

TEMPLE JUDEA OF MANHASSET NEWS RELEASE

333 Seasingtown Road, Manhasset, NY 11030

For Immediate Release

Greek Jews of Lower East Side Come to Temple Judea

On Sunday, March 8th, Temple Judea of Manhasset's Greatest Generation group will explore the history of the 2000 year-old Greek Jewish community, both in Europe and in America. The presentation will include a charismatic speaker, Marcia Haddad Ikonopoulou, Director of the Greek-Jewish Museum in Manhattan, as well as a short film presentation.

With roots in Greece, many "Romaniote" Jews migrated to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, specifically to the Lower East Side of Manhattan. There, on Broome Street, not far from Chinatown, they built a synagogue and later a museum which is still functioning. The Greek Jewish Museum is associated with the Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue which was recently declared a landmark by the New York City.

The story of this Greek-Jewish community is a fascinating part of history. In 70 AD, after the Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans, the conquerors sent many of their Jewish victims to Rome on slave ships. One of these ships, encountering a fierce storm, was able to land safely in Greece.

Free of a life of bondage, the Jewish victims set about building a new community. Over the next 2,000 years, they lived peacefully and were accepted in the country. They continued to practice their religion incorporating much of Greek culture. While practicing Judaism, their ethics and religious customs became removed from mainstream Judaism, but they retained the core of their religion.

During the presentation, the speaker, Marcia Haddad Ikonopoulou, will include a 25-minute film followed by a discussion of the Romaniote community throughout history. She will also talk about the museum, which includes a literary center, art gallery, a Holocaust Memorial dedicated to Greek Jews victimized in the Shoah, and a book store.

Ms. Ikonopoulou will talk about the Museum's items of note. The Museum has a book collection of 40 Old Testament texts in Greek as well as the world's largest collection of *Alephs*, hand-painted birth certificates. Following the presentation, the speaker will remain to answer questions.

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The program will be held from 2:00pm to 4:00 pm on March 8th and, as all programs sponsored by the Greatest Generation, is open to the public. A \$5 fee will be collected to cover the cost of refreshments.

While the Greatest Generation is a committee designed to address the needs of Temple Judea congregants who are generally 60 years old plus, the programs are open to the public. They have included a genealogy event, film presentations and discussions, barbeques and special Shabbat Services. For more information on upcoming events, please contact Temple Judea directly.

Temple Judea of Manhasset was established in 1955 and has over 500 member families. One of the few temples on Long Island that is completely handicapped accessible, Temple Judea is affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism. It is located at 333 Searingtown Road, Manhasset. Please call (516)621-8049 for further information and visit its website at **temple-judea.com**.



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