



## Armenian Heritage Park Celebrates Decade with Gala Benefit Honoring Journalist Stephen Kurkjian

MAY 5, 2022

By **The Armenian Mirror-Spectator**

**BOSTON —** The 10th anniversary of the Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway is being celebrated with a series of events.

The Armenian Heritage Park is a place that brings pride to all Armenians and celebrates the strength and resiliency of not only generations of Armenians who have immigrated to the U.S. but of immigrants and refugees from throughout the world who have come here and contributed much to American life and culture.

In the heart of downtown Boston, Armenian Heritage Park is where the Armenian-American community gathers, and where all gather on common ground.

It is among the select few gathering sites on public land in the United States that commemorates the Armenian Genocide, celebrates the immigrant journey and contributions made to American life and culture and welcomes all in celebration of what unites and connects us.

On the occasion of the park's 10th anniversary, a gala benefit, with the titled "Celebrating Contributions of Our Nation's Immigrants," will be held on Wednesday, September 21, at the InterContinental Hotel. Stephen Kurkjian, Pulitzer Prize journalist, author and leader is the distinguished honoree. In addition, organizations serving immigrants and refugees will be recognized. Funds raised at the event will benefit the Park's Legacy Fund, the endowed fund to support the annual care for and maintain of the Park year-round for many years to come.

"The park has been a brilliant addition to the new Boston with its giant modern sculpture that gets reshaped every spring into a new form, as the *Boston Globe* stated. It celebrates 'how public art becomes a part of the city, both permanent and alive'...measuring up to the promise each of us makes in living or working in Boston — you are part of this city's great history and expected to honor and contribute to it...And this is the kind of pledge that I see that the Armenian Heritage Park made to itself and to those who supported its drive from the outset," shared Kurkjian during the virtual Gathering for Park Benefactors on December 2, 2021.



Walking the Labyrinth at Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway

The son of a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, Kurkjian was born and raised in Dorchester. He is a product of the Boston public school system, and a graduate of Boston University and Suffolk University Law School.

An editor and reporter for the *Boston Globe* for 40 years, Kurkjian was a founding member of the paper's investigative Spotlight Team. As a member of the team, Kurkjian was awarded the Pulitzer Prize on three occasions and about 25 other regional and national reporting awards. Between 1986 and 1991, Kurkjian headed the *Globe's* Washington Bureau.

Following his retirement from the *Boston Globe* in 2007, he researched and wrote *Master Thieves: The Boston Gangsters Who Pulled Off the World's Greatest Art Heist* (Perseus Books), on the historic theft from Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, which was published to critical acclaim in 2015. In his retirement, he has also taught journalism as an adjunct professor at Northeastern, Boston University and Boston College.

And he has continued to write extensively about the Armenian Genocide of 1915, a horrific massacre by the Ottoman empire which killed more than a million Armenians, including his paternal grandfather, and drove countless others from their ancestral home. Stephen has long been a member of the Board of Directors for the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, and NAASR has assisted him immensely in his reporting on the Genocide.

He has two adult children — Erica Kurkjian Parrell, a public school teacher, and Adam, teaching assistant with the Needham Public Schools — and three grandchildren, Theodore, Jillian and Emily Parrell.

Over ten years ago, because of the generosity of the park's benefactors and supporters, funds were raised to both construct the park and endow funds.

Each endowed fund supports a designated purpose. These endowed funds support the Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture, the Park's Care and Maintenance, Public Programs that include Genocide Remembrance and a Welcome Reception for New Citizens at the Park following their Naturalization Ceremony at Faneuil Hall and the Lecture on Human Rights at Faneuil Hall. The annual lecture series was inaugurated prior to the park being constructed

The Park's Endowment, a collection of endowed funds, is managed by the Armenian Heritage Foundation's Investment Committee, a team of professionals. The Board of Directors of the Armenian Heritage Foundation, sponsor of Armenian Heritage Park, is composed of representatives from organizations throughout Massachusetts.

Many programs are offered in collaboration with civic, arts, cultural and educational organizations. Programs Partners include the City of Boston, Boston Public Schools (BPS), Museum of Fine Arts, Armenian Museum of America, Boston Pops, Benson-Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine at MGH, Berklee College of Music as well as organizations serving immigrants and refugees.

All are invited to Celebrate the Park's 10th Anniversary over the next many months during Programs at the Park culminating with the September 18 Sunday Afternoon at the Park program at 2 p.m.

For schedule of Programs at the Park, visit [ArmenianHeritagePark.org](https://ArmenianHeritagePark.org). For information about the Gala Benefit, email [hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org).