Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

Jewish communities around the world stop and remember their losses on Yom HaShoah. For those of us from the Greek Jewish world, we have so many to remember. This issue is dedicated to the over 67,000 Greek Jews who perished in the Holocaust. May their names be inscribed for Eternity.

Residents of the Beit Yeshua VeRachel Hebrew Home for the Aged, in Ioannina, who were rounded up by the Germans on March 25, 1944 and sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau
This newsletter, our 52nd 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 (papousoup@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 send our condolences to the family of Murray Raphael. Murray and his wife Phyllis visited Ioannina with us in 2000 and we will always have fond memories of him.

Births

A new member of our family has entered the world. Lucy Hessman Wertheimer (b. 4/7/2012) daughter of Robin Hessman and Lorin Wertheimer, granddaughter of Erika and Lawrence Hessman, great-granddaughter of Irving Hessman & Esther Colchamiro Hessman, great great-granddaughter of Leon Colchamiro and Julia Mazza Colchamiro and the proud great great great-granddaughter of Jessula Colchamiro and Rachel Galanos Colchamiro.
Yom HaShoah Around the Greek Jewish World

This year in Yad Vashem, a survivor from Ioannina was among those chosen to light the memorial candles.

Artemis Miron was born in 1928 in Ioannina, Greece. After the Germans entered Greece her father and grandfather were shot to death, and she was sent with her mother and brother to Auschwitz. Artemis volunteers at Yad Vashem translating testimonies from Greek to Hebrew, and has completed 1,838 Pages of Testimony in memory of the Jews of Ioannina murdered during the Holocaust.

Educators from Yad Vashem approached Kehila Kedosha Janina to put ‘flesh’ on the story of Artemis Miron. If you wish a copy of the complete article, please contact us and we would be happy to send it to you. (kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net).

Family Portrait, 1936-37. Clockwise from top right: Josif Pepo Batis, Artemis Batis Miron; her brother Salomon Makis Batis; her mother Eftichia Batis.

As always, visitors continue to flock to Kehila Kedosha Janina

B’nai Sholom-Beth David in Rockville Center New York
Our Sol Kofinas is always a joy with young visitors

It is always a joy to see our Museum filled with Sunday visitors

Upcoming Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina
The Jewish Woman of Rebetika with Carol Freeman

Sunday May 20\textsuperscript{th} at 7:00 at 280 Broome Street (between Allen St. & Eldridge St.)

Songs and Stories of legendary Greek Jewish Singers Roza Eskenazi, Victoria Hazan, Stella Haskil, and Amalia Baka

Kehila Kedosha Janina is honored to host the legendary Carol Freeman in a special concert on Sunday May 20\textsuperscript{th} at 7:00 PM

There will be dancing in our aisles! Tickets: $20 in advance

Checks can be sent to Kehila Kedosha Janina (att: Marcia) at One Hanson Place, Huntington NY 11743. Tickets may also be bought at the door on the evening of the event for $25 (cash only).
Past Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina

The second program in our series “Tell Us Your Story” was a great success. On April 29th, Anastasia Nicholas and Katherine R. Boulukos presented a fascinating program highlighting the collection of stories, photos and artifacts they have collected for a Museum of Greek-Americans. All they need now is a location!

Upcoming Cultural Events on Lower East Side

Woodward Gallery: 133 Eldridge St

New Exhibit to open May 5th

First New York solo exhibition of Japanese born Kenji Nakayama will be the most diverse and extensive presentation of his art to date.

http://www.woodwardgallery.net/exhibitions/ex-Kenji-Nakayama-Solo.html
NEWS FROM JEWISH GREECE

Scholarships Give Greece’s Jewish Children Second Chance at J-School

JDC’s (Joint Distribution Committee) scholarship initiative for Greek families facing financial crisis is ensuring children like Moni can continue to receive a Jewish education.

Since closing the doors of the family clothing business in Athens for good last year, Rafail, 58 has had to count every Euro. Unable to afford the mortgage or sell the house, he and his wife, Sara were forced to cut spending back to a near halt—including pulling their small children, Lela, 10, and Moni, 6, out of Athens’ Jewish Community School.

As Greece’s sovereign debt crisis turns into a full-fledged domestic economic emergency, the skyrocketing unemployment and small business bankruptcy rates are rattling families throughout the country. Rafail and Sara are among hundreds of families in the Jewish community making heartbreaking decisions just to keep a roof over their children’s heads.

The Greek Jewish community, consisting of some 5,000 Jews, operates synagogues, a Jewish school, a cultural center, and a soup kitchen to aid the most vulnerable members of their community. But with the country’s dire financial situation, the majority of Jewish communal institutions are struggling to stay afloat.

Many members of the Greek Jewish community are now unemployed and falling below the poverty line; people who were once the community’s steadfast supporters are now turning to the community for help.

Not long ago, Rafail was an important donor and offered his support to his children’s school. A keystone of the Athens Jewish community, the J-school offers the full curriculum of the Greek Ministry of education, as well as Hebrew and Jewish History. There’s a pre-school day-care for kids starting at age 2.5. Kids begin learning Hebrew in kindergarten; they study Judaism and Jewish history from first grade on, and celebrate and visit Israel. “Our aim is to make each student feel connected to the Jewish community and understand his/her role in it,” says Principal George Kanellos.

“When kids graduate from our school they can communicate in Hebrew; they know about our traditions, our religion, and our history,” he said.

Jewish education is even more essential in small communities like Greece’s, he argues. “Where we live it is very hard to preserve Jewish life. It is not just the learning at our school that is
essential. The contact with other Jewish families and the deep friendship bonds that are created here are invaluable. The school cements ties within the community, which is like an extended family.”

The community was shocked to learn that Lela and Moni had to leave the school, and they came together to offer the children full scholarships. In these toughest of times, a special emergency grant from JDC for welfare and tuition assistance enables the community to extend a lifeline to families like this one.

"In its mission and in its deeds, JDC is the 9-1-1 of the Jewish world."

JDC CEO & Executive V.P. Steven Schwager

For 96 years, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)—also referred to as “the Joint”—has exemplified globally the principle that all Jewish people are responsible for one another.

*Active today in more than 70 countries, JDC and its partners work to rescue Jewish lives at risk, bring relief to Jews in need, renew lost bonds to Jewish identity and Jewish culture, and help Israel overcome the social challenges of its most vulnerable citizens, both Jewish and non-Jewish. JDC reach extends beyond the global Jewish community by providing non-sectarian disaster relief and long-term development assistance worldwide.*

JDC’s reach is global, yet it is uniquely equipped to make a deep impact locally. In the former Soviet Union, home to the world’s poorest Jews, a network of JDC-supported Hesed welfare centers offer relief to 168,000 Jewish elderly in some 2,800 towns and villages, while Jewish Community Centers are fueling Jewish renewal for all ages across the region.

ATHENS — “Patricia Alcalay, 24, has been unemployed since she finished her nursing degree in December, 2010. Her father lost his job four months ago, a year shy of retirement.

Her older sister, who was studying abroad, meanwhile, found work in the Netherlands and is not coming back to Greece anytime soon.

*Stories like these have become common among the Jewish community in Greece, which like the rest of the Greek population is struggling to stay afloat in a country engulfed in the fifth year of an economic crisis that shows no sign of abating.*

*Approximately 5,000 Jews live in Greece — about 3,500 in Athens, 1,000 in Thessaloniki and the rest scattered elsewhere — and community leaders say they are laboring to maintain Jewish institutions and deal with the additional heavy demands on welfare programs.”*
Greece and Israel have taken "spectacular steps" leading to "a new geopolitical and geostrategic environment" that opens up "new prospects for both peoples", the defence minister has said.

Dimitris Avramopoulos was speaking during a dinner hosted by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in his honour at the Committee's headquarters in Manhattan.

Avramopoulos, who will be in Washington at the invitation of his US counterpart, Leon Panetta, described Monday’s meeting as "another link in the chain of the relations between Greece and Israel, between Greece and the US, and also between the Greek American and Israeli American communities".

In the new reality brought out by the wider economic crisis, "people such as ours come even closer together, with a spirit of mutual understanding", Avramopoulos said.

Avramopoulos said that he had the opportunity to exchange views with prominent members of the AJC and of the economic, business and energy sectors.

David Harris, American Jewish Committee (AJC) executive director, said it was an honour to host Avramopoulos and that this was another step in their friendly relations with the Greek government.

He said that his own and the AJC's relations with the country go back some 30 years "when we commenced our relations with Greece and the close cooperation with our Greek American partners, such as Andy Athens."

"In these 30 years, we have gone back and forth, with visits to Athens, to Thessaloniki, with the aim of improving the cooperation and friendship between Greece and the Jews, between Greece and the state of Israel," Harris added.
"As Defence Minister Avramopoulos said, today, in 2012, we are discussing a strategic alliance between Greece and Israel. And this is in favour of American and European interests in the region. We therefore welcome the spirit conveyed by Mr Avramopoulos. We understand that today is a very difficult moment for Greece, and that is an additional reason why we are trying to understand Greece. That is why we were there in November, in January, and will go again in a few months,” Harris continued.

* Athens News-April 3 2012

Do read Esther Hecht’s excellent article on Jewish Albania in a recent edition of Hadassah magazine. If you do not have the magazine, you can access it on line. We were honored to be of help to Esther.

“Dear Ms. Ikonomopoulos,

My article on Jewish Albania has just appeared in Hadassah magazine.

These are the links to the on-line version:

http://www.hadassahmagazine.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=twI6LmN71zF&b=6727195&ct=11712985¬oc=1

OR: http://tinyurl.com/ckmx2p9

“Thank you for publicizing my request for help. The response to that request was invaluable in the preparation of this article.”

Ruins of synagogue in

Sarande Albania
We are proud to offer Sarah Aroeste’s new CD “Gracia.” While officially not yet released, you can purchase copies at Kehila Kedosha Janina for $15 plus $4 P&H. Send you check to Kehila Kedosha Janina (Att: Marcia) at One Hanson Place, Huntington NY 11743.

Do see Sarah in person on May 31st!

Sarah Aroeste CD Release Show

Gracia - experimental, feminist, original Ladino songs.

Thursday, May 31st 7 PM
Joe’s Pub, NYC
425 Lafayette Street
Tickets: $15 advance/$18 door
www.joespub.com
212-967-7555

www.saraharoeste.com
facebook.com/saraharoeste

Requests

Below you will find Bella Atun’s class photo from about 1933, taken on the Lower East Side. We are trying to find out what school this was.
Shalom to one and all!

Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel

"Yom Yerushalayim", Jerusalem Day, the 28th of Iyar, which falls this year on May 20th, commemorates the day when the Israel Defense Forces liberated the Old City of Jerusalem and Judaism's holiest sites in the 1967 Six Day War. And though The miracle of a reunited Jerusalem reverberates among all of world Jewry, Jerusalem Day has a certain special significance for Sephardic Jewry, since with the Jordanian conquest of the Old City in 1948 and the expulsion of the Jewish population, among the many historic synagogues gutted, vandalized, burned and even transformed into stables and garbage dumps by local Arab residents, were four particularly beautiful Sephardic synagogues that served as the center of Sephardic community life in Jerusalem for hundreds of years.

Though built at different times, since the four synagogues were constructed adjacent to one another, they form an impressive single interconnected complex right in the center of the Jewish quarter.

The oldest of the four, called the Eliahu Hanavi synagogue (Elijah the Prophet), dates from the 16th century. It was named after a legendary event and tradition that tells of a time when the Jewish community of Jerusalem was so small that one Yom Kippur, a tenth man could not be found to make a minyan. Suddenly a white-bearded old man appeared, completing the minyan, but immediately after Yom Kippur, he entered a small side-room and disappeared. Realizing that that this must have been Eliahu Hanavi, the synagogue was named in his honor. The next oldest synagogue, and the most significant of the four, was built in the 17th century on the site believed to be where the Talmudic sage Rabbi Yohanan Ben Zakai once lived and studied. Appropriately named the Yohanan Ben Zakai synagogue, from 1893 onward this beautiful structure also served as the location for the inauguration and installation of the 'Haham Bashi' in Ottoman times, and later the "Rishon LeZion" — the Sephardic Chief Rabbi — of Israel. Many other official and community events were also held in this synagogue, including the welcoming reception for Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria in 1870.

Due to a growing Sephardic population, and especially a major influx of Jews from Turkey, a third synagogue was built in 1764, appropriately named the "Istanbuli" synagogue, to serve this community. Particularly large in size, this synagogue also housed the community "Genizah" (old sacred texts and ritual objects), and was built with a very high ceiling with perfect acoustics. Finally, the "Middle Synagogue", completed as such in the mid 18th century, was originally the courtyard and women's section of the Yohanan Ben Zakai synagogue, but again, because of an ever-growing Sephardic community, was converted into a full-fledged synagogue. Its name comes from its location in the middle of all of the other three structures.

All four synagogues were extremely beautiful, and adorned with lavish décor and ornaments. But all of this came to an abrupt end in 1948, when the Jordanian Army conquered the Jewish quarter, resulting not only in the total end of any Jewish presence in the Old City for the next 19 years, but also the total destruction of these and all other synagogues in the Jewish quarter. After the Six-Day War, the Rabbi of the Western Wall, Yehuda Getz, embarked upon the resurrection and renovation of all four structures, which took several years to complete.
Today, each synagogue is once again in use: the Yohanan Ben Zakai synagogue holds daily morning and Shabbat services; the Istanbuli Synagogue serves Jerusalem’s Spanish-Portugese community; the Eliahu Hanavi synagogue is used for both prayer services and a "Beit Midrash" for yeshiva studies, and the Middle Synagogue serves a local group of residents as their house of prayer. Though only a fraction of their former beauty and usage, it is still heartening to see this major center of Sephardic Jewish bustling with activity on a daily basis. Happy Jerusalem Day!

Items of Interest on the internet

The Catastrophe of Salonikan Jewry by Dr. Nikos Tzaferis, Postdoctoral Researcher at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cclBxZH1HZ4&feature=share
History of the Jews of Thessaloniki and the Holocaust November 14, 2006 West Chester University of Pennsylvania page 1 of 47 Paul Isaac Hagouel, hagouel@eecs.berkeley.edu West Chester, Pennsylvania Tuesday, November 14th, 2006
http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/holocaust/Salonika.pdf

Remember—our new exhibit "Memories" will open May 6th. The reception on May 6th is by invitation only but the exhibit will be open for public viewing starting May 13th.

We love this photo of Delancey Street from c. 1938.
Eve Ganis, recently visiting from France, informed us that her grandmother would be celebrating her 96th birthday soon. Mazal Tov! Eve wanted to know if her grandmother was the oldest still surviving Jewish person born in Ioannina. We ask for the help of our readers. If anyone has an older Yanniote in their family, please get back to us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net.

Rebecca Matza Ganis, the little girl in this photo, was born in 1916 in Ioannina. Marrying Elie Ganis in Egypt, she survived the deportation of the Jews of Ioannina and was one of the few in this picture to escape the horrors of Auschwitz-Birkenau.
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.

Note: If you are interested in future Friday night services at Kehila Kedosha Janina, let us know!