

Nina Frances And Her Grandmother Bienvenida Moshe In Athens



This picture was taken in August 1941 at Syntagma (Constitution) Square in Athens.

First from right is my grandmother Bienvenida Moshe, nee Florentin. On her left is my sister Nina Frances, nee Moshe with our uncle's dog.

With the bombings we decided to come to Athens in 1941. My grandfather, my mother and myself.

Especially since during the summer, while we were at Aidipsos, happened the incident with the navy ship 'Elli,' which was bombed and sunk.

My grandmother was already in Athens, at my uncle Mario's, as she had decided not to go to Paris for her yearly gynecological treatment, but chose Athens instead.

She had even taken my sister with her. This way we all met here, in Athens.

When we left for Athens from Thessaloniki, it was during the Albanian war, and the trains were carrying the army, so we took a bus.

It was grandfather, my mother and myself. It was an old bus with 16 seats, and we got into it, twenty persons, Jews as well as Christians. The Germans had not arrived yet.

We left early one Tuesday morning in March, and we arrived in Athens on Friday in the afternoon. It took us over three days for such a short trip.

It was then that a small earthquake shook Larissa and our driver almost fell asleep on the steering wheel.

They would wake him up and shout at him, so that he wouldn't fall asleep, but they insisted that he wouldn't stop at Larissa due to the tremor.

Thursday night we slept in Thiva, in a hotel full of bugs and fleas. Early on Friday morning we heard the sirens as the city was bombarded, and we left and it took us five hours to reach Athens.

Can you imagine it, five hours to Athens from Thiva? At the end of our trip we saw the Acropolis and couldn't believe it in our joy.

And another thing: we had paid four or five golden sovereigns per person for the whole trip, and all during this trip I was traveling on my mother's knees.

I don't remember how many 'kokorakia, small roosters' I swallowed during this trip – this was the word we used for aspirins.

When we arrived in Athens, we were accommodated at my Uncle Mario's place, who lived on Ploutarchou Street in Kolonaki, from March to September.

Uncle Jacques was staying on the top floor, the penthouse, on Kriezotou Street, but it was a very small place.