



Dr. Antranik L. Ashdjian (1918-1997)

Born on the 27th December 1918 in Tarsus, Cilicia, he was the first-born son of Dr. Loutfik & Victoria Ashdjian of Adana, Cilicia.

His family moved to Cyprus in 1921, where he attended the Armenian Elementary School and American Academy of Larnaca.

He attended the American University of Beirut in 1934-1937, studying Pre-Medicine, then enrolled at the French Faculty of Medicine of Beirut in, graduating in 1942 as a Laureate in Dental Surgery (D.D.S.). Having lost both his parents to cancer during his studies, upon his return to Cyprus he established in Nicosia, where he practised dentistry from 1942 to his death in

1997. In the 1950's he received the Honorary Degree of Fellow of the International College of Dentists (F.I.C.D.).

In 1945 he married Haiganoush Vartabedian of Beirut, with whom he had a daughter, Vicky.

After his first wife passed away in 1966, he wedded Anna Boghossian of Athens, Greece, and had a son, Antranik.

During his study years he was involved in the Armenian student unions of Beirut, often taking up leadership role due to his non-partisan background.

After returning to Cyprus, he became a member of both AYMA and AGBU.

In the 1940's he served as a Committee member of AYMA.

For a long number of years he served as the dentist of the Melkonian Educational Institute, the American Academy of Larnaca and the English School.

In 1955 he was one of the founder members of the first Lions club in Cyprus, the Lions Club of Nicosia, as well as of the Lusignan Lodge.

In 1960 he became vice-Chairman of the Unified Armenian Front.

In the period 1963-1970 he served as Municipal Councillor of the City of Nicosia, representing the city in official delegations abroad, in the capacity of vice-Mayor.

In 1970 he was elected to the seat of Armenian Representative in the Cyprus House of Representatives. He was re-elected in 1976, and served until the spring of 1982.

He was the personal dentist and friend of President Archbishop Makarios III and President Spyros Kyprianou.

During his service as Armenian Representative, he realised the following principal projects:

- The donation of state land and construction of the Nareg Elementary School in Nicosia
- The enrolment of Armenian Elementary Schools' teachers to the state pay-roll and pension system
- The granting of full autonomy to the Armenian School Board, to administer the three elementary schools of the Community
- The allocation of a state grant for Armenian students studying in foreign language/private secondary schools, the amount equalling to the annual cost of a student studying in a Greek state secondary school.
- The donation of funds towards the construction of the Sourp Asdvadzadzin Church in Nicosia.
- The compensation of Armenian refugees of the Turkish invasion of 1974
- The assistance rendered in 1975-76 to the refugees of the Civil War in Lebanon who fled to Cyprus.

During his term in office, he represented the President of the Republic, Archbishop Makarios III in Armenian events held overseas. He was also a member of the Delegation of the Republic of Cyprus to the General Assembly of the UN in 1978.

He participated in the National Representative Assembly held in Antelias, Lebanon, in 1977, where Catholicos-Coadjutor Karekin II of Cilicia (who in 1983 became Catholicos Karekin II of Cilicia and in 1995 became Catholicos Karekin I of All Armenians) was first elected.

As recognition of his services granted to the Community, Catholicos Khoren I of Cilicia bestowed upon him the Medal of the Order of Cilician Knights in November 1972, during the opening ceremony of the newly erected Nareg School in Nicosia.

Dr. Antranik L. Ashdjian passed away on 1st February 1997. Despite the freezing temperatures, a crowd of many hundreds of Armenian and Greek Cypriots, amongst them the President of the Republic Glafkos Clerides, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Spyros Kyprianou and other top state officials, bid him farewell at his funeral service, held on 5th February 1997, at Sourp Asdvadzadzin Church in Nicosia.