

the diaspora potrezebie

Alumni Newsletter of the American Community School Beirut

Volume XLVI Number 2

Our 46th year of publication

May 2024

A Message from the President

Dear fellow alums,

As the news of Linda's passing went through the ACS community the requests and suggestions that we dedicate an issue of the POT to her came rolling in. Thanks to Jay Bruder, who partnered with her family, gathering and writing tributes, it came to fruition. Alice, as usual, pulled it all together and prepared for printing. I know everyone joins me in thanking them for this effort.

Those of us who knew her, know that she would not want to be the center of attention; she made her contributions quietly, but her impact was everything but quiet. Linda was instrumental in getting me up to speed when I needed it; she guided me through everything from getting the POT together, to planning a reunion. I'll miss her, and be forever grateful to her for all of it.

Nina Joukowsky Koprulu '79, President of the Board of Trustees, writes the following:

From the board of trustees, we want to share our sorrow for Linda's passing. We will remember and cherish her unfailing dedication, warmth, and charm in all that she undertook on behalf of the ACS community, near and far.

Inspiring to all of us ACS volunteers and alumni, Linda carried the school's torch loyally and with humility. We were always in awe of her steadfast composure. Because of Linda, we also had a good time!

With the fondest of memories, Nina

I have been busy, partnering with the Alumni Council and the ACS Development Office, on various projects including:

- Finalizing our 2023/24 fundraising that raised funds for the school's Annual Fund, the AA/ACS General Fund, as well as the Malcolm Kerr endowment. Thanks to all who contributed.
- Determining the location and timing of the 2025 Triennial Reunion! Stay tuned for details.
- Connecting and planning with the younger, "post war" generation as we prepare to hand off our beloved AA/ACS to them. This week, I had lunch in Long Beach with Dana Ballout and Karem Shibbani (class of 2007). She is an Emmy nominated filmmaker, he a Pediatric Cardiologist. It was so inspiring, and I'm thrilled that they want to get involved.

The feelings and fond memories that we all have about ACS span years and generations. It was revealed in my conversation with Kamel and Dana that all our closest friends were from ACS.

My best



Gina

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The Diaspora Potrzebie

Editor

Alice Ludvigsen '70
Email: alice.ludvigsen@gmail.com

Past Editors

Peter G. Gibson (Fac), Founding Editor, 1978-1986 [RIP June 6, 2009]
Connie Scott '76, Editor, 1986-1990
Jonathan G. Stacey '61, Editor 1990-2012 [RIP December 7, 2012]
Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68, Editor 2013-2020 [RIP December 2023]
Jay Bruder '74, Editor 2020-2021

Contributing Staff

Faten Hayek, Research & Development Officer

Executive Committee and Representatives

President, Gina Kano '73, ginakano1@gmail.com
Vice President, Daniel Harrich '18, dh2924@columbia.edu
Treasurer, Leonard Smith '67, leonard.smith@telesis-usa.com
Secretary, Donna Harms-Hansen '74, 32Aruba@comcast.net

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Webmaster: The late Børre Ludvigsen '64

The Diaspora Potrzebie is published quarterly as a nonprofit activity of the Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut. Subscriptions are provided free to all members of the alumni association. Please make tax deductible donation checks payable to the Alumni Association of ACS (AA/ACS).

All address information should be sent to AA/ACS, Glen Grubbs, 20 Franklin St., Salem NH 03079. Our legal address is: 3 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 8th Floor, New York NY 10017-2303. *The Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut. (AA/ACS) does not take positions on religious, political, social topics, or issues and does not endorse the positions or opinions given from time to time by contributors to this newsletter.* © 1990–2022 Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut.

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Message from the Editor

It is always sad when we lose people we love and admire, and this month's issue reflects some of those emotions and memories.

We also have some happy memories to present to you, dear readers, which I hope you will enjoy as much as I have done while working on the project: ACS Films, a collaboration between Ray Ruehl, art teacher extraordinaire, myself, and my partner, Bob Foster. I hope you all watch and enjoy these films on the web page provided in the article, and if anyone wants a personal download for any reason, please contact me: alice.ludvigsen@gmail.com. They will be available to download for one year, starting now, but always available to watch on the ACS website.

The most joyous thing about these films for me is the locations they were shot at - it's all so wonderfully familiar and fun. We owe Ray Ruehl many thanks for keeping these films safe and complete through all these decades. (There might be more coming, I have been told.) They are truly a treasure of a time capsule for so many of us - and hopefully a source of some pleasure for all those who have no idea what I'm talking about!

We also need to think again about this publication. See Faten's post under Alumni News, about considering, once again, whether you might choose to opt for the electronic (technicolor) version of the *Diaspora Potrzebie*, rather than the paper one that you get in your physical mailbox and hold between your hands.

It is now late spring, and I wish you all a wonderful summer.

My best wishes,
Alice



Can you feel the summer breeze at the Sporting Club?
(My photo from 2018.)

In Memoriam Linda Handschin-Sheppard 1950-2023

by Jay Bruder and many friends

From Peter Gibson's first efforts to assemble an ACS alumni mailing list in the late 1970's through the current association leadership no one has done more to sustain the Alumni Association of ACS at Beirut than Linda Handschin Sheppard '68. With the help of her husband Ken and their children Kelsey and Kyle, she hosted a triennial reunion, served on the Board of Governors/ Alumni Council, helped to maintain the alumni database, serviced requests for souvenirs and directories for decades, and edited *The Diaspora Potrzebie* newsletter.

Linda was the oldest of 3 boys and 2 girls. She was the big sister at home, but in truth she was everybody's big sister. She always knew what to do, how to calm people down, how to keep things moving forward, and how to give guidance or a gentle nudge when needed. Linda worked quietly behind the scenes as a tireless organizer and promoter.

Linda Handschin Sheppard was born on August 30, 1950 in Rochester, New York, where her father was attending medical school. She passed away from lung cancer in Bellevue, Washington, on December 18, 2023. In between, she led a fabulously rich and rewarding life which she shared most generously with the ACS community.

Linda's maternal grandparents emigrated from Modena, Italy, and settled in Walsenburg in south central Colorado, where her grandfather found work as a coal miner. Colorado mining towns never really recovered from the Great Depression and Linda's mom, Ulanda 'Ula' Steffani, left as soon as she could. She settled in Sacramento, California, where she found work as



an assistant to a senior California state administrator.

Linda's dad, Dick Handschin, was the son of a college professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. His father died when Dick was young and he was raised by his mother, who ran a boarding house near the university. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1942 with a B.A., and then served as a Navy corpsman in the South Pacific during World War II. After the War he decided to take a motorcycle trip across the country. While passing through Sacramento he was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident. After he was released from the hospital, he stayed in Sacramento to work off his medical bills as a messenger. He met Linda's

mom while making a delivery to her office. Ten days later they were married. Based on his military service in the Navy, he decided to pursue a medical degree. Not having the normal pre-med academic background, he applied to dozens of medical schools before being accepted at the University of Rochester, where Linda was born. During his residency at a Veterans Administration hospital in Seattle, he started to look for follow-on work. He found it with ARAMCO.



Linda was keenly aware of and deeply influenced by her father's work. Carole Hicke interviewed Dr. Handschin in 1996 as part of the [ARAMCO Medical Department Oral History Project](#) which can be found online. Dr. Handschin traveled to Saudi Arabia in April 1958, and Linda's mom followed with their four children in October. As an ARAMCO epidemiologist and medical director in Dhahran he took care of the ARAMCO community, and also reached out to the local population

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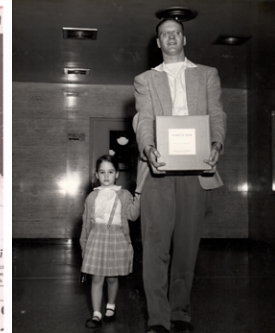
Linda Handschin-Sheppard 1950-2023 continued

Doctor Gives 1,370 Polio Shots In Mass Immunization



io Shots Please All But The Very Young
Caption: Mrs. Handschin, Dr. Handschin, and Linda Handschin, Seattle, Washington, April 1956. Linda, age 6, is being vaccinated. Dr. Handschin is administering the shot. Mrs. Handschin is holding Linda.

'It Looks All Right But W'
Caption: Linda Handschin, age 6, is being vaccinated. Dr. Handschin is administering the shot. Mrs. Handschin is holding Linda.



April 1956, mass polio vaccination in Seattle. Linda assists her dad.
Photo from Ken Sheppard

where he worked on malaria control, polio eradication, and women and children's health issues. Dr. Handschin advocated for a midwife program, even against the opposition of fellow MD's, because the need was so obvious. On occasion he was called to treat members of the royal family as healthcare in Saudi Arabia, especially for women and children, was still very basic. Linda would recall that throughout his career Dr. Handschin was aware of the premature deaths of his co-workers and their children through the kinds of exotic events that only happen to people who have reached a certain privileged lifestyle. Mountain climbing falls, parachute malfunctions, scuba drownings, and accidents in overpowered sports cars all made his mental list. In April 1963 a [Middle East Airlines' Caravelle flying from Beirut to Dhahran](#) crashed into the Persian Gulf during a sandstorm. All aboard were killed. Dr. Handschin had the grim task of identifying the remains of friends and colleagues and their children. These hard lessons shaped Linda's very pragmatic, yet very positive outlook on life.

Linda attended elementary and junior high school in Dhahran. There she became interested in language study, beginning Arabic classes in the 4th grade and French in the 7th grade. She was active in the Girl Scouts and went on numerous driving and flying vacations with her family all over the world. She was enlisted by her father to participate in public service ad campaigns in Arabia for such things as head lice prevention and vaccine promotion.



Carolyn Bates Bonner '68 remembered:

Linda was one of my oldest friends, from grade 2 at the

Dhahran ARAMCO school. Our class were all somewhat stunned by this beautiful girl with the long, silky black hair, and she turned out to be an impressive student, as well.

Linda and I lived only a block apart in Dhahran. I enjoyed many afternoons playing with the five Handschin kids. I also loved Dr.H, who was head of the Medical Dept., and Mrs. H, who was a warm spirited force, despite her petite stature at barely 5 ft. tall.

While **Carmena Henry** '68 wrote:

I remember Linda very well from 4th grade on in Dhahran. I remember the day she arrived at school for the first time. We were saluting the flag (!), and she appeared at the classroom door. I looked up and thought 'that is the most beautiful girl I've ever seen.' She had long dark braids and a lovely smile. Then she came to ACS! And THEN we both moved to the Seattle area! We stayed in touch (not frequently) throughout our lives. Incredibly giving, competent, smart, graceful human being with a beautiful family. She will be missed.

ARAMCO schools in Saudi Arabia only went through the 9th grade. All children of ARAMCO employees were required to attend high school outside of Arabia. Linda and her family chose ACS because of its high academic reputation and its relative nearness to their home in Dhahran. Linda became a boarding student there, and once she got over the expected stress of being separated from her very close family at a young age, she came to love both ACS and Beirut. She grew close with several of her ACS classmates and enjoyed the frequent ACS field trips and outings.

Carolyn Bates Bonner continues:



Carolyn and Linda with classmate Pam Shannon at the 2018 Class of '68 Reunion.

Upon graduation from the ARAMCO school, Linda and I, having both been accepted at ACS, were assigned as freshman roommates in the "Girls' BD" boarding department.....and stayed in touch ever since. I will miss that, from now on. All of which goes to say I feel her loss greatly -- as I'm sure that many others who knew her are now doing.

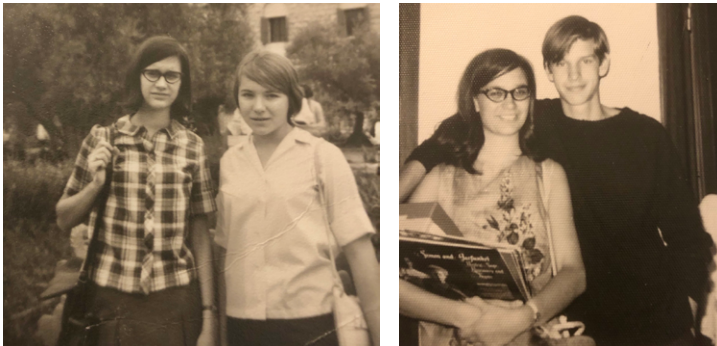
For Junior and Senior year at ACS Linda's roommate was **Dorinda Dorsey** from Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia:

I'm pretty sure Linda (or '*Linna*', my pet name for her) knew

Linda Handschin-Sheppard 1950-2023 continued

I was going to go to ACS before I did. I remember receiving a letter telling me that she had suggested us as roommates for the upcoming Junior Year (1966-1967). Of course, at that time, I had no idea how she would impact my life. Without her I would not be who I am.

I went to ACS 'kicking and screaming', but once *Linna* arrived along with the rest of the ARAMCO crew, I knew I was in good hands. (Yes, I got there first that year – probably the only time I was early in our entire relationship.) She knew her way around and was happy to show me the ropes; the dining room, the AUB stairs, the Junior Lounge, and of course, the Pit! It was Linda who suggested I'd be a good "call girl" in the production of *Guys and Dolls*. That introduction into theater helped me find a place where I could thrive at ACS, as well as later in life. Those of you who knew me at ACS understand what a gift Linda gave me by opening that door. I know this is supposed to be about her, but at this point she would nod and agree and say "Yes, Drinna - it's always all about you," and she was okay with that. We were friends.



Roommates Linda and Dorinda + Linda with classmate Alan Akers
Photos from Dorinda Dorsey

Their ACS years were very full for Linna and Drinna, with on campus events and activities, although Linda later remarked that she didn't know Beirut very well. Boarding students often had to get special permission to leave campus and trips anywhere but "uptown" were infrequent. In the Senior Class "Last Will and Testament" of 1968 Linda left: "To Miss Rich my organization and domestic trends . . ." These were traits that we were all soon to benefit from.

Sarah Rich (Fac.) writes:

I got to know Linda best during the 1967-68 school year when she was a student in my class and also lived in the boarding department where



I also lived as a supervisor. I was impressed by Linda's organizational abilities and her willingness to help others. She took pride in always being neat and having her dorm room in order. She was one of few whose gym uniform was clean and ironed and her room always passed daily inspection except once when her room got a demerit. (I understand her roommate Dorinda has provided this story). Perhaps my fondest interactions with her and Dorinda occurred after study time when we had some great conversations about the world in general and Linda's and Dorinda's dreams and hopes for the future. In 2018 I had the privilege of attending the class of 1968 50th class reunion which Linda organized, and was able to see how Linda's life had evolved through the years in so many positive ways. As a teacher it was a very happy experience to see how students you last knew at age 18 had become successful and contributing members of society.



Sarah Rich with Dorinda Dorsey, Seattle 2018.

Linda had intended to go to college in California, but as the time approached her family decided to leave Saudi Arabia. They settled in Seattle in 1968, where her father worked for Group Health Cooperative (now Kaiser) as its Research Director. Linda enrolled at the University of Washington, where she studied Near Eastern Languages and Literature. Dorm life at U.W. had the men and women separated into different buildings. For the 1969-1970 academic year her dorm was in one of two adjacent towers sharing a lobby, one tower being all men, the other all women. Mid-year the school administration took the daring step of transforming each tower into half men and half women. There she met her future husband, Ken Sheppard, who shared the same dormitory floor. Ken, an Economics major, described their building as a "hippie frat house." Ken, who was headed to law school, became interested in her language studies and also took some Arabic language classes. This resulted in each of them getting a National Defense Fellowship to study Arabic at the University of Tunis in 1971. They were married in 1972, and Linda took a masters in Near Eastern Language and Literature, with an emphasis on Turkish and Persian, while Ken studied law. Ken had

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Linda Handschin-Sheppard 1950-2023 continued

also studied Sharia law which resulted in ARAMCO offering him a position as Corporate Counsel. After brief stints in New York and Houston, they moved to Saudi Arabia in 1974 and stayed until 1979. Linda worked in the ARAMCO Contracting Department where she was able to put her language skills to good use, while Ken was in the Law Department. Of course they were not able to visit Beirut during this period, although they did fly over it several times, seeing smoke rising from buildings throughout the city. Linda and Ken returned to Seattle when they were expecting their first child in 1979.

Linda found work at several private schools in the area, culminating in a position at The Bear Creek School, a private institution in Redmond, Washington. She coordinated their parent and alumni events, as well as running their charity auction which raised hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. From that base she was firmly into the world of “development” for private schools. She was well versed in best practices and emerging trends in fundraising and the management of alumni associations. Ken, whose private law practice in Seattle specialized in commercial and international transactions, became an avid member of the Seattle and American Rose Societies. Linda helped Ken organize the American Rose Society national convention in Seattle in 2006, attended by over 400 people, who toured Ken and Linda’s large rose garden.

Ken remembers that Linda really reconnected with the larger ACS alumni community via the Alumni Association Triennial Reunion in Boston in 1988, which was hosted by her classmate George Salm. The reunion obviously made an impression. Linda, Ken, and the kids, along with her local volunteer team, hosted the next reunion in 1991 in Seattle. The 4th AA/ACS Triennial Reunion had about 400 in attendance and gave the alumni community a sense of the strength and potential of the alumni association. After the reunion there were left-over souvenirs, directories, and alumni association paperwork. Linda stepped up to take charge of “Membership Services” and fill late orders for merchandise and directories out of the family’s garage in Bellevue into the 2010’s. Some stuff just didn’t sell very quickly. When asked, Linda might volunteer that a lot of homeless people around Seattle were wearing ACS T-Shirts and drinking coffee out of ACS mugs. Ever pragmatic, she ensured that everything went to where it could do the most good.

Dorinda Dorsey catches us up:

Fast forward 10 years from ACS. Mr. Blakemore is on television with the Pope in Rome; I’m in Texas (don’t ask) and I call Linda on the phone. She has just given birth to her daughter. I can’t relate. All I know is that she did

everything right and I was kind of lost. We meet up again at the ACS Reunion in Boston in 1988, now 20 years since we’d graduated from high school. She introduces me to her perfect husband (an attorney), her two children (a girl and a boy) and she looks fantastic! And, she’s now ‘Ms. ACS’; on the board, writing the newsletter, and well, connected. I try to catch up. A few years later, when I gave birth to my daughter, I found myself thinking, “OH, this is what *Linna* was talking about!”, but ... she’s still the one who has it all together. Everyone knew mine was the messy side, and, whatever you do, don’t open my side of the closet – ask Miss Rich! In fact, I’ve often shared that. On Sunday nights, Linda would take out her list and mark off all of her to-do’s, while I would spend the 2 hours of “Study Hall” just looking for my list.



The alumni association does not keep a running track of who was on the Board of Governors (BoG, nowadays called the Alumni Council, AC). So, it is hard to say when Linda first signed on for AA/ACS leadership roles. But it’s safe to say that she stayed fully engaged in various capacities from about 1988 through 2022. She served as a board member and as an officer. I believe that at different times she was Secretary and Vice President. At the 2007 reunion in Washington, D.C. I rejoined the Board and several of us gave her a little nudge to serve as the president of the association (a position nominated and confirmed among the board members). She served for three years and, with the help of **Bill Crays** ‘56, and her professional knowledge of fundraising, helped to stabilize the association’s finances. She handed off to **Pat Hinds** ‘56 at Austin in 2010.

Bill Crays ‘56:

I was honored to serve with Linda Handschin-Sheppard on the Board of Governors for 16 years from 2000 until the end of 2016. Prior to the 2000 Portland Triennial Reunion, I had known of Linda, because she was the addressee of all dues and contributions correspondence, but I didn’t know her.

We met at the first/organizational meeting of the newly elected 2000 Governors. Prior to the 2016

Linda Handschin-Sheppard 1950-2023 continued

election of Governors, which was the first one conducted electronically, all elections were held in person at the Reunions. There were 27 candidates on the ballot to fill 15 Governor positions for the Portland Reunion election. My name was not on the Ballot. However, at that time nominations could be made from the floor, and cumulative voting was allowed. Judy Mandeville Lipman '56 nominated me from the floor and arranged for each attendee from the Classes of 1956 and 1957 to cast all 15 of their votes for me. I was elected.

For the next couple of years, I had the pleasure of serving with Linda on the quarterly Board conference calls. In mid-2002, the serving Treasurer resigned, and I volunteered to assume the role. From that time, and until December 2016, I worked closely with Linda on the financial issues faced by AA/ACS. She never refused an assignment and always performed them well.

Almost every organization has a large number of volunteers, but only a few do most of the work, Linda was one of the few who had served AA/ACS for many years before I met her, and continued that service after I became a Trustee. Before they passed away, Jon Stacey '61, Peter Moller '61 and Pat Hinds '56 were big parts of the "Few", as well.

Linda is and will continue to be missed.

As a development professional Linda understood the importance of maintaining a current contact database and she worked closely with **Peter Moeller** '61, who kept the database started by Peter Gibson, and with Jon Stacey '61. Jon edited *The Potrzebie* from 1990 until his passing in 2012. Peter Moeller's database was used in 2007 to print the last published directory and then it was handed off to the Development Office at ACS where it was merged with their database of more recent graduates, and where it is maintained today.

Under the guidance of Bill Crays (AA/ACS President 2013-2016), she worked on a BoG subcommittee to chart the future of the association. One of her great frustrations was the inability of the association to bring the younger generation of ACSers onboard. She worked closely with **Fadi Kannan** '98, and **Yasmin Agha** '04 who have made valiant efforts to enlist their peers.

When I joined ACS, both **Linda Handschin Sheppard** '68 and **Jon Stacey** '61, took me under their wing and played a huge role in helping me with reconnecting the Alumni with ACS in order to celebrate the ACS Centennial in Beirut in 2005.

Linda worked in development for over 20 years at several private schools in Washington State, and her guidance was crucial in my growth as a fundraiser when I first started out; she remained a person I could reach out to over the years.

She served on the AA/ACS for over 35 years and has organized (or been involved in organizing) many reunions held by the ACS/AA. She organized the fundraising drives for the Malcolm Kerr fund. She put the POT together (I never knew how she managed with her busy schedule), did the mailing, etc... Clearly, Linda cared a lot about ACS and has done so much for both the school and the Alumni Association.

As a person, Linda was always shy, soft spoken and kind. She was very discreet yet smart and funny, kind and generous, thoughtful and compassionate. She was the one quietly working hard behind the scenes.

We have stayed in touch and grown closer over the years. I will miss Linda very much. May she rest in peace.

Fadwa Ghanoum, ACS Administration

Dorinda recalls being reunited with Linda in San Diego for the 2013 reunion:

Another 10 years (well, maybe 15) go by, and she talks me into going to the reunion in San Diego. We schedule time for a short conversation in the afternoon and connect in a way we've never been able to before. It turns out she's had quite the time juggling, with her parents, her siblings and life. I see her human side and think I'm the one who suddenly has it a little easier. And we are, once again, sisters. We hug.



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Linda Handschin-Sheppard 1950-2023 continued

Linda stayed in close contact with Jon Stacy over the years. When Jon's health started to fail she stepped up to assist and then took over editorship of *The Potrzebie* in 2013. She contracted Marla Zylstra, a designer she knew from Bear Creek School, to redesign the newsletter and gave it a much more professional look and a web presence. Linda was fastidious in her composition and editing. Through her incredible

network of connections with ACSers of many different generations, she was able to keep the content flowing until she passed off editorship responsibilities to **Alice Ludvigsen** '70 in 2022 (my name appears on the masthead for 2020-2021, but in truth, she did most of the work during those years).

Linda organized and hosted a number of mini-reunions and "Summer-In -The-City" events for Seattle. In 2018 she hosted her Class of 1968 reunion in Seattle, which included a dinner at a Seattle area Mediterranean restaurant. Dorinda comments; "suddenly, it's been 50 years since graduation and we are planning our class reunion. I know I stepped on some toes, but I had the opportunity to work with Linda and we are back to being in high school, planning dances and organizing the activities. It is glorious. She invites me to her home and it's like I'd never been away."

One of Linda's very quiet projects was ensuring that [all of the back issues of *The Potrzebie*](#) that she had gathered from multiple donors were scanned and posted on the ACS website. Thanks to Hasan El Masri at ACS for the website work. The paper copies were subsequently forwarded to ACS for placement in the school archives at the AUB Library.

Linda stayed active with the AA/ACS AC and with editing *The Potrzebie* while holding down her full-time job at the Bear Creek



Class of '68 50th reunion in Seattle in 2018. Linda, 2nd from left.

to be effectively treated with a newly developed drug that extended her life for over three years. She quickly returned to an almost normal life, was able to welcome two new grandchildren, and to spend quality time with all of her family. Even as her disease ultimately resumed progressing, she continued to advise and help Gina as president of the association and Alice as the new editor of *The Potrzebie*.

In addition to being very private, Linda was always uncomfortable when people made a fuss about her. As a result, she limited who

knew about her illness. During these months Linda and I had time to discuss her life and her work for the association. She was disappointed that we had not found a way to get the younger alumni engaged. She took some well-deserved satisfaction in her role in sustaining *The Potrzebie* past its 40th year of publication, and in knowing that the association had over four decades provided a tremendous service in reconnecting many generations of ACSers while supporting the school and future generations of students. In October of 2023 her cancer had progressed to the point that she entered hospice care, still with the same positive and pragmatic outlook she had maintained for her entire life. She passed away on December 18, 2023 in Seattle leaving her husband Ken, their children Kelsey (Eric) and Kyle (Mary), and her four beloved grandchildren.



An informal portrait of Linda by her husband Ken.

In Memoriam

David Holladay '71

We received this posting from Glen Grubbs on February 15, 2024. (There will be more from David's family and friends in the next issue of the Diaspora Potrzebie.)

It is with profound sadness that I must inform the ACS Beirut Community today of the passing of David Holladay, Class of 1971. He passed away yesterday at 4:30 pm. Although David has been quite sick for years now, his passing was unexpected, and the cause is not



Young Glen and David

yet known, he simply lost consciousness and died on his way to physical therapy. David was my classmate way back in 1968 when I first arrived in Beirut. He and his wife Caryn attended most of

my ACS reunions in Salem NH over the last 13 years, and David was extremely pleased to re-charge many old friendships and break bread with the ACS gang.

Condolences can be left on his obituary page at:

<https://morsebaylissfuneralhome.com/obituaries/david-holladay-of-westford-massachusetts/>

Larry Lucchino, Faculty 1967-68 passed away April 2, 2024, age 78. I was scrolling through Instagram when I came across this post:



petesouza Edited • 5w
I love the look on Larry Lucchino's face at far right as President Obama gestured towards me and said, "This is the biggest Red Sox fan in the White House."

Lucchino, CEO and President of the Red Sox, and others from the management team were about to be introduced at a White House ceremony honoring the 2013 World Series champions. (Yes I was wearing one of my many Red Sox caps as I made this picture.)

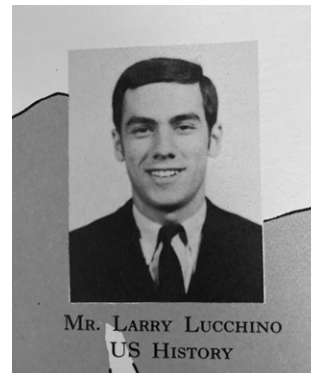
Really sad to hear the news that Larry has died of cancer. He became Red Sox CEO in 2002 and presided over their World Series title in 2004, ending a 86-year drought. (And World Series champions again in 2007 and 2013).

12,844 likes
April 2

Many of us who were at ACS in the 1960's will remember Larry Lucchino, a handsome, cheerful young man who taught US History, who would arrive every morning on his motorbike, which he would park inside the gates to the Boys' BD (causing the fluttering of a few

hearts, I have heard). He was only there for the one year, between college at Princeton and law school at Yale, but is remembered by many.

One person who does not remember him from ACS is **Glen Grubbs '71**, who made this discovery while browsing through the 1967-68 yearbook:



For you ACSers who belong to Red Sox Nation. That is indeed Larry Lucchino, famous baseball executive (Camden Yards), the President of the Boston Red Sox, who taught at ACS 1967-1968. I was browsing the 1968 Al Manara one day in 2010 and thought, "Hey isn't that the President of the Red Sox? I have a photo of his Red Sox Hall of Fame plaque. I will attach it. He will eventually be in the Baseball Hall of Fame, no doubt. Glen

Larry Lucchino was invited to the ACS reunion in Boston in 2016. This came about when **Marke Baker '73**, a huge Red Sox fan, was alerted by Glen, whereupon he sent an email to Larry



with the picture from the yearbook, explaining the story, which Larry confirmed. Marke and brother **Sean Baker '71** suggested to **Donna Harms Hansen '74**, who was organizing the Boston reunion, that Larry be invited to speak. Which Donna did. And Larry accepted. Part of the story is that Sean promised Donna "to 'bow at my feet' if I got him to the reunion, so yep..... Sean bowed!"

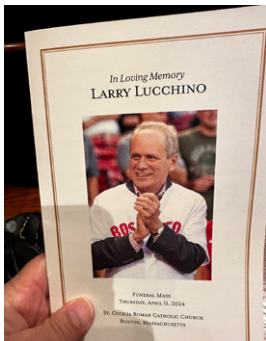
continued on page 10

In Memoriam

There are countless articles about and obituaries for Larry Lucchino, as well as a Wikipedia page, but the only mention I have found of his contact with Lebanon is a sentence from a book written about him, "Feeding the Monster" by Seth Mnookin:

*"At Princeton, Lucchino was a backup point guard on a varsity basketball team that played in the NCAA Final Four and posted a record of 23-6. After a stint teaching English in **Beirut**, Lucchino set off for Yale Law School, and by the late 1970's he had joined the Washington DC law firm Williams & Connolly..."*

"A day of deep sadness and of joyful celebration. Just left a most beautiful Funeral Mass for Larry Lucchino. Simply Larry changed both baseball AND the heart of American downtowns; he was absolutely a visionary. And, much as I attended because of his amazing work in Worcester - the WooSox, the WooSox Foundation, and the "drive through food pantry" during COVID, I also attended to represent the American Community School in Beirut, where Larry taught between college and law school.

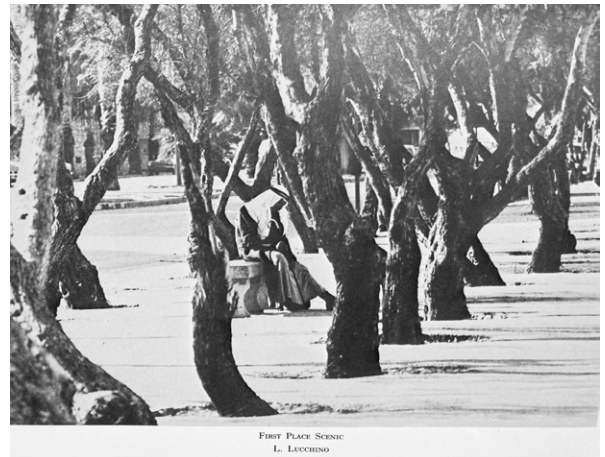


Rest in Peace Larry Lucchino; you have made my life; our lives better!"

Tim Garvin, ACS 76

I end this tribute to Larry Lucchino with a photo he took while teaching at ACS. It is in the 1967-68 yearbook, and has always been one of my favorite pictures of the way the Corniche used to look. Rest in peace, Larry Lucchino.

Alice Ludvigsen '70



Alumni Notes

My name is **Carol Glessner Haeussner**. I attended ACS from 1949 (third grade) to 1957 (10th grade) as a boarding student. I am in the **class of 1959**. I was very interested in the article of the January POT under Alumni Notes from Don Maxwell, about the 1947-48 ACS Yearbook. My oldest sister was Phyllis Glessner, one of the three seniors of the 1948 graduating class. I remember the old school and Mr. Ford, our Principal very well. I have attached a photo of my three older siblings on the balcony of the old boarding school. L to R: Lois, class of 1950, Dick, class of 1951, and Phyllis, class of 1948. Phyllis is wearing her graduation dress and corsage. Sadly both of my

sisters have passed away, but my brother Dick, an ordained minister, just turned 90 and lives in St. Augustine, Florida. Our parents, Rev. and Mrs. J.C.Glessner, were missionaries for 30 years in Kirkuk, Iraq. Our mother home schooled us until we were able to attend boarding school in Beirut. I first attended ACS at age eight, in third grade. That year we lived in the old BD up near Rue Bliss, and walked every day back and forth to the new school building down by the Corniche. By the next year,

(1950) the new BD was finished. By then the school had expanded a great deal, because the kids from ARAMCO in Saudi Arabia started to attend after eighth grade. I still have my old ACS Yearbooks from 1955, 1956, and 1957, but I don't remember ever seeing my sister's from 1948! I am also including a photo of me about 1956, taken on the roof of the new BD.



Alumni Notes

A lovely ACS gathering in San Francisco, February 1, 2024:



In the photos:

Tom & Linda Cangiano, Melinda Lord '75 with Nabila Kesrewan and Maya Mouhaidly, Lalena Porro '71 and Bob Foster (Fac.), Diane La Macchia '68 with husband Doug, Chris Lund '64, Alice Ludvigsen '70 & Robert Reeves '70.



A "Rhodesie" brunch reunion at Nesrine's restaurant La Secreta de Rosita in April 2024.



L-R: Nermine '77 and Nesrine '79 Abaya, Ramsey Taweel '74, Janis Jibrine '77, Betsy van den Berg '74. We all lived on the island of Rhodes, Greece, and attended ACS.

The Diaspora Potrzebie: Paper or not?

The Development and Alumni Relations Office in Beirut has sent out the following email. Hopefully, you have all received it, and if you haven't yet replied, please check your inbox.

Dear ACS Alumni,

We are in the process of reviewing our mailing list for the POT and wish to know from you if you would like to continue receiving our printed version, or you prefer to switch to the electronic version, or even both!

Because some of our readers (alums, friends, former employees) have relocated, our POT is sometimes "returned to sender" and so, we would like to avoid waste – and save trees – by reaching some sort of accuracy.

Please help us understand more about your preferences by replying to this email and copying / selecting one of the below options:

- Electronic version only
- Both (I like to keep the printed version)
- Printed version only (limited access to email)
- Opt out

Thank you for letting us know,

The D&A team & The Alumni Association

Teacher Stories



Interview with Sarah Rich

by Cat Essoyan '73

I had a wonderful talk with Sarah Rich for our series of articles in the Potrzebie about former ACS teachers. I asked her what brought her to Beirut and to ACS. She said she grew up in Stamford, Connecticut and had graduated from

the University of Connecticut in 1962. She was teaching physical education for K-12 in Stillwater, New York. She got tenure in 1964 and she saw an ad for teaching opportunities abroad. She applied and got an offer of a job in Pakistan but war related to a dispute about Manglo Dam broke out there and the job was no longer on offer. The next year, she got a phone call from the agency which had been advertising the positions overseas inviting her to New York City to interview for jobs in Japan or Beirut. It was February and she welcomed the opportunity to get out of the snow in Stillwater. She was offered a job in Beirut. Sarah's mother was pleased to hear about this as she loved traveling herself.



Sarah went to Beirut in 1966. She took advantage of the Pan Am flight to make six stops enroute in various places including London, Amsterdam, and Paris, "seeing Europe on 5 dollars a day" as she said. Sarah was at ACS for 5 years; from 1966 to 68 she worked in the high school (7-12) and taught and coached girls' volleyball, basketball, and cheerleading. From 1968 to 1970 she worked in the elementary school (K-6.)

She continued to coach

women's sports and boys' (4-6) basketball and soccer. In her final year, 1970-71, she taught in the high school.

She lived in the BD and said it was great fun getting to know

the students in the dorm. When the 1967 war broke out she was temporarily heading the BD and was responsible for getting all the girls packed up for evacuation, each could bring one suitcase, a pillow, and a blanket. They then hiked over to AUB where they got picked up by buses for evacuation. She left Lebanon about ten days later. One faculty member had had to stay at ACS a bit longer and she stayed as Bill Blakemore was eager to go. That worked out well for him as he went to Rome and had an opportunity to meet the Pope together with his students. In the summer of 1970, Sarah got an air ticket and money for shipping her belongings. She was able to trade that in for a round the world ticket with Pan Am. She and Mrs. Schechner and Kay Opp traveled together, stopping in Tehran, Kabul, India, Kashmir, Kathmandu, Djakarta, Bangkok, Tokyo, and Hawaii. They were in Tokyo at the time of the World's Fair.

I asked Sarah about her memories of her time in Beirut. She said when she left the US for Beirut, women's basketball was played differently with 6 players on a team while in Beirut it was played 5 against 5. She had to learn to play and to coach 5 on 5 basketball. She asked a coach there about a team she could join herself and ended up joining a team at the Sporting Club. Most of the team members were college students. Neither the coach nor the players spoke English and she did not speak much French. She learned French and some Arabic while playing and continued playing with the team all the years she was in Beirut. She is still in touch with two of the women who were on that team. One credits Sarah with teaching her English and she is now running the Berlitz center in Dubai. Another, Khadije Itani who also came to teach PE at ACS, now lives in Cologne and Sarah sees her when



Teacher Stories continued

she does river cruises in Europe. A highlight of Sarah's basketball career in Beirut was when the Russian Olympic team came to Beirut and Sarah got to play against them on her 30th birthday.

I asked Sarah if she visited much of Lebanon while she was there. She said she used to drive around exploring Lebanon with Martin Gostelow (who had a better car than hers.) She would also go on drives with Elsa Turmelle and her two dogs to help with walking the dogs. She travelled with ACS students to Baalbek and to Syria. She also traveled outside Lebanon with student teams, to take teams to play in Greece for example. She visited Palmyra

with Elsa Turmelle. She took advantage of the holidays, traveling to Egypt and once to Kenya and Tanzania with Mrs. Schechner to go on a safari. In her first year (1966) she took a group of mostly BD students to Egypt at Thanksgiving. The Sound of Music was playing there although it had been banned in Beirut and the ACS kids went to see it. One Easter she chaperoned a

trip to Greece with Peter Gibson, visiting Athens and Delphi on a bus tour and one spring break she accompanied a student group to Cyprus. In early 1967 she went on a two-week holiday to Russia.

Sarah really enjoyed her time in Lebanon but after 5 years there she felt she better head back to the US or she might not return. She was looking for a job there and got one on Long Island but she did not really want it as it was in a junior high school and the previous year the students there had burned down the auditorium. Luckily on the day she had to decide about the job, a former professor of hers at the University of Connecticut contacted her and offered her a graduate assistantship which she took instead. She got her master's there and got into coaching basketball, field hockey and volleyball. Her MA was in adapted and developmental physical education for people with disabilities. She did an internship at the VA teaching golf to returning Vietnam vets who were blind. When she applied for jobs, with her experience in coaching she could look for roles combining

teaching and coaching. She was hired by Ithaca college to teach and coach volleyball, bowling, and lacrosse (which at the time was new to her.) A plus she had was that she had experience teaching 5 on 5 basketball from her time in Beirut. She worked at Ithaca college from 1972 until she retired in 2000. In 1976/7 she had the option to go for academic tenure or to continue as a coach. She elected to go for academic tenure, so she needed to get a doctorate. She went to Texan Woman's University and did a PhD in therapeutic recreation and adaptive physical education. She studied during the summers and took off one year to finish

the degree. She had a scholarship from the federal government supporting her during her studies.

From 1984 Sarah started attending the Paralympic games, initially as a volunteer. In 1984 at the Paralympic games in Long Island NY, she was assigned to assist the Chinese team which was taking part for the first time. She accompanied a blind girl

who won the first gold medal for China in the Paralympics. She also attended the Paralympics in Barcelona, Atlanta, Athens, and Beijing supported by Palaestra magazine (like Sport Illustrated for athletes with disabilities) for whom she did photojournalism: photography and writing. In 1993 during her sabbatical, she was hired by the U.S. State Department to go to Niger to train people for paralympic sports. At the Athens Paralympic games in 2004, one of the blind athletes participating had been trained by her during her visit to Niger. In 2008, the last time she went to the Paralympics in Beijing, the blind athlete she had met in 1984 was in the opening ceremony. Sarah asked to meet with her and was invited to her house. Her visit got wide media coverage in China.

I asked if Sarah has kept in touch with friends from ACS and Beirut. She said she was in touch with quite a few of the faculty. She attended the 50th reunion of the class of 1968 in Seattle in 2018 which was organized by Linda Handschin. She was really impressed to meet students she had known 50 years earlier and



Watching Ithaca Volleyball from the South Pacific on Wifi. Oct.'23

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Teacher Stories continued

to see how successful they were and the remarkable things they had achieved, as doctors, lawyers, and in the media. She said then you feel as a teacher a sense of having done something. She said she found ACS was truly a unique place with its students and its approach to education. She has kept in touch with the Turmelles, particularly since Will Turmelle died. Sarah said she had been back to Lebanon in 1974/5. In the 2000s, she traveled with Elsa Turmelle to Egypt and added on a week in Lebanon. She said it was amazing to see the changes, the airport was completely redone and the road into Beirut from the airport was quite different but Hamra felt the same as it had in the 1960s.

In retirement, Sarah lives from April to October in Ithaca, where she has a condo. During the summer she does volunteer work with two organizations. For one, the Racker Center, in 1976, she created a swim program to insure that young children with disabilities were safe in the water. Racker Centers provide therapy and preschool education to children with special needs in three counties in N.Y. They also provide housing and group homes for adults with disabilities. In addition, she is a Board member for FISH (Friends in Service Helping) which provides free transportation to those who need



it to get to medical oriented appointments. The rest of the year she travels. During her retirement, she reached her goal of traveling to all the continents with her visit to Antarctica in 2019.

Her travel companion Susan lives in Iowa and for the past 15 years they have traveled annually to Arizona and then to Mexico to play golf. In mid-January this year they were about to go to Arizona. One of her golf friends is now 92 and winters in Arizona and they continue to golf together.

She said she golfed during her time in Beirut and would go down to Saida to golf with the Putnams. Last year, she and Susan went on an amazing 52-day cruise of the Pacific. Unfortunately, upon her return she was knocked down in an airport by a man rushing to catch a flight and fractured her pelvis. She has been resting and recuperating for weeks and is now able to walk unaided for short distances. She is looking forward to putting and chipping on the golf course. This fall Sarah and Susan plan to go on



another long cruise from Seattle to Alaska, stopping in Japan, and then continuing to Midway Island and Hawaii before returning to Seattle.



Sarah and Susan in the South Pacific.

ACS Films

Alice Ludvigsen 70

In the 1970 ACS yearbook there is a spread titled:

a c s cinematographers put on way-out film festival

with the following text:

*A new kind of theatre was introduced to ACS under the skilled direction of **Mr. Ray Ruehl** and **Miss Anne Ratcliffe**. This consisted of a series of experimental films, four in color and three in black and white. The audience, and those involved in the filmmaking, felt the rewards of the weeks of hard work in this entertaining collection of films. As tickets sold out almost immediately, an extra showing was held. Even this special showing could not appease the public demands, however; and the activity will be refined and continued in future years.*

Ray Ruehl has preserved these films throughout all these years, and had a dream of having them digitized and shared with ACS alumni. An attempt was made several years ago, but it was not successful as the magnetic sound tape on 800 mm films has been hard to reproduce clearly. At the beginning of this year, Ray and I got in touch by email and on the phone, talking about this, that and the other, and the conversation turned to the films. I did a little research and found a company that promised to do just that: digitize 800 mm films with the previously troublesome magnetic sound strip. Ray entrusted me with the films, I sent two of them off to the company, they were successfully digitized and returned, and I contacted the alumni office at ACS in Beirut so that they could download them and keep them safely recorded for posterity. Another three films were added after the first batch. A huge thank you goes out to **Hasan El Masri**, who has created a link for the films for all of you who might be interested in seeing (and revisiting) them.

Go to: <http://www.acs.edu.lb/acs-films> for your own "special showing".

I would also like to thank **Bob Foster**, who was a teacher and counselor at ACS during the same period as Ray and Anne, for his loving enthusiasm and generous donation that made it possible to have this work done.

The films are as follows:

- **The Red Ball**, 1970, which bounces delightfully through neighborhoods of Ras Beirut.
- **Variations on a Theme**, 1971, the "theme" being the so-called "stinky steps" (with Mrs. Churchill's 4th grade).
- **The Arts of the Harem** - Miss Sindy Foosse and her Belly Buttons (rated X!)

- **First Love**, 1971
- **Mrs. Churchill's 4th Grade Lebanon Unit**, 1972

Here is a message to me from Ray, after he had watched the first two films:

Hi Alice

I just watched the films on my computer. Considering their age and the fact that kids did a lot of the work, they are not as bad as I thought they would be. We are spoiled of course by the advances since 1970. Like all student films they seem too long, repetitious, etc. but we wanted to showcase as many kids as possible. The digital production group you found did a first rate job with ancient and difficult material. If we ever show these, I think Sindy Foosse should be a presenter. Enjoyed Rose Churchill in her prime, a great teacher. Thank you for your patience and help with this, you deserve an Academy Award.
Ray

And a later message: I just watched the new batch of films. I'm sorry that the Red Ball is purple now. A lot of color has dropped out of it.

We probably used the wrong film stock. FIRST LOVE is much better and the film is much freer of dust and debris. The sound is pretty good on all of them. Putting a magnetic strip on the film is a primitive technique, and some of the sound gets worn off a bit with every showing. Vera Ellen and Jay McD were certainly an attractive couple. Richie Hanna a budding Keaton. The ACS filmmakers used the Kitten trademark several years before Mary Tyler Moore stole it.

Sindy Foosse, aka Sara Parrott wrote:

I loved that experience in my life long ago, and I think learning to belly dance helped me and all my students feel closer to the spirit of Lebanon and each other. It also helped me feel more at peace with my own body after years of trying to meet all the unrealistic expectations about how I thought I was expected to look. I'm delighted Ray and you are saving those wonderful films!

I hope you will all enjoy these films, whether you are watching them with your heart full of nostalgia for the Beirut of the 1970's, or whether you are seeing them for the first time, as a historic record of a Beirut that was.

They will be available here, on this website, for your unlimited viewing. If anyone wants their own personal download, please contact me at: alice.ludvigsen@gmail.com

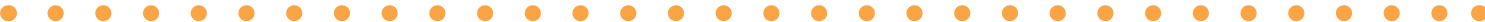


Mr. Ruehl and Penny Blockley film The Red Ball on Abdul Aziz Street as passersby watch.

Alumni Association of the American Community School at Beirut, Inc.
20 Franklin St.,
Salem, NH 03079

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