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When there is ignorance, there is fear



**BONNY
FELDMAN**
 Editor

A podcast I recently listened to struck a chord. It featured two remarkable people: Aziz Abu-Sarah, a Palestinian, and Maoz Inon, a Jewish Israeli. Both lost close family members to violence committed by ‘the other side’. Rather than allowing grief to harden into hatred, they joined forces to build a movement called *The Future is Peace*.

During the conversation, Maoz made a comment that stayed with me: “When there is ignorance, there is fear; when there is fear, there is hate; when there is hate, we can do horrible things to one another.”

It is a simple observation, but a powerful one.

Recently, I saw that same principle at work in a very different context – right here in Cape Town.

I heard someone remark that there are so many people living on the streets in Sea Point because some organisations provide food and support, encouraging them to remain there. The comment was delivered with obvious frustration, portraying rough sleepers as a nuisance that detracts from an otherwise beautiful suburb and threatens property values.

But such a view can only flourish when there is little understanding of the realities behind life on the streets.

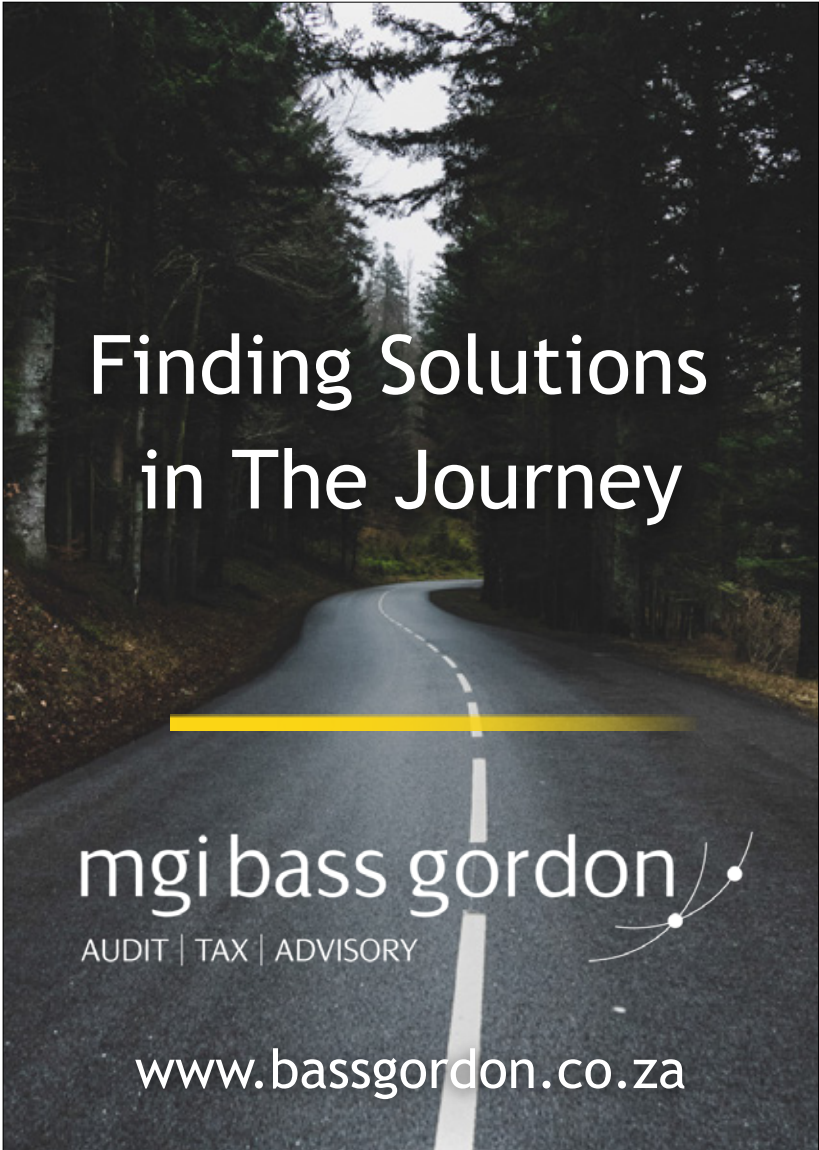
Without knowledge of how people end up there, it becomes easy to reduce them to stereotypes. We stop seeing individuals and begin seeing a problem. Ignorance breeds fear. Fear breeds resentment. And resentment makes compassion far more difficult.

The challenge is that housing insecurity and life on the streets are among the most visible social issues facing Cape Town. Yet many of us know very little about the circumstances that lead people there, the trauma they experience, or the pathways that can help them rebuild their lives.

If we remain uninformed, we are unlikely to become part of the solution. We will continue to walk past the problem, hope someone else will deal with it, or complain about it. In fact, in this scenario, it’s easy to tap into NIMBYism (which stands for ‘Not in my backyard’.)

Until recently, I had not given the issue much thought myself. That changed when I encountered people who had once slept on the streets but whose lives had been transformed through the work of Souper Troopers, an organisation founded by two members of our community.

Listening to their stories was a humbling experience. It became clear that many factors that lead to a person losing their home are complex and often beyond their control. I was reminded of the saying: ‘There, but for the grace of G-d, go I.’ It can, in fact, happen to all of us.



Finding Solutions in The Journey

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SHABBAT TIMES

DATE		PORTION	CANDLE LIGHTING		
			Earliest	Latest	Ends
3/4 July	19 Tammuz	Pinchas	16:48	17:31	18:26
10/11 July	26 Tammuz	Matot – Masei	16:51	17:35	18:30
17/18 July	4 Av	Devarim, Chazon	16:54	17:39	18:34
24/25 July	11 Av	Vaetchanan	16:58	17:43	18:38
31 July/ 1 August	18 Av	Eikev	17:01	17:48	18:42

The answer is not to look away. It is not enough to shake our heads and say, “What a terrible problem.”

As Maoz urged in the podcast: “Show up.”

Learn about the issue. Volunteer. Support organisations doing meaningful work. Use your skills, your resources or your

voice. Every person helped back into stability benefits not only themselves, but their family, their community and our city as a whole.

The first step towards change is understanding. The next is action. And both begin when we choose to see the person before we see the problem. ●



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South African Jewish delegation brings message of resilience and hope to AJC Global Forum



Last month, I had the opportunity to attend the American Jewish Committee (AJC) Global Forum in Washington, DC, representing the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies as part of the broader South African delegation.



DANIEL BLOCH
Exec. Director
Cape SAJBD

The conference brought together Jewish leaders and community representatives from around the world to discuss the challenges, opportunities and future of Jewish life.

A SHARED CHALLENGE, A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

With more than 2 000 delegates in attendance, the AJC Global Forum (31 May–2 June) tackled some of the most pressing issues facing Jewish communities today. Yet amid discussions about antisemitism, security, and global affairs, a clear theme emerged: the Jewish future cannot be built on responding to threats alone. It must also be built on strong communities, proud Jewish identity, and a commitment to ensuring that Jewish life continues to flourish.

A POSITIVE STORY FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Back home in South Africa, Jewish life continues to thrive. Unlike in some countries where Jews feel compelled to conceal their identity, South African Jews proudly and openly express their Jewishness. We attend *shul*, celebrate our traditions, host

Jewish and Israel-related events, and participate actively in public life.

This is not to suggest that challenges do not exist. Anti-Israel protests continue to take place, media bias remains a concern, and online hatred continues to spread. Yet our community remains resilient, vibrant, and optimistic.

The delegation met with a range of international stakeholders and supporters who have a keen interest in the well-being of South African Jewry. These discussions highlighted a significant gap between international perceptions of South Africa and the lived reality of our community. Delegates left with a greater understanding of Jewish life in South Africa and a renewed commitment to supporting our community.



AJC CEO Ted Deutch



VOICES OF COURAGE AND RESILIENCE

The forum opened with moving testimony from hostage survivors Aviva and Keith Siegel, who shared their experiences following the atrocities of 7 October. Their message was one of hope, resilience, and determination. Aviva, originally from South Africa, inspired attendees with her vision for a brighter future for the next generation.

Another powerful moment came when the parents of Sarah Milgrim and Yaron Lischinsky, the young couple murdered in Washington, DC, in May 2025, addressed delegates. Despite their unimaginable loss, they spoke about honouring their children's memories through a commitment to hope, community, and peace.

LEARNING FROM GLOBAL CHALLENGES

While Jewish students at South African universities generally

Wkaku Appiah-Menka (Ghana), Simone Sulcas (Cape SAJBD Chairperson), Asoka Ranaweera (US), Daniel Bloch (Cape SAJBD Executive Director)

feel safe and supported on campus, students in parts of the United States and Europe continue to face antisemitism, exclusion, and, in some cases, physical violence.

The AJC outlined its work with university leadership, Jewish students and campus communities to develop effective responses to antisemitism. While South Africa has not experienced these challenges on the same scale, understanding the experiences of Jewish communities abroad and the strategies being implemented remains invaluable.

CONFRONTING ONLINE ANTISEMITISM

One of the most pressing issues discussed throughout the conference was the rise of online antisemitism.



Keith and Aviva Segal, October 7 survivors and former hostages, present AJC CEO Ted Deutch with a special gift from the Hostages and Missing Families Forum in recognition of the AJC's advocacy to bring the hostages home.

Senior representatives from TikTok, Meta, Google, YouTube, and X engaged directly with delegates, acknowledging shortcomings in addressing antisemitic content and outlining new strategies, including the use of artificial intelligence, to identify and remove harmful material more effectively.

The South African delegation participated in a private discussion with more than 20 Jewish leaders from around the world and senior representatives from these companies. The conversation was candid and robust, with participants raising concerns about the role social media platforms have played in enabling online hatred



Daniel Bloch (Cape SAJBD Executive Director) in conversation with Kwaku Appiah-Menka (Ghana)



Simone Sulcas (Cape SAJBD Chairperson), Aviva Segal (Israeli-South African October 7 captivity survivor), Daniel Bloch (Cape SAJBD Executive Director)

and hostility toward Jewish communities.

The SAJBD raised important questions regarding legal processes, local support mechanisms, content-removal procedures, and how technology companies can better assist communities facing organised online hate campaigns.

Perhaps the most significant outcome was the establishment of direct relationships with key decision-makers at Meta and Google. These connections will strengthen the SAJBD's ability to combat online antisemitism and advocate more effectively on behalf of South African Jewry.

ANTISEMITISM, ANTIZIONISM, AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

A dedicated session examined the relationship between antisemitism and antizionism.



Honouring past and present AJC National Presidents

Speakers argued that antizionism often functions not merely as political criticism but as a driver of antisemitism and Jewish exclusion, echoing historical efforts to delegitimise Zionism and marginalise Jews from public life.

The discussion explored how institutions and campuses have often treated antizionism as a purely political position while focusing on more traditional forms of antisemitism. Speakers called for renewed efforts to educate about Zionism as a legitimate national movement, to challenge forms of antizionism that deny Israel's right to exist, and to foster spaces where criticism of Israeli policy can coexist with firm opposition to demonisation and delegitimation.

AFRICA'S GROWING STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Africa emerged as another important focus of discussion.

Many countries increasingly view the continent as a strategic partner as demand grows for innovative solutions in water security, food production, and energy development. Israel continues to play a leading role in developing technologies that address these challenges.

Countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Zambia were highlighted as examples of nations prioritising practical

partnerships, development opportunities, and the needs of their citizens over political rhetoric.

STRENGTHENING JEWISH COMMUNITIES WORLDWIDE

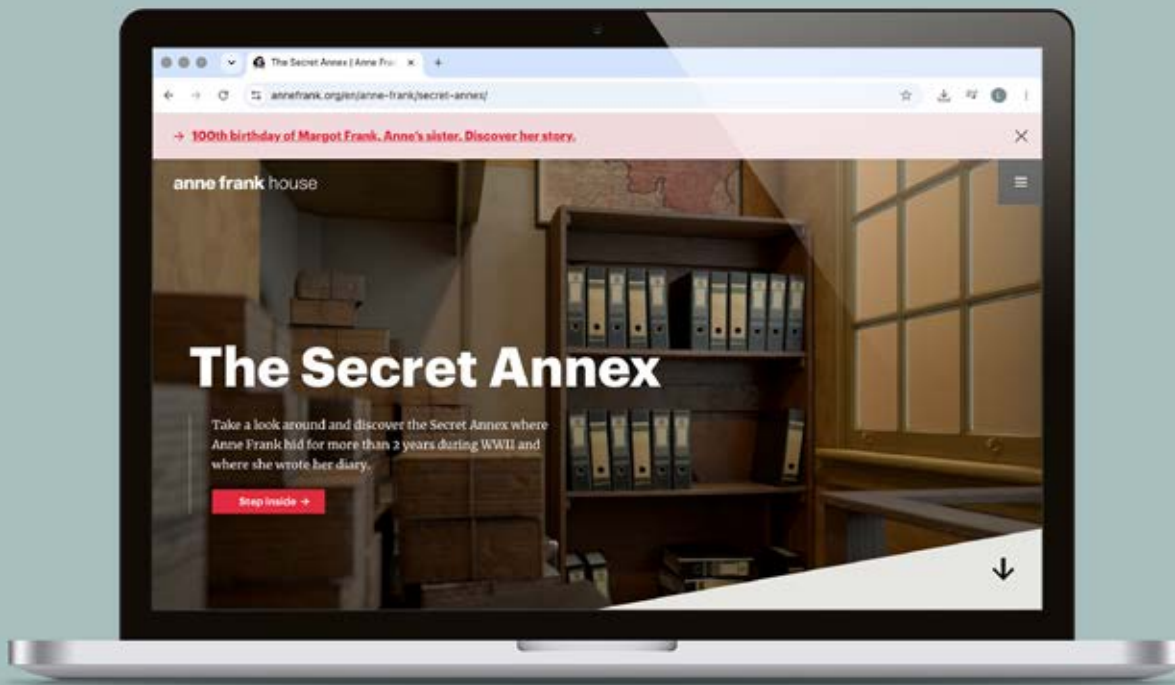
The AJC Global Forum provided an invaluable platform for learning, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas. It also reaffirmed the importance of the work undertaken by the SAJBD in protecting the rights, security, and future of South African Jewry.

As delegates returned home, they did so with new partnerships, fresh insights, and renewed confidence in the strength and resilience of Jewish communities both in South Africa and around the world. ●

See our Ed Talks reportback from the AJC Global Forum: [Part One](#) and [Two](#)



Talk by Harmeet K. Dhillon, US Assistant Attorney General, US Dept. Of Justice Civil Rights Division



Delve into each room and learn about the lives of the family through objects in the rooms.

If a tour of the Anne Frank house is on your bucket list...

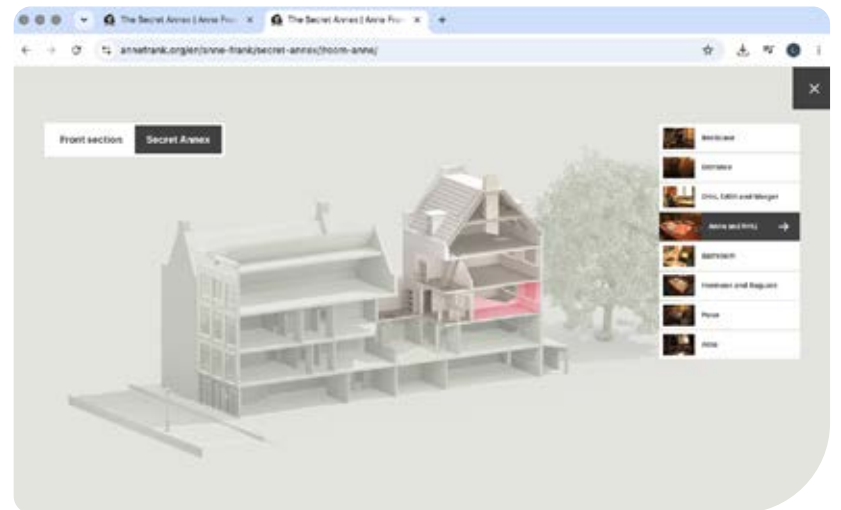
Anne Frank House was established in 1957 – a collaborative effort led by Otto Frank, Anne's father. An independent non-profit organisation, the House runs a museum in the house where Anne Frank went into hiding.

On a recent visit to Cape Town, Aaron Peterer, who works at the House, demonstrated a new offering from the Museum: a virtual reality (VR) tour of the section of the property where the Frank family hid.

What this VR tour means is that you do not have to travel

to Amsterdam to see where the Frank family were in hiding during World War II – no tickets to be purchased, no long queues to wait in, and no cost involved.

One is able to 'visit' the House from the comfort of your own lounge, your desk – in fact, from anywhere – using a computer or

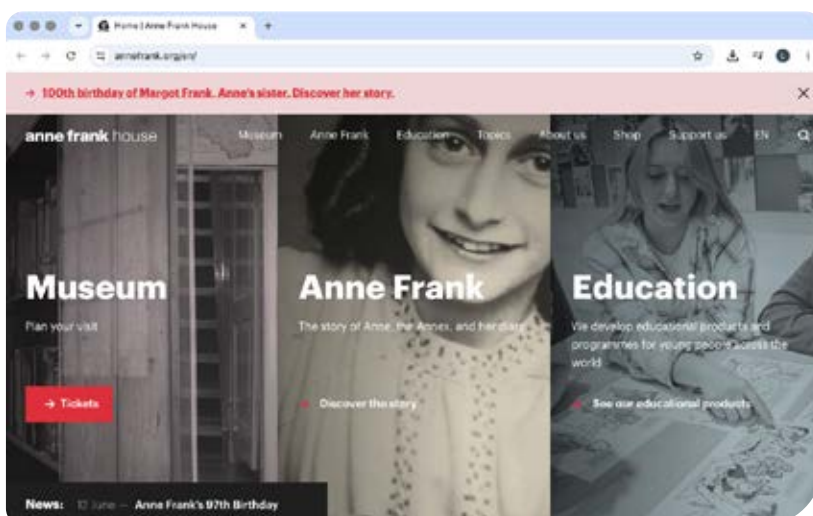


The user can navigate the Annex in many ways, one of which is by using the interactive map

your phone. It creates the ability to explore the hiding place of Anne Frank and her family, and gives a special view into the Secret Annex where Anne Frank and the seven other people hid during WWII.

In the VR app, all of the rooms in the Secret Annex are furnished to reflect exactly what the interior looked like when occupied by the group in hiding, between 1942 and 1944. Everything was carefully built and modelled in 3D by the creators of the VR app.

In the actual museum, however, the Secret Annex is empty. After the eight people hiding in the house were found and arrested in 1944, the furniture was removed. Leaving the rooms of the Secret Annex empty was Otto Frank's wish. ●



EXPLORE THIS VIRTUAL TOUR HERE.

Visit the Anne Frank exhibition at the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre where you can view a model of the building in which the Frank family was hidden.

STORIES

The name that chose my daughter

When Cape Town's Rabbi Nissen Goldman and his wife, Ariella, welcomed their daughter into the world shortly after Shavuot, they already knew her first name would be Chaya, in honour of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson. But the second name remained undecided.

What followed was an experience that Rabbi Goldman describes as a powerful example of the Jewish teaching that parents receive divine inspiration when naming a child.

"We had discussed several possibilities, but none of them felt right," he said. "We decided that if we had a girl, we'd worry about the second name when the time came."

A few days before the birth, Rabbi Goldman came across a news report about Raizel, a young Chabad woman from a family of *shluchim* who had tragically passed away at the age of just 23 during Shavuot. Although



he would normally avoid such stories, something compelled him to stop and read. "There was something about her that wouldn't let me scroll past," he recalled. "I read about her life and was deeply moved by the kind of person she was – someone who seemed to radiate kindness, love and selfless giving." The story remained with him in the days that followed.

"Then one day, while driving home, the thought came to me with complete certainty: if we have a girl, she is Raizel. It wasn't a suggestion or an idea to consider. It felt like something that had already been decided."

When he shared the thought with Ariella, her reaction was immediate. "She burst into tears and said, 'Yes, that's the name.'"

The story did not end there. After their daughter's birth, the Goldmans contacted Raizel's parents in New York to tell them what had happened. During an emotional

video call, they learnt more about the young woman whose name their daughter would carry.

They then made an unusual request: that Raizel's father be the one to formally name the baby. Because the Goldmans were still in hospital over Shabbat and unable to attend a *minyan*, the naming took place at Raizel's family's Chabad House in upstate New York, where her father was called to the Torah and announced the name *Chaya Raizel*. "It felt as though our daughter brought a brief moment of joy and healing to a family emerging from *shivah*," Rabbi Goldman said.

Reflecting on the experience, he remains convinced that the process was guided from Above. "It never felt like we chose her name," he said. "It felt like the name chose her – and chose us." ●



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COMMUNITY NEWS



LEADING WITH PURPOSE

Grace Harding's journey to the top of the business world has been anything but conventional.

Today, as Global CEO of Ocean Basket, she is taking one of South Africa's best-known restaurant brands into new international markets. But her rise was not built on prestigious qualifications or a carefully mapped-out career plan.

Instead, Harding describes a path marked by uncertainty, setbacks, and determination. Speaking at the UJC's Business Breakfast in late June, she explained how growing up with a parent living with bipolar depression shaped the people-centred approach she brings to leadership.

"Being exposed to people's suffering early in my life made me far more sensitive to the need for care for others. That has translated into deep empathy for those I interact with," she says.

"The uncertainty and lack of a sense of safety I experienced as a child motivated me to want to change that – both for myself

and for others." She believes the impact leaders have on others is determined by the way they behave.

That drive, together with a willingness to keep learning, has defined her career. Harding credits mentors including Spur CEO Val Nichas, Ocean Basket founder Fats Lazarides, and business coach Gaby Rajak with helping her along the way.

"I have no ego, and will not accept defeat," she says. "I am one of those crazy ones who believes I can make some positive dents in the world."

Unlike many corporate leaders, Harding did not follow the

traditional route of obtaining a university degree before climbing the corporate ladder. Instead, she worked her way up, developing skills she believes will become increasingly valuable.

"The world of work has changed," she says. "We've moved from the Industrial Age to the Digital Age, and many of the things we studied for will no longer be done by humans. Work will be defined less by job titles and technical knowledge, and more by human skills such as self-awareness, critical thinking, deep listening, and the ability to simplify complexity."

She also stresses the importance of collaboration – not only within organisations but with competitors, suppliers, regulators, and other stakeholders.

Before joining Ocean Basket, Harding spent more than a decade running an internal communications consultancy that helped organisations connect business strategy with employees. The experience taught her the importance of partnerships, confidence, and understanding every aspect of a business rather than focusing on a single area of expertise.

Harding believes effective leaders must combine compassion with high standards. She describes her leadership style as "kind and tenacious", expecting people to take ownership of their work while providing support when needed. "Adults are responsible for themselves, so the business leader should give them the space to take ownership of their own work."

While many business leaders focus on South Africa's economic challenges, Harding believes mindset plays a critical role in success. Rather than dwelling on factors beyond their control, she argues that businesses should focus on what they can influence. She notes that although the economy is tougher than it was a few years ago, Ocean Basket is stronger than it was before the pandemic.

"It's all about how you frame things," she says. "The negative stuff will burn you to the ground."

Despite leading a major international company, Harding recently began a Global MBA through Henley Business School. She says the programme has strengthened her existing capabilities while exposing her to new ideas and perspectives.

"The value is also about the people I am with. Young, dynamic South Africans from all kinds of industries, challenging my thinking and teaching me new dances."

For Harding, leadership is a continuous journey of growth, curiosity, and service. Her story suggests that success is shaped not by where someone starts, but by a willingness to keep learning, adapting, and moving forward. ●



STORIES

It all began at Herzlia

Jewish schooling in Cape Town developed from small community-based institutions into a comprehensive Jewish day school system over the first half of the twentieth century.

One of the earliest Jewish schools was the Hope Mill Hebrew Public School, situated near the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation at the top of Government Avenue. By 1901, it had about 350 pupils.

To strengthen Jewish religious education, a Talmud Torah school had been established in District Six in 1899. By 1903, it had grown to approximately 100 pupils. The movement toward more organised Jewish schooling continued with the establishment of the United Hebrew Schools of Cape Town in 1919, operating from 101 Hope Street under the leadership of Principal Joseph Homa.

A major turning point came with the arrival of Rabbi Abrahams as Chief Rabbi of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation. His vision helped revive the idea of a full Jewish day



Soccer team: Back row on left, Bernard Brom. 2nd from left: Solly Kreiner (former Mayor of Cape Town). Jack Levin, 2nd from right. Front row at end sitting next to Meyer Katz is Jack Schneider who lives in Cape Town.



Picture of the matric class of 1958: Jack Levin in the front middle (cap on side); In the top on left is Bernard Brom; Leonard Feinstein (married to Renee, late Stanley Lewis's daughter) is in the middle just behind the girl that's between Shalom Brenner and teacher Jack Sagel.

school. The first day school class opened in January 1940 at 101 Hope Street.

In 1945, the morning school was given a separate identity from the Hope Street Talmud Torah and was named Herzlia. Rapid growth followed. By 1948, the school had 225 pupils and six standards, prompting the purchase of 4½ acres of land in Highlands Estate to accommodate future expansion.

The 1950s marked a period of significant development. In 1955, enrolment reached 423 pupils, the school expanded to Standard 9, and Myer Katz was appointed head of Herzlia. Construction began on the Highlands Estate site, and in 1956 four foundation stones were laid by Chief Rabbi Professor Abrahams, Max Rabie, Ben Wilder, and Meyer H. Goldschmidt in memory of Jacob Gitlin.

On 29 April 1957, 560 pupils gathered in the new school hall for the first time. Enrolment soon approached 1 000 students, leading to the construction of additional facilities, including a preparatory school block and a hostel (now Highlands Primary). These facilities enabled Jewish children from distant regions, including Upington and Zambia, to receive a Jewish education.

Jack Levin, who has lived in Houston, Texas, for almost 50 years still retains fond memories of the early years of the Highlands campus of the school – memories that he shared with the *Cape Jewish Chronicle*.



“One of my most treasured memories of Herzlia is the official opening of the Highlands campus in April 1958,” he says. “It was a landmark occasion attended by many of the school's visionaries and pioneers, including Chief Rabbi Israel Abrahams, M.H. Goldschmidt, Ben Wilder, Sylvia Smaller, Mr Davson, and the then Principal of the school Myer Katz.”

Jack recalls that this official opening of the campus came a few months after the pupils relocated to the new campus from their Hope Street premises. At the time, he was in Matric – one of the 17 matric pupils who made up one of the earliest Matric classes at Herzlia.

Proudly a member of the school choir, which was directed by Mr Goldberg, Jack recalls the singing of *Hallelujah* as the school was formally declared open.

Jack continues: “Following the ceremony for the opening, matric pupils guided visitors on tours of the new facilities. Among the group I showed around were Solly and Frieda Rechtman, who had recently returned to Cape Town from Israel, and were considering enrolling their children at Herzlia. They were impressed by the school and, unbeknown to any of us at the time, this introduction would prove significant: their daughter, Leorah, and I would later meet, marry in 1965, and go on to share a lifetime together!”

Looking back, the opening of the Highlands campus remains a cherished memory – an occasion that celebrated Herzlia's growth and, in an unexpected way, helped shape Jack's own future. ●

Mark Solomon
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VIEWS

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DANIEL BLOCH
Exec. Director
Cape SAJBD

THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE – THAT’S IF YOU BELIEVE IN THE TRUTH...

The week of 15-19 June will certainly be remembered, at least by me, as one filled with an extraordinary range of emotions and events.

At times, it felt like I was watching a movie and this week seemed to have it all: drama, comedy, aggression, demonstrations, singing, legal arguments, false accusations, and what could only be described as Hollywood-style theatrics.

So where does truth fit into all of this? For some, truth is the foundation of everything. For others, it appears to be little more than an optional version of events.

I attended the three-day court hearing involving Cape Union Mart and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC). The legal merits of the case have been widely reported and can be read through various sources, so I won't repeat them here. What I will say is that Cape Union Mart's legal team conducted themselves professionally and presented their arguments clearly and effectively.

Based on what I observed, and noting that I am not a lawyer, it appeared that the case centred on allegations that defamatory claims have been made against both Cape Union Mart and

Philip Krawitz. In my view, the PSC's legal team presented little evidence to substantiate those claims. It is now for the court to decide whether the protest slogans, posters, and conduct complained of exceed the bounds of lawful protest and amount to unlawful defamation.

One of the most striking moments of the proceedings was the apparent argument made by the PSC legal team that the rights to protest and to freedom of expression are not necessarily dependent on the factual accuracy of the statements being made. In other words, that individuals may protest and make allegations regardless of whether those allegations are true, partly true, or false. Several questions from the bench suggested the court was carefully interrogating that proposition.

Outside the courtroom, events seemed to mirror the arguments taking place inside.

On the second day, PSC representative Yusuf Chikte publicly announced what he described as "a serious incident", accusing the South African Jewish Board of Deputies of attacking a journalist. Minutes later, in an aggressive manner, he called me out by name and accused me of allowing such conduct to occur.

I rejected those allegations immediately and challenged him on what I regarded as defamatory statements. This serious accusation was made without any evidence of SAJBD involvement – typifying the false narrative and lies used by the PSC to pedal their propaganda and hate campaign. The video of this exchange is available on our social media channels.

Unfortunately, this was not the only incident that raised questions about the accuracy of claims being made. Videos circulating online show heated confrontations between opposing groups, including one in which an anti-Israel supporter approached pro-Cape Union Mart demonstrators while shouting accusations, death chants and other hostile slogans. Such conduct sits uneasily alongside claims of peaceful protest and respectful engagement. Nothing screams (excuse the pun) peaceful like a good death chant.

Perhaps the most surreal moment came when, during one particularly tense exchange, Mr Chikte suddenly collapsed to the ground, creating panic and confusion among those present. The incident quickly became the subject of widespread speculation and

online commentary, illustrating how rapidly narratives can develop before facts are properly established.

Ultimately, the central issue throughout the week seemed to be the value placed on truth itself. Courts exist precisely because facts matter. Allegations require evidence. Serious accusations carry serious consequences.

In the months ahead, various matters involving anti-Israel activists and organisations will continue before the High Court, Equality Court, the South African Human Rights Commission, and other legal forums. Those proceedings will provide opportunities for evidence to be tested and competing claims to be scrutinised. The Cape SAJBD is involved in several of these cases.

Whether one supports or opposes any particular cause, the principle should remain the same: truth matters. Without it, public debate descends into misinformation, reputations are unfairly damaged, and justice becomes increasingly difficult to achieve.

Perhaps, after all, the old saying still rings true: *The truth shall set you free* – but only if you are prepared to accept it. ●

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Explore our community with Daniel, as he talks to community members, stakeholders and partners. **ED Talks is serious... But not too serious.**

Watch on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

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ED TALKS
WITH DANIEL BLOCH
CAPE SAJBD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



STORIES

Beyond the bakery: a Nazi past and a complicated legacy

A story recently resurfaced in the South African Jewish press – the story of *C'est Si Bon*, a celebrated bakery that once operated in Bellville.



The story was researched by Gail Lustig (née Loon), a retired doctor living in Israel who grew up in Bellville and studied at the University of Cape Town.

“Growing up in Bellville, we heard rumours of an incident at *C'est Si Bon*, our favourite bakery in the area,” Gail recalls. “The pastries were simply outstanding – aesthetically and taste-wise. We loved going there to stock up on treats that were exceptional in every way. None of our mothers could come near the standard of *C'est Si Bon*.”

The “incident” she refers to involved a Holocaust survivor named Issy (a pseudonym) and the bakery’s owner, André Pouliart.

“It was probably sometime in the 1960s,” Gail says. “A customer in his late 40s walked into the shop with his wife. It was their first visit. Within minutes of entering the store, Issy felt the ground shaking under his feet. His head throbbed with the sudden realisation of what he saw behind the counter.”

According to the account, Issy pointed at the owner and cried out, “You, you killed my family, you Nazi! It’s you! I remember you from the camps!”

The bakery fell silent. Pouliart reportedly continued working at the till without responding. The survivor left immediately, supported by his wife.

The story spread through the local Jewish community, and many people subsequently boycotted the bakery. Despite the allegation, there appears to have been no official investigation by the police or other South African authorities.

Although Gail never heard any further developments, the incident remained in her memory. Decades later, as a member of the Bellville Memorabilia Facebook group, she noticed frequent posts reminiscing about *C'est Si Bon*. Through discussions with

former residents of Bellville, she learned the names of the owners: André and Wanda Pouliart.

As she began researching further, Gail discovered documentation confirming – through his own admission – that André Pouliart had served in the Waffen SS during World War II. A Belgian national, he volunteered for the Waffen SS in 1942 and was deployed to the Eastern Front. After being wounded in 1943, he was transferred to Berlin.

“I wrote to the German Bundesarchiv, and they sent me various documents,” Gail says, including a statement Pouliart made to German authorities during the War. In the translated document, he wrote: ‘And I was a member of the national socialist Flemish party.’ He went on to say, “On the 01/08/1941 I volunteered to join the Waffen SS. I felt it was my duty as a Germane to join the rows of German soldiers.” (Note that the meaning of ‘Germane’ in the statement is ‘one belonging to the German nations’.)

“I found it shocking to read Pouliart’s text about himself, with the words ‘Heil Hitler’ in his own handwriting at the bottom,” Gail says.

“Apparently, the Belgian soldiers who joined the SS did so voluntarily.”

The archival evidence leaves little doubt about his wartime allegiance. In addition, Gail has found evidence relating to the area in which Pouliart served between 1941 and 1942, as the German army pushed towards Leningrad. “The area had many Jewish *shtetlach*,” Gail explains, “and there is evidence of mass pogroms and brutal killing of Jews there, so it’s quite possible that Pouliart was involved in this.”

Pouliart had learned the pastry trade from his father, a pastry chef in Brussels. He and his family arrived in South Africa in 1960 – Gail has not yet been able to determine where they lived between the end of the War and their arrival here.

After leaving Bellville in the wake of Issy’s allegation, the family moved to the Strand, where Pouliart opened another successful

Scans of the original handwritten statement that André Pouliart gave to the German authorities in 1942.

business, the Ultra Bakery. Following his death, his wife and son relocated to Palma de Mallorca in Spain – a destination that became home to many former Nazis and Nazi collaborators after the war.

Gail’s research raises broader questions about the concern that many former Nazi soldiers and collaborators may have settled in South Africa after World War II, in particular since many National Party members – the National Party being the ruling party in South Africa at the time – had been Nazi sympathisers. Many Waffen SS volunteers were prosecuted after the War, while others escaped and rebuilt their lives elsewhere in Europe, South America and beyond. ●

The *Cape Jewish Chronicle* tried to ascertain whether any research has been done regarding whether the South African authorities vetted applicants for citizenship after the War. It appears that little research has been done on the topic but, says Professor Milton Shain, “I have no doubt that many Nazi sympathisers settled here. The story of the Bellville man comes as no surprise.”

ON VIEW: AT THE CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST & GENOCIDE CENTRE

Anne Frank

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"Isn't it wonderful that none of us need wait a moment before starting to change the world."
Anne Frank

JUNE 2026 - JULY 2026
SUNDAY - THURSDAY: 10AM - 5PM . FRIDAY: 10AM - 2PM
CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST & GENOCIDE CENTRE,
88 HATFIELD ST, GARDENS



ON VIEW: AT THE CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST & GENOCIDE CENTRE

MORE IMPORTANT THAN LIFE



THE UNDERGROUND ARCHIVE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

This exhibition explores rare photographs and documents from the hidden archive of the Warsaw Ghetto, known today as the Ringelblum Archive. In secret, a collective of academics, writers, and activists documented the mass murder of European Jews as it unfolded. It tells the story of this extraordinary act of resistance a harrowing, painstaking, and ultimately successful effort to preserve the history of the Holocaust through the eyes of its victims.

July 2026 - August 2026
Sunday - Thursday: 10am - 5pm . Friday: 10am - 2pm
Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 88 Hatfield St, Gardens



Memories of Jewish life in Kupishok

When one thinks of the origins of Jewish families in South Africa, Lithuania - its cities and *shtetlach* - looms large. Names such as Vilna, Kovno, Riteve, Ponevez, Kupishok - and others - sound familiar to many of us with *Litvak* origins.

Thousands of Jews from the area left in search of a better life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with sizeable numbers relocating to South Africa, perceived as a *goldene medina* that would allow people to thrive in a way that Lithuania did not. Of course, that dramatic drop in the size of the population was subsequently overshadowed by the destruction of the Holocaust in the 1940s, a period during which more than 90% of Lithuanian Jews were murdered.

Although limited, there has been some recognition of the significant impact of Jews on Lithuania's history, as evidenced in various initiatives being launched. One of these is a project of the Kupiškis Museum.

Kupiškis (the Lithuanian word for Kupershok) is a town in the north-east of the country that many of us know as Kupishok, the town from which your ancestor may have moved to South Africa. Prior to the Second World War, over 40% of the population of the town was Jewish.

As Žygimantė James, a museum specialist at the Museum, explains, "Our museum is planning to write an illustrated youth/children's book (based on known facts) about Jewish life and traditions in our town during the interwar period. It will be based on a child's perspective of life in the town."

She explains that the project is financed by a Lithuanian Council of Culture programme and the Kupiškis District Municipality, and that the intention is to produce an electronic edition of the book in English and a printed book in the Lithuanian language.

To assist with the project, Žygimantė is appealing for families who trace their origins to Kupishok to come forward. "We are looking for letters, documents and photographs that reflect Jewish life in the town," she says, adding that, "These items will bring greater authenticity to the book."

So, if the word *Kupishok* brings warm feelings of a *Bobba* or a *Zeida* who came from there, contact Žygimantė via email at zygimantejames.kem@gmail.com to share your knowledge and items. ●

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AGEING IN PLACE



For many families in the Jewish community, the family home is far more than just a place to live. It is where families gather around the Shabbat table, where grandchildren visit during Yom Tov and where years of memories are built, shared and passed from one generation to the next.

As time goes on, however, many homeowners begin facing an emotional and practical question: can we continue living safely and comfortably in the home we love?

For families living in double-storey homes, stairs can gradually become a daily challenge. Often, the first signs are small. A hesitation before going upstairs. Avoiding certain rooms. Leaving something behind because the climb feels

like too much effort. For children and loved ones, there may also be a growing concern about safety, independence and what the future might hold.

Yet the thought of leaving a cherished home, familiar surroundings, and a close-knit community can feel overwhelming. Many South Africans assume that growing older means eventually having to downsize or move into a retirement estate. More families,

however, are discovering that there is another option.

Ageing in place has become an increasingly important conversation for homeowners who want to maintain their independence, remain close to loved ones, and continue enjoying the comfort and familiarity of home for years to come.

At Lifta SA, we believe growing older should never mean giving up the home, lifestyle and independence that matter most. A home should continue supporting you through every stage of life, which is why more homeowners are choosing to future-proof their properties with elegant and practical Home Lift solutions.

A Home Lift is not simply about convenience. It is about preserving dignity, independence, safety and quality of life. For many families, it means remaining close to children, grandchildren, friends, places of worship, and the community connections that form such an important part of daily life. It also gives families peace of mind, knowing that movement between floors can remain safe and comfortable long into the future.

Lifta SA specialises in beautifully designed European Home Lifts that combine style, safety and practicality with minimal building work. Unlike traditional lifts that often require major structural changes, our Home Lifts are designed for quick and efficient installation in new or existing homes. Many homeowners are surprised to learn that adding one is often far simpler and less disruptive than expected.

The Duo is ideal for compact spaces and everyday convenience. Designed for two passengers, it travels smoothly between floors using slim support rails that guide the lift safely up and down. Its modern appearance blends

beautifully into the home while maintaining a small footprint, making it a practical solution for homeowners who want greater accessibility without compromising on style.

For homeowners looking for additional space and flexibility, the Trio offers even greater comfort and accessibility. Spacious enough for a wheelchair or multiple passengers, it is ideal for larger homes or families planning for future mobility needs. Whether carrying shopping, luggage or simply moving comfortably between levels, the Trio provides a safe and elegant solution that allows homeowners to continue enjoying every part of their home with confidence.

Both models are designed with safety and ease of use as priorities. Features such as battery backup, smooth start and stop movement, and simple user-friendly controls help provide reassurance for homeowners and their families. Most importantly, they are designed to help people remain independent and comfortable in the homes they cherish most.

When compared to the emotional and financial cost of moving, including transfer fees, estate agent commissions, moving expenses, and the stress of downsizing, many homeowners see a Home Lift as a valuable long-term investment. It not only improves accessibility and convenience but can also add future readiness to the property itself.

At Lifta SA, we are proud to help South African families continue living independently, confidently and comfortably in the homes and communities they treasure most.

Because sometimes the best move is staying exactly where you are. ●

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VIEWS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

WHEN WE PLAY AS ONE TEAM

What the World Cup reminds us about leadership, unity, and community



SIMONE SULCAS
 Chair, Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies

South Africa had just drawn level against the Czech Republic, and for a moment, the country seemed to move as one – attention fixed, reactions immediate, a shared surge of energy felt across homes and WhatsApp groups. It is a reminder of how quickly a single moment on the field can unite a nation. Their hopes now rest on the final group game against South Korea. (By the time this article appears, Bafana's fate will already be sealed.)

As the world turns its attention to the 2026 FIFA World Cup, there is something in this spectacle that resonates beyond the pitch, particularly for those of us engaged in communal leadership. Watching those moments of shared attention, I found myself thinking about what it takes for any community to move with that same sense of purpose.

A World Cup team is not simply a collection of talent. It is built on trust, discipline, and shared purpose. Each player brings something different, yet success depends on cohesion. Individuals matter, but it is the collective that carries the result. The same is true of our community at the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies. We are diverse in outlook and experience, but united in our commitment to protecting and strengthening Jewish life in the Western Cape.

There is a lesson in that opening moment. Community works best when we are aligned – pulling together and moving in the same direction. Alignment does not mean agreement on every issue; it means knowing what we stand for and showing up for one

another when it matters. 'Stronger together' is not simply a phrase; it is a discipline, and, at times, a choice.

On the field, preparation and adaptability are essential. Coaches study their opponents, adjust tactics, and respond in real time. Leadership demands the same. It also requires clarity about what must be confronted directly. In our context, that means addressing antisemitism firmly and responsibly, while continuing to build relationships, advocate with confidence, and ensure that Jewish life remains visibly and constructively part of South Africa's broader story. There is no single playbook – only principles, experience, and the will to act.

Elasticity matters, too: the ability to absorb pressure, adjust, and return to purpose without losing shape. Even strong teams face setbacks. What defines them is how they respond. In communal life, challenges are inevitable – moments of pressure, disagreement, and uncertainty. These test our unity and our sense of purpose.

And then there is the crowd. Football without its supporters is unimaginable. The energy, belief, and shared investment elevate the game. Our community is no different. The Board draws its strength from the people it represents – affiliate organisations, volunteers, and engaged members of our community who contribute to a shared whole.

The World Cup also shows how pride in who we are can sit comfortably alongside respect for others. As South African Jews, we know this balance well: deeply rooted in our Jewish heritage, and fully part of the national story.

The best teams are not those without difference, pressure, or uncertainty. They are those who remember what they are playing for. As the tournament unfolds, that may be the reminder we need most.

And to Bafana Bafana: win or lose, I am proud you are there – carrying us with you. ●

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



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NO PLACE FOR HATE

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

BOOKS

The Persian

Truth. Yours and mine can be completely different. For those that inhabit the clandestine world of spies, agents and sabotage, the truth can be twisted to suit the purpose – causing chaos in the world. A circle of lies. And so, who do we believe?

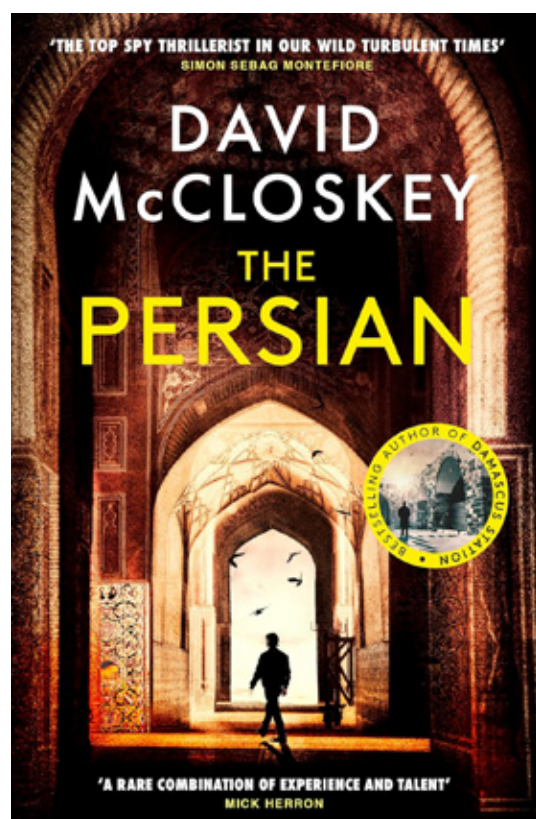


Reviewed
by **BERYL
EICHENBERGER**

David McCloskey in *The Persian* has written a spy thriller that races across the pages, his experience as a CIA analyst surely informing his narrative. The Middle East – a powder keg – the shadow war between Iran and Israel, a harsh reality in our lives, the ripple effect almost as destructive as the war zones. How do we understand lives so far removed from ours, intelligence agencies who recruit and handle, plot, plan, disrupt, sow the lies, reap the violence – in the name of saving their own?

There is no doubt that MacCloskey holds a deep attachment to the Middle East: his detail

DAVID MCCLOSKEY is a former CIA analyst. He worked in field stations across the Middle East and briefed senior White House officials and Arab royalty. His first novel *Damascus Station* was called 'one of the best spy thrillers in years' by *The Times*. His second, *Moscow X*, was a Sunday Times Thriller of the Year.



LISTEN TO THIS BOOK REVIEW



Scan or click on the QR code to listen.

is extraordinary, the contents bold, violent, shocking, emotional, stomach-clenching, ruthless, and yet underneath there is a humanity, love and humour.

Kamran Esfahani is a Persian Jew, a dentist living in Stockholm, Sweden. Desperate to start afresh – a dream of California in his sights – he is recruited to spy for Mossad in Iran as part of a clandestine unit causing chaos and sabotage inside the country. But he is captured, forced to write his confession detailing everything that led to his capture. A testimonial which takes the form of a story within a story – revealing, challenging – the reader is led into the coldness of capture, interrogation, the mental toll of keeping secrets. Who do you protect? When your life is at stake, how much of the truth can you risk when you live in a world of lies?

The story opens gently, quickly escalating into horror as we see the Iranian Shabani family violently torn apart. The characters are indelibly written. We follow the strategies that bring the manipulative head of Mossad, Arik Glitzman, into Kamran's life. The horrors of the Iranian captors. Subsequently, slowly, two lost souls, Kamran and Roya Shabani, caught in the turmoil and chaos of war, become entangled, upended, handled.

McCloskey does not spare us. It's a masterful story – a spy thriller in the John le Carré genre, cleverly constructed with a story line that is heartfelt, probably closer to the truth than can ever be revealed. Follow it closely – dense, complex, revealing and so contemporary – and you won't want to miss a word. ●

While he was in Cape Town for the Franschhoek Literary Festival, Beryl interviewed David McCloskey for Fine Music Radio. Listen to the interview on the station's *Book Choice* programme on Monday, 6 July, 12h00 to 13h00.



BOOKS

NICKI BRIVIK LAUNCHES NEW GUIDE TO INTIMACY AND MODERN RELATIONSHIPS

Sex and intimacy coach Nicki Brivik, the founder of the *AskNicki* website, is launching her debut book, *SEXPONENTIAL*, a candid and practical guide designed to help people in long-term relationships reconnect with intimacy, communication and desire.

Blending psychology, humour, storytelling and evidence-based insights, *SEXPONENTIAL* explores the realities of modern relationships and the often unspoken challenges couples face around intimacy. The book offers practical tools, reflective exercises and honest conversations aimed at helping readers build more connected and fulfilling relationships.

Written in Nicki's accessible, no-shame style, the book tackles topics including desire, communication, fantasy, mindfulness, emotional connection, intimacy blocks and sexual wellbeing, encouraging readers to move beyond routine and towards deeper connection and curiosity.

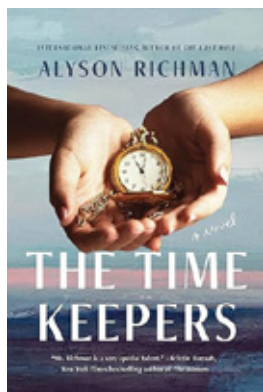
Advance praise includes author Vanessa Raphaely calling it "the conversation about how to have great sex that every adult should be having."

BOOKS

LOOK OUT FOR THESE BOOKS

The *Cape Jewish Chronicle* has invited some of our readers who are book lovers to share their recommendations about books they have read – and loved! Please share your recommendations by contacting editor@ctjc.co.za.

FICTION



THE TIME KEEPERS BY ALYSON RICHMAN

Recommended by **SHERYL SCHKOLNE**, a voracious reader, painter and ceramicist. Instagram page: [@artbysheryl](https://www.instagram.com/artbysheryl)



The Time Keepers will have you reflecting on its story and the interweaving of the characters long after you have completed reading the book.

Loosely based on true stories told to

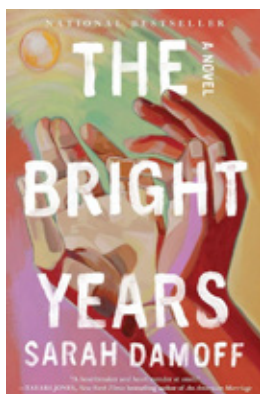
the author, Richman weaves a novel dealing with pain, longing for one's country of birth, and the loss of family, as well as the challenges of making a meaningful life in a new country. It's 1970s America, fraught with concern about the Vietnam War ('The American War', as the Vietnamese called it), and the book deals with the various realities of the awful consequences of war. The characters

include a badly disfigured Vet, an immigrant from Ireland, and a Vietnamese widow who arrives in the USA with her orphaned nephew. It shows how an act of kindness leads to a relationship developing between women who would not normally meet. Add in the cruel bigotry of both young people and adults, and you have a clash of world views.

The Time Keepers deals with the value of being a skilled craftsperson. In our throw-away society of today where there is a prevalence of planned obsolescence, being talented enough to repair watches and other timepieces is both worthwhile and restorative. Having a meaningful skill that allows one to become financially independent is very valuable.

A central theme is the importance of kindness, generosity and humanity which is so very important in all of our worlds.

The Time Keepers is available at the Jacob Gitlin library.



THE BRIGHT YEARS BY SARAH DAMOFF

Recommended by **ALIX EPSTEIN**, Herzlia Primary School teacher and bookstagrammer (@alix_in_wonderland)



The Bright Years is the generational saga of Ryan and Lillian Bright and their daughter Jet. They are young, in love, and have every inch of potential on their horizons; they are essentially a perfect family. But

hidden deep down, dark secrets threaten to tear them apart – a child put up for adoption, years of abuse, generational trauma, hidden alcoholism, and broken histories. There is so much sadness in this story, but such bright, beautiful hope at the same time. This novel has the trappings to destroy you – it destroyed me. Told in three parts – Lillian's introduction, Jet's story, and Ryan's

conclusion – you find yourself immersed in the world of this family.

The sting of unimaginable loss touches every page of this book. It's hard to articulate what this book did to me after I read it. Halfway through, I already had that telltale lump in my throat, knowing that this book would never leave me. I sobbed until I closed it, and I was absolutely undone by it. Sarah Damoff is a storyteller of note. Read it and fall in love with the characters; it is worth it.

PODCAST

BBC AUDIO: THE INTERVIEW: AZIZ ABU SARAH AND MAOZ INON: RECONCILIATION OVER REVENGE

EDITOR'S recommendation

Aziz Abu Sarah is Palestinian; Maoz Inon is an Israeli Jew. Personal tragedy caused by the other side – the enemy side – would usually have led each to seek revenge. Instead, these two individuals from opposing communities in the Middle East have joined forces to search for a peaceful solution to the conflict. Their mantra is: 'The Future is Peace'.

After so much violence in the Middle East for so long, one has to wonder whether military action is the only possible way. This podcast offers something refreshing and hopeful. Its message is not especially profound, but it represents a shift away from violence: get to know one another, and reconciliation may become possible.

I found the story of how these two people came together both endearing and hopeful. Both are articulate and share a vision for a different future, one that is difficult to argue against. I recommend listening to what they have to say.

Hear it here: [bbc.com/audio](https://www.bbc.com/audio)



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STORIES

Jan Smuts the Zionist

It's refreshing to read about support for the Zionist cause from a South African statesman of yesteryear – in sharp contrast to our current government's stance. See below an article published by the JNFSA regarding former Prime Minister of South Africa, Jan Smuts.

Representatives of the Jewish National Fund South Africa (JNF-SA) attended the annual 2026 Jan Smuts Memorial during May, where members of the delegation paid tribute to one of South Africa's most internationally influential statesmen and highlighted his often-overlooked connection to the founding of the State of Israel.

During the memorial, delegates noted that while Jan Smuts remains widely remembered in South Africa as a military leader, philosopher, and former Prime Minister, his role in supporting the Zionist movement and the establishment of a Jewish homeland is less frequently discussed in contemporary public life. Yet Smuts was regarded by many early Zionist leaders as one of their most important international allies.

Members of the JNF delegation also referenced the fact that



Isla Feldman, President of JNFSA, and Benji Shulman, Executive Committee JNFSA

Israel honoured Smuts in a unique and enduring way through the establishment of Ramat Yohanan, a kibbutz named after him in 1931. The Hebrew name 'Yohanan' is the equivalent of 'Jan', symbolising the deep appreciation felt by sections of the Zionist movement for Smuts's support.

The memorial served not only as a reflection on Smuts's broader legacy in South African history, but also as a reminder of the longstanding historical links between South Africa and Israel. Smuts' support for Jewish self-determination formed an important chapter in the international campaign that eventually culminated in the establishment of Israel in 1948. ●

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Cape SAJBD and UJC bring *Power Shabbos* to Paarl

The Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Cape SAJBD) engages regularly with our country communities. Following various visits around the Western Cape over the last few years – including Shabbat dinners, centenary celebrations and more – we visited Paarl on the weekend of the 26-27 June for a special *Power Shabbos*.



JOSH FRIEDMAN
Programme & Development
Manager, Cape SAJBD

The visit was warmly embraced by the Paarl Hebrew Congregation, under the leadership of Rabbi Bryan Opert and a dedicated committee headed by President Selwyn Chatz, and brought together community members for a memorable and uplifting Shabbat programme.

Friday night began with a well-attended service, led by the Cape SAJBD's Josh Friedman, followed by a festive Power Brocha, at which approximately 70 people gathered for an evening of community, connection and engagement. Cape SAJBD Executive Director Daniel Bloch and Chairperson Simone Sulcas then tag-teamed an address titled *Jewish Life in the Western Cape: A Global and Local Update*, sharing insights into the local communal landscape as well as reflections from the recent AJC Global Forum in Washington DC. The gold standard shared is that, relative to many Jewish communities around the world who are experiencing shrinking spaces, increased violent antisemitism, and who, at times,



Left: Rabbi Bryan Opert and Chairman Selwyn Chatz; Right: SAJBD representatives David King, Simone Sulcas, Josh Friedman and Daniel Bloch



cannot visibly express their Judaism, here our civil rights as Jews are protected and, where infringed upon, challenged rigorously by the Cape SAJBD.

The evening also featured an address by UJC Vice Chair Tamara Davidson, who highlighted the work of the United Jewish Campaign and the vital role it plays in sustaining and strengthening the network of Jewish organisations that serve the Western Cape Jewish community, making it one of the most desirable places for Jewish people not only to live, but to thrive.

In a particularly meaningful development, the special Shabbat also made possible a Shabbat morning *minyan* — no small achievement for a congregation that does not ordinarily open every week for Saturday morning services. The opportunity to *daven* together again on Shabbat morning added an extra layer of significance to the weekend and



Paarl Shul Challah Bake 2026

reflected the growing energy within the Paarl Jewish community.

The visit also offered an opportunity to celebrate the rich heritage of the Paarl Hebrew Congregation, one of the Western Cape's historic Jewish communities. Established in 1893, the congregation traces its roots to the Jewish traders and settlers who helped shape life in the Boland in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Its synagogue in Breda Street remains a proud symbol of more than 130 years of Jewish life in Paarl and the surrounding district. Like many smaller South African Jewish communities, Paarl's numbers declined over time as families moved to larger urban centres. Yet today, the congregation is experiencing a welcome revival.

Paarl, like much of the Cape Winelands, is enjoying something of a renaissance, with semigrants from around South Africa increasingly making the Winelands area their home. Drawn by lifestyle, schools, natural beauty and the proximity to Cape Town, both young families and retirees are settling in the region – and with them comes renewed interest in Jewish communal life. That shift is beginning to be felt in Paarl's Jewish community too, where growing participation and a renewed sense of possibility are helping to breathe fresh life into this historic congregation.

For the Cape SAJBD and UJC, the Paarl visit formed part of a broader effort to deepen ties with Jewish communities across the Western Cape, strengthen communal connection, and ensure that smaller centres feel part of the wider communal conversation. It was a Shabbat marked by warmth, hospitality and genuine enthusiasm, and the Board and UJC are deeply appreciative to Rabbi Opert, Selwyn Chatz and the Paarl congregation for hosting them so generously. ●

ARTS & CULTURE



Exhibition restores forgotten Jewish artists to their rightful place

Twice extended. Visitor numbers far exceeding expectations. Strong interest from international art experts.

For Associate Curator at the South African Jewish Museum (SAJM), Jay van den Berg, the success of the *Wolf Kibel – Lippy Lipshitz: Palm Studios* exhibition has been immensely rewarding. The exhibition, which closed at the end of June, has become one of the Museum's most successful events.

"The Palm Studios exhibition has been a tremendous success for the SAJM," says Museum Director Gavin Morris. "It has elevated the museum's standing among art lovers in the country and demonstrated a real appetite for South Africa's art history."

The exhibition also marks a significant milestone in van den Berg's curatorial career. He first conceived the idea while working at the SA National Gallery and later brought the proposal to Morris, believing the two influential 20th-century South African artists had been largely overlooked.

His passion, meticulous research and attention to detail transformed the concept into a landmark exhibition. "Through

his extensive research, Jay uncovered many things that weren't widely known," says art historian Anna Tietze. Morris agrees: "Jay was the driving force behind this project and produced a remarkable exhibition and catalogue worthy of any major museum."

That praise is reflected in the exhibition's international impact. During its six-month run, it fostered valuable connections with museums, collectors and scholars around the world.

Van den Berg believes its greatest achievement has been "stimulating new conversations about the place of Jewish artists within the broader narrative of South African art history".

That Jewish story is especially significant in the case of Wolf Kibel. Born in Poland, he arrived in Cape Town in the late 1920s after years of poverty in Poland and elsewhere. Although he enjoyed some success locally, he died young, before South Africa fully recognised his artistic talent.

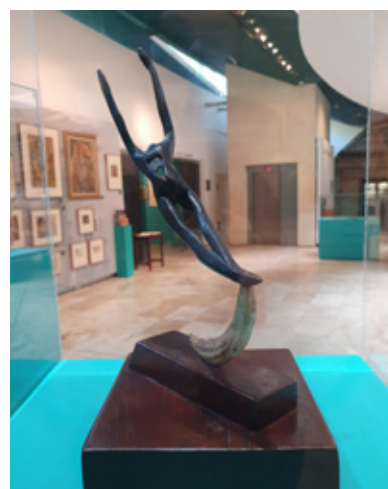
"Kibel's work wasn't understood at the time," explains Tietze. "Now the exhibition has elevated his profile."

She believes his achievements as an Expressionist deserve comparison with those of Irma Stern. "But Stern's work was far

more flamboyant and appealed more readily to the public, while Kibel was more reserved and his art more esoteric."

Today, Kibel's reputation is also growing in his country of birth. Before the Cape Town exhibition opened, the SAJM collaborated with the Grodzisk Mazowiecki Cultural Centre in Poland to present an exhibition of reproductions of his work – the first formal recognition of Kibel in his hometown. The project was accompanied by a catalogue published in Polish, introducing his life and work to a new audience and providing an important scholarly resource.

The SAJM exhibition also attracted prominent visitors and introduced many influential figures to the Museum, including the Director of Modern & Contemporary African Art at



A SNAPSHOT OF THE EXHIBITION

9 800 visitors

Extended twice due to public demand

11 public walkabouts

9 special tours

Public talk by art historian Anna Tietze

Exhibition catalogue transformed into a coffee table book and lasting art history resource. Published by HOBBERMAN, it sold out.



Bonhams, London; the editor of *South African Art Times*; representatives from the Norval Foundation, Strauss & Co., and the Iziko South African National Gallery; and senior museum professionals from Poland.

For collectors who loaned works, the exhibition offered an opportunity to share treasured pieces with the public. Muriel Rubin recalls meeting Lippy Lipshitz as a child through her father's friendship with the artist, and was particularly pleased that one of her damaged Lipshitz works was professionally restored for the exhibition. Artist and collector Patsy Groll also enjoyed seeing Kibel paintings she had acquired at auction displayed for a wider audience.

Beyond the exhibition itself, the accompanying catalogue is expected to become an important reference for South African art history. Art historian and writer Hayden Proud, who has researched the work of sculptor Herbert Meyerowitz, one-time mentor of Lipshitz and best known for his Liberman Memorial Door at the SA National Gallery, comments: "What this exhibition and catalogue have done after fifty years of relative neglect is reopen scholarly enquiry into the work of these two artists and remind us that there are still many gaps to fill and much to reclaim before it is irrevocably lost."

In celebrating the achievements of Wolf Kibel and Lippy Lipshitz, the exhibition has restored these remarkable Jewish artists to their rightful place in South Africa's artistic story while laying the foundation for future research and greater international collaboration. ●

Preserving a legacy of leadership, service and Zionism



SHELLEY TROPE-FRIEDMAN
President, WIZO SA

Jewish women have long played a remarkable role in shaping both South African society and the State of Israel. Throughout history, Jewish women have stood at the forefront of social justice, education, community building and national development.

Their courage, resilience and commitment to improving the lives of others have left an enduring legacy that continues to inspire future generations.

South Africa's Jewish community has produced extraordinary women whose impact extended far beyond our community. Women such as Helen Suzman, who stood as a lone parliamentary voice against *apartheid*; Ruth First, whose commitment to justice cost her her life; and Bertha Solomon, who championed women's legal rights, demonstrated the powerful role Jewish women have played in advancing equality and human dignity.

This same spirit of leadership and service has been embodied by WIZO South Africa since its founding in 1932. For more than



nine decades, WIZO South Africa has provided Jewish women with a platform to lead, serve and strengthen both our local communities and the people of Israel. From its early beginnings as the Women's Zionist Organisation of South Africa to the vibrant organisation it is today, WIZO has remained committed to Zionism, women's empowerment and social responsibility.

WIZO South Africa plays a vital philanthropic and social welfare role in Israel, serving as a critical bridge of support between South African Jewry and the communities most in need. The impact of South African Jewish women has been felt for generations. In 1949, WIZO South Africa laid the cornerstone for the Mothercraft Training Centre in Tel Aviv, a pioneering project dedicated to caring for premature babies and training paediatric nurses. This groundbreaking facility helped establish WIZO's global reputation in maternal and child healthcare, and contributed to the organisation earning consultative status with UNICEF.

Over the decades, thousands of dedicated South African women have contributed their time, leadership and resources to support WIZO's network of schools, daycare centres, foster homes and social welfare programmes throughout Israel.

As President of WIZO South Africa, I am deeply inspired by the women who came before us. I have always believed in helping others become the very best version of themselves. My passion for WIZO stems from my love for Israel, my commitment to strengthening Jewish communal life, and my belief that women have the power to create meaningful and lasting change.

[T]he WIZO South Africa Oral History Project...is...an initiative dedicated to preserving the stories, experiences and contributions of the women who have built our organisation....
[I]f you have memories, photographs, documents or experiences that reflect WIZO's rich history and impact, we would love to hear from you.

This year, together with my PA Jessica Jantjies, we launched the WIZO South Africa Oral History Project, an initiative dedicated to preserving the stories, experiences and contributions of the women who have built our organisation over generations. The project has already commenced with interviews with WIZO leaders.

I would like to extend an invitation to all past members, leaders, volunteers and supporters who have been part of the WIZO story; if you have memories, photographs, documents or experiences that reflect WIZO's rich history and impact, we would love to hear from you. Every story matters, and together we can ensure that the legacy of the extraordinary women who shaped WIZO South Africa is preserved for generations to come.

Through our oral history project, we continue to honour our past while building a vibrant future.

The story of WIZO South Africa is ultimately the story of generations of extraordinary women whose leadership, compassion, vision and unwavering commitment to Israel have left an indelible mark on both South Africa and the Jewish world. ●



OBITUARIES

Remembering a community connector

The Cape Town Jewish community has lost one of its great connectors and cultural entrepreneurs with the passing of Avron Kaplan z"l in early June.

For decades, Avron was a familiar figure through *The Living Newspaper*, the platform he founded in 1987 to bring prominent local and international speakers to Cape Town audiences. Through these events, he raised funds for the Camps Bay Congregation, while enriching community life with thought-provoking discussions and remarkable personalities.

As the *Cape Jewish Chronicle* noted in 2009, Avron "single-mindedly, passionately and doggedly" brought an impressive array of speakers to Cape Town. Among them were Indian diplomat and author Vikas Swarup, whose novel *Q&A* became the Oscar-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire*; Booker Prize-winning author Bernice Rubens; Jewish astronaut Jeffrey Hoffman; Rabbi and author Shmuley Boteach; former Australian judge Marcus Einfeld; Alan Committee; Nik Rabinowitz; Mira Nair, the Indian filmmaker, who is the mother of the controversial New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani; Alan Dershowitz; Helen Suzman; Chris Barnard; Marius Barnard;



Avron Kaplan

and Michael Friedman, head of Frankfurt's Jewish community.

Beyond his speaker events, Avron ran a popular film club that introduced Cape Town audiences to movies otherwise unavailable in South Africa. In some cases, he successfully challenged *apartheid*-era censorship restrictions to secure screenings for private audiences.

A past Chairman of Camps Bay *Shul* (1970-72), Avron also served for many years on the committee of the Jacob Gitlin Library.

Many older Capetonians will remember his enthusiasm, determination and ability to bring people together around ideas, culture and conversation. Through the speakers he hosted, the films he screened, and the institutions he supported, Avron left a lasting mark on community life. ●

A man who touched countless lives

While the name Cyril Karabus is for many associated with the horrific story of a man unexpectedly arrested and imprisoned in the United Arab Emirates more than a decade ago, Professor Cyril Karabus should not be defined by the bizarre events of 2012. He was, in fact, an "extraordinary and somewhat unique" individual who touched many lives.



Professor Cyril Karabus

His daughter, Sarah, described him this way while delivering the eulogy at his funeral after he passed away at the age of 91. As she said, "To many, he was a respected paediatrician, a brilliant physician, a pioneering oncologist, teacher, mentor, advocate for children, and a man whose intellect touched countless lives. To me, he was simply Dad, or sometimes CDK."

His impact on others is perhaps best summed up by a former colleague's comment: "Another great tree has fallen and the earth is reverberating."

A paediatric oncologist passionate about medicine, Karabus was widely recognised in South Africa for his work with children suffering from cancers and blood disorders such as haemophilia. Founder of the paediatric oncology unit at Red Cross Children's Hospital, he was also a key figure in training doctors at the University of Cape Town.

Born in Beaufort West to Lithuanian refugee parents, Professor Karabus's family moved to Cape Town when he was 15, and

he attended Wynberg Boys' High School. His intellectual brilliance was already evident: he skipped two grades and started medical school at just 16.

Known for both his intellect and humility, Cyril Karabus never tried to talk over anyone or draw attention to himself. Sarah recalled, "On his arrival back to Cape Town after his 10-month ordeal in the UAE, he was met at the airport by thousands of well-wishers. He turned to me and asked, 'What's all this fuss about?' He just couldn't comprehend that people had actually thought he was important enough to celebrate."

During her eulogy, Sarah fondly recalled the life lessons her father instilled in her: critical thinking, intellectual curiosity and perseverance.

She added, "While we will miss him deeply, we take comfort in the extraordinary legacy he leaves behind – not only in his professional achievements, but in the countless lives he touched through his kindness, humanity, unique sense of humour and unwavering dedication." ●

A Jewish pioneer of Spanish dance

The internationally acclaimed Spanish dancer Enrique Segovia, who passed away in late June, was born Geoffrey Neiman to Jewish parents in Johannesburg just days before the outbreak of World War II.

Neiman began dancing as a teenager and devoted his career to Spanish dance. He worked for 20 years with the renowned Mercedes Molina, touring internationally with her company before later leading it. Together

they choreographed the ballet *Carmen*, which was broadcast on the opening night of South African television. He retired in 1982 after a 28-year performing career. Neiman also compiled the complete male syllabus for the



Enrique Segovia (Geoffrey Neiman)

Spanish Dance Society, which he chaired for more than 20 years. Used worldwide, the syllabus remains a lasting legacy. In 2000, Spain honoured him with a knighthood – the Royal Order of Isabella the Catholic. ●

STORIES



Top: LEAPS Right: Jolene Harris

A VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

When attorney Jolene Harris used to go out for a run in Elands Bay, where she and her husband had a holiday home, she would always notice the surroundings.

It was during one such run past an informal settlement that she noticed a large Ridgeback tied up in a tiny yard without shelter. The sight stayed with her.

"I remember getting back home and saying to my husband, 'We have to do something,'" Jolene recalls.

That moment ultimately led to the creation of LEAPS (Lamberts and Elands Animal Protection Services), a non-profit animal welfare organisation serving Elands Bay, Lamberts Bay and Vredenburg on the West Coast.

Established in 2008, LEAPS has become a lifeline for thousands of animals. Working with just

two full-time staff members and a dedicated group of volunteers, the organisation focuses on education, primary healthcare, sterilisation, feeding programmes and rescue interventions. Without a shelter facility, the team works directly in communities, going door to door and responding to animals in need wherever they are found.

One of LEAPS' greatest achievements has been its sterilisation programme. To date, the organisation has sterilised around 8 000 animals, helping to reduce the number of unwanted pets born into difficult circumstances. The need for this type of intervention is clear

when one looks at the numbers: there are approximately 4 million homeless animals in South Africa.

For Jolene, animal welfare is more than a cause – it is a calling.

"I have always loved animals with a passion beyond what I can explain," she says. "I couldn't bear to see or hear of the suffering of animals without at least trying to help in some way."

Balancing her work as a lawyer with her animal welfare responsibilities is no easy task. Jolene jokes that her husband would tell anyone there is no



balance at all, given that she is never far from her phone in case of an animal emergency. Yet she has structured her legal career to allow the flexibility needed to respond when animals require help.

"People often say, 'If you want something done, ask a busy person'," she says. "I need to work to earn a living, and I need to help animals, so it isn't really a matter of how I do it – it just has to be done."

Alongside direct interventions, LEAPS runs educational programmes for children and pet owners. Jolene says these efforts are producing encouraging results, with community members increasingly seeking help for animals rather than ignoring their suffering.

At the same time, she remains deeply concerned about the challenges facing animal welfare in South Africa.

"Animals are not always regarded as sentient beings with feelings and emotions," she says. "That makes it easier for people to treat them without care, love and respect."

She is particularly frustrated by the lack of enforcement of animal protection laws and municipal

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 4 MILLION HOMELESS ANIMALS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

by-laws, which contributes to overbreeding, neglect and abuse. Jolene believes that changing attitudes towards animals is critical, not only for their wellbeing but for society as a whole.

Fortunately, there are many ways people can assist LEAPS.

As with any NPO, financial support is crucial. But there are many other ways to help. The organisation is constantly looking for foster families willing to care for rescued animals until permanent homes can be found. Adoption is another vital need, and Jolene says that around 95% of LEAPS rescues are ultimately placed with families in Cape Town.

Volunteers are also essential – whether helping at events, networking rescue appeals on social media, transporting supplies, or offering professional services such as graphic design, printing or website support.

Practical donations of pet food, blankets, beds, carriers, collars, leads and veterinary supplies are always welcome.

For Jolene, every act of kindness matters.

"Too many people talk about making a difference," she says. "If you want to see change in the world, you need to walk the walk."

For nearly two decades, that is exactly what she has been doing – one rescue, one animal and one life at a time. ●



Jewish Volunteers co-creating change in Cape Town

The Mensch Volunteer Programme combines hands-on volunteering with reflection and learning about Jewish values and service.

This year, Mensch Volunteers worked with our partner organisations Funda Kunye, Love in a Bowl, Souper Troopers, Salt River High School and The Angel Network to support early childhood development, food security, homelessness awareness and education initiatives across Cape Town.

Food security



Volunteers explored food security in South Africa, while harvesting fresh produce to support nutritious meals for 22 preschools in Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg.

Early-childhood education



Volunteers refurbished Justine's Educare Centre in Hangberg, helping to create a safer and more welcoming learning environment for young children.

Homelessness



We partnered with Souper Troopers to sort clothing, footwear and toiletries for their Winter Drive, while deepening our own understanding of the realities and causes of homelessness.

Be a Mensch. Volunteer!
Contact us to get involved.
admin@mensch.org.za
www.mensch.org.za

Youth Development



Volunteers contributed to the transformation of Salt River High School through tree planting, food parcel packing and campus improvement projects supporting learner wellbeing.

What do dead Jews think about a Jewish homeland?

In the Wonderful (Probably, Possibly, Perhaps not) World of AI – BTW (By The Way), this is being written by me, Julian Anthony Resnick, and not by a Bot imitating me – the questions on the table today could be answered by asking a computer the question and allowing me to continue fading away into insignificance as I have been. As someone who believes that human intelligence is a crucial part of continuing to grapple with the important questions we face as human beings.

So, let's play a game. I 'asked' five significant Jews, all long gone, a question: Do the Jewish People need a physical homeland? Here are short excerpts from their answers. Try and work out for yourselves who these Dead Jews are. See it as your *Cape Jewish Chronicle* Pub Quiz for today. We will publish the answers at a later stage.

THINKER 1:

"To answer your question directly: no, I do not believe that the establishment of a physical homeland would, in any spiritual or essential sense, 'improve' the Jewish people.

Let us examine this matter with the calm light of reason. I had occasion to reflect upon the history of the ancient Hebrew nation. The Hebrew state was indeed a prosperous society for a time, governed by just laws revealed through Moses. Yet, we must understand that the ancient Hebrew nation was not chosen by God before others because of its superior intellect, peace of mind, or some unique spiritual essence. Rather, their 'election' was a matter of temporary fortune – specifically, the social order and the fortunate political circumstances by which they came to establish and maintain a physical state for so many years.



JULIAN RESNICK
writes from Israel

They are not bound to any soil, nation, or tribe. To believe that a specific group of people possesses a monopoly on God's favour, or that their human flourishing depends upon a particular piece of earth, is to fall prey to the imaginings of the prophets rather than the clarity of reason.

In an ideal commonwealth, there should be no distinction between Jew and Gentile, for such divisions are artificial and deluded. Human flourishing does not come from a physical homeland or a particularist state, but from a stable, reasonable political order that guarantees the freedom to think and to speak. True salvation and freedom are found when we elevate ourselves above tribal and sectarian divisions to embrace the universal laws of human nature."

THINKER 2:

"For many years, I have wrestled deeply with what it means to be a nation and what the Jewish people truly require for their preservation and flourishing.

If by a 'physical homeland' you mean a politically sovereign nation-state with borders, an army, and a measure of temporal power, then my answer is no; I do not believe we need such an entity.

However, if you mean a physical *cultural and intellectual sanctuary* – a safe haven – then yes, I believe such a place is of vital importance. My Zionism is ethical and cultural, not political-nationalist.

I came to support the Zionist project for very specific, human reasons:

First, there is a clear humanitarian necessity. When antisemitic violence erupts,

persecuted Jews, particularly our brethren from Eastern Europe, must have a safe place to flee.

Second, we require a spiritual and intellectual centre to serve as an antidote to the 'spiritual sickness' of assimilation in Europe. In places like Germany, I saw Jews internalising the very prejudices of their oppressors, losing their self-respect and their identity. A central outpost in Palestine allows Jews to do what they do best: to think, discover, and innovate alongside one another in an atmosphere that holds intellectual aspiration in the highest esteem.

But this sanctuary must not be established at the expense of those who already inhabit the land. The first and most important necessity is the creation of a *modus vivendi* – a way of living peaceably side-by-side – with the Arab people through organised co-operation and shared governance.

Ultimately, Palestine can never absorb the majority of the Jewish

people, but it can succeed as a moral, cultural, and intellectual centre. Our survival as a people does not depend on a state, but on our shared commitment to humanity, intellect, and justice."

THINKER 3:

"If you had asked me this in my youth, when my peers and I were first beginning to speak the modern languages of politics – of socialism, of Zionism, of citizenship – I might have given you a different answer. But from where I sit now, having spent these years listening to the hidden, dissenting currents of human desire, I find myself looking at this question of a 'home' with a certain analytical skepticism.

To understand the longing for a Jewish state, we must first look at what we are trying to cure. The Jews of Europe – particularly of my parents' generation – have lived a life of enforced, precarious

Continues on page 37.

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ARTS & CULTURE

Searching for Sugar Man meets the Rockstar Rabbis

Natalia Rabinowitz, a London-based self-taught artist, grew up in Cape Town surrounded by music's icons.

Her father is Stephen 'Sugar' Segerman, the record-store owner whose hunt for a vanished American musician, Sixto Rodríguez, became the Oscar-winning movie *Searching for Sugar Man*.

Her father's reverence for music's heroes impacted her, and she is now channelling that lifelong love of music's heroes into an unexpected debut: *Rockstar Rabbis*, fourteen



hand-drawn portraits that reimagine Judaism's great sages as the cultural icons she believes they always were, set against the kaleidoscopic visual



language of the concert posters she was raised among. *Rockstar Rabbis* includes portraits of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, and the Baba Sali.

The series began as a private 40th birthday gift for her husband: a portrait of the Rebbe. She then drew one rabbi a week, studying each through that week's Torah portion until she could capture, in her words, "not just a likeness but an essence."

Natalia explains that she has chosen to share the portraits publicly now at a moment when Jewish life in Britain feels under pressure, framing it as celebration rather than defence.

The fourteen works will be on show briefly in early July in London at Chabad of Hampstead Garden Suburb, and further shows in other cities will be announced soon. ●

To view all 14 portraits, visit Natalia's website: www.nataliarabinowitz.com

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

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Protests outside the Western Cape High Court during Cape Union Mart court proceedings



JOSHUA SCHEWITZ
Executive
Director of SAZF
Cape Council

Supporters of both Cape Union Mart and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) demonstrated on Monday 15th June and Wednesday 17th June. While both groups exercised their democratic right to protest, the nature and conduct of the respective demonstrations were markedly different.

On Monday, while there were hostile chants and accusations directed at our supporters, the agreed arrangements put in place were respected and no significant incidents occurred.

Wednesday was markedly different. The SAZF CC repeatedly raised concerns to the SAPS regarding the shrinking separation between



the groups. Despite this, PSC supporters moved increasingly close to our designated area throughout the day, with several incidents requiring police or marshals to direct individuals back. Supporters were subjected to repeated inflammatory accusations and attempts at provocation. This conduct, in our view, was intended to create confrontation. They also displayed inflammatory placards and flags including those of the Islamic Republic and Hezbollah.

It is notable that the slogans and behaviour of the pro-Hamas supporters was on full violent display and echoed the reason for the court proceedings in the first place.

By contrast, those supporting Cape Union Mart, Simunye Israel and South African Friends for Israel (SAFI), whose courage and conviction were evident throughout the proceedings, sang peacefully and prayed for the South African economy.

In this framework, the narrative currently being pushed by the PSC of a journalist being assaulted, using selective information and edited footage, is being circulated and presented as a complete version of events. The truth goes beyond their use of slogans, performative activism, or curated controversy.

The SAZF reaffirms our commitment to peaceful civic

engagement, respect for the rule of law, and the pursuit of truth over propaganda. We will also continue to show solidarity, together with our Christian friends, for Cape Union Mart, a proudly South African company that employs thousands and contributes significantly to the economy.

The South African Zionist Federation Cape Council (SAZF CC) extends its sincere gratitude to every person who came out to support Cape Union Mart, its employees and its Executive Chairman, Philip Krawitz, during the Western Cape High Court proceedings involving Cape Union Mart's defamation claim against the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC). ●



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STORIES

When Abraham lost Israel

In the previous edition of the *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, we shared information about *The Boy in the Barrel*, a novel based on a true story. In this edition, we share more of the true tale, as recalled by Guy Lieberman, a grandson of the main character.

When Guy Lieberman tells the story of his grandfather, Israel 'Issy' Lieberman, it sounds almost too extraordinary to be true. Yet it has become one of the defining stories of the Lieberman family – a tale of loss, survival, resilience and an unlikely reunion.

In 1899, Guy's great-grandfather, Abraham Lieberman, left a town in Eastern Europe in search of a safer future for his family. Pogroms were spreading through the region, and South Africa, with its gold rush and economic opportunities, seemed to offer hope.

His wife, Rachel, pregnant at the time, encouraged him to take one of their children, seven-year-old Issy, along. "He's the naughtiest," she reportedly joked.

Father and son eventually arrived in Cape Town after a long journey by road, rail and sea. But shortly after landing, disaster struck.

Abraham left Issy guarding their luggage while he searched for accommodation. "Don't move from this place until I return," he instructed the boy.

He never came back.

Unknown to Issy, British soldiers, suspicious during the Anglo-Boer War, arrested the large, red-bearded immigrant, mistaking him for a Boer rebel. Unable to communicate in English, he spent three days in custody before being released.

By the time he returned to the harbour, Issy had vanished.

"Abraham searched Cape Town for three months," Guy says. "Eventually he concluded there was no way the child could have survived."

He wrote to Rachel back home in Eastern Europe, informing her that their son was dead.

Meanwhile, Issy was very much alive.

Alone, hungry and unable to speak English, the seven-year-old survived by scavenging

for food and sleeping in a discarded barrel. He learned to fend for himself, stole bottles of milk from doorsteps – and befriended a stray puppy.

Eventually, a group of Coloured street children took him under their wing. Later, a Coloured family, recognising that something terrible had happened to the young immigrant, welcomed him into their home, despite their own poverty.

"Even after losing his father in a foreign land and being absorbed into a completely different culture, Issy never forgot who he was," says Guy. "He always remembered his name – Israel Lieberman."

Five years later, Abraham had earned enough to bring the rest of the family to Johannesburg. Rachel never accepted that her son had died. Armed with the only photograph she had of him, she began placing advertisements in the *Rand Daily Mail*.

"Israel Lieberman, your family is looking for you. Come to this address."

She continued for years.

Abraham thought it was hopeless.

"Issy is dead," he insisted. But Rachel never stopped believing.

Eleven years after father and son had become separated, fate intervened.

Now 18, Issy was working on a diamond diggings site when a friend showed him a newspaper carrying one of Rachel's advertisements.

"There is a family looking for someone with your name," the friend told him.

Issy immediately set off for Johannesburg.

After a series of mishaps – including getting off at the wrong train station and walking for hours to Braamfontein – he finally arrived at the family home after dark. Nervous and

curious, he peered through a window to look at the people searching for him.

One of the older brothers spotted him outside and, assuming he was a thief, crept around the house and struck him on the head with a plank.

When the unconscious stranger was carried into the kitchen, Rachel took one look at him and froze.

"That's Issy."

The reunion was emotional and overwhelming. Rachel immediately recognised the son she had never stopped searching for. The rest of the family welcomed him home.

Only Abraham struggled to accept it.

"This man is an impostor," he insisted," Guy recounts. "He simply could not believe that a seven-year-old child could have survived alone for so long."

For Rachel and the rest of the family, however, there was no doubt. The boy they had lost had finally come home.

Issy went on to build a successful life in Johannesburg, marrying and raising a family of his own. Yet he never forgot those who had helped him survive, maintaining a lifelong affection and gratitude towards the Coloured community that had cared for him as a child.

For the Lieberman family, the story remains a reminder of both human vulnerability and remarkable resilience.

"How Issy survived as a lost seven-year-old and then thrived is a staggering combination of will, resilience and sheer luck," says Guy. "For us, it has become Lieberman lore." ●



SPORT

A surname that opens the door to the past



Benchimol with FC Akron Tolyatti in a game against FC Zenit St. Petersburg in 2024.

This year’s FIFA soccer World Cup brought some unexpected results. When the tiny island nation of Cape Verde took on a leading contender for top honours – Spain – the soccer world was stunned as they held the mighty Spaniards to a goalless draw.

The news brought attention to another interesting titbit: a member of the Cape Verde

team, reserve forward Gilson Benchimol, carries a surname that reflects Jewish roots.

Historical research into centuries-old Jewish connections among some of the island’s populace highlights the fact that Jewish life there began in the 16th century. At that time, the Inquisition targeted Portugal, and many Portuguese Jews converted to Christianity. Keen to continue their Jewish practice in secret, some moved to places far from the mainland – the distance seemingly offering greater security for this clandestine practice – settling in areas such as Cape Verde and Madeira.

Subsequently, the 19th century saw Jews from Morocco arrive in Cape Verde, too.

While today Cape Verde does not have a practising Jewish community, the link to a Jewish past is clear from some surnames among the island’s citizens: Benchimol, Levy, Cohen, and Wahnnon, for example. Many people carrying these surnames are aware of their Jewish origins, although they are practising Catholics. ●



FOOD

World-class kosher food

The award of a Michelin Star is to someone in the food industry the equivalent of an Oscar in the movie world.

And it was with great pride that an Israeli chef, Raz Shabtai, recently heard that his restaurant *Mutra* in Miami, USA, had achieved this mark of culinary excellence. The award, one of the most coveted

distinctions in gastronomy, highlights the use of exceptional ingredients, great culinary skill, creativity, and the consistent delivery of quality dishes.

While other Jewish and Israeli chefs have previously been awarded Michelin Stars, this announcement stands out because it is the first time that the recognition has gone to a kosher restaurant. The restaurant is named in honour of the chef’s grandmother. Her cooking serves as an inspiration for the menu he has put together.

“The award places *Mutra* among the world’s most celebrated restaurants and marks a breakthrough for kosher cuisine,” commented the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*. ●

JULY 2026 Community Events

ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	FOR MORE INFO
Nechama	Breakfast Talk with Martine Ben Harush	Tues 7 July, 08h30 for 09h00	Contact admin@nechama.org.za or 021 465 9390.
ORT SA CAPE JET	Business Breakfast Club (Topic TBC)	Wed 8 July, 09h00 – 11h30	RSVP: jet@ortsacape.org.za
Jacob Gitlin Library	Book launch: <i>The Travelling Rabbi – Journeys Continued</i> by Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft	Sun 12 July, 14h30 for 15h00	RSVP: admin@gitlinlibrary.co.za
Cape Jewish Seniors	Knittathon for Mandela Day, CJSA Southern Suburbs	Tues 14 July, 10h00 – 12h00	RSVP: 0753437355 Social Worker, Monique Nieuwenhuys
ORT SA CAPE JET	Business Training In-person event (Topic TBC)	Wed 22 July, 09h00 – 12h00	RSVP: jet@ortsacape.org.za
Jewell	Online (Zoom) Webinar	Sun 23 August, 17h00 – 19h00	To register: info@jewellness.org



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JCS@WORK More Than Food: How our Foodbank Supports the Community

Our JCS Tikvah Foodbank exists to help ensure that no one faces hunger alone. Through the generosity of donors, volunteers and community partners, we collect, sort and distribute food and essential household items to individuals and families who are experiencing hardship. What may seem like a simple food parcel can make an enormous difference to someone struggling to make ends meet.

In total, the JCS Tikvah Foodbank completes around 611 deliveries per month, all while maintaining strict confidentiality. We operate on a client number system, ensuring that no names are ever given and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Gina, who has worked at the Foodbank since 2020, knows her clients well - their dietary requirements, their preferences and their challenges. This personal knowledge allows her to prepare tailored service packs, ensuring each parcel meets the unique needs of each household.

Every week, our team prepares and distributes parcels to households across a wide range of neighbourhoods. Demand continues to grow as more families seek assistance and we are committed to responding wherever the need exists.

How Can You Help?

Donate Food or Funds

Every contribution makes a difference. Financial donations allow us to purchase essential items and fill gaps where donations are needed most. Food donations help ensure that families receive nutritious and balanced parcels.

Volunteer Your Time

We are always looking for caring and committed volunteers to help deliver food parcels throughout our communities.

For many recipients, the volunteer delivering a parcel may be the only friendly face that they see that week. Volunteers not only deliver food parcels, but they also deliver compassion, connection and hope.

Whether you can assist once a week, once a month, or occasionally when needed, your time can make a real difference.

The volunteers themselves often speak of how deeply this work touches them: *"I came to help others, but I found a family here. Every smile, every thank you reminds*

me why we do this." *"When I deliver food, I'm not just dropping off a parcel - I'm checking in, making sure someone feels seen and cared for."* *"It's very humbling. You realize that a small act of kindness can change someone's whole day."*

Together, we are proving that hunger can be met with hope and that when a community comes together, no one stands alone.

If you would like more information about the JCS Tikvah Foodbank, or would like to volunteer, please contact the JCS office on **021 462 5520** or email info@jcs.org.za

"The volunteers themselves often speak of how deeply this work touches them: I came to help others, but I found a family here. Every smile, every thank you reminds me why we do this."



#JewishCommunity #JCS #CapeTown #TikvahFoodbank



VIEWS
CONSIDER THIS

A July reflection on time, memory, and choice


RABBI TAMARA SCHAGAS

I look at the calendar dates as concrete co-ordinates for spiritual development. As I write this piece, I am aware of the challenges we face as humanity and as a people, and I choose to share thoughts that I believe, if taken into action, can make a difference in our experience as individuals and as a collective.

On July 18th, South Africa celebrates Mandela Day to honour a legacy of freedom, justice, and human rights, yet we look around and see a society still grappling with deep socio-economic fractures long after the legal structures of *apartheid* fell. Just a couple of days after, our Jewish calendar carries us through Tisha B'Av, our collective day of sitting with the memory of broken walls and shattered Temples. It is a sad, shaking, fearful time where the sense of destruction runs so deep, and life as it was known for that generation was brought down to ashes. We cannot help but acknowledge the destruction, the violence, and the pain we are all going through. Yet, just a week after the 9th of Av, on the 15th of Av, we celebrate our ancient festival of love and new beginnings – a festivity of hope that reminds us that with love, and through love, we can start all over again and choose to be and to do better.

When a date enters our calendar, whether as a people or as humanity, it is a call to check in, to pay attention, and to see how we are doing on that specific matter. The calendar gives the co-ordinate in time, but it is up to the individual to enter that space with awareness and turn the date into a living teaching. Physical spaces and structures are rigid, static, and prone to destruction. Time is dynamic – it is the ultimate landscape for the soul. The destruction of physical things, structures, or old mindsets is never the end

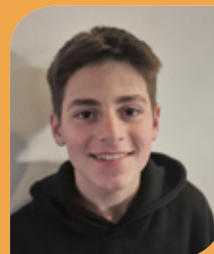
of what is truly eternal. The physical world is meant to be a tool for the experience of the soul, not the other way around.

When one approaches the calendar as a tool for conscious growth, it ceases to be a list of historical facts and becomes a beautifully proportional roadmap for inner evolution. Turning inward is incredibly hard, and real transformation takes an immense amount of time, commitment, practice, and effort. Yet, change is real and inevitable; it is a law of nature, and everything changes. Why not change with joyful awareness, keeping peace and kindness as our intention all along?

When it comes to the matters of the soul, transformation can be something we consciously take upon ourselves to guide. We can change from a place of choice and awareness, in ways that reflect our core values and the world we want to see. Spiritual growth operates like mathematics – it is directly proportional. The amount of joyful awareness and clear intention we pour into our inner lives is exactly the amount of positive change we will see manifest in our outer reality.

Nothing in our lives is completely permanent, and that is actually a gift. It means that what was does not have to be what is. We can relax for a moment, stop looking for someone to blame, and hold a space of quiet, joyful responsibility for ourselves. We cannot

BNEI MITZVAH: MAZAL TOV!


Nathan Sachs

Grace Bhiza

Ali Smuts-Simons

Tim Bourne

single-handedly fix the macro-politics of our nations, but we can change our own reality, starting from the inside out.

This July, in this month of Av, let us choose awareness. Let us look at the destruction happening around us and not just mark it on the calendar. Let us go deep into our souls, look our anger, our violence, and our fear straight in the eye, and then step out of our rigid structures and choose hope. Let us turn our gaze softly inward, take gentle responsibility for our own peace, and choose to build a shared future rooted in kindness, intentionality, and unconditional love. ●



FAREWELL TO RABBI GREG

Members and friends of the congregation recently gathered to celebrate Rabbi Greg and thank him for twenty years of dedicated service to

our community. His farewell was filled with laughter, tears, memories, and heartfelt tributes shared during this special farewell event.

We wish Rabbi Greg every happiness and success as he embarks on the next chapter of his journey. *L'hitraot*, Rabbi Greg. ●





'What do dead Jews think about a Jewish homeland?' Continued from page 29.

cosmopolitanism, always potentially nomadic, living on sufferance in foreign states. We have been the 'resident aliens' of Europe, perpetually traumatised by a sociability in which we are expected to assimilate, yet are forever marked as the unassimilable outsider.

A physical state is a narrative of perfect safety, a fantasy of a secure 'home' where conflict will cease and identity will finally become stable. I must ask: is such a consensus ever real, or is it a spurious form of defence? We humans are defensive creatures. We build thick walls – both in our minds and in our politics – to protect ourselves from the terrifying fluidity of memory, history, and the other.

If the Jewish people were to establish a physical state, I worry we would merely be translating our internal conflicts into geographical borders. A state requires a new kind of acculturation, a new authority, and therefore, inevitably, new forms of repression and exclusion. Would this new state not create its own dissenting minorities? Would it not demand a conformity that effaces the very thing that has made the Jewish mind so distinct – our status as the permanent, critical outsiders, the 'outlaws' who do not blindly submit to the local regime?

My own 'inner identity' as a Jew is not bound to a piece of earth; it is

bound to a shared psychological structure, a familiarity with precariousness, and a refusal to be easily pacified.

A physical state may offer a temporary, political satisfaction, but it cannot cure the modern grief of displacement. I suspect that even in a land of our own, we would find that the true 'home' we are searching for is not a territory, but a capacity to tolerate our own inner conflicts without turning them into new dogmas.

Perhaps the question reveals our deepest fear: can we survive our losses and our historical precarity without becoming the very type of authoritative, boundary-enforcing masters who once excluded us?"

THINKER 4:

"To speak of a physical homeland is to speak of a vessel, and like any vessel, its true value lies in what it is made to hold.

First, I knew that the ultimate "homeland" of the Jew is the Torah itself. The Torah is our water. Without it, even if we sit upon the most secure soil in the world, we are like fish gasping on dry land. The Jewish people cannot be sustained merely by borders; our true existence is bound to the divine words which are our life and the length of our days.

Yet, do not mistake this for a rejection of the soil of Eretz Yisrael. The land is not merely a political sanctuary; it is the stage upon which the Torah is meant to be lived, and its dust is holy.

So, do we need a physical homeland? Yes. We need it

because the commandments of the Torah are designed to sanctify a real, physical society – how we treat our neighbours, how we harvest our fields, and how we govern ourselves with justice. But the land is the body, and the Torah is the soul. A body without a soul is a corpse; a soul without a body has no dwelling in this world. We must pursue the land, but only if we fill it with the waters of Torah."

THINKER 5:

"With the gravity that the years and the weight of my office have bestowed upon me, I must answer you with an unequivocal: Yes. The Jewish people do not merely require a physical homeland as a matter of political convenience; they require it as an absolute, existential necessity.

We are a historical group of people who clearly belong together, held together by a common foe. Wherever we go, our very success, our very presence, stirs the sleeping beast of antisemitism.

We cannot remain in this invisible ghetto, frozen in a

state of perpetual psychological dislocation, begging for tolerance from hosts who look upon our noses, our beards, and our very gait with disdain.

My journey to this realisation was not born solely of the external horrors of the pogroms, but of a deep, internal quest for Jewish dignity and authenticity. We must have a space where we can 'bow without servility and stand upright without defiance'.

We need a homeland that is not merely a refuge from physical destruction, but a theatre for the realisation of our highest human ideals.

We must build this physical home, not as a theological domain run by the clergy – for we shall keep our rabbis in their temples just as we keep our soldiers in their barracks – but as a modern, legally assured haven. Without a land of our own, we are but a ghost among the nations, an anomaly of history. With it, we shall finally step into the light of the modern world as a proud, self-determining, and authentic people." ●



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Making choices while you can

Following on from my article last month, I cannot overstate the importance of making decisions and putting plans in place as we age.

Recent events reminded us how quickly circumstances can change and highlighted the need to consider important choices before they become urgent.

One area that deserves careful thought is financial management. Every person should have someone they trust implicitly who can assist with financial matters if they become temporarily or permanently unable to do so themselves. This may include ensuring that essential accounts such as rates, electricity and levies are paid on time. For those without family living nearby, having practical systems in place can make a significant difference.

It is also important to understand that a Power of Attorney ceases to be valid if the grantor loses the capacity to understand the consequences of their actions, for example through dementia, coma or severe mental illness. This makes early planning essential.

Many of us avoid difficult conversations with loved ones, yet discussing our values, treatment preferences and what quality of life means to us is invaluable. If family discussions are difficult, speaking to a trusted adviser or organisation is another option.

Dignity SA offers helpful information and guidance on many of these matters.

Recently, while looking through past newsletters, I came across a remarkable document left by a much-loved member after her passing. It was not a conventional will, but what she called her Ethical Will – a document well worth reading.



Southern Suburbs members enjoying a morning at Hotel Verde



Left: West Coast Challah Bake. Right: Social Worker Stacey Melmed and Jane Arelitsky

Southern Suburbs members enjoying their art morning

MY ETHICAL WILL (BY MRS L HENRY)

I want to revive an ancient Jewish custom & write to you all my ethical will. I will try to be brief, explain to you what are the values I would like to bequeath to you – for my material assets are lean.

There are many values I would love to pass on to you, all my children & grandchildren. Under the pressure of modern living & our great separation, there never seems time to sit down and discuss my philosophies. I hope one day you will read my words and find something in them you can apply to your own lives.

I have been happy & rich in relationships, heightened by my pride in all of your achievements. You are all very special & my dearest family.

The early years on the farm *Pomona* were difficult & demanding, but the beauty of the sunrise & sunsets & the sense of achievement after a hard days work, made a day worthwhile. Sitting to a simple supper with Bertie cleanly washed and hair slicked down, was good. To work hard and appreciate rest after labour – is good. To get things too easy is not right – one must work for things that are more valuable than money in the bank, for no one can ever take them away from you.

I leave you the fragrance of the smell of apple blossom – the stark look of newly pruned trees, with the sadden singe of sap rising & the promise of life & growth. I leave you the soft splash of the irrigation flow, the bees on their endless search for honey, the gathering of the rain clouds coming surging up from the north, the comfort of the wood

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

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

Births: Amanda Summerfield – Granddaughter, Maureen Summerfield – Great Granddaughter

Barmitzvah: Shirley and Hymie Kaplan – grandson

Wedding: Sonia Norrie – Grandson

Birthday: Sylvia Quin – 90th

Welcome to new members: Susan Friedman, Beth Moalem, Barry Todes

Wishes to those who are not well: Debbie Epstein, Temma Gad, Lorraine Lazarus, Mary Rapaport, Sandra Sheinbar.

Our condolences to the families of our members who have passed away: Cecile Buirski, Alma Buchinsky, Miriam Kleineibst, Rahle Kuritzky, Renee Woolf.

Our condolences to members who have lost loved ones. Linda Franklin Thorn – Husband, Brian, Jennifer Karabus – husband, Cyril

fires in the grate, the soft purring of cats & the faithful & obedient eyes of a beloved dog. All so simple - & yet so rich.

I leave you the love of reading & always searching for knowledge. I leave you love of friends & trust in each other. I leave you the right to judge & be fair in your judgement. I ask you not to be too judgemental for you, too, can be judged.

Remember, the spoken word, if given in anger, can never be retrieved, & you will find you will be the loser. I leave you the pride of being part of a family. They belong to you.

Continues on page 40.



'Making choices while you can' – Continued from page 39.

You will celebrate together, grieve together – you will argue, criticise & sometimes reject, because families do – but really, deep down you will all be proud of each other, & there is always love. But remember – & believe me – I know its true – when you need your family, they will be there.

I leave you the faith of my forefathers. Be proud to be a Jew. We have suffered as a race, but hold your heads up high. My faith has come down from my grandparents & parents, & I now pass it on to you. Cherish it – I leave you pride in yourselves & whatever country you are in.

I also leave you my memories of my dearest husband – a man of honour & decency, who taught me to love the simple life & appreciation of good, clean living. His passing has left a void, but each day I know he has pride in my strength.

I leave you my love of Israel & longing for peace. I leave you my love for, understanding of the handicapped, & the priceless gift I received in the richness of Batya's life (her granddaughter). She has heightened my awareness of beauty of the soul behind a different body & mind. I leave you the sweetness of service towards her & all who are handicapped. I leave you compassion & understanding towards the elderly & abandoned – & the realisation that age creeps on slowly, but surely – & each day gained is a gift.



Milnerton Members enjoying a morning at Suikerbossie



Guest Speaker Karen Kallman speaking at West Coast on her recent family travels

I leave you the knowledge that each one of you, in your own special way, has made ME – I am proud to have been daughter, wife, mother & Gran – what more could a *Yiddische Meidel* want – despite life's challenges & sometimes, hard knocks – life has been worth living – So – Go for it – live – & be happy. *Carpe Diem* – seize the day –.

Mrs Lilian Robinson – Mrs Herbert Henry – Mrs L. Henry – but always ME –

Date found: November 2006 / 24 Cheshvan 5767

Wishing you a good month – enjoy all we have on offer so that you too can live your best life! ●

Diana Sochen,
Executive Director



Above Top: Art Teacher Ruth Melmed in Southern Suburbs. Left and above: Trevor Lomofsky's mural of mosaics made at CJSA. Trevor Lomofsky and his murals.

CLASSIFIEDS

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SHARE YOUR STORIES

Every edition of the *Cape Jewish Chronicle* celebrates our community – its people, achievements, traditions and the many acts of kindness that bring us together.

Do you have a story, celebration or community moment to share? We'd love to hear from you.

Cape Town-based stories with a Jewish connection are welcome. Email us at editor@ctjc.co.za

