

## HOW IS THE DEAR OLD SCHOOL HE SAID...

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Class '55  
Chairman  
BHSC  
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Mr. President

This is how you have summoned us to this reunion and it indicates the interest that you and members of your association take in BHS.

Of course it is not uncommon for former students to remember their school and flock back to it... upon the first call... but then how many such former students accept without much resistance the term "OLD" to describe them and not feel NIGGLED by it.

But let's face it... Scholars we WERE... and old... we are going to be...

And in this context, how many associations of former students of schools have addressed their memberships to all those who attended school rather than restrict them to graduates.

This is the commendable attitude of the Old Scholars Association of BHS which brings us together again today... much older... and less scholarly.

Members of the Old Scholars Association of BHS and former students,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the most beautiful campus for a school in Lebanon. Some of us have not seen it in many years and only reminisce the old times... To those I say in response to the summoning call of our president

**She is Thriving Yet**

Thanks to the faith with which these walls were built and to the convictions of the founders.

At this point it may be of interest to rush through a little history of our school in order to highlight certain crossroads in its development.

In 1875 Mr. Theophilus Waldmeier bought Ain es-Salam with about 20,000 square meters of land and started the first girl's school, then in 1876 started a training centre for boys. Both these schools were later to be called the High School for Girls and the High School for Boys.

Dr. Antonios Manasseh was the first



principal to be appointed by Waldmeier. He was followed by Mr. Lutfallah Rizkallah in 1880 until 1886.

It was during the term of Thomas Little 1895-1908 when the Boys' training school became to be known as the Boys High School. The curriculum was changed and the students from Brummana quickly won an enviable reputation with the Institution of Higher Studies, later to become AUB. He introduced cricket and football and with the boys dug and levelled, what Farideh Akl claims to be the first football field in the Middle East. It was "a funny little field for six-a-side football". Thomas Little died in his bed at the school and it is said that he insisted on his deathbed that the loud noises of the playing students outside his bedroom to continue regardless of his condition, but when he passed away a sad and marked quietness befell all children in the school.

Mr. Oliver from Ras El-Metn took charge until Mr. Bocca was sent to Lebanon.

During World War I school closed down and the British left Lebanon. Dr. Manasseh continued to care for the Hospital and the property of the Society of Friends, while Mr. Tanios Cortas opened a kitchen to feed the poor.

Marshal Fox, the head Quaker in Lebanon, returned from Egypt after the war and reopened the school.

In 1930 Mr. Christopher Naish was called to Brummana and he served until Mr. John Turtle took over in 1938, Mr. Naish wrote the school song in 1930.

During World War II, the British Quakers in Lebanon, being Conscientious Objectors, had to go under cover so they will not have to join the armed forces, but soon after, Mr. Richard Wright returned to Brummana and served with John Turtle until 1947 when Dr. Clay was appointed head. By this time the school's enrollment was nearly 550 with about 80 boarders between 9-19.

Herbert Dobbing followed in 1948 and was principal until 1957 when he retired in Brummana and continued to teach English and Scriptures. The school had taken a very long educational leap forward during the term of Mr. Dobbing. He wrote, "While the political excitement grew amongst students in schools in Lebanon, Brummana experienced a marked calmness"; Mr. Dobbing was later to become a very ardent supporter of the Palestinian cause.

Duncan Campbell became head between 1957 and 62 and the school continued to soar among eagles in Lebanon, but an unfortunate political incident with some teachers made him give up Brummana.

Grovesnor succeeded Mr. Campbell and promoted the school in the Arabian Gulf. The school noted further growth in its boarding department.

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh opened Edinburgh House, which, together with Little House and the Craft Block were a donation to Brummana by the British School in Lebanon, an institution which was to replace Victoria College of Egypt.

During Barty Knight's term, 1968-1974, the school saw the highest enrollment of students. A total of 780 from 48 nations with 330 boarders of which 85 were girls. The school was on its way to become the most important British school in the Middle East. The unfortunate outbreak of the armed conflicts in 1975 and some local annoyances forced Mr. Knight to leave, together with all non Lebanese boarders. Thus the boarding section quickly shrunk to a mere 18 in 1978. By that time all the 18 expatriate staff had left except for Jim Shaw and Sue Mneimneh and the student body began to change to a single denomination with only a Lebanese program of studies.

After Mr. Knight three British principals served, namely, Mr. Hudson 1975-76, Mr. Cyril Harvey 1976-78 and Mr. Alan Rowland 1978-82.



Our Naim Baroud became acting principal until 1985 when the Quakers finally decided to leave Lebanon and handed over the school to BHSCS.

The history of the School, at the ground level, can only be embodied by the man who loved us most. The man who has preached goodness, the man whom we loved with Awe. Najib Baz.

In 1954 the first school committee was formed in Lebanon and chaired by Emile Cortas.

Throughout its modern history, Old Scholars have been involved in service of the school. The late Nuhad Essaid was Chairman of the Executive Committee between 1966-74, Joseph Kan'aan between 1974-76, Amine M. Daouk between 1976-81, Richard Wright co-chaired the committee with Duncan Campbell between 81-85.

Incidentally Mr. Richard Wright is now retired in Saffron Walden In England and continues with his wife Hildegard, to follow with deep interest the news of Brummana. Mr. Campbell together with his wife Jocelyn follow closely the school news, Jocelyn is chairman of the Brummana Group. She produces the LINK newsletter, and she will soon be secretary of the M.E. committee at Friends House.

In 1985 six Old Scholars together with Professor Ralph Crow, who all had previously served on the school committee, formed the BHS Cultural Society with a singular objective, THAT of service, in order to maintain the continuity of BHS. They are

Amine M. Daouk	Chairman
Albert Rizk	Secretary General
Raja Younis	Treasurer
Ralph Crow PhD	Member
Nadim Naimy PhD	Member
Dr. Joseph Siman	Member
Dr. Nadim Cortas	Member

BHSCS took over the responsibilities of administration of the school and worked, together with a devoted body of staff, and

by the Grace of God, succeeded to raise the number of students from 400 students to 725 in 1991. Noteworthy are good school results and successes at AUB Entrance exams, SQ etc... The school now regained its position and is considered one of the important English medium schools in Lebanon.

In 1988 and 1990 Old Scholars in Kuwait and Bahrain met to celebrate a reunion and discussed the means of assistance they could offer the school. All allusions to partisan takeover of the school were duly suppressed by friends like the three Khaleds, Shamma, Saab and Salaam. This year we note this gratifying interest of Old Scholars in Lebanon to promote our BHS and try to participate in its development which will regain for BHS the prominence it deserves.

Many Old Scholars send their children to school at BHS, some have served on the Parents Association and I must pay tribute to all P.A. Committee members, although it was never spelt out in black and white but their support has made it possible for the school to go on.

I may have taken more time than our President had allowed me, for that I beg your indulgence and hope that some points have been clarified.

I, like yourselves, am confident that this first encounter will proceed in the same diligence with which it was prepared by members of the OSA and the President. I assure you that the BHSCS is receptive to all suggestions and will always solicit your support.

On behalf of members of BHSCS and the school staff, I present to you our compliments and thank you for this gesture. We will look forward to a long and durable association. In the meantime I wish this reunion all success and to you all a Happy New Year.

Thank you.