

TWO AZERBAIJANI CARPETS RETURN HOME



Grover Schiltz (1931 - 2012) is a famous collector, a devoted fan of the culture and arts of the East and a member of the Chicago Oriental Rug and Textile Society.

The staff of Irs-Heritage magazine took part in a highly symbolic event - the handover of two historical Azerbaijani carpets from the collection of US citizen Grover Schiltz to the Latif Karimov State Museum of the Azerbaijani Carpet and Applied Arts. Grover Schiltz (1931-2012), a professional musician who played the oboe in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was also a well-known collector and a devoted fan of the art and culture of the East. Carpets from his collection were handed over by his wife Mrs. Beverly Schiltz.

One of the donated carpets - «The Carpet with Dragons» (Azerbaijani - Əjdahalı xalça) (18th century) belonging to the Karabakh carpet school - took its worthy place among the «dragon» carpets of the 19th-20th centuries, supplementing the historical-chronological sequence of this group of carpets kept at the museum. Dragon motifs feature prominently in the art and mythology of Azerbaijan. The director of the Carpet Museum and Doctor of Arts Roya Tagiyeva noted at the opening of the ceremony to hand over the carpets that «70 % of Azerbaijani carpets are



Carpet with dragons (18th century), the Karabakh carpet school.

*Salyan-Hila Carpet (19th century),
Shirvan carpet school.*



*The handover of a letter of thanks to
Mrs. Beverly Schiltz*



rich in these motives. The development of the main forms of the dragon carpet falls to the 16th-17th centuries. The stylized image of the dragon, which is the main element of the carpet, is a testament to the cultural dialogue that took place on the Great Silk Road. Later Azerbaijani dragon carpets ended up in Italy, Venice, where they also began to depict dragons. They can be found in frescoes by Domenico Morone and Venetian fabrics. That is to say the Chinese motif, the image of the dragon, was reflected in the culture and art of different nations, each of which brought something different into this subject.»

The second donated carpet belongs to the Salyan-Hila type of the Shirvan carpet schools and was woven in the 19th century.

Mrs. Beverly Schiltz said: «I feel satisfaction from the fact that I am in Azerbaijan and have the opportunity to hand over ancient carpets from the collection of my husband to your country as a gift. My husband bought these carpets in Azerbaijan in 1960.»

In connection with the special symbolism of the action, the management of the museum, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Azerbaijan Republic, invited more than 15 distinguished scientists and carpet experts from around the world. They not only took part in the ceremony to hand over the above carpets, but also visited carpet museums in Baku and Nakhchivan and ancient craft shops in Lahij, Sheki and Shamakhi as part of the International Carpet Tour.

It must be noted that the President of the Azerbaijan Republic Ilham Aliyev has issued the decree «On the preservation and development of the art of carpet weaving in Azerbaijan», in which special attention is paid to the conduct of propaganda work in foreign countries with the aim of returning historical carpets to the country. ❖