

# Campaign To



# Restore the Statue

# Background

- The \$100,000 sculpture was commissioned by the American-Armenian Bicentennial Commemoration Committee with additional backing by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Knights of Vartan.
- The Committee contracted 65 Year Old Armenian-born sculptor Khoren Der Harootian to create the memorial.
- Der Harootian was born in 1909 in the village of Ashodavan in Turkish Armenia.
- At the age of 6 years old, he saw the Turks torture and kill many of his family, including his father, who was the village priest.
- Der Harootian witnessed many other atrocities and the destruction of Armenian property before he and his wife eventually made their way to the United States.
- Der Harootian received his art education at the Worcester (Massachusetts) Museum School.



# Meher

- Meher is one of four generations of Christian Armenian heroes, beginning with Sanassar, Meher's father, and continuing with his son, David of Sasoun, and his grandson, known as "Young Meher."
- All four heroes had to deal with invasions of Armenia by neighboring peoples.
- In Meher's case it was an invasion by Arabs, which he successfully resisted.



# Public Monument

- This public monument in Philadelphia about the Armenian Genocide is 22 foot high and located next to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
- It is under the custody of the Fairmount Park Commission.
- Meher, in a middle ages battle uniform, facing south, with proper left leg forward and bent, proper right leg extended behind. Figure appears to be in process of kneeling.
- Executed in 1975 in bronze and dedicated on April 24, 1976, the sculpture Meher symbolizes the "invincible faith of the Armenian people."



# The Panels

- Front - Keeping Watch Over the Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of Armenia.





# The Panels

- Left - Day of Infamy - April 24, 1915 - The Genocide and martyrdom of the Armenian Nation.









# The Panels

- Right - St. Vartan at the Battle of Avarayr (451 A.D.) History's first defense of the Christian Faith.





# The Panels

- Rear - Mid the ashes of martyrs, mother and Child Look to freedom for Armenia and all nations.







# Two Bronze Plaques

- Located in front of the monument (found on the ground) which are attached to a large, flat rock reads:

*On this day, April 24, 1976,  
Commemorating the 61st Anniversary  
Of the Martyrdom of the Armenian Nation  
And celebrating the bicentennial Year  
Of American Independence,  
We Americans of Armenian Heritage  
In Eternal Gratitude to God  
Dedicate this Monument  
To our adopted land of Freedom,  
The United State of America*





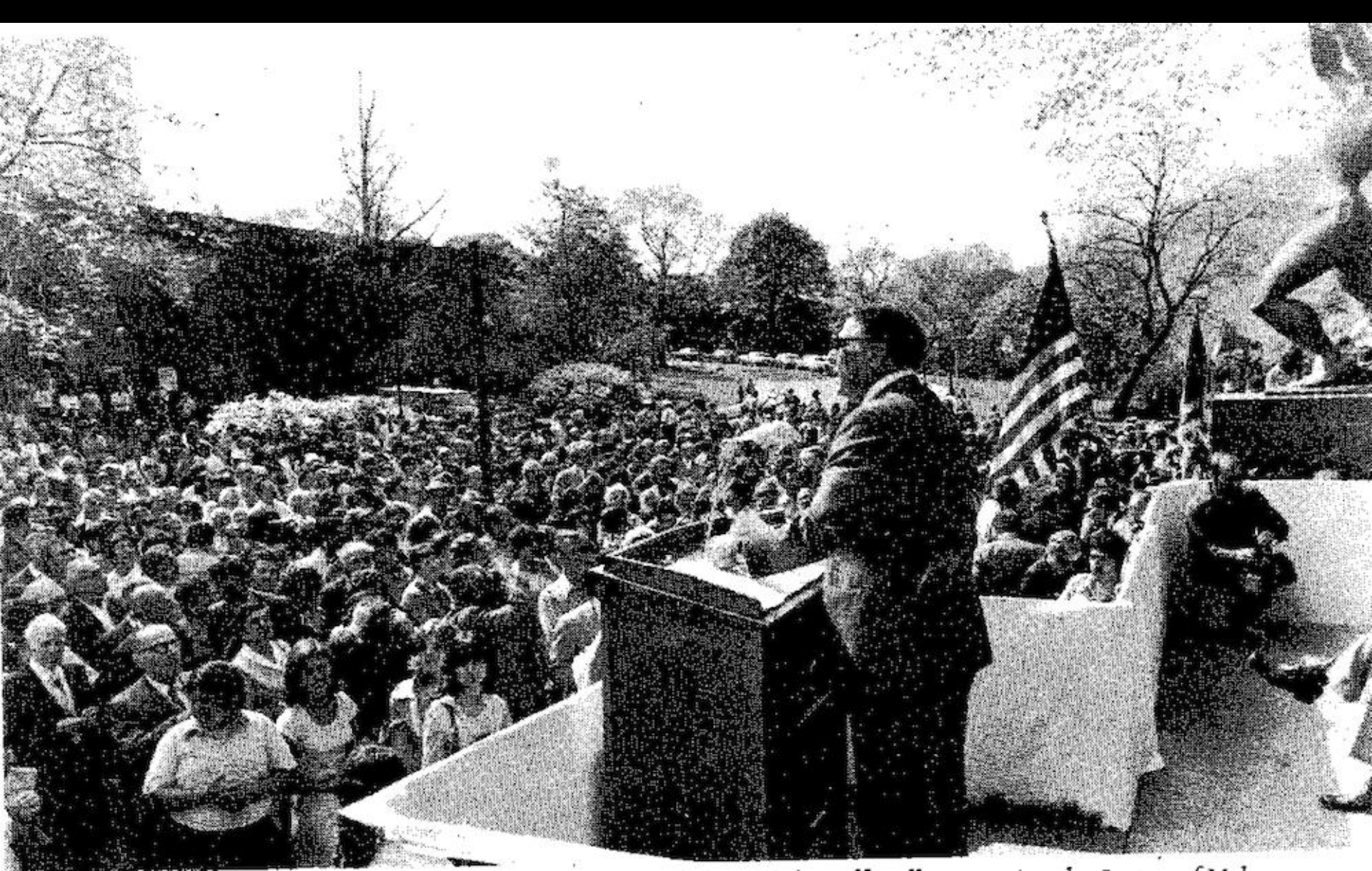


# April 24, 1976

- An estimated 2,000 people were on hand at the unveiling of the Statue. Many journeyed from New York, Boston, Washington, Detroit and California to witness this auspicious occasion.
- The unveiling was done by Mr. Haik Kavookjian of New York City, who was 101 years old at the time.
- Accepting the gift of the Armenian-American community to the United States on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of this country was then Mayor Frank L. Rizzo.
- Also present were famous notables: movie director, Rouben Mamoulian; philanthropist, Stephen P. Mugar of Boston; composer, Richard Yardumian; and actors, Mike Connors and David Hedison.







# Restoration

- The sculpture require inspection to assure continuing structural stability and satisfactory appearance
- A preliminary look at the Meher sculpture with reliefs have a great deal of patina loss and visible areas of corrosion forming, along with deterioration of the underlying concrete of the base, which has also caused the panels to shift
- The sculpture is very dry with some wax still clinging to the underside of the elements.
- The base is made of red granite and has caulk filling the spaces between the panels, this caulk has failed and needs to be replaced
- The work would be performed using a rented high reach and completed between 2 to 3 days
- The ***restoration will cost \$25,000*** and the Knights and Daughters of Vartan are requesting the kind support of our beloved community members to help fulfill our obligations of properly maintaining this quintessential icon

