

ARS Toronto Roubina Chapter Dohmig Or Dedicated to the Twentieth Century Armenian Resistance

The Toronto Roubina ARS chapter's annual Dohmig Or (Heritage Day) was held on December 3, 2016, at the Armenian Community Centre. More than three hundred people gathered to celebrate this day, which was dedicated to the twentieth century Armenian resistance efforts.

Guests, received by ARS members attired in traditional Armenian costumes, were offered cherry liquor and chocolate-covered dried fruits from Armenia.

The hall was beautifully decorated with a bell tower, symbolizing the monument of Sardarabad. This structure, with winged bulls, represents the victory obtained by the people and was graciously prepared and donated by Albert Barsoumian. Photos of various heroines and heroes of the day were hung on an evergreen tree and on the walls of the hall. Tables were enhanced with artifacts from Armenia depicting Mount Ararat and Armenia's Coat of Arms.

Continuing with tradition by publishing a bi-lingual Dohmig Or book, this year's comprehensive book, *Twentieth Century Armenian Resistance*, includes stories of the resistance and biographies of the fighters. The stories of the battles of Van, Daron, Urfa, Shabin Karahisar, Zeytun, Hadjin, Aintab, Musa Ler, Pash Abaran, Gharakilisa, Sardarabad and Artstakh are included. There are also 276 illustrations both in colour and black and white. Official letters included in the book are from: Mr. Armen Yeganian, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia to Canada, Mr. Robert Avetisyan, the Nagorno-Karabakh Permanent Representative to U.S.A. and Canada, His Eminence Archbishop Papken Tcharian, Prelate of the Armenian Prelacy of Canada, Most Rev. Fr. Keghart Kosbakian, Pastor of St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church of Toronto, Mr. Garen Arisdagesyan, Director of Sardarabad Ethnographic Museum and Musa Ler Museum, ARS Toronto Roubina chapter's Executive Board, and Dohmig Or Committee. The cover of the book was graciously donated by Mr. and Mrs. Varouj and Silva Lapoyan. Also present was Mrs. Mardikian-Der Hagopian, representative of Syria at the ARS Central Executive Board

The program began with the entrance of the H.M.E.M scouts bearing the flags of Canada, Armenia, and Artsakh, and Ms. Armenia Sarkissian performing their anthems. Zepure Dorna, co-chair, warmly welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the evening's program. Dr. Mardig Aprahamian was invited to the podium to receive *Im Hisheli Housbereh*, the memoirs of his grandfather, Brigade Master Mardiros Aprahamian, which was recently published in Armenia.

His Eminence Archbishop Papken Tcharian was invited to bless the evening. He extended his fatherly remarks and praised the twentieth century Armenian resistance fighters for their heroism, spirit, and maintaining hope for the nation. He also thanked the ARS Roubina chapter and members of the Dohmig Or Committee for their efforts in organizing such a successful evening. He then blessed the evening's meal with a prayer.

The menu was prepared by the committee members using traditional Armenian recipes consisting of various Armenian specialties.

Mrs. Tamar Donabedian-Kuzuian opened the cultural aspect of the evening by reciting Armenian poems reflecting heroism, and was followed by Nver Ghazarian and Mher Minassian who whole-heartedly sang Armenian national songs. Hamazkayin's Toronto Klatsor Dance Academy and Erepouni Dance Ensemble elegantly performed Armenian folkloric dances.

The areas of Van, Daron, Urfa, Shabin Karahisar, Zeytun, Hadjin, Aintab, Musa Ler, Pash Abaran, Gharakilisa, Sardarabad and Artstakh were honoured by the following patrons: Mr. and Mrs. Henry and Henriette Abrahamian, Dr. Raymond and Mrs. Elizabeth Kevork, Mrs. Arsho Zakarian, Mr. and Mrs. Haig and Maral Tokatlian, Mr. and Mrs. Vahe and Hrip Tokmakjian, Dr. Jirair and Mrs. Eky Ternamian, Mr. Michael Joly and Mrs. Ani Hotoyan-Joly, Mr. and Mrs. Simon and Maral Hasserjian, Mr. and Mrs. Levon and Ani Hasserjian, Mr. and Mrs. Stepan and Hourii Najarian, Mr. and Mrs. Vahan and Loucine Shahinian, Mr. and Mrs. Sarkis and Seta Balian, Mrs. Rita Bekmezian-Shamlan, Mr. and Mrs. Nerses and Sona Fisdekjian.

A video by Yerkirmedia.am, a television channel based in Yerevan, and compiled by Onnig Nazarian, dealing with the Resistance of the twentieth century and its heroes, was presented. Horovel Folk Ensemble, under the unique guidance of Mr. Jivan Stepanian, performed an extensive repertoire of Armenian traditional and folkloric music. Ms. Armenia Sarkissian and Mr. Mher Minassian performed with the ensemble.

Throughout the evening lottery tickets were sold and a silent auction was held. This event was a huge success and the proceeds will be allocated to humanitarian, social and educational projects of the A.R.S.

Lisa Sarkhanian