



# The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research

## NAASR Launches Leadership Circle at Southern California Event

NAASR launched a campaign for its Leadership Circle of membership in the Southern California Armenian community on April 13, 2013, at the Pasadena home of David and Margaret Mgrublian. The evening was organized by NAASR's Southern California Board members Bruce Roat and Dr. Gregory Ketabgian, working closely with a dedicated committee.

Following a buffet dinner, the nearly 100 individuals present gathered to listen to remarks by Master of Ceremonies Paul Ignatius, a dialogue between Dr. Carla Garapedian and Prof. Peter Balakian, and comments by members of the NAASR leadership.

"Fifty-five years ago my father got the bug for NAASR to help them set up endowed chairs at Harvard and UCLA in Armenian Studies," said MC Paul Ignatius. Ignatius served as Assistant Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy during the Kennedy and Johnson presidential administrations. His father, Hovsep, an immigrant from Kharpert, was involved in many Armenian



Left to right: Margaret Mgrublian, Peter Balakian, Carla Garapedian, David Mgrublian

causes including efforts at the inception of NAASR to keep Armenian history alive for future generations. Ignatius, in his concise and witty opening remarks, emphasized that NAASR continues to be a uniquely important organization that needs to be supported by all who value scholarship and increased knowledge about Armenian subjects.

Ignatius introduced acclaimed documentary filmmaker Carla Ga-

rapedian and writer and scholar Peter Balakian, who engaged in a half-hour-long discussion on the topic of "Scholarship and the Pursuit of Justice."

*Peter Balakian and Carla Garapedian Speak*

Garapedian and Balakian discussed the fraudulent academic apparatus supported by the Turkish see LEADERSHIP, page 2



## From NAASR Chairman Raffi P. Yeghiayan

To All Valued NAASR Members:

Because of your commitment to NAASR and to Armenian issues, we invite you to join the newly established NAASR Leadership Circle. We are pleased that already more than 50 individuals and foundations have joined, resulting in a doubling of revenue from membership dues.

For more than fifty-five years, NAASR has led the movement to create, maintain, strengthen, and perpetuate Armenian Studies in the United States. Before the establishment of NAASR, permanent programs of Armenian Studies in the United States were the unrealized dream of only a few people; since the establishment of NAASR they have become a reality. Before the establishment of NAASR, publications on Armenian subjects in English were few and often of poor quality; since the establishment of NAASR hundreds of scholarly works have been produced.

It is our collective responsibility to support the continuation and expansion of these remarkable achievements.

see CHAIRMAN, page 4

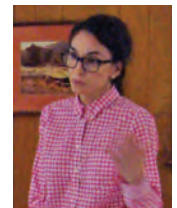


Chairman Raffi Yeghiayan and NAASR members

## NAASR Holds 59th Annual Assembly of Members

NAASR held its 59th Annual Assembly of Members on Saturday, May 18, 2013, at its Headquarters in Belmont, MA. The Assembly was highlighted by a lecture by Dr. Christina Maranci, the Arthur H. Dadian and Ara T. Oztemel Professor of Armenian Art at Tufts University, on "The Extraordinary and Endangered Outdoor Sculpture of Medieval Armenia."

Prof. Maranci discussed "the relationship between art and ritual in early see ASSEMBLY, page 4



Prof. Christina Maranci

# NAASR Launches Leadership Circle at Southern California Event

LEADERSHIP, from page 1 government to further their project of denial of the Armenian Genocide. Balakian spoke of the need to counter this campaign both through scholarship and through the kind of informed activism that scholarship makes possible. He pointed to the example of the exposure and shaming of Princeton's Heath Lowry by Robert Jay Lifton in the 1990s, when it was found that Lowry was working closely with the Turkish Embassy in Washington, D.C., as a key moment in demonstrating the relationship between academia and the Turkish state. The publicity surrounding this affair had brought the denial issue out in the open in the mid-1990s.

Although—or perhaps because—the Armenian Genocide today receives far greater coverage in scholarly work, on television, and in social media than in previous decades, denial persists. The discussion turned to Turkey's attempt to pressure the Rwanda Genocide Museum to remove materials on the Armenian Genocide. A last hour effort by genocide scholars and writers, including Balakian, who had gathered there to give a symposium, helped to block that effort.

Similarly, in 2005 there was a Turkish-supported attempt in England to have the Parliament officially repudiate the authenticity and validity of the Bryce/Toynbee "Blue Book" (aka *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916*). This effort ultimately failed and led to noted British human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson writing a report en-



Peter Balakian and Carla Garapedian speak, while Master of Ceremonies Paul Ignatius (far right) looks on.



Left to right: Dr. Gregory Ketabgian\*, Anne E. Elbrecht\*, Yervant Chekijian\*, Raffi P. Yeghiayan\*, Paul R. Ignatius, Nancy R. Kolligian\*, Bruce W. Roat\* (\* indicates Member of NAASR Board of Directors)

titled "Was There an Armenian Genocide?" which was highly critical of Turkish-led denial and British acquiescence. Revisionist historiography by Turkish and Azeri scholars has picked up speed and there is a need for a large number of trained scholars to answer their claims. Garapedian and Balakian stressed the need for financial support of institutions such as NAASR to enable increased grants to deserving researchers and scholars, and the importance of continued "cultural production" in various media and forums in order to keep Armenian history and culture alive and moving forward.

As Peter Balakian stated at the conclusion: "We need to move into a much higher

level of professionalism; it needs to involve creative thinking and needs to be proactive. It should be emerging as we walk out tonight."

After a lively question and answer session, representatives from the NAASR Board's Executive Committee were introduced to provide an update to the audience concerning the present status and future goals of NAASR. Raffi Yeghiayan, NAASR Board Chairman, welcomed the guests



Roupen Berberian, Nancy Kolligian, Dr. Hrag Margarian

and introduced Marc Mamigonian, NAASR Director of Academic Affairs, who briefly reviewed the history of NAASR since its inception in 1955 and its early efforts to establish the first chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard and subsequently the second at UCLA. Taking special note of NAASR's renewed high level of activity in Southern California, thanks to the efforts of current Board members Roat and Ketabgian, as well as former Board member Dr. Rubina Peroomian, Mamigonian also pointed to the close working relationship with the Ararat-Eskijian Museum in Mission Hills, whose director Maggie Mangassarian-Goschin serves on NAASR's Southern California committee.

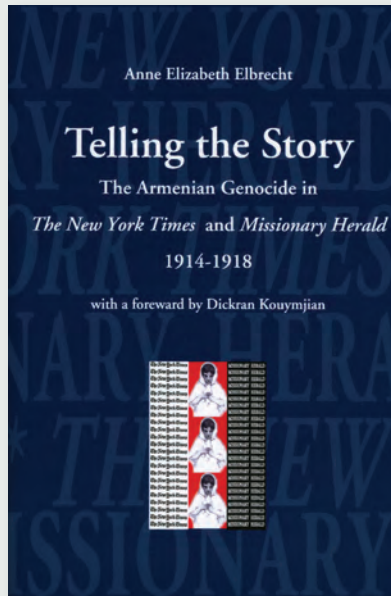
Next, he detailed some of the tasks that NAASR performs at the present, including organizing and collaborating on lectures and other public pro-



## NAASR Board Member Anne Elbrecht Publishes Book

Anne Elizabeth Elbrecht of Davis, CA, a member of NAASR's Board of Directors for Northern California, has published *Telling the Story: The Armenian Genocide in The New York Times and Missionary Herald, 1914-1918* (Taderon Press, 2012), an adaptation of her MA thesis from California State University, Sacramento.

Elbrecht's study focuses on two important journals to see how news of the Armenian Genocide filtered through to the United States between 1914-18. It also looks at how the American public reacted to such news with a humanitarian intervention program.



There were undoubtedly differences between the two journals, as *The New York Times* was a leading news organization while *Missionary Herald* was part of an institution (the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) with vested interests in Turkey. However, the flow of information to the outside world was clear and compelling, especially as many reports were actually written by United States officials in Turkey and leaked to the

press by the State Department in Washington, D.C.

In the book's foreword, Prof. Dickran Kouymjian writes that "other scholars have used the information in both *The New York Times* and the *Missionary Herald* to inform studies of the Genocide, but for the first time an analysis of the evolution of the reports



Anne Elbrecht discussing her book *Telling the Story: The Armenian Genocide in the New York Times and Missionary Herald* at NAASR in May 2012

of the journalists and the missionaries is presented as a subject of inquiry."

Anne Elizabeth Elbrecht is a graduate of Wheaton College, University of California, Berkeley, School of Library Studies, and McGeorge School of Law. With her late husband Richard A. Elbrecht she traveled throughout Turkey photographing Armenian churches, a visual archive now part of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno. She has been a member of NAASR's Board of Directors since 2007.

grams; providing research/publication grants; maintaining an extensive library; functioning as a communication hub for scholars; assisting researchers; distributing books on Armenian subjects; publishing; and organizing heritage trips to Historic Armenia led by prominent scholars. As did Garapedian and Balakian, he emphasized that it is crucial that NAASR substantially increase its capacity to provide grants and support for scholars and vital projects.

He was followed by Yervant Chekijian, who explained the establishment of the Leadership Circle as an upper level of annual support which will allow NAASR to expand upon the work it currently performs. Chekijian emphasized the importance of members of the community showing leadership by taking responsibility for the strengthening of institutions such as NAASR that support scholarship and preserve Armenian history and culture.

The evening came to an end with former Chairman Nancy Kolligian thanking the speakers, the MC and the host, as well as the organizing committee. After dessert as the guests were leaving, each received a signed copy of *The Burning Tigris* by Peter Balakian.



Left to right, Armenian Film Foundation Board Chairman Jerry Papazian, Carla Garapedian, Marc Mamigonian

# NAASR Holds 59th Annual Assembly

ASSEMBLY, from page 1  
 medieval Armenia,” focusing on the 7th century church of Mren, in Eastern Turkey near the Armenian border. Based on this one case study, Maranci raised “broader questions about

own formidable research and interpretive skills to bear, Maranci discussed in particular the striking lintel sculpture above the Mren cathedral’s north portal.

Maranci concluded by posing the pressing

monuments they adorn, and exposed to the elements, the carved bas-reliefs I have spoken about today deserve not only the attention of the scholar but the care of the preservationist, and if necessary, the voice of the activist, one hopes they will receive all three.”

Following the luncheon and lecture, those in attendance heard reports about NAASR’s ongoing efforts to further Armenian studies, research, and publication from Chairman Raffi P. Yeghiayan, Treasurer Roxanne Etmekjian, Advisor Yervant Chekijian, and Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian.

Chairman Raffi Yeghiayan announced the recipients of certificates for 25-year members, who are as follows: Prof. Kevork Bardakjian, Ellen Sarkisian Chesnut (who sent a touching thank you and NAASR salute), Daniel Shadbejian, Diane Shadbejian, Nevart Rose Talanian, and Paula Tashjian.

Newly elected to the NAASR Board of Directors were Stepan Piligian of Westford, MA, and Prof. Ann Lousin of Chicago, IL. Anna Marie Norehad of Glenview, IL, ended her tenure of Director.

Those Directors who were reelected were: Dr. Geri Lyn Ajemian of Watertown, MA; Van Aroian of Worcester, MA; Dr. Seda E. Keshishian of Lincoln, MA; Shushan M. Teager of Belmont, MA; Gregory Aftandilian of Vienna, VA; Marta T. Batmasian of Boca Raton, FL; and Bertha Mugurdichian of Providence, RI.



Treasurer Roxanne Etmekjian presents the financial report

the sacrality of exterior bas-reliefs of Armenia, their potential ritual use, and their relationship with the surrounding landscape.”

Building on the work of other scholars such as Nicole Thierry, Thomas Mathews, and Daniel Findikyan, among others, and bringing her

question of “how to preserve such a fragile tradition.” Mren is in grave danger, and “the isolation of this church, and its unstabilized condition, mean that the north façade, and its portal, may soon go the way of the south façade,” which has collapsed. “Tied to the fate of the

## From NAASR Chairman Raffi P. Yeghiayan

CHAIRMAN, from page 1

The advances in and growth of scholarship in Armenian Studies have provided a solid foundation for presenting issues relevant to Armenians and Armenia to the world. The academic world and the general public alike have access to an ever-increasing base of knowledge regarding Armenia, its history, people, and rich culture. The success of NAASR and the flourishing of Armenian Studies is a tribute to the wisdom of those who saw the value of scholarly work on Armenian subjects, not only for Armenians but for all thinking people.

NAASR today continues to be the sole organization with a nationwide membership and international reach devoted to advancing the cause of Armenian Studies in all its forms.

By serving as a communication hub for scholars and students in the field, providing support for important publications, events, and research projects, providing books and reference materials to academics and researchers, and acting as a crucial bridge between the scholarly world and the general public through our unrivaled lecture programs, NAASR remains a unique and vital force.

As much as has been achieved, there are always new challenges; and NAASR is constantly seeking new ways to improve and expand

our work on behalf of Armenian Studies. (See “NAASR’s Fundamental Purposes” on p. 8 of this *Newsletter*.) This improvement and expansion is only possible with the support of members of a Leadership Circle who understand the need for Armenian Studies to receive the support necessary to build on the achievements of the past half century.

Each year, NAASR will hold a Leadership Circle event to which all Circle members will be invited. This will feature a prominent scholarly speaker or speakers, and there will be a special briefing from the NAASR Chairman about the work of the organization and the field of Armenian Studies.

We ask you to join with us in building on our achievements and leading the way to new heights for NAASR for Armenian Studies. A Leadership Circle response card and envelope are enclosed for your consideration.

Sincerely,



**Raffi P. Yeghiayan**  
 Chairman, Board of Directors





# A Call for Library Donations

A focus of NAASR's library in recent years has been to expand our collection of "village histories" or *hushamatean* volumes (memory books), of which some 200 have been published. These important publications contain vast quantities of information on the now-destroyed Armenian communities of the Ottoman Empire.

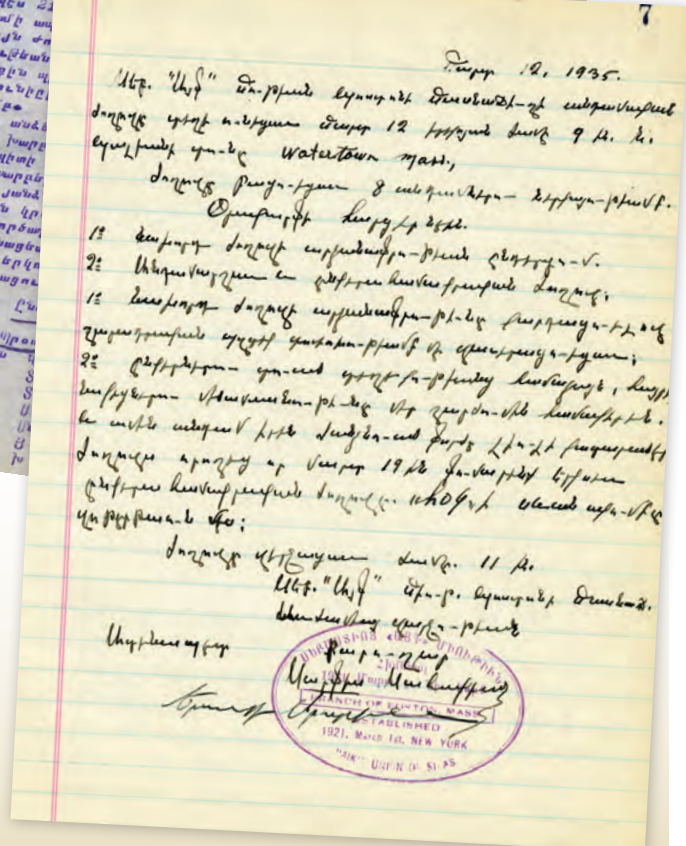
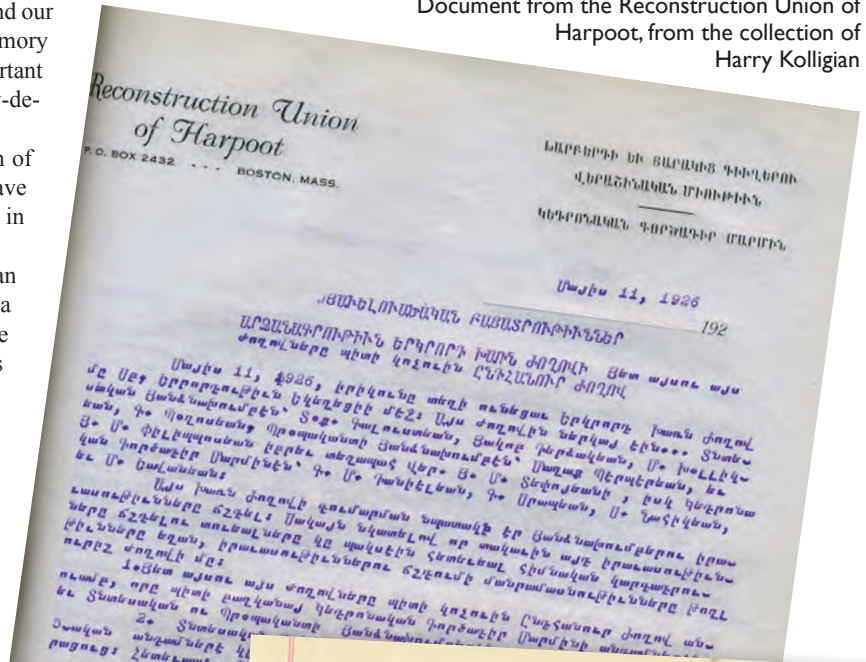
NAASR's Mardigian Library already has a strong collection of these precious books, and we are looking to fill the gaps we have or, in some cases, to find copies in better condition than those in our collection.

NAASR also is seeking materials relating to the Armenian compatriotic unions that flourished for decades in North America and elsewhere but which, by and large, have ceased to exist. The records and publications of these entities are vital documents for the understanding of 20th century Armenian history and should be preserved.

Indeed, any and all records pertaining to Armenian-American organizations, including businesses, are worth preserving and give insight into our history.

Please, if you have in your homes such materials, consider donating them to the NAASR library. Your contribution will be duly acknowledged and genuinely appreciated. Please contact Marc Mamigonian at [marc@naasr.org](mailto:marc@naasr.org) for more information.

Document from the Reconstruction Union of Harpoot, from the collection of Harry Kolligian



A notebook from the Pan-Sebastia Rehabilitation Union, from the collection of Helen Sahagian

Pan-Sebastia Rehabilitation Union documents from the collection of Edward Alexanian



## NAASR Founding Member Helen Anahid Sahagian (1920-2013)

Helen Sahagian, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, passed away on March 28, 2013. Born in Boston in 1920, Helen Anahid was the youngest child of Ne-vart-Artemis Zartarian and Sahag Krikor Sahagian of Sebastia, Historic Armenia. Helen was a Founding Member of NAASR and actively involved with the Association for decades.

She has left generous bequests to NAASR and the Armenian Library and Museum of America, creating endowments for the benefit of the institutions' libraries, in memory of Helen and her late brother Edward.

Helen Sahagian in 1995 with Manoog S.Young (left) and Haig Der Manuelian (right).



REMEMBERED BY  
PROF. JAMES RUSSELL

Prof. James Russell, Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies at Harvard University, remembered Sahagian with fondness, recalling that "Helen and I first met when I was a seventeen-year-old freshman at Columbia College studying Armenian language with Krikor Maksoudian, who was then finishing his Ph.D. under the direction of Professor Nina Garsoian, with whom both Helen and I studied. She and I became great friends. She was very devoted to the work of the Pan-Sepastia Compatriotic Union in helping to build Soviet Armenia. She and I came from strong Old Left backgrounds and saw eye to eye on most things."

Russell continued, "Helen loved scholarship, loved the community, loved NAASR, loved the Harvard Square milieu, and loved Soviet Armenia and the ideals that, at its best, it stood for. She was my friend and fellow traveler, on the road of life and otherwise."

After graduating from Arlington High School, Helen worked as a secretary while attending evening classes at Harvard University Extension School to earn a Bachelor of

Arts Degree in Modern Languages. In 1976, she was awarded a Master of Arts Degree in Armenian Studies from Columbia University. Helen wrote many scholarly articles on ancient and modern Armenian History and recorded the oral histories of survivors (some of whom were close family members) of the Hamidian Massacres in 1894-1896 and the Armenian Genocide of 1915. She was a Founder and Incorporator of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

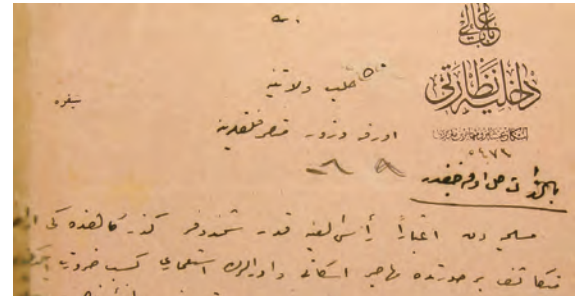
After 83 years as a proud Bostonian, Helen moved to Albuquerque to be with family; however, her memories held fast of Colonial New England history—the people, places, and literature—and of the area's art museums, concerts halls, beaches, Cape Cod, lobster tails and fried clams, the Boston Public Garden Swan Boats, Filene's Basement, and most of all, her favorite hangouts in Harvard Square.

Helen is survived by her niece Artemis Chakerian, her nephews Armen and Gerald Chakerian and many loving members of her extended family. She was preceded in death by her brother Edward Sahagian and her sister Florence Chakerian.

## NAASR and Knights of Vartan Grants Support Mouradian's Research

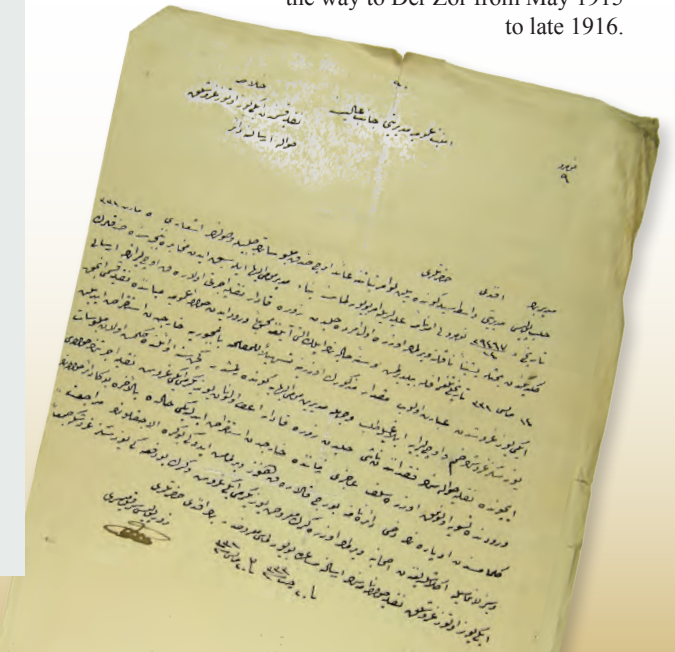
Supported by travel grants from NAASR and the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies, Khatchig Mouradian conducted two research trips to Turkey in winter 2012 and spring 2013, delving into the Prime Minister's Ottoman Archives in Istanbul for his doctoral dissertation at Clark University. Mouradian's dissertation focuses on what is referred to as the second phase of the Armenian Genocide, particularly the destruction of Armenian deportees arriving in Syria from early May 1915.

"I thank NAASR and the Knights of Vartan for the opportunity to work in the Ottoman Archives during the past year. During my research there, I came across a wealth of



material that corroborates the Armenian and western archival sources I am using as I study the fate of the Armenian deportees upon their arrival in Syria in 1915-16."

Mouradian is currently writing his dissertation, which he is expected to defend later this year. Based on material from the Ottoman Archives, as well as Armenian and diplomatic and missionary sources, he is examining the survival and destruction of the Armenian deportees in camps in the Province of Aleppo and along the Euphrates River all the way to Der Zor from May 1915 to late 1916.





## Paul Ignatius Honored by U.S. Navy

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced at a June 11, 2013, ceremony that a future Navy destroyer will be named in honor of former Navy Secretary Paul R. Ignatius.

Ignatius will be the first Armenian American so honored, and NAASR joins with all Americans in expressing our pride in his achievements. NAASR is especially proud to be the publisher of Ignatius' memoir *Now I Know in Part* (2011) and of the fact that Ignatius was among the first to join NAASR's Leadership Circle.

Paul Ignatius served as Secretary of the Navy from 1967-1969 and as Assistant Secretary of Defense under President Lyndon Johnson. USS Paul Ignatius will be 509 feet in length, have a waterline beam of 59 feet, displace approximately 9,496 tons, and make speed in excess of 30 knots.


The June 11 ceremony took place at the Pentagon and was attended by Ignatius, members of his family, and five former Secretaries and acting Secretaries of the Navy.

"I was really quite overwhelmed when Secretary Mabus told me that this ship was going to be named in my honor," said Ignatius. "The Navy meant a lot to me in my life."





Paul Ignatius speaking at the June 11, 2013, ceremony at the Pentagon. (Photo from [www.navsourc.org](http://www.navsourc.org))

# IS NAASR IN YOUR WILL?



PLANNING YOUR ESTATE WITH NAASR IN MIND

There are many ways you can help NAASR and its programs for the furtherance of Armenian studies and research. One of the most significant is including NAASR in your estate planning. There are many possibilities - please make an appointment with NAASR to discuss the best plan for you. NAASR is currently preparing an informational brochure for estate planning. Please call us at 617-489-1610, e-mail us at [hq@naasr.org](mailto:hq@naasr.org), or visit us at the NAASR Center in Belmont to discuss your plans.

# NAASR's FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSES

- To foster and promote Armenian Studies through scholarship, research, and publication;
- To work for the establishment of endowed professorships, fellowships, scholarships, departments, and courses of instruction in Armenian Studies at colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning;
- To solicit and administer funds and to cooperate with universities, foundations, and similar organizations for the advancement of Armenian studies and research; and
- To sponsor and promote educational, cultural, and other activities and projects for the realization of the purposes and objectives of the Association.

## Current Primary Areas of NAASR Activity

- organizing and collaborating on lectures, symposia, conferences, and other public programs in the Boston area and in several other regions of the U.S., including Los Angeles, New York, and Florida
- Armenian language instruction classes
- providing research/publication grants to scholars
- maintaining library and assisting researchers on- and off-site
- functioning as a communication hub for scholars in field of Armenian Studies
- distribution of books on Armenian subjects through our bookstore
- publishing (books, *Journal of Armenian Studies*, *NAASR Newsletter*)

## Future Additional or Increased Areas of NAASR Activity

- substantially increase NAASR's capacity to provide grants and support for research
- expansion of NAASR's staff including hiring Executive Director
- create separate endowments to support: undergraduate research, graduate research, publications, conferences, visiting scholars
- create endowment to provide funds to university libraries to augment or develop their Armenian collections
- create endowment to support scholarships (as opposed to grants) for students focusing on Armenian Studies
- create an endowment for publication of translations from Armenian
- continued expansion of programs to other geographical areas and develop local chapters
- expansion of reach of programs through live streaming and increased online presence
- develop and implement plan for digitization of selected NAASR Library materials
- hire professional archivist to catalogue, organize, curate NAASR Library Special Collections
- hire professional library conservationist to address needs of Library holdings requiring attention

## NAASR Donates Books To Rwandan Genocide Memorial

In the summer of 2012 NAASR donated two boxes of books dealing primarily with the Armenian Genocide to the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre in Rwanda. Providing the impetus for the donation were Bianca Bagatourian and Prof. Peter Balakian, who reached out to NAASR to assist. Bagatourian and Balakian were the co-organizers of the conference "Genocide and Denial: The Armenian, Jewish, and Tutsi Genocide" in Kigali on July 17-18, 2012. Having a scholarly symposium on Armenian, Jewish, and Tutsi genocides and their aftermaths," Balakian noted, "in



Row one, left to right: Donald Miller, unknown, John Bosco Siboyintore, Wendy Lower, Peter Balakian, Bianca Bagatourian, Deborah Lipstadt, Hadley Rose; Row 2: unknown, Tom Nhadiro, Jean-Pierre Karegeye, Glen Ford, Solange Umulisa, Jose Kagabo

an important sub Saharan African country like Rwanda opens up new pathways for intellectual work."

The Kigali Memorial Centre was established by the Aegis Trust, founded by Dr. James Smith, who also created the Holocaust Memorial and Education Centre in the UK. NAASR received a kind note of thanks from the Centre's Deputy Director Solange Umulisa following the books' arrival.

"It was a great pleasure to be able to provide the Kigali memorial with some significant books on the Armenian Genocide, and we appreciate the efforts of Bianca and Peter in facilitating this," said NAASR Academic Director Marc Mamigonian. "We know that there is a real interest in the Armenian Genocide and in the overall topic of comparative genocide in Rwanda. This was a great chance for us to help them out. We are all strengthened by increased knowledge and understanding."



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