



# Saroyan's World



Photo by Leonard Kizirian

## Announcing the 2012 Saroyan Story Writing Contest Winners

Each year the William Saroyan Society sponsors, in collaboration with the Fresno County Public Library and the Fresno County Office of Education, a writing contest open to students in grades 1st through college. The purpose of the contest is to encourage young people to write of their experiences, much in the same way as Mr. Saroyan wrote of his own experiences. The Society awards \$100 to all first place, \$75 to second place and \$50 for third place winners.

This year's contest elicited 387 entries. The Society is pleased to announce the following 2012 winners:

### Grades 1-2

First Place: Matthew Clough, *Nana Newman*. Liberty Elementary, Clovis USD.

Second Place: Blake Plumlee, *Cool Cole*. Liberty Elementary, Clovis USD.

Third Place: Aliya Helsley, *How My Best Friend Elyse Ikemiya Taught Me That Bulling is For the Bulls*. Liberty Elementary, Clovis USD.

Honorable Mention: Jacob Rocha, *My Uncle Bobby*. Liberty Elementary, Kerman USD.

### Grades 3-4

First Place: Grant Provencio, *The Impact of Tumbling Class*. Goldenrod Elementary, Kerman USD.

Second Place: Reagan Redding, *A Teacher's Influence*. Viking Elementary, Fresno USD.

Third Place: Adalena Waterfall, *A Moonwalk With My Dad*. Roosevelt School, Taft, CA.

Honorable Mention: Karlee Sager-Christenson, *Untitled*. Lincoln Elementary, Clovis USD.

Honorable Mention: Grant Freeman, *Untitled*. Lincoln Elementary, Clovis USD.

Honorable Mention: Freddie Flores, *Untitled*. Copper Hills Elementary, Clovis USD.

### Grades 5-6

First Place: Gurleen Pabla, *Untitled*. Lincoln Elementary, Madera USD.

Second Place: Jocelyn Krupens, *Big Sister Lost*. Reagan Elementary, Clovis USD.

Third Place: Marianne Gleason, *Express Yourself Through Words*. Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Clovis, CA.

Honorable Mention: Jakob Richards, *Untitled*. John C. Fremont Charter School, Merced, CA.

### Grades 7-9

First Place: Emma Willis, *The Person That Inspires Me*. Granite Ridge Intermediate, Clovis USD.

Second Place: Ruby Fernandez, *Love Seeds From My Grandmother*. Washington Academic Middle School, Sanger USD.

*continued on page 5*

## William Saroyan Society

*The William Saroyan Society is dedicated to promoting the life, times and literary works of William Saroyan, while educating the public about the human values depicted in his writing.*

Post Office Box 4606  
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### News from the website

**Inquiries** – Our site is visited by people throughout the world with an interest in William Saroyan and his works. We have helped those who have contacted us with inquiries about producing plays, verifying quotations and titles of his works, and items of general interest. The website is one of the services supported by your contributions.

**Saroyan Store** – Visit the website [www.williamsaroyansociety.org](http://www.williamsaroyansociety.org) where you will find our sculpture, tote bag, poster, postage cachets, and the book *Armenian Town* available for purchase.

## Message from the Chair

*By LeRoy Pandukht, Chairman*

The past few months has been a busy time for members of the William Saroyan Society. In April, the Society's annual writing contest for students, grades first through college, drew entries from not only the Central Valley, but nationally. The awards reception held at the Woodward Park Regional Library attracted an audience of winners and their proud families. This year's Saroyan Walk was very successful. Society members Dennis Elia and Leonard Kizirian led walkers through downtown Fresno pointing out Saroyan sites and sharing a lifetime of stories.

In August, members celebrated William Saroyan's August 31st birthday with students at the William Saroyan School. In addition to birthday cake, the students were entertained with a program focusing on the author's life and literary achievements. You can read more about these activities in this issue of *Saroyan's World*.

We are all aware of the economic problems experienced by nonprofit organizations at this time and the William Saroyan Society is no exception. The Society relies on financial support from the community. Your donation now to the Society will assist us to continue to carry out our mission: "to provide education and promote public interest and information about the life, times, literary works, themes and sentiments of the Pulitzer-Prize winning author and playwright, William Saroyan; to educate the public about the human values depicted in his works; to promote the heritage of the Armenian/American culture and its unique and rich experience...."

Please consider making a financial commitment to the Society by becoming a member of the Society or making a donation. Any donation you can make will be greatly appreciated.

*The William Saroyan Society is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization.*

## Thank You Donors

*Thank you to all contributors supporting the work of the Society.  
Since the Fall 2011 issue, the following have made donations supporting our work:*

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**John  
Kenneth  
Kallenberg  
1942- 2011**

John Kallenberg was chair of the William Saroyan Society from November 2005 until his death on July 4, 2012. He joined the Society's board in 2002. He enthusiastically participated in all the Society's activities. He was especially proud of his involvement with the William Saroyan Writing Contest for students, first grade through college. While John was Fresno County Librarian, the Library became a co-sponsor of the contest. He often enlisted library staff members as judges.

During his 32 years at the Fresno County Public Library, the Library's Saroyan collection grew to be recognized as one of the largest in the United States. He was responsible for the Library's purchase of the Abramson collection, which expanded the Library's holdings of Saroyan materials. Throughout his career, additional collections were acquired as they became available.

John participated in several panel discussions dealing with Saroyan. He was involved in the planning and implementation of local celebrations honoring Saroyan. He wrote a history of the Library's collection for the California Library Association.

John participated in all of the Society's activities. He provided not only the Society's leadership, but its staff. He was editing the Society's newsletter just days prior to his death.

John's leadership and commitment to the William Saroyan Society will be greatly missed.

# Saroyan's 104th Birthday Celebration

Call it a learning party, call it organized fun, but whatever wording you care to choose, it was a day of great joy to hundreds of school kids, and the William Saroyan Society. The setting for the occasion was the William Saroyan Elementary School, ready for the celebration with a museum quality window display case of rare Saroyan memorabilia and birthday banners aplenty.

The highly energized students were quickly seated in the school's auditorium to hear Society presenters Chairman Leroy Pandukht (at right), and Board Member Brenda Najimian Magarity, give an age-adjusted insight into the man and his literary works. The purpose was to awaken their curiosity and inspire them to become active readers, writers, and adventurers in the written word.

There was enough pent up energy in that room to launch any idea, martial any cause, and to sustain the image and works of William Saroyan for the ages. At the completion of the presentation, these enthusiastic students were invited outside to enjoy a traditional cake and juice tribute to Saroyan.

The gravitational pull of birthday cake resonated beyond the comprehension level of the most staid observer. Society members and school



*Photos by Chrissy Rocca, District Special Projects Coordinator for Central School District*

**Society members enthusiastically served William Saroyan Elementary School students birthday cake.**



staff went into warp speed motion to serve 630 kids their treat. William Saroyan never experienced a birthday celebration of this magnitude in his lifetime. The kids sent a message of thanks, and the Society volunteers gained an added level of appreciation of the daily duties of school teachers.

Thank you District Superintendent Mike Berg, Principal Brad Edmunds, Vice Principal Stephanie Nelson, District Director of Elementary Education Karen Garlick, District Special Projects Coordinator Christy Rocca, and Head Cook Betty Correia, for making this school experience rich and rewarding for all.



**From left: Principal Brad Edmunds; William Saroyan Society Board of Directors LeRoy Pandukht, Jo Ellen Misikian, Brenda Najimian Magarity, Leonard Kizirian, Dennis Elia; and District Director of Elementary Education for Central School District Karen Garlick.**

# Walking With William Saroyan

By Dennis Elia

This spring, a group of 28 adventurers reprised a tradition that has been carefully nurtured for many years. This tradition, the annual William Saroyan Walk, takes us back in time to an era long since passed both in a visual and cerebral sense.

My acquaintance with Bill Saroyan has its roots in our family relationship with the author. Starting out as neighborhood and grammar school friends, my father and his many colorful cousins forever captured the fancy of Bill. So, at an early age, I was okay by his book, and he was okay by mine. His celebrity never interfered.

Can one feel William Saroyan by walking the pathways he so often frequented? Probably not, but you would not be far removed from what “Bill” himself often felt. Like all of us on the Walk, Bill often would come back to town and retrace his footsteps, attempting to recapture the mythical early days of a time long since past. Yes, you could say we were in lockstep, trying to relive what we once thought we knew.

I know the above to be factual, because I would see him revisiting certain locals that were a part of his early past. A sure bet sighting of Saroyan in the 1950s would be at Paul’s Cleaners on Van Ness Street. There he was, in the flesh, holding court, his animated words spoken loudly, each sentence punctuated by hissing hot steam and the acrid smell of unregulated cleaning fluid. Listening intently were his group of cronies: Paul, Kinky, Little Ratty and other drop-in regulars. Or, if you frequented the Fresno Downtown Library in the 1960s, you might catch him walking in, always with a grand entrance, never a silent one. The library was his White House. He was the President for Life. And, if he spotted you, and liked you, he would holler out your name from 50 feet. The librarians couldn’t get enough of this elixir of spirit. They got intoxicated every time he walked in the door. That was the Bill that I knew.

So, all 28 of us, and Bill, walked along

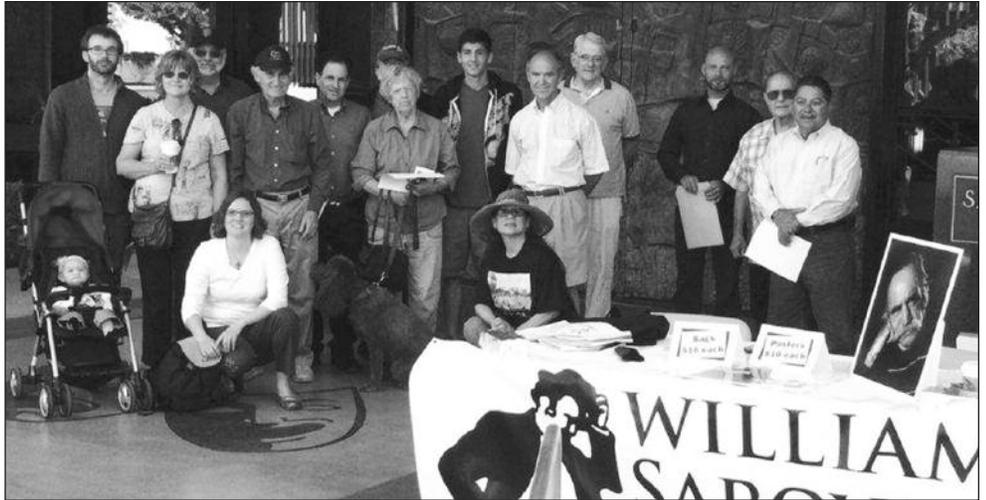


Photo by Leonard Kizirian

## Saroyan Town Walk Attendees April 28, 2012

Laura Blaisy, Dennis Elia, Nance Espinosa, Lucille Gahvejian, Pat Hunter, Analia Janzen, Chris Janzen, Robin Janzen, Rod Janzen, Leonard Kizirian, Becky Linscheid, Dan Linscheid, David Lomelli, Oran McNeill, LeRoy Pandukht, Dennis Torigian, Danny Vartanian, and Mike Vartanian.

this mythical path, each of us allowing ourselves to slip back in time and imagining life in an earlier era.

Maybe you could catch him at Andy’s Owl Club on Fulton Street, playing pinochle for high stakes, or wandering over to one of the two Armenian bakeries to drop in and shoot the breeze. The thing was, Bill never let on which bakery he liked best but kept them both guessing, romancing each bakery owner with his eloquent banter of “How great it is that you carry on this tradition just like your father.” There wasn’t a storekeeper in Fresno who didn’t fall for this favorite ploy of his. You see, this was his “go-to pitch” whenever he wanted to win over someone. Bragging rights were important to these early shopkeepers, who years later would offhandedly state, “Saroyan was here,” much like “George Washington slept here.”

Bill rotated among Fresno area one-chair barber shops to catch the latest goings-on. It might be over to Mark the Barber on Ventura and L Street, or John the Great at Broadway and Kern Street, to hear these practitioners of wisdom dispense the straight scoop. Or it might be to check out a local character of

interest for a possible story line.

On to more hallowed ground, we ventured over to the exact spot where Saroyan, as a young boy of 10 or 11, sold *The Daily Republican* newspaper. One could imagine him standing there hollering, “Paper, Mister, Paper!” Nearby stood the Postal Telegraph Company that hired Bill as a bicycle messenger boy to deliver important telegrams from back East, San Francisco and countless other places. We stopped at Bill’s birthplace on Broadway Street. It is now an empty commercial building but still a point of historical interest.

Earlier, Andy’s Owl Club was referenced because Bill’s passion for gambling was an unshakeable vice that taunted him from Paris and Monte Carlo to Golden Gate Fields, where he passionately, but invariably, picked the wrong horse. Yes, Bill was a gambler, but are we not gambling every day we wake up, hoping for the best, often settling for something less?

We then proceeded to the site of The First Armenian Presbyterian Church, the first Armenian church in California. What a sacred spot, now an empty lot. It

*continued on page 5*

## Contest Winners

*Continued from page 1*

**Third Place:** Vandana Ravikumar, *A Friend Who Has Had the Greatest Impact On My Life*. Davidson Academy, Reno, NV.

**Honorable Mention:** Delilah Ovalle, *Untitled*. Washington Academic Middle School, Sanger USD.

### Grades 10-12

**First Place:** Dalia Wolfson, *Grandma Era*. Hunter College High School, New York, NY.

**Second Place:** Colleen Motoyasu. *Georgie and Me*. Buchanan High School, Clovis USD.



*Photo by Leonard Kizirian*

**Brenda Najimian Magarity (right) giving the Saroyan Award to Taralyn Culpepper, Lemoore High School, for her story entitled "Boxes" at the Young Writers Contest Ceremony at CSUF.**

**Third Place:** Angeles Martinez, *Untitled*. Kerman High School, Kerman USD.

**Honorable Mention:** Cody Brazeal, *The Ol' Geezer*. Buchanan High School, Clovis USD.

### College

**First Place:** Yecsi Lopez, *My Superhero*. Madera Community College Center, Madera, CA.

**Second Place:** Robert L. Young, *Of Black Blots and White Paper or What I Learned Through the Presence of Others in Particular Rich*. Fresno Pacific University, Fresno, CA.

**Third Place:** Coua Lee, *A Living Legacy*. Fresno Pacific University, Fresno, CA.

## Walking With Saroyan

*Continued from page 4*

is here that Bill first sensed the power of the written word. This historically important, clapboard, octagon-shaped church possessed a musty smell, with oak flooring that creaked loudly as you walked into its cavernous sanctuary. Hey, I'm sure Bill had a similarly mystical experience, as all of his writings reflected this spirit of wonderment.

Next, we visited the hallowed ground of Emerson School. This is Saroyan Central. Bill's life, and that of many Armenian community pioneers, began with Emerson.

Oh Emerson, dear Emerson. Every Armenian past 70 has an Emerson experience etched into his or her consciousness. If you didn't go to Emerson, you were not a player, only an Armenian pretender. In the ensuing years, whenever a large gathering of Armenians took place, and your life credentials didn't include Emerson, you were considered a lightweight. It was here that he absorbed the fabric of the neighborhood – from the dreams and despairs of young boys and girls to the discipline and dirge of schoolwork.

And yes, Bill and his male peers were not used to taking orders from anyone but their fathers and mothers. In concert

with other young Armenian boys, Bill would often challenge his teachers and even the principal. To hear the stories, it was like a reform school without bars.

Immigrant parents went to night classes at Emerson to become citizens, studying and learning a rigid curriculum of civic responsibility and government. To these early immigrants, Graduation Day was a defining moment, a landmark event to be celebrated with great joy and reflected upon with quiet pride in later years.

We next stopped by the site of the Arax Market, now deserted. This small grocery store, diagonal to Emerson School, was an integral part of the community. It is here that Bill liked to banter with big Kersam, the larger-than-life, no-nonsense storekeeper straight out of Central Casting. He had enormous features, a shock of unruly hair, and darting, laser-piercing eyes set off by the bushiest eyebrows in history. Yes, he was downright frightening to little kids. If you were caught acting up, like transferring rice into his open flour bins, Kersam would pick you up, admonish you and then incarcerate you in these 3-foot-high empty grain bins until your mother finished shopping. It was not uncommon to see three kids "locked up" for minor infractions. Well, Kersam was Bill's type of guy, a veritable treasure trove of story material.

My insight into William Saroyan was that he was a very guarded person. He knew that to write, he must always be looking in, observing, not getting too close to his subjects. For this reason, befriending Bill Saroyan took place on his terms, not yours. If you were chosen, how grand it was. For to hear him speak was to hear a combination of words and phrasing with such a magical quality that your gut would ache for more as you stood in wonderment at his mastery of the spoken word. Bill Saroyan was the ultimate communicator, and the William Saroyan Walk brings you close to his roots and his core values. Don't miss the next opportunity to join the William Saroyan Walk and hear some exciting tales about Bill, Kersam, Kinky, John the Great and Little Ratty. The adventure is priceless.

Visit the William Saroyan Society online at [www.williamsaroyansociety.org](http://www.williamsaroyansociety.org)

Here you will find insightful stories authored by close personal friends, candid pictures of him, photos of many of the settings of his stories, and a calendar of activities to promote interest in the author.

*Dennis Elia, the author of this essay, is on the Board of Directors of the William Saroyan Society, and may be contacted at [denelia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:denelia@sbcglobal.net).*

# Two Fresno Lads in Paris

By Edward Hagopian

In the spring of 1960 a classified ad appeared in the Paris edition of the *New York Herald Tribune* that read, "Armenian American writer offers three original manuscripts for a six months lease for an apartment overlooking the Seine. Call William Saroyan at Hotel La Perouse."

Seeing the ad I call the hotel and asked for Mr. William Saroyan. When he answered I said, "This is Ed Hagopian. Welcome to Paris." He replied, "Are you French?" I laughed and said, "I was an American from Fresno." There was a pause, then a gruff sound of suspicion in his voice. "Oh yeah? Where, what part of Fresno are you from?"

I said, "I lived at Balch Avenue and South 11th Street, just off of Huntington Boulevard."

Suddenly his voice changed to one of joyful relief. "Well, I'll be damned. We lived in the same neighborhood; I lived just five to six blocks away on El Monte Way. Tell me, Ed Hagopian, what the hell are doing in Paris? Are you a tourist?"

"No, I live here. Been here since February, 1951. Came to Paris for two reasons, to study at the Sorbonne under the G. I. Bill and to escape from the hysteria of McCarthyism that was sweeping like a plague across the country."

"Those were pretty good reasons for leaving," he said. "So where do you live in Paris?"

"Would you believe it? I'm about five minutes away, on the other side of Arc de Triumph," I said.

"Well, I'll be damned. It must be fate. Two hys from Fresno living in the same neighborhood," he said roaring with laughter. "Do you know what the odds are? They're astronomical! It's got to be fate. What else could it be? Kismet? Luck? Predestination? Believe me, I could use some luck right now. Tell you what Ed Hagopian, we've got to meet. I'm working right now. Why don't you come by the hotel around four o'clock and we'll go down the Champs and have a drink and get acquainted, if that's all

right with you?"

"I'll be at the hotel at four, Mr. Saroyan."

"Forget the mister, just call me Bill," he said and hung up.

Promptly at four I reported to the desk and said I had an appointment with Mr. Saroyan. The clerk called then nodded toward the ancient elevator and said top floor. "No room number?" I asked.

"*Non, monsieur, pas de numero.*"

I shrugged and pressed the top button and slowly rose to the fifth floor. Penthouse, I thought, or the attic or ateler? I pressed the doorbell. "Door's open. Come on in, Ed Hagopian," boomed the voice behind the huge oak door.

I entered. The room was not a penthouse nor the dismal garret I expected, but a huge loft like studio for an artist, but no easel or paintings, just a raised platform that held a chair and a small table, on which sat his portable typewriter. "I'll be with you in just a minute, Ed Hagopian," he said, straightening out sheets of paper on the makeshift desk. "No hurry, Bill. Take your time," I said, wondering why he kept repeating my name. Later I learned why he addressed people the way he did. Mental imprint, Ed Hagopian!

Repeat. Repeat to remember. He grabbed his jacket and hat. People of that era (pre JFK) still wore hats. "O.K. Ed Hagopian let's go."

As we left the hotel and turned toward the Champs-Elysees, he peppered me with questions. "Was I married?"

"Yes."

"Was she Armenian or an odar?"

"Genevieve Robinson/Anglo-Scottish stock, now Armenian by marriage."

"How wonderful. Got any kids?"

"One. Four-year-old daughter, named Raffi."

"But that's a boys name, a pen name, really."

"I know."

"You named her after the famous 19th century writer?" "No, my wife did."

"Did she know his real name was Hagop Hagopian?"

"Yes, she knew. Since our daughter

was a Leap Year Baby she was to be given a special name... something exotic so she chose Raffi. Also because it tied in with the family name."

"You've got a treasured family, an intelligent and understanding wife and a lovely daughter. *Pakt avor ess!*" (You're really lucky).

"I only wish I had..." his voice trailed off in twinge of envy.

Later in our friendship I understood that he marital problems with his wife, Carol.

He quickened our pace and soon we reached the famous sidewalk café and restaurant known as Fouquets, which most Americans and Anglo-Saxons called it by a vulgar name.

We spent many an afternoon at different sidewalk cafés enjoying the warm afternoon sun and watching the endless parade of humans beings of all shapes, sizes, ages and colors, while Bill kept peppering me with more questions about my life, my family, my hopes and dreams, about the Armenian community in Paris, Lyons, Marseille, Nice and Cannes. Thus was the beginning of a long, wild, wacky, wonderful and sometimes rocky friendship.

One afternoon in early May, we were sitting at Fouquets, our favorite café when out of the blue Bill said, "Ed, old boy, I've made up my mind. I'm getting out of Paris, leaving."

"Oh?" I said, completing surprised. "What brought this on?"

"I can't afford living in Paris. My hotel bill costs a small fortune. See that building across the street? It's killing me."

It wasn't the building, but the second floor, the Aviation Club, an exclusive gambling club for gentlemen only.

Special members included all men of status, celebrities, sheiks, crown princes, royalty, diplomats and all manner of high rollers who enjoy gourmet food, chateau wines from the most notable vineyards of France, plus champagne and caviar all on the house, (tips not included). No rifferaff allowed. Games: Baccarat & Chemin de Fer. Betting limit: A million old francs large ivory plaques worth

*continued on page 7*

## Two Lads

Continued from page 6

about \$2,000. Smallest bet \$5. No limit bets, approved only by special permission of management or head honcho of the house, Monsieur Paretti. The night before, Bill confessed, he had lost just over six grand.

“So where are you going?” I asked.

“Lisbon, Portugal. Cost of living there is the cheapest in Europe. I’ll buy me a small apartment and settle down and do some serious writing.”

“And who do you know in Lisbon?”

“I know the richest man in the world, Calouste Gulbenkian, Mr. Five Per Cent... Armenian billionaire.”

“How well do you know Mr. Five Per Cent?”

“We had lunch together many times at the Avis Hotel, back in May, 1949.”

“But this is May, 1960,” I said. “Mr. Gulbenkian passed way in 1955. How many other Armenians do you know in Lisbon?”

“Only Roberto, his nephew,” he said lamely.

“There are nearly 60,000 Hyes in and around Paris, why don’t you buy an apartment here in Paris?”

“Too expensive,” he said.

“Nonsense. Seek and yea shall find. Have you looked?”

“Nope. And I don’t really trust real estate agents.”

“You don’t need agents. I’ll find an apartment for you by simply buying a newspaper. Sit right here and I’ll get a paper at that kiosk,” I said. I returned with a copy of *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* and searched through the classified ads while Bill looked on, pleased that some one took charge. I scanned the ads when a small three-line ad caught my eye. Rue Taitbout! I knew the area well having lived in a small hotel around the corner on Rue St. Georges. I read the ad, “Four rooms, with terrace, fresh paint, fifth floor, reasonable price. Must see.” I told Bill that the flat was in the Opera area, made up mostly of Jews, Greeks and Armenians who fashioned high quality jewelry in gold and platinum. Cut, polished and set diamonds, emeralds and rubies for Harry Winston, Cartiers and

## Humor in the Mediterranean

By Ron Eskender

William was noted for being a notorious gambler throughout his life. One evening in Monte Carlo, Willie and four of his gambling friends tried their luck at the casino and low and behold William hit it big time winning thousands from a machine. Willie stopped playing and gave each one of his pals two thousand dollars with a glorious smile on his face. His thankful companions went off in different directions trying their own luck nearby. William didn’t quit but went to a table and lost all of his recent winnings plus the rest of his own money. In desperation William went back to his companions and stated frantically, “Fellas, fellas, how about giving me back some of the winnings I gave you!”

Answer – They happily did.

Tiffany’s Jewelry stores. There were several Armenian restaurants, gourmet grocery stores, merchants, tailors, and other tradesmen in the *quartier*. This fascinated Bill.

We took a taxi to 74 rue Taitbout and entered the cobblestone entrance way and looked around for an elevator. All we found was a notice “Apartment for sale 6eme etage” attached to one of the mail boxes.

“No, elevator, Bill, it’s a six floor walk up. Do you want to hike six flights?”

“Well, we’re here. Might as well make the climb,” he said. “We can use the exercise.”

We started our climb up a wide, well-worn circular stairway, slowly puffing toward seventh heaven. We stopped on the third floor landing to catch our breath.

“Do you want to continue?” I asked.

“Why not? The exercise is good for ticker.”

“Well, I’m game, if you are.”

“I’m game. Let’s go.”

When we reached the top floor it took several long minutes before our breathing normalized.

“I counted 107 steps up,” I said.

“You counted each step up?”

“Well, it’ll be easier going down. Sliding down the banister would be great fun, wouldn’t it?” he chuckled. “Ring the bell.”

“I hope some one’s at home so we didn’t climb 107 steps for nothing.”

The door opened. We were greeted by two smiling middle-aged gentlemen. They were very pleased to see us, making small talk while showing us the newly decorated apartment. It consisted of an entrance way, two very large rooms with light facing north looking over a long terrace, a Pullman-size kitchen, a bathroom with tub and shower and a smaller bedroom facing the inner court yard. I could see that Bill was taken by the place, especially by the terrace. He could plant some herbs, maybe a small garden of sorts. Except for the climb, it was great find and in an Armenian area. “Ask them the price,” he said.

I asked. “Eleven million old francs,” I translated to Bill. “That’s about twenty-two grand.”

“It’s a real bargain. I’ll take it.”

“Hold your horses,” I replied. “That’s what they’re asking. Let’s see if they will come down in price.” Fortunately, neither man understood English, but they were an observant pair. They huddled in the rear bedroom, muttering to themselves, finally agreeing to ten million francs and not a centime less.

“They’re down to ten million, Bill. I don’t think they’ll come any more.”

“That’s great. Tell them I’ll buy it for that price.”

“Are you sure you really want to buy this flat? Remember the 107 steps. All the way up.”

“I said, I could use the exercise. Let’s get the ball rolling. Will they take my personal check for a thousand dollars as a deposit? Tell them my lawyers at Coudert Freres, will handle the details.”

They accepted Bill’s check.

“And tell them I want a receipt!”

Thus Bill didn’t have to move to Lisbon.

# William Saroyan Society

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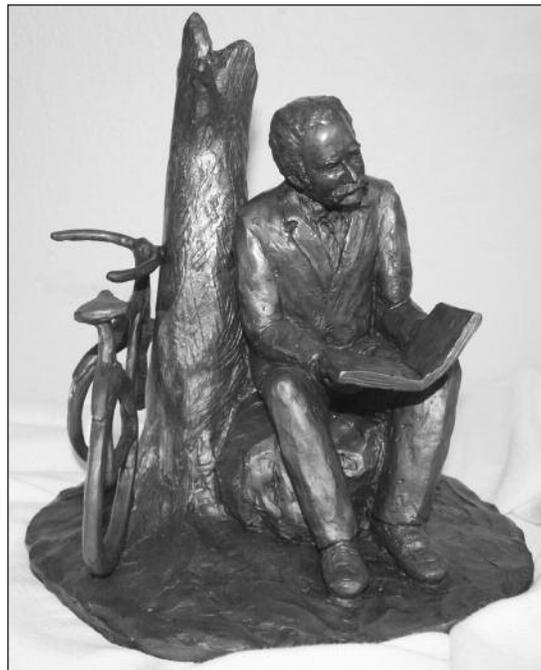
### UNIQUELY SAROYAN! "Under the Apple Tree"

This limited edition of 50 bronzed sculptures is created by Arminee Shishmanian. Each piece is numbered and signed, Size: 11" x 11".

First casting \$1,000 each



The Society has a limited number of two cachets from the first day issue of the William Saroyan stamps. The one with the picture of young Bill is \$20 and the one with the picture by Paul Kalinian is \$15.



### Saroyan Tote Bag

Graphic design includes a quotation from the Preface to *Time of Your Life*: "*In the time of your life, live — so that in that wondrous time you shall not add to the misery and sorrow of the world, but shall smile to the infinite variety and mystery of it.*" and an illustration by Al Hirschfeld.

Size: 15" x 17-1/2" and 5" gusset  
Price: \$10, plus shipping of \$3

To purchase contact the Society's voice mail at 559-221-1441 or online at: [www.williamsaroyansociety.org](http://www.williamsaroyansociety.org).