

Moshe Sulam

06/03/1922- 11/02/1982



The son of Reuven and Bulisa was born on March 6, 1922 in the city of Rhodes which was under Italian rule. He grew up in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. He was speaking and writing Hebrew as well as other languages like Italian, Greek, Spanish, French, and Turkish.

His life on the island was pleasant and quiet until 1938, when the great troubles of the Jews of Rhodes began under the new fascist supreme governor Cesare De Vecchi and the racial laws.

After the outbreak of war, bombings began on the island. In one of these bombings, in February 1944, damage was caused to the civilian population and especially to the Jewish. One of the Jews that was killed was Moshe's younger brother, Nissim Sulam. In addition, his

house was destroyed and he and his family were left homeless.

During the summer of 1944 the Germans decided it was time to implement the final solution for the Jews of Rhodes and Kos as well and began to operate their own mechanism. A small number of young Jews aged 20 to 25 decided to flee from the planned pandemonium. On a dark night they fled to the coasts of Turkey which was neutral at the time. While rowing, a German patrol boat discovered their escape and shot them. Luckily they reached the shores of Marmaris and there the Turks handed them over to the British. The British proposed to send the young Jews to the Middle East where they would enlist in the Greek Royal Navy that was in Alexandria. After training in the Greek navy he was stationed on a minesweeper ship.

Immediately after the liberation of Greece from the Germans, in late 1944, the Greek navy returned to Greece. The Aegean Sea was full of naval mines scattered by the Germans to prevent the Allies from following them during their retreat. He continued to serve in the

minefield without knowing what happened to his family members who were taken to the Auschwitz extermination camp.

During operational activity in the winter of 1945, his ship landed on a German mine and exploded. He was wounded and fell into the sea. Only after a day they were able to locate him and bring him, seriously wounded, to a military hospital in Athens.

After the unification of Rhodes to Greece in 1947 he was allowed to return to his hometown where he met Lucia Modiano, an Auschwitz survivor and started a family. As the Jewish tradition was very important to him, he looked after the Synagogue with his wife Lucia. He enjoyed to accompany and guide around visitors with roots from the Jewish Community of Rhodes.

He died in February 1982. He left behind three daughters which had already immigrated to Israel