**IFBA Officers Election Procedure - 2021 – 2023**

Shared 17 June, 2020 by David Wardrop, IFBA Chairman

- IFBA will elect new Officers at the next Annual Meeting,
- Positions in the IFBA are: The Chair; Vice-Chair; and Secretary
- Only members of recognized Chapters are eligible, and they must have attended at least two Annual Meetings prior to nomination
- Officers will hold their positions for two years and may stand for re-election
- The election process dates are as follows

**August 29:**
Deadline for nominations to be sent to the BA team

**September 5:**
BA requests nominees to confirm agreement to stand for election and submit 100 word ‘statement of intention’

**September 12:**
Deadline for ‘statement of intention’ to reach BA team

**September 19:**
Names of nominees and statements posted on IFBA website and/or transmitted to Chapters by email

**October 3:**
Electronic Voting opens

**October 10:**
Deadline for electronic vote

**October 18:**
The BA team announces the result

The newly appointed officers will work with the outgoing officers and the BA during the Annual Meeting to ensure a smooth transition.

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**Editor message**

The Third Is The Charm!
Tharwat Abouraya

Living IFBA

I have been reflecting on the role IFBA can play as we face a new and different future.

As a network that is dependent on the engagement of our members, this poses an interesting challenge. We are grateful to the members who are joining our virtual meetings and supporting this newsletter. We want to keep everyone engaged and keep us relevant, and the best way to do that is to have your input!

We’ve scheduled three virtual meetings (Alone Without Borders) since May. Our 6 August Zoom will be our third; two earlier calls have exceeded expectations, especially 11 June when we reached 26 on the call. These calls connect IFBA Members across the globe as Citizen Diplomats, sharing chapter activities and ideas.

Recognition is due to Prof. Emmannouil Yannakoudakis, Vice President of the Greek Chapter, for generously allowing IFBA friends to use his Zoom account and coordinating the logistics of our calls.
This IFBA digital newsletter is the third in what we expect to be a quarterly series, with the next in October. The newsletter started in April 2020 with 6 articles by Member Chapters; the August issue has 12 submissions, showing a desire to become a more cohesive group in this new format.

When Heba El Rafey spoke to American audiences in the Washington-Baltimore area last summer, the most frequent reaction was surprise at the vast number and variety of BA projects and activities. The BA is “much more than a library...a place of dialogue, learning and understanding between cultures and peoples...dedicated to recapturing the spirit of openness and scholarship of the original Bibliotheca Alexandrina.”

The IFBA embodies these lofty goals – we are an arena for cultural pluralism, representing 22 countries and still growing. We can foster dialogue, formulate visions and develop ideas, as well as:

- Seek and encourage formation of new chapters by broadening awareness of the international value of the BA, as Catherine Sofianou, President of the Greek Chapter, has done. With her inspiration, I’ve established contacts with Canada, China and Japan;
- Identify common projects, like the BrainExploratorium, to which each chapter can offer its own expertise and ideas;
- Expand IFBA digital presence by creating social media accounts on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and/or Instagram.

The IFBA can accompany the BA, as – in Dr. El Feki’s words – it “steadily heads toward a better future.”

Congratulations to everyone for your interest, enthusiasm and resilience, and for sharing ideas, opinion, and constructive feedback to make IFBA stronger during these challenging times.

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The plan to drain the Eastern harbour

*By David Wardrop – UK CHAPTER*

The impact of the great earthquake and consequent tsunami that engulfed Alexandria in 365AD, killing great numbers of people, did not halt the city’s economic development. Buildings and artifacts which had slid into its harbour and surrounding coastal waters were left there for centuries, until about thirty years ago. Two French underwater researchers, Frank Goddio, and Jean-Yves Empereur, working independently, have revolutionised our knowledge about life in Alexandria before the earthquake. The BA’s antiquities museum proudly displays objects they have brought to the surface. Some of the objects are on loan to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, where a virtual tour is available. But is there more yet to find?

In the late 1990s, Guy Weill Goudchaux, the late French historian, proposed an ambitious plan to drain the Eastern harbour (image). This would bring benefits to Alexandria in archaeology, the environment and commerce. His masterplan saw the ancient eastern harbour as ripe for sensitive excavation as its undisputed hidden treasures continued to tease the divers who were at the extent of their technology.

At the same time, the commercial western port was working to capacity and the Qaitbay promontory was in danger from the ocean swell. Could solutions to all these challenges be linked?
For the commercial western port, the masterplan proposed a four-kilometre anti-swell dike, providing the long-needed spine to handle more ships and provide new wharves. Then, a waterproof dike of Bentonite clay would totally enclose the eastern harbour, preventing the land-locked Lake Mariout leaching into it. In this way, the city’s commercial future would be assured. Then the waters in the eastern harbour would be lowered, revealing its treasures. These could be raised and moved to Cape Silsileh, opposite the BA, creating an archaeological garden and museum. In time, the harbour would be filled again, and its traditional activity renewed.

Goudchaux sought financing from about twenty countries. The greatest enthusiasm, he told me, was shown by Greeks who, he argued, viewed Alexandria as their ‘own’, the Egyptian ‘partner of choice’ of the future. What might have been Egypt's greatest sea enterprise since the opening of the Suez Canal failed to develop. In subsequent years, the western harbour continues to operate to capacity, losing trade to Port Said. Lake Marriout, no longer the great ocean it was in the days of Alexander, continues to leach into the sea and the Quait Bey promontory is at last being reinforced against the prevailing ocean swell.

Outside "Ra" warmed my parched skin with its rays and my eyes observed the wonder described in the history books. How magnificent that colossus, so I decided to climb it among tons of loose rock. Perhaps it was the overlay of the pyramid that formed after its partial collapse. There I stood watching for a long time while the scorching sun did not give up. I meditated on the obsession with building pyramids. The effort of what had begun with the first mastabas.

In the distance the guard of the place raised his hand inviting me to a second cup of boiled tea and smiled at me with his friendly laugh.

In the DNA of the human being there was this deep desire to build towards the sky in different cultures, in different geographical areas and at different times in history.
I am pleased to share how very proud I am of the IFBA whose members have reached huge numbers from all around the world. As a member of the Bibliotheca of Alexandrina (BA), each year we have a meeting with IFBA organizers at the BA, around the middle of October to celebrate the annual anniversary which was in 2002.

Although this year due to COVID 19, we are unsure what to expect? The IFBA did not disappoint, in fact this year’s 18th anniversary will be an exceptional event hosted via video conference. We shall never forget the inauguration which was very well organized and hosted by Queen Sophia from Spain, along with President Jacques Chirac of France and many other great personalities. At the opening ceremony the BA presented a beautiful song done by students of all ages to allow them an opportunity to present knowledge from all around the world. In fact, the importance of research through books and the Internet was highlighted in order to apply new technology in their daily lives and to raise their creativity in the future.

So during the virtual meeting with the IFBA, in June 2020, we were nearly ten participants from the USA (California, Maryland, Minnesota), Mexico, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Greece (Athens, Rhodes) and Egypt. As soon as I saw them on the screen I felt an incredible sense of happiness and pride. Although they are very far in distance, they were so near through their spirits which prioritized education enough to make this year’s conference happen and productive despite all the circumstances. Their efforts, concern, donations such as books, training for the employees of the Bibliotheca, software for adults or for children have not gone unrecognized, nor unappreciated. This virtual meeting was successful due to the incredible sense of unity; we were thinking together for the benefit of this big institution of the BA and Egypt, and that alone is a feat not attained by many.

Each member had so much input, and insight on how to approach and aid the institution, and help in various ways, that we decided to host yet another meeting in August to discuss each member’s proposals and ideas. This virtual conference and the friendships formed out of it have humbled me, because it has shown yet again, that it is not regardless of diversity, but rather because of it, our world and knowledge will constantly expand in Egypt! In fact, I am looking forward to meeting our members from Australia, Sweden, Norway, Chili, Cape town... depending on their schedule, so that more valuable input can be added to the BA.

Glory to them and glory to Egypt!

Memories

Aida Khalafalla – Minnesota Chapter (MFBA)

Great memory with the first lady of Egypt and Dr Serageldin congratulating the MFBA for establishing the children’s library, a project originated by Mrs. Mubarak and closely followed by Dr Serageldin.
Mount Sinai and Saint Catherine Monastery
A mystical experience ...

Gloria S. Pérez del Valle
Mexico Chapter

Being the representatives in Mexico of the New Alexandrina Library has multiple gratifications. One of them is the annual trip that the almost 30 associations make in Egypt to delve into their land and culture.

In 2009 we made one of the most unusual and extraordinary trips: climb the Mount Sinai and contemplate life from Horeb, Gebel Musa or Mount Sinai, part of a mountain range, located in the northeast of Egypt and that is familiar to us as the place where Moses received the tablets of the Ten Commandments, according to the Biblical text of the Exodus.

The desire to achieve the goal is fueled by the solidarity of the companions who support or are supported by others. The expectation of what our eyes will see when the first rays of the sun lift the shadows that cover the unexpected spectacle fill us with energy.

The journey, like life, begins with the darkness of the night as we ascend through intricate terrain, supported by slip-resistant shoes, a flashlight, perhaps a cane, a warm jacket and, above all, lots of encouragement to achieve the goal: reach to the top at daybreak and enjoy the indescribable images of the sun flashing on the pink rocks that acquire a sublime hue that floods the chest with emotion and gratitude.

A section can be traveled on a camel by a different path from pedestrians but only up to a certain point.

After being stunned by the ineffable experience, we went down to the Monastery of Saint Catherine, located at the foot of Mount Sinai to be near the Burning Bush that belongs to the Monastery. The members of the Library of Alexandria were kindly received by the Orthodox monks who guard and inhabit it since ancient times. We were greeted with simplicity and warmth by Father Justin who received the gifts from the Library of Alexandria sent by Dr. Wastawy through the good offices of Rosalie Cuneo, Scribe of the International Committee and President of the Friends of California, in coordination with the friends of Greece.
A brief history

The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta
Article authorized by H.E. Count Thierry de Beaumont-Beynac, President of the French Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta, President of the Chapter of Friends of the B.A.

The Sovereign Order of Malta has its origins in the community of Hospitallers, created in Jerusalem in the mid-11th century to treat pilgrims to the Holy City and its own population. The Order was recognized as a religious order by Pope Pascal II in 1113 who granted it the freedom to govern itself. From its inception, the Order's vocation has been to be hospitable.

Soon after, new members joined from all European countries and generous donations enabled it to open a network of commanderies, mainly reception and care centers, and located in all European countries.

At the beginning of the 13th century, after a short period in Cyprus, the Order relocated to Rhodes (1310-1522) and then to Malta (1530-1798). Even though it had territorial sovereignty, its prime role was to care for the sick. Therefore, in both Rhodes and Malta, the Order built large hospitals able to accommodate hundreds of patients which became the largest hospitals in the world at that time. Its staff contributed greatly to advances in medicine, notably for the creation of quarantine procedures to avoid epidemics, the charting of the blood system, and in undertaking cataract operations, developed in the Middle East.

After the capture of Malta by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798, the Order relocated to Rome where the Grand Master and colleagues are now based. From there, he coordinates 6 Grand Priories and 48 National Associations which bring together the Order’s 12,500 members worldwide.

Faithful to its original humane vocation, the Order maintains hospitals, dispensaries, maternity hospitals, medico-social centers, and participates in health programs in some 120 countries. It also serves communities in times of conflict, natural disasters and pandemics. Its approach to humanitarian diplomacy uniquely helps resolve local and national countries.

That long-established freedom to govern itself enables the Order to care for humanity, without distinction of origin or religion, and in a spirit of neutrality. The Order maintains diplomatic relations with 110 countries and has permanent observer status at the United Nations and with principal agencies including WHO, FAO and UNESCO. In all this, it maintains its pledge to continue working for sake of the weakest in the community.
L’ORDRE SOUVENIR MILITAIRE HOSPITALIER DE
SAINT-JEAN DE JERUSALEM, DE RHODES ET DE MALTE
L’ORDRE SOUVENIR DE MALTE

Un bref historique.
L’Ordre souverain de Malte tire son origine de la communauté des Hospitaliers qui s’est créée à Jérusalem au milieu du XIème siècle pour soigner les pèlerins qui venaient aux Lieux Saints et les populations locales. Cette communauté a été reconnue comme un ordre religieux par le Pape Pascal II en 1113, avec la liberté de se gouverner seul. Dès sa création, l’Ordre a pour vocation d’être hospitalier.

Très vite, ses membres viennent de tous les pays d’Europe et des donations importantes lui permettent d’ouvrir tout un réseau de commanderies, qui étaient autant de centres d’accueil et de soins, répartis dans tous les pays européens.

Au début du XIIIème siècle, après un rapide passage à Chypre, l’Ordre s’établit successivement à Rhodes (1310 – 1522) puis à Malte (1530 – 1798). Dans les deux cas, à sa souveraineté fonctionnelle s’ajoute une souveraineté territoriale. Son premier souci est de soigner les malades ; c’est ainsi qu’à Rhodes comme à Malte, il construit un grand hôpital, que l’on peut encore voir aujourd’hui, capable d’accueillir des centaines de malades, devenant les plus grands hôpitaux du monde de l’époque. Il contribue aux avancées de la médecine avec notamment une faculté réputée, la création de la quarantaine pour éviter les épidémies, la cartographie du système sanguin, les opérations de la cataracte apprises au Proche Orient, les pratiques de prophylaxie…

Après la prise de Malte par Bonaparte en 1798, l’Ordre s’établit en Italie. Il est maintenant installé à Rome où résident son Grand Maître et son gouvernement. C’est de là qu’il coordonne 6 Grands Prieurés et 48 Associations nationales qui regroupent les 12 500 membres de l’Ordre à travers le monde.

Toujours fidèle à sa vocation hospitalière, l’Ordre entretient des hôpitaux, des dispensaires, des maternités, des centres médico-sociaux, participe à des programmes de santé dans quelque 120 pays. Il intervient également lors de conflits, de catastrophes naturelles ou de pandémies ; il développe également une diplomatie humanitaire pour contribuer à résoudre ou éviter les tensions entre pays.

Cette action au service de l’humanité souffrante, sans distinction d’origine ou de religion, est facilitée par son indépendance et sa neutralité permises par la souveraineté dont il dispose. Il entretient des relations diplomatiques avec 110 pays et dispose d’un poste d’observateur permanent aux Nations Unies et dans ses différentes agences (OMS, FAO, UNESCO). C’est un gage important pour continuer son action presque millénaire au service des plus faibles.

“Nile no longer decides”

Count Federico Wardal, Italian Chapter

On June 12th 2020 Count Federico Wardal president of the Italian Friends B.A. together with the Italian Friends B.A. Vice President Mrs. Elena Panarella nominated the Italian Egyptian international journalist Hon. Alix Amer as General Secretary for diplomatic and media relationships for the Italian Friends B.A.

Journalist Alix Amer has an important background supporting worldwide peace with his articles in the major media.
Currently Amer is supporting the Egyptian cause for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. For this reason his popularity is growing worldwide. The Count Wardal Secretariat Art Human Rights and Peace, under the auspices of the Italian Friends of B.A., through its goal of joining art, human rights and peace for the benefit of the humanity, is producing the art short movie “Nile no longer decides “ about the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The news of this initiative is already getting great international attention. Civilizations Bridge of New York, the International Friends Association in New York, is seeking to repeat a youth exhibit and forum hosted by the BA’s Bayt Al-Sinnari in Cairo.

**EGYPT IN MY THOUGHTS EXHIBIT & FORUM**

**Mohamed Soliman, New York Chapter**

In Cairo, 2014, Civilizations Bridge initiated “Egypt In My Thoughts & Forum” to honor Bayt Al-Sinnari’s Napoleon scholars. The Forum was sponsored by IFBA New York Chapter & the BA. This Creativity Youth Forum aimed to help young artists through free workshops with professional and well-known artists of Egypt in painting, sculpture, filmmaking and other arts. Seminars were given by some professors from different backgrounds and the exhibition was joined by over twenty artists with specialty in Egyptian culture arts. There was significant media coverage of the events which lasted for eight day including 500 attendees.

**IFBA “Alone without Borders” Zoom Virtual Meeting 6th of August, 2020 REMINDER!**

Formal elements of the agenda, David Wardrop:
- assess any feedback regarding the election schedule (already agreed),
- confirmation that nominations must be submitted by 29 August,
- liaise with BA Public Relations & International Communications on modalities,
- also, recalling our online meeting in 2013, we will seek to outline the content and duration of the annual meeting.
Opportunity for Children

By Dalia Elkony, Head of Children and Young People’s Libraries Section, Bibliotheca Alexandrina

During the summer, the Children and Young People Libraries at the BA usually organize extensive activities, including cultural, artistic and scientific workshops and storytelling events. Since April, the focus has been on social media, especially the Facebook pages dedicated to children and young adult users. We would like to expand our services to young patrons around the world, since social media can be a positive window to communicate and share cultural knowledge. We already have young people participating in our Dialogue in Peace program from countries in Africa, Europe and America. So we would welcome short videos in English, Arabic or French from children age 6 to 16 years old (Children’s Library 6-11 years old; Young People’s Library, 12-16 years old), in which young people share their experiences during this critical period when so many are sharing almost the same feelings. These videos, along with any questions you may have, can be sent directly to me at Dalia.Elkony@bibalex.org

Please also let me know if you have elementary schools (5th – 6th graders) in your country that might be interested in participating in our Dialogue in Peace program during the coming school year.

Aida Khalafalla has already shared with the BA her granddaughter Azumi, reading aloud Malala Yousafzai: Warrior with Words, by Karen Leggett Abouraya

Progress on Alexandrina/Brain Exploratorium (BA/BE)

By Cynthia Milani, IFBA PROJECT CHAIR

We are currently establishing a network of IFBA and non-IFBA members who would like to be involved in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina/Brain Exploratorium (BA/BE) project. We will work closely with BA staff to establish guidelines, identify advisors and donors and fill out our Steering & Advisory Committees. Our newest Advisory Committee member is Karen Lubieniecki, an award-winning American public relations professional who has worked with the Association of Science and Technology Centers (of which the BA is a member) and chairs the board of the Laurel (Maryland) Historical Society Museum. We encourage our fellow IFBA members to examine their own personal networks and museums/organizations for anyone with particular skills to offer our various committees or projects:

Acquisition & Organization of:

- Educational materials
- Interactive models
Simulations
Apps
Brain sculptures and exhibitions
Arts & Crafts

Language and language processing

- Neurotransmitters & hormones
- Artificial and emotional intelligence

Multimedia
Workshops
Lectures
Demos
Exhibitions

Our suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- The human brain
- Child development and the brain
- Memory
- Aging
- Gender
- Personality and the brain (Ariston and other products)
- Cloning
- Cognition – neurodiversity, ADD/ADHD, autism, bipolar conditions.

We envision offering national prizes/awards/competitions for advancement in the area of neuroscience and the brain.

On behalf of the steering committee, we appreciate your interest and support, and will keep you updated throughout our progress. Please do not hesitate to contact Cynthia Milani cmilani@inst-glob-dev.com with any questions or ideas to advance this exciting project.

However, in early 2004 at a reception at the Egyptian Embassy with mainly Egyptian participants, the Ambassador, HE Mohamed El Orabi, suggested that it would be nice to have a society in support of the Bibliotheca for Germany. Due to my occupation in the field of economic
press and since already heading a German-Egyptian society in Darmstadt I felt that I could pick up this new challenge for my country. Statutes were quickly developed and only one month later at a meeting of Egyptian and German friends the “Egyptian-German Association of the Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina e.V./Ägyptisch-Deutsche Freunde der Bibliotheca Alexandrina e.V.” was founded and registered in Frankfurt. The inaugural board consisted of Fahima Nokraschi-Sarhank, Dr. Ing. Hassan Swelim and Ragab El-Nigoly.

Since then the German chapter participated every year at the annual meeting in Alexandria including a stand presenting books and participating in the literature reading. In the first year we presented a poem from Goethe’s book “West-Ostlicher Diwan” dealing with the relations between the “Orient and the Okzident.”

We are helping Germans to participate in projects of the Bibliotheca and to organize concerts and exhibitions and pass on book donations.

We can use the facilities of the Egyptian Association in Darmstadt to organize events, present films, lectures, feasts and trips in different cities to introduce the Bibliotheca and its activities.