



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

June 2009 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

As we set out for our annual visit to Greece (we will be in Rhodes, Salonika, Ioannina and Athens from June 4-18) we wish to share our latest news with you. So much continues to happen. So many fascinating people continue to cross our threshold. We are beholden to those who pass on the word of how special we are and all those who continue to support us both financially and spiritually.

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Ralph Colchamiro, the youngest of the children of Leon Colchamiro, one of the founders of Kehila Kedosha Janina. Ralph was one month short of his 93rd birthday. He is survived by his widow Esther, daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As his nephew Jesse Colchamiro stated, "It is the end of a generation."

Leon
Colchamiro
Family.



May also saw the passing of Sarina Attas, who grew up on Allen Street, across the street from Kehila Kedosha Janina. Sarina was a colorful figure, the daughter of Nissim and Esther Attas and the last of the four Attas sisters (Mary, Julie, Blanche and Sarina). She performed in local nightclubs as a singer. Noted for her beautiful voice, she once sang at Carnegie Hall.

We welcome the birth of Emily Udler's new granddaughter Shiri born in Israel to her son Arieh and his wife Hadar on April 30th, 2009. Emily is the daughter of survivors from Ioannina (*Rosa Esther Bessos and Iakov [Jack] Isaacs, both of Blessed Memory*).

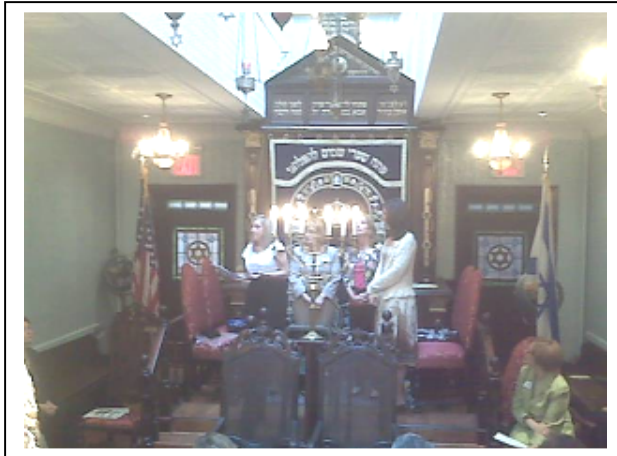
May 17th witnessed an historic event in the sanctuary of Kehila Kedosha Janina, the baby-naming of Amelia Rose Krivitsky, the great-great-great granddaughter of one of our earliest rabbis, Rabbi David Davidson. Rabbi Davidson served the community before the actual building of Kehila Kedosha Janina. His signature appears on many of the early kettubahs, and he created many of the "Alefs" of the community here in New York at the beginning of the 20th century. Rabbi Davidson was also instrumental in arranging for the Hametz family coming to the USA, his own wife Rebecca being a sister of Rabbi Israel Hametz's wife Pernoula. We welcome Amelia Rose to the family of Yannote Jews. We are honored that the family chose our humble synagogue for this important occasion.



Rabbi Davidson and Family

Special Visits to Kehila Kedosha Janina in May 2009

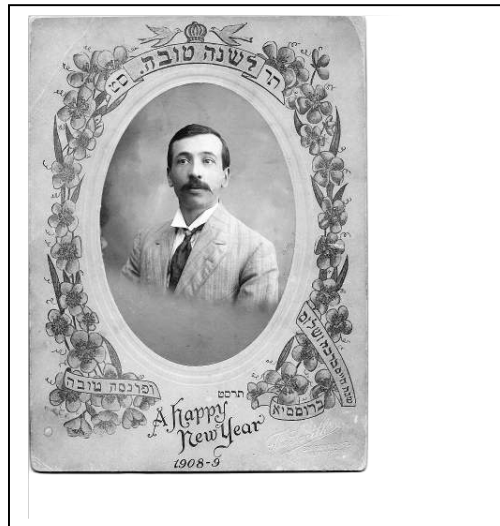
We were honored to be chosen as the venue for the New Jersey section of Israel Bonds for their annual awards presentation. Rather than going to a restaurant or hall for the ceremony and presentation, the chapter chose to have offer their members an opportunity to visit Kehila Kedosha Janina for our special lunch tour.



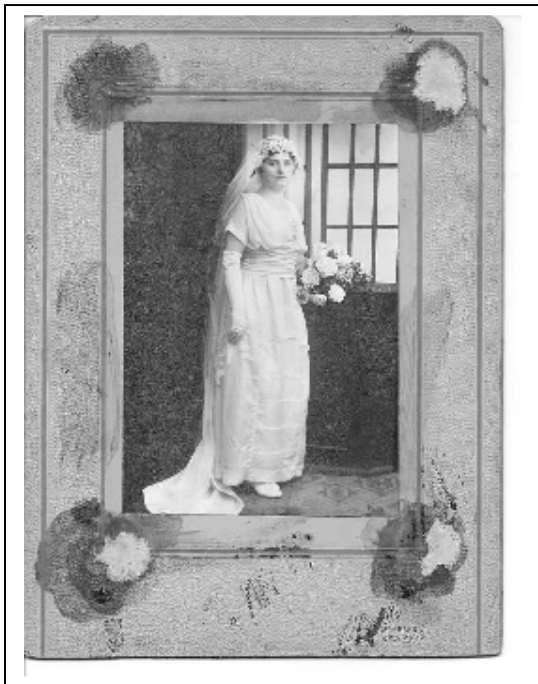
Seeing our synagogue/museum through the eyes of children is always fascinating, and a recent visit by Solomon Schechter of Queens proved to be unexpectedly emotional. While upstairs in the Museum the children were asked to find something they were not familiar with. A 10 year old female student pointed to the early 20th century Singer sewing machine in one of our display cases. She had never seen a sewing machine before. While explaining to the class how such an artifact played an important role in the economic life of our immigrant community, it was discovered that the great-great granddaughter of the actual owner of the sewing machine (Rabbi Jessoula Cohen) was a member of the class from Solomon Schechter, Ellen Leifer was joined by her mother Carrie.



We were honored to host a special lunch tour for members of the Gani family. Included in the tour was the daughter of Avasai Gani who presented the museum with a beautiful photo of her father taken in 1906 when he had recently arrived in the country. Remarking how elegant he looked in the photo, Freda noted that the family was quite poor. Renting clothing for professional photos was quite common in the early 20th century. The photos would be sent home to Greece and, of course, now that they were in America, they had to show their relatives how well they had done!



Remember, we are still looking for photos and memorabilia for our wedding exhibit. Don't be left out.



Anne Moise Barouch wedding 1915



Politis Wedding: Ioannina 1938

Responses to May 2009 E-Newsletter

As readers of our monthly e-newsletters continue to grow in number, the responses have been encouraging and illuminating. Previous unanswered questions are now easily answered, and new material on Greek Jewry continues to come to light. We are inspired to be a part of the process.

Let us share with you the responses to some of our inquiries from the May 2009 E-Newsletter.

We are overjoyed by the knowledge that our newsletter brought joy to the residents of The Sephardic Home for the Aged on the annual Sisterhood of Janina Monday after Mothers Day, as they looked over the photo of Sisterhood's honoring of Anna Moise Barouch, and recognized friends and relatives from the past. Those identified in the photo by Sisterhood members and residents of the Home were Sarah Honan and Sarah Lagary; Max Negrin identified Esther Cohen wearing a corsage to the right of the dark clad woman centered in the second row, and Molly Nicokiris behind and to the right of that same woman. Annette Binder identified her mother, Esther Politis, behind Molly Nicokiris. In addition, Irene Mathios Dresner identified her father's sister Rose Matathia Baruch. Of course, we all recognize Sarah Colchamiro, if only by her hairdo, in the back row, behind Mrs Nicokiris.



Note: See Anne Moise Barouch's wedding photo from 1915 on page 4 of this issue.

To complete the story, Ed Coffina, grandson of Anna Barouch, sent us a copy of the original letter inviting his mother Mildred Coffina, (Esther's daughter) to the event (date: April 18, 1956 at the Rosoff Hotel Restaurant).

SISTERHOOD OF JANINA, Inc.

2023-60th Street,
Brooklyn 4, N.Y.,
March 29th, 1956.

Dear Mildred:

I am very happy to inform you officially that, the officers and board members of our Sisterhood, have arranged to dedicate a **TRIBUTES LUSCHEW** in which we hope to do the very well deserved honours to your dear **MOTHER**, for the devoted service she rendered to our organization during her administration of the most important office of President.

It will be both an honour and added joy to our officers and members to have you attend as our guest on this happy occasion. The enclosed invitation will advise you.

Please take note of the

DATE: WEDNESDAY APRIL 18th, 1956
TIME: 12 O'CLOCK NOON
PLACE: ROSSINI'S HOTEL RESTAURANT
 117 West 43rd Street, N.Y.C.

I will be waiting with anticipated pleasure to greet you

Most Cordially
Sarah Honan
 Sarah Honan, President.

PAID UP
 Mrs. MILTON JEROME

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 PRESIDENT
 Mrs. SARAH HONAN
 VICE PRESIDENT
 Mrs. JANE COHEN, 2007 10th St.
 Mrs. LILLIE HATTA, 1000 10th St.
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We received some interesting responses to the photo of Al Yomtov in the May 2009 newsletter. Let us share them with you.

From Sandy Schaff: "I notice a picture of my first cousin Al Yomtov on page 5 submitted by Jack Attias. Could you tell me how I could contact Jack so that I may speak to him about my family? My mother was Rebecca Yomtov."

Al's picture also received a warm recognition from Max Negrin who graciously expressed his gratitude with what we are doing. **"...the soldier is Al Yomtov, changed from Abe (when he moved to the Bronx, from my building at 81 Orchard Street), and he was a very close friend of my brother, Jake, who's lived in San Francisco, for the past 63 years, or so. I haven't seen Al in about 55 years..... is he still alive? (note: Al is still alive and lives in Florida.)"**

"Al and Jake enlisted, together, in late '42 ... when they were about 19... if I remember correctly, Al was 19 on December 2nd, of '42 ... Jake is a few months older."

"My brother is so far removed from his youth and the memories of it, having been in California and away from all traces of his past, for so long. I'd like to get that"

newsletter, and mail it to him. Jake's 86, now, and in full possession of his faculties .. I speak with him a couple of times a month, and last saw him at the funeral of our other brother, Sam, two years ago. (Sam was the middle son). He's been a widower for about ten years, lives alone, and loves to hear reminders of his youth, from me."

We love stories like this and the fact that we can be an instrument of happy memories and reconnections. Thank you, Max Negrin, for sharing this with us.

New inquiries

We are seeking information on the Gattegno family from Sofia and Salonika.

From France we received this inquiry: *"Hello, I'm searching for a lady who was deported from Greece during WWII. Unfortunately, I don't know much about her. Her maiden name was Suzanne BENOUN but she was probably married and I don't know her spouse's name. She was probably deported together with her son, but I don't know that boy's name. She came from France to Greece where she married. I don't know anything else.*

Thanks in advance for your response.

*Eve Line Blum
France"*

Note: Suzanne Benoun was born in France and, on marriage, went to Salonika to live with her husband. She was rounded up and deported with the Jewish Community of Salonika in 1943.

News of Interest

Attention Bronxophiles

The Bronx Museum is planning a show about growing up on the Grand Concourse. If you are a former denizen of that borough and wish to contribute your memories **and/or** observations, contact Camille Wanliss, Media Coordinator, at 718-681-6181 or Email her at cwanliss@bronxmuseum.org.

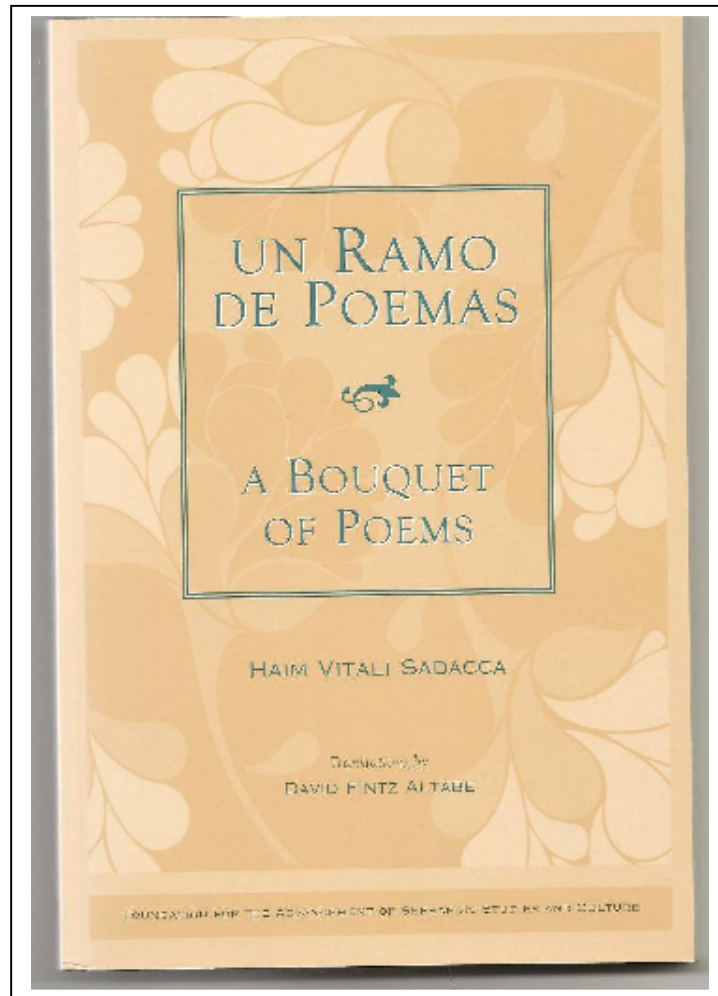
New Book for Sale

It is our honor to offer the following book for sale and to express our continued appreciation to Bob Bedford and FASSAC (Foundation for the Advancement of Sephardic Studies and Culture) for publishing books that, hopefully, will educate the world on Sephardim and ensure the continuation of our culture. FASSAC's latest publication, *Un Ramo De Poemas* is now available through the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry.

"Un Ramo De Poemas is a compilation of poems in Ladino by Turkish poet Haim Vitali Sadacca....These days, an original work in Ladino is rare, especially one which conveys the beauty of the language in poetry form, and the book is further distinguished by the

English translations which were prepared especially for this publication by the late David Fintz Altabe."

Bob Bedford



The book can be ordered by sending a \$15 check made out to The Association of Friends of Greek and mailed to The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry, One Hanson Place, Huntington NY 11743. The \$15 covers the cost of the book and postage and handling for orders within the continental United States. For international orders, contact us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net or friends_greek_jewry@netzero.net.

Stay well and stay in touch. Continue to send us your news, photos, family info and comments. We hope to return from Greece with only good news.

**Kehila Kedosha Janina e-newsletter: number 17: June 2009
Kehila Kedosha Janina, 280 Broome Street, New York NY 10002
kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net www.kkjsm.org**