October 2018 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

As we start the New Year (5779) we are overjoyed with the strength and vitality G-d has given us. We see boundless possibilities for the growth of our precious Romaniote community and are so grateful for the productive collaboration we have seen with Sephardic communities here in New York, throughout the United States and world-wide. We are particularly grateful for the support of the Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America and Rabbi Nissim Elnekave, May we go from strength to strength. With your help and continued support we will. This year we were heartened by attendance for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. Our sukkah was more beautiful than ever.
This newsletter, our 115th will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedesha 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.

We now reach close to 10,000 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 museum@kkjsm.org.

As always, you are all invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up by emailing info@kkjsm.org 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.

Passings

We mourn the passing of Joan Ganis Dollard, the last child of Avisay and Louise Saporta Ganis, the granddaughter of Jesse and Diana Colchamiro Ganis. Joan was one of six daughters of Avisay and Louise and was preceded in death by her five sisters (Rose Ganis Sachs, Sophie Ganis Winton, Diana Ganis Watkin, Freda Ganis Weiner and Terry Ganis Dunn. Joan was 85 at her passing.

"Joan Ganis Dollard passed away quietly in her sleep early Thursday morning September 13, having lived a long life that stood out for her uncommon kindness; dedicated, perpetual friendship to those she loved; and a caring and open heart.

She was born in Bronx, NY, to Louisa and Avisay Ganis. She was the youngest of six sisters, Rose Sachs, Sophie Winton, Diana Watkin, Freda Weiner and Matilda “Terry” Dunn, all of whom have predeceased her. With 14 years between her and her next-in-line sister, Terry, she lived a life of strong convictions and independence. Her professional career began in the early 60s, an uncommon path for a woman at that time. She began as a secretary at one of the most popular magazines of the era, Good Housekeeping, and rose to fiction editor of the magazine a few years later. It was at this time that she met and married John Adrian Dollard, esteemed Professor of Sociology at Yale. She subsequently moved to New Haven where she lived for the next 58 years, twenty of them with Professor Dollard until his passing in 1980. She was an active
participant in the Yale community. She was administrative assistant to Yale President Bart Giamatti, with whose family she remained close throughout her life. She was a strong supporter of the Yale Drama School; a founder and longtime board member of the Connecticut Ballet; and was involved with New Haven Reads, tutoring children to whom English was not a first language.”

Greek Jewry lost a very special man in September. The Embassy of Israel in Greece announced the death of Moses Konstantinis, former President of the Central Jewish Council of Greece (KIS), on Thursday. He was 86 years old.

The embassy statement stresses that Konstantinis worked to promote the issues of the Greek Jewish community, relations with other communities in Greece and relations between Greece and Israel. The statement also highlights “the kindness, modesty and professionalism” of the deceased. Moses Konstantinis served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Central Jewish Council of Greece for 13 years (1998 – 2010 and 2015 – 2016), following his term as Secretary General of the organizations from 1991 to 1997.

Moses Konstantinis was also a founding member and General Secretary and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Museum of Greece. From 1971 until his death he was a Special Adviser to the Hellenic Post for Philatelic issues.

Born in Athens in 1932, he was from a family that contributed to Greek and to Jewish life as well. His father, Kanaris Konstantinis, was a founding member, as well as the first President, of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece that was established in 1945, after WW II.

During the 1950s, young Konstantinis was President of the Zionist Youth Organization and he was publishing the Jewish paper Al Magor. He did a lot of research in Greek Jewish history and was very active in all aspects of the Greek Jewish community.

The funeral of Moses Constantinis took place on Sunday, September 23, at 3 pm, in the Jewish section of the 3rd Cemetery of Nikaia.
Simchas

Our dear friend from Great Britain, Basil Jeuda, turned 80 on September 17th. In honor of the occasion, Basil shared some precious photos with us. We especially liked the photo of Basil in 2002 when the Queen visited the Manchester Jewish Museum, (formerly Manchester’s Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue). Basil was Chair of the Museum at the time and there is a photo of Basil and the Queen on the Tevah, explaining the Sefer Torah to her.

Congratulations to Murray Koryto on his 92nd birthday.
Join us on October 4th at Kehila Kedosha Janina for a special event in cooperation with the American Sephardi Federation.

Join Kehila Kedosha Janina and the American Sephardi Federation for a special concert:

**An Evening of Romaniote and Sephardic Music**

**Thursday, October 4 at 8:00pm**

**280 Broome Street**

**$20 per Person**

Join Renan Koen, a world-renowned Turkish Sephardic pianist and musician from Istanbul, and Ensemble Una Matika de Ruda for a special night of Greek Jewish and Ladino-Sephardic music.

**RSVP at AmericanSephardiMusicFestival.com or amarcus@kkjsm.org**
Join us on Shabbat October 27 as we honor Sol Kofinas

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US AS WE HONOR

SOL KOFINAS
WITH THE FIRST
HY GENEЕ LEGACY AWARD

JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL SHABBAT WHEN WE
RECOGNIZE SOL KOFINAS FOR ALL HE HAS
CONTRIBUTED TO OUR COMMUNITY

SATURDAY OCTOBER 27, 2018
SERVICES BEGIN AT 9:30AM
KIDDUSH LUNCH AT 12:30PM

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NYC

PLEASE RSVP TO AMARCUS@KKJSM.ORG
October 28th Oxi Day: Screening of the film on Greek Jews in the National Resistance
Sunday October 28 at 1:00pm in our communal room

November 18th “Stop at the Red Apple” with author, Elaine Freed Lindenblatt at 2:00 pm
Book will be for sale and author will there to autograph copies
THE GREEK JEWISH & SEPHARDIC YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK INVITES YOU TO A

GREEK SHABBATON AND SHABBAT DINNER

FRIDAY OCTOBER 26TH TO SATURDAY OCTOBER 27TH

kehila kedosha janina
280 broome street nyc

Friday Night Kabbalat Shabbat Services – 6:30pm
Friday Night Shabbat Dinner – 7:30pm
$25 per Person

RSVP TO GREEKJEWISHYPN@GMAIL.COM

Meet other young Romaniote and Sephardic Jews
Enjoy delicious homemade Greek food
Experience a traditional Greek Jewish Shabbat
Open to Young Adults in their 20’s and 30’s

Saturday Morning Services 9:30am, Kiddush-Lunch 12:30pm
Past Events of Interest

Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network – Holiday Cooking Class

Thank you to everyone who attended our Greek Jewish Holiday Cooking Class! Special thanks to our guest chef Evan Zagha and our sponsor MD Squared Property Group. We cooked spanakopita cigars, Greek salad, and baklava, and we had a fun and delicious time!
News from Jewish Greece

Corfu

This past Rosh HaShanah, a small group from the United States and Brazil shared services with the Jewish Community of Corfu.
This trip we discovered a fascinating museum in Corfu in the south of the island, at the Mavoudis Family Museum and Olive Press, where we learned the history of the making of olive oil on the island. Free tour and very reasonably priced olive oil. Highly recommended. While in Corfu we took a delightful daytrip to Albania to see the remnants of a synagogue in Saranda and the ruins of Butrint.

We saw the ruins of a 5th century synagogue in the city of Saranda located alongside a Byzantine Church. In the background there was a minaret of a local mosque.

The ruins at Butrint date back to a number of historical periods and the site is presently an UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Inhabited since prehistoric times, Butrint has been the site of a Greek colony, a Roman city and a bishopric. Following a period of prosperity under Byzantine administration, then a brief occupation by the Venetians, the city was abandoned in the late Middle Ages after marshes formed in the area. The present archaeological site is a repository of ruins representing each period in the city’s development.
We were honored to join the Jewish Community of Ioannina and Yanniotes from around the world for Yom Kippur. We visited the cemetery to pay our respects at the graves of Yanniotes and, in addition, said kaddish for the Yanniotes who were victims of the Holocaust.
Before Yom Kippur, we had a delightful tour of the synagogue by Allegra Matsa, showing us the recently restored tik that dates back over 600 years.

Yom Kippur

Before the start of services we were able to take some photos. While there was a respectable crowd for Kal Nidre, for Yom Kippur day, the synagogue had over 300 attendees. It was so lovely to see both Stella Koen and Zanet Tsitou, both Holocaust survivors, attending services.
Our participants made us proud

While in Ioannina, our group was treated to day trips to Metsovo, Konitsa, Zagoria and the excellent museums of the area (the War Museum, the Silversmith Museum, and the Municipal Museum). On the way back to Athens, a breathtaking stop at Meteora is always a treat. Of course, the magnificent scenery of the area was the true star.
Thessaloniki

In September, the Mayor of Thessaloniki, Yiannis Boutaris, was awarded by the Mayor of Tel Aviv, Ron Huldai, a token of appreciation for his contributions to the commemoration of history, and the heritage of Jewish presence Thessaloniki.

Trikala

Save the Date!
From November 1-9, 2018 the Greek Jewry and diplomatic delegations of member countries of IHRA (International Alliance for Holocaust Remembrance), will find themselves in Trikala participating in a series of cultural Holocaust remembrance events organized as part of this year’s Italian presidency of IHRA. The program activities include: unveiling of a temporary Holocaust memorial in the central square of Trikala, with the participation of the Choir of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, and the Holocaust of Greek Jews, a lecture about the Jews of Trikala, a book presentation, a concert and a music program, plus a visit to the restored synagogue in Trikala and a Kabbalat Shabbat service in the Community Cultural Center. A detailed program will be announced shortly.

The events were co-organized by the Italian Presidency of IHRA, the Municipality of Trikala, the Greek Delegation to the IHRA, the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece and Jewish Museum of Greece, with the cooperation and support of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki and Trikala, the Italian School of Athens, the Tsitsanis Claus Museum and Cultural Center.

The events of IHRA in Greece is held every year in a different city to highlight the local Jewish history and to awaken the wider community on issues of anti-Semitism through the messages of Holocaust history. With the cooperation of local municipalities in the Jewish Communities and, in recent years, events by IHRA have been done in Ioannina, Larissa, and Kavala etc.

This year, Trikala is the city that hosts the events of IHRA and the Jewish Community will highlight the rich cultural heritage and its roots, presenting alongside the historical Synagogue Kal Shalom restoration work, which survives thanks to co-religionists donations from Greece and abroad and sponsored by Germany.
Sephardic Wisdom for Politicians from a Ladino poet
By Ty Alhadeff from the University of Washington here

In October 1985, the United States and the Soviet Union were in a nuclear arms race, violence rattled the Middle East, and Iran and Iraq were at the height of their bloody war. For Albert Adatto, a Sephardic immigrant from Istanbul, a former lieutenant colonel and military historian, the future looked bleak. Returning to his native language of Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), Adatto, at age 75 and long since retired from his military career, waxed poetic on the tumultuous political climate.

Inspired by the Rosh Hashanah liturgical poem Avinu Malkenu ("Our Father, Our King"), a petition for God to show mercy on His people, Adatto’s poem Muestro Padre, Muestro Rey expresses his hopes and fears for the years to come. Written in anticipation of President Ronald Reagan’s meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at the 1985 Geneva Summit, Adatto’s poem prays for wisdom to come to world leaders, including those of the Arab states and Israel. “Forgive our leaders of state that profane religion in making war in Your Blessed Name,” he writes. “Give wisdom to the leaders of the Arab countries and of Israel so they can make peace and so that they will remember they have the same patriarch.” “Da saviduria a los kapos de los paizes Arabos i de Yíisrael para ke agan pas i ke se akodren ke tyenen el mezmo patriarka.”

For the entire article, access the link here.
The month of October literally opens with the Festival of “Shmini Atzeret” (The Eighth Day of Assembly”), which appropriately falls, as the Torah states on the eight day of Sukkot, though it is actually its own special holiday, since Sukkot itself is seven days long. However, while this is true for the Land of Israel, outside of Israel, the entire length of Sukkot/Shmini Atzeret actually comes to 9 days. And while in Israel, Shmini Atzeret is also Simhat Torah, which is the celebration of the completion and restarting the annual Torah reading cycle of weekly portions, since the holiday is two-days long in the Diaspora, the holiday celebrations are split into two: On Shmini Atzeret the prayer for rain is recited, while the dancing and singing with the Torah — “Hakafot” [Encirclements] – “Simhat Torah” is celebrated on the second day. In other words, the night of Simhat Torah for KKJ in NY – like everywhere else outside Israel – is “Motza’i” Yom-Tov in Israel.

And though this means that the holiday in Israel is officially over, with “Hakafot” having been completed the night and day before, all over Israel, “Hakafot Shniyot” are commonly held, meaning a second round of singing and dancing with the Torah, corresponding to Simhat Torah night in the Diaspora. And this custom is no small, private affair. Besides local synagogues and yeshivot, virtually every city or town in Israel either sponsors Hakafor Shniyot or joins together with a particular — usually large — local synagogue or community center for this joyous activity, where everyone is invited to participate, and attendance everywhere is usually quite impressive.

But the truth is, few people really know how this practice originated, with many assuming that it is basically just a “leftover” from the amazing joy of the entire Sukkot holiday, whereby people simply want to somehow ‘continue’ the holiday for just a few more hours as they join world Jewry in one last “blast” of celebration and happiness.

But the origins of this custom are quite ancient. Apparently, it is first described by the Kabbalist Rabbi Haim Vital of 16th century Tzfat, in his book called “Sha’ar Hakavanot” – “Gates of Devotion”, which records the customs of his teacher, the famous Yitzhak Luria Ashkenazi – “The Ari”. The latter would apparently visit synagogues in Tzfat as they concluded the post-holiday evening prayers and hold seven “Hakafot” – encirclements with Torah scrolls in each location. From Tzfat this practice spread first to Hebron and then to the Kabbalist Yeshiva “Beit El” in Jerusalem, followed by most other Jerusalem synagogues. And while the custom is attributed to Jewish mysticism, there is no question that part of its purpose was to better connect Jews in the Land of Israel with their brethren in the Diaspora.

And in more contemporary times, this idea of trying somehow bring Diaspora and Israel Jewry closer, at least in spirit, the custom of Hakafor Shniyot was further intensified and given exposure to the general public in Israel in three specific periods:

1. The late pre-state Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Yitzhak Yedidya Frankel, who, on what would have been Simhat Torah night outside Israel in 1942, instituted “Hakafot Shniyot” as a way of identifying with European Jewry, whose horrible fate was already becoming exposed to the world.

2. At the end of the 1950's, one of the oldest religious Kibbutzim, Tirat Zvi, began holding “Hakafor Shniyot” to try and help their brethren on non-religious Kibbutzim to experience some of the joy of this wonderful Jewish holiday. This initiative rapidly spread to religious Jewish youth movements, especially B’nei Akiva, in larger cities.

3. Finally, after the Six Day War, the custom took hold all over the country, and continues unabated today. Given recent discussions and headlines about a growing rift between Israel and Diaspora Jewry, may these celebrations be a small sign — and contribution- to the opposite! Hag Sameah!!
Request for Research Help

I am one of the leading authorities in the world on "Who is Jewish" and I have done extensive research on the Jewish boxers captured by the Nazis. I feel I know more about these boxers than anyone on the planet as I was doing research on them in the mid-1990s and worked with the Israeli Government. In fact, I have some super rare items of these boxers and both the US Holocaust Museum and Yad Vashem have contacted me that they want these items for their museums. Please go to www.NeilKeller.com to learn more about my hobby.

I am aware of two Greek Jewish boxers captured by the Nazis - Salamo Arouch and Jacko Razon. They both survived World War II and move to Israel. I know they both died recently but I would love to obtain a document from their family/relatives for my all-Jewish hobby. Can you please help me with contact information on both Salamo and Jacko. I want to have a document for my collection that will be passed down for generations. Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope to hear from you soon. Neil Keller

This photo was taken from a wedding of the Akkos/Vital family (circa 1930s). We are looking to identify the two young children on the bottom left. Please send any info to museum@kkjsm.org.
Because we care about our readers and because we love Greece, here is information on Greek products that help your health.

Two Greek clinical dieticians, Asteria Stamatakí and Constantinos Xenos, wrote a book on Greek superfoods, not all widely known, but with miraculous qualities.

The book entitled “Get to Know Greek Superfoods” is published by Dioptra and contains well-known but quite a few unknown natural foods that work wonders on health.

Kozani Saffron
The crocus sativus flower produces the saffron spice that is worth its weight in gold, literally. It prevents cardiovascular disease, it is a natural anti-depressant, prevents Alzheimer disease and helps in weight control.

Messolongi Fish Roe
Its precious Omega 3 oily acids enhance mental functions, prevent cancer and cardiovascular disease, boost the immune system and have rich anticoagulant properties.

Caper
Very rich in antioxidants that protect the human organism and has very few calories.

Thyme Honey
It has antimicrobial qualities and prevents cancer. The darker it is, the more potent in antioxidant activity.

Corinthian Currant
Protects from cancer, excellent against high blood pressure, good for controlling blood pressure of diabetics without raising sugar level.

Almonds
Full of protein, vitamins E and B2, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, manganese and good fats. It helps prevent type 2 cancer, obesity and heart disease.

Aegina Pistachios
Rich in B and B1 vitamins, micronutrients like copper and manganese, good fats and antioxidants. Aegina pistachios reduce triglycerides, improve sugar and cholesterol levels, protect from heart disease and cancer.
Picture of the Month

We are grateful for this photo from circa 1961 of a Varon family Sukkah gathering

Back Row from Left to Right; Fred Dubin, Dr. Rachel Dalven, Judy Dubin, Ronald Dubin, Yisroel (Paul) Dalven, Josie Dalven, Morris Hazan, my grandfather (head partially Blocked)

Middle Row from Left to Right: Amelia (nee Dalven) Dubin, Rose Dalven, Esther (nee Colchamiro) Dalven, Our Matriarch, Sam Weiss, Beatrice (nee Hazan) Weiss, Sophie (nee Dalven) Hazan, my grandmother, Esta (nee Hazan) Varon, my mother, Morris (Mac) Varon, my father.

Front Row from left to right: Charles Dalven, Lewis Dalven, Kenneth Weiss, Andrew Dubin, Steven Weiss standing behind Andrew, Joseph Varon (me), and Cherryl Varon Kovarsy

Thanks Joe!
So many of you have applauded our efforts. We thank those who have sent in contributions.

If you would like to make a contribution to Kehila Kedosha Janina, please send your check (in US dollars) made out to *Kehila Kedosha Janina*, to us at 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002 (attention Marcia). Your donation will enable us to continue to hold services and preserve our special traditions and customs, and to tell our unique story through our Museum.

When you are in New York, visit us on Broome Street. We are open for services every Saturday morning at 9:30am and all major Jewish holidays and our Museum is open every Sunday from 11am-4pm and by appointment during the week.