Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

As we approach the Jewish Holiday of Hanukkah, we, at Kehila Kedosha Janina, are grateful for our growth within our small Greek-Jewish world and the connections we have made to the outside Jewish and non-Jewish world. We are saddened by the increase in anti-Semitic acts here in the United States and throughout the world. In many ways, Hanukkah is an example of the ability of Jews to overcome persecutions. As a people, we will overcome. As a community, we will persevere. We are forever thankful for the support and love we receive. This love strengthens us and enables us “to go from strength to strength” (לעבאור מבו לולוות).

We wish everyone a Happy Hanukkah. May your candles glow brightly symbolizing hope and strength. We wish our Christian friends a joyous Christmas surrounded by family and love.

Hannukia from Ioannina (1868)
This newsletter, our 117th 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 have now reached over 10,000 households worldwide. What an accomplishment for a little synagogue on the Lower East Side of New York City. Our community of ‘friends’ continually grow with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at museum@kkjsm.org

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

Correction on last newsletter. In the references to the Solomon family, “Jerry” should have appeared after “uncle” to read as “sweet Uncle Jerry Solomon and his wife Janet.” Our apologies.

Passings

This month has been an exceedingly difficult month as we mourn the passing of seven members of the Greek Jewish world, four in Greece and three here in the United States. Four of those who passed were survivors of the Holocaust, two from the concentration camps who were born in and deported from Ioannina.

Iakovos Tepelenis (b. 1952-d. Nov. 3, 2018) Iakov was born in Ioannina. He leaves behind his wife, Anna and his two children, Isaak and Haim. We cherished the visit Iakov and Anna made to Kehila Kedosha Janina. Iakov will be missed. May his memory be for a blessing.
We mourn the passing of Rachel (Rene) Tiano, mother of Izzy Tiano and Nika Konstantini, mother-in-law to Lillie Magti Tiano, and grandmother to Galit and Salvator Tiano, along with a large and loving extended family. Rachel (Rene) was the daughter of Mois and Sarra Abastado and was born in Thessaloniki in 1925. She passed on November 1, 2018. The congregation of Kehila Kedosha Janina send their condolences. May her memory be for a blessing.

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We mourn the passing of Raphael Nachmias, husband of Nina Nachmias. Raphael was the son of David and Louiza Nahmias. He was born in Trikala in 1932. He is survived by his wife, Sarah (Nina), his children, David and Victoria and his granddaughter, Victoria Nachmia Kamchi.

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We mourn the passing of Bea Zagha at the age of 94 (born into the Sabba family on September 15, 1924). Bea was pre-deceased by her husband Eli and is survived by her son, Maurice, and daughters, Marilyn and Elaine, and a loving extended family. Bea was a lovely, gentle woman and will be missed by all who knew her.

Bea and Eli Zagha in Central Park, April 26, 1942, on the day of their engagement
We mourn the passing of Nina Negrin of Ioannina. Nina survived the concentration camps and bore the number on her arm (77160). Nina was born October 16, 1926 and left us on November 15, 2018, shortly after her 92nd birthday. Nina was born into the Matsa family of Ioannina. Born Sara (Nina) Matsa, the daughter of Jesouas and Mazalto Matsa, she was the widow of Alberto Negrin, and mother of Elias and Sakis. She is mourned by many of her extended family in Greece, Israel and the USA. May her memory be for a blessing.

Dora Dostis Cohen (May 25, 1921-November 19, 2018). Born in Ioannina. Survivor of the Holocaust. Dora survived but her widowed mother, Louiza (born into the Lagaris family) and one of her brothers perished in the camps, along with over 1800 other Yanniote Jews. Dora was predeceased by her husband, Louis Cohen and her son Jack. She is survived by her son Isaac and daughter Louise and their families. The New York Community of Kehila Kedosha Janina mourns her passing. May her memory be for a blessing.

These photos were taken at a hospital camp in Athens where they were placed after the war.
We mourn the passing of Elaine Moss Ioannou, wife of John Ioannou, mother of Dean and Allan and Grandmother of Sophie. Elaine was the granddaughter of Joseph and Esther Yohanan and the daughter of Sophie Yohanan and Al Moss. Elaine was very proud of her Greek-Jewish heritage and her early childhood on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.
Simchas

Congratulations to Byron and Irene Dresner (Mathios family) on their 62nd anniversary.

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Congratulations to Terry and Janice Solomon on their 40th anniversary.

On our tour in 2017

We are overjoyed to welcome all the new Romaniote babies into the Greek-Jewish world.

We welcome Anna Michelle Myones

Anna Michelle is the daughter of Adam and Jenna Myones, the granddaughter of Steven and Michelle Myones (of Blessed Memory) and the Great-granddaughter of Hyman and Becky Myones
Welcome Emma Rae Cantos, Isaac Kelton, and Anna Michelle Myones.

Proud parents, Zak and Holly Kelton

Emma Rae with big sister Ayle

Grandma Debbie Kelton (From Koryto and Matza families)

Matza family branch of Corito family (Ioannina 1912)

Corito Family (1912)
ΔΙΚΟΙ ΜΑΣ – Dikoi Mas – Los Muestros

Our synagogue is more than just a place of worship, and a place of study and learning, with our museum and extensive library. It is also a place to preserve traditions and customs and a living memorial to those Greek Jews who perished in the Holocaust. In addition, it as a place to welcome “Our Own.” Each month, Greek Jews, both Romaniote and Sephardic, come to visit the center of Greek Jewry in the United States, often the place their own ancestors worshipped.

In November, we were honored by visits from members of the Matza family, Andrea Assael, Barry Myones, Doris Abramson, and David Ischakis.
**Visitors Flock to Kehila Kedosha Janina**

This past November we had visitors from a synagogue in Philadelphia, Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan, along with numerous visitors from New York City, the tri-state area, the United States and elsewhere.

Freda Alexander with Camilla and Francesco from Texas (originally from Brazil)

Ben Cohen & Friend from D.C.

Evan Misshula (family from Monastir)

Lee Gelber (NYC Tour Guide) and Anatasia (from Greece)
Past Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina

On November 18th, we were treated to a presentation by Elaine Freed Lindenblatt, author of “Stop at the Red Apple. Elaine is the daughter of the original owners and took us down memory lane in the 1950s and 1960s Catskills.

The author left us a limited number of autographed copies of the book ($20 plus postage and handling). Please email us at museum@kkjsm.org if you would like a copy.

On October 27th, our beloved Sol Kofinas became the first recipient of the Hy Genee Legacy Award. At the culmination of a beautiful Shabbat service and a packed house for our delicious Kiddush, Sol was presented with the award during an emotional service. Of course, it being Shabbat, photos could not be taken.
Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum invites you to a special program with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Romaniote and Sephardic Communities: Preserving History through Artifacts, Archives, and Research

Join us on Sunday December 9th at 2:00 PM
Kehila Kedosha Janina
280 Broome Street New York, NY 10002

Professional staff from the USHMM in Washington DC will join us in presenting their search for original artifacts from Romaniote and Sephardic Jews or their descendants who suffered displacement, persecution, or discrimination under the rule of Nazi Germany and its Axis partners between 1938 and 1945. They are looking for material that belonged to the victims and survivors that relate their stories, experiences, and histories.

Help us ensure that our story is told.

Please RSVP to Museum@kkjsm.org or 516-456-9336 Refreshments will be served
Upcoming Events in the New York Area

JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL

SEPHARDIC HANUKKAH PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9 • 4PM TO 6:30PM
ADMISSION $5 • RSVP 718-268-2100
67-67 108 ST. FOREST HILLS, NY

Join the Sephardic Jewish Center of Forest Hills Sisterhood and the Sephardic Brotherhood for an evening of live music, dancing, sufganiyot and Sephardic refreshments, menorah lighting, Ladino Refranes, and more!
Past Events of Interest

The Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professional Network hosted a fun day trip to Bear Mountain. They hiked up to the peak of Anthony’s Nose and enjoyed nature with great company. If you are in your 20s or 30s, email GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com to sign up for future programs!
News from Jewish Greece

Thessaloniki

Jewish Thessaloniki: A Story of Love Against All Odds. Full article from Greece-is.com available here.
By Amber Charmei | October 31st, 2018

Leon Perahia and Lina Capon never met in pre-World War II Thessaloniki, and they might never have, had it not been for the war.

When German troops occupied Thessaloniki in April 1941, the systematic persecution of the city’s Jews began almost immediately, eventually leading to their segregation into ghettos. In March 1943, the deportations began. Within a little over a year, a community that had been the cornerstone of Thessaloniki’s multicultural society for centuries was almost completely wiped out.

Leon Perahia was sent to Auschwitz. The Capon family was, at first, more fortunate; that same spring, as the deportations were in progress, Lina Capon’s sister, Alice, and her brother, Benjamin, were able to reach Athens, using false identities and various means of transportation. Lina and their parents, Hasdai and Vida, followed soon after.

The family first took refuge in an asylum by feigning insanity, as did some other Jews. They were betrayed, but when the police came, they were able to pay them off. Still, it no longer seemed safe, so they joined other family members already living in a villa that had been given to them by a business associate of Hasdai Capon. They lived there for nearly a year before being betrayed again.

Thirteen members of the extended family were deported, including Lina, her siblings and her parents. Their mother was killed on arrival at Birkenau, a fate that befell more than three-quarters of Thessaloniki’s Jews. Not long before liberation, Hasdai and Benjamin were sent to other camps, while Lina and Alice remained in Birkenau.
In January 1945, with the war’s end in sight, the Germans evacuated the death camps, hoping to kill as many Jews as possible by letting them die from exhaustion as they marched, before the Allies could reach them. When Birkenau was evacuated on January 18, Lina, feverish with typhoid, was in the infirmary. She fainted as they were being marched from the camp. A guard thought she was dead and kicked her aside. Alice was elsewhere and didn’t know what had happened to her sister. Hours later, Lina regained consciousness to find herself in an utterly deserted Birkenau.

Three kilometers away at Auschwitz, Leon and some friends had managed to hide during the evacuation. They had been factory workers, so they knew the camp’s layout and were also in fair physical condition. Armed with whatever they could find, they now took control of the camp where they were once prisoners, in case any Germans should return.

Two of the men, Jews from Holland, went to Birkenau in search of other survivors. They found Lina and told her there were other Thessaloniki Jews at Auschwitz. She gathered her strength, bundled herself in whatever she could find and set off with them through the snow, taking sips from a small bottle of Cardiazol—a heart medicine—to sustain her as she walked. When she arrived, she asked the prisoner-turned-guard, in German, if he knew where the Greeks were. He replied to her in Greek; the guard was Leon Perahia.

On January 27, the Russians liberated Auschwitz. They didn’t have the means to repatriate anyone, so the survivors were transported to the city of Chernivtsi (present-day Ukraine), where Leon and Lina fell in love. Six months later, they were sent by train to Bulgaria. Other Jews greeted them at the station offering soup and cigarettes. “Stay with us,” they urged them. “You won’t find any survivors in Thessaloniki.” But Lina and Leon could not be dissuaded; they still held out hope.

At a quarantine station set up near the Greek border at Sidirokastro, a woman from the Red Cross recognized Lina. She gave her excellent news: her father, brother and sister had survived. Alice had reunited with Benjamin at Bergen-Belsen, and their father had been liberated at Gross-Rosen; they had been living at home together in Thessaloniki for months.

Lina’s family had, for some time, been certain that Lina had died, after a woman from Thessaloniki had told them she had seen Lina being tossed aside as they were being marched from Birkenau. They had even said the Mourners’ Kaddish for her. The miraculous news was sent to them at once: Lina was alive and would soon return to them.
By June 1945, the Capon family had returned to their old rented apartment. Most of the city’s Jews were not as fortunate. Over 95 percent never made it back, and for nearly all of those who did return, there was no home to go back to: after the Jews were deported, the authorities redistributed most of their houses to refugees from Asia Minor and to those fleeing the violence in Thrace. With so many homes gone, communal housing was arranged in the buildings that were still at the disposal of the Jewish community. Leon, who had also lost his family home, was housed in a synagogue.

Back in Thessaloniki at last, Lina and Leon wished to marry at once. However, they met with a new obstacle. Lina’s father withheld his permission; there was, after all, still their difference in social class (the Capons were from a privileged class; the Perahias were not). And as it turned out, her father’s refusal wasn't the only obstacle. No sooner was World War II over than the Greek Civil War, which had been brewing before the end of the German occupation, broke out in earnest. Leon was sent off to fight in 1947 and 1948. Some Jews perished in the civil war, but Leon came home safe. It was only after his return that Lina’s father was eventually persuaded to give his permission. In 1950, Lina and Leon were finally married.

Later in the 1950s, Leon and his brother, David, managed to reclaim their family home. They sold it, as David had decided to immigrate to the United States. Although Greece was the first country to pass a law allowing Jews to recover their properties, in practice, tracking down property deeds was difficult and costly. This led many other Jews to make fresh post-war starts elsewhere, some in the part of Palestine that would become the state of Israel in 1948, others in destinations closer to home, including Athens, feeling there was nothing left for them anymore in Thessaloniki, and yet others on distant continents. Leon also thought of building a new life in Israel, but Lina wouldn’t hear of it. Being reunited with her family was a miracle, and it would have been unbearable to be parted from them again. Hasdai Capon lived with his daughter and son-in-law for the rest of his life; he was there when the family welcomed his granddaughters, part of a new generation of Thessaloniki Jews, into the world.

*This story was narrated to the author by Lina and Leon’s daughter, Erika Perahia Zemour, who recently retired from the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.*
On the occasion of this year’s Italian chairmanship of IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance), the Italian Embassy in Greece, the Municipality of Trikala, the Greek Delegation to IHRA, the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece and the Jewish Museum of Greece, with the cooperation and support of the Jewish Communities of Thessaloniki and Trikala, the Italian School of Athens and the Tsitsanis Museum co-organized commemoration events in the city of Trikala from 9-11 November 2018.

The city of Trikala honored its 139 citizens of Jewish faith who perished in the Nazi concentration camps by unveiling a tear-shaped Holocaust Memorial in a ceremony which was attended by Holocaust survivors, diplomatic representatives from 14 IHRA Member Countries, and representatives of Jewish communities from all over Greece.

The three-day event commemorating the Holocaust culminated in the unveiling of a carved symbolic monument. At the entrance of the old Jewish quarter of Trikala a tear formed by railway tracks with an olive in the center calls to mind the long deportation journey that Jews from Trikala and other Greek cities faced aboard the "death trains" on their way to the extermination camps. Only few survived, like 97-year-old Naki Bega, an Auschwitz survivor, and Victor Venouziou, a hidden child, who honored the ceremony with their presence. A marble column stands close to the monument with an inscription in three languages - Greek, Hebrew and English - to remind the city about the character of this Memorial and the duty of the society. During his speech on Friday 9 November, 2018, at the inauguration ceremony of the exhibition of the Jewish Museum of Greece entitled: "The Holocaust of the Jews of Greece 1941-1944, personal testimonies" at the Tsitsanis Museum, (to remain open till the 17th of November), Mr. Dimitris Papastergiou, Mayor of Trikala, said: "Close to the Lithaios river, the river of oblivion, we keep our memories alive". Mentioning the memorial, the Mayor emphasized the importance and symbolism of these tears for the perished fellow citizens and the important role the monument plays in bringing their memory back to Trikala.
In the same spirit, referring to the responsibility to remember the victims of the Holocaust, were the speeches of Mr. David Saltiel, President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece and of H.E. Mr. Luigi Marras, Ambassador of Italy to Greece. An emotional speech was also delivered by the President of the Jewish Community of Trikala, Mr. Jakob Venouziou,

The unveiling ceremony started with a memorial service (Ashkavah) held by the Rabbi of Larissa, Mr. Elias Sabetai and religious hymns sung by the choir of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki. At the end a tribute of a minute of silence was observed and then the Philharmonic band of the Municipality of Trikala played the Greek National Anthem.

During the main event held at the "Athanasios Trigonis" cultural center on Saturday, 10 November, 2018, all speeches addressed to the public focused on the need to stand united against any extremist ideology. Mr. Dimitris Papastergiou, Mayor of Trikala, Mr. David Saltiel, President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities, H.E. Mr. Luigi Marras, Ambassador of Italy in Greece, Dr. Efstathios Lianos-Liantis, Head of the Greek Delegation to the IHRA and Mr. Mikis Modiano, Vice-president of the Jewish Museum of Greece, addressed the audience.

At that same time an exhibition entitled: "The German Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz- Birkenau", organized by the Auschwitz - Birkenau State Museum, under the care of the Polish Embassy in Greece, was presented in the entrance hall of the Cultural Center of Trikala. The exhibition will remain open to the public until 17 November.

The main event also included a clip of the film "Kisses to the Children" by Trikala-born director Vassilis Loules, which focuses on the rescue of Jewish children by Christian Greeks. At the end of the evening, the Orchestra of the Municipality of Trikala presented a program of Greek composers based on the theme of the Holocaust.

Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece www.kis.gr

Corinthia

"The families of Athanasios Dimopoulos and Father Nikolaos Athanasoulis attended an event at Kryoneri in Corinthia on Wednesday that recognized the two men posthumously as Righteous Among the Nations for rescuing a Greek Jew, Rivka Kamchi, and her family from the Nazis during World War II."

The ceremony was organized by the Kryoneri community and the Embassy of Israel and was also attended by Kamchi and dozens of her relatives from Israel.

The title is awarded to those who helped Jews escape Nazi persecution by Yad Vashem, the Jerusalem-based museum and institute established to perpetuate the memory of Holocaust victims.
Cyprus

With Larnaca synagogue and museum, small Cypriot Jewish community has big plans
By Larry Luxner Full article in the Times of Israel here

LARNACA, Cyprus — Only 45 minutes by plane from Tel Aviv, the Mediterranean beach resort of Larnaca boasts the world’s closest functioning synagogue to Israel.

Home to 3,500 Jews, the predominantly Greek-speaking Republic of Cyprus is currently enjoying an unprecedented boom in Israeli tourism. And Larnaca’s newly inaugurated Jewish Community Center of Cyprus — located a few blocks from the town’s Byzantine-era Church of Saint Lazarus — doubles as headquarters of the island’s Chabad-Lubavitch network, which now has five branches throughout the country.

On September 13, Rabbi Arie Zeev Raskin dedicated the house of worship along with 200 Jews, as well as local government dignitaries, religious leaders and diplomats from 10 countries.

All watched with awe as the rabbi unveiled a World War II-era Quonset hut, similar to the kind the British used to house some 53,000 Jewish refugees in Cyprus between 1946 and 1949. Yiorgios Lakkotrypis, the country’s minister of energy, commerce, industry and tourism, the symbolically laid soil at the site of what will be the Jewish Museum of Cyprus.

“Many Cypriots have never visited Israel,” said Raskin. “They know it’s a holy place, and they know about Jerusalem and Nazareth. So this museum isn’t only for locals, but for Arabs too. It’s the only way for us to build a bridge to the Arab world, and definitely Arabs will come.”

The five-story museum, covering 300 square meters (3,230 square feet) of exhibit space per floor, will utilize virtual reality technology that lets a visitor “be in” and experience the holy sites of Israel, walk around the Cyprus internment camps and get a sense of the Nazi concentration camps where Jews were exterminated during the Holocaust. The building will boast 10 such virtual reality exhibits at a cost of 500,000 euro (about NIS 2.1 million) each. (Raskin declined to comment on how and by whom the new JCC and planned museum were funded.)

Also attending the inauguration was Larnaca Mayor Andreas Vyras, whose city of 70,000 is the third-largest on the island after Nicosia, its capital, and Limassol, its main port.

“The Jewish community is very active,” Vyras told The Times of Israel. “We already get a lot of Israeli visitors and investment, and we expect the museum will be a big tourism attraction.”

Expected to open by 2020, the project represents a total commitment of at least 9 million euro (about NIS 37.8 million) — all of it to be raised entirely by private, anonymous donations.

The building, whose entrance is designed to resemble the back of a man wearing a prayer shawl, will rise on a piece of land adjacent to the existing JCC, which contains a prayer sanctuary, a religious school, a kosher grocery, two restaurants and a hotel.

Among other things, the planned museum will offer visitors a glimpse of several rare 19th-century Torah scrolls confiscated by the Nazis and stored for decades at a Soviet military installation east of Moscow. The scrolls will be loaned to the museum, which was conceived of by Raskin and Sibyl Silver, director of the Cleveland-based Jewish Heritage Foundation. Raskin, interviewed at his synagogue office on Larnaca’s Apollodorou Street, said that despite the presence of 630 Jewish families (including 3,000 people) who live in Cyprus permanently, the island is home to only 25 families of Cypriot origin. The rest are mostly foreign business executives, along with a few elderly British citizens with relatives here.
“They find it a very welcoming country. It’s very peaceful and close to Israel,” he said. “With a British passport, you’re like a local. Here it’s more expensive than the Turkish-occupied area, but the cost of living is still half that of Israel — only 350 euro (NIS 1,470) for average monthly rent. It’s meshugeh [crazy].”

That could explain why so many Israelis business executives live in Cyprus from Monday to Thursday, then fly home for the weekend. Many work in the financial or gaming industry. (When asked, Raskin would not comment on whether the increasingly outlawed binary options companies are among them.)

Besides Israelis, Cyprus is also home to a smattering of Russian, French and American Jews.

“We have a daily minyan [prayer quorum] full of people in all the major cities,” said Raskin, 41, a native of Kiryat Malachi who managed a shopping mall in Ashdod before becoming a rabbi.

He and his wife, Shaindl, have been living in Larnaca for the past 15 years. They have eight children, four of them born on the island.

“All our Chabad branches are open to everyone. Here we see the love of Am Yisrael [the Jewish nation] big-time,” said Raskin. “Here we feel the legacy of the [Lubavitcher] Rebbe [Menachem Mendel Schneerson], who taught us that you cannot fight darkness with more darkness. Even the kitzonim [extremists] who come here on vacation change their views over Shabbos.”

Warm Israeli-Cypriot relations

Cyprus, with a population of nearly 1.2 million, has had a Jewish presence going back to Roman times, though for most of its history it has been relatively devoid of Jews.

Yet in the aftermath of WWII, some 53,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors hoping to immigrate to Palestine crowded into British internment camps in Cyprus, which until 1960 was a British colony. Some 2,200 Jewish children were born in those camps between August 1946 and February 1949, when they were closed.

That experience will form the centerpiece of the museum, and will tell the stories of people like Prodramus Papavassilious, a Cypriot businessman and customs agent who defied British colonial rule after WWII and risked his life to help smuggle Jews to Palestine.

He would never talk about his illegal activities,” said his son, Christakis Papavassiliou, managing director of Shoham Cyprus Ltd., a shipping company in Limassol. “My father was an active trade unionist before the war, and my father joined the Cyprus regiment of the British Army in 1942. But after the war ended, the British themselves created camps for these same people they fought to rescue.”

Among other things, the elder Papavassiliou — who died in 2006 — helped Jews escape the detention camps by digging tunnels under the barbed wire fences surrounding them. He was also in charge of one clandestine operation to smuggle young Jews out in wooden crates and transport them to waiting ships on the coast.

Earlier this year, the city of Haifa honored Papavassiliou by naming a square, Kikar Papa, after him. The inscription on the memorial reads: “A Greek Cypriot and a brave humanist who risked his life helping Holocaust refugees who were deported to the detention camps in Cyprus during 1946-49. Recipient of the State Warriors Decoration and the Carmel Award of Merit.”

Today, the vast majority of Greek-speaking Cypriots practice Orthodox Christianity; besides Jews, the island is home to small numbers of Armenians, Latins and Maronites.

Jewish life centers round the five Chabad centers. Besides Larnaca, there are also synagogues in Nicosia, Paphos, Limassol and Ayia Napa.
Cyprus also has three kosher hotels — an important consideration, said Raskin, given that one-third of the Israelis who visit the island keep kosher. But because of complicated European Union regulations, Raskin may not import kosher beef or chicken from Israel. Rather, he has to buy those products from suppliers in Belgium, Poland and other EU member states.

Kosher wine is available locally, however, and Cyprus is the only country in the world — other than Israel itself — whose wine is specifically mentioned in the Talmud. Raskin supervises production of the Ya'in Kafrisin (Cypriot Wine) line at the Lambouri winery near Limassol. The changing political landscape has also boded well for Israeli-Cypriot diplomatic ties.

"I remember the previous governments of Cyprus. They did not have a good relationship with Israel," Raskin said. "They were communists and sided with the Arabs. They didn't even attend Yom Ha'atzma'ut [Israeli Independence Day] celebrations. But this government is building relationships on a daily basis. We see progress at all levels."

The progress is also seen by Thessalia Salina Shambos, Nicosia's ambassador in Tel Aviv for the past three years. She said her country's ties with Israel have warmed considerably in light of Israel's strained ties with Turkey, which has occupied 37 percent of Cyprus ever since its 1974 military invasion of the island.

"When Israel signed the normalization agreement with Turkey back in 2016, one main variable was that the strategic value of the Cyprus-Israel relationship should be left intact," said Shambos. "Cyprus and Israel share the same democratic values, we both have a Judeo-Christian background, and we see eye to eye on energy, security and defense."

Israelis flocking to Cyprus
In 1995, the year the Cyprus Tourism Organization (CTO) opened its office in Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center, just 30,000 Israelis boarded flights to the nearby island; at that time, the only airlines operating between the two countries were El Al and Cyprus Airways. But since then, a bilateral "open skies" agreement has reduced prices and expanded tourism dramatically — especially in winter months.

This year, more than 300,000 Israelis are expected to visit Cyprus by air, up from 265,000 in 2017. El Al, Cyprus Airways, Ryanair and Arkia all operate from Ben-Gurion International Airport, while Ayit offers charter flights to Larnaca from Tel Aviv's municipal airport, Sde Dov, and Tus plans flights from Haifa to both Larnaca and Paphos.

Among other things, the CTO managed to convince the Israel Travel Agents Association to hold its 2018 convention November 27-29 in the beach resort of Paphos.

"Here you don't have bombs going off, and you don't have crazy people driving on the highways," said Roland Wig, a Jew of Hungarian origin who runs the Lambouri Winery. "It's a very friendly country, and you don't even need to speak Greek."

In all, Cyprus receives about 3.5 million tourists annually. Included in that mix are thousands of visitors from Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. And during the 1980s, Cyprus was a nearby refuge for Lebanese fleeing that country's devastating civil war (Lebanon, incidentally, is home to Beirut's Magen Avraham Synagogue — which is closer to Israel than the Beit Chabad in Larnaca — but the newly restored synagogue doesn't hold active Jewish services).

Today, Israel and Lebanon constitute the island's main market for civil unions, which are recognized when conducted abroad but not performed in either country. In 2016, Cyprus authorities performed 7,169 such ceremonies, including many for Israeli same-sex couples, according to Nana Asmeni Pavlou, director of the tourist office in Larnaca, which hosted 39% of those ceremonies.

In fact, last year Israel ranked as the third-largest source of tourism to Cyprus, behind Great Britain and Russia — and ahead of Germany and Greece, according to CTO statistics. A good portion of these Israelis, however, are headed for casinos in the self-styled Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which enjoys diplomatic recognition by only one country in the world: Turkey.

Since no direct flights exist between Israel and the so-called TRNC, tourists must either fly from Tel Aviv into Larnaca and cross overland, or fly to Turkey, and from there to an airport in the north. About 40 casinos operate in the TRNC, though Cyprus recently approved casino gambling and now plans Europe's largest casino — the 500 million euro (roughly $567 million) City of Dreams project just outside Limassol.
Foreign tourists cross into the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, an entity recognized only by Turkey. Many Israelis flying into Larnaca continue on to the Turkish-occupied zone and stay in hotels there, in violation of Cypriot laws.

"I cannot tell you not to cross [into the Turkish-occupied zone], because obviously it’s not a different country," said Shambos. "We’re not going to stop you, but if you cross, you’ll be staying in expropriated Greek Cypriot property and supporting the Turkish Cypriot economy. That’s why it’s illegal to stay overnight in the occupied territories."

The ambassador added: "We’ve been stopping quite a few Israelis randomly. If you do that, you’re violating European and international law. You go at your own risk."

Raskin said he understands the emotions of Greek-speaking Cypriots when they encounter Israelis planning to gamble at casinos in the occupied north.

Trilingual sign in Turkish, English and Greek warns travelers to present their immigration documents or risk prosecution at Nicosia’s Ledra Street crossing to enter the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus — a territory which only Turkey recognizes.

"The travel agents are trying to sell tourism and casinos, and they are very aggressive, but when tourists ask if it’s a problem to visit the north, they say no. But people don’t understand the sensitivity," said Raskin. "I tell them, it’s like you’re landing at Ben-Gurion Airport, the authorities ask you where are you going to stay, and you say ‘Gaza.’ This is how the Cypriots look at it. This didn’t happen 2,000 years ago; it’s still going on. And they live the pain every day."

An abandoned Jewish cemetery containing 35 destroyed gravestones sits about 10 miles north of Nicosia, in the Turkish-occupied zone near Margo. Raskin has been there once to say the kaddish memorial prayer, but hasn’t been able to return since.

"We’ve tried several times, through the UN and through embassies and governments, to at least restore the gravestones, which are in pieces," Raskin said. "But we were turned away several times. There was nobody to talk to."

Today, the vast majority of Greek-speaking Cypriots practice Orthodox Christianity; besides Jews, the island is home to small numbers of Armenians, Latins and Maronites.

Jewish life centers round the five Chabad centers. Besides Larnaca, there are also synagogues in Nicosia, Paphos, Limassol and Ayia Napa.

Cyprus also has three kosher hotels — an important consideration, said Raskin, given that one-third of the Israelis who visit the island keep kosher. But because of complicated European Union regulations, Raskin may not import kosher beef or chicken from Israel. Rather, he has to buy those products from suppliers in Belgium, Poland and other EU member states.
On ‘Bureka Tuesdays,’ They Make Pastries the Way Their Grandmothers Did
By Joan Nathan Full The New York Times article here

Members of a synagogue in Atlanta come together to make the savory pocket pastries to sell at Hanukkah, as they have for decades.

Every Tuesday, the volunteers arrive at Congregation Or VeShalom, carrying aprons, pushing strolle rs or walking arm in arm. They find seats at tables arranged in an assembly line in the synagogue’s great hall and begin preparing the burekas, either making balls of dough for the traditional pocket pastries, rolling them out, or stuffing and sealing them with spinach and feta cheese.

Many call the gathering Bureka Tuesdays, and like the burekas themselves, it is a tradition; people have come together to bake at the synagogue for several decades, and in homes well before that. By the end of November, the group of mostly women will have baked more than 10,400 burekas this year, which they make according to recipes handed down from the grandmothers and great-grandmothers of synagogue members.

The burekas — with five different fillings, like spinach and feta cheese, or eggplant and tomato — as well as Sephardic Jewish sweets, like double-stranded cookies called biscochos, will be sold at the synagogue’s 43rd annual Hanukkah bazaar, which is expected to draw more than 1,000 people on Dec. 2.

Around 1912, a group of Sephardic Jews left Turkey and Rhodes, and many settled in the American South. Some made their way to Atlanta, and within a few years established Or VeShalom. They served the burekas for tea and for Saturday desayunos (meaning breakfast in both Spanish and Ladino, a hybrid of Spanish and Hebrew influenced by Turkish, Greek and Italian).

“Burekas were a piece of home that these immigrants brought with them,” said Adam Kofinas, the synagogue’s executive director. “Even today with all our technology, this is a link to our heritage. Machines could make the pastries quicker, but nothing matches handmade.”

The word “bureka” is the Hebrew and Ladino term for “borek” or “burek,” as the pastries are known in Turkey and the Balkans. The pastries come in many different forms today, made with buttered layers of phyllo dough, laminated doughs like puff pastry, or with an oil-based dough, as it’s done in this community.

On a recent Tuesday, Renee Galanti Feldman, 84, took a heaping teaspoon of filling and put it in the middle of a flat piece of dough. She moved her thumb and index finger to seal the bureka and then crimp the edges.

“The old ladies would tell us how to make the burekas uniform,” she said. “Now we are the old ladies, and we have a reputation and our heritage to protect and perpetuate.”

There have been a few changes to the recipe over the years: potatoes were switched to potato flakes, frozen spinach was substituted for fresh. But their dough is still made with White Lily flour and Mazola corn oil, and boiled twice.

Between the bazaar and special bureka orders, the synagogue made more than $50,000 in net proceeds in 2017. (Money is also raised from sales of “The Sephardic Cooks,” a spiral-bound cookbook first printed in 1971
that includes all the recipes made at the bazaar. The book sells for $15.) (Note: Kehila Kedosha Janina has the book in stock and sells it for $15 plus P&H)

“Coming every Tuesday is a commitment, but you get so much,” said Shelley Soriano Cooper, 61, as she rolled out her grandmother’s dough for biscochos. “We talk to the elders, we keep the traditions alive and we speak Ladino.” After baking, lunch was served to the 50 or so volunteers for $1 per person ($3 for those who just wanted to come to eat). Everyone received a flavorful but not-so-perfectly formed bureka, as well as salmon and quajado de spinaca, a Ladino dish that is a kugel-like casserole with spinach and cheese. The meal ended with a drawing for six reject burekas, not quite polished enough for the bazaar but fine to take home as a prize.

“It’s not about the people, it’s about the cohesiveness of the community coming together. It’s not about your or my burekas,” said Elise Meyer, the president of the sisterhood at the synagogue. “This year we made so many burekas we had to use the synagogue’s freezer and a caterer’s commercial freezer to store them all.”

Bureka Recipe

Burekas With Spinach or Eggplant Filling
Joan Nathan
Yield: About 20 burekas
Time: About 2 hours, plus chilling

These little pocket pastries are adapted from the ones made at Congregation Or VeShalom in Atlanta. The women there make theirs with oil, which is traditional, but this version with butter is more tender. The dough is easy to work with and the fillings are delicious on their own; use any leftovers in eggs for breakfast.

Ingredients
For the dough:
2 ½ cups all-purpose flour/320 grams, plus more for rolling the dough
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ pound/115 grams cold unsalted butter (1 stick), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
½ cup/120 milliliters ice water, plus more as needed
Egg wash (1 large egg mixed with 1 tablespoon water)
For the eggplant-tomato filling:
1 medium eggplant (about 1 pound/455 grams)
2 tablespoons olive oil

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1 small onion, diced (about 1/2 cup/115 grams)
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
½ cup/115 grams strained diced tomatoes (from a can)
¼ cup/25 grams grated Parmesan, plus more for topping
1 large egg, beaten
2 teaspoons all-purpose flour

Or for the spinach-feta filling:
1 package frozen chopped spinach (16 ounces/455 grams), defrosted and drained
¾ cup/115 grams crumbled strongly flavored feta cheese
½ cup/50 grams grated Parmesan, plus more for topping
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
1 large egg, beaten
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

Preparation
If using the eggplant-tomato filling, heat the oven to 425 degrees. Pierce the eggplant several times with a knife and roast on a parchment- or foil-lined baking sheet until the eggplant collapses and is completely soft, 35 to 40 minutes. When cool enough to handle, remove and discard the skin; transfer the flesh to a strainer to drain and set aside.

Make the dough: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, add the flour and salt and pulse briefly to combine. Add the butter and pulse just until the butter pieces are the size of peas. Slowly add the ice water and process just until combined. Form the dough into 2 disks about 1 inch thick, wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the oven to 350 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

If using the spinach-feta filling: In a medium bowl, combine the spinach, feta and Parmesan. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then add egg and flour.
If using the eggplant-tomato filling: In a medium-sized frying pan over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the onions, season with salt, and cook until beginning to soften but not brown, about 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and eggplant, breaking them up with a wooden spoon, and cook until the mixture begins to thicken and loses some of its moisture, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and remove from the heat. When the mixture has cooled, stir in the Parmesan, egg and flour.
Working with one disk of dough at a time, on a lightly floured surface and using a lightly floured rolling pin, roll out the dough into a circle about 1/8-inch thick or slightly thinner. Using a 3 1/2-inch/9-centimeter circle cutter, cut as many circles as you can from the dough.

Hold a circle in your hand and fill with 1 tablespoon of filling. Fold up the sides into a half-moon shape and pinch the edges closed to seal, crimping them if you like. Place the sealed bureka on the prepared baking sheet and repeat with the remaining dough.

Brush the tops lightly with the egg wash and sprinkle with a large pinch of grated Parmesan. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until the crusts are golden brown.
Portland, Oregon

13th Annual Sephardic Winter Film Series

Films shown SECOND TUESDAY each month at 7PM
SHOWING AT: 3225 SW Barbur Blvd. Portland, 97239
ADMISSION & SEPHARDIC DESSERT ARE FREE!
For Information call Ron 503-750-0888

December 11, 2018
English language, 85 minutes, Producer: Steve Rivo, Speaker: Prof. Laura Liebman

January 8, 2019
Trezoros: The lost Jews of Kastoria. Using never-before-seen pre-war archival footage and first-person testimonies, this film chronicles the Jewish life and culture of Kastoria, a lakeside village in the mountains of NW Greece. There, Jews and Greek Orthodox Christians lived together in harmony for more than two millennia until WWII, when the Jewish community was wiped out in the blink of an eye by the Germans. Trezoros (the Ladino word for Treasures) takes us from joyous pre-war years through the Holocaust.
English language, 87 minutes, 2018, Producer Larry Confino
Speaker: Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum NY.

February 12, 2019
A Woman Called Golda. PART ONE OF TWO.
Ingrid Bergman gives her Emmy Award winning performance of one of the most famous women in modern history. From Milwaukie, Wisconsin, she harbored an incredible dream to help the people of Israel build a new homeland. Through hardship, war, and countless sacrifice Golda survived to become Israel’s first female Prime Minister. Her stunning story reminds us of how one person can make a notable difference. An all-star cast of accomplished actors completes this film.
English language, 110 minutes, Color, Producer: CBS, 1982. Speaker: TBA

March 12, 2019
A Woman Called Golda. PART TWO OF TWO (also see above)
This feature is part two of a continuation of the feature film of Feb 12, 2019. 99 Minutes.
Ingrid Bergman gives her Emmy Award winning performance of one of the most famous women in modern history. From Milwaukie, Wisconsin, she harbored and incredible dream to help the people of Israel build a new homeland. Through hardship, war, and countless sacrifice Golda survived to become Israel’s first female Prime Minister. Her stunning story reminds us of how one person can make a notable difference. An all-star cast of accomplished actors completes this film.
English language, 110 minutes, Color, Producer: CBS, 1982. Speaker: David Tver

April 9, 2019
The Women’s Balcony. Discover Israel’s #1 film of the year, featuring a cast of Israel’s biggest stars! An accident during a bar mitzvah celebration leads to a gender rift in a devout Orthodox community in Jerusalem, in this rousing, good-hearted tale about women speaking truth to patriarchal power.
Hebrew Language, 96 minutes, 2016, Produced in Israel, Speaker: Judy Margles

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Estimados amigos:

It is my pleasure to invite you to attend the 6th Annual International Ladino Day at the University of Washington (December 5th at 7 pm in Kane Hall 130).

Our special guest, François Azar, a Judeo-Spanish activist and publisher in Paris, will make his U.S. debut to speak about his two collections of richly illustrated Ladino folktales. Moreover, Seattle’s famed “Ladineros” will present a reading of one of the tales—“The Jewish Parrot” (El Papagayo Djudyo).

It promises to be an entertaining and informative evening—the first Ladino Day to deal with the power of folktales, children and people of all ages as consumers of Ladino culture, and the visual arts. We will also explore the future of Ladino cultural creativity across the world.

Be sure to stay until the end: we will conclude with some Sephardic delicacies (such as those profiled in the New York Times yesterday).

For details and to register, click here. Please take a moment to register to ensure that you get a seat and that we have enough food!

Finally, as a sneak peak, I invite you to read two short pieces about François Azar and his work by our friend and collaborator Hannah Pressman:

“François Azar brings folktales and the French Sephardic revival to Seattle Ladino Day” (Stroum Center website)

“Ladino Day Turns to Storytelling—and to the Future” (Jewish in Seattle)

We in the Sephardic Studies Program and the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies are grateful for all of our sponsors that make Ladino Day possible: the Lucie Benveniste Kavesh Endowed Fund for Sephardic Studies, Congregation Sephardic Bikur Holim, Congregation Ezra Bessaroth, Seattle Sephardic Network, and the Departments of Spanish and Portuguese Studies, French and Italian Studies, Linguistics, and the Turkish & Ottoman Studies Program in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

We look forward to seeing you on December 5th! In the meantime, please be in touch with comments or questions. Please also visit the Sephardic Studies website and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Full information here.

Al vermos!

Devin Naar
Hanukkah will begin Sunday night, Dec. 2nd with the lighting of the first candle. The Talmud, in Tractate Shabbat, concisely describes what the holiday means:

“What is the reason for Hanukkah? For our Rabbis taught: On the twenty-fifth of Kislev [commence] the days of Hanukkah, which are eight, on which eulogies for the dead and fasting are forbidden. For when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils therein, and when the Hasmonian dynasty prevailed against and defeated them, they made search and found only one cruse of oil which lay with the seal of the High Priest, but which contained sufficient for one day's lighting only; yet a miracle was wrought therein and they lit [the lamp] with it for eight days. The following year these [days] were appointed a Festival with [the recital of] Hallel and thanksgiving.”

Yet the last sentence seems somewhat strange. Why did the Sages institute a holiday only a year after the actual events, and why not that year, while the Temple was being rededicated?

Apparently, the Sages were somewhat perplexed as to what exactly should be commemorated and how? Though the military victory of the Maccabees was indeed miraculous, the struggle actually began as a civil war between Jews who favored further Hellenization of Jewish life and those who fiercely opposed any denigration of Jewish law and life according to the Torah. This was certainly not something to be proud of, let alone perpetuate. A second point raised by the Maharal of Prague, was that a military victory could also be perceived as a total human achievement, with God's hand being forgotten. As for the single cruise of pure oil lasting eight days and the Temple's rededication, the fact is that the war had not yet ended, and though Jerusalem and the Temple had been liberated, there was still a possibility that the enemy could turn the tide, cancelling the significance of any perceived miracle. Yet these very reasons further beg the question: Why not institute the holiday immediately, thereby celebrating Israel's upper hand and God's intervention and help?

My brother-in-law, Rabbi Ari Kahn, in his book “Explorations” (Targum/Feldheim, 2002), suggests an innovative answer. The late Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik suggested that despite the probability that miracles were occurring, the people had yet to realize their significance, which is often the case with historic events as they unfold before our eyes. Only from a certain distance in time when we can properly analyze such events can we hope to understand and interpret them. Our Sages, then, felt that it might take some time to reflect and understand did this as well for the Hanukkah miracles, ultimately understanding their true significance by analyzing the events through the prism of previous “Hanukkot” – dedications – in Jewish history.

The first was that of the portable Tabernacle – the precursor to the permanent Temple – in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt. As described in the Book of Exodus, the fire of God came down and consumed the sacrifices offered in honor of the occasion. This was a clear and tangible sign of God's presence. Likewise, there were times when even Moses could not enter the Tabernacle, because the “Cloud of Glory” – God's spirit – filled the entire structure. The fiery light that descended was the joyous confirmation of God's presence. An almost identical scene is described at the dedication of the First Temple, built by King Solomon, in the Second Book of Chronicles: a Heavenly fire comes down and consumes the sacrifices, and “the glory of God filled the house”. God Himself descended into the midst of the people and demonstrated his presence in a glorious way.
There was also a third dedication in Jewish history, which was that of the Second Temple, which was rebuilt by Jews returning from the Babylonian exile by permission and blessing of the Persian king Daryavesh. The Book of Ezra describes a wonderful, joyous and impressive ceremony, with sacrifices being offered, Passover celebrated, and dancing and singing by the people. Yet in the description of this dedication, one thing is noticeably absent: Any mention of any cloud, fire or light descending from Heaven! Where was the Godly presence? It was not there, at least visibly, and this was very disturbing to many: “...Many of the priests and Levites and chiefs of their fathers’ houses, old men who had seen the First Temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this [the Second] Temple was laid before their eyes.” Why were these elders sad? Apparently, as opposed to what they or their parents had seen at the dedication of the Solomonic Temple, the Divine Glory was not there. Unfortunately, the majority of Jews chose to remain in Babylonia, notwithstanding Daryavesh's permission, recommendation and even help to allow the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild God's sanctuary! God was obviously unhappy and perhaps even angry at this situation, and showed his displeasure by not manifesting His presence with the same spiritual dimensions as before.

Since this was the Temple of the Hanukkah story, the Sages noted the blatant absence of God’s Divine presence at the original dedication, and reflected back at the miracle of the single cruise lasting eight days. They then understood what that miracle signified: Though not as dramatic as the previous dedications, the miraculous daily replenishing of the oil and the daily lighting of the Menorah was the Divine Light missing. It was obviously a sign of God’s presence – which had not occurred at the original dedication. The daily replenishment of the oil was God’s way of showing the return of His presence and Divine light, which was so conspicuously absent at the original dedication of this Temple. In fact, perhaps this rededication was the true dedication, with God's presence being manifested in the miraculous light of the Hanukkah candles. No wonder then, that another name for Hanukkah is "The Festival of Lights" – God's light as it were! That is certainly a reason to celebrate and commemorate Hanukkah, not only then, but certainly today as well. Happy Hanukkah!

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**Request for Research Help**

**Romaniote and Sephardic DNA Research Project**

From Barry Myones

I am the administrator for a large family database with many DNA kit numbers crossing multiple families. Currently, we have almost 12000 individuals documented in our family tree and over 4 dozen DNA samples from pivotal persons in the FamilyTreeDNA.com database. These include members of the Mioni, Abdala, Kofinas, Negrin, Matza, Zaffos, Cantos, Naphtali, Koen, Elhai, Solomon, Dostis, Lagary, Mizan and other families.

I have worked with Jonathan Alcantara, the administrator of the Romaniote project at FamilyTreeDNA. I have also worked with Isaak Dostis in Ioannina and Mike Matsas in Rockville and Leon Taranto on deciphering our history. I have also recently started a collaboration with Theocharis Vadivoulis of the Jewish Community of Arta.

I have just been approved for a new project entitled “Hellenic-Sephardic Migration project” at FamilyTreeDNA. The goals are a little different (emphasizing migrations) but complementary to the Romaniote project and many members will belong to both. The invitation from the home page is below:

"You are invited to join the Hellenic-Sephardic Migration Project My goal in managing this cohort is to track the migration of our Hellenic-Sephardic ancestors across globe from the time of expulsion from Spain in 1492 (Spanish Inquisition), expulsion from Italy by 1540 (Italian Inquisition), and exodus from Greece in the early 1900’s (famine and wars). While the gene pool and cultures mixed to some extent with existing Greek-Jewish (Byzantine-Romaniote) settlements, many Sephardic traditions and language patterns were preserved. This
depended to a large extent on the number of generations the genetic pool remained in the same geographical area. More rapid migrations eastward coincided with preservation of language, culture and gene pool. Some of these migration patterns indicate northerly movement into Eastern Europe and areas in the Ukraine. You are invited to join even if you are unsure of your background. This site will include those of Sephardic, Romaniote, Mizrachi and Eastern European-Balkan Jewish heritage. As a geneticist, I am acutely attuned to issues of privacy and as such the website filters are set to display only ancestral information on the maps. Your name and kit number(s) will remain confidential.”

We have utilized FamilyTreeDNA for our studies. Why? The FamilyTreeDNA platform is the most extensive on the market and they have the most sophisticated chip. They basically started the industry and have the most experience. They do other tests than autosomal DNA such as Y-chromosome (which they developed) and X-chromosome. They are now performing the testing for MyHeritage and Geno (National Geo), so why not send samples to the lab doing the tests. They do not sell their data. There is much analytic power to have everyone in the same database. If all the data is in one place then one can search for common sequences and determine real genetic distance between family members. This was the same company involved in some of the original family studies on Jewish families from Salonika, Smyrna, and Rhodes 20 years ago.

All of our DNA samples are coded to protect the privacy of the contributors. As a geneticist, I am acutely attuned to issues of privacy and as such all samples in the database from our group carry my email address. I act as a filter for inquiries in order to fulfill my promise to each of them. The genealogic data in the family trees is likewise stored in a site separate from FamilyTreeDNA to further ensure the security of the database. Your information would be much more private than on any other site (23-and-me or Ancestry or myHeritage), only I will know it is you (matches only see the code without any personal information).

if you have already submitted a DNA sample to one of the other companies, and if you are willing, I can explain how to download the raw data file and email to me. If you have already submitted to FamilyTreeDNA, then you can join this project and/or the Romaniote project. Or you can submit a new sample to FamilyTreeDNA. If you have questions or are interested in getting started with any of these options please contact me at: bmyones51@gmail.com. Thank you, Barry Myones.

**Photo of the Month**

![Jews in Thessaloniki - Early 20th Century](Photo.jpg)
There is still limited room on the Greek Jewish Young Professionals Tour to Jewish Greece. This special tour is open to young adults in their 20s and 30s. Full trip details are available here.

Young Professionals Tour of Greece Summer 2019

The Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network in partnership with The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry

Tour of Jewish Greece
July 7 – 17, 2019

Includes Thessaloniki, Kastoria, Ioannina, Athens, & Rhodes

Rediscover your heritage and connect with other young Greek Jews on this once-in-a-lifetime experience

For more information email Museum@kkjsm.org
Summer 2019
Itinerary

The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry

Tour of Jewish Italy & Greece

June 23 – July 8, 2019

Includes Rome, Sicily, Florence, Thessaloniki, Kastoria, Ioannina, and Athens

For more information email Museum@kkjsm.org
So many of you have applauded our efforts. We thank those who have sent in contributions.

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

Some of our major donations have been generous bequests, which have enabled us to complete major work in our synagogue/museum. Do remember us in your will. Your legacy will be present in our legacy.

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