

חברה שלום והולכי קרימה



דוסיידאד פאס אי פרוגריסו

The Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation

A non-profit organization established in 1997

10850 Wilshire Boulevard #750

Los Angeles, California 90024

Telephone (310) 475-4779 Fax (310) 475-8144

E-mail: info@rhodesjewishmuseum.org

Web Site: www.rhodesjewishmuseum.org

“KE HABER ?”

Newsletter for the Year 2015 Describing “What’s New” Regarding Rhodes Jewish History

By Aron Hasson

Welcome to the eighth publication of the “Ke Haber?” newsletter of the *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation*. The *Foundation* continues its goal of preserving the cultural background of the Jews of this island in the Aegean Sea and serves as a link between the past, present and future generations of “Rhodeslis” around the world.

Ancient “Megila” and Other Special Artifacts Donated by a Rhodesli Family of Hawaii

In February 2015, Randy Hasson, the daughter of Moshe (“Murray”) Hasson of Hilo, Hawaii has generously donated two “megilas” and a pair of “takos” (wooden “mikve” sandals decorated with inlaid mother-of-pearl) hand made in Rhodes. These family heirlooms were brought from Rhodes to the United States in 1920 by the family when they immigrated. Murray was born in the Bronx, New York and eventually moved to Hawaii in 2010.

The “megila” shown here was written in Hebrew on parchment and will soon be displayed at the Jewish Museum of Rhodes. The opening title page indicates that it was written in 5622 (=1862) for **Yitzhak Hasson**, the son of Baruch Hasson (the great-grandfather of Murray).

The “Rhodesli Diaspora” is very spread out around the world. Nevertheless, there exists a special bond with its roots with “la judería”. The family noted that they stay connected with their heritage because they receive the publications of the *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation*.



These items were very well preserved by the family for over 150 years. This particular “megila” was contained in a sophisticatedly and accurately-fitted cylindrical tin which telescopically opened and closed. The family explained to me that the container was made by Murray’s great-uncle, Aslan Hasson, who was a tinsmith in Rhodes.

The “megila” is read during Purim and describes the “Story of Esther”. Purim celebrates the story of the rescue of the Persian Jews (a few thousand years ago) by Queen Esther and her uncle, Mordechai, from the evil plot to annihilate them.

Memorial Events Held in Rhodes and Kos

The Jewish Community of Rhodes hosted several special events during July 2014 which was appropriately entitled: "Forever Linked". These events commemorating 70 years since the tragic 1944 deportation were organized by Mrs. Bella Restis, President of the Community, and by Carmen Cohen, Director, and we are grateful for their dedication.

First Hand Account by Stella Levi of the July 2014 Events:

Hundreds from the "Rhodesli Diaspora" gathered this past summer in that sunny island of the Aegean Sea to commemorate the loss and celebrate the legacy of that community, a legacy the *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation* is proud to preserve and cherish. They came from all over the world: Belgium, Israel, South Africa, Italy, the United States and elsewhere.

What began with somber and emotionally painful memorials, amidst the tears and sobs of so many, at the end it was comforting to see the people parting with hugs, smiles, and shouts of recognition of family traits of Rhodes Jewish ancestry on the faces of the young children. One could hear the sweet sound of the typical parlance (Ladino) of the Jews of Rhodes. It was a "Gathering of Anguish, Pride and Hope".

Memorial Event Held on the Island of Kos

A memorial commemoration was held at the cemetery on the island of Kos on July 20, 2014. The Jewish communities of the two islands were what was called "sister communities". Thus it was natural for about 100 of the participants to take the boat ride from Rhodes to Kos. At the cemetery, Mr. Benjamin Albalas, of the Central Board of the Jewish Communities of Greece, presided at the unveiling of a memorial plaque to honor the victims of the island. The prayer service was conducted in part by Giuseppe Mallel, a grandson of survivors of Auschwitz. It was heartening to see that a good number of Greeks of the island, including a Greek Orthodox *Papas* came to pay respect to the memory of some old friends and friends of their families.

The Kos Cemetery:



The Mayor of Kos as well as the Greek Orthodox Church participated in the memorial service at the Jewish cemetery.



Memorial plaque dedicated.

The Kos Synagogue

In the afternoon of July 20, 2014, the participants walked to and viewed the former Jewish synagogue on Kos island. The plaque at the entry gate of the synagogue is shown below:



July 2014 Symposium of the “Holocaust in the Aegean Sea”

The events included a 3 day symposium of lectures and open forums relating to the “Holocaust in the Aegean Sea”. These were held at the “Aktaion” adjacent to the “Mandraki” of the New City. The below photo is Esther Fintz Menascé displaying a “chantika” during her presentation called: “Jewish Rhodes: A History in Image and Song”.



Esther was born in Rhodes and her family moved to Italy a few years later. She has been a professor at the University of Milan and has previously published books about the Jews of Rhodes in the Italian language. In 2014 she wrote a new 300 page book in English called “A History of Jewish Rhodes”. People who are interested in purchasing the book may contact the *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation*.

In addition to the efforts by Ms. Restis and Ms. Cohen, the events included a joint-endeavour between many people, including: the Prefecture of Rhodes; Professor Giannis Sakkas, the University of the Aegean, Rhodes; the Pane di Capo; the Danon Family (Cape Town); Professor Anthony McElligott, the Department of History, University of Limerick, Ireland; the Department of Mediterranean Studies and Irene Tolios, Director of the General State Archives, Dodecanese, Rhodes.

Burial Memorial Erected for the Victims of the World War II Bombings of “La Judería”

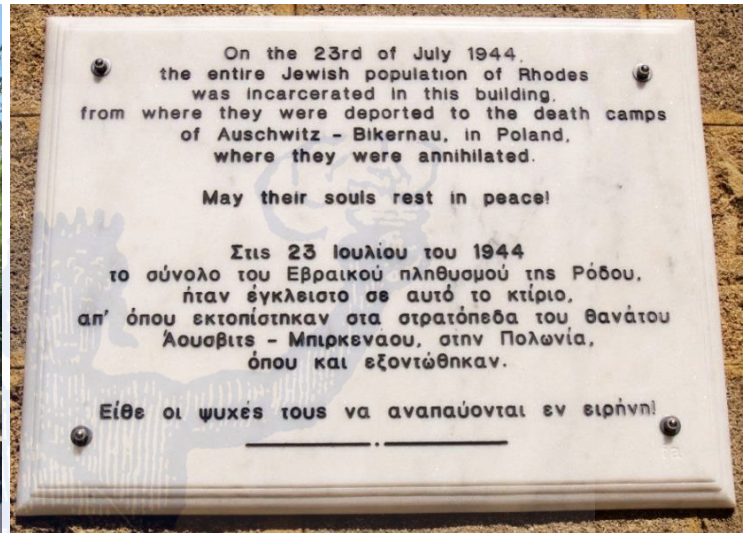
Seventy years later a burial memorial was erected on July 24, 2014 at the Jewish cemetery for those victims of the bombings that fell on the Juderia of Rhodes on February 2nd and April 8th 1944.

There were more than 30 members of the Jewish community who were killed in those two bombings. These victims were buried in the cemetery and a few months later in July 1944 the remainder of the Jewish community was deported to Auschwitz. Therefore, until this time the victims of the bombings never had the proper burial with memorial service within the year of their death.



Dedication Plaque of the Deportation on July 23, 1944

On the 23rd of July 2014, a memorial plaque was dedicated at the building where the Jewish community was incarcerated prior to their deportation from Rhodes. It was 70 years earlier, on Sunday morning July 23, 1944, that the Jews of Rhodes were led at gunpoint to the harbor on foot where three boats took them away. They left behind their sunny island, their beautiful sea, their homes, their departed, their belongings...



Shabat Services at the Kal Shalom on July 25, 2014



The Rhodeslis Who Traveled to Attend the Memorial Events:

Photos courtesy of Susan Hasson of Seattle:



Rosa Hanan Mallel
(of Rome, Italy)



Esther Amato Gianotti (of Genova, Italy)
Stella Levi (of New York City)
Lea Turiel Russo (of Brussels, Belgium)



Moshe Cohen
(of Los Angeles, California)

Lina Amato Kantor (of Cape Town, South Africa). She was one of the 42 Jews of Turkish nationality who were not deported due to the efforts of the Turkish Consul General, Selahattin Ulkumen.



Holocaust Memorial Ceremony



The Sunday Holocaust memorial ceremony in the Square of the Martyred Jews on July 27, 2014.

The successful week long events were orchestrated by Bella Angel Restis, the President of the Jewish Community of Rhodes and by Carmen Cohen, the Administrative Director.

A Thank You From the Jewish Community of Rhodes to the Participants:

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for attending the 70th anniversary of the deportation of the Jews of Rhodes and Kos. Your presence during this commemoration was filled with emotions and may you keep alive your memories and your feelings of this event so that you may pass them on to your families and friends.

You remain our moral support. Please keep on coming back to Rhodes. Your visits keep our community alive and your presence gives us the strength to keep our heritage blooming. You are our strength behind our endeavor and without you, how could we keep this place going on !

May the Kahal Shalom be a place of celebration, of simchas, and of unity."

A Few of the Hundreds Who Attended the July 2014 Events:

Photos courtesy of Jo Mallel of Cape Town, Susan Hasson of Seattle, Sol Menashe of Scottsdale and Alan Treves of Los Angeles:



Front row: Herzel Mallel, Jo Mallel, Mike Mallel, Nisso Mallel.



Front row: Leon Cohen, Elie Hasson, Marc Dozetos, Samy Tarica, Sadoc Aladjem, Bello Israel, Moussani Codron. Second row: Jacky Capelouto, Albert Avzaradel and Jacques Franco.



Stella Cohen, Lucie Hasson Soriano, Maurice Soriano, Claude Levy & Victor Cohen.



The Kantors (Amato family): Michael, Miranda, Gary, Jeanette, Tamsin & Linda.



Jacques Capelluto at family home on Kaye de los Rikos.



Isaac & Solly Menashe family in front of their family home.



Treves family on stairs of family home on Kaye de la Eskola.



Salomon and Florence Israel.



Barry Salzman and Esther Capelouto Salzman.



Rosa Hanan Mallel and Nissim Mallel.



Laura, Vivienne Capeluto, Susan Hasson & Victor Capeluto.

Film Screening of “The Longest Journey”

A documentary film by Ruggero Gabbai, features the personal accounts by Stella Levi, Sami Modiano and Alberto Israel.¹ It includes the contrast of the beauty of the island with the tragedy suffered by the Jewish community of Rhodes. The film was shown at the Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel in Los Angeles on Sunday, April 14, 2013 (photo below). The film was followed by a question and answer period with Stella Levi.



Above photo from the left: Sally Mann, Rae Hasson Wexler, Natalia Indrimi, Stella Levi, Rose Cohen Benon, Anita Hasson Goldbaum and Rae Cohen.



Photo at the top right are “cousins” at the home of Alan Berro after the screening of the film. At the right is Ted (Israel) Hasson, Stella Levi and Aron Hasson.



¹ The film was produced by the Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation and the Shoa Museum in Rome. The screening was sponsored by the Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation.

The Baúl Story

A few years ago a Rhodesli descendant in Las Vegas whom I had never met, Morris Menasche, called me to express his appreciation of the Foundation's efforts with the Jewish Museum of Rhodes, the "Ke Haber?" newsletter, etc. and he offered to send me a framed family photo of an older couple and a "baul" from Rhodes, which I happily agreed to.

Many of you may be familiar with a "baúl". It's an old type of trunk or chest for a trousseau and was also used as luggage. There were two Jewish family businesses that made "baúles" in Rhodes: the Capelouto and Pilosof families.

Two weeks later I received the photo and "baúl" here in Los Angeles and recalled that I already had the same photo of the older couple with a bearded man wearing a fez and the woman wearing a white headdress. So I started looking through the files of previously shared photos of various "Menashe family". I couldn't locate any file with the photo of the older couple and decided that maybe I would find the photo at some later time.

I then called Morris to thank him for the artifacts and asked him if he had previously sent me the photo and he replied "no", he did not send it to me until then. The photo is of his grandparents: Moshe Menashe and Esther Alhadeff.



Moshe Menashe and Esther Alhadeff

I then asked if I could get some background information on his family and the two items. Morris said that he was born in Portland, Oregon and his parents were Liachon (Louie) Menashe and Rachel Sidis. I asked him the source of the "baúl". He said that in 1915 his father Liachon traveled from Rhodes to the United States with his aunt, Perla, and it had belonged to Perla. I was immediately surprised by this answer because my mother's name was Perla and my mother was named after her grandmother, Perla Menashe! So I replied to him that the name of my great-grandmother was coincidentally also Perla Menashe. I told him that my great grandmother, Perla Menashe, also came to the United States to visit her family before returning to Rhodes.

Morris was not very familiar with his family ancestry, but I told him that I would check my family tree information to determine whether or not he and I were related and that the "baúl" was a nexus. I checked the family tree and saw that my great-grandmother Perla had 5 siblings, one of whom was "Moshe" (the father of Liachon). That clinched it.

I then checked the photos in my grandparent's file and was able to locate the copied photo of the older couple. I had previously only looked in the Menashe files, and didn't think of looking into my grandparents' files because they were of the Benoun and Amato families. But then I remembered that the mother of my *papú* Aron Benoun was Perla Menashe. What a surprise that was--I called Morris back to inform him and he was also happily surprised. We were related!

Aron

P.S. The sad part of the story was that this discovery occurred a few months after my mother, Pearle ("Perla") had died and she would have enjoyed seeing her grandmother's "family" baúl.



*Corrected Photo: Baul of Perla Benveniste Menashe.

*Correction: The author initially noted that the baúl belonged to Perla Menashe Benoun. Later documents of Liachon and Perla Menashe's travel to the US indicate that the owner of the baúl was Perla Menashe Benoun's sister-in-law, Perla Benveniste Menashe, who was married to Joseph Menashe.

The Touriel Hat Story

In 2013 valuable books from the Rabbinical College of Rhodes were donated by Louise Albagli of Portland, Oregon, the daughter of Rabbi Michel Albagli. She also donated other artifacts including a new *Borsalino* bowler hat from the 1930s. Since the hat was brought to the U.S. but never used, I'm guessing that Rabbi Albagli did not find it as his style to wear, yet he kept it all of those years due to its respected value of prominence. I'm glad he kept it because in 2014 it eventually came to me and with some investigative efforts I'm able to share this story.

To try to find out more background information I sent the below email to several members of the Touriel family:

December 2, 2014

Dear Touriel/Turiel family.

During my activities related to preserving the Jewish history of Rhodes I have collected various pieces of information relating to a part of the Touriel family which I would like to share with you.

I have recently obtained an original "bowler" hat manufactured by the renowned *Borsalino Company* of Alessandria, Italy.

Rabbi Michel Albagli received this "bowler" in the 1930s from the Boaz Touriel hat shop in Rhodes. He was a student and graduated from the Rabbinical College of Rhodes. Later he married Naile Taranto and they emigrated from Rhodes to the United States in 1939. He later served as the Rabbi for the Sephardic synagogues of Los Angeles and Portland. Last month I obtained the original hat and the hat box from the Albagli family along with books from the Rabbinical College and several other special artifacts.

One of the Touriel families in Rhodes owned a textile company which was located in the main business square of *la juderia* (the Jewish Quarter). In addition to the textile company there was another business close by (across the street from the Bank of Isaac Alhadeff) called the Boaz Touriel "Cappelleria Americana" (in English: "American Hat Shop") and was located at Via Tra Porte – A - Mare N. 23. I believe the parents of Boaz Touriel were Isaac Touriel and Lea Israel?

I am attaching 3 images of the "bowler" hat as well as a 1938 business envelope from the hat shop in Rhodes which I obtained several years ago.



In the near future, the "bowler" hat will be displayed at the Jewish Museum of Rhodes.

If you have any information to modify or add to the story it would be appreciated.

Best regards,

Aron Hasson
Founder of the Jewish Museum of Rhodes



(A few days later, on December 8th, I surprisingly received a detailed email reply from Brussels on the following page)

The Touriel Hat Story (continued)

December 8, 2014

Hello Aron. My name is Elie Capelluto. We already met before--a few years ago in Brussels. My wife is Solange Hasson, daughter of Leon Hasson and Elisa Franco Hasson (Rhodes/Leopoldville-Kinshasa/Brussels) and we are related through the Tarica side of our family.

My mother's name is Lucia Touriel. She is the daughter of Boaz Touriel, the one from the "Cappelleria Americana". Boaz was married to Luna Marcos. They had several children: Isaac, Lucia, Violetta, Ezra (Isidoro) and Dolli. Isaac Touriel went to the Belgian Congo, before the 2nd W.War and was saved. The rest of the family was deported to Auschwitz. Only my mother came back from the concentration camps, then she lived in Rome for a while waiting, I believe, for her brother to send her money for the travel to the Belgian Congo. I previously sent you a copy of her ID card and you have displayed the ID card in the Jewish Museum of Rhodes.



Luna Marcos and Boaz Touriel

My father's name is Moise (Mosé) Capelluto. He is the son of Elie Capelluto and Marie Codron. Elie Capelluto initially lived in Kos, but after the earthquake of 1933 he migrated to Rhodes with the rest of his family. Elie and Marie had several children: Sarah, Rosa, Vittoria, Mosé (my father) and Dora. Sarah emigrated to the US where she married Sam Menasce, before the 2nd W.War and was saved. My father studied in the "Collegio Rabbिनico" of Rhodes, where he graduated as a Rabbi. I believe Rabbi Albagli was a student and a friend of my father. My father also graduated as a teacher for Italian language and later emigrated to the Belgian Congo.

Boaz was born in Rhodes and was the son of Isaac Touriel and Lea Israel. Boaz Touriel did various jobs before he started the "cappelleria". He went working in different areas of the world. He traveled to America, trying to find jobs and worked there. This was in the early 20th century.

In June 1917, he joined the US army. He was on a US Navy's ship to Europe when the first W.War ended. He was demobilized and received papers certifying his new American citizenship (because he had joined the US army). He kept his uniform and had a very long and good relation with a US Ambassador in Italy. He was very proud of his American citizenship.

After the War he came back to Rhodes where he had left his wife and children under the protection of his brothers. He started his new business of hats ("Cappelleria Americana"). He became quite wealthy and built a nice house for his family outside the historical walls of the ancient city.

My mother, Lucia, used to help him and worked in the shop. She was able to manage the shop herself when her father was away on travel, even though she was still young. One day, before the deportation, she had an argument with a Fascist Italian officer and she refused to serve him. She was condemned to imprisonment in a local military "concentration camp". I did not know the existence of that camp until the day she told me the story.

My mother had met my father in Rhodes where they fell in love. As I mentioned, my father left Rhodes to Africa with the last boat and she remained in Rhodes. She was deported and was the only member of her family to survive (except her brother Isaac who was in Belgian Congo). She finally emigrated to the Belgian Congo herself, after waiting in Rome for about a year to receive enough money for the ticket to the Congo. She found there my father and ... they got married and had three children: Myriam, Elie (myself) and Boaz.

As time passed my mother used to tell a little more about the war and the fact that she had been deported and had lost her family. She also told me about my grandfather, Boaz, being obliged to work hard in the concentration camp. Apparently he got wounded in a "mine" and did not survive the infection. She told me about that day where she saw him for the last time (apparently, there was one point where men and women's camps were "touching") and talked to him. He encouraged her to resist and to be strong. (continued on next page...)

The Touriel Hat Story (continued)

My mother had one big regret (and she often mentioned it): When the Germans came on the island, my mother's family was afraid that the Germans could arrest and kill my grandfather Boaz as a "spy", and all of his family if they learn about his American citizenship. The family begged him to burn any items (uniform and papers) attesting to his American citizenship. When the moment came for deportation, the Germans did not take the Jews with Turkish nationality (thanks to the Turkish Consul). Apparently they would have spared also any American family ! So the regret was that the family had asked Boaz to destroy the only evidences that could have finally protected them against deportation.

Many years later, in 1991, I went to Rhodes for the second time of my life, with my wife Solange and my three children. My daughter Dorothée had a Greek friend on the island. Her friend told her about a "treasure" that had been found in a house when destroying it. The services of archeology had apparently stopped the work on this construction site.

With the help of a cousin of my mother, Lea Touriel who was spending her holidays in Rhodes, I had found the place where my grandfather had built his house. But when I went to see the house, it was no more there. My mother and uncle had sold the house years ago to a Greek citizen of Rhodes, met in Africa. They had settled one condition: whatever the new owner would find buried in the ground belongs to my mother's family. The new owner had given the house to his son who had just destroyed it, planning to build a new structure. I entered the tailor shop next to the construction site. The tailor gave me a telephone number and I finally could talk to the owner of the house. I asked him if he had some picture to show of the house of my grandfather. He answered no but told me that he found in the ground, a box containing jewels and other things. We made an appointment at his house where he would show me these things.

The guy told me a "fantastic" story about his dead mother showing him in his dreams where the "treasure" was hidden. The treasure was definitely, according to him, a present of his dead mother! Therefore he would not give it to me. The guy definitely wanted money as he told me that he was planning to sell the treasure to "American rich collectors" for, at least, \$50,000 ! Finally, he placed on the table an old rusted box and all the things it had contained. It contained some precious things which had been buried to preserve them from German cupidity. It contained various rings, bracelets, gold crowns and bridges and boxes of little value. Besides this, it contained papers certifying the American citizenship of Boaz Touriel. He had apparently removed them from the fire. He was deported but had no opportunity to use them.

I took some pictures of the content of the box and I used the remainder of my holiday's money to "buy" a few of these objects. A few days later, I gave to my mother the "famous grandfather's papers", and several jewels among which a little ring that my father offered her the day he had left Rhodes to Africa. Also the wedding ring of my grandmother.

I hope you found this interesting. I am very happy of the great work you do for the memory of our families.

Elie



(continued on next page...)

The Touriel Hat Story (conclusion)

After receiving Elie's extraordinarily informative email I researched a little more and found something else interesting: a connection to **Seattle**:

When Boaz enlisted in the U.S. Army he was living in Seattle. His 1917 registration card is shown here, indicating his profession as a "tailor" and that he lived on 1528 E. Fir Street in Seattle:

East Fir Street was the area where the Rhodesli community lived and established their first synagogue. The Rhodesli synagogue in Seattle, "Ezra Bessaroth", was established in 1912 and was originally called "Koupa Ezra Bessaroth of Rhodes". Then after a little more research I discovered something special: their Articles of Incorporation were filed on June 19, 1914 and the 7 men who founded the organization included, Boaz Touriel! Below is the image of the 1914 document which includes his signature:

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF THE
KOUPA EZRA Bessaroth of RHODES.

WE, the undersigned, do hereby associate ourselves together for the purpose of incorporating under the laws of the State of Washington for the objects and purposes hereinafter specified, and as such corporation do make and subscribe these articles of incorporation in triplicate and do hereby certify as follows:

ARTICLE I.
The name of said corporation shall be KOUPA EZRA Bessaroth of RHODES.

ARTICLE II.
The duration of said corporation shall be fifty (50) years from the date hereof.

ARTICLE III.
The objects and purposes for which this corporation is formed shall be: To aid and assist the sick, distressed and needy, financially and otherwise, without any charge, compensation or remuneration whatsoever; to promote the religious, moral and physical welfare of its members and others.

ARTICLE IV.
All male persons of the Jewish faith may become members of this association.

ARTICLE V.
The principal place of business of this corporation shall be Seattle, King County, Washington.

ARTICLE VI.
The officers of this corporation shall be chosen by a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, and a board of five (5) trustees to be elected annually by the members of this association in good standing.

association in good standing. No person shall be eligible for the office of this association for six months from the date hereof. In WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals in triplicate this 19th day of June, 1914.

Sam Alhadiff (S) (S) (S)
 Marcus Franco (S) (S) (S)
 Elie Bessaroth (S) (S) (S)
 Jack Pika (S) (S) (S)
 Jack Leon (S) (S) (S)
 Sam Pika (S) (S) (S)
 Boaz Touriel (S) (S) (S)

Boaz Touriel

This is to certify that on this 19th day of June, 1914, before me, the undersigned, a notary public in and for the State of Washington, duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared Sam Alhadiff, Marcus Franco, Elie Bessaroth, Jack Pika, Jack Leon, Sam Pika and Boaz Touriel, all of whom I know to be the persons described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and each acknowledged to me that he signed and sealed the same as his free and voluntary act and deed for the uses and purposes therein contained.

WITNESS my hand and official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

William Lewis
 Notary Public in and for the State of Washington, residing in Seattle.

Final observation: This story took surprising directions the more it was followed!

1932 Photo of Laborers at the Port of Rhodes



Photo at the port in Rhodes taken by an Italian merchant who appreciated the work of these two workers (the same port where the cruise ships currently dock, near “la puerta de la mar”). Slung over their shoulders are ropes with pulleys.

*I più bei facchini
del Mondo
Chelibi Alcana - Ebreo
Ali Arap - Turco
Rodì (Veges) MCMXXXII*

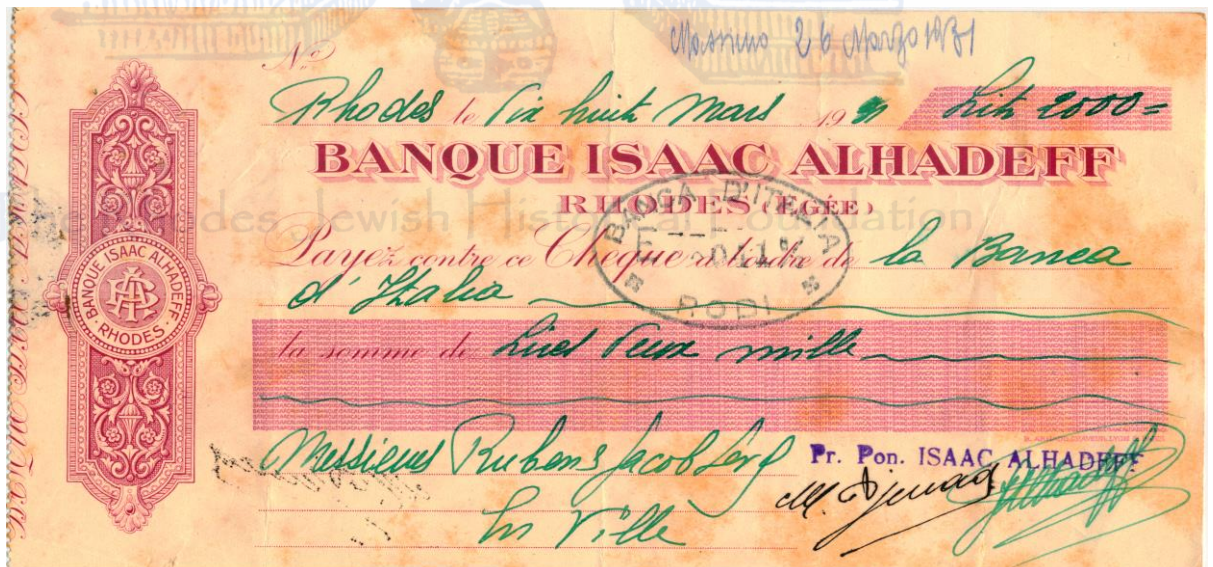
The back of the photo reads: “I più bei facchini del mondo” = “The most famous porters in the world. Chelibi Alcana, Jewish & Ali Arap, Turkish.”

In Turkish the word for porter is “hamál”, and this was the word used by the Jews of Rhodes as well. Very small in the distant background (between Chelibi and Ali) is a well-dressed sailor or visitor walking from the pier. This photo is from the Leon Levy family of Palm Springs, California.

1931 Bank Note from the Bank of Isaac Alhadeff:

This is a promissory note from one of the Jewish banks of Rhodes. This was a precursor of paper “checks”.

The amount of this bank note is “2,000 Italian Lire”. In 1931 this currency amount was equivalent to approx. US \$100.



Document of the Rabbinical Court of Rhodes

The Jews of Rhodes were allowed to operate their own judicial systems in various degrees under both the Ottoman and Italian rule. This autonomous judicial authority was utilized in all types of cases--ritual, business, family law and even criminal law.¹ These courts were also known as the "Bet Din". Below is a sample of one of those documents acquired by the *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation* through its efforts of locating artifacts relating to the Jews of Rhodes.

Adjudication Regarding the Halfon Family Inheritance:



Translation from Italian of the Halfon document of 1928:

Rabbinical Court of the Dodecanese²
The President of the Rabbinical Court of the Dodecanese
Certifies

That on the 7th of October, the year 1927, died in Rhodes in the Jewish Quarter of the house No. 2812, the Mr. Mussani Halfon son of Jacob, leaving legitimate heirs according to Jewish law three children: **1-** Jacob, 50 years old and a resident in Rhodes, **2-** Yeushua, 34 years old and **3-** Nissim, 29 years old residing in North America.

Further certify that outside of these heirs there are others absent, so arises. In witness whereof we issue this certificate at the request of his son Jacob.

Rhodes, the 15th of February, 1928.

The President
(signature and seal in dark purple ink of
Reuben E. Israel, the Grand Rabbi of Rhodes)

¹ For an in depth understanding of the rabbinical scholars of Rhodes, the reader is referred to Rabbi Marc D. Angel's prominent book, *The Jews of Rhodes*, Sepher-Hermon Press, Inc., New York, 1978.

² The Dodecanese refers to the group of the 12 islands in the eastern Aegean Sea, of which Rhodes is the largest island.

Remembering D-Day and the War in Europe

From the “Rhodesli Diaspora”, hundreds of sons of the Jews of Rhodes took part in the European and Pacific war fronts of World War II. This page focuses on two of those young men living in the United States who served in Europe.



Victor Codron was born in 1908 and grew up in Rhodes, the son of Isaac Codron and Sarah Hanan and he attended the Alliance Israelite school and immigrated to the United States in 1921.

He spent 2½ years in the U.S. Army, where he fought in the battles of Normandy, Ardennes and the Rhineland. He received numerous awards and medals.

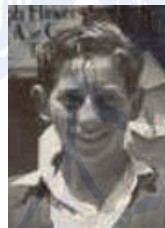
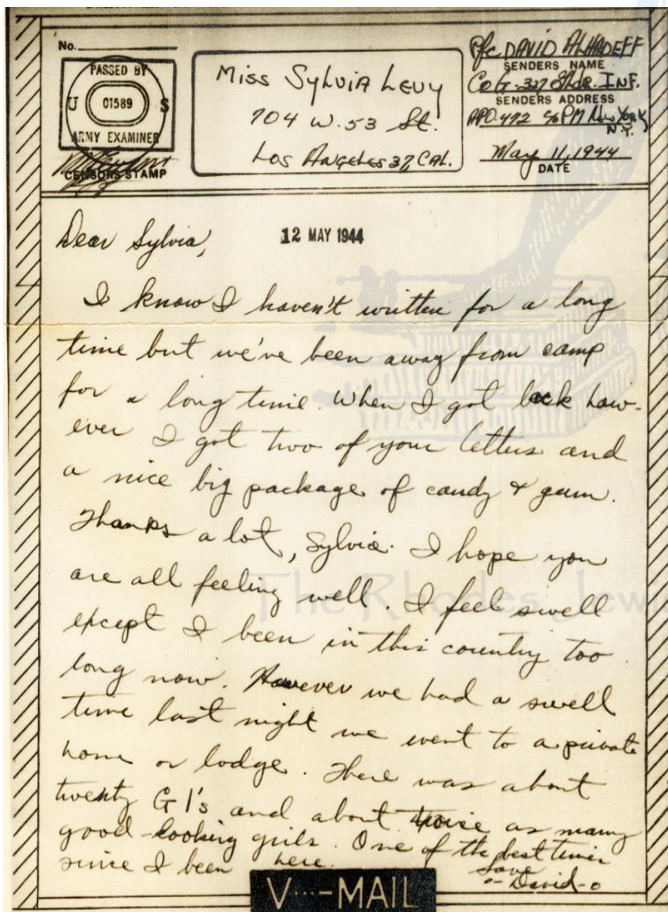
The photo at the left is in June 1945 of Victor Codron in Germany. The Germans had surrendered a month earlier.

After the War, Victor returned to Los Angeles. A few years later he met and married Claire Halfon, a survivor of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.

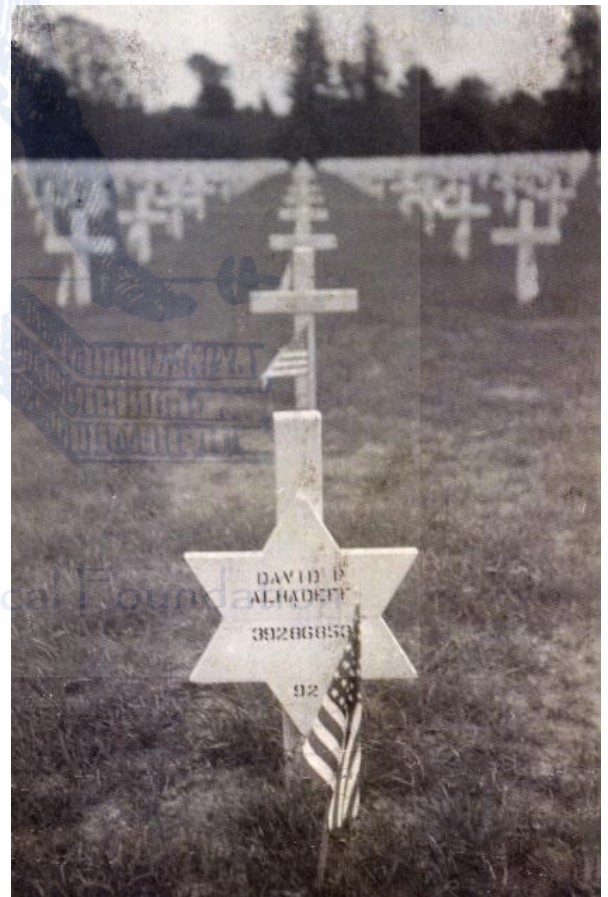
In Memory of the Many Brave Soldiers

Countless courageous Rhodesli descendants fought in World War II. This section is dedicated to one of the many who did not return.

David Alhadeff was born in Los Angeles. He was the son of Perahia “Peter” Alhadeff and Sarina de Leon who were born in Rhodes and immigrated to the United States during the early 1920s. David attended Manual Arts High School. In England during his preparation of the “D-Day Invasion” he wrote a letter home on May 12, 1944 to his cousin, Sylvia Levy Aboulafia. The D-Day Invasion began on June 6, 1944. David Alhadeff died on June 11th.



David Alhadeff is buried in the Normandy American Cemetery. He died during the Normandy Invasion as a member of the “Infantry Glider Group”. David was a member of the 327th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division.



January 2015 Underground Exploration of Jewish Sites of Rhodes Begins

A fascinating new source of information is emerging of the Jewish history of Rhodes is coming from a project being conducted by Rabbi Dr. Richard A. Freund, a Professor and Director of the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Hartford in Connecticut together with a team that includes staff from Tel Aviv University, the University of Wisconsin and Duquesne University. In 2014 he obtained the authorizations and cooperation of the Greek Archaeological Department of Rhodes, the Jewish Community of Rhodes and Athens to proceed and they have begun to uncover the most ancient synagogues of Rhodes still buried beneath the earth (below the present layers). The *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation* has supplied Rabbi Freund with background information, photographs and archival documents to facilitate this endeavor.¹

The exploration conducts “ground penetrating radar sub-surface imaging” utilizing sophisticated equipment to map the sub-surface and everything buried below. It is non-invasive and only afterwards by analyzing the maps can “pin-point archaeology” be done. It sees through stone and wood and recognizes electro-magnetic materials underground to a depth of 15 feet (= 5 meters).

The expensive data processing is being donated and undertaken by a prominent geophysicist in Los Angeles, Dr. Dean Goodman (GPR-SLICE). By coincidence, Dr. Goodman is himself a Rhodesli descendant, the son of Rachel Israel.

This image at the right is of the Kal Grande foundation which is all that exists today. It consists of a mosaic tile floor and partial perimeter walls. In the photo is Professor Philip Reeder of Duquesne University and two university assistants.



The January 2015 project included exploration of the terrain beneath the Kal Grande, Kal Shalom and the “Church of the Victory” which is thought (by the Greek archaeological authorities) to have been built over an ancient synagogue that was located closer to the port during the time of the Knights of Rhodes.

A goal is to see if there is evidence of earlier synagogues that were built in the same locations (which were destroyed by military battles and/or earthquakes) affecting the Jewish Quarter of Rhodes indicating what architectural forms they had and if changes were made. It also could lead to future excavations to uncover the remains of the synagogues themselves and Jewish artifacts from the earlier synagogues.

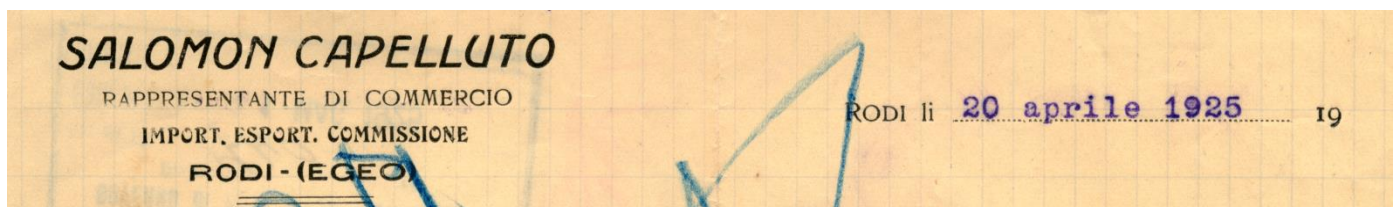
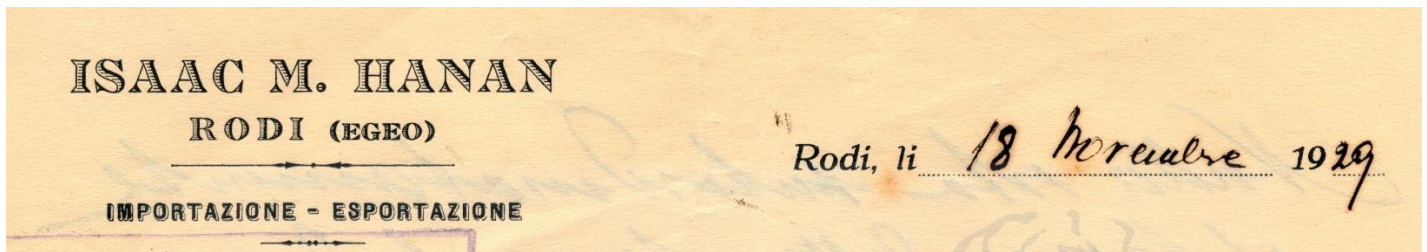
The initial findings of the project show the existence of multiple levels of floors beneath the Kal Grande and the Kal Shalom. That means that after a lower building and foundation was destroyed, the ground would be leveled and a subsequent foundation and structure was built directly above the earlier building. This raises the possibility that one or more of the multiple foundations pertain to an earlier floor of the synagogue prior to the current building of the Kal Grande. There were two very distinctive floors identified beneath the Kal Shalom. The idea that there might be the earliest artifacts from the Jews of Rhodes still embedded in destruction layers below that can be salvaged is very exciting and the work could be done without harming the existing synagogue.

Their work included “core samples” to confirm dates by carbon 14 dating the artifacts from earlier periods. It will take additional time and analysis to evaluate the data. Due to the initial success, the exploration team is applying for a license to continue and perhaps expand its work in January, 2016. The University of Hartford’s Museum of Jewish Civilization will be sponsoring an exhibition “It was Paradise: Jewish Rhodes” starting in October, 2015 which will include artifacts from Rhodes along with photos of the work being done. The Avzaradel-Capuano families have established a fund to support the work of the exhibition and the excavations at the University of Hartford. For more information you can contact Professor Freund at freund@hartford.edu. The findings of this project will be published by Rabbi Freund as well as in a future issue of the “Ke Haber?” newsletter by the *Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation*.

¹ Dr. Freund and his team have worked in buildings, businesses, caves, and religious institutions all over the world (he is also working on the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, Israel) to identify ancient foundations and has specialized in ancient burial sites that have been changed or bulldozed, discovering grave stones, markers and artifacts still buried underneath the ground.

Various Letterhead of Jewish Businesses of Rhodes

Preserving the history of Rhodes is the primary objective of this Foundation. Here are several top portions of business letterheads collected which illustrate a sample of the commercial enterprises.



Various Letterhead of Jewish Businesses of Rhodes

TARICA & MENACHÉ
 NÉGOCIANTS EN
 Bonneterie, Confection, Verrerie,
 Emaillé, Quincaillerie etc.
 MAISON FONDÉE EN 1890
 RODI (Egèe)

Rodi, le 10 Octobre 1926
 (Egèe)

Cartoleria LEON CODRON
 VENDITA ALL'INGROSSO
 VECCHIO MERCATO N. 24

FABBRICA Via Ibraim Pascià N. 6
 QUADERNI - REGISTRI - SACCHETTI
 DI CARTA - CARTINE DA SIGARETTE

RODI, li 5 Novembre 1921

ردوسده قپویا برادرلی
 Capouya Frères
 RHODES
 (TURQUIE)

Rhodes, le 18 Juin 1912

JACOB BERRO
 NEGOZIANTE IN FERRO, FERRAMENTA E TUBI PER ACQUA
 RODI (EGEO)

INDIRIZZO TELEGRAFICO:
 JACOB BERRO - RHODES

Rodi, li 18 luglio 1932

Raphael Alhadef
 SETERIE, LANERIE, DRAFFERIE, COTONERIE
 RODI - EGEO

Rodi, li 13 Novembre 1921

ROUBEN & JACOB LÉVY
 RHODES - EGÉE

COMMIS, IMPORT, EXPORT
 ADRESSE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE:
 ROUBEN LEVY - RHODES

RHODES LE 15 نوامبر 1931

رؤبن و جاکوب لوی

Personal Walking Tours of the Jewish Quarter

Since 2012, visitors to Rhodes have had the special opportunity of having a walking tour of the Jewish Quarter of Rhodes. We have been fortunate to have the services of Isaac Habib to provide tours of the synagogue, museum and Jewish Quarter of Rhodes. Isaac lives in Cape Town and has visited Rhodes numerous times and has a wealth of knowledge and sentiment for the history of “la judería” from the Jewish perspective (his family lived in the Jewish Quarter prior to the Holocaust). He has offered these one hour tours during the tourist season. Arrangements to attend the tours can be made by visitors when they arrive at the Kal Shalom. Isaac is also a poet of Judeo-Spanish, the ancient language of Sephardic Jews.



Isaac shown above in the courtyard (“kortijo”) of the Kal Shalom describing the 16th century fountain plaque.



At the street of “El Datilar” explaining the historical importance of the Joseph Notrica plaque of 1915 which is inscribed in Judeo-Spanish.

Recent Family Reunions in Rhodes

Many descendants from Rhodes organize family trips to learn about their heritage and share their experiences. Here are a few recent family reunions.

The Berro family:



The Capeluto family:



The Elio Tarika family:



Special Thanks and Appreciation

Since its founding in 1997, the Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation has been supported in many ways and from many people. Thank you for all of your support which is greatly appreciated.

Extra thanks go out to Stella Levi for her input with this newsletter and Steve Nemirovsky (of the Fis and Benveniste family) for his Judeo-Spanish translations.

Our efforts continue in collecting artifacts for preserving our Rhodesli history. Many families have photos, documents and artifacts. Sometimes people discard items not realizing they may be valuable for archiving our heritage. If you are interested in sharing your family heirlooms for future generations to appreciate, please feel free to contact us.