



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

February 2010 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

January proved to be a painful month for Greek Jews, with two major arson attacks at Etz-Hayyim synagogue in Hania Crete but, as we started the second decade of the 21st century, this tragedy gave us the opportunity to realize how important our 'community' was and how, as a 'community' we could reach out and give support to Etz Hayyim. It also made us realize that our role in acting as an advocate of Greek Jewry around the world was finally bearing fruit. While, for a long time, we were just a shout in the darkness in protesting the desecrations at the Jewish cemetery in Ioannina, the response to the tragedy in Hania was quite different. Condemnations of the arson attacks were forthcoming. Jewish organizations responded. Greek government officials responded and, most importantly, good people around the world, both Christian and Jewish, responded. We applaud these actions. We gratefully thank those who contributed both individually and through organizations (among them Kehila Kedosha Janina, The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry and The Sisterhood of Janina).

Etz Hayyim before the arson attacks. Photo compliments of Maurice Askinazi.



An e-mailing on the update on Etz Hayyim went out in January. If you did not receive this, please e-mail us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net. Additional information, not included in the January update, will be included in this newsletter.

This e-newsletter is dedicated to the resurrection of Etz Hayyim and to the memory of the former Jewish Community of Crete.



Looking for IDs.

This newsletter, our 25th, 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.kkjasm.org).

We now reach over 4000 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.

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) 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.

We mourn the passing of Stella Moses, a great lady who was always proud of her Ioannina roots. We also mourn the passing of Rachel Schinasi Balter, the daughter of Sophie Ishaki and Solomon Schinasi, both of Blessed Memory, passed away at the age of 92.

Museum News

Upcoming Exhibit on Families (Dikoi Mas/Los Muestrros)

Family pictures are coming in. Some of the examples of the treasures we received last month were from the Asser/Cohen families by Judy Asser, of the Bakola family from Lenora Lowe, and the Atun/Azouvi families from Louise Rostker. We loved the rooftop photos taken in Williamsburg, the formal studio photos taken here in the United States and in Greece and the fact that the photos were coming in from families who had their roots in both Romaniote and Sephardic communities in Greece and other parts of the former Ottoman Turkish Empire. We loved the fact that these photos gave us a cross section of life here in the United States, both on the Lower East Side and in other parts of New York City where Greek Jews settled. We loved the fact that we were hearing from Greek Jews who had their roots in cities like Kavala and Larissa, along with those from Salonika and Ioannina. Keep the photos coming but, please, spare us the beach photos!



**Sara Cohen on roof of 324 Roebling St.
in Williamsburg Brooklyn 1940's**



Sion Bakola Family: Athens 1952

**Gabriel Azouvi family in
Larissa 1910**




Marcia Haddad Ikonopolous, Museum Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina, will be the guest speaker at the February 21st presentation of the Sephardi Federation of Palm Beach County at Temple Shaare Shalom in Boynton Beach




Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum, Greece

The Sephardi Federation of Palm Beach County
presents

Marcia Haddad Ikonopolous
The Jews of Greece:
Sephardim & Romaniote
Sunday, February 21, 2010
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
at
Temple Shaarei Shalom
9085 Hagen Ranch Road,
Boynton Beach, Florida 33472
\$7 members* / \$10 guests and non-members
*Members of the Sephardi Federation of Palm Beach County or Temple Shaarei Shalom of Boynton Beach, FL
Admission includes
Lecture, Short Film, Cultural Display
and Light Traditional Refreshments



Marcia Haddad Ikonopolous
A noted author and Museum Director of New York's Historic Greek Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum on Broome Street, Ms. Ikonopolous will share her extensive knowledge and personal experience about the history of Jews in Greece of both the Sephardic (Ladino-speaking) and Romaniote (Greek-speaking) traditions. Her talk will be both erudite and touching and cite the status and condition of Jews in Greece today. The event includes a short film providing a fascinating tour of the Jewish Museum in Greece and a display of artifacts from Sephardic and Romaniote home life. A social time with light traditional refreshments follows the lecture.
Seating is limited.
RSVP to Miriam Behar at (561) 495-8536 or mirhal@comcast.net by February 10, 2010
For more information on the Sephardi Federation of Palm Beach County contact Neer D'Agos-Ahne at (561) 794-6532 or neer@sefusa.com



Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum
on Broome Street in New York City

Topic: The Jews of Greece: Sephardim and Romaniote

Special members' entrance price (\$7) for members of the Kehila Kedosha Janina community. RSVP a must.

Kehila Kedosha Janina Website

New additions to our website (www. Kkjsm.org) for this month include the following:

An addition to our new "Stones of Ioannina" link with an excellent paper by David Colchamiro. David researched the coinage of the Ottoman Turkish Empire giving insights into the actual amounts of the contribution listed on the synagogue plaques.

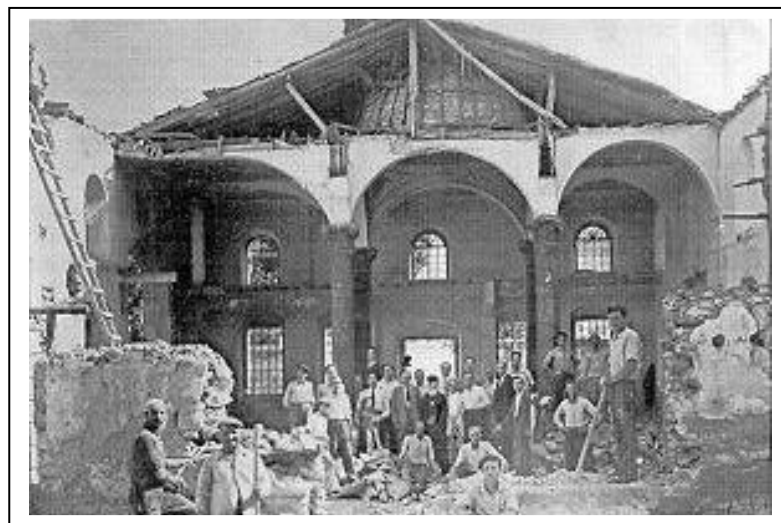
Ottoman Gold Lires



An addition to our archives section with an article called "The Crying Woman" published January 13th in The Hellenic Voice.



A new link on our website called "The Holocaust in Greece." We are in the process of adding additional information on deportations from other communities. The first list we have added is that of the Jews of Volos.



Volos Synagogue destroyed by Germans in 1944.

New Project of Kehila Kedosha Janina

"Kehila Kedosha Janina Cookbook"

Be part of our project. This cookbook will include not only recipes and photos, but also stories of families that make up our community. With the help of June Hersh, who worked with the

Museum of Jewish Heritage on production of a cookbook of recipes of Holocaust survivors, a project that members of our community took part in, we are hoping to publish this cookbook that not only gives us a literal taste of Sephardic and Romaniote cooking but, also, gives us a "taste" of life in the Sephardic and Romaniote world of immigrant families. Contact us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net so we can make arrangements to gather your stories, recipes and photos.

Sephardic Jewish News

Sephardic Film Festival (www.sephardicfilmfest.org) February 4-11

Since its founding in February 1990 as a biennial event, the NY Sephardic Jewish Film Festival has become the only annual Film Festival dedicated to showcasing Sephardic history, tradition and culture through film. Please join us on Opening Night for the The 14th NY Sephardic Jewish Film Festival. We will honor the Festival founders - Dr. Janice Ovadiah, filmmaker Mr. Haim Shiran and Mr. Morrie Yohai - with the ASF "Pomegranate Award."

Annual Commemoration in Memory of Greek Jewish Victims of the Holocaust

In New York

Under the auspices of the Consul General of Greece
THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF GREECE
Present the exhibition

"Sylvia"
AUSCHWITZ, BIRKENAU, MAJDANEK, TREBLINKA
photographs by Viktor Koen

January 28 - February 12, 2010
CONSULATE GENERAL OF GREECE IN NEW YORK
69 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10021
Mon, Wed, Fri: 9 - 2:30pm & Tu, Th: 9 - 3:30pm

the exhibition was part of the
2010 GREEK CONSULATE HOLOCAUST DAY COMMEMORATION
Thursday, January 28, 6-8pm.

In Salonika

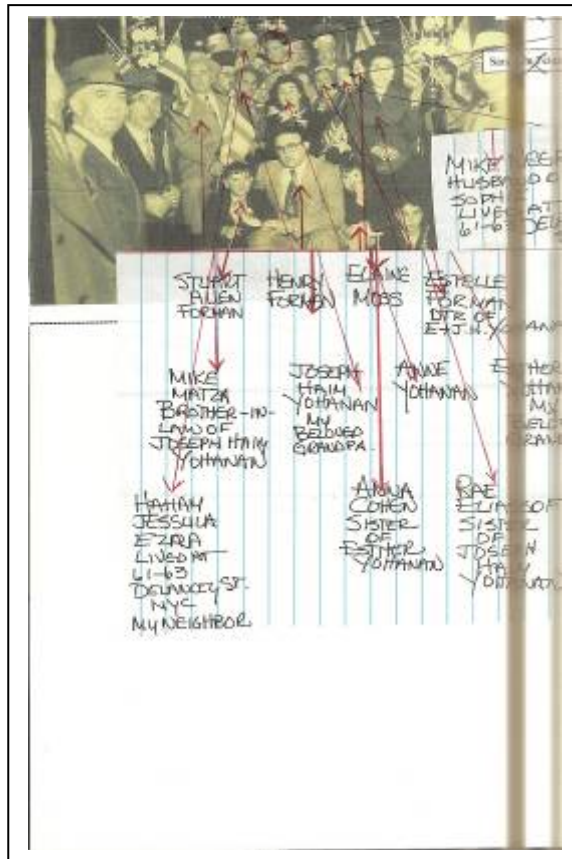
One of the honored guests at the commemoration ceremony in Salonika on January 27th was His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios, Archbishop of the Americas. Archbishop Demetrios was born in Thessaloniki in 1928 and has often spoken of his eye-witness accounts of the deportation of the Jews, where as a young man of 15 he saw Jewish classmates taken away, never to be seen again. This year in Salonika, Archbishop Demetrios was made an honorary member of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki.



David Saltiel, President of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki presents plaque to His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios

Responses from our last newsletter

Elaine Ioannou sent us definitive info on the ID's in the photo of Joseph Yohanan.



We are now on Facebook: access kehilakedoshajanina@gmail.com on Facebook. This marvelous initiative was launched by Len Neuhaus and is bringing many of the younger generation back to their roots.

News of interest to Greek Jews

January 15, 2010

Digitisation of Post-War Era Documents Now Complete

The International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen has now finished digitising its documents from the post-war era concerning displaced persons and emigration after the end of World War II. "This part of the ITS archives has hardly been explored so far," said Udo Jost, Head of the Archive Division. "It offers excellent insights into life after survival, as well as the wave of migration which resulted from the war." This week, ITS forwarded copies of the documents to its partner organizations in Israel, the US, Poland, Luxembourg and Belgium.



The documents provide information on the fate of those who were rescued from concentration camps, forced labour and, in some cases, war captivity. This inventory specifically comprises documents from German, Austrian, Italian and British camps for displaced persons, as well as emigration lists, files and dossiers from refugee organisations such as the UNHCR, and lists of Holocaust survivors compiled by Jewish organisations.

Among the documents mainly preserved from the DP camps are 350,000 "CM1" questionnaires issued by the Allies (care and maintenance) at the time. Jost explained that in these forms, "people documented what they had gone through during the war, and specified reasons for their desire to emigrate." The digitisation of the entire inventory of post-war documents took a year and a half. "The documents can now also be searched for and viewed in the ITS database in Bad Arolsen," said Jost. "This form of electronic access helps protect the original files while facilitating researchers' access to information."

This week, ITS forwarded copies of the documents from refugee organisations and Austrian, Italian and British DP Camps (about 2.3 million images) to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw, the Documentation and Research Centre on the Resistance in Luxembourg and the National Archives of Belgium in Brussels. Last year, ITS already handed over the first part of stock consisting of DP documents from Germany and lists of Holocaust survivors (ca. 2.2 million images). In accordance with a resolution by the International Commission which oversees the work of ITS, all eleven member states are entitled to digital copies of the documents archived in Bad Arolsen.

Up until now around 84.5 million images and roughly 6.5 terabytes of data have been handed over all together to the different institutions, including documents on concentration camps, ghettos and prisons (ca. 18 million images), the ITS central name index (ca. 42 million images), registration cards of displaced persons (ca. 7 million images), documents concerning forced labour (ca. 13 million images), and files from DP camps and emigration after World War II (ca. 4.5 million images). The inventory of the children's tracing service still needs to be transferred, as well as the so-called general documents and the correspondence files.

Article in Jerusalem Post on 65th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz includes the story of Alberto Israel, a survivor from Rhodes

"Nazi Camp Survivors Dwindle to a Few

By [JOHN W. MILLER](#)

OSWICIM, Poland—For decades, Alberto Israel avoided talking about his experience at the Auschwitz concentration camps. "There were plenty of others to do the talking," he says. Now, the 82-year-old Mr. Israel is one of the few Holocaust survivors healthy enough to attend ceremonies commemorating the liberation of the camps. He has been four times in the past four years. "I don't even like going," he says. "It reminds me of when I was 17, and that's painful." Visitors enter the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp Wednesday amid ceremonies marking the 65th anniversary of its liberation.

Amid the rhetoric at this week's commemoration of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps, Jewish groups focused on a more crucial question: how to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive after the last survivors die. It is a real problem that needs addressing, say Jewish leaders.

"There'll be just a few more short years before the living memories become memories," said Ronald Lauder, president of the World Jewish Congress. Their solution, the leaders say, is to step up the number of Holocaust-related events and make sure that Mr. Israel and other survivors attend, as well as casting the crime in the light of modern geopolitics, so that ordinary people can relate. There was plenty of the latter at ceremonies Wednesday in Krakow and Berlin and at the Auschwitz concentration camps.

Speaking to the German parliament, Israel President Shimon Peres called the Iranian government "a fanatic regime" and said its nuclear program "represents a threat to the entire world."

Mr. Lauder compared Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Adolf Hitler. Mr. Ahmadinejad has threatened to destroy Israel and questioned whether the Holocaust happened. Hitler "had the same words, and people didn't take him seriously," Mr. Lauder said in a speech. The Iranian mission the United Nations didn't respond to calls seeking comment. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attended a ceremony at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camps in southern Poland, where 1.3 people, mostly Jews, were murdered between 1940 and 1945. He warned that "there are yet again threats to exterminate the Jewish people." But more important than rhetoric, say Jewish groups, is increasing the number of events commemorating the Holocaust.

"It needs to be more than historical theory," said Ari Zuckerman of the Paris-based European Jewish Congress. In 2005, Jewish groups created the World Holocaust Forum, dedicated to preserving the memory of the crime.

As well as this week's events, the forum has organized ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary of the camps' liberation and the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht, an infamous Nazi night of violence against Jews. Since its founding, "we have lost many, many survivors and liberators," said Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress. The increase in the number of events means that people like Mr. Israel have become even more treasured and will have to travel more. The 82-year-old from the Greek island of Rhodes was the only Holocaust survivor on a plane of Jewish activists and European politicians that flew to Krakow from Brussels on Tuesday.

Mr. Israel was deported from Rhodes to mainland Greece in 1943 and held there before being shipped to Auschwitz in 1944. His parents and two brothers died there. "I've felt guilty ever since," he said. After the war, he worked as a shopkeeper and trader in the Belgian Congo and Belgium. He married and raised a family.

He kept quiet about the Holocaust, he said, until a few years ago when he met Stipan Bosnjak, a Serb of Roma origin whom he met in Brussels and the two became friends. The Nazis killed several hundred thousand Roma, according to historians. "I was moved to help him come to terms with his memory," said Mr. Bosnjak, now a psychiatric nurse in Belgium. Two years ago, Mr. Bosnjak helped Mr. Israel write a book. Nobel Peace Prize winner and Holocaust survivor Elie Weisel wrote an endorsement on the jacket. On the flight from Brussels, Mr. Israel's daughter gave out copies.

In Poland on Wednesday, Mr. Israel thanked former Soviet soldiers who liberated the camps in January 1945. Ivan Martinushkin said it wasn't always easy to relate the story of what he saw in 1945 to younger generations where he lives in Moscow. "They get tired of you telling, telling, telling, but if you do it gently, they get the message," he said.

Mr. Israel also showed visitors around the camp. "There were 100 of us in a train like that," he said, pointing to a red wagon. "It was hot in August. Can you imagine?"

Requests

Joe Varon is looking for a recipe:

"My Grandmother Sophie used to make a dish called Stad. I believe it was wheat berries cooked in sugar or honey and cinnamon. It was served cold after the meal as a dessert."

Bob Isaac's search for Joseph Ezra, the son of Rabbi Eliezer Ezra, who gave testimony on his father's death at Yad Vashem:

"My research on my grandfather's first cousin Jessula Ezra, a Hazan at KKJ until 1960 (whose father is Rabbi Eliezer Ezra). At Yad Vashem there is a Page of Testimony for Rabbi Ezra submitted by Yosef Ezra - Rabbi Eliezer Ezra's son.

Would you have been in contact with Yosef Ezra or his family? If so, do you have any contact info?" If you know this family and have any info on Joseph Ezra, please get back so us so we can pass this info on to Bob.

Request from Sandy Schaaff

"Thank you so much for including my parents' wedding picture in the exhibit. They are Max Bart and Betty(Rebecca) Yomtov. I noticed that my grandmother's photo is also included at my uncle Barouch Yomtov's wedding. Would you be able to tell me who submitted that photo? I never got to meet my grandmother as she had passed away before I was born. It means a lot to me to be able to trace my roots now. Thank You Sandi Schaaff"

We forgot who submitted the photo but we are sure one of our readers will remember.

Additional Updates on Etz Hayyim Synagogue in Hania

Condemnations from Greek-American Groups

American Hellenic Institute (AHI)

"WASHINGTON, DC —The American Hellenic Institute (AHI) strongly condemns recent anti-Semitic attacks in Greece that have included two cases of arson committed on the Etz Hayyim Synagogue in Hania, Crete and the desecration of monuments in the Ioannina Jewish cemetery.

"Clearly we strongly condemn these anti-Semitic attacks that have occurred recently in Greece," said Executive Director Nick Larigakis. "Acts of bigotry and racism have no place in society. We applaud efforts by the citizens of Ioannina, Greece, Jews and Christians alike, to come together to show support for the Jewish community in Greece and to denounce anti-Semitism."

Larigakis also welcomed news that four arrests have been made in connection with the two arson attacks on Etz Hayyim Synagogue. Of the four suspects, two are British nationals, one is American, and the fourth is Greek. The arsons were committed on January 5 and 16, 2010 and caused significant damage to the infrastructure of the synagogue, archives, and equipment.

The American Hellenic Institute is a non-profit Greek American think-tank and public policy center that works to strengthen relations between the United States and Greece and Cyprus, and within the Greek American community."

Condemnations from Greek Public Officials

"Greece Protects Its Minorities"

The recent arson attacks on a synagogue in the island of Crete endangered social peace and raised serious moral and political issues. However, such issues are associated more with the general rise of violent and extremist groups and less with the rise of anti-Semitism. Greece has never been – and hopefully will never be – a country of blind hatred and racism. While one may justifiably have expected an earlier public reaction to the despicable attack on the synagogue, one should not be tempted into inaccurate and dangerous generalizations. The Greeks historically suffered at the hands of the Nazis and have paid an unprecedented price in the name of liberty, social justice and civil rights.

Now that the vandals are in the hands of justice, the critics should admit that the Greek authorities acted in a professional and exemplary manner. Moreover the Greek police arrested a few days ago more than 40 ultra-right extremists who attacked pro-immigrant demonstrators. Change will not come overnight, but our new government led by George Papandreou is determined to show "zero tolerance" against any kind of violence and to protect the rights of minorities and its weak and poor citizens.

**Mihalis Hrysohoidis
Minister of Citizen Protection"**

Condemnation by PASOK (Majority political party in Greece)

"PRESS RELEASE-PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement)

MESSAGE SENT ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Athens, January 27, 2010

SECRETARY NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PASOK

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

The International Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Holocaust reminds us that, sixty years after the Holocaust, European societies must be constantly vigilant against all forms of racism, discrimination and exclusion.

PASOK honors the victims of the Holocaust and stands against those who, in anyway, deny the historical reality of the Holocaust and foster anti-Semitism. We condemn acts of violence against Jewish buildings and symbols, such as the recent attack on the Jewish Synagogue of Chania.

PASOK unconditionally supports and vigorously promotes the rights of all Greek citizens, regardless of nationality, religion, ideology, gender or sexual orientation. For us, the implementation of human rights for all is non-negotiable and the elimination of racism is a priority.

As a society, we should keep alive the memory of Holocaust victims and to build on the lessons and legacy of the survivors: a legacy of courage and belief in the value of life and humanity."

Condemnation by Georgios Papandreou, Prime Minister of Greece

(Letter sent to Moses Constantini, President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece)

***"Mr. Moses Constantinis
President
Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece
36, Voulis Street
105 57 Athens
Greece***

Dear Mr. President,

The attack on the Etz Hayyim Synagogue not only constitutes an attack on one of the remaining Jewish monuments in the island of Crete, but also an attack against the history and the cultural heritage of our homeland, Greece.

The Government, I personally as well as the entire Greek nation condemn this abominable act in the strongest possible terms. We have already taken immediate steps to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

This Sunday we honor all the Greek Jews Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust. It is a National Day of Remembrance, during which we, once more, declare and reaffirm that phenomena such as anti-Semitism and racism are condemned and have no place in the Greek society.

I would like to assure you that my Government and I stand by the Greek Jews and firmly support their struggles for a better Greece.

***Sincerely,
George A. Papandreou,
Prime Minister of Greece"***

Condemnation by Nea Demokratia (opposition political party in Greece

***"Wednesday, January 27, 2010
Nea Demokratia (New Republic) MP B Athens, Mr. Panos Panagiotopoulos, made the following statement:***

"The 27th of January is a day of remembrance and honor for millions of our fellow human beings, victims of World War II. It is a day of remembrance of the Jewish Holocaust by the Nazis. It is a day of honor for those who prevented the implementation of a ruthless decision intending to destroy a people, and for all those who managed to survive the unspeakable horrors of the concentration camps.

This sad anniversary simultaneously reminds all of us of the contributions of our fellow Jews in the war against the Axis forces and their involvement in the national resistance and, also, the solidarity of the Greeks to the Jewish Community of our country in these difficult years.

This year's anniversary is shaded, unfortunately, by two recent arsons of the Jewish Synagogue in Hania.

The New Republic expresses its deep concern about these incidents and calls on the Government and competent authorities to exhaust all efforts to clarify, to the last detail, the case and to bring to justice those who are guilty .

Such events and such psychosis are quite foreign to the Greek people, its history and traditions."

Article in Jerusalem Post on Arrests

"4th arrest over Crete synagogue burning

Jan. 25, 2010

A fourth suspect, an American man, has been arrested in two arson attacks on a medieval synagogue on the island of Crete, Greek police said Monday.

A police statement said that the suspect, identified only as an English teacher, was arrested Monday in the seaside town of Hania, where the Etz Hayyim Synagogue was damaged in attacks earlier this month.

Police have also arrested a Greek and two British men and are seeking another US citizen, also an English teacher. The attacks destroyed books, archives and heirlooms.

Police have not said what the suspects' alleged motive was.

The Etz Hayyim Synagogue is the only one to survive on Crete, whose last Jewish community was wiped out during World War II."

<http://www.jpost.com>

Comments from Nikos Stavroulakis, taken from his blog at Etz Hayyim

"This past week (15 – 22 January) began with Erev Shabbat prayers as usual. Some 20 people gathered in the Kal itself which had been re-painted and polished – it was quite exquisite an atmosphere as all of the benches had been polished in lavender oil and the marble floor had been polished as well. At roughly 4:00 in the morning of Shabbat I was wakened once again by news that yet another fire had been set and by the time I arrived at the Synagogue the main office of the Synagogue – where we had also stored some things that we had rescued from my office and library – had become a raging furnace and by the time the fire had been put out the office was completely gutted. Flames this time had managed to penetrate the synagogue proper against the NW ceiling panels and in putting this fire out it was necessary that fire hoses be directed against it. By the time the fire was out the Synagogue was once again stained, filthy with burnt wood and some of the cushions had been destroyed but both the Ehal and Bimah were untouched and by 9:00 in the morning we began Shahrith prayers as usual in an anxious state of mind.

The week has been quite busy and we are grateful for all of the support that we have had and are having. David Saltiel the President of the Salonika Jewish Community has sent a sum for money for immediate needs that we are facing as serious fund-raising is going on. Also from Salonika Mr. Maurice Saporta arrived to set in motion a new security system that the Community will fund for us. There has been little time for much more than making several depositions with police assistance and many telephone interviews from all over the world. I especially must thank the police of Hania for their work and support as well as the local fire brigade that managed to put out the fires with limited peripheral damage. Special thanks are due to the Archaeological Department of Hania and its director Dr. Michael Andreanakis. Through his assistance much paper work that normally is associated with antique buildings has been obviated. It was also Dr. Andreanakis who had made the transference of the bones of 15 Jews found in Nea Hora to the Synagogue burial plot several months ago.

On Friday, 22 January some 90 people assembled in Etz Hayyim for Erev Shabbat prayers. By far most were Christians who wished to show their concern for the Synagogue and for the spirit of reconciliation that it stands for. Of special importance is that I made a somewhat solemn announcement to all that in keeping with the ancient Jewish practice henceforth annually the Synagogue would celebrate a Special Purim on the 7th of Shevat.

This week work will be concentrated on the Kal proper and also on the blocking in with stone, of the windows of what was once the Yeshiva and is now a Café through one of the windows of which the second attackers entered our courtyard.

N. Stavroulakis”

**Fire Damage
at
Etz Hayyim**



Finally, a message from Nikos to us.

“Dear Marcia - thank you for all of your help and forgive the brevity of this...but you can imagine what is happening as we get it back together again. We have good support and are working hard and your help in funding this quite formidable project is deeply appreciated by us all - love Nikos”

Remember, only the complete restoration of Etz Hayyim will remedy what has happened. Just as we rose out of the ashes of the Nazi concentration camps and their attempt to eradicate us, we will rise above the attempted destruction of Etz Hayyim and the acts of these anti-Semitic barbarians. If you have not sent donations before, do so now. If you have sent donations, dig deeper. Sam Gruber estimates that the complete restoration may reach \$100,000.

There are a number of ways to give:

Directly to Nikos Stavroulakis:

Any donations will be deeply appreciated and, of course, welcome.

ALPHA BANK (Hania, Crete)

Account name: Friends of Etz Hayyim

Account # 776-002101-087154

IBAN: GR74 0140 6600 7760 0210 1087 154

Nicholas Hannan-Stavroulakis / Director Etz Hayyim Synagogue/ Hania

In the USA, tax-deductible charitable contribution will also be received by the International Survey of Jewish Monuments (ISJM). Checks can be sent to ISJM, P.O. Box 210, 118 Julian Place, Syracuse, NY 13210. Write "Hania" on the memo line. 100% of all funds will be transferred for use by Etz Hayyim.

In addition, The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry has been raising funds for Etz Hayyim and contributions have already been sent by the Association, Kehila Kedosha Janina & the Sisterhood of Janina.

News from Greece

David Saltiel re-elected to Presidency of The Jewish Community of Thessaloniki

We send our congratulations to David Saltiel on his re-election (with 70% of the vote) as President of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki. His dynamic leadership has been instrumental in bringing the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki into the 21st century. His leadership reminds us that the small, but vibrant, Jewish community of Thessaloniki, is alive and well and continuing to contribute to the world.

65th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-10th Anniversary of the Stockholm Declaration on the Holocaust

- http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/Articles/en-US/27012010_ALK1135.htm

- **"Athens , 27 January 2010**

- ***Sixty-five years ago today, Allied troops entered the death camp of Auschwitz, putting an end to an infamy that is felt even today as a mark of Cain on the whole of the human race. Millions of men and women, of many nations, faiths and races, never lived to see that day. Others did, and some are still with us, as living witnesses to the evil that lurks in the darkest recesses of the human heart.***

The tribute in blood, in particular that paid by the Jewish population of Europe, was appalling and will forever haunt our collective memory. Auschwitz took the lives of many; Greek Jews were disproportionately numerous among them. Greeks of other faiths also paid a heavy price, often in defense of their Jewish brethren. Many have been declared Righteous among the Nations and their names are engraved at the Holocaust Memorial of Yad Vashem.

Greece today honors these fallen sons and daughters, through the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Act, which was passed unanimously by the Hellenic Parliament, making 27 January a Day of national remembrance.

This year also marks the tenth anniversary of the Stockholm Declaration, which launched a fertile rethinking of the Holocaust in Europe as part of the historical heritage of our continent and a defense against the possibility that such a horror be repeated. It has led to collaboration between many countries in order to develop further educational programs and scholarly research, as well as to commemorate and to honor the victims of the Holocaust.

Greece is proud to be among the original signatories of this epochal document, in the person of then Foreign Minister George Papandreou, our Prime Minister today."

New Books

The Subject of the Return of Pillage Taken During the Nazi Occupation of Greece: The instance of Gold Money of the Jews by Professor Konstantinos Maglivera

This book, recently published in Greek, reveals research on the looting of individual and communal money, and information on the vast fortune handed over to the Germans for the release of Salonikan Jews taken for forced labor in July of 1942. Whether this research will lead to reparations is another matter.

Comments on last e-newsletter

From Dave Corito (on the community in Kingbridge and Marv Negrin's comment)

"Great newsletter and what got my eye was the letter from Marv Negrin mentioning the shul on Kingsbridge road in the Bronx. I don't if Marv knows this but before Kingsbridge the shul was on Simpson Street in the South Bronx. The name of the shul was the "Congregation Sheerith Israel of Janina" a spinoff of Kehila Kedosha Janina of those congregants who moved from the lower eastside to Harlem then the Bronx.

My Uncle Harry Negrin who may be related to Marv was a member along with the Matza family, DeCastro family etc. (Mr. DeCastro conducted service at the Shiva house). My Uncle Jacob Corito was a very religious active member who was known by all. My father Saby Corito and his sister Molly Abrams all were known and active.

That shul was very dear to me. On November 10, 1950 I was Bar-Mitzvah at that shul by the only rabbi I knew Chamonzalu (sorry can't spell it) and blessed me when I joined the Navy. I knew just about all of its members Negrin, Matza, Solomon, DeCastro, Petrilo, Habib, Attas the family names slip my memory it's been so long.

Sheerith Israel of Janina located at 928 Simpson Street, Bronx NY was in two large class rooms that open via folding doors into one large room on the third floor of the Hunts Point Jewish Center an Ashkenazi synagogue. Not only was it standing room only on the High Holidays but

Shabot services always had a full house and when Chamonzalu blew the shofar it was heard outside of the building.

I remember many High Holy days when a few congregants from the main Ashkenazi synagogue below would walk up the three flights of stairs and listen to a service that was strange to their ears. Sadly that generation of Romaniote Jews have passed on but the memories of Sheerith Israel of Janina will always live in my heart."

On Ezra Cohen on the Lower East Side

"I just read your recent newsletter and I remember Ezra Cohen's store so very well. I would go there with my mother to buy linens and curtains for years, mostly on a Sunday so my father could park or we took the "D" train from the Concourse & 170th Street to Delancy Street. The customers all argue the prices with him in Ladino. Mothers and mother's in law all took the bride to be there to buy linens, it was a big deal back in the 40's and 50's.

Estelle Benozilio-Hendrickson"

***"As always, the latest newsletter brought back fond memories. We were married in 1963, and as new homemakers we needed all of the necessities required in a new home. Ezra Cohen was one of the first places we went to, as did many of our friends. Our first apartment was on Avenue Y in Sheepshead Bay, around the corner from my brother Alvin and his family, and we drove down there in my 1956 Chrysler. His store was a legend even back then, and I see from your story that it remains that way. As the song goes, "Thanks for the memories".
..... Bob From Bob Matsil"***

From Joel Negrin

"I have been too busy to read the current edition, but I read it anyway. Great decision. The stories of Mayor Karrer (we all wish we could be that guy at such a time), of Ezra Cohen (everybody who ever passed through the LES, which means almost all American Jews, knows this store) and, again, of the human chain, made my day. Thanks for giving me a better day every month. Joel Negrin"

Thank you Joel for making our day!
