

LESSON 2: RESOURCE 6

Besim and Aishe Kadiu



“My father said that the Germans would have to kill his family before he would let them kill our Jewish guests.”

We lived in the village of Kavajë. In 1940, for a short time, our family sheltered two Greek Jews from the Italian fascists. Their names were Jakov and Sandra Batino, and they were brother and sister. They came to us from Tirana. Their father had been interned in a camp by the Italians. Later, in 1944, both Jakov and Sandra again sought shelter with us, fearful of the Nazis. Another family took their parents into hiding.

Sandra, Jakov and I were close friends. We all lived in the same bedroom. I remember we cut a hole in the bars of our rear bedroom window so they

could escape if the Germans discovered that they were hiding with us. We were constantly watching for German patrols. When the Germans began house-to-house searches, looking for Jews, my father took Jakov and Sandra to a remote village. We then supplied them with all their needs until the liberation. There was a great celebration in Kavajë. I remember the telegram we received from Jakov and Sandra and the joy of liberation. Soon they left for Tirana and then for Israel.

I have so many wonderful letters and pictures from Israel. In 1992, I was invited there to receive the Righteous Among the Nations award on behalf of my family, and for a time I was the head of the Albanian-Israeli Friendship Association. Those years were fearful, but friendship overcame all fear.

On July 21, 1992, Yad Vashem recognized Besim Kadiu and his wife, Aishe Kadiu, as Righteous Among the Nations.

Story as told by Merushe Kadiu (daughter of Besim and Aishe Kadiu)

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