

# “It’s Not A Program, It’s A Yeshiva” –

## Reflections On The Agra D’Pirka Melave Malka In Monsey

By M. Lowinger

Last week, members of Agra D’Pirka in Monsey and their wives attended a gala Melave Malka that was dedicated in memory to one of their own. The event, which was held in FountainView, paid tribute to Rabbi Sholom Hamada, O’H, an active participant of the program since its inception in Monsey. It turned out to be an evening filled with fond memories of R’Sholom , as well as an opportunity for members to develop friendships and for their wives to become acquainted.

Agra D’Pirka is an organized kollel program geared towards local professionals, business owners, college students, retirees, or anyone who wishes to increase his morning limud haTorah. The program is currently thriving in the communities of Boro Park, Flatbush, Queens, Lakewood, Miami, Williamsburg, Monsey, and Baltimore. It’s held on Monday through Thursday mornings with

Motzei Shabbos event, and most remained for the entire program. “You could have heard a pin drop throughout the evening,” says R’Rafi Klein of FountainView. And yet, when it ended, no one was in a hurry to rush home. Instead, people lingered and schmoozed, enjoying the company and the relaxed and pleasant atmosphere.

It was an elegant event, to be sure. Or, as Rafi Klein says, “It was mamish a five star seudah, very high end. Even the dessert was exquisite.”

But those who attended didn’t come for the cheesecake. They were there to pay tribute to their chaver Reb Sholom, who attended virtually every single shiur as long as he could. “He left a legacy for all of us to learn from,” said Rabbi Shlomo Besser, who offered divrei zikaron. “He had a gevaldike midah. He wasn’t afraid to reinvent himself and add a new dimension to his life. It

should be a mussar to all of us. When a dovor tov comes our way, let’s not hesitate to be a part of it. “

Members of Agra D’Pirka, he noted, are continuing his legacy. “You are also a part of it,” he said. “Ashrei shezachisem l’kach.”

R’Ezra Klein, said that “Rav Sholom embodied the grace and greatness of yesteryear. He was among

the she’aris hapla’toh that survived the horrors.”

To celebrate the life of R’Sholom Hamada, R’ Ezra suggested that members of Agra D’Pirka take upon themselves one simple



Participants at the Monsey Agra D’Pirka Melave Malka

an outstanding roster of maggidei shiur at each location. Agra D’Pirka recently started its first evening program for the Monsey community at Northern Metropolitan.

Over a hundred people attended last week’s