

- DABKE
- DRAMA
- MUSIC
- COMEDIES/SKETCHES
- FESTIVALS AND CARNIVALS
- INTERSTATE AND OVERSEAS
- ACTING/SINGING
- COMPETITIONS
- BELLY DANCING

.....AND MANY MORE



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The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group



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Brief History

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group has been established since 1977 by Elie Akouri, the teacher and choreographer of the Lebanese Dabki dance in Australia.

Having migrated alone to this wonderful country full of dreams and opportunities and speaking little English, I found the language barrier very difficult to overcome. However, I was lucky to have secured a full time job. I had neither family nor friends at the time and planning for the future was not as easy as anticipated.

Having studied and researched the Lebanese Traditional Folklore. I dedicated all my spare time and frustrations towards the production of my first Folkloric play and the search for young Lebanese migrants sharing an interest in the Lebanese folklore.

Soon, I had a group of 24 boys and girls and my first production, "A Father's Mistake" was staged in that same year ,1973. The play being an instant success had brought together hundreds of non English speaking Australian/Lebanese families who for the first time in Australia had seen a play in their own language which they understood. Response from the community has reflected an intense need amongst the Australian/Lebanese community.

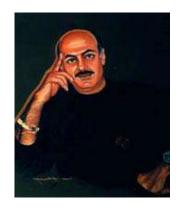
Soon after, we were asked to stage other productions that were sponsored by different charitable associations and asked to perform at public places for the Australian English speaking communities. From then on I realised that there was an opportunity for us to assist many Lebanese non English speaking migrants to adjust to their new lives in Australia, thereby promoting a role model for the Lebanese in Australia, by sharing our exotic and colourful folklore with people of all ages, colours and cultures.

In 1977 the Cedars Of Lebanon Folkloric Group was formed. The group specialises in teaching the Lebanese folkloric Dabki dance to all ages and all cultures. A majority of the past and present members are Australian born and vary from 16 to 40 years of age. Some of these members are not fluent in the Lebanese language and have little knowledge of the Lebanese culture, tradition and history. Yet all these members have become dedicated "Dabki performers"; wanting to share their new found culture with the Australian community.



BACKKROUND OF PERFORMERS

Elie Akouri



Elie Akouri the Teacher, choreographer, Costume Designer, former School Co-ordinator, and Founder of the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Dance Group, was born in Lebanon in 1953 and immigrated to Australia in 1972. His then adventurous spirit had profound influences on the state of the Folklor Dance Art in Australia and overseas, portraying the beauty of the Lebanese Folkloric Dance with its rich heritage and culture. These influences of challenge, struggle, and persistence ultimately led to his accomplishment.

Elie has not only inherited the past realm of Phoenician Artistry but has expressed the representative state of the Lebanese identity through this "group art thinking". The representation of this traditional art of the Folkloric Dance has been an end goal.

Six months after his arrival, Elie embarked upon his initial Australian performance. The Arabic play entitled "A Father's Mistake," was Elie's first written production. The play was performed in Granville and was the first Arabic Dance theatre of its kind in Australia. In 1977 Elie founded "The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group" and went on in 1983 to establish the first Lebanese club named "The Cedars of Lebanon Theatre Restaurant" which operated until 1986. Elie Akouri provides various audiences with Lebanese traditional entertainment and cuisine.

As a teacher of the unique Folkloric Dance, Elie has had a long lasting impact on the Australian-Lebanese community's artistic dance fervour and has continuously contributed to the formation and development of this art form. During his long established campaign of promotion and leadership of Folkloric Art form, the "Dabki" in a variety of settings, Elie has taught hundreds of young people and has been a catalyst behind many performances at numerous venues.

The traditional act of the raising of the Australian and Lebanese flags with each and every performance has been enacted in schools, weddings, private and public functions, commercial centres, carnivals, and festivals, both nationally and internationally. The specialist performances have also taken place at traditional Art venues, the likes of which include the Australian icon, the Opera House and Sydney's Darling Harbour.

Not only has Elie Akouri used his art as an influential tool of multicultural artistic integration, he has also used it as an instrument of humanitarian and charitable ends. The vast array of philanthropic causes have included televised Telethons aimed at improving conditions prevailing in the disabled communities within Lebanon and Australia and other programs aimed at alleviating the plight of the overseas orphans and under-privileged children.

Elie's efforts have earned him an Achievement Award from the Arab Heritage League in Australia for his long-standing service to the cause of multi-cultural Arts Development as Teacher, choreographer, costume-designer and founder of the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric group. Elie migrated to Sydney, Australia in 1972.

A few months after his arrival to Australia, Elie wanted to share the "Beauty and Richness" of Lebanon's Folklore with the Australian and Lebanese community. Besides promoting the Lebanese Folklore throughout Australia, Elie has founded The Cedars Of Lebanon Folkloric Group, teaching the Lebanese Dabki in a variety of places, including schools and gatherings.







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THE LEBANESE DABKI



Lebanon is devoted to the Arts more so than any other country of its kind on Earth. I say that I am truthfully correct in saying this because we find its people are always thirsty for the Arts. The sound of the cascading streams and the rising sun on the mountains in a glorious heavenly but artistic way, the trees swaying gently to and fro as the wind rustles the leaves in Lebanon, is the finding of talent.

The Lebanese person on hearing the sound of the streams and the wind rustling through the leaves, thinks of the sounds of music he sings along to. If wanting to wake in the morning, he will not wake unless he hears the chirping sound of birds.

And here I shorten my words on this topic to say when The Almighty God created Lebanon, it was made to be picturesque in all forms of life and naturally the community would be also.

The presence of this beautiful nation and these people who founded the Lebanese Folkloric Dance (Dabki), was to remain forever present to this land which is small in size, but large at heart in talent.

Here I give insights about the Lebanese Dabki, which are:

- The Lebanese Dabki is a culture of our Lebanese ancestors.
- The Lebanese Dabki is magnificently beautiful in its own right.
- The Lebanese Dabki is the chance for both males and femaless to join in performing their own culture.
- The Lebanese Dabki is an inspiration at happy gatherings.
- Last but not least the musical songs that are specially created and played for the Dabki will always be played and no person will ever lose interest in it.

Following is a brief meaning of the musical songs that are meant for dancing or romance that are a far cry from the Dabki songs.

Every now and then, a new dance or dances appear on the scene that thrills the boys and the girls emotionally to an unimaginable height, winning many followers. That allows the stiff rivalry between the writers and composers in the creation of the songs for people to dance their dances of enjoyment.

The Dabki is one that does not end, the people have danced it for centuries and always will. It has followers in the community and is universal for young or old, rich or poor. As I mentioned earlier, the Dabki is the cultural heritage in Lebanon and that culture does not cease; but if it was to cease then so will the Nation and its people.

That is why the Dabki in our Mother Country, Lebanon, or elsewhere in the lands where it carries the certitude of responsibility and grounding, shows the serenity of Lebanon and its people. This is the evolution of the foundation.

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group like to join in every festival possible, to present the Dabki everywhere far from its land of origin, giving the true image of the Lebanese community.

We ask God to safeguard every person who cares about the group the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric group and our Mother country, Lebanon.

Elie Akouri
President of CLFG





PERFORMANCE

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group was founded on the 30th of March 1977. There have been over 500 members who have joined during the 34 years that the group has been in practice. Currently, the group has a range of members varying from the age of 10 and above. Rehearsals and training is currently held in Granville Town Hall every Wednesday, beginning at 8:00pm and finishing at 10:00pm.

A group for the children was formed on the 30th March 1999 however ceased in 2001. This group consisted of more than 60 members from the age of 3 to 16. The training for the junior dance group was held every Tuesday from 7:00pm to 8:00pm at Greystanes and then it was moved to Granville.

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group had their own theatre restaurant and club which was established in 1983 and ceased operation in 1986. This club consisted of more than 1300 members in total and included 5 different sports clubs, besides the Folkloric Group. The first sport team to be founded was the soccer team which began in 1980 and ended in 1986. In 1983 when the restaurant and club were established, the volleyball team, the football team, the ping-pong team and backgammon team were formed. These sports teams were all discontinued in 1986.

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group held and still hold many activities. These include tours to the snow and the caves, picnics, harbour cruises, as well as trips interstate and overseas such as Lebanon and Europe.

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric group performed on various Television Channels, worldwide. The group appeared on TV 59 times, in Australia and overseas. The group presented the Lebanese culture on all local Australian television channels and many Lebanese channels with a total of 25 performances. They also performed on World Satellite TV, as well as Uruguay and Canadian channels.

The group held 9 performances in the year 1997 in Lebanon with approximately 5000 attendees. Not only did the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group perform in their hometown, they also made a trip to Uruguay in 1986 to perform the Lebanese Culture. This trip comprised of 14 performances with an audience of 3500. These were two major events in the groups performances, however they have had many other trips to present the culture in other various countries. The group has performed 1573 times both interstate and overseas during their years in practice. This has attracted 2,709,965 people from 1977 to the current year to watch and learn the Lebanese culture.

PERFORMANCES HELD IN VARIOUS TELEVISION STATIONS

The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group appeared on TV 59 times, in Australia and overseas.

AUSTRALIA LEBANON INTERNATIONAL

Channel - 10 = 5 times Channel - L B C = 10 times Uruguay Sth America = 3 times
Channel - 09 = 6 times Channel Eagle = 2 times World satellite TV = 5 times

Channel - 07 = 2 times Channel - 05 = 3 times Canada = 2 times

Channel - 02 = 7 times Lebanese Gov. Channel = 10 times

CLFG SUMMARY OF MAJOR ACTIVITIES

PERFORMANCES HELD OVERSEAS

Channel - SBS = 7 times

Lebanon 1997 one trip 9 performances 5000 attendances Uruguay 1986 one trip 14 performances 3500 attendances

PERFORMANCES HELD INTERSTATE

Wollongong - 5 trips (5 performances) Canberra - 56 trips

Average 500 @ 2500 attendances Average 1000 @ 56000 attendances

Melbourne - 15 trips QLD - 9 trips

Average 600 @ 9000 attendances Average 500 @ 4500 attendances

Perth - 2 trips (6 performances)

Adelaide - 7 trips

Average 300 @ 1800 attendances Average 500 @ 3500 attendances

Festival 15000 attendances

PERFORMANCES HELD IN NSW

Peformances were held in various places in NSW, including schools, shopping centres, festivals, carnivals, workshops, private and public functions. The Group also travelled interstate to perform at various venues for private functions, festivals, carnivals and workshops.

Total number of performances from the 30th Mar 1977 to 18th Dec 2010 = 1573 performances Total number of attendances = 2,709,965

To contact the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group for performance information

and bookings or to join the group: Contact Elie Akouri

Phone: +61 (0)414 750 013

E-mail: e.akouri@bigpond.com

Address: PO Box 191, Punchbowl 2196

PS: WE NEED NEW MEMBERS BOYS AND GIRLS FOR THE GROUP, TO LEARN AND PERFORM THE LEBANESE CULTURE HERE IN AUSTRALIA

THE CEDARS OF LEBANON FOLKLORIC GROUP LEBANESE CARNIVAL

Lebanon Carnival is a once a year event, which first began in 1977. The aim of the carnival is to bring together young artists from the Australian Lebanese Community, encouraging them to interact together, using their skills to promote and exchange their talents, with other ethnic groups.



Lebanon Carnival introduces a better image of the Australian Lebanese Community in Australia.

The Carnival will introduce and further enhance the public's knowledge on the Lebanese Culture. It will also entertain many families from a variety of ethnic communities who attend the carnival every year.



The carnival invites Members of Parliament, State and Federal Ministers, families and individuals from Australian and from other communities to come and enjoy the Lebanese Folklore presented by the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group, along with arts, crafts and music.











PERFORMANCES

The Cedars Of Lebanon Folkloric Group Records











- CLFG was founded on the 30/3/1977
- Currently, we have a range members from the age of 10 and beyond.
- Rehearsals/Training were held at Randell St Granville on Wed & Fri from 8:00pm to 10:00pm.
- Training is currently on Wednesday 8:00pm to 10:00pm at Granville Town Hall, 10 Carlton St Granville.
- CLFG Junior Dance Group was founded on 30/3/1999 and stopped on 30/3/2001
- There were more than 60 members aged from 3 to 16 years.
- Training was every Tuesday from 7:00pm till 8:00pm at Greystanes and Granville
- The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group Theatre Restaurant and Club was established in 1983 and ceased operation in 1986. It consisted of 1300 members with badges and 5 different sports groups, including the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group.
- The Volleyball team was founded by CLFG from 1983 till 1986
- The Soccer Team was founded by CLFG from 1980 till 1986
- The Football Team was founded by the CLFG from 1983 till 1986
- The Ping pong Team was founded by C L F G from 1983 till 1986
- The Backgammon Team was founded by CLFG from 1983 till 1986

CLFG Activities consisted of tours to the Snow, Picnics, Harbour Cruises, Tour to the cave, Tours to Europe and Lebanon.

THE PERFORMANCES FOR THE CLFG SENIOR FROM 1977 TO PRESENT

2010

24 performances

Average 23 x 600 = 13800 people from 23/01/2010 till 18/12/2010 10/10/10 Lebanon Carnival at Darling Harbour - Attendance: 9800 27/03/2010 C.L.F.G Concert (Hokm Al Rouayaan) - 33 years Anniversary at Bankstown Town Hall TOTAL 23600

2009

36 performances

Average $36 \times 600 = 21600$ people from 08/02/2009 till 11/12/2009 27/9/09 Lebanon Carnival at Darling Harbour - Attendance: 7500 C.L.F.G Concert (no concert this year) 0 TOTAL 29100

2008

31 performances Average 31 x 650 = 20150 people

Lebanon Carnival this year was at Darling Harbour about 5000 people C.L.F.G Concert (no concert this year) 0

TOTAL 20150

2007

47 performances Average $47 \times 700 = 32900$ people Lebanon Carnival this year was at Darling Harbour about 7000 people C.L.F.G Concert at Hurstville Town Hall 400 TOTAL 32900

2006

31 performances
Average 31 x 600 = 18600 people
Lebanon Carnival this year was at Darling Harbour about 6000 people
C.L.F.G Concert (no concert this year) 0
TOTAL 18600

PERFORMANCES......continued

2005

33 performances average 33 x 870 28710 Darling Harbour Festival No C.L.F.G concert this year TOTAL 28710

2003

27 performances average 27 x 835 22545 C.L.F.G Lebanon Carnival TOTAL 22545

2001

26 performances average 26 x 1300 33800 Darling Harbour Festival 14500 C.L.F.G. concert 500 TOTAL 48800

1999

48 performances average 48 x 1600 76800 C.L.F.G. concert 450 D/H/F 13000 TOTAL 90250

1997

41 performances average 41 x 1200 49200 C.L.F.G. concert 320 Lebanon trip 5000 D/H/F 8000 Lebanon TV and S.B.S. TV TOTAL 62520

2004

37 performances average 37 x 840 31080 Darling Harbour Festival C.L.F.G Lebanon Carnival TOTAL 31080

2002

27 performances average 27 x 1200 32400 Darling Harbour Festival 15000 No C.L.F.G concert this year TOTAL 47400

2000

44 performances average 44 x 1100 48400 C.L.F.G. concert 480 Darling Harbour Festival 14000 TOTAL 62880

1998

43 performances average 43 x 1300 55900 C.L.F.G. concert 460 D/H/F 12000 TOTAL 68360

1996

58 performances average 58 x 1400 81200 C.L.F.G. concert 640 D.H.F. 10 000 TOTAL 91840

1995

68 performances average 68 x 1200 81600 C.L.F.G. concert 600 Darling Harbour Festival 12000 Channel S.B.S TOTAL 94200

1993

48 performances average 48 x 1100 52800 CLFG concert 400 Opera House Opening 30000 TOTAL 83200

1991

64 performances average 64 x 1200 76800 CLFG concert 510 Opera House Opening 32000 Lebanon TV and LBC TV - Lebanon TOTAL 109310

1989

58 performances average 58 x 1100 62800 CLFG concert 530 Opera House Opening 34000 TOTAL 98330

1987

45 performances average 45 x 1000 45000 CLFG concert 550 Opera House Opening 30000 Channel 10 TV, Lebanon TV and LBC TV TOTAL 75550

1994

63 performances average 63 x 1400 88200 C.L.F.G. concert 800 Darling Harbour festival 15000 TOTAL 22300

1992

52 performances average 52 x 1000 52000 CLFG concert 420 Opera House Opening 28000 TOTAL 80420

1990

72 performances average 72 x 1250 90000 CLFG Concert 480 Opera House Opening 28000 Channel SBS TV TOTAL 118480

1988

66 performances average 66 x 1300 85800 CLFG concert 610 Opera House Opening 28000 Channel 9 Telathon TOTAL 114410

1986

39 performances average 39 x 1100 42900 CLFG concert 500 Opera House Opening 31000 Uruguay trip 1 week 3500 Channel 7 & Uruguay TV TOTAL 77900



PERFORMANCES......continued

1985

55 performances average 55 x 1300 71500 CLFG concert 650 Opera House Opening 34000 TOTAL 106150

1983

45 performances average 45 x 1600 72000 CLFG concert 500 Opera House Opening 32000 Lebanon TV, LBC TV and Channel 5 TV – in Lebanon TOTAL 104500

1981

41 performances average 41 x 1600 65600 CLFG concert 750 Opera House Opening 35000 Channel 10 and Channel 9 Lebanon TV in Lebanon TOTAL 101350

1979

41 performances average 41 x 1200 49200 Opera House Opening 30000 CLFG concert 900 TOTAL 80100

1984

79 performances 79 x 1200 94800 CLFG concert 600 Opera House Opening 35000 TOTAL 130400

1982

52 performances average 52 x 1000 52000 CLFG concert 420 Opera House Opening 28000 TOTAL 80420

1980

47 performances average 47 x 1500 70500 13/12/80 CLFG concert 600 20/12/99 CLFG concert 600 Opera House Opening 25000 TOTAL 96700

1978

31 performances average 31 x 1000 31000 Opera House Opening 36000 CLFG concert 700 TOTAL 67700

1977

27 performances - average 27 x 900 13500 17/9/77 CLFG concert 800 - Opera House Opening 8000 6/12/77 Maggy Echardt show - 14/12/77 Channel 10 TV TOTAL 22300







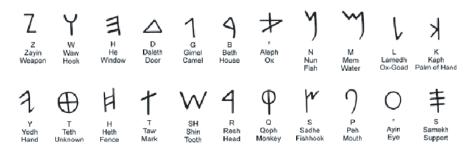
With their richness in History, Commerce, Arts, Culture, and Folklore, The Phoenicians became the centre of the world. They also contributed a major role to history whilst living in the Mediterranean. Lebanon, which is on 10452 square kilometres of land, became the homeland of The Phoenicians.

The Phoenicians and Lebanon, the most beloved land of the Mediterranean, excelled in all; beauty, love, peace, culture, trade, education and civilisation.

Being "lovers of peace, life and discoveries", The Phoenicians introduced the alphabet to the world. When the Phoenicians settled in the land of Lebanon, they brought with them a unique and most beautiful inheritance, the "Lebanese Folklore".

Years ago, the most exotic unique temples of Lebanon became the landmark of Culture and Folklore around the world. Baalbeck became an international venue for the world's opera festivals, musicals and performances. Many other internationally acclaimed venues were founded in Lebanon to accommodate for world wide performances.

THE PHOENICIAN ALPHABET



THE PHOENICIAN ALPHABET

The earliest of the written language originated in the Semitic countries. As time goes by, the alphabet continually changes.

The first two forms of written language were the Hieroglyphics of Egypt and the Cuneiform Script of Mesopotamia. The Hieroglyphic Script and the Cuneiforms Script, both began before 3200BC. The Hieroglyphic consists of pictures with more than 2000 symbols.

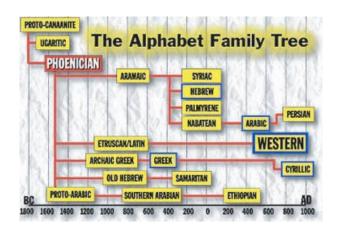
During 1928 - 1932, the Byblos syllabary was discovered by Maurice Dunand, containing around 90-100 signs.

Phoenician, Hebrew and Aramaic are known as Northwest Semitic Languages.

The Phoenicians developed the Alphabet around 1400BC, which was used to communicate with other cultures. The Phoenician Alphabet was widely used, as it had only 22 letters which were based on sound.

The original language of the Israelites was Hebrew, discovered in 1500-1200BC. Aramaic was used by the Arameans and was uncovered around 1400BC. It was the language of the Middle East from about 700 BC to around 700 AD. It contained a cuneiform alphabet with only 30 of the signs.

Arabic, a Southwest Semitic Language, replaced Aramaic. It became prominent in the time of the rise of Islam, which was around 7th Century AD.



Australian National Anthem





Australians all let us rejoice For we are young and free We've golden soil and wealth for toil, Our home is girt by sea: Our land abounds in nature's gifts Of beauty rich and rare, In history's page let every stage Advance Australia fair, In joyful strains then let us sing Advance Australia fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross, We'll toil with hearts and hands, To make this Commonwealth of ours Renowned of all the lands, For those who've come across the seas We've boundless plains to share, With courage let us all combine To Advance Australia fair. In joyful strains then let us sing, Advance Australia fair.

Lebanese Lyrics

كلنا للوطن للعلى للعلم ملء عين الزّمن سيفنا والقلم سهلنا والجبل منبت للرجال قولنا والعمل في سبيل الكمال كلنا للوطن للعلى للعلم كأتنا للوطن

شيخنا والفتى عند صبوت الوطن أسد غاب متى ساور تنا الفتن شرقنا قلبه أبدأ لبنان صانه ريه لمدي الأزمان كلنا للوطن للعلى للعلم كلنا للوطن

> بحره بـرّه درّة الشرقين رِ فَدُةً بِرَّهُ مِالَى القطبين إسمه عزّه منذ كان الجدود مجدَّهُ أرزُّهُ رِمزُهُ للخلود كأتنا للوطن للعلى للعلم كأنا للوطن

English Lyrics

Kulluna lil-watan, lil'ula lil-'alam. Mil'u ayn az-zaman, saifuna wal-qalam. Sahluna wal-jabal, manbitun lir-rijal, Qawluna wal-'amal, fi sabil al-kamal. Kulluna lil-watan, lil'ula lil-'alam, Kulluna lil-watan.

Shaykhuna wal-fata, 'Inda sawt al-watan, Usdu ghaben mata, sawaratna al-fitan, Sharquna qalbuhu, abadan Lubnan, Sanahu rabbuhu, li-mada al-azman. Kulluna lil-watan, lil'ula lil-'alam, Kulluna lil-watan.

Bahruhu barruhu, durratu-sharqayn, Ramzuhu birruhu, mali' al-qutbayn, Ismuhu 'izzuhu, munzou kana al-judud, Majduhu arzuhu, ramzuhu lil-khulud, Kulluna lil-watan, lil'ula lil-'alam, kulluna lil-watan.

English Translation

All of us! For our Country, for our Flag and Glory! Our valour and our writings are the envy of the ages. Our mountains and our valleys, they bring forth stalwart men. And to Perfection all our efforts we devote. All of us! For our Country, for our Flag and Glory! All of us! For our Country, Our Elders and our children, they await our Country's call, And on the Day of Crisis they are as Lions of the Jungle. The heart of our East is ever Lebanon, May God preserve her until end of time. All of us! For our Country, for our Flag and Glory! All of us! For our Country. The Gems of the East are her land and sea. Throughout the world her good deeds flow from pole to pole. And her name is her glory since time began. Immortality's Symbol, the Cedar is her Pride. All of us! For our Country, for our Flag and Glory! All of us! For our Country.