Welcome to our latest newsletter where we reflect on our return to live events in London last autumn after a break of nearly 2 years and gear up to gatherings overseas this year in Paris, and Italy. The timing will be determined when we can secure suitable, affordable venues. If you can help with this or would like to help us stage these events as local volunteers or sponsors, please get in touch. Thank you in advance for this support.

In addition will be the first edition of our newsletter featuring an interview and we are starting this series with our Chairman Quentin Compton-Bishop and thank him in cooperating with this suggestion. These interviews aim to highlight the views and motivations of our valuable volunteers helping us grow and develop and their answers hopefully will be our guide on how best we can focus our very finite energy and perhaps you the reader could help in your own way to achieve our higher aims. We are always grateful for all the time and effort given by our friends.

Our activities

Upcoming LHF Events

5 April 2022, 6 pm (UK time)
19th LHF online presentation with guest speaker Gábor Fodor: ‘Changing by the Needs: The Story of the Hungarian Society in Constantinople’ - flyer: - registration:

20 April 2022, 6 pm (UK time)
20th LHF online presentation with guest speakers Tom Rees, Noël Woolrych, George York: ‘The English Consul – Chief of British Intelligence’ - flyer: - registration:

14 June 2022, 6.30 - 8.30 pm
2nd joint LHF / Royal Asiatic Society live lecture gathering with guest speaker Esther-Miriam Wagner: ‘From Tuscany to Egypt and the Levant: 18th-c. Arabic letters in the Prize Paper Collections’ - flyer: - registration:

Current research

If you are seeking help with research, please write to Craig Encer who will endeavour to point you to sources of material or connect you with people in the LHF network who may be able to help. Additionally, we can post requests for assistance in our newsletter.

Michael Refalo - Request for map of Tunis from the 1890s or thereabouts

My interest extends from Algiers to Izmir via Alexandria, Cairo and Beirut and is focussed upon Maltese migrants in those ports. I have recently published a book about the Maltese in Egypt and I am currently researching Tunis, Tripoli and Algiers. If at all possible, I would be most grateful if a map of Tunis from the 1890s or thereabouts is sourced by one of your readers - refalom@gmail.com.

Gabriel Rautenberg - Seeking Contracts for Levant Company

I teach contracts and capital markets at the University of Michigan Law School. I am interested in the early history of the Levant Company (pre-1750), and in particular, in its early contracting practices. Unfortunately, while I have consulted secondary sources and the indexes of the National Archives, I have had trouble finding out where I might find copies of the indentures entered by apprentices or factors to the company, or partnership contracts among the company’s principals (or any of the company’s actual other contracts). I was very much hoping that you could provide me with any direction for my search. Much appreciated, and thank you for your time and consideration. I can be reached at rauterb@umich.edu or +1 (203) 606-6754.

Pat Yale - Writer seeks descendant of Dorina Neave (nee Clifton), author of Romance of the Bosphorus

Istanbul-based writer Pat Yale would very much like to be in touch with Dorina, Lady Neave’s descendants to seek permission to quote from Romance of the Bosphorus in her own upcoming book, Following Miss Bell: Travels Around
Turkey in the Footsteps of Gertrude Bell. Lady Neave’s book includes a reference to a meeting with the famous British explorer. If you can help, please email me on patyale2@hotmail.com.

Mike Smith - Mystery photo identification
The location is probably Smyrna from the Lewis / Laurence family dated 1909 with what appears to be a narrow gauge railway and a ‘Frontier’ sign in French, and a caption suggesting either these ladies are missionaries who are overdressed for the Congo, or that they are a ladies group that raised money to send missionaries to the Congo. Helen and her husband Caleb Lawrence were supported by the US Board of Foreign Missions, so they certainly could have hosted or otherwise supported visiting missionaries. I would welcome readers’ ideas of what this gathering could be.

Mike Smith - mikels1010@gmail.com

Julie Edmonds - Descendant seeks information on Fanny Pompei and family, born 11th March 1905, Smyrna, Turkey
I am Julie Edmonds from Australia, and I have been trying to gather information to help me to build my family tree, but when it comes to my grandmother, I cannot find any information. In ‘Family Search’ it was suggested that she was from the Levantines. My grandmother’s name was Fanny Pompei, born 11th March 1905, Smyrna, Turkey. I am not sure if Fanny is her real name, or just what my grandfather John Alfred Martin called her. Fanny was Greek, with an Italian surname and born in Turkey. I was told her family lived in a big house with servants, she also had a sister who married an Italian named John Petrizza in the 1930’s. The marriage didn’t last long and her sister’s husband move to Australia. Fanny’s sister later married Albert Edizel whom I was told owned a Zipper Manufacturing Company in Turkey.

Julie.edmonds@hotmail.com

Read more:

Chris Seaton - Interested in connecting with any of the Latin community in Cyprus
I am planning to visit Cyprus on a brief holiday, which was the home of my wife’s paternal grandmother and family, next month. I wonder if any readers have any contacts in the Maronite community of Cyprus. Above the name, ‘Prince’ in our tree are the surnames Besson-Carletti, Cosma, Bosgiovich and Mattei. The earliest name I have in that branch of the family is Elias Prince de St Gilles de Antioch Tripoli 1745 (Tripoli, Lebanon) - 1808 (Smyrna, Turkey). I will be grateful for any leads – read more: - foxesontherox@gmail.com

Stefan Haderer - Researching the history of the Shepherd Hotel in Cairo
I am researching the history of the Shepherd Hotel in Cairo, where a number of royalties and famous personalities stayed at the end of the 19th century. Is there any archive material including guestbooks from the year 1890-1895 still available? I am going to Cairo end of May and would be grateful for any hint or expertise. Thank you – stefan.haderer@posteo.at

Recent Events


16th LHF online presentation with guest speaker Dr Vjeran Kursar: 'Croatian Levantines in Ottoman Istanbul', 8 December 2021 - flyer - video.

17th LHF online presentation with guest speaker Brian VanDeMark: 'American University of Beirut: The Story of America's Influence in the Middle East', 13 January 2022 - flyer - slides - video.


18th LHF online presentation with guest speaker Paulina Dominik: 'Levantine-Polish Contacts in Late Ottoman Istanbul', 17 February 2022 - flyer - video.

Recent Website additions

Interviews:
Ozden Mercan – From Constantinople to Livorno: Merchants, Migration and Transfer of Technologies - link;
Ozan Ozavci – Dangerous Gifts: Imperialism, Security and Civil Wars in the Levant – link;
Dominique Gogny – Archives d’Orient: Les notables alexandrins, des héritiers sans héritage (1882-1985) – link;
Brian VanDeMark – American University of Beirut: The Story of America’s Influence in the Middle East – link;
Kaleb Herman Adney – Portfolio Habits: Commercial Networks, Orinetal Tobacco and Extraterritoriality in the Age of International Finance – link;

Galleries:
Paşaköprü Catholic cemetery – link;
Padova Freres Postcards (updated) – link;
Foreign post offices (updated) – link;
Embassy stationary yachts in Constantinople – link;
The French benevolent foundation of Constantinople celebrations (updated) – link;
Advertising boards (updated) – [link]
The former Caravan Bridge cemeteries of Smyrna – [link]
 Feast of San Giovanni Bosco – [link]
Grazia Dura Bin and Levant new world connections – [link]
Civitas Hymn of Smyrna – [link]

Submissions:
Recollections of Maud Guarracino (married name Hagan) – [link]

Diary:
A refugee journey through Ukraine - diary pages about my flight from Constantinople Dr Friedrich Schrader, 3 and 4 November 1918 - Pages 3 and 4 (Translated) – [link]

In Memoriam
We are sad to announce the death of Father Ron Evans, Anglican Chaplain of St John's, Izmir from 2003 to 2015, buried in Karabağlar Christian cemetery in Izmir on 2 Dec 2021.
Listing of Izmir Levantine deaths 2021.
In addition sad to report the passing of Julian Nowill on 13 Feb 2022 – [obituary]

External activities

External Upcoming Events
30 March 2022, 8.30 pm (Turkey time)
Online Presentation (Turkish): 'Pera’nın Levanten Mimarları ve Eserleri', Turan Farajova - Levanten Kültür ve Mirasını Koruma Derneği - [flyer]

30 March 2022, 7 pm
In-person: 'Ottoman concert', Baha Yetkin (Oud), Idris Ersan Küçük (Kabak Kemane and Kemenche), Eylem Korkmaz (vocal) - [flyer]

31 March 2022, 5 pm (UK time)

1 April 2022, 7.30 pm (UK time)
Hybrid Presentation: Mr. Consta & The Oriental Carpet Manufacturers – From Malta to Mirzapore, James Crowden - Ebenezer Presents, The Seed Factory - [info]

10 May 2022, 6 pm
Lecture: The Grand Tour in the Ottoman Empire: Power, Pleasure and Ruins, Dr Philip Mansel – The Nomad’s Tent, 21 St Leonards Lane, Edinburgh, Scotland - [info]

Recent Publications
On the Nile in the Golden Age of Travel - Andrew Humphreys, The American University in Cairo Press, 2021 – [link]


Intra-European Litigation in Eighteenth-Century Izmir - Tijl Vanneste, Brill, 2021 – [link]

The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe - Mark Mazower, Allen Lane, 2021 – [link]


A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul - Editors: Shirine Hamadeh & Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, Brill, 2021 – [link]

Among Others, the Maltese in Egypt: Life, Crime and Death (1860s-1923) - Michael Refalo, Kite, 2021 – link:

19. Yüzyıl İzmir’inde Ressam Boğos Tatikyan, Tatikyan Matbaası / The artist Bogos Tatikyan in 19th century Smyrna and the Tatikyan print-house, Ömer Durmaz & Iskender Dereli – İzmir Kalkınma Ajansı, 2022 – link:

Promised Lands: The British and the Ottoman Middle East - Jonathan Parry, Princeton University Press, 2022 – link:

Constantinople Au Jour Le Jour Durant La Premiere Guerre Mondiale 1914-1918 Journal de guerre de Félix Dekempeneer prêtre lazariste, Avec une introduction de Rinaldo Marmara – Isis Press, 2021 – link:

Upcoming Publications
The Sultan’s Court Painter: Fausto Zonaro - Erol Makzume, Istanbul Yayinevi, 2022 – cover:

Representing Modern Istanbul: Urban History and International Institutions in Twentieth Century Beyoglu - Enno Maessen, Bloomsbury, 2022 – link:

New External digitisations
Lives between the Lines, by Michael Vatikiotis - review by Philip Mansel, Times Literary Supplement, November 2021 – link:

“I Have Left My Heart in Syria”: Cornelius Van Dyck and the American Syria Mission - Uta Zeuge-Buberl, Cairo Journal of Theology, 2015 – link:

The Levantine Merchant Consuls of Aleppo; The Commercial Elites 1750- 1850 - Maran Momdjian, 2017 – link:

The Dragoman Renaissance: Diplomatic Interpreters and the Routes of Orientalism - E. Natalie Rothman, 2021 – link:

Entangled Education: Foreign, National, and Local schools in Ottoman Syria and Mandate Lebanon (19–20th Centuries) - Julia Hauser, Christine B. Lindner, and Esther Möller, eds. - Ergon-Verlag GmbH, 2016 – introduction – review:

Hungarians in Constantinople in the mid-19th Century: Socio-Economic Background and Careers. In Between Empires - Beyond Borders. The Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Republic Era Through the Lens of the Köpe Family - Ed. Fodor Gábor, Hungarian Cultural Centre in Istanbul and SALT Istanbul, 2020 – link:

The Ledger: Bulletin of The Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative, Volume 1 • Issue 2 • Autumn 2021 – link:

Trade and diplomacy in the Ottoman-Venetian relations during the 16th century - Cafer Talha Şeker, 2011 – link:

Life and works of Marius Michel in nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire - Emine Esra Nalbant, 2021 – link:

Producing Pioneers: The American Junior College for Women and the Beirut College for Women, 1924-1973 - Catherine Batruni, 2019 – link:


British Heads of Mission at Constantinople 1583-1922 - G. R. Berridge, 2020 – link:

 Freemasonry and fraternalism in the Middle East - Andreas J Önnerfors, 2008 – link:

Presse ottomane francophone – BnF Gallica – link:

Beneath Sovereignty: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Internationalism in Nineteenth-Century Egypt - David Todd, 2018 – link:

Brokering the Orient. Towards an entangled history of Belgian diplomacy in Egypt between 1830-1914, Gert Huskens, 2020 – link:

An Ottoman-English Merchant in Tanzimat Era: Henry James Hanson and His Position in Ottoman Commercial Life - Ü. Serdar Serdaroğlu, 2014 – link:

New Podcast
Colonialism, Sovereignty, and Medicine in Ottoman Lebanon, with Philippe Bourmaud, Ottoman History Podcast, August 2013 – link:
New Videos

Vatikan Arşiv Araştırmalarının Türkiye ve Türk Tarihçiliği Açısından Önemi, Dr Rinaldo Marmara & Prof Dr Kenan Gürsoy, İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Batı (Garbiyat) Araştırmaları Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi, Nov 2021 – link:


Online lecture: ‘Piracy and Law in the Ottoman Mediterranean: Navigating Jihad Island’, 8 October 2021 - Joshua White, Anglo-Turkish Society – link:

Online lecture: ‘The Legacy of Mezemorta Hüseyin Paşa: Corsair, Captain, Ottoman Grand Admiral’, 2 December 2021 - John Curry, Anglo-Turkish Society – link:

Online discussion: The Ottomans: Khans, Caesars and Caliphs - Marc Baer, Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association, 27 Jan 2022 – link:

Online discussion: Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans: Mouradgea d’Ohsson and His Masterpiece - Carter Findley, Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association, 15 Dec 2021 – link:

Une amitié franco-turque peu connue : Pierre Loti et Abdülmecid Efendi I - Alain Quella-Villéger, Institut français de Turquie, 9 Feb 2022 – link:

Book Discussion with Annalise J. K. DeVries, author of "Maadi", 11 Apr 2021 – link:

Online lecture: ‘Ottoman industrial capitalism in Macedonia’, 25 November 2021 - Costas Lapavitsas & Pinar Cakiroglu, Anglo-Turkish Society – link:

‘Kai i Smyrni’, a documentary by Angelos Kovotsos shot in Smyrna and Athens, based on the book awarded by the Academy of Athens by George Poulimenos and Achilles Chatziconstantinou, ‘The Waterfront of Smyrna ‘ – trailer:

Smyrna 1922 (new Youtube channel) – link:

Up and Down Galata | 2015 – link:

New database

Interactive map of Smyrna pre 1922 – link:

Ephemera

The Nairn Way - John M. Munro & Martin Love, Aramco World, 1981 – link:

Why You Should Thank Levantine Greeks For Vaccines - Edmond Shami, Greek City Times, December 2021 – link:

The Keeper of Izmir - Paul Benjamin Osterlund, Tablet, 4 January 2022 – link:

Your Guide to the Ancient Names of Lebanon’s Towns & Cities - Christie K., The 961, 2019 – link:

How Ankara Became Turkish: Excavating the Legacies of Cosmopolitanism Buried in Turkey’s Capital - Ajam Media Collective, Kenan Cruz Çilli, 24 January 2022 – link:

In this Turkish city, historic synagogues are seeing new life - David I. Klein, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 9 February 2022 – link:

East of Zionism - Ussama Makdisi, Aeon, 3 December 2021 – link:

A Glimpse of 19th Century Jerusalem, Gil Weissblei, The Librarians, 2 June 2019 – link:

Review of ‘A Lexicon of Smyrneika’ (George Poulimenos, Alex Baltazzi, George Galdies) - Prof Peter Mackridge, Anglo-Hellenic Review #48 – link:

Our requests
Supporting our upcoming Europe based gathering

We are happy to report that we are planning events this year in Paris, France and Italy. These will have both an academic focus and a networking gathering with our friends in those countries. We will release more information on these events once we have fixed venues and dates. Please contact us if you can help in ways such as securing low-cost venues, event organisation or partial sponsorship of these gatherings.

The crystallising event was the 2010 symposium in Izmir, organised in collaboration with the Izmir group of Levantines and the Izmir Chamber of Commerce. As well as excellent talks that provided fascinating context on Levantines and their communities, we were able to visit some of the places where they lived and where they were laid to rest. Family descendants learned new information from academics, and academics met new sources of original records. Strangers discovered new cousins. A core group of us decided that this academic-family researcher model and network should be developed further and we set up the Levantine Heritage Foundation.

1. What led you to become involved with the Levantine Heritage Foundation?

I was researching my family’s history. On my mother’s side we have a fairly typical Levantine mixture of nationalities and identities: French, British, Dutch, and Italian. Additionally, there is a significant Polish element. I found Craig Encer’s original website where not only could I find snippets on various ancestors, but also complementary background information about the communities they lived in. Craig gave me some additional leads for my research and that led to me contributing a family testimonial for the website. I went to some of the small social gatherings he organised for Levantine descendants and researchers and the wider collaboration started to form.

2. Why is the context of Levantine communities, rather than families, so important?

A family history and genealogy are generally only of interest to the extended family, not the wider world. And the level of that family interest depends on understanding the family stories and the context in which they took place. Why did someone settle in the Levant? Where did they work and live? What were their social lives? What were their interactions with others in the community? What made the community work? When change came, how did they respond, where did they go and why there? It is the richness of the history that links names, families, places and economic and social activities, and that generates a transmissible heritage.

For that reason, the LHF’s view of who and what is a “Levantine” is broad and inclusive. It takes the approach of people in the context of their communities. In that sense, we use Levantine more as an adjective to describe places and communities, than as a noun labelling a limited subset of people. Our Levantine scope is broadly the Eastern Mediterranean, from Athens to Alexandria, and the multifaceted communities who lived there during the Ottoman era. However, modern era diasporas mean that Levantine families and communities have established themselves all over the world. The LHF’s network extends globally beyond the Levant, therefore.

3. How resilient is Levantine heritage as time passes and memories and records are lost and the interests of descendants change? How can it be sustained? How can the LHF itself evolve and help sustain and nourish the heritage of the communities of the Levant?

The LHF was set up to help prevent the loss of memories, buildings and physical objects and the social and cultural heritage that they carry. We have made a good start in preserving the diverse memories of a good many family lines through testimonials. While the opportunity to capture living personal memories of the end of the Ottoman era have now passed, the research of descendants’ enables us to update family testimonials with new material.

Going forward, we have to create a sustainable bridge to carry the interest and value of Levantine heritage to future generations and audiences. The huge LHF website is at the heart of this effort. It is the leading source of free information in the subject area and we will continue to develop it.

The website is valuable both as a resource for the public and as a safe repository of curated information. In addition, we wish to develop a digital archive to preserve the even larger quantity of documents and images that families of Levantine descent hold. We aim to help families find a solution to the problem of what to do with these records before they are dispersed or even thrown away. By donating them to the LHF for digital recording and safe-keeping, we can preserve them for access by future researchers. This will require a greater level of resources and funding than we
currently have, however. In the short-term, we can currently only consider such legacies of materials if there are donated funds alongside for us to cover the costs of digitising them and safely storing the originals.

An even greater ambition is one day to have a physical space where our library, records and legacies of small physical objects can be kept and made available to researchers. Ideally, this would be part of a collaboration to preserve a building of Levantine architectural merit, with meeting and exhibition space.

These ambitions require significant step-changes in the LHF’s organisation and funding. Alongside that, the LHF has to evolve to become more relevant, interesting and accessible to future generations. We are considering, for example, how the social and cultural heritage of the past can connect to modern cultures and communities of interests, be they art, literature, food, music and travel.

The LHF’s evolution, growth and long-term sustainability are likely only to be achieved through attracting donors and partners. We also need to attract the next team members who wish to develop the LHF, whether they be Levantine descendants, academic researchers, archivists or curators. I encourage anyone who would like to get involved with the running of the LHF to get in touch with me or Craig Encer.

4. What are the LHF’s greatest needs right now?

Picking up from my last point, our greatest need is people to share in the active management and operation of the LHF. Craig’s expertise and priority is the website and our network, facilitating access to the knowledge and resources they both contain. We get many requests for help with family and academic research and for images and other content for use in publications, film and TV productions. On top of that, Craig organises our events, currently running at over one a month. I look after memberships and finances. We have the support of our trustees who bring a variety of valuable experience and contacts. And we have a few volunteers who generously give us their energy, ideas and time. We are starting to build up the broader team to whom we can delegate some of the management and operational responsibilities and so make the LHF run more effectively and efficiently.

The other great need, of course, is funding. While our costs are low, the income from our loyal members’ subscriptions and a few donations are only enough to maintain the status quo. If we are to expand our mission as I have outlined, we need to secure larger income streams from grants and donations. It will mean building stronger collaborations and partnerships with other organisations with complementary goals. That is an exciting challenge that I look forward to.

Subscription to this newsletter and other LHF communications

If you wish to no longer receive our future newsletters and communications please let us know by writing to contact@levantineheritage.com. We hold your personal data securely for the purpose of providing you with information on LHF research, events, publications and membership. We will not share your personal data with 3rd parties.

Contribute to our newsletter

The next newsletter is scheduled for 30 June 2022; contact us if you wish to contribute an article or place an entry / announcement.

Craig Encer
General Secretary – secretary@levantineheritage.com

The Levantine Heritage Foundation - www.levantineheritage.com

Our Facebook page: (3,005 followers) | Our Youtube channel: (506 subscribers) | Our Twitter channel: (775 followers)

The Levantine Heritage Foundation is a non-profit association with a constitution prepared and adopted according to the guidelines of The Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Trustees: Quentin Compton-Bishop, Dr Philip Mansel FRHS, Dr Axel Corlu, Dr Kalliopi Amygdalou, Zeynep Cebeci Süvari, Jonathan Beard, Nuri Çolakoğlu, Achilleas Chatziconstantinou