

REMEMBERING NASSER SABAH AL AHMAD AL SABAH

Sheikh Nasser loved life, his family, and his country. My family first met him and Sheikha Husa just after their wedding when I was ten years old. My parents had made the decision to move to Kuwait, and my later father, Mohamed El Mamoun, also known as Abu Mahdi, spent the rest of his working life with the family.

Besides his family, the Collection is his legacy. He had an eye for beauty, rarity, and quality in Islamic art, and he was proud of sharing his vision. I remember his excitement when things were coming together for the opening of the Museum in 1983, and how happy he was to show his collection to scholars, friends, and professionals in the field. I was helping Manuel Keene at the time.

On a more personal level I treasure two photos with happy memories from the summer of 1979 at the Wylds, and from my sister Nora's wedding party in Kuwait from 1986.

In 1979 the three of us with our mum Margrit were invited to spend the weekend at the Wylds. Nasser had just bought two brass candlesticks and they were sitting on the lawn when we were all sitting outside, so we could admire them. My mum used to bake cakes for Nasser and Husa, particularly a layer cake. She had brought one with her and everybody, including Bubbles, the Maharaja of Jaipur, laughed when he cut only razor thin slices for his guests. He enjoyed his shisha, as seen on the photo.

In 1986 my parents organized a wedding party for Nora and Harald at the revolving restaurant, and I love this photo of Nasser with my late brother Mahdi, who has now been gone for nearly seventeen years. May they both rest in peace. Almost everybody we knew was there, including Sheikh Hamad, Jeannette and her husband Waleed, Mahmoud Al Nouri, and all the Al Futtooh staff. This was a happy memory.

Sheikh Nasser was a wonderful person, I will always remember his mischievous sense of humour, and he was very brave to the end. He will be much missed.

Mona El Mamoun

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