



A Look Into a Sefardi Family

Presented By
Reverenda Star Wahnnon
Kantor

ספרד

Sepharad - the ancient Hebrew
word for Spain

SHEARITH ISRAEL, NYC
2 WEST 70TH STREET
EST. 1654



Parents
Aestheta Hoffer Wahnon
James Robert Wahnon



Sisters
Hilary Wahnon Davis
Jan Wahnon

Dedicated to the Wahnon
men and women
who taught me the love of
Sefardi tefillah, Ladino and our beautiful
traditions and song.

Reverend (Hazzan) James Meshod Wahnon
Shamash Martin James and Serina Wahnon
James Robert and Aestheta Wahnon
Hilary Wahnon Davis and Jan Wahnon
Our culture lives on in my voice and soul.



Reverend Chaim Mesod Wahnon
Congregation Shearith Israel
Gibraltar



Grandparents
Sarina Levy Wahnon
Martin James Wahnon



My grandparents
Gibraltar, Bulgaria,
Bronx



Benjamin and Matilda Levy (nee
Betsalel)
My great grandparents
Bulgaria



Helena Wahnnon nee
Guinon
Great grandmother
Morocco

EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM WESTERN EUROPE



My Wahnons family moved southwardly from Cordoba to Gibraltar and finally, settled in Teutan, Morocco. Some Wahnons went westbound into Portugal where they remain, however, not Jewish. They are acutely aware and proud of their roots.

Some Wahnons settled in Italy while others in Thessalonica, Greece as well as Cabo Verde where they became royalty and politicians.

The Levy family went eastward settling in Sofia, Bulgaria.

SEFARDI FUN FACTS

- We refer to our Hazzan as *Reverend*. The Assistant Hazzan is called the *Shamash*.
- Periodically, we interchange **v** for **b**, **c** for **k**, **s** for **z**
- Women do read from the Torah just not in mixed services.
- We name our children after a living grandparent or relative.
- We typically do not say *Yasher koach*, but *Chazaq U'varuch* (*Strength and blessing*) and the response is "*Chazaq v'ematz*" (*Strength and courage*).
- Sefardi synagogues are typically Orthodox; the siddurim are male centered as well as the choir.
- Our bimah is in the center of the congregation with the pews facing it. Maimonides stated that when the bimah is in the center, everyone can hear the Torah read.
- The first Jews in America were Sefardim (1654.) They came as refugees from Recife, Brazil to New Amsterdam, which became New York City. Here, they started the oldest American synagogue, *Shearith Israel*.
- Famous names in the Sefardi world: Maimonides (Rambam), Paula Abdul (Syria), Hank Azaria (Greek), Neil Sedaka (Turkish) Jerry Seinfeld (Syria),
- Oftentimes, additional as well as different verses and placement of phrases distinguish Sefardi from Ashkenazi siddurim/chumashim: i.e. *Adon Olam* has extra verse, Psalm 93 order, *Kaddish Le'ela*: an extra phrase

Adon olam asher malach,
b'terem kol y'tzir niv-ra.
L'eit na'asah **k'**cheftzo kol,
azai melech sh'mo nikra.

V'acharei kichlot hakol,
l'vado yimloch nora.
V'hu hayah, v'hu hoveh,
v'hu yihyeh, b'tifarah.

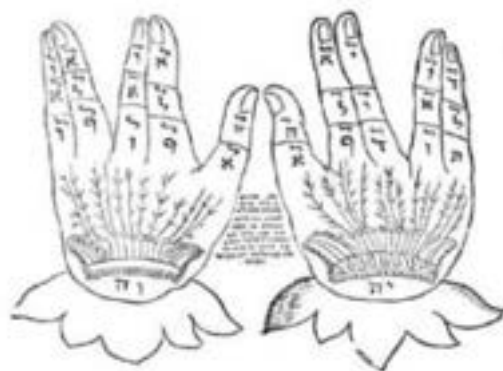
V'hu echad v'ein sheni,
l'hamishil lo l'hachbirah.
B'li reishit b'li tachlit,
v'lo haoz v'hamisra.

**Beli erech beli dimyon
Beli shi-nuy v'hahtmura
Beli chibur beli ferud
Gedol koach v'hahgevura*

*Without compare, unchanging He
Whose thoughts infinity pervade.
Without associate, complete,
In might supreme He is arrayed.*

**Additional Sefardi text*

Adon Olam



אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ
בְּטֶרֶם כָּל יִצְיָר נִבְרָא
לַעֲת נַעֲשֶׂה כְּחֶפְצוֹ כָּל
אִי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא

וְאַחֲרֵי כִכְלוֹת הַכֹּל
לְבַדּוֹ יִמְלֹךְ נֹרָא
וְהוּא הָיָה, וְהוּא הוֹנֶה
וְהוּא יִהְיֶה בְּתִפְאָרָה

וְהוּא אֶחָד וְאֵין שְׁנֵי
לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה
בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תַּחְלִית
וְלֹא הָעֵז וְהַמְשָׁרָה

בְּלִי עֶרֶךְ בְּלִי דִּמְיוֹן
בְּלִי שְׁנוּי וְהַתְּמוּנָה
בְּלִי חִבּוּר בְּלִי פְּרוּד
גָּדֹל כֹּחַ וְהַגְּבוּרָה

Adon Olam

David Aron de Sola

Ab

A - don o - lam a - sher ma - lach b' - te - rem

7 Db Ab Eb Ab Eb Ab

kol y' - tzir niv-rah l' - eit na - sa v' chef - tzo

13 Db Ab Eb Ab

kol a - zai me - lech sh'-mo ni - kra





Sefardi cooking changes as does the spelling of the language according to the location where the expelled Jews settled

Recipes always changed – not written – **un poko d'akel...un poko d'aki** – things were not measured .

They were done “a ojo” by eye. No recipe for masa – done by feel.

Cook with olive oil

Rice instead of potatoes

Turn off light meant turn off oven

Nána thought farmer was easier to cook with – it shouldn't be complicated

Kashkaval (yellow cheese) ***pan de casa***, ***aceitunas*** (olives) ***Borekas***, ***Boyos*** (yeast and cheese) ***fritadas*** (basically soufflee)





•**Fijones kon arroz – beans and rice**

•**Hamin** equivalent to cholent; add eggs – typical Shabbat meal - **haminados**

•**Fideos kon keso** – noodles with cheese – cream, kashkaval

•rice stuffed peppers (**pipiritzas yena kon arroz**), lamb (**kodrero**), leeks (**prassa**), eggplant



•**Baklava, biscocho, kurabiedes (nut cookies), halvah**, rose water desserts, **masapan, leche kon aroz**

•Black licorice

•**Fazuelos & Roskitas**—fried dough formed into a spiral shape – eaten on Purim,

•Chanukah – **Buñuelo special pan** – *like a pancake or deep fried*

•**Mina** is a Passover meat or vegetable pie made with a matzoh crust

•Most important was food was to be enjoyed.



BENDICHOS MANOS!

Sadie Wahnnon is shown at the Torah with Rabbi Mitchell Smith in the synagogue at Menorah Manor during rehearsal for her big day.

In the background are the other B'not Mitzvot: From left, Frieda Sohon, Edith Berger and Evelyn Schultz.



B'not Mitzvah at Menorah Manor

By JUDY PRITZKER
Jewish Press

Family members cried tears of joy and the Bat Mitzvah gals read their parts without a hitch — neither thing unusual in itself — but this was no ordinary Bat Mitzvah. On June 10, four residents of Menorah Manor, the region's Jewish nursing home in St. Petersburg, read from the *Torah* and together celebrated the rite of passage — decades after they first became teenagers.

When Frieda Sohon, Edith Berger, Evelyn Schultz and Sadie Wahnnon were growing up, girls did not have Bat Mitzvahs. Now times have changed, and these women weren't going to be left out. "I looked at it as a challenge," said Wahnnon, a 92-year-old grandmother of six and great-grandmother to ten. "I figured maybe I could do it, at least I could try. The Hebrew alphabet looked like a bunch of curves and dots at first."

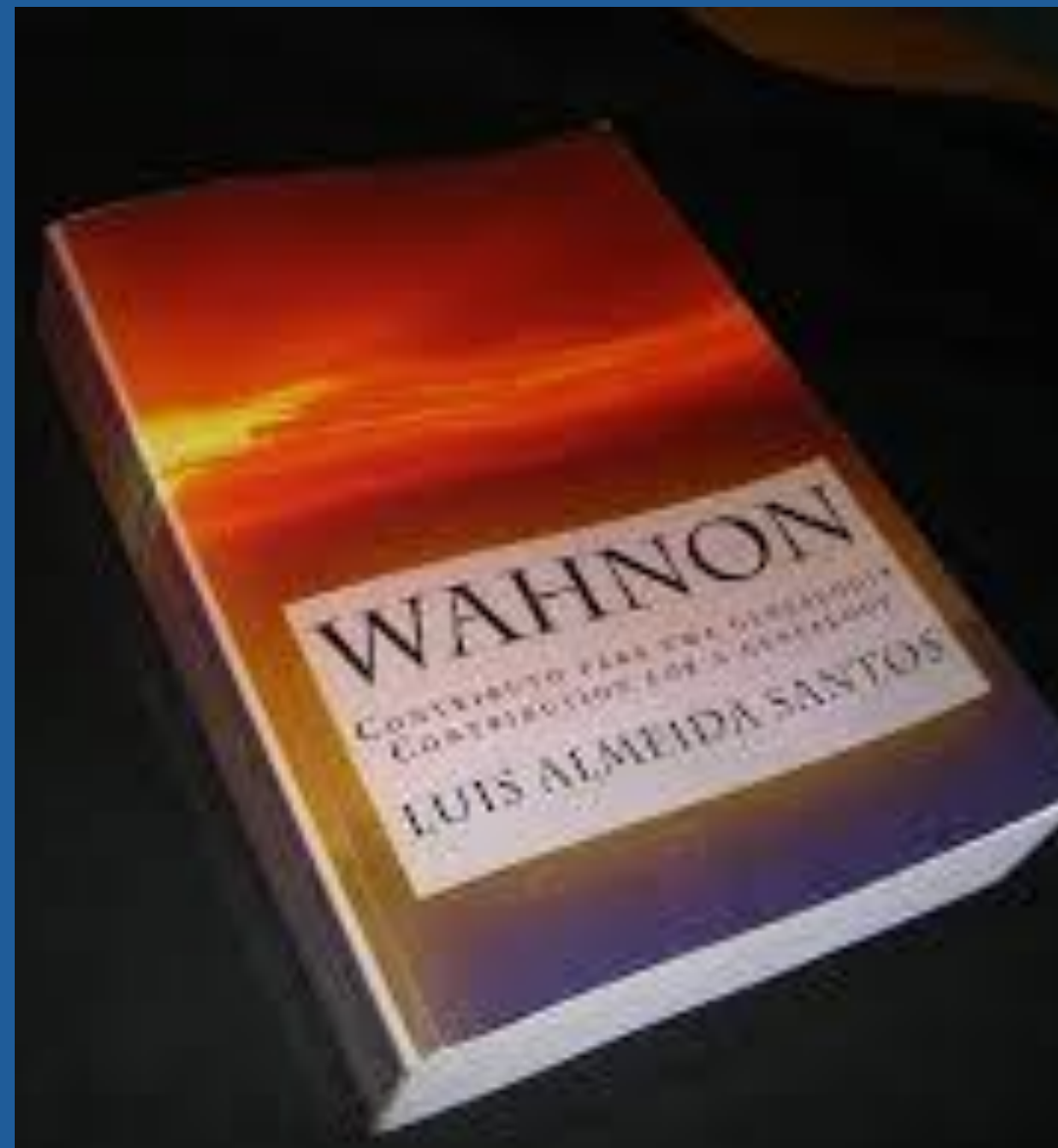
The B'not Mitzvah was special not only for the women,

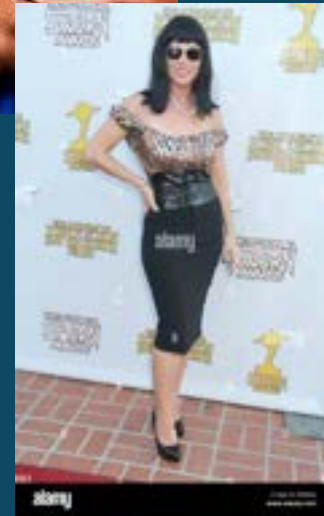
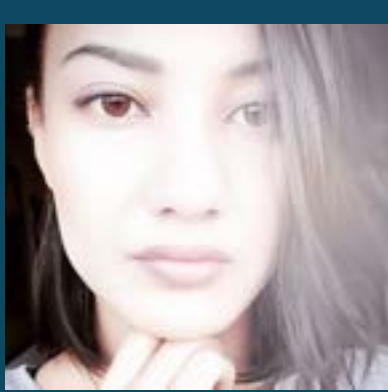
but also for Menorah Manor. There has never been a resident's Bar or Bat Mitzvah especially one held in the nursing center's own synagogue with the residents trained in-house.

The idea of a Menorah Manor B'not Mitzvah came from an Association of Jewish Aging Services Symposium. Upon returning from the conference, Madeline Liss, president of the Menorah Manor Guild, proposed the idea to Rabbi Mitchell Smith, Menorah Manor's fulltime rabbi, who embraced the project wholeheartedly. "Judaism is a life-long endeavor," said Rabbi Smith. "These ladies really epitomize this."

None of the participants knew how to read Hebrew when they began their B'not Mitzvah classes. After nine months of twice-weekly study groups, Wahnnon and her three companions each were called upon to read the Shavuot portion.

B'NOT continued on PAGE 3





ADIO KERIDA

Adio, adio, kerida, no kero la vida. Me l'amargates tu.
Adio, adio, kerida, no kero la vida. Me l'amargates tu.

Tu madre kuando te pario i te kito al mundo,
Korason eya no te dio para amar segundo.
Korason eya no te dio para amar segundo.

Adio, adio, kerida, no kero la vida. Me l'amargates tu.
Adio, adio, kerida, no kero la vida. Me l'amargates tu.

Va, bushkate otro amor, aharva otras puertas,
Aspera otro ardor, ke para mi sos muerta.
Aspera otro ardor, ke para mi sos muerta.

Adio, adio, kerida, no kero la vida. Me l'amargates tu.
Adio, adio, kerida, no kero la vida. Me l'amargates tu.

Farewell, farewell, beloved, I don't want life.
You've embittered it for me.

When your mother brought you into the world, she did
not give you a heart to love another.

Farewell, farewell, beloved, I don't want life.
You've embittered it for me.

Go, find yourself another love, knock on other doors in
hope of other passion because for me, you are dead.

Goodbye, goodbye beloved, I don't want life.
You've embittered it for me.

