



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

July 2012 e-newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

Kehila Kedosha Janina was honored to be represented at the 8th International Conference on Holocaust Education at Yad Vashem. A total of 362 representatives from 54 countries gathered in Israel for three days of intensive presentations centered around the theme "Telling the Story, Teaching the Core: Holocaust Education in the 21st Century." This e-newsletter will present highlights of the Conference as it relates to Greek Jewry. In addition, our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, led a tour to Jewish Greece from June 3-18. Highlights of this visit to Greece, plus firsthand accounts and impressions of the atmosphere in Greece and the political and economic situations will also be presented.

Greek Flag flies at
Auschwitz



This newsletter, our 54th 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).

We now reach over 5000 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 are all 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.

Passings

We mourn the passing of Isaac (Pat) Nachmias at the age of 89. "Pat" (as everyone called him) was a prisoner of war during WWII and the son of two Yanniotes (Sam Nachmias and Bessie Naftaly, both of Blessed Memory). He is survived by his two sons, Richard and Stuart, brother Max Nachmias and sister Rose Salberg. The Nachmias family lived across the street from Kehila Kedosha Janina at 279 Broome Street.

Simchas

Congratulations to Carmen and Moses Cohen on the marriage of their daughter Anna to Victor Solomon on June 3, 2012. The wedding took place in the historic synagogue of Kahal Shalom on the island of Rhodes and was officiated by Haim Ischakis. Anna is the oldest daughter of Moses and Carmen Cohen, Secretary of the Jewish Community of Rhodes. Victor is from Larissa.

Mazal Tov to Anna Sarfatti on the June 9, 2012 Bar Mitzvah of her Grandson Ken, at Kehila Kedosha Janina. Proud parents are Emily and Mitch Marburg.

News From Jewish Greece

Thessaloniki

The Greek roots of a mythical family

THESSALONIKI. The family needs no introduction. Active in the aerospace industry, both in the manufacture of airplanes and the operation of Air France, along with the newspaper "Figaro," both Marcel Dassault and his son, Oliver, have often been covered by the Press. What is rarely mentioned in the French Press are the family's Salonika roots. A descendant of the Allatini family. Naomi Allatini was born in Thessaloniki in 1860 and died in Paris in 1928 and was the daughter of Dario Allatini. The present patriarch of the family is 87 year old Serge Dasso, who once sat in the French parliament as a member of the Center Union Party (UMP) and is a former mayor of Kormpeig Essonne (1995 and 2001).

This year, in honor of the birthplace of her grandmother and great grandmother's family, the Dasso family funded the renovation of a hall at the French Institute of Thessaloniki. The inauguration of the renovated hall was held on June 11, with the presence of the descendants of Naomi Allatini, Laurent, and his son Serge, who came to Thessaloniki with his wife for this purpose. He will reveal the new name of the gallery that bears both names: «Allatini-Dassault». The support of the French institute in perpetuating the memory of Allatini family, is due to the fact that the French Institute helped to shape modern Thessaloniki. The dedication coincides

with the centennial anniversary of the liberation of the city. Exactly 100 years after the final departure of the family Allatini for France, the descendants of Allatini return to the city to celebrate their ancestry and the accomplishments of their family.

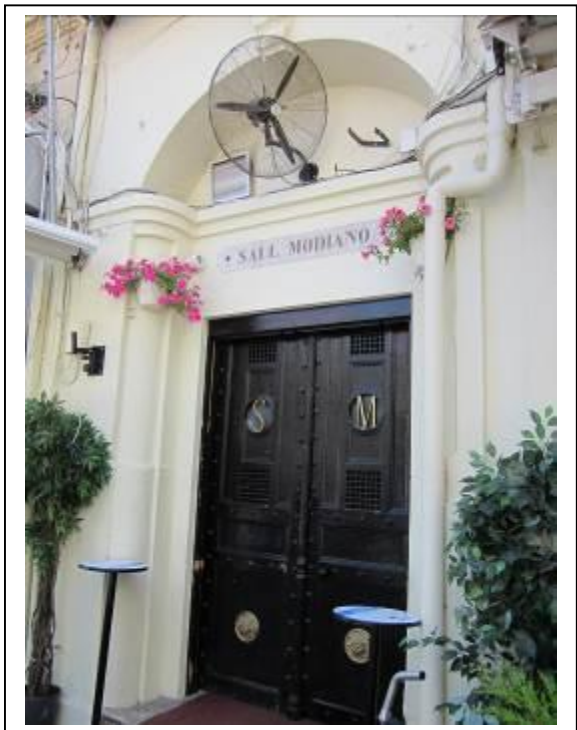
The couple will arrive in the city by private jet and stay in Thessaloniki for two days. The agenda, apart from the unveiling of the plaque at the French Institute, includes a visit to Allatini Mills and the Thessaloniki History Center, where they will learn about the history of the Allatini family, view the military records from the 1916-18 French presence in the city, the royal tombs of Vergina and meet the mayor, Yiannis Boutari, who reportedly will ask the French tycoon to contribute to the economic life of the city.

Villa Allatini



The Allatini family, of Judeo-Spanish origin, came from Livorno, Italy, early in the 18th century. They were active in the Sephardic Jewish community and were the third richest family in the city, after the bankers Kamondo and Modiano families. For 100 years they were one of the most powerful economic forces in the city, not only because of their mills (trading in grain and flour), but, also, because of their other ventures (potteries, banks, insurance companies, breweries, tobacco trade and mining. In 1911, because of their Italian origins, the Ottoman government forced them to sell their property.

The villa-Allatini the summer residence of the family in an area that was once a suburb of the city, was where their grandmother Naomi (1895-1907) once lived, now houses the Regional Offices of Central Macedonia. There are many monuments attesting to the presence of the Allatini family in the city of Thessaloniki, among them the industrial complex of flour mills (Vitaliano Pozeli), the pottery factory, the bank, and the mansion.



Building bearing the name of Saul Modiano



Holocaust memorial

Ioannina



Aaron Matathia
Halevi d. 1426

Matathia Joseph
Halevi
Can't read date
of death



We are overjoyed to announce that the Jewish Cemetery in Ioannina is now an historical landmark. Due to photos submitted to the Municipality of Ioannina (check our website kkjism.org for photos of old tombstones in the Ioannina cemetery) the municipality officially designated the cemetery as an historical landmark. The oldest tombstone discovered to date is that of Rabbi

Aaron Matathia Halevi from 1426. We have received permission from the President of the Jewish Community, Moses Eliasof, to move forward with applying for funds to enable a cleanup and restoration of the cemetery.

The Jewish Community of Ioannina is working on repairing the roof of the synagogue. If you wish to send funds to help in this repair, you can do so through Kehila Kedosha Janina (mail checks to us at 280 Broome Street).

Visit with Mayor of Ioannina

During our visit to Ioannina (June 7-11-see article below), we were invited to meet with the the Mayor of Ioannina, Philippas Philios, who graciously expressed his pleasure at our visiting the city and elegantly spoke of the long history of Jewish presence in Ioannina. Kehila Kedosha Janina will be working with the Municipality of Ioannina on an exhibit to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Ioannina becoming part of Modern Greece.



Athens

<http://www.jta.org/news/article/2012/06/01/3097091/athens-jewish-school-the-communitys-jew-el-imperiled-by-greek-economic-crisis>

Athens' Jewish school, the community's jewel, imperiled by Greek economic crisis

By Gavin Rabinowitz • June 3, 2012

ATHENS, Greece (JTA) – When the bell rang, the sixth-graders who had been playing basketball rushed off to a computer class. Their place in the yard at Athens' Jewish Community School was taken by two dozen giggling 4- and 5-year -olds practicing dance steps for the year-end concert. "One, two, three and turn," the kindergarten teachers chanted as the kids, wearing yellow caps to protect them from the bright Greek sun, jumped, stepped and shimmied through their complex routine.



The vibrancy reflects a remarkable renaissance that Athens' lone Jewish school has undergone in the last decade. With an enrollment rate of 70 percent of Athens' Jewish children, it has a penetration rate that would be the envy of any American Jewish school. The school's success -- which could hold lessons for Jewish schools elsewhere in the Diaspora -- has been the result of heavy educational investments, an aggressive recruiting strategy, significant community subsidies, comprehensive busing and an open-minded enrollment policy for children of intermarried families.

But the school is now in peril as Greek Jews struggle through the economic and political turmoil roiling Greece. A few years ago, the Athens Jewish Community School had reached a nadir. Since its founding in 1960, the number of children enrolled had been slowly dropping. By 2002, fewer than 80 students remained, and the leaders of the city's small Jewish community debated whether their school was even viable anymore. Community members believed that shutting the school down would have been an ominous development for the capital's community of some 3,500 Jews.

"This school is the Athens Jewish community and its future," said Alvertos Taraboulous, the current chairman of the school board.

Instead, they embarked on an ambitious and largely successful plan to revitalize the school. The concept was simple: To get as many children as possible to attend the school that runs up until 6th grade by providing top-notch private education, modern facilities and a warm environment -- at an affordable price. Realizing that many children did not attend because their parents were hesitant to uproot them after they became settled and made friends at local kindergartens, the Jewish school opened its own in 2002, followed by a nursery in 2007.

"Now we see that if we get them into the kindergarten, they do not leave," Taraboulous said. "If our children are really happy, that is the best promotion for the school."

Aggressive recruiting bordering on chutzpah didn't hurt either. When Jewish women give birth in Athens, the newborns are sent a gift basket with a note from the school that says "expecting you in two-and-a-half years." The school is also heavily subsidized by the Athens Jewish Community. Parents pay about \$4,000 in tuition annually per child, compared to \$10,000 to \$14,000 at comparable private schools. Two other steps were key to bringing in more students. The school opened admission to children of mixed marriages, and it operates an ambitious bus service that ranges all over Athens' vast urban sprawl to bring Jewish kids to the school. Some commute from as far as 40 miles away.

"The bus fleet is crucial," Taraboulous said. "Without this door-to-door service, many would not be able to come." This year, there were 136 children enrolled in the school (Full disclosure: this reporter's daughter is one of them). Next year, 151 are registered, according to school principal George Kanellos. The changes at the school seem to appeal to parents. Even though Zanet Battinou and her husband are both Jewish -- she's the director of the city's Jewish museum, and he was a member of the school's first-ever class -- the decision to send their three children there had not been a no-brainer. They shopped around Athens' best private schools before making their decision.

"It turns out that it is a very good school, with teachers of the highest caliber," Battinou said. "It's very professional but also very warm."
For other parents, the sense of community is the draw.

"There is something very special about bringing your children to a school where you went, where the other parents were your classmates. It is very comforting and intimate," said Matilda Vital, a Hebrew teacher at the school, whose daughter is in the nursery program.

But now, the enormity of Greece's economic and political crisis threatens to undermine the school's success -- even, possibly, its existence. From Taraboulous' office in downtown Athens -- away from the leafy green suburb that houses the school -- the signs of the country's distress are everywhere: The mound of flowers marking the site where a pensioner shot himself in protest, roads closed by riot police ahead of protests, a homeless man begging for money to treat his brain tumor. Every day, it seems, the distress of five years of a brutal recession, massive unemployment and harsh European-imposed austerity seeps deeper into all corners of the Jewish community.

"I have parents who can't pay, or are missing or delaying payments," Kanellos said. "In many houses now only one parent is working, or those who had their own companies have seen them close. The situation is very hard."

Last year, only one child in the school received a full tuition subsidy. This year it's seven. "The next few years will be worse," Kanellos said. The school has begun providing some children with clothes to wear to school celebrations and paying for outside therapy for children with learning disabilities. Once-wealthy community members who used to pick up the slack now find themselves hard-pressed to pay for their own kids' education.

"People who could afford more are asked to donate, but most of the big donors we had in the past are now bankrupt," Taraboulous said. "They are totally broke."

The official Jewish community organization, which provides 40 percent of the school's budget, has seen its income drop sharply, too, in particular from rental properties the community owns. A few months ago, the community asked for help from Israeli and international Jewish groups. In February, the Jewish Agency for Israel voted to grant about \$1 million over two years to help Greece's Jewish communal institutions continue operating. Other Jewish groups have offered aid, too. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee gave \$330,000 for welfare and school scholarships.

"We hesitated to ask for assistance, but after doing all the cost-cutting we could, we decided we could not cut more without losing important things," Taraboulous said. "We decided the school should not suffer."

With no end in sight to the crisis, however, he fears the community may need to ask again. "Many Greeks gave a lot in the past to support Israel and other Jewish communities," he said. "Now is the time for the Greeks to get help. We need it, and we need it now."

I am passing on this e-mail received by Asher Matathias from Solomon Halegoua, General Manager of Restion (the Senior home outside of Athens):

From: info@resteion.gr

To: AsherJmat@aol.com

Sent: 6/25/2012 11:26:03 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time

Subj: From Restion the Jewish Elderly Home in Athens Greece.

Dear Mr. Matathia ,

My name is Solomon Halegoua and I am the director of Restion , Jewish Seniors Residence in Athens Greece.

I am on your mailing list so you keep my posted for different issues concerning Jews all over the world and I would like to thank you for that.

I am writing on behalf of Welfare Institution of Jews of Athens that "Restion" belongs to, a non profit making, charitable Jewish Elderly Care Centre, in Koropi, Athens in Greece. The Welfare Institution of Jews of Athens establish and opened our Centre 6 years ago and since then has provided exceptional quality care to the residents who have made their home with us. Our Centre was made possible by the generosity of the original Jewish Sponsors and donors and Claims Conference who were motivated by the dream of making a home where the Holocaust Survivors, now in their 80's and 90's, could be offered a dignified and positive environment with caring , specialized staff in luxury surroundings for their last years. This original dream has been widened to include all denominations and nationalities and a unique lively community has been created.



This community has however been threatened by the severe financial crisis that Greece is suffering and the future is now a serious jeopardy.

The crisis has hit the most vulnerable sector of society: the aged. Their pensions have been reduced, taxes on property have been increased and those who have tenants and are living off this income have suddenly found that their tenants can no longer pay their rent ; this has the knock-on effect that the residents can no longer pay their dues. Likewise for several of the residents their children are no longer able to assist and indeed are facing their own financial ruin. The staff have been doing what they can to save the Centre , including taking income reductions and delays in being paid but the Centre desperately needs funding and so we are asking you to please help us to keep the Centre open , to enable us to supplement those of the residents who need help and to continue with this immensely worthwhile endeavor.

We have a capacity for 75 residents and a break even target of 60 to 65 (which before the crisis we had reached) but now we have only 48 residents, several of whom are not able to keep up with their payments.

Athens Jewish Community is financing a small number of needy Holocaust Survivors but they are facing also great financial problems and they are unable to help us. Also the Central Board of Greek Jewish Communities are facing the same unpleasant situation.

We are hoping that the crisis will pass and our worries will be over but until then we are doing our best to keeping the home functioning for the 48 residents who would be devastated in their community was dispersed and they had to go elsewhere as they have to learn to love "Restion" and have grown to feel it is truly their home over the years they have been with us.

Please, would you like to inform us if there is any kind of financial help we can get from the organizations you are dealing with?

Sincerely Yours

Solomon A. Halegoua

Gen. Manager of "Restion "

For more information please contact me directly at info@restion.gr and moha@otenet.gr and please visit our web site: www.restion.gr

Our overall impression of Jewish Greece during this time of crisis was one of sadness. As soon as one began to talk about the financial problems and the uncertainty, a veil of sadness would fall over the faces of those talking. The rise of a neo-Nazi group that will now have a number of seats (thank G-d small) in the Greek Parliament, led one Greek Jew to simply state: "I am out of here. I will be damned if one cent of my taxes goes to pay for the salary of a Nazi." Most, though, will be staying and hoping that things will improve. Many, such as the elderly, have few options. They will stay.

Many thought we were crazy to go to Greece during these troubled times. We go to Greece every year, in good times and in bad. It was more important for us to be there this year than in previous years and although our group was small, every community we went to expressed their gratitude at seeing us. Do join us next year.

Veroia

State of Israel awards three Greeks who helped Jews during WWII



From left to right: Israeli Ambassador Aryeh Mekel, WWII survivor Simon Danieli, and the president of the Israeli Community of Thessaloniki, David Saltiel.

In a ceremony marked by great humanity, gratitude, pride and emotion, the state of Israel on Tuesday night posthumously bestowed the Righteous Among the Nations Award upon three Orthodox Christian Greeks who risked their lives to help Jews during the Holocaust. Hosted by the Municipality of Veroia in northern Greece, the ceremony was attended by Israeli Ambassador Aryeh Mekel, the president of the Israeli Community of Thessaloniki, David Saltiel, and Maurice Magrizos, the president of the Israeli Community of Larissa.

Those attending heard the chilling and touching testimony of 82-year-old Simon Danieli, who traveled from Israel to his birthplace in Veroia to thank the descendants of the people who helped him and his family escape Nazi persecution during World War II.

Danieli was 13 in 1942 when his family -- father Joseph, a grain merchant, mother Buena, and nine siblings -- fled Veroia to escape the increasingly frequent atrocities committed by Nazi forces against the city's Jews. They ended up in a small nearby village in Sykies, where the family

was taken in by Giorgos and Panayiota Lanara, who offered them shelter, food and a hiding place in the woods, helped also by a priest, Nestoras Karamitsopoulos.

The Nazis, however, soon stormed Sykies, where around 50 more Jews from Veria had also taken refuge. They questioned the priest about the whereabouts of the Jews, but when Karamitsopoulos refused to answer, they began raiding people's homes. They found Jews hidden in eight homes, and promptly torched the houses. They also turned their wrath on the priest, torturing him and pulling out his beard, according to Danieli.

The Danieli family survived, but when they returned to Veroia, the neighborhood where they had lived, the Jewish quarter known today as Barbouta, had been almost completely destroyed, and some 450 of their neighbors were gone, sent off for extermination.

The family later moved to Israel. Life, remembers Simon Danieli, was not easy there either. "It was a new state. There was a lot of unemployment and I took work wherever I could find it," Danieli said.

Eventually he was able to start his own business, but he never forgot Veroia and often traveled to the northern Greek city to visit his old friends and his old neighborhood.

"I was a boy when the Germans came and spread death," he said at the ceremony. "But I will always have gratitude and love for our three heroes."

The medals awarded to Giorgos and Panayiota Lanara, as well as to Nestoras Karamitsopoulos, were received by their granddaughters.

The Righteous Among the Nations Award has been bestowed on a total of 300 Greeks so far, most notably Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Damaskinos, and Angelos Evert, who was the head of the Greek police during the Nazi occupation.

ekathimerini.com , Wednesday June 27, 2012 (18:41)

Claims Conference Boosts Help for Greek Jews

By JTA

Published June 27, 2012.

The Claims Conference will significantly increase its aid to Greece's Jewish community in light of the country's economic crisis and the recent rise of a neo-Nazi party.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, which administers Holocaust reparations from Germany, said Tuesday it was increasing its assistance, giving \$272,000 for 2012 to the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece for social services to Nazi victims. This is up from \$86,000 in 2011.

Some 5,000 Jews live in Greece today. The prewar community of about 78,000, most of whom lived in the northern port city of Thessaloniki, was almost entirely wiped out in the Holocaust. Among them are over 500 Holocaust survivors, who have seen their living conditions and social services deteriorate rapidly as the country struggles with the fifth year of a harsh recession. Government pensions have been slashed, income from property rentals have fallen significantly and there have been steep tax hikes and price rises. At the same time, state social services and medical assistance have been significantly reduced.

"Today's economic crisis has made these survivors more vulnerable than ever, at a time in their lives when they most need aid," Gregory Schneider, executive vice president of the Claims Conference, wrote in a report on the new assistance.

"The Claims Conference is taking dramatic and immediate action to help ease their situation as much as possible and to prevent a crisis from becoming a catastrophe for this vulnerable population," he said.

The Claims Conference also announced that following the rise of the Golden Dawn Party – a fascist party with a Nazi swastika-like flag and Holocaust-denying leader –it would also fund an educational program on anti-Semitism for the first time in Greece.

Running on a populist, anti-immigrant platform, Golden Dawn won 18 seats in Greece's 300-member parliament in elections earlier this month.

An allocation of nearly \$120,000 will go to the Jewish Museum of Greece, which is establishing a program on anti-Semitism that includes a traveling classroom version of the museum's exhibit.

"For survivors in Greece, already grappling with the catastrophic consequences of the government austerity plan, the emergence of this party adds another dimension to the upheaval that has already made their old age more difficult," Schneider wrote.

Tour to Jewish Greece: 2012 (June 4-18)

This year's tour to Jewish Greece was a great success, especially in light of the economic conditions in Greece and hesitancy on part of many Americans to travel to Greece at this time. The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry, the sponsor of these annual tours, is committed to visiting Greece. Our group was smaller this year (only 11 in number) but our presence was greatly appreciated. We visited Salonika, Ioannina (stopping in Metsovo for lunch), Meteora, Athens and Chalkis, before embarking on a 4 day cruise that took us to Mykonos, Ephesus, Patmos and Santorini. If you wish to join us in the future, get on our mailing list (kehila_kedoshajana@netzero.net).

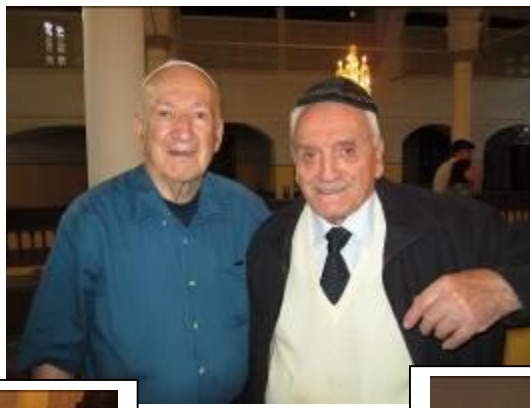


Dinner in Salonika joined by members of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki



Elias Matalon takes the group to the Ouziel neighborhood in Salonika

Marvin Abraham and Samuel Cohen reconnect



Dinner at Gostijo Sephardi Kosher Restaurant in Athens



Chaim Ischakis blows the shofar in the Synagogue of Chalkida



Chalkis-Statue of Mordechai Frizis



Mykonos-in front of statue of Bouboulina

Athens now has a kosher Sephardi Restaurant: Gostijo, located at 10 Aisopou Street in Psiri Athens (tel: 210-3233825 e-mail: kosher@otenet.gr; website: www.gostijo.gr)

Our group enjoyed the restaurant and for those who observe kashrut, it was a comfort to know they could eat everything on the menu, including meat!

Ricky Vidal who manages
Gostijo



Shalom to one and all!

Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



Some of Jewish history's most tragic and sorrowful events occurred during the three-week period between the 17th of the Hebrew month of Tammuz and the 9th of the Hebrew month of Av, including the destruction of the First and Second Temples and Jerusalem, the deadline for Jews to leave Spain as decreed in the Edict of Expulsion in 1492, and the start of World War I, which for world Jewry turned out to be just a prelude to the ultimate nightmare and incomprehensibility of the Holocaust.

Therefore, both of these days are fast days: the 17th of Tammuz is a 12-hour day-long fast, which commemorates the beginning of the end of Jerusalem and the Second Temple with the breach of Jerusalem's walls and defenses by the Roman legions in 70CE, and the 9th of Av is a more severe 25-hour fast and day of mourning (with all the stringencies and prohibitions of Yom Kippur), when the Temples were actually destroyed and the Jews exiled. Throughout the interim 3-week period between these two especially tragic days, Jews traditionally follow certain customs of mourning that gradually increase in intensity from the 17th of Tammuz till the 9th of Av itself.

Besides fasting for a full 25 hours (nightfall to nightfall) on the 9th of Av and personal expressions of mourning, even the synagogue and prayer services take on the characteristics of mourning and sorrow: In many synagogues prayers are conducted under very reduced lighting, and even by candlelight; worshippers often sit on the floor, and the prayer and Torah reading "bimah" -platform and even the Holy Ark are draped in black; the Hazzan (cantor) does not lead the prayers from the bimah, but rather from wherever he is standing, and more. The book of Lamentations is read aloud at night, followed by a series of "kinot" –dirges, which are also read in the morning. Most of these dirges were composed by Rabbis, poets, and even laymen in both Sephardic and Ashkenazi lands, in memory of the destruction of the Temples and Jerusalem, but

often contain much more contemporary material, since many of the authors were eye witnesses and often survivors of some of the most horrible massacres Jews have ever suffered. Thus, many originate in the time of the First Crusades (11th century), when entire communities of Jews were mercilessly annihilated in France and the Germanic lands along the Rhine valley, while others refer to the expulsion of the Jews of Spain and the horrors and wrenching tragedies of the subsequent starvation, murder, torture and enslavement of so many Spanish exiles as they struggled to find safe havens in other lands. And still other dirges, especially in the Sephardic rite, focus on the contrast between Israel's days of glory and anticipation of redemption and the horrors and harsh realities of exile, persecution, degradation and destruction of Jewish life and lives. One particular poignant dirge of this genre, recited on the night of the 9th of Av in Sephardic synagogues, is called "Mah Nishtana?" [What is different?], based on a striking comparison of the joyous rituals of Pesach and its theme of redemption, to the rituals of mourning and gloom of the 9th of Av.

Yet within this tragic context, mandated by the necessity to remember our past and the martyrdom and sanctity of millions of Jewish souls throughout history, an element of happiness is also part of the 9th of Av ritual. Jewish tradition teaches that the Messiah will be born on the 9th of Av, and that this most tragic day in the Jewish calendar is destined to become a joyful holiday in Messianic times. We therefore also incorporate this element in the day's customs by not saying any specific penitential/confessional prayers on the 9th of Av as a sign of our belief and confidence that God will keep his promise and covenant with the Jewish people and bring us the Messiah and the final redemption. Furthermore, as the day of the 9th of Av progresses, we gradually leave our full state of mourning, and by the afternoon prayers, we return to our seats and remove the symbols of mourning from the synagogue. Sephardim even add a series of prayers and songs of comfort ("Nahamu, Nahamu") as further testimony to our undying faith in God and His commitment to the eternity of the Jewish people. Ultimately, in many ways, the 9th of Av is also the ultimate symbol of one of Judaism's most precious and unique tenets: Never lose hope!

Kehila Kedosha Janina was very fortunate to be visited by two women of Yanniote background (Jackie Cohen and Leah Matsil), as they were preparing to write articles for a local New Jersey newspaper highlighting Jewish foods from around the world. Jackie shared her article with us and our feeling is that a series of columns such as this could well be the basis for an excellent cookbook. Send us your recipes in this format. (note: we will publish Leah's article in the next issue of our e-newsletter.

Comfort food and memory
Jackie Helfand Cohen



The writer's grandparents, Mollie and her husband, Morris Isaac.

To this day, I always feel special when I tell someone that I am a Greek Jew. It was, to my mind, unique to my extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins and second, third and "once removed" cousins. I would meet other Jews, but never Greek ones. (Meeting Leah in my forties at Gerrard Berman Day School was like meeting a long lost cousin!) Once a year, we would all go for a "Greek" weekend to the Saltz Hotel in Mount Freedom. The food was typical "Catskills" cuisine,

but there would be a Greek band, and lots of Greek dancing with my father always leading. All eyes were on him and I was so proud that he was my father. If someone didn't know who I was, I always just said "Jack Cohen's daughter," and it somehow put me in an elite group.

We did not belong to a synagogue, and we were not observant but for a Passover seder every year with 15 of my cousins. Being Romaniote, Greek, my parents never felt at home in an Ashkenazi synagogue. In some ways, the Jews didn't think we were Jewish, and the Greeks didn't think we were Greek.

My grandmother Mollie lived across the street with my aunt, and everyone cooked. I remember tomatoes stuffed with meat and rice, zucchini with tons of oil cooked in enamel pots, fasoulakia (string beans), and fasoulia (white beans), with chunks of meat. Bizelia (peas) with chicken in a tomato sauce was a favorite. My mother made bourekia with phyllo dough filled with spinach or cheese (always eggs and farmer cheese). We would make hundreds for parties. Farmer cheese and eggs would be mixed with flour and fried in oil to make pancakes called singatu. And again farmer cheese, eggs, and eggplant for patrigian. My mother also made tomato soup with orzo called bigeles, which to this day is the definition of comfort food to me.

Two desserts stand out for me. Crunchy cookies called clouthia that we made with oil, not butter (to keep them pareve) and a sweet custard called galaptopta. My father's mother made galaptopta every Friday. He and his brothers would go out after dinner and when they would come home, late, each would dip a spoon into it the pot. By morning nothing was left!

My most prized family recipe is for caltzonia, little halfmoon shaped pastries, made with a very simple dough and filled with either farmer cheese filling, or spinach or meat filling. My grandmother Mollie would make them occasionally, four for us and four for my aunt's family – even though we had five people and they had four – I feel the unfairness till this day! They were coated with oil, and always a little overdone so the corners (my favorite part!) were extremely crunchy. I called them "cheese buns," and enjoyed them for breakfast. My grandmother was "off the boat" Greek even though she had lived in the U.S. since she was sixteen. She was the epitome of unconditional love, sweet and adorable, and represented, along with my other grandparents, our "special" background – we were Greek Jews! It made us different and exotic and unique. My grandmother died thirteen years ago at 97 years old, blessed with relatively good health and a sharp mind until the end.

Neither my mother nor my aunt ever made caltzonia. After I moved out of the house, I went years without tasting them until I started questioning my mother's scattered cousins for the recipe. Her cousin Julia, who at this time was in her eighties, sent me the recipe written out on index cards and complete with hand drawn diagrams. The first time I made them, I cried. In each bite was my childhood, my special Greek Jewish heritage, my grandmother's hug. Now I make caltzonia with my daughter, Carly, and it has become the link between her and the "nonna" she never got to know.

Caltzonia

Dough:

Dry ingredients:

3 cups flour

1 teaspoon salt

Wet ingredients:

1/3 cup oil

2/3 cup cold water

Mix all together. It may need more water to hold together

Filling:

1/2 pound farmer cheese

1/4 lb. cream cheese (I use feta cheese)

2 eggs

Salt and pepper to taste

Roll out dough and use small plate to cut out circles (around 7 inches round). Place 3 tablespoons filling in the center and bring ends together to form crescents. Twist the ends to close tight. Place on oiled cookie sheet, oiling caltzonias on both sides.

Bake in 375 degree oven, lower rack at first, and higher rack, after bottom is browned.

Mollie's caltzonias recipe was a favored family breakfast.

This year Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum was honored to be included in the 8th International Conference on the Holocaust at Yad Vashem. There were 362 participants from 54 countries and our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, made important connections linking us to Jewish and Holocaust Museums in Turkey, South Africa, France, Russia, Venezuela and Argentina and educators throughout the world. Unfortunately, there was an upsetting aspect to the conferences: misinformation about the Holocaust of Greek Jewry presented by scholars who should have known better. This just re-enforced the need to have our story out there and re-confirmed the commitment to publish additional original source material on the Holocaust of Greek Jewry.



Michael Berenbaum



Anna-Maria Droumpouki and Professor Hagen Fleischer



Laura Zelle and Marcia Haddad-Ikonomopoulos



Panel for Museum Directors

Leka Rezniki from "Besa" organization telling the story of Albanian Righteous.

Note: for more information on Besa and its search for Albanian Righteous, contact us.



Requests

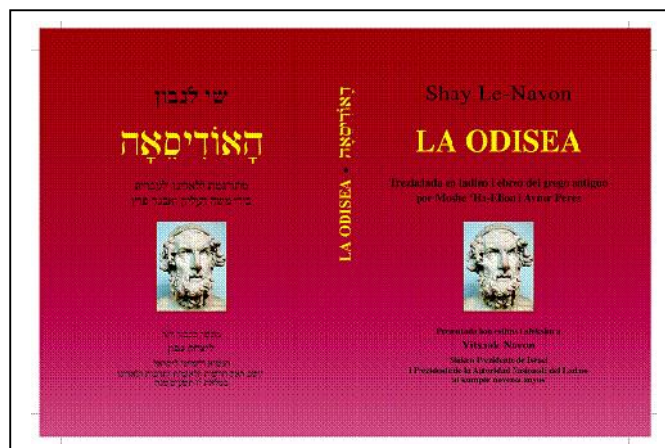
Marcia, how do I contact Isaac Mizan (from your article)? My uncle was Abraham Mizan. Have a wonderful time in Greece. One day, I will go with you with my wife.

Adam Mathios

For those interested in purchasing LA ODISEA (The Odyssey) by Moshe Ha-Elion and Avner Perez (translated into Ladino) send a check (32 euros if mailed to Europe or \$44 if mailed to the USA). Postage is included.

Mailing address for all orders (whether paid for in euros or dollars) is:

Instituto Maale Adumim POB 35 Maale Adumim ISRAEL



THESSALONIKI, Greece — Archaeologists in Greece's second-largest city have uncovered a 70-meter (230-foot) section of an ancient road built by the Romans that was city's main travel artery nearly 2,000 years ago.



The marble-paved road was unearthed during excavations for Thessaloniki's new subway system, which is due to be completed in four years. The road in the northern port city will be raised to be put on permanent display when the metro opens in 2016.

The excavation site was shown to the public on Monday, when details of the permanent display project were also announced. Several of the large marble paving stones were etched with children's board games, while others were marked by horse-drawn cart wheels. Also discovered at the site were remains of tools and lamps, as well as the bases of marble columns.

Viki Tzanakouli, an archaeologist working on the project, told The Associated Press the Roman road was about 1,800 years old, while remains of an older road built by the ancient Greeks 500 years earlier were found underneath it.

"We have found roads on top of each other, revealing the city's history over the centuries," Tzanakouli said. "The ancient road, and side roads perpendicular to it appear to closely follow modern roads in the city today."

About 7 meters (23 feet) below ground in the center of the city, the ancient road follows in roughly the same direction as the city's modern Egnatia Avenue.

The subway works, started in 2006, present a rare opportunity for archaeologists to explore under the densely populated city – but have also caused years of delays for the project. In 2008, workers on the Thessaloniki metro discovered more than 1,000 graves, some filled with treasure. The graves were of different shapes and sizes, and some contained jewelry, coins or other pieces of art.

We thank Rose Eskononts for the article above.

Now available for purchase:

"Empty Boxcars" by Ed Gaffney

"Gaffney's powerful film explores the dark side of Bulgarian anti-Semitism, as well as the saving of Bulgaria's 48,000 Jews. It is not a tribute to Bulgaria's role in the war. Former president, Petar Stoyanov, pays tribute to the role of certain Bulgarians in saving the Jews, declaring it to be Bulgaria's 'greatest contribution to European civilization.' Yet he also notes the 11,000 murders on the occupied territories (Thrace and Macedonia)."



Bulgarian roundup of Jews in Kavala- March 1943

King Boris & Adolph Hitler

Previously shown at the Sephardic Film Festival in New York, this film is now available through Kehila Kedosha Janina. For a copy of the film send \$25 (includes postage and handling within the continental USA) in a check made out to Kehila Kedosha Janina and mail to Kehila Kedosha Janina at 1 Hanson Place, Huntington NY 11743.

Update on status of Chrysi Avgi (Greek Neo-Nazi Party) that won a number a seats in the Greek Parliament: The Greek Parliament refused to grant Chrysi Avgi a deputy seat in the parliament, chosing to leave that seat vacant and go with 6, rather than 7, deputies.

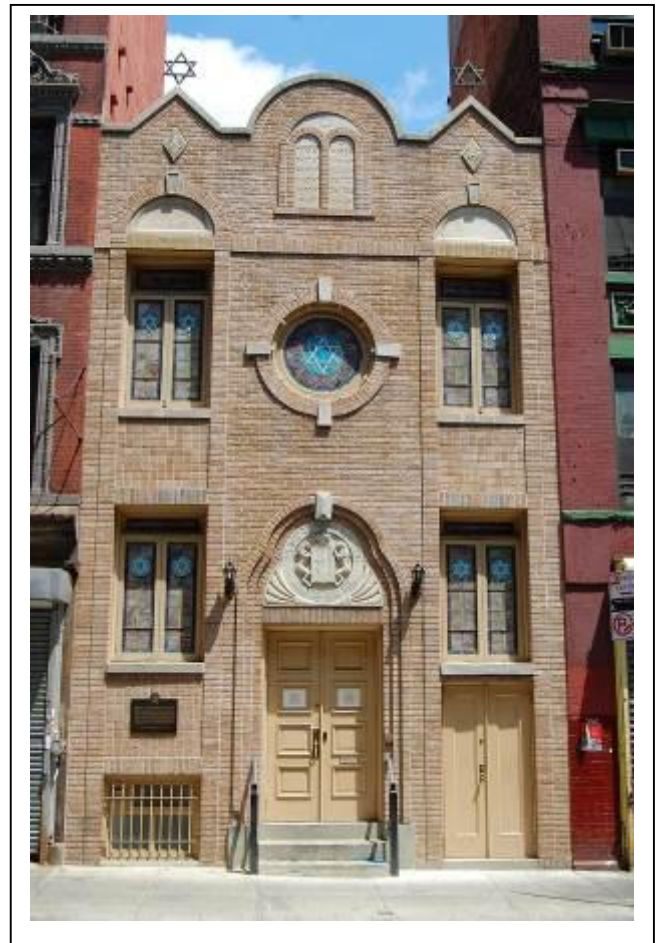
Websites of interest:

<http://hollandsheroes.com/2012/06/29/in-support-of-greek-jewry/>

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) 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 and all major Jewish holidays and our Museum is open every Sunday from 11-4 and, by appointment during the week.



Kehila Kedosha Janina e-newsletter: number 54: July 2012
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