



Events marking Centenary of the Society of Gallipoli are held in Turkey



On November 20, 2021, Rev. Georgy Sergeev, who is responsible for taking pastoral care of the Moscow Patriarchate's faithful in Turkey, celebrated a requiem service at the Church of Ss Constantine and Helen Equal-to-the-Apostles located in the territory of the summer residence of the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul. It was a commemorative event marking the centenary of the Society of the Russians of Gallipoli founded by General Wrangel.

Attending the service were Melisa Murat representing the Foundation of St. Andrew the First-Called, and compatriots living on the coast of the Bosphorus.

On November 22, Rev. Georgy Sergeev celebrated requiem service in Gallipoli (modern Gelibolu).

Attending the commemorative events were official representatives of the RF Consulate General in Istanbul; Mayor of Gallipoli Mustafa Özacar; General Secretary of the Turkish-Russian Public Forum Ender Arat; Rector of the University of Çanakkale Prof. Dr. Sedat Murat; representative of the Russian House in Ankara Roman Penkin; representative of the House of Turkish-Russian Friendship in Ankara

Erol Uğurlu; representative of St. Andrew's Foundation Melisa Murat; Prof. Aidyn Ibragimov; Prof. Vedat Çalişkan; Governor of Gelibolu district Bekir Abaci; Chairman of the Federation of Crimean Tatars Cultural Societies Ünver Sel; Mr. Hüseyin Çakmak; members of the TURUSIA Research Centre; Çanakkale Provincial Director of Culture and Tourism Murat Yılmaz; and Russian compatriots residing in Gallipoli.

Participants in the commemorative event laid a wreath at the memorial to the Russian soldiers. Later in the day, a photo exhibition was opened at the Ataturk Cultural Centre in Gelibolu to mark the Society of Gallipoli's centenary.

In 1920, almost 150 thousand Russians left their homeland on 126 ships. Among them, there were elderly people, women and children, but for the most part, there were military personnel of various ranks from the Russian Army under the command of General Pyotr N. Wrangel. The largest in number 1st Army Corps took up quarters on the Gallipoli Peninsula, in the town of Gallipoli (modern Gelibolu). The Army found itself in a very difficult situation, finding accommodation in dilapidated barracks or even in tents that were to shelter people in winter. Mass disease broke out. For lack of medication, about 250 died in December-January. As of the early February 1921, the strength of the Army was 48,419 men, half of them officers. As a result of the interminable strained negotiations with the governments of the Balkan countries on the Army's location there, in the late autumn 1921, due agreements were finally reached; and only after that the gradual relocation of the Army started. Thus the over-a-year-long 'Gallipoli Stand' came to an end. The last 'Gallipolians' left Turkey in May 1923.

Lieutenant-General Baron Wrangel established the Society of the Russians of Gallipoli on November 22, 1921, exactly a year after the arrival of the first regiments of the Russian Army in Gallipoli.

The Union of the Descendants of the Russians of Gallipoli was founded in Paris in 2008. Its primary objective is the memorialization of the glorious forebearers. The Union has extended its activity to Russia.

In May 2008, the Foundation of St. Andrew the First-Called set about the restoration of the memorial to 342 Russians who died in 1921 while in Gallipoli. A Turkish company that promised to construct the monument according to the original drawings in a short time was employed to do the job. On January 10, 2008, a solemn ceremony was held in Gelibolu to lay a capsule with a message to future generations in the foundation of the future monument. In May the same year, Vladimir Yakunin and Alexander Sokolov, the co-chairmen of the Board of Trustees of the programme, together with Governor Orhan Kirli of Çanakkale Province unveiled the reconstructed monument.

Official website of the Moscow Patriarchate/
DECR Communication Service

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