

ECYC GAZETTE

*'.....For your ins and your outs,
and your whereabouts!*

Welcome! To the inaugural issue of ECYC's newsletter- made, produced and written by ECYC members. In this monthly journal, we offer you news and views of the goings and happenings at our club. And, we're happy to present to you- our community- issue#1!, packed with a showcase of all the programmes and activities we've enjoyed throughout the month of May, as well as the preparations we've conducted leading up to ease of lockdown restrictions.

This newsletter is more than a record of what goes on, rather, we wish to share with you the work done at ECYC, and how our staff (and more importantly our members) contribute to the thriving vibrancy of our community. All that you will see and read is just a small example of what we do at ECYC- where our goal has always been to develop young minds to strive and thrive into stalwarts of their community- and wider society.

Issue #1 - May 2021

Featured today!

- News, events, updates and reports of what we've been up to in the run up to the easing of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.
- Our main, featured article with two unique members of ECYC (as well as their mum!)
- A special illustration from our resident Artist, of whom more will be revealed in future issues!
- Profile one of our many fantastic staff members
- An opinion-piece from one our club members...
and a budding scribe!
- Local history column, where we show you a snippet of heritage you might've never known was there.
- Special interview with an even more special guest!



“Keeping it in the Family!”



Meet the clan who've shown if any one can...they can-can!

One, you'll find running circles on the pitch...the other you'll find on her phone- most likely. They are the Zaiter's: ECYC's favourite brother and sister act.

Before they entered our doors in 2018, Ramy and Ranya had a whole other life back in France, where they were born.

In 2017, the family moved to London, when their mum secured a job at Gatwick airport. They first lived in nearby Gloucester road, before moving to Earl's court a year later when they joined ECYC

'I wasn't that sad when we left France' says Ranya- 13, as she sits on the couch of the basement room. *'...Most of all I miss the bakery that was under our house, and going down every morning to buy fresh croissants!'* Ramy-11 nods in agreement, *'the school meals in France were much better, but generally, I'm happy our mum brought us to England...'* When asked about their first impressions of this strange, new land across the channel, the answers were as different as their personalities. *'...The first thing I noticed was the school uniforms...'*

Mum and kids on their first ever London bus ride!



Ramy on the pitch!



says Ranya, smiling, *'...I didn't think the English could be more fashionable than the French...!'* Ramy lights up when he recalls the first thing that struck him, *'...two story buses!'* to which his sister corrects, *'...you mean double-decker buses.'*

Upon arriving to England in early 2017, Ramy and Ranya both enrolled at the local St Cuthbert's with St Matthias primary school- where alumni include author Michael Morpurgo, and, pop star Rita Ora. Struggling to adapt to a new environment- and language- the pair found it difficult in those first few months. *'My English wasn't that good in the beginning...'* remembers Ramy, *'...a lot of the time I was misunderstood with the other kids in my class.'*

Both were glad, when mum put them into ECYC roughly one year after they moved from France. Immediately, Ramy threw himself into the clubs sporting activities, and since the age of 9, has steadily rose through the ranks of ECYC's junior boy's team. Ranya- who exudes a calm buffer to her younger brother's buoyancy- tends to take it easy, lolling on the couch as she tries to forget the stresses of secondary school; although, she has exhibited a physical streak, most recently during our LONDON BY BIKE activity earlier this spring. *'...I'm also looking forward to the drama program...that sounds like fun!'*

Finally, we meet the matriarch, and our soon to be cookery instructor...Ms Ihssane Zaiter! *'...Bringing my kids to ECYC was a tremendous decision, it not only helped them settle in to their new environment, it also taught them skills and helped them make friends.'* Although her main job is as a Passenger Service Agent at an airport, Ms Zaiter has always loved cooking for friends, family and special occasions, and lapped up the chance to become our cookery instructor. *'...Hopefully if the cookery class is a success, I hope to begin teaching Arabic lessons as well.'*



Momma's little helpers!

News, Events, and Updates

“Hope Springs at ECYC”

In these extraordinary times the staff at ECYC have kept on keeping on; and with the loosening of COVID restrictions, we've wasted no time unleashing our wide array of programs and activities. Below is just a taste of what's been happening at ECYC in the last few months.

LONDON BY BIKE

As part of our Easter holiday programme, ECYC organised a series of mini bike marathons, The journeys commenced from ECYC, and each day young people were given an itinerary that ended in either Richmond Park- Burgess Park (Camberwell), or the Tower of London, and back. After a long period of inactivity and gestation, our members were ecstatic at once again heading outdoors and getting physical!



Community Champions Volunteer at Earl's Court Vaccination Pop-up Centre

As ever, our community champions have been indispensable in supporting key services in our community. Earlier this month, they kindly gave their time to help out with a pop-up vaccination centre, held inside St Cuthbert's church in Philbeach Gardens- SW5.



Young Members Group Iftar

At ECYC, we are proud to boast a diverse demographic which we hope, mirrors our eclectic community. A significant number of our members belong to the Muslim faith and, on the very last day of the holy month of Ramadan we held a group Iftar where members –both Muslim and non Muslim- enjoyed a sumptuous meal from Nandos.



Community Champion Eid Lunch

Eid ul-Fitr commemorates the end of thirty days of Ramadan, and to celebrate, ECYC lent its grounds to our friends at 'Community Champions' who organised an Eid lunch for their volunteers and anyone else who felt like enjoying home cooked meals- kindly donated by members of our wider community.



Elderly Walking Group

Not many know that part of what ECYC does in the community, is support and offer programs for our senior citizens- who perhaps more than most, have felt the most isolated during the long months of social distancing. In partnership with 'Community champions', the club runs many activities, including a walking group where senior citizens come together to enjoy fresh air and light exercise.



ECYC's Write Stuff!

Each issue, one of our members pens a piece giving you- our dear reader- an insight into their thoughts, opinions, observations and musings. For our inaugural issue we have 18 year old Ali-Eldin Elhosiny, with his....

'Art throughout the ages'

Art is a necessity to us all. It's an expression of perspective and a method of communication.

Evidence of our species' first symbolic thoughts date back to the stone age where Homo sapiens used their arms as stencils to paint on walls. Not long after, they created cave paintings of animals to document their hunting expeditions.

Later on in Ancient Egypt, rendering religious figures in art gave them permanence. Despite how aesthetically pleasing the statues and sculptures were, they were always primarily functional and their purpose was to provide a home for their spirits or their gods.

The Greeks studied each detail of the human figure and during the times of the Olympics, they used sculpture to depict ultimate beauty and harmony. The artists wanted to present the ideal build to motivate the athletes to keep training until they have reached their peak by presenting them with what they deemed a perfect model.

In the Medieval era, we find the precursor to modern day architectural blueprints. The Plan of St. Gall is one of the oldest known surviving architectural plans. Here art has been used to plan a structure after many iterations and changes.

And so, as we have seen throughout history, Art plays a vital role in all we do. Whether it is used to spread a message of inspiration or to record history, Art allows us to focus on common issues for the betterment of humankind."

Meet the Crew

It goes without saying, without our tireless and passionate staff, ECYC would not be the pillar of the community it has been for 40+ years. And each issue we introduce one of our outstanding team- who always ensure the club goes above and beyond to guarantee our commitment to the community never wanes.

JALAL- boy's football coach

At 22 years of age, Jalal has spent half his life at ECYC. His story with the club began back when he was at Bousfield Primary in year 4- when he first entered our doors and stayed for the next eight years. '*...I was an active and energetic kid*' recalls Jalal, with a nostalgic tint. '*...My parents were desperate to find me somewhere where I could burn off all that energy. And luckily ECYC was just round the corner.*' After leaving Bousfield, Jalal got a place at Holland Park School (where many of our members study today) but even during secondary, the club remained a focal point of his adolescence, and he would regularly attend until the age of 15, one year ahead of his GCSE's.

When asked how the club had changed since the time he was a member, Jalal gives an envious nod to the Astro turf where he conducts his training, '*I remember it was a lot smaller. We didn't have a football pitch or a games console, and there was only one snooker table...*'

Even if things were a little austere a decade ago, Jalal has no reservations over how ECYC contributed to his development. '*...ECYC gave me friends and confidence. I'll definitely agree that it nurtured me, developed my skills, and taught me how to conduct myself out in public.*'

As an Adult, Jalal has ventured into a career with the NHS- where he works as a Pathway Coordinator at St George's hospital; Working in healthcare amid these testing times, has doubtless made Jalal grateful for the support and care he received growing up, and recently he decided to lend his free time at his former '*...home away from home.*'

'...I've always loved football, and I have fond memories of playing here as a youngster. So, it made perfect sense to re-approach the club and offer my services as a coach where I can not only help the youth keep fit, but more importantly instil the same confidence that was given me.'



Jalal and his boys training for Wembley!

Local History column (A blast from the Past!)

Did you know...?

The month of May, marks exactly 40 years since the death of legendary reggae artist Bob Marley at the age of 36. Marley's music and artistry are renowned and loved around the world, but how many of you know of his connection to our neck of the woods...?

(Marley and the wailers outside Island studios, Notting Hill)



In 1976, following political turmoil in his homeland, Bob Marley was exiled from Jamaica. Part of this period was spent in the UK- a time known as Marley's *Baby London* phase.

In a nondescript street near Portobello Market, Marley and his band- the wailers, recorded the classic album *Exodus*, as well as *Kaya*.

During his stay in the capital Bob Marley lived in multiple locations, one of which is Oakley Street, just off the King's Road- where a commemorative blue plaque still hangs.



(Aisha and Ishmael pay a visit to the King of reggae- just off the Kings Road)

Special guest express interview

To finish off every issue, we meet one of our many partners here at ECYC. You may not have seen them on our grounds, but we assure you without their friendship and support we wouldn't be half as successful as we are.

For our opening issue, we have none other than.....LILAH PARSONS!, who you may have heard gracing our air waves on Heart 106.2!

-Who are and what do you do?

I'm Lilah Parsons. I'm 33 years old. I was born in London and I work as a radio presenter on Heart FM. I'm also an illustrator and a youth worker!

-What's your connection to ECYC?

I have been volunteering for ECYC since January 2019 and I also studied for a qualification in youth work through the club.

-what have you learnt through your experience at ECYC?

That helping young people grow in confidence is one of the most important things! It gives them the self belief to go after what they want in life and realise their full potential.

-Have you always lived locally?

I was born in Hammersmith and went to primary school in South Kensington, but moved to Northamptonshire in my teens. I moved back to the area in my 20's.

-what's the best thing about our community?

I love how the youth club brings together people from all different backgrounds and cultures.

-as a young person in the media, what can you tell us about working in an exciting industry ?

I'm not sure I'm that young anymore! It can be an exciting industry to work in but it can also be quite cut throat! You have to learn not to take rejection personally.

-what are you up to at the moment?

I'm currently hosting my Heart radio show every Friday and Saturday night at 10pm, working as a freelance illustrator and, most importantly, running art sessions at ECYC!

-lastly, how would you encourage young people to realise their dreams?

By having the confidence to think big, and go after what they want. To never be afraid to ask for help and advice from those they respect and admire. Most people are flattered to be asked!



That's it for this month! We hope you enjoyed this issue as much as we enjoyed making it. Look out in June when we'll be back with more of what you may (pun intended) expect, and some that you won't!



....Just something our artist in residence whipped up in her sleep...see you in June!