

IN HONOR OR MEMORY

Donations were made in memory of the following: Beckie & Morris Abrams, Esther & Jacob Besson, Morris & Esther Calef, Chic & Sarah Cantos, Eva & Morris Cabillis, Morris Calderon, Betty & Izzy Cohen, Esther Cohen, Ester & Jesoula Cohen, Ettie Cohen, Sam & Shirley Cohen, Solomon & Rebecca Cohen, Stella Cohen, Edward & Esther Danon, Louis Dastis, Eliot DeCastros, Louise Michael Eliasof, Murray Eskononts, Sarah Ezratty, parents & grandparents of Sarina & Gerald Feldman, Reba Geik, Hy Genee, Sonia Janet Goldstein, Ben Golombek, Hyman & Miriam Hametz, Albert Jenis, Solomon Johanan, Annette Joseph, Ezra Joseph, Max Joseph, Samuel L. Katzin, Mary Dostis Kestenbaum, Sidney Landau, Ben & Sally Levy, Hyman Levy, Louise & Sol Levy, Stamoula Levy, Esther Matza, Eva Solomon Matza, Julia Matza, Abraham Mazzas, Morris & Rachel Meezan, Elias Mordechai, Nissim Mordechai, Mazeltov Nachmias, Morris & Esther Negrin, Esther Mosios Negrin, Nat Negrin, Murray Saltzman, Sarah & Benjamin Serata, Eli & Betty Solomon, Jerry Solomon, Murray Solomon, Sol M. Solomon, Mr. & Mrs. Julius Weise, and Rebecca Moses Varon.

Donations were made in honor of David Cohen, the Colchamiro Family, the Dostis/Cohen Family, Rose Eskononts, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, Andrew & Dana Levi, Janet & Victoria Levi, Jean Saltzman, and Azi Sarfatti.

Donations were made on the occasion of the following: the engagement of Ariel Genee (daughter of Marla & Marty Genee and granddaughter of Hy Genee of Blessed Memory) & Josh Sternberg; 90th birthday of Hyman Menachem; in honor of the marriage of Brent Fisher to Allison Grolnick; and in honor of the birth of Sophie Mae Krivitsky, the newest member of the Askinazi, David, Davidson, Ovadia, Coffino & Negrin families.

PASSINGS

It is with sadness that we note the passing of these special Yanniotes and family members of Yanniotes: Nat Negrin of Delray Beach; Sam Negrin, brother of Max Negrin; Solomon Yohanan, uncle of Sherry Johanas Borrero; and Jack Jeuda, brother-in-law of our Board member Sol Matsil. This year also saw the passing of Andreas Sephiha, former President of the Jewish Community of Salonika; and Hank Halio, father of Joe Halio.

They shall all be missed.

RECIPE FOR FNARO

Nothing conjures up memories more than food. Recently, Marv Negrin was reminiscing about a dessert his nona served, but could not remember its name. It turned out to be Fnaro. The memories our Yanniotes shared with us could fill a book, but here are just a few [along with, of course, not one, but two recipes (out of hundreds received) for Fnaro].

"The dish is (was) called 'fnarh-oh' (accent on the second syllable). It consisted of, among other ingredients, scrambled eggs and honey. It probably also contained sugar. It was served in a large oval platter garnished with lots and lots of almonds. The hostess prepared the platter perimeter with teaspoons sticking out so that guests, when served, would fill one of the spoons with this confection, eat it and wash it down with a glass of water. As I recall, it was delicious!"
—Milton Matsil

"...fnaro was a good-luck dish served before a wedding or birth of a child."
—Claudia

"It is called Fnaro. I have an original copy from Rose Isaacs who is living in NYC. It is very difficult to make. The eggs curdle very easily. But, then again, practice makes perfect!"
—Risa Samuels

1 1/2 cups of water
1 1/2 cups of sugar
3 tablespoons of honey
6 eggs

Boil the water, sugar and honey together for 3–4 minutes so that it becomes a syrup. Beat six eggs and put them in the syrup. Cook them until the syrup is absorbed. Stir once in a while!

Here is the recipe you requested for Fnaro from Matilda Besca: [Joe Besca]

6 eggs
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup water
2 tablespoons honey

Dissolve sugar in boiling water and honey mixture. Stir gently until syrup is formed. Be careful not to burn mixture. Scramble 6 eggs, including yolk and egg white, and pour into syrup mixture over low heat. Stir mixture as you would scrambled eggs. Fnaro should turn golden brown and fluffy. Allow to cool and add unskinned almonds on top. Serve chilled.



KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM

Founder*: Joseph I. Josephs Life President*: Hyman Genee Life Members*: Michael Aronesty • Morris L. Cohen • Morris David • Morris Eskononts • Joseph Kassorla • Sam Nahoum • Solomon Schinasi

Trustees: Marvin Marcus, President • Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, Museum Director • Chaim Kofinas, Treasurer • Solomon Kofinas, Financial Secretary • Elliot Colchamiro, Recording Secretary

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SIMCHAS

The last year has seen important simchas celebrated at Kehila Kedosha Janina: baby namings, bar mitzvahs and our first wedding in years. On November 7th, Sharon Hametz and Jeffrey Rodnick received their wedding blessings in Kehila Kedosha Janina. Sharon's great-grandfather, Rabbi Israel Hametz, came to serve the growing Yanniote community on the Lower East Side in 1928. Her grandfather Haim attended Kehila Kedosha Janina, as did her father, Ivan, and her great aunts, great uncles, aunts and uncles. Her great-uncle Ovadia, Israel's son, also served as a spiritual leader. Needless to say, seeing Sharon take her vows in our sanctuary brought tears to all our eyes. Herein lies our future. The fact that the younger generation finds our synagogue so precious assures our continuity. Our special thanks to Doug and Rebecca Colchamiro Dicks for arranging the baby naming of their daughter Sara Jane Dicks (named after her great-grandmother Sara Colchamiro) and Paul and Aliza Solomon for naming Rebecca in our synagogue (as they did their first daughter, Rachel). What better way to pass on the love of our traditions than to celebrate a simcha with us! Contact us to arrange your simcha.

KKJ CALENDARS

Elias Hadjis is working on creating beautiful calendars that will be a treasure in any of our homes. Filled with photos of recent events at KKJ, and we would like to truly personalize these calendars with your special simchas (birthdays and anniversaries). Send us your information on the enclosed appeal coupon. Hopefully, calendars will be ready for 2009!

KKJ BOOK CLUB

As a sign of our continual renewal, two members of the Colchamiro family (Rhoda Hirsch and Ada Finifker) suggested the formation of a book club at Kehila Kedosha Janina. What an excellent idea! Our Book Club meets the first Sunday of the month and, of course, refreshments are provided. Contact us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net to become a member (nothing to pay, only something to gain - Suggested donation of \$5 per meeting to cover refreshments).

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Rose Eskononts:
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Association of Friends of Greek Jewry
Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos: 631-367-3905

The Romaniote

Newsletter of Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum

RENEWAL

In 1927, a magnificent Torah scroll, encased in a heavy silver tik, was brought over from Ioannina, Greece to dedicate the new synagogue, Kehila Kedosha Janina. Over the course of the years the tik would tarnish, in many ways reflecting the decline of the small Romaniote community that used the facilities on 280 Broome Street, but the Torah inside would continue to be used by the traditional, observant, Romaniote congregation.

Eighty years later, those who had the foresight to send the Torah to New York City can look down from the heavens above and be assured that the small congregation on Broome Street has been worthy of their gift. In many ways, the silver tik and the Torah inside represent the positive changes taking place at Kehila Kedosha Janina. The tik is being shined, the tarnish gently removed, its luster restored, by Andrew Marcus, the son of our President, Marvin.

In Andrew and, fortunately, in others of the younger generation, we are seeing a resurgence of interest in the synagogue, the liturgy, the customs and the traditions of the Kehila. A wedding was recently celebrated in our sanctuary (see articles on Simchas and Hametz family). The great granddaughter of Israel Hametz, an early rabbi of Kehila Kedosha Janina,



approached us to celebrate her nuptials. She wanted to stand next to her betrothed in the sanctuary where her family had worshipped for years. As part of or, in many ways, in the forefront of the Renaissance taking place on the Lower East Side, visitors from around the world have entered through our portals. Most come to see the restored synagogue; some are descendants of the founding families. But another unforeseen resurgence

has taken place. There has been an increase in observant Jews who visit our synagogue on Sundays, and it is not unusual to find impromptu minhah services taking place in the afternoon. Why not? We have worked hard to assure that our structure remains an active synagogue. While we are very proud of the museum encased within its walls, our founding fathers built a Jewish house of worship and, as they look down from heaven, we

are sure they appreciate our efforts in ensuring that Kehila Kedosha Janina continues to be a sanctuary for the observance of Judaism. Not only has the tik encasing our original Torah been shined, but also the words of the Torah continue to be heard within our walls. Support us. Contribute financially to our physical renewal. Be a part of our spiritual renewal.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Seasonal changes afford us the opportunity to reflect on our changing lives. In celebrating Passover, I have wonderful memories of participating in seders with my parents and family, reading the Haggadah in Hebrew, Ladino and English and singing traditional Sephardic holiday songs. Our sources of strength change as we age. Family, home, customs and heritage meld into who we are. Our Kehila has become a source of light for many who seek out renewal and return. The erecting of a Succah

and a wedding ceremony are but a few of the events taking place at KKJ. We look forward to those who search for a better understanding of our unique heritage and wish to share this knowledge with their families and friends. Become a part of this new dynamic at Kehila Kedosha Janina. Pessach allegre. Kalo Pessach.

Sincerely,
Marvin Marcus

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www.kkjsm.org or e-mail at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net

MESSAGE FROM OUR MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Attendance at our Museum continued to increase in 2007, nearly doubling the attendance of the previous year. Of course, our completed restoration had much to do with this. But, in addition, the support of our community, not only at special events but also throughout the year, has been instrumental. Nothing pleases me more than to see *e thika mas* (our own people) coming to book presentations and openings of exhibits.

Since our last newsletter, we officially opened the Preveza exhibit on October 7, 2007 [see the exhibit at our website: www.kkjsm.com] in memory of the Jewish Community of Preveza. In attendance was Moses Eliasaf, President of the Jewish Community of Ioannina, whose own mother was born in Preveza. The exhibit will be up through June 2008. This year, in memory of this small, often overlooked community, our annual Yom HaShoah ceremony will be in their honor. Special thanks to Abraham Sabbas whose moving speech brought us all to tears, and Jeff Mordos, Rachel Ganis and Isaac Dostis, whose photographic contributions made the exhibit possible.

On November 11th, in honor of the wedding of Sharon Hametz and Jeffrey Rodnick in Kehila Kedosha Janina, a special family exhibit was created for the Hametz family [see articles: The Hametz Family and Simchas]. The exhibit will be up through October of 2008

and will become a permanent part of our website.

On November 25th, we hosted Mara Cohen Ioannides for a book signing of her delightful book, *A Shout in the Sunshine*, now nominated for the Jewish Book Award. As Mara said, being at Kehila Kedosha Janina was the most important stop on her worldwide book tour. In keeping with our desire to tell the story of Greek Jewry and present important books of interest, we were honored to host the first presentation of Katherine Fleming's highly acclaimed book, *Greece—A Jewish History*. The book is dedicated to Hy Genee and has a chapter on Kehila Kedosha Janina. In addition, Katherine generously donated 50 copies of the book for resale, all profits going to our Museum.

The Museum received two important monetary donations this year, the first from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, which will enable us to set up a multimedia research center in our communal room, enabling us to truly become a center for Greek Jewish studies, and the second from the Greek government, which will be used to create a DVD presentation on the Holocaust in Greece.

In November of 2008, Kehila Kedosha Janina will open a major exhibit on "Our Veterans," the story of the service of Greek-American Jews in WWII. Two items will serve as the backdrop of the

exhibit: a 48-star American flag found in storage under our Aron, and a moving photograph taken in 1943 of a young girl (Carole Lurie of the David family) as she salutes her uncle Arthur before he goes off to war. Arthur would not return. He would die in the Pacific in 1944, one of a number of Yannioties who would die in battle. I am still looking for photos for the exhibit and, especially, the loan of medals.

My special thanks to David Belle for his valuable work in documenting census records, Veteran Administration records and former residences of our community. Irwin Josephs has been working on manifest listings of our community during immigration. Elias Hadjis has been working on brochures and gathering photos for our own calendars [see article on KKJ calendars]. As always, I continue to find treasures among *e thika mas*.

All that the Museum has been able to do would not have been possible without the help of our volunteers: Koula and Sol Kofinas, Elias Hadjis, Maurice Negrin, Rose Eskononts, Abe Levy, Marcee Rafael, Andrew Marcus and Abraham Sabbas. Our special good wishes to our former volunteer Arlene Schulman, now working at Yeshiva University.

Thank You,
Marcia Haddad Ikonopoulou
Museum Director

MESSAGE FROM THE SISTERHOOD OF JANINA

The Sisterhood has not rested on its laurels. Coming off the "5-Way Anniversary" celebration, and its 75th Anniversary, we continue in our philanthropic endeavors. This past summer we witnessed the beginning of the fires that devastated Greece and donated to the fund set up to help the victims and reforest the land; we lived up to our commitment to KKJ by purchasing new Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur books; "Monday after Mother's Day at the Sephardic Home" is our next item on the agenda. This annual event is one we look forward to as much as the residents do and is a highlight for

us. In addition to the monetary donation we present each year, gifts for the female residents are being purchased. The Sisterhood is a charter member of the Home, as we were there at the very beginning, selling "bricks for a dollar" to help erect the building. We are very proud of our connection to this very important Sephardic institution, as many of our members are, and have been, residents. This year, in response to an emotional visit to Ioannina on the annual Tour to Jewish Greece, many of our group reconnected with their roots and joined the Sisterhood. Join us. Join our growing membership.

THE HAMETZ FAMILY

In many ways, the Hametz family typified the early members of the congregation of Kehila Kedosha Janina: recent immigrants, Greek-speaking observant Jews with large families. Israel Hametz, the patriarch of the family, had allowed his oldest daughter to come on her own in 1920. In this close-knit community, there was no danger in this. She would live with extended family or close family friends and, as was typical of first-generation Yannioties, marry another Yanniotie (in this case, Joe Leon Josephs in 1924). Unforeseen circumstances would make it difficult for her family to join her. In 1924, immigration quotas were put into place restricting the entrance of potential immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. In 1928, Israel would arrive in New York with his wife and seven children, helped by a letter written to the American Consulate in Athens, testifying to his need to serve as rabbi in the new Kehila Kedosha Janina. A copy of the original letter of 1928 is on display in our Museum. Israel worked in import/export to supplement his salary as a rabbi. The family would live on the Lower East Side, close to the Kehila where Israel's son, Ovadiah, would also serve as a spiritual leader, helping to conduct the traditional Romaniote prayer services. For additional information on the Hametz family (including photos) access our website: www.kkjsm.org.



MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF GREEK JEWRY

As the Association celebrates ten years of existence, we look back with pride on all we have accomplished. We have made a difference! We have raised funds for restoration projects, published two books and continue to run annual tours to Jewish Greece. 2007 has been an exciting one. We have been asked to support a project inspired by the heroism of Colonel Mordechai Frizis, the Greek-Jewish war hero who died on the Albanian front in December of 1940. Stephanos Becharas, an

impassioned Greek, has raised funds for an equestrian statue in honor of Colonel Frizis, a statue that will be unveiled this August 17th in Ioannina, the closest city to where he fell in battle. The Association is honored to be part of this project. The Association's annual Tour to Jewish Greece in 2007 was by far our most successful. Our group joined with the Kofinas family in Ioannina to celebrate the Bar Mitzvah of Seth Kofinas [see article on Bar Mitzvah in Ioannina]. The true success of this tour is reflected

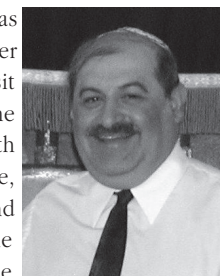
in the close relationships formed by our participants, who continue to keep in touch and meet for reunions. The true success of our tours, in general, are the number of participants who join for the second, third or even the fourth or fifth time! It is not too late to join our 2008 tour (Salonika, Ioannina, Volos and Israel). Join us for an experience you will never forget. Join with us in being a part of the only organization working to preserve the remnants of Greek Jewry. Make a difference!

MEET THE BOARD: CHAIM KOFINAS

One of the many beautiful aspects of our community, and one that is reflected in the composition of our Board of Directors, is the love of Kehila Kedosha Janina (KKJ) that is passed down from generation to generation. Nowhere is this better exemplified than in the Kofinas family. Chaim Kofinas, the son of Sol and Koula Kofinas, and a Board member since the inception of the Board of Directors, had his Bar Mitzvah at KKJ, studied under Sam Samuels and Hy Genee, both of Blessed Memory, and is passing the traditions, customs and minhag of the Yannioties to his son, Seth [see article on the Bar Mitzvah in Ioannina]. Chaim is an accomplished CPA with a BS in Accounting from Brooklyn College and a Masters in Taxation from Pace University. He is also

a graduate of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem on East Broadway. Now, in addition to providing KKJ with financial advice and filling the position of Treasurer on the Board of Directors, he also acts as spiritual leader of the synagogue. While he no longer physically lives on the Lower East Side, his fond memories of growing up at 180 Allen St. and 80 Delancey St. have stayed with him. "I was born to two immigrant parents in 1958...at the time they lived at 180 Allen St., a walk-up tenement on the top floor (6th). The apartment faced an inner courtyard. The bathtub was in the kitchen. In the summer we would go up to the roof and watch life unfold in the streets below." Chaim visited Greece, the country where both his parents were born, for the first time after his own

Bar Mitzvah, and has returned a number of times to visit family. This year he returned again with his wife, Suzanne, his sister, Rachel and his parents for the celebration of the Bar Mitzvah of his son, Seth (the actual Bar Mitzvah was held in June at Kehila Kedosha Janina), filling the synagogue of Ioannina with joy. Thank you, Chaim Kofinas, for your commitment to the Yanniotie community, for your valuable contributions to Kehila Kedosha Janina and for sharing your simchas with us. We are truly blessed to have you on our Board of Directors.



A BAR MITZVAH IN IOANNINA

On July 21, 2007, the synagogue in Ioannina was filled with joy. Chaim and Suzanne Kofinas had brought their son, Seth, to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah. They were accompanied by Seth's grandparents Sol and Koula Kofinas and his aunt, Rachel. His great-uncle Zino and his family would travel from Athens for the joyous occasion. In addition to the family and the Jewish Community of Ioannina, The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry had gathered an additional 37 celebrants, all members of the annual tour to Jewish Greece [see article: Message from the Association]. The Bar Mitzvah was an exceedingly emotional event for all involved. Seth's great-grandparents Chaim and Rachel Kofinas had worshipped in the Ioannina synagogue and had married there before their moving to Athens. Chaim and Rachel were victims of the Holocaust, as were two of their children, Perna (age 13) and Tzadikos (eight months old), rounded up on March 25, 1944 in Athens. Sol and his older brother Zino would survive as hidden children in Athens.

The Bar Mitzvah made the local newspapers! Following are excerpts translated from a major morning newspaper in Ioannina:

Jewish Yannioties from America visit Ioannina, By Geogios Siobotis

On the 20th and 21st of July a group of Yanniotie Jews from New York visited our city. The purpose of their visit was to acquaint themselves with the special motherland of their grandparents. The leader of the delegation was Marcia Haddad Ikonopoulou, the Director of the museum in the Yanniotie Synagogue of New York [Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum].

On the occasion of this visit, the family of Chaim and Suzanne Kofinas [descendants of the large Kofinas family who used to live in Ioannina] celebrated the Bar Mitzvah [religious coming-of-age custom] of their son, Seth Kofinas on Saturday, July 21st in the synagogue of Ioannina. There were many Christians invited to the event...After the service inside the synagogue, all of the invitees went outside into the courtyard, where there followed a "kiddush" [a sanctified offering] consisting of light drinks and traditional Yanniotie sweets...In the afternoon, the celebration continued with a meal in a restaurant on the island where, according to tradition,

the young boy, Seth, was presented with gifts from his co-religionists...It is worthy to mention the presence of two senior members of the group [one 85 years old and the other 87], Elias Eliasof [Hy Eliasof] and Matsil Matslia [Max Marshall], both born in America, who, as they were leaving, spoke to me in Greek [in Yanniotie dialect] some words and phrases they remembered from their grandmothers and their parents... At the end music was played and, slowly, slowly, one by one, they got up to joyfully dance Greek dances, which most of the younger guests did not know, but they quickly learned the steps to the beautiful rhythms of the Pogoniou.

Seth Kofinas truly put the mitzvah back in Bar Mitzvah

