

THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF GREECE

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Exhibition of Photographs

Peenemünde



The Jewish Museum of Greece is host to an exhibition of photographs by Franka Hörnschemeyer entitled Peenemünde from 21st January until 31st March 2008. The exhibition curator is Achilleas Tzonis

Peenemünde was at one time just a little village on the Baltic island of Usedom in Germany. Between 1936 and 1945 it developed into one of the most prominent military research centres of the Third Reich. It was, in fact, devoted to research and development of guided missiles, and gradually became one of the most significant missile research centres in the world. The disastrous effects it had on events in World War II aside, the missile technology developed at Peenemünde was also to be used during the cold war and the fruits of the research later played a leading role in such fields as space exploration and satellite technology. Yet,



the 15.000 strong workforce of this ground-breaking centre of science and technology was mainly drawn from prisoners at concentration camps. Already doomed to die in the camps, these prisoners lived and worked under the worst imaginable conditions. Peenemünde was bombed in 1943 and subsequently abandoned. Work being carried out there was transferred to camp Dora. Greek-Jewish Jeky Handeli of Thessaloniki was moved to camp Dora from Auschwitz-Birkenau and made to work there under killing conditions. Yet he survived and wrote about his experiences in his memoirs. Of the 60.000 prisoners who worked at camp Dora, over 20.000



Left, the exhibition in the contemporary art gallery of the JMG. Right, photos from the inauguration event. Left to right: Franka Hörnschemeyer, the Ambassador of Germany Dr. Schultheiss, group of guests among whom the President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, Mr. M. Konstandinis, the exhibition Curator Achille Tzonis and Artemis Alcalay

perished as a result of the inhuman conditions and torture to which they were subjected.

Peenemünde base remained a restricted area until 1990. Franka Hörnschemeyer, who has been visiting the area since 2001, looks at the dilapidated ruin of this military base through her camera and brings out its multi-faceted meaning. Hidden under the canopy of the dense forest that has grown there in recent years are the secret installations of the research centre, Karlshagen concentration camp, unexploded bombs, and human presence in the form of finds and stories told.

In her search for traces of human activity in this place - and in the perspective of time - and while collating historical, sociological and archaeological information, this German artist subjects the place (the place of sacrifice) to a process of discovering meaning, thereby bringing to light the inviolable relationship between the various elements that are part and parcel of it.

The opening of the exhibition was held in the JMG Contemporary Art Gallery on Monday 21st January 2008, and was attended by formally invited guests including the Ambassador of the Federal German Republic Mr Wolfgang Schultheiss, members of

the Museum's Board of Directors, members of the Association of Friends of the JMG, the exhibition curator Mr A Tzonis, as well as members of art circles and the press.

Guests were able to talk to the artist about her work

and share her experiences of Peenemünde. The Museum provided refreshments and white wine to accompany the discussions. The end of the evening saw guests feeling satisfied that the Museum had extended its horizons to include the art scene of the

world at large; this being the first time the Museum has hosted an exhibition by a foreign artist. This bears witness to the JMG's aim to interact with artists from other countries and become a place where wider issues that concern it can be explored.



Franka Hörnschemeyer



Franka Hörnschemeyer's work usually takes the form of installations, which are both sculpture and architecture. As an artist she moves in different places, researching and creating, and her every creation is an inviolable composition of place.

There is a sort of inverse parallelism in Franka Hörnschemeyer's work.



On one hand, her Peenemünde photographs show how the standardised construction material used in the buildings has been

overgrown and assimilated into the morphologically complex natural surroundings.

On the other hand, the simple but meaningful geometrical lines of her sculpture - also made out of standardised construction materials - penetrate the highly complex surroundings and draw attention to the most significant features.

Two JMG exhibitions in Rhodes



Acting on an idea put forward by its president Bella Resti, the Jewish Community of Rhodes decided in July 2007 to launch a series of events to commemorate the Jews of Rhodes and Kos who were forcibly removed in July 1944 and murdered in Nazi concentration camps.

At the invitation of the community, the JMG team journeyed to the island of the Knights on 16th July in order to set up and present two exhibitions belonging to the Jewish Museum of Greece, Hidden Children in Occupied Greece and the Holocaust of the Greek Jews 1941-1944, in the temporary exhibition space at the Castle of the Knights in the old city.

The exhibition openings were held on 17th July 2007 as part of a week-long series of events that began on 16th July. People with direct or indirect connections to the Jewish Community of Rhodes were invited for the occasion and they came to the island from towns and cities all over the world. They all brought with them their own stories, their own family's loss, so much so that the week of commemoration was charged with emotion since every visitor had his own little piece to add to the puzzle of the missing members of the Community of Rhodes.



Both these travelling exhibitions belonging to the Museum are based on historical evidence and material from the Museum's own collections and archives. They were designed by Hayia Cohen and had already been shown in Athens and Thessaloniki. The Hidden Children exhibition had been travelling since 2006 in the USA where local Greek Consulates assumed the responsibility of displaying it in a number of major cities.

the German Occupation. The first one used personal accounts to present the subject of Jewish children in hiding and what became of them. The second explored events and circumstances in Greece at that time and dealt with the fortune and fate of Jewish communities so as to give a more complete view of the subject. The exhibitions combined with the voices of visitors naming people who lived on Rhodes but who are no longer and prompted thoughts that were soon at the fore of everyone's mind; if the greater part of the population of Rhodes and Kos had not been annihilated in July 1944, today's local community would present a vastly different picture.

Director of the Jewish Museum of Greece Zanet Battinou and President of the Central Board of Jewish communities in Greece Moissis Konstandinis both spoke at the opening of the exhibitions and both drew attention to the educational value of exhibitions

such as these, stressing that the only role these irrevocable crimes against humanity can now play is that of setting an example for united action to be taken so as to ensure that such acts never take place again. The exhibition remained open to the public for a month and drew a most impressive response.

"Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece"



The Jewish Museum of Greece designed and conducted four seminars for primary and secondary school teachers and museum educators on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece. The first seminar in the series was held in Athens on 22nd October 2004 with 86 people in all taking part. The second seminar was held at the Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 23rd October 2005 with over 85 people taking part; among them 58 educators, representatives of ministries, other organisations and public bodies, as well as interested private parties. The third seminar was held in Athens on 19th and 20th October 2006 with 59 educators among those taking part.

Overview

On Thursday and Friday 18th and 19th October 2007 the Jewish Museum of Greece held its fourth seminar on the same subject at the Electra Palace Hotel. This seminar was also held under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education and Religious

Affairs, and enjoyed the support of the Ministry of Education by way of the General Secretariat for the Younger Generation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, while the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research lent its moral support. As in previous years, Maurice Gattegnio Ltd. once again covered the needs of the seminar in writing materials and stationery. Twelve speakers from a variety of fields took part in the seminar and their presentations were attended by a total of 74 educators.



The seminar hall

Addresses



Mr. Wolfgang Schultheiss Mr. Alexander Filon



Mr. Evangelos Syrigos Mr. Minos Mordochai



Director of the JMG
Ms Zanet Battinou
reading the message by
Ms. Berry Nachmia

The proceedings of the first day - Thursday 18th October 2007 - opened with addresses to those present, the first being that by His Excellency Wolfgang Schultheiss Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany. Next came an address by Ambassador Alexander Filon, speaking in his capacity as representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and head of the Greek delegation to the International Task Force. Those present were then greeted by Mr Evangelos Syrigos the Ministry of Education's new special secretary for Intercultural Education, and Minos Mordeshai representing the Board of Directors of the Jewish Museum of Greece. Finally, a message sent by Mrs Berry Nahmia President of the Association of Greek-Jewish Holocaust Survivors was read out.

The first day panel



Ms. Maria Efthymiou Mr. Alexios Menexiadis



Ms. Odette Varon - Vassard Mr. Nikos Tzavaras

Presentations

The actual work of the seminar itself began with an attempt to place the difficult subject of the Holocaust of Greek Jews within the broader historical context; essential to an understanding of an historic event of this magnitude.

Maria Efthymiou, lecturer at the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Athens School of Philosophy, gave a concise account of the 2300-year long history of Jews in Greece. She gave a general outline of the relationship between the Greek and Jewish Diaspora through the ages and demonstrated how the co-existence of the two peoples was sometimes harmonious and at other times strained.

Historian Alexios Menexiades then spoke on Holocaust related events taking place in Greece from the time of the Italian invasion in 1940 until the early post-war years. Using photographs and objects from the JMG's collection, he shed light on such difficult issues as the exploitation of the property of those who were displaced, but also on brighter aspects such

as the altruism of people who risked their lives for the sake of Jewish people in their towns and cities.

Searching beneath the surface of historical fact, historian Odette Varon Vasar spoke about Auschwitz in the collective conscience and memory; in other words, how and by what processes in the collective memory this particular camp became synonymous with the attempt to annihilate a whole race, and why 27th January, the day it was liberated, was chosen as Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Pointing out that concentration camps and death camps were two completely different things, she commented on the use of the term 'Holocaust', contrasting it with the terms 'Shoah' and 'Genocide'. She was acerbic in her condemnation of attempts to revise history and deny that the Holocaust ever took place, not only as seen in neo-fascist and neo-Nazi movements, but also as sometimes seen in the supposedly progressive left.

Then neurologist-psychiatrist Nikos Tzavaras, director of the Psychiatric Hospital at the Democriteo University of Thrace, spoke about anti-Semitism



During the reception given by the JMG for the educators and invited guests

The first day of the proceedings was brought to a close with moving accounts given by three survivors of the time: Sam Nehama, who survived Auschwitz-Birkenau and Buchenwald; Salvador Bakola, who was a member of the national resistance in the mountains; and Alexandros Simha, a young child



From left, Msrs Sam Nehama, Salvator Bakolas and Alexandros Simha, Holocaust survivors

and prejudice in Greece and Europe as a whole. He referred to the stereotyped depiction of the Jew as a being totally 'Apart', and to that frenzied form of anti-Semitism which holds Jews responsible for every evil under the sun. Indeed, he used an actual case study to show how deeply ingrained this kind of prejudice is, and voiced his own reservations on the ability of history, reasoning and seminars to weed it out.

at the time, who survived thanks to the Christian families that hid him.

At the close of the day the JMG held a reception for both teachers and official guests, during which participants were able to see the JMG's traveling exhibition 'The Holocaust of Greek Jews, 1941-1944', which was on display in the Museum especially for the occasion.

"Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece"



During the reception given by the JMG for the educators and invited guests

They were also able to see a presentation of the Museum's newest interactive electronic display on the Holocaust. It is one of the Museum's most ambitious educational projects. The installation of interactive computer terminals with touch sensitive screens in the Holocaust Gallery and two more exhibition areas, plus the Museum library, has begun to take actual physical shape this year.

The aim of the Museum in setting up this computer-based application is to provide the public with an educational product that is pleasant, functional and useful. The direct involvement inherent in this type of presentation, combined with its ability to focus on individual aspects, make it an excellent educational resource for primary and secondary school teachers, but also a readily available source of historical information and audio-visual material for any interested party.

Presentations given on the second day, Friday 19th October 2007, focused more on practical aspects of teaching about the Holocaust.



Ms. Emma O'Brien

War Museum in London, which has an extensive, permanent exhibition on the Holocaust entitled 'Why, what and how to teach the Holocaust in the classroom', presented the main directions, instructions and methodology recommended by the International Task Force to help teachers in this difficult task. She ended by presenting a small sample of work based on pre-war photographs and designed for schoolchildren of approximately 14 years old.

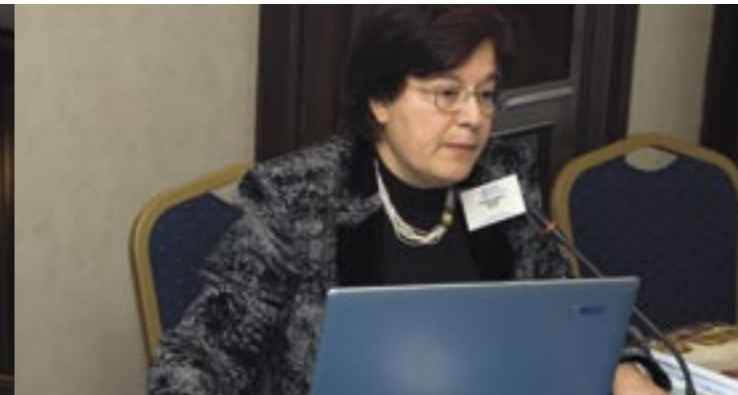
Then Shira Magen, head of the Greek section of the Yad Vashem International School for Holocaust Studies, presented a teaching aid on anti-Semitism



Ms Shira Magen

and religious hatred entitled 'It was them, not us' which is produced by the organisation for use with secondary school children. This teaching aid looks into how prejudice against what is 'Different' arises and how it is perpetuated. It is intended as a tool to support the teacher in discussing such prejudices and dealing with them in class.

This was followed by Anastasia Kyrkini-Koutoula, lecturer in history at the University of Athens and Consultant for the Institute of Education,



Ms Anastasia Kyrkini - Koutoula

who presented new sources and booklets on the Holocaust that have been approved by the Ministry of Education for use in both primary and secondary schools. She referred to specific excerpts from the books, detailing the origins of the sources and the criteria on which selection was based. Some of these new booklets are already in use in schools while others are still in production.

Georgios Kokkinos, associate professor at the University of the Aegean Department of Primary School Teaching, spoke on 'Issues in Documenting the History of the Holocaust: Public History and its



Mr. Georgios Kokkinos

Ideological Uses'. He referred to relevant phenomena, ideological trends, publications and films produced in different countries from the period shortly after the war to the present day.

The team of educators from the University of the Aegean, led by Mr Kokkinos, with Evangelia Kouneli, Kiki Sakka and Stavros Papadopoulos, presented a series of particularly interesting suggestions on approaches to teaching the Holocaust in primary and secondary schools. Mrs Kouneli's outstanding



The group of educators from the University of the Aegean

teaching demonstration made use of, among other things, the diaries of two children, Anne Frank from Holland and Rozina Pardo from Greece. Both diaries were written while the children were hiding from Nazi persecution.

Mrs Sakka spoke about how the structure and content of the syllabus for teaching history affects approaches to the Holocaust.

Mr Papadopoulos spoke about how the work of the group presented at last year's seminar was continuing and was exploiting the local history of Rhodes to teach broader historical issues such as World War II and the Holocaust.

The presentation ended with Mr Georgios Kokkinos who spoke on: 'Jews of Rhodes in Haidari Camp: communist reasoning and cultural anti-Semitism'.

Director of the JMG Zanet Battinou spoke briefly on material handed out in the participant's file (photocopies of articles and related printed matter) with a view to reinforcing Holocaust teaching but also to demonstrating its relevance in today's world.

She then presented each of the three practical guides published by the JMG. The first is a Greek translation of the ITF guide, made by the JMG. The second, entitled 'Teaching about the Holocaust', is a localised translation of the greater part of a comparable guide produced by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It provides guidelines for teachers, helping them approach Holocaust teaching through specific teaching techniques, as well as suggesting ways to deal with sensitive issues that frequently arise in

"Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece"

the classroom. The third, which goes under the title 'Preparing for Holocaust Remembrance Day', is a localised translation of relevant suggestions taken from the websites of Yad Vashem and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Foundation for Security and Co-operation within Europe.



Ms. Orietta Treveza - Soussi



Ms. Nina Alcalay

JMG Museum Educator Orietta Treveza-Soussi then presented the Jewish Museum's latest museum case entitled 'A Holocaust Exhibition in a Museum Case: a new JMG teaching aid'. It is a small Holocaust exhibition that has been specially designed so that it can be transported in an ordinary museum suitcase. It is in three teaching units and is particularly suitable for children to work on and present their work in class on their own.

Bringing the workshop sessions to a close, dance teacher and therapist Nina Alcalay presented the theoretical basis of an alternative method of teaching and her proposals for 'An Experiential Teaching of the Holocaust through Art'. She then took the teachers through an exercise in order to demonstrate how an experiential approach to the Holocaust through art can speak more directly to children than any scientific or historical approach.



Conclusions

The seminar ended with the pronouncement of conclusions drawn from the two days of presentations. At the end of the proceedings participants filled in evaluation questionnaires which had been handed out earlier; the purpose being to introduce improvements in future seminars. Answers given indicated that



Ms. Zanet Battinou, JMG Director, pronouncing the conclusions from the seminar presentations

participants had a positive opinion of the organisation and content of the seminar. Conversations with teachers and comments given on the evaluation questionnaire indicated that future seminars should be longer, lasting perhaps 2 1/2 days instead of the present 1 1/2 days, or should be held twice a year instead of once. Teachers also asked for more one-day events, workshops and talks on the Holocaust and related issues such as the history of Greek Jewry, the Jewish contribution to Greek society, anti-Semitism, the revision of history, incidences of genocide in the present day and such like. There is also much lively interest in demonstration lessons on Holocaust teaching and more teaching suggestions, a request which has been made in the past too. Finally, many teachers entered their names and contact details on a special page for those who would like to be contacted by the Jewish Museum of Greece and informed about educational initiatives in Greece and elsewhere, as well as receiving information about the annual, two-day seminar for teachers.



Educational programme in conjunction with the American Community School of Athens and Berry Nahmia

On 25th May 2007 the American Community School of Athens took part in a JMG educational programme on the Holocaust. The children came fully prepared as suitable material, documentaries and publications of survivors' accounts had been sent to their school in advance. The children were shown the Museum's Holocaust Gallery and the president of the

Society of Greek-Jewish Hostages, Berry Nahmia, was there to answer their questions and speak to them about her own experiences. Face to face contact with Mrs Nahmia, renowned for her approachability, gave the children the chance to talk and set them thinking. Following this they made a DVD of their own which they later showed at their school.



The JMG museum educator takes part in the Panhellenic Conference on "Museums and Education"



JMG museum educator Orietta Treveza-Soussi took part in the conference on "Museums and Education" held in Volos from Friday 9th November to Sunday 11th November by the University of Thessaly Department of Primary Education and the International Council for Museums (ICOM).

The conference was designed to promote dialogues between all parties involved thereby leading to a critical evaluation of what has already been achieved in educational activities designed and applied in museums in Greece so far.

The aim was to pinpoint positive, productive achievements as well as to locate possible problem areas, while also opening up new horizons in this particularly lively, fast developing area.

Furthermore, because of the special position that museum education is acquiring, the conference also dealt with other issues related to educating and training museum educators and teachers from universities, museums and other public and private organisations to establish a creative approach to museums, the arts in general, science and places of cultural significance.

The JMG museum educator visits the 2nd Junior-High School of Geraka



On Tuesday 4th December 2007, JMG museum educator Orietta Treveza-Soussi was invited to the 2nd Junior-High School of Geraka by the teacher in charge of the school library, Emmanuella Agrada, to present the museum case 'Hidden Children in Occupied Greece' to teaching staff and to a class of schoolchildren. Working in the school library, the children formed six groups and used passages, objects and photographs to conduct research on hidden children and their families in occupied Greece. At the end of the activity the groups used the hinged display board provided in the museum case to present the objects and information that told the story of each hidden child. This was followed by a discussion of what takes place in the present day and how relevant the stories of these children are. The children were able to borrow publications and audio-visual material from the museum case, which remained at the school for two months, so as to allow all the children to benefit from the programme and make full use of the suggested creative activities and theatrical play.



The JMG museum educator takes part in the 11th Meeting "Education and Modern Greek Cultural Heritage"

On Friday 7th December 2007 JMG museum educator Orietta Treveza-Soussi presented the JMG programme entitled 'The Oil Lamp' at the 11th Meeting on 'Education and Modern Greek Heritage' whose topic was 'Cross Intercultural Dialogue in Educational Programmes'. This JMG programme was designed for the Ilion Intercultural Primary School and is based on the use of the oil

lamp in the three main monotheistic religions. The programme involves children in exploration of the use of the lamp, its symbolic meaning and the materials it is made of. Knowledge and understanding are reached through activities, constructions, literary passages, fairy tales and family stories.

The sixth grade of the Jewish Primary School of Athens visits the JMG

On Wednesday 23rd January 2008 sixth graders of the Jewish Primary School of Athens came to the Museum to participate in an educational programme and see the "Peenemünde" temporary exhibition / installation of photographs. The children had chosen to do the "Young Curator" programme.



This programme aims to give children a deeper, more substantial understanding of the work a museum carries out on an object in order to bring it into its collection. It does this by involving them in work on every stage a genuine object brought into the Museum undergoes, from the time it is first recorded and validated, to the allocation of a place for it in one of the Museum's storage spaces.



The programme achieves its aim through role play and exploration in the Museum itself, the library and on the Internet. Eventually, the children reach the museum collection storage area where they put the object they have worked on in the appropriate place.



In this case there followed the 'House/Mask' creative activity and then the children set up their own exhibition in the educational programmes area.

In celebration of the Tu'bishevat festival (New Year for Trees) the children were given 'asoure' to eat (a traditional sweet made of wheat and nuts). They also took copies of the recipe so they could make some at home. They left the Museum with catalogues and mementoes of their visit.

Education

The Teacher Training Team of the Children's Museum visits the Jewish Museum of Greece



Evening workshops are held on the Jewish Museum's premises every year as part of the collaboration between these two museums.

Christina Drogianni and Orietta Treveza-Soussi worked together on this year's training programme entitled 'The present school curriculum and bringing museums into teaching: the method of the historian,' which they presented on Monday 28th January from 17:30 until 20:30.

It is a teaching method which can be applied very successfully in museums of history. The methodology is essentially the same as that applied to solving scientific problems: recognition and definition of the problem - developing a research plan - data collation - data processing - data analysis - composition (drawing conclusions and interpretation).

Trainees explored issues such as those that the Jewish Museum might be involved in and decided which issue they would like to focus on. They divided into groups and conducted their research in the Museum galleries, basing it on observation of unfamiliar objects and comparison with familiar objects and other sources such as museum information boards. The groups then presented their initial findings and followed these up by conducting research using relevant literature and websites.

By the end of the session the trainees had discovered how an educational programme can be developed in the Jewish Museum. They learnt a lot of things about Jewish history and traditions in Greece that they did not know before. They were provided with materials and dates were set for visits with groups of schoolchildren.

A museum case containing the Holocaust exhibition: "World War II and the Holocaust in Greece"

This teaching resource is designed to provide support for teachers adopting an experiential approach to Holocaust teaching, as well as commemorating National Holocaust Remembrance Day. Ample material is provided for an exhibition of photographs to be set up in a classroom or other area in the school.

The museum case comprises three main units:

- **Life before the war.**
- **World War II and the Holocaust of Greek Jews.**
- **Life since the war.**

Each unit consists of a certain number of photographs with captions and accompanying texts, which are placed at the front of the units when they are displayed in the exhibition. They are there for the teacher to use

or photocopy for the children. For schools that are not able to visit the Jewish Museum, there is an extra unit called 'The Jewish Museum of Greece', which has photographs of the Museum's Holocaust Gallery, clothes and personal effects of people who were taken to concentration camps. This exhibition has been fitted into a museum case, so that it can be moved easily and sent anywhere in Greece. The museum case also comes with a selection of JMG publications and audio-visual material. Loan of the material is arranged following a written application from the school. The Museum also recommends that, prior to borrowing the museum case, teachers should contact the JMG Head of Educational Programmes, Orietta Treveza-Soussi, for guidance on its use.



Museum Diary 2007

On 3rd January 2007

Claude Singer, head of the Educational Committee of the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, visited the JMG with his wife, Patricia Hidiroglou, lecturer on Romaniote Judaism at the University of Paris.



On 26th February 2007

an introductory-informative meeting for members of the press was held at the JMG on the initiative of its Honorary President, Sam Benrubi. Attending members of the press and student journalists were shown round the Museum and informed about its programmes. They then had the opportunity to talk to members of the board of directors and staff over a light meal.



On 16th February 2007

Lord Greville Janner, member of the House of Lords, the upper house of the British Parliament, was shown round the permanent exhibition and informed about the Museum's programmes on the Holocaust and teaching about the Holocaust in Greece.

On 23rd March 2007

an update meeting took place with Radu Ioannid and Vadim Altskan of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.



On 18th April 2007

a full tour of the museum was organised for the delegation from the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) during their visit to Athens. The tour included a presentation of the age-old history of Greek Jewry.

On 20th April 2007

Greg Matsson, head of the American mission to the International Task Force for Holocaust Education Remembrance and Research was taken on a guided tour of the JMG. He then met and talked to members of the Greek mission to the same organisation.

May 2007

saw the publication of the second edition of the 'Hidden Children in Occupied Greece' exhibition catalogue. The new edition includes three more accounts.

On 10th-12th June 2007

the JMG, in its capacity as member of the Greek delegation, took part in the annual meeting of the International Task Force for Holocaust Education Remembrance and Research in Prague.

On 22nd October 2007

the museum welcomed Christian Kennedy, the US Department of State's special envoy for Holocaust related matters. Following a guided tour of the Museum, focusing on its programmes, events and publications relating to the Holocaust, a meal was arranged for him and Paul Carter of the US Embassy, who accompanied him on his visit, compliments of the Museum.

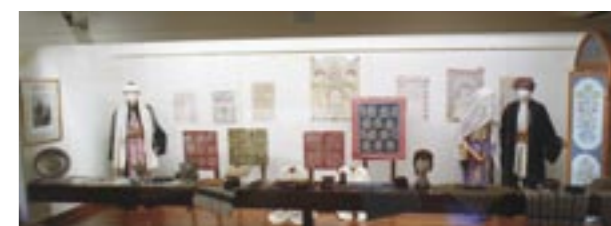
On 31st October 2007

the JMG was visited by Christoff Farnaud, the new French Ambassador to Athens.



17th-20th November 2007

saw the annual conference of the Association of European Jewish Museums (AEJM). This conference was particularly interesting as it was hosted by the new Jewish Museum in Munich.



The end of November 2007

saw the successful completion of cleaning and renovation work on display cases in the JMG's permanent exhibition, work that had begun in March 2007 (see NSL 55).



Two weeks of events at the Jewish Museum of Greece

National Holocaust Remembrance Day



To commemorate the National Day of Remembrance for Victims and Heroes of the Holocaust, which the Greek Parliament has declared should be observed on 27th January each year, the Jewish Museum of Greece presented the traveling exhibition entitled ‘The Holocaust of the Greek Jews, 1941–1944: Personal Testimonies’, in the ante-chamber to the Hall of Friends at Athens Concert Hall on Monday 4th February 2008, during events organised there by the Prefecture of Athens and the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece. The presentation was sponsored by the president of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Museum of Greece, Makis Matsas.

The Museum’s aim in this exhibition, which brings together many different areas of research, is to provide a detailed presentation of the tragic events of that time. It briefly deals with every aspect, all the main events and the circumstances so as to promote better understanding and comprehension of the Holocaust in Greece.

The exhibition is the product of on-going research and is constantly being added to. This year’s exhibition included photographs of concentration camps and extermination camps as they are today. The photographs were taken by Greek Jewish photographer Samuel Negrin in 2002. It also included the stories of a number of individuals who experienced World War II from differing perspectives, places, circumstances and fortunes, as victims, resistance

fighters or rescuers. Set against the broader historical background of the exhibition as a whole, the accounts of what these people went through provided a different, more direct angle and gave viewers a sense of the prevailing mood at the time, of the terrible hardship and dilemmas people faced when their decisions meant somebody’s life or death.

At the same time the Jewish Museum of Greece hosted an exhibition of photographs by Franka Hörschemeyer entitled ‘Peenemünde’ on its own premises.

The Ministry of Education sent a circular to primary and secondary schools inviting all interested parties to take part in educational programmes on the Holocaust in Greece. The programmes and activities for schools and families described below were all conducted in the Museum daily from Sunday 27th January to Friday 7th February 2008.

All programmes were designed to encourage children to explore the main events of World War II in Greece and elsewhere in Europe, in other words, to learn about the fate of Jews and other victims of the Holocaust through historical data, photographs and personal accounts and discuss the moral issues it raises for life in the present day.

Dance teacher and therapist Nina Alcalay, working with the Jewish Museum’s Head of Educational Programmes Orietta Treveza-Soussi, suggested experiential teaching of the Holocaust through the

arts (music, dance, painting and collage). Practical application has shown that an experiential approach to history speaks to children more directly and helps them relate to other people’s experiences as well as

to the works of art that develop as a result of the effort to understand their experiences and work with them.

The 11th Junior High School of Peristeri (1st February 2008), the Junior High School of Palaeo Faliro (5th February) and the Junior High School of Geraka (7th February) are just some of the schools which took part in educational programmes on the Holocaust, conducted in the following way for all schools taking part in the programme.



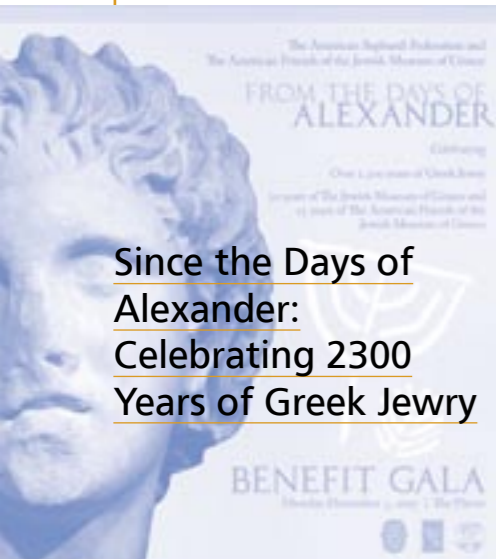
First of all the children watched a video recording of survivors’ accounts and visited the Museum’s Holocaust Gallery. Then they split into groups and did research on the life of Jews in Greece before, during and after World War II using the interactive information centre.

By the end of February over 28 public and private schools from all over Greece had taken part in JMG educational programmes, borrowed exhibitions and museum cases, and been provided with printed matter and audio-visual teaching material for use in the classroom, as well as books for their school libraries.

Events and activities at the JMG

- Getting to know the “**Peenemünde**” temporary exhibition of photographs.
- Getting to know the JMG’s new interactive electronic application entitled “**World War II and the Holocaust of Greek Jews, 1941–1944**”.
- **Experiential teaching of the Holocaust through the arts** – and educational programmes produced in conjunction with dance teacher and therapist Nina Alcalay. Art workshop – producing a collage / “House-Mask”.
- **Showing of a DVD** with accounts by hidden children of the Occupation and Holocaust survivors, and a **documentary** on World War II.
- **Meeting survivors of the Holocaust at the JMG as well as hidden children** of the time and talking about their experiences.
- “Albert’s Story”, **dramatisation based on improvisation.**
- **Educational museum case:** “Hidden Children in Occupied Greece”.
- **Educational museum case:** “The Holocaust of Greek Jews, 1941–1944”.
- **Exhibition of photographs:** “The Holocaust of Greek Jews, 1941–1944”.

Events of the Association of American Friends of the JMG



Since the Days of Alexander: Celebrating 2300 Years of Greek Jewry

On December 3rd, 2007, the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece celebrated their own 25th anniversary and the 30 years of the Jewish Museum of Greece. A sumptuous gala dinner at the Pierre Hotel on New York's Fifth Avenue marked the occasion. The event, co-sponsored by the American Sephardi Federation, attracted about 260 guests, some from as far as Greece. Among the honorees were founders of the Museum, or their representatives, the President of the Board of Directors, S. Matsas and the Director of the Museum, Z. Battinou. Archbishop Demetrios and the former Consul General of Greece in New York,

Mrs. Catherine Boura, were also present; they both received awards in recognition of exceptional services. With Archbishop Demetrios, the AFJMG introduced the "Damaskinos Award" in memory of the remarkable prelate who helped Greek Jews so much during the Second World War. The event also honoured the founders of the Association of the American Friends, who have spread the word of both the Jewish Museum of Greece, and the Greek Jewish communities - the oldest in Europe. The gala therefore was aptly named "Since the Days of Alexander: Celebrating 2300 years of Greek Jewry".



Left, the Archbishop of America Dimitrios having received the "Archbishop Damaskinos" award from Makis Matsas and Solomon Asser. Right, some of the guests from Greece



The honorary award of the former Consul General Aikaterini Boura

The Nazi Holocaust and the Jews of Greece



Dr. Mimis Cohen

In commemoration of the Liberation of the Concentration Camps, Dr. Mimis Cohen, Professor and Chief of Plastic Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgery at the University of Illinois at Chicago and original founding member of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece, gave a multimedia presentation on January 30, 2008, at the University. The event was co-sponsored by the Levine Hillel Center at UIC and the UIC Department of Jewish Studies. Dr. Cohen's eloquent lecture on the Jews of Greece attracted a large audience.



The exhibition area in Houston



Solomon Asser, President of the Central Board Moissis Konstandinis and Ambassador of Greece Alexandros Mallias

"Hidden Children in Occupied Greece" in Houston, Texas

The Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest and the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece in collaboration with the Jewish Community Center of Houston presented the Exhibition "Hidden Children in Occupied Greece" from January 13th until February 7th, 2008 at the Deutscher Art Gallery of Center, in Houston, Texas.

Governor Michael Dukakis attended the opening ceremony. The event was followed by a Series of Guest lectures at the JCC, by professors James C. Skedros, Louis Markos, and Renée Levine Melammed. The latter presented a two-day course on Bouena Sarfatty, entitled "Ladino Poetry in Translation: A Look at Jewish Life in the 20th Century Thessaloniki". Bouena Sarfatty was a Thessaloniki Jew who joined the armed resistance during the German Occupation. Later, in Canada, she became a singer of traditional songs of the Jews of Thessaloniki.

Reception at the Consulate General of Greece in New York in observance of the Remembrance Day of the Holocaust of the Greek Jewry

The Remembrance Day of the Holocaust of the Greek Jewry was observed on February 21, 2008 at the Consulate General of Greece in New York with an introduction by Consul General of New York, Hon. Aghi Balta, and remarks by Rabbi Martin Cohen; Hon. Andreas Panayiotou, Consul General of Cyprus in New York; His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The screening of the documentary "The Song of Life-To Tragoudi tis Zois" followed, by Tony Lykouressis on the Jewish Community on the island of Zakynthos (Zante) from the mid 15th century to-day.



Consul General of Greece in New York, Mrs. Aghi Balta remarks



Rabbi Martin Cohen, member of the Honorary Board of AFJMG reciting the Kadish.



Archbishop Demetrios addressing the audience at the Consulate

"Greece through Jewish Eyes"

Athens, Delphi and Thessaloniki, September 11th - 23rd, 2008

The Jewish Museum of New York, in cooperation with the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece, is pleased to present a unique trip -limited to 32 participants- that will explore the history and culture of the oldest Jewish communities in Europe. The participants will meet members

of the Jewish communities of Athens and Thessaloniki and visit important sights, including the Acropolis and its new Acropolis Museum, scheduled to open in 2008.

They will be accompanied by excellent, English-speaking guides, stay in world-class Hotels and attend presentations by Greek scholars. We are hoping that this trip will be a unique and fascinating experience.

"Hidden Children in Occupied Greece" in Los Angeles

On February 19th, 2008, the exhibition "Hidden Children in Occupied Greece" was inaugurated at the Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel in Los Angeles. The event was under the auspices of late US Congressman Tom Lantos, Chairman of the House of Foreign Relations Committee and Greek Ambassador Alexandros P. Mallias. The Greek Consulate General in Los Angeles and the city's Office of the American Jewish Committee jointly organized the exhibition presenting the stories of 16 Greek Jewish children who survived the Nazi occupation aided by Christian compatriots. The exhibition was co-sponsored by the Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel and the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece and was supported by the Maurice Amato Foundation and the Rhodes Jewish Historical Society. More than 400 guests attended the opening ceremony. They were addressed by the Temple's Rabbi Daniel Bouskila; Governor Michael Dukakis; Moses Constantinis, President of the Board of Jewish Communities in Greece; Alexandros P. Mallias, Ambassador of Greece to the US; Solomon Asser, President of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece; Sherry Weinman, President of the American Jewish Committee (Los Angeles Chapter) and Professor Jonathan Petropoulos, Director of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights History (Claremont McKenna College). Songs by Rev. Father John Bakas, Dean of the St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral and Cantor Mizrahi of the Temple closed the ceremony. The exhibition will remain on display at the Levy Family Exhibit Center of the Temple until April 18th, 2008.



Greek Ambassador Alexandros P. Mallias, Kitty Dukakis, Governor Michael Dukakis, Sherry Weinman (President, American Jewish Committee, Los Angeles Chapter)

Message of the Greek Foreign Minister Ms. Dora Bakoyanni for the opening of the exhibition "Hidden Children in Occupied Greece"

in Los Angeles, on February 19th, 2008

From far away, yet close in spirit, I send you my warm regards and heartfelt congratulations on presenting the "Hidden Children in Occupied Greece", a testament to the will and determination of both rescuers and rescued, survivors of one of history's darkest moments, which left Greece devastated.

Thanks to the courage of their fellow citizens, the sixteen children featured in this exhibit grew up to become outstanding citizens of Greece, making the fabric of Greek society all the richer for it.

Furthermore, this deceptively simple exhibit is proof and testament of the power of one; the power of an individual to make the difference between life and death.

These children were saved by individuals, who risked life and limb, not only their own, but also of their families. In the process, they did more than save a life; they salvaged human dignity, they restored faith in humanity and made us proud.

No better example of both survivor and rescuer can be found than the Honorable Tom Lantos, who generously offered to put this event under his auspices before his passing. A Holocaust survivor himself at the age of sixteen, Tom Lantos, to the end of his life, was a champion of the struggle for human rights.

He rose out of tragedy to become a man of vision, of courage and humanity; he dedicated his life to the service of others and made the dignity of man the focal point of his life.

Last week, I was honored and humbled to be included in a special service held in his memory on Capitol Hill, along with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tzipi Livni, and other dignitaries.

Today, this event is dedicated to his memory.



Rosa Benveniste

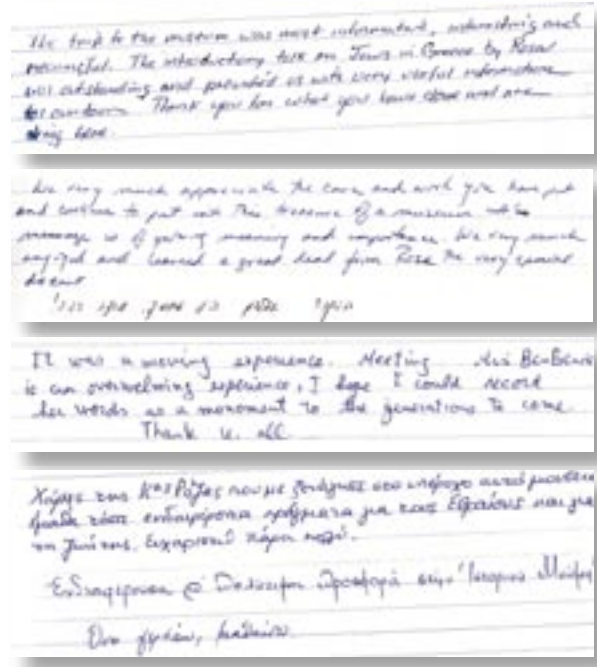


The Jewish Museum of Greece mourns the loss of its treasured volunteer Rosa Benveniste, who passed away on Friday 22nd February 2008.

Rosa Cohen-Benveniste was born in Thessaloniki on 30th June 1919, the daughter of Vitale Cohen and Flora Gattegnio. Her only brother, Albert, died in 2003. She attended the Ecole Francoallemande primary school and her secondary education was at the American Girls' School. She then attended the ORT school where she studied tailoring.

Shortly before the war she married Rahamim (René) Benveniste and later moved to Athens. They had two children, Alberto and Sarah. After the war she gave private tuition in English.

She served the Museum as a loyal volunteer for 24 years and watched its progress through three different premises, from its very early days until the autumn of 2007 when she was taken seriously ill. She specialised in taking people on guided tours of



the museum; a task she performed unflinchingly three days a week in a number of different languages including Greek, English, French and Spanish. Not only did she initiate people into Greek Jewish traditions and history, but generously shared her own experience of life in pre-war Thessaloniki with them. In April 2005 the Board of Directors of the JMG awarded her with a gold medal in appreciation of her long, outstanding service to the Museum.

STAFF:

- ZANET BATTINOY - ARCHEOLOGIST, DIRECTOR
- VICTORIA KOSTI - FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR
- ORIIETTA TPEVEZA - EDUCATION OFFICER
- NANA BATI - RECEPTION MANAGER
- HAYIA COHEN - ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
- RACHEL FELLUS - FINANCIAL ADMIN ASSISTANT
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 Sunday 10.00 - 14.00, Saturday closed

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