

AABA NEWS



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PLEASE CONSIDER BEING A MEMBER/SUPPORTER OF AABA

A mailing regarding AABA Membership will be sent to you soon. In it we outline the many programs and projects of AABA. We hope that you will respond positively and promptly. For any information or questions, please contact the AABA office at 617.323.2722. We cannot do it without you!



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Samy Attaya

Samuel Herbert Attaya or Samy H. Attaya was born Salim Ataia on either 6 January 1897 or 22 February 1897 in Zahle, Greater Syria (now Lebanon) to Solomon Ataia and Rosa Maloof. He was the eldest of seven children. Solomon immigrated to the United States around 1900, but Rose and Salim arrived on 2 November 1908. The family initially lived in the heart Boston's Syriantown at 23 Hudson Street along the Hudson-Tyler-Harris corridor. In Boston, Salim went by Samy or the more anglicized Samuel and he worked for a publisher in 1917. The family packed up and moved from Boston to Bath, Maine by 1920 because war related industry help Solomon secure work in an iron foundry and Sam worked in the shipyard.

In February 1920, Boston businessman Elias M. Hajjar hosted a party celebrating his fifteen-year-old son's escaping the ravages of war and starvation in Syria over the previous five years with the assistance of the Red Cross and captain in the British Army. This event marked one of Samy's first paid music gigs as he sang and played the oud or as the press called it, a "Syrian mandolin." In June 1920, Sam returned to Boston where he married Ida Aboud, who worked as a seamstress and dressmaker. Sam, again found work in publishing and printing and worked in this industry for the remainder of his life. He along with a Miss McCormick recorded ten songs on Maloof Phonograph records including in February 1923 including "Charlotte Pt 1 & 2," "Ya Boo Eeyoon II Dublana Pt 1 & 2," "La Paloma 1 & 2," and "Kanter Fee Wachin Jameelin Pt 1 & 2." Perhaps in anticipation of generating revenue from the Maloof recordings, Attaya bought the property in Boston worth \$6300. We have not determined whether Sam's mother, Rose Maloof Attaya, was related to label-owner Alexander Maloof.

Things got much busier in the Attaya household as Ida gave birth to three children between 1922 and 1928. First, in June 1922, she had Herbert. Two years later in May, Anthony joined the family. Finally, in September 1928, Gerald was born. With her hands completely full caring for three children, Ida became a full-time stay-at-home mother. Sam continued to work in publishing full time but sang on occasion for events in the Syrian/Lebanese community.

Sam collaborated with up-and-coming singer, Najeeba Morad, to direct the chorus in a community pageant that included a combination dancing, "choral singing, instrumental music, and pantomime" production of biblically-inspired "Pageant of Syria and Lebanon" in September 1930. Some 12,000 people reportedly attended Boston's tercentenary celebration.

One of Boston's most active, widely-known, and continuously running women's clubs is its chapter of the Lebanese Syrian Ladies' Aid Society. Founded in 1917, the Society celebrated the opening of a new home, and Sam Attaya along with Elias Shamon, Emily Harfoush, and John Joseph performed as the program's entertainment. In August and October, Syrian and Lebanese members of the Catholic Charitable Bureau

Volume 29 August 2021

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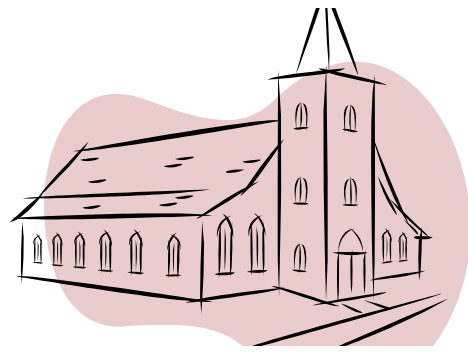
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CONTACT INFORMATION

18 Cheriton Road
West Roxbury, MA 02132
617-323-2722
E-Mail : daryag@aabausa.org



CHURCH COMMUNITY NEWS

[St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church](#)

[Our Lady of the Cedars of Lebanon Church](#)

[St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church - Boston](#)

[Our Lady of the Annunciation Cathedral](#)

[St. Matthew's Syriac Orthodox Church](#)

[St. George Orthodox Church—Norwood](#)

DUE TO COVID AND EVER CHANGING GUIDELINES, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR INDIVIDUAL CHURCH FOR THEIR UPDATES

Continued from page 1- Samy Attaya

staged two separate productions: one about life in the Middle East from the beginning of time to the coming of Christ and another "depicting the progress of the Syrian Lebanese People in the United States." Sam Attaya served on the executive committee for the production. In March 1931 and May 1932, he performed with a small ensemble and solo for the receptions at the Church of Our Lady of Annunciation and the Lebanese Syrian Ladies Society. When the Syrian American Club of Boston hosted its 20th Anniversary festivities in April 1933 Attaya appeared on the same program as fellow Maloof recording artist Midhat Serbagi, future Morad Records singer Najeeba Morad, and others including Mityr Abdelahad, Nicholas Najjai, Louis Morad, and Earl Chamberlain. Some 2,000 people showed up for this event. Many of the same performers including Attaya and Najeeba Morad plus Anton Abdelahad, Harry Hasakian, and Garvis Baskarian provided entertainment for an equally large and lively crowd the following year. The collaborative performances between Arab Americans and Armenian American musicians represent a practice, that music historian and Canary Records re-issue producer Ian Nagoski reminds us harken back to the first Ottoman diaspora recordings in the United States issued in the early 1910s not long after Attaya arrived.

Sam Attaya eventually became a regular fan favorite at Boston's Syrian American Club annual festivals and concerts between 1933 and 1938. According to some reports, there were approximately twenty-five local Syrian or Lebanese clubs and organizations in Boston and over one hundred in Massachusetts in 1934. Soloists Najeeba Morad, Anthony Abdelahad, and Jobe Negeim appeared with Sam Attaya on the list of singers who performed that year. The following year, 1935, violinist Philip Solomon joined Morad and Attaya and Solomon appeared with Attaya, too, in 1938.

By 1937, Attaya also played a role on the business and planning side of events in Boston. He served as board member of Boston's Syrian American Club and a regional officer for the Syrian and Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States as it planned its eighth annual convention in 1939.

Attaya's charitable work continued into the 1940s and 1950s with a number of local Syrian American clubs and Our Lady of the Annunciation Church, he also played smaller parties and sahras, but not larger concerts and festivals anymore. For instance, Attaya joined a number of dignitaries at the head table for the banquet that accompanied the mortgage burning ceremony for Our Lady of the Annunciation Church in 1945. He sang and played the oud along with derbekee player Joe Saliba at a small benefit for Douma, Lebanon in 1955. Illness kept Attaya and Russell Bunai from playing at the Father Fairneny Memorial Fund event in October 1956.

Samuel H. Attaya died 2 November 1965. Appropriately, Our Lady of the Annunciation Church held his funeral and memorial services. Ida Aboud Attaya lived until 1989.

IN MEMORIAM

Beginning with this issue, we will be adding a new section to list those of our AABA community who have passed away. If you would like to have a family member listed, simply call the AABA office at 617.323.2722 or email the name of your departed to: daryag@aabausaorg

May God Rest Their Souls and May Their Memory Be Eternal

2020

Leila Bunai

Albert David

David Epperson

Yasmine Kiami

Laurencia Milla

Priscilla Sada



2021

Rosemarie Nashawaty

Leslie Warnsby

Emily Msaddi

Yasmine Kiami

Samira Arour

Louie Shagoury

Georgianna Rhibany

Laurice "Morocco" Teebagy

ANNUAL AABA BOARD DINNER MEETING June 15, 2021



Swearing in of New Board of Directors Members 2021-2023



Swearing in of New Officers of AABA Board of Directors 2021-2023



Outgoing AABA President Louis M. Kfoury III



New AABA President Linda Ayoub