

# ★ JEWISH CAPE CHRONICLE

VOLUME 40 No 9

NOVEMBER 2023

Digital Edition

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## The month of October was a time of...

### Joyful Sukkot celebrations



Photograph by: Yolande Kretzmer Keys and Robyn Cohen

## And then terror in Israel



**BREAKING NEWS: 07 October 2023**  
Death came from sea, air and ground.

**Hundreds dead, thousands wounded after Hamas attack in Gaza Strip, takes Israeli hostages**

**A Second October War in Israel-Palestine**

**Netanyahu Calls on Israelis to Unite: 'WE ARE AT WAR'**

**KIDNAPPED**



**Gadi Moses, 80-year-old Israeli, kidnapped from his home**



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# Bonny's Beat



## A 2nd Holocaust?

I sat down to write this the morning after news broke about what was discovered by Israeli soldiers at Kibbutz Kfar Aza, which is in the south of Israel near the border with Gaza. In addition to the almost total destruction of the kibbutz and the murder of many of the kibbutzniks, a number of babies were found - not just dead, but decapitated.

The horror of this news brought into focus a thought I had had hovering in my mind for a few days beforehand, a thought I didn't want to acknowledge. The thought: Could the Hamas invasion of Israel be an attempt at yet another genocide against the Jews? The second within less than 100 years?

When combatants slaughter people in the way that Hamas has done – and more particularly when they do such unspeakable things to large numbers of small children and babies, defenceless individuals who have no understanding of the ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, I cannot help but wonder if this is not an attempt at a genocide. When you eradicate a cohort of people who would potentially become the next generation of adults that you hate, is that not an attempt to clear the world of this generation?

And the fact that the slaughter was done in such a horrific way brings huge parallels with how those uber perpetrators of genocide, the Nazis, eliminated the lives of babies: they smashed their heads against walls. Now, their followers, Hamas, are also killing by destroying people's heads.

This news has made me think about my late father, who passed away over 30 years ago, at a time when I was just entering adulthood. I have so often wished that he was still with us,

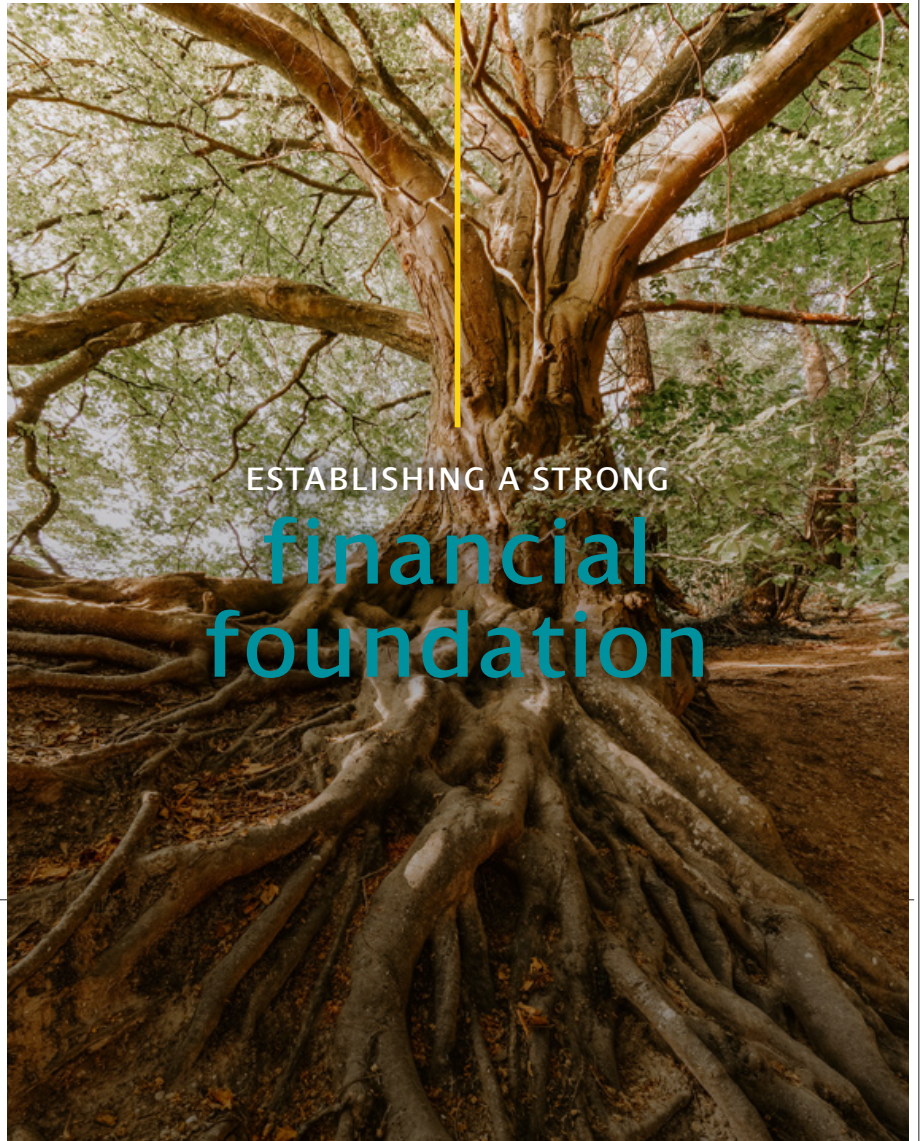
so that I could discuss things with him, understand his opinions on various issues, and enjoy the pleasures of life with him.

But, now, I am relieved that he is not with us anymore. He was a Holocaust survivor, and I can only imagine that, were he to have been alive now to witness what Hamas has done, the similarities with what he saw and experienced in the 1940s would have killed him just as certainly as the heart attack that felled him all those years ago did. And it would have killed my sister and me, too, to witness the anguish he would have gone through on hearing about what is starting to look like yet another genocide against our people.

The various articles we publish this month are, as you would expect, dominated by the tragic events of 7 October. You will see the powerful commentary by the Chairperson of the Cape SAJBD at the solidarity event organised by a number of our organisations, including the SAZF Cape Council. Both of our regular columnists, Julian Resnick and Craig Nudelman, offer reflections on the unimaginable events in Israel, as does the Rabbi's column on the Temple Israel page. See also the strong message from Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein.

We trust that you will find things to read that provide meaning and guidance to you during these extremely difficult times.

POSTSCRIPT: We have started using the Cape Jewish Chronicle's website ([www.cjc.org.za](http://www.cjc.org.za)) to post news that we believe will be of interest to members of the Jewish community. Please visit the site to read about support for Israel from a wide range of people, as well as to find useful contact details should you need assistance or wish to report something of concern.



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## SHABBAT AND YOM TOV TIMES

DATE	PORTION	CANDLE LIGHTING		ENDS	
		earliest	latest		
3/4 November	20 Cheshvan	Vayera	17:52	18:58	19:53
10/11 November	27 Cheshvan	Chayei Sara	17:57	19:05	20:00
17/18 November	5 Kislev	Toldot	18:03	19:11	20:08
24/25 November	12 Kislev	Vayetzei	18:08	19:18	20:15

# Save the date



## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

<u>COMMUNITY ORGANISATION</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>FOR MORE INFO</u>
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Seeing Auschwitz Exhibition	Open until January 2024	<a href="https://ctholocaust.co.za/seeing-auschwitz/">https://ctholocaust.co.za/seeing-auschwitz/</a>
Melton	<b>ONLINE PROGRAMMES:</b> Between the Lines – Bryan Opert (6 sessions)	1 November	Page 29
	Israel@75	9 November	Page 29
	Eshet Chayil – Nicole Green (3 sessions)	13 November	Page 29
ORT Jet Cape Town	A Tribute to our Mentors, Donors, & Partners	2 November, 18:00	<b>The Power of Connection</b> <b>RSVP:</b> <a href="https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/The Power of Connection">https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/The Power of Connection</a>
The Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute	Jewish leaders & leadership A masterclass for executives presented by Rabbi Dovid Wineberg	6 November	<b>RSVP: Viv Anstey at</b> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:events@osrinleadership.org">events@osrinleadership.org</a>
SAZF Cape Council	Film Club: Movie TBC	12 November	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:sazfevents@ctjc.co.za">sazfevents@ctjc.co.za</a>
SA Jewish Museum (SAJM)	An intimate evening with violinist YEVGENY KUTIK	13 November, 18h30	<b>RSVP:</b> <a href="https://www.sajewishmuseum.co.za/event-3">https://www.sajewishmuseum.co.za/event-3</a>
SA Jewish Museum (SAJM)	Community History Online SA Jews in Music Seminars 2023	14, 21, 28 Nov, 5 Dec	<b>Register:</b> <a href="https://www.sajewishmuseum.co.za/copy-of-event-1-1">https://www.sajewishmuseum.co.za/copy-of-event-1-1</a>
ORT Jet Cape Town	Business Networking	15 November, 08h30	<a href="https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/">https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/</a>
UJW Cape	Domestic Workers Appreciation Day	16 November	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:projects@ujwcape.co.za">projects@ujwcape.co.za</a>
Mensch	Mitzvah Day	19 November 2023	<b>Page 17</b> <b>RSVP:</b> <a href="https://mensch.org.za/mitzvahday2023/">https://mensch.org.za/mitzvahday2023/</a>
SA Jewish Museum (SAJM)	“BUILDING A CREATIVE COMMUNITY” Ann Nurock will present the biggest trends seen at the 2023 Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity	20 November, 18h00	<b>RSVP:</b> <a href="mailto:events@sajewishmuseum.co.za">events@sajewishmuseum.co.za</a>
Astra Centre	Astra Race Day	21 November	<b>RSVP:</b> <a href="https://cjc.org.za/2023/10/02/astra-race-day-3/">https://cjc.org.za/2023/10/02/astra-race-day-3/</a>
ORT Jet Cape Town	Shining Light Awards Ceremony	22 November, 17h00	<b>RSVP:</b> <a href="https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/">https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/</a>
Jacob Gitlin Library	Jacob Gitlin Memorial Lecture delivered by Dianna Yach Unwavering Pursuit of Social Justice: Embracing the Inconvenient, Conquering the Difficult and Capturing the Elusive!	23 November	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:admin@gitlinlibrary.co.za">admin@gitlinlibrary.co.za</a> <b>Tel: 021 462 5088</b>
Cape Jewish Seniors Association	Craft Exhibition	23 November	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:admin@cjsa.org.za">admin@cjsa.org.za</a>
UJW Cape	Jumble Sale	30 November, 12h00 – 15h00	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:projects@ujwcape.co.za">projects@ujwcape.co.za</a>
Cape Jewish Seniors Association	Volunteers Thank You Day	30 November	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:admin@cjsa.org.za">admin@cjsa.org.za</a>
UJW Cape	Simcha Group Card and Games Day	3 December, 13h00	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:projects@ujwcape.co.za">projects@ujwcape.co.za</a>
ORT Jet Cape Town	Business Networking	6 December, 08h30	<b>RSVP:</b> <a href="https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/">https://ortjetcapetown.org.za/events/</a>

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# DEAR COMMUNITY



Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein

Amidst the pain we all feel in the wake of these heinous attacks in Israel, we have also been outraged by the reprehensible stance the South African government has taken in supporting Hamas.

In light of this, I have changed the wording of the official prayer for South Africa (originally composed by Chief Rabbi Harris ztl) recited in *shul* on *Shabbos* mornings since 1994. From this *Shabbos* onwards, we will pray only for South Africa and her people, and not for the government.

We simply cannot, in good conscience, pray for a government that supports an organisation responsible for the worst killing spree of Jews since the Holocaust – an organisation whose official policy is to murder Jews, and which poses an ongoing threat to the safety of the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

At the same time, we must draw a critical distinction between the South African government and the South African people. A blessing we have here in South Africa is the prevailing atmosphere of tolerance and kindness among people of very different backgrounds. *Baruch Hashem,*

at this point, the surge of anti-Semitic attacks around the world has not happened here. The people of South Africa have once again shown how the value of unity in diversity is held dear by many.

We are not our government. The people of South Africa exist apart from the government. We elect the government – they serve us and are accountable to us. In a democracy, the government draws its mandate from the people – the people are, in fact, higher than the government. Hence, the South African constitution begins with the words, “We, the people...”

The decision to change the prayer for South Africa was not taken lightly – in any democracy there will be government policies certain population groups will vehemently disagree with. And we certainly can’t change the text of our prayers every time a government makes a decision we don’t like. But when it crosses the line and adopts a stance this immoral we can’t in good conscience pray for them.

Such a change is reserved for extreme situations, for government violations of morality so grotesque they undermine the integrity of our prayers. This is an issue of our Torah values. We mean what we daven for; our prayers reflect our deepest hopes and aspirations, and our deepest values.

We look forward to a time when this government reverses its support of Hamas so that we can again include them in our prayers.

“May Hashem grant His people strength, and may He bless His people with peace”.

With blessings,  
Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein

# 1923 – 2023: A century of Jewish religious life in Stellenbosch



Stellenbosch Synagogue and crowd for centenary celebrations

The Stellenbosch Hebrew Congregation celebrated its centenary with a meaningful Shabbaton on the 20th and 21st of October 2023, coinciding with Parashat Noach.

Revered Bender laid the foundation stone for this purpose-built house of worship on the 12th of December 1923. The Shul has since been the centre of Jewish worship, learning, celebration, and gathering for Jewish people in Stellenbosch, holding countless dear memories for many.

The Shul Committee, led by the President of the Congregation, Dennis Zetler, organised a Shabbaton with current and former Stellenbosch members. Former Stellenbosch members and expats travelled from overseas, including New Zealand, Australia, Israel, as well as locally from Johannesburg, Milnerton and Sea Point to join in the nostalgia.

The Shabbat activities began with photographs outside the Shul before Shabbat on Friday evening, followed by the Friday night Shul service and a sumptuous Shabbat dinner in the adjoining function venue. After the Saturday morning service, a lavish Kiddush Brocha luncheon was enjoyed by all who attended. Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, the Travelling Rabbi, officiated and delivered the sermons. The services featured different former and current members sharing in the davening of the services. This included Resident Chazzan at Stellenbosch Hylton Phillips, former member Ronnie Chorn and Raphi Ress. A first for Stellenbosch was a choir accompanying the services conducted by Sea Point’s Marais Road Shul Choirmaster, Josh Friedman (whose father, Michael Friedman, and grandfather, Joel Friedman, hail from Stellenbosch). This invitational choir was made up of choristers from different choirs who also participated in the centenary. The rousing renditions of the Choir and “Hatikvah” during the services brought tears to many, as past members recalled nostalgic memories.



Dennis Zetler



Dr Gerald Rosendorff

The Shul remains operational, holding services on Friday nights and some Jewish holidays. Also in attendance was Daniel Bloch, Executive Director of the Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies, who said, “Fortunately, Stellenbosch is home to approximately 80 Jewish students with some students having attended the celebration. It is hoped that the energy and ‘gees’ that permeated the Shabbat will continue for another 100 years.”

# Response to the war in Israel

Well known to many in Cape Town, Stephen Smith MBE is a respected expert on the Holocaust and genocide. He hails from the United Kingdom, where he grew up in a strongly Christian household, and he himself studied Christian theology.

Together with his brother, he founded the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire in the UK, and subsequently served as a consultant when Cape Town's own Holocaust & Genocide Centre (CTHGC) was being planned. He is still a Patron of the CTHGC.

Stephen served for a number of years as the Executive Director of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, which is the repository of Holocaust survivor testimonies, a project initiated by Steven Spielberg.

Very recently, Stephen converted to Judaism.

He is passionate about the Jewish people, and has written an insightful piece reflecting his view of the Hamas war on Israel. He has kindly allowed the Cape Jewish Chronicle to republish the article first published in the Jewish Journal.

## TIME TO FIGHT

By STEPHEN SMITH



Stephen D. Smith is CEO of StoryFile and Executive Director Emeritus at USC Shoah Foundation.

*I have dedicated my life to the pursuit of peace, but now is the time for war.*



Image courtesy of Marc Berman Photography

As my first High Holy days as a new Jew ended this weekend I was preparing to write to a personal private note to my Rabbis. Then our world changed. And so I write to them here:

“Rabbis Kligfeld, Schatz, and Chorny, I hope your loved ones are safe and well. It was just four weeks ago I sat before you at my Bet Din, excited that my 30-year journey was culminating as I crossed the threshold to become part of the Jewish people. I had told you that the abandonment of the Jews during the Holocaust had erased my own belief in deity. How could God allow such a thing? If indeed there was a God. Yet as I came out of the Mikveh and you blessed me, my faith was restored through the ancient covenant between God and the Jews.

The warmth I received at Beth Am over the last few weeks was overwhelming. I was embraced, cradled like a newborn. You gave me my first Aliyah on Shabbat Shuvah, I had the honor of holding the Torah during Kol Nidre, and again during the Yizkor service, as El Maleh Rahamim was recited in remembrance of the Six Million Jews murdered during the Holocaust.

As my Bet Din, I told you that last year I had stood at the Western Wall. I had just completed 30 years of service as a non-Jew, teaching and researching the Holocaust. I had been in a fight for three decades. I had been fighting for memory, fighting against denial, fighting for education, fighting antisemites,

and fighting for justice. I had just completed my term leading USC Shoah Foundation as I stood before the stones of the ancient Temple. I realized that I was no longer fighting. It was my time to be — to be a Jew, be a learner, be part of Am Israel, the people of Israel.

After my first Aliyah you called to the bimah my surprise guest, partisan Aaron Bell, the last of the four Bielski brothers. He and his family fought back against the Nazis and rescued 1,200 Jews. Today there are 40,000 Jews alive because of their courage in the face of genocidal murder. We stood together with the holy Torah, and I committed to Aaron that I would always fight for the Jewish people.

The fact that three weeks later, over 700 innocent Jews were massacred in broad daylight, in our homeland, seems inconceivable. My heart goes out to every parent, every child.

The memes circulating that harken back to our memory of the Holocaust are understandable. Genocidal killers – Nazis and Hamas alike – want us to quote the statistics of mass killing, it serves to further dehumanize their victims. What we must do now is honor every life. To honor their memory is to fight back. I am committing to know something about all 700 Jews that were murdered.

There is a significant difference between the experience of the Jews of Europe in the 1940s, and our situation today. European Jews had no country to go to, no army to defend them, no weapons to fight

with, no allies to come to their aid, no one to speak on their behalf.

Today we have a country, we have a world-class military, we have allies, who have now seen for themselves the genocidal intent of Hamas. We also have Jewish people around the world, ready to use our collective voice.

I do not doubt that the IDF will prevail militarily, and thank in advance the young men and women who will sacrifice their lives in the coming weeks.

Antisemitism has an endemic grip on our society and feeds the beast that murdered our fellow Jews before our eyes. We are stronger than they are, but only if we act in unison.

But there is another war raging — the battle for hearts and minds. As I write, Pro-Hamas protestors are out on the streets of San Diego.

The biblical wisdom found in Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 states, “there is a time for peace, and a time for war.” I have dedicated my life to the pursuit of peace, but now is the time for war. The murder of our fellow Jews calls all of us to avenge their deaths, to protect each other with our bodies, our minds, and our single-minded determination to overcome those who would seek to destroy us.

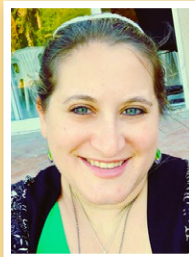
Thank you for your warm welcome to the Jewish people. I do not fully understand that millennial covenant I entered. But I do know it is worth fighting for.

I am here to fight.”

**CONSIDER THIS**

# We are only as divided as we want to be

By RABBI EMMA GOTTLIEB



In my five years in Cape Town, I've had opportunities to get to know the ins and outs of our unique and special Jewish community. We are small but strong. We are tight-knit. And we are diverse. Often, when we talk of the Jewish community in Cape Town, we sadly focus on our differences. We have different ways of understanding and practising Judaism. We have different political leanings. We have different world-views. We have different views on Israel. We have different cultural backgrounds. We speak different languages. We come from different parts of the world. To put it plainly, there are a lot of things that could divide us.

Recently we were reminded with excruciating clarity that what unites us all is far clearer than what might divide us. We are Jews. No matter how we see ourselves, how we identify ourselves, how we group ourselves, or label one another, there are times when, for better or for worse, we are only seen by others as one thing and one thing alone: Jewish. And on a day like October 7th, and in the week that have followed that horrible day, as I'm writing this, we learned – if we didn't already know – that nothing that could divide us matters half as much as what we share.

This dark period in Jewish history will be remembered long after we are gone. But

it won't only be remembered for the horrors. It will also be remembered for the unity. We will remember how we reached out to one another. How we supported one another. How we prayed together and sang together and cried together. How we bonded over dark humour. We will remember how we checked in with one another. How we kept one another safe. How we came together as one Jewish community to say in one clear and consistent voice: Am Israel Chai.

This week, I am not a female Progressive Rabbi. I'm not Canadian. I'm not a South African resident. I'm not left-leaning, or centrist, or pro-this or anti-that. I'm just like you. I'm Jewish. And not just this week, but every week – every day – that really should be all that matters between us.

We are taught, Kol Yisrael aravim zeh l'zeh (All of Israel is responsible for one another). We are all Israel. We are all connected. We live and die together. If this experience has taught us anything, it has taught us that.

You will notice that here, in our Temple Israel section of the Chronicle, we have chosen not to promote our shul events or share our photos of our recent Holy Day and festival celebrations. Instead, we are holding space for mourning, for memory, for courage. This isn't a time to focus on who we are, separate from one another. This is a time to focus on who we are together: The Jewish community of Cape Town – United. Strong. Resilient.

I am thinking of each and every one of you. Each of us knows someone who lost a life, or knows someone who knows someone who lost a life. Each of us is feeling sad, angry, vulnerable, scared. But each of us also knows that the Jewish people overcome tragedy time and time again. We face the worst horrors that humanity can face, and we come out stronger on the other side.

As we begin to move out of darkness and God-willing into better days ahead, let us not forget the feelings of unity that we have been expressing throughout this time. Shema Yisrael! God is One and we are One. We are only ever as divided as we want to be. We can choose to be as strongly bonded together always as we are right now.

*Kein Yehi Ratzon – May it be God's Will*



## Mazaltov to last month's Bnei Mitzvah



Abigail Perling



Elijah Sack



Sophia Wener



Tristan Hermalin



Josh Katz



Keren Atash

# ISRAEL – WE GRIEVE WITH YOU



בית ישראל



# Cape Town stands with Israel – Solidarity rally Oct 2023

*“We mourn the lives lost in this humanitarian disaster.”*

On 15 October 2023, the Cape Town Jewish Community, together with Friends of Israel, different faiths, political parties, and consulates, united to attend a solidarity rally for Israel.

Cape SAJBD Chairperson, Adrienne Jacobson, spoke with passion to the 2,500 people present, saying, “Our Jewish values uphold the sanctity of life and together we mourn the lives lost in this humanitarian disaster.”

“On 7 October 2023, the world watched as the worst atrocities known to mankind were perpetrated by Hamas Jihadists, who murdered innocent men, women and babies for the simple fact that they were Jewish, and then went on to joyfully, intentionally and proudly boast this to the world. As a Jewish community we are shocked, horrified and traumatised and we will be mourning this for the rest of our lives.

In 1973 *Yom Kippur* was taken away from us, in 2023 the same for *Simchat Torah*, and we wept on what was supposed to be the most joyous day in our calendar. For many years to come the families of the 1,500 murdered people will be saying *Kaddish* every *Simchat Torah*.

But out of the depths of our collective trauma and grief comes a fundamental shift in our Jewish psyche ...that we have a Jewish State, and as Jewish people there has never been a more poignant time to say, “Never, never and never again” to evil and to terrorism, where we can stand as *Am Ehad* firmly behind the State of Israel and our people in their time of need.

When Israeli civilians, our fellow Jews, some of them friends and family, were targeted in a horrific massacre, hunted down in their homes, at a music festival for peace, women raped and babies beheaded, we as a South



Cape Town Community Solidarity Rally

Marc Berman Photography

African Jewish community witnessed the greatest tragedy to befall our people since the Holocaust.

As South Africans, as citizens of this country we expected a word of consolation for our grief and trauma from our democratically elected President – and we got nothing.

We waited for a word of condemnation against the heinous slaughter of Jewish lives but not a modicum of compassion or empathy.

President Ramaphosa’s response has crossed a line of common humanity and decency and our community is reeling in hurt anger and disbelief. We have watched as ruling political leadership throughout the world has stood behind their Jewish communities with messages of comfort, solidarity and reassurance. We are reminded of Martin Luther King’s quote, “In the end we will remember not the words of our enemy but the silence of our friends.”

As South African citizens, however, we are part of a constitutional democracy which is independent of any ruling political party of the day, so we never have to feel afraid to stand up and defend our constitutional democratic rights. As proud South African citizens of a constitutional democracy, with minority rights enshrined therein, we have the responsibility, morality and inalienable right of freedom of expression and association. So we, the Jewish people of South Africa, call on our government to exercise its

obligation to protect these rights.

We have received an outpouring of messages, calls and statements from political parties, from consulates, embassies, members of parliament and government officials, interfaith leaders, and friends of our community. We value and appreciate each and every message. We have incredible support from our state security, our City of Cape Town, SAPS and Law Enforcement Metro Police who keep us safe at protests, and safeguard our schools. It is deeply appreciated, and we work in tandem to make Cape Town a city for all.

As this crisis unfolds we need to take a deep breath and realise that as proud Jews and Zionists, across a diverse spectrum of opinion, thought, expression and experience, the road ahead may be long and uncertain, but it is in difficult times like this that we require courageous, yet calm and measured leadership. We are working around the clock across organisations to address the political situation and the hostility that we find ourselves in, in the strongest and most collaborative way.

Organisations of first response in this crisis are the Cape SAJBD, working relentlessly in the political and government space to uphold and protect our civil rights to practise our Judaism in a safe environment free from discrimination and hatred. The SAZF keeps us connected with our

beloved Eretz in her time of need. SAUJS advocates for our students on campus. CSO safeguards Jewish lives and our way of life.

We are blessed with inspired spiritual leadership. Our Rabbis, across the wide spectrum of our community, have remained steadfast.

Right now we are going through a very difficult and traumatic time. Victor Frankl, leading psychology theorist and Holocaust survivor, said that pain and trauma does not need to lead to ongoing trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; rather we can find meaning by coming together and we will find courage from our shared community.

Our community is united as we pull together, and we will make sure that we come out of this not just intact but stronger.

In the words of our blessing for Israel, “*Avinu shebashamayim tzur yisrael vegalo, Baruch et Medinat Yisrael, Reishit Tzmitach G’ulateinu.*”

View Adrienne Jacobson’s full speech here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YGNd\\_In9RQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YGNd_In9RQ)

At the event, the Cape SAJBD Executive Director, Daniel Bloch, was interviewed live by SABC News. View it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M791i99Barw>



## UNITY AND PEACE: Cape SAJBD's Sukkat Shalom celebration

During *Chol Hamoed Sukkot* on the 4th October 2023, the Cape SAJBD hosted its annual Sukkat Shalom Luncheon in the Sukkah at the Gardens Synagogue, which serves as the mother congregation of South African Jewry. This event is distinctive in its celebration of kinship and peace among the various stakeholders of the Cape SAJBD.

More than 40 guests, representing diverse backgrounds, including political parties, media, consulates, interfaith organisations, foreign communities, and religious leaders, came together to break bread, sing songs, and share stories. It was a truly delightful afternoon of networking among friends. Distinguished attendees included the United States and Spanish consul generals, the president of the Greek community, the supreme leader of the Goringhaiqua Goringhaicona Kingdom, representatives from the Congolese Civil Society, and

members of the media.

The event began with a warm welcome from Cape SAJBD Executive Director Daniel Bloch, followed by a blessing and message delivered by Rabbi Feldman, Head of the Rabbinical Association of the Western Cape and Gardens Shul Rabbi. In her address, Adrienne Jacobson, Chair of the Cape SAJBD, expressed the joy of coming together to celebrate friendships and collaborate on projects aimed at making the Western Cape a better place. The guests were treated to melodious Hebrew songs of peace performed by the Cape Board's Programme and Development Manager, Josh Friedman, accompanied by Matthew Reid on the keyboard.

In testament to the diversity of the community, attendees – despite differing beliefs, traditions, and customs – all shared a common hope for peace, friendship, health, and prosperity for all.



Photography by Yolande Kretzmer Keys

### REPORT ANTISEMITISM & HATRED

The Cape SAJBD closely monitors and investigates all acts of antisemitism in South Africa – but **we stand against all forms of hatred.**

Our **'No Place for Hate'** campaign fights hatred directed against anyone to combat a culture of racism, antisemitism and prejudice in our country.

Report incidents of antisemitism and hate by sending a **Whatsapp message to the Antisemitism Hotline on 079 994 5573.**

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**



### COMMUNITY WELLNESS HELPLINE

If you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious and would like access to a trained counsellor, please contact our Cape SAJBD's Community Helpline to support your emotional wellbeing.

**Send a WhatsApp message, voice note or call the Emotional Wellness Helpline on 079 875 3902**



CAPE SAJBD  
Engage | Educate | Empower

### REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Please report any suspicious activity or potential security threats specifically related to the Jewish Community or Communal facilities as well as medical emergencies to the

**24-hr CSO Control Room on 086 18 911 18**



CAPE TOWN



**The Western Cape**

**Jewish community**

**welcomes you!**

**The Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies welcomes you to the Western Cape!**

If you or your family have moved to the Western Cape in the past few years, or if you know of anyone who has joined our community, then please connect with us. We would like to assist you as best we can to ensure your transition is as smooth as possible. Find out more about this incredible community and how we can work together!

**Let's continue to grow and strengthen our Jewish community!**



**For more information,  
please email [sajbd2@ctjc.co.za](mailto:sajbd2@ctjc.co.za)**



# Future Forex

## MEET THE HERZLIA ALUMNI spearheading change in the South African forex sector



Harry Scherzer

Last year we featured the success story of Future Forex, a burgeoning local business founded by two Herzlia alumni who initially decided to start the venture at an *Ohr Somayach* event, making waves in the financial sector with their digital asset arbitrage investment service. Fast forward a year and a half later, we checked in to see how their story has been unfolding and how their new international money transfer service that launched this year is disrupting the South African forex landscape.

Since we last caught up, co-founder and CEO Harry Scherzer (Herzlia Class of 2011) and friend, co-founder and CTO Josh Kotlowitz (Herzlia Class of 2010) have grown Future Forex to be the biggest arbitrage service of its kind in South Africa.



Josh Kotlowitz

Harry Scherzer is a UCT graduate and qualified actuary with a strong background in Finance and Risk Management. Josh Kotlowitz, a UCT and University College London graduate, achieved his MSc in Space Science and Engineering at the top of his class. Together, they have been riding high on the success of scaling a business that now employs over 50 dedicated specialists (MBA graduates, accountants, engineers and lawyers) who work remotely around the country.

Their stringent adherence to regulatory norms has paved the way for the firm to be given a Financial Service Provider licence (FSP 51884), placing Future Forex among the ranks of the country's largest and most trusted financial providers.

Using a now-proven formula that capitalises on the power of collaboration, innovation and a client-centric approach, the pair introduced their new foreign exchange service to the South African market this year, adjacent to their booming digital asset arbitrage investment service.

Future Forex's foreign exchange service assists businesses and individuals in moving money to and from abroad. While banks can do this too, the levels of service and pricing are well off the mark, according to Scherzer. "When entering the foreign exchange market, we were amazed at how poorly clients are being serviced by the major banks. Not only is the pricing often exorbitant, but businesses and individuals are

left to fend for themselves if there are any issues or special instructions for a payment. Future Forex is here to change that for good, and to ensure that processing forex transactions can become client-centric, as it should be." He continues, "I think everyone can relate to being put on hold by a call centre after explaining your issue to the fifth different person, with no resolution. This simply isn't acceptable to us when moving sums of money internationally."

Future Forex assigns every client a dedicated account manager who is always available to assist. Their ethos has always been one of a client-centric approach, which is why their account management team knows the ins and outs of their clients' use-case to ensure that they can assist in the most efficient way, understanding the nuances of different industries and unique client needs. From regulatory approvals of international transfers (AITs) – formally known as FIAs – for individuals wanting to send sums of more than R1 million overseas, performed as a complimentary service by Future Forex, to assisting with the completion of the Reserve Bank's mandatory Balance of Payment (BOP) forms. Future Forex always ensures that they go the extra mile for their clients in order to transform the industry into something that is seamless and streamlined.

Usually by increasing levels of service, clients would expect the cost of the service to increase. This is one of those rare cases where, because of the exorbitant margins charged by banks, Future Forex is able to offer significantly better and more personalised service, but at a reduced cost. "The aim is to improve service significantly while reducing our margins in order to ensure that it becomes an easy decision for clients to move across," explains Scherzer. The level of personalised service and ludicrous pricing by banks aren't the only areas which the Future Forex team have identified as being ripe for disruption. They have also found that the level of general operations by banks is decades behind technologically, which translates to poor levels of service when on-boarding, making changes or transferring funds internationally. Future Forex utilises their cutting-edge technology to ensure that all 'paperwork' is performed online in a streamlined

manner, and that the system can remember all client details so that the same information never needs to be provided twice. This leads to huge time-savings for businesses and individuals alike when making a payment. "Right from the outset, we identified key areas in the client journey where digitisation and automation could be leveraged to improve traditional processes," says Kotlowitz.

The technological changes underway by the Future Forex team are essential to improving client experience, and have been easily identifiable given the low level of streamlining in the current market. "We've started by improving the 'low hanging fruit' – for example, removing the need for a pen and paper and going into a bank, or not repeating details multiple times when on-boarding or booking a deal. We're now moving to more nuanced changes which will further improve client experience like allowing you to transact through whichever platform you please, from email to WhatsApp to our online platform, and even reading details of your ID document or proof of address so you don't have to input this yourself. We develop technological solutions from what we're seeing our clients struggle with on a day-to-day basis," says Kotlowitz.

A recent survey performed by Future Forex confirmed the team's beliefs that the levels of service in the industry are far off the mark, with 76% of respondents saying that they aren't fully satisfied with their current level of service from their forex provider.

Future Forex has been shocked by the subpar level of service and pricing clients have to experience when making international payments through the banks directly. Instead of standing on the sidelines and allowing this subpar service to continue as it has been, they have been the change that they want to see in the industry.

To investigate switching to Future Forex for your foreign exchange payments, you can email [info@futureforex.co.za](mailto:info@futureforex.co.za) or call 021 5180558 and one of our specialists will be in touch to improve your service and pricing. Visit: [www.futureforex.co.za](http://www.futureforex.co.za) for more info.

*Future Forex is able to offer significantly better and more personalised service, but at a reduced cost.*



**SOUTH  
AFRICAN  
ZIONIST  
FEDERATION  
CAPE COUNCIL**

# Cape Town's Connection to Israel

**ADVOCATE EDUCATE CELEBRATE**

**CAPE TOWN**

**STANDS**

**WITH ISRAEL**



It is through hard times that we know how strong our community is, and nothing proved this statement more than the presence and outpouring of support that we witnessed on a recent Sunday afternoon. More than 2,000 members of the Jewish community and SA Friends of Israel came together to pray for the safe return of hostages and all the innocent civilians murdered by the terrorist organization, Hamas.

The SAZF – Cape Council & Cape SAJBD would like to thank each and every one who attended the rally in solidarity with Israel. Nothing shows support more than your physical presence. The generosity of the Cape Town community and their connection to Israel was overwhelming. Many thanks to those who gave so generously.

If you were unable to attend the rally, there will still be a number of ways to show your support. We continue to raise money for The Jewish Agency's Victim of Terror Fund. You can donate here: <https://www.fundnation.org/sazf>

We will also be sending out correspondence on updates, webinars and petitions in the coming weeks. Keep an eye on your email inbox and, if you know of community members not receiving our emails who would like to subscribe, please send them this link: <http://bit.ly/SAZFCC>.

Together we will support our community and Israel.

Am Yisrael Chai



### STAY INFORMED

To keep abreast of the situation in Israel or to get your questions answered, use the contact details below or join the SAZF WhatsApp groups:

**HOTLINE:** 081 880 5217 / [hotline@sazf.org](mailto:hotline@sazf.org)

**FUNDRAISER:** <https://sazf.org/fund>

**TRAVEL INFO WhatsApp Group:**  
<https://sazf.org/travel>

**SWORDS OF IRON NEWS WhatsApp Group:**  
<https://sazf.org/news>

Photographers: Marc Berman and Emma Levin



**SOUTH  
AFRICAN  
ZIONIST  
FEDERATION  
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# Cape Town's Connection to Israel

**ADVOCATE EDUCATE CELEBRATE**

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**STANDS**

**WITH ISRAEL**



## Better together

By JESSICA CONNÉ

October has been a month of much simcha and much sorrow.

Reflecting on the simcha, Bnei Akiva Cape Town had fun this Sukkot! The different shichavot started off Sukkot celebrations by making Sukkah decorations for Morasha Shul and then came together one afternoon before EQT to hang all the decorations up!

We then ran our first Sukkah Hop in years! Over 45 channichim in our younger shichavot joined in a night of hopping from Sukkah to Sukkah all over Sea Point! Thank you to the five families who hosted our wonderful channichim and madrichim! We have already

been asked by channichim for another Sukkah Hop next year!

Next came Simchat Torah! Morasha Shul generously allowed Bnei Akiva to raise money for channichim to attend end-of-year camp, Hayinu Kcholmim, which we are grateful for. Despite the devastating news coming out about Israel at that time, Simchat Torah was still a moment of simcha and togetherness.

On Thursday night we hosted a meaningful and beautiful unity event to honour the soldiers fighting for Am Yisrael. Bnei Madrichim, Chanichim and Bogrim came together and



*Bnei channichim and madrichim standing in the sukkah they decorated at Morasha Shul*

expressed much-needed words of inspiration, support and upliftment. We sang, we danced and we watched videos presenting the true unity and resilience of Am Yisrael.

Lastly, our new shlichim have been incredible! They will be returning to Israel soon to be with family, but we are excited to welcome them back!

## The importance of Jewish spaces

By JEFFREY GUTMAN, Rosh Chinnuch for HDSA Machaneh 2023

Globally, Jewish communities have been shocked and the world has been shaken to its core over the gruesome events in Israel.

These events have sparked a rise in anti-Semitic rhetoric and actions around the world - leaving Jewish communities scrambling for safe spaces.

Working for Habonim Dror, I interact with children on almost a daily basis. I have seen the effects that this situation has on children and

their psyche. Now, more than ever, is the time when children need the sanctuary of a Jewish space. And the anti-Semitic rhetoric has emphasised how important my job is: to give Jewish children a springboard to engage with other South African Jews, to grapple with tough concepts – and ultimately to allow children to come together for a month just to experience unbridled fun.

Fun feels like an abstract sense



*The opening tekes for Machaneh 2022 on the Habonim Campsite*

right now but it is during these times that giving children the opportunity to experience fun is most crucial. As Habonim Dror Southern Africa, we will not be stopped in our mission to provide the best space for South African Jewish youth in December, and we urge the wider community to help us in achieving that goal for our youth.

## Spicing up the Holidays

By GHAIM ATASH

This past month, Netzer hosted and ran kids' programmes and activities throughout the High Holy Days at the Temple Israel centres. It was a wonderful time to learn about the holidays as well as about Netzer. We ran various activities from crafting photo frames and dreamcatchers on Rosh Hashanah to making spice bags for the

congregations for our havdalah on Yom Kippur, and teaching our channichimot about the importance of each holiday and how we as the youth can engage and educate others in our community about these holidays and traditions that follow, truly spreading our Netzer spirit and inviting youth to be a part of these experiences.



*Channichimot making spice bags for Yom Kippur*

We have more exciting and educationally enriching events to come, as well as our Summer Machaneh from 14–16 December. For more information, contact us at [cpt@netzer.org.za](mailto:cpt@netzer.org.za).

## Diller CT's Cohort 9 journey begins

By EYTAN LABE, Diller Co-ordinator



*Diller Teen Fellows CT Cohort 9: Top left to right – Sam Marks, Ben Marks, Alexand Franco, Yedidya Ziegler, Sam Miller, Ben Levin, Mikey Hendler (Junior Councillor)*

*Middle left to right – Eytan Labe (Co-ordinator), Amir Gelgor, Daniel Geva, Ariella Landau, Ella Castle, Danielle Breslaw, Sam Frankal, Zack Rogoff, Matt Wilck*

*Bottom left to right – Danielle Munitz (Junior Councillor), Eden Sacks, Mika Bacher, Eve Cohen, Isabella Widan, Romy Young, Talia Abrahams*

Our Diller Teen Fellows journey in Cohort 9 has kicked off with a bang, and it's time we share our exciting adventures and the significant strides we've made. As we embarked on this voyage, our primary focus was on building unbreakable group bonds, fostering connections, and unraveling the mysteries of both personal and group identity.

Our journey so far has been marked by two enriching workshops, where we've not only delved into our own identities but also got to know the exceptional teens that make up Cohort 9. Each workshop took us a step closer to understanding who we are and what we can achieve together as a collective force.

The group has been nothing short of amazing. We've laughed, we've learned, and we've grown. As we look ahead, the excitement is palpable. The adventures that await are bound to be nothing short of remarkable. With the foundation of strong group bonds and a clear sense of identity, we're ready to conquer challenges, make a lasting impact in our community, and forge lifelong connections. Cohort 9, together, we're unstoppable!



## Getting ready for summer

The norm for me each year as Rosh Hashanah approaches is to begin planning for Summer. I adore the awakening of the Spring flowers and the wonder of the floral displays that we are so fortunate to enjoy around Cape Town. This year was no different – we planned the flower trip to welcome Spring, but to everyone’s dismay the warmer days did not materialise. The weather remained really winterish and, as everyone got ready for their Yom Kippur fast, one of the worst storms hit Cape Town. I do not remember a storm of this magnitude, and those who braved the ungodly elements to the Kol Nidre service really had to be commended. Fortunately, many could tune into the online service for spiritual upliftment.

Choices are what make us different. There are those who enjoy their own company and are happy to spend a lot of time on their own. On the other hand, there are so many who really thrive when they are stimulated and able to socialise and interact with one another. This is where CJSA plays an important role in our community with the programmes we offer and the warm space available for members to meet and form friendships. We invited members to give feedback on their experiences of membership, and the responses we received were wonderful. One such response can be read below:

“Cape Jewish Seniors Association (CJSA) gave me the opportunity to start a new chapter in my life, when I joined them towards the end of 2022.

I had been through a very difficult time during Covid and lockdown, especially being alone, and knew that I needed something in my life to uplift my spirits and give me some purpose. That’s when I was introduced to the wonderful Sea Point social worker who inspired me with her warmth and compassion to start a new chapter in my life and join the CJSA.

There are outings to various places and restaurants around Cape Town, where everyone has a good time, and different activities are offered every day. You can pick and choose as you wish – various card games, board games, Yiddish mornings, topical discussions. Chair yoga every week, which I love, and also mosaic and art classes. We had a morning with the Shalom Choir and a light lunch - the singing was

fabulous, and everyone joined in. There are Zoom activities to participate in, and I’m sure there are many more that I haven’t mentioned, but whatever your age or the state of your health, there is something for everyone.

There are more activities that I want to participate in, but all I can say is that my life has changed for the better, in so many ways. I am more positive in my outlook, have met many people, and made new friends.

The lovely social worker is always on hand to help in any way possible, and comes with us on the outings with our fantastic driver. They are two of the most caring, kind and compassionate people I have ever met.

All those who work there are wonderful, caring people, and you certainly won’t be lonely or isolated when belonging to the CJSA. Join now – you won’t regret it!”. (Andrea)

We have much on the go during the next couple of months, starting with our three-night getaway to Goudini, a special Shabbat Supper in November, and an Art Exhibition, where the beautiful work being done by our members will be on display – all dates to be finalised.

### Smile a while:

- On Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.
- Some people try to turn back their ‘odometers’. Not me. I want people to know why I look this way.
- I’ve travelled a long way and a lot of the roads were not paved.
- Ah! Being young is beautiful but being old is comfortable.
- Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth.
- May you always have Love to share, Cash to spare, Tyres with air, and friends who care.

Have a great month.

Diana Sochen, Executive Director



Hajiera Safdien Maloon and Miriam Kleineibst enjoying the Chesed lunch celebrating the life of Eric Samson z'l



Barbara Friedman and Rosebeth Becker enjoying the fellowship



Sisterhood ladies – organisers of the Simchat Torah Tea at the Temple



Philippa Wener and Sarah Daitsch at the Chesed Lunch



Pictured left: Cecile Buirski and Joan Sarembok at the Chesed lunch



Sukkot party at Marais Road Shul



Tuesday Art Class with Glynnis in Sea Point

## SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

**We congratulate our members who have had joyous occasions during the last month.**

### MARRIAGE :

Shirley Cohen – Grandson in London

### WELCOME to new members:

Brigette Flanagan, Vivian Hertzberg, Barry and Mary Levenson, Roslyn Rubenstein, Marion Yudelman

**WELL WISHES to those who have been under the weather:**

Felicity Berman, Carrie Clift, Anne Ger, Freda Jacobs

**Our wishes of strength to those who have recently lost loved ones:**

Family members of Dave Wittels

Cecile Buirski – Son

Family of Vivienne Brooker



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At this time of darkness, let us be the light. **VOLUNTEER THIS MENSCH MITZVAH DAY** to enact *Gemilut Hasadim* – acts of kindness – and make a positive impact in the community around us. We have over 15 Mitzvah Day Projects already planned:



**SOCIAL MEET UP WITH PREVIOUSLY HOMELESS PEOPLE**



**DANCE AND MINDFULNESS WITH TEENAGERS**



**FARM TO TABLE - COMMUNITY COOK-UP WITH COMMUNITY**



**ART THERAPY WORKSHOP WITH CARE WORKERS**

Find out where and how you can volunteer: [www.mensch.org.za/mitzvahday2023](http://www.mensch.org.za/mitzvahday2023) or contact [jodi@mensch.org.za](mailto:jodi@mensch.org.za)

## ART & LIFE: the story of Samuel Bak

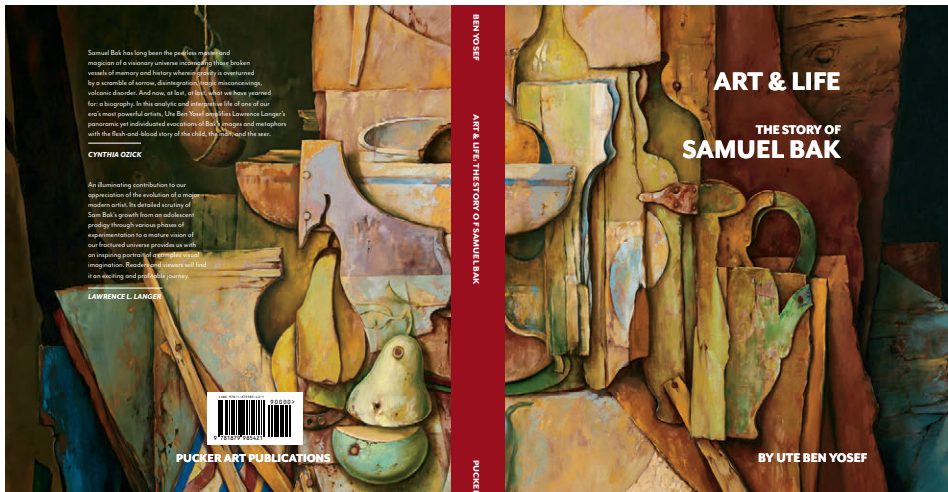
By UTE BEN YOSEF



When art historian Dr Ute Ben Yosef was asked by the local Jewish newspaper to interview the artist Samuel Bak then exhibiting in Zurich where she was living with her husband, Rabbi Dr Israel Ben Yosef, little did she think that many years later she would be approached by gallery director Bernie Pucker of Boston to write Bak's biography.

Art & Life: the Story of Samuel Bak, which was launched at the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre in August, is a beautiful book – beautifully written, beautifully illustrated and beautifully presented.

Simply and accessibly written, Ben Yosef outlines the story of this child prodigy whose first exhibition was held in the Vilna Ghetto when he was nine, from where he was smuggled out in a sack on his father's back. Then followed years of flight, of hiding,



of fear and of loss, including that of his father and grandparents, his teddy bear, his pillow and his education.

After some years in a German DP camp, Bak and his mother managed to reach the newly independent State of Israel, where, for the first time, he went to school, followed by the army, and attained success as an artist.

Forced by the Eichmann Trial to confront his suppressed memories, Bak abandoned his popular abstract paintings and started to focus on his Holocaust experiences, subjects the art world wanted to ignore, but using symbols instead of people.

Writing with great insight and sensitivity, Ben Yosef describes

Bak's life, marriages and moves, and explains the meaning of the images and symbols in his art in a setting she describes as a "landscape of indifference".

Bandaged teddy bears representing the murdered children, chess pieces representing the tenuous insecurity of the Jewish pawns whose lives depended on chance, flightless birds and angels, broken china representing the destroyed lives. Bak's trees are cut away from the ground, unwilling to be rooted in the blood-soaked Ponary forests. There are crematoria chimneys, broken Tablets of the Law, with bullet holes through the Sixth Commandment – Thou shalt not kill. There are



representations of the yellow star Bak was forced to wear, crumbling shtetl ruins, distorted Magenei David, shabbat candles and shtetl houses on boats of stone unable to sail in the sea of indifference.

His paintings are both mysterious and beautiful, made intelligible by Ben Yosef's explanations and description of his life. Reading the Bak book and examining the paintings, one gets an insight into the tormented mind of a survivor unable to leave behind his nightmarish childhood of insecurity, yet able to use his creative talent to turn them into images of beauty that can carry meaning to the beholder who still lives in a world indifferent to the sufferings of others.

In a book as readable as a novel, Ben Yosef has provided us with a key to understanding the life and work of one of the 21st century's greatest artists.

Limited copies of Ute's book, Art & Life: The Story of Samuel Bak, are available at the CTHGC for R1500 each. For more information, contact [admin@holocaust.org.za](mailto:admin@holocaust.org.za) or call 021 462 5553.

# Grammar in times of war

JULIAN RESNICK writes from Israel



*JULIAN RESNICK was born in Somerset West and grew up in Habonim Dror. He studied at UCT, and made Aliyah in 1976. He's conducted numerous shlichuyot and educational missions on behalf of Israel, to Jewish communities in England and the USA. He works as a guide in Israel and around the world (wherever there is a Jewish story). He's married to Orly, and they have three children and seven grandchildren and is a member of Kibbutz Tzora.*

I have always loved grammar. Conjunctions; participles; nouns; adjectives; adverbs; even gerunds.

Possibly because I studied Latin in high school. I remember conjugating verbs and declining nouns (or was it adjectives?).

Recently I visited our cousins from Kibbutz Zikim (You all know that I live in Israel, I assume) on Kibbutz Ma'alei Hachamisha, where they, and hundreds of other refugees from the brutal attacks by Hamas on October 7th, are begin housed.

They are the lucky ones.

They are not dead.

They are not hostages in Gaza.

And yet...

They are surrounded by tens of volunteers doing everything they can to help. There are young people from the Youth Movements doing activities with the children; there is a huge room with second-hand clothes as they left quickly, quietly, so as to avoid the hungry guns of the terrorists (hungry to murder babies, children with special needs, very old people, women – freedom fighters???? Seriously!!!!); there is a woman with a sewing machine – a lovely Bernina – doing alterations, so that the second-hand clothes fit; there are massage therapists; a room for the little children to play, for old people to relax together;

there is coffee and tea.

And yet...

When my cousins' three children saw me, I got the biggest hugs ever.

I love grammar and that is why I think that the tenses being used – that I am using – disturb me so much.

I travel the world to tell the Jewish story. I stand in Vienna, in Berlin, in Krakow, in Budapest, in Prague, in Toledo, in Lisbon, in Marrakech, and use almost only the past tense (in all its many beautiful possibilities: past, past perfect – pluperfect to some – past continuous, but always past). As the massacres were happening, and before I got home from Greece, I stood in Ioannina with Allegra, in Veria with Eva, in Saloniki with Hella. and we talked in the past tense almost all of the time; and we wept when I recounted the story of Yehudah Poliker's return to his father's home town, Saloniki, and when I recited the names of the children killed in Be'eri, in Nahal Oz, in Sderot in the very empty synagogue in Veria.

And I talk of where Jews "once prayed, sang, danced, had a coffee."

Where Jews (I often use the pronoun "we" instead of the proper noun, "Jews") were taken away, rounded up, were shot, separated from their children.

I sometimes mention how other

people stood by and did nothing, refused to believe, were incredulous. and I mention those who helped, stepped forward.

"We were murdered," I say.

"The world stood by," I say.

"We were torn from our homes," I say.

"This was one of the worst times in the history of humanity," I say.

And being who I am, I shed many a tear as I speak; I choke up at the thought of innocent children, not really understanding what is happening, being torn away from those who love them.

As we love our children. Remember when Golda, said, "Peace will come when they love their children more than they hate us."

And now, the tense has changed.

It is all present tense. The simple present tense; present continuous tense verbs are being used all the time.

"We are under attack right now."

"We are being killed/murdered."

"Our children/young people are being held hostage in Gaza."

It hurts so much. It hurts so much. It hurts so much.

This present tense hurts even more than the past tense.

## PHYLLIS FRIEDLANDER z"l made a huge contribution to the people of Cape Town



The Cape Town Jewish community has lost yet another remarkable individual with the passing of Phyllis Friedlander z"l. The longest-serving member of the Cape Town executive of the Union of Jewish Women (UJW), she made an impact in numerous ways.

Her involvement with the UJW goes back many years, since she first joined the Toni Saphra Branch in 1951. Her hard work for the organisation saw her serving as Deputy Chair in 1976, and then as Chair from 1976 to 1979. Phyllis's contribution to the UJW has been recognised over the years through her being named an Honorary Life Vice-President of the Cape Town Branch of the UJW and an Honorary Life

Member of the National UJW.

Aside from her leadership role both with the UJW and as the Mayoress of Cape Town, Phyllis will be fondly remembered for the meaningful initiatives she powered, projects geared to improve the lives of many citizens of Cape Town. These included the establishment of Meals on Wheels, a project that continues to positively impact many in our community. Through her leadership, the UJW also became synonymous with providing financial support for the Hebrew Nursery Schools. This included a unique initiative: the Saplings school, which provided for children with special needs, allowing them to move into mainstream primary schooling.

A strong Zionist, Phyllis also gave of her time and knowledge to the Rotary movement, and was involved in many local outreach programmes.

Her daughter, Serena Arnoni, comments: "We have also lost a storyteller, who spanned the generations. She was passionate about family. She carried the memory of those generations that had come before from Sassmaken and Riga, Latvia, and Uman. She spoke eloquently about those forebears as she transmitted that knowledge to the next generations: her three children, seven grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. We have lost a critical link to our past."

Known and loved by many in our community, Phyllis led a generous and meaningful life. She was intelligent and wise, thoughtful with a warm and friendly disposition. She will be sorely missed.



Discover 2023 group photo



Jonah Lustig participating in the Discovering your True North talk

## Herzlia Discover experience

Herzlia's Discover experience is a life-changing experiential programme that is run by Herzlia JET (Jewish Experiential Team) for the Grade 11s. This year's 5-day retreat theme, 'Beyond the known', speaks to all the elements in our lives that are 'unknown' to us even though we live in an age of unprecedented information overload. Part of thriving in life is the ability to embrace and be comfortable with confronting the unknown.

The aim of Discover is to break the norms of our daily routines and create an opportunity to explore our inner worlds, from a perspective of Jewish religious exploration, and as it relates to personal growth. Jewish values and identity, religious rituals and self-care are explored. The serene location supported reflection and exploration on topics such as Jewish values, identity, religious rituals, and self-care, with the guidance of young adult advisors. Many participants found it transformative, gaining new insights into themselves and their faith. Memorable moments included heartfelt talks, music sessions, unique sound healing journeys, and enriching Shabbat experiences.

Here is what our Grade 11s had to say...

'It was the best camp I have ever been to. I learnt so much about myself and about Judaism.'

'I kept Shabbat for the first time in my life, and I absolutely loved it. I really want to try to keep more of Shabbat back in Cape Town.'

'I did not know what to expect from Discover, but I was blown away by the attention to detail and the organisation of the programme!'

'When I got home, I had the most real conversation with my dad that I have ever had and we both were in tears – it was so beautiful!'

### Discover

By NOAH ZIVE, Gr 11, Herzlia High School

Discover was an amazing experience, from the fun-filled ruach sessions to the powerful talks that impacted every one of us and had us thinking about who we are as Jews. Discover really had it all. As a grade, Discover brought us much closer together. It was amazing to see the unity we had during this trip from a Judaic point of view like keeping Shabbat, boys putting on tefillin, and even spending time discussing and learning together. Discover was genuinely one of the most meaningful and inspirational experiences imaginable. I think I speak for most of us when I say that I have taken a lot out of Discover: memories, insights and so much more.



Havdallah service – (from L-R) Danielle Munitz, Sarah Gluckman, Lital Novick & Ella Rosmarin



Shabbat on Discover



L-R Leo Franck, Kyle Harcombe, Adam Merris, Jacob Ogus, Matt Whitesman, Noah Arelisky, Kai Seeff

## Feel the Beat

Herzlia's annual musical showcase "Feel the Beat" was a resounding success! The 80s theme made for an upbeat and uplifting evening. Thanks to pupils and staff involved on- and off-stage and the nightly packed, energetic audience for bringing the vibes!



Herzlia Mass Choir



Meg Levy



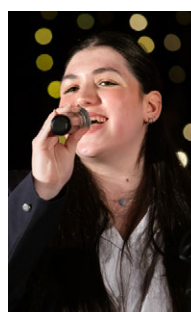
Herzlia Weizmann Primary Choir



Herzlia Vocal Ensemble



Josh Malia



Jessica Sherman



Herzlia Highlands Primary Choir



Herzlia Highlands Primary Orchestra



# HERZLIA HIGH Matric Art Exhibition

At the SAJM on the evening of Tuesday, 17 October, Herzlia High school students, teachers and parents came together for the opening of the 2023 Matric students' art exhibition. This marked the eighth annual Matric Art Exhibition to be held at the museum, and it meant a great deal to be together as a community celebrating something positive, creative and exciting.

Head of Art Lauren Palte gave a moving speech, demonstrating why she is an inspiring leader who brings out the best in her students.

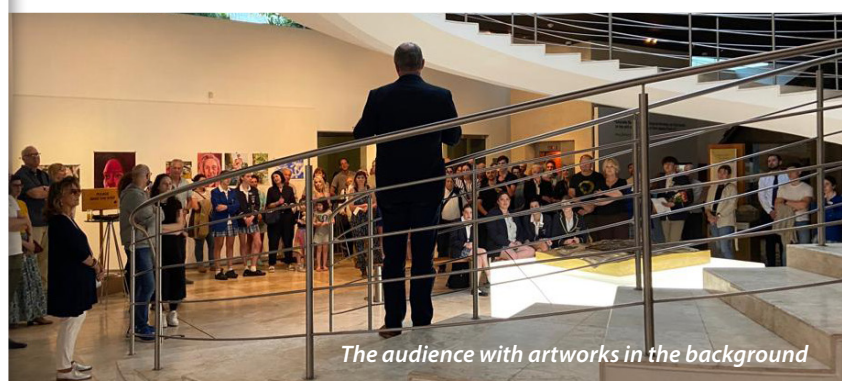
The outstanding artworks produced by this year's matrics will be on display at the SAJM until the end of November 2023.



Herzlia students' artworks



Herzlia Matric art students



The audience with artworks in the background

## Violence and trauma informs artwork



Desrae Saacks

Former editor of the Cape Jewish Chronicle, Desrae Saacks, recently showed some of her paintings at a group exhibition marking the end of the 2023 Sessions programme for visual artists.

Her body of work developed as a response to a trip to Lithuania that she undertook earlier this year – a trip that prompted her to reflect on her personal, familial and community identity, and to acknowledge how generational trauma has shaped her and others within her community.

**Desrae explains:**

"I recently travelled to Lithuania, the country of my grandparents' birth. I breathed the air and stood on the ground that had hosted generations of

my family – and learned the horrific fate of those who had stayed behind. Along with the vast majority of Lithuania's sizable Jewish community, they were shot to death in mass graves in 1941.

Travelling around the country, I was aware of the violence that lay buried just below the surface; and felt the palpable absence of a recently erased community in a country teeming with ghosts.

This journey offered a profound opportunity for me to engage with my personal and cultural identity; and, on an expanded level, to grapple with the centrality of violence and trauma as an ever-repeating part of the human story. I am interested in how the residual effects of micro and macro acts of violence linger on a cellular, vibrational and energetic level, shaping our environment, our culture, our bodies and our psyches.

My practice is strongly rooted in a love of oil paint – a wondrous and generous substance that engages me on a tactile, intellectual, and spiritual level – and holds an energy and plasticity that offer boundless expressive potential.

I reference a Eurocentric culture that informed my childhood and education with depictions of martyrdom, horror and the grotesque - in the fairy tales that nurtured my imagination, and the paintings that inform my practice."



Terminus

# CAPE OF STORMS AND CLAIMS: Navigating the wet and wild world of insurance!

By DAVE ZETNER



**DAVE ZETNER** of Risk Benefit Solutions, better known as RBS Insurance Brokers, which has offices in Cape Town and elsewhere in South Africa

Ahoy, Cape Town residents! If you've recently been serenading the rain gods, it seems they've heard you loud and clear. With the recent downpours and the Western Cape resembling a water park more than our beloved peninsula, many of us have been left with more than just wet socks. From drenched driveways to the occasional floating car, it's been a season to remember (or forget, depending on how waterlogged your living room is).

But fear not, dear Capetonians! While we can't control the weather (yet), we can undoubtedly navigate the stormy seas of insurance claims. So, grab your umbrella and dive into some frequently asked questions that have been pouring in (pun intended).

## 'ACT OF GOD' OR ACT OF INSURANCE

You might wonder if your household insurance covers storm damage to your house or vehicle. After all, isn't a storm an 'Act of God'? Good news! Most policies do provide coverage for such divine interventions. However, always keep your policy booklet closer than your raincoat. Some might have exclusions, especially for vehicles.

## DOUBLE TROUBLE IN THE MOTHER CITY

With Cape Town's repeat performance of storms this winter, you might be thinking, "Can I claim again, even if I just claimed a few months ago?" The answer is, "Generally, yes." But remember: it's essential to fix any damage from previous claims. Insurers have a keen eye for spotting a leaky roof that's been left unattended.

## THE TALE OF THE TOPPLING TREE

If a tree decides to take a nap on your property, who do you call?

Ghostbusters? Not quite. Start with your insurance. But if that tree was from your neighbour's yard or the City Council's pavement, and they've been neglecting its upkeep, you might also have a claim against them. If it's not your tree, the negligent gardener also needs to cover the removal cost. (It's a bit like a detective story but with fewer trench coats and more tree branches.)

## THE UNDER-INSURANCE UMBRELLA

Here's a splash of cold water: many are under-insured for the kind of damage we're seeing. It's like wearing gumboots when you need a full-on wetsuit. Regularly review your policy and ensure it covers the total replacement value of your home and its contents. And, no, that doesn't mean what someone might pay for your home, but what it would cost to rebuild or repair it. So, if you are found to be underinsured, say by 20%, any claim will be reduced by this amount, too!

## SNAP, CRACKLE, AND DOCUMENT!

Always document and photograph your property and its contents. Think of it as taking selfies with your sofa or photoshoots with your fridge. This way, you have all the evidence you need when making a claim. Plus, who doesn't love a good home photoshoot?

Now, as the sun finally peeks through the clouds and we swap our rain boots for flip-flops, it's essential to remember that the ever-changing weather affects us all. Whether it's the bright sun causing wear and tear or the heavy rains testing the strength of our roofs, our homes are continuously facing the elements. And with these changes come the need to be ever vigilant about our insurance coverage.

In conclusion, while we can't predict when the next storm will hit or when the sun will shine bright, we can ensure that our homes and belongings are adequately protected. So, the next time you're enjoying a sunny day or preparing for a stormy night, remember to review your insurance policy. Because, as we've seen, the weather might be unpredictable, but with the right coverage, our peace of mind doesn't have to be.

Stay dry, stay insured, and always keep your sense of humour, Cape Town! After all, every cloud (or insurance claim) has a silver lining.



## EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS TODAY

COHORT IV IN 2024  
APPLICATIONS OPEN SOON

*Communal continuity and resilience do not happen by accident. The Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute is filling a long-recognised need to identify and cultivate the leaders of the future and train, equip and support those who already play essential roles in communal life.*

Adam Mendelsohn  
EOLI Advisory Board & Faculty  
Director: Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies, UCT

Are you ready to elevate your leadership skills and make your mark?

The Eliot Osrin Leadership Development Programme (LDP) creates a culture of bold, visionary and ethical leadership to ensure that the current and next generation of leaders are shaped by our shared Jewish values, the challenges of community, our South African context and global trends.

Participants will have the opportunity to grow personally, professionally and communally, expand their leadership networks, gain knowledge and expertise, and embark on a transformative leadership journey to benefit self and impact community.

LET US KNOW THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED OR TO NOMINATE SOMEONE!  
For more info contact Viv Anstey on (021) 464-6700 or email [applications@osrinleadership.org](mailto:applications@osrinleadership.org)

### EOLI'S FLAGSHIP LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This accelerator programme includes theory, immersion and experiential learning across all modules:

- Leadership Mastery
- Community History & Context
- Leadership Skills Toolkit
- Action Learning
- Ethical Leadership

### EXPERT FACULTY

MBA Executive level teaching and curricula

### OUTCOMES

- A greater understanding of oneself as a leader
- Coaching opportunity
- Exposure to robust leadership skills, strategies and frameworks for the community to thrive now and in the future
- A Jewish lens on leadership
- An expanded network



[www.osrinleadership.org](http://www.osrinleadership.org)  
[applications@osrinleadership.org](mailto:applications@osrinleadership.org)  
+27 21 464-6700

# IT'S A NUMBERS GAME for these Cape Town youngsters!

South Africa's Mathematics education is notoriously poor, and benchmark comparisons show how far behind we are against our peers. A 2020 research report highlighted that, "...the data shows that South African students consistently scored in the bottom three countries for a range of tests".

This is certainly a worry because Maths is important for many careers. "More and more, Mathematics is being seen as an invaluable asset in all fields and it opens many doors to future career prospects," explains Lauren Paillard, Head of Mathematics at Herzlia High School. "Pupils learn crucial skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the Maths classroom, which are valuable skills for any line of work, but they are particularly important for work in fields such as medicine, engineering, finance, data science, and AI and Machine Learning."

While the national situation may be dire, there are some teens who are bucking the trend. These are the Maths boffins who recently showed how their love of numbers took them to the top at the University of Cape Town's Mathematics Competition. The top learners were announced at

a prize-giving event held on 21 September.

A number of local Jewish children took top honours in the competition. Grade 11 learner at Hout Bay International School, Aaron Epstein, did particularly well, as did a number of Herzlia students. "All of the pupils who participated in the UCT Maths Competition this year performed outstandingly," says Lauren.

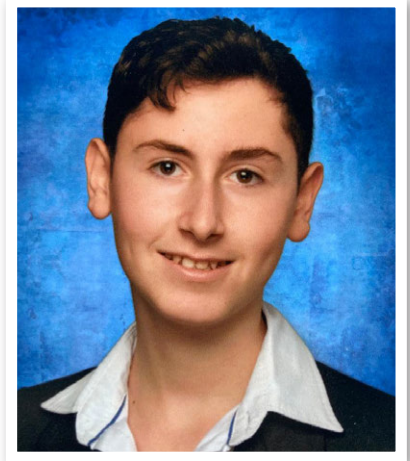
Evidence of this is that three Herzlia pupils were placed in the top 10 of their age groups. Matt Carroll and Daniel Gad came 2nd in the Grade 12 Pairs Competition and Liam Baruch came 5th in the Grade 9 Individual Competition. In Grade 9 Liam Baruch made it into the A team, Levi Gluckman the B team and Zachary Rosenberg the C team. Grade 12 Matt Carroll made it into the C team.

Herzlia's Liam Baruch is certainly making his mark in local Maths circles, despite only being in Grade 9. With a string of accomplishments already credited to his name – including achieving a top 10 placing in the South African Maths Olympiad, representing South Africa at the Bulgarian International Maths Competition in July this year, and coming 3rd in the Jewish High

School Maths League, with students from three different continents competing – Liam is passionate about the subject. "What fascinates me most about Maths is the impact it has on our everyday lives: from the encryption behind the electronic devices we use, to geometry that GPS technology relies on, and even in structural engineering – it's all connected to Maths in some way," he explains.

For those with the ability and interest in Maths, bright careers await. Both Liam and Matt Carroll are keen to study actuarial science, and Liam has also shown interest in the fields of computer science and mechatronics.

While Herzlia Grade 12, Daniel Gad, is not sure about a career choice, he has some thoughts about possible routes to take. "I want to get into the tech industry," he says, "and biomedical engineering interests me because it's a way to use problem-solving skills to develop solutions to improve people's lives and their health. And software engineering also appeals to me because I am passionate about coding, and working on big projects to improve or develop systems like AI and Machine Learning seems interesting to me."



Liam Baruch



Matt Carroll, Lauren Paillard (Head of Maths), Liam Baruch

## Local lifesavers outswim the competition at international events



Chloe Gershuny with the SA flag



Rebecca Fury emerges from the surf

Local lifesavers are making their mark internationally – and this includes three Cape Town Jewish youngsters who have recently been selected to participate in international lifesaving events. They succeeded in showing just what Capetonian sea-lovers are capable of!

Both Zack Waters, a matric learner at Rondebosch Boys' High School, and St Cyprian's School Grade 10, Rebecca Fury, took part in the 2023 International Surf Rescue Challenge (ISRC), held in late September in Texas, USA.



Zack Waters in action

Rebecca and Chloe Gershuny, a matriculant also at St Cyprian's School, took part in the Commonwealth Lifesaving Championship in Canada during September.

While Zack, who was selected for the Youth Men's team, won a number of titles, both Rebecca and Chloe's excellent efforts also brought huge successes. For Rebecca, that means being named the top point scorer for the South African President's team, as well as the top point scorer overall for the President's teams across all the other countries participating. Chloe achieved the second highest overall point score in the South African President's team, and she placed 8th in the women's development teams. She won bronze medals for the obstacle relay, medley relay and manikin relay events.

15-year-old Rebecca is both a competitive swimmer and a pool and surf lifesaver. For her swimming, she trains at Vineyard Swimming Club, as does Chloe; her surf lifesaving excellence is honed at the Clifton Surf Lifesaving Club, of which both Zack and Chloe are also members.

Zack won multiple events such as Team Surf Swim, Tube Rescue, Board Rescue, and Beach Relay. At individual level, he placed 2nd in Test 1 Ironman and 2nd in Test 2 & 3 surf swim.

For Rebecca, competition at this level has brought numerous successes. She explains: "My main events were the surf swim events and I won my individual surf swims in all three tests, together with the tube rescue event where I performed the role of the rescue swimmer. I was also a member of the surf swim relay team and swam the swim legs in the Taplin relay (which is a relay comprising a swimmer, runner, malibu boarder and surf skier), and our team won all those relays in all three tests. Our sprint relay team (of which I was a member) also won gold in test 1 and silver in tests 2 and 3."

Chloe comments that, "I made memories to last a lifetime and competing on an international stage is something that has changed my perspective on sport, and has reminded me what an honour it is to be able to represent our amazing country."



# HEALTH FOCUS



## SEEING WELL into the future

By AVRON GOLDSTEIN

*“Everyone should have an eye examination once every two years.”*



**A**vron Goldstein, an optometrist with 40 years of experience, has an optometry practice in Wynberg. He also does weekly sessions at Victoria Hospital Eye Clinic. Avron has kindly provided information about eye health and common visual problems to the Cape Jewish Chronicle.

### COMMON VISUAL PROBLEMS

He says that the most common visual problems that people encounter are poor distance vision, which weakens one’s eyesight for driving, watching TV, or seeing on a classroom board. In addition, many people struggle with activities that require close vision, such as reading, computer work and seeing the cell phone screen.

Everyone should have an eye examination once every two years.

### VISUAL PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH AGE

Short-sightedness is usually hereditary and cannot be prevented but there are special spectacle lenses and contact lenses that can slow down the progression of short-sightedness. There is a high prevalence of short-sightedness within the Ashkenazi Jewish population.

The onset age of cataracts can also be slowed down by wearing protective lenses that block out ultraviolet rays from sunlight.

Glaucoma can be prevented by having your eye pressures measured and the optic nerve examined every two years especially after the age of 45. High eye pressure can cause blindness if not controlled.

### DIABETES AND VISION

Diabetics should keep their sugar levels within the correct limits to prevent major damage to the blood vessels in the retina which, if not controlled, can cause loss of vision. A person with diabetes should have an eye examination once a year to check the blood vessels, and eye pressures should be checked every two years to monitor for glaucoma.

### SERIOUS VISUAL CONDITIONS

**Macula degeneration:** The progression of some forms of this condition can be halted with injections into the eye.

**Retinitis Pigmentosa:** Spectacle lenses can help to improve vision but there is no treatment or cure at this time. This condition is fairly common within the Ashkenazi Jewish population.

**Detached retinas:** This is something that occurs unexpectedly and suddenly. It usually appears as a sudden loss of vision with continuous ‘flashes’ and can feel as if a ‘curtain’ has come down. Immediate treatment involving surgery must be implemented to prevent further loss of vision. The longer it’s postponed, the more damage will occur and the vision in that eye may never be as good as it was before the ‘tear’ in the retina.

### SPECTACLES AND CONTACT LENSES

In the majority of cases contact lenses are an accessory to spectacles and not an alternative. If you wear contact lenses, make sure you also have a pair of spectacles in case you develop a condition which may cause pain in your eye(s),

for example an eye infection or a corneal ulcer.

Contact lenses are a good option for people doing activities in which spectacles cannot be worn, for example ballet and sports activities.

Contact lenses, as opposed to spectacles, can improve vision if you have a condition like Keratoconus or if you’ve had a corneal transplant.

### CARING FOR SPECTACLES AND CONTACT LENSES

- Clean spectacles by rinsing them with water and drying them with the special cloth your optometrist would have supplied.
- When you take your spectacles off, use both hands so that you don’t stretch the frame.
- Contact lenses should never be used longer than the time specified by the optometrist.
- Only use solutions supplied by your optometrist.
- Never store your contact lenses in tap water.

### VISUAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

The use of digital screens for long periods may result in red, tired and dry eyes. While this may be uncomfortable, it does not mean that permanent damage has been done to the child’s eyes. Close vision for extended periods may cause short-sightedness, but this is not definitely the case.

There is a theory that to reduce the chances of young children developing short-sightedness, they need to play outdoors in sunlight.



# JEWISH COMMUNITY SERVICES CAPE TOWN

## JCS BY NUMBERS

[www.jcs.org.za](http://www.jcs.org.za)  

JCS serves the welfare needs of our community, offering social services, material relief, the Tikvah Foodbank, and accommodation - relying on donors to meet the needs of vulnerable members in our community.

**680**

680 Tikvah Foodbank parcels delivered plus 5 556 cooked meals distributed by JCS at an average cost of R360 000/month.

**130**

Jewish Community Services is currently assisting 130 individuals who are unemployed.

**210**

210 individuals in our community are currently struggling with mental health conditions.

**190**

190 older persons are seeking assistance from Jewish Community Services.

**530**

530 individuals are receiving financial assistance, rentals, food, medication, electricity and water. Numbers are increasing daily.

**850**

850 individuals in our Jewish Community are currently requiring Social Services.

**210**

Jewish Community Services provides shelter and accommodation for 210 individuals.

### VISION

The vision of Jewish Community Services is to be recognised as the leading provider of innovative services and programs that address existing and emerging social service needs. To provide a full spectrum of services that promotes quality of life within the context of Jewish ethics and values. Together we can build a caring, self-sufficient community with dignity, harmony and happiness.

### MISSION

To develop, implement and coordinate social protection and poverty reduction solutions for and with the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged in the Cape Town Jewish community. To provide quality social welfare services to enable them to meet life's challenges.



# BOOK TALK

## WHAT DO YOU WANT? by LINDA DIRMEIK



Kenilworth resident, Linda Dirmeik, has written a motivational guide to help one achieve one's goals.

With many years behind her in the field of motivational training, Linda's expertise in the field is acknowledged in the book, *What do you want?*, by both Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz and Claremont Shul's Rabbi M Liebenberg.

Getting into the field of self-motivation, Linda has previously produced material, such as her motivational programme *Motivation Work Book for adolescents and Work Book with a Guide for Adults*.

*What do you want?* is available for purchase at the SAJM gift shop and at the Coffee Time gift shop and for loan at the Jacob Gitlin Library.

## STATUES AND STORMS: Leading through change by MAX PRICE



Dr Max Price served as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town from 2008-2018, a tumultuous time for the university. He has now written an

autobiographical account of some of the issues faced during his tenure.

The book, *Statues and Storms*, offers a gripping insider's account during a transformative period in South African higher education. In the wake of the Rhodes Must Fall

protests, universities across the country were engulfed in sustained and often violent demonstrations, challenging institutional cultures and sparking a global movement.

With a focus on leadership and the difficult decisions leaders must make during rapid transformation, the book also explores enduring themes in academia, including academic and artistic freedom, the limits of protest rights, institutional racism, culture and inclusiveness, and the funding of higher education.

The book is available at all good bookstores, and can be borrowed from the Jacob Gitlin Library.

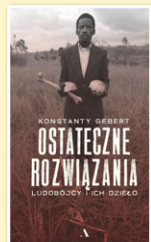
## BACK TO THE FRONT by LEON LEVY



*Back to the Front* is the personal record of Leon Levy, anti-apartheid activist and pioneer of the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

His highly readable memoir explores his childhood, early years on the factory floor and immense contribution to the formation of the trade union movement. Levy then delves into his time in prison and his exile in England, before recalling his return to South Africa and continued involvement with trade union and labour relations organisations.

The book is available for purchase at the SAJM gift shop, and for borrowing at the Jacob Gitlin Library.



## FINAL SOLUTIONS? Genocide in Comparative Perspective by KONSTANTY GEBERT

An online discussion about this book by the distinguished Polish writer and publicist, Konstanty Gebert, was held on 23 October by the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre.

# Opening of Seeing Auschwitz exhibition

On September 22nd, in partnership with the German Consulate in Cape Town, The Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre proudly opened *Seeing Auschwitz*, an internationally acclaimed exhibition, to a capacity audience. This exceptional exhibition features a collection of 100 photographs, sketches, and testimonies from the German Nazi extermination camp Auschwitz.

Before the event's official commencement, the distinguished guest speaker, Pawel Sawicki, Press Officer & Educator at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, provided an informative guided tour of the exhibition for our esteemed guests. The opening ceremony commenced with a warm welcome from Richard Freedman, Chairperson of CTHGC, who had served as the interim director for the past year. He officially passed the reins to the incoming director, Jakub Nowakowski, who then introduced the exhibition.

The German Consul General, Tanja Werheit, delivered a special address that added to the significance of the event.

The event concluded with a panel discussion led by Jakub Nowakowski, featuring Pawel Sawicki and Orli Barnett, Education Director of CTHGC. This thought-provoking discussion explored the symbolism of Auschwitz throughout history, while also seeking to understand its contemporary relevance and role in addressing global challenges.

The panelists delved into the ongoing efforts of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and Memorial to preserve this site as a historical monument and how it can be harnessed to educate future generations about the dangers of hateful ideologies and the imperative of moral responsibility.

The exhibition is open at the CTHGC until 31 January 2024. We offer private and group tours – please book through [admin@holocaust.org.za](mailto:admin@holocaust.org.za).

The exhibition will be accompanied by a full public programme of lectures and screenings.

For more information, please visit [www.ctholocaust.co.za/events/](http://www.ctholocaust.co.za/events/). We hope to see you there!



CTHGC staff and supporters with Consul General of Germany and Pawel Sawicki



Members of the public view the exhibition



Panel discussion



Members of the public view the exhibition



Pawel Sawicki guide training



Pawel Sawicki public walkabout



# THE ISRAEL-GAZA WAR: a Jewish halachic perspective



The Cape Jewish Chronicle received the article below from Darren Hollander, Group CEO of Global Energy, based in South Africa and the United States. Darren has a keen interest in global affairs.

It must be noted that Jewish law can be applied to any situation in different ways, which means that there can be quite varied interpretations of the law which may result in the drawing of other conclusions. This is particularly the case if the sources relied on by the writer are not provided – as is the case in this article. As such, Darren’s article should be seen as *a halachic approach*, but not as *the definitive halachic approach*.

In recent years, the Israel-Gaza conflict has been a topic of great concern and debate. This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the conflict from a Jewish Halachic perspective. Halacha, the Jewish legal framework, offers guidance on how individuals and communities should navigate complex ethical and moral issues, including armed conflict. By examining the principles of Halacha, we can gain a deeper understanding of the Israel-Gaza conflict and its implications.

### THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DEFENCE

One of the fundamental principles of Halacha is the obligation to defend oneself and protect one’s community. In the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict, Israel has the right to defend itself against attacks from Hamas and other armed groups. Halacha recognises the inherent value of human life and permits the use of force when necessary to preserve life and protect innocent civilians.

According to Halacha, the task of the Israeli military is not only to defend the country in times of war, but to root out the forces of evil in the world and to sanctify the honour of Hashem because, as our Sages teach, the honour of Hashem and Israel are one.

### PROPORTIONAL RESPONSE

Halacha also emphasises the principle of proportionality in self-defence. This means that the response to an attack should be measured and not exceed what is necessary to neutralise the threat. Israeli military actions in Gaza are guided by this principle, with efforts made to minimise civilian casualties and avoid excessive

force. However, the nature of urban warfare and the use of human shields by Hamas present significant challenges in achieving this ideal.

### PROTECTION OF INNOCENT LIFE

The protection of innocent life is a central tenet of Halacha. Jewish law prohibits the targeting of civilians and requires combatants to take all reasonable precautions to minimise harm to non-combatants. Israel’s military operations in Gaza are guided by strict rules of engagement, which aim to prevent harm to innocent Palestinians. Nevertheless, the complex reality on the ground often makes it difficult to distinguish between combatants and civilians, leading to unfortunate casualties.

### ETHICAL DILEMMAS

The Israel-Gaza conflict raises ethical dilemmas that require careful consideration from a Halachic perspective. For example, the use of airstrikes to target military installations in densely populated areas may inadvertently harm civilians. While Jewish law recognises the necessity of self-defence, it also places a high value on human life. Balancing these competing obligations is a challenge that Israeli military strategists and policymakers must grapple with.

### THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Halacha acknowledges the importance of adhering to international law and norms. Israel, as a member of the international community, has a responsibility to conduct its military operations in accordance with international humanitarian law. This includes minimising civilian

casualties, allowing humanitarian access, and respecting the rights of prisoners of war.

### THE PURSUIT OF PEACE


Halacha promotes the pursuit of peace as a paramount value. Jewish law encourages the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means whenever possible. Israel has made numerous efforts to engage in diplomatic negotiations and seek peaceful resolutions to the Israel-Gaza conflict. However, the continued launching of rockets and terrorist attacks by Hamas has made a lasting peace elusive.

### ACTS OF MERCY AND TZEDAKAH

Jewish law and ethics also emphasise acts of mercy and tzedakah (charitable giving). Many religious Jewish individuals and organisations are actively involved in providing humanitarian aid and support for those affected by the conflict, irrespective of their national or religious identity. The concept of “tikkun olam” – repairing the world – drives these actions, encouraging Jews to mitigate suffering and provide assistance to victims of violence.

### CONCLUSION

The Israel-Gaza conflict is a complex and multifaceted issue that demands careful analysis from a Jewish Halachic perspective. While Halacha recognises the right to self-defence and the necessity of protecting innocent life, it also emphasises the pursuit of peace and adherence to international law. As the conflict continues to evolve, it is crucial for individuals and communities to engage in thoughtful discussions and seek guidance from Halachic authorities to navigate these challenging times.



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## LEGAL MATTERS

# NON-PAYING TENANTS in the residential rental property industry

By MARLON SHEVELEW of Cape Town law firm, Marlon Shevelew and Associates Inc.

*Having an additional property may be a good investment, and you'll want to maximise the returns on the property. But what can you do as a landlord if a tenant defaults on the payment of rent?*



Marlon Shevelew

The Cape Jewish Chronicle spoke to local property attorney, Marlon Shevelew (MS), about the matter.

**Q CHRONICLE:** What should a landlord do when a tenant misses a rent payment?

**MARLON SHEVELEW:** A landlord should first communicate with the tenant, preferably in writing, to enquire about the missed payment. Whilst this approach is important and keeps things conciliatory, the landlord should also consider formally putting the tenant to terms with a legal letter of demand. This will provide for definitive time limits to pay, as per the lease agreement, and allow for the possibility of the cancellation of the lease agreement in terms of the governing laws.

**Q** In that regard, how long should a landlord wait before taking formal action against a non-paying tenant?

**MS:** The customary time period is approximately 7 calendar days and should be detailed in the lease agreement. One must also factor in the time period for receipt of the demand and, assuming the tenant is a natural person – i.e. an individual person, not a Trust or a Company – (different rules apply if it's a juristic person), there is a statutory time limit in the Consumer Protection Act of 20 business days from the date of demand before a lease may be cancelled and the occupant told to vacate.

**Q** What is an eviction notice, and when can it be issued?

**MS:** Many people make the mistake of thinking that an 'eviction notice' is a magical thing that can be executed upon... It's often confused with the notice of cancellation and an eviction order. An eviction notice is actually a formal letter informing the occupant that their lease has been terminated, for reasons as contained in the letter of demand, and is sent in terms of the appropriate notice clause of the lease. In short, the letter seeks to inform the occupant that they must leave, failing which a formal eviction application process may be commenced. Depending on whether the lease is terminated

during the rental period stated in the lease or when the rental continues on a month-to-month basis, the tenant would either have to vacate immediately or within a calendar month.

While the process may be done by the landlord him-/herself, there are particular nuances that can determine the success of the process. It is thus better to consult an attorney with knowledge of rental property law – and so avoid failing in the eviction application and having to commence with the entire process from scratch again.

**Q** What should a landlord avoid doing when trying to evict a tenant for non-payment?

**MS:** Landlords should never engage in 'self-help' evictions (like changing locks, shutting off utilities, or removing tenant's belongings) as this actually carries civil and potential criminal consequences. Always follow the legal advice of an attorney versed in rental property law.

**Q** Can a landlord and tenant come to an agreement outside of court?

**MS:** Yes, landlords and tenants can negotiate an agreement or payment plan to avoid an eviction or legal action for money owing. This should be documented in writing, with both parties keeping a copy. Any indulgences granted to a tenant can be hugely problematic unless there is a firm agreement in place that can be acted upon if the indulgence is abused by the tenant.

A very important point is that if a settlement agreement is to carry real strength, it would be best to have that agreement made an order of court and that can only be achieved if a legal matter has actually been instituted in a court of law.

A settlement agreement that is not an order of court is nothing more than a contract giving rise to the defaulting party being sued for damages or being compelled to specifically perform its contractual obligation/s, whereas a settlement agreement that is an order of court and which

is breached, is contemptuous and worthy of court sanction and immediate action. By way of example: if a landlord and tenant agree that a sum of money will be paid and this is incorporated into an agreement, if payment is not made then the landlord can issue summons against the tenant. If, however, there has been legal action instituted already and the self-same agreement has been made an order of court thereafter and it is breached by the tenant, the landlord will have an immediate right to execute upon the order and instruct the sheriff to carry out the necessary attachment of the tenant's property.

**Q** How can landlords avoid potential litigation when dealing with non-paying tenants?

**MS:** Landlords can:

- Thoroughly screen tenants before renting
- Maintain open communication lines
- Ensure lease agreements are clear and comprehensive
- Always follow the law
- Consult with an attorney when in doubt.



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# Preserving the footprint of Southern African Jewish life online

By GERALDINE AUERBACH, MBE (co-founder of CHOL with Eli Rabinowitz of Perth, Professor Adam Mendelsohn UCT, and Gavin Morris, Director of the SAJM)

The internet has provided unprecedented facilities for connecting people and preserving their stories. Recognising the potential of this, an organisation called Community History On-Line (CHOL) was set up in 2020 under the auspices of the Kaplan Centre at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the South African Jewish Museum (SAJM). It brings together all those working on or interested in the history of Jewish communities in Southern Africa.

CHOL has created a website where, in one place, you can find links to activity of this kind. CHOL has

already listed 42 communities with some form of online presence, the most comprehensive being Kimberley and Zimbabwe/Zambia, and with the latest additions being the small towns of Ceres, Laingsburg and Darling.

We have sections for family sagas and monographs of individuals and already there are 28 of these posted on the 'Memoirs' page of the site, ranging from eight pages to 300 pages each. They cover Jewish life in places like Upington, District Six, Malmesbury, Johannesburg and Pietersburg, as well as the role of South African Jews in the Second World War.

### SHARE YOUR STORIES

A special section is devoted to 'Share Your Stories', in which South Africans now living all over the world share their creative writing. An inspired idea of Gail Loon Lustig, a retired doctor who grew up in Bellville where her father was a GP, she worked as a family doctor in Tel Aviv. She has already attracted 34 writers and CHOL has uploaded over a hundred original stories.

Stories fill an important gap between history and biography, providing a true picture not only of the facts but also of the emotional elements associated with the

facts. You can read more on the 'Stories' page.

### INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS AND STORY-READING SESSIONS

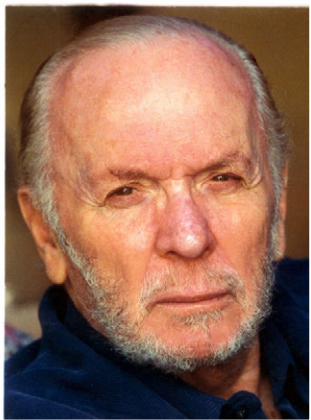
More than just a website, CHOL is a living and growing forum for interested people around the world. In line with this, CHOL organises regular international seminars as well as story reading sessions (which are also all recorded and posted on the website on the 'Presentations' page).

### SOUTH AFRICANS INVOLVED IN MUSIC

Our next international Zoom Seminar sessions take place in November and early December and are focused on South Africans who have been involved in music. There will be four fascinating weekly two-hour-long sessions with two presentations in each session.

Presentations with illustrations and musical examples will cover subjects as diverse as Jascha Heifetz's tour to South Africa in 1932; King Kong – the groundbreaking all-black musical cast with its all-Jewish production team; the Jewish music documentation centre at Stellenbosch University; and the

story of the lyricist who wrote the lyrics for the English-language adaptation of the musical Les Misérables, Herbert Kretzmer – from Kroonstad to Victor Hugo via Fleet Street.



**HERBERT KRETZMER**, the lyricist who wrote the English words for the stage production of *Les Misérables*



Malmesbury Synagogue

To be added to the Community History On-Line (CHOL) mailing list, kindly email [info@chol.co.za](mailto:info@chol.co.za) or log in to the CHOL website: [www.chol.website](http://www.chol.website)



The beautiful Kimberley Synagogue

# Tragedy and destruction in the 21st Century

By CRAIG NUDELMAN



*A former Capetonian, CRAIG NUDELMAN is now based in Sydney, where he has settled into Australian life with his wife Gabi, and two daughters, Jessica and Livi. He works for the Jewish Communal Appeal and enjoys singing as a member of Sydney's Central Synagogue choir and the Sydney Philharmonia Choir. The Cape Jewish Chronicle is privileged to continue to receive regular articles written by Craig.*

The week of the 7 October 2023 will be forever etched in our minds as Jews worldwide. We have witnessed the greatest mass killings of Jews since the Shoah. People who, for just being Jews, were murdered in cold blood by Hamas, a terrorist organisation operating in Gaza. Their leadership, who are in Lebanon, Qatar, and Iran, lauded this attack not on Israel, but on innocent Jewish civilians. Hamas were praised, not only by other countries in the Middle East who have been enemies of Israel since its inception in 1948, but from democracies and liberal groups around the world, including South Africa. How despicable!

Hamas is a terrorist organisation that is bent on killing Jews. It is not there to be a mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is not there to assist in the creation of

a two-state solution. In fact, in its charter, the Hamas Covenant (Article 13) states that “[Peace] initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement... Those conferences are no more than a means to appoint the infidels as arbitrators in the lands of Islam... There is no solution for the Palestinian problem except by Jihad. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are but a waste of time, an exercise in futility.”

In the attack, 1 300 innocent individuals were killed, including babies, children, women, men, and elderly people. Amidst the carnage, some disturbing comments were made in the media and on social media. Did you read the tweet that said, “Hamas did not behead 40 babies. They killed 40 and some were beheaded.”? As if that makes it OK. I mean, how in the world can you even think that, let alone tweet it? Other awful protests occurred around the world, including in Sydney, where my family and I live.

On the Monday morning following the attack, the leadership of the Jewish Communal Appeal (JCA), where I work, briefed us on extra security measures placed on the building, which is a Jewish community centre that houses most of the Jewish communal organisations in Sydney, including the Sydney Jewish Museum. I was quite nervous to walk outside and had terrible flashbacks of the nervousness I had in Cape Town during anti-Israel flare-ups. I once again felt unsafe to walk in the streets, even though I don't look overtly Jewish. I don't wear a kippah, tzitzit, or a Magen David or Chai around my neck. On Wednesday I had to go to an education symposium at Moriah College, a Jewish Day School. I needed to either catch a bus or an Uber. I chose to catch the bus because I didn't want to be in a car with a potential antisemite, or with someone who did not condemn the terrorist attacks in Israel.

Like so many of you, I'm sure, I was continuously checking the news and social media – which was very bad for my mental health.

However, I did check in with my friends. One thing that this atrocity has done is bring people together and re-establish bonds we may have lost over the past few months or years. I reached out to people living in Israel that I hadn't seen or spoken to for a long time, to see how they were faring. No one was feeling OK. One of the posts many friends and influencers in the Jewish space were sharing was “Physically, I am OK.

Emotionally, I am shattered.” One close friend in New York could not sleep at all, so she, another friend in Melbourne and I made a group on WhatsApp to debrief with one another across time zones. It was really helpful to get everything out and assisted me with my feelings during this awful time.

One thing that struck me was the amazing way the Jewish community

came together. We did not protest or call for the murder of Gazans or even Hamas. We held vigils and community gatherings to mourn, comfort each other and show how much we care about our fellow Jews in Israel. I hear the words “Am Yisrael Chai” again and again from my fellow Jews, regardless of religious or political affiliation.

This month's article may seem a little like a stream of consciousness. I'm still processing my thoughts and feelings into a logical, intellectual argument. For now, though, this is one small way that I can show solidarity with my Jewish brothers and sisters in Israel, South Africa, Australia – and wherever else you may be reading this. I hope for a peaceful solution after this war – no more innocent lives should be taken.

Am Yisrael Chai.

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