

## The Voyage of the “Katriel Jaffe”



This vessel was named in honor of Katriel Jaffe (pictured here), who was one of the foremost seamen, prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. He accompanied two ships of Ma’apilim, the first in 1934 and the second, which arrived on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1939, the day WW II broke out. He was also the commander of the launch in which 23 seamen were lost at sea in 1941, when they set out on a mission for the British army to Tripoli, in Northern Lebanon.

On July 31<sup>st</sup> 1946, the vessel set sail from Boca di Magra, Italy, carrying 604 passengers, Ma’apilim. Many of them were the “children of Salvino” (orphans who were gathered and put in a shelter, prepared for them by soldiers of the Jewish Brigade). The commander of this vessel was Eliezer Tal (Klein) and the Gideonit was Aya Meir (Pinkerfeld). En route, they received instructions to meet the vessel “Kaf Gimel Yordei HaSira” and to take her passengers on board. Due to a number of technical failures this encounter did not take place.

“Katriel Jaffe” was captured by the British navy and towed to the Bay of Haifa on August 13<sup>th</sup>. In the bay, the commander - Eliezer Tal organized loud singing among the Ma’apilim, to mask the sawing noise, carried out by a group of husky Ma’apilim, led by Bronek Burstein, who sawed through the anchor cable, under the nose of the British and without them noticing it. Once the anchor was detached, the vessel was pulled by the wind in the direction of the town of Kiryat Chaim, inside the bay. A large tug chased after her and took her in tow once again. The Ma’apilim were among the first to be deported to Cyprus, not before displaying fierce resistance.



With the assistance of three young Ma’apilot from among the Salvino orphans, (Anita Mariminski-Titlebaum, Adina Ben Pinchas-Liberman and her younger sister Ayala Aviel-Liberman), the Palyamnikim were able to transfer to the deportation ship a considerable amount of explosives, which had been smuggled to the vessel hidden in loaves of bread, by Zalman Perach. The girls hid the material in their shoes as insoles, and their shoes were not inspected by the British. Eliezer and Zalman detonated the explosives, but the ship was only slightly damaged.

(Compiled by Tzvi Ben-Tzur)



*Anita Marimsky-Titlebaum Ayala Aviel-Liberman Adina Ben-Pinchas-Liberman*

*The three Ma'apilot who transferred the explosives to the Deportation vessel*