

Sousa Mendes Foundation

...preserving the legacy of Aristides de Sousa Mendes...

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 2, 2011

'THESE ARE MY PEOPLE!'
THE STORY OF ARISTIDES DE SOUSA MENDES

An exhibition chronicling the heroic actions of the Portuguese diplomat who rescued over 30,000 lives during World War II

February 10–April 3, 2011 at the Mineola Memorial Library

Mineola Memorial Library

195 Marcellus Road
Mineola, NY 11501
(516) 746-8488

<http://www.nassaulibrary.org/mineola/>

Exhibit Hours

Mon-Wed-Thu 10:00am to 9:00pm
Tue-Fri 10:00am to 5:30pm
Sat 10:00am to 5:00pm
Closed Sundays and holidays

The exhibition titled ***'These are my people!' The story of Aristides de Sousa Mendes*** will be held at the Mineola Memorial Library in Mineola, New York (Long Island). The venue was arranged on behalf of the Sousa Mendes Foundation by New York State Senator Jack Martins, a Portuguese-American and former Mayor of Mineola. "Aristides de Sousa Mendes is a wonderful example of how a single individual of character and courage can change the world in a positive way," said Senator Martins. "His selflessness and grace in the face of overwhelming adversity is an inspiration to us today."

Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese consul in Bordeaux, France during World War II, is credited with saving an estimated 30,000 lives in 1940. As Germany invaded France, thousands of refugees were trapped within its borders. Portugal was officially neutral, but its dictator issued a directive barring Jews, Russians and other refugees from entering Portugal. Sousa Mendes disobeyed these orders, and at great personal peril he decided to issue visas to anyone who asked, free of charge, regardless of race, religion or nationality. Posthumously he was awarded the title of "Righteous Among the Nations" by the Israeli Holocaust authority, Yad Vashem.

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The exhibition was curated by Dr. Olivia Mattis, herself the daughter and granddaughter of Sousa Mendes visa recipients, and will be on view in the library auditorium.

The Sousa Mendes Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to honoring the memory of Aristides de Sousa Mendes and to educating the world about his good work, has a two-fold mission: raising funds for the restoration of the Sousa Mendes family home and the creation within its walls of a museum and memorial site; and sponsoring US-based projects that perpetuate his legacy. For more information please contact info@sousamendesfoundation.org or call (206) 426-5951.

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