



IC Newsletter SPRING 2018



*Ain Aar:
The Beginning*

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IN THE MAKING**

Ain Aar: Future

Ain Aar 1988

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The Adventures of Alexander MacLachlan:

Rev. Alexander MacLachlan



WI was raging on and despite the nearby aerial bombardment, the spread of famine and diseases, Protestant Minister, Reverend Alexander MacLachlan, was determined to keep the school going. If IC were to close, Turkish authorities would immediately seize the campus for its own military use, as was the fate of other foreign schools. It was MacLachlan's continuous fear....

Reverend MacLachlan surveyed his school forlornly. By all means, the school could not continue. Only five teachers remained out of the original 24. And of those, professors Gulbenkian and Tchiboukdjian were about to be called for military duty, while Prof. Papadopoulos, a Cypriot, was under probation as a British subject.

This would just leave two men of "stout of heart and strong of arm:" IC's Dean, Cass Reed and Prof. Samuel Lee Caldwell.

The two men were his last remaining hope.

Then came the bad news: Reed received notice that as an American citizen, he could not be accepted as Acting Director of the College during the war – effectively destroying the last hope that IC could even carry out a limited number of classes.

In desperation, MacLachlan called on Smyrna Governor Rahmi Bey at his private residence in Bournabat. Bey, forever faithful to his foreign constituencies and its Christian population, had ordered – against the wishes of his Turkish superiors – to keep foreign schools in Smyrna open.

Bey listened carefully to MacLachlan's woes and immediately came to his rescue: since Turkey is not officially at war with America, Reed may continue with his duties at IC.

The next day, MacLachlan put an advertisement in the newspaper that IC will indeed continue with its classes (for day students only) and

Smyrna

(Part XVII)



was currently accepting applicants. But since the school was functioning with a skeleton of a faculty, only 100 students will be accepted and, moreover, the tuition will be doubled.

MacLachlan waited. To his amazement, applications rained in but he was only able to accept 117 students. While the boarding section of the school was shut down, many students – up to 25 – came back to IC anyway and managed to find boarding in homes nearby. With the scarcity of textbooks, MacLachlan had no choice but to relegate the responsibility of securing the required books to the students – unfortunately, giving birth to a black market of IC textbooks. Still, the students came.

“Owing to the friendly attitude of the Governor, I was again able to take charge of regular morning chapel exercise, and to continue the care of office administration and accounts in addition to my regular classroom



duties,” he wrote the Board in the 1917-1918 Annual Presidential Report. “Dean Reed, as acting Mudir, represents the College before the government and, in addition to his duties as Dean, conducts four hours of daily classroom work.”

For his part, Prof. Caldwell had his own load of classwork and ran the electric lighting plant and library.

Somehow, the men kept IC open and classes running and as MacLachlan insisted with “very thorough work which was done in all the classes, and the former standards were fully mainlined in the classroom and the final examinations.”

Despite his own troubles, it would have been very difficult for MacLachlan to turn a blind eye to the obvious and growing needs around him.

The first call for relief work from a nearby Greek village, Prophet Elias, made up of 100 families. The men of the village were called to serve in the auxiliary service camp in the Turkish army - leaving the women and children destitute. Upon hearing the news, MacLachlan set up a relief center in the village. But the center soon became overwhelmed with desperate appeals from other neighboring villages. Finally, MacLachlan moved the center to the IC campus itself.

The Turkish government, for its part, was providing rationed supplies at two cents a day. But even that proved too much money for famine ridden families.

“We are now feeding two thousand daily, and our food supplies are limited to horse beans and olive oil, both very common and nourishing articles of diets,” wrote MacLachlan. “But as the

war continues, all food supplies were requisitioned by the government and we could no longer purchase supplies in the interior (of the country) and for some time we provided the money equivalent of the food ration for each family.”

This, MacLachlan was able to provide, thanks to a ten thousand dollars gift from the American Near East Relief.

In the midst of the relief operation and despite the war and the famine, MacLachlan had to hold his chuckles as he noted a Turkish volunteer, Mehmet Bey, adding his own little tidbit in the relief work. For every handout, he would sternly tell the recipients, “Pray for the Americans.”

Meanwhile, the war seemed never ending. Could IC possibly continue for another year?

“We recognize the possibility and perhaps even the probability of America and Turkey being at war with each other before the time for our autumn opening arrives,” he wrote. “This, we presume, would mean the closing of the college by the Turkish authorities, and yet such a step might not necessarily follow, and in view of all the ways in which the college has been guided and blessed in the past, we are hopeful that even another year of service is possible under existing conditions.”

To be continued....

Historical information based on: An interview with Dr. Howard Reed (summer 2011); Potpourri of Sidelights and Shadows from Turkey, by Alexander MacLachlan, 1937; The Fifteenth Annual President's Report and Financial Statement, 1917-1918.



Ain Aar: The Beginning

Photos: 1988

The Board's decision was clear. Continue searching for a piece of land. IC will open a branch in the eastern side of the country. The task fell into the lap of Acting President, Edmond Tohme, who had recently taken up the role leading the school. Still reeling from the sudden death of Alton Reynolds, IC's President, Tohme was still adjusting to this new role.

The year was 1986. The country was in the midst of a vicious civil war. Reynolds' main job had become keeping IC open as well as staff and faculty motivated. It was trying times. One of IC's former Directors, Frank Reed, was kidnapped – during a spate of kidnapping of foreigners living in West Beirut - putting other foreign teachers in dire danger. (Reed was released three and a half years later.) The student body had decreased, as indeed had faculty members.

Truth be told, the school was on the brink of a financial disaster. In New York, then Chairman of the Board, William Turner, found himself under pressure to relocate the school to Greece or Egypt. It was a hard decision. It just took one shell to fall on the Ras Beirut campus, and hundreds would be killed. Next door, AUB President Malcolm Kerr had been assassinated just two years before

- soon after AUB took the decision to keep its doors open.

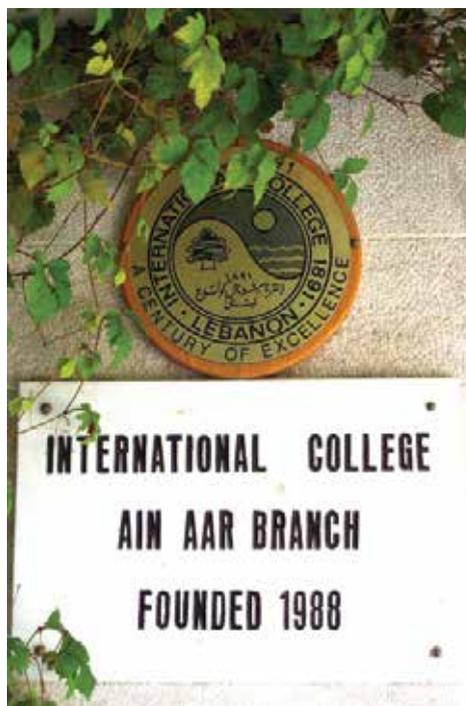
Finally, the Board of Trustees took a final decision: no. IC will remain in Ras Beirut. But another decision soon cropped up. Should IC open a branch in the east side of Beirut – to accommodate students living in the east side of the country? The Board voted yes.

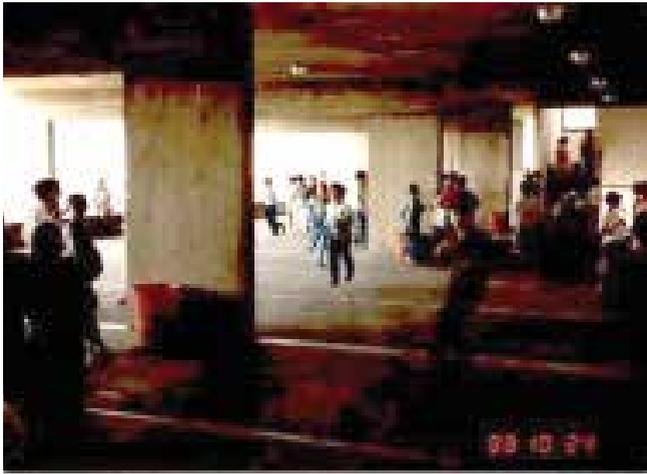
Turner came across much resistance. "Even the US government told me that if we do this, we are accepting the partitioning of the country," he said, "and that we would not receive any financial support for that campus. Even AUB called me and said don't do it."*

The Board held its ground and a Capital Campaign was launched. Most likely, it would be a temporary school – just until the war was over.

The Board gave Alton Reynolds the green light to search for a piece of land. But in October of 1986, Reynolds suffered a fatal heart attack. Tohme was made Acting President and inherited the task. "Reynolds already had a small group of consultants searching for a piece of land," said Tohme. "There were a lot of offers that he was considering at the time. But Ain Aar was not one of them."

Tohme continued to look. "We were looking at Keserwan





and Jbeil,” he said, “People were coming with offers. But none really appealed to me.”

Until, that is, when two developers approached Tohme. Their offer: not only will they sell IC a piece of land in the village of Ain Aar (just a few kilometers away from Bekfaya) but they will construct a small building for IC according to the school’s specifications.

The land had breathtaking views. The village quaint and friendly. It would be the perfect place for IC. Since the American Board members couldn’t come to Lebanon, the Board had to take his word that it was indeed a good location. “Most of the negotiations with the Board took place over the phone or by telex,” said Tohme. “And whenever I went to the US.”

Papers were drawn. Construction began. Tohme got his team together. It was a committed group. Then Ras Beirut Elementary School Director, Mona Habib, worked with the architect.

“To be honest, it really wasn’t clear what we were going to do,” recalled Tohme. “Should we only create a lower school? What if the war ended soon, what do we do then? It was really on a try-as-you-go basis.”

Finally, Tohme and team decided to go only up to Grade 7 – with both English and French sections. In the fall of 1987 construction began. In October of 1988, construction was completed.

British national Janet Hyde Clark, who was working at the ERC (Educational Resources Center) was hired as the School Director.

Locating English speaking teachers proved to be difficult, but finally enough were hired and the school opened its doors.

The first year saw about 120 students.

The challenge now for Tohme was

Joëlle Kahwaji’97 was one of the first students who entered the doors of Ain Aar. Originally a student at the Ras Beirut campus, her parents had fled the area and settled in the east side. In 1989, she returned to the Ras Beirut campus – this time her parents fleeing the east side. But after only a year, she returned to Ain Aar. Today, her two children are enrolled at Ain Aar and she is the newly appointed Advancement officer.

“I remember that when we arrived to the school, it was still a construction site. We were only a handful of students really and because there were only a few students in every class, we used to do activities together. We loved it. I remember studying outside a lot under the trees. Since we didn’t have a real playground then, we used to hike in the village and young and older kids played together a lot. We became a family. I knew everyone and everyone knew me. I remember the Director, Miss Clark, hugging us all the time. She had on flip flops and would bring her lunch and eat with us. It was fun waiting for construction to finish because we would run and claim whatever they finished as ours. The basketball court, for example, was ‘baptized’ by us and we engraved our names on the wood there.



There was just one building (today’s Upper School) then and the new basketball court but that was it. No extension building or football field like now. Some of those first teachers are still there now. Despite of the war, these were great times for us Ain Aar kids.



Giselle Mouawad

I was living in the village when I heard that a new school opened and had vacancies. I applied for a job and was immediately hired as the bus supervisor and secretary. At the time, I was still studying for my sociology degree but I took the job. Then two years after we opened, war broke out in this part of the country. The students left. Some went to IC's Ras Beirut campus, some to other schools and some were homeschooled – and we provided the homework. I, and several staff members from the Physical Plant, were asked to come every day and keep the school open, even though there were not students. So I did. Day after day for a year, I came and sat alone in the office hoping that the children would come back one day. When the war finished, they did and all went back to normal. The school grew. We were one family in those early days.



running the two campuses and having to cross the city's notorious and deadly 'Green Line.'

"I spent the weekends in the east side so I would be at Ain Aar all day on Monday then cross over to Ras Beirut for the rest of the week," recalled Tohme.

Before he knew it, Ain Aar's student body grew dramatically and was quickly becoming an entity in itself. The war ended only three years later but it was clear to all that Ain Aar had become not just a temporary school. It was unquestionably here to stay. So the question now had become: to join Ras Beirut at the Secondary level or not to join?

"You become a prisoner of your own act," he said. "The more students you have the more you have to expand. Until, one day, you stop and say: how far are we going to expand?"

It was a difficult question. Finally, the decision was made: Ain Aar would only take students up to Grade 9. After that, students would have to commute to Ras Beirut.

More resistance. A lot more arguments. In New York, the Board's decision was



unwavering. Tohme was equally resolute.

After all, wasn't it the duty of a leading school to bring the country together?

"We didn't want a school that would entirely be made up of one community," said Tohme, "we cannot continue to live separately like this."

Today, Ain Aar boasts over 800 students. Another Capital Campaign was recently launched to add on new modern facilities and upgrade the existing ones.

"It took a lot of commitment and work to make Ain Aar happen," said Tohme. "So many people were involved to make it what it is. Ain Aar has taken on an identity of its own. It is IC's success story."

**Interview with William Turner "The Man Behind the Scenes," IC Newsletter, Winter 2011*



Araxie Melkonian

I was hired to work in the Preschool. I remember there was a terrible battle once and the parents could not reach the school. We called them and told them not to come and that we will keep the children at school. We put mattresses in the hallway for the children. Ms. Hayden went out to get them milk and food. And we spent the night singing for them and playing games. The next day, when the parents arrived, the children didn't want to go home! Now, some of those children are parents and have their children here.



THE LANGUAGE OF SOUND

From Berlin to Beirut. It was a novel idea. Of course, IC will participate. For it is not every day that students will get a chance to stop lessons and listen to the world around them.

And so it was German representatives from the Humboldt Forum Academy arrived in November from Berlin to the Ain Aar campus to work with 20 Grade 6 students on a pilot workshop called “capturing Be & Be (Berlin to Beirut), from mouth to ear.”

The focus was sound. Sounds created. Sounds discovered. Loud sounds. Squeaky sounds. Low sounds. Murmuring sounds.

It is a language of its own. And thanks to Thomas Edison and his

phonograph, this language has its own channel.

Who better to revel in this language than young listeners just awakening to the world around them.

As their German peers took off in their journey of discovering sounds, so did IC students – led by Emanuele Valariano, Felix Classen and Siska.

Lessons were stopped for a week – except for two hours at the end of the day – as students worked intensively uncovering various sounds. The workshop is based on a well-known Chinese game, better known in Lebanon as ‘téléphone cassé.’ The use of the game emphasizes the depth of sounds and its layers in a general perspective and encourages students to conduct experimental improvisations in sound making. The result of both simultaneous workshops in Berlin and Beirut, would be a recording and a joint exhibition at the prestigious Humboldt Box in Berlin entitled “[Loudly] Listen to the World”.

While German students used the Berlin phonogram archive of the Ethnological Museum (sound archive of the Humboldt University in Berlin), IC students received much of their knowledge from the AMAR Foundation that boasts one of the largest collections of historic recordings from the entire Arab region.

For a week, Ain Aar Upper School hallways resonated with interesting and yet sometimes eerie sounds. It could be the scraping of chairs, the overturning of tables, the indiscernible





thuds of this or that.

Or very simply, “the falling of leaves or olives,” said Yara Oun, 11. “Listen closely and you can hear it.”

Or sounds you never thought existed. “I just removed a plastic bottle cap stuck in a hole in the ground,” said Carlos Daoui. “That produced a great sound.”

The sixth graders were seen all over the campus recording sounds, following people around as they examined different shoe soles, infiltrating the Preschool playground to record the hum of tricycle wheels.

The basketball court, the football field – all suddenly spoke to them. It was an exciting language.

Ilias Oun simply overturned a drum and “made different sounds,” he said. “You wouldn’t think so but it does.”

Alexandre Elias and his group created a human beat box – vocal percussion imitating drum machines using their mouth, lips, tongues and voice.

Lucas Chirazi experimented with paper. But crinkling noises were not particularly appealing to 11-year-old boys. Yet unfolding a paper in a certain way “can create a huge popping noise,” he said.

Leonard Labaki was only too pleased to demonstrate.

True, it was a sound which promises to jolt any unsuspecting teacher and parent.

And, of course, there were the tried-and-tested old-fashioned lessons unremittingly repeated and regularly disregarded by offspring: “loud noises are harmful to the eardrum especially

when wearing headphones,” explained Lea Abu Sleiman, while some noises “are disturbing in class,” declared Elias Tawk.

“It was like a new horizon opened up to our students,” said IC music teacher, Arlette Akl, who worked alongside the German delegation during their stay. “It was a challenging week. The group work was intensive in every way. But at the end, the recording was amazing.”

No regrets. Especially none from IC Upper Elementary and Middle School Director, Diana Aboulebdé.

It was she who received a surprising email one morning from the parent of a former student who recalled the Director’s fondness for the arts. Would Aboulebdé be interested in allowing her students a week off to partake in a joint Berlin-Beirut workshop?

“I didn’t even hesitate,” said Aboulebdé. “Education is not all about academics. Arts, music and drama are equally important. Such a project would benefit our students and expose them to new experiences. Of course we will take part.”

The workshop was concluded with an exhibition for parents.

As for the students, the experience has been an amazing journey into a world of sounds but most important – and, when you are 11, a very vital side note: it was a chance to miss a whole week of formal lessons.

The exhibition “[Loudly] Listen to the World” opened on March 22 and will continue until 16 September at the Humboldt-Box, Berlin.



WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Had someone told **Rima Kotaiche El-Husseini '92** that in only six years she would be declared “The Most Impactful Lebanese Woman” and win the Evelyn Bustros Foundation award, she wouldn’t have believed it.

And neither did she believe it when she was called up to the stage during the Fortune Most Powerful Women Summit held in California to receive the 2016 Fortune and Goldman Sachs Global Women Leaders award. Or, a year later, when she was awarded the Woman of the Year in Social Entrepreneurship by UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization).

Her journey started simply enough. A covert entrepreneur who got antsy with her 9-to-5 bank job and, in 1996, quit and co-founded her own company with her sister.

Blessing, which specializes in luxury events’ chocolates and gifts, was a great success. So much so that it expanded into the Arab world.

This marked the beginning of her journey.

In 2012, she was selected as one of 25 women from all over the world to join the Fortune/US State Department Mentoring program, a program aiming to provide women entrepreneurs a shadowing and mentoring experience with some of the most powerful women in business.

El-Husseini was assigned to be under the mentorship of none other than the Vice-Chair of Nielson Company, Susan Whiting – voted as one of Fortune’s most powerful women.

But, upon her return to Lebanon, El-Husseini felt troubled.

“The concept of mentoring among women in business has to be introduced in Lebanon,” she said. “We too have successful women in business who can mentor and empower young women entrepreneurs.”

Indeed, why shouldn’t all Lebanese women entrepreneurs have the chance to be mentored by women leaders in business? “So I thought why don’t we create a network of women in business here?” she said. Her initiative, The

Blessing Foundation – an offshoot of her business name – was launched in 2012, with a mission to empower women in business, to start, sustain, evolve and scale up their enterprises.

With three young children at home and a full time business, the extra work seemed rather intimidating.

“But it became my passion and drive,” she said. “I felt that I had to make it easier and faster for other businesswomen to succeed.”

As part of Vital Voices Global Leadership Network, she introduced her idea: women mentoring women.

The first year, 30 mentoring ‘couples’ were paired and the year-long program was finally launched.

Even El-Husseini was amazed by the quick success of the program.

Now into its seventh year, the program has seen 200 mentoring relationships established so far.

Every year sees new initiatives such as workshops, panel discussions and various networking events.

In 2016, Vital Voices chose 100 women from across the world to meet in San Francisco to create a 20-year strategy. Five percent were selected from Lebanon. All of them were from the Blessing Foundation.

Funding included grants from BLC Bank’s We Initiative and the US Embassy.

This year she started yet another project: empowering skilled women in rural Lebanon.

This new initiative under The Blessing Foundation is an online platform, ‘SheMinLebnen.com’, to sell women’s products locally and internationally – and pairing rural women with Lebanese designers in a new kind of ‘mentoring’ relationship (Supported by UN Global Compact Network Lebanon).

“I want to see women succeed,” said El-Husseini. “I believe that when women work, communities thrive, they create role models for future generations. Basically, you are creating an ecosystem at home that encourages collaboration, partnership and taking collective decisions. When kids grow in this system, you will replicate this in your family. And when you have many of those, you have a healthy society.”

For more information about the Blessing Foundation or She Min Lebnen go to: TheBlessingFoundation.com/ SheMinLebnen.com





FROM RAGS TO BLANKETS

It was a brilliant idea, really, but someone had to think of it. And so it was that Office Manager, Tima Mrad, was sitting dutifully at her desk in the Physical Plant office when dozens of large stuffed bags were placed in her office.

“We found these while cleaning a room off the sports field,” said a worker. “We don’t know what to do with them. So here they are.”

Mrad stared at the intruding bags. They were filled to the brim with old, abandoned PE clothes gathered over the years. What indeed to do with them?

A few days later, the bags were still sitting in Mrad’s office and Mrad was staring at them thoughtfully yet there was a distinct twinge of annoyance.

Then, as great ideas do, it suddenly hit her. Wasn’t the Ras Beirut Parents’ Committee involved in environment projects?

Immediately, Viviane El Imad, a member of the Committee showed up to the office. The project fits quite nicely with the Parents’ Committee’s goal to turn IC into a zero waste community. In fact, it was

the perfect project for the Committee to fund.

“We have to keep trying to reach that level,” she said. “It’s not just about sorting trash but it’s also about our books, pencils and PE clothes. Most people just put them in the trash.”

The women contemplated the PE outfit bags.

“We will use them for an upcycling project,” declared El Imad.

For those not familiar with the term, “upcycling is now the latest effort in sustainability, coined by author William McDonough’s book, *Cradle to Cradle*. ‘Recycling’ takes items – typically plastics, paper, metals or glass – and breaks them down so the basic materials are recovered and can be remade into something new.

These products, however, are usually lower quality than what they were before being recycled.

Upcycling, however, is described as reusing a material without degrading the quality and composition of the material for its next use. So in the process of upcycling, nothing is broken down. The product may

be reworked or reconstructed in a number of different ways but the material stays the same.

“Well,” suggested Mrad finally, “we could turn them into rugs.”

The brainstorming ideas continued. Soon enough, Rita Jadam, IC’s seamstress, was brought into the fold. The seamstress showed no signs of being already overwhelmed with a long list of sewing tasks, and enthusiastically agreed to come out with samples.

Soon enough, the good Rita sewed together a blanket, a baby bunting and a pillow.

Mrad and El Imad looked at each other. The new products would keep many a needy family warm this winter. Why not call on all parents to give in their children’s old PE suits – especially now as the Parent’s Committee had just came out with a new line of PE outfits.

Word was sent out to the IC community: all PE clothes welcome **and** bins were placed in strategic spots throughout the campus. The response was instant. Relieved parents were all too quick to dispose of the redundant PE outfits - taking up precious closet space.

All too soon, the Physical Plant hallway was filled with dozens of boxes.

“Parents were also curious to see how the old PE outfits can be of use to others,” said El Imad. (PE outfits, in good condition, would only have the IC logo removed and donated as jumpsuits).

As for the sewing, the women began contacting NGOs across the country. Do they have the required personnel and sewing machines? A sad no from one NGO after another.

Finally, and as luck would have it, one NGO came through. Arcenciel in Beirut was opening their own upcycling shop to offer affordable clothing (old clothes are transformed into trendy ones) and, of course, to reduce waste. Their shop was well equipped with sewing machines and their employees well trained.

The Physical Plant hallway was soon emptied of its boxes.

Just before Christmas break, several tables were placed across Rockefeller Hall. Students were busy at work tying the eerily familiar blankets, baby bunties and pillows with decorative Christmas ribbons.

Their next assignment would be to deliver the hundreds of packages to needy families across the country.

“It was a lot of work but at the end, we are giving back to the community,” said Mrad. “It was a learning process for students and the entire school.”



IC students giving out the packages to needy families.

IC’s Focus on the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Following an 18-month review of our curriculum and campus life through a sustainability lens, IC is embarking on an exciting and sustainable journey, making use of the 17 SDGs as its guiding framework. The school aims to focus on a few of the SDGs during each academic year, in order to have covered each of the 17 Global Goals by 2020. In line with the UN’s High Level Political Forum which meets in New York in July to discuss progress on specific SDGs each year, the following SDGs have been chosen for IC to embrace as guidelines for many of its environmental and social initiatives.

IC, Rugby and Syria

This wasn't just another sports field for the five Syrian coaches who arrived at IC in February to take part in a rugby training session. It wasn't just any workshop and certainly not just any certificate. For whatever they would learn right here at IC, will earn them the much needed Level 2 Coaching Certificate – and help provide an official path towards becoming full members of Asian Rugby. A boost they, greatly need in war-torn Syria.

Among them was UN engineer, Mohamed Jorda. “We are here so our

coaches will go back and take our teams to a new higher level,” he explained. The sport was introduced in Syria in 2004 and then rapidly grew during the war as more teams formed.

It was only last year that, as the Secretary-General of the Higher Syrian Rugby National Federation, he was invited to a rugby game taking place in Sweida.

Cautiously, Jorda made his way to Sweida. He had heard that the roads were safe despite the imposing presence of checkpoints. Still, he was too curious and too ecstatic not to go. It would be the first rugby game ever held in Sweida. Rugby wasn't a national sport in Syria by any means. In fact, many Syrians had never heard of it. So will anyone even show up to the game?

There, Jorda stared in disbelief. The stadium was full of onlookers. Hundreds of them. Their cheers could be heard for miles. Sweida had pulled it off. It officially had its own rugby team and, moreover, a now recent spinoff: an under-20 boys' and girls' team.

Their coach and founder is 20-year-old Bassel al Halabi, a 4th year engineering student. “I know it is not a popular game in Syria”, he said. “But I have always loved it and watched it on TV.”

An avid athlete, he was approached by the Syrian Rugby Federation last year. How would he feel about starting a rugby team in Sweida?

Al Halabi got his friends together. After two months of training, they had a team.

Soon enough, his team was playing others from Damascus. One of them was Imad Kobeissi's team, a dentistry student in Damascus. The 22-year-old grew up watching American football on TV and immediately joined the university rugby team. He soon fell in love with it and before long became the coach of his own team. “We need outlets,” he said. “We need to run and tackle. This alone lets out the stress. It is helping us cope with this pressure around us.”

The ultimate goal: to reach the highest level in rugby certification. And thus the arrival – thanks to the funding of Asia Rugby and the organization of the Lebanese Rugby Union Federation – of the five Syrian rugby coaches to IC, to take part in the four-day Coaching the Coaches Training Workshop (Level 2).

While rugby was introduced in Syria in





2004, the Beirut Phoenicians rugby team was created in the 1990s, by brothers Alex and Mike Jammal. The team played their first game against a British warship. Today, there are four other Lebanese rugby teams and five school teams across the country including IC.

“Now we are trying to become a member of the World Rugby Team,” explained Steven Wrigglesworth, the National Coach of Lebanon Rugby who lives in Cyprus and came over for the training session. “We are trying to shape and develop Lebanese rugby for the future and there are many challenging requirements to meet.”

“It is important for the IC rugby squad that we follow rugby’s core values and strengthen our rugby community with good relationships with other players, teams, and nationalities,” said Richard Bampfylde, Head of Rugby at IC. “During difficult times, rugby, and sport in general, can be a great relief. We have seen how our own IC students find it a great stress reliever from their academic demands.”

The Rugby Workshop was attended by coaches and trainers from various countries including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Tunisia.

Our goal is to keep the flame going,” said Jorda. “This sport is bringing people together. People come to see the teams play because they want to be happy. They want to cheer us on. They are tired of the war. If we stopped playing rugby, the game will end there. It is up to us to keep it going. And this is what we are doing by coming here.”

And, very softly, he continued, “and every year we say that tomorrow will be better...”



INTO THE 'JUNGLE'

The building was so run down that her father determinedly drove past it. “Dad,” she said. “This is it. The GPS says this is the building.”

Reluctantly, her father drove back to the building and dropped his precious 21-year-old daughter at the door – a door which was politely and firmly slammed shut after **Nayla Tohme '14** walked in.

Welcome to the Gynecology Without Borders office and residence, in Dunkirk, France. Tohme looked around.

This land, near the tiny village of Bourbourg – is occupied by thousands of migrants from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran.

Referred to as the “jungle,” the area near the tiny village has become a migrant stopover for the last leg of the journey and ultimate destination: UK.

According to French authorities, the migrant camps were dismantled. But migrants continue to come and squat on the land despite the lack of proper sanitary, washing facilities or accommodation. It is here that they vie to find passage on the many trucks – the preferred smuggling route – leaving Dunkirk and Calais bound to England.

As they live in this squalor cared for by various churches and NGOs, migrants must somehow raise funds to pay their smugglers. Ultimately, there is only one way: drugs, alcohol or prostitution.

Among the active NGOs near the ‘jungle’ is the Gynecology Without Borders, mostly made up of midwives who provide medical and psychological help to female refugees, while focusing on their gynecological needs and reproductive health.

But as Tohme would soon find out, the job went well beyond medical and reproductive health.

And whether she liked it or not, this run down building was to be her home for the next two months – the internship period required by her university – Connecticut College. As a psychology major student, it would be her job to assist resident psychologists.

The problem was, however, that there weren’t any psychologists to assist. Their



contract ended and they had left.

So, she, Tohme, would be the sole psychologist, student or not. Oh, and she would also have to clean, cook, fix the plumbing, do the shopping, do the mending, fix the fridge and could she drive the ambulance as well?

The bewildered university student was quickly pulled in to a bedroom. Her sleeping quarters consisted of a metal bed with a thin mattress and what looked like to be a wisp of a pillow. Her bed was pinched right in the middle of two other similar looking beds – occupied by two middle-aged midwives.

Yes, welcome to Dunkirk.

But this was paradise. The worst was yet to come.

Still fazed, Tohme was shepherded early the next morning to a women's safe house. "You will have to counsel women," she was told. "They have been traumatized."

Counsel? She – still a junior at college?

There was no time to brief a young intern and Tohme reluctantly walked into the room. She stared in shock. The "women" were mostly 14- and 15-year-old girls. Some had been raped. Some had been battered. Some were ill. A few older women were fast asleep exhausted from many days' walk from their home countries of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Iraq. All too soon, Tohme's job became to manage the emergency shelter and create a healthy

psycho-social environment for them.

Her duties also included French lessons, informative sessions on contraception and legal rights and babysitting.

Meanwhile, the midwives were driving back to the jungle and bringing yet more women.

A few days later, Tohme herself was relegated to the 'jungle'.

The ambulance doubled as the office. Women and girls stood in queue – all with





Nayla Tohme

shocking stories of imprisonment and rape during their voyage to France.

And so it was for the next two months.

As the weeks passed, her optimism turned to disillusionment as she realized the enormity of the problem and how powerless she and the relentless midwives were at bringing any substantial long-term change to the plight of the refugees.

It was just one terrifying story after another. Sleep deprived, Tohme found herself woken up at all hours to run from one emergency to another. Her duties at the 'jungle' and shelter became blurred. A psychologist, a doctor, a cleaner, a cook, a plumber, a firefighter, a big sister, a daughter – she wasn't sure anymore.

At some point, her emotions became numb as she rushed at 3am to de-freeze a Kurdish family caught trying to enter Britain. Their mode of transportation was a refrigerated truck. Among them was a 2-year-old child.

She learned to stifle her reaction as she lathered the entire body of a 14-year-old Ethiopian girl covered with scabies. The girl would only allow Tohme near her.



And hold back her tears as she informed a poor migrant that she had breast cancer.

Never did she imagine facing the guns of the French SWAT teams when they frequently descended upon the 'jungle'. Nor did she think about the obvious danger when she raced with the midwives to the 'jungle' during a violent clash between Ethiopians and Eritreans who were hurling killer stones at each other.

With a midwife at the driver's seat, Tohme jumped into the mayhem, directed women into the ambulance, took them to safety and turned back into the 'jungle'. As the killer stones rushed around her head, Tohme ignored the fear now gripping her very bones – sometimes having to drive off with women still running after the ambulance.

These were scenes Tohme would not soon forget.

Then there was Nina. The six-month-old baby was Tohme's bright spot of the day. The Iraqi baby's blue eyes twinkled when she saw Tohme. The intern would wait excitedly for mother and baby to come to the shelter.

Then one day, the mother stopped coming. In the 'jungle', Tohme was informed that the baby's parents managed to get smuggled into the UK in a truck. The baby was left behind and had become a ward of the French state.

In the midst of the bedlam, Tohme's parents arrived to France and asked her to join them at a party at a friend's house. For Tohme, it was a bizarre jump.

Everything around her was surreal. The music. The well-dressed guests. The rich food. The happiness. The laughing.

Was this once her life?

She went back to the 'jungle'. Back to stark reality. She had a job to finish.

Tohme returned to the US after her two-month internship was completed. A part of Dunkirk and Calais went with her. So did the guilt.

"Promoting reproductive health with an all women team was incredibly empowering," she said. "However, my experience was also tinted with guilt. The guilt that comes with having the privilege to step out of this awful reality and move on with my life."

Connecticut College internship program has since reportedly forbidden its students to intern in the 'jungle' for safety reasons. Tohme is currently finishing her last year of University and is writing her thesis, "Cultural Sensitivity Between French Midwives and Refugees." In February, Tohme was chosen to be one of the finalists to give the student Commencement Speech.

Bayard Dodge visits IC

Bayard Dodge, an IC Trustee, spoke with students on campus during his Beirut visit in November 2017. Dodge, who was born in Beirut and has been on the IC Board of Trustees for the past 17 years, is the great -great-grandson of Daniel Bliss who founded AUB in 1866. His grandfather Bayard Dodge, as president of AUB, invited IC to relocate to Beirut from Smyrna (Izmir) in 1936. His great grandfather Cleveland H. Dodge was a founder in 1917 of the Near East Relief which raised more than \$100 million in the United States to provide aid and assistance to survivors of the Armenian genocide. Today, Bayard Dodge is the one of the directors of the NY based Cleveland H. Dodge Foundation



United Strings of Europe

IC welcomed the United Strings of Europe in February to both campuses. Led by Julian Azkoul, the visiting group performed various tunes and educated students on musical instruments. A final performance took place in the Imad Taher Auditorium, Rockefeller Hall.



Dinners & Events



Boston

IC Dinner, hosted by Dr. **Dania Mansour '87** and Dr. Moussa Mansour at their residence in Boston on January 27th, and attended by Board member Anthony Jones, IC president Dr. Don Bergman, VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64** and Katherine Murphy McClintic, the VP for Advancement & Development (NY).



Anthony Jones, Moussa Mansour, Moufid Beydoun '64



Bruce Knox, Tove Hayden, Eric Hayden, Anthony Jones



Dania Mansour '87, Tarek Samad '88, Zeina Fawwaz '86, Aida Hamdan, Ousama Hamdan '71



Alex Zakharia '54 and family celebrating his birthday



Don Bergman, Larry Snyder, Jeanne Snyder, Mary Chebah, Ziad al Khatib '80, Ziyad Mneimneh '76, Oscar Seikaly '75, Christian Chehab '74, Zahra Deford and Mac Deford



Elie Alam '04, Marianne Alam, Alex Zakharia '54, Roman Bensen '83, Monica Bensen, Toufic Zakharia '96, Kate McClintic, Moufid Beydoun '64

Miami

IC Dinner held at the Texas de Brazil on January 30th, and attended by Board member T.M. (Mac) Deford, IC president Dr. Don Bergman, VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64** and Katherine Murphy McClintic, the VP for Advancement & Development (NY).





Nour Chamseddine '12, Lea Hakim '99, Dany Matar '05, Maysam Ali '04, Don Selinger, Salem Al Sabah '74, Moufid Beydoun '64, Randa Radwan



Marey Skelsey, Liz Evans, Bayard Dodge, Victoria Sams, Lisa Sams, Hala Buck, Kate McClintic

Washington D.C.

Hosted by the ICDC Chapter, IC Dinner was held at the Key Bridge Marriott on February 1st, and attended by Chairman of the Board Don Selinger, Board member Bayard Dodge, VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64** and Katherine Murphy McClintic, the VP for Advancement & Development (NY).



Moufid Beydoun '64, Bayard Dodge, Don Selinger, Sana Al Hajj '86, Kate McClintic, Liz Evans, Dany Matar '05, Naser Alizadeh



Zeina Samara '74, Houzama Boubes '71, Rima Bitar, Lynn Hamdan, Raed Hamdan '86, George Bitar '86, Bassel Abou Zeid '11



Houston

IC Dinner held at the Mezza Grill on February 3rd, and attended by Chairman of the Board Don Selinger, VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64** and Katherine Murphy McClintic, the VP for Advancement & Development (NY).



Don Selinger, Tarek Ghandour '78, Mustafa Beydoun, Iman Drooby, Khaldoun Drooby '76, Omar Sawaf '73



San Mateo

IC Dinner held at Tannourine on February 9th, and attended by IC president Dr. Don Bergman and VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64.**



Ahmed Bleik '01, Abed Bachir, Maha Beydoun, Yehia Beydoun '00, Marwan Manneh '97, Diala Rbeiz '00, Wael Barakat '03, Khaled Itani '98



Marwan Nader '82, Jibran Jahshan'82, Hadi Barghash '75, Suzanne Barghash, Rima Yenikomshian, Agheg Yenikomshian '64, Shawn Jahshan, Sonya Nader Sayigh '75, Bassim Sayigh '67, Nabil Saad '85



Don Bergman, John Boudos, Ramsey Hissen '78, Rima Hissen



Sami Badre '57, Mike Ahmar '80, Jay Lovely, Kira Reed, Gina Ahmar, Hania Ahmar '92, Mohamed Haidar '96, Talal Beydoun '74, Janet Badr



Karim Kano '74, Hisham Hamadeh '92, Dida Saab, Ghaleb Saab '67, Hanna Shammas, Najwa Shammas '65, Rena Jurdi, Moufid Beydoun '64



Hania Ahmar '92, Mike Ahmar '80, Gina Ahmar

Los Angeles

IC Dinner hosted by **Mike Ahmar '80** and **Hania Ahmar '92** on February 10th at their residence, and attended by VP for Alumni and Development **Moufid Beydoun '64**.





Don Bergman, John Khabbaz, Anne Murphy, Don Selinger, Richard Murphy, Vanissa Ramadan, Majdi Ramadan, Daniel Marshi, Karen Khabbaz



New York

IC Dinner hosted by **Marwan Marshi '79** on February 13th at the Harvard Club, and attended by the Board and Alumni.



Reem Acra '75, Mounir Barakat '64, Moufid Beydoun '64, Mona Housami, Mazin Irani '64, Wael Bayazid '70, Hayat Barakat, Nicholas Tabbal '65



Fred Crawford, Derik Betts, Sofia Crawford, Arthur Waffa, Irene Cordahi, Sandy Rea, Mac Deford



Daniel Marshi, Don Selinger



Adib Kassis '81, Rola Baddoura, Hani Beyhum '75, Rashid Baddoura '66, Shereen Ghandour '87



Tania El Alam '05, Talal Jundi '86, Badr El Hasan '97, Edwin Baladi '04, Anthony Jones

In Memoriam

We regret to inform you that **Farouk al Khoush '61** passed away in February 2018. His family would like to share the following letter, received by his eldest daughter, **Mouazzaz Lama El Kouche '90**, from Al Khoush's best friend, Dr **Bahij Nuwayhid '61**.

Mr Al Khoush leaves being a wife, four children and six grandchildren.

I was very saddened to hear about the passing away of Farouk, your dear father. Kathy, Ziyad and I would like to offer our condolences and hope that the passage of time will lessen your pains and brings back memories of the good times that you had with your father.

Farouk and I met in 1960 at the International College (IC) and within few months we became close friends. He introduced me to his friends and I did the same and soon enough we became a bunch of teenagers



who met frequently and enjoyed the company of each other. Some of us left the country and others pursued different career options. Your father was accepted to the School Of Pharmacy, I to the School Of Medicine, both at the AUB, and our friend Ghassan Touma at Heidelberg School Of Medicine. Needless to say, we remained friends over the years and during my occasional visits to Beirut, I used to visit him at his pharmacy in the El Wiza'ai area. As you might know, this area was impoverished and was a temporary /permanent dwelling for many of the refugees from the South of Lebanon during the Israeli occupation. People used to come to him with chest x - rays, symptoms of various illnesses and names of medications

written by their own hands on a strip of paper. Your father would examine them, diagnose them and give them shots or oral medications. Coming from the States, I was surprised by his behavior and told him "Farouk, you are treating these individuals as a physician will do, why don't they go to their own physician for treatment and come to you for medications?" I remember his answer very clearly. "These people do not have enough money to eat, buy medications or go to a physician and if left them to their own devices, they will get seriously ill. I do my best to diagnose and treat them appropriately".

Your father and I were good friends for 58 years and the last time I talked with him was about three months ago. As usual, we remembered the good old times but it never crossed our minds that it will be our last conversation and our last goodbye. May God bless his soul.

Ammou Bahij

We regret to inform you that **Samir Sidani '67** passed away in August 2017. IC staff and faculty send their deepest condolences to the Sidani family.

We regret to inform you that Dr. **Ibrahim Dabbous '53** passed away in November 2017. IC staff and faculty send their deepest condolences to the Dabbous family.

We regret to inform you that **Saja Tourbah '08** passed away in October 2017. IC staff and faculty send their deepest condolences to the Tourbah family.

We regret to inform you that **Labib Nassar '62** passed away in February 2018. IC staff and faculty send their deepest condolences to the Nassar family.



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**Save
 the Date**

IC Annual Dinner

Celebrating Ain Aar's
 30th Anniversary

Wednesday

20 June, 2018

7:00 P.M.

Beirut - Lebanon



LEADERS
 IN THE MAKING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dubai Suhoor Dinner on **May 19, 2018** at Music Hall, Jumeirah.
25th Anniversary reunion class of 1993 on **July 6, 2018** at IC Campus, Beirut.
10th Anniversary reunion class of 2008 on **July 7, 2018** at IC Campus, Beirut.

For tickets/information contact:
 alumni@ic.edu.lb - Tel: 9611367433

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