



## **Land and Culture Organisation 2011 Project – Fact Sheet**

### **The Church of Surp Astvatsatsin in the Village of Yeghvard in Armenia:**

The village is located in the Syunik region of Armenia, 14 km South East from the city of Kapan. Most probably it is similar to the village of Aghahord in Myus Bagh or Qashuniq Gavar mentioned in the list of settlements by the historian Stepanos Orbelyan.

Throughout its history Yeghvard was subject to a number of invasions including the 8th Century Arabs' invasion, the 11<sup>th</sup> Century Seldjoukides' invasion and the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Mongols' invasion. These resulted in the destruction of the village on a number of occasions.

This three-nave church is in the centre of the village; on the front stone above its southern entrance, the date of its construction is carved "1700". It was built with local multi-coloured, roughly-worked limestone and sandstone and joined by lime mortar. There are medieval Khatchkars and grave stones inserted in the walls.

A number of gravestones are located in the yard on the eastern and southern sides of the church, while 30 metres south is the grave of one of the most devoted and bravest comrade-in-arms of David Bek's army general Toros Ishkhan, who fought for the liberation of Syunik. Finally, on the Western part of the southern square of the Church, a monument to the martyrs of the World War II from Yeghvard has been built.

The first campaign started in 2007, where the volunteers, led by specialist architect in historical monuments, Levon Vassilian, undertook the initial archaeological searches and excavations necessary to the planning of the Church renovation. Despite the state of the Church, LCO initiated and organised a number of baptisms with the assistance of the priests coming from Kapan, the main city of the Syunik region.



Since 2007, LCO has completed the most urgent works such as the reconstruction of the windows and the roof of the Church. In 2010, LCO and its volunteers completed the consolidation of the walls, the pillars and the vault of the Church. LCO will also begin work on the interior of the church, including the stage for the choir and the altar.









### What are the dates of the 2011 campaigns?

- 18 July 2011 to 12 August 2011
- 1 August 2011 to 21 August 2011
- 1 August 2011 to 28 August 2011

### What kind of work will be involved?

This year's programme involves completing the interior of the church, the removal of the memorial monument, re-locating and protecting the cemetery which includes the tomb of Thoros Ishkhan, restoring the garden and building a small wall/gate around the church area (3000sqm) to prevent the animals from damaging the garden and cemetery.

LCO anticipates completing the works and the programme of Yervart this summer. It may therefore be the last opportunity for volunteers to participate to this exciting programme.

### Is there anything else I should know?

The availabilities for this programme are limited to 12 volunteers only, so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Please contact the LCO team for further info on accommodation, flights and campaign fees. Please also visit our website: [www.landandculture.co.uk](http://www.landandculture.co.uk)

### Where is Yeghvard?



For any other general information please see the Volunteers' Welcome Pack

