



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

June 2008 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

Our e-newsletters continue to be very well received and will remain a permanent monthly feature. As we continue to work on resolving some technical difficulties, we will continue to include a copy of the e-letter in an attachment.

If you are on our e-mailing lists, you will receive our e-letter automatically. If for any reason you do not wish to receive the e-mail newsletter, please inform us.

This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of two special women who passed away in May:

Sara Burakoff, the fifth of Elias Cochamiro and Nancy (Esperanza) Matza's nine children, passed away on April 25th. Her father, Elias, was the youngest son (the 10th of 11 children of Jessoula and Rachel Colchamiro). May her memory be blessed.

Bella Gerson of Blessed Memory, wife of Isaac, passed away in May. A survivor of the Holocaust, Bella was an eyewitness to the horrors of Auschwitz. Deported from Salonika in the Spring of 1943, she would be among the few to return from the camps. As we lose our survivors, we lose our eyewitnesses. That is why it is so important to document their stories and to ensure that the story of Greek Jewry takes its rightful place in the archives of Holocaust memoirs. To that end, as an educational institution, Kehila Kedosha Janina continues to donate books to other educational institutions. In May, our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikononopoulos, spoke at the Flushing Library in Queens. As a result, we have donated books to their library and, now, when visitors research the Holocaust, our story will be included.



Survivors from Greece showing their tattooed numbers. Courtesy USHMM.

June continues to be a hectic time for our museum. We will be hosting [among others] a lunch tour from the JCC of Manhattan. This is in conjunction with Vincent Giordano's exhibit at MOBIA. (For additional details on upcoming events in conjunction with MOBIA see article on "Before The Flame Goes Out.") To arrange a lunch tour for your group, contact us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net. To learn about our lunch tours, do access our website [www.kkjsm.org].

UPCOMING MUSEUM EVENTS

June 15, 2008: 1-2 pm: KKJ Film Festival

Join us on Sunday, June 15th for a showing of "Song of Life," a highly acclaimed film about the saving of the Jews of Zakynthos. The film was recently shown at the Hellenic Film Festival and, then again, at the January 27th commemoration of Greek-Jewish Holocaust losses at the Greek Consulate but, unfortunately, there were difficulties at both showings. At the festival, the film version could not play on the DVD player [differences in Pal and US systems] and, at the Consulate, the version had no English subtitles. Our version has been converted to play on the US system and does have English titles.

The film will be shown on our new high definition plasma TV in our Museum. \$5 entrance fee. Refreshments will be served.

NEWS

Kehila Kedosha Janina News

On May 20th, at Seward Park High School on Grand St. on the Lower East Side, an important announcement was made. The National Trust For Historic Preservation announced its "Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places" in the nation. Among the eleven noted was The Lower East Side. In a news conference at Seward Park High School, the National Trust warned that construction of new hotels and apartment towers threatened to efface the Lower East Side's immigrant past. To quote from a May 21st New York Times article, the National Trust stated the following: "The community, with little recourse for protection is reeling from the recent destruction of its cultural heritage, including the defacing of several historic structures and the loss of First Roumanian Synagogue. Slapdash and haphazard renovations have led to the destruction of architectural detail, while modern additions to historic buildings sharply contrast with the neighborhood's scale and character."

Kehila Kedosha Janina, along with The Tenement Museum, Eldridge Street Project and other religious, cultural, community and social organizations, is a

member of The Lower East Side Preservation Coalition, working to preserve architectural integrity of the only neighborhood in the United States that stands as a living memorial to the United States' history of immigration, and to address quality of life issues and fair housing practices to ensure that the Lower East Side remains an immigrant neighborhood. An important goal, one that we hope will be achieved shortly, is the designation of parts of the Lower East Side as an Historical District. Broome Street [between Allen and Eldridge] would be part of this proposed district, hopefully preserving the tenements on Broome Street where many of our congregants lived. To learn more about the other sites included by the National Trust For Historic Preservation, and to see a video [where Kehila Kedosha Janina is included!] see:

<http://blogs.nationaltrust.org/preservationnation/?p=588>



Kafenion on Allen Street [circa 1920s]: Kehila Kedosha Janina Photo Archives

Website News

Our website has received acclamations from around the world. We wish to thank Maurice Askinazi for donating his talents to enable us to reach out to the world. As you open the page on The Holocaust in Greece, a picture appears, a picture that has haunted us since we first found out about it. The photo [see below] is one of 18 taken by a German photographer on the day of the deportation of the Jews of Ioannina [March 25, 1944]. An appeal was

made to help us identify this young woman whose anguished expression punctuates the horrors of that fateful day. It appears that, due to the internet, we have finally been able to identify this young woman, the "crying woman," as she has become known.



We now feel with reasonable certainty that her name was Fani Haim (Svolis), daughter of Firo [bat Avraam Matsil] Haim and Avraam ben Isaak Haim. Fani would be the only survivor from her family. She recently died in Athens. As promised, our soon-to-be opened Holocaust exhibit will be dedicated in her honor.

NEWS FROM GREECE

This July, in Athens, as part of the 2008 Intercultural Dialogue in Greece, two papers will be given on Romaniote Jews, one by our dear friend Nikos Alexiou, professor of Sociology at Queens College, and the other by Angelyn Balodimas-Bartolomei, Ph.D. from North Park University in Chicago, Illinois. Professor Balodimas-Bartolomei's paper is entitled "The Inclusion of Invisible Minorities in the EU Member States: The Case of Greek Jews in Greece."

As the professor shared with us in formulating her proposal, "As EU communities become increasingly multicultural, multiethnic, and multireligious, the recognition of otherness has become a main priority throughout the educational systems of the European Union. Consequently,

2008 has been designated as the "European Year of Intercultural Dialogue" by the European Parliament and EU Member States. The initiative, to be implemented through educational and cultural projects, aims at developing dialogue among the diverse societies within and between the Member States.

The National strategy for the 2008 Intercultural Dialogue in Greece, intends to acquaint Greek people with the cultures of others and also to acquaint others with the various ethnic groups within the Greek territory. Although intercultural education is currently an integral dimension of Greek Educational Policy, the inclusion of ethnic communities, immigrants, and minorities within the Greek society remains underrepresented in the national curriculum and in didactic material. In reality, a number of these communities have constituted the country's population for thousands of years such as the Greek Romaniote Jewish community whose existence dates back to the Hellenistic period.

This study examines the status and representation of the Greek-Jewish community in Greece and the USA (mainly NY) from an educational, historical, religious, social, cultural and political perspective."

Kehila Kedosha Janina will continue to work with and support all those who wish to add to studies on Greek Jewry.

Upcoming Lectures on Greek Jewry [not at Kehila Kedosha Janina]

June 24, 7:45 pm

**Congregation Ohr Kodesh
8300 Meadowbrook Lane
Chevy Chase Maryland**

Marcia Haddad Ikonopoulos will present the documentary film, "Song of Life," as part of an evening dedicated to Greek Jewry. For more information, access the flier in the attachment.

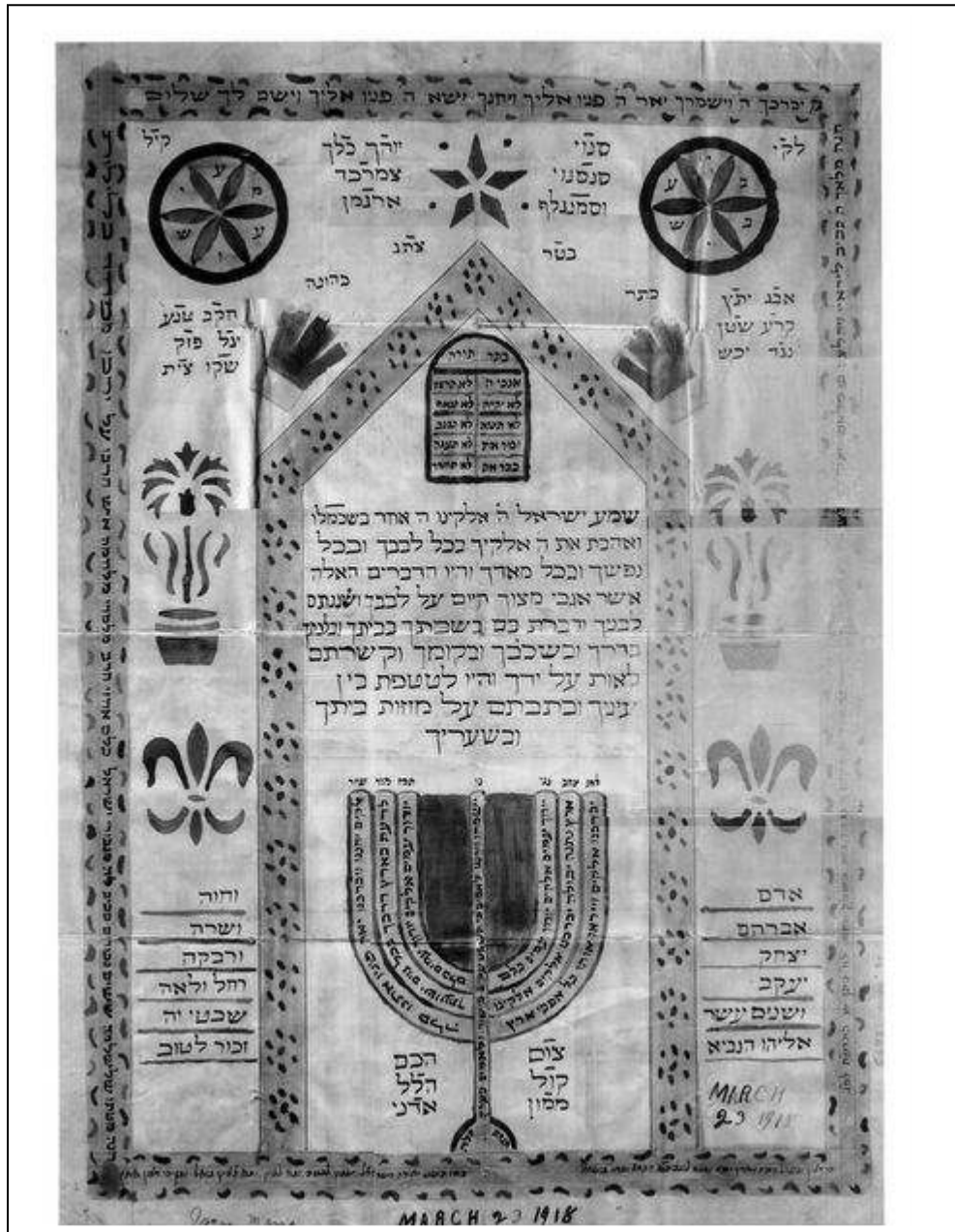
June 19th, 6:30-7:30 pm

**Museum of Biblical Art
1865 Broadway at 61st Street
New York, NY 10023-7505**

Vincent Giordano will screen a rough cut of his film documenting the Romaniote communities in Ioannina, Greece, and in New York City. The screening will be accompanied by a discussion with the artist.

To access additional information: www.mobia.org

To learn more about Vincent Giordano and "Before the Flame Goes Out" access www.romaniotelegacy.com



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Vincent Giordano walked through the doors of Kehila Kedosha Janina and into our lives. His project to document the Romaniote Jews 'before the flame goes out' has helped ensure that our flame will continue to burn brightly. We were overjoyed to learn that Vincent has received a Fullbright enabling him to continue this important project. While we will miss him as he spends most of 2009 in Greece, we anxiously await the new additions to his documentation and, it final completion.