



Fig. 1
LIONEL GORRA'S HOUSE, BEIRUT.



Fig. 3
RENTED HOUSE, TALLAT JUMBLAT ST. BEIRUT.



Fig. 2
ALBERT ANAVY'S HOUSE, BEIRUT.

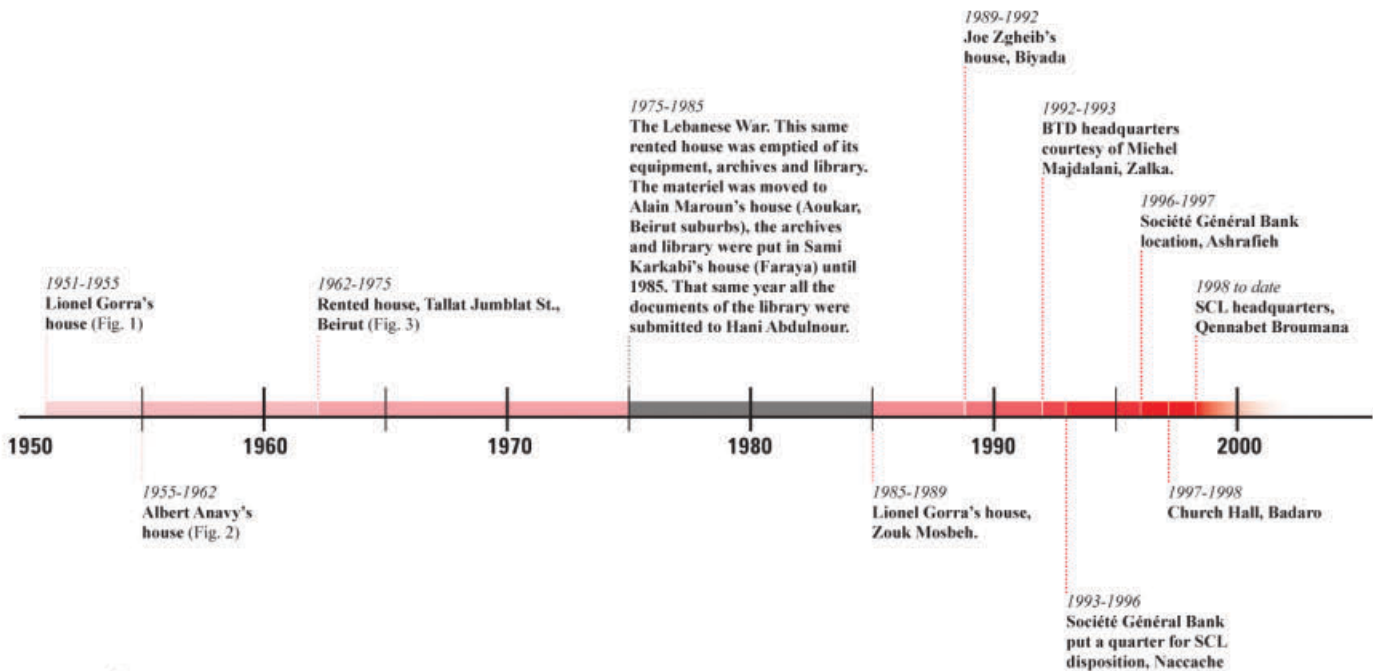


Fig. 4
SCL HEADQUARTERS, 1998, BSALIM.



Fig. 5
THE CLUBHOUSE WITH THE CLIMBING WALL, 2009.

We always had this problem. We were on the move regularly. Even before the war we were always nomadic. We did not stay in one place for long. We had to move all our equipment and change our weekly meeting location frequently, for various reasons. The material we owned and collected throughout the years were sometimes lost and other times stolen due to this wandering existence.



OUR THURSDAY MEETING HEADQUARTERS

EVER SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE SPÉLÉO CLUB DU LIBAN IN 1951 WE HAVE MOVED HEADQUARTERS MORE THAN TEN TIMES.

على مدى 47 عاما ظل النادي اللبناني للتنقيب في المغاور يتنقل من مكان الى اخر، الى أن استقر في قنابة برمانا سنة 1998. وفي سنة 2007 وضع اعضاء من النادي مخطط توجيهي لتحسين مقر النادي وينفذ هذا المخطط على مراحل حسب متطلبات الاعضاء المستقبلية.

Dans cet article, l'auteur met l'accent sur le problème d'avoir dû déménager plus de 10 fois déjà depuis la fondation du Spéléo Club du Liban en 1951. Le SCL n'a pas duré longtemps dans le même emplacement pour plusieurs raisons. Le matériel du SCL, approprié et collectionné au fil des années était parfois perdu, d'autres fois même volé malheureusement, jusqu'à l'année 1998 lorsque le SCL a acheté les locaux à Bsalm. Cet article expose comment les quartiers généraux du SCL sont restaurés et commencent à prendre forme, pour devenir un centre où tous nos livres, archives, équipements et matériels peuvent être conservés.

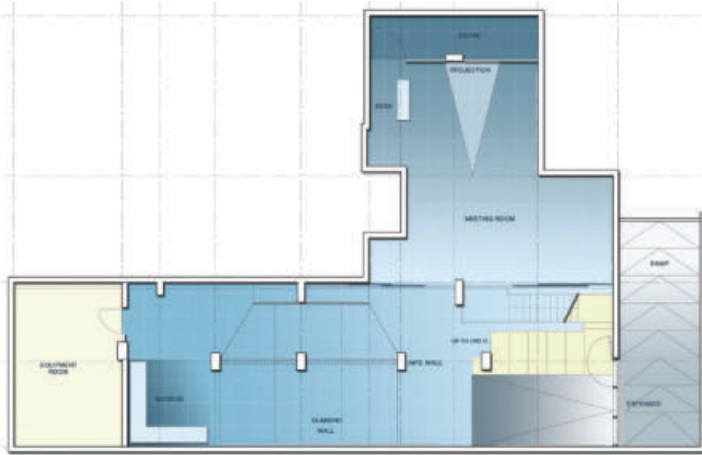


Fig. 6: The first floor

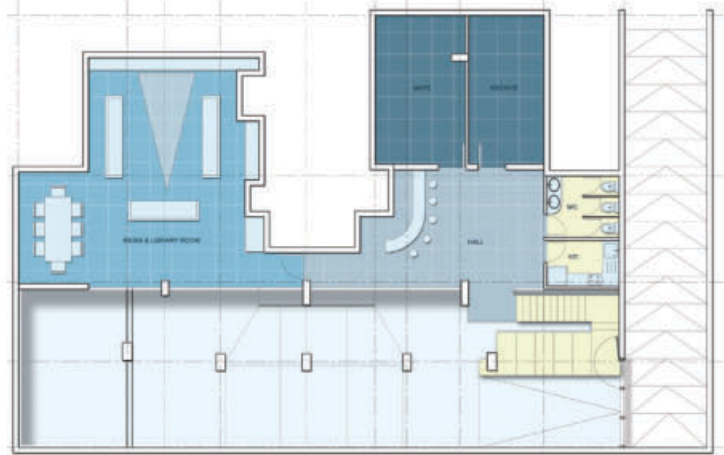


Fig. 7: The mezzanine floor

In 1998, we no longer had to move, the club-house in Bsalm was bought (Fig. 4).

The importance of finding a central hub where all our books, archives, equipment and gear can be stored was beginning to take shape.

The club-house was bought in 1998 when Hughes Badaouie was the president of SCL. The cost at that time was \$30,000. Half of it came from club members who donated money and the other half came from work done on the Qattine Azar sinkhole project conducted by BTB (Bureau de Techniques et du Développement) managed by M. Majdalani.

The location is a two-level, 370 sqm warehouse located in Qennabet Broummana, 10 minutes from Beirut.

Since 1998, club members worked on improving its condition. This included painting, tiling, installing a metal staircase, an entrance door, and lighting. They also allocated a room for the caving equipment and a small room for archiving. This was all done with very good intentions but without any proper preplanning.

The new design for SCL's club-house came about after members showed a need to identify themselves to the space in order to appropriate it and feel at home.

How are we to satisfy these aspirations?

Recently Johnny T. and I have worked on a new design for the club-house that satisfies the modern caver's needs and aspirations. The plans in Figure 5 and 6 show this new design of the lower level and the upper level or mezzanine level.

A roof covering the entrance was necessary not only to conceive a small working space for washing and storing dirty equipment and ropes which is very vital for the cavers, but also beautifies the club's entrance.

Rearranging the stairs to the mezzanine level provided direct access from the entrance. Direct access to the upper level was necessary for transporting material in and out of the library which was named "Sami Karkabi's

Library". This library is now recognized by the UIS as being the Middle East caving documentation centre.

The 15 sqm library is moved to a bigger 40 sqm space (Fig. 6). This area is now called the Media and Library room. This will accommodate the continuous flow of Middle Eastern caving books and materials and to provide a suitable environment for research activities. The room will also be provided with a round table for work groups and committee meetings. The area that housed the old library and the old archive room will join to become a large archive room.

Toilets, showers and a small kitchenette are located on the upper level (Fig. 6).

The meeting room remains in its old location on the lower level (Fig. 5). However modifications were made to isolate it by defining it spatially, and to reduce sound echoes and create thermal isolation.

A museum to expose our rich club heritage (next article) was situated in front of the entrance next to the equipment room. This gave it more value and central position with special lighting effects.

Finally an area in the club was allocated for training activities optimal for maintaining physical fitness and technical abilities of the club members. This includes ropes and ladders to practice SRT techniques. A 120 sqm climbing wall with overhangs and a bouldering area in the shape of an arc resembling part of a tunnel-cave that highlights our caving identity is also present in this area (Fig. 7).

This dream come to life, a child of SCL's intuition and years of hard work, is what we were all waiting for; it is what we still needed for our family to become closer to accomplished: we finally have what we can proudly call HOME. Now, even Our Thursday's meeting place will very soon take form in our newly born Darling Hub. 🐦

SCL would like to acknowledge all those who helped and contributed to make the SCL club-house reality.