

# CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

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## A tribute to Rabbi Desmond Maizels z"l

Our community lost a great Rabbi and mensch on 15 January, when Rabbi Desmond Maizels passed away suddenly in Cape Town.



*Camps Bay Shul; he was a shochet, mohel, sofer, member of the Cape Beth Din and Head of the Cape Town Kashrut Department. Rabbi Maizels worked tirelessly for the improvement and enhancement of Kashrut in Cape Town and travelled the length and breadth of the country (and world) inspecting factories, farms and shops." Union of Orthodox Synagogues, Cape Council*

The tributes written on social media all spoke of his humanity, kindness and wisdom. He fulfilled so many important roles in the community that the face of Jewish Cape Town that he changed so much during his lifetime can't help but be forever altered by his passing.

Below are excerpts from just a few of the moving posts expressing appreciation for Rabbi Maizels and all that he did for the Jewish community.

*"...He gave to the community in so many ways — he was a dedicated congregational rabbi for decades and is the Rabbi Emeritus of*

*...There are so many more stories that I can tell. So many voices of his that I hear in my head thinking of him. The extent that he respected his wife Esther was inspiring and so special to hear. He was so proud of his children living in Israel and being part of the national Jewish future. His naughty laugh and mischievous smile were part of his humanity and more so, were part of his connection to Hashem." Rabbi Jonathan Altman*

Continues on page 4

## Friends of UJC 12th annual year-end event goes online

More than 150 guests logged in from around the globe on 29 December for the 12th annual celebration of the Friends of the UJC Cape Town (Friends).

Patrons and Friends connected from overseas and South Africa, and were joined by local Top Donors for this uniquely South African affair.

The event, which has become a highlight of the summer season in Cape Town, and is usually held at a unique and distinctive venue, was held online this year, due to the pandemic. This did not detract from the usual splendour and even though guests were not able to connect in person the sense of community and connection could

be felt by all. This year-end event was graciously hosted by Western Cape Premier Alan Winde and was live-streamed from his beautiful residence, the historic Leeuwenhof Cape Dutch home built in 1665.

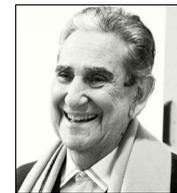
Premier Winde welcomed all to our Cape Town event and spoke about the humanity that South Africans have displayed towards each other in facing the challenges that COVID-19 has presented.

Guests were then treated to an hour of entertainment by the Cape Minstrels, Nik Rabinowitz (comedian), Carina Rubin-Frankal (producer of My Octopus Teacher), Gabriel Sieff (pianist), Choni G (musician, chazzan) and Dani Bitton (songstress, storyteller) all beautifully tied together by MC, Africa Melane.

See pictures and read more on page 17

## Remembering Eric Samson z"l

The Cape Town Jewish community was shocked and saddened by the news of the passing of Eric Samson.



*to the wider South African society where he was able to help the less fortunate and previously marginalised people of South Africa. Eric was a true mensch." United Herzlia Schools.*

Tributes and messages of condolence began pouring in online after news of the passing of the steel magnate and philanthropist in Newport, California on 19 January.

Below are excerpts from a few social media posts that spoke to his generosity and vision:

*"...The magnitude of his achievements was surpassed only by the greatness of his heart" SA Jewish Board of Deputies.*

*"...We owe much of our communal continuity to him, and our sustainability will be his legacy." SA Zionist Federation*

*"...He didn't only support Jewish organisations. His generosity extended*

*"...it is now up to us, whose lives were so beneficially touched by Eric, to live up to the standards he set and build on the strong foundations he so energetically laid. It is in following his example that we shall best be able to pay tribute to the memory of a great human being." Jewish Community Services.*

Days later, messages of condolence are still pouring in on social media as testimony to the many lives he profoundly changed for the better.

Eric is survived by his wife Sheila, children Dorothy and Leonard, Franki and Steven, and Jeffrey and Elana and 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

See page 11 for a full tribute to Eric Samson

## Eliot Osrin Award winners announced at Jewish Care Cape AGM

Despite the challenging and changing times we are living in, Jewish Care Cape came *Together as ONE* for their 12th Annual General Meeting on Zoom, on 26 October 2020, providing a window to the seven welfare organisations that together reach out and provide the range of services to ensure that we are indeed a caring community.

The Annual Eliot Osrin Awards, in recognition of outstanding contributions to the welfare of the community, were announced at the AGM, but the Awards could not be physically handed over as usual. This was done on an individual basis (all COVID protocols observed) and we are delighted to introduce you to the winners.



Dani Jankelowitz, Brendan Widan, Loren Raize, Philip Todres, Jarred Marcus and Lauren Lowenstein

See page 22 for all the winners and excerpts from the citations on their awards.

## Regular contributors

Page 3	Lindy with a why
Page 4	Family Announcements
Page 6-10	Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies
Page 12-13	SA Zionist Federation (Cape Council)
Page 14	Telfed
	SA Jewish Museum
Page 15	Temple Israel
Page 16	Cape Jewish Seniors Association
Page 17	Friends of the UJC (from page 1)
Page 18	Chronic Ads
Page 19	Anton Katz on vaccines
Page 20	Craig Nudelman on immigrants
Page 22	Jewish Care Cape (from page 1)

## Features

Page 4	Voluntary subscriptions request
	Philip Krawitz elected onto JAFI
	A tribute to Rabbi Maizels (from page 1)
Page 11	Remembering Eric Samson (from page 1)
Page 18	Steve Sherman wins international teacher award
Page 21	Magnificent ancient mosaics of Israel
Page 24	Witnessing Holocaust history with Eli Rabinowitz



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# Lindy with a why

## Why my kosher kitchen is even more precious now



By Lindy Diamond, Editor Cape Jewish Chronicle

Every year on 13 August I get a pop-up reminder on my phone that it is the anniversary of koshering our kitchen. I see the message and smile, remembering the mammoth task and the journey that led up to it.

It had started before Pesach — our goal was to transition to only buying kosher meat for our home. But things snowballed, as they do, and after realising the shortage in free-range kosher options, we decided to go pescatarian, and then, in time, realised how easy it would be to take the extra step to have a milchik kosher kitchen.

Cue the entrance of Rabbi Maizels z"l. I emailed him our deep desire to have a kosher kitchen and asked if he would be able to help us. I cringe a little now, knowing how busy and sought after he must have been. But he found the time for us, and on the evening of 13 August, 2017 he arrived at our house to help us with this transformational mitzvah.

Rabbi Maizels and I went through the rituals of koshering my dishes, in what can only be described as the calmest, most in the moment, deeply grounded way. His presence is one that can't easily be explained, but if you've ever been around him, you know what I mean.

I remember feeling a little nervous at first, having him standing in my little kitchen, dipping — dipping everything that was to remain, giving a very gentle shake of his head for an item that just couldn't be properly koshered and should be donated.

There were a million things Rabbi

Maizels could have spoken to me about in our evening together. Subjects like Jewish learning and the rules of kashrut spring to mind. But he spoke to me about his time as the editor of his 'varsity newspaper. He spoke to me about my girls; the fact that the younger two were battling to fall asleep, about my eldest who was finishing up a school project. He asked me the functions of some of the items he was koshering, and he told me about his own kosher kitchen — strictly the domain of Rebbetzin Maizels.

It felt deeply personal and yet deeply respectful of boundaries and it was just wonderful.

In the years that have followed, my kosher kitchen has given me such a sense of joy and pride. Whenever I would see Rabbi Maizels he would always ask about my family, my eldest's school project and about how the kosher kitchen was going, and I would answer honestly that it was the best gift anyone could give for a Jewish home. And when, on occasion, I would rush with checking herbs or eggs, I would chastise myself with a, "what would Rabbi Maizels think?!" and slow myself down to do it properly.

Now, at the risk of sounding sentimental, I feel like every dish in my house is utterly precious, having been made kosher by this kind, wise and Godly man. The memory of koshering my kitchen is made bittersweet as I feel the profound loss of Rabbi Maizels with the rest of our community and Jews around the world. May his memory, and the mitzvot he did in our community, be for a blessing.

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# Philip Krawitz elected onto JAFI Board of Governors

At the end of 2020, Philip Krawitz was elected onto the Jewish Agency For Israel (JAFI) Board of Governors, after having been nominated by Keren Hayesod, an Israeli fundraising organisation in which he has been involved for many years.



who never knew the time when the State of Israel did not exist. We all have to realise how privileged we are! One of the powerful goals that I am going to try to ensure is that our children and grandchildren grow up understanding the importance and the centrality of Israel in their lives that Israel will always be there for them."

On being elected, Philip says, "I was very honoured. We need to continue to support Israel when and how we can. I will work very hard to try to strengthen the link between South Africa and the Jewish Agency and to ensure a two-way relationship".

Philip's broader goals include connecting Jews in the diaspora; educating Jews in South Africa about Israel through JAFI's various programmes, such as through bringing shlichim to South Africa; and promoting Aliyah through, for example, Masa or Birthright.

Philip emphasised the extent of the role JAFI (the *Sochnut*) has played since its establishment in 1929 "to ensure that there is a vibrant Jewish future for generations to come" including its part in establishing the State of Israel.

He adds, "I'm optimistic that we are going to be entering into a very constructive phase of working with Israel, in the interest of Israel and in the interest of Jews in the diaspora. I look forward to the opportunity and will do my best to maintain those links both ways as passionately as I can".

JAFI's mission, bringing Jews to Israel and Israel to the Jews, encapsulates Philip's core values. He explains, "We now have an entire generation

*The Board comprises 120 individuals from all over the world and his appointment runs through 2022.*

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### Shabbat and Yom Tov Times

Date	Portion	Candle lighting		Ends
		Earliest	Latest	
5 Feb/23 Shevat	Yitro	6.30pm	7.15pm	8.23pm
12 Feb/30 Shevat	Mishpatim/Shekalim	6.30pm	7.15pm	8.16pm
19 Feb/7 Adar	Terumah/Zachor	6.30pm	7.15pm	8.08pm
26 Feb/14 Adar	Tetzaveh	6.30pm	7.08pm	7.59pm

N.B. Please note that the times indicated are the earliest times for candle lighting. Please consult your Rabbi.

## Family Announcements

### BEREAVEMENT

#### HENECK

Harold and Sheila, passed away peacefully within days of each other.

Generous and loving to their family and friends, they leave behind a magnificent legacy.

May their memory be a comfort for Martin, Glen, Trevor, Tony and families.

We will miss them dearly.

With love, Marco, Gwen and the Van Embden Family.

### CONDOLENCES — THANK YOU

#### BENNY SCHLOSBERG

We would like to thank Rabbi and Rebetzin Wineberg, Rabbi Bernstein, all our family and friends and the greater community for your love, overwhelming support and compassion on the untimely and tragic passing of our husband, father and grandfather, Benny OBM.

We greatly appreciate your calls, messages and all the meals, which have been an incredible source of comfort to us.

Benny was a true mensch. His passing has left an enormous void in our lives. We will miss his unconditional love, support, guidance, wisdom, kindness and generosity.

He never failed to make us smile with his sense of humour and wittiness. Benny touched so many people's lives in his own special way and through his many selfless actions set a wonderful example for us to follow.

We will miss him every day and the beautiful, cherished memories we have of Benny will live in our hearts forever.

Deeply mourned by his loving wife Rica, children Tammy and Kevin, Robert and Jacqui, grandchildren, sisters and families.

To place a family announcement, email: [chron@ctjc.co.za](mailto:chron@ctjc.co.za)

Continues from page 1

## A tribute to Rabbi Desmond Maizels z"l

"...I recall when Zeesy and I were sitting with Rabbi Maizels the day before my son's Bris... he spoke to us about the intricacies of the process as if we were nervous parents, gently putting us both at ease, as if we were hearing about it for the first time in our lives. This was a typical Rabbi Maizels moment — dropping everything else that he had on his mind and schedule (and it was a lot!), to be there for you — a truth of which thousands of people can, and please G-d will, attest to." Rabbi Asher Deren

contact with. Rabbi Maizels was an eternal optimist — a person who saw problems as challenges and opportunities for innovation — cheerfully finding innovative ways of solving things when others gave up. His contribution to our community was greater than words can adequately describe, and his absence is unthinkable. His decades of leadership have given him an eternal legacy — and us a towering example to emulate..." Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein

"...He was a rabbi and teacher and friend to his congregants — and to everyone. He epitomised the teaching of Pirkei Avot — of receiving everyone with a friendly face. He exuded warmth and kindness and happiness. He beamed love and cheerfulness to every human being he came into

Rabbi Maizels was buried in Israel on 20 January.

Many members of the Cape Town Jewish Community have their own 'Rabbi Maizels stories'. You are invited to send yours to the family at [rabbimaizelsmemorial@gmail.com](mailto:rabbimaizelsmemorial@gmail.com)

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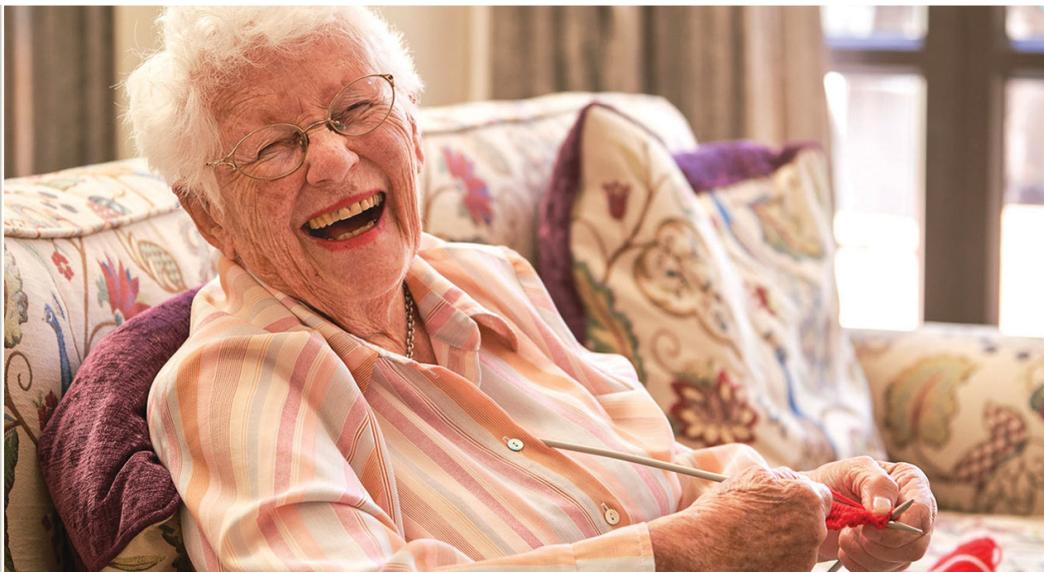
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## KEEPING IT REAL

### Raising our collective voice

By Stuart Diamond, Executive Director, Cape SAJBD

**The New Year offers us a chance to start anew with the wisdom we gained in the previous year.**

Two issues of concern that we bring with us into 2021 are the high levels of divisive debate in our community and the small — yet dangerous if unchecked— rise in antisemitism and anti-Jewish cases reported to the Cape SAJBD.



In 2019, we launched our new reporting system so that community members could report all incidents of antisemitism or anti-Jewish behaviour. This reporting tool allowed members to report by various categories, namely hate speech, intimidation, acts of violence, vandalism and graffiti. In that year, we had 10 reported cases, which were mainly acts of vandalism and graffiti. At the time, we had the odd incident on school campuses, and these were excellently handled together with the Cape Town Holocaust and Genocide Centre.

In 2020, with the community more aware of the tool, we saw our case numbers rise to 19 with an alarming increase in antisemitism taking place on school campuses in the Western Cape.

The Cape SAJBD will continue to engage with these schools and advocate that they ensure students have the correct programmes to counter the narrative of antisemitism. The Cape SAJBD works closely with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in the US to ensure that we are not only trained but that we have the best materials available.

We continue to urge community members to report instances of antisemitism through our reporting system. That way, the professionals and lay leaders on the Antisemitism & Legal Subcommittee, led by Simone Sulcas, can ensure we break down the pipeline of hate.

In March 2021, we will launch our antisemitism booklet that community members can download and share. We hope that both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities will use this resource.

Today, we have a communal and moral obligation to be the whistleblower when we see or feel something is not right. I often hear community members say that what they witnessed was 'not serious' or that it had 'no power to impact people'. However, when we choose to turn away from the graffiti tags or the words filled with hate, our silence can be seen as agreement. My team and I are there to deal with these matters and protect you. If you see something, do something.

In response to the divisiveness that we have seen inside and outside of our community, the Cape SAJBD recently launched a campaign titled #WordsMatter. The campaign underscores our right to freedom of expression in a democratic society, that this right is "balanced against other fundamental human rights — such as our right to human dignity, equality, and freedom of religion, belief and opinion". That is, "free speech" is "never a justification for the use of derogatory or hateful words". Most importantly, this campaign design encourages us to reflect on the words we use and the potential impact that these words might have on another.

Martin Luther King Jr said: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

May this be a year that we all find our voices and commit to raising them when needed so that we create a safer future for our community.

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

### Lighting a candle with the president

By Tzvi Brivik

**Our community was offered the opportunity to honour the memory of those healthcare workers who lost their lives to COVID-19 by lighting a candle.**

The invitation was received directly from the office of the Presidency to the Cape SAJBD. A decision was made to hold the ceremony at the Khayelitsha District Hospital in recognition of the service of those brave nurses and doctors working for this severely affected portion of our community.

To ensure that the Adjusted Level 3 travel and curfew restrictions were not infringed upon, the ceremony was held at 19:45. In attendance were President Cyril Ramaphosa, Premier Alan Winde, MEC for Health Nomafrench Mbombo and Deputy MEC for Safety and Security. Alongside me representing the Jewish community, there were representatives of the Khoisan community, Anglican community, Catholic community and the chairman of the Muslim Judicial Council Shayk Ibrafaan Abrahams also attended.

The prayer I offered on behalf of the Jewish community recognised those lives lost, and pleads for the end of the pandemic and ways forward for our country. The ceremony itself was very intimate, as a gathering of no more than 50 people was allowed. The President gave a moving address honouring fallen healthcare workers and recognising the government's failure to provide PPE and support to those health workers. The President also discussed the purchase

of vaccines and affirmed the government's support for health workers.

After the ceremony, candles were lit by President Ramaphosa, the MEC for Health Mbombo, Premier Winde and the representatives of the various faiths. We at the Cape SAJBD are grateful to have had the opportunity to join the ceremony



**The prayer I offered on behalf of the Jewish community recognised those lives lost, and pleads for the end of the pandemic and ways forward for our country.**

and bring in 2021 with other faiths and elected leaders of our government. We hope that this year will see an end to the loss of life and economic decline.

This invitation from the President's office also recognised the vital role the Cape

SAJBD occupies in representing our community in civil society and ensuring an ongoing dialogue with all branches of government. Our role is critical in safeguarding our community's civil rights and facilitating an exchange of ideas and concerns.

The prayer which I offered included the following:

"All in Heaven and Earth acknowledge Your kingship and authority, and in Your hands is the soul of all living and the spirit within all flesh, and it is in your power and strength to nurture and strengthen and cure humanity to the utmost, and nothing is beyond Your ability. This prayer stands for all of us for the year 2021 and we hope that our prayers are heard."



Tzvi Brivik engaging with President Ramaphosa and Premier Winde at the candle lighting ceremony.



## Towards a world of interfaith harmony

By Gwynne Robins

**In 2010, King Abdullah II of Jordan at the 65th UN General Assembly proposed a World Interfaith Harmony Week.**

King Abdullah said: "It is [also] essential to resist forces of division that spread misunderstanding and mistrust especially among peoples of different religions. The fact is, humanity everywhere is bound together, not only by mutual interests, but by shared commandments to love God and neighbour... What we are proposing is a special week, during which the world's people, in their own places of worship, could express the teachings of their own faith about tolerance, respect for the others and peace."

The first week in February was selected and it was passed unanimously. Although South Africa, with its history of racism and prejudice, would benefit from promoting the concept, no programmes are run by the

government. Despite this, the Cape SAJBD has been commemorating the event annually since 2012. Our initiative has been followed by the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative, the Cape Town Ahmadiyyas, and in Durban, by the World Alliance of Religions and Peace.

Our first event was addressed by Dr Imtiaz Sooliman, founder of Gift of the Givers, who flew in from Maputo where he had been assisting with a flood.

Since then we have hosted breakfasts and panel discussions with speakers ranging from former Premier Ebrahim Rasool, Mayor Dan Plato and former mayor Rev Gordon Oliver to Judge Albie Sachs, Judge Dennis Davis, Khoisan Chief Autshumao, Archbishop Stephen Brislin, Dominee Ds Braam Hanekom, Rabbi Greg Alexander, Rabbi Osher Feldman, Mickey Glass, Prof Jonathan Jansen, Cape Times editor Gasant Abarder, Institute of Justice and Reconciliation's Stanley



*Meeting at Holy Cross Primary School*

Henkeman (who passed away recently from COVID-19), Turquoise Harmony Institute's Muhittin Canlibel, and others.

Our events have attracted members from the Anglican, Catholic, Dutch Reformed and Unitarian Churches, and Baha'i, Sunni, Shiite, Ahmadiyya and African Traditional faith communities.

Last year's interfaith concert was held at Greenpoint Temple Israel and

filmed for television, featuring the Herzlia School choir, Muslim musicians, and performers from the Congolese refugee community, the African traditional community and the Khoisan community.

This year, our Zoom webinar will be looking at how the different faith communities have

been coping during the lockdown. We shall be sharing ideas about how they have managed to connect their congregation, not all of their members owning computers, and how they have had to negotiate services and life cycle events, and the many COVID-19 fatalities. It is on Thursday 4 February from 19:00 to 20:00 with a livestream on Facebook.

Contact Jodi at [sajbd2@ctjc.co.za](mailto:sajbd2@ctjc.co.za) for the link.

# COPING WITH COVID THOUGHTS OF THE INTERFAITH COMMUNITY

A United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week Event

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## On reflection and reconciliation

By Stuart Diamond

### Over the past year, what we have grown to consider 'normal life' has been completely upended.

From how we understand work-school-home life, to how we socialise, pray and interact as a community, no person has been unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Aside from health concerns and the tragic loss of life, 2020 has also brought economic hardship for many, and economic devastation for others. In South Africa, the number of households facing food insecurity has grown significantly.

But 2020 also forced us to pause, reflect and adapt — as individuals and as a community.

The challenges facing the Jewish community in 2020 have been extensive, with the pandemic and lockdown inevitably putting stress on communal resources. Yet adversity also brought out the best of what the Cape Jewish community can be when aligned with a shared purpose.

The language of the past year seemed to shift too. I have heard the words 'pivot' and 'paradigm shifts' many times. But for me, the key phrase that I found most compelling, which I heard primarily in international circles, was 'reflective learning'.

Reflective learning emphasises the intention to learn from our current or prior experiences. Reflection is a type of thinking aimed at achieving a better understanding that leads to fresh perspectives. By sitting with and analysing our strengths and weaknesses and questioning our perceptions we can create a path from where we are now, to where we want to be.

The idea is to step back first in reflection, rather than forward in action, to help see the larger picture. Reflection has become inculcated in my decision-making at a personal, professional and communal level.

Of course, reflection in a time of crisis is not always easy. In crisis-mode, we often simply react.

That the writing of this piece coincides with Reconciliation Day (16 December 2020) is not lost on me. This month also marks the seventh anniversary of the passing of South

Africa's beloved Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. In a Reconciliation Day speech given in 1995, Mandela said, "Reconciliation means working together to correct the legacy of past injustice."

This day holds so many lessons for our small Jewish community on the tip of Africa. I have always wondered if by easing our transition into a 'Rainbow Nation', Mandela unintentionally also denied South African Jews their moment of reflection and, as such, of authentic reconciliation.

Reconciliation demands that you not only listen but 'hear' each other. As such, can there be true reconciliation without reflection?

At the time of his death in December 2013, I had served two years in the Council of the City of Cape Town. I remember standing in reflection at memorial prayers at Cape Town's Civic Centre Chambers as Rabbi Asher Deren delivered prayers of mourning on Mandela's passing on behalf of the Cape Jewish community. I remember thinking at the time, "Why do we only reflect in times of pain and immense challenge?"

This year has undoubtedly been one of immense challenge and for many, deep pain. Aside from navigating our own personal and communal challenges, we have also seen the pain and suffering of so many in South Africa. It has been devastating to see how many South Africans have gone hungry over this period.

I hope that this difficult time has also allowed us to reflect a little deeper on the painful disparities that still

exist within South African society; deep disparities that were yet again exposed by COVID-19.

The challenge now is, how do we hold on to the shared sense of purpose that helped us, as a community, come together and navigate 2020?

The year 2020 was marked by the deepening of partisan politics globally and a seeming inability for people to hear each other across their differences.

Reflecting on this trend, over the last few months, I have witnessed debates and discussions among our community members on social media platforms about a wide variety of difficult topics, from PPE, COVID-19, schools and shuls, to Jack Markovitz. Some of these discussions were constructive and engaging and others soon became divisive and ugly. In response to this type of divisiveness, the Cape SAJBD instituted a campaign, #WordsMatter. The #WordsMatter campaign underscores 1) our right to freedom of expression in a democratic society, and 2) that this right is "balanced against other fundamental human rights — such as our right to human dignity, equality, and freedom of religion, belief and opinion." That 'free speech' is never "a justification for the use of derogatory or hateful words." Most importantly, this campaign is designed to encourage us to reflect on the words we use and the potential impact that these words might have on another.

COVID-19 has not hidden the fact that our community is still grappling

to find spaces where it can hold safe and/ or brave conversations 'for the sake of heaven'. Where we can speak respectfully across difference. Perhaps one of our greatest challenges as a community is a reconciling between South African Jews.

In 2019, I was selected to be a part of two international leadership fellowships, the Schusterman Fellowship and the Nahum Goldmann Fellowship, the latter which aims to provide "a constructive space for young leaders to test questions and assumptions... and learn about the diversity and shared values across the Jewish world". It was in these spaces that I experienced the possibility of speaking across difference (ideological, political, geographical, denominational, etc.) on difficult issues in a respectful manner. These spaces offered me the opportunity to share and speak about my experiences as a South African and also listen and reflect on the experiences of others.

Our community so desperately needs these types of spaces where we can listen to each other. And, reflect on what we hear.

It was on these two different journeys that I also learnt to be appreciative of South African Jewry and the enormous talent that exists in our communal structures. It was in these moments of clarity that I was very much a South African Jew and a proud one at that.

What this year most powerfully underscored is that we should be using reflection as a tool as often as we can, to shift stubborn outdated paradigms and to safeguard the ones that have stood the test of time.

Our community has shown its resilience, but this challenge is far from over. This year will likely be as challenging as 2020. It will ask of us as a community to be more caring, thoughtful and understanding of one another — to 'hear' each other — as well as 'hear' our fellow South Africans. It is when we do this that we will have a community that can sustain itself for generations to come.

*This article was originally published on DafkaDotCom (www.dafkadotcom.org) on 21 December 2020.*





## Caledon's springs attracted Jewish settlers in the 19th century

by Gwynne Robins

**Caledon is famous for its seven springs — one cold, six thermal — warmed by rocks heated deep underground to 49.5° C. As early as 1797, a bathhouse was built there, followed by a sick house and a sanatorium.**

Understandably, Jewish immigrants spreading out into the interior looking for economic opportunities would be drawn to a village that was already hosting visitors and, as early as 1870, J Hurwitz, a smous ('hawker'), and a Mr Brauer had settled there, followed around 1880 by Solomon Gordon who introduced ostriches, the Allegenskys, fishmongers, Mordechai Choritz and Isaac Newmark, general dealers, and Chaim Landaw, a shop assistant and Samuel Ressel, a bootmaker. Many Caledon Jews later owned local hotels or ran B&Bs, were general dealers, grain and wool buyers, ostrich feather dealers, shopkeepers and one, a cinema owner. Solly Perlo, proprietor of the Commercial Hotel served as mayor on several occasions.

When Dr Daniell published an article in the South African Medical Journal in 1894 praising the waters as a treatment for rheumatism, that put the village on the map. Poor immigrants

complaining of rheumatism asked the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation's Cape Town Jewish Philanthropic Society to send them to Caledon, but this turned out to be a costly treatment. When the society sent a young man to Caledon for treatment, it discovered that it had to pay thirty shillings for travelling expenses, £6 for a month's maintenance at the Baths, £1.16.0 for Dr Daniell's treatment, and £1.6.0 for board and lodging every nine days, and when it asked the presumably Jewish landlady for a reduction, she only agreed to give it a donation. When a second man with a wife and eight children in Russia also asked to be sent to Caledon, they gave him £3 and told him to make his own arrangements.

The 'far-famed Caledon Baths' and



*The synagogue as a private home*

its visitors must have been good for business. A 1911 advertisement for the baths which was "of the utmost importance to humanity from a curative point of view", stated the properties of which were "unexcelled throughout the world," particularly for "most chronic cases of disease in which stagnation of the blood is the distinguishing feature."

**Many Caledon Jews later owned local hotels or ran B&Bs, were general dealers, grain and wool buyers, ostrich feather dealers, shopkeepers and one, a cinema owner. Solly Perlo, proprietor of the Commercial Hotel served as mayor on several occasions.**

Moreover, the Baths are situated in a district in which Titania and all her fairy court might well wander amid the natural garden of multitudinous heath. The Caledon Baths Company

had built a splendidly appointed sanatorium and hotel with 100 bedrooms, several suites of rooms, 30 bathing rooms, nine reception rooms and a very large concert hall, where dances are often held, and a string band played frequently during the week. There are also two pianos in the hotel, three reading and writing rooms, and daily papers are in abundance. There are extensive vegetable and fruit gardens, and it houses its own butcher. Milk and butter are produced on the premises, as well as bread and other necessities. There is roomy stabling, and carts are for hire; a motor-garage is also attached to the Baths."

With all these attractions, surprisingly, the community did not have sufficient committed religious leadership to

buy land for a synagogue before 1925, and their synagogue was only erected in 1928, although Solomon Gordon had organised a minyan to celebrate the High Holy Days in the 1880s. In 1914, HM Grodzinski was the congregation president and Montagu's Rev N Cohen was its mohel, cantor and shochet. In 1918, 18 members attended services. By 1933, they held weekly services and celebrating all chagim. At its peak, 40 families lived there. They managed to retain ministers until 1945.

Usually, one of the first things that a Jewish community does is to purchase a burial ground, but the baths must have kept the congregation healthy as they only got a cemetery quite late at an unknown date and, by 1947, it only contained seven graves with the last Jewish funeral taking place in 1955. Earlier Jews were buried in the Dutch Reformed cemetery or the bodies were sent to Cape Town. In 1995, the vacant section was given to the municipality in return for a commitment to look after the graves. A precast wall was erected around the graves two years later, once it was realised that the municipality was not doing so.

There were several antisemitic incidents with protest meetings against Jewish immigration in Caledon in the 1930s by the

Nationalist Party, with Dr Donges (later state president) as a speaker, with Dr Verwoerd (later prime minister) at another. During the Second World War, there was a virtual boycott of Jewish shops with slogans on school blackboards, and the synagogue was vandalised.

Caledon, like all the country communities, started to lose its members as the children grew up and moved to the cities for education, to be followed later by their parents. In 1952, there were still 11 families with six children. The SAJBD provided Caledon with a subsidy to assist families who could not afford the cost of Jewish education. Its Country Communities subcommittee, with the help of Rabbi Duschinsky, tried to assist it with a minister for the High Holy Days and a minister to visit them once a week, and he suggested that the SAJBD helped by arranging cultural events to retain the interest and involvement of the community.

In 1955, the SAJBD loaned a Sefer Torah to the Caledon Hebrew Congregation. The SAJBD had established a Sifrei Torah Fund to assist country communities to obtain Sifrei Torah and later gave Caledon a Torah from the defunct Ladismith Hebrew Congregation. In 1957, the synagogue windows were smashed. By 1970, there was

no longer a minyan, and in 1982, the Caledon Hebrew Congregation ceased to exist. In 1983, their Sifrei Torah was given on loan to the Camps Bay Hebrew congregation.

In 1994, the SAJBD's Country Communities Subcommittee met with members of the Caledon community to adopt a new constitution and approve the sale of the synagogue to an Afrikaans man who wished to use it as a private home. The money was put into the Caledon Hebrew Congregation Bursary Fund.

*The Country Communities subcommittee of the Cape SAJBD looks after the cemeteries of the defunct country communities. For queries or to get involved, contact Stuart Diamond on stuart@ctjc.co.za*

**There were several antisemitic incidents with protest meetings against Jewish immigration in Caledon in the 1930s by the Nationalist Party, with Dr Donges (later state president) as a speaker, with Dr Verwoerd (later Prime Minister) at another.**

## Cape SAJBD engages Piketberg municipality and stakeholders

By Mathilde Myburgh



Stakeholders engage with our Executive Director Stuart Diamond during a meeting held at the Piketberg Jewish Museum (the old synagogue)



The Ceres Jewish Cemetery was cleaned by good Samaritan David Cohen, free of charge to the Cape SAJBD, on Wednesday 12 December. We appreciate you! If you want to get involved with our Country Communities and our cemetery maintenance projects, email Stuart on [stuart@ctjc.co.za](mailto:stuart@ctjc.co.za)

On Friday 27 November, our Executive Director Stuart Diamond travelled to Piketberg to visit the Bergriver Municipality leadership, as well as the curator of the local museum.

The museum is situated in what was the old Piketberg synagogue, and Stuart visited to see how they captured the history of the Piketberg Jews.

After a meeting and engaging with the speaker, the municipal manager and various other leaders of the council, the group of delegates visited the historical graveyard, which has a section for the Jewish community of Piketberg. They viewed the cemetery, discussing maintenance and future upgrading.

It is important for us as the Cape SAJBD to continue a good relationship with the Bergrivier Municipality and we deeply appreciate its assistance in looking after these historical Jewish spaces. We encourage the Cape Jewish community to visit Piketberg and learn more about the Jewish history of the town, and we continue to work to ensure both the museum and cemetery are well maintained.

## Antisemitism in education spaces

By Stuart Diamond

**If an antisemitic incident happens on your campus or in your online learning environment:**

**DO:** Call campus security, or call CSO immediately if there is any threat to your safety or that of your fellow students.

**DO:** Document the incident.

**DO:** Report the incident to campus authorities as a bias incident.

**DO:** Try to find out if the perpetrator of the incident was a student or someone from off-campus/ outside your learning environment.

**DO:** Report the incident by emailing the Cape SAJBD at [sajbd2@ctjc.co.za](mailto:sajbd2@ctjc.co.za). Your report will help us keep accurate data and combat antisemitism.

**DON'T:** Use hateful language to respond. Your goal should be to show why bias is hurtful, not to even the score.

**DON'T:** Take matters into your own hands. If someone puts up antisemitic flyers or online content, for example, do not remove them without approval from your university.

**DON'T:** Call for bans on free speech. Focus instead on countering bad speech with good speech.

**DON'T:** Give up. It's important to show how much this event or incident hurts you, and share those feelings with your fellow students.

*You can respond effectively. Empower your campus community to learn from the event, and to take steps to ensure it doesn't happen again.*

## Homeless to benefit from donation to CCID Social Development

By Mathilde Myburgh

In November, our Executive Director Stuart Diamond handed over R6321.27 to the Social Development department of the Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) towards its annual *Show You Care* campaign initiative, *Hope for the Homeless*.



CCID Social Development manager Pat Eddy, Cape SAJBD Executive Director Stuart Diamond and CCID CEO Tasso Evangelinos

This is a great springboard for our Social Justice working group which was formed and started work in September. Below, an excerpt from the beautiful letter from CCID Social Development manager Pat Eddy:

"The donation will go a long way in reaching our goal of raising R100 000 for our partner NGOs who work with the homeless community

of the Cape Town Central City, many offering work-based rehabilitation programmes that give street people the chance at a better life.

Other than raising much-needed funds to drive the work of our NGO partners, the campaign aims to raise awareness of and empathy for the plight of street people, especially in the face of a global pandemic.

# TO REPORT

AN INCIDENT OF

# ANTISEMITISM OR

# ANTI-JEWISH

BEHAVIOUR

**HATE SPEECH**

**INTIMIDATION**

**ACTS OF VIOLENCE**

**VANDALISM**

**GRAFFITI**

email [sajbd2@ctjc.co.za](mailto:sajbd2@ctjc.co.za)

in case of emergency call CSO Cape

on 086 18 911 18 (available 24/7)

## Remembering Eric Samson z"l



It was with great sadness that the United Jewish Campaign learnt of the passing of Eric Samson z"l, a devoted husband to Sheila, a loving father to his children Jeffrey and Elana Samson, Dorothy and Leonard Sank, and Franki and Steven Cohen and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

As the Talmud says: (*Moed Katan*) "Weep for the mourners, not for what is lost. He found him rest, Tis we are left distressed" and indeed we have been left distressed.

To the Jewish community Eric was irreplaceable. He was a source of wisdom and understanding, a modest and visionary leader. Although the Pirkei Avot (1:2) teaches us that the world stands on three pillars: *Torah*, *avodah*, and *gemilut hasadim*, in Cape Town, we had the benefit of an additional pillar, Eric Samson z"l, on whom we could rely whenever assistance was required to advance those three pillars.

When it came to the study of Torah and Jewish education, or to the support of the services in synagogues and temples, or to fund a wide range of acts of loving-kindness both in the Jewish and the non-Jewish community, Eric was always there. Projects in South Africa like the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, in America like the Cleveland Clinic or in Israel like the Independence Hall, the Samson Assuta Hospital and numerous other



projects, Eric was the go-to person. Eric, with the full support of his devoted wife Sheila, was always there. Eric was a true mensch in every way and his impact on Jewish life in our city was immense.

Another one of the Pirkei Avot (1:17) states that it is not what one says but what one does that makes all the difference in the world, and it was what Eric did that made all the difference and the wellbeing of

the Cape Town Jewish Community often depended on him. No one gave tzedakah so willingly and on the scale and generosity that Eric and Sheila did. Their philanthropy changed lives and enhanced the sustainability of so many of our communal organisations.

If there was a need to support Torah learning and living, shuls and yeshivot, Eric was willing. If the Cape Jewish Seniors Association needed transport for its members or the CSO needed to equip a medical response car, Eric would provide it for them with an open hand and a warm heart. It was the Eric and Sheila Samson Foundation that helped fund our Jewish day schools and youth movements, our welfare organisations, Highlands House, the Cape Town Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, the Jacob Gitlin Library, the Chevrah Kadisha and the cemetery. All the organisations in the Samson Centre like the CSO, the Cape Jewish Chronicle, the Jewish Board of Deputies, the Western Province Zionist Federation and of course the United Jewish Campaign benefitted from their funds. It was not just what Eric gave that was impressive, it was the manner in which he gave. His passing is a deep loss for us all for we have lost a giant.

*May Sheila and the family be comforted amongst the mourners for Zion and Jerusalem, and may the days of their mourning be ended.*

*Baruch Dayan Ha'emet.*

### MOST SA JEWS (BOTH OF ASHKENAZI AND SEPHARDI HERITAGE) ARE ELIGIBLE TO REINSTATE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND, ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT.

A common misconception is that European citizenship and EU passports can only be obtained if one has documents providing his/her lineage. The fact is that not having any documents proving lineage, doesn't lead to disqualification of eligibility. Jews of Ashkenazi heritage can rely on documents obtained in Lithuania or Poland.

Jews of Sephardi heritage need no proof at all!

In his experience, the majority of South African Jews are descendants of Jews whose European citizenship was illegally deprived, and therefore they are entitled to reinstate it, and accordingly obtain an EU passport.



Adv. Horesh has been operating in SA market with the Jewish community since March 2018. He arrives regularly to South Africa, and can meet in person with Jews who are interested to do so.

**Ashkenazi:** This ad refers to Jews of Polish & Lithuanian heritage only. The most important thing is the understanding that prior to the end of WW-I, the European map was very different than the one we know today. Countries like Poland and Lithuania did not exist as independent countries, and until 1918 these territories were only known as Lithuanian or Polish regions/counties of the Great Russian Empire who ruled all of north eastern Europe. Accordingly, until 1918, residents of these territories were Russian citizens, as Polish and Lithuanian citizenships didn't exist. Therefore, since applications for reinstatement of these citizenships can only be based on whether one's ancestor was a Polish or Lithuanian citizen, whoever is a descendant of an ancestor who left Europe prior to 1918 will not be eligible.

In addition, it is highly important to remember that since borders in Europe were shifted once again during and after WW-II, one's eligibility for Polish or Lithuanian citizenship depends on the city from which his/her ancestor hailed. Horesh explains: Shifted borders resulted in cities changing nationalities, and that the resultant effect for descendants of Jews left Vilnius is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined whereas a similar



Adv. Avi Horesh is an Israeli attorney, who lived in Poland for seven years. Horesh is recognised in Israel as one of the leading lawyers in the field of reinstatement of European citizenship.

application for reinstatement of Polish citizenship may very well be approved!

**Sephardi:** This ad refers to all Jews of Sephardi heritage – Jews who arrived from North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, as well as many descendants of Jews who arrived from Holland and the UK.

Most descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are eligible to reinstate Portuguese citizenship and, accordingly, an EU passport. If applicable, Adv. Horesh will apply for (on behalf of the applicant) an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which, an application for Portuguese citizenship is most likely to be approved.

Horesh has an in-depth knowledge and a full understanding of European immigration laws.

Horesh resides in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – enabling him to travel to Poland and Lithuania, as well as to Portugal, where he collaborates with local professionals who assist him in tracing documentation required for successful applications of reinstatement of European citizenship.

Adv. Horesh closely collaborates with professionals who assist him in tracing documentation in Europe required for successful applications of reinstatement of EU citizenships.

*My next visit in SA will take place in February 2021*

*You are most welcome to contact me on [adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com](mailto:adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com) or whatsapp +48783953223*



**SOUTH  
AFRICAN  
ZIONIST  
FEDERATION  
CAPE COUNCIL**



## DIRECTOR'S CUT

By Chaya Singer, Executive Director SAZF Cape Council

As we start this new year of 2021 and a new era for the South African Zionist Federation (Cape Council) begins, it is particularly symbolic that we recently also celebrated Tu B'Shvat, the New Year of the trees, a day of ecological awareness and sustainability.

The strength of an organisation lies in its ability to evolve, and at this time of new beginnings and fresh vision, I am reminded of the Talmudic story (Ta'anit 23b), of Choni HaMa'agal, who asked an old man planting a carob tree if he expected to live 70 more years to see it bear fruit. The man replied that just as he inherited a world of trees planted by his fore-fathers, he too plants trees for his children. Connecting the past to our collective future is the essence of Jewish continuity and in my view, the core mandate of Jewish communal institutions. At the SAZF Cape Council, we are planting a renewed vision as we endeavour to strengthen our work by applying long-term thinking and strategy. It is imperative that our organisation embodies the world leading Israel of today that is at the forefront of cutting-edge innovation and international development.

Planting trees is a core ecological effort of Israel, as embodied by our affiliate organisation, the Jewish National Fund. Since 1900 about 250 million trees have been planted across Israel and it is the only country in the world that ended the 20th century with more trees than it had 100 years prior. In 1948 approximately 2% of Israel was covered in trees. This has increased exponentially and today roughly 8.5% of Israel is covered in trees.

Judaism carries with it an environmental ethic and a charge to



care for and preserve the environment. Israel has excelled at cultivating the land and in our lifetime we have seen the desert literally bloom. The Jewish people have always, even in the most destitute of times, generously given towards the cultivation of the land of Israel and this continues through the planting of trees and the work of the JNF. Jewish tradition fully acknowledges the environment with many laws pertaining to farming and the preservation particularly of fruit trees, and on Tu B'Shvat Jews around the world traditionally honour the 7 Species of fruit of the land of Israel with a special seder.

Tu B'Shevat is a reminder to us of the importance of planting for the next generation and ensuring a fruitful and prosperous future, even in times of uncertainty. At the SAZF Cape Council we are committed to doing just that through our work and involvement in the community, and beyond. In celebration of Tu B'Shvat, we are establishing a joint JNF/ SA Friends of Israel (SAFI) sustainable food garden project with a comprehensive irrigation system in a local underprivileged area. Trees symbolise a healthy and sustainable environment, qualities that we seek to emulate in our work to secure a stronger Israel, a prosperous South Africa and a healthier world.

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Karen Marsden Sank, Chairperson SAZF Cape Council

**The mission of the SAZF is to protect and promote Israel in South Africa. We do this by educating the Jewish and broader South African community about Israel and establishing projects that promote Israel in South Africa. We focus on strengthening the bond between South African Jews and Israel and building ties with our South African Friends of Israel to continue to build and create relationships with the broader South African community.**

As the newly appointed Chairperson of the SAZF Cape Council, I am committed and inspired to take on this critical role. Together with our newly appointed Executive Director Chaya Singer I believe together we can ensure a strong, dynamic and visionary team of both lay-leadership and a committed professional staff to take the SAZF to the next level – watch this space!

There is a focused commitment to bring added value and create new opportunities for our Zionist community and other communities who remain committed to building broader and deep relationships both within South Africa as well as with Israel and its partners.

2020 has been one of many struggles, hardship and fear as we have been forced to adapt to a new COVID-19 world. This pandemic has forced us to face a new normal which has brought so many painful losses for so many of us. We are so saddened at the amount of deaths and trauma experienced by so many in our community, and to those that have lost loved ones we acknowledge and send our deepest condolences for the lives lost to this pandemic. Three such people include

Barney Singer, Milton Gerdis and Brian Josselowitz. Barney was the Chairman of the SAZF CC – formally Western Province Zionist Council –



from 1980-1984. He later became the Vice President of the SA Zionist Federation. Milton was a member of the SAZF CC. Management Committee and served on various Committees and portfolios. Brian was a critical member of the SAZF CC Media Committee who wrote prolifically on behalf of Israel. We honour these men for their commitment and dedication and wish their families Long Life. Their memories will most definitely be a blessing. Baruch Dayan HaEmet.

In the short time since I was elected as Chair I have had the opportunity to meet and engage with key stakeholders, consultants, the Israeli trade officer Mr Amit Lev as well as the Israeli Ambassador to South Africa Lior Keinan. All these engagements and conversations have been encouraging, productive and indicate a positive continuation of the strengthening of these critical ties.

Today, Israel is a country of excellence, innovation, insight, diversity and in just the last few months has normalised relations with countries we never would have believed possible. As a truly exceptional winning nation and from my own personal perspective nothing makes me prouder!

*Am Israel Chai*



## FREE AVERA & HISHAM!

- Please sign the following petition and be their voice - [https://www.change.org/o/free\\_avera\\_and\\_hisham\\_south\\_africa\\_2](https://www.change.org/o/free_avera_and_hisham_south_africa_2)
- Create awareness on social media





## Diller Cape Town: meet the staff!

Diller Cape Town is proud to highlight the staff members that ensure the programme runs smoothly throughout the year.

The Diller programme relies on its staff members to provide social support, engaging content and assistance in all logistical elements of the programme. This year we have a powerhouse staff team consisting of Junior Counsellors Rachel Rod and Julia Kaimowitz and student intern Talia Scher.

Rachel Rod and Julia Kaimowitz completed their fellowship year in Cohort 5 (2019-2020), and although the year proved to be turbulent with many obstacles, both Rachel and Julia proved their commitment and dedication to the programme with their outstanding ability to remain enthusiastic and grow through the various workshops and educational experiences. Let's get to know our Junior Counsellors, Rachel Rod and Julia Kaimowitz.

### Why did you want to be a Junior Counsellor?

"I wanted to experience Diller from a new perspective, as well as to positively impact the new fellows' experiences and help guide them through the programme." — Rachel

"I was receiving a huge amount of



guidance, advice, love and support from my own JC's, I decided I wanted to do that and give that to the next cohort." — Julia

### What was the highlight of your Diller experience as a fellow:

"Definitely Leadership Shabbaton. It gave me a chance to explore my strengths and weaknesses when working in a group, as well as the opportunity to showcase all that I had learnt so far in Diller!" — Rachel

"When we planned Leadership Shabbaton, it was beyond exciting. I learnt so much about myself and others and these learnings are something I think about every day." — Julia

## Spreading the light of Chanukah

The South African Zionist Federation, in partnership with the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Jewish Report, hosted a meaningful Community Chanukah Celebration on 13 December via Zoom.



Chaya Singer lighting the channukiah

People tuned in from all over the world for the celebration of unity and solidarity on the 4th night of Chanukah. It was a great opportunity to spread the light of Chanukah and celebrate the miracle of the survival of the Jewish people – in ancient times and today! It was also an opportunity to enjoy the incredible music of Yudi Cohen, internationally renowned chazzan and opera singer.

Special guests included Yair Lapid, Chairman of the Yesh Atid party and leader of the opposition in Israel, and Isaac Herzog, Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel. Both shared some personal reflections on Chanukah and sent warm words of encouragement and friendship to the Jewish community here in South Africa.

Both Israeli dignitaries also had strong messages for the South

African government, hoping that our government would be cognisant of the recent developments in the Middle East with the normalisation deals between Israel, Arab countries and beyond to North Africa. They noted the shift in the region and challenged our government to take a

lead and be an honest broker in the negotiations towards peace. They said it was time for SA to decide if it wants to be a partner and a positive force in the changing region.

Candle lighting was done by special guests including Warren Goldstein — Chief Rabbi of South Africa, Shaun Zagnoev — Chairman SA Jewish Board of Deputies, Chaya Singer — Executive Director SA Zionist Federation — Cape Council and Adina Roth — Jewish educator with B'tocham Education.

Chaya Singer gave an inspiring message of hope, highlighting the spirit of the Jewish people through the ages. She said, 'Tonight, Jewish families in South Africa and around the world, unite to light the menorah, symbol of hope, emblem of the State of Israel, and we take strength during this time of isolation, in commemorating our resilience as a nation'.

## An update from our youth movements

Our youth movements have done a remarkable job navigating COVID waters and have managed to keep their movements afloat with their flexibility and creativity. As we move into this new year, the different movements share some thoughts and insights.



### Habonim

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our day camps and could no longer share December with our channichim. The newly elected

Habonim leadership have been working hard to make sure Habonim Dror in 2021 is as active as possible (whether it be online or in person) and safe for our chaverim. Although the first half of 2021 is looking to be similar to 2020, we are making sure that Habonim will be active in all our chaverim's lives. We are taking the lessons learned in 2020 and ensuring that there will be plenty of fun and engagement for channichim of all ages and our bogrim.



### Netzer

After a difficult 2020 and as we begin a new year, we would like to highlight and reaffirm Netzer's four main pillars that make up our movement. It is important that we are

cemented in these pillars as they make up the very essence of Netzer.

Progressive Judaism – Because we are Jews, we are Progressive Jews

Reform Judaism – Because we are Progressive Jews, we are Reform Zionists

Tikkun Olam – A world that we are perfecting

Youth Empowerment – Because we are a Youth Movement we strive to empower the youth.



### Bnei Akiva

Chassidus gives us an explanation as to the deeper meaning of tests and challenges in life. It says that the word 'L'sanos' means 'to test'. 'L'sanos' also means 'to raise higher'. How incredible is that! The tests and challenges that Hashem gives us provides us an amazing opportunity to grow and rise up to reach our spiritual heights. The year of 2020 was a difficult test for us all. Some of us struggled and some of us overcame our challenges. As we begin this new year, Bnei Akiva Cape Town wishes for the whole Cape Town Jewish Community to have a year of success, joy and love; and to see challenges overcome!



# Webinars on the COVID-19 vaccination for South African Olim, featuring South African Olim

Soon after Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu received the country's first Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination, Telfed hosted a virtual community panel discussion to answer questions from the ex-SA community in Israel.

Three South African-born doctors, Dr Carron Sher (a paediatrician with Clalit Health Fund), Dr Rhona Bagraim (a family doctor with Maccabi Health Fund) and Dr Gail Loon-Lustig (former head of Home Care for Maccabi in central Israel) addressed the community on the pertinent topic: "What you need to know about the COVID-19 vaccination in Israel". The doctors offered explanations on how the vaccinations work, the importance of vaccinating on an individual, national and international level and why we should avoid fake news. They shared practical advice on how to schedule an appointment in Israel. Dr Gail Loon-Lustig, a graduate of UCT, added that it was 'a huge privilege to be sitting with my two colleagues from UCT. I have great pride in that. And this has not happened in 40 years.' There was an overwhelming response to the webinar, and many concerns

were eased thanks to the knowledge and professionalism of our guest speakers.

As Israel continued to make international headlines due to the efficiency of the vaccination rollout, questions were raised over mutations and whether COVID-19 can be entirely eliminated. Once again, Telfed had the unique opportunity to host a community webinar with a South African-born expert in the field of epidemiology. On Sunday 17 January, Professor Manfred Green (a Director at Haifa University's School of Public Health) spoke about the ability to eradicate COVID-19 now that we have a vaccine. Another UCT graduate, Professor Green is a founding director of the Israel Centre for Disease Control and currently sits on government advisory



Telfed CEO Dorron Kline received his COVID-19 vaccination from nurse Abu Sbeh Jameel at Leumit in Beit Shemesh, Israel.

community is faced with.

Arnie and Roni Witkin were on holiday in Cape Town when they received a message from their health care provider that they were eligible to schedule appointments for their first COVID-19 vaccinations. Following their mandatory Corona tests, they booked their appointments at the Maccabi vaccination facility in Herzliya in central Israel. 'Again, a model of efficiency and making you feel welcome,' wrote Arnie. 'There were around 15 stations and a supervisor directing people to their stations. We were taken as soon as we arrived, the explanation

of what to expect was to the point and the jab painless. There was a sense of urgency — "we really need to get this done." It's not just veteran Olim who are receiving their vaccinations. Following the mandatory quarantine period and initial bureaucratic steps, our newest Olim have joined other Israelis in rolling up their sleeves and getting vaccinated.

committees including the Committee on the Control of Epidemics and the Committee on Measles, Rubella and Polio Eradication (which he heads). Drawing on the experiences learned from the eradication of smallpox, and international programmes to eliminate polio and measles, Professor Green spoke about the long-term challenges and opportunities that the international



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Consider This

# Audacious Hospitality



By Rabbi Greg Alexander

## Coronavirus has opened up as much as it has shut down.

And one of the things that have been highlighted to the world is how so much of the society that we lived in daily pre-COVID was founded on the privilege of the few and excluded the vast majority. In South Africa we have known this for ever and despite nearly three decades of democratic government we still see how divided our country is into those who can and have and those who can't and don't.

This lockdown made it all the more important that we use this time to look inward at how we can be part of the solutions and even more urgently how we ourselves are part of the problem. Temple Israel has led the Jewish community for more than 75 years in open, welcoming Judaism and so it was the right time to turn the spotlight on ourselves and see just how open and welcoming our own congregation is. We began a process of actively auditing our congregation with regard to equality, diversity and inclusivity, and this is what we found:

We can rightly be proud of how our Jews-by-Choice programme has opened the doors of Judaism to so many seekers. Our classes are filled each year with people who long to be part of Am Yisrael, and we are the doorway in. Our Pride Shabbat and LGBTQI+ outreach has made clear to the Jewish community that who you love is your choice and that the Jewish people is made up of individuals and families of all orientations. We have reached out to the many different faith traditions in Cape Town to join forces, speak with one voice where possible and partner on issues of mutual concern, and at the same time to reassure interfaith couples and families that their Jewish home is in our shul.

Recognising that gender is not binary but fluid, we set in motion a process to ensure that all three of our campuses in Cape Town have gender-neutral bathrooms. Our Torah teaches us that every person is born with dignity and humanity, and that includes their gender expression. We practice that belief by creating welcoming and inclusive spaces, and the bathroom is a major part of that. This is important for parents or caregivers whose children are a different gender from them, and for people with caregivers or personal attendants who are a

different gender from them. Also for those with sensitivities around body image or a history of abuse or who are gender non-conforming. Our bathrooms also have wheelchair access making it available to all congregants to use.

We found much that was positive and commendable. We also found much that still needed to be done. Our synagogue has already done much work to empower Jewish women. Our leadership boards and councils are populated by women and men, and we currently have one female rabbi (Rabbi Emma Gottlieb) and two student rabbis (Andrea Kuti and Sofia Zway) in our community. And yet, if you ask the majority of people in Cape Town to describe a rabbi, they will still tell you it is a man with a beard.

We used the BLM (Black Lives Matter) protests as an inspiration to begin an internal investigation into how our community makes Jews of Colour and their families feel at our services, in our buildings and passing through our security and found that there was much work that still needed to be done there.

And while all three of our campuses allow for wheelchair access there is still much to be done to make the experience of those who are

differently abled as good as it could be.

We reached out to our sister congregations in the USA who have already done some work in this regard, and who launched a campaign they have termed "Audacious Hospitality". Audacious Hospitality is rooted in the belief that we will be a stronger, more vibrant Jewish community when we fully embrace the diversity that is the reality of modern Jewish life. There is more than one authentic way to be Jewish and diversity is an essential component to making our communities whole.

They have developed an auditing tool that evaluates a synagogue on

the basis of their diversity, equality and inclusivity (DEI) strategies, to help identify the steps needed to become a community rooted in principles of DEI. At the end of 2020 we assembled a working group of synagogue staff and members to begin working on the assessment as a way of identifying current areas of concern and also creating a vision of the type of community that we would like to be.

As I write this at the beginning of 2021, I look forward not just to the process that will continue this year, but to the decades of benefit that will come from the work done now. May we all be (safely) audaciously hospitable in 2021.

**Rabbi Meir said: Whoever occupies themselves with the Torah for its own sake (lishma) is made as an ever-flowing spring, a stream that never ceases. (Pirkei Avot 6:1)**

**Torah is a gift we acquire for nothing except the hours we put into our learning. The phrase Torah Lishma (study for its own sake) is the call to grow our learning not for the sake of income or a qualification but just because it is study of Torah and that is what we as Jews do.**

**Lishma is Temple Israel's adult-learning programme. Join courses or one-off classes to continue growing your Jewish knowledge.**

	<b>INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM 101</b> with the Rabbinic Team and guest teachers A comprehensive introduction to the history, thought, practise and laws of Progressive Judaism continuing for the whole year. Drop in for a module or stay for the whole course.	<b>MONTHLY RABBINIC SHIUR</b> Join a member of our rabbinic team or a guest rabbi for thought-provoking shiurim on a variety of topics.	<b>HEBREW LEVEL 1 &amp; 2</b> with Rachel Losinsky and Lizi Geva <b>Level 1:</b> Intro to Hebrew reading & Siddur-skills <b>Level 2:</b> Continued learning with a focus on Hebrew reading and understanding the Siddur prayers
	<b>LEYNING COURSE</b> with Rabbi Greg Learn how to chant the traditional Torah portion with the ancient notation.	<b>RACE RELATIONS READING GROUP</b> with Rabbi Malcolm and Rabbi Emma As part of our ongoing efforts to educate around and improve race relations in our community, Temple Israel has launched a reading group, starting with our first book, "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents" by Isabel Wilkerson	<b>ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL</b> Beit Ha-am, Israel, Rabbi Greg and Rabbi Chen Watch a short Israeli film and join a discussion group between Cape Town and our sister congregation in Ra'anana, Israel
	<b>JEWISH PARENTING WORKSHOP</b> with Student Rabbi Andi and Lizi Geva Based on the theory of Dr Alfred Adler: "Why is parenting in the 21st century more challenging than before?" "What is your role as a parent in a democratic family?"	<b>TORAH FOR OUR TIMES: A WEEKLY PARASHA STUDY</b> with Rabbi Emma An engaging, text-based study group that explores what relevant messages the Torah has for us today	
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# Cape Jewish Seniors Association

DIRECTOR: Diana Sochen 021 434 9691 [director@cjsa.org.za](mailto:director@cjsa.org.za) ADMIN: Amanda 021 434 9691 [admin@cjsa.org.za](mailto:admin@cjsa.org.za) search CJSA on Facebook

## A new year with new ideas for CJSA seniors

Who would have thought that on a beautiful summer's day, in magnificent Cape Town, with its wonderful shoreline and many open spaces for socialising and relaxing that the majority of law abiding people would be listening to our State President's orders of staying indoors and observing lockdown protocols in order to stay safe?

Our social workers continue to be vigilant about keeping in touch with all of our members, regularly offering support, a listening ear and assistance while our office administrator has provided an



November 2019: Jenny Dinsdale, Wendy Johnston, Rifka Luyt, Audrey Shantal, Reina Bristow, Merle Thompson, Tina Philipps and Maureen Lurie enjoying an outing

incredible service telephonically to everyone who calls — even throughout the leave period whilst the office was closed between Christmas and New Year.

Our Shabbat meals to our homebound and infirm members, as well as the community, continued throughout the festive season thanks to Berkies service and our wonderful volunteers who availed themselves each week. Even though over 100 people were alone in their own homes, there could be a sense of being part of a caring community, with each one receiving a similar meal and being able to feel that there was one huge Shabbat

table for Cape Town.

Even though there were no end-of-year parties or New Year's Eve celebrations, CJSA thought 'out the box' with Diana and Ivor Joffe collaborating to ensure that no one need to be lonely on the last night of the year. Ivor produced, organised and provided a spectacular Zoom concert with wonderful musicians singing and doing what they do best, entertaining. There were over 400 people entertained and able to enjoy a sense of fun and celebration in the safety of their homes.

It was uplifting and although we were all in separate locations, we all felt that we were in the company of friends. The choice of performers was perfect and the addition of the messages by the various community leaders added a real special touch to the event.

We are now beginning a new year and unfortunately will not be meeting back at our centres in the foreseeable future. As a team we realise that we need to think creatively in order to provide ongoing services to our members. Zoom is the way to go and we are endeavouring to get as many people onto this platform as possible.

Currently we are offering Ageless Grace exercises twice a week and a weekly Zoom Pop In with a guest speaker, or very popular concert. We



October 2019: Philip Todres, Rochele Winer and Sybil Castle

are now going to increase this offering with each social worker hosting their own branch meeting, regular Yiddish sessions, a knitting group and craft sessions, quizzes and movie/ book club reviews plus other topics, so there will certainly be something of interest for everyone.

A weekly notice of the programme will be distributed via email so make sure you have 2021 diaries to keep up to date with what we have to offer.

We welcome our new Sea Point social worker Rebecca Yoko who has 'met' many members on Zoom and looks forward to working with all of us.



November 2019: Doreen Fiansky enjoying a craft morning in Sea Point

I am sure that you join us in wishing a hearty mazaltov to three members who have recently celebrated their 100th Birthdays, all thank goodness in good health. Happy birthday to Ettie Buch, Manne Stern and Rita Blum. Hopefully we will be able to celebrate fully in the near future.

With sadness we remember two members of the



February 2020: Paula Baskir, Social Worker Monique Nieuwenhuys, Rita Wagenheim, Julia Petersen and Hilda Sandak-Lewin at the end of year lunch in Southern Suburbs

CJSA Executive who both recently passed on. Benny Schlosberg joined the committee when CJSA opened the doors in the late 1980's and Chaired the organisation and became a Trustee. Tania Jacobson was a committed member, Chairman and committee member for a number of years and we wish their families and loved ones Long Life, and thank them for their commitment to Seniors.

Finally, even though we are not meeting in person, we are still providing a service to our seniors. No one should have the need to be alone or lonely, while they are at home. The seven Welfare groups under the Jewish Care Cape umbrella are providing a wonderful service to the whole community and we offer our sincere thanks to all emergency services and CSO for keeping us safe and being there for us 24/7.

*Diana Sochen*  
Diana Sochen.

## Social and Personal

**Wishes of Mazaltov to our members who recently celebrated the following:**

### Birth

Gillian Cress — Grandson  
Shirley Kellner — Great Grandson  
Stella and Errol Kope — Grandson

### Barmitzvah/Batmitzvah

Henny Bernstein — Great Grandson  
Roy and Vonnice Bernstein — Grandson  
Merle Rubin — Granddaughter

### Special Birthdays

Ettie Buch, Mannie Stern and Rita Blum 100th Birthdays

**Many of our members are unwell due to having contracted the COVID-19 virus. We hold them in our prayers and wish them all a speedy recovery to full health.**

**Our condolences to members who have recently lost loved ones**

Shiela Burland — Husband  
Hilary Osrin — Brother  
Audrey Shantall — Brother in law

**CJSA expresses condolences to the families of our members who have recently passed away**

Irving Freeman  
Chai (Livey) Herman  
Reina Hurwitz  
Tania Jacobson  
Martin Margolis  
Bennie Schlosberg

**CJSA welcomes new members**

Lionel and Karen Fig  
Hirschel Ginsberg  
Monty and Lola Gold  
Desiree Katz  
Ian and Dalene Morris  
Emanuel Stern



February 2020: Sea Point members enjoying a morning at Little Streams restaurant

# Friends of UJC 12th annual year-end event goes online

**M**arco Van Embden, Chairman of the Friends and the David Susman Community Foundation (DSCF), addressed the guests and shared the Friends remarkable 12 year journey.

The main focus of the annual Friends event is to raise funds for the DSCF and to celebrate Jewish Life in the Mother City. This foundation was established in 2007, with great foresight, as a financial safeguard against any unforeseen adverse events our community may face in the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic was just such an event and 2020 marked the first time that it was called upon to aid the community in a significant manner on many levels. The DSCF's Board of Trustees approved a disbursement from the fund in support of the COVID-19 Emergency Campaign launched in Cape Town to assist our communal institutions and help them cover the additional and ongoing costs forced upon them by COVID-19 pandemic.

We thank our patrons, friends, donors and loyal supporters for standing with us and sharing our vision for a stronger, more resilient community. Their support allowed us to answer the call to action when it came.

We would like to make special mention of and thank our generous annual sponsor Investec, who have supported us since inception 12 years ago.

For more information on the Friends of the UJC Cape Town contact Robyn Slot on [friends@ctjc.co.za](mailto:friends@ctjc.co.za) or call +27 21 464 6700



Alan Winde, Western Cape Premier and Marco van Embden, Chairman, Friends of the UJC Cape Town at Leeuwenhof



The crew prepares to go live



MC, Africa Melane who presented on the night and tied the event together



Nik Rabinowitz entertained the crowd



Dani Bitton, Sea Point songstress sang a touching rendition of Halleluja



Dori Weil sent greetings to the Friends, from Johannesburg



Lawrence Kaplan sent a Friends greeting from Connecticut



Carina Rubin-Frankal spoke about her experience as producer of My Octopus Teacher and her connection to the Cape Town Jewish Community



Arnold and Joceline Basserabie sent wishes to the Friends from Johannesburg



Hilton and Gail Nowitz sent wishes to the Friends from Atlanta, Georgia



Andrea Kerzner sent greetings and best wishes from New York to the Friends



Choni G performed a cover of Weeping, originally by Dan Heymann



The Cape Minstrels opened the evening's entertainment with a local rendition of Havenu Shalom Aleichem

## Top Cape Town educator recognised in global awards

**Steve Sherman, synonymous with out-the-box teaching methods and maths lessons that bring real understanding as well as endless fits of giggles to children in our community, was announced the winner for South Africa in the AKS Global teacher awards.**

The CJC caught up with him just before the start of the new school year to find out more about his work and his incredible commitment to life-long learning.

“As a teacher, I don’t expect thanks, I don’t teach to win prizes and I also don’t expect to retire rich! When your skills are recognised and you are placed in the same company as some of the best teachers in the world, I won’t lie it does feel incredible,” said Steve.

**Can you take us back to the first quarter of last year — when the enormity of COVID-19 was beginning to sink in. As a teacher, what went through your mind and how did you adapt to what is now our ‘new normal’**

My circumstances were a little different. I am not affiliated to just one school. I provide extramurals to many schools. When COVID-19 arrived, safety protocols meant that I was no longer able to run classes at all of my schools. Effectively, I became unemployed. It’s not a place that anyone wants to be in, but I knew that if I sat around and waited for opportunities they would not arrive on my doorstep. Fortunately for me, I have been in the online space for the past decade so I have a skillset that I could tap into. I began offering free online classes to students around the world. I needed to change my business model to online and I a) wanted to identify the best software to do the job and b) to build an audience.

This worked out as I had 1200 students from all over the world signing up. When we launched our ‘for pay’ model, we manage to secure a small fraction of this. The goal is to build these numbers so that I can grow livingmaths.com into an international programme that can be run from anywhere in the world. When people saw what I was doing online they took notice. I was fortunate to give a Tedx talk as well as receive the Global Teacher Award – in recognition for my work. I believe that COVID-19 will still be around for the first half of 2021 so I will continue to build my online work and find innovative ways to collaborate with international partners.



**There must have been some challenges moving to teaching virtually. Do any amusing stories stand out?**

Teaching virtually is easy for me – I have over 10 years’ experience but for the students and parents it was new territory. Not everyone is used to muting and unmuting. Not everyone is used to the fact that a camera and mic is on in their kitchen or lounge. I have so many amusing stories about parents that have walked past the camera with their underwear on, as well as face masks of the mud variety, and my favourite is when the parents crawl along the floor to avoid being noticed but can still be seen. I have had some parents that have spoken about interesting things not realising the mics were unmuted and we have also had the occasional background farts that were not only audible but pre-schoolers are not shy to name and shame their own flesh and blood.

**Have there been any unintended or unexpected benefits?**

A teaching programme like mine is tied to the personality of its teachers. If you have dynamic teachers and they make a connection with students then 80% of the battle has been won. If I want to expand our programme to other provinces or countries, then finding those types of teachers is not a simple task. Taking livingmaths online means we are now international and I can do the teaching. This makes life a lot easier. Other benefits would be that we began offering additional services like virtual birthday parties (no catering, no one hangs around when the party ends and no cleaning up! You get a recording of the party and screen shots – all from the comfort of your home!). Apart from the virtual parties, we have been running corporate team building quizzes, scavenger hunts and Bingo and these have been going very well! Due to the online nature, clients come from all over the world. Most of the best conferences around the world are virtual – I have had the opportunity to attend and present and quite a few conferences over the past year that I would never have been able to attend.

**Tell us a bit about your AKS Global teacher award nomination and win.**

There are 2 major international teacher prizes on offer. The Global Teacher Prize (with a prize of \$1 million) and the Global Teacher Award (a gorgeous certificate).

I was short-listed for the Global Teacher prize but sadly did not make the top 50. Then news came in that I was nominated for the Global Teacher Award and discovered that I was announced as a winner for South Africa. They select the ‘best’ teachers from 110 countries. While I work with the department of education and I know and like many of the officials, I am still an outsider – this means I am automatically excluded for all the national teacher competitions as I am not registered with SACE. Due to the pandemic and the focus on online teaching, my online work received recognition by global organisations and because of the digital nature of my work, they can see what I do

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A VIEW FROM THE BAR

# Can you be forced to vaccinate?



By Anton Katz

**COVID-19 has and will continue to bring many challenges to, and indeed changes to the laws and their implementation.**

In normal times it is the legislature who make the law and the executive (the government) which implements the laws. The judicial branch (the courts) rule on the limits of the exercise of the legislative and executive powers. And the courts determine whether constitutional rights have been violated by the laws enacted by parliament and/or their manner of execution by the government. But our pandemic dominated lives are not normal times — it has been the government that have been making the laws, which govern individual's rights. And the government does so with limited, if any consultation at all, with the public. And the courts have generally been taking a hands-off approach. The courts have allowed all manner of violations of rights by the government — they have deferred to the executive as to how best to deal with the spread of COVID-19. Thus, when the government has banned tobacco, alcohol, limited exercise hours, set curfews, banned the sale of hot food and prohibited beach-going the courts have not interfered and not upheld challenges to the regulations. Many complex human rights and other issues arise.

The rights to freedom of movement, choose a trade, occupation or profession, education and access to health care services are at stake. Insurance claims and other commercial concerns are directly impacted by whatever government action is taken or not taken. An obvious example is the roll out of vaccines. A question is can government enjoy a monopoly on the import and manufacture of vaccinations?

I think it can safely be suggested large numbers of South Africans are reluctant to be administered the COVID-19 vaccine. In order to achieve herd immunity, medical experts have estimated that at least 40 million in South Africa will need to be injected. So, the question arises: can people be forced to obtain a vaccination? The World Health Organisation has indicated that it does not support forced vaccinations. The question

has been and will be debated in many countries, as vaccine-skepticism is certainly not limited to South Africa.

As far as South African law is concerned to what extent, directly or indirectly, can government compel individuals to be vaccinated against the COVID-19 or any other virus against their will? And what about the private sector — can private medical aid schemes deny benefits to those who refuse consent to be vaccinated or reward those who do

**In order to achieve herd immunity, medical experts have estimated that at least 40 million in South Africa will need to be injected.**

get vaccinated? May parents force their children to be vaccinated; and can adult children require their elderly parents to obtain vaccinations — and what about spouses? What about the labour environment — could an employer require its employees to get a vaccination or lose their employment, and may it depend on alleged operational requirements?

Other questions arise, such as what role, if any, does a legitimate religious objection to being vaccinated play in the debate. And could health care workers, doctors and nurses for example, refuse to treat those who have not been vaccinated or could they refuse to administer vaccinations. What about the immigration laws? Could Home Affairs ban the entry into South Africa of those who are not able to prove they have been vaccinated?

**Could Home Affairs ban the entry into South Africa of those who are not able to prove they have been vaccinated?**

In Spain, for example, there is speculation of not allowing unvaccinated people into concerts or football games. And schools: could schools, private or government, bar children not vaccinated? What about care facilities for older persons — may they evacuate residents who are not vaccinated?

Like all law, the starting point is the Constitution. The Constitution protects every person's right to bodily integrity, which includes the right to security in and control over their body. And the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought belief and opinion is also protected. There can be no doubt that forced vaccinations violate rights. Yet that is not the end of the debate.

Freedom is two-way street: each person lives in a community with others. So, if one person's conduct

constitutes a danger to the lives of others the Constitution makes clear that it is reasonable and justifiable for their rights to be limited by the law. Is it reasonable and justifiable for the law to compel, and in so doing violate rights, every person to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination?

There are, of course, many different ways the government could compel vaccinations. The most draconian is to criminalise the failure/refusal to get vaccinated; it would be committing a crime on pain of criminal sanction to not be vaccinated. Another harsh measure could be to require individuals to remain at home until and unless they have been vaccinated. Leaving home without being vaccinated would constitute a criminal offence. What about the millions of social grant recipients — could they be denied their grants if they refuse?

A less serious measure, I suppose, which could probably satisfy the reasonable and justifiable standard could be for government to provide access to free health care only to those who have been vaccinated.

In December 2020, the Brazil

Supreme Court ruled against COVID anti-vaxxers. It ruled that no law may order citizens to be taken to receive the vaccine by force; but laws may require a restriction of rights if citizens fail to demonstrate they have been vaccinated - like not being allowed to file for a benefit or being banned from entering a place or enrolling at a public school. In the same ruling, the court decided that parents or guardians of children and adolescents must vaccinate their children. Vaccines against potentially life-threatening diseases such as measles and meningitis have long been mandatory for children in Brazil and the Court dismissed a separate case seeking to free parents from that obligation due to religious beliefs.

My sense is that the courts in South Africa will follow a similar line to that of the Brazil court. But in response to any court challenge the government will need to prove by way of solid evidence that the challenged measures it has imposed have backed up by scientific evidence. With proof of the factual reason for the violation of rights challenges may well succeed.

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## USING MY NUDEL

## Immigrants — they get the job done

By Craig Nudelman

Some of you may recognise the title of this article from Lin Manuel-Miranda's *Hamilton*, a groundbreaking musical about an immigrant who became a US founding father.

However, while *Hamilton* references a time hundreds of years ago, these words still hold true today. Immigrants, and the children of immigrants generally tend to outperform their peers who were born in a country. Most notably, as I write this on 20 January 2021, Kamala Harris, the daughter of a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, was inaugurated as Vice President of the United States of America. So why do immigrants and their children tend to succeed?

A person's migration history makes a big difference. The children of parents who were born in a foreign country have a lot going against them. Nicholas Zill, writing for the Institute for Family Studies, investigated how these children perform in schools in the United States. One would think, he suggests, that academic success is proportionately representative to a student's family's income, stating that success should be based on a child's, "wealth, social class, ability to go to schools with good teachers and abundant resources, and 'white privilege'". This would make it seem very unlikely that a child of an immigrant would be successful.

This is because, he explains, the average family income for these students is lower than those of parents born in America. Also, many live in neighbourhoods that have high concentrations of childhood poverty. Yet, his research showed that many of these students are doing remarkably well in school; a higher proportion of students whose parents were not native to America performed marginally better. This despite the fact that these students' parents were less likely to be contacted about learning or behavioural problems.

This example demonstrates the will to succeed. Immigrants are far more willing to sacrifice for their children. Michael Ungar, writing about resilience in *Psychology Today*, states that immigrants show grit and resourcefulness to gain the motivation to succeed. Parents are determined that their children gain an education to become upwardly mobile. With higher expectations for their children, they ensure that their children make a higher effort.

Lingxin Hao, who authored a large study on children of immigrants, writes that children of immigrants will focus more in school and therefore have a better relationship with their teachers. She states that, "teachers are somebody (...) they educate you, so you have to respect them". Her study showed that the children who immigrate to the United States will outperform their native-born peers, as well as their children. Interestingly, the advantage disappears when it comes to the third generation.

The downside to this, however, is that the success of 'the other' can lead to locals becoming jealous, resulting in more pronounced anti-immigrant or xenophobic rhetoric. There is no greater example of this than here in South Africa. We have a large immigrant population which is entrepreneurial and has a lower level of risk aversion, according to a 2018 finding by the World Bank. The idea that immigrants and refugees are stealing locals' jobs is unfounded, yet it still persists. In fact, the World Bank showed that between 1996-2011, immigrants in South Africa "had a positive impact on employment and wages for locals (...) with each immigrant worker generating approximately two jobs for citizens."

The idea of immigrants "getting the job done" is apparent in the South African Jewish story, too. Our ancestors came here from Eastern Europe with nothing and made a



## Shelley Trope-Friedman elected new President of WIZO SA

BZA WIZO Cape Town is delighted to announce the appointment of Shelley Trope-Friedman as new President of WIZO South Africa.

No stranger to community work and a passionate Zionist, Shelley comes from a long line of philanthropists, and proudly continues the legacy of her parents and grandparents, having been involved in many local organisations including SAZF Cape Council, Glendale and ORT Western Cape, and remains on the Board of ORT Jet and ORT Education.

Shelley said she hopes her personal passion and love for Israel will have a positive impact on WIZO SA.

"I see this as a chance for personal growth as well as an opportunity to lead WIZO SA into the future. My dream is to help transform WIZO SA into a powerful organisation that can hold its own amongst any of the more successful WIZO federations around the world."

Immediate Past President, Tamar Lazarus said: "We feel privileged to welcome Shelley as our new President of WIZO South Africa. Together with Vice-Presidents Barbara Flax and Helen Maisels-Trisk heading the newly elected Council, we have no doubt they will lead WIZO South Africa from strength to strength".



living for themselves. They then gave an opportunity to their children to become professionals. It is our generation (or perhaps those a little younger than me) who need to buck the trend of the third generation losing their advantage in the world. Perhaps the COVID pandemic will be the catalyst that stirs the younger generation into showing show ingenuity, entrepreneurship, risk taking, and self-sacrifice.

## On the American election

In my column published in November last year, I remarked how the 45th President of America, Donald Trump, was an example of a terrible manager. My column was not intended to diss the Orange Menace. Instead, I was giving examples of what a manager should not do with employees. However, I am happy to say that we no longer have to deal with that abomination of a leader.

His gross misconduct during office, culminating in a dramatic insurrection at the US Capitol, has made him the worst president the United States

has ever seen. His violation of the Constitution, his selfish interests, and his ineptitude of dealing with the most devastating pandemic in history has reserved his spot at the very bottom of the ranking. America has, in the last three days (18-20 January 2021), lost more people to COVID than died in 9/11, the Iraq War and the War in Afghanistan combined. Joe Biden now has the hard job of rebuilding on the damages of his predecessor — the economy, the virus, and a divided people.

## Starting 2021

It's a brand-new year, and *bizrat Hashem* may it be a year where we can all start living normally again. COVID-19 has struck the community hard. Many loved ones have unfortunately passed away; it has indeed left a void which cannot be replaced. I wish all of you who have experienced loss a long life and sincere condolences. Let's hope that the tide turns soon and that 2021 is a year of growth and rejuvenation for us all.

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# Magnificent ancient mosaics of Israel

By Naama Barak Israel21C via JNS

**For such a small country, Israel sure boasts a huge number of ancient mosaics — some 7000 of them, to be precise.**

And those are just the ones that have been discovered and registered, with new archaeological digs or happy accidents regularly unearthing more ancient treasures.

The art of mosaics arrived in the Land of Israel from Rome around the time of Herod the Great 2000 years

ago. They were continuously created here through the 11th century, leaving us with documentation of Roman, Byzantine and early Arab culture in the area.

“Mosaics have an artistic component that tells of life during a certain period, about the mythology of the time, and there’s also a very strong element of aesthetics,” explains Jacques Neguer, the head of the Israel Antiquities Authority’s art conservation department.

“In addition, there’s also the information that appears in the inscriptions,” he says. “For example, the mosaic discovered at Megiddo Prison is probably the floor of the earliest church to have been found in the world and is a very rich source of information, both technological and artistic, as well as relaying information about the way people lived in that time period.”

## How old is it?

Neguer explains that the mosaics of the Land of Israel were influenced by the cultures surrounding it and the art coming from Egypt, Rome and Byzantium. Distinct styles emerged in different locations across the land.

Despite this great variety, many of the mosaics shared similar qualities, patterns and styles over the centuries — so much so that in many cases it’s not possible to date the mosaics based only on the artwork. Archaeologists must make use of the surrounding digs and inscriptions to determine their age.

“There are many mosaics with geometrical patterns that get repeated for hundreds of years. You can recognise the same style of mosaic that moves on from a synagogue to a church and then to a public building. It’s the same sort of composition that transfers to different buildings,” Neguer says.

This repetition and transfer of style makes sense, he notes, since mosaic artistry was probably a profession passed down generations in a family.

Being a mosaic artist paid pretty well: in Roman times, a mosaic team manager earned 150 dinars a day, while a carpenter on a Roman navy ship earned only 60. The price of a chicken at the time was 30 dinars.

“They made a lot of money. They were free men and not slaves and their status in society was quite high,” Neguer says.

“But you have to take into account that making mosaics was very hard work. It included creating the materials, building the necessary infrastructure, cutting the stones, making a scale project and then the mosaic on site. By the end of the day your back would hurt.”

## Another 200 years?

Fast forward 2000 years, and the workload is now focused on preserving the endeavours of those ancient artisans.

Neguer notes that the mosaics that have been uncovered in Israel will probably last another 200 or so years, until being ruined by wear and tear. Somewhat surprisingly, that’s not the end of the world as far as he’s concerned.

“First of all, you don’t preserve material, you preserve values,” he explains. “The conservation of the mosaics preserves the values and information that constitutes the mosaic and its archaeological context.”

Originally, the mosaics’ condition began to deteriorate once they were put into use, for example as floors of buildings that were continuously stepped on and eroded. That ancient condition was preserved for as long as they were covered in earth. The real deterioration begins the moment they are discovered and exposed to people, climate change, vandalism, pesticides and natural erosion.

Neguer says, “Neglect is something that’s very typical to digs across the word. The right thing to do is to cover the mosaics inside the earth once again after the digs.”

## Endangered by time

Back in 1994, Neguer and the Israel Antiquities Authority carried out a survey on 100 sites out of the 7000 (encompassing around 30 000 square meters of mosaics) and determined that over 50% of them were in danger.

Conservation efforts since then have reduced that number to around 35%, with an additional 35% determined to be in good condition and the remaining 30% in moderate condition.

“We’ve worked very hard, for some 25 years, to reach this stage,” Neguer says.

The 50 or so mosaics that are situated in national parks are being looked after and enjoy maintenance and conservation work. The less famous mosaics, and the ones in moderate condition, can very quickly take a turn for the worse if they’re not cared for.

*The full version of this article was first published by Israel21C.*



*The fourth century mosaic at Severus Synagogue in Hamat Tiberias in northern Israel has three panels — one with Greek inscriptions of its donors’ names; another with a zodiac starring Greek sun god Helios dressed as a haloed emperor surrounded by the star signs and four women symbolising the seasons; and another showing a tabernacle and other Jewish symbols. Photo by Reuven Riven.*



*The mosaic at the fifth century Beit Alpha synagogue in northern Israel. Photo by Boaz Eshkol.*



*Dionysus House, an ancient villa found in Tzipori from the third century Roman period, contains the Mona Lisa of the Galilee — a woman peeping up from the floor alongside images of Greek wine god Dionysus. Photo by Tomisti via Wikimedia Commons.*

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# The annual Eliot Osrin Award winners announced at Jewish Care Cape AGM

**BARBARA BERNSTEIN**, appointed Senior Social Worker of Highlands House in November 1994, received the Professional Service Award.

“At all times, Barbara remains gentle and sensitive to the needs of the residents, whilst promoting their emotional wellbeing. In addition, Barbara is highly skilled at supervision, providing insightful guidance to two other social workers, who benefit greatly from her knowledge and experience and from her insight into the needs and problems of the residents. Barbara has certainly earned this accolade.”



*Barbara Bernstein*

**ZIA ADLER**, social worker at Jewish Community Services for the past 16 years, received the Professional Service Award.



*Zia Adler*

“Zia’s passion for her profession and Services to the Community, has been exemplary. Her extensive experience and skill is utilised to support and guide our clients residing in the JCS Cottages, who require extensive care and support. This award and the deep respect with which it is conferred acknowledges Zia’s extraordinary capacity to fulfil the needs of others with grace, dignity and determination, making her a true asset to JCS and the Community.”



*Jonathan Sher, Astra Centre Vice Chairperson and Marc Edelberg*

**MARC EDELBERG**, who joined the Astra Centre Committee in 2010 and was appointed Hon Treasurer, received the Community Service Award.

“During the past seven months of pandemic Marc has met with finance and admin ‘team’, consistently, at least every two weeks. He has enormous insight and understanding of the organisation. His role has been invaluable in managing the most challenging time in the organisation. He is a solid and reliable committee person and is totally committed to giving the best service. He is always available and helpful in a friendly manner.”

**RODNEY STEIN**, who has served on the Oranjia committee for the past 14 years, received the Community Leadership Award.

“He always avails himself unconditionally, and his wise council, insight and perspective are always well considered, grounded and appreciated. His commitment, dedication and loyalty to the children, staff and organization have been unwavering. His gentle but firm approach and his ability to listen, has made him invaluable. Rodney remains hugely involved, and we turn to him regularly for guidance and leadership in all matters.”



*Rodney Stein*

**SELWYN SOLOMON** received the Community Leadership Award in recognition of his active involvement with Glendale Home for the past 30 years.

“Selwyn has carried out his various leadership roles with a deep commitment to uplifting the lives of our residents and making sure that Glendale is a homely, caring and harmonious environment for everyone. Selwyn has always been generous with his institutional knowledge and his leadership contribution to Glendale is deeply appreciated. Selwyn has recently retired from the Glendale Governing Board. He continues his communal leadership role through Jewish Care Cape, the Jewish Welfare Trust and the UJC Allocations Committee.”



*Chairperson Judith Cohen, Director Shelly Korn, Selwyn Solomon, Resident Charles Brand and Vice Chairperson Lesley Katz*

**LOREN RAIZE**, Director of CSO Cape Town, and the Community Security Organisation (CSO) received the Chairperson’s Choice Award in recognition of their mission to protect Jewish life and the Jewish way of life and to empower the community to protect itself.

“Loren is passionate and dedicated to the safety and care of our community. She has had excellent training, and her knowledge is constantly passed on to her team, who are all volunteers, dedicated to the well-being of the Cape Town Jewish Community. Together, the medical team developed an excellent COVID-19 response during the past critical months, thus ensuring service excellence and the highest standard at all times when answering the call of those in need.” *See pic on page 1*

**STUART DIAMOND**, Executive Director, Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies, received the Chairperson’s Choice Award for the incredible contribution he has made to holding our community together, particularly during this critical time.

“His call to action to bring the various communal organisations together, to meet the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, was acutely timeous and highly effective. The seven welfare organisations under the Jewish Care Cape umbrella salute him for his dynamic leadership at this time. Despite the pressure, he has always been available to offer professional, informed and strategic advice. The Chairperson’s Award is an acknowledgement, by all seven welfare organisations, of Stuart Diamond’s contribution to the care, safety and well-being of our community, now and into the future.”



*Stuart Diamond and Philip Todres*

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*WISHING THE CAPE TOWN COMMUNITY A SAFE AND HEALTHY 2021*

## **MOST SA JEWS (BOTH OF ASHKENAZI AND SEPHARDI HERITAGE) ARE ELIGIBLE TO REINSTATE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND, ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT.**

A common misconception is that European citizenship and EU passports can only be obtained if one has documents providing his/her lineage. The fact is that not having any documents proving lineage, doesn't lead to disqualification of eligibility. Jews of Ashkenazi heritage can rely on documents obtained in Lithuania or Poland.

Jews of Sephardi heritage need no proof at all!

In his experience, the majority of South African Jews are descendants of Jews whose European citizenship was illegally deprived, and therefore they are entitled to reinstate it, and accordingly obtain an EU passport.



Adv. Horesh has been operating in SA market with the Jewish community since March 2018. He arrives regularly to South Africa, and can meet in person with Jews who are interested to do so.

**Ashkenazi:** This ad refers to Jews of Polish & Lithuanian heritage only.

The most important thing is the understanding that prior to the end of WW-I, the European map was very different than the one we know today. Countries like Poland and Lithuania did not exist as independent countries, and until 1918 these territories were only known as Lithuanian or Polish regions/counties of the Great Russian Empire who ruled all of north eastern Europe. Accordingly, until 1918, residents of these territories were Russian citizens, as Polish and Lithuanian citizenships didn't exist. Therefore, since applications for reinstatement of these citizenships can only be based on whether one's ancestor was a Polish or Lithuanian citizen, whoever is a descendant of an ancestor who left Europe prior to 1918 will not be eligible.

In addition, it is highly important to remember that since borders in Europe were shifted once again during and after WW-II, one's eligibility for Polish or Lithuanian citizenship depends on the city from which his/her ancestor hailed. Horesh explains: Shifted borders resulted in cities changing nationalities, and that the resultant effect for descendants of Jews left Vilnius is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined whereas a similar



Adv. Avi Horesh is an Israeli attorney, who lived in Poland for seven years. Horesh is recognised in Israel as one of the leading lawyers in the field of reinstatement of European citizenship.

application for reinstatement of Polish citizenship may very well be approved!

**Sephardi:** This ad refers to all Jews of Sephardi heritage – Jews who arrived from North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, as well as many descendants of Jews who arrived from Holland and the UK.

Most descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are eligible to reinstate Portuguese citizenship and, accordingly, an EU passport. If applicable, Adv. Horesh will apply for (on behalf of the applicant) an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which, an application for Portuguese citizenship is most likely to be approved.

Horesh has an in-depth knowledge and a full understanding of European immigration laws.

Horesh resides in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – enabling him to travel to Poland and Lithuania, as well as to Portugal, where he collaborates with local professionals who assist him in tracing documentation required for successful applications of reinstatement of European citizenship.

Adv. Horesh closely collaborates with professionals who assist him in tracing documentation in Europe required for successful applications of reinstatement of EU citizenships.

*My next visit in SA will take place in February 2021*

*You are most welcome to contact me on [adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com](mailto:adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com) or whatsapp +48783953223*

# Witnessing Holocaust history global project

By Jaime Uranovsky

In January, three organisations from across the globe came together to create an innovative way for Jewish schools around the world to memorialise the Holocaust.

The WE ARE HERE! Foundation, World ORT and the Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Centre of Philadelphia (HAMEC) teamed up to honour International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. 19 ORT schools in as many cities participated in the programme from various countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, the Netherlands, Russia, South Africa, Spain, and Ukraine.

The programme involved the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, which had been shared with the participating ORT school students ahead of time via HAMEC. The students had then prepared and submitted impact statements in response to the survivors' experiences with the aim of personalising the Holocaust for a younger generation which may be more disconnected from it than its members' parents and grandparents were. To end off the commemoration, students sang the 'Partisans' Song' in Yiddish, Hebrew, English, Russian, Spanish or in a combination of these languages, and the pre-recorded programme was then broadcast via Zoom.

Eli Rabinowitz, CEO of WE ARE HERE! Foundation, is the glue that brought these organisations together and played an instrumental role in the realisation of the project.

Eli, who was born in Cape Town and who has lived in Perth since 1986, is passionate about Jewish history and writes about a variety of subjects on his blog, Tangential Travel and Jewish



Eli Rabinowitz with students at Herzlia High School in 2018. The Herzlia Vocal Ensemble with Cantor Ivor Joffe was filmed singing the Partisan's Song, and Miriam Lichterman was in attendance.

Life, which has over 700 entries. He describes the way in which the project came together as a chain. It all started when the Head of Jewish Studies at King David Linksfield read one of Eli's blog posts in 2017. Eli was subsequently asked to talk to the learners about the 'Partisans' Song' (a topic he had written about) while on his annual trip to South Africa to visit family. While the 'Partisans' Song' was usually sung by the students on Yom HaShoah in Yiddish, they did not understand the meaning of the words.

To Eli, it is imperative that the hope in the 'Partisans' Song' is conveyed and understood by the youth. He explains, "This became something I was worried kids would lose. Nobody speaks Yiddish. It's a world gone by but it's a relevant world to me and to educators to talk about". The song, written in 1943 by 23-year-old Hirsch Glick who was later murdered by the Nazis, is "all about making a better world — that's what drives me", says Eli.

The next link in the chain emerged in the form of Nance Morris Adler,

a teacher from Seattle, who came across Eli's work and worked with him to educate schools in the US about the 'Partisans' Song' and its broader meaning. Eli then established the WE ARE HERE! Foundation which teaches learners in Perth and beyond the importance of being upstanders instead of bystanders, who will respond to injustices in society. He says, "It Stands for 'mir zaynen dol!' — the last three words of the 'Partisan'

Song': 'We are here!' We are not going away. We have survived and we will survive."

Yet another chain link came when Eli was put in touch with the Executive Director of HAMEC in Philadelphia and the two began speaking about the potential of the project. Eli then contacted World ORT which advertised the programme to its schools all around the world and the rest is history.

The team hopes that the programme will be encapsulated into Yom HaShoah ceremonies in a couple of months' time. Additionally, Eli's goal is for schools in Australia, New Zealand, and for additional schools in South Africa to get involved. He says, "I don't want the enthusiasm to drop. I want it to grow so it's very important to keep this going. It has to do with being positive and having hope for a better world. A lot of Holocaust stuff is understandably very sad and morbid but it doesn't always have to be like that. It can also inspire you, as Elie Wiesel writes about".

For more information about the project or Eli's blog, go to <https://wah.foundation> or <https://elirab.me/>



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