

Lebanon – Kherbet Rouha/Lala History

Although the Lebanese Canadians of Lac La Biche originate from many parts of Lebanon including places like Jib Janine, Saadnaya, Kfar Deane and others, most originate from the two towns of Kherbet Rouha and Lala. They are not far from each other but are separated by a mountain range. To get from one town to the other one must go through a valley called Wadi Bu'ubaad. In this Wadi are ruins of a palace, which has been excavated and is thought to have been built by King Solomon.

Lala



The town of Lala is located in the province of West Bekaa, one of the eight provinces of Lebanon. Lala is 71 kilometres away from Beirut the capital of Lebanon. Its elevation is 1120 meters (3674.72 ft) above sea level. Anis Freiha, in his book "The Names of Lebanese Villages and Towns," speculates as to the root of this name, which is made up of two parts: "la" preposition, and "ila" meaning God, making it an area dedicated to the "God." A second possibility to the meaning of the name is a reference to an ancient monastery high on a hill in the town with its glass windows that "ylali," which in Arabic means 'reflect the light.' Every time the sun rose, the people used to say the "Lala Ad-Deir" meaning the monastery lit and with time the phrase was shortened to the use of the word "lala." Excavations in the town have unearthed the remnants of a Roman city dating back thousands of years.

Lala has a population of approximately 5500 hundred people living in the town and many more thousands who are living around the world, including those living in Lac La Biche and Alberta. The first two Lebanese settlers of Lac La Biche, Ali Ahmad AbouChadi (Alex Hamilton) and his uncle Sine AbouChadi were from Lala. Sine Alley Abougoush followed shortly thereafter.

Kherbet Rouha



Kherbet Rouha is a small town in the Rachaya province of Lebanon in the far south of the Beqaa valley as it transitions into the mountains. It is about 10 km north west of mount Herman and about 75 km from the capital Beirut and is about 1450 meters above sea level. It is a very old community and like most towns in Lebanon, it has a very long history going back many centuries. The name Kherbet Rouha comes from the word 'kherbit', which in Arabic means "the ruins of" and Rouha' which was an ancient city located on the site. Excavations have uncovered seven layers of ruins underneath the town. One layer consists of burnt timber and is said to be from the Mongol invasion when the whole town and area was burned down by the invaders. On a high hill overlooking the town are the ruins of a castle built by the crusader Raymond. One famous son of Kherbet Rouha is Bourhan Al Dean Al Bequ'ee who is a famous scholar and philosopher, born about 600 years ago. He was also involved in the defeat of the Mongols.

It is estimated that there are over 10,000 people worldwide who originated in Kherbet Rouha or are descendants of Kherbet Rouha. Most early immigrants (in the 1870's) from Kherbet Rouha immigrated to the U.S, mostly to Minnesota, the Dakota's and in the early 1900's many moved to southern Saskatchewan and

Manitoba. The first ones to move to Lac La Biche (from Slave Lake and Barrhead) in the late 1940's and early 1950's were Mike Fyith and Ed Ferris.

Kamid and Jib Janine



Baalbek Bacchus Temple

