



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

September 2008 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

A Happy and Healthy New Year to all our dear friends here in the USA and around the world. L'Shanah Tovah for 5769. Xronia Polla, Muchos Anos. May you all be inscribed in the Book of Life for the upcoming year. Join us for the Holidays. There is no charge for seats and we graciously welcome all to come worship with us. Our service schedule is enclosed.

Last month we lost a special lady, Alice Levy Leontsini (4/21/1918-8/21/2008). Alice was born in Salonika, the daughter of Moses and Stamoula Levy of Ioannina. She would marry a Corfiote and survive the war in hiding in Athens. In many ways, the story of Alice (Aliki) Levy Leontsini was the story of Greek Jewry in the twentieth century; hesitant steps towards modernity, upheavals due to war and border changes, tremendous losses during the Holocaust and the struggles to survive both during the war and afterwards. At the age of 89, Alice passed away in California. We extend our sympathies to her daughters (Stella Leontsini and Marcella Mitilineos) and the family.



**Jewish woman from Corfu
19th century**

We also, regrettably, report the passing of Diana Negrin, wife of Sam Negrin of Blessed Memory and mother of Joel Negrin and Sarena Michaelson.

On August 31st, Leon ben Charles Colchamiro, grandson of one of our founding fathers, Leon Colchamiro of Blessed Memory, passed away. Leon did his namesake justice, a dedicated family man and a generous supporter of Kehila Kedosha Janina. We send out heartfelt condolences to Leon's three sons, Charles, David and Paul, and to his widow Constance.

This is the eighth of our increasingly popular e-newsletters. If you are on our e-mailing lists, you will receive our e-letter automatically. If for any reason you do not wish to receive the e-mail newsletter, please inform us.

UPCOMING MUSEUM EVENTS

September will be an exceedingly busy month at the Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum. In addition to a full schedule of lunch tours, we have very special events on the first 3 Sundays of the month.

On September 7th, starting at 1:00 (in our main sanctuary) we will have the dedication of a glass sculpture created by internationally acclaimed artist Saara Gallin. *Am Yisrael Chai* is being donated by the artist in memory of Hy Genee of Blessed Memory. Refreshments will be served.

Saara's relationship with Kehila Kedosha Janina began many years ago, when her son and daughter-in-law, both now living in Israel with their family, were part of the small congregation on the Lower East Side and two of her granddaughters received their Hebrew names in the synagogue. Saara remembered the warmth of the congregation and, like so many others, was charmed by the sincere welcome Hy Genee extended to her family.



Recently, Saara reluctantly joined a lunch tour from Westchester to Kehila Kedosha Janina. She so wanted to see the synagogue again but lamented the fact that it might be no more than a 'museum' as advertised in the tour. When learning that Kehila Kedosha Janina was still an active synagogue (in addition to housing a museum) she made the decision to donate her prized piece, *Am Yisrael Chai*, "Israel Lives," in honor of our beloved Hy Genee. Hy so exemplified the concept of "Israel Lives." He worked so hard to ensure that

Kehila Kedosha Janina still lives as an active house of Jewish worship. What a fitting tribute to Hy Genee of Blessed Memory, to have this magnificent piece donated in his honor. Refreshments will be served

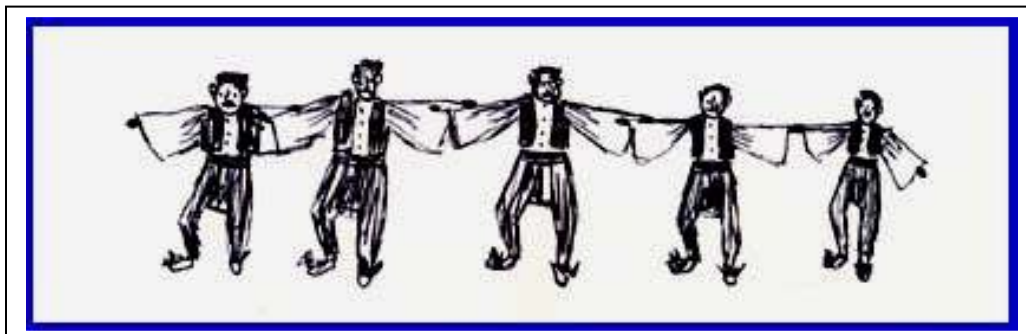
September 7th at 2:00, Kehila Kedosha Janina is honored to host the lecture of Devin Naar, a young scholar whose great-grandfather (Rabbi Benjamin Haim Naar) was brought from Salonika to be the rabbi at Etz Ahaim in New Brunswick New Jersey. In our upstairs museum, Devin will be presenting a program on "Sephardic Immigration to the USA." Join us. This program is open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

Devin, a Fullbright Scholar and a PhD candidate in History at Stanford University, has become an expert on Sephardic Immigration. We are honored to have him share this knowledge with us.

Patera Family



September 14th: 1:00: Join us in our downstairs communal room for Greek music and dancing. \$5 per person. Pre-registration required (kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net or 516-456-9336). Reserve early. Space is limited and we may not be able to accommodate walk-ins.

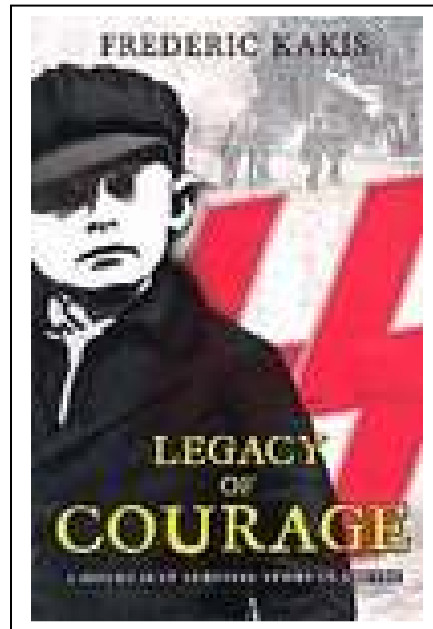


September 21st: 1:00-3:00: Lecture and book presentation in our upstairs museum. Dr. Fred Kakis, author of "Legacy of Courage" will be sharing with us his family's story of survival during WWII. The book will be for sale in our

museum (see book review in this e-newsletter) and Dr. Kakis will be available to autograph his book for those in attendance.

DR. KAKIS' BOOK NOW AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA

Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum is proud to offer Dr. Frederic Kakis' *Legacy of Courage* for sale, both in our bookstore and via mail orders. *Legacy of Courage* is the true story of the survival of the Kakis family during the Occupation of Greece. It is a story of courage and resistance. Born in Drama, the family had fled to Salonika. Frederic was only 12 when his father died in 1941. His mother made a courageous decision not to obey the German orders and the family would actively resist the Fascist Occupation, first in Salonika and then on the island of Skiathos. Dr. Kakis gives a vivid description of life in Drama and the hardships of Occupation.



Legacy of Courage by Dr. Frederic Kakis can be purchased for \$20 (plus \$4 for P&H within the continental USA...contact us for postage rates for international orders). Please make check out to Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum and mail to One Hanson Place, Huntington NY 11743.

If you purchase Dr. Kakis' book at the September 21st book signing, Dr. Kakis will be pleased autograph it for you. [Those attending Dr. Kakis' book signing on September 21st will be able to have their purchased copies autographed at the event.]

NEWS

Kehila Kedosha Janina News

On August 26th, Kehila Kedosha Janina hosted one of the members of a "lost branch" of the Colchamiro Family. At our reunion of the Colchamiro's in March of 2007, we lamented the fact that we had been unable to find representatives of three branches of the family (that of Simcha, Malka and

Dinoula). We knew that most of Dinoula's family had perished in the Holocaust, and we knew that one of her sons, Max Bakola, had immigrated to the USA in 1914. Since March of 2007 we have been able to find members of all three "lost branches" of the Colchamiro family. They were never truly lost, just, in most cases, dis-attached from our community here in New York.



Colchamiro Family Gathering in Honor of Leonora Colchamiro: August 26, 2008

Therefore it was with particular joy that we welcomed Leonora Bakola Lowe, the daughter of Max Bakola, to a smaller family reunion at Kehila Kedosha Janina. In attendance were, Jesse and Leonard Colchamiro and Richard Hessman (all grandsons of Leon Colchamiro. Leon hosted Max Bakola when he came to the USA. How appropriate that three of his grandsons would do the same for Max's daughter. Also in attendance were Oscar Colchamiro, his granddaughter Jane and his nieces Eve (Sarah's daughter), Jean (Morris' daughter) and Rhoda (Jesse's daughter). Vickie Conan, Hanoula Colchamiro Cohen's granddaughter remembered Max reaching across the country with a present of a bathing suit on her birth in 1942. On August 26th, the East Coast Colchamiro's reciprocated with a warm welcome for their Californian cousin. Kehila Kedosha Janina continues to be the soul of Romaniote Jewry in the United States.

**Leonora Bakola Lowe
at Kehila Kedosha
Janina Synagogue
and Museum
August 26, 2008**



Kehila Kedosha Janina is proud to offer for sale original silver jewelry made exclusively for Kehila Kedosha Janina by Ed Ledner (son-in-law of Hy Genee of Blessed Memory). These solid silver pendants make excellent gifts and Ed has priced the jewelry very reasonably, assuring that all profits go to Kehila Kedosha Janina.



Tree of Life: \$125



Greek Key: \$95

NEWS FROM GREECE

Throughout Europe, September 7th has been set aside as the European Day of Jewish Culture. The day is a celebration of Jewish heritage sites and culture across Europe and is now observed in 30 countries, including Greece.

This year, the theme is "Testimonies", chosen to highlight the cultural "imprint" left by the Jews wherever they have lived in Europe. Thus, the Cultural Day unites those places that retain active Jewish communities and those Jewish spaces without Jews.

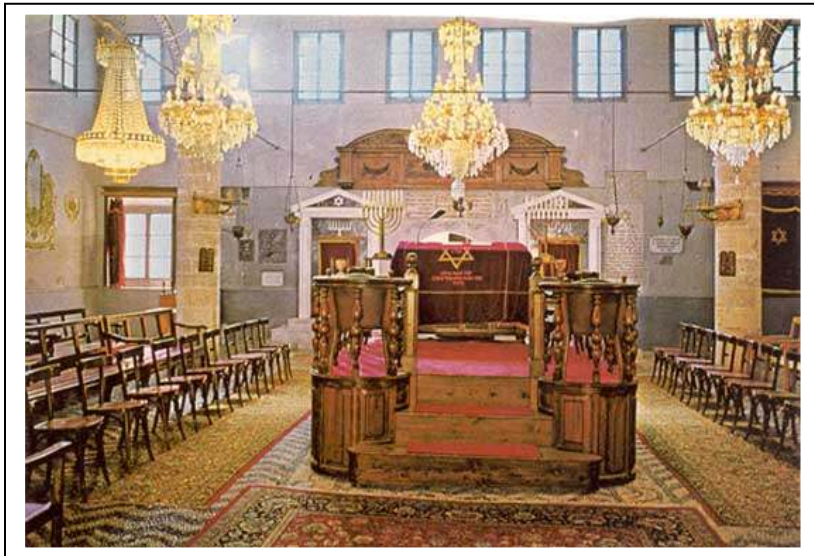
The official program for the day is posted as it is developed, at www.jewishheritage.org

Each country arranges its day differently. For some, it is the only time that certain places are open. Elsewhere, the Day is used to draw attention to otherwise little-known sites that are now accessible year-round.

For more information: www.jewishheritage.org; details of the events online from June 2007 onwards.

Rhodes

Our congratulations to Bella Restis, President of the Jewish Community of Rhodes, on the August 27th Bar Mitzvah of her grandson, Izzy Matarasso. The Bar Mitzvah took place in the beautifully restored sanctuary of Kahal Shalom Synagogue. Kahal Shalom is the oldest still-functioning synagogue in Greece (built in 1575) and the only remaining synagogue in Rhodes of the four that were in existence before World War II.



Interior of Kahal Shalom Synagogue, Rhodes

Lower East Side News

Kehila Kedosha Janina is excited to welcome new Greek neighbors to the Lower East Side. For those of you who have not seen the New York Times article on Mastiha:

A Traveler From the Aegean Finds Its Way to Orchard Street



Marilynn K. Yee/The New York Times

By **FLORENCE FABRICANT**

Published: April 23, 2008

New York has hundreds of specialized stores, but only one that puts the spotlight on mastic, the aromatic resin of an evergreen that grows on the island of Chios in the eastern Aegean.

Artemis and Kalliopi Kohas, sisters from Chios (pronounced HEE-ohss), opened the bright green Mastihashop on Orchard Street a few months ago. (In Greece, mastic is known as mastiha.) They sell a wide range of food products made with mastic, including delicious honey, preserves, spoon sweets to add to yogurt, chocolates, teas, mustard, eggplant chutney, cookies and pasta (\$1 to \$21.50). Mastic is used in many Greek recipes, especially sweets like festive breads, cakes and cookies. The resin is said to have anti-inflammatory and other healing properties.

A co-op in Greece, the Chios Gum Mastic Growers Association, which sponsors the store, makes the mastic by first slitting the bark of the Pistacia lentiscus tree, allowing the resin to flow out in drops. Pieces of it, which look like bits of golden rock sugar, have a fresh, slightly piney aroma and flavor, and can be chewed like gum.

The Mastihashop is at 145 Orchard Street (Rivington Street), (212) 253-0895, info@mastihashopny.com.

Kalos Ilthete (Welcome!) kai Mazal Tov!

Please check our website (www.kkjsm.org) for our new newsletter (The Romaniote) now out in the mail. If you do not receive the newsletter (published twice annually) send us your mailing address and we will mail you future copies.

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