

Brazilian Lady of Lebanese Descent, Mrs. Naire Geni Elias, Visits LERC

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Reported by Elie Nabhan

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center at NDU welcomed to its offices a Brazilian lady of Lebanese descent, Ms. Naire Geni Elias, who resides at Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do sol in Brazil. Ms. Elias was accompanied to the center by Mr. Roberto Khatlab, LERC's Latin-American Liaison Officer.

Mrs. Elias's grandfather, Khalil Elias Letayf (Lteif), emigrated from Zahle to Brazil in 1900 at the tender age of twelve, his last name being dropped at the port in Brazil.

Recently interested in finding out more about her grandfather, Mrs. Elias sought out and searched the manifest of the ship that transported her grandfather across the Atlantic but could find no trace of his name whether in Arabic or in French since the ship had sailed from the French port of Marseilles. Mrs. Elias is insistent on searching further and has travelled to Lebanon, for the first time, to visit the country, the family, and Zahle, to find out more about her ancestry.



Souvenir picture at LERC: (From left-right) Mr. R. Khatlab, Ms. G. Hourani, Mrs. N. G. Elias, Mrs. L. Haddad, Ms. B. Abdel Khalek (Oct 2010).

Following a brief welcome by Director Guita Hourani, Ms. Elias was then introduced to LERC's electronic archives and database, especially the material collected on the Lebanese of Brazil. Mrs. Elias was also informed about oral interview techniques she could apply in her search of her own ancestry. Mrs. Elias's visit concluded with a tour of the Lebanese and Migration Museum.

In her parting statement, Mrs. Elias said she was filled with emotion and expressed her thanks for learning of NDU and LERC, delighted to know that the Center would be of great help to her while she wrote the history of her grandfather. She promised to send some materials for the archives and the museum.



Mrs. N.G. Elias pictured at the Lebanon Migration Museum at NDU (Oct 2010).