



**The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry
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**2018
Annual Newsletter**

As the Association enters its 21th year we welcome our new members and thank our loyal supporters. The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry continues to be the only organization in the United States dedicated exclusively to Greek Jewry and we take this responsibility seriously. Obviously, so do others. When the United States Holocaust Museum was searching for a means to increase their photo archives on Greek Jews, they contacted the Association. When the Consul General of Greece in New York needed names for the annual January 27th commemoration of Greek-Jewish Holocaust losses, they contacted the Association. When the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki wanted help in distributing their English-language newsletter El Avenir, they contacted the Association. When the Jewish Community of Ioannina needed help in restoring their synagogue and cemetery, they contacted the Association. When Corfiote Jews in the Diaspora wished to raise funds for a memorial plaque in the synagogue in Corfu, they contacted the Association. When the synagogue in Rhodes was in jeopardy of collapsing, the Jewish Community of Rhodes contacted the Association. The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry has a proven track record. We reach out to more Greek Jews in the Diaspora than any other organization in existence. The amazing thing is that all this is all done by a staff that receives absolutely no financial compensation. They are driven by a passion to make a difference. Of course, none of this could possibly happen without the support and financial help of our loyal members both here in the United States and worldwide.

In 2010, we were part of a three way collaboration (partnered with Kehila Kedosha Janina and the Sisterhood of Janina) to raise funds for repair of desecrated tombstones in the Ioannina cemetery. There were a total of 4 desecrations in 2009 and The Association (along with Kehila Kedosha Janina) spearheaded an internet and letter writing campaign to draw attention to this problem, resulting in an historical demonstration of support for the Jewish Community of Ioannina in December of 2009.

In 2010, we raised thousands to help in the repair of Etz Hayyim Synagogue in Hania Crete, severely damaged by arson. While, unfortunately, the library has been difficult to replace, we are happy to report that the synagogue is now operational and almost fully restored. We were honored to be a part of this campaign.

In 2011, we helped raise the funds for the repair of Torah scrolls and tikkim in Ioannina that had been damaged by excessive moisture.

In 2012, we initiated a campaign to draw attention to and raise money for repair of cemeteries throughout Greece. We have been in contact with ISJM (the International Survey of Jewish Monuments) and are hoping to get help from the European Union.

In 2013, we raised funds for the repair of the roof on the synagogue in Ioannina.

In 2014 we, along with Kehila Kedosha Janina and the Sisterhood of Janina, made a generous donation towards the creation of a Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Greece. The center will be located in Salonika but will represent all Greek Jewry. David Saltiel, President of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki (Salonika) and the architects were personally on hand to receive the donation. In addition, in 2014, the Association made a generous donation to the Jewish Community of Ioannina and to Kehila Kedosha Janina's Infrastructure Fund.

In 2015, we once again made substantial donations to the Jewish Community of Ioannina and towards the creation of a Holocaust Education Center in Salonika. In addition, we, along with Kehila Kedosha Janina and The Sisterhood of Janina, made sizeable donations to the Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece (KIS) specifically to aid poor and elderly Jews throughout Greece during these times of financial crisis. In addition, we gave our prestigious "Award of Moral Courage" to the island of Ereikousa (off the coast of Corfu) for saving a Jewish family during the Holocaust.

In 2016 and 2017, we, once again, gave sizable donations to the Jewish Community of Ioannina and towards the creation of a Holocaust Education Center in Salonika, Etz Hayyim Synagogue in Crete, the Jewish Community of Corfu and the Jewish Community of Larissa.

This year, our annual campaign will, once again highlight the need to help the **Jewish Community of Ioannina**, a community of only 30 individuals who are now struggling to pay increased community taxes. Moses Eliasof says that, without help, he does not see how the community can continue to exist. In addition, the Association will continue to raise funds towards the **Holocaust Education Center in Thessaloniki**. It is hoped that in 2018 the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki will be able to break ground for the new Holocaust Education Center, due to substantial funds that are coming from Germany and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.



The Association arranges annual tours to Jewish Greece. Those who have attended past tours will attest to the fact that they are literally 'life changing experiences.' Our tours have gone viral! The main tour for 2018 is a very special tour, visiting Greece and the "Jewish Balkans." The itinerary and prices are enclosed with this newsletter. We are sure this tour will sell out immediately. We must be doing something right!

In 2016 we started tours in the Fall and, in 2017, visited Rhodes for Rosh HaShonah and Ioannina for Yom Kippur. We will, most likely, be doing something similar in 2018.

Our first tour for those in their 20's and 30s took place in 2017 and we are hoping to continue this in the future.



Join with us in being a part of the only organization working to preserve the remnants of Greek Jewry. Make a difference!