

know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at museum@kkjism.org

We are open for Shabbat every Saturday morning starting at 9:30am. Please email amarcus@kkjism.org if you would like to attend, and enjoy a traditional Greek kiddush lunch after services.

Our Museum is open every Sunday from 11am-4pm. Please RSVP to museum@kkjism.org if you would like to visit. If you wish to sponsor a newsletter, contact us at museum@kkjism.org.

Simchas

Mazal tov to Alex Winson and Dina Vardava, who celebrated their wedding of on September 21st on the island of Rhodes. Alex is the great grandson of Rebecca Nikokiris who came from Ioannina to Manchester in 1915 with the son, Simon Bacolas. We welcome Alex and Dina into our ever-growing Romaniote family, along with Alex's sister, Becky (Rebecca), his mother, Loraine and father, Paul.



Passings

We mourn the passing of Rivka Betty Gisser Nachmias, who passed on September 2, 2022. In the words of her son Gordon: "Mom was one of the sweetest, the most beautiful, loving, selfless people in the world... even in spite of her health and other life issues, she was a person who only thought of and gave to others before herself, to her detriment. She earned a Masters degree in Psychology and knew Finance well... she worked for some time in the jewelry trade on 47th St and others including a well known sign company. Her life passion were her kids and had a great love for music. She would always find a way to share what little she had with as many as she could. She was a generous mother with infinite love for her children and family. She prayed every day, sent weekly emails to wish a good Shabbos to her family and to share the word of Hashem and love to all.... "She grew up right next door to KKJ Synagogue, with her Mom and Dad, William and Mollie Nachmias, and was very deeply influenced by the world she grew up in. She would share memories and tell us about the beautiful prayers and songs coming from next door.....

And now, she is our angel above!"



Rivkah "Betty Gisser" Nachmias

Father: William Nissim Mordechai Nachmias

Mother: Mollie Levy Nachmias

Sister: Rita Nachmias Sanders

All of Blessed Memory

Children - Nolan, Marshall, Gordon and his wife Cindy and children Kimberly and Greg, Daryl (recently passed 12/2021), Brett, Seth and his wife Sheri and son Aden

Ex-husband father of her 6 boys - Herman George Gisser

Many extended family members, friends, and family of Kehila Kedosha Janina.

Visitors to Visit Kehila Kedosha Janina

We are always honored to welcome old friends and great new ones. In September we welcomed many new faces, including Billie Hirsch from the Dalven family, and Avital Reem from Israel. Emily Sorkin from AJC visited the Kehila in preparation for an upcoming visit of diplomats and members of AJC in October.



Avital Reem



Emily Sorkin



KKJ was honored to welcome a very special visitor who has traveled around the world: Little Amal, a 3.5-meter tall puppet of a young refugee girl. This traveling festival of art and hope in support of refugees has brought Amal to 85 cities around the world, and during her visit to NYC she shook hands with our President Marvin Marcus as well as our congregants Sol and Koula Kofinas. Amazingly, Little Amal already visited our sister synagogue Kahal Kadosh Yashan Synagogue in Ioannina, Greece last year, so she knows all about Romaniote Jews! Learn more about Little Amal [here](#) and watch videos of her visit [here](#).



We also want to offer a special thanks to Sivan and Elio Koen who helped us build and decoate our communal Sukkah.



Upcoming Events

Simhat Torah Celebration and Dinner

Monday October 17 at 6pm

Please RSVP to Amarcus@kkjasm.org



2022 5783

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR A

SIMHAT TORAH
CELEBRATION & DINNER

מועדים לשמחה
Χαγκ Σαμέαχ MOED ALEGRE

MONDAY OCTOBER 17 AT 6:00PM
KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NYC

EREV SIMHAT TORAH SERVICES BEGIN AT 6:00PM
INCLUDING MINHA, ARVITH, AND HAKAFOT
TRADITIONAL GREEK JEWISH DINNER FOLLOWING SERVICES

"THESE ARE THE APPOINTED FESTIVAL SEASONS OF THE LORD... FRIENDS OF
YOU SHALL REJOICE ON YOUR FESTIVAL... AND YOU WILL BE COMPLETELY JOYOUS"

PLEASE RSVP TO AMARCUS@KKJSM.ORG

VIEW OUR FULL HOLIDAY SCHEDULE AT WWW.KKJSM.ORG

DONATED BY FRIENDS OF
KEHILA KEDOSHA
JANINA
DEDICATED
PURIM 5744

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA MUSEUM
INVITES YOU TO THE

OPENING RECEPTION FOR OUR NEW EXHIBIT ON THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF CORFU



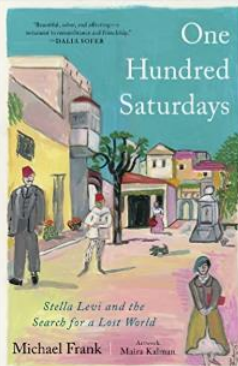
SUNDAY OCTOBER 23 AT 1:00PM
KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NYC

In conjunction with the Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library and the Jewish Theological Seminary Library, which recently launched their exhibit "The Jews of Corfu: Between the Adriatic and the Ionian," Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum is proud to share our newest exhibit highlighting the history and daily life of the Jewish Community of Corfu.

The island of Corfu is now part of Greece, but from 1386 until the end of the 18th century it was under Venetian rule and was closely affiliated with Italian Jewry. At the same time, it was home to a community of Greek-speaking Romaniote Jews, Ladino-speaking Sephardic Jews, and Italian-speaking Jews from Apulia and Sicily. Join us to learn more about this fascinating historic Jewish community.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED
PLEASE RSVP TO MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG

**KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA MUSEUM
INVITES YOU TO A SPECIAL
BOOK PRESENTATION
ONE HUNDRED SATURDAYS:
STELLA LEVI AND THE SEARCH FOR A LOST WORLD
BY MICHAEL FRANK**



**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13 AT 1:00PM
KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NYC**

Stella Levi, born on the island of Rhodes in 1923, was taken from her island paradise when the Jews of Rhodes were deported on July 23, 1944. Surviving Auschwitz, Stella lost most of her family and, for many years, found it very difficult to return to Rhodes. When she finally did, in the 1980s, she committed herself to remembering the lost Jews of Rhodes. She was instrumental in helping to save the historic Kahal Shalom synagogue in Rhodes, originally built in 1577, and create the present Jewish Museum inside the synagogue. Stella also worked to have each and every name of the Jews of Rhodes who perished memorialized on a series of boards in the courtyard of Kahal Shalom. Now, with the publication of this book, Stella is also ensuring that the traditions and customs of the Jewish Community of Rhodes will be remembered. Join us as Stella presents this new book and autographs copies for sale.

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED
PLEASE RSVP TO MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG**

Upcoming Events of Interest

The American Sephardi Federation, the Seattle Jewish Theatre Company,
and the Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America present:

"ARRIVALS"

***A Jewish Romeo & Juliet love story based on historical events.
A hit in Seattle, coming to New York. Written and Directed by Art Feinglass***

When the first Sephardic Jew arrived in Seattle in 1902, not everything went as planned. Marco Cordova, a young Sephardic Jew from Turkey, came to America to make his fortune. Bayla Keigelman, a fragile Ashkenazi girl from Russia, arrived fleeing a pogrom. Their meeting seemed written in the stars until tradition declared their love forbidden.

Sunday, October 30 at 3:00 PM
Monday, October 31 at 8:00 PM
Tuesday, November 1 at 8:00 PM
Thursday, November 3 at 8:00 PM
Sunday, November 6 at 3:00 PM

Order Tickets [Here](#)

\$36 Early bird discount (if purchased before October 9th)

\$50 Ticket price (if purchased after October 9th)

The Center for Jewish History - 15 W 16th Street, New York City

American Sephardi Federation Seattle Jewish Theater Company The Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America
La Ermandad Sefaradi

PRESENT

ARRIVALS
A Sephardi-Ashkenazi Love Story
Written and Directed by Art Feinglass

Center for Jewish History
15 West 16th Street, NYC
New York Premiere October 30, 31 November 1, 3, 6

Annual OXI Day (October 28, 1940) Commemoration: "Freedom's Shout to Tyranny- OXI!" Panel Discussion



Dear Friends and Colleagues

Join us for EMBCA's Annual OXI Day (October 28, 1940) Commemoration: "Freedom's Shout to Tyranny- OXI!" Panel Discussion on Sunday, October 23, 2022 at 2 P.M. EST/ 9 P.M. EEST.. The panel discussion will be moderated by Lou Katsos EMBCA's President. Our distinguished panel, in formation, will include General (R) Ilias Leontaris; Author Dr. Christopher Lamb Research Fellow (R) at the National Defense University; Author/ Writer/ Historian and EMBCA Director Alexander Billinis; and Historian/ Researcher/ Author and EMBCA Director Peter Giakoumis.

OXI Day (October 28, 1940) a national Hellenic holiday represents when the Hellenic Prime Minister Metaxas was awoken to respond to a series of demands from a representative of a WW2 Axis Power which would have allowed foreign troops free reign in Greece a neutral nation at the time. His response to these demands and the Hellenic people's simple shout "OXI/NO" led to battles by the Hellenes of historical international consequences for Europe and the free world. It was the first time in the European theater that an Axis Power was defeated after them taking over country after country, raised the hopes of occupied Europe, and caused the Nazi forces which were scheduled to attack the Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa) to divert their forces and invade Greece instead. This diversion led to a delay in the Nazi invasion of the U.S.S.R. and the Nazi's eventual defeat there in the Soviet winter. As per the title of this event OXI Day was a turning point in WW2 and had an importance that went beyond the Hellenic Republic and a war international in scope. In addition, despite the ultimate Hellenic defeat, having fought long and hard, the bravery of the Hellenic people during those difficult six months also had the effect of changing how Hellenic Americans were perceived in America and Hellenes in general. In America it transformed them from being thought of as the "Other" to being finally accepted as Americans.

Best regards- EMBCA

Lou Katsos
Marina A. Belessis Casoria
Stamatis Ghikas
Konstantinos Drougos
Prof. Nicholas Alexiou
Alexander Billinis
Peter S. Giakoumis
Eric Hill
Richard S. Khuzami
Constantine Sirigos

When: Sunday, October 23th at 2:00 PM ET (US and Canada) /
9:00 PM EEST (Athens)

Where: Online event – [Link Here](#)

KKJ Looks Forward to Welcoming Dr. Anna Kohen present her Newly Published Book “Flower of Vlora.” As soon as we set the date for this presentation, we will formally announce the event

The Romaniotes: My Family’s Story of Survival
Anna Kohen

September 5, 2022

The Romaniotes, or Romaniote Jews, are the oldest Jewish community in Europe, dating back at least 2,300 years to the time of Alexander the Great. They are Hellenized, Greek-speaking Jews native to the eastern Mediterranean. They established communities in many Greek cities, such as Ioannina, where my parents were born. The first clear historical reference to the Romaniotes dates to the 1300s where they were mentioned in Byzantine golden bulls (official decrees). Additionally, archeological remains are evidence of earlier communities, such as the synagogues in the Agora of Athens and Delos, dating to the 2nd century BCE; mosaic inscriptions found in the synagogue on the island of Aegina are believed to have been constructed between 300 and 350 CE and used until the 600s CE. The Romaniotes lived in relative peace under Ottoman rule, and by the 1800s were involved in many trades, including owning small shops and family businesses.

On March 25, 1944, the nearly 1,960 Romaniote Jews in Ioannina — including my mother’s family — were deported by the Nazis to Auschwitz. Only 180 returned. Today, there are very few Romaniote synagogues in the world; there are a handful in Greece, one in Israel, and only one in the Western Hemisphere, the Kehila Kedosha Ioannina Synagogue and Museum in Manhattan.

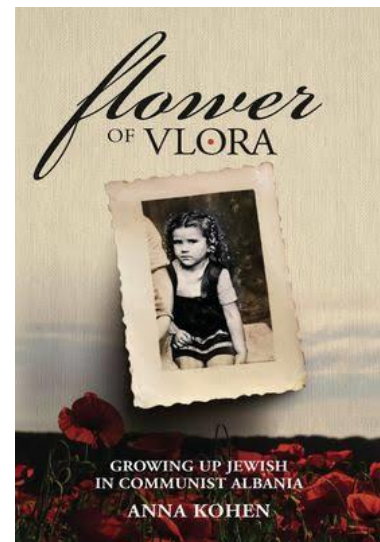
The Romaniotes are distinct from the Sephardim who settled in Ottoman Greece after the 1492 expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Romaniotes traditions vary from those of the Sephardic Jews. For example, the Sephardim speak Ladino, a Judeo-Spanish language, while the Romaniotes use demotic Greek as their everyday language. Yevanic, or Judeo-Greek, was both spoken and written using the Hebrew alphabet. A few words that our parents taught us appear in my memoir, *Flower of Vlora*.

I decided to write my memoir, *Flower of Vlora*, for my grandkids; I didn’t know anything about my grandparents — especially from my mother’s side — except that they were sent to the concentration camps from Ioannina, Greece. The more I wrote, the more I realized that this story would have a larger audience. In Ioannina, my paternal grandfather, Ilia, and his brother, Joseph, had a fabric dying business together. While the Jews of Ioannina earned their livings in many trades at that time, they worked primarily in the cloth industry. My aunt Nina was ready to get married to her future husband in Trikalla. According to Romaniote tradition, her family had to give her a dowry. My grandfather had no money and decided to take a loan out against the business. However, he could not repay the loan and the two brothers were forced to declare bankruptcy in 1938.

Many of the Romaniote Jews in Albania were hidden during the Nazi occupation of the country, and a number of Jews from the surrounding countries also found refuge in Albania.

My grandfather was a specialist in dying fabrics and was offered an opportunity by a Romaniote friend, also from Ioannina, in Vlora, Albania. He accepted the offer, moving his family to Albania, and ultimately helped his friend to save fabrics imported from England after a flood in the store. Joseph and his family went to Eretz Israel, today Israel.

My grandparents and my father, a young man at the time, met a small community of Romaniotes in Albania and decided to stay in Vlora. My father eventually returned to Ioannina, married my mother, and brought her



to Vlorë in 1942. Many of the Romaniote Jews in Albania were hidden during the Nazi occupation of the country, and a number of Jews from the surrounding countries also found refuge in Albania.

After the war, my parents came out from hiding in Trevllazer, where a Muslim family sheltered them from the Nazis. They could not go back to Greece, even though they were Greek citizens. We had great Romaniote friends in Vlorë, most of whom had settled there before 1900. During the interminable period of Communist rule, the small group of Romaniotes kept the family traditions and practiced their religion secretly despite the watchful eyes of the Sigurimi, the police. There was no way for the family to leave the country, as Albania was under the dictatorship of Enver Hoxha. They gave up the idea of escaping at that time and went on with their lives in Vlorë. As years passed, the idea came up again more seriously as we kids were older; we had to orchestrate a scheme to leave.

My goal in writing the *Flower of Vlorë* was to teach my children and grandchildren about their ancestors and their rich heritage. My hope is that they appreciate and are as proud as I am to be a Romaniote Jew.

Dr. Anna Kohen was born in Vlorë, Albania, and left in 1966 with seven of her family members and moved to Greece where she completed Dental School and earned a dental degree. In 1991, and with the help of several Jewish organisations, she brought 37 of her Albanian relatives to the United States. That same year she was invited to Albania to celebrate the founding of the Albanian-Israeli society and was appointed Honorary Member. In 2004, the President of the Albanian Republic awarded her the medal for special Civil Merits for Valuable contributions in helping Albanians during the Kosovar humanitarian crisis. Dr. Kohen has served the Albanian community for over 30 years as President of the Albania American Women's Organization.

Past Events of Interest

Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network

On September 26, the second night of Rosh Hashanah, the Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network welcomed more than 45 young community members to Kehila Kedosha Janina for evening services and a wonderful Rosh Hashanah Dinner. This inspiring group of young people enjoyed a special Rosh Hashanah Seder led by Andrew and Ethan Marcus that included symbolic foods including dates, pomegranates, apples and honey, squash, prasa keftedes/keftikas de prasa (Leek patties), fish head, and more. Everyone chanted the prayers together in Hebrew, English, Ladino, and Greek, and learned about the beauty of our Romaniote and Sephardic traditions. The evening continued with additional delicious foods and plenty of wine and ouzo. Thank you to everyone who attended to make the evening so memorable, and special thank you to Joel and Laurel Marcus who generously sponsored the dinner. We look forward to many more fun events together in the new year!

President of Kehila Kedosha Janina Marvin Marcus meets the new Consul General of Greece in New York, Konstantinos Konstantinou.



News from Jewish Greece

Thessaloniki

The "Phantom" Spy of the Nazis in Thessaloniki

By Dimitris Stavropoulos

The name of Pericles Nikolaidis still causes goosebumps to the old Thessalonians, who lived the horrors of the Occupation. A recently published book reveals his hitherto unknown action, against not only the Jews but also the other inhabitants of the city. Nikolaidis' network of spies was not only anticommunist. His targets were the British who had escaped arrest and their spy networks, the Jewish properties of the city, the money in every version of it. The main members of the spies were of course declared fascists and Nazis, with "stamps" in organizations such as the infamous UGS (National Union of Greece). Nikolaidis becomes a player, undertakes the fortification works of the Germans, demolishes the Jewish settlements of Hirsch and 151 and sells the building materials with the much-discussed Max Marten by his side.

He Even Murdered Germans

The men of Nikolaidis' personal guard never hesitate and for nothing, with the identity of German counterintelligence in their pockets they even murder... German military. In the midst of the occupation and with hunger reaping, "Phantom" sets up a chain of casinos ("Oraia Naoussa", "Aegeon", "Neon Faliro", "Monte Carlo", "Panellinio", "Femina") in Thessaloniki and casinos up to Athens. Self-financing and murderously profitable, handing out money to German officials as well, he also entered the operational competition of the German secret services that almost cost him. Armed with money, bribery, fraud, relationships with fatal women of the time such as the singer Tada Valic and his wild feasts, casinos were promoted by the Nazi newspaper "New Europe" as "centers of culture"! Even during the German retreat Nikolaidis was on a network that was preparing an "armed guerrilla", since they believed that their fleeing would be temporary and they would return. He himself was eventually lost in the ashes of the defeated Germany, killed or changed his identity and continued his life with the profits he had made.

Especially during the winter of 1941-1942 when the occupiers, robbing the wealth of the country, had snatched from the state warehouses all the food reserves resulting in famine, many were the ones who were forced to sell their belongings, in order to literally secure "a bite of bread". The humanitarian crisis of that horrible winter mainly decimated the large urban centers. The crisis caused by the German occupation had taken on disastrous proportions. On the one hand, the Nazis plundered agricultural production and on the other, they closed their eyes to the crimes of their bandit collaborators, the black marketeers, who exchanged a tin of oil for expensive detached houses in the center of Athens and Thessaloniki. It is estimated that under this regime of unbearable pressure, 400 thousand citizens sold part or all of their property. As it appears from the data of the Registry Office of Thessaloniki, that winter 3,090 people had lost their lives as a starvation, that is, 1.5 of the total population of the city, which at that time amounted to 226,147 inhabitants.



Pericles Nikolaidis

Nikolaidis and the "Wealthies"

In the face of the hunger and despair of those who had to feed a family, mainly young children, the purchase and sale of real estate began to take on tremendous stretches. Thousands of poor industrialists were then forced to sell their small properties for a minimal price. The sales had reached such proportions that even the government of Cairo took a stand, proclaiming on a radio show that it considered all real estate transfers to be invalid. According to Serreos lawyer Papantoniou, who served as director of the Land Registry of Thessaloniki at that time, the number of contracts for purchases and sales of this kind during the three years of the Occupation had exceeded 7,000 only in the district of the Magistrates' Court of Thessaloniki.

Who were the ones they bought? As he himself stated in an interview in the first months after the release:

"They were the people of the time. Those who had the fluency, those who swam through the many millions of inexhaustible bundles of the goods of happiness of gold. Contractors, big and small. Collaborators of the

conquerors. Megalo-mavragorites. Leeches generally insatiable, who did not mean to stop, who showed no inclination to be moved in the face of the endless drama of the people."

Greed with Names and Numbers

The greed of those who had decided, having the backs of the conquerors, to acquire, by pressing "on corpses" large real estates, had reached its peak. According to the indicative data published in the first months after the liberation by the newspaper of Thessaloniki "Morning Hour", a machinist had bought 14 properties, a constructor of shirts had acquired in this way 20 properties and a small grocer, Savvas Tryf. 13 properties. While a typical case was the case of a coffee maker, who despite the fact that the coffee had disappeared during the Occupation, he managed to buy six properties. And of course, all of them, having the favor of the conquerors. Like the editor of the German-funded pro-Nazi newspaper New Europe Georgios Pollatos who had acquired five properties during the Occupation: Three houses on 18-5-1942, 1-9-1942 and 26-2-1943, as well as a large farm on 7-5-1942 and a plot of land on 17-9-1942. A few months after the liberation, the forced law A.N. 182/45 had been issued during the government of N. Plastiras,

"On the special taxation of the rich during the war period, on the basis of which the "rich under occupation" were obliged to pay the taxes that would be set.

The punishment they faced was severe, as it provided for the deportation, imprisonment and confiscation of all or part of their property. Based on this law, the committee that had been set up in Thessaloniki, began to invite various people, mainly people who had collaborated with the Nazis, asking them to pay to the state sums of money, as a tax on the properties they formed during the Occupation.

In the first list published by the committee in July 1945, there were well-known names of collaborators who cooperated with the Germans, such as the owners of casino clubs and agents of the Gestapo, Pericles (Perry) Nikolaidis and Laskaris Papanauom who were called upon to pay from 150,000,000 drachmas each, the collaborator of the German large public works contractor Ioannis Müller (1000,000,000 drachmas), the journalists of New Europe Dimitrios Tsourkas and Alexandros Orogas who had to pay to the state from 25,000,000 drachmas

The Trials

In the last months of 1946, the cases of a significant number of financial traitors, among which there were cases of large companies, had been heard in the Special Court of Treason of Thessaloniki. These trials for financial cooperation with the occupiers, from 20 in 1945 had reached number 59 in 1946. The trial of two contractors who had built in April 1943 the fencing of the Baron Hirsch camp, where all the Jews of Thessaloniki were to be transferred before being sent for extermination to the Hitler crematoria, was typical.

The commission for this particular project, according to the prosecution witnesses, was 20%, while they also built for a hefty fee a barracks in Lagadas for the needs of the German army.

One contractor was sentenced to twelve years in prison and confiscation of half of his property. A little earlier, one of the magnates of Thessaloniki, Pavlos Dinas, who had set up a construction company, had been tried in absentia, from the execution of which he was earning huge sums, according to the prosecution witnesses. The commissioning of the works, in the area of Thessaloniki and Ioannina, was done by the Germans in the form of a reward for Dina's contribution to the Work of the Gestapo, since the defendant did not just have financial dealings with the Occupation Authorities, but was also included in the whistleblowers of the German services. In the end, the Court imposed the last sentence on him, finding him guilty of taking advantage of the economic cooperation with the enemy, denouncing Greek citizens and committing acts of violence after being armed by the Germans.

The spidery dossier of the plundering of Jewish property, as well as of the wealthy under occupation, must finally be opened at some point. Thessaloniki, the whole of Greece, owes it to the tens of thousands of Our Jewish compatriots, who not only suffered the torments of hell and most of them were killed in the crematoria of the Nazi beast, but also saw, unable to react, that their lives were plundered.

In November 2014, the then mayor of Thessaloniki, Yiannis Boutaris, at the inauguration of the monument to the Jewish cemetery that was razed to the ground in 1942, said: "The city was unnecessarily slow to break its unjust and guilty silence, but now it may say it is ashamed of this attitude." Source: militaire.gr, 2.8.2022

New Board Elected at the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (2022-2025)

The 25th Conference of Representatives of the Jewish Communities of Greece convened in Athens on September 18, 2022 and elected the new Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), the umbrella organization of Greek Jewry.



The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (as of September 18, 2022):

President: David Saltiel

First Vice President: Nachman - Manos Alchanatis

Second Vice President: Moysis Elisaf

Secretary General: Victor Isaac Eliezer

Treasurer: Daniel Benardout

Deputy Secretary General: Giomtov Robisa

Deputy Treasurer: Isaac - Sakis Leon

Members: Elias Kabelis, Marcel Solomon, Anna (Matathia) Anthi, Solon Maisis, Solomon Parente

Deputy Members: Regina Kounio, Leon Saltiel, Moissis Manouah

Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece Condemns Greek Holocaust Denying Judge

Judge Marianthi Pagouteli condemned for wishing that the Nazis would have "eradicated" all Jews. By JNS

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS) is criticizing the appointment of the Greek Supreme Court's new vice president for her previous support of an antisemite and Holocaust denier.



The Jewish group said on Sept. 2 regarding Judge Marianthi Pagouteli's position that it "expresses the strong resentment of the Greek Jewry for the appointment at the high level of the Greek Justice of a person who cannot defend the declared position of the Greek State against anti-Semitism, even more so in the capacity of the vice president of the Supreme Court of our country."

Judge Pagouteli was appointed to the position by the ruling right-wing Nea Dimokratia party. Members of the Greek Supreme Court, the Aeropagus, are tenured until reaching mandatory retirement age of 67.

During the infamous trial in Greece of right-wing extremist author Konstantinos Plevris regarding his antisemitic book *Jews, the Whole Truth*, Pagouteli, who was a judge of appeals at the time, joined the minority vote in support of his acquittal. In a 32-page report explaining her vote, she justified Plevris's views.

She reportedly noted that Plevris "did not designate a subhuman Jew as a Jew in general, but as a war criminal Jew" and that the author adopts "the Nazi view that the white race does not want Semites in Europe without intent to offend or provoke acts of violence."

She added that Plevris "rightly points out" how Jews who follow the teachings of the Talmud are "manifestly lacking in humanism." In the first edition of his book, Plevris, who was eventually convicted in the case, described himself as a "Nazi, fascist, anti-democrat, racist and anti-Semite," and the "high priest" of Greek neo-Nazism.

Marianthi was condemned in 2013 for having an Internet blog in which she denied the Holocaust, compared Zionists to Nazis and said she wished that Nazi leader Adolf Hitler would have "eradicated" all Jews. Around 6,000 Jews live in Greece.

Trikala

Inauguration of the Renovated Synagogue of Trikala – Program of Festive Events October 2022

The Synagogue of Trikala Reopens Its Doors!

KIS and the Jewish Community of Trikala invite you to the 3-day festivities for the inauguration of the renovated Synagogue of Trikala, which will take place from 14 to 16 October 2022, with the cooperation of the Municipality of Trikala. A detailed program will be released shortly.

Religious services for Shabbat and Sukkot, artistic events, photo exhibitions and excursion to the picturesque sights of the area, will enrich the official ceremony for the reopening of the historic Romaniote Synagogue Kal Yavanim of Trikala, while honoring the donors who supported the restoration project.



Veria

Righteous Who Saved Jewish Family in Veria Honored

The Gianopoulou and Axiopoulos Families

Veroia, Greece... 1942 – Mentos Mordechai, his wife Miriam, known as Marie, and five children, Sara, Asher, Shmuel, Rachel, and Yossi lived in Veria, Greece. Mentos owned a business and his wife had a dress shop and gave sewing lessons. Germany occupied Greece on April 6, 1941. With the arrival of the Germans, the persecution of the Jews began. Evlambia Axiopoulos had worked in the Mordechai home. When Yossi was born in August 1942, Marie did not have milk. Evlambia, who had given birth to a baby girl around the same time, became a wet nurse for Yossi. Evlambia came regularly to the Mordechai home to feed Yossi. Evlambia's brother, Nikos, went to Thessaloniki to obtain false identity cards for the Mordechai family, only to find that the Jews of Thessaloniki were being deported. Nikos warned the Mordechai family that the next transport of Jews was due in a few days and the train was scheduled to stop in Veroia to collect the Jews of Veria. Nikos, who was a carpenter, built a false ceiling in the attic of the old abandoned Turkish mosque where he was living with his family. Marie and the children moved into the mosque before Passover 1943 and remained hidden there for more than a year. Mentos hid with a friend from the army. The Jews of Veria were rounded up on May 1, 1943. The living conditions in the mosque were unbearable. The place that Nikos built was very small, with no holes for air or sunlight. The Mordechai family developed health problems and a new hiding place needed to be found, one that provided access to fresh air. Efthimia Gianopoulou stepped forward to help the family. Before the war, Efthimia studied to be a seamstress with Marie. Since Efthimia was very poor and an orphan, Marie did not charge her for the lessons. When a new hiding place was needed, Efthimia arranged for the entire Mordechai family to move into her two-room apartment which she shared with her sisters, Melpomeni and Bithleem. The sisters shared everything with the family, most importantly food. Shmuel, who was six years old, became very ill and died. Shortly after Shmuel died, they were denounced to the Germans. Relatives of the sisters helped the family to escape. They took Sara, the eldest daughter, to the woods. Marie took the two youngest, Rachel and Yossi, to hide in the mountains. Asher escaped to the mountains on his own. After several days of being separated, the family escaped to the mountains where they were all reunited. They hid in a pigsty where they remained until the area was liberated in December 1944. While they survived the war, more than seventy-five members from the Mordechai family were murdered in Auschwitz. Melpomeni, the only surviving member of her family, is in her 90s and lives in Thessaloniki.

Read more from the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous [Here](#)



Photos from the 2022 Association of Friends of Greek Jewry Fall Tour of Greece

This year's Fall Tour to Jewish Greece was extremely meaningful since, in addition to the beauty of Mykonos and Santorini, we had the opportunity to spend Rosh Hashanah in Rhodes with the Jewish Community of the island and Rhodesis from around the world but, also, join over 400 celebrants on Yom Kippur in Ioannina. We thank the Jewish communities of Rhodes and Ioannina for their invitations. A special thanks to Haim Ishakis for his traditional Romaniote Yom Kippur service. Thank you, Carmen Cohen in Rhodes and thank you to Hatzekelis Taverna for our first meal on the tour.



Carmen Cohen



Lew Attas



Murray Genee



Mykonos is always beautiful

Mykonos is always beautiful, and Santorini is always breathtaking, but of course for us, Ioannina was the highlight.



Murray Genee



Lew Attas



Arlene Schulman and Marios Kofinas



Moses Eliasaf



Murray and Joyce



Lew and Neli



Murray and cousin Jolli



Lauri at the winery

Poem by Murray Genee on What Visiting Ioannina Meant to Him

Ioannina, Greece 2022

We came here from far and wide
Filled with love and bursting with pride
Returning to our ancestral land
Where our familial history really began.
We came to pray and pay homage here
On this day this our very holy day
Yom Kippur day when we remember
Recalling all those who came before
For their souls we pray and say yizkor.

The Hazan's voice calling loud and clear
Fill the synagogue rafters with psalms
We love to hear as heartily we pray
Reaching out to the heavens from here
Our hearts are open as we confess
The sins we made we ask you forgive.

A greater heritage there could not be
Proud to have made the journey here
Recollections of times gone by
Bringing tears to our eyes
Recalling those we held so near
Images of those we hold so dear.

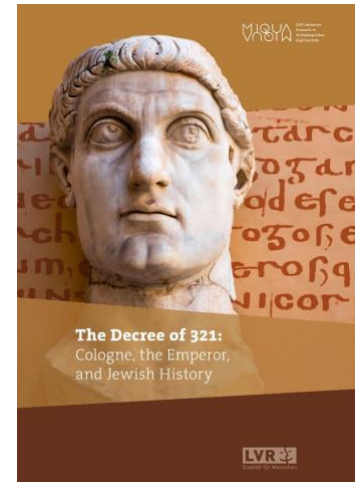
I can feel their spirits in the air
Calling upon us to recall their names
Nona and Papoo I am here you say
Reminiscing of those days we spent together
Although many years have passed since then
When we gathered together to celebrate these days.

The aroma and scents you helped create
Those special foods you cooked and baked
So many different plates of food
Filled the table and our senses too.
Oh what I would give to share once more
Those stories of your childhood days
I yearn to hear them once more again
The trials and tribulations you endured
The voyage you took on rough ocean waves
Filled with hope and aspiration for better days
Seeking to raise a family in comfortable surrounds
Always remembering their homeland of Ioannina.

New Book on Constantine's Decree of 321

Emperor Constantine's Decree of 321: new edition of the English brochure
On 11 December 321, Emperor Constantine issued a decree permitting the appointment of Jewish councillors in every provincial capital of the Roman Empire. This decree is the oldest surviving evidence that Jews were living north of the Alps. MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne has now published a revised second edition of its brochure about the Decree of 321.

The Decree of 321: Cologne, the Emperor, and Jewish History is now available in a fully revised second edition, this time with many more illustrations. The brochure provides an introductory guide that helps anyone interested to understand this unique source and it reflects the latest research on Jewish communities north of the Alps during the first millennium. It explains the significance of the Theodosian Code, a compilation of Late Roman laws dating from the early 5th century. The oldest surviving copy of the Code, made in the 6th century, is preserved in the Vatican Library.



The Decree of 321: Cologne, the Emperor, and Jewish History can be ordered free of charge from MiQua (MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne, Augustinerstr. 10-12, 50667 Köln, or by email to: miqua@lvr.de). The publication is also available to download as a PDF from the MiQua blog (<https://miqua.blog/>).

The brochure as a press download: <https://miqua.lvr.de/de/presse/presse.html>

Please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions.

Kind regards

Michael Jakobs, press officer. MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne

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America and the Asia Minor Refugees

By Professor Alexander Kitroeff, September 10, 2022

A big part of the narrative surrounding the events of the burning of Smyrna one hundred years ago is that the Great Powers turned their backs on the Greek refugees. Indeed, their battleships were instructed to take on board only persons fleeing the fire who were their own citizens, as a way of maintaining misconceived neutrality in the conflict.



There are some accounts of how American naval personnel ignored the neutrality order and using small vessels smuggled bags of flour to Smyrna's port and evacuated a few refugees on their return. Of course, the reason thousands of ethnic Greeks were stranded on the city's waterfront was not directly attributable to the Great Powers. The Greek authorities had originally thought it best those Greeks should not leave or be evacuated the way the Greek army was, so as to lend demographic credence to any claims Greece might still make on Smyrna after the war. Some of those Greek leaders who made that fateful decision were later tried and executed for treason. Nonetheless, the unwillingness of the navies of the Great Powers to intervene is an example of the unwillingness of powerful countries to prevent crimes against humanity that was to be repeated in the twentieth century and more recently in the case of Syria.

Yet as far as America was concerned in 1922, this was not the end of the story. American officials and citizens more than made up for their government's indecisions. Some of their stories have become better known over the recent years. That of George Horton the United States Consul in Smyrna is the best known. A philhellene who was married to a Greek, Horton was present during the destruction of Smyrna and did a great deal to protect the Christian population. He described those events in a searing and emotional account, *The Blight of Asia*, published in 1926.

Another story now gaining some deserved publicity is the extraordinary feat of Asa Jennings, a YMCA employee in Smyrna who was part of a group of American residents in Smyrna who organized a safe haven for Christian women and children when the city fell to the Turks. In what was an unlikely turn of events, Jennings, with the help of Naval officer Halsley Powell, engineered the evacuation of the over 250,000 refugees who remained stranded on Smyrna's waterfront after the fire consumed the Armenian and Greek neighborhoods. The refugees were taken across the Aegean to the island of Mytilene aboard Greek transport ships which had taken the Greek troops from Asia Minor to that island and remained anchored there. It was a bold plan devised and executed by Jennings, backed up militarily by Powell and approved and encouraged by Greek admiral Ioannis Theophanides.

A lesser-known story is the enormous contribution of the members of the American Women's Hospitals (AWH) organization who offered lifesaving care to the refugees who arrived in Greece. Dr. Esther Pohl Lovejoy, the chair of the AWH, arrived in Smyrna days after the fire and was a witness to the dramatic evacuation of the refugees on the ships Jennings had brought from Mytilene. The AWH had been formed to provide medical assistance to Americans fighting in WWI. The organization was not disbanded at the end of the war because its leaders were well aware of the suffering of thousands of civilians in its aftermath. As Lovejoy said, in some countries the aftermath of the war was far worse than the war itself.

Fearing the spread of disease, the Greek authorities ordered vessels bringing refugees to Piraeus to instead drop of them on the barren island of Macronisos, off the eastern coast of Attica. There, they were housed in rudimentary outdoor camps. The AWH swiftly established services on the island. Three AWH women doctors, two nurses, and assistants recruited from among the refugees, cared for over ten-thousand people suffering from diseases such as lice, typhus, and smallpox.

The AWH was not the only American agency helping the refugees. The American Red Cross had already established itself in Greece in 1918 and remained active through 1923. By then, another American organization, Near East Relief, assumed the role of rehabilitating and settling the hundreds of refugees and continued its efforts for another decade. And finally, perhaps the most substantive and symbolic sign of America's post-1922 involvement in Greece was the international Refugee Settlement Commission that coordinated all refugee related work in Greece. It was headed by an American, the businessman and diplomat Henry Morgenthau Sr.

During last year's bicentennial of the Greek revolution of 1821, we heard a lot about the contribution of American philhellenes. There is also a story to be told about American philhellenism in the 1920s as we mark the centenary of the Asia Minor Disaster.

Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



Sukkot is considered the happiest of all our festivals, and in fact, the traditional Hebrew greeting, "Hag Sameah" ('Happy holiday'), though used for all holidays, only refers to Sukkot in the Talmud.

The various mitzvot and customs of the seven days of Sukkot are well-known: building and spending the entire week in the Sukkah, taking the "Four Species" - lulav, etrog, hadassim and aravot, "Ushpizin"- welcoming our forefathers and ancestors into our Sukkot, and more. However, much less familiar is one of the most unique and joyous Temple rituals on Sukkot: the daily ceremony called "Nisuh HaMayim" - "Pouring of the Water" (Water Libation) for all seven days of Sukkot, and the subsequent joyous celebration every evening, called the "Simchat Beit Hasho'eva" – 'Rejoicing at the Place of the Water-Drawing'.

These specific Sukkot rituals are based on Sukkot being the onset of fall and winter and the rainy season in Israel. As such, after having judged the entire world on Rosh Hashanah and forgiving our transgressions and sins on Yom Kippur, on Sukkot, G-d judges us in terms of annual rainfall. The Land of Israel was not blessed with abundant sources of fresh water, so sufficient rainfall is absolutely critical for all of Israel's needs. G-d himself tells us in the Torah that He controls the rainfall for the Land of Israel and, depending on our deeds and loyalty to the Torah and mitzvot or lack thereof, we will be either rewarded or punished by the amount of rainfall decreed for any given year. Therefore, Sukkot is the time when special prayers and ceremonies were instituted in the Temple to pray to G-d for a successful and plentiful year in terms of sufficient rainfall.

The specific and unique Temple ceremony for this purpose performed on all seven days of Sukkot was called, as stated, "Nisuh HaMayim", whereby fresh water was drawn daily from the "Mayan Hashiloah" (the pool of Silo'an) in Jerusalem, and brought up to the Temple via a special pilgrims' road from the City of David (recently excavated and now being restored). As the flasks of water were carried through the "Water Gate" of the Temple, trumpets were sounded, and joy and fanfare ensued. On the altar, together with the different sacrificial offerings and the accompanying wine libation poured on the altar's corners, the Cohen [Priest] poured this water libation as well.

The same evening, in honor of the "Nisuh Hamayim" ceremony, myriads of spectators would gather in the Temple's outer courtyard to watch and participate in the aforementioned "Simchat Beit Hasho'eva", as they watched even the most senior Sages joyfully and wildly dance and sing in praise of G-d, including the carrying of lit torches and joyous acrobatics. It is even recorded that the great Sage, Rabbi Shimon Ben Gamliel, would juggle eight burning torches as he danced, never dropping a single one. And all dancing and singing were accompanied by harps, lyres, cymbals, and trumpets of the Levi'im. The happiness and spiritual uplifting were so palpable and unbridled that the Mishnah in Tractate Sukkot declares that "He who has not seen the Rejoicing at the Place of the Water-Drawing has never seen rejoicing in his life." And throughout the Sukkot holiday, Jerusalem was filled with pilgrims from all over Israel celebrating the holiday. Finally, on Shemini Atzeret, the holiday immediately following Sukkot, the special prayer for rain was (and still is) recited, marking the onset of the fall-winter rainy season, and pleading to G-d for a plentiful, rainy year.

Obviously, after the destruction of the Second Temple and the end of the sacrificial rite and dispersal of the Jewish people to every corner of the earth, the "Nisuh Hamayim" and "Simhat Beit Hasho'eva" lost their significance and purpose. Being intrinsically connected with the sacrificial rite and the Temple, both ceremonies ceased for many generations.

And though the "Nisuh Hamayim" ceremony could not be performed outside the Temple, the "Simhat Beit Hasho'eva" has been revived in a very big way. In Israel, these celebrations are often advertised for the general public, and have become so popular that people from all walks of Jewish life attend and participate. And like the Levi'im in Temple times, live music and performances by well-known musicians and singers are usually the key feature of these celebrations, along with words of Torah and other festive activities. Private homes, synagogues, yeshivot and schools also hold their own "Simhat Beit Hasho'eva" in their private or community Sukkot in joyous anticipation and yearning for the final redemption and the revival of the original "Nisuh Hamayim" and "Simhat Beit Hasho'eva". Hag Sameah to one and all!



Rabbi Marc D. Angel

Perasha of the Week – Sukkot

Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals – JewishIdeas.org

The Torah informs us that the festival of Succoth commemorates God's providence over the Israelites during their years of wandering in the wilderness. An old question is: why was this holiday scheduled to begin specifically on the 15th day of Tishri? The dates for Pessah (15 Nissan) and for Shavuoth (6 Sivan) are clearly linked to historical events—the day of the Exodus and the day of the Revelation at Mount Sinai. But the wandering in the wilderness was ongoing for 40 years, with no particular historic connection to Tishri 15?

Rabbi Haim David Halevy, in his *Torat Hayyim al ha-Moadim*, suggests that the Tishri 15 date was specified by the Almighty so as to be parallel to the Nissan 15 date of Pessah. Since the Exodus from Egypt is so central to Jewish thought and observance, Pessah and Succoth were set exactly six months apart, to the day, in order to ensure that we experience the power of the Exodus on a regular basis every six months. The great 18th century sage, Rabbi Hayyim Yosef David Azulai (known popularly as the Hidah), offers a different explanation in his *Midbar Kedeimot*. He notes that the lives of our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob overlapped for fifteen years. When Abraham died, his grandson Jacob was 15 years old. In rabbinic tradition Abraham is identified with Pessah, Isaac with Shavuoth, and Jacob with Succoth. (See *Tur O.H.* 417). Because of the merit of these extraordinary 15 years, the holy days of Pessah and Succoth were both set for the 15th of the month.

The Hidah is alluding to something deeper than the clever confluence of numbers. He suggests that the 15 years of shared lifetime among Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were a period of extreme happiness for the world. These three luminaries literally changed the course of history and brought humanity to a better understanding of the One God. Succoth, which is known in our tradition as the season of our happiness (*zeman simhateinu*), commemorates the extraordinary happiness and enlightenment that emerged at the founding of our nation.

Since Pessah (symbolized by Abraham) and Succoth (symbolized by Jacob) both occur on the 15th day of the month, this highlights the special link between grandfather Abraham and grandson Jacob. When grandparents and grandchildren share ideas and ideals, this is a sign of continuity, love...and genuine happiness. When there is a "generation gap," there is sadness and alienation. Just as Pessah and Succoth are linked together by sharing the date of 15, so Abraham and Jacob are bound together by their shared 15 years of life.

Pessah and Succoth celebrate the Exodus from Egypt in ancient times. The relationship between Abraham and Jacob suggests the key to the future redemption of Israel—when the traditions are shared, loved and experienced by the generations of grandparents and grandchildren. A teacher of mine once quipped: Who is a Jew? Someone with Jewish grandchildren! While this is not an objectively true statement, it underscores a vital principle in the Jewish adventure: the importance of transmitting our teachings and values through the generations.

The genuine happiness that derives from family and national continuity does not just happen by chance. It is the result of deep devotion, strong commitment, and many sacrifices. There is a vast difference between happiness and amusement. Happiness entails a genuine and deep sense of wholeness. It is not attained casually. Amusement, on the other hand, is a passing sense of enjoyment. It is shallow and ephemeral. We laugh at a joke, we enjoy watching a sports event—but these amusements do not touch our souls in a lasting way. Happiness is achieved through active and thoughtful involvement; amusement is essentially a passive experience in which we sit back and wait to be entertained. Succoth, the festival of our happiness, reminds us to strive for genuine happiness, to be committed to transmitting our traditions through the generations, to distinguish between real happiness and shallow amusement.

In the July Issue of our E-Newsletter, Our Help Was Requested

From Alex Winson: " *This is my Great Grandmother Rebecca Nikokiris, born circa 1890 in Ioannina. We know she had a brother named Joseph, of whom we have been able to trace relative across the generations to find relatives in Israel and the UK. We suspect there may have been a brother of Joseph and Rebecca named Solomon, born around 1892 who had children who left for the USA. I have been unable to trace any record of Solomon or indeed much on Nikokiris settlers in the US. I'd be grateful for any potential info or leads.*"

If you have any leads, contact us at museum@kkjism.org

We often work miracles with our E-Newsletters. On our tour to Jewish Greece in the Fall of 2022, our first stop was Rhodes, where Sharon Cohen, one of our participants was able to connect with Alex Winson (who was there for his wedding to Dina Vardava). Coincidence or Beshert? We don't believe in coincidences. We are still working on final DNA determinations. Sharon's great-grandmother was a Nikokiris, as was Alex's. They made an uncanny connection.



Thank You from the Sisterhood of Janina

The Sisterhood was very grateful to all those who renewed their membership and/or gave a generous donation. As mentioned in July's E-Newsletter, the Sisterhood has always been a strong supporter of both Kehila Kedosha Janina and the Jewish Community of Ioannina. Just recently, the Sisterhood sponsored a new Memorial Board in the Synagogue, which will be officially unveiled in November of 2022. We stress how important it is to continue the good work of the Sisterhood (established in 1932 and celebrating its 90th birthday this year!). You can join the Sisterhood (or continue your membership) by sending \$18 to The Sisterhood of Ioannina c/o Laurie Serwetz, 338 Felter Avenue, Hewlett, NY 11557. You can also supplement the Sisterhood by sending cards (birthday wishes, thank yous and in memory of) for \$5.00 each to Laurie Serwetz (Rose's daughter).

If it is easier for you to make a donation or renew membership online, you can do so on the Kehila Kedosha Janina website, www.kkjism.org through the donate button on the Home Page.

Looking for Our Help

Hi. I am researching Enrico Rosenbaum, a Jewish musician born in Italy in 1944. His mother was Ida Levy Rosenbaum from Salonica to Italy. She died in Minneapolis Minnesota USA in 2007. Do you know of any living family in Salonica? Joel Fink joelfink07@gmail.com

Pictures of the Month



Xenokratous in Athens in late 1920's



House in Baron Hirsch neighborhood in Thessaloniki before WWII
These were the houses Jews were transferred to while awaiting deportation since Baron Hirsch was across from the train station.

So many of you have applauded our efforts. We thank those who have sent in contributions.

If you would like to make a contribution to Kehila Kedosha Janina, please send your check (in US dollars) made out to *Kehila Kedosha Janina*, to us at 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002 (attention Marcia). Your donation will enable us to continue to hold services and preserve our special traditions and customs, and to tell our unique story through our Museum.

Some of our major donations have been generous bequests, which have enabled us to complete major work in our synagogue/museum. Do remember us in your will. Your legacy will be present in our legacy. **We need donations more than ever now. You can do this on line on our website: www.kkjsm.org accessing the donation link in the upper left hand corner.**

When you are in New York, visit us on Broome Street.



Kehila Kedosha Janina E-Newsletter – Number 163

October 2022

Kehila Kedosha Janina

280 Broome Street, New York NY 10002

Website: www.kkjsm.org

Email: museum@kkjsm.org

Your donations enable us to continue our work. You can send donations via mail directly to 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002, or you can donate via our website www.kkjsm.org