

**PROGRAM  
HISTORY  
DIRECTORY**

SOUVENIR OF THE

**NINETEENTH ANNUAL  
REUNION**

OF THE

**KFEIRIAN  
BROTHERHOOD**

SEPTEMBER 5-6, 1954

HOTEL PRICHARD

HUNTINGTON, W. VA.



It is with the greatest of pleasure that we your Local Committee have had the opportunity to present to you this gala 1954 Reunion. We wish to extend our sincerest thanks to each and every one of you for attending and helping to make this the best Reunion yet. To the Members of the Local Committee, I wish to express my sincerest thanks for your cooperation and diligent efforts in making this affair a complete success.

HUNTINGTON REUNION COMMITTEE  
EDMUND GEORGE, Chairman





## HISTORY OF KFEIR

In 1952, during the 17th Annual Reunion, the general assembly of the Kfeirian Brotherhood adopted a resolution directing the Kfeirian Reunion Foundation to gather and compile data, information, and particulars about Kfeir for the benefit of the Kfeirian youth in America. The committee in charge of this project, through the Board of Trustees of the Kfeirian Foundation, recognizes with gratitude the cooperation of the Lebanese Embassy in Washington, the Department of Interior in Lebanon, the Mayor of Kfeir and his council, the president and the members of the Kfeirian Brotherhood in Kfeir. Their assistance and cooperation have made this project possible. It is hoped that this short history of Kfeir will serve as it is intended to better acquaint the Kfeirian youth with the birth place of their fathers and ancestors.

**History of Kfeir.** While historic facts are not available, it is presumed that the village of Kfeir dates back approximately to the year 1200 A. D. The region known as Wadi El-taim where Kfeir is located is known to have been inhabited at that time by tribes of two rival Mohammedan sects, the Druze and the Sheea, the latter were forced out of the region after constant raids and encounters. It is established therefore that the Druze migrating from Aleppo in Northern Syria and from Mount Lebanon were the first to settle in Kfeir. They were followed in later years and joined by Christian families from Houran, Damascus and its vicinity, and from Mount Lebanon. They have lived together until the present day.

**Commerce, Industry and Agriculture.** To secure their livelihood in the village, the majority of the Druze population engaged in agriculture while the Christians, for the most part, engaged in commerce and trade. Their caravans carried goods and supplies to and from Damascus, Beirut, Palestine, and as far as Egypt. The weaving and dyeing of cloth became for a time a sizeable industry in Kfeir and early Kfeirians enjoyed also a fair income from raising and marketing tobacco and the silkworm. The village was known as Kfeir-El-Zait (Zait meaning olive oil) because of its olive and olive oil industry, and continued planting of olive trees over the past 40 years has made olives and olive oil Kfeir's principal industry today. The grapevine also played an important part in the economic life of Kfeir. Wide areas were developed over the years into beautiful vineyards of numerous varieties, producing clusters which, nursed by the gentle sun by day and bathed by the mountain dew by night were surpassed by none in natural beauty and rich flavor. The grape vine however, bowed out of the Kfeirian agricultural scene when the hand of Nature dealt it a fatal blow in 1943. The blight struck at the very roots of the vines and destroyed them completely; and so the beautiful vineyards of Kfeir which for generations adorned the countryside are no more.

**Emigration.** Emigration from the village began with the unfortunate disturbances and religious massacre of 1860, when some Christian families were forced to seek peace and refuge and establish permanent residence in such cities as Beirut and Tyree. Others went to Damascus, Houran, El-Bkaa and other parts of Syria and Lebanon.



The first Kfeirian to emigrate across the seas was Nicholas el-Taweel. He went to Australia in 1886. In 1894 the first contingent left Kfeir for the United States and the cycle of emigration continued with others going in later years to South America, Canada, Africa and other parts of the world.

**Education:** Kfeirians since their beginning have been eager to learn and improve themselves and have looked favorably upon education. The village boasts a number of doctors, lawyers, journalists, writers and teachers. Faris Bey El-Khoury the elder statesman of the Near East and the elder Kfeirian, is a source of pride to the village and to Kfeirians everywhere. Kfeirian boys and girls from all walks of life are to be found today receiving their higher education in high schools and colleges in cities and towns such as Beirut, Saida, Shweifat, Damascus, Merjayoun, and others.

**Progress and Development:** Kfeir, like all communities of its size, in the old world, maintained for centuries its primitive look and its people did not deviate from the primitive way of life. At the turn of the century, however, and with the advent of emigration, the village underwent a partial face-lifting, when some of those daring and determined Kfeirians who, a few years earlier had ventured into the new world defying all odds and handicaps, returned to the mother village with the wealth and knowledge acquired from their adventure. Some of them replaced the old family residences with new structures, sleek and modern by the standards of that time, while some improved their lands and property and others acquired and developed new olive groves, vineyards and fig orchards. So Kfeir began a humble but slow march in the parade of modernization and development. This progress unfortunately was short-lived and completely stopped with the eruption of World War I.

**The Charitable Society of the Kfeirian Brotherhood:** In 1930 the Kfeirian Brotherhood Charitable Society was organized by a group of alert and farsighted young Kfeirians who were influenced by their own desire to improve themselves and the village and by the shining beacons of the Western civilization. They set out to improve the living conditions of Kfeir by initiating and executing such projects as may benefit the entire population. Faced with financial inability, they had to rely on their will and determination and the generosity of their brothers in America. With the financial help of Kfeirians in North America they succeeded in improving the existing but meager water supply, by building a new reservoir and distributing water to the schools and the western part of the village. When the government of Lebanon failed to recognize the dire need for a road suitable for modern transportation, connecting Kfeir with its county seat, Hasbaya, these young men of the Kfeirian Brotherhood in spite of some opposition in the village committed themselves to the task of building the road with their own hands. This sincere gesture coupled with constant petitioning and determined effort resulted in completion of the road, to a black top finish, by the Lebanese government with public funds. The society of the Kfeirian Brotherhood was influential also in improving the public schools and raising their standards; the number of



teachers was increased from two to five in the boy's school and from one to two in the girl's school. With the help of Kfeirian emigrants and their descendants the Orthodox Church in the village is now equal in magnificence and beauty to any church in Lebanon, and the cemetery has been protected and reverently preserved by the erection of a fencing wall in 1945. In 1947 telephone service was established in Kfeir and in 1950 Postal and telegraphic service. 1952 gave Kfeir the electrification project, a gift from Kfeirians in North America through the Kfeirian Reunion Foundation, Inc. The society of the Kfeirian Brotherhood directed the project there under the able guidance and supervision of the elder Kfeirian Faris Bey El-Khoury. In 1953 the Lebanese government allocated funds for a large water project. Distribution of water to every house in the village will be possible when the project is completed. Work is still underway.

Thus a general picture has been drawn of a small village in southern Lebanon. It has existed for 700 years and maintained its geographic location at the foot of Mt. Hermon withstanding and surviving the slings and arrows of time and nature . . . It stands today a witness to 700 years of history in that part of the world. It was for centuries a part of the feudal systems of old and has witnessed the rise and fall of the Ottoman empire and experienced and endured the subjugation and the oppression of that empire. It also witnessed the French mandate over Syria and Lebanon at the end of World War I and experienced also and endured for twenty some years another form of subjugation and oppression. It further witnessed the events which brought about in 1943 the independence of Lebanon and the freedom of its people. It stands today proud of its past, its years and the humble share it contributed to the human society. There live in it today as in the past, a group of people who too have likes and dislikes, ambitions and frustrated desires, respect for law and order, faith in God and natural born instincts to uphold freedom, individual rights and the dignity of man. These people of Kfeir, and not necessarily the village itself, have been the basis of this abbreviated Kfeirian story.

## FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT KFEIR

### 1. Population.

The population of Kfeir according to the latest census is 1200 people.

### 2. Religion of the population.

The Christian religion is predominant in Kfeir and represents two-thirds of the population. There are 750 Syrian Orthodox and 50 Eastern Catholics. The other third, or 400, people are Druze (A Mohammedan sect).

### 3. Local Government—Method of Appointment.

The affairs of the village are governed by a Mayor and local council composed of six members. They are elected by the voters of Kfeir for a term of four years. Elections are held under the supervision of the central government and by secret ballot.



4. Standard of Education.

Kfeir has two public schools; a school for boys with five teachers where students receive elementary education in Arabic and French equivalent to the ninth grade. The girls school has two teachers who teach in both Arabic and French up to sixth grade.

5. Number of Students in local schools.

There are 140 boys and 90 girls.

6. Proximity to principal cities.

The distance between Kfeir and Beirut, the capital of Lebanon is 80 miles. It is 50 miles from Saida, the capital of Southern Lebanon. 45 miles from Zahla and 77 miles from Damascus, the capital of Syria.

7. Health and Medical facilities.

Kfeir does not have a resident physician. A number of doctors however, practice in Hasbaya the county seat which is only six miles from Kfeir. Among them is a native Kfeirian, Dr. Chehadi Cantees, who in addition to his special trips to the village, makes regular visits once a week and receives patients from Kfeir and neighboring communities. The village is also visited twice or three times a year by a doctor from the Lebanese health ministry. The students of the public schools and the rest of the population are then inoculated against current epidemics.

8. Elevation.

Kfeir is 3116 feet above sea level.

9. Climate and weather conditions.

The weather in the region where Kfeir is located is considered mild. The seasons of the year are distinct insofar as the rainy season begins in late fall and continues through early spring. The remaining months are sunny and rainless. The climate is moderate and the air is dry and healthy because Kfeir is surrounded by forests of pine and oak trees and by olive groves.

10. Area of Lands.

There are approximately 300 dunums (750 acres) of cultivatable land and 700 dunums (175 acres) representing the area of the live groves, vineyards, and fig orchards combined.

11. Number of olive trees.

There are approximately 10,000 olive trees in Kfeir, half of which are still in the developing stage.

12. Resources and Crops.

Olives, olive oil, wheat, barley and kersenneh.

13. Total annual income.

Yearly income from grain crops is approximately 50,000 Lebanese pounds (\$14,380), the same amount is realized from olives and olive oil. Figs, diminishing grapes and other fruit and vegetable crops combined amount to 6000 Lebanese pounds (\$1714). This total of 106,000 Lebanese pounds (\$30,474) is the annual gross income.

14. Amount of taxes collected by the government from the village.

The Lebanese government collects from Kfeir 2000 Lebanese pounds (\$572) and in turn spends 20,000 pounds (\$5,710) directly for Kfeir in the form of salaries and wages for teachers and postal and telegraphic employees.



حتى اتصل الطريق الى البلدة من حاصبيا معبدة بالاسفلت وتحسنت حالة المدارس الحكومية فيها ان يوجد خمسة معلمين للذكور ومعلمتان للاناث واصلحت كنيستها حتى اصبحت من افخم الكنائس في البلاد وذلك بفضل ابنائها المهاجرين وبفضل ابنائها المهاجرين ايضا تصونت مقبرة البلدة وذلك ١٩٤٥ وفي سنة ١٩٤٧ احدثت الى الهاتف (التلفون) وفي سنة ١٩٥٠ احدثت فيها مركز للبريد والبرق وفي سنة ١٩٥٢ كان مشروع الكهرباء الذي تبرع به مهاجرو الكفير في الولايات المتحدة والذي تم انشاءه تحت اشراف دولة العلامة ابن الكفير البار الاستاذ فارس بك الخوري وفي هذه السنة ١٩٥٣ بدأت الحكومة اللبنانية الجليلة باصلاح نبع الفواره ولا تزال الحفريات والاعمال مستمرة الى الان على ان يجري بعدئذ توزيع المياه على البيوت والاحياء

هذه هي المعلومات التي تمكنا من معرفتها عن تاريخ بلدتنا الكفير وما اصابها من تطور وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام .

مختار الكفير

الامضاء :

١٩ تشرين الاول ١٩٥٣

عدد ٩٣٦ : حضرة محافظ الجنوب المحترم

اقدم هذا التقرير المفضل من التطور الذي اصاب بلدة الكفير منذ القدم حتى اليوم ولقد تأخر تقديمه حتى الان نظرا للمعلومات التاريخية الدقيقة التي استقاها اهلها من عدة مصادر هذا واقبلوا الاجترام .

١٩ تشرين ١٩٥٣

قائم مقام حاصبيا

## حضرة قائمقام حاصبيا المحترم

بناءً على المذكرة المحالة لحضرتكم من جانب وزارة الداخلية الجبلية بواسطة  
حضرة محافظ لبنان الجنوبي والتي احلتوها لي بتاريخ ١٧ تموز سنة ١٩٥٣ تحت عدد ٣٨٨  
المطلوب فيها الافادة بتقرير مفصل واعطاء معلومات عن تاريخ بلدتنا الكفير وما اصابها  
من تطور حتى يومنا هذا فعليه افيد :

بعد المداولة مع وجهاء البلدة وكبار السن فيها تبين لي ان تاريخ الكفير يرجع  
الى سبعمائة سنة تقريبا حيث كان يسكن رادى القيم والكفير احدى قراء قبائل من الشيعة  
التي نزحت عنه بعد قتال ومعارك بينها وبين الطائفة الدرزية فيكون ان الدورز قد سكنوا  
الكفير اولا نازحين من حلب وجبل لبنان ومن ثم لحق بهم المسيحيون نازحين ايضا من حوران  
وجوار دمشق وجبل لبنان وتساكنوا مع بعضهم البعض الى يومنا هذا فكان اكثر الدورز يتعاملون  
الفلاحة والزراعة واكثر المسيحيين يتغاطون التجارة مع فلسطين وبيروت والشام ومصر وكان البعض  
منهم يتعاطى حياكة الاقمشة والصبغات على اشواها . وقد سميت الكفير كفير الزيت نظرا  
لكثرة الزيتون فيها اذناك حيث كان الموسم الاول فيها ومن ثم فرس اهلوها الكرمة بكثرة وقيت  
هكذا الى ان اصاب الكرمة مرض ( الفلوكسرا ) من مضي عشرين سنة وقضى عليها ومن مضي  
اربعين سنة كثرت زراعة الزيتون حتى بات الزيتون موسما الرئيسي وقدما ايضا كان الكفيريون  
يعتنون بتربية دور الفز (الحرير) وزراعة الدخان . وبدأت الهجرة من الكفير الى ما وراء البحار  
في ١٨٨٦ ان هاجر اول شخص منها يدعى نقولا الطويل الى استراليا هذا من الذين  
هاجروا منها الى بيروت وصور بعد حوادث سنة ١٨٦٠ المعلومة وبعدها هاجر قسم منها  
الى دمشق وحوران والبقاع ومنذ القدم واهالي الكفير يميلون الى العلم فكان منهم الاطباء  
والمحامون والصحافيون والكتاب والمحلون وبدأ التطور فيها من اوائل القرن العشرين فكان  
ابناءها يهاجرون الى اميركا الشمالية والبرازيل ويأتون بالمال فيبنون البيوت الصالحة بالنسبة  
لتلك الايام ويكثرون من زراعة الزيتون والكرم وما شاكل ولا يزال ابناؤها على اختلاف طبقاتهم  
يتلقون العلم في الكيات والمدارس العالية في بيروت وصيدا والشويفات والشام ومرجعون وفي  
سنة ١٩٣٠ بدأ التطور والتحسين فيها ان تأسست جمعية الاخاء الكفيرى الخيرية من الشبان  
الناهضين وبدأت الجمعية تسعى لاصلاح البلدة وايجاد المشاريع الحيوية فيها فجرت مياه  
نبع الفواره بمساعدة المهاجرين في اميركا الشمالية الى المدارس والاحياء الغربية من البلدة  
وبدأت الجمعية ايضا بشق طريق (الكروسة) الى البلدة وواصلت جهودها ومراجعاتها للحكومة



- ٨ - عده صاعين لطح البعر ؟
- ٩ - ثقل البعر عن سطح البعر ٨٥٠ مثاقيل .
- ١٠ - المناج واللفف واحدها ؟
- ١١ - المناج فعدل صيفاً مثاقيل ، ومناجها صاع للفاكهة لواطه ما احاط بها من اعراس الصنوبر والسديان واشجار الزيتون التي تحيط بها من جهات الاربع ، صفاؤها ثاقف صاع
- ١٢ - صاعه ارضها الشجرة وغير الشجرة ؟
- ١٣ - صاعه ارضها الفدان الشجرة عن وجه التقريب ثلاثة آلاف دوئم اما صاعه ارضها الشجرة من زيتون دتين وعريش ( ٧٠٠ ) دوئم
- ١٤ - فعدل عدد شجر الزيتون فيها ؟
- ١٥ - عدد شجر الزيتون فيها يقدر بقرية الاف غرسه منها اكثر من النصف نصب جديد لم يعلو نتيجته بعد .
- ١٦ - محصولاتها ؟
- ١٧ - زيت وزيتون واكبوب على انواعها كالقمح والشعير والقطاني
- ١٨ - فعدل مدخولها من الارض السنوي ( من محصولاتها ) ؟
- ١٩ - مدخولها من اكبوب عن انواعها ٥٠ الف ليرة لبنانية ومن الزيتون والزيت ٥٥ الف ليرة لبنانية الرضا ومن القطن والكمون والقمح والفواكه ستة آلاف ليرة تقريبا . وان مدخولها هذا من الزيت والزيتون وغيره هو المدخول السنوي الغير الصافي حيث يدفع فداحه واجرة محمل وما اشبهه .
- ٢٠ - فعدل القيمة التي تستوفى اكلوفة سنويا من ضرائب وما شاكل ؟
- ٢١ - القيمة التي تستوفى اكلوفة من ضرائب وما شاكل ألف ليرة لبنانية .
- ٢٢ - فعدل ما تستوفى اكلوفة سنويا من سبيل مباشر كرواتب معلمين وما اشبهه ؟
- ٢٣ - تدفع اكلوفة للغير ١٤ الف ليرة لبنانية رواتب معلمين و ٦ الاف ليرة رواتب لموظفي مركز البصرة والبريد .

## اسئلة واجوبة عن الكفر

- ١ - عدد سكان الكفر ؟
- ٢ - ان عدد سكان الكفر المقدر يبلغ (١٢٠٠) الف ومائتان نسمة
- ٣ - حاصي طوائفهم الدينية ؟
- ٤ - مسجونون ودرور : المسجونون هم الثلثان منهم ٧٥٠ نسمة  
ارثوذكس وضمنت نسمة كاثوليك والثلث الاخر من الطائفة الدرزية
- ٥ - شكل حكمها المركزية وطريقة بقسرها ؟
- ٦ - تولف حكمها المركزية من مجلتين لهم مختار وصيته اختيارية مؤلف  
من ستة اعضاء ينتخبون لمدة اربع سنوات بالاقتراع السري من  
اهاين الكفر باشراف الحكومة اللبنانية على طريقة انتخاب نواب الامم .
- ٧ - حقوق التقليم في مدارسها المحلية ؟
- ٨ - في الكفر مدرستان مدرسة للذكور وفيها خمسة معلمين تؤهل الطالب  
لشهادة الابتدائية الحكومية للفتن العربية والفرنسية ، ومدرسة  
اخرى للاناث فيها معلمتان تدرس العلوم الابتدائية لتصف الثالث ابتدائي .
- ٩ - عدد التلامذة - ذكور - اناث ؟
- ١٠ - عدد التلامذة الذكور ١٢٠ طالبا والاناث ٩٠ طالبة .
- ١١ - الماسة التي تفصلها عن الدين الرئيسية ؟
- ١٢ - الماسة التي تفصل الكفر عن يروت ١٢ كيلومترا وعن صيدا عاصمة  
لبنان الكنفي ٨٠ كيلومترا وعن مدينة زحلة ٧٠ كيلومترا وعن  
دشق في سوريا ١٢٥ كيلومترا .
- ١٣ - التسهيلات الصحية والطبية فيها
- ١٤ - لا يقدم طبيب دائم في نفس البلدة بل يوجد الجهاد في حاصبيا مركز القاعمة  
التي تبعد ١٠ كيلو مترات عن الكفر انما يوجد في حاصبيا طبيب من الكفر  
هو الدكتور شحادة نعمه فنيش له عيادة اسبوعية في الكفر ويؤمها  
يوم الاحد من كل اسبوع ويستقبل مرضاه من القرى المجاورة عدا زيارته في صبه  
وتزور البلدة طبيب من قبل وزارة الصحة اللبنانية مرتان او ثلاثة وبمجرد  
وبمجرد تفتيح التلامذة والاهالي ضد الامراض السارية .



## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1954

### 9 A. M.—REGISTRATION

Lobby — Prichard Hotel

### 11 A. M.—MASS

St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, corner 7th St. and  
11th Ave. Metropolitan Archbishop Antony Bashir, officiat-  
ing, assisted by Reverend Wakeem Dalack.

### 2 to 5 P. M.—GET TOGETHER

Rooms 208 - 209 - 210—Lobby Prichard Hotel

Swim Party—Dreamland

### 5 to 6 P. M.—COCKTAIL PARTY

Rooms 208 - 209 - 210 Mezzanine

### 6:30 P. M.—DINNER

Ballroom

### 9 P. M. to 1 A. M.—ENTERTAINMENT GALORE

Ballroom

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1954

### 9 A. M.—REGISTRATION

Lobby—Prichard Hotel

### 11:30 to 12:30 P. M.—COFFEE TIME

Station WSAZ-TV. Admission by Studio Pass — See one of your local committee.

### 1 to 3 P. M.—BUSINESS MEETING

Rooms 202 - 203 - 204 - 205 Mezzanine Floor

### 5 to 6 P. M.—COCKTAIL HOUR

Rooms 208 - 209 - 210 Mezzanine Floor

### 6:30 P. M.—BANQUET

Ballroom

### 10 P. M. to 1 A. M.—GRAND BALL

Ballroom



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PHOZIA NASSER ----- Secretary

MRS. MIKE THABET ----- Treasurer

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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JOE BOLUS — ERNEST G. TWEEL