



# Kehila Kedosha Janina

## Synagogue and Museum

### July 2017 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

This newsletter comes a few days early since we will be in Greece, Cyprus and Israel from June 29 to July 27. We will be reachable, as always, by email ([info@kkjsm.org](mailto:info@kkjsm.org) for the synagogue, [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org) for the museum). Stay well and stay in touch.



Please remember our new website: [www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org) and our new emails: [info@kkjsm.org](mailto:info@kkjsm.org) (President) and [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org) (Museum Director).

This newsletter, our 100<sup>th</sup> 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.

**YOU CAN NOW DONATE ON OUR WEBSITE!**  
[www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)

We now reach over 8,500 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 [museum@kkjism.org](mailto:museum@kkjism.org)

As always, you are all invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up ([papusoup@mindspring.com](mailto:papusoup@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.

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We would like to thank those who donated to help repair the earthquake damaged synagogue in Ioannina with special thanks to Kehila Kedosha Janina and The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry. More funds are needed. Please donate generously. This is our heritage. As one of our board members, Jesse Colchamiro, passionately said, "If there is no synagogue in Ioannina, what will my grandchildren and great-grandchildren see when they visit the homeland of our family?"

Donations are being accepted by The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry, 1 Hanson Place, Huntington, NY 11743





## **Simchas**

**June was filled with simchas and, as always, we are happy to share our joy with you. In June we celebrated the wedding of Elisa Negrin, daughter of Rebecca and Joseph Negrin, the birth of Tzvi and Malkie Hametz's first child and the special birthdays of Irene Mathios Dresner (85), Shirlee Paganetti (87) and Esta Varon (94) and the special anniversary of Shirley and Eli Jenny (51).**



**Elisa and Adam**



**Rebecca and Joe**

**Elisa comes from Romaniote families on both sides, one of the few in the world, filled with the names of Ioannina and Arta Jews (Negrin, Myone, Matsa, Ganis) and we were fortunate to have her, her brother Jon and her parents, Joe and Rebecca, travel with us to Greece in 2015 on one of our "Greek Jewish Tours."**



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**Congratulation to Tzvi and Malkie Hametz on the birth of their son and congratulations to the proud grandparents, Irwin and Denise Hametz. This precious baby has a long lineage to be proud of, the great-grandson of Isaac Z"L and Pearl Hametz Z"L, the great great-grandson of Rabbi Israel Z"L and Pernoula Hametz Z"L and the great great great-grandson of Haim Z"L and Sarah (bat Ovadia Solomon) Z"L. May our new edition to the Yanniote Romaniote world bring joy to his family and pride to our community.**







**Isaac and Pearl Hametz**



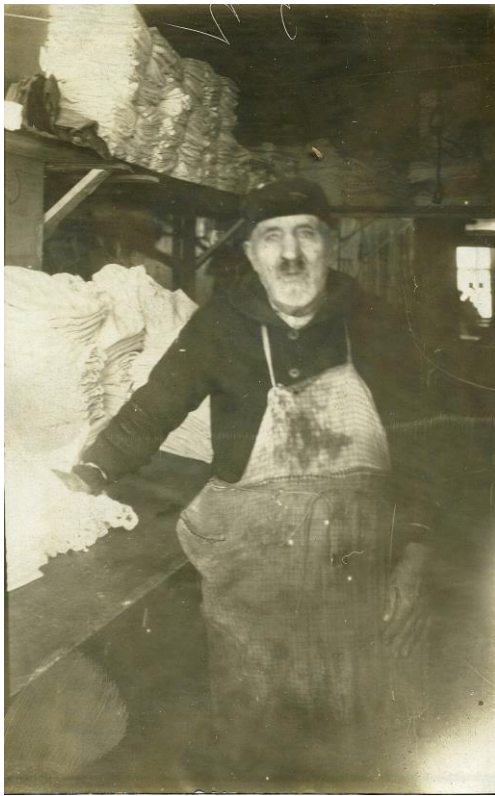
**Rabbi Israel Hametz**

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**We wish Irene Mathios Dresner a happy 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. Irene comes from a founding family from our Lower East Side Romaniote community, her parents Abraham Mathios Z"l and Leah Negrin Z"l, her grandparents Matathias Matathias Z"l and Esther Negrin Matathias Z"l, and her great grandparents, Moses ben Haim Matathias Z"l and Rose Negrin Z"l. Irene came to Greece with us in 2005.**

**Irene and Byron Dresner**





**Matathias Matathias**



**Abraham Mathias and Leah Negrin**



**Wedding invitation for wedding of Abraham and Leah (1921)**

**Happy 87<sup>th</sup> birthday to Shirlee Cabillis Paganetti, another of our community with Romaniote roots on both sides of her family tree (from the Cabillis and Eliezer families). We had the joy of having Shirlee travel with us to Greece two times, the first in 1997 and, the second for the Bar Mitzvah of her grandson, Maxx Kleiner in 2000. We recently celebrated Maxx's wedding.**





**Shirlee and her grandson, Casey Paganetti**



**Morris Cabillis and Eva Eliezer (1926)**

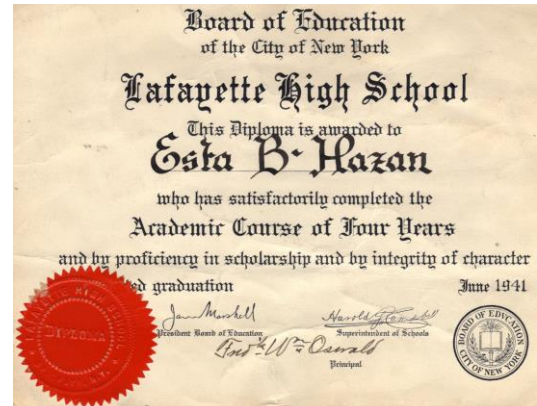


**Vic, Sammy, Joe and Shirlee Cabillis**

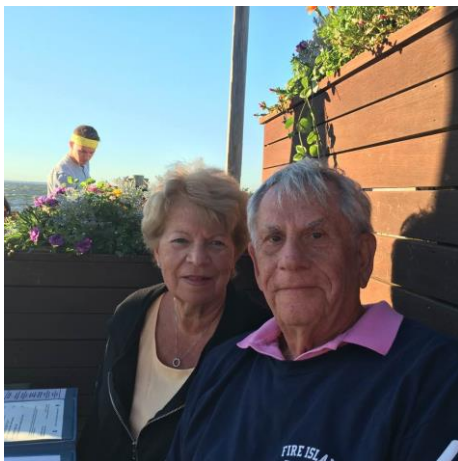


**Cabillis Family with Shirlee's famous "moutra"**

**Birthday wishes to Esta Varon on her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday. Esta is the daughter of Sophie Dalven Z"l (born in Preveza) and Morris Hazan Z"l (born in Salonika), the granddaughter of Steroula Colchamiro Z"l (born in Ioannina) and Israel Dalian Z"l (born in Preveza), the great granddaughter of Jessoula Z"l and Rachel Colchamiro Z"l (born in Ioannina) and the great great-granddaughter of Matathia ben Jesoula Matathias Z"l and Sophie Matathias Z"l.**



**Happy 51<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary to Shirley and Eli Jenny. Eli is a descendent of the Genee/Jenny family, another of our founding families, the son of Leon Jenny Z"l (born in Ioannina) and Katie Abolafia Z"l (born in Smyrne), the grandson of Morris Jenny Z"l and Stamu (Stamoula) Battino Jenny Z"l (both born in Ioannina) and the great-grandson of Yanniotes Haim Genee Z"l and Firo Genee Z"l.**



**Now**



**Then**





**Stamoula Jenny Family**

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**Dikoi Mas (Our Own)**

**We love when our own come to visit. In June, Allan, Ann and Susan Cantos came to visit, along with members of both the Attas and Matsa families for our event on June 11<sup>th</sup> (see article later in the e-newsletter).**



**Cantos Family**



**It was such a joy welcoming members of Abraham Matzas' Z"L family from California and Cal Attas who grew up with Nissim Attas' family on the Lower East Side.**



**Abraham Matza's nieces from California**



**Attas family**



**We were thrilled to welcome Adam Hanson during his visit from California. Adam is from the Asser family, which was one of the founding families of Kehila Kedosha Janina.**





## Visitors

**As always, Kehila Kedosha Janina greets visitors from all over the world. We are one of the most popular sites on the Lower East Side.**



**We have left a lasting impression on people.**

**Jeff and Stephanie Atlas remember Hy Genee Z"L. Jeff runs the fabric store on the corner of Eldridge St and Delancey St. Jeff fondly remembers Hy, who used to buy his fabrics from Jeff.**



**Visitors from Spain and Germany  
Peter Hausner and Yolanda Sanchez  
and their children, Sarah and Alex.**



**Filming crew from Extra TV working on Yvette  
Manassis Corporon's documentary**

**We were honored to welcome Ms. Vassiliki Keramida, the Scientific Adviser to the General Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs in Greece. She is in charge of Jewish and Holocaust Education in Greece.**

**Ms. Vassiliki Keramida with  
Marvin Marcus, President of KKJ**



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### **Past Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina**

**Our event in memory of Nissim Attas and Abraham Matza, both of whom died at the Battle of the Bulge in January of 1945. This was a culmination of a moving visit to Henri-Chapelle American Military Cemetery in early April. Aimee Fogg, a historian who has worked to uncover the stories of those buried at Henri-Chapelle gave a moving presentation. Rose Attas Ferrari and our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, told the stories of Nissim Attas and Abraham Matza. All of our events have lasting repercussions, not all of them expected. What was so beautiful with this event were the family connections made. Abraham's family, his nieces, Karen and Naomi, and their daughters, Rosa, Katie and Molly, travelled all the way from California for the event only to find a distant cousin in Rose Attas and to learn about the family they knew very little about. Rose Attas was so excited to hear Cal Attas' memories of her uncle Nissim.**

**Aimee  
Fogg**





**Our Special Benefit Concert on Sunday June 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 was a huge success as a kickoff for Kalesma. We are still raising funds through the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry.**

**Learn more about this important effort to raise funds for a music program for children in need in Greece at <https://www.fracturedatlas.org/site/fiscal/profile?id=15884>**



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**Of course, KKJ was represented at the Celebrate Israel Parade in NYC.**



**We were proud that Marcia Haddad Ikononopoulos attended the American Jewish Committee's Global Forum in Washington DC from June 4-6. The keynote address was given by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nikos Anastasiades.**



**Congratulations to Ethan Marcus for receiving a scholarship award from the Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America.**



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### **Past Events in the NYC Area**

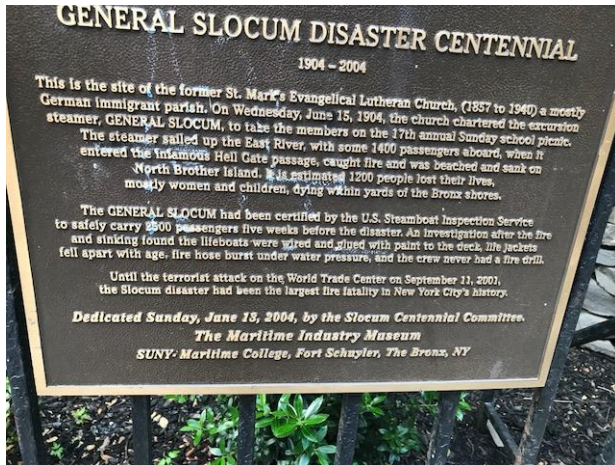
**The International Day of Ladino was celebrated at the Sephardic Jewish Center of Forest Hills on June 11. The turnout was excellent. The attendees were a mix of scholars, Ladino speakers and those who are interested in perpetuating the language and culture.**





On June 21<sup>st</sup>, LESPI (the Lower East Side Preservation Initiative) held a moving event at the Sixth Street Community Synagogue, "Moving Uptown: German-American Culture at the Turn of the 20th Century, The Lower East Side's Kleindeutschland and the Upper East Side's Yorkville."

The program featured a tour of the historic Sixth Street Community Synagogue, originally St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, by Dr. Elissa Sampson; and illustrated lectures on German-American Kleindeutschland (Little Germany) and Yorkville by Dr. Richard Haberstroh and Friends of the Upper East Side's Elizabeth Fagan, respectively. Our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikononopoulos, serves on the Board of Directors of LESPI.




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### Upcoming Event of Interest through the Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy



**Bialystoker the Beautiful - a special evening event  
July 13, 2017**

**Join the Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy for a 1 hour tour of the magnificent Bialystoker Synagogue, which was built in 1826 as a Methodist Church, and believed to be a stop on the Underground Railroad. Hear a presentation of Lower East Side History, and learn about the largest active congregation on the Lower East Side today. Marvel at this synagogue which is covered in murals and showcases Tiffany inspired glass windows.**

**Time: 7 PM**

**Meeting Place: In front of Bialystoker Synagogue, 7-11 Willett/Bialystoker Place (between Grand and Delancy Street)**

**Fees/Info: \$10 per person in advance  
(\$2 additional if purchased day of tour)**

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**News from Jewish Greece**

**TRIKALA**

**We would like to thank those who sent in donations. Please continue to do so. We want to make this restoration a reality. Those interested in taking part in this important project can contact the Central Board of Greece directly ([info@kis.gr](mailto:info@kis.gr)) and the Jewish Community of Trikala ([iakov.venouziou@gmail.com](mailto:iakov.venouziou@gmail.com)). For those who wish to give a donation within the United States (tax deductible) you can send your contributions to The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry, 1 Hanson Place, Huntington NY 11743. ALL MONEY COLLECTED WILL GO TO SAVE THE SYNAGOGUE**

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**KARDITSA**

**On June 19<sup>th</sup>, in the town of Amarndo, outside of Karditsa, a memorial was dedicated in thanks to the villagers who saved Jews from Karditsa, Volos and Trikala during the Occupation of Greece. Thanks to the moral courage of these Greek Orthodox Citizens, Jews, who otherwise might have wound up in the crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau, survived the Holocaust. Many of their descendants showed up for the ceremony. Viktor Venouziou, whose family were among those saved, was instrumental in the creation of the monument.**





## Thessaloniki

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, visited the Monastirion Synagogue in Thessaloniki. The visit drew Jews from all over Greece. Earlier in Netanyahu's historic visit, he met with the Prime Minister of Greece, Alexis Tsipras, the President of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, David Saltiel and the Mayor of Thessaloniki, Yiannis Boutaris. A main topic of discussion was the creation of a Holocaust Education Center in Thessaloniki. We are proud to say that The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry, Kehila Kedosha Janina and the Sisterhood of Janina have all given funds to help finance this important venture.



So much has been written about the ancient Jewish Cemetery in Thessaloniki and its destruction. To separate fact from fiction, do access this blog (in both Greek and English).

<https://abravanel.wordpress.com/2010/03/14/ancient-jewish-necropolis-thessaloniki/>

## Crete

### **On June 11<sup>th</sup> CEREMONY OF MEMORY IN CRETE FOR VICTIMS OF SHIP TANAIIS**

**On June 11, 2017, the Synagogue Chania Etz Hayyim organized the annual ceremony commemorating the victims of Tanais ship which sank in June 1944 south of the island, and was carrying Greek and Italian resistance fighters and all the Jews of Crete. Their destination was Haidari and, then, Auschwitz.**

**The ceremony began with a memorial service by Rabbi Gabriel Negrin of Athens, followed by a greeting from the Second Vice President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities (KIS), Victor I. Eliezer.**

**In his address, Mr. Eliezer said, among many other things, "Greek and Italian resistance fighters and Jews of Crete were loaded onto a ship with a final destination Auschwitz. The Jews of Crete were deported by the Nazis just because they were born Jews. They were the people next door, the neighbors of Kondylaki Street, traders, artisans, classmates of elementary and secondary school children. Just like that, on June 9th, they disappeared, lost to memory.... And then? After the void of history, nobody survived. Crete was emptied of Jews! The memory was lost. But not for everything. In 1999, the damaged Chania Synagogue was restored thanks to the tenacity of a Cretan, Nikos Stavroulaki who we lost a few days ago. And the memory was kept alive. The prayer was heard, the sound of the shofar sounded again. Why not forget? We must not forget. Because if you forget the atrocities will be repeated. And I want to congratulate the two new researchers who are trying to map the Jewish presence in Chania. We owe it to those who left, we owe to history, but above all we owe to future generations because just knowing the history and perpetuating the memory can shield the values of humanism and culture."**

**The keynote speech was made by poet Mr. Iosif Ventoura, the only living Jew who was born in Crete, who spoke about the history of the Jewish community of Crete, mainly focusing on the tragic death of almost all members of the Jewish Community of Crete with the sinking of the Tanais.**

**The memory ceremony ended with a wreath from the Central Jewish Council of Greece and President of the "Non-profit organization Etz Hayyim" Ms. Marianne Winter.**





## **News of Interest from Around the World**

**European Parliament approves resolution to adopt working definition of Anti-Semitism  
June 1, 2017**

**(JTA) — The European Parliament voted to adopt a resolution calling on member states and their institutions to apply the working definition of anti-Semitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.**

**The vote was taken on Thursday.**

**Most of the 28 European Union states participate in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, however, only Austria, Romania and the United Kingdom have formally adopted the definition.**

**The definition adopted by the IHRA in May 2016 reads: "Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."**

**The European Parliament resolution passed on Thursday calls on member states to protect their Jewish citizens and Jewish institutions from hate crime and hate speech, to support law enforcement efforts to identify and prosecute anti-Semitic attacks, to appoint national coordinators on combating anti-Semitism, systematically and publicly condemn anti-Semitic statements, to promote education about the Holocaust in schools, and to review schoolbooks regarding content related to Jewish history and contemporary Jewish life.**



**"Anti-Semitism is the oldest form of ethnic and religious hatred, and we need binding criteria for measuring it. This resolution must now be speedily implemented by all member states and by the EU institutions. It is critical that all countries apply the same criteria when it comes to dealing with hatred of Jews," World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder said in a statement following the vote.**

**"This is a monumental day for the fight against hate and the protection of the rights of European Jews," Dr. Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress, said in a statement. "For too long, Jews were deemed unique, with hate defined by the perpetrators and not by the victims."**

**"The only people who will be dismayed by this decision are those who wish to continue the culture of anti-Semitic impunity and who believe that Jews should not be afforded protection under the law," he also said.**

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**Gershon Harris  
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel**



**The fast day of the 17th of Tammuz is on July 11th. This is a one-day fast that commemorates 5 major tragedies that befell the Jewish people over history: Moses breaking the first 10 commandments because of the sin of the Golden Calf; the cessation of the sacrificial rite in the First Temple as the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem; the Romans breaching the walls of Jerusalem in Second Temple times; the burning of the Torah by a certain Greek soldier named Apostomos, who may be the famous Antiochus from the Hanukka story; and when an huge idol was placed in the Temple by the Romans. The 17th of Tammuz introduces the "3 Weeks" - a period of semi-mourning leading up to the 9th of Av - the destruction of the First and Second Temples. As we can see, three out of the five are specifically connected to the Temples and Jerusalem, which are eternally linked to Judaism and the Jewish people.**

**Nonetheless, recent UNESCO and other United Nations agencies have succeeded in passing resolutions that totally disconnect and deny any Jewish connection to Jerusalem, even claiming the "Kotel"- the Western Wall - as being an exclusively Moslem holy site. The next step planned by UNESCO is to totally eliminate any Jewish connection with the "Machpela" Cave in Hebron - the burial place of our Patriarchs and Matriarchs, among others! And this despite the fact that the story of Abraham's purchasing the site for perpetuity as a Hebrew gravesite is recorded in the Bible. It would seem that there are no limits to the treacherous and hateful attempts of all too many modern anti-Semites to deny Judaism's indisputable and irrevocable connection to Jerusalem, Hebron and in fact, the entire Land of Israel.**

**Yet, as frustrating and maddening this absurd situation has become, these are far from the first attempts to totally deny Judaism's most precious legacies. In fact, even after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. by Rome, and despite the lack of any real Jewish presence in the city, in 129-30 the Emperor Hadrian began rebuilding Jerusalem as Aelia (in honor of his family, Aelias) Capitolina (after the three Capitoline gods – Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, the designated patrons of the new city). This included construction of a temple to the gods of the city on the Temple Mount. Hadrian also renamed the country Palestine after the Biblical Philistines, though the Philistines had long since disappeared. His express purpose was to erase all memory of the connection between the Jews, Judea and Jerusalem.**

**The idea was to create a completely pagan city and totally eliminate – and even prevent – any Jewish presence of any kind. This led to further rebellion by Jews, including the famous yet ultimately unsuccessful Bar Cochba revolt, which led to delays in construction of the new city, but also to even greater destruction and decimation of Jewish towns and settlements and the remaining Jewish population than had occurred in the previous rebellions. Given this unbridled Roman victory, Hadrian forbade Jews to reside within a ten mile radius of Jerusalem, and**



construction of Aelia Capitolina resumed in earnest. The inscription "the colony of Aelia Capitolina has been founded" appeared on coins, together with a portrayal of the emperor plowing a furrow along the walls, the symbol of the establishment of a new Roman city. Nonetheless, these comprehensive and far-reaching attempts to create a totally new reality and eliminate the very name of Jerusalem, ultimately failed. Changes in Roman emperors and policies led to better relations with Jews and the establishment of a renewed, though small, Jewish community, which only continued to grow, and never left again, despite a plethora of new conquerors, wars and further attempts to totally exile Jews from Israel and Jerusalem. The historical record is clear and totally unequivocal: The Jewish people has never lost its inbred connection with Jerusalem, and never will. If the unprecedented physical and spiritual 250-year long attempt by ancient Rome to totally "de-Judaize" Jerusalem, modern-day resolutions will certainly not succeed. True, it is painful and shameful to see how much the world is willing to accommodate Palestinian-inspired attempts to literally change history in their contempt of the State of Israel and any Jewish connection to the most Jewish holy sites in existence, and yes, these evil actions must be fought on every front by Israel and the entire civilized world. But the very fact that we continue to observe fast days like the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz and the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av not only further strengthens our ties to Jerusalem and Israel, but also shows our resolve and knowledge that truth will ultimately triumph, and the world will accept our irrevocable and eternal ties to Jerusalem and the entire Land of Israel.

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#### Messages from our community

Sherri Busch (from the Eskononts family) wanted to share her great experience with our readers. "I was able to connect Phyllis Cohen Nardello with her sister and brother. Her sister and brother were given up for adoption in 1948. I had done "23andme" years ago and was able to find a cousin on my father's father's side. Phyllis and Denise are on my father's mother side. Denise (Phyllis's sister) recently joined "23andme" and we came up as first and second cousins. Also Ronni Abraham Korder was on there and she had the same connection with Denise. I called Aunt Rose and she knew Phyllis was adopted and Phyllis knew her biological mother had twins and had given them up for adoption.

We are all related by our grandparents-(Sophie Cohen-Ronni) (Benjamin Cohen-Phyllis, Denise and Gregory) (Esther Cohen-me)

They spoke to each other for the first time on Saturday. I am meeting with Denise and would love to show some photos.

Maybe you want to put this in the newsletter how I was able to find my cousins on "23andme."



In addition to La America, Judeo-Spanish Jews in America had La Vara, a weekly Ladino language newspaper published by Albert Levy, at 7 Rivington Street, New York, between 1922 and 1948. Pictured here: the masthead from the 2 January 1948 edition.

Our website has become an excellent source for researchers on the Holocaust in Greece. We have just published on our website the School List from the Jewish Community of Kavala, compiled by Vasileos Ritzaleos in 2013 for the 70th anniversary of the deportations from Kavala. You can find it on our website: <https://www.kkjsm.org/articles-and-historical-archives>



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