2 pounds of beef or veal  
2 ripe tomatoes  
1 onion  
1 green pepper  
1 can of fresh tomato sauce 6-8 oz  
1 bay leaf  
1/2 of olive oil  
Salt and pepper

Tomato Orzo with Meat (Kreas me Kithrakes) by Fany Grin (Mauree’s Mom)

Cut the meat into serving portions and place into a roasting pot. Cut the tomato, onion, and green pepper into small pieces.

Add all of the ingredients above, including the tomato sauces and bay leaf. Add olive oil and pepper. Allow the dish to boil in medium to low heat until the meal is well done. When the meat is almost done, pour 4 cups of hot water, add 2 cups of orzo pasta and stir it until it is done. Add salt when meat is done. Serve it hot and enjoy!

DONATIONS HONORING INDIVIDUALS

Morris & Rebecca Cantos, Rosalind Cohen, Jessica Esser, Michael Esser, Joseph Esser, Irving Kaye, Rachel Kaye, Sarah Josephs, Irving Kaye, Rachel Kaye, Sarah

J. Isaac, Beatrice Jacobson, Jack Jacobson, Hazan, Max Honan, Sarah Honan, Hanen Sabetai Gadol, Arthur Gaines, Rebecca

Becky Besso Douek, Dorothy Elison, Elias Elliot DeCastros, Rosina Moses Demaios, Colchamiro, Spiranza Colchamiro, Esther


FAMILY

We mourn the passing of the following persons:

Gemeria Bulgaria, Abe Battino, Daryl Battino, Manny Battino, Esther Askinazi Baum, Moses Berchadnyusk, Julie Benjamin Blank, Jeryn Bender, Ve Caledin, Manny Avram Cantos, Dorothea Capron, Murray (Motsi) Cohen, Anna Dauts, Becky Besso Douek, Florence

From Generation to Generation

So often we are asked the question, “How do we ensure that our traditions and customs are passed on to the next generation?” This is a challenge faced by all communities. Our challenge is made even greater because of the fact that we are few in number and so distinct. Nowhere are we more aware of this than in our weekly services, when we often struggle for a minyan. In recent years, a promising sign that we do have a future are the younger members of our community who have absorbed the traditions and customs, and not only attend services on a regular basis but step often up to the beima to help. This is especially highlighted during the High Holidays when Andrew Marcus, his brother Ethan and Seth Koban share in blowing the shofar, a symbolic call of spiritual reawakening. Just recently, Andrew Marcus became our newest member of the Board of Directors, ensuring that our traditions and customs are being passed on to the next generation.

We are fortunate in that our founding fathers had a very clear idea of who they were and, although surrounded by Jews of other traditions, both Ashkenazi and Sephardic, were proud of their distinctive Romaniote traditions. Although they could have afforded any one of the hundreds of synagogues on the Lower East Side, they needed a place to hear their distinctive style of chanting, speak their Greek and eat their traditional foods at communal kiddushim.

They passed their love of who they were on to their children, and in turn, their children passed it on to theirs, ensuring that customs and practices would be “passed down” from generation to generation.

Life was much simpler then. The community lived close to the synagogue, making it easy to attend services. There were not the distractions of the outside world competing with their traditions and customs: no TV, iPads or smart phones, no one complained of long services. After all, what else was there to do on a Saturday when the whole community was gathered together in the synagogue?

Life is different now. The challenges are greater but, with your help, we will succeed. Support us financially and do try and join us for services. Your presence means so much to us.
Dear Friends,

As President of the Kehila, we had a discussion about receiving the Ten Commandments from Hashem at Mount Sinai. Our ancestors were told firsthand how they were to live their lives. It then became their responsibility to transmit this information to future generations. The Board of Directors of KJK and I have been given a responsibility; to perpetuate the liturgy and customs of Yanniote Jews. Although our Board is committed to the survival and continuation of our institution, we simply cannot do this on our own. We ask that you, descendants of the original founders from Janina (children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren), help us in our endeavor to ensure that our institution not only survives, but thrives in the coming years.

Join us in celebrating Shabbat and High Holiday Services as much as you can, experiencing the many traditional songs and liturgy unique to our people. Impress upon your children and grandchildren the importance of their heritage. Introduce them to our extended family; one that they may have never known existed. By doing so, you will help perpetuate your Greek Jewish roots. To our younger members, speak to the elders of your family and share the experiences of their youth. Time is fleeting. What wonderful things you will learn. We have a rich history most people are not aware of and you should find great pride in it.

We at Kehila Kedosha Janina hope to continue to share our special place in the Jewish world. Your support, whether it is by visiting the Kehila and participating in our services, or by donating in memory of loved ones and establishing long-term bequests, will help sustain us for years to come.

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year. L'Shana Tova, Chronia Polla and Muchos Anos.

Sincerely,
Marvin Marcus, President

The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry was founded in 2010 with the mission to organize Greek Jewry in the Diaspora to work on restoration projects in Greece. Aware how few we were in number, and how those who had immigrated to other European countries, Israel and the United States still preserved their local identities (Yanniot, Corfotes, Salonikis, Rhodeses, Kastorias, Kastorias, et al.), we had wanted to unite Greek Jewry to work together on projects that went beyond local affiliations. We have succeeded. A few of the many examples of joint collaboration were Yanniotis contributing to the memorial plaque in Corfu, Salonikis helping in restoration projects in Ioannina, and how all were involved in raising funds to help restore Eli Hayyim in Crete after an unfortunate arson attack in January 2010.

As part of our endeavor to create a community of Greek Jewry, we have published a number of books and have run annual tours to Jewish Greece, enabling interested individuals to learn about our little corner of the world and to enable Greek Jewry to reconnect with their roots. In June 2013, we celebrated a Bar Mitzvah in Ioannina (Max Abraham), and our tour in 2014 went viral and many people had to be turned away. Our 2015 tour is already sold out. If you wish to see the itinerary, access the Kehila Kedosha Janina website (www.kkjsm.org), and if you wish to get on our wait list in case of possible cancellations, e-mail us at friends_greek_jewry@netzero.net. Our tours are a perfect example of how we pass on our special culture to future generations. The 2014 tour included many multigeneration groups and the ages ranged from 25 to 82! Get on our mailing list to join us on a future tour.

We are proud of our work. The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry is proud that we have made a difference. Become a member of the Association (check off the box on the appeal your for further info) and join us.

Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, President

In the spring of 2011, our present exhibit, our most extensive to date, opened to a packed house. “Memories” tells the story of the world they left behind, the world they found here (especially on the Lower East Side) and the arduous journey over. It is truly the story of our community. We have found that this exhibit has, also, given us the opportunity to tell the stories of special individuals in our community. A central display case has been used to celebrate birthdays, memorialize lost members and gather families together for reunions to carry our story “from generation to generation.” Our present exhibit in this central display case was created by Evelyn Mordechai in memory of her mother, Esther Politis Mordechai, and has received such positive reviews that we have to hate part with it! It will, most likely, become a semipermanent exhibit.

The completion of our new community center and education center, made possible by a generous bequest from Dr. Ada Weintraub Finifter, granddaughter of Leon Colchirano, one of our founding fathers, now enables us to expand museum activities in our new space. Just since its opening, we have had book presentations, lectures, and film showings, making use of our new state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment. In addition, in what was once our “hallway,” and is now our “Gallery,” we can beautifully display additional exhibits. The present exhibit is that of the photos of Vincent Giordano, of blessed memory, photos taken of the synagogue in Ioannina, and who would have thought that our synagogue/museum would become a venue for concerts? But in the case of photos of years, we have successfully hosted Kol Dodi (three times!), Carol Freeman (performing rebetika) and, most recently, the Elias Ladino Ensemble. We have a wait list for future exhibits and future performers!

Our communal/education room now can also, display photos and, in March of 2014, on the 70th anniversary of the deportations from Ioannina, Volos and Athens, a photo exhibit opened with pictures of members of our own community who survived and went on with their life. Among those photos displayed are those of Maurice Negrin’s family. This year is also the 70th anniversary of deportations from Arta, Preveza, Rhodes, Corfu, Kastoria, Chalkis, Patras, Larissa, Trikala and Crete, and during the course of the year films will be shown remembering those who perished and celebrating those who survived.

Our Museum is visited by thousands throughout the year, coming from other neighborhoods in New York City, surrounding states, across the country, and other countries throughout the world. We were part of Lower East Side History Month and New York City Sacred Sites. All of these visitors are now part of our ever-growing extended community.

Our Museum publishes a monthly e-newsletter. If you do not yet receive this, contact us through our website (www.kkjsm.org).

As always, nothing could be done without the help of our volunteers and the support of our Board of Directors. A very special thanks to Sol and Koulas Kolmanis, who are always there to give of their time. As a display of how our synagogue/museum has installed a love of community and how this is passed “from generation to generation,” we now have an extensive list of new volunteers. Special thanks to Maurice Negrin, (son of Judy Asser Brown, grandson of Manny Asser and great-grandson of Solomon Asser). Of course, both Andrew and Ethan Marcus continue to be two of our most industrious volunteers, following in the footsteps of our President, Dr. Marvin Marcus. One of our new volunteers, Corrine Gittelman, may not have been born into this community, but her passion and commitment has made her one of our most valuable volunteers. Do come to visit us to see our synagogue and Museum. Become involved! Become impassioned!

Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, Museum Director

Message from the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry

Message from the Museum Director
L’Dor va Dor, in Hebrew, literally means from one generation to another. This is precisely what comprises Sisterhood of Janina. In 1932, Leon Golcharrio, of blessed memory, envisioned a philanthropic organization to augment Kehila Kedosha Janina’s spiritual contribution to the community. Thus, Sisterhood was created… thank you, Leon. We are at the 82-year mark of our existence, and very proud of what we have accomplished, and what we will in the future.

Our membership, currently at approximately 225, is comprised of many second- and third-generation women, some of whom vividly remember attending Sisterhood meetings with their moms, conducted in Greek! Imagine that! Today, we are an amalgam of Romaniote and Sephardim, dedicated to philanthropic and charitable causes. We, in fact, have some three-and more-generation members. I, for one, am one – my mother-in-law, of blessed memory, Tehru Haddad Ikonomopoulos, started it back in the beginning. Then 1, through the auspices of Mathilda Cossuto, became a member, at the unlikeliest of places – a Pasha weekend at the Raleigh Hotel in the Catskills! My daughter and my niece comprise the third generation of our family.

We have many such examples: the Solomon clan, Audrey and daughter and daughter-in-law, Edie and her daughter and daughter-in-law; Lillie Genee (OIBM) and her daughter, and daughter-in-law and granddaughters, Selma Matil-Gilberg and her daughter and niece; and the list goes on… who knows how many more? If you are of a generational family, please let us know.

Throughout the years, we have donated to the Sephardic Home for the Aged and are charter members, selling “bricks for a dollar” to fund the completion of the building, where many of our founding members resided for years. Our records show that Israel, Ioannina and Salonika in Greece were recipients of our members’ generosity… not to mention, of course, our own beloved Kehila Kedosha Janina. We’re looking forward to many more “generations” joining us in continuing the good work envisioned by our founders. Won’t you join us and become a generational family… mother, daughter, etc.

We welcome you with open arms. Rose Eskornots, President

CONTINUED RESEARCH ON ROMANIOTE IMMIGRATION

Our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, has been busy working on a book on Romaniote Jews in New York, hoping to fill a void in the literature on Greek Jewry. Researching different aspects of the immigrant story of this community has been very much a part of the project.

One question has already been answered: who was the first of the Yanniotes to immigrate to New York? This distinction goes to Zacharia Yomtov, arriving in the port of New York on a cold (15°F) winter day on January 11, 1899, with 20 dollars in his pocket, destination 11 Madison Street in Lower Manhattan. He left from Avlona in Albania and traveled to the USA on the SS California, leaving Naples in December of 1898. So many questions still need to be answered, especially, what made Zacharia leave in 1898 when most of the other Yanniotes did not leave until after 1902? Do you have immigration stories to share? Please contact us at: kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net.

Maurice Negrin is one of the youngest members of our Board of Directors, born in 1975 and, in many ways, symbolizes “from generation to generation.” Both of Maurice’s parents (Savas Negrin and Fan Vanni Negrin) were born in Greece, Savas (Steve) in Volos and Fani in Athens. Maurice, the son of Eleni Mosios and Esther Mosios, has two sisters, Kiri and Rachel Matza. Both the parents immigrated to America in the 1950s and settled on the Lower East Side. They settled on Delancey Street. In Maurice’s own words, “I grew up in a culture where real values, both family and moral, were more important than money, things and entertainment, something I think has become somewhat lost in modern society.”

The family moved to Queens, close to Astoria, and both Maurice and his older sister, Esther, found themselves torn between two worlds. “On most days I was a U.S. born Greek-American kid, would visit my Maltese grandparents in Greece during the summer, and was pretty well-versed in Greek language, culture, foods, dance, music, media and movies. My name, however, was Maurice Negrin and not ‘Nickolikis Stephanopoulos,’ and I did not celebrate a Greek name day, and somehow felt a little different from many of the other Greek kids. We did celebrate Christmas and Easter. On holidays, I was Jewish. We fasted on Yom Kippur, lighted candles on Hanukkah and eat matzah on Passover, but many times I felt a little different in Jewish circles. I was not Greek enough for the Greeks and not Jewish enough for the Jews, except when visiting my paternal grandparents’ synagogue (Kehila Kedosha Janina) on the Lower East Side.”

Maurice earned two degrees in Psychology from CUNY/Hunter College while working as a physical fitness trainer. After graduating, he worked with adults with developmental disabilities, doing testing, counseling and staff development. Eight years later, he returned to school with the New York City Teaching Fellows program and earned a Masters in Education for middle and high school at Queens College. He has since worked as a special education teacher and dean in a high school in Queens.

“The truth is growing up, I didn’t really know what a Romaniote Jew was. I didn’t really realize the uniqueness of it or how this little synagogue on the Lower East Side where my grandfather used to pray, and where my grandmother looked out from the balcony, was so special. Through a series of a few spiritual, devoted and God sent individuals, the Kehila Kedosha Janina stands today, and lives to tell the story of a culture and a people that history could have easily erased and forgotten. Today it is an inspiring museum and a functional synagogue, a time machine to a people and a culture of the past almost destroyed, but alive, as real as a picture, as real as a story, as real as the unanswerable questions.”

Maurice, thank you for your passion and commitment, and for carrying the flame into the next generation. We are truly blessed to have you on the Board of Directors of Kehila Kedosha Janina.