



# Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

June 2010 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

Unlike most of our newsletters, this present one, our 29<sup>th</sup>, is coming to you directly from Greece. Our Museum Director led a tour to Jewish Greece and Spain. We made new friends and expanded our ever-growing family of internet subscribers. Most important, we visited old friends and will update you on current affairs in Jewish Greece. This issue is dedicated to the small Jewish community of Ioannina, their present concerns and their current needs. We are hoping that Jews (Greek and non-Greek) along with Christians (Greek and non-Greek) will help in the restoration of Torah scrolls, some of which are over 500 years old, that were recently damaged by moisture within the Aron Kodesh inside the old synagogue in Ioannina.

Torah scroll from Ioannina  
damaged by moisture.

See article in this newsletter.



This newsletter, our 29<sup>th</sup>, will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedosha Janina and news concerning Greek Jewry. We hope you find our newsletter interesting. Your feedback is of utmost importance to us. If you missed previous issues, they can be accessed on our website ([www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)).

We now reach over 4500 households worldwide, with our community of 'friends' continually growing with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net).

As always, you all are invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up ([papusoup@mindspring.com](mailto:papusoup@mindspring.com)) so we are sure that our Kiddush (traditional Greek Jewish Kosher foods) is sufficient. If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush for a special occasion or an Adara, contact Sol.

This month, we welcome the birth of David Colchamiro's granddaughter, Maria Ivanovna Panyavin Martinez-Risco, quite a moniker for a little girl weighing in at 3.33 kg.

---

### 2010 Tour to Jewish Spain and Greece

This most recent tour (occurred from May 17-May 31<sup>st</sup>) brought Greek Jews and other interested participants to Spain and Greece. An excellent connection was made at the Museum created in Barcelona at the Calle . Miguel Laffa, the Museum Director, spoke personally to our group. The Jewish Community of Barcelona, whom we joined for Friday night services, is hoping to create a museum on the Jewish presence in Barcelona. You can access the present museum website at: [www.calldebarcelona.org](http://www.calldebarcelona.org)



**When we say that our tours are life-changing experiences, we are serious. The connections members of our group made with their Greek-Jewish roots will never be forgotten.**



**#1**



**#2**



**#3**



**#4**

**1. Rosalyn Roffman, her son Peter, and Joyce Elias standing in front of the Lake in Kastoria. Their families (the De Maios and Elias families) came from Kastoria**

**2. Stu Forman (center) standing in the Ioannina cemetery where members of his Yohanan family were buried. We also visited Arta and the street where Stu's family had once lived.**

**3. Rose Attas Ferrari and her distant cousin Mr. Matathias in front of his shop in Ioannina.**

**4. Elaine Lust and her cousin Stella Mioni Cohen. It was only through this trip ( and the extensive genealogical research being done at Kehila Kedosha Janina) that we were able to make this connection.**

**Do join us for a future tour. If you are not on our mailing list, contact us at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net).**

## Museum News

In May, we hosted groups from the UFT, Katz Jewish Community Center in Cherry Hill New Jersey, the Women's League of Sutton Place Synagogue, the Chai Society of Temple Beth Shalom in New City, NY and Elana Hadassah of White Plains, NY, in addition to hosting a gathering of members of the Ganis family, many of whose relatives appeared in the 1941 wedding picture below.



As the Ganis family members gathered around the photo, they were thrilled to find parents and grandparents in the photo. Arrange a family visit to Kehila Kedosha Janina. Re-attach to your roots.

As always, our Koula's Kitchen (May 2<sup>nd</sup>) was a tremendous success. Thanks to Koula Kofinas, Rose Eskononts and Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos.



Our April 25<sup>th</sup> New York premier of "In the Shadow of the Acropolis" was written up in the Hellenic Voice and the article can be accessed through our website ([www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)). This excellent film was also reviewed by Israel National News: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/137296>. The film can be purchased through Kehila Kedosha Janina (you can access our complete updated book and gift list on our website).

**Pictures for our upcoming exhibit on Families (Dikoi Mas/Los Muestrros) continue to come in. We are grateful to Lois Abraham Davis for sending us the photo of her family below. Her father (Morris Abraham) in the center was leaning against his mother (Rifka Abraham). He was 3 when the picture was taken 85 years ago. He is now 88, G-d bless him.**



**Abraham (Avraam) Family New York 1925**

**We thank Nina Kaplanides for the photo of her family below. The photo was taken in Ioannina in 1929.**

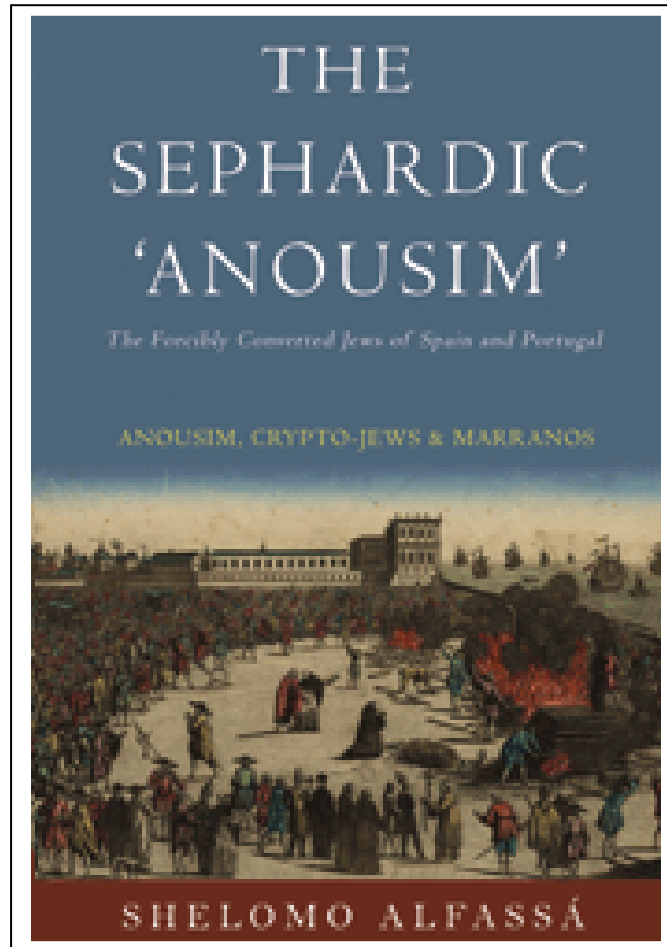


**Remember, if you want to have your Greek-Jewish family represented in our upcoming exhibit (and want a personal invitation to the opening of the exhibit, without which you cannot attend), send us your photos.**

-----

## Upcoming Museum events at Kehila Kedosha Janina

**Sunday: June 27: 2:00: Book Presentation.** Shelomo Alfassa will be presenting his just released book, "The Sephardic Anousim." The presentation will be accompanied by a **Power Point** presentation. Open to the public. No charge. Refreshments served and the book will be available for purchase.



## Events at other museums and cultural venues

**Devin Naar will be presenting the Tenth Annual Dorothy Koppelman Memorial Holocaust Lecture at the Cavalla Room of the Bart Luedeke Student Center at Rider University, in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, on June 6, at 1 pm. The topic will be:**

**"Sephardic Jews in America and the Holocaust."**

**The lecture will focus in particular on the responses of Sephardic Jews in the United States to the destruction of their native communities in Greece and the Balkans during the Second World War - a theme previously unexplored by scholars. He will draw on a variety of textual and visual sources, including Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) newspapers, institutional records, private correspondence, memoirs, poetry, and photographs.**

**For more information about Rider University and the Koppelman Holocaust/Genocide Resource Center, please see: [http://www.rider.edu/172\\_5316.htm](http://www.rider.edu/172_5316.htm)**

**The administrator of the Center is Ms. Carol Azoff, who can be reached at (609) 896-5345 or by email: [holctr@rider.edu](mailto:holctr@rider.edu)**

---

## Sarah Aroeste in NYC!



**Sunday, June 6th NYC 5:30-7:30PM**  
FIRST COMMEMORATION IN HONOR OF THE  
500TH BIRTHDAY  
of  
DONA GRACIA NASI  
**The Brotherhood Synagogue**  
28 Gramercy Park South  
Tapas, Sangria, & Music

Andree Aelion Brooks, award-winning author of "The Woman Who Defied Kings," presents the incredible story of Dona Gracia Nasi, a 16th century Jewish woman banker who developed an escape network that saved thousands of her fellow conversos from the terrors of the Inquisition. Followed

by:

A musical presentation by Sarah Aroeste (vocals)  
and Dan Nadel (flamenco guitar).

Tickets: Adults \$18, Students \$9 (under 25)

Presented by:

The Dona Gracia Project

For more information please inquire [here](#)



**Monday, June 7th, NYC 5:00-6:30 PM**

**The Spanish Portuguese Synagogue**

8 West 70th Street (at Central Park West)

Prize winning historian and author, Marcia Fine, presents from her novel, "The Blind Eye," and shares from her research some new perspectives on the Sephardic story.

Followed by:

A musical presentation by Sarah Aroeste (vocals)  
and Aviva Cambara (piano).

Tickets: \$5

**We are proud to announce a new exhibit by Artemis Alcalay. Artemis, descended from Yannote Jews, presently living in Athens, is a talented young artist whose work in many materials has been displayed in venues around the world, including the Jewish Museum of Athens.**





## Past Events in May

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in May (May 10-16) in Corfu

special events in memory of Albert Cohen took place.

The program initiator and leader was Dr. Giourgas. The event was sponsored by Mr. Mamou, the President of the Association for the Memory of Albert Cohen, Mr. Sotiris, the Mayor of Corfu and Mr. Pagani, the Mayor of Geneva.

The program included the following: films, music and a symposium at the Ionian university and the Corfu Archives at the Old Fortress. There was also a commemorative plaque placed at Albert Cohen's former home in the old town of Corfu.

Albert Cohen (August 16, 1895, Corfu, Greece - October 17, 1981, Geneva, Switzerland) was a Greek-born Jewish Swiss novelist who wrote in French. He worked as a civil servant for various international organizations, such as the International Labour Organization having become a Swiss citizen in 1919. He was born Avraam Cohen, the son of Corfiote Jew who owned a soap factory. His father decided to move the family to Marseille, France when their business started to go downhill and anti-Semitism was increasing. In France they started an egg and olive oil business. He referred to this period of his life in his novel *Le livre de Ma Mère* (The Book of my Mother). In addition to his literary skills, Albert Cohen became a diplomat during the WWII, having fled Geneva to Bordeaux and then London. The Jewish Agency for Palestine made him responsible for establishing contacts with exiled governments. In 1944, he becomes an attorney for the Intergovernmental Committee for refugees. In 1957, he turned down the post of Israel Ambassador in order to pursue his literary career. He is buried in the Jewish Cemetery of Veyrier, near Geneva.

---

## News of interest

### From Greece

Because we were physically in Greece, we are able to report in detail on what is going on in our 'patrida' and update recent events from our first-hand, on the spot observances.

### Salonika

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, we received the following press release from the Central Board of Jewish Communities:

CENTRAL BOARD OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN GREECE

36, VOULIS STR.  
GR - 105 57 ATHENS



TEL : (+30 210) 32 44 315 - 8  
FAX : (+30 210) 33 13 852

WEB SITE : [www.kis.gr](http://www.kis.gr)  
E-MAIL : [hhkis@ath.forthnet.gr](mailto:hhkis@ath.forthnet.gr)

## **Vandal Attack against the Jewish Cemetery of Thessaloniki**



**Last night, the Jewish Cemetery of Thessaloniki was vandalized by a group of antisemites who used rags and gasoline to set fire to a tomb. Swastikas and anti-Semitic graffiti reading "Fire to the Jews" and "Juden raus" appeared on a number of tombstones, the alleys and the surrounding wall of the cemetery.**

Following a phone call to the police, made by a resident in the area, three young men were arrested as suspects.

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS) addressed letters to the Minister of Protection of the Citizen, Mr. M. Chryssochoidis, and the Minister of Justice, Mr. H. Kastanidis, and issued a press release expressing the Greek Jewry's outrage on this hideous attack. The Jewish Community of Thessaloniki (JCT) addressed a letter the local law enforcement authorities and issued a press release as well.

KIS and JCT President David Saltiel related the new attack to the acquittal of Kostas Plevris. As he pointed out "this attack is one more consequence directly related to the court decision to acquit a neo-nazi writer who incites to acts of violence against the Greek Jews, as well as to the recent Supreme Court decision to dismiss the *cassation in favor of the law* filed by the Prosecutor against the acquittal verdict. Our Board was not heard when had warned of the deriving dangers".

**Athens May 14, 2010**

Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece



Photo of damaged tombstones.

### **Update on Salonika Cemetery desecration:**

***(ANA-MPA) -- The Greek government on Saturday issued a stern condemnation of the incidents of vandalism and desecration at Thessaloniki's Jewish cemetery, which occurred in the early morning hours of Friday or late Thursday evening.***

***Three suspects, two men and a woman, 21, 18 and 17, were arrested as suspects in the incident northern port city.***

***"The government unequivocally condemns the vandalisms at the Jewish cemetery of***

***Thessaloniki. Such instances of racism and hate have no place whatever in Greek society, which stands opposed to such acts of violence and chauvinism. The responsible authorities will do whatever is necessary so that the perpetrators of these acts are led, as soon as possible, before justice," government spokesman George Petalotis underlined.***

***According to reports, the trio was picked up by a police patrol after being spotted acting suspiciously outside the cemetery. A knife was found in the possession of one of the suspects, and according to police, the likelihood of their being associated with extremist groups is being investigated.***

***Anti-Semitic graffiti was sprayed on gravestones and on the cemetery's wall, while a can with flammable liquid was found inside the cemetery but there were no signs of arson, police said.***

***Earlier, the Central Jewish Council of Greece (KIS) and the Jewish community of Thessaloniki condemned the desecration of the northern port city's Jewish cemetery.***

***"Three suspects have been questioned by police, and we are convinced that the state will condemn this heinous act and take all necessary measures to bring the culprits to justice. Phenomena of anti-Semitism and similar views must be eradicated, guaranteeing the people's right to exercise their religious beliefs," according to a statement issued by the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki.***

**We visited the cemetery on May 26<sup>th</sup> and the anti-Semitic graffiti has been removed and the damage to the tombstones has been repaired.**

**View of old tombstones from former cemetery now in new cemetery of Salonika**



**Below-Memorial to Jewish Soldiers who died on the Albanian Front 1940-1941**



## Veroia

Our group visited Veroia on May 27<sup>th</sup>. We visited the synagogue and the *barbouta* (the old Jewish quarter). No further work has been done on the synagogue and, unfortunately, two of the former Jewish homes in the *barbouta* are no longer there. One was destroyed by fire and the home adjacent to it had to be torn down.



Empty lot to the right was the site of two lost homes

---

## Rhodes

These are very difficult times and, in addition to the attack on the Jewish cemetery in Salonika, in May there was also an attack on the Holocaust Memorial in Rhodes. To date, there have been no arrests.

CENTRAL BOARD OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN GREECE

36, VOULIS STR.  
GR - 105 57 ATHENS



TEL : (+30 210) 32 44 315 - 8  
FAX : (+30 210) 33 13 852

WEB SITE : [www.kis.gr](http://www.kis.gr)  
E-MAIL : [hhkis@ath.forthnet.gr](mailto:hhkis@ath.forthnet.gr)

## PRESS RELEASE

### Vandal Attack against the Holocaust Monument in Rhodes

The desecration of the Holocaust Monument of Rhodes, only a few days after the violent attack against the Jewish cemetery of Thessaloniki, marks a dangerous increase tendency of anti-Semitic phenomena in Greece.

The vandals used a heavy object in their attempt to smash the Magen David on one façade of the granite-made Rhodes Monument, which was damaged and cracked.

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece addressed letters to the Minister of Justice H. Kastanidis, to the Minister of Protection of the Citizen M. Chrysochoidis, as well as to the Government's Spokesman G. Petalotis, asking for the arrest of the perpetrators and for more intense security measures in Jewish sites all over Greece. Letters were also addressed to the Prefect and the Mayor of Rhodes.

**The Greek Jewry was not heard when alerted the authorities to the consequences of the acquittal of K. Plevris who in his book clearly incites to acts of violence against the Greek Jews.**

**Our Board issued a Press Release expressing the outrage and the concern of the Greek Jewry about the increasing anti-Semitic incidents, urging all competent authorities and democratic citizens to react firmly against anti-Semitism.**

*Athens May 17, 2010*

Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece

### Ioannina

**We are happy to report that all damage desecrated tombstones in the Jewish cemetery of Ioannina has been repaired.**

**Below are photos taken on May 28<sup>th</sup>:**



**Repaired tombstones**



**Repaired Holocaust Memorial**

---

**Unfortunately, we have a new problem in Ioannina. Moisture had seeped into the Aron Kodesh and damaged 5 Torah scrolls. Experts from Israel have viewed the damage and will be involved**

in the repair. It will be quite costly but it will be done. If you wish to contribute to the repair of the Torah scrolls, contributions received by Kehila Kedosha Janina (280 Broome Street, NYC NY 10002) will be sent directly to the community in Ioannina.



**Samuel Cohen preparing for Friday night Shabbat Services on May 28<sup>th</sup>.**

One of the damaged scrolls drying before repairs can be done.



### **Athens**

Members of our group visited the recently unveiled Athens Holocaust Memorial. There is a guard stationed there 24 hours a day (as there are outside the synagogues of Athens on Melidoni).



To see videos of the unveiling of the memorial:

<http://www.athensliving.net/apps/videos/videos/show/8598335-unveiling-the-holocaust-monument>

---

### **Etz Hayyim in Hania**

Keep up with what's happening at Etz Hayyim with this interview on youtube"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7Qvf76e9Pk>

### **Requests**

Rhonda Almira Saldias, who has worked for years on updating the "Matza Family tree" is asking all Matzas to get in touch with her so she can possibly link your family into the tree or update your branch of the tree if you are already part of this extensive fascinating family tree. Her e-mail is [matzaneews@gmail.com](mailto:matzaneews@gmail.com)

---

Due to Rhonda's work and her going through family photos, a very emotional connection has been made with Regina Battino. In our March issue of the e-newsletter we printed the post-WWII photo that Rhonda had in her family's collection. She had no idea who the people in the family were. We now know that they were members of Regina Battino's immediate family.



### **Articles of interest**

**Article on Holocaust atrocities by German doctor. Many of the victims were from Salonika.**

<http://www.holocaust-history.org/hirt/>

**Recently published 'letter to the editor' by Leon Saltiel commenting on Greece's financial situation.**

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/11/opinion/11iht-edlet.html>

**Paper by Devin Naar**

[http://www.thefreelibrary.com/\\_/print/PrintArticle.aspx?id=188739069](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/_/print/PrintArticle.aspx?id=188739069)

**Sabby Mionis on youtube.**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCGrQSIQnNc&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCGrQSIQnNc&feature=player_embedded)

**He was seen acting as a representative of the Israeli Army explaining to Greek viewers what had happened with the recent Israeli "attack" on the Turkish flotilla.**

---

**Kehila Kedosha Janina e-newsletter: number 29: May 2010  
Kehila Kedosha Janina, 280 Broome Street, New York NY 10002  
[kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net)**