Joy to the World the Lord has Come

Letter from the President

A year has passed and here we are about to celebrate the Christmas Season. The real meaning of Christmas is Love. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3.16)

On November 28, 2014, I was invited along with other guests by President Dr. Peter Dorman and Mrs. Kathy Dorman for a special reception at the Marquand House for they were hosting to launch the 1866 Society, a new philanthropic community comprising AUB’s most committed and loyal supporters. This reception was intended to recognize us for our unwavering support of AUB over many years and to extend to us to be part of the 1866 Society where we will inspire others with our generosity. This inaugural event will become an annual event to honor all 1866 Society members who have given a gift of any size to AUB in seven or more of the past ten years.

In this sense, the Women’s League is a relatively small supporter because we offer each year a donation to “The Disabled Students’ Fund at AUB” from the proceeds of all our activities along with the membership fee.

Wish you all a Happy, Peaceful and Joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Lamia Kawar
November Trip

On a sunny Wednesday on the 19th of November, the Women's League organized a day trip to Baakline (Chouf area). Our breakfast stop was at "Moulin d'Or'. Where the 73 ladies and 2 gentlemen had their coffee and a bite. Then we headed straight up to "Artisan de Chouf" in Baakline. Many splendid handwork items were displayed and nearly everybody bought something. Then we proceeded to the "Hamadeh Palace or Seray" where Mr. Talat Hamadeh, one of the owners of this Palace was waiting for us to show us around one of the most beautiful Palaces in Lebanon. It is 430 years old, built through many years and with an area of 5000 m². It features Islamic and Ottoman Art. It consists of the "السلاملك والخطل" areas with many Arabic Saloons, having in them a display of old portraits of famous Druze celebrities, swords, equipments, and history of the Chouf area. In the name of the Women's League, we all thanked Mr. Hamadeh for his hospitality in showing us around and explaining the history of the Palace. Not to mention that our Deputy Mr. Marwan Hamadeh is one of the owners of this Palace.

We then proceeded to the Baakline National Library which was built during the Ottoman Empire in 1897 as a Seray. At that time it contained a prison. Then in 1987, with the initiative of Mr. Walid Jumblat, it was transformed into a National Library under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. It consists of a Public Library with around 110,000 Books, 280,000 Magazines and Inscriptions, a Computer Center, Archives Center, a Center for teaching Arabic, English and French (all free of charge) and an Auditorium. In July 24, 2011, the Baakline National Library was awarded by "The Guinness Book of Records", an award for exchanging books, 8000 books in 8 hours.

Then we had a delicious Lebanese Mezze'ah and Barbecue in the "Country Gate Restaurant in Deir el-Qamar after which, we headed back to Beirut. Everybody thanked Mrs. Zeina Arab for all her efforts in organizing this great trip.
Speaker of the Month of November

Our Speaker for the month of November was Mrs. Roula Rafic Al-Ajouz Sidani. She was introduced by our Program Chairperson, Mrs. Suad Khoury, saying that she was born in Beirut, graduated from LAU with a BA degree in Communication and Teaching Diploma and now she is the Publisher and Editor-in-chief of Middle East Airlines (MEA) Magazine, "إحية الأرز" since 2000.

Mrs. Al-Ajouz started her lecture by reciting some beautiful quotations eg. "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are" (a quotation By Theodore Roosevelt). She shared with us her experiences in life, how she became a member of the Beirut Municipality in 1998 until 2010 (she was the only female). She was only 32 years old with no experience in politics, only with a will to serve and help others and a strong determination to succeed in life. Another experience she shared was that “forty days after the assassination of Prime Minister the late Mr. Rafic Harriri in 2005 (God Bless his Soul), Mrs. Sidani tried to revive Beirut by pursuing an idea called "غاء الحياة إلى وسط بيروت". She tried her best to revive the life in Beirut by opening all the Restaurants and shops with a slogan: "النزل لتمشى ونتعشي". Many people than offered chocrates, flowers etc. and pictures for free.

She ended her Lecture with a quote: (She altered): “Sooner or later, we are all going to leave this world, until then may we live everyday of our lives, and live in passion and love to each other and humanity".
Traditional Christmas cake

1. The night before, place the dried fruit in a saucepan with the booze and bring to a simmer. Pour into a bowl, cool, cover and leave to soften.
2. The following day, preheat the oven to 150C/gas 2 and line the base and sides of a 23cm round tin or a 20cm square tin with a double layer of greaseproof paper. You’ll need the side lining to be a good 8cm higher than the tin.
3. If you’d like your cake to be particularly moist, blitz half the soaked fruit in a food processor to make a paste, and stir back into the rest of the fruit. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Grate in the zest of your lemon and beat in the eggs, one at a time. Mix in the treacle. Sift the flour and combine with the spices and ground almonds. Mix into the butter mixture, alternating with the soaked fruit. Finally, fold in the walnuts. Spoon the mixture into the lined tin and bake in the oven for about 3 hours. Check after 2½ hours and then every 20 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean.
4. As soon as the cake comes out of the oven, brush with a little more booze. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes and then remove, placing it directly onto a large sheet of tin foil. Wrap it up twice to retain the heat for as long as possible. After a few hours, remove the foil and wrap the cake up again in a double sheet of greaseproof paper and a double sheet of tin foil, making sure you can access the cake from the top. Store in an airtight container for 2–12 weeks. During this time, feed the cake the alcohol of your choice by gently pouring it over the top and rewrapping.

Ingredients

- 600g raisins
- 200g currants
- 100g dried sour or glacé cherries
- 250g mixed dried fruits – try prunes, apricots, apples, pears – finely chopped
- 400ml booze, plus extra to ‘feed’ the cake (brandy, sherry, Tia Maria and rum all work well)
- 300g butter, at room temperature
- 200g dark brown sugar
- 1 lemon
- 4 eggs, at room temperature
- 2 tbsp treacle
- 300g plain flour
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- A pinch of ground cloves
- 150g ground almonds
- 150g walnuts, chopped

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- **Our Christmas Lunch** will be held on **Wednesday, December 17, 2014** at the Prime 18 Restaurant of Lancaster Plaza Hotel, Rawcheh, Beirut. The fee is $80 per person and tickets are available with all board members. Come on! buy your ticket now for the places are limited. Hope you will join our Luncheon.

- The **Board of the Women’s League** would like you all who are joining our activities to become members and pay the annual fee which is LL. 50,000 per year.

- **Our next General Meeting** will be on **January 5, 2015** at West Hall, Bathish Auditorium as usual at 4.00 p.m.

- **Wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

Leila Zocca Alameddine
Editor of the Bulletin