



**The Journal
of
The Pipe Club of Lebanon**

Volume 1, Issue 1

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The Journal of the Pipe Club of Lebanon

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Editorial

May 15 is an important date in the history of the Pipe Club of Lebanon, as it witnesses the launch of our quarterly journal. Now a durable, printed and printable platform is offered to all members (regular and Friends) to air their views, exchange ideas, provide tips, and recount their smoking experience. More than a newsletter, the *Journal* aims not only at updating the members about the activities of the club, but also at giving knowledgeable information about matters related to the noble art of pipesmoking. Every word appearing here reflects, as much as possible, the motto of our club: "Pipe smoking is properly an intellectual exercise." Some of this endeavour can be found in our online pdf publication, "The Way of the Pipe," published in

2003. Why smoke a pipe? What is it that makes pipesmokers go on an unending search for the perfect pipe and perfect tobacco? What is this object, many times a unique piece of art, which allows itself to be smoked, that is, to be actually used and abused? Why has mankind ignored the real or unreal dangers of smoking and



continued to put together a beautiful, handy, portable, and comfort-giving pipe and a handful of fragrant tobacco leaves? These and others are the questions

which every serious pipesmoker must have asked himself/herself over the many hours spent with pipe in mouth. The *Journal* is our forum for answers to the above, and the many editorials, essays, hints and tips of the FAQs, pipe reviews, tobacco reviews, and events of the Pipe Club of Lebanon are only different ways we in the club are trying to come to terms with the fundamental mysteries of pipesmoking. But smoking a pipe does not have to be an overly serious activity, far from it! The fragrant and savoury pleasures of the briar and leaves, the social gatherings, the worldwide community bound by the simple and elegant shape of the pipe, all help us remember that smoking a pipe is also fun! Smoke in peace!

Paul Jahshan

Members

Founding Members:

Paul Jahshan, President, Editor-in-Chief
 Tarek Khalaf, Vice-President
 Fares Irani, Personnel Manager
 Salim Khoury, Treasurer
 Elie Seif

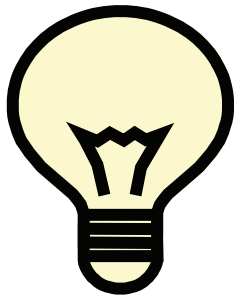
Regular Members:

Marc Haddad

Friends of the PCoLeb:

Pedro Romero-Auyanet
 Toufic Nsouli
 Jose Luis Manzur

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



Q: I have problems drawing (puffing in) the tobacco; I have probably packed it too tight.

A: Some tobaccos, for example most MacBarens, are known for this. Packing lightly all throughout

Email your questions and we will try to answer them.

(some people would use the word “carelessly”) can be a solution.

smoking?

A: The sound is made by moisture produced by the smoking process. The first solution is to gently puff out a few times; the second solution is to insert a pipe cleaner from the mouthpiece straight to the tobacco in the bowl.

Q: I can't seem to get the pipe-cleaner through the mouthpiece to the bowl. Something blocks it!

Q: How can I stop the annoying gurgling sound when I'm

A: In 99% of the cases (provided you have removed any filter), you can work it out by bending the tip of the pipe-cleaner (1 to 1.5 cm) about 35-45 degrees down, and inserting it; when you encounter your “blockage,” turn the pipe cleaner inside and you will see it come out the bowl hole.

Q: How often should I take my pipe apart to clean it?

A: As seldom as you can! Try to clean it with a pipe cleaner from the mouthpiece to the bowl. The less you unscrew the mouthpiece, the longer the life of your pipe.

Paul Jahshan



Educating Pipesmokers

To everything in life there is a proper way, and to pipesmoking there is indeed a proper way. The “proper way” is not about sacred or absolute rules to be followed blindly. On the contrary, the proper way to pipesmoking is based on sound observation, rational explanations, and the long experience of millions of pipesmokers throughout the centuries.

There are “very wrong ways” to smoke the pipe, and I can think of many I have personally seen: never cleaning a pipe, filling a bowl without first emptying it and/or adding fresh tobacco onto the remains of a just-smoked bowl and wondering at the execrable taste and smell, mixing different tobaccos in the same pipe during the same smoking session, taking the pipe apart while it is still hot and later wondering why the mouthpiece is loose, inhaling the smoke into the lungs, emptying the pipe by tapping the bowl onto one's heel or a hard surface and denting it or worse, breaking it, burning the rim of the bowl while lighting the tobacco and thus defacing a beautiful piece of artisanship in a matter of weeks, biting the mouthpiece so hard as to actu-

ally leave holes in it and render it unusable, smoking exclusively the cheapest tobaccos, etc.

To these obvious violations of the most basic rules of pipesmoking, there are also more subtle things to think about, and these come with sound observation, reading, talking with educated pipesmokers and, more importantly, from a sense of caring for one's pipe and treating it with a minimum of respect.

Respect? A pipe is generally a unique piece of workmanship which has taken sometimes many hours to produce; a pipe gives pleasure to our palate and to our nose; a pipe gives comfort when cold, when lonely, when stressed, when in a meditative mood, or when happily sitting in a congenial environment and wanting to add to the joys of the moment the peaceful effluves of a select tobacco; a pipe is a companion which is always ready, tucked in a pocket, a companion which silently accompanies us through our daily thoughts, a companion which demands little of us other than some tobacco, a good light, and cleaning, a companion which, if taken proper care of, can live with us and sometimes outlive us, handed on from father/

mother to son/daughter, filled with the memory and passage of years. For all these and more, a pipe deserves caring, attention, and mostly respect.

What are the “more subtle things to think about”? I can think of a few: scrupulously cleaning your pipe, letting it rest at least 24 hours before lighting it up again, keeping it in a dry and shaded/dark place, not mixing different tobacco styles in the same pipe (i.e., aromatics vs. English or Burleys vs. Virginias vs. Cavendishes vs. Periques vs. Latakias), not being afraid to experiment with better—and probably more expensive—tobaccos, using only good matches and, mostly, trying to “understand” how you and the pipe “interact,” how each can become the mirror of the other. “Show me your pipe and I will tell you who you are” can be an interesting proposal.

The search for the “perfect” pipe and the “perfect” tobacco is a continuous and ever-changing quest. Educated pipesmoking is an exciting, pleasurable, and highly “intellectual exercise” worthy of our time.

Paul Jahshan

My First Pipe



Fares contentedly puffing

It was in 1998, on New Year's Eve; all the family was assembled that night at my aunt's (President Paul's mother) home. A traditional family gathering with food and drinks, jokes, and a lot of noise: a really nice af-

fair!

Nobody was able to move because of the amount of food ingested, and Paul asked me and Salim, my other cousin who later also became a founder of the club, to smoke a pipe with him.

It was my first time smoking tobacco; I had no idea what was going to happen to me. My cousin Salim didn't say no, so neither did I. I chose a pipe from Paul's collection but it was

a bad pipe which nobody had smoked, not even its owner.

Paul was secretly happy I had chosen such a bad pipe because his initial idea was to put me off smoking (I was 18 then).

To make things worse, Paul chose a relatively heavy tobacco, *Balkan Sobranie*, and I can still remember (and smell) what a strong tobacco it was for a first-time smoker.

When Paul was filling my pipe, he said: "you chose a bad pipe

"It was my first time smoking tobacco; I had no idea what was going to happen to me."

and I'm giving you a strong tobacco; if you hate it, my conscience will be at ease, so don't blame me; but if you like it, then it will have been my pleasure. And smoke slowly!

He gave me the pipe but I immediately started to smoke heavily. Paul said to me: "Wow! Take it easy!" I didn't listen, and after 30 minutes, a very bad

feeling hit me and I felt dizzy. I couldn't hear anything except my cousin Salim telling me about a lamp and the light in the room and the electricity. After two minutes, I ran away through the kitchen straight to the bathroom but I didn't make it: I vomited in the middle of the kitchen, right on the oven, on the floor, everything. It was a really bad night and I was

embarrassed!

The next day my cousin Paul gave me a call and we talked about this night and I said to him: "I must try it again, but this time the right way!" The next time I smoke, it was as a future founder and member of the Pipe Club of Lebanon!

Fares Irani

My First Pipe

The first time I started smoking pipes was in 1988, using *Sail* tobacco. It was a harsh first experience because I immediately felt my tongue burning and got slightly dizzy, but I insisted on going on because it made me calm. It had such a positive effect on me that I came to smoke from two to four pipes a day over a period of five years. Now, I usually smoke a pipe in the evening, mainly during the weekend. I still feel that a pipe helps me relax after a long day's work, and the perfect time is after a good dinner. My favourite tobacco is *Captain Black Cherry*, yet I still long after *Sail* which, unfortunately, is nowhere to be found in Lebanon, although it is a very smooth tobacco. The way I smoke a pipe is like this: I fill it completely but not too tightly, then I light it very thoroughly and draw slowly in order to enjoy it completely. But I also believe that every smoker has his/her way of filling, lighting, and drawing, so I leave this to personal experience!

Tarek Khalaf



Tarek meditating on the loss of *Sail* from the Lebanese market

My First Pipe

In 1998, on New Year's Eve, I was invited to a family dinner at my aunt's house. I had always believed that eating was a pleasure, so I ate until I couldn't move or breathe, and that was when my cousin Paul asked me and my other cousin Fares to smoke a pipe with him.

I had never smoked a pipe before that date, so I thought that I should give it a try. I chose a pipe from Paul's collection, and he filled it with *Balkan Sobranie*, a very strong tobacco.

He then told me to smoke it slowly.

I usually push things through their limits, like I did with the dinner, so I didn't follow his advice and smoked very heavily. After about half an hour of steady smoking, I felt extremely dizzy and ready to vomit if I made any sudden movement. Luckily, I didn't.

The next day my cousin called me. We spoke about pipe smoking and I decided to give it another try but this time on a comfortable stomach. On the evening of that same day, I

smoked happily for 45 minutes and felt very relaxed. Later that year, and after trying many tobaccos, I bought my first pipe, a Stanwell DeLuxe No. 63. Ever since, pipe smoking has become a part of my life.

After smoking many pipes, I realized that pipe smoking is not only about smoking a pipe, but it is also a relaxing practice and a big help to calm the mind and put aside life's stresses and anxieties. As a Founding Member of the Pipe Club of Lebanon, I have learned the delicate art of putting together a good pipe, a carefully

selected tobacco, and the right frame of mind. I still think of *Balkan Sobranie* fondly, and even smoked it for some time, but my favourite tobacco is Davidoff's *Danish Mixture* for its mild flavor which remains tasteful from the beginning to the end of a smoking session.

Salim Khoury



A very serious-looking Salim pondering the mysteries of the pipe...

“After about half an hour of steady smoking, I felt extremely dizzy and ready to vomit if I made any sudden movement.”

My First Pipe

Since I was a kid I loved the smell of the pipe and I was looking forward to trying pipesmoking. My wish came true when Salim, a co-founder of the Pipe Club of Lebanon, gave me his pipe on of the meeting of the pipe club to try it. At first, I felt a strange taste and got a little bit dizzy. After that, I attended every meeting and smoked a little until I learned the way to

smoke a pipe. Then, I bought two pipes, and I got into the pipe club. Furthermore, I like to smoke a pipe because it makes me feel relaxed and what I learned from smoking alone is that it makes me think clearly. Also, it gives me the ability to clear my mind from other issues and allows me to concentrate on my studies or work. Usually, people's opinion on pipesmok-

ing is that it is a hobby, but to me it is something that facilitates my life by letting me get away from my problems. In my opinion, pipes can also make people come together. It's like a way to better communication between persons who share ideas about tobaccos and pipe models.

Marc Haddad



Marc Haddad, our newest regular member, puffing his pipe at his first PCoLeb meeting

A Pipe to Bring back the Good in Each One!

Old people, who are usually wise, say that the bad times make a lot of the good things which we have inside of us bloom.

Maybe these bad times, and with the help of tobacco, are having precisely this effect, for since the moment I have trodden into the world of the pipe, I can't remember having contemplated an activity so intense as pipesmoking.

All of us who have grown up in the shadows of some pipe club, virtual or not, are now seriously considering creating our web pages and transmitting something of what this experience in pipesmoking, gathered from other veteran smokers, has given us, as we smoke these pieces of art.

And it is indeed an audacious task, that of pipe makers who have thrown themselves into the adventure of getting out of a piece of briar its soul and revealing it in the form of a pipe. A lot of rough pipes at the beginning, yes, and each new pipe coming nearer and nearer to the final shape. Because whether the hands that turn the pipes are very skillful or not, no pipe is ever ugly.

There comes to my mind, as I smell the flavours of this pipe I am smoking now, the words of some character created by J.R.R. Tolkien, something like: "It is in bad times that the best of each one comes to the surface."

Pedro Romero-Auyanet

*“Because
whether the
hands that turn
the pipes are
very skillful or
not, no pipe is
ever ugly.”*



**Pedro puffing out
some of his goodness
back onto the world**

Coming Soon from The Pipe Club of Lebanon:

Keep checking our page for the following projects:

- **“The Way of the Pipe” (English and Spanish versions) in a new format**
- **“The Book of Shapes” in a new format as well**
- **“The Absolute No-Nos of Pipesmoking”**
- **“The PCoLeb’s Pipe Treatment”**
- **“The Annual Pipesmoking Competition Rules and Results”**
- **“A Brief History of the Pipe Club of Lebanon”**

**Become a
member!**



About the Pipe Club of Lebanon: We are the premier pipe club in Lebanon and, probably, the first club of its kind in the Middle East. Our aim is threefold:

We want to become the rallying point for serious pipesmokers in Lebanon and in the Middle East.

We aspire to provide knowledgeable information about pipesmoking, about pipes, and about tobaccos to amateurs and professionals alike.

We are dedicated, as is clear in our motto, to eagerly investigate ways in which pipesmoking is “properly an intellectual exercise.”

Serious pipesmokers, be they beginners or veterans, are welcome to join us and share in our quest for the perfect pipe and the perfect smoke.

Visit us at www.pipecluboflebanon.org !

Announcements and PCoLeb Meeting Schedule

Announcements:

The Pipe Club of Lebanon welcomes our new members in the recently created “Friends of the Pipe Club of Lebanon” section. Greetings to Pedro Romero-Auyanet, who has been, unofficially, helping the PCoLeb with translating “The Way of the Pipe” into Spanish and then helped designed the membership cards. Greetings also to Toufic Nsouli, living in New York, and to Jose Luis Manzur in Argentina. We also welcome Marc Haddad, our first regular member after the founding members. Marc, who has been around for a while, finally made up his mind during the club’s last meeting.

We welcome them all!

On the PCoLeb’s Schedule:

The PCoLeb’s schedule for the coming three months is as follows:

- First week of June: Club Meeting “Danish Pipe Makers”
- First week of July: Club Meeting “Three Main Kinds of Tobacco”
- August: The celebrated Pipe Club of Lebanon’s Annual Pipesmoking Competition!