

IC Newsletter SUMMER 2018

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Opening Fall 2018

For comments or suggestions, email us at rhaddad@ic.edu.lb

Contents



FEATURES

The Adventures of Alexander MacLachlan: Smyrna (Part XVIII)4
 The British Officers’ Sports Challenge Gift7
 The New Trend8
 The Fifth Founders’ Day Reunion11
 Mud, Straws and Rats: Survival of Rural Laos13
 The Gift of an Education16
 Back to the ‘50s – Arab Style18
 The Blue Bird Project21

CAMPUS NEWS

International Day22
 Alumni Association Elections24

DINNERS & EVENTS

Bahrain26
 Kuwait27
 Jeddah27
 Paris28
 Dubai29

ALUMNI

Letters to the editor32
 Updates34

OBITS35

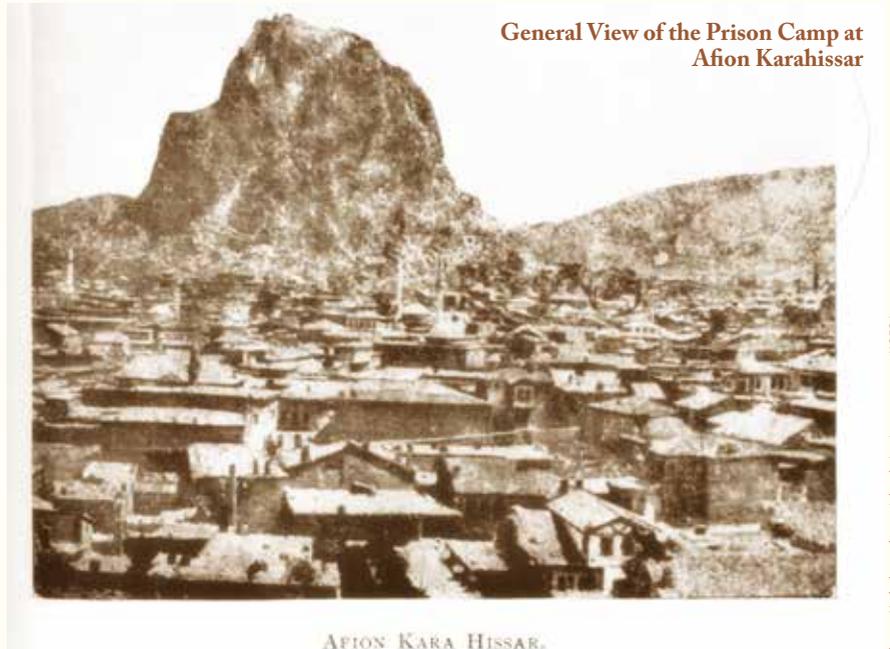
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The Adventures of Alexander MacLachlan:

Rev. Alexander MacLachlan



https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/www_pow_camps/1252/

The year was 1918. The arrival of American troops on European soil tipped the military balance in favor of the allied powers. There was a feeling that Germany and her allies could now be defeated...

Still heard about a convention (Berne) signed between the UK and Turkey where a large number of prisoners were to be exchanged. Prisoners at the camp rejoiced but soon their hopes were dashed: only disabled and wounded prisoners were to be exchanged. Still

Thirty-eight-year old John Still shivered uncontrollably. The second lieutenant in the 6th Battalion in East Yorkshire Regiment had been in the Afion-Kara-Hissar prison camp (Western Turkey) since 1915 when captured during the Gallipoli Campaign.

It was ironic really. As an archeologist, he appreciated his internment surrounded by the picturesque towns, with their streams and valleys and medieval citadels. But as a prisoner confined to a house previously owned by an Armenian family with no provisions for heating and not even glass at the windows, it was pure misery. Prisoners had to deal with intense cold and primitive conditions. With each winter, POWs had to face the prospect of famine and destitution. Now in his third year as prisoner, Still had to share the camp with 100 British officers and 120 Russians – too large a number for the existing accommodations.

Just as he was about to give up hope,



Smyrna

(Part XVIII)

contemplated. Somehow or another he had to go home to his wife and children. But the problem was that he was basically healthy.

“Really the only thing wrong with me were that I had lost three and a half stone in weight and had lumbago,” he wrote in his 1919 book, *A Prisoner in Turkey*.

During the medical exam, he suddenly got a brainwave and began to argue – endlessly – in French. The Turkish officers looked at him oddly.

The verdict came out a few days later. Still was to be exchanged. He was deemed unfit, as he was obviously mad.

And so it was that on September 9, 300 prisoners from the Afion Kara, joined by Indians from another camp, were shepherded on a train. Their ultimate destination were the nearest ports where ships would take them to England or India.

“Our last view of the camp was most affecting. There was a spontaneous outburst of noble good feeling and unselfish gladness, unmixed with any envy of our good luck,” wrote Still. “None of us thought the end of the war was near, yet those who stayed behind



General View of the Prison Camp at Afion Karahissar

cheered those who went, with never a sign of an afterthought. It was not just a few, it was everyone; and we literally had to struggle through the crowd in the street with our arms aching from hearty handshakes.”

Finally, they arrived at their destination: Smyrna.

Protestant Minister, Reverend Alexander MacLachlan was at his residence at IC in Paradise when he was summoned to Vali Rahmi Bey’s office. Bey pushed a telegram in front of him. “British military war prisoners will shortly arrive in your city. Make the necessary provisions for their accommodation until they are embarked,” it said.

Bey remained silent. MacLachlan stared at the letter and stifled his excitement. Not only was this his chance to ‘do his bit’ in the war but he would

finally get some news from the outside world. He eagerly offered the College and its grounds to accommodate the POWs.

Still Bey remained silent. MacLachlan felt he had to continue. So he proceeded to enlarge in detail all the advantages the campus and buildings that IC offered.

Finally, Bey responded. “So you think the American College at Paradise is the most suitable place in this area to accommodate these British prisoners?”

Then he added with a twinkle in his eyes. “And are you quite sure that when the war is over you will not claim that I seized the American College as a prison camp for British soldiers?”

Amused, MacLachlan assured him that it would certainly not be the case.

Meanwhile, Still and the rest of the POWs were feeling duped as they found themselves, once in Smyrna, escorted to yet another dark and filthy prison cell.

“We looked out through the bars rather dolefully, and watched the rank and fashion of Smyrna in the garden,” wrote Sill. “There seemed little hope of getting out or of getting any food in.”

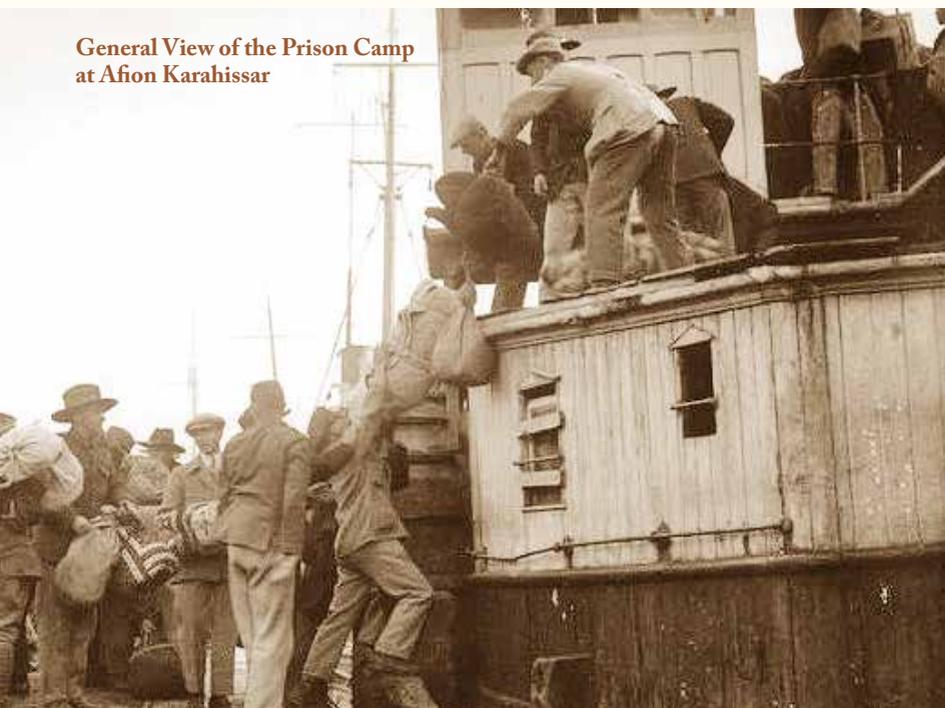
Somehow, the British Chaplain got to know of their plight. The next day, Rahmi Bey – forever faithful to his foreign constituencies and its Christian population – arrived and surveyed the bleak situation.

Still dazed, the prisoners were immediately escorted out of the jails and taken to Paradise. There awaited them a sight they never thought they would see. A gated green campus with buildings offering everything from dormitories to a gymnasium to even a theatre.

The thin and weary men walked slowly into IC. Some were limping. An Indian man collapsed. An IC staff member immediately pulled him onto his back and carried him into the building.

There, a scrumptious tea awaited and

General View of the Prison Camp at Afion Karahissar



“everything that man or woman could do they did,” wrote Still. “We had not known the like for many years.”

IC staff and the remaining British community in Smyrna set to work sending in food. Soon word got out that the men were in desperate need of clothes. A collection was made to buy the necessary cloth and cotton while women worked around the clock sewing shirts and pants.

“They nursed our sick, they mended and washed our clothes, they cooked dainty



POWs: Indian Sikh Regiment at IC, Smyrna, 1918

little dishes for the convalescents, and they gave us all heart once more,” wrote Still. “We were unclean and uncivilized, queerer perhaps than we knew, and they brought back to us the knowledge that the world as a whole is good.”

The entire IC campus was put at the disposal of the prisoners: dormitories for the men, small rooms for the officers, a school conduit to wash in, shower baths, electric light, a library, and cleanliness. “It was the cleanliness of the building and the kindness of their hearts that appealed to us,” wrote Still. “I confess without any shame that it almost broke me down.”

More prisoners arrived, many in the last stages of exhaustion and collapse. Despite MacLachlan’s best efforts, nineteen “of whom had reached the very threshold of home and loved ones, found their last resting place here, and most of them now sleep under the mounds of poppies in the little “God’s Acre” which we set apart for them at the western end of our campus,” wrote MacLachlan in an article he had submitted to the *Missionary Herald* in 1919.

The college was soon overflowing with more than 2,000 prisoners from the vast British Empire including English, Scot, Irish, Welsh, Canadians, Australians, South Africans and New Zealanders.

Another camp was started in another part

of Smyrna.

Still the ships didn’t arrive.

And then suddenly on October 30 - on the very day that British troops at the border prepared themselves for action - the Ottoman government signed an armistice. Turkey was out of the war.

Word reached Smyrna authorities to set the prisoners free. IC gates opened. Prisoners were free to roam around Smyrna. Free to leave the College. Just free.

Some prisoners were taken in at houses of residents in Smyrna, some were checked in at hotels and some stayed on at IC.

Among those who was set free was Lieutenant Colonel John Barker, captured at the Kut-el-Amar siege.

The first thing he did was to write a letter to his wife back in the UK. Not about the hardships of being a prisoner and not even about IC. But about the women of Smyrna.

It seems that the cosmopolitan Levantine women of Smyrna were ‘liberal’ in their clothing, wearing thin blouses and dresses where the hemlines were alluringly revealing. Furthermore, women shockingly exposed their knees. “Heavens, what a place this is!” he wrote in a letter to his wife. “The feminine element from the age of about thirteen overdresses like a professional. Hardly any of any age have dresses more than two inches below the knee.”

What Mrs. Barker thought of her husband’s letter, no one knows. But the affable Colonel was so overjoyed to see a British vessel finally come into the bay of Smyrna that he jumped into the sea and swam out to it.

And so it was that, as suddenly as it had started, the war ended.

For at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, World War I was over.

The people of Smyrna rejoiced. It was over. MacLachlan sighed with relief. IC could continue as normal.

But, unknown to them, the worst was yet to come.

In Greece, military preparations were underway. The city of Smyrna, they assumed, was rightfully theirs.

To be continued...

Historical information based on: “Potpourri of Sidelights and Shadows from Turkey,” by Alexander MacLachlan, 1937; “A Prisoner in Turkey,” 1919 by John Still; “Paradise Lost, Smyrna 1922” by Giles Milton; “Diary of Life during WWI Smyrna,” Grace Williamson; “Diary of Emily Jane Holton of Smyrna,” 1918; “The Missionary Herald,” October 1919; “The One Hundred and Eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,” 1918.

The British Officers' Sports Challenge Gift

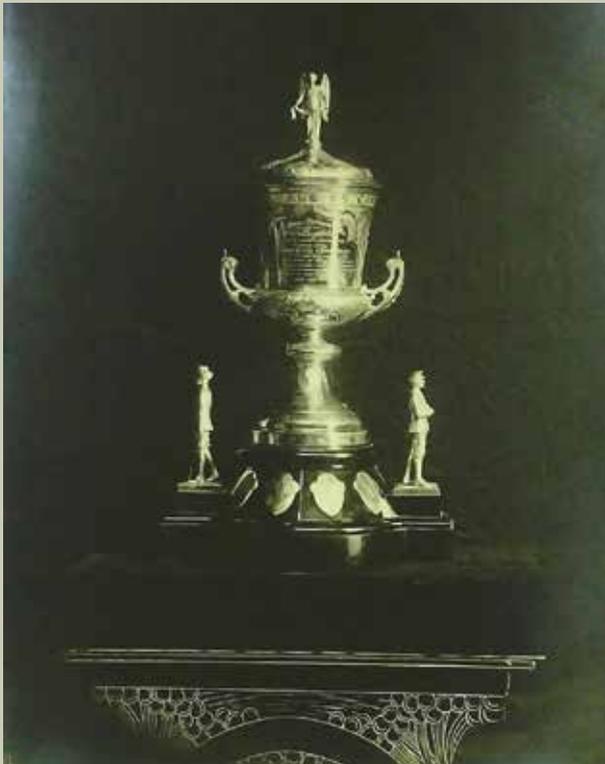
In gratitude to IC and Rev. Alexander MacLachlan, the former prisoners of war sent the school in Paradise a sterling silver Challenge Cup. The 26-inch high cup bears the following inscription in bold: "I WAS IN PRISON AND YE CAME UNTO ME"

On the face of the cup is another inscription: "BRITISH OFFICER PRISONERS OF WAR SPORTS CHALLENGE CUP FOR BEST ALL-ROUND STUDENT OF THE YEAR."

And beneath is the following:

"Presented to the International College at Paradise, Smyrna, by the British officers who, with their men, enjoyed the hospitality of the college and experienced the splendid charity of the college staff, during the last and happiest weeks of their long captivity in Turkey, through the years of the Great War 1914-1918."

On the other side of the cup's face represents the main building of the College. On either side of the pedestal base, on which the cup rests, is a figure in solid sterling silver of a wounded British officer, and on the opposite side a similar figure of a wounded Indian officer. The cover of the cup is surmounted by another figure in solid silver representing the angel of Mercy with outstretched wings. The Cup was designed and made by Goldsmiths & Silversmiths Co., Ltd., of Regent Street, London.



Have you seen this cup?

During the move from Turkey to Beirut, The Silver Sterling British Officer's Sports Challenge Cup went missing along with a stained glass window made in memory of students who served in the war. According to the late Dr. Howard Reed, the grandson of IC's Founder, Rev. Alexander MacLachlan, the cup was very dear to his grandfather's heart. Reed had asked IC in Beirut to look for it. The campus was searched, including attics and basements, but the Cup has not been found.

If you have seen or know of the whereabouts of the Challenge Cup, please contact Reem Haddad at: rhaddad@ic.edu.lb



The New Trend

One could say that **Yasmine Sakr '03** was in the right place at the right time. One could say that she planned and calculated to be on this exciting and dynamic new wave across the globe. But, actually, she was having lunch with her parents when ideas just started floating back and forth.

“Why not break the ground below your office and make a staircase,” suggested her architect father, **Mohamed Sakr '72**. “Use the storage basement below for something.”

Break the ground indeed, objected her mother. What a preposterous idea.

Break the ground indeed, thought the young Sakr excitedly. What a great idea.

Her master's thesis at the Domus Academy in Milano, popped into mind: how to create space to engage a community and create an intersection between different background fields.

What better way to do that, then to create a coworking space.

“Go for it then,” said her father. Sakr did.

In 2016, the Submarine was born and is located just below The Farm Design – Sakr's Branding and Creative Lab company in Ramlet al Baida (opened in 2012).

Now, almost two years later, Submarine is almost always fully booked. It's a home but yet an office. You're alone and yet you are not. Thus, is the new trend of work.

Long after the Golden 60s beloved Café de Paris, Horseshoe and Modca - hubs for chain-smoking writers, poets, artists and low key politicians – were shut down, a new trend has emerged.

It is called “coworking” – without a hyphen.

Began in 2005 in San Francisco, coworking spaces have quickly spread around the globe. Lebanon is no exception. Today, a handful of such ‘spaces’ have opened across the city catering to freelancers, independent contractors, temps, start-ups and digital nomads.

These spaces are mostly frequented by the under 40s – many of whom are part of the government's plan to encourage startups.

In 2014, in a bid to halt the brain drain and boost local employment, the BDL

announced Circular 331, which injected \$400 million into the Lebanese enterprise market. This sharply boosted the rise of startups, accelerators, venture capital firms, and more. According to the Lebanese Innovation Economy – Tech Startups 2018 report, Lebanon is one of the thriving capitals of digital innovation in the MENA.

These startups need a space to work in, thus the spread and success of coworking spaces across the city.

At first glance, the Submarine looks like an odd *mélange* of professionals: freelancers, startups, illustrators, game developers, PR people, life coaches, recruitment officers, architects, graphic designer, journalists, NGOs, social media specialists, urban planners – each heavily engaged in his or her individual project.

But a closer look reveals another story. Here and there, several professionals are sharing ideas or collaborating on some kind of project.

On one side of the room for example, is Rafic Saab, the founder of Grafic Hub, an advertising company. He met a graphic designer at Submarine and they are currently working on a project together.

“I tried to work from home,” he said, “but it’s not the same. I feel more motivated to work when I come here. It’s like going to the gym. You are not alone.”

Like the others, Saab is a ‘mariner’ – Submarine clients who have pre-negotiated deals. Next door, two young men and a woman are staring hard at their computers. They are in the process of creating a new game app – part of the startup trend.

Some mariners are ‘jumpers’ (dailies or weeklies), some have offices, some have ‘cabins’. All have access to their space, six days a week.

Mariners can hold meetings with clients in the common meeting room, or more informally on the comfortable cushion chairs. They have bike racks, lockers, common areas, printing services and of course, the highly necessary high speed internet. They can also hold events or workshops if needed. And every Wednesday without fail, the Mariner mother figure – Sakr’s mother - now long over her objection of breaking the ground – provides a delicious homemade cake for this new ‘family’.

Moreover, mariners may join yoga or meditation classes often held at the Submarine especially for them. And a rarity in Beirut: a little garden and a picnic table outside for those who want to soak in the sun as they work.



Yasmine Sakr



Rafic Saab



“This is not just a place to come and work,” explained Sakr. “We have created a community who care about each other. If their needs aren’t met here, we refer them to outside sources.

We do whatever it takes to help them succeed.”

Overseeing the mariner family is Nour Alwan. Technically, she is the manager. But, in reality, her hats are many: adviser, psychologist, career guidance counselor and facilitator. She personally follows-up on every project undertaken by the mariners.

“Our focus here is on community building and working together,” she said.

The ideal newcomer must add value to the Space and the mariners.

“When you create a space which is nourishing and safe, people thrive in it,” said Sakr. “In a coworking space, you are putting value in the community. This is a value that you really cannot put a price to.”



The Fifth Founders' Day Reunion



Dr. Bergman and other heads of schools planting the Founders' Day Tree at the Tarsus American College

The fifth Founder's Day reunion - otherwise known as the "cousins reunion" - was held in Tarsus on March 1-3 and brought together, once again, administrators and students from six different schools from Turkey, Lebanon, Greece and Bulgaria.

Eight students from IC travelled with IC President, Dr. Don Bergman, and Newsletter writer, Reem Haddad, to Tarsus American College (TAC) in south central Turkey. Students from the schools participated in various workshops and community service projects. More importantly, students made lifelong friends.

As they walked into TAC, little

did students realize that they were walking in the footsteps of IC's very own founder, Protestant Minister, Rev. Alexander MacLachlan. He and fellow Armenian minister, Harutune Jenanyan had recently graduated from New York Union Theological Seminary and sent off in 1888 to establish a new school in the birth land of Paul the Apostle. The school was called St. Paul's Institute.

But only two years after the school's opening, a dispute erupted between MacLachlan and Jenanyan.

It was this dispute which gave birth to our very own IC.

MacLachlan resigned his post. His grandson, Dr. Howard Reed, who passed away only this year,

remembered his grandfather telling him the story. "He was tired of this mess (dispute with Jenanyan) and wanted to go back to America," he said. "But a friend told him to take a vacation in Smyrna and visit the mission base there."

The missionaries had opened up a girls' school in Smyrna (American Collegiate Institute) but there was still a strong need for a boys' school. Would MacLachlan go and take a look at the city?

The rest is history. IC opened its doors in 1891. St. Paul's Institute continued to thrive and became known as the Tarsus American College.

The same founding fathers, the American Board Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), which paved the way for the opening of IC, also established schools and universities throughout the region in the 1800s.

But the Ottoman Empire's demise led to a struggle for Turkish self-determination and schools were subjected to heavy restrictions.

The role of ABCFM and its missionaries dwindled considerably.

Some of the Board's schools eventually either shut down permanently or relocated to other countries.

Some, however, remained. As the years passed and as they adapted to their new environments, the schools lost touch with one another.

It took 76 years for IC's sister



Catherine Kebbe, Laetitia Doumet, Riwa Hanna, Jade Klat, Kiyana Cavalcanti, Mark Antoine Raphael, Ryan Abdallah, Yasmine Blanford, Dr. Don Bergman



school, the American Collegiate Institute, to locate IC.

In 2012, IC received a surprise letter asking for a reunion in Izmir (Smyrna), Turkey – IC’s original birthplace. IC and its sister schools apparently had many joint activities together. But, out of the 15 schools that were originally established by the Board, only seven schools survive today: International College (Beirut), American Collegiate Institute (Izmir), Anatolia College (Greece), Pierce (The American College of Greece), Tarsus American College, Uskudar American Academy (Turkey) and the American College of Sofia.

It was six of those schools that met at Tarsus this year. The reunion was held in Beirut last May but didn’t include students because of security reasons. Nonetheless, during a day-long meeting, heads of schools and administrators agreed to joint activities between the ‘cousin’ schools in an effort to keep the rekindled spirit alive.

The first joint activity, the Shepard Cup 2017 Basketball Tournament, took place in November at the American Collegiate Institute in Izmir (Smyrna) – the very school that hosted many dances and activities when IC was still in Turkey. It was the first time that IC students stepped back onto the ACI campus.

It was a great moment for all. As for IC students, they were treated as family. For indeed, at long last, the ‘cousins’ were back together again.



Community service activity in a village outside Tarsus



IC team travels to Izmir to take part in a joint activity between the ‘cousin’ schools.



The Shepard Cup 2017 Basketball Tournament, Izmir.

Mud, Straws and Rats: Survival of Rural Laos

In April of this year, fourteen IC students stood in the village of Ban Nong Yong and surveyed their surroundings. Beirut, it was not. The lush green landscape, the wood and bamboo houses and paddy fields and, most of all, the timeless quality looked like it was straight out of a movie set. Chicken, ducks and dogs were almost everywhere. Villagers had stopped to stare hard at these strange looking newcomers.

Of the two adults accompanying them, only Bruce Knox – the Secondary School Director – didn't seem awed. Having lived and worked in Laos from 2002 to 2009, he had been to the rural villages in Southeast Asia many times. The accompanying Dean of Students and Community Service Coordinator, Rindala Abdel Baki, however, seemed equally struck.

Well, they thought, this could be heaven or this could be...

Contemplations must come later. IC was here on a mission: to build a dormitory in the village of Ban Nong Yong for high school students. The current high school is the only one among many surrounding villages. Local students would either have to walk three or four hours to reach it or just quit school. Most quit.

A Swedish friend of Knox, David Johnsson, had started an organization, World Volunteer (WV), to build eco-bungalows in rural villages to encourage sustainable eco-tourism. Among its projects, WV was building a 40-bed dormitory for the school. Knox immediately signed up IC to join. Now the question was: will parents send their children to take part in this once in a lifetime opportunity?

At the first parent meeting, twenty-five parents showed up. Knox began to explain. Laos is one of the world's few remaining communist states and one of East Asia's poorest. It is a landlocked, mountainous country, largely covered by a tropical forest and sandwiched between China, Cambodia and Vietnam. The country was the scene of America's "secret war" during the Vietnam War (the US conducted the war in secret in Laos, in an attempt to destroy communist supply lines). Laos was one of the most heavily bombed

countries per capita in history – an ongoing cost of war that still affects its people today.

But rest assured, IC students will not be anywhere near the region contaminated with unexploded ordinances. The village of Ban Nong Yong, their destination, is poor – like

occasional visits from snakes, spiders and scorpions. There may be several diseases out there. Immunizations will be required.

There will be quite a bit of manual work, a lot of hiking – especially through the jungle. It will be hot and humid.

And, Knox continued, the facilities



Trekking through the jungle

the rest of the rural villages in Laos and depends on agriculture for survival. The students will be building the dormitory from mud, straw and sticks.

So far, so good, thought Knox. The parents seemed interested.

Now the moment of truth: the area may also have malaria-carrying mosquitoes and, well, its proximity to the jungle, also means there may be

are rudimentary. Little electricity, no shower, cold water, no flush toilets.

One more thing: students will be sleeping on the floors of the village houses with Lao families.

By now, several parents were obviously shifting uncomfortably in their seats.

A few weeks later, another parent meeting was held. Fourteen parents showed up.



Knox smiled. “When people asked me later on why I chose those particular students to travel with, I answered: I didn’t. They simply had the bravest parents.”

Preparations began. Immunizations given. Hiking paraphernalia bought. Lao customs introduced. Basics of the language memorized.

Finally, the 14 students, Abdel Baki and Knox arrived at Ban Nong Yong – home to 70 families. The feeling was unreal.

But all too soon, the work began. Like the rest of the villagers, students were up at dawn.

“It’s the chickens,” explained Laetitia Tyan El Chami. “They get up very early and are always just outside the door.”

As women cooked over an open fire and men headed off to work their land, students made mud pits, trampled in them, made mud bricks and cut straw bales – all under scorching heat. “It was amazing team work,” said Romy Faisal. “We were always encouraging each other to persevere.”

At night, exhausted students slept on mats in various village houses along

with the Lao families. Privacy was, well, rare. The ‘bathroom’ consisted of a squat toilet – flushed with a bucket of water. Another bucket with freezing cold water was placed for bathing purposes. Fortunately, the ‘bathroom’ was private (though flashlights were needed) – much to everyone’s relief. But that is more or less where the privacy ended.

“I learned to dress very quickly in that house,” laughed Abdel Baki.

The nights were yet another adventure. Despite a big mosquito net over the mattresses, there were definite audible and very distinct noises. More specifically, noises of “things scuttling across the floor and coming under the net,” said Abdel Baki. “The first night, I stayed awake imagining what they could be. But I kept repeating to myself, ‘I was a scout, I can do this, I was a scout.’”

Actually, they were cockroaches and rats – a blessing and delicacy in Laos.

But unfortunately for Abdel Baki, her scout training did not prepare her for the frolicking of a (big) lizard that decided to slither across her head. Her screams managed to wake up the entire household. Meanwhile, Knox

slept peacefully in the nearby house, unperturbed. This was a familiar home. (P.S. Knox is from Australia – home to some of the world’s most dangerous creatures).

In another hut, Abdel Rahman (Aboudi) Al Samadi, was kept awake by a distinctive rustling noise behind the wooden closet. He alerted his host who called in his 7-year-old son. The child was handed a bow-and-arrow and ushered to go behind the closet. The child emerged from behind the closet proudly holding up a bloody but still squirming rat. Aboudi scampered back to his mattress as the father finished off the job and handed the limp rat back to his son. The child threw it in the fridge and both went off to bed. (Hosting families were under strict instructions not to serve rats or insects to IC students).

“Yes, well, I didn’t sleep that night,” admitted Aboudi.

In their house, Radah al Khatib, Yasmine Nahas and Hannah Abi Saab jumped at the sound of squealing in the wee hours of the morning. The girls peaked outside in time to see the limbs





Back row: Bruce Knox, Rindala Abdel Baki, Amin Halawi, Fouad Chehab, Hannah Saab
Second row: Raja Haroun, Aboudi Samadi, Reeda Mroueh, Radah al Khateeb, Yasmeen Nahas, Laetitia Tyan, Maya Hneidi, Mona Charbine, Romy Faisal
Front Row: Joseph Faisal, Yves Achdijian

of a large pig being cut off. It was a true culture shock.

By the end of the week, all had adjusted. So much so in fact, that when Joseph Faisal turned on his flashlight to see a big rat sitting diagonally from his mattress, he nudged awake Fouad Chehab ("I didn't want to be alone awake with a rat!"). For his part, Fouad showed no interest. "It's just a rat," he said. "Go to sleep."

Both boys did.

Food was another adjustment. With rats and insects off the menu, the students were served rice. Rice for breakfast, rice for lunch, rice for dinner.

"There was rice with cabbage, rice with French fries," laughed Yves Achidjian. "Then with fried rice - there was rice."

Now, it so happens that the most adventurous (food wise) student among them was Reeda Mroueh. He declared that he wouldn't mind tasting an insect. Unfortunately, for him, Knox overheard him and immediately bought him a bag with several cooked cicadas. To the horror and laughter of the others, Reeda obliged and ate one declaring that 'it tastes like chips'. However, let it be noted that he gagged and the bag - with the rest of the cicadas - was quickly

handed to the Lao guide who received them with thanks (a favorite childhood snack).

During some of the evenings, the students would gather around a fire with Knox and Abdel Baki. Discussions would ensue.

"One can live well without money," decided Fouad.

Yes, "and they are happy here," continued Laetitia. "Happier than we are."

"We take so much for granted," said Yves. "It put things in perspective."

But most of all, said Yasmine, "you learn about a part of you that you never knew existed."

Listening in, the accompanying adults knew that the lessons learned here went well beyond knowing how to build a home from mud and straw.

"I discovered in our students aspects I had never seen before," said Abdel Baki. "Those whom I thought were quiet students turned out to be natural leaders. They needed a chance like this, outside the big school environment, to emerge."

As the Community Service Coordinator at IC, Abdel Baki is looking forward to simulate a similar project in Lebanon.

"This experience was an eye-opener

and an inspiration to enrich our community service program at IC," she said. "Engaging our students in a sustainable long term project with a local community in Lebanon is definitely a project to be considered."

None could be happier than Knox. During his time at Laos, he had fallen in love with the country and had spearheaded an annual fundraising bike trek (www.teamdai.org) to support rural villages. Seeing his IC students grow in this one week was his ultimate reward.

"School is such a manicured place. Everything is set out for students," he said.

"But take them outside their comfort zone, and they will learn new things about themselves. They will learn to overcome any challenges and become more confident because of it. We are doing them a disservice by not letting them struggle. From now on, these students will say, 'hey I did that in Laos and I survived'."

To see a documentary of the trip to Laos go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v05JH1NWMFI>



Feghali often comes to IC to check up on her “wards” – public school students

THE GIFT OF AN EDUCATION

Ghada Feghali knocked hesitantly at the black gate of the public school located just across IC, and was shepherded to the Director’s Office.

“I am the biology teacher at IC,” she explained. “And I am just wondering if your students passed the brevet test.”

Her own IC students had all passed the government test and she was, well, just curious.

The Director sadly shook her head. All her brevet students had failed. “Well,” said Feghali, “would you allow me and some fellow teachers from IC to give your

students extra lessons after school?”

And so, in the following year, Feghali and a few colleagues volunteered their afternoons coaching Grade nine students. All passed.

That was in 2000.

Since then Feghali has been spending much of her time coaching public school students. In 2010, after a 42-year academic career at IC, she retired and founded her NGO, MMKN.

“We need to bridge that gap between public and private sector,” she said. “We use the same books, we have the same curriculum. So why is it that almost all private school students pass the brevet and barely 50% of public students don’t?”

Those who don’t are refused at vocational schools. Many of them may become delinquents.

“And yet,” continued Feghali, “all that these kids need is some extra tutoring.”

And then it came to her: why not recruit student volunteers from universities and train them to tutor public school students? It would be a perfect Social Responsible Citizens opportunity.

Universities were open to Feghali’s idea. But, first, Feghali needed to secure permission from the Ministry of Education allowing her access to public schools.



The then Minister of Education, Abdel Rahim Mrad, reportedly stared astonished at the teacher. “You really want to do this?” he asked.

“Very much so,” answered Feghali. “Very much so.”

With the necessary permissions secured, Feghali set to work.

As fellow teacher colleagues set to work to create support books, students from AUB, LAU, Balamand, Hagazian and the Lebanese University, took part in class management sessions and met with public school teachers.

Tutoring classes would take place after school and on Saturdays.

As word spread, more students signed up to volunteer in Beirut and in their own villages. Last year alone saw 226 volunteer students. This year, MMKN will be working in 46 public schools across the country.

“It really all depends on our students,” said Feghali. “They are eager to serve their own schools in their own villages. So they start the process and MMKN goes to the schools to finalize the details.”

Moreover, some of the high achieving public school students have been awarded full scholarships at IC. Every Friday sees Feghali on campus checking up on her ‘wards’.

Since the majority of the operation is on a volunteer basis, the costs are kept low. But still, there are certain costs including hiring a public school supervisor to stay afterhours and the rent of a small headquarters in Hamra.



“Now this is where it becomes interesting,” chuckled Feghali.

The headquarters in Hamra, dubbed the “The Study Room,” gives tutoring lessons in all subjects to private school students. A large part of the tutoring fee goes towards covering MMKN costs.

“As long as we have private school kids coming in for lessons, the system works,” said Feghali. “It is a win-win situation.”

MMKN has also expanded its activities and now targets younger students in elementary and middle school, providing educational after-school activities – also on a volunteer

basis.

Recently, the NGO began targeting women empowerment projects including rural handicrafts and baking goods – which are duly sold – making the women active contributors to their household. The NGO equally supports several civic engagements and cultural activities.

“I love education,” said Feghali. “I feel that I was gifted in teaching. This is why I chose this career. I want to pass this gift to others.”

For more information about MMKN go to: www.mmkn.org

MMKN students in public schools.





Back to the '50s *Arab Style*

By her own admission, **Rana Salam '86** is a hoarder. Her collections include vintage movie posters, odd fabric patterns, and, well, Syrian lingerie. Not just any kind of lingerie but kinky (excuse the word) women's underwear selling in today's Syrian souks. Thus, her 2006 book, *The Secret Life of Syrian Lingerie*. Now, that book is a bit of a coincidence, as she had no intention of publishing photos of the particularly interesting subject. But it's the usual story of someone seeing them, loving them and suggesting a book. But for Salam, the thrill was the actual collecting and discovering of who designs and makes them - and why.

"There is nothing more fascinating and more thrilling than looking and finding things that no one else thinks of looking at," she explained as she sat in her studio in Gemayze surrounded by cushions, tablets, paper cups and other bold and vibrant paraphernalia distinctly marked with a nostalgic twist.

The thrill of collecting has taken her to most of the Middle East and India looking for discarded items dated from the 1950's. By 'looking', it meant going places where a lone female traveler usually avoids.

But not Salam. Still in her early 20s and in the throes of her collection obsession, she would disappear on a Vespa into the local scene. And, so, she looked and she found and she collected.

Old movie posters captivated her but



not only those. Old tin cans strewn about, milk dispensers with interesting patterns - anything that struck her fancy would find a way back to the shady hotel she would usually stay at ("they had to be shady so I can fit in with the local street scene," she explained).

Some called her collection rubbish. A title that doesn't seem to thrill her much, but basically yes, they were rejected items. But not to Salam. Every object had a story. Every piece had meaning.

Another collection: Lebanese militia logos, an interest which spiked during the 16-year-old civil war.

"Some logos were abstract and some were concrete using Arabic calligraphy,"



she said. "I thought that was so exciting as each religion expressed themselves differently."

The interests of the then IC schoolgirl, however, were diverted by another discovery: foreign made chocolate. Specifically, Flake bars.

"Kids would gather around me in awe and I would tease them by putting down a layer of Flake chocolate wrapper on the floor," she said laughing. "Lebanon didn't have Flake bars back then. But I brought them with me from London."



As her classmates fawned over the British chocolate, a little thought began to occur to Salam – it would be an observation that would eventually carve her future career. “Why is it that UK products can have this effect on people but Lebanese products in the UK mean nothing?”

Salam went on to do the usual thing: graduate from IC, complete her BA in the UK (Central St. Martins) and pursued her

chance to bring the east to the west and she did so by commissioning work from Lebanese and Armenian poster artists living in Beirut, reproducing Lebanese and Egyptian movie and posters.

It was then Salam knew her calling: Changing the perception of the Middle East through the power of design.

She opened a studio in London which found success. But, yearning to live and bring up her two children in Lebanon, she packed and returned home eight years ago.

Today, the story of her journey is found at her studio in Gemayze. Here is a step into the past laced with a mélange of popular art and culture. In her workshop-dash-studio-dash-shop, lives on Umm Kalthoum and other once famous Egyptian stars as well as other people no one knows at all – a girl’s picture on a 50s tin of biscuits (found in a garbage bin) for example. Even old Arabic street numbers she picked up at an Indian market are there.

Other products carry popular street jargon – picked up routinely as Salam roams the working streets of Beirut and notes down the local slang.



Master’s at the Royal College of Art in the London.

This is when everything began to come together. To be exact, it was her theses entitled, “Beirut: Design under Civil War”, that paved the way and set her on the road to collecting discarded items from the 50s and translating them into her projects.

Then, her first commission, in 1993, to design the 11 Harvey Nichols windows in London, really set her on the path to success. Her question from when she was at school suddenly came back to mind. And, now the answer: “The UK don’t fawn over our products because we don’t make attractive products and market it to them.”

The design of the windows was her

And, most notable, is her signature: The roses of Damascus, an ancient flower known for its gorgeous color and its fine fragrance. Her inspiration to use them? A poster of a religious leader often seen in the streets of Beirut during the civil war. The roses were used to soften his image.

“Design creates culture,” she said. “And the Middle East was an amazing place for design. It was done by street people. Not by companies like abroad. They made creativity out of nothing. The pop culture designs of the Middle East are so charming and nostalgic. It really makes you fall in love with your country.”



Johanna Asfour distributing food.

The Blue Bird Project

In an effort to reach out to refugees and underprivileged families in Lebanon, brother and sister team **Tony Asfour '16** and **Johanna Asfour '18** launched “The BlueBird Project”, a volunteer organization that distributes lunch boxes, fulfils families’ ‘wish lists’ and provides healthcare to the homeless.

“We were raised with the strong ideal of giving back to the community around you and it is this ideal that inspired us to really start thinking about doing something to help those who need it the most,” said Tony. “We want to empower families by eliminating some of the minor obstacles that they are facing.”

The Asfour siblings began distributing lunch boxes earlier this year. They started with 35 lunch boxes but are now distributing more than 150 per week.

“We took the advice of several nutritionists who advised a well-balanced lunch box,” said Johanna.

Moreover, they prepared a list of items needed and required by refugee families. Included are kitchen utensils, dry food, small furniture and toiletries.

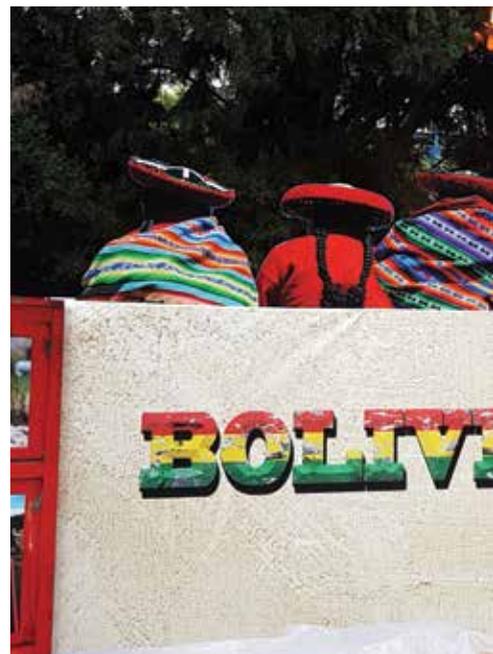
“We try to fulfill the family’s wishes by holding drives and voluntary donations,” said Tony. “We then prepare boxes and deliver them to the families at the camps.”

To provide the necessary healthcare, the siblings talked to several medical professionals who offered their services. Every so often, random meeting points are arranged and families go for free general checkups.

“All we are trying to do is bring a little light into the lives of those who need it,” said Johanna.



INTERNATIONAL DAY 2018







Alumni Association Elections

The IC alumni association held its General Assembly Meeting and Election on campus on May 13th 2018. Led by **Imad El Khalil '81**, the president of the ICAA, the election committee organized an exemplary election process supervised by the Lebanese Association for the Democracy of Elections (LADE). 60 percent of all registered members in the ICAA participated in the elections in which 21 candidates competed for 14 seats. The 15th member of the council is appointed by the IC

president. Participants ranged from the class of 1946 to 2012.

The Election reflected the IC community's commitment to the democratic process; to the rotation of power; and to fair play. It was due to the positive energy of candidates like: **Dania Najjar Nsouli '90, John Rubeiz '09, Rula El Halabi '86, Dany Samaha '92, Ziad Chehade '99, Mounir Haddad '63, and Lena Aridi '14** that the day on campus was so special. When asked why she ran even though

she arrived one day before the elections from an extended business trip Dania Nsouli replied: "My participation was a necessity to keep the healthy competitive spirit of the election. The IC spirit compels us not to care about winning or losing but to focus on fair process. We all win when IC sets a positive example for the country. I am very proud my participation helped the ICAA do just that".

The 14 members who will lead the ICAA council for the coming 3 years are:



1970	Ramez Haddad	1991	Lina Itani
1981	Imad El-Khalil	1991	Sherine Bayoud
1983	Samer Doughan	1991	Ahmad Ismail
1985	Dina Musallam	1994	Karim Baalbaki
1985	Wassim Sinno	1994	Rami Labban
1986	Dania Nsouli	1994	Wael Sanyoura
1989	Nada Ghazal	1998	Karim Noueihed
1991	Walid Nakfour	2008	Tarek Hourri

All new council members have committed to a program which will be shared with you in the next issue of this Newsletter. Among the objectives is the modernization of the ICAA by laws so that they too reflect the IC community's commitment to good governance and NGO best practice. Among the many proposed

amendments is a 2-term limit for council members. Under the leadership of Imad and his team, the ICAA has had a very successful and eventful year. The list of activities included:

ICAA Events Summary
May 2017 – April 2018

2017		
Event	Initiative	
June	Scholarship Fund total 1500\$ for 3 graduates class of 2017	Awards
July	Honorary Award for Mr. Hassan Orfali (Retired Football Coach) was presented with a memento to honor his life support to IC football students	Awards
August	Honorary Award for Ambassador Kabalan Frangieh for being appointed as a Lebanese ambassador	Awards
September	.Session on the new Lebanese Electoral Law Guest Speaker H.E. Mr. Bahij Tabbara (class of 1946)	Brain Bites
December	Launch of the new ICAA website www.icaalebanon.com	Networking Communication & Membership
2018		
Event	Initiative	
January	Launching of the ICAA Affinity credit card	Membership & Member Privilege
March	Providing ICAA members with access to the IC Ras Beirut campus on Sundays	Membership & Member Privilege
March	Providing scholarship to support IC graduates during their first year at University of their choice AUB pledged to equally match each donation provided by the ICAA for students who enroll at AUB starting with the class of 2018	Awards
April	Session on the new Lebanese Tax Law. Guest Speaker Mr. Walid Nakfour (class of 1991)	Brain Bites
April	Reception honoring the 11 founders of ICAA as well as the previous 6 presidents of the association	Awards

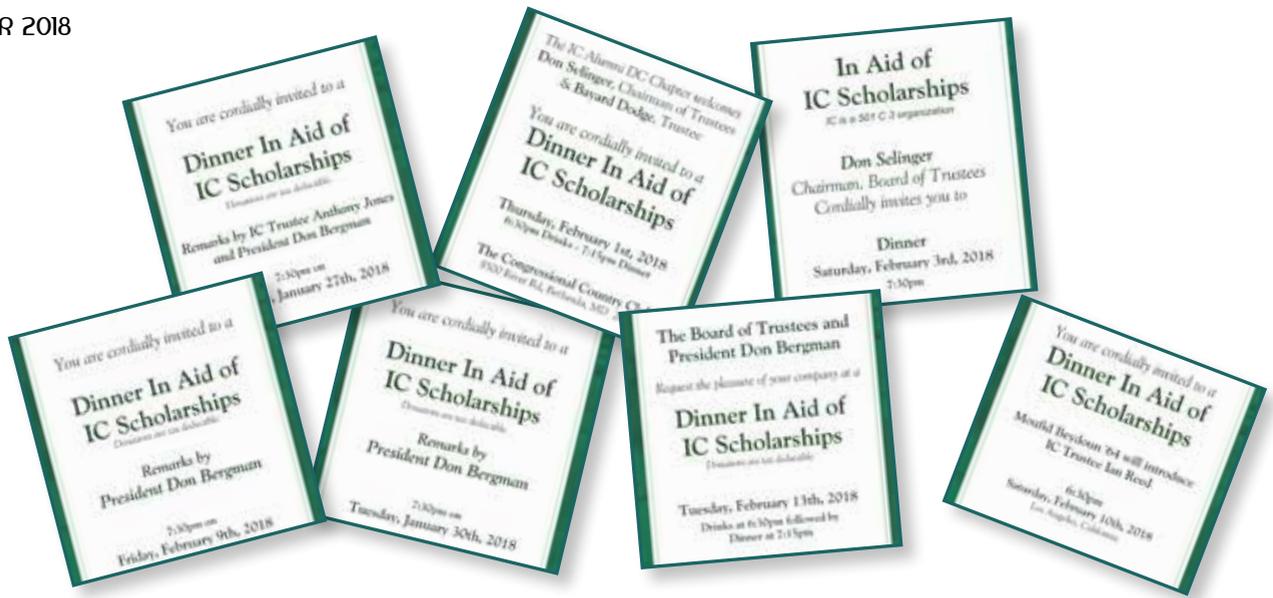


The ICAA's 3 main objectives are to:

Make sure the IC community remains anchored to its identity and committed to the values of Moderation, Open mindedness, and Tolerance.

Secure the support of alumni for the school and its scholarship fund so that IC remains the melting pot that dissolves fault lines and remedies the illnesses of a fractured war society.

Support IC alumni with their university education, as well as with mentorship, internships and career advancement.



Dinners \$ Events

Three IC Alumni and Friends' Dinners were held in the Gulf, March 2018. The first one in Bahrain on March 12, hosted by Mr **Akram Miknas '63** at his Camelot restaurant, and was attended by over 20 alumni and friends. They were joined by IC's Interim Director of Advancement, Katherine Murphy McClintic, and Richard Bampfylde, IC's Communications and Sustainability Coordinator.

Bahrain



From L to R: Nazem Ibrahim-Basha '76, Amer Fathallah, Fadi Sawaya, Lena K., Riyad Kaidbey '56, Sammy John Saad '96, Marc Irani '04, M. Hamza, Khalil Elias '59, Adib Suleiman '56, Richard Bampfylde
 R to L: Selma Ibrahim-Basha, Bushra Abu Salem '94, Soumar Abi Haider Sawaya '99, Ahmad Al Ansari, Randah Hamadeh '72, Hala Saad '03, Reine Lahoud Irani '04, Mirna Hamza, Ramez Tomeh '66, Kate Murphy McClintic

Kuwait

The second dinner, on March 13, was in Kuwait attended by the Chairman of IC Board of Trustees, Don Selinger, McClintic, and IC's VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64** and was attended by 40 alumni and friends.

The third dinner, held in Jeddah on March 20, was organized and hosted by **Mohamed Zameli '81** and Dina Zameli and was attended by McClintic.



Don Selinger, Michel Accad '73, Christian Boustani '73, Talal Mekkaoui '04, Rabih Abla '95, Hisham Chemaitilly '86

Kuwait



Saudi Arabia



First Table: Samir Kriedieh '65, Henri El Sheikh '83, Mazin Kotob '85, Ghida Kahwaji Kotob '88, Husni Houssami '87, Mona Salameh Moussa '81, Rima Maghabghab Hatoum '98, Amir Sinno '83, Mohamad Ali Zameli '81

Second table: Viviane Jabri, Hasan Jabri '79, Fadi Abbas '81, Fouad Abbas '89, Karim Ghandour '89, Raja Nahas '77, Hana Nahas, Lina Houssami, Dina Zameli



Paris

An alumni and friends' dinner was held at Paris and at the Janna Restaurant on May 16th. Organized by **Charles Simon Thomas '75**, it was attended by IC's president, Dr. Don Bergman and VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64**.



Charles Simon Thomas '75,
Oussama Kaddoura '74



Dr. Don Bergman, Moufid Beydoun '64, Nour Abu Joudi '01, Manal Issa al Khouri, Elsa Rahal '10, Hassan Salha '63, Oussama Kaddoura '74



Dubai

The IC Suhoor (a social and business networking event) was held in Dubai on May 19th at Music Hall (MASRAH RAMADAN), Jumeirah Beach and was attended by over 400 IC Alumni and friends.



Don Bergman, Moufid Beydoun '64, Madeleine Bardawil, Fouad Bardawil '44, Houssam Rinno '83



Hiba Osseiran Chamout



Maysa Sabbah '90,
Sherine Fadlallah
'90, Tuline Ballouz
'92, Lama el Kouche
'90, Rima Dajjani '92

Mona Maktabi '83





Mr. and Mrs. Karim Osseiran '94



Mr. and Mrs. Elias Hanna '91

**A SPECIAL
THANK YOU TO:**

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 Communication, Music Hall, Leo
 Burnett, Dubai Chapter.
 Future Pipe Industry
 Rani Ohannasian
 Mr. Elie Khoury,
 Omnicom Media Group,
 Sawa Media
 Around the Clock
 Communication
 Saba Consultant
 Chalhoub Group



Rayyan Osseiran '13, Karim Oueidat '13, Rani Balaa '13

Letters to the editor

Thank you. I always enjoy reading your Newsletter from cover to cover.

I have very fond memories of my student days at IC and its excellent teachers.

Recently, though I am retired from medical practice of cardiology, I have published my third book titled "My Poetry and Medicine" in which I tried to bridge literature with medical science as well as a lament for peace for Lebanon.

For future budding doctors I have added few pearls of my medical experience.

Keep your good work and I look forward to the IC Newsletter,

*Dr, Munir E Nassar'51
Nassarmd@gmail.com*



that our worldwide classmates join us as well.

*Marwan Stambuli '65
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Whatsup Number +41792598811*

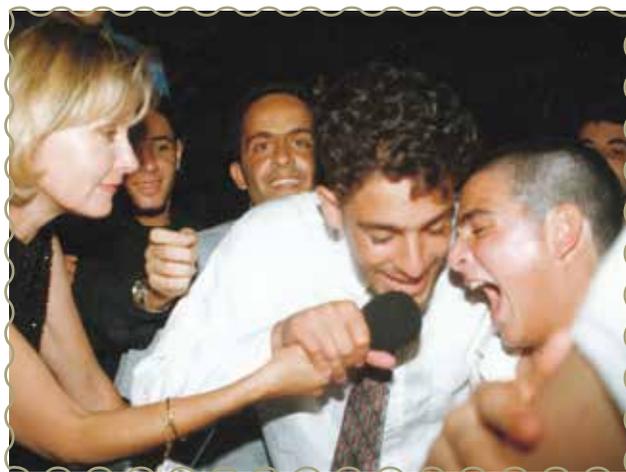


The best part of our final few weeks of senior year was the complete and utter disregard for any and all forces that kept us from letting loose. With college acceptance letters in hand (and final grade point averages more or less on the books), the stretch between senior skip day and graduation night was a lesson in high school mayhem. Packed into the massive unleashing of frustration were cold winter morning memories of bi-weekly "Monday Exams," the years of tussling to the front of the cafeteria "line" for a rosto sandwich before recess was over, and the gatekeepers' keeping us from enjoying the wonders of Bliss St., despite our best attempts to escape. Captured in this photo is that beautiful energy. Big shout out to all my wonderful classmates from 1996-1999. Love you all!

Omar Nassereddin'99



The IC 1965 group are meeting and enjoying our old age together. The IC1965.com is updated and I invite all to visit and enjoy the Gallery. May God Bless Them all and hope



Nabil Najjar '54
sent in this joke.



نابيل طويل و

Fill in the blanks

This is how certain class mates used to tease me

Nabil Najjar

Prep graduate 1954

ANNOUNCEMENTS

25th Anniversary reunion class of 1993 on **July 6, 2018**, IC Campus, Beirut.

10th Anniversary reunion class of 2008 on **July 7, 2018**, IC Campus, Beirut.

For tickets/information contact:

The Office of Alumni & Development at: alumni@ic.edu.lb

Tel: 9611367433

Updates

'58

Abdel Majid Naja retired this year after working for 55 years as a civil engineer. "I had a good run thanks to IC, AUB, and Cornell University," he wrote. "I live in Beirut with my wife Hana. Our son **Marwan '86** lives in Geneva, and our daughter **Leila '88** lives in Sydney."

'64

Dr. Ismail Khalil '64
The Lebanese Society of Vascular Surgery Honored Dr Khalil's career on April 20, 2018 during its 10th annual congress of the Lebanese Society For Vascular Surgery (LSVS) April 20, 21 at the Hilton Habtoor Hotel, Beirut Lebanon. During the ceremony, Dr. Khalil was dubbed as "one of the



pillars of this society, an educator, an accomplished surgeon, a father of modern vascular surgery in Lebanon and the region, the ex-President of our society, a relentless fighter, Al Muaallem," said colleague Dr. Fady Haddad.

For his part, Minister of Health Ghassan Hasbani added that he would "like to take this opportunity to convey my highest appreciation and thanks to someone who has offered the health industry in Lebanon a great deal of value. And when I say value it is not just about scientific value and medical value. This person has given our country also the humanitarian and human touch and the work ethic and dedication. Dedication that he had put himself in danger many times in order to help save lives. Please join me in thanking and honoring one of our prides in Lebanon Dr. Ismail Khalil."

'72



Sarmad Albert Rihani
PE, F.SEI, F.ASCE, a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Structural Engineering Institute (SEI), has been honored by ASCE-SEI by receiving the W. Gene Corley Award during a ceremony held in Fort Worth, Texas on April 21 in the presence of nearly 1,300 structural engineers from the U.S. and other countries of the world. This

prestigious recognition is awarded annually to one individual for their efforts in support of advancing and distinguishing structural engineering as a profession, including licensure for structural engineers. Mr. Rihani has an active member of SEI during the past 18 years, and has served on numerous committees, the board of governors, and eventually as the President of SEI for two years (2011-2013).

'77

Jamal Arnaut went to AUB and graduated in 1980. He Moved to the UAE for two years, then Philadelphia for graduate school, then Indiana and finally California. He is currently in Southern CA, with his wife, Andrea Wolfe Arnaut, and working at Merrill Lynch. "Greetings to all my classmates," he wrote. "Especially to my brothers who passed away so very early. Basem El Zein, Nabil Adra and Ghassan Bawarchi. May they all rest In Peace. There is no better high school than IC, whether in Lebanon or anywhere else around the globe."

93'

Hani Oubari currently lives in Beirut where he is managing his own engineering & renovations firm "Vertispace". Previously, and after gaining the PMP credential, he worked with Solidere as a Project Manager on infrastructure projects. He is married to Rawan Takkoush and have a four year old girl Celine. He may be contacted on 03-549631 or by email at h_oubari@yahoo.com

'00

Yahia Beydoun and his wife, Maha, were blessed with a baby girl, Naya, on March 10. Yahia works in San Jose, California as an electrical engineer.



'06

Karma Salem graduated with a bachelors in Biology from Boston University in 2010. She then returned to Lebanon where she obtained her Doctorate in Medicine (MD) from the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 2014. Following graduation, Karma pursued a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute/Harvard Cancer Center in Boston where she studied the genetics of progression in multiple myeloma in the lab of Dr. Irene Ghobrial. She then went on to complete an internship year in internal medicine at Albany Medical College and is now a radiology resident at University Hospitals/Case Western Reserve University. Karma married fellow AUB medical school classmate and alum Michael

Nasr in a civil ceremony in Boston in June 2017 followed by a celebration in Lebanon officiated by close IC friend Wajiha Jurdi Kheir. Karma and Michael are now both resident physicians living and working in Cleveland, Ohio.

'13

Firas Chamas will be starting his Masters in Architecture and Urban

Design at Harvard University in August.

Daniel Habbal graduated from Boston University and is about to attend medical school in the states.

'14

Nour Bitar is a mother of 2 beautiful children, Noura & Safi. She is a Managing Partner at Engineering

& Building Co. EBCO (BITAR), General Manager at Nasser Building Materials (NBM) and Partner in Real Estate Development (RED). She was elected in 2017 as an alumni trustee of the American University of Beirut. She is a Founder and Member of the Steering Committee of United Nations Global Compact Network Lebanon, Board Member of Toumouh Association and Board Member of Ajjalouna Association.

In Memoriam

I speak for myself and all those IC guys who knew and remember **Karim Karjian '64** over the years.

A childhood buddy is usually the hardest person to describe as your whole being invariably fills up with good memories mixed with humorous events and then followed by emotions.

When one mentions Karim, then the first thing that comes to mind is the name itself which translated to English means: generous and benevolent. That was Abu Rami...

I first met Karim at the Ahlieh school in the mid-1950s, then at IC, AUB and then London in 1970. We both had just started our careers and each went his own way but always to meet over lunch or coffee in Beirut, Shemlan or London.

Karim proved to be a successful businessman and did quite a bit of globe-trotting between Africa, Europe, UK and the USA. One thing I can candidly say is that he is a unique example of a success story. He always maintained the same character and continued to treat all his friends and acquaintances with his usual kindness and warmth.

He never changed ... He was a genuine person.

Alas he is no longer with us but his smile, character and good humor shall remain embedded in our hearts.



Said Abou Ezzeddin '64



We regret to inform you that **Karim Ali Khalil '10** passed away in April 2018. IC staff and faculty send their deepest condolences to the Khalil family.

Have a great summer!

International College

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