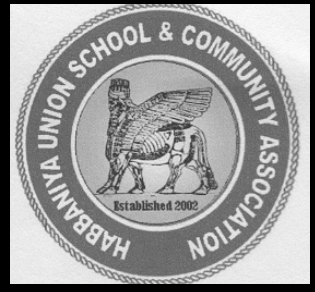


HUSCA

6th Issue
Vol. 3, No. 2
Fall-Winter, 2004

The Magazine of HABBANIYA UNION SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



To inform, to connect with and to preserve old ties and memories between former schoolmates and residents of Habbaniya local "town"

Class of 1942 (&1941)



The second graduating class of *Raabi* Yacoub Bet-Yacoub's Union School in Civil Cantonment posing in the C.C. Superintendent's residence garden in the Cantonment

Secondary C Form (Middle School). Standing from left: Souren Onick Sanasarian* (Monrovia, CA), Eshay Orahim Baba* (Skokie, IL.), Leonard *Raabi* Mishael* (deceased), Mattai Sogul (?), William Kaplano Kanon* (Modesto, CA.), Andrious Attu Soro (Sydney, Australia, future father of today's Bishop *Mar* Bawai Soro). Youlyous Nwyia Shabbas (deceased); Sitting from left: Davis Eshay David, (Modesto, CA.), Mirza Shmoil (Toronto, Canada), Mary *Rab-Tremma* Gewargis Shabo (Skokie, IL.), Mr. Jack Ingram (CC Superintendent, deceased), *Raabi* Yacoub Bet-Yacoub (Headmaster, deceased), Lujiya Kakko Poloss* (Calgary, Canada), Mikhail Waranso (San Francisco), Shidragh Skopila Youav (deceased). The picture was taken in the garden of C.C. Superintendent, Mr. Jack J. Ingram.

**These graduates were in fact to be the second graduating class in July 1941. But because the final exams were cancelled due to the May 1941 Battle of Habbaniya, they took the final exams and graduated with the class of 1942, while more than a dozen other members of the class, among them Aprim Billa, Sombat Iskhaq, Manouk Mamolian, Yacoub Youkhanna, Zaia Esho Yalda, Daniel Iskhaq, June Wilkins, Minashi (Mikhael) Khammo Pius and a few others who either started working or moved away and did not sit for exams with the 1942 class to graduate--Editor.*

HUSCA Magazine

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The Ancient and the Modern in New Year Celebration

In America today “Happy New Year!” is the greeting with which the new year is welcomed at the stroke of midnight on December 31 each year, to the tune of “Auld Lang Syne” (“old long ago” or “good old days”). But the new year is actually ushered in by various kinds of festivities in various countries of the world. In this country, in addition to the fireworks and celebration by mammoth gatherings in specific spots in big towns, such as Times Square in New York, there is the Tournament of Roses Parade (since 1886), Rose Bowl football game (since 1916) and a host of other methods of ringing the old out and the new in. Then there are the many resolutions people make, mainly to give up smoking or bad habits, losing weight, getting rid of anger and many other things, most of which fall through in a matter of hours, days, or weeks.

In our former homelands in M.E. the most common custom of our people was small family gatherings or larger gatherings of friends in a home to greet each other, eat, drink, sing, dance and be merry till the wee hours of the... (Cont'd on P.25)

Thanksgiving & Holiday Greetings

We offer our thanks and appreciation to all of you members and readers for the support you've given HUSCA during the three years of its existence

We hope you've had a

Happy Thanksgiving and wish you and your family

A Merry Christmas

Filled with love of our Lord Jesus Christ

And a very Happy New Year too

From:

**Ben E. Yalda, Mikhael K. Pius,
 Zacharia O. Zacharia, & Basil K. Pius**

Just Chit-chatting...About a Late Friend

Close to two hundred loved ones and friends, had gathered to pay their last respect to Julius Nwiya Shabbas when he was laid in his last resting place at Sunset View Cemetery, in El Cerrito, California, on a beautiful sunny afternoon on October 1, 2004. I was one of them.

All of them were from the Bay Area, except for a very few. I was glad I managed to go and say my last farewell to Julius, or Youlyous as he was known to most of us old friends. I also had the opportunity to meet quite a few friends living in that area (perhaps 20 of them) I hadn't seen for some time. In the mortuary foyer I ran into Youlyous' successor as *Nineveh's* Editor, Dr. Robert Karoukian, a nice handsome guy who seemed pleased to meet me for the first time. We chatted for a minute and in parting he asked me to write something about Youlyous for *Nineveh Magazine*.

I arrived from Modesto an hour earlier. I was with Sami Neesan's brother Richard and wife. So we went first to the home of Sami and Youlyous' sister Lily. Sami hasn't been in good health for a year now following his bypass surgery and Lily seemed to have some problem with her legs. But which one of us old timers hasn't at least one ailment or another to complain about?

A hefty man, Sami has lost a good portion of his weight. He was in bed, but we had a good chat. Despite the sad occasion, he was in good spirits, chatty and hopeful about his getting back on his feet again. Actually, he seemed to be in better condition than I had expected. I also met a bunch of sons, daughters, grandkids and a son-in-law. Lily and Sami apparently have a well-connected

clannish family, and Sami seemed to be well pampered and cared for.

Youlyous' cousin Sargon Shabbas was in-charge of the funeral arrangements. I had emailed Sargon a short piece on Youlyous and asked him, if possible, to have it read by someone at the memorial reception because "I haven't learned the knack of public speaking." Sargon replied that because the eulogies would be confined to the family members, he did not think it could be managed but hoped I could have my say on the 40th Day memorial reception that would be given by the Foundation. Brother Wiska had also emailed him a eulogy.

I had planned to audio-tape the proceedings as well as take a few snapshots at the graveside. But I was in for a couple of disappointments and a surprise!

The huge cemetery was hilly with overgrown lawn on uneven ground and not as well planned and scenic as Turlock Memorial Park, where most of the Stanislaus County Assyrian dead are buried. (My late brother Aprim "Appy" would call Turlock, with dry humor, Najaf of the Assyrians.) I found it somewhat straining walking around on the uneven grassy ground on legs unsteadied by the wear and tear of years, though most friends tell me "You look good."

I managed to find *Raabi Yacoub's* grave and took a shot of it as well as took a few shots as they carried Youlyous' coffin to the grave-

side. But somehow I was disappointed that *Raabi Yacoub's* grave had a flat marker rather than an upward gravestone to make a good picture. And it turned out from the picture that I was right.

My second disappointment came when I virtually bulldozed my way to sit almost on the front pew to record the mortuary church service. I switched on the recorder and soon discovered that the tape had got stuck in the machine. Exactly as it happened when I tried to tape Violet's funeral for Youlyous 30 months ago. This time in my haste I had picked up the same faulty pocket recorder instead of the look-alike one my daughter had given me and so I missed the recording this time too.

When things go wrong they really go wrong! The battery of my hearing aid also decided to go dead on me at the reception so that I could barely pick up a few words of what was being said. And I was surprised (and felt like *atrash bil zaffa!*) when my table mates nudged me and said Sargon Shabbas had announced my name to go and speak. I almost froze with fright, but realized it was an ordeal I had to face. Somehow I managed to walk to the podium,

say a few words and read out my piece in a fairly even voice—with a slight tinge of pain in my chest caused by jitters. Wiska's eulogy, including a short touching farewell poem, was also read out, by Sargon Shabbas. One of Wiska's reminiscences even made some people laugh.

I (and many others) have known Youlyous since we were young boys in the early 1930s in Hinaidi, Iraq, when we swam naked in a RAF fire-station mud pond, played games together and climbed trees to eat mulberries. So we

were really life-long friends. Some of you readers knew him in school in Habbaniya, others in Baghdad while still others here in the U.S.

Youlyous and I both had our early schooling at the late *Raabi Espanya Shimshon's* school in Maratha Lines in Hinaidi and our secondary education at the late *Raabi Yacoub's* Union School in Habbaniya, ending in early 1940s. I was about a year older and one class ahead of him. Youlyous was a handsome and likable person and he was popular with girls too. His family was also better off economically than mine. So when we both finished middle school, I started working but Youlyous went on to high school in Baghdad and to university in California, graduating as a chemist.

From late 1943 to mid-1946 we happened to be neighbors in Gailani Camp, Baghdad and, along with the late Avia Ewan, we were close friends for a few years before Youlyous came to this country in 1950. From 1945 to early 1948 I suffered from a respiratory disease. I was skinny and sickly all the time, with little hope of recovery. I often envied Youlyous and other young men of my age their good health and normal activities and wondered whether I would ever be like them one day. But, thank God, I did recover and gain normal weight, married and had a family and at 79 I'm still living and fairly healthy, despite two bypass surgeries I had in my middle age—plus a number of age-related moans and groans. (Con't on P.25)



What's on your mind?

Express Yourself!

Dear Ben: I received the third and fourth issues of HUSA along with the subscription application. I thank you and all the wonderful Assyrian friends who are participating in producing this magnificent work.

I have never lived in Habbaniya or even close to it, but I can tell you that I felt so close to all those beautiful and handsome faces that appeared in HUSA pages. In fact I felt very proud to see how civilized and neat my people had lived in those good old days. Viewing the pages filled my heart with agony when I compared the peaceful and positive lifestyle reflected in those images with the turmoil and destruction inflicted on my people in Iraq nowadays.

The wonderful and valuable photos in HUSA brought to my mind vivid memories of my late father and all the old people of my village who had never hidden their love to and longings for Iraq and their home villages Halmon and the neighboring Gairamon, with their orchards of figs and nuts. Throughout their entire life in Syria, they had never stopped dreaming of going back to Iraq. The pictures also reminded me of my late uncle and the Levy soldiers of Halmon, their formal appearance even in their old days, their ever-polished boots and ready-to-strike canes. They must have been proud of it. What else to be proud of in those days other than being a soldier for the British Empire?

I also thank my dear friend Atalla Giwargis who referred me to HUSA. Atalla lives in London, Ontario, Canada, with his family. We recently launched ZELGA, an online magazine in Arabic (www.zelga.com) Zelga is a cultural, political and informal magazine dedicated to serve the Assyrian culture and history.

I am enclosing the subscription application along with a check [\$75] to cover one year [HUSCA] subscription for Atalla and myself and for the third and fourth issues that you sent for both of us.

Thank you again and may God bless your efforts.

Ehsan Chukro

4.27.04. Bartlett, Illinois.

Invitation to Readers

We are grateful and appreciative of the letters and old photos we have been receiving from readers, especially some of which have been quite expressive, informative and interesting. But we would like to stress that we are also open to articles, ideas, stories, newspaper clippings, remembrances, concerns, etc. relating to your or other people's life, with a connection to Hinaidi or Habbaniya. Photos should be sent with, wherever possible, the following details:

Date photo taken, place, occasion, and full names of persons in the picture.

Such material received will be gladly published, if considered relevant and of interest.

To reproduce well, photos have to be submitted in their original prints (not photocopies). They will be scanned and returned to their owners in due time. If owners are reluctant to mail photos for fear of loss (which has never happened) the pictures may be scanned and e-mailed to:

mkpius@comcast.net

Thank you.—Ed.

My dear Ben and Michael:

Greetings from Jane and myself. We trust that you and the rest of your family members are faring well...

I regret for not having written earlier to congratulate you both about such a magnificent newsletter or magazine. All the pictures, articles, stories and even short words of thanks are worthy of praise. For the first time the newsletter reminded me how quickly time passes. On one page one sees a group of teenagers and on the next the same persons 55-60 years later, celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Teenagers once and now grand- and even great-grandparents! Without doubt it is a great newsletter containing all sorts of material, some of which I have not seen before. The views expressed by different persons are amusing and entertaining. The vintage and current pictures of residents now living in different parts of the world do remind us of the past and the present... As a former student and teacher [of Habbaniya Union School], I take great pride in those who produce such a newsletter, even those of you who contribute a picture or a few words of appreciation. I delight in reading your names even though I cannot always remember your faces. I take joy in reading about the achievements of some of you who have attained higher standards in different educational and professional fields...The late *Raabi* Yacoub Bet-Yacoub would have been proud of all of you.

I would encourage all you former Habbaniya residents, or off-spring of residents, who have heard of HUSA newsletter to add your names to the subscription list and share in publication costs. You all know this is a non-profit newsletter that reminds us of our old Alma-Maters and of Habbaniya in general and to the older generation, like me, of Hinaidi too, which included Central Labor Camp (nick-named Kota Camp), Coolie Camp, Maratha Lines and Assyrian Levy Lines.

The first three Hinaidi camps mentioned were under the supervision of Mr. Jack Ingram, Camp Superintendent. Mr. Ingram was a former Quarter Master in the British Army. The British pronunciation of the word "Quarter" sounded like "Kota" to Assyrians and so they nick-named Mr. Ingram "Kota" and also named the camp (Kota Camp) after him.

[The first three Hinaidi camps were inhabited by RAF local employees and their families and the last by Levy officers and soldiers and their families. Kota Camp was the largest of the four camps. It was inhabited by a couple of thousand people, most of them Assyrians, with a minority of Armenians. Coolie Camp was a smaller "township" whose residents were mostly Kurdish and Arab RAF laborers and their families, with a minority of Assyrian families. Maratha Lines was made up of five long military bungalows crammed with some 40 Assyrian families, including a few Indian and Armenian families.—Ed.]

Mr. Ingram or "Kota" was married to a beautiful younger Assyrian lady called Minanya, daughter of a widow named Khanna. As far as I know, Minanya was the first Assyrian lady who played tennis in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Mr. & Mrs. Ingram had their own private tennis court. They lived in a spacious house by the main entrance (gate) to Coolie Camp. Opposite the house on the west side of the main road were Mr. Ingram's offices. Beside the offices were four huts which were used as prison. I remember spending an afternoon in one of the prison huts together with seven or eight other young boys, aged 7-8 years. We were digging up mushrooms in a hockey pitch just outside the RAF compound when suddenly we were surrounded by a number of *chokidars* (local policemen) and were taken to the prison. (RAF personnel had complained beforehand because we had already dug up mushrooms the previous day.) Mr. Ingram came to the prison at about 4 pm and through an interpreter asked: "Will you go again picking mushrooms in the hockey pitch?" We all

shouted "No!" We were then set free.

To get back to the present, Ben, you mentioned once the next Habbaniya reunion might be held at Lake Habbaniya, circumstances permitting. Certainly all other Habbaniya reunions held

Reminder to Readers

A few of the HUSCA copies we mail out go astray and are not received, because the addresses of the subscribers involved have changed since the previous issue was mailed and the subscribers have not, unfortunately, notified us of the change. The subscribers concerned then raise a hue and cry that they have not received their copies!

When this happens, we are obliged to mail a replacement copy. This costs us the printing cost of the second copy plus the cost of postage which, in the case of an overseas subscriber, amount to a total of \$6.00 or \$7.00. Because of our limited budget, this is overtaxing to us.

May we therefore remind and impress on you dear members to please let us know soon after your address changes so that your HUSCA copy (and letters) may be directed to your new address correctly and the losses avoided. And please do send your payment, if overdue!

Your assistance would be very much appreciate.

—Admin. Manager

have been outstanding, but if this takes place, it will be the epic of previous Habbaniya reunions and I would probably be the oldest student or Habbaniya

resident to attend, God willing.

On behalf of myself and other surviving [Habbaniya Union School] teachers I heartily congratulate the Founding and the Organizing Committees in different Assyrian communities for their untiring efforts and zeal in organizing and holding such successful reunions. I believe the greatest outcome of these reunions is the HUSA newsletter. Michael and Ben, who can forget you! I cannot find words good enough to thank you both for such an excellent newsletter. *Chaibo* for your efforts and skill in the production of such a magnificent work of art, by two ex-Union School students.

Mike, I have in my old photo collection two pictures that might be suitable for publishing: one is of a group of RAF Assyrian Employees' Club tennis players and the other of a group of British and Assyrian Rovers. I will be happy to send them over..

(Raabi) Albert A. Babilla

5.12.04. Ex-Teacher & Friend.
>>> *Thank you, Raabi Albert, for your kind words and the beautiful description of the locale and the various aspects of the local camps of Hinaidi and for the reminiscent anecdote of your "imprisonment." Regarding the two pictures, please do send them over for we may be able to use them in future issues.—Ed.*

Dear Mikhael (Menashi): It is a little late but I want to thank you and Ben for having the courage and dedication to publish the HUSA Newsletter. I have enjoyed reading all the issues to date; the articles about Habbaniya, letters to the editor. They bring back memories of time long gone, when we were young. I have also enjoyed greatly reading your book, *An Assyrian's Youth Journal*.

It may seem odd, but I am pleased and grateful that you were bitten by the writing bug otherwise we would have been deprived of your *Journal* and many articles written by you in different Assyrian magazines, especially in *Nineveh Magazine*.

The *Journal* and HUSA reminded me of our social life and Habbaniya

friends, some who... (Cont'd on P.6) have sadly gone to a better place and others dispersed all over the world.

I know that you personally have suffered a great deal, losing your siblings and their children and your beloved wife. But what can I say. That is life, and we must play the cards dealt to us.

I will write you a longer letter when I hear about our people in Australia about our clubs, churches, weddings, etc., and if you need any other information just ask. I would appreciate it a great deal if you could provide me with "Youki" Youkhanna Patros's and your uncle Youshia K. Poloss's email addresses.

I hope to hear from you.

Yul (Bahram) Marbo

5.16.04. Greenfield Park, Australia.

>>>Thanks for your heart-felt comments. I trust you received my email for the information requested—Ed.

Dear "Minnie": I have just received the latest issue of HUSA (subscription) from your Chicago affiliate, Mr. Ben E. Yalda. As always, it is full of captivating tidbits, articles, and photos, including your Habbaniya love story, "Blue Eyed Margarita."

The 'obit' on the late Regina Gewartis Zaia was of particular interest to me as her maternal uncle. It is very difficult emotionally for me when I realize that she was the only surviving child of my late sister Mariam. Also, the section containing letters was of much attraction because of all those Assyrian subscribers, each writing something about themselves, many of whom I remember from Habbaniya days.

The HUSA issues you, Ben, and Wiska put out are really collectible pieces. There is just one point I wanted to bring up: nowhere in the magazine did I see a small mention to prospective but hesitant writers something like an ad asking these readers to submit stories, vignettes, sketches, photos, etc. You know, things which may have relevance to Habbaniya days or to Rabbi Yacoub's Union School. To encourage more Assyrians of Habbaniya era to come forward with written material having a Habbaniya or Union

School linkage, I suggest you include in each future issue something like an ad, requesting such material, that will encourage them to write and appear in print in HUSA.

But, congratulations are in order to all three of you for your efforts in putting together such an excellent magazine.

(Uncle) YKP

[Yooshia K. Poloss]

7.14.04. Hollywood Calif.

>>>Khaalu: *We thank you very much for your compliments, and your suggestion is very sound. But you will see that in almost every issue I have specifically requested photo and text contributions from readers. (See the opening pages of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th issues; "Notes from the Editor" on P.6 of 4th issue, not to mention the Editor's notice, in the masthead on P.2. of every issue, inviting the submission by readers of "articles, letters, photographs, documents, newspaper clippings or other memorabilia relating to the former Hinaidi and Habbaniya and their local people," with the deadlines indicated. But I guess most of our readers, like me, have to use a magnifying glass to read some of the fine print. So as per your suggestion, I am inserting a boxed "ad" (See Page 4) with bigger, bold lettering, inviting the readers to send in material for publication.*

But if one is to be blunt about it, it's not so much because readers don't or can't read my request notices as it is a lack of literary ability of some to write, or apathy on the part of those who can. You are one of the qualified writers Khaalu; you not only have the knowledge and journalistic ability to write but also the experience of having been raised and lived in both Hinaidi and Habbaniya for two decades. We appreciate the couple of letters you have sent us, but we would like to receive a more substantial material from you. So how about it? And don't expect the other fellow to do it!—Ed.

Dear Ben: Thanks for your reminder. Enclosed is \$20; \$10 of it for my subscription and \$10 as a donation.

It is always a pleasure to con-

tribute to a valuable cause, such as HUSCA, as well as to compensate—albeit meagerly—for your and Mikhael K. Pius' time and effort in producing such a wonderful magazine, and hey, with improved covers too. *Chaibo* to both of you.

I have read the entire 5th issue as well as Mikhael Pius' entire book *An Assyrian's Youth Journal*, which you recently gave me.

The bittersweet memories of those 60-plus years bring tears to my eyes and aches to my stomach but also joy for the staunch endurance of our people in Habbaniya!

I vividly remember the May 2, 1941 Habbaniya so-called war and the out-of-range bombardment of our little town by the Iraqi troops; the catastrophic German Messerschmidt airplanes that bombed the few sensitive areas such as the Aircraft Engine Repair Shop; the cries and commotion of the CC inhabitants when they learned of the death of several of our people, including the beloved "Eeju" (Ewan) Shaul, the supervisor of the shop and under whom my father, Youkhanna Slivo, worked as a mechanic.

I was a clerk at that very bombed shop, but because I was assigned to distribute food rations in CC, luckily I wasn't at the shop on that tragic day. Ewan loved me like his own son Avia, who was also more than a friend of mine—like a brother.

I will stop here even though my heart yearns to relate more of my memories of "good old" Habbaniya days, bittersweet as they may be.

Best regards to you and all the HUSA staff, and keep up the good work.

Shlimoon Youkhana

7.14.2004. Rosemont, Illinois.

Dear Mikhail: Congratulations on the latest HUSCA magazine. Excellent and interesting.

On page 17 there is a photograph of RAF Policeman John Falconer. One of our prominent RAF Police members remembers him well from Habbaniya and would like to get in touch with him. If you could forward his address to John & Julia [Falconer] or let me

have his e-mail address it would be much appreciated.

[Mr. Ray Foster's address and email were quoted.]

Our Association website (www.habbaniya.org) is now active again (why are they so complicated??) and I am working on a page specifically for the RAF Iraq Levies to give information about them. Not quite ready yet.

Any news about the next Reunion?
Best wishes. Christopher.

C.D.E. Morris, Dr.

Honorary Secretary, RAF

7.15.04. Habbaniya Association

>>> *I sent Mr. Ray Foster the address of the late John Falconer's family. As regards the next Reunion, Ben Yalda is the one who knows—Ed.*

Dear Mike: I received today your magazine. Frankly, the contents make me sad because they reminded me of how much our people suffered. But I was happy to receive the magazine anyway because it heralded to me happy tidings.

You see, I had not heard from you for several months. This worried me. Sad and unhappy thoughts went into my mind. I thought you had kicked the bucket. One day I was at your home in Modesto and watched your hands. The skin was wrinkled. My hands are now wrinkled just like yours. This made me think that after all we are old now and death is our final destiny. But I am glad I was wrong and wish you a happy and fruitful long life.

As regard the magazine, although the contents make me sad and reminded me how much our people have suffered there, and we did not know it. I want to read about the offspring of ex-Habbaniya boys and girls, those who achieved something, made a name for themselves and contributed something to the society.

Thanks again, I am glad you are OK. My *shlamy* to Ben.

Your friend, Youki.

[**Youkhanna P. Youkhanna**]

7.14.04. Turku, Finland.

>>> *No, I have not yet kicked the bucket, you old goat! I did go through a series of ups and downs in recent months,*

but I assure you I'm still alive and kicking despite my "wrinkled hands."

Youki, we have included a story, from time to time, about the progress and achievement of former Habbaniyans, or their offspring, when we have come across one. Examples are: "Habbaniya's Gentleman Sportsman," "Habbaniyan With a Golden Horn" and "A True Assyrian." (HUSA # 2); [Two] "Young Assyrian Achievers of Habbaniya Origin..." and "Ben Yalda—Assyrian" (HUSA #3); "Native Habbaniyan is Noted Achiever in Sweden," and "In Remembrance of... William David Shino (HUSA #4); and "Former Habbaniya Bike Repairer is Assyrian Educator," and "In Remembrance of... Ewan Gewargis (HUSCA #5). And the big story in this issue is about the great achievements of our beloved Julius Shabbas, former Nineveh Editor, who passed away recently—Ed.

[Translated from Assyrian]

Dear Brother Benyamin: I was born in Habbaniya and our house was C2/190. We were neighbors of the late *Rabbi* Regina, wife of the late Yonathan.

I received HUSCA Magazine, full of pleasant memories of the good days of love that existed in that camp; those days that can never be forgotten.

Bravo to this great work that you organizers of this magazine are doing. I also thank Mr. Mikhael Pius for his beautiful pen. [meaning writing]

May God help you and grant you long life and good health.

Shamasha Elisha Shummon

7.14.04. Sacramento, Calif.

Dear Ben: I hope you and all members of HUSA Magazine are fine. We really appreciate your excellent effort toward this magazine which provide us with all the interesting news for the Assyrian people worldwide. I am glad to enclose [\$30.00] my subscription renewal for another year and another for my brother Tawar Michael

Lewis Atto Shlaimoun

7.15.04. Ealing, London, UK.

Dear Ben: I am sure this check [for \$15.00] will serve the purpose.

God bless all of you for the excellent work you are doing. Say Hi to my neighbor of 75 years ago, Michael Pius.

Michael Lazar Solomon

7.15.04. Oakville, ON. Canada

>>> *Thanks for your greeting, old neighbor Meshael Lazar! Now you may say hello for me to your wife Axo—my teenaged neighbor of 65 years ago—Ed.*

Dear Mikhael: I received the latest issue of the HUSCA magazine and would like to congratulate you for the superb new look. Definitely, it's a step forward.

Incidentally, the upcoming issue of the *Assyrian Star* is focusing on Assyrian schools & education. We have various contributors writing for this issue about the Assyrian schools of Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul, Iran, Syria, Turkey. We would like to have you write (a couple of pages, more or less) about the Assyrian schools of Habbaniya and Baquba, such as the Raabi Yacoub Bet-Yacoub's school. Along with some photos if possible. Please let me know if your time permits.

Basima Raba.

Andrew Bet-Shlimon

7.16.04. Editor, Assyrian Star.

>>> *The requested article was published in Assyrian Star #3/04. —Ed.*

[Translated from Assyrian]

Respected Brother Mikhael:

Receive my greetings in our Lord.

I was glad to receive HUSCA magazine. I want to say *chaibo* to the beautiful pen that writes in this magazine full of pleasant memories of Habbaniya camp. My wish from our Lord, our Savior, is to give you always a charitable hand and long life to enable you and your colleagues to continue this great job.

I am sending you two pictures emailed to me. They show the condition of Mar Gewargis Church in Habbaniya, photographed in 1980. I hope you will receive benefit from them.

Shamasha Elisha Y. Shimon

7.16.04. Sacramento, Calif.

>>> *Thank you for your encouraging comment and for the pictures. We were hoping to have in this issue an article with many pictures on today's Habbaniya and Mar Gewargis Church of the East by a Dr. Sami Sharlman in Habbaniya. Unfortunately due to some delay, it will ap-*

pear in next issue, *God willing*.—Ed.

(Cont'd on next page)

Ben: I hope you remember me. I am Alice Aziz, younger sister of Roza, Panna and Liza. Also I was in Habbaniya Reunion in Chicago. I am happy that I became a member. [\$20.00 enclosed.] Best regard to you and your wife.

Alice A. Andy

(Undated) Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Ben: Thank you for your letter. Enclosed herewith please find a check for \$30.00, hoping this amount will cover my past dues as well as the present year.

I express my warmest regards and best wishes to all readers for their health and happiness for the coming years. God bless you all and I hope, to meet again. You are doing an excellent job. Keep things rolling.

Joseph "Osi" Y. Sliwo

7.19.04. Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Ben: Thank you for loaning to me last year the publishing disc [Microsoft Publisher] sent to you by my Brother Mike of Modesto. I am returning it to you with my appreciation.

Also thank you for your excellent job, making and encouraging and doing all the bookkeeping and publicity work to keep HUSCA so special. Bless you.

"Wiska" Khammo Pius

7.20.04. Miles City, Montana

Dear Menashi: I would like to thank you for priceless HUSCA 5th Edition.

Frankly speaking, whenever I read the contents it gives me tremendous pleasure. Moreover, it reminds me of too many events which I personally cannot forget.

Kindly mail a copy to each of the following [addresses given]:

1. Mr. William Yosip of Turlock
2. Messrs. Sargon & Luka Rohan of Australia.

Enclosed please find \$10.00 covering postage.

I salute you and your colleagues for such excellent efforts. God bless.

Andy J. Simon

7.20.04. Ealing, London, UK.

Dear Benyamin Yalda: Thank you for your thoughtfulness to send me the copy of HUSA Magazine in which I find the beautiful face of my late mother Regina and her obituary by her cousin Mike (Minashi) Pius. I am proud to be related to Minashi. I shared the magazine with our family friend Manuel Kirvokian, who is also from Habbaniya.

I am enclosing my membership application [with \$40.00] and also may I ask that you send a copy of HUSA to my sister in New Zealand. I am thankful to you and to Minashi. Keep up the good work.

My husband, Khachik Kachadorian, was also born and raised in Habbaniya. His family had a bakery and his Mom was called Bagee.

With warmest regards.

Elizabeth (Leezo) Kachadorian

7.22.04. Modesto, CA

>>> *Thanks for your appreciation and check cousin Leezo. A HUSCA copy was sent by Ben to your sister Shammy.*—Ed.

Dear Ben: I am enclosing herewith a money order for US\$20.00 being my subscription for 2004.

I congratulate you and Mr. Pius for the improvements on the last issue. Please keep up the terrific work.

My best wishes.

David Ganja

7.27.04. Scarborough, ON. Canada.

Hi my dear [Ben]: I am so sorry for not sending the money soon. I wasn't feeling good and I kept forgetting.

You do a wonderful job. May God bless you and your wonderful wife. I love you both. Keep doing the good job. I send you \$50.00.

Love you always.

Youlia [Julia] Falconer

7.26.04. Modesto, CA.

Dear Ben:

Received the 5th HUSCA Magazine. Thank you and your Editors group for such a brilliant publication. Plenty photos of our long lost friends and relatives.

I am enclosing \$20.00 to cover my subscription.

Youash G. Tamras & Family
7.26.04. Fairfield, Australia.

Dear Mikhael: I received your magazine a couple of days ago, and I have been trying since then to e-mail you, to no avail. For some obscure reason, my messages to you returns undelivered.

What I wanted to say is that I was deeply moved by what I read. You told me there were some lines about me in it, but I never imagined what it was. "Youki's" remarks are so touching, that I couldn't believe it. I also like the fact that he calls me an Assyrian. As you probably know, I am only 'half' Assyrian, since my mother was American. The same as Youki, I was moved to tears because of what he says.

So Youki lives in Finland? Just a few days ago a reporter from the radio I usually listen to, traveled to Finland because of some dealing a Finnish company is having with our country, and she made wonderful descriptions of Finland and its people.

Again, I thank you very much for sending me your magazine, and through you I thank Youki for his remarks.

Best regards,

7.28.04. Gladys Warda

Montevideo, Uruguay

>>> *Gladys Warda is a mathematician and a contributor to academic publications.*—Ed.

Dear Ben: I enclose check for \$15.00 for renewal of my annual subscription. I suggest we write HUSCA on the check instead of the full name as there is not enough space for the full name. Can we do that? Thanks.

Aprim K. Abraham

7.30.04 North Hills, CA.

>>> *Yes "Dosta," it's quite all right to do that.*—Ed.

Dear Ben: Sorry for the delay. This is just a short note to say that HUSA is great. Keep up the good work and good luck to you. God bless you.

Enclosed is a check for \$50.00 for my subscription and donation.

Johnny Benjamin Warda

8.3.04. Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Ben: I just want to thank you for

the good job you are doing. I really enjoy reading your HUSA Magazine.

I send you a badge of Habbaniya school which has been with me since 1940. Please mention it in your magazine. I also send you renewal dues of \$10 for one year. Thank you.

Marganita Nadirsha Gergo

8.8.04. Toronto, Canada.

>>> *Thank you for the remittance and the badge, Marganita. We regret the cloth badge does not scan and reproduce well in the magazine.—Ed.*

Hi Mr. Ben: This is the total of US\$.12 for my subs membership fee. Thanks.

Benyamin I. Yalda

(undated) London, England.

Dear Mikhael: Thank you for the 5th issue of HUSCA and for printing extracts from my letter of January 2004.

It is a delight to read and a wonderful medium for tracing and keeping up to date with one's acquaintances, friends and relatives.

You did a magnificent job in drafting the layout of CC and Levy Camps in Habbaniya from memory. The only inaccuracy I noticed was that you had placed the girl's primary school and the boy's secondary school on the same side of the road. The latter should be on the opposite side. Well done, Mikhael! I couldn't have done a better job myself.

Your article on hockey in Habbaniya was quite interesting, especially the photos which portrayed a number of well known and loved faces from the not too distant past. They are a treasure to keep.

I noticed that my "old" friend Shimshon "Shisho" Francis [Warda] has contributed one photograph (P14), depicting his father (Francis Warda) in the W&B team in Hinaidi in 1936. I vaguely remember Francis as a very fit man, but I never realized he played hockey. I would love to correspond with Shisho and keep in touch again after an absence of so many years. I would be grateful if you would pass on my address to him, that is if he is willing to communicate.

It is lovely to know that Andrews Simon (encyclopedia of tennis and hockey) is still enjoying an active life in sports. He has always been an all

rounder. I played a lot of volley ball with/against him in Daura [Baghdad] Assyrian Club during 1964-67.

My late brother William's youngest son Samir in Elgin, Illinois, gave me a copy of this photo [enclosed] showing the AMWD hockey match in 1946 titled "Redskins vs Palefaces" Please accept and add this one to your priceless collection of photos, with my compliments.

Mikhael, I have the following questions to ask you regarding the identity of some individuals portrayed in this issue [of HUSCA]:

Front cover (Class of 1940): Is John David mentioned the husband of Vartush and son of Dawood and Qanbar and brother of Joan and of Ammo David, another of my "old" Habbaniya friends? If so, I would like to know the whereabouts of his brother Ammo as I would love to get in touch with him too.

P.22, "Former Habbaniya bike repairer is Assyrian educator": Is the gentleman in the picture mentioned as *Shamasha* Issa Patrus the same Issa Israel who lived in Levy Camp and who had an older brother who, I believe, was a clerk in Levy and who had thick curly hair and wore thick lensed glasses (no disrespect intended)? His name escapes me, but my enclosed photo shows him standing behind the *khigga* line held in 1963 (?) at Assyrian Daura Club. Issa was my classmate in the intermediate school in Habbaniya and I wonder how far did he get in his studies?

Back cover: "Assyrian Levy Officers in London": Is *Rab-Khamshi* Gewargis Parkho shown in the picture the officer who, on retirement, opened a milk and dairy [products] shop in Levy Camp next to the gate leading to CC Camp? He was the father of "tall" Yuarish Gewargis who was my classmate in the primary school. Officer Gewargis was related to my father Shawel (Bne Margawer and Targawer) and I would love to know about Yuarish.

The enclosed photo shows a pretty girl named Elsie (I can't remember her father's name) who is married to an Englishman. She is with me and her two children (the boy must be in his late forties by now) and the picture was taken

by her husband when I was invited to their home in Harrow, north London, when I was in my first year of university in 1958. Elsie and family were our neighbors in C1 neighborhood in Habbaniya. If you contact Naima Ishmaiel Yalda in England, she may know about Elsie. [**Do you, Na'ima?—Ed.**]

I see from page 7 that Albert and Jane Babilla are actually back in UK for good and that poor Jane is still not well. Margaret and I will always be thinking of them and hope their move to be near their daughters and grandchildren will bring solace to Jane during her illness.

Finally, Mikhael, I thank you and your team again for another smashing issue of the magazine. It certainly was worth waiting for.

Take care and God bless.

Youel S. Tammo

8.9.04. Redruth, Cornwall. UK.

>>> *Thank you, Youel, for another interesting letter. I trust you have received the answers to your questions and the information requested, as per my letters of August 29 and Sept. 20, 2004.—Ed.*

Dear Benyamin: Many thanks for the latest copy of HUSA, which as usual contains many articles of great interest to those of us who were privileged to be part of the school activities during the early 1940s.

I hope there will be an opportunity for me to meet you and Sargon and some of the others of the Scout and Guide groups in which I was involved. I congratulate you and your team for the way in which by your work you have maintained the link with so many from the above groups who are now scattered to so many parts of the world.

I wish you and your families the very best of health. I have enclosed the \$12 for my membership fee.

Aggie Haggata

8.10.04. Rexhil on Sea, UK.

Dear Michael: I hope you are well.

Today I received your latest issue of HUSA to my new address. Thank you for your efforts. I also congratulate you and my friend Ben for your hard and

ful and high standard magazine to the fellow Assyrians, keep up the good work. God bless you.

Thank you again with our best regards.

8.20.04. Jacob Miraziz

Horning Sea Park, Australia

>>> *We thank you for your compliments as well as for the information requested from you, and are glad you have received the second copy sent to replace the missing original copy mailed to your old address.—Ed.*

Dear Ben: First, I thank you for your wonderful letter offering your condolences on the death of my uncle, Pithyou Kindo. Your words were very much a comfort to my family and me.

It is so nice to leaf through the pages of HUSCA and look at the pictures, especially those of RAF Levies and remember the words I would hear from my late father, Nanno Kindo, who was a proud member of Levies. Unfortunately, I do not have any of his Levy pictures. I wish I did.

I am enclosing a check for \$30 to cover one year subscription. Please send also a copy to my brother, Nenos Kando. [address given—Ed] in Germany.

Thank you again and keep up the good work.

Angel Kindo

8.23.04. Chicago, Illinois.

Mikhael: We don't have many diarists; people who can capture glimpses of our modern history...Habbaniya days and the like. I hope you find it possible to carry on with some of your writings, which is a valuable legacy for those too young to know firsthand, and for those not so young (such as myself) but without the personal experience.

Good to hear from you. Until later,

Francis Sarguis
[Retired lawyer]

8.24.04. Santa Clara, CA

Dear Mikhael: Your *shlameh* care of Jack Yohanan reached me. I was delighted to hear that you are keeping well and enjoying cooking.

I have some sad news for you: If you have not already heard it, *Rab-Khamshi* Gewargis Zorzan passed away

on 23 August 2004 here in Sydney. He was 97. The following biographical details were compiled by Aghajan Jammo: [See Editor's comment below this letter.]

Having given you the sad news, I now want to congratulate you for another most enjoyable edition of HUSCA. I know how much effort you put into producing it, but the final outcome must be most rewarding.

The final item I have for you is: At my lunch break at work (I work as a casual accountant at the local campus of the University of Western Sydney), I clicked on Zinda Magazine and very much enjoyed reading the 15 page story about Youra. The guy who wrote it did an excellent job of covering a fair bit of the sports history of our people in Habbaniya. Your name is mentioned in the story.

Keep on looking after yourself and enjoying doing what gives you pleasure and satisfaction. Regards.

Philimon G. Darmo

9.2.04. Sydney, Australia.

>>> *Good to hear from you and thank you for your compliments as well as, though regrettably, for the news about the death of Gewargis Zorzan. Unfortunately, I have not received yet the details requested and a picture from Gewargis's son Youel for a bio-obituary.*

Philimon, I too read the article supposedly on the late Youra Eshaya, written by a Sayid Hassanin Mubarak and posted on Zinda website. It is indeed an interesting piece that contains, quite a bit of information on Habbaniya soccer and a few players. But it is also a hodge-podge of various subjects all lumped together. Most of it is patches of work lifted from the published work of various writers and presented as Sayid Hassanin Mubarak's work without giving proper credit. Almost half of my seven-page article on Youra Eshaya published in Nineveh Magazine (Issue #3/1992) and posted on www.edessa.com website, as well as the information in my 20-page special issue of my 20-year-old newsletter Bil Khizmaany Wdosty (Between Kith and Kin) published in August 1992, comprising a collection of published clippings (mostly mine) on Youra Eshaya, is all in Sayid Hasannin's article—some of

it shamelessly copied word for word!—and he has credited me for only a few words: (Youra...was once asked by journalist Mikhael K. Pius why he thought he was so popular with the fans, he replied "I think it is because of my dribbling," and added "My tricks amuse the people") And I'm sure most of the other parts of his article are lifted, not just in sentences but in paragraphs, from other writers' published material.

I know, no writer can create everything himself and has to depend to some extent on information from other sources. But if he wants to print other people's information as published, he has to put it in quotation marks and give its writer proper published credit, not to mention the courtesy of asking permission to use it. Otherwise, he should take the gist of a piece of writing and rewrite it in his own words. A writer cannot just help himself to other writers' work and present it as his own. This is called plagiarism and is considered a misdemeanor! (See my protest published in Zinda e-Magazine of 11.16.04)—Ed.

Dear Mikhael: A big thank you for all the effort you put in finding the addresses of my long lost friends. They have all been a success except for Elsie's address. This happened to be a case of mistaken identity! This Elsie is definitely the cousin of your late wife Blandina, but she is not the one I met in London. She told me that they entered U.K. in the 1970s while the other Elsie was here prior to 1957. But I thank you for trying.

I have already got in touch with Ammo David and had nearly an hour telephone conversation with him and Margaret spoke to his wife Jeerusha (in Assyrian, of course!) who happened to be a cousin to Harun Ballu with whom Margaret and I returned to Iraq in 1962, on his expense, because he bought himself a car in Germany in my name. And when we got to Daura we found that his sister was our next-door neighbor! What a small world it is! I also spoke to Yourish Gewargis in Australia and his wife Elizabeth, whose family turned out to be the *qariveh* of my sister-in-law Christina. We Assyrians are entwined together like vine.

I shall be writing to *Shamasha* Issa Israel Patrus in due course. So all in all you have done me a great favor. Thank you.

It was very interesting to read your article [in *Assyrian Star Magazine*] about Raabi Yacoub. I have heard so much about him. Of course it then dawned on me that the primary school that I attended under *Sayid* Antwan was initially Raabi Yacoub's school! It is clear to me now from your description of the classrooms and the playing ground.

I have been in communication with Wiska recently. He has sent me clippings of his latest articles published by the *Miles City Star*. He is doing a magnificent job there.

Finally Mikhael, it certainly has been lovely hearing from you and I am very grateful for all your help. Please convey my regards to all your family. Look after yourself and God bless.

Youel S. Tammo

10.9.04 Redruth, Cornwall, UK.

>>> *Although having a fuller figure, the "unknown" Elsie in the picture certainly has a resemblance to Blandina's maternal cousin Elsie, middle daughter of the late Ezaria and Ish'sha Shummon of Habbaniya, and with whom you have evidently talked on the phone recently.—Ed.*

Dear Mikhael: Thank you for your letter of 11th instant and the enclosed [photocopy of] the aerial picture of Habbaniya CC [and Levy Family camps]. It brought back again those sweet memories of my childhood. Looking at the primary school location and along that straight road leading all the way to our house C2/120 by the Roman [Chaldean] Catholic church. I can visualize my dog "Jacksie" crouching there by the side of the road waiting for me to come out of school. He knew the exact time of my coming. I would give one long whistle and he would come bounding all the way to the school to meet me and walk me home. Ah, those were the days, my friend!

Mikhael, as you may be aware, I was then a student, confined mostly to the local camps to know much about the Station parts of Habbaniya.

However, regarding the CC parts I can remember most places well and I have marked them for you in red to contrast with your black annotations.

The CC bazaar extended from where I have shown it. The location where you have marked as CC bazaar is where Jittu's, the paraffin seller's and the photographer's shops were, not far from *markas-alshurta* (police station) behind the indoor cinema.

The unknown building you enquired about consisted of the school toilets and store room for sports equipment. The houses next to these were the shopkeepers' homes. Khammo the cobbler and Mikhail "Abu Naffut" lived there. I know this because I spent quite a few evenings playing there with Yuarish and Yushia Khammo (God rest their souls).

The Chaldean Catholic church sticks out like a beacon to me and from there I can visualize our house, William Daniel's and Aprim Kamar's houses. The road in front of them ran all the way in front of your house and ended by the Abattoir (*Qassabkhanna*) next to the fence line. (Khammo the Cobbler later moved into your house after your family moved up to K-Type.)

You have mistakenly marked the cinema nearest to the CC gate as "outdoor" when in fact it is the indoor. The outdoor cinema and the adjoining ice plant are where I have marked them.

Finally, Mikhael, I am not "rubbing it in" when I say that the road leading to the Uxbridge Gate [on my CC & Levy Camp map—Ed] clearly separates the intermediate school from the girl's primary school and the mosque.

I hope I have done adequately what you required and I will be only too pleased to help at any time.

Youel S. Tammo

10.19.04. Cornwall, England.

>>> *Thank you, Youel, for another absorbingly descriptive letter and for the help you gave in identifying a few of the places on the aerial picture—now printed as the center piece of this issue.—Ed.*

Dear Minashi: In your note you asked if you could print an obituary of my brother Tsholak. Your suggestion is very generous and I humbly accept.

I'd be glad to make a donation to your Association and I so appreciate your time given to me in this matter. I'm therefore enclosing a check for \$50 and hope this will cover all expenses.

I like to say thank you again for everything. You are a great friend.

Arpen Onick Hovasapian

10.11.04. Glendale, California

>>> *Thank you for your generous donation, Arpen, but we are sorry that you are not joining the HUSCA membership. In this issue, in addition to Tsholak's bio-obituary, we have also your older brother Souren's graduation picture on the cover. And in the next issue your graduation class picture is scheduled to be on the cover. How about that? Won't you be missing out? In fact I think you should be telling the few of your Habbaniya friends there about HUSCA. Perhaps one or two might even have some publishable material on Habbaniya Armenians for us. We'd like that. How about it?—Ed.*

Dear Ben and Mike: I send \$12 and all my salutations and greetings to you both and to the readers of your great magazine.

Your magazine reminds us of a part of the Assyrian history which was joined with a love so strong that is left for us from our Assyrian nation. We have also received this love from Jesus Christ and therefore has left all the people in Habbaniya cousins. With your magazine you are bringing back the love of Habbaniya to us. My opinion is that putting Assyrian writing in your magazine for those who can't read English.

We hope and pray God will help you; health wise and your magazine.

Yousipos E. Serges

8.30.04. Sydney, Australia.

Dear Ben: I do not remember paying my subscription for 2004 and so I am enclosing my check for \$30.00 for this year and for 2005.

Davis Eshay David

(undated) Modesto, CA

If YOU have not yet renewed your membership, please send in your payment now without waiting to be reminded. Thanks a lot.

THE GREAT SURVIVORS: A frosty letter from the guy in frozen Finland

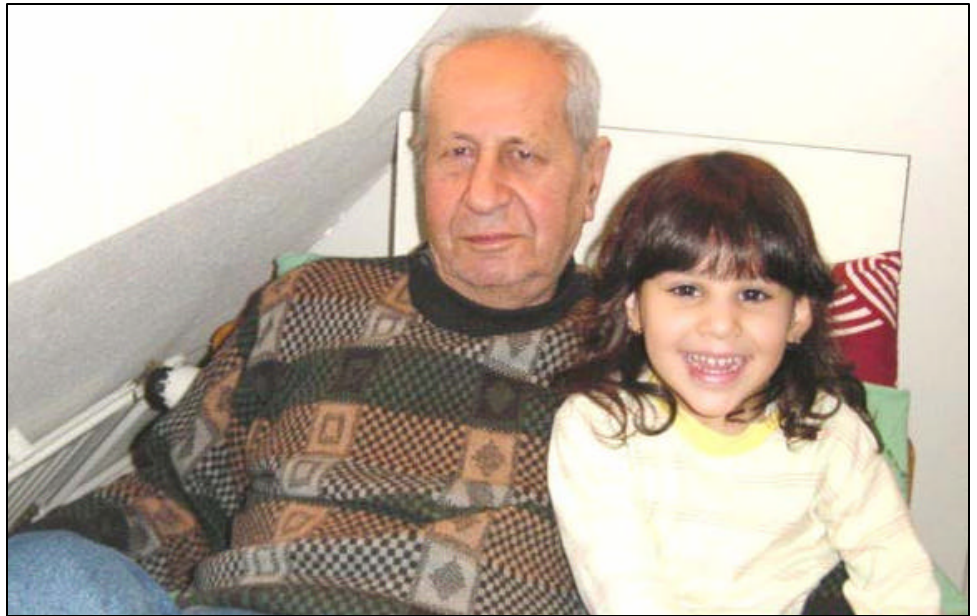
No, it was not wine and roses! Habbaniya was not all wine and roses. I felt it and Yooshiya [Poloss] also felt it and expressed it. I felt that there was something wrong but did not know what. I was young and almost illiterate. My parents never spoke about their past except that my grandfather had died in Baquba [Refugee Camps] and my grandmother was poisoned together with about 600 women and children who had gone to the American Mission compound to escape from the attacks by Kurds, Turkomans and Iranians. The American Mission had contracted a Turkoman to supply the compound with flour. He had mixed *juss* with the flour and all had died from eating the poisoned bread.

I once saw a video tape in Chicago of a party of an Ex-Habbaniya group. When *Raabi* Jane David spoke she said: "We did not know." I understood what she meant.

No, *Raabi* Yacoub's Union School was not *taken over* by the Iraqi Ministry of Education in 1944 (P.25 of 5th issue of HUSCA). It was *given* by the administrator of CC to appease the Iraqis for their defeat in their attempt to destroy or capture Habbaniya.

Each Assyrian family was obliged to give a sum of 100 or 150 dinars for the construction of the new school building. It took seven years to collect the money required for the construction of the school. We did not know.

Pastor *Khoury* Abdul Ahad (P.25) (we called him Ablahad) was formerly a Catholic priest and was expelled because he had married and had joined the Nestorian Church. He was from Alqosh and we heard he had built two houses there. This happened when *Mar* Eshai Shumon had sent a letter after he had returned from the first conference of World



"Youki" Patros Youkhanna and his granddaughter in Turku, Finland
(Youki and family moved in September and settled in Sweden)

Council of Churches held in New Delhi, India. *Mar* Yosip Khnanisho came to Habbaniya to read the letter. The church of *Mar* Gewargis was filled and loudspeakers were installed so that the hundreds of people outside the church could also hear. In this letter *Mar* Shimun explained that all the Churches that attended the World Council of Churches conference had agreed to observe Christmas on December 25 and he asked the congregation if they agreed to change the traditional Church of the East date of 7th January to 25th of December. Although Assyrians are notorious for not obeying their leaders, the majority that day agreed for practical reasons. They agreed because the Muslims taunted and mocked them by asking: "When was Jesus born, December 25. January 6, or January 7?" [The Armenians celebrated on 6th January—Ed.] But about 60 elderly men did not agree to the change, saying, "We will go the way of our parents." However, there was no friction between the two groups, the adherents to December 25 and those of January

7. There was instead mutual understanding and respect and some families observed Christmas on both dates. This continued until the Baathists came to power in 1968 and Nadhim Kzar, that notorious intelligence chief, interfered and split the Assyrians and created animosity between the two groups.

In his letter *Mar* Shumon also proposed that an administration committee and a treasurer be elected, that classes in Assyrian language be held and the priest be paid a monthly salary. The administrative committee discovered that the church was receiving donations from church members totaling 400 dinars per month and that all this money was going into *Kashisha* Ablahad's pocket. Soon after this, Ablahad left the church.

You must remember [RAF local] employees and Levies were poorly paid. A Levy soldier received less than 6 dinars [a month]. He was fed *purupkhina*, rice, some pieces of meat and bread. But they paid their dues to the church out of their conscience, not as an obligation.

Photos in your magazine show boys and girls playing, singing, dancing and smiling. Pictures of happy people. But there are no photos of elderly people who were there in Habbaniya while the young ones were happy. The young ones did not know what their parents had experienced.

To me Habbaniya was a big prison. We were enclosed in a camp surrounded by iron fence, barbed wire[?], watched by Iraqi police, *Chokidars*, Levy police, and by British Secret Service informers. But *Usta Mooshi* founder of *Khet Khet (Khubba Khuyyada) Movement*,* had a secret service that had penetrated the British Secret Service in Habbaniya. But the British managed to steel the *Khet Khet* file. After reading through it, however, they were reassured that the Movement was not communistic. But they arrested *Usta Mooshi* and seven of his committee members and ordered them to disband [their organization] otherwise, they were told, the Iraqi police would arrest them. I was told *Usta Mooshi* had said that he had accomplished his objective which was to create *Khoubba* and *Khoyada* [love and unity] among the Assyrian tribes.

Before 1914 the Assyrians were tribes and each tribe looked after its own. Due to centuries of isolation they had no feeling of belonging to Assyrian ethnic groups. But they had the feeling that they belonged to the Church of the East. *Usta Mooshi's* organization united all the tribes into belonging to one nation, Assyrians.

Young men and women who grew in Habbaniya are offspring of the GREAT SURVIVORS. Their parents had survived the calamity of World War One. Not one person who had survived had not lost, one, two or three members of his family. Their parents did not speak about their past except telling nice and pleasant stories. From 1910 to 1917 many of our people had been killed, many died from starvation, exposure during the long trek from Urmi [Iran] to Baquba [refugee camps in Iraq in 1918], and from diseases. Some mothers were obliged to abandon their small children

*See Mikhael K. Pius' article in Nineveh issue

No. 3/1999 on the subject.

because they did not have the strength to carry them. Others died with their babies suckling on their dry breasts. I had read that about 40,000 men, women and children had perished during the six month trek from Urmi to Baquba. A relative told me that when they arrived they were starving, and when they put a piece of bread into their mouth they collapsed and died before they could chew and swallow it. I had read that 20,000 had died in the [Baquba] camps from exposure, starvation and other causes. I also heard the British Indian doctors in the camp carried out medical experiments there on the Assyrians and some had died as a result. I have also heard that Arabs near the camp would enter the camp when all were sleeping and steal sleeping girls, rape them, kill them and throw them in irrigation ditches. Later guards were placed at night.

Boys and girls who grew in Habbaniya are offspring of the Great Survivors. They knew nothing nor wanted to know about the past horrible experiences of their parents. So they played, danced, smiled and laughed. Assyrians have many cemeteries in north Iraq, in Baquba, the biggest in Baghdad; two in Kirkuk and one near Gailani camp, but the latter was bulldozed and a petrol filling station was built upon it. A friend who visited the local cemetery in Habbaniya where his father was buried, saw the cemetery filled with garbage by the Iraqi Air Force personnel. When he spoke he cried. They laughed at him.

Not only Habbaniya was no wine and roses, it is the same [situation now] all over Iraq.

Yes, I did take a shower in the bath building in Maratha lines. I remember the occasion because it was the first time I saw a beautiful naked girl with breasts. The vision is still in my mind just like the red headed [golden haired] girl you saw in Habbaniya. Both visions are real.

Writing, editing, and printing a magazine is laborious and hard work. I know because I have worked as a reporter and editor. I know you would not do

it, but I suggest you copy selected articles from Internet. See www.aina.org, the book section. But you don't have to publish the whole book but in installments. See also Assyria online and Forum. The best writer is Fred Aprim. All his writings are on Internet and no copyright.

“Youki”

7.14.04. Youkhanna P. Youkhanna Turku, Finland.

>>> *Thanks for your interesting impressions about Habbaniya and what went on with our people before Habbaniya. But sorry, Youki, I take exception to a few of your facts and figures: I have never heard that Khoury Abdul Ahad was a married priest. It was also news to several knowledgeable former Habbaniyans here whom I asked. And someone who was the Khoury's next door neighbor in K-Type for several years told me he was absolutely certain that the Khoury was not married and that the reason for his estrangement from the Chaldean Church was because he was passed over for a bishopship in favor of another priest. The Khoury had two spinster sisters, one was a nun and the other one in C.C. took care of him. I will not discuss here the subject of the inaccurate figures—the 400 dinars a month you heard went into the Khoury's pocket, the 150 or 200 dinars extracted from each CC family for the building of a new school, etc—because it might prove somewhat embarrassing, but will thrash this out with you personally when you send me your new email address in the near future.*

I know about AINA (Assyrian International News Agency), Assyria Online, Zinda e-Magazine and the few other Assyrian websites and I delve into them from time to time. First of all, HUSCA is not a mainstream Assyrian periodical of general interest but rather of special interest serving as a record of a certain region, time, and people—the former Union School student body and the local town of Habbaniya and its community. (The motto of our magazine, as mentioned under the nameplate, reads: “To inform, to connect with and to preserve old ties and memories between former schoolmates and residents of Habbaniya local 'town'.”) Second, I would rather leave Assyrian politics to our honorable Assyrian politicians. And third, I do not want to use up space for material that is already seen and read on the internet, if I can help it.

And by the way, the golden haired Marganita was not real but a product of

Luftwaffe Wings Over Habbaniya

By Solomon (Sawa) Solomon

Habbaniya was the location of the main British air base in Iraq from 1938 to 1955. It was located about 55 miles west of Baghdad. It was besieged by the Iraqi Army in April/May 1941, but held out. Among the defenders were 1200 Assyrian Levies. Also about 8000 Assyrian civilians made the base their home. The following is the story of the axis involvement in the Iraq Battle.

The German contribution in Iraq was a small one. It was not till May 12 that RAF reconnaissance aircraft first noted the presence in Iraq of Luftwaffe. Fliegerkorps (Air Corps) VIII in Greece dispatched a small force under the command of Colonel Werner Junk. That unit included 12 Messerschmidt twin engine, seven Heinkel bombers, two Messerschmidt C, five Messerschmidt HE III, 20 Junker Transports and one 20 mm Flack Battery. One of the first aircraft to arrive on May 11 was flown by Major Axel Von Blomberg, the son of the former War Minister, Field Marshall Von Blomberg. He was killed by rifle fire on landing at Al-Rasheed Air Base, near Baghdad.

The Germans found the two main air fields in the country, Al-Rasheed and Mosul, in bad shape, with little anti-aircraft defenses. Here the British reacted by sending more planes to Iraq and by attacking German bases in Mosul and Kirkuk.

It was on Friday, May 16, that Captain Schwahauser led three HE-III Heinkels to attack Habbaniya. They arrived at the base at 9:35 am. Schwahauser made two passes over the hangars. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Graubner attacked the parked aircraft. Here Flight Officer G.D.F. Herriage of the RAF scrambled his Gladiator aircraft to meet the attacker, but his plane was caught in the cross fire of all three bombers and crashed, killing the Englishman. However, he did disable one of the German bombers, forcing it to land later on.

After this, the Luftwaffe launched a campaign of strafing against British reinforcements to Habbaniya. On May 18 the Air Officer Commanding, Air Vice Marshal Smart, was sacked by Churchill and AVM J. H. D'Albaic was brought from Palestine to be the new AOC. AVM Smart was hostile to the Assyrians.

On Tuesday, May 20, the Germans threw all their aircraft in the battle of Fallujah; this was the high tide of

the Luftwaffe in Iraq. It was the RAF against the Luftwaffe and when the dust settled, the British came on top. Meanwhile, below on the ground, the Levies were able to stop the Iraqi counter offensive dead in its track and resume the attack toward Baghdad, but there were heavy casualties on both sides.* On that day six BF-110 Messerschmidts attacked Habbaniya again. They destroyed a Blenheim, a DC-2 and two Valentines and damaged two more Blenhiems.

On Friday, May 23, the 155 Italian Squadron consisting of 12 CR-42 left for Iraq under the command of Captain Francesco Sforza. The squadron arrived in Kirkuk via Rhodes, Aleppo and Mosul. Starting on May 28 the Italians conducted a strafing campaign against the British/Assyrian forces in the Fallujah area. However, this was to be a very short fight for the Italians, for on Friday, May 30, the Iraqi Prime Minister and his supporters fled the country, the Mayor of Baghdad declared a truce with



RAF's Westland Wapiti Airplanes over RAF Station, Hinaidi, Iraq in 1930s

the British and the campaign was over. Next day, May 31, the Italians were crossing the border into Syria in buses covered by the remaining fighters. And on June 5 they left Aleppo to Rhodes and their 155 Squadron was renamed the 164 Squadron and used to defend Rhodes.

The Germans fared worse. They lost all their aircraft, combat and transports. The Luftwaffe personnel managed to escape to Syria, thus ending a minor tactical campaign that could have had major strategic implications.

*The following Levy soldiers were the casualties on May 22, 1941:

1. Benyamin Tooma, Pte.#1272.
2. Dinkha Daniel, Pte #1265
3. Eshu Gewargis, Cpl. #1026
4. Eeyou Tooma, Pte #1281 (died May 28)
5. Gewargis Odisho, Pte. #302.
6. Khaskiel Enwia, Pte. #296.
7. Pithyou Eshu, Pte. #1321.
8. Youkhanna Hassado, Pte. #992 (died May 24)
9. Youkhanna Tooma, Pte. #1090.(died June 7

Source of information: Book, *Cloud in the Middle East*, By

From our sports archives (Reprinted from *The Iraq Times* dated 5.14.1951 (report) and 6..12.1951 (photo))

CIVIL CANTONMENT JUNIOR FOOTBALL WINNERS



1951: Habbaniya Bus Brothers Soccer Team: Habbaniya Junior Cup Winners

In front, from left: Summon *Raabi* Ammanuel and Wiska Khammo Pius (Capt); Sitting, second from left: Shmouel Kamar, Albert Philip Rasho, Khoshaba Yacoub Aboona, Clarence Vincent; Back row, from left: Youash Gilyana Tamras, Atniel David, Wilson Warda, William Youkhanna, Shmouel Lazar Essa, William Khoshaba, and Zia Moshi Youkhanna (lineman)

Habbaniya Bus Brothers Drive on to Win Cup

By Minashi K. Pius

Philip N. Benjamin's Habbaniya Junior Knock-out Cup went to Habbaniya Bus Brothers when they defeated the Habbaniya Intermediate School in a lively match yesterday. [The HBB are the Habbaniya boys who attend the Ramadi Intermediate School.]

The game was played at a very energetic pace in a rough-and tumble, do-or-die sort of way. Both teams were of equal strength at the outset, the kids dishing it out hot and pungent. It soon developed, however, that the Brothers had the upper hand.

Time and time again the Brothers' force surged upon

the school's goal with brisk teamwork, but failed to score. Whenever they broke through, the agile goalie Enwiya was always there to meet the ball. The School too tried a few times to score but their forwards lacked the finishing touch.

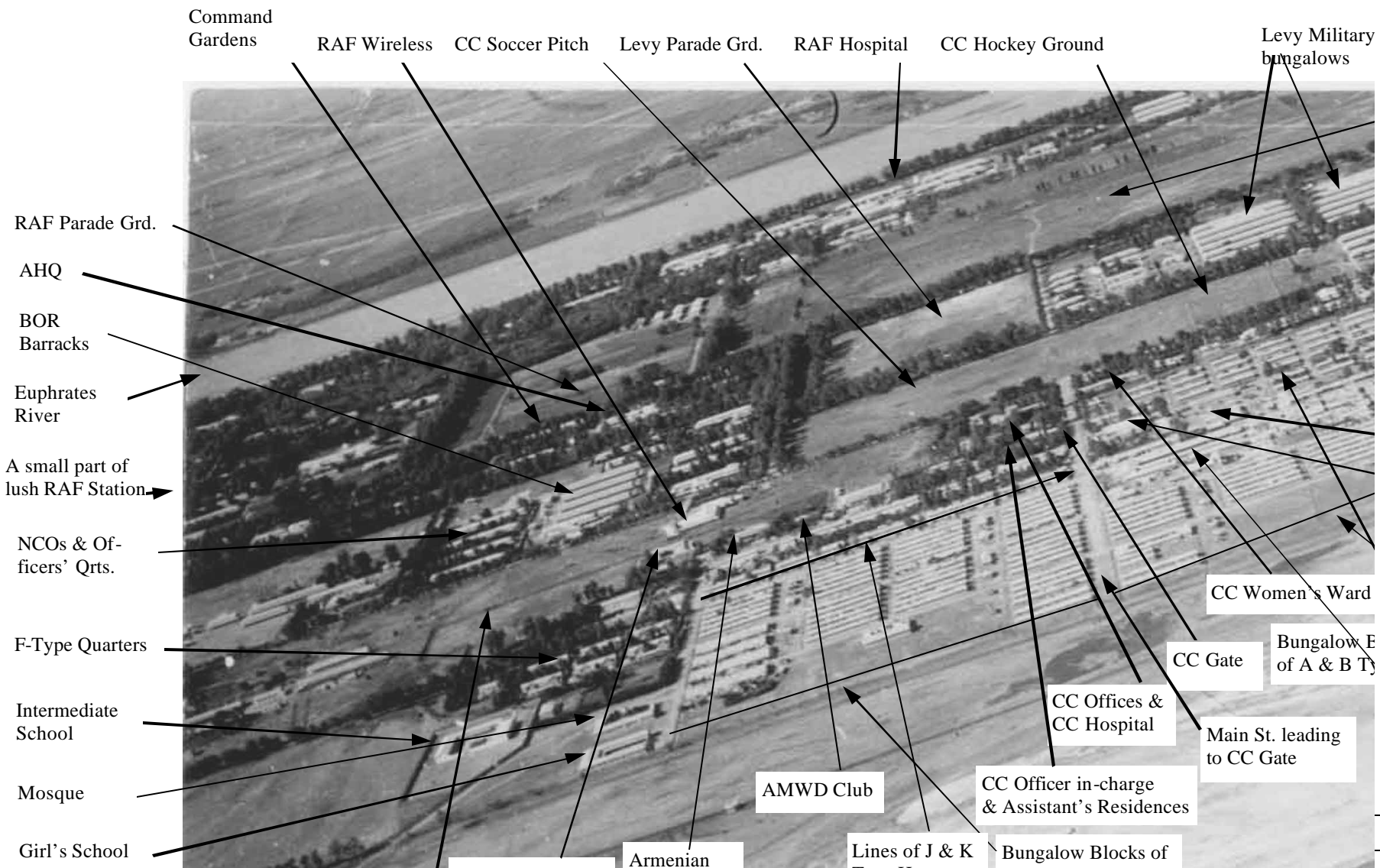
Ten minutes to the end, when both teams were putting out their last ounce of strength, the Brothers' forward, Albert, found an opening and netted the first goal.

Four minutes later, a second goal followed. And no sooner had the ball been dealt at the center when Wiska slugged the third one into the net, ensuring victory.

This aerial photograph of a part of Habbaniya shows mostly the local camps of Civil Cantonment, Levy Fair

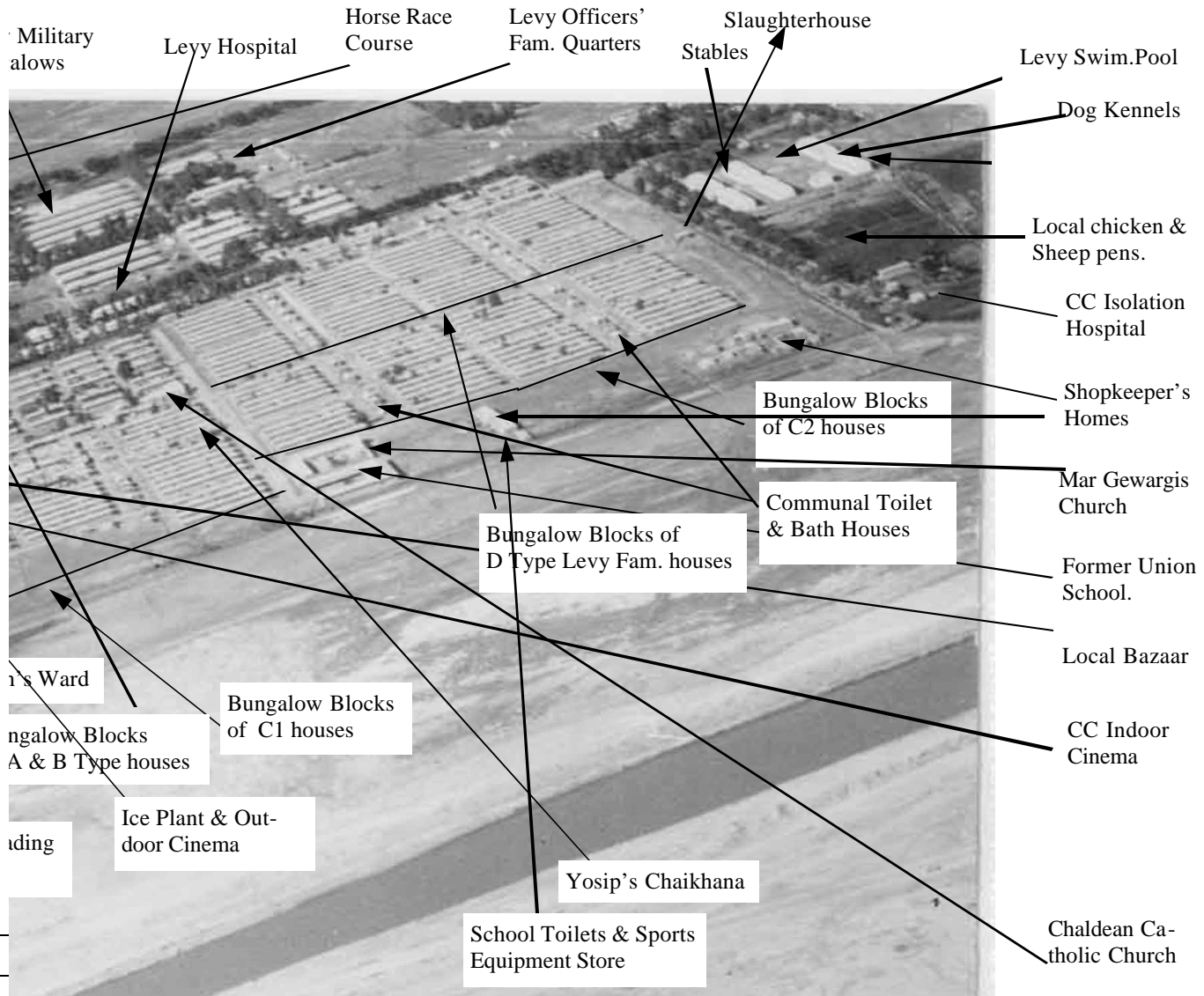
Taken from over the Habbaniya Plateau, this picture has been contributed by John Mackay through R.A.F. Habbaniya Association. Mr. Mackay served at 123 Signals Radar Maintenance Unit in RAF Habbaniya from

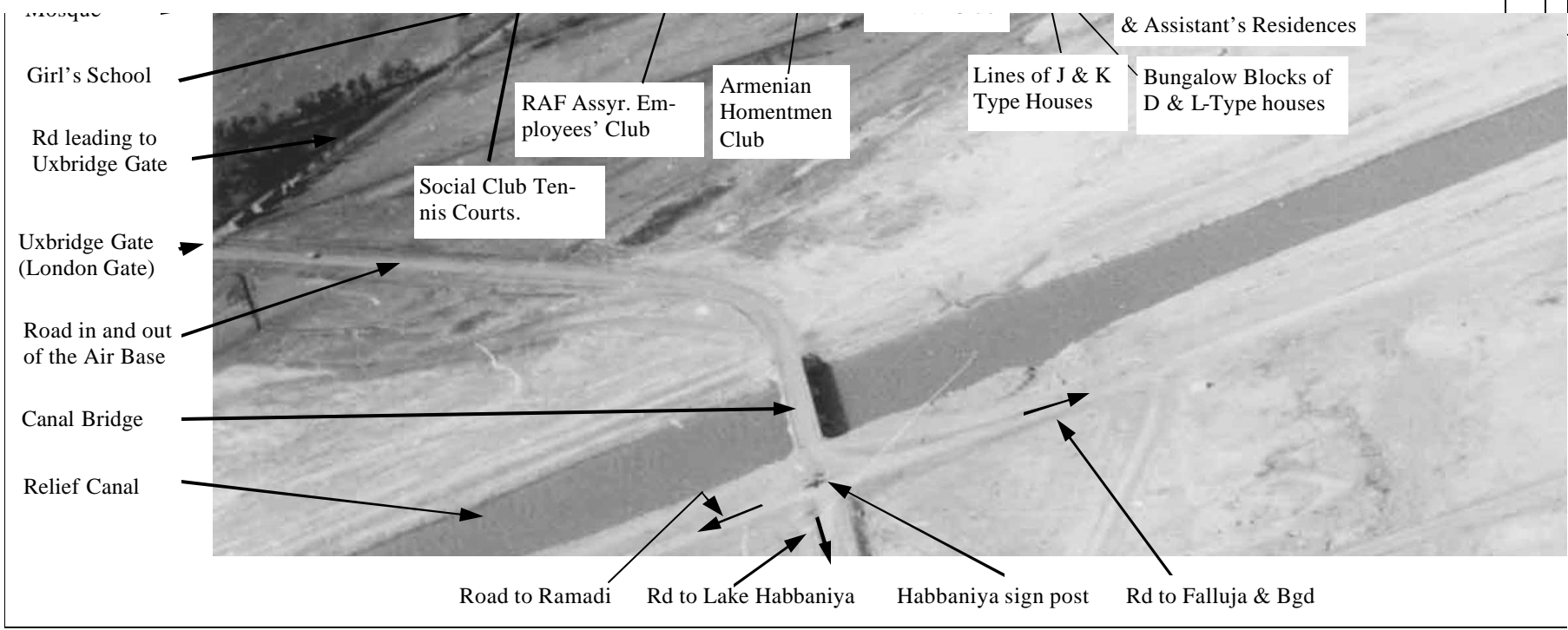
October 1957 plateau. Ident



Levy Family Lines and Levy Military bungalows and local Levy Officers Quarters

er 1957 to October 1958. There is now a railway and multi-lane highway between the canal and the u. Identification of places made by Dr. C. Morris, Mikhael Pius, Sargis Shallou, and Youel Tammo.





School Toilets & Sports
Equipment Store

Chaldean Ca-
tholic Church



SNAPSHOTS CONTRIBUTED BY READERS



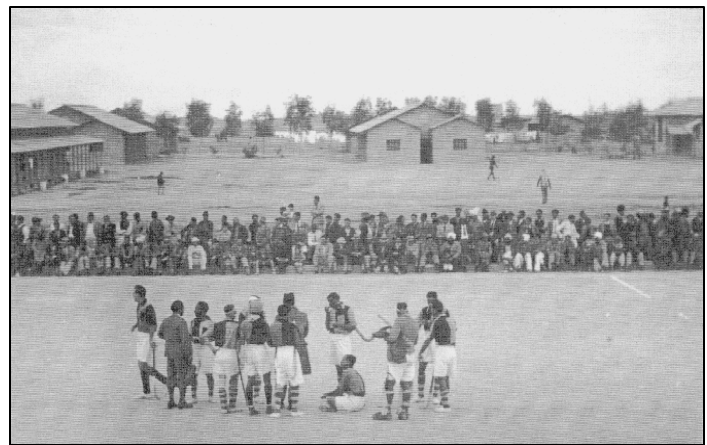
1958: Youel Tammo with Elsie (?), a Habbaniya neighbor, and her two children in London when Youel, a university student, was a guest at their home. Youel is interested to contact Elsie and see how she is doing. Help, anyone? Photo, snapped by Elsie's English husband, was sent to us by Youel Tammo.



1957: A group of Assyrians at a social in Habbaniya. Front, from left: Andrena and Pebronia Orahim Shino, Noori and Jamiel Hormis; Center back, from left: Khoshaba Bahram, Wilson (Khamis "Khokha's" brother) and Andrew Orahim Shino. Photo courtesy Andrew Shino of Chandler, Arizona.



1963: A social evening at Assyrian Daura Club, Baghdad. Shmoil Shawil Tammo (left) holding his sister-in-law Margaret Tammo's hand. Other three young ladies not identified. At back, David Israel.



1936: A section of the spectators and the Works & Buildings team at half time during a hockey match against the Station team, in RAF Station, Hinaidi. Photo from Shimshon Francis Warda.



A Get-Well wish to three Union School Reunion founders, Ben Yalda (left), Sargon Aboona and Zacharia O. Zacharia, following their hospitalization this year for various ailments. This scenic Photo was taken at the time the Reunion was held in Australia in Oct. 2000.



Another Get-Well Wish, to Helen Zacharia (with hand bag). Photo taken at a social gathering at the home of Sophia (extreme left) and husband Youaw Kanna (behind her) at the time the 2000 Reunion took place in Sydney, Australia. (Regret no space to name the others).

SNAPSHOTS CONTRIBUTED BY READERS



11/1943: Matron Polus inspects Junior Girl Guides during a Scouting field day in Habbaniya as Girl Guide Leader Khawa Aboona looks on. Photo Enwia Warda.



Ealing Junior Open Tennis Winner 2003. Ben, 16, son of Mr. & Mrs. Simon Shallou of Ealing, England, Photo courtesy Sargis Shallou, Ben's granddad, of Modesto, Calif.



1944: Air Commodore & George Nikola "chatting" during a jamboree held in Civil Cantonment of Habbaniya. Photo courtesy Enwia Warda, Kent, England.



1944: Aircraft Depot Equipment Acct. Staff, RAF Habbaniya. Front, from left: Abbas, Eva Edwards, Panna Jacob, Victoria Odi-sho, Sandra David, Not known, Awshalim Malham, Wallace Joseph; 2nd row, Andy Simon, LAC Ashman, Cpl. Brolin, LAC Lee, Mr. Edwards, Sgt. Roberts, Sgt. Ryan, W/O Mark, NK, Yosip Yacoub; Back, left: Michael "Sawa," Awiqam Youna. Photo courtesy Andy S.



1946: St. George Day Parade in RAF Station of Habbaniya, Iraq The skillful and sharp-smart RAF (Assyrian) Levy Band leading the Habbaniya Boy Scout & Girl Guide troops march past a group of high-ranking British officers and Scouting officials during a ceremonial day at Levy parade ground. Photo courtesy Enwia Warda, Kent, England.



1957: Group of "Giants" from Habbaniya at Salman Pak, Baghdad. Standing in front of Ctesiphon Arch, from left, Simon Putrus, Albert Aviqam Samuel, Wales Pera and Sargon Yacoub Aboona. (Observe size of cars in backdrop!) Photo courtesy Albert A. Samuel. Sydney.



The second graduating class of Union School CC Habbaniya A second pose of the 1942 & 1941 graduating class in which, for some reason, Souren Onick Sanasarian is not present. Souren, however, is included in a second pose (See front cover picture)

The Zacharias Celebrate Golden Wedding Anniversary...



Helen and Zacharia O. Zacharia on their wedding day.

Because both Zacharia (aka Skharia and Zac) and Helen (aka Heleeny) Zacharia have not been in good health, the couple observed their golden wedding anniversary themselves quietly at home on 4th of December 2004, the date they were married in 1954 in Habbaniya. The lives of both Skharia and Helen run in a similar pattern: Second of six children, Skharia was born to Odisho Skharia Latchin and to Khazy Adam Dermo in Amadia district in Northern Iraq in 1932. Helen was also born in Amadia district two years later, to Khoshaba Yacoub and Meriam Shamisdin. Skharia was second of six children and Helen was sec-



Helen and Zacharia at a party in recent years.

ond of seven children. The fathers of both served for many years in RAF Iraq Levies. Both were raised and educated in Habbaniya and lived there for five years after marriage, where their two sons and a daughter were born. They moved and lived in Baghdad in 1959 and relocated to London in 1969, where they had another daughter. In 1981 they immigrated to this country and lived in the Bay Area; in 1989 they moved to Chicago to be close to parents and to their own married children. But after five years of Chicago's weather they quit and returned to California, where they as well as their youngest son and family have been living. Skharia, as many know, is a proficient and well known musician, specializing in saxophone—MKP

...and The Thomases Celebrate Silver Wedding Anniversary



Kamal & Lily Thomas on their wedding day.

Lily and Kamal Thomas observed their silver wedding anniversary with a drinks-and-dinner party at their home in Modesto on Saturday evening, September 18, 2004. The event was

attended by some two dozen guests, including their own family as well as their extended family members. Kamal, born in Kirkuk, Iraq, is the fifth of seven children of Mary and Yosip Patros Thomas of Glendale, CA. He owns a car lot in a neighboring town, Manteca. Lily, a Baghdad University graduate and head start teacher since 1991 and housewife, was born in Habbaniya in 1953 and is the eldest of two children of Mikhael Khammo Pius and the late Blandina Ewan Pius of Modesto, California. She has a brother, Yosip, 12 years younger. Lily and Kamal were married in Baghdad on September 18, 1979. They now have a daughter and three sons, all born in Baghdad, and a two-year old grandson. The family emigrated from Baghdad to Modesto in June of 1990 and has been living there ever since—MKP



Kamal & Lily with their Children in 1997. From left Freddy, Lynne, Emile and Peter

Blue Eyed Marganita

By Mikhael K. Pius

The conclusion of a Habbaniya love story—Part 2

The story so far: On his way back home from a visit to his uncle's family in Baghdad, Shimshon "Kutta" meets on the bus a beautiful girl named Marganita. She is going to Habbaniya to visit with her aunt's family and to attend a wedding. They get acquainted and Shimshon falls head over heels in love with her. She not only tops him by a few inches, but her family is also way over his head in both culture and class, not to mention the fact that the two belong to two separate faiths of the Eastern Church that often scorn each other. Furthermore, his family's economic situation is so tight that he has no hope of ever meeting the financial obligations that a wedding requires: *nigda*, bridal clothes, jewelry, gifts for in-laws' family, wedding celebration expenses, even if he is able to win the love of the girl and clear the religious and social barriers separating their families. To find out how the story develops and ends, now read on...

In the early evening of the day following his return home to Habbaniya, Shimshon Kutta had a shower out of a pail at the neighborhood's common bathhouse. He then shaved carefully, oiled and combed his dark hair and shined his only shoes. After he put on the best of his two white poplin shirts and his special-occasion pair of gray gabardine pants, he smiled at his mother (who had hand-washed and charcoal-iron pressed his clothes) and said in Assyrian: "Thank you, Mother." He then left home and began walking toward the beautiful crimson setting sun, where the F-Type quarters were located.

Although FType neighborhood was only a cluster of a small number of houses, he did not know which one was the home of Marganita's aunt. But he kept walking back and

forth in the vicinity, hoping against hope to catch a glimpse of her. He spent most of the evening loitering there but could not see anyone except a few middle-aged people and a night guard who looked at him closely. It was also getting late in the evening. So he finally trudged back home, tired and disappointed.

It was already past supper time. His mother set a plate of warmed-over rice, topped with a watery dash of *sherwa* (lamb stew), and a *sammoun* bread on their rickety table for him. He ate a couple of spoonfuls, but didn't have much of an appetite. He sighed and went outside, grabbed the neck of the clay *talimta* set outside to catch the breeze, raised it over his head and took a few gulps. The water was lukewarm. He then sat on his bed for a long while, thinking before undressing and going to bed. He turned and toss for some time before falling asleep.

He lived with his parents and a brood of siblings on what little he and his father made. They lived in the Civil Cantonment in a C-Type house, one of six mud-brick, arch-roofed houses which formed a bungalow.

The three-fourth-square-mile camp was crammed with close to 500 of these houses. Each house had two small rooms and a courtyard the size of the two rooms. They had no electricity nor kitchen and their running water and toilet facilities were communal. In the Cantonment and the adjoining Levy Family Camp there were some one thousand other similar houses, but smaller, with the same facilities. Two or three hundred other houses of several types of a slightly better standard, however, had electricity, private bath with running water, kitchen and a private latrine in the courtyard. Among these were the F-Type quarters, the top of the line, occupied by families of higher grade employees.

The two small rooms his family had, served as dining, sitting and guest rooms and sleeping rooms in wintertime. At night, the whole family slept on mattresses on the floor and covered themselves with wool-stuffed quilts, all home-made by his mother.

In summertime, his family slept in the open just outside their house, as all other families did, mostly on bedsteads of one kind or another set alongside each other. After lunch, as customary Shimshon took a short nap in the roofed courtyard, despite the stifling heat, flies and lack of a cooling system. In wintertime the chill was broken by the warmth from bodies in overpopulated rooms and by his mother's roaring kerosene Primus stove when she cooked their meals or boiled tea in one of the two room instead of the courtyard.

Though disheartened the first evening of his lookout for Marganita, Shimshon continued to seek her during the next two evenings as he and his best friend Ninus strolled about in the camp. He even steered his friend to the F-Type neighborhood thrice. But there was no sign of her.

But on the third evening, as the two were walking up the main street, past the Bazaar, his heart jumped with joy when he spotted her walking with an older woman down the street toward them. As she approached nearer, the hallowed glow in her golden hair created by the setting sun behind her, her slim and tall figure and graceful gait took his breath away and he felt trigger-tense.

When the pair was close enough, he nudged his friend with his elbow and smiled, ready to greet them. But they both passed by without even looking at him and his friend.

Shimshon felt a stab of disappointment piercing his heart. This turned to pain when his friend nudged him back, smirked and said: "Hey, *khori* [my friend], I thought you said she loves you!"

(Cont'd on next page) Soon after, he left his friend and went home, his mind greatly troubled as he imagined various reasons for Marganita's indifference; thoughts and questions that harassed and puzzled him and kept him long awake another night and pensive the next day. *If only she had given me just a quick sideways glance!* he thought.

Embarrassed by Ninus' knowledge of Marganita's indifference toward him and his friend's probable assumption that he had only bragged about his friendship with the beautiful Baghdad girl, he did not call on Ninus the next day. Instead he spruced up and went out alone for a stroll early in the evening. He walked back and forth on the criss-crossing dusty and treeless main streets of the camp, passing by and overtaking time and again many young people he knew as they took their evening stroll. He even traversed shorter streets and watched bypasses like a hunter looking for his quarry. But his hopes of meeting her grew fainter by the minute and his spirit grew lower.

As a last resort, he walked to the F-Type neighborhood for the third time, but without luck. On his return, he cut across the K & J-Type quarters to get on the quieter road passing between the B-Type bungalows and, lining the other side, the expansive fenced gardens and residences of Officer-in-charge of Civil Cantonment and his assistant and the local club premises. Because of the few shade trees on one side and the classy residences and gardens on the other, the street was rather popular as a lover's lane.

When he stepped on to the road to turn right, he glanced to his left. He saw two women approaching from the direction of the Assyrian Employees Club. They were barely one hundred feet away, but it was dusk and he could not recognize them. He stopped and looked closely for a few moments as they approached. His heart suddenly started beating faster and his knees grew weak as he noticed the graceful gait of the taller and slender figure. He turned right and started

walking very, very slowly. They were walking faster than him and it took only a minute and they were alongside of him. They slowed down their pace. He looked sideways. He saw Marganita gazing straight ahead. For a moment his heart felt so heavy that it almost dropped into stomach! Then suddenly she turned her eyes and looked at him and a broad smile of recognition lit up her face. He felt a tingling sense of relief. He smiled back. But before he could greet them, she piped cheerfully: "Hello, Shimshon!" followed by "How are you?"

Her voice sounded like music to his attentive ears, especially when she said his name, and his pounding heart almost leapt into his mouth, and because of his short breath he could barely manage a strained "Hello!"

He then added: "Thank you, I am well. And how are you?"

"Thank you, I am well too and I am enjoying myself in Habbaniya." Then she added: "Shimshon, this is my *aunti's* daughter, Parmaneh"

"*Shlamaloukh*," Parmaneh greeted him and lowered her head, smiling impishly. She then held Marganita's arm and gently pulled her, urging her to walk faster. Parmaneh, Shimshon noted, was a younger pretty dark-haired girl he had seen a few times around.

After they had overtaken him by fifty paces or so, Shimshon noticed something drop from Marganita's hand. He quickened his step and picked it up. It was a little delicate white silken handkerchief. He walked faster. When he was close enough, he called out: "Marganita, you dropped your handkerchief," holding out the object.

She turned and hastened toward him, leaving her cousin standing still.

When she took the handkerchief, his eyes shifted from the handkerchief to her face, back and forth twice.

Marganita held the handkerchief suspended for a moment. She then held it out to him and whispered: "If you want it you may keep it for your breast pocket," giving him a meaningful smile. Then she added in an undertone: "I am sorry I could not greet you that evening because of my

Aunti. I will see you at the wedding."

"All right," he returned eagerly. "I will hold you seats. How many?"

"Four," she said, smiling again as she hastily strode back to rejoin her cousin.

Shimshon wondered whether the dropping of her handkerchief was by accident or by intent. He pressed the scented handkerchief to his nose and sniffed deeply while he walked. It was like he was smelling roses and strolling on a heavenly promenade in April instead of on the nameless dusty CC road in July. And his thoughts ran ahead of him. He was thinking of tomorrow evening when he would see her again, and the next day...and next...and, he hoped, perhaps always in future.

The mild breeze blowing was somewhat warm, but it refreshed his body as he walked. And the sky was clear and he wondered what the stars that were already beginning to wink up there held in store for him.

It was supper time. He hastened home. He ate heartily of the simple meal his mother set for the family as he chatted and bantered with his siblings. Later in the evening he went to bed, relaxed and happy in his hopeful anticipation of the next evening.

He was still overflowing with joy the next day. He just had to tell his friend Ninus of his good fortune, he decided. So shortly after coming back from Saturday's short-day work and having lunch he cycled to his friend's house. He was so cheerful and chatty that Ninus looked at him askance and asked: "What has happened to you, *Khori*?"

"You will not believe what happened last evening!" He exclaimed. "Man, I saw her and...and also talked with her!"

"I don't believe you," said Ninus.

"You will believe me when...when I see her again this evening...and talk with her and...and...perhaps even dance with her!"

Ninus chuckled. "You are just bragging."

"Just wait till... Tomorrow I will tell you what...happened at tonight's wedding!"

Ever since he had come of age,

his father and mother had given up going to a wedding, unless it was a very close relative's marriage. They had left this social obligation to him, and he had started sharing it with his younger sister Shushan, who was still in her middle teens. So early the next evening, he and his sister showered and spruced up and left for the RAF Employees' Club, a seven-or-eight minute walk, where Ashur and Shamiram's wedding was to taking place.

The club was built only a year earlier. It had a sizeable hall for winter and a large garden and a lawn with a two-step elevated stage in the center for summer weddings and dance parties. The Assyrian Band had already assembled its instruments in one corner of the stage and more than half of the chairs around the some 50 tables were occupied by guests.

First, Shimshon's eyes panned all over the tables. He then steered his sister to a vacant one with six chairs in one corner of the lawn.

The sky was clear of the usual summer haze and a mild breeze was blowing, though somewhat warm.

More guests arrived gradually. A couple asked if they could sit with them. Shimshon apologized and told them that the seats were reserved for friends. He politely directed them to two nearby unoccupied chairs. When his sister asked: "For whom?" he just gave her a mysterious smile and said "For friends."

He kept a sharp lookout as the guests filtered in. He noticed that most of the tables were gradually being occupied. He began to drum the table with his fingers.

His sister watched him closely. "You look nervous," she said, smiling. "What is the matter?"

He waved his hand at her and returned her smile to reassure her. "Oh, nothing," he replied.

He wondered how long he could hold on to the four vacant chairs!

Where is she? He questioned himself mentally. *Has something happened to keep her from coming?*

He was beginning to despair when he finally spotted her. She was with her aunt, her cousin Parmaneh and a

teenaged boy. They had just stepped on to the lawn.

As the group stood for a minute looking around for a place to sit he held his breath. Then his heart started pounding with excitement.

There were a few odd one or two vacant seats here and there, but no table to seat all four of them together. Then his heart jumped with joy as he saw Marganita looking and pointing towards his table!

As she and her party came into the light, he noticed Marganita was smiling. She was wearing a well-fitting sky-blue dress matching her eyes. With the cascade of her golden hair, she looked radiant, and he was dazzled by her beauty!

The group approached his table. He stood up and, looking at Marganita's aunt, he greeted them: "In peace you came. You are welcome to sit with us, if you want to."

As they settled down, he said "My name is Shimshon, I am son of Shmouel and Shamamy And this is my sister, Shushan."

Marganita's aunt said: "My name is Khammeh. This is my daughter Parmaneh, this is my son Sankho and this is my sister's daughter Marganita."

They shook hands all around. He observed Parmaneh looking from under her eyelids into Marganita's eyes opposite her and smiling impishly, while Marganita tried to divert her aunt's attention by engaging Shushan in small talk.

Shortly after, Shimshon heard the swelling sound of *zorna woo'dawoola* as the bride and bridegroom were eventually ushered into the club garden, amid a joyous crowd of dancing and prancing colored handkerchief-waving women and clapping men, all relatives and close friends of the newlyweds' families. And when the "King" and "Queen," both glowing with happiness, were finally danced to their table of honor, the horn and drum team continued to play and the dancers formed a line on the stage and began dancing Assyrian *khigga*.

He watched as Marganita stood up. Looking at Parmaneh she said: "Come on, let us dance." Then on

impulse she grabbed Shushan's hand and gently pulled her up, and the three girls joined the dancing line.

The line of dancers went round and round for about 15 minutes before it broke up. The dancers gradually took their places at their tables, fanning themselves with their hands.

Then the MC announced the fathers of the newlyweds. They walked to the stage and each said a brief speech to welcome the guests and to thank them for attending the wedding.

Soon after, dinner was served. It consisted of cold cuts of roast beef, with a boiled potato and greens. Arak or beer was brought for men and soda drinks for women and children. To bolster his spirit, Shimshon decided to sip a beer.

Dinner over, the band began to play as the MC announced that the King and the Queen would open the stage with "The Wedding Samba." And William David, the vocalist, began to sing the song in a robust voice to the accompaniment of the band.

Shimshon was just aching to dance with Marganita. But he thought he might displease Marganita's aunt if he rushed into it, and he didn't want to press his luck. He decided to take his time, to create a more familiar air with his table companions before easing his way into a dance with her. So he took his sister for the first few dances while Marganita and Parmaneh danced with Sankho by turns, as Khammeh sat, nursing a soda drink and watching.

After he had sat out a couple of dances, trying to make conversation with Khammeh to gain her favor, the band struck up a waltz, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," one of his favorites.

He waited a few minutes, watching the dancers. Inspired by the song, he could not contain himself any longer. He gazed straight into Marganita's face. He sensed an unmistakable expectation in her smiling eyes. He drew a deep breath and stood up. He looked at Khammeh and politely asked: "May I dance with Marganita?"

Khammeh looked at him for a long moment. There was a look of un-

certainty on her face as her eyes shifted from him to Marganita and back. He

(Cont'd on next page)

glanced at Marganita and noticed that her smile had frozen on her face as she looked at her aunt. His own heart almost stopped beating! Then Khammeh finally nodded her head solemnly and said "Yes."

He saw Marganita's smile come alive as she stood up and started walking toward the stage. He followed her, resisting the temptation to hold her hand and lead her.

On the stage he looked into Marganita's eyes. He smiled and said: "You know, I thought your aunt was going to say... to say no!"

Marganita laughed and said "I had my hand on my heart too."

Being a fairly good dancer, he was cautious not to step on her toe or bump her into other dancers. But he soon discovered she was a good dancer too and glided around, light on her feet. And to his joy, the band switched to "My Heart Cries for You" without even stopping. So he had a non-stop two-dance with her as the vocalist finished the number with the line "my arms long for you, please come back to me."

For the next dance, he encouraged young Sankho to dance with his sister Shushan, and to assume common consideration, he himself danced with Parmaneh. She, too, was a good dancer and he enjoyed the "South American Joe" rumba with her.

To his uneasiness, he noted that Marganita's beauty was attracting attention other than his. During the next few numbers, a couple of young men approached timidly and asked for a dance. They were not known to the family. After looking at her aunt, Marganita politely declined. Then a handsome young man he didn't know came over, greeted Khammeh and her group with familiarity and asked Marganita for a dance. Shimshon felt a twinge of uneasiness as she eagerly accepted and her aunt smiled broadly at the unknown man.

When the next number began, the rhythmic strains of "La Comparita" tango reached his ears. Without losing any time, he asked Marganita for a dance. This time he didn't even bother to ask her

aunt's permission.

As they began to dance, he asked: "Who was that handsome man who danced with you?"

"Oh, that was one of my mother's relatives from Baghdad" After a brief pause, she laughed and added: "He is married."

He smiled in relief as they continued dancing.

Her long, tapering fingers in his throbbing left palm and her other hand upon his shoulder, he circled her slim waist with his right arm as they moved to the rhythm of the heavenly music, floating around as if in a dream. The tango gave him the opportunity to dance closer to her than did the waltz. She was wearing low-heeled shoes and she lowered her head a little to bring her face closer to his. In fact they were so close that their cheeks touched a couple of times and a strand of her hair kept brushing against his ear, tickling it. He did not know whether it was he who was holding her close or if she was the one nestling closer to him. She smelled like roses and he held her firmly and yet so gently as if she were a thin glass of Champaign. And bubbly like Champaign she was as they danced!

As she chatted gaily, a tug-of-war went on between his mind and his feelings. Finally, her gay mood boosted his courage and inspired his feelings. He drew a long breath, looked into her eyes and blurted out in a whisper: "You know...you know...I love you?"

As she looked into his face, he perceived, despite the dim lighting, a blush coloring her fair face for the first time. Then she smiled, nodded and whispered back: "I love you too."

He almost swooned with rapture. He held her closer to him and danced on, feeling he was in a dream world of his own. It was divine!

Then he suddenly had an intense desire to kiss her! He wondered how she would react if he gave her a quick peck. Of course he doubted if Khammeh's watchful eyes could perceive their closeness and what they were doing from that distance. But others around them certainly would and that would

cause a disastrous outrage!

After he had recovered his composure, he said in an undertone: "Do you think your father would...would give you to me when he knows about... about the differences between us? I mean our family...our faith, our...our economic situation?"

She smiled reassuringly and replied: "My father is a good and simple man. I am sure he will agree. He loves me very much and will not break my heart when he knows that I love you. And I do not care about a big expensive wedding. And I have found out that you have a good family." She then laughed and added: "Even if you are not wealthy."

He smiled and again drew a long sigh of relief.

They managed to have two more dances together. But shortly after midnight, people began leaving. Shimshon felt an acute disappointment when Khammeh got up and told her family members it was time to go. Her children pleaded with her to stay a bit longer, but she stood her ground. "It is late," she said firmly. "We must go. And you know your father is not feeling well."

After they all said goodbye to him and his sister, he watched Khammeh lead her group to the newlyweds' table. She shook the bride's and bridegroom's hands, kissed them both on the cheeks, placed her *sabakhta* (money-gift) envelop in front of them on the table and slowly walked toward the exit. Marganita and her cousins also shook hands with the couple and then caught up with Khammeh. As he gazed longingly after Marganita, she cast him a backward glance.

Shortly after that, he held his sister's hand and told her: "Let us go too," even though there were still many guests dancing and enjoying themselves. But he was so full of happiness that he didn't think he needed any more pleasure that night. He just wanted to hang on to what he had experienced and enjoyed that evening.

He and his sister congratulated the newlyweds and gave them their gift and walked out of the club.

Shushan looked at him, smiled broadly and said: "Marganita is very beautiful. And she is also a nice girl."

He smiled back and nodded his head. "Yes, I know," he said.

"Did you enjoy yourself?"

Still smiling, he nodded again, assuming a dreamy look.

By the time he reached home and went to bed the dreamy look he had assumed had turned to a song in his heart. As he lay in his bed in his underclothes alongside the beds of his peacefully sleeping family members his bed sheets, chilled by the cool breeze of the small wee hours of a new day, tingled his bare arms and legs. Gazing at the clear dark sky and the twinkling stars up above, he smiled and began to sing softly to himself: "My heart cries for you, sighs for you, dies for you. And my arms long for you, please come back to me..."

The End.

Note: I'm grateful to Brother Basil, our consulting editor, for the suggestions he made in eliminating some of the detailed description (that slowed down the pace of the story) and for pointing out a few pitfalls in regard to viewpoint. Basil is a former college teacher of English, which also included teaching story writing.

Also I'd like to point out that in the first installment I erroneously named Parmaneh as "Khammeh," which in fact is the name of her mother, a serious and responsible woman, as indicated in the concluding

installment.—Editor.

New Year Celebration (Cont./P2)

morning or till their eyelids started drooping. In some cases, several men got together in a home to smoke, drink and play poker or some other kind of gambling game. These customs are gradually being replaced in recent decades by big open community parties held, for an entrance fee, often including dinner, by organized groups in clubs or rented halls, with professional singers and musicians (the top ones demanding a five-figure fee!) to provide music. The crowd eats, drinks, dances and shouts the new year in. And for sober people, the new day is also celebrated in the morning by attending Mass, hearing the priest's special homily and receiving the sacraments.

Celebration of New Year is the oldest of the holidays. Assyrians and Babylonians celebrated it thousands of years ago. The New Year began after the first new moon (visible crescent) appeared after the first day of spring, which is a logical season to start the year when rebirth of new life begins—planting and blossoming of crops and plants and thawing of snows and gushing of life-giving waters. But January 1st has no importance in regard to astronomy or agriculture, but was adopted arbitrarily. The ancient New Year festivities

basket, which signified the annual rebirth of god of wine as the spirit of fertility. Egyptians also used a baby to represent rebirth.

The early Christians denounced the custom as pagan. But the practice was so popular that the Church was obliged to reconsider its position, allowing its members to celebrate the New Year with a baby. It gradually came to symbolize the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

At the beginning, the Romans celebrated the New Year on March 25, but when their calendar ran foul of synchronization with the sun they declared January 1 as the beginning of the new year. But this was not always followed until Julius Caesar established the Julian Calendar in 46 BC, confirming January 1 as the New Year. But Caesar had let the previous year to drag on for 445 days in order to synchronize the calendar with the sun.

In 567 AD, however, January first was abolished by the Council of Tours in favor of March, varying the actual day to coincide with Vernal Equinox (first day of spring), as today's Assyrians do in regard to *Khab Nee-san*. But when Pope Gregory XIII established the Gregorian Calendar in 1582 AD, new year was moved again to January 1, which the Western nations have been celebrating now for the last 422 years. [The information for the second half of this article was gleaned from Internet.]—MKP

Just Chit-chatting.. (Cont/P3)

I connected with Youlyous again here in 1989 when I started sending him articles for *Nineveh* on Habbaniya and its local people. We continued our working relationship for 12 years. We exchanged letters and he would call me now and then to discuss my contributions and to chat. He was so attentive and prompt in his responses and firm in his decisions. And after he resigned his editorship of *Nineveh* in January 2001, and especially after his wife Violet took ill, I made it a point to call him regularly every month. Sometimes Violet would pick up the phone and we would chat for a few minutes before she handed the receiver to Youlyous. She was a very pleasant lady, cheerful and with a great sense of humor. And Youlyous was a brave person throughout his terrible illness. He was always in good spirits and optimistic, even in the last few weeks when he could barely talk.

Well, both Youlyous and Violet have gone now, as some other of our old friends and loved ones have gone during recent years. But such is life. Some of us are fortunate to enjoy the whole spring, summer, autumn and winter of our lives before we too become just a memory, while still others are less fortunate and pass away sooner. We the lucky ones shoot up, bud and blossom, and wither before we finally die. But our fruits are what we are remembered for. Both Youlyous and Violet produced rich fruit and left us good memories. May their souls blossom and bloom again in heaven.—MKP

Shidragh Yousif, former Assyrian Iraqi International Footballer Visits California

Shidragh Yousif, an Assyrian from Iraq who was one of the top soccer international players of Iraq in the sixties and seventies, was on a visit to Modesto-Ceres-Turlock in November 2004. During his visit, a rally meeting was held on Sunday evening, November 14 at Urhai Club of Ceres at which he was the guest of honor. The rally, attended by a couple of hundred soccer fans, was sponsored by the Assyrian Athletic Club of Modesto. Shidragh arrived at the Urhai Club accompanied by two other former Iraqi Assyrian international players, Aram Karam (left) and Edison David (2nd from right) who sat at the head table on either side of him.



The meeting included speeches by Aram and Edison and a few others as well as a talk by Shidragh himself about his life, followed by a few questions from the audience. The rally ended after the audience had coffee and cakes including a special cake for Shidragh, which he is seen above tasting. —MKP

In Remembrance of...

...Julius Nwyia Shabbas, 77, former editor of *Nineveh Magazine* and a prominent member of Assyrian Foundation of America, who passed away at home in Benicia, California, on Monday, September 27, 2004, and was laid to rest on October 1, at Sunset View Cemetery in El Cerrito, California, after losing a courageous two-year battle against cancer of the pancreas. In the same cemetery also lie Julius' wife Violet (who passed away on May 1, 2002), his parents, Nwyia and Shirin Shabbas, and his older sister Nina as well as the Shabbases' renown *khnami Raabi* Yacoub Bet-Yacoub, his sons *Raabi* Emmanuel and William and their wives Nina and Shammiram Jacob, respectively.

Julius' funeral services were conducted at Sunset View Mortuary in El Cerrito by Rev. Ninos Michael of Mar Narsai Church of the East of San Francisco. He was assisted by Dr. *Shamasha* Patros Koryakos of San Jose. Some 200 family members and friends attended the funeral and a lunch reception that followed in his memory at St. John's community Center.

Those who eulogized him were: Rev. Ninos Michael, Sargon Shabbas, Youel Baaba, Dr. Lincoln Malik, Edward Mikhail, Charles and Florence Yonan and Mikhael Pius. A eulogy emailed by Basil Pius was read out by Sargon Shabbas.

A 40th Day mass was also celebrated in his memory at Mar Narsai Assyrian Church of the East in San Francisco, followed by a lunch reception for an assembly of 150 people, when several colleagues and friends reminisced about him.

Julius is survived by his children Semiramis Shabbas of Oakland, CA, Raman Shabbas in Holland, and Dumarina Shabbas in Benicia, CA; siblings Lily Neesan in Hercules, CA, Hamlet Shabbas in San Francisco, Baba Shabbas in Hercules, CA, and Alice Henderson in Martinez, CA; first cousins Shammiram Huwe, Shalim Tattar, Mariana Samo, Sargon, Daniel, and Sankhero Shabbas; and by many nephews and nieces and grand-nephews and grand-nieces.

Second of eight children of Nwyia (of Chamakiye) and Shirin (of Geogtapa), Julius (aka Youlyous) was born in Mosul, Iraq, on November 20, 1926. He lived 27 years of his life in Iraq and 51 years in this country. His childhood years were in Maratha Lines, Hinaidi, where he received his elementary education at *Raabi* Espanya Shimshon's school. Julius' father was a contracted caterer for the Royal Air Force and the family had a good life.

After the RAF Station relocated in 1936-37 from Hinaidi to a new site called Dhibban (later renamed Habbaniya), 55 miles west of the Capital, Julius and his siblings, Lily, his late brother Elia and sister Nina continued their education at *Raabi* Yacoub's Union School in Civil Cantonment. Shortly after Julius graduated from Union School (middle school) in 1942, the family moved



Julius in 1977

to Baghdad. There Julius had his high school education at the Jesuit Fathers' Baghdad College. In May 1950 he left for California where he attended U.C. Berkeley and received his B.S. degree in chemistry from San Francisco University.

On July 9, 1955 he married Violet Genevieve Hortop. Following the birth of daughter Semiramis, the family moved to Baghdad, where Julius' children Raman and Dumarina were born. Julius worked for three years for a local firm, Ibrahim J. Saad, as well as did his Iraqi Army conscription service as a reserve officer. But In February 1959, he took his family back to California, where he worked as a chemist for Radiant Color Company in Oakland and Richmond for 26 years, when he then retired.

Julius was particularly known for his editorship of *Nineveh Magazine*, which he served for 20 years, resigning at the end of 2000 when his ailing wife needed care and attention. He was an early member of Assyrian Foundation of America and served as its president. He was also its treasurer for many years and a member of the board for 37 years. Through his dedicated work and efforts the Foundation disbursed hundreds of thousands of dollars to needy Assyrian families as well as granted scholarships to many disadvantaged students to further their education. To honor him, the Foundation established last year a scholarship fund in his name.

Julius sponsored the immigration of his parents, his siblings and cousins and their families. Together with his kind and hospitable wife, took care of them and helped them to find jobs and settle down.

An upright person, Julius had a sterling character. He was honest, truthful, helpful and caring and a truly dedicated contributor to the promotion and development of Assyrian literature and culture, proving himself in deeds without consciously reaching for fame or gain. He was gentle and soft-spoken and kept a low profile, but people everywhere knew him and respected him. As an editor he was head and shoulders above all others. He was attentive and considerate to both his literary contributors and to his subscribers alike. He took time to reply, usually promptly, to all communications he received. Because of him, *Nineveh* was, and still is, a respected Assyrian periodical, just as the Foundation is a trusted and respected Assyrian organization into which Julius poured his energy and resourcefulness for almost 37 years. Julius symbolized both *Nineveh Magazine* and the Foundation.

A life-long friend, Julius encouraged and nurtured a 12-year working relationship with this writer who produced some 80 articles over the years, mostly on Habbaniya and its residents, for *Nineveh Magazine*.—MKP

In Remembrance of...



July 1942: Youlyous with Hab. Union School co-graduates, Lujiya Kakko Poloss (left) and Mary Gewargis Shabo.



Julius (shown full length, left) as a reserve officer in the Iraqi Army, during his 1956-59 sojourn in Baghdad with his family. (Three-fourth of picture has been cropped out.)



Julius and his bride Violet at their wedding day in San Francisco, California, on July 9, 1955.



Mid-1940s: Youlyous (white suit) with brother late Elia (front, left), and two friends posing upon their Gailani Camp house rooftop.



Mid-1930s: Youlyous (left) with his late parents Shirin and Nwyia and siblings Lily (right), and late Nina and little Elia, in Hinaidi,



July 9, 1995: Julius at his 40th Wedding Anniversary, with his late wife Violet and children: Semiramis (left), Raman and Durmarina.



Julius with his parents and all his siblings: from left Hamlet, Alice, Baba, Mina, and Lily, on their parents' Golden Wedding Anniversary in 1971.

In Remembrance of...

...Raman Dick Sargon, 56, son of a former Habbaniya sportsman father and teacher mother, and himself an accomplished civil engineer, who passed away of a massive heart attack on September 13, 2004 in a strange country, Pakistan. He died all alone and far away from his family and loved ones while working on a project for his firm Montgomery Watson Harza Engineering Co., by which he was employed since 1974. His remains were flown back home, where he was laid to rest at Montrose Cemetery in Chicago. His funeral services, attended by more than 700 people, were celebrated at St. Mary's Catholic Church by Fr. Edward Bikoma, with Archdeacon Aprim DeBaz and Rev. Dr. Gewargis Toma of Assyrian Church of the East in attendance. A memorial luncheon at Crystal Palace Banquet Hall in Park Ridge followed and a Third Day church mass was celebrated in his memory at Mar Gewargis A.C. of E. in Chicago.



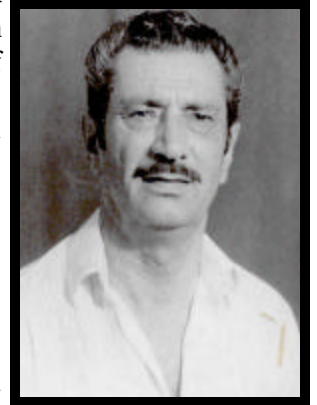
Raman is survived by his wife Dona Sargon, children Benata and Peter Sargon, mother Vergin Sargon and brother Ashur Sargon, all of Morton Grove, Illinois; by eldest brother Sargon D. Sargon in California; and by six nephews and nieces. Youngest of three brothers, Raman was born to Vergin Patros and the late Malko "Dick" Sargon in Baghdad on January 31, 1948. (Raman's two brothers, Sargon and Ashur, were born in Habbaniya in 1942 and 1945 respectively.) Raman had his high school education at the Jesuit Fathers' Baghdad College and graduated with a AB. Sc. Degree in Civil Engineering from Al-Hikma University in Baghdad, also sponsored by the Jesuit Fathers of Boston. He also gained a M. Phil. degree (similar to Ph. D) in his post-graduate studies in Civil Engineering from University of Surrey in England.

According to his brother Ashur, during his 30 years of service to MWHE Co. Raman designed and applied unique solutions to various projects he worked on in U.S., in Saudi Arabia (four years), in Bulgaria (five years) and in Pakistan (two years). "Raman was a brilliant engineer with an extraordinary analytical talent. During his career Raman designed and applied unique solutions to the projects he worked on, which included large complex dams, unique space structures and practical, efficient and economic buildings and projects. In addition, he excelled in areas of project management of operations and client relations."

Like his late father, Raman was a sportsman in various fields, including soccer and tennis, and was a patriotic Assyrian. He coached and managed the well-known Assyrian Winged Bull soccer team of Chicago in the 1980s. In his private life, he was an avid reader and enjoyed social gatherings. He worked hard to support his family and took joy in seeing his children excel in their education.

May God bless him and reward him in heaven—**MKP**

...Shlimoon Gewargis Daniel, 76, a former Habbaniya musician, who passed away on October 20, 2004, in Modesto, California, as a result of a stroke he had two years earlier which made him bed-ridden and from which he did not recover. His funeral services were celebrated by Rev. Kando Kan-do at Mar Zaia Assyrian Church of the East in Modesto and he was laid to rest two days later at Turlock Memorial Park in the neighboring town of Turlock. Three hundred people partook of a memorial lunch that followed at the church hall.



Shlimoon's eldest nephew, John Aghajan of Canada, gave a brief sketch of his maternal uncle's life and narrated a few memories about him; Shlimoon's younger brother, Shimshon Gewargis Daniel, also eulogized and reminisced about him; and Shlimoon's eldest son Danny Georgis thanked the mourners for attending his father's funeral and sharing in the family's sorrow.

Shlimoon is survived by his wife Aroos Georgis; by six children: Mary Kakou of San Jose, Calif., Daniel Georgis of Modesto, Suzi Warda of North Carolina, Diana Haddad and John Georgis of Modesto, and Robert Georgis of Mississauga, Canada; by his younger brother Shimshon G. Daniel of Turlock; and by 11 grandchildren and a number of nephews and nieces. Shlimoon's older siblings, Shalim Gewargis Aghajan and Awshalim Gewargis Daniel passed away some years ago.

Shlimoon was born to the late Gewargis Daniel of Solduz and Qizbz Aziz of Dizzataka in Hamadan, Iran, in 1928. In early 1930s the family moved to Iraq. Gewargis worked in carpentry for the Royal Air Force at Hinaidi air base near Baghdad. In 1937 Gewargis and family moved to Habbaniya, 55 miles west of the Capital, where the air base had relocated. Shlimoon grew up, and had several years of elementary schooling at Raabi Yacoub's Union School there, in Civil Cantonment. In his middle teens he left school and started clerking for the RAF. On June 12, 1954 he married Aroos William Elias and soon after he quit his job and left for Basra where he worked as a bank clerk. The family moved to Baghdad in 1963. There Shlimoon worked for the Rafidain Bank until his retirement. After working another few years for Mitsubishi Company, he and his wife immigrated in 1993 to California, to be near some of their children.

In Habbaniya, Shlimoon and his two brothers were members of the Assyrian band. Shlimoon, a nice, quiet person, was the saxophonist. May he rest in peace—**MKP**

In Remembrance of...

...Panna Rohan, 88, a culture grandmother, passed away in Fairfield Hospital in Sydney, Australia, on September 17, 2004. Her funeral services were celebrated by Rev. Ashur Lazar in Rabban Hormizd Assyrian Church of the East in Greenfield Park on September 20 and her burial took place at Pen-grove Memorial Park cemetery, followed by a breakfast offered by her family in her memory.



Panna was born in 1916 in Urmia, Iran, to Eshaya Mirza and Baany Eshaya. She was two years old when her family along with thousands of other Assyrian families were driven out of Urmia by their Moslem enemies to the refugee camps of Baquba situated 30 miles northeast of Baghdad in Iraq. And after the disbandment of Baquba followed by Mandan refugee camps, Panna's family settled in Khalilkhan village in district of Mosul. There Panna grew up and studied up to sixth grade at the American missionaries' school. At this time, her brother found work and the family moved down to the Baghdad area. After Panna furthered her education and then taught school for several months at *Raabi Yacoub's* school in Kota Camp, Hinaidi, in 1933 she was married to the late Baijan Rohan (who died about two years ago). He was working at the RAF Station in Hinaidi. But four years later Panna and Baijan moved to the new RAF Station of Habbaniya, where they lived, had, and raised four daughters and two sons. The family left Habbaniya in 1959 and settled in Daura near Baghdad. Because of her own love and interest in education, Panna inspired her children to attain high standards in their knowledge and education before they immigrated to Australia, where Panna and Baijan rejoined them in 1980, through London.

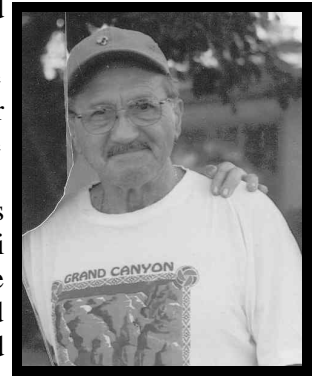
The late Panna leaves behind her six children: Albania, Rapqa, Sarah, Ramziya, Andrious and Youay; sons-in-law Leon Darmo and Andrious Youkhannan; daughters-in-law Janet and Khanna; four grandchildren; and many nephews, nieces and other close relatives.

The late Panna lived 24 years in Sydney among her family members and friends in peace and harmony. Her pleasure was in reading books in her mother tongue and in taking part in her people's church, social, nationalistic and domestic affairs. She was respected and loved by all her people for her affection and cultural and patriotic deeds as well as for her dedication to the education and progress of her children who also served their people tirelessly.

In 1986 Panna was named "Mother of the Year" by the Assyrian Australian Association. May she rest in peace.

By Philimon Darmo, Sydney, Australia

...Tsholak Onick Sanasarian, 70, a former Habbaniya musician, who passed away in Monrovia, California, of cancer on June 11, 2004. He was cremated four days later and his ashes scattered over the hills behind his home.



A luncheon reception was held in his memory in Ureni Restaurant in Hollywood on the Seventh Day. It was attended by 120 family members and friends. He was eulogized by Papkin Hovasapian, his brother-in-law, and a poem was read out by the deceased's second son Dro as a tribute from Arpen Hovasapian to her departed brother.

Tsolak is survived by: his wife Lorna in Monrovia; his children, ranging in age from 39 to 45, Armen in Los Angeles, Dro in Moravia, Raffi in Glendale and Julia in Portland, Oregon; and two grandsons and a granddaughter. He also leaves behind five siblings, namely Souren in Monrovia, Harout in Fort Meyers, FL, Arpen Hovasapian in Glendale, Keko Shahinian in Glendale, and Veronica Douglas in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as well as a number of nephews and nieces. Tsholak married Lorna in Milwaukee, Wis., in 1955 when he was only 21 years old.

Fifth of seven children, Tsholak was born to the late Julia Mark (or Marqus?), an Assyrian, and Onick Sanasarian in Kota Camp, Hinaidi, Iraq, on July 24, 1934, where he spent his first few years. His family moved to the new RAF Station in Habbaniya in 1937. There he had his first few years of schooling in the early 1940s at *Raabi Yacoub's* Union School, which included an Armenian language class, and he continued his elementary education at the government school. His father Onick had a good business (a general store) in the Cheapside vicinity of the air base in which his children gave him a helping hand. Tsholak left his father and siblings and came to America, evidently, within the few years following his departure from Habbaniya in 1950 or 1951.

His sister Arpen doesn't tell much about him except that Tsholak left Habbaniya at the age of 17 to follow his musical inclination; that he was "a unique person, humble yet rebellious, stubborn and yet compassionate."

I personally remember Tsholak as an active teenager in Habbaniya. He was a rather handsome boy, lively, gregarious and friendly, but seemed somewhat impetuous. He played the drums in the Armenian Band and our Ben Yalda, a drum player in his Kirkuk days, says that it was Tsholak who taught him in Habbaniya how to play the drums.

May Tsholak's soul find peace in heaven.—MKP

In Remembrance of...

...Asyat Badal Yalda, 97-year-old, mother of ten, grandmother of 39 and great grandmother of 51 children, passed away in Fairfield Hospital in Sydney, Australia, on Sunday, October 10, 2004. Funeral services, attended by a large number of family members and friends, took place three days later at *Mar Zia Cathedral* in West Houston, Sydney. She was later laid to rest in the same grave with her late husband Esho Yalda at the Assyrian section of Rookwood Anglican Cemetery in Lidcombe, Sydney. After the funeral, condolences offered their sympathy to the family members at the home of the deceased's son Oberon Yalda in Wakefield.



Asyat's nine surviving children are: Zaia, Mary, Neesan, and Oberon Yalda, and Roza Alfonso, in Australia; David in Muscat, Oman; Yalda, Benyamin (our Admin. Manager), and Youseph Yalda in USA; and her grand- and great grandchildren live in Australia, USA, and Oman.

Asyat was born in Quchanos, Turkey, in 1907 and was married to the late Esho Yalda of Geramon, a Levy soldier, in the village of Chalik in 1920. The couple had and raised their children in both Hinaidi and Habbaniya. After serving for 31 years, her husband retired from Levies as sergeant in-charge of all equipment stores. The couple then left Habbaniya in 1952, living eight years in Kirkuk and 19 years in Baghdad before immigrating in 1978 to Australia, where they lived with their son Oberon.

Asyat lost her husband in 1988, but in her later years she was taken care of by Oberon's wife Souad, assisted by her three children, Ashourina, Ramina and Esho. And when Asyat was seriously ill last year, her son Benyamin, with his daughter Dorothy, of Des Plaines, Illinois, went to Australia to visit her, staying for several weeks.

Benyamin Yalda also offered a Seventh Day church mass in his mother's memory on Sunday, October 17, at St. Mary's Assyrian Church of the East in Roselle, Illinois. Attended by 500 people, it was celebrated by Rev. Khoshaba Bouza, with Mar Emmanuel Eliya, formerly bishop of the Ancient and Apostolic Church of the East in Iraq, and Mar Afram Atniel, visiting bishop of Syria, in attendance. A memorial breakfast followed at the church hall.

Benyamin Yalda and his family and his siblings offer sincere appreciation to all those who visited them, sent flowers or cards or called to express their sympathy.

Asyat lived a full and rich life indeed. May her soul

...Ilyakim Romanus Adam, 73, a former Bookshop owner in Baghdad, died in a hospital in Denton, Texas, on August 28, 2004 as a result of prostate cancer. According to his wish, his remains were taken for burial in Chicago where he had many relatives and friends. He was laid to rest following a memorial mass celebrated by Fr. Edward Bikoma at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Chicago and attended by more than 300 people. He was eulogized by his son-in-law John Woodfin at a lunch given at the Social Club in Chicago in his memory following burial.



Third of nine surviving children, Ilyakim, also known as "Youyakim," was born in 1931 in Sarawqat, Iran, to Murassa and Romanus Adam of Mawana. In the late 1930s, his family relocated to Iraq where his father found work in a NAAFI canteen kitchen in the RAF Station of Habbaniya, 55 miles west of Baghdad. Ilyakim received a few years of elementary education at Raabi Yacoub's Union School before he started working at Air Head Quarters as an office peon while still a young boy. A few years later, he switched to an officers' mess where he soon became the barman. Following the surrender of Habbaniya by the British to the Iraqi Government in 1955, Ilyakim left for Giyarah. There he worked for a year before moving to Baghdad.

During the course of his 18-year residence in Baghdad, Ilyakim and his younger brother, Lewis, owned and operated four different bookshops, namely Saadun, Hindiya, Masbah and Baghdad Hotel Bookshops. Ilyakim also got married, in 1969, to Panna daughter of Benyamin and widow of the late William "Zlimma" Benyamin who died in Habbaniya of a stroke in 1952 at the young age of 32. Panna already had three young daughters and Ilyakim and Panna had three children together. In 1974 Ilyakim and family migrated to this country and settled in Chicago for 12 years before they moved to Texas, where they had been living ever since.

Beside his wife Panna, Ilyakim leaves behind in Denton, Texas, his three children May, Paul and Peter; two brothers Lewis Adam in Modesto and Raphael Adam in Monterey, CA; six sisters, Soriya wife of late Ilyakim *Qasha* Akhiqar and Maria wife of late Nestoris Tamras in Baghdad, Victoria wife of Toma Naser in Dohuk, N. Iraq, Virginia wife of Hormis Mikhael and Rosemary Adam in Chicago, and Margaret wife of Benyamin Aprim in Arizona; a grandson and a granddaughter; three stepdaughters, Juliet, Pheona and June; and many nephews nieces and cousins.

Raised up by God-fearing parents, Ilyakim and his siblings were regular church goers, affectionate and likable. Ilyakim himself was a chatty and cheerful person. May God bless his soul in heaven—MKP

Tributes to Late Julius Shabbas

The following tribute from Basil Pius was read out by Sargon Shabbas at Julius Shabbas' funeral at the Mortuary:

About Julius Shabbas...

..Too many virtues to list.

He was an outstanding and gentle spirited Assyrian *hakem* of our modern times and a tireless contributor to our culture. Two personal anecdotes about the man and his family will illustrate Julius' personal legacy, at least for his friends in Montana. And I cherish those memories.

In 1960 when my late brother Rafael and I were new in the US: strangers, singles, timid, and perhaps a little lost in a new culture, we found Julius, Violet, Semiramis, Raman, and Dumarina in Berkeley CA. Knowing that Julius once was a school mate of our brother Minashi (aka Mikhael), we were encouraged to make contacts with him. So one afternoon Rafael and I walked all the way from our Oakland apartment to their big house in Berkeley (perhaps 5 miles) where we spent homely time and enjoyed a delicious meal with the family. There was no big fanfare and impressive preparations but a down-to-earth friendly setting and encouraging exchange of ideas. They made us feel at home. Julius and Violet never hesitated to invite us back again. Thus the Shabbas family soon became our earnest friends in California, just like Joash Paul's family was in Turlock. They were a great influence on Rafael and me in so many practical ways. Oh, how truly unconditional their Assyrian altruism!

The second event took place in the early 1980s right here in Miles City, Montana. One afternoon Julius surprised us when he called to tell us that he and Violet were actually in Miles City on their way home from the east. My first reaction was "My God, what curious Assyrian friends would take time off their buzzing lives to venture into our isolated cowboy town in south-eastern Montana to check on us?" Yes, our friends were humble enough to visit and share a meal and chat about families and friends late into the night.

That evening Julius watched me preparing some fresh mushrooms to sauté with our steaks. He gently told us that rinsing fresh mushroom in water makes them sloppy. Then he showed us how to clean them with a paper napkin so that they would retain their true flavor. And it is so very true ever since. Simple little rationale; happy remembrances for ever.

This is a special salute to a dear friend - Julius:

God looked down upon the earth
and saw your tired face
He put his arms around you
and lifted you to rest
He saw the road was getting rough
And hills were hard to climb
So he closed your weary eyelids
And whispered "peace be thine."
Farewell good friend
With love
Wiska and Babs Pius,
Miles City, Montana.

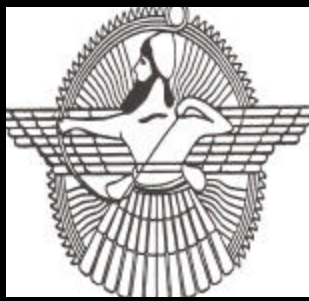
Mikhael Pius, who attended Julius's funeral, read out the following tribute at the church services at the Mortuary:

A Good Friend

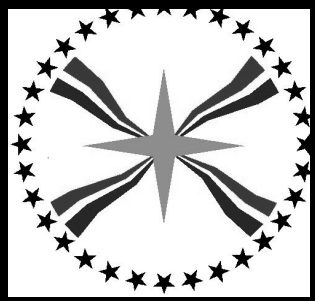
Julius, also known as Youlyous, was one of my life-long friends. We knew each other and grew up in the same group since the early 1930s when we were seven or eight years old. I was about a year older than him. Both of us studied in the same schools, *Raabi Espanya Shimshon's* school in Maratha Lines, Hinaidi, Iraq, and *Raabi Yacoub's* Union School in Habbaniya. Youlyous' late father Nwyia was better off economically than my father. So when I finished Union School (middle school) in 1941 and Youlyous a year later, I started working but Youlyous went to Baghdad to continue his schooling. We happened to become neighbors and close friends for a few years in the mid 1940s in Gailani Camp, when my father and I were working for NAAFI in Baghdad. Of course I know the older Shabbas siblings and cousins fairly well, such as Lily, Shalim, Shammiran, and Sargon, and Youlyous and I have had a close working relationship here from 1989 to 2000 when I was a regular contributor to *Nineveh* Magazine. I have also kept in close touch with him on the phone since his late wife Violet (a kind, cheerful lady with a sense of humor) became ill immediately after he left *Nineveh* Editorship at the end of 2000 and throughout his own more than two years of debilitating illness. And we have met each other briefly several times over the past 15 years. Youlyous and family were also good friends to my two younger brothers Basil and the late Rafael and their families for several years after they came to this country in the late 1950s. [The late Aprim also knew them well and my younger sister Christina and my late wife Blandina were friends of Lily in Gailani Camp for a few years.]

I liked Youlyous basically because he was an upright person. I found him to be honest, truthful, helpful and caring and a truly dedicated contributor to the promotion and development of our Assyrian culture, proving himself in deeds without consciously reaching for fame or gain. He was gentle and soft-spoken and kept a low profile, but people everywhere knew him and respected him. He had a sterling character and as an editor he was head and shoulders above all others. He was attentive and considerate to both his literary contributors and his readers and subscribers alike. He took time to reply to all communications he received (either by mail or phone), and usually promptly. Oftentimes he called me to discuss cutting or changes in my manuscript, and we carried on long chats. Because of him, *Nineveh* was and is a respected Assyrian periodical, just as the Foundation is a trusted and respected organization into which Youlyous poured his resourcefulness for 20 and 37 years, respectively. In fact I believe Youlyous symbolized both *Nineveh* Magazine and the Foundation.

All of us have lost a loved one and a dear friend. He will be missed and remembered not only by his loved ones but also by many, many friends in various places for some time to come. May he be rewarded in heaven for his good deeds.



مجلة حَبَبَانِيَا
 حَبَبَانِيَا



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LOCAL HABBANIYA BEAUTIES on a picnic outing



A small group of Habbaniya maidens on a picnic outing 58 years ago
 near Habbaniya Filtration Plant Farm. Standing, from left: Khanna Raabi Ammanuel, Avigil Polus Jado,
 Avigil Polus Rasho, Youlia Shawil, Munny Murad, Sabikky "Sophia" Oney and Roza Aziz; Sitting, from left:
 Panna Jacob, Panna Aziz, and Victoria Odisho. Photo by, and courtesy of, Andrew J. Simon, Ealing, England.

These beauties were some of the popular girls in the local camps. A few worked as clerks for the RAF, and most of them married local Assyrian boys from Habbaniya, among them a well-known sportsman and an Iraqi Army officer. One of them married an RAF policeman and another an Assyrian businessman in Baghdad. Most of them served in the Habbaniya Girl Guide movement and one of them was the Girl Guide Leader. A couple of them now live in the Chicago area, a couple in Australia, four in Modesto, California, and two, sadly enough, have passed on in recent years in England. Almost all of those surviving are now grandmothers (at least one of them a great grandmother of seven). All of them are now around their mid-seventies. May God bless the souls of the departed ones and grand good health to the survivors in their remaining years. Can you match them all with the full names of their husbands and their professions or specialties?—Editor.