

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

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THE WOMEN'S MONTH EDITION 2026

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AUGUST 2026



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Beyond charity: Building a more equal South Africa



BONNY FELDMAN
Editor

South Africa is a wealthy country with many poor people. It possesses the resources, infrastructure, and institutions of a developed economy, yet legacy inequalities, low economic growth, and high unemployment prevent millions from sharing in that wealth. The defining characteristic of South Africa's economy is not simply poverty, but extreme inequality.

For generations, our community has responded to need with generosity. We saw this clearly over the past few weeks, as people rallied to support Mandela Day initiatives and provide relief for victims of xenophobic threats. Through our welfare organisations, food programmes and countless acts of kindness, we have transformed lives and upheld the Jewish values of compassion, dignity and responsibility. This work remains essential. It provides hope, relieves suffering, and strengthens the social fabric of both our own community and wider society.

Yet charity alone cannot solve South Africa's greatest challenges.

No matter how effectively we feed the hungry, support vulnerable families or fund

educational opportunities, these efforts address the consequences of inequality rather than its causes. As long as economic growth remains weak, unemployment remains stubbornly high, and opportunities remain inaccessible to millions, the demand for charitable support will continue to outpace what any community can provide.

This is not an argument for doing less. Rather, it is an argument for thinking bigger.

The Jewish community has long been recognised for its leadership, entrepreneurship and commitment to public service. Those same strengths can help shape the conversations and partnerships needed to build a more inclusive and prosperous South Africa. Alongside our philanthropic work, we should actively contribute to discussions on economic growth, education, skills development, job creation and public policy. These are not abstract national debates – they will ultimately determine whether future generations require the same level of charitable assistance that exists today.

Meaningful change will require collaboration between government, business, civil society and communities. No single sector holds all the answers, but neither can any afford to remain on the sidelines. Our community has experience in building institutions, solving complex problems and creating sustainable organisations. Those capabilities can make a valuable contribution beyond our own community.

Our tradition teaches us not only to care for those in need, but also to pursue justice and repair the world. In South



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SHABBAT TIMES					
DATE		PORTION	CANDLE LIGHTING		
			Earliest	Latest	Ends
31 July/ 1 August	18 Av	Eikev	17:01	17:48	18:42
7/8 August	25 Av	Re'eh	17:05	17:53	18:47
14/15 August	2 Elul	Shoftim	17:09	17:58	18:51
21/22 August	9 Elul	Ki Teitzei	17:12	18:03	18:56
28/29 August	16 Elul	Ki Tavo	17:16	18:08	19:00

Africa today, that calling asks us to look beyond immediate relief and engage with the structural issues that continue to divide our society.

Charity will always have a vital place. There will always be people who need compassion, support and practical assistance. But if we want to build a South Africa in which fewer people need charity in the first place, we must also

become part of the search for long-term solutions.

Our community has never lacked the will to make a difference. The challenge now is to ensure that our commitment extends beyond alleviating hardship to helping create a society where opportunity is shared more widely, inequality is reduced, and every South African has the chance to thrive. ●

COMMUNITY NEWS

MANDELA DAY ACTIVITIES



"WHAT COUNTS IN LIFE IS NOT THE MERE FACT THAT WE HAVE LIVED. IT IS WHAT DIFFERENCE WE HAVE MADE TO THE LIVES OF OTHERS." – NELSON MANDELA

WIZO CAPE TOWN

In the spirit of Mandela Day, our incredible WIZO volunteers came together to make sandwiches for the children and families supported by Mamma Mickey's Soup Kitchen and Crèche.

It was a simple act of kindness, but one that reminds us how powerful it is when a community comes together to care for others. ●



The handover of hundreds of loaves of bread, food items and warm clothing to Mamma Mickey's Soup Kitchen and Crèche in Khayelitsha



MENSCH

Mensch volunteers made sandwiches for Capetonians in need, and donated knitted dolls and beanies to children at an ECD.



UNION OF JEWISH WOMEN

We joined the wonderful residents of Spes Bona (Jewish Community Services Cape Town) to decorate and ice cupcakes for 67 minutes in honour of Mandela Day.

The beautifully decorated cupcakes were distributed to ECDs in Kensington. There was plenty of laughter, creativity and community spirit, and both the volunteers and residents thoroughly enjoyed the morning together.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone at Spes Bona for partnering with us in this meaningful initiative and helping us make every minute count.



In the true spirit of Mandela Day, we came together to pack comfort bags for survivors of domestic violence. A huge thank you to everyone who so generously donated goods and funds to make this initiative possible. Your kindness and compassion will bring comfort, dignity and hope to those facing some of life's most difficult moments. Together, we are making a meaningful difference – one comfort bag at a time. ●





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WOMEN'S DAY 2026

The month of August in the South African calendar provides an encouragement for us to turn our attention to the position of women in our country. While the 9th of August was chosen as the date for a public holiday – in commemoration of the 1956 women's march against the pass laws that regulated the lives of women of colour in apartheid South Africa – there is a great deal more that deserves attention in terms of the place of women in our country.

In some senses, it seems odd that we still need this kind of focus: in so many parts of the world, women have been able to take their places as equal partners to men in their societies, enjoying significant levels of equality.

But this is, unfortunately, not the case in our country, where extensive systemic disparities continue, notwithstanding the equality that our Constitution promises. We face one of the highest rates of Gender-based violence and femicide globally. In addition, women in our society suffer an unequal burden in terms of health issues; are more likely to be unemployed than men; less likely to enter the labour market and earn a living; and consistently face a significant wage gap.

And so, when we hear of women who are leaders in their fields, we should acknowledge their achievements even more – if for no other reason than to show that it's possible to break these barriers. It's with this in mind that this month, the *Cape Jewish Chronicle* shares some inspirational stories of women from our community who are truly doing great things: pushing the boundaries in fields women are not traditionally part of; initiating meaningful interventions to improve the lives of others; and achieving at the highest levels in their fields.



Valerie Mizrahi: A life in Science

KAREN MILLER

Valerie (Val) Mizrahi is busier than ever, even though she was required by university regulations to retire at 65.

She is now Professor Emerita at UCT; a Senior Scholar at the Institute of Infectious Diseases and Molecular Medicine, the major postgraduate research institute she once led at UCT; and remains deeply involved in research development, both here and internationally.

Her latest honour is election as an international member of the United States National Academy of Sciences, one of the world's most prestigious scientific institutions. It joins election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of the UK in 2023 and membership of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2025. They are remarkable distinctions, although one suspects Val Mizrahi herself is more interested in the next scientific question than the last honour.

Science is her driving force: she was the chemistry student inspired by an exceptional teacher who developed into the

chemist who has spent more than three decades pursuing tuberculosis (TB), and the internationally acclaimed researcher flying around the world building scientific networks.

For more than thirty years tuberculosis has been the great scientific question of her life. In South Africa, where TB remains one of our leading causes of death, her research has helped transform our understanding of the bacterium that causes this disease and contributed to the development of new approaches to treatment. She has been instrumental in advancing our understanding of drug-resistant tuberculosis, one of the most pressing public health challenges of our time.

After working in the United States, Val returned to South Africa in 1989, excited by the groundbreaking work being done in HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases and by the opportunities opening up in tuberculosis research. Given the freedom to follow her scientific curiosity, she worked at the SA Institute of Medical Research and built a world-class TB research programme at Wits University and the National Health Laboratory Service before moving to UCT in 2011 to lead the Institute of Infectious Diseases and Molecular Medicine.

Science, for Val Mizrahi, has never been a solitary pursuit. It is about individual curiosity, certainly, but it is equally about collaboration. She speaks often of "social capital", the networks of relationships that make good

science possible. Scientific excellence, she believes, depends upon bringing talented people together, building capacity and creating opportunities for younger scientists to flourish.

Colleagues at Wits affectionately gave her the nickname, 'the Rottweiler'. This perfectly captures both her determination and her refusal to let go of scientific problems. She cheerfully admits to being hyper-competitive and that she cannot switch off completely from her work. Retirement, therefore, was probably doomed from the outset.

She proudly proclaims that her background is "100% Sephardi". Three of her grandparents came from the island of Rhodes and one from Izmir in Turkey. Economic circumstances brought them to Rhodesia in the 1920s to begin their lives again, while other members of the family who remained behind were murdered in Auschwitz in 1944. Her admiration of their courage and tenacity to persevere against the odds is behind her own drive to face the insurmountable health issues that South Africa faces.

Scientific excellence depends upon bringing talented people together, building capacity and creating opportunities for younger scientists to flourish.

She grew up with the privilege of knowing all four grandparents, listening to them speaking Ladino, and having remarkable parents, who taught her the importance of family and community. Today there is a heartfelt regret that she didn't ask more questions about her family's history and lived experiences. "I wish I had found out more," she says. Curiosity, she reflects, has shaped both her personal and scientific life.

She speaks warmly of the mentors who have guided her, particularly Professors Solly

Continues on page 9

WOMEN'S MONTH 2026

Benatar and Siamon Gordon. Her greatest mentor, however, is her mother, whose own battle with tuberculosis proved a defining moment for the family. It is therefore no surprise that mentorship occupies such an important place in Val's own life. Helping younger scientists build the networks and collaborations that will sustain their careers matters deeply to her.

She is also a passionate advocate for women in science. Although she describes herself as "an aberration in my time", she never saw herself primarily as a woman scientist, simply as a scientist. Family, she insists, comes first. When her two daughters were young, she left work early in the afternoons to be with them and has enabled younger women in her group to do likewise.

Although she is not a medical doctor and does not treat patients herself, her work extends far beyond the laboratory. She mentors young scientists, and promotes organisations such as the Khayelitsha-based *Eh!woza*, which brings together biomedical researchers and young people from communities affected by HIV and tuberculosis. "The bacterium does not carry a passport," she says. Science and health, for her, transcend borders and ideology.

She reads "voraciously", treasures quiet time alone and walks to recharge. She draws inspiration from Rabbi Jonathan Sacks: "There is a difference between optimism and hope. Optimism is the belief that things will get better. Hope is the belief that if we work hard enough together we can make things better." It is difficult to imagine a motivation more perfectly aligned with both her science and her worldview.

Asked what legacy she hopes to leave, Val Mizrahi's answer is immediate. It is "not science but people". For someone newly elected to one of the world's most distinguished scientific academies, that may be the most revealing answer of all. ●

Crafting a Cannes winner the human way

EDITOR

In an era when artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the creative industries, one of advertising's most prestigious awards has gone to a commercial that achieved its remarkable visual effects the old-fashioned way – through human ingenuity, craftsmanship and meticulous filmmaking.

For Cape Town's Bev Wynne, founder and Executive Producer of Gatehouse Commercials, being part of the team behind the Cannes Lions Grand Prix-winning *Your Way Out* for Coinbase represents the pinnacle of a 40-year career.

The commercial won top honours: the Grand Prix for Film Craft at this year's Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. It's also received a Primetime Emmy nomination, a rare achievement for an advertisement.

"Cannes Lions is the biggest stage in our industry globally," says Bev. "It's where the best advertising work from every country is judged against each other. Winning a Grand Prix, which is awarded to only one entry in each category, is genuinely considered a career high point.

"Our film won the Grand Prix for Film Craft, which is particularly meaningful because that category judges the actual filmmaking – direction, camera work and execution – rather than just the concept."



This project proved that, even in an age where AI is transforming the industry, extraordinary results can still come from people building, crafting and solving problems together.

Gatehouse Commercials, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, provided the production services that enabled the ambitious international shoot in Southern Africa.

"My role is as a service producer: I'm not developing the creative idea itself, but making it physically and financially possible to shoot here," she explains. "Most of the work I do is facilitating productions that come in from overseas and turning their vision into a shoot that actually happens on the ground."

That means overseeing budgets and schedules, sourcing local crew, arranging locations and permits, co-ordinating casting, and solving countless logistical challenges on set.

What distinguished *Your Way Out* from many other



On set, an actress in full make-up and costume, in position for the next take

productions in today's environment was its commitment to practical filmmaking.

At first glance, the commercial appears to have been created almost entirely using computer-generated imagery. It resembles a pixelated retro video game. In reality, however, almost everything viewers see was physically built and filmed.

"The agency gave us a strong no-AI mandate from the outset," says Bev. "Even though the finished film looks like a pixelated video game, none of that was done digitally afterwards. It was all built and shot for real."

Bringing that vision to life required remarkable planning and craftsmanship, including constructing two 80-metre sets, building and shooting miniatures, and filming on location in Cape Town – all physically crafted to create that video-game aesthetic in camera, rather than adding it afterwards.

The result is a film that demonstrates how practical effects can still surprise audiences in an age increasingly dominated by digital technology.

"It's an enormous logistical and technical undertaking to pull off practically what most people would assume is done on a computer," Bev says. "I think that's exactly why it stood out to the Cannes jury in the Film Craft category, which rewards that kind of filmmaking craft and ingenuity."

For Bev, the award is also recognition of South Africa's world-class film industry and the highly skilled technicians and craftspeople who have helped establish Cape Town as a leading international production destination. "The crew base here has grown up alongside decades of international productions, so you've got camera, grip, lighting and production crews

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'Crafting a Cannes winner the human way' continued from page 9

who work to the same standard as anywhere in London or Los Angeles," Bev comments.

"Cape Town has become one of the most sought-after production hubs in the world for international advertising," she says. "The light and landscape diversity is extraordinary. Close by you've got ocean, mountains, desert-like terrain and city, so a director can get several completely different looks without leaving the region."

Bev's own career began more than 40 years ago when she answered a newspaper advertisement for a 'Girl Friday' at a production company. After starting in feature films, she found her niche in commercial advertising, where shorter production cycles offered a better balance while still delivering the creative challenges she loved.

Looking back on *Your Way Out*, she is immensely proud of the achievement.

"I'm incredibly proud of what everyone accomplished," she says. "This project proved that, even in an age where AI is transforming the industry, extraordinary results can still come from people building, crafting and solving problems together. That's something worth celebrating."

At a time when so much creative work is being generated digitally, *Your Way Out* stood apart by demonstrating that human imagination, technical skill and collaboration remain capable of producing work that not only captivates audiences but also earns the advertising industry's highest honours. ●

Watch the award-winning advert by [clicking here](#).

And, to see how the advert was made, [click here](#).

Paige Nick: South Africa's ultimate Book Person

KAREN MILLER

If there is such a thing as a 'Book Person', then Paige Nick may well be the gold standard.

Novelist, columnist, book influencer, festival curator, radio reviewer, public speaker and founder of one of South Africa's most active online book clubs, she has spent much of her life encouraging people to read, talk about books and, above all, enjoy them. In a literary world that can sometimes take itself rather seriously, Paige brings something refreshing: enthusiasm, humour and a genuine love of stories.

Her own story begins in Camps Bay, where she grew up as the youngest of six children. Books were woven into family life from the start. Every Saturday, the family would pile into two cars and head off to the Camps Bay Public Library to stock up on reading material for the week ahead. It was the sort of ritual that quietly shapes a life.

One of her fondest memories is, as a little girl, reading to her grandpa, when her grandparents, Jess and Syd Icklow, visited from Australia. Long before she became a published author, she was already sharing stories with others.

Another formative influence was Netzer, the Jewish youth movement where she spent



...creating stories and connecting readers with one another is what has made Paige Nick one of South Africa's most important champions of the contemporary literary scene.

much of her youth. The movement's camps encouraged in Paige qualities of leadership, creativity and performance. Through skits, plays and group activities, she developed skills that would later find expression in both her writing and public life.

These days, while many people unwind in front of television or with music playing in the background, Paige prefers something else entirely. She reads. It is not merely part of her work; it is her favourite pastime. She starts most mornings with exercise, either swimming or running, before returning to the world of words.

Like many writers, she has a practical day job. Paige built her career in advertising and continues to work as a copywriter, now freelancing after years with major agencies. She speaks warmly about having "grown up" in advertising alongside colleagues and remains fascinated by the business of communication. While social media has transformed the industry, she believes the fundamental principles remain rooted in understanding people

and finding what she calls "human truth".

Her writing career has flourished alongside her advertising work. Since publishing her first novel, *A Million Miles from Normal*, in 2010, she has written ten books: seven novels and three erotic adventures. Her latest novel, *Book People*, published

in 2025, centres on a Facebook book club, a setting she knows particularly well.

Paige's fiction is marked by sharp observation, satire and a light touch. She writes books that make readers laugh while holding up a mirror to modern life. Real experiences often spark her stories, which are then transformed through imagination and humour.

Jewish readers may recognise another familiar feature of her novels: characters with distinctly Jewish names such as Rachel Marcus, Ruth Burstein and Myra Berelowitz. She has often spoken about her affection for Jewish humour and her delight in finding the funny side of everyday Jewish life.

One of her most memorable novels, *Death by Carbs*, published in 2015, opens with the murder of the real-life Professor Tim Noakes, the No Carbs doctor, on the very first page. Before publishing it, she sought Noakes's permission to use him as a character. He not only approved but later attended the book's launch, demonstrating a sense of humour equal to the premise.

Writing, she says, begins long before the first words appear on the page. Research, thinking and planning occupy much of the process. Then comes a concentrated period of writing, usually around three months, when momentum takes over.

Continues on page 11

Like every writer, she has also experienced disappointment. One manuscript that she believed would be her biggest success never reached publication after another author, Liane Moriarty, released a book built around a remarkably similar premise. It was one of those cruel twists familiar to writers everywhere. Yet rather than dwelling on what might have been, she simply moved on to the next project.

Paige's impact on reading culture extends far beyond her own books. The Good Book Appreciation Society, the Facebook book club she founded, now has more than 24 000 members. It has become a vibrant community of readers sharing recommendations, opinions and literary discoveries. She is endlessly fascinated by how people behave online and works hard to keep discussions constructive. Describing herself as an "equal opportunity deleter", she is determined that the group should remain free of nastiness and political point-scoring.

She has also become a familiar voice on Fine Music Radio, where twice each month she hosts a show of book reviews and author interviews. More recently, she curated the literary programme at the Hermanus FynArts Festival, bringing together 11 almost sold-out book events. For anyone concerned about the future of reading, that level of enthusiasm is encouraging.

Asked about her favourite book, her answer is telling. It is always the one she has just written.

For someone who spends her life surrounded by books, that response makes perfect sense. Reading may be a big love, but creating stories and connecting readers with one another is what has made Paige Nick one of South Africa's most important champions of the contemporary literary scene. ●



Rebecca Gore: asking the hard questions

KAREN MILLER

Hard questions are what occupy much of Rebecca Gore's search for solutions to humanity's pressing predicaments.

They are questions about prisons and rehabilitation, about women whose lives have been shaped by violence and poverty, and about what happens when societies stop seeing the humanity of the people on the margins. These questions have found expression in the recently launched *Behind Prison Walls: Unlocking a Safer South Africa*, the book she co-authored with Justice Edwin Cameron and Sohela Surajpal. They have appeared as well as in her academic writing on subjects ranging from abortion rights in prison, and women who kill their abusers, to the menstruation needs of women behind bars. They have also set her on the path to becoming an advocate: she was admitted to the Cape Bar earlier this year.

"Chutzpah" is the word she uses when speaking about these hard questions and "not being comfortable with the

REBECCA REMINDS US THAT JUSTICE IS NOT MERELY ABOUT WINNING ARGUMENTS OR APPLYING LEGAL PRINCIPLES. IT IS ABOUT WILLINGNESS TO SEE THE ESSENTIAL HUMANITY IN ALL PEOPLE.

status quo", especially when it deprives people of human dignity. For her it is one of the values Judaism has given her: not simply audacity, but the willingness to challenge accepted assumptions. It is also a phrase that captures much of the work she has chosen to do.

Rebecca considers this particularly Jewish quality as central to who she is and the values she follows. She speaks of being inspired by strong Jewish women throughout history and of being raised with the importance of making a positive impact in the world. Her grandparents have been a strong influence, especially her paternal grandmother, whose commitment to

lifelong learning, embracing eccentricities and taking ownership of one's life continues to inspire her.

Law itself was not however Rebecca's first choice. She began by studying Politics, Philosophy and Economics at UCT, and being interested in social impact and justice long before she contemplated a legal career. An internship at the Legal Resources Centre and studying Transitional Justice drew her increasingly towards the law and the possibilities it offered. Her arrival as an advocate is the culmination of years of public interest work and academic research, including a Master of Laws from Harvard Law School.

Her greatest inspiration in the law is Justice Edwin Cameron, who has consistently taken on seemingly insurmountable social challenges. Rebecca had the opportunity to clerk for Justice Cameron at the Constitutional Court and then was his legal researcher at the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (JICS), the national prison oversight body.

Working in prison oversight during the height of the Covid pandemic took Rebecca into both men's and women's prisons throughout South Africa. Here she encountered overcrowded cells built for thirty, accommodating sixty inmates; inmates in prolonged solitary confinement, unsanitary conditions and neglect. She continued to reflect on the humanity and context of the range of people she encountered.

One memory has remained particularly vivid. Observing long queues of dejected people waiting to be processed before entering prison, dressed in their everyday clothes, she was reminded of the dehumanisation Jews have suffered over a long arc of

Continues on page 12

WOMEN'S MONTH 2026



Caption here

history. She acknowledges the markedly different context, but the power of the image remains significant for her. It raises questions about how societies treat collective groups of people and what oppressive actions become possible when people are labelled and treated as less than human.

Her work has increasingly focused on women in prison. "What women experience in prison is a microcosm of what they experience in life". Women inmates have lives shaped by violence, poverty and abuse. Some have engaged in sex work; some have acted as drug mules; and others have stolen food for their children. Women's prisons have too often been designed around men's experiences and fail to recognise women's particular needs. A prison nurse once told her that women simply "become numb" with incarceration.

Alongside these stories are others that resist easy categorisation. She recalls meeting a thoughtful and ambitious woman imprisoned for murdering her abuser who was studying law through Unisa while serving her sentence. Women's rights remain at the forefront of much of her thinking about prison reform.

The law that attracts Rebecca is not confined to the courtroom though she is drawn to the role of the advocate, to argumentation, the challenge of difficult cases and the necessary research that follows. She is equally committed to creating spaces

in which difficult issues can be discussed openly. While many more women are entering the profession, she believes obstacles remain and that mentorship remains key.

Rebecca enjoys long-distance running and, as a personal challenge, takes part in a marathon each year. Running is an opportunity to switch off, to explore her surroundings, and to think about perplexing issues. She loves books and films and describes herself, in a family of 'numbers' people, as the 'word' person. There is something wonderfully apt about that description. Words matter to lawyers, but so too do the questions that sit behind them.

Perhaps that is what most distinguishes this young advocate. In a profession often associated with certainty, Rebecca Gore remains interested in uncertainty, in asking the hard questions and accepting the ambivalence of many of the answers. She reminds us that justice is not merely about winning arguments or applying legal principles. It is about willingness to see the essential humanity in all people. ●

REBECCA GORE'S PAPERS AND ARTICLES

Behind Prison Walls: Unlocking A Safer South Africa – [click here](#).

Rethinking Crime and Punishment – [click here](#).

Abortion behind bars: women in prison have extra obstacle to overcome – [click here](#).

Carceral period poverty in South African prisons – [click here](#).



Changing the future of maternal mental health

EDITOR

For more than two decades, Associate Professor Simone Honikman has dedicated her career to helping women and their families navigate the mental health challenges that can accompany pregnancy and early motherhood.

As Founder and Director of the Perinatal Mental Health Project (PMHP), she has worked to improve the lives of thousands of women in South Africa while helping to shape maternal mental healthcare across the African continent.

A graduate of the University of Cape Town's medical school, Simone's passion for social justice began long before she entered the medical profession. Growing up in a middle-class family during *apartheid*, she was encouraged by her parents to question authority and

challenge injustice. Witnessing the resilience of disadvantaged women sparked a lifelong commitment to improving their lives.

By the age of 12, she had decided she wanted to become a doctor and work in underserved communities. While studying medicine at the University of Cape Town, she recognised the emotional toll medical training was taking on fellow students and established a student advice and support centre that offered counselling and psychological support to students in distress.

After qualifying, she worked in the public health sector in obstetrics, paediatrics, internal medicine and psychiatry before managing the Khayelitsha Cervical Cancer Screening Project.

It was during this time that her life's work came into focus. Research showing that one in three women in Khayelitsha experienced postnatal depression, together with the devastating suicide of a colleague eight months after giving birth, highlighted the urgent need for accessible maternal mental healthcare.

In response, Simone, and a team of midwives and volunteers, founded the PMHP at Mowbray Maternity Hospital in the early 2000s, pioneering an integrated model of maternal mental healthcare within the public health system.

Today, the PMHP is a nationally recognised organisation. Although based at the University of Cape Town as a founding partner of the Centre for Public Mental Health, it raises its own funding and continues to expand its work so that more women across South Africa can access essential mental health support. Simone comments: "PMHP's achievements can be attributed to many extraordinary people – our small team, our long-standing volunteers and consultants,

Continues on page 13

WOMEN'S MONTH 2026

and the collaboration with funding partners and thought leaders from all over the country and the globe.”

According to Simone, South Africa has one of the highest rates of perinatal mental health conditions in the world. “Worldwide, about 10% of pregnant women and 13% of women in the year after giving



birth experience a mental health condition, primarily depression and or anxiety,” she explains. “In South Africa this is even higher. We estimate that one in three women is affected by these conditions during or after childbirth.”

Pregnancy and the first year after birth can be a particularly challenging time, as many women face multiple pressures at once. Financial hardship, conflicts in relationships, the demands of caring for a new baby and others in the family, as well as other life stresses, can all affect a mother’s mental health and how she is able to manage her life. Without appropriate support, these

conditions can have profound consequences not only for mothers but also for their babies and families.

“The importance of mental health is unfortunately often overlooked,” says Simone. “Mental wellbeing is crucial for the woman who is pregnant or has just given birth. When women experience depression, anxiety or other mental health challenges without the support they need, it can affect their own physical health and wellbeing, as well as their ability to fully enjoy and navigate early parenthood and manage stressors in their environment. Because the period from conception to two years is such an important time in a child’s development, ensuring that women have access to timely mental health care benefits mothers, babies and families alike.”

To address these challenges, the PMHP integrates quality maternal mental healthcare into existing maternal and child health services, particularly in low- and middle-income communities. The organisation supports pregnant women, strengthens public health services, partners with NGOs, and trains healthcare and social development professionals so that maternal mental health becomes part of routine care.

Its influence extends beyond South Africa. Through training, research and collaboration in advocacy work, the PMHP has shared its expertise with health professionals and organisations

in countries including Lesotho, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Botswana.

“Our mission has driven us to share our expertise and learnings with others working with mothers across Africa,” she explains, “and we have benefitted hugely from innovative work being done across the continent and in other world regions.”

Simone’s pioneering work has earned international recognition. In 2014, she was elected to the prestigious Ashoka Fellowship, which recognises leading social entrepreneurs creating innovative solutions to society’s most pressing challenges.

More recently, she was granted a visiting fellowship at the

University of Oxford, as part of the AfOx programme, which enables Africa-based researchers to collaborate with Oxford scholars and further strengthen research and innovation in their fields.

“This recognition has given me access to extraordinary, dynamic and innovative people, working across sectors, working on the African continent and elsewhere, to better the development of their countries,” Simone comments.

From a childhood desire to make a difference to leading one of South Africa’s foremost maternal mental health organisations, Simone’s work continues to ensure that thousands of women receive the care and support they need at one of the most important moments of their lives. ●



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ELLA BLUMENTHAL!

Our best wishes to Ella Blumenthal on turning 105 during July. Your resilience, despite the terrors of the Holocaust, is remarkable.



Mark Solomon

JEWELLER GEMMOLOGIST








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ARE JEWS TERRIBLE AT WORLD DOMINATION?

For as long as any of us can remember, Jews have been accused of dominating the world. We supposedly control the banks, the media, the weather and now, even sport. These days it is no longer just “the Jews” supposedly pulling the strings - it is Israelis and Zionists too.



DANIEL BLOCH
Exec. Director
Cape SAJBD

If any of that were true, then we are clearly terrible at world domination and should seriously start re-evaluating our life choices.

During the FIFA World Cup, Argentina came from 2-0 down to beat Egypt in a controversial match. As is often the case in football, many supporters blamed the referee for their team's defeat. That, in itself, is hardly unusual. Egypt had just lost to the reigning world champions, led by one of the greatest footballers ever to play the game, Lionel Messi. Perhaps Argentina were simply the better side when it mattered most?

But the blame did not stop with the referee. Israel, Jews and Zionists were also

dragged into the conspiracy. Social media posts and media reports claimed that Israel had somehow influenced the outcome. Egyptian commentator Mohammed Nour even remarked: “We played like heroes, but Israel - meaning FIFA and the referees - had something to say about it, and we couldn't overcome these circumstances.”

If Jews really controlled the World Cup, surely we would at least have managed to get Israel into the tournament. Israel did not even qualify. In fact, reports suggested that United States goalkeeper Matt Turner was the only known Jewish player at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with perhaps only a handful of other players having some Jewish ancestry. If Jews control world football, why couldn't we get more Jewish players onto the pitch? We could at least have arranged for a brisket stand inside the stadium serving hot beef on rye.

The conspiracy theories do not end with football.

A few years ago, a United States senator suggested that Jews control the weather. If that were true, why do so many Cape Town Jews escape the city's cold, wet winters for warmer destinations such as Greece, Europe or Plettenberg Bay?

Then there is the claim that Jews control the banks and are all fabulously wealthy. If only. Apparently, every Jew is supposed to own a mansion, a holiday home, a yacht in

Monaco, and perhaps even a sports franchise. Meanwhile, I cannot afford Springbok rugby tickets, let alone buy a professional sports team. My bank account certainly contains plenty of zeros - they just all happen to be on the right-hand side of the decimal point.

Many of the individuals and organisations who claim to champion justice and human rights are often the very same people who casually blame Jews, Zionists and Israelis for problems entirely unrelated to them.

Humour aside, these conspiracy theories have serious consequences.

Many of the individuals and organisations who claim to champion justice and human rights are often the very same people who casually blame Jews, Zionists and Israelis for problems entirely unrelated to them. Even here in South Africa some sought to blame Israel and Zionists for recent outbreaks of xenophobic violence.

These accusations are not political criticism. They recycle classic antisemitic tropes that have existed for centuries, simply replacing old language with new labels. Increasingly, even the word ‘Zionist’ is no longer enough - the word ‘Jew’ is once again being used openly.

That should concern everyone.

The Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies will continue calling out antisemitism wherever it appears and will continue challenging it both online and in the courts.

Last year we secured the first of several successful hate speech cases. In August, another respondent will appear before the Equality Court, and we expect further matters to follow. We have already served papers on two additional individuals and are in the process of serving others.

We will not stand by while members of our community are targeted because they are Jewish. Protecting the rights and dignity of Jews in the Western Cape remains at the heart of our mandate.

No, we certainly do not dominate the world.

But over the coming months, we do intend to spend a fair amount of time dominating the courtroom. ●

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VIEWS MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The teacup moment

An objectively minor incident occurred in the first week following my admission as an attorney. Subjectively, it was profound.



SIMONE SULCAS
Chair, Cape SA
Jewish Board of
Deputies

I was brimming with the enthusiasm of a young green lawyer – low on experience, but high on passion for the law. The meeting room was brimming with advocates, attorneys and a couple of

unhappy looking clients. My quick scan of the room underscored two things: first, that I was the only woman in the room; and second, that I had noticed it.

The consultation progressed slowly, with the clients' frustration growing in direct proportion to the billable hours being clocked. Relief arrived on a tray: teacups, biscuits, and the sudden expectation that I would serve them. Almost in unison, every face in the room turned to me. After a few awkward seconds, senior counsel 'rescued' me by jovially taking charge of the teacups. I replayed the moment afterwards, wondering why I had not stood up for myself, and frustrated that the incident had been enough to silence me when I had a good strategic point to make.

A few days later, by chance, I bumped into my 'rescuer' at court. We discussed the case, and I took the opportunity to make the point I had not raised during the consultation. He said it was important and would add it to the papers. Then he asked whether I had failed to raise it at the time

because I had felt disempowered by being cast, however silently, into the stereotype of a woman expected to serve rather than speak. I sheepishly nodded. He looked at me and said, "Next time, remember that your seat at the table is not ornamental. You earned it as well. Use it."

On the 9th of this month, we celebrate Women's Day. I always pause on this day to remember that room, that table, and the moment I allowed a stereotype to quieten me. It took time to realise that I was not bound by the role others had silently assigned to me. I could define for myself the kind of woman I chose to be: one who speaks, contributes, leads, and models that courage for the young men she raised. Because, ultimately, equality is not about being offered a seat at the table. It is about using it. And as representative of the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies, I am trying to use mine in service of our community: to advocate with courage, to confront Jew-hate, and to support a community that is strong, proud and connected. ●



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FROM CHESED COMES HOPE

It was the distinct privilege of the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies to dedicate our Mandela Day initiative this year to Home of Hope: an extraordinary Cape Town organisation that provides a safe, loving home and a brighter future for almost 50 children and young adults, from the ages of three to eighteen.

Many of the children in Home of Hope's care come from severely disadvantaged backgrounds and live with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) or other developmental challenges. Beyond providing a safe space and 24-hour care, Home of Hope offers specialised education, therapeutic support, life-skills development and individual nurturing, ensuring that every child is given the opportunity to reach their full potential in an environment of dignity, stability and love.

With Mandela Day falling on Shabbat this year, we marked the occasion a little early. Armed with Home of Hope's wish list, our team headed to Makro to stock up on pantry staples and fresh produce. We also put together individual goodie bags for each of the children, packed with the help of our chair, Simone Sulcas, immediate former chair Adrienne Jacobson, members of the Cape SAJBD's council as well as



The Cape SAJBD team, members of the executive, and colleagues from several Jewish communal organisations helped pack goodie bags for the children of Home of Hope



colleagues from several Jewish communal organisations.

Delivering the donations gave us the opportunity to meet some of the remarkable people whose dedication keeps Home of Hope running every day. From caring for the children to managing logistics and fundraising, their passion and commitment were evident in every conversation. Being welcomed by the children themselves was a privilege. Their warmth, resilience and unmistakable sense of belonging were a powerful reminder of



the life-changing work taking place within these walls.

Out of the many worthy organisations serving the wider Cape Town communities, Home of Hope holds a particularly special place in the heart of our own Office and Administrative Coordinator, Mika – the glue that keeps the Cape SAJBD office together. She has been supporting Home of Hope for over a decade and has long spoken about the extraordinary work they do. Seeing that work firsthand, it was immediately clear why this organisation means so much to her.

Some experiences cannot be measured in minutes alone. While Mandela Day encourages us to give 67 minutes in service of others, our visit to Home of Hope reminded us that the impact of kindness extends far beyond the clock. It was a profoundly joyful and deeply humbling experience, and one that we know will not be our last encounter with this truly remarkable organisation.

For more information about the Home, see [Home of Hope](#) or phone 021 556 3573. ●



Cape SAJBD Executive Director Daniel Bloch with Kayla Abel, Director of Home of Hope



Raising the bar for South African kosher wine

When respected South African wine critic Michael Fridjhon conducted a blind tasting featuring both kosher and non-kosher wines, the results challenged long-held assumptions about kosher wine.

Five wines from Cape Town-based ESSA Wine Co. received some of the highest scores, demonstrating that they could hold their own against leading South African producers. For founders Josh and Chana Rynderman, it was powerful validation of a vision they had pursued since arriving in Cape Town several years earlier.

Historically, kosher wine has often been regarded as a niche category, with many assuming it could not rival premium non-kosher wines. The Ryndermans were determined to change that.

“Our focus has always been on producing wines of exceptional quality,” says Josh. “We believe every bottle should reflect the very best South Africa has to offer.”

That commitment has also earned ESSA international recognition. The winery was named Kosher Winery of the Year 2024 by the internationally respected publication Kosher Wine Musings, further cementing its growing reputation.

The story began long before the couple settled in South Africa. Josh, originally from California, entered the wine industry in 2014 as an apprentice at Four Gates Winery in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Like many newcomers, he started with the least glamorous tasks – cleaning barrels, moving boxes and helping wherever needed.

What began as physical labour soon developed into a fascination with the blend of science, agriculture and craftsmanship that lies behind every great bottle of wine.

After several harvests, Josh and Chana, a Johannesburg-born South African, recognised an opportunity to create something unique in the local wine industry.

“We were drawn by the opportunities within the local wine industry and the chance to create something that had never been done before: premium South African kosher wines with an uncompromising focus on quality,” Josh says. “Looking back, it was one of the best decisions we've ever made.”

The company launched with its first tiny harvest of just two tonnes in 2018. Since then, it has steadily expanded while



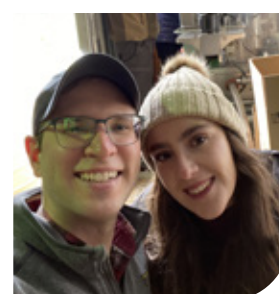
remaining firmly committed to quality over quantity.

That philosophy influences every aspect of production. Rather than owning vineyards, ESSA deliberately sources grapes from carefully selected growers in some of the Cape's premier wine regions, including Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge, Elgin and Stellenbosch. Each vineyard is chosen for the variety it produces best, with an emphasis on cool-climate and dry-farmed vineyards that yield grapes with freshness, concentration and complexity.

“We firmly believe that great wine begins in the vineyard,” says Josh. “Partnering with growers who truly understand their land is one of the most important decisions we make each vintage.”

The winery has also adopted production methods that distinguish it within the kosher wine world. It remains the only kosher winery in Africa that does not flash-pasteurise its wines, helping preserve the character and quality that wine enthusiasts expect from premium South African wines.

The name ESSA also reflects the couple's philosophy. Josh's original California label was called Kos Yeshuos. When they established their South African venture, they chose another word from the same verse in Tehillim (Psalms 116:13): “Kos Yeshuos Essa, U'v'shem Hashem Ekra” – “I will raise a cup of salvation and call



upon the name of Hashem.”

“For us, wine isn't simply a beverage,” Josh explains. “It's present at our most meaningful moments –

Kiddush, Yom Tov, weddings and countless simchas. We hope every bottle of ESSA adds another small moment of gratitude to those occasions.”

Innovation has also become a hallmark of the business.

During the past year alone, ESSA released one of the world's few kosher wines fermented and matured entirely in acacia barrels; launched South Africa's first kosher three-year-old potstill brandy that is also kosher for Pesach; and introduced its first Reserve wine – a 2023 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon matured for 25 months in French and American oak barrels.

The company has also expanded beyond wine, producing kosher gin, vodka and limoncello.

International growth has followed. In another significant milestone, ESSA recently signed an agreement with an Israeli importer, becoming the first South African winery to export kosher non-mevushal wines to Israel. (These are wines that are not heated, thereby protecting the grape's natural flavours. According to Jewish law, only observant Jews may open and pour the wine.) The move opens the door to a wider international audience and further strengthens South Africa's growing reputation in the premium kosher wine market.

The Ryndermans look forward to their wines being viewed as strong South African wines, rather than being judged only in terms of their kosher identity. ESSA wines can be tasted at the ESSA winery in Somerset West. See the winery's website for more information: essawine.com ●

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Golda Meir poses for a picture with the children of kibbutz shefaim, July 1950

Why Golda Meir still matters on Women's Day



HAYLEY COHEN

Golda Meir's tenure as Prime Minister of Israel (1969–1974) came just before a pivotal moment for women worldwide. Less than a year after she stepped down, the United Nations officially began observing International Women's Day on 8th March 1975, recognising the global movement for women's rights and equality.

Golda Meir never sought to be known as a feminist. Instead, she insisted on being regarded simply as Prime Minister rather than as a “female prime minister.” Yet her career demonstrated precisely what the world was beginning to celebrate: that women could lead nations, shape history, and govern with strength, wisdom, and conviction. Although she never publicly commented on the United Nations' first official International Women's Day in 1975, her life had already become a powerful example of its ideals. She believed women should simply be given the opportunity to lead—and then be judged by the same standards as everyone else.

Golda Meir's example reminds us that the advancement of women is not only about breaking barriers at the highest levels of leadership, but also

about recognising the countless ways women strengthen their communities through courage, service, and commitment every day.

While International Women's Day celebrates the global advancement of women's rights and achievements, South Africa's National Women's Day commemorates the courage of the more than 20,000 women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9th August 1956 in protest against apartheid pass laws. Though separated by geography and history, these occasions share a common message: women possess the courage and determination to shape the future.

Those same qualities continue to shape communities today—not only in government and public life, but also through the often unseen work of women who lead, volunteer, advocate, and inspire others.

At the South African Zionist Federation Cape Council, our women continue that tradition every day. Whether

YVETTE: “WOMEN ARE GENERALLY DOERS! WE ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES AND GET THE JOB DONE.”

serving in leadership roles, advocating outside the High Court, standing on the Sea Point Promenade in solidarity with Israel, volunteering their time, or quietly strengthening our community behind the scenes, they lead with courage, conviction, and purpose.

Tamara Davidson captured the spirit of Women's Day when she said, “Investing in

TAMARA: “My involvement in community building stems from being a mother specifically, more so than just being a woman. I want my children, my daughter in particular, to see that participation and service with integrity and vision in life is key -we need to show up for one another

women—from young to old—is one of the most powerful ways to strengthen our entire society.”

One respondent reflected, “I believe women often bring a nurturing and compassionate perspective to advocacy and community work,” choosing to lead by listening, showing empathy, and building understanding.

Yvette Rosenberg highlighted another quality that many women bring to community life: “Women are generally doers! We roll up our sleeves and get the job done.”

Golda Meir's legacy reminds us that leadership is not defined by gender but by character, courage, and a willingness to serve. This Women's Day we celebrate the remarkable women in our own community who continue to strengthen Jewish life, stand proudly with Israel, and inspire the generations that follow. ●

JESSICA: “I believe women often bring a nurturing and compassionate perspective to advocacy and community work. I try to be a listener, a mediator and someone who leads with empathy.”



DILLER TEEN FELLOWS

REUNITED IN ISRAEL FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SUMMER SEMINAR

JESSICA CARROL

For the first time since 2023, more than 600 Jewish teenagers representing all 32 Diller Teen Fellows communities from across the globe gathered in Israel for the International Summer Seminar (ISS), a three-week journey of learning, connection, leadership and discovery.

Among them was the Cape Town Diller cohort, who experienced Israel through a rich and diverse programme designed to deepen their understanding of the country's people, culture and history. From visiting Bedouin communities in the Negev to exploring Tel Aviv's vibrant street art on a guided graffiti tour, each experience offered a unique perspective on the many facets of Israeli society.

A highlight of the Seminar was the week in which all 32 cohorts came together. Through thought-provoking discussions, collaborative workshops and shared experiences, fellows engaged in meaningful conversations in open and supportive spaces. These exchanges encouraged participants to reflect on their identities, explore different perspectives and strengthen their connection to the global Jewish community.

The Seminar also placed a strong emphasis on Tikkun Olam, the Jewish value of repairing the world. Through community outreach initiatives and leadership activities, Fellows were inspired to consider how they can create positive change within their own communities once they return home. ●

Perhaps the greatest impact of the programme was the friendships formed across continents. Through storytelling, dialogue and shared experiences, teens built meaningful relationships that transcend borders.

Under the Israeli summer sun, ISS provided far more than an educational journey. It offered a space to celebrate Jewish identity, embrace diversity, develop as young leaders and create memories and connections that will last a lifetime. ●

"Through BBYO I've realised the opportunity we have, as future Jewish leaders, to make a difference." – Ally Nathan



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BBYO offers local chapter events, social action projects, teen-led programming, American summer camp experiences, leadership development, and international conventions that inspire teens to lead with purpose and make a meaningful impact. Whether you're looking to meet new friends, develop leadership skills, give back to your community, or connect with Jewish teens from over 60 countries around the world, there's a place for you in BBYO.

To learn more or get involved please visit www.bbyo.org, or contact our Regional Director, Martine Kawalsky Katz, at martinekatz@bbyo.org. ●



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As another unforgettable Habonim Dror Winter Camp comes to an end, we're left with full hearts, tired feet and memories that will last a lifetime.

Over the past week, our *chanichim* and *madrichim* embraced every moment from exciting *peulot* and meaningful discussions to singing around the campfire, late-night laughs, sports, dancing, and countless moments of friendship and growth.

Winter Camp is so much more than just a week away. It's a place where confidence is built, leadership is developed, lifelong friendships are formed, and our Habonim values come to life.

As we return home, we take with us new memories, stronger friendships and even more excitement for everything that lies ahead. Until next time... ●

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SPORT



Historic Durban July 1st-2nd for Cape Town owner

For Cape Town's Jonathan Bloch, this year's Hollywoodbets Durban July will be remembered as the day a lifelong passion for horse racing delivered the sport's ultimate reward.

Jonathan celebrated a remarkable one-two finish in South Africa's premier horse race when *Note To Self*

stormed to victory ahead of stablemate *Wish List* at a packed Hollywoodbets Greyville racecourse. Even more remarkable is that the pre-race favourite, *Star Major*, was withdrawn just a few days prior to the race happening. Guess who its owner is. Yes, this leading contender is a horse that's part-owned by Jonathan Bloch, too!

The Justin Snaith-trained *Note To Self*, ridden by Richard Fourie, held off the gallant *Wish List* by just a quarter of a length to claim the winner's purse of R5.75 million, with the runner-up earning R1.5 million.

Jonathan shares ownership of both horses alongside Nancy Hossack, while Jonathan Snaith is also a part-owner of *Note To Self*. Winning the 1st and 2nd places is a rare occurrence for owners, so this Durban July certainly marks a significant moment for the Hossack-Bloch partnership.

The victory marked several milestones. It was Varsfontein Stud's first Durban July winner as breeders, while Snaith and Fourie became the first trainer-jockey partnership to win the race together four times.

For Jonathan, however, the achievement was about far more than trophies and prize money.

A horse-lover from his youth, when he learned how to ride a horse in Hout Bay, Jonathan has been a racehorse owner since 1990, introduced to the sport post university when he embarked upon his chosen career in stockbroking (now wealth management) by his wonderful mentors and supporters, Abe Swersky, Arnold Galombik, Graham Beck and Laurie Jaffe. He stepped away from the sport for almost two decades before returning after the Covid-19 pandemic and, since then, his stable has enjoyed extraordinary success, but he insists the greatest reward is sharing the journey with others.

"I'm having fun with great people," he says. "Every year I try and bring three or four new owners into the game. I always joke, 'I can promise them two things: (1) They'll meet interesting people and have loads of fun, and (2) Financially, we will go down the loo together.'"

Jonathan is known for racing almost exclusively in partnerships and believes the friendships formed are as important as the results on the track. "The horse always comes

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY?

Jonathan's son Zachary (Zac) appears to have picked up his father's passion for horses. Having learned a great deal from Jonathan, Zac established the Yuppie Syndicate to attract more young people to become involved in owning horses. Zac was with Jonathan when his two horses took their leading places at the Durban July.



first," he says. "Everything is about the horse." It's this sentiment that leaves him comfortable about *Star Major* being withdrawn from the premier Hollywoodbets Durban July race when the horse exhibited a raised temperature.

The Durban July victory capped an extraordinary season for Jonathan, who had already celebrated major Grade 1 and Grade 2 victories with *Note To Self*, *Wish List* and *Star Major*. But seeing his two horses cross the finish line first and second in Africa's greatest horse race was the fulfilment of a dream more than three decades in the making.

Another horse-racing triumph for some of Cape Town's Jewish residents on the day of the Durban July came for David and Garth Musikanth, part-owners of *AHEAD OF THE FACTS*, which won the longer-distance Durban G3 Gold vase.

This race is one run over a marathon distance of 3 000 meters, making it one of the premier endurance events on the South African racing calendar.

"Garth and I are over the moon with our boy *AHEAD OF THE FACTS*," David comments. "He is giving us great fun and super memories. And it's always fun winning together as brothers!"



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WOMEN'S MONTH | PANEL TALK

BUSINESS WITH PURPOSE:

Women Shaping Social and Economic Change

Our Panel:

Vanessa Raphaely
Former Editor-in-Chief,
Cosmopolitan SA | Founder,
The Village

Dorcas Dube-Londt
National Marketing &
Comms Manager, Citizen
Leader Lab

Alexi Silverman
Teacher, Facilitator &
Trustee, Silverman Family
Trust

Bev Da Costa
CEO, ORT SA CAPE |
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and broadcaster
Annika Larsen

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inspired, challenged
and connected.



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26 August 2026

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to 19h30

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AUGUST 2026 Community Events

ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	FOR MORE INFO
Union of Jewish Women	Online Art Auction	Mon, 3 – Sun, 30 Aug	RSVP: projects@ujwcape.co.za
Union of Jewish Women	Comedy night with Sarah Abraham	Wed, 5 Aug, 19h30	RSVP: projects@ujwcape.co.za
Midrasa Melton	Online: <i>Unlocking a life of meaning</i> with Rabbi Dr Shmuly Yanklowitz	Thu 6,13,20,27 Aug 19h00-20h00	RSVP: www.meltoncapetown.org
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Online film: <i>Among Neighbours</i>	Tue, 11 Aug, 19h00	RSVP: admin@holocaust.org.za
ORT SA CAPE Jet	Online webinar – Avoiding Burnout and Managing Stress in Challenging Times. Facilitated by Jarred Shippel	Wed, 12 Aug, 18h00	RSVP: Anton@ortsacape.org.za or Nicole@ortsacape.org.za
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Lecture: Sobibor – Yoram Haimi	Thurs, 13 Aug, 18h00	RSVP: admin@holocaust.org.za
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Webinar: Jakub Nowakowski in conversation with <i>Among Neighbours</i> director Yoav Potash as they explore the complexities of Polish-Jewish relations during the Holocaust through history, memory, and film.	Tue, 18 Aug, 19h00	RSVP: admin@holocaust.org.za
JEWELL (Jewish Community Wellness Space)	End-Of-Life Care Webinar	Sun, 23 Aug, 19h00-21h00	RSVP: info@jewellness.org
ORT SA CAPE Jet	Women's Month Panel Discussion: Business with Purpose - Women Shaping Social and Economic Change. Facilitated by Annika Larsen	Wed, 26 Aug, 18h00	RSVP: Anton@ortsacape.org.za or Nicole@ortsacape.org.za
WIZO Cape Town	Rosh Hashanah Market	Sun, 30 Aug, 10h30 – 14h30	Registration: https://forms.gle/suFYSe3H2WRvtuB7A



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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Email: info@lifta.co.za
Contact number: 080 737 3737



Why Choose Our Home Lifts?



Speedy Installations

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No Shaft Required

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Retro-fit

Due to their design and simplicity of installation, our Home Lifts can be installed after the house has been built.



Size

Duo Home Lift has a tiny footprint of just 0.8 square metres (carrying capacity of 170 kgs) while Trio is only 1.3 square metres (carrying capacity of 250 kgs).



Power Requirements

Our Home Lifts operate by way of a normal 220V plug and there is no need for 3-phase power.



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A BENEFICIARY OF



COMMUNITY NEWS

A mother's love, a son's enduring legacy

There were few dry eyes in the room as former Capetonian Martine Ben Harush (née Gordon) shared the story at a recent Nechama breakfast event of losing her 20-year-old son, Shoam.



Martine Ben Harush, 3rd from left, Avigail Popack (4th from left), Barry Pogrud, Nechama Chairman, on right

With remarkable honesty and courage, she spoke not only about unimaginable grief, but also about the enduring love, kindness and humanity that continue to define her son's legacy.

Shoam, the second youngest of Martine and her husband's six children, was critically injured during the October 7 attacks and died three weeks later.

"When you lose a child, your sense of time changes," Martine told the audience. "My life changed 968 days ago, when we finally had to say goodbye to Shoam."

Although nearly two years have passed, the pain remains ever present.

"Grief of this magnitude is paralyzing," she said. "I can't just shake it off and pretend that everything is okay."

Throughout her talk, Martine spoke candidly about the loneliness that often accompanies bereavement. Many adults, she explained, simply do not know what to

say and, as a result, avoid the conversation altogether. Yet it has been human connection – particularly through the children she teaches – that has helped her find the strength to keep moving forward.

A high school English teacher who treasures the school environment, Martine said she has found it easiest to speak about Shoam with her students.

"Children are just more honest and real," she reflected. Their compassion, willingness to listen and genuine concern have brought her immense comfort during the darkest period of her life.



Martine Ben Harush speaks at the event

Amid the heartbreak, there have also been moments that have deepened her understanding of the son she lost.

"I learned things about Shoam after his death that I didn't know beforehand," she said.

Among those discoveries was a letter Shoam had written before the outbreak of the war, which she read only after his passing. In it, he expressed a profound appreciation for life and gratitude for all that the world had given him.

During the family's *shiva*, friends and acquaintances shared stories of Shoam's quiet acts of kindness and his sensitivity towards people who were struggling – qualities that continued to emerge long after his death.

One story that particularly moved Martine concerned a young boy with special needs who now visits Shoam's grave every Friday. The boy had first met Shoam when Shoam visited the boy's family because his brother had served alongside him before October 7. Shoam had formed a special bond with the boy, engaging with him in a way few others could.

Perhaps the most profound expression of Shoam's compassion was a wish he had shared before his death – that his organs should be donated if anything ever happened to him. Despite their overwhelming grief, Martine and her husband honoured that request.

"As a result," Martine told the audience, "five other people are alive because of Shoam."

As the breakfast drew to a close, those present were left not only with the weight of a mother's loss, but also with the extraordinary legacy of a young man whose generosity continues to touch lives. In sharing her family's story, Martine reminded everyone present that, while grief may never disappear, love, kindness and human connection have the power to endure long after a life has ended. ●

MORE ABOUT NECHAMA

Established over 30 years ago, Nechama provides specific Jewish bereavement and palliative care counselling to the Cape Town Jewish community. In addition to trained psychologists and social workers, the organisation offers support through its 25 volunteer counsellors, all of whom have been trained, selected and supervised by Nechama to serve in this role. Through compassionate one-on-one support, and telephone outreach to newly bereaved families, Nechama helps individuals and families navigate grief and adjust to life after loss. These support services are available to anyone no matter their location, with counselling being done online all over the world.

The organisation also strengthens community wellbeing through mental health workshops, public lectures, counselling skills training, and outreach programmes that extend beyond the Jewish community.

The organisation falls under the leadership of Director Avigail Popack, Psychological Services Co-ordinator Sarit Swisa and Admin Manager Shana Isserow.

The Nechama website offers numerous valuable resources. [Click here to visit the website.](https://www.nechama.org.za)



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The Catalogue that became a Book

MARC HOBERMAN

About a year ago, Gavin Morris invited me for one of our favourite coffee catch up rituals at Café Riteve. He had invited me for this specific 2 x coffee to ask if I'd consider being involved as publisher for a milestone exhibition catalogue – to accompany *Wolf Kibel Lippy Lipshitz: Palm Studios*.

Adorably, the brief was 28 pages and a few short essays. However, alas, upon 'introducing' me to Wolf and Lippy, my brain did that thing it does where it sprints off without asking permission. Catalogue? No chance. These two deserved a proper book. More than a proper book. A beautiful, tactile, unapologetically substantial book. The sort of book you don't read once and put away, but keep returning to. They deserved that. By the time my soliloquy ended, our flat whites were rather flat.

Poor Gavin Morris. Cape Town's beloved mensch and Respected Director of the South African Jewish Museum. He had unwittingly unleashed a HOBERMAN storm of ambition. But, despite the cold coffees and the need for extra funding, he let me lovingly know it was indeed wittingly.

What followed became less an act of publishing than one of custodianship. I spent hundreds of hours with diaries, journals, sketchbooks, letters, photographs and experimental studies, particularly the seven volumes of Lippy's works on paper donated to UCT. Messy, layered and alive, they became a roadmap to how he thought and saw.

I felt I had to understand the men before I could properly present their art. There is something terrifying about holding the legacy of people who can no longer speak for themselves. One day, every artist's story rests in the hands of a stranger. Throughout the



project, I tried to 'consult' Wolf and Lippy: Would this choice honour you? Does it help the reader see what you were trying to show us?

Then something strange happened. The more time I spent with them, the more familiar they became. During the project, my aunt Cecile Elstein – my father Gerald Hoberman's only sibling – passed away. Cecile grew up in Oranjezicht before becoming a celebrated sculptor and printmaker in Britain. Reading her *Guardian* obituary, I stopped at the words: "She had studied sculpture with Lippy Lipshitz." Her daughter confirmed that Cecile had been something of his protégée.

Suddenly I understood what I had been recognising. As a child in Cecile's Manchester studio, I was fascinated by the drawings, notes and experiments surrounding her sculpture. With Lippy, I felt the same frustration: the sculpture was magnificent, but only the tip of an immense creative iceberg.

Then Phillippa Duncan asked whether I knew an 'I. Hoberman', named among Lippy's early portrait sitters. I certainly did: Izzy Hoberman was my grandfather's brother. Decades later, a Hoberman had returned – this time as publisher and custodian. It felt wonderfully circular.

Meanwhile, the short essays grew into theses. Jay van den Berg's years of tireless retrieval



The modest catalogue became a hefty, oversized book requiring two hands and a respectable amount of table space. At R1 600, it was unlike anything the museum had sold before – and became the first catalogue in its history to sell out.

gave the book its heart and historical backbone. Hayden Proud and Anna Tietze brought formidable scholarship; Ayala Nir brought family memory; and Phillippa supplied rigorous research, exceptional brainpower and carefully timed cat memes that gave us just enough paws (*slichah*) during our post-midnight working. Mel Fick visually translated the conversations inside my head into pages that worked. Behind everything stood Gavin, whose faith, guidance and willingness to accommodate our impossible ambitions made the book possible.

Everyone gave more than the brief required. Time did not respond by becoming more generous. Birthdays were missed, weekends disappeared and, after months of working past midnight, seven days a week, we eventually had to reintroduce ourselves to society.

We had chosen catalogue over life.

We took no shortcuts. Nothing was templated; every page was individually composed. I developed a world-first

remastering process so the artworks would not be sanitised for print. Torn paper remained torn. Bent corners remained bent. Cracked paint, rough timber, old nails and handwritten masking tape were preserved because these are not imperfections to erase. They are evidence. Another reader may find meaning in a detail I failed to notice.

The modest catalogue became a hefty, oversized book requiring two hands and a respectable amount of table space. At R1 600, it was unlike anything the museum had sold before – and became the first catalogue in its history to sell out.

That felt less like a commercial triumph than the most honest response we could have received: people had noticed. Humans can spot something created with heart. As is the case with our beloved Wolf and Lippy.

The people behind *PALM STUDIOS: The Book*

Gavin Morris – Director of the South African Jewish Museum and convenor of the *Palm Studios* exhibition.

Jay van den Berg – Associate Curator at the South African Jewish Museum; curator of the exhibition and Editorial Director of the book.

Hayden Proud – Art historian and curator at the Iziko South African National Gallery.

Anna Tietze – Cultural and art historian; Honorary Research Associate at UCT's Michaelis School of Fine Art and a research associate of the Iziko South African National Gallery.

Ayala Nir – Granddaughter of Lippy Lipshitz

Phillippa Duncan – Independent art researcher, art adviser and collection manager; Collectors Liaison and author of two essays in the book.

Mellany 'Mel' Fick – Designer and former HOBERMAN Art Director, responsible for the book's design and layout. ●

A month of kindness, safety and reflection

Despite one of the coldest Julys in recent memory, our branches have remained vibrant, with members enjoying outings, guest speakers and a variety of activities. It has been heartening to see so many people continuing to connect, learn and support one another throughout the winter.

MANDELA DAY: JARS OF HOPE

Our members once again embraced the spirit of Mandela Day with generosity and compassion. This year we prepared 148 Jars of Hope, each filled with vegetables, soup mix and spices – enough to provide 592 meals.

A special thank you to our Milnerton and Sea Point housekeepers, Poppie Gonu and Maggie Banda, who hand-washed every bottle before they were filled. Members then joined us in distributing the jars at the Koeberg Road Clinic, where recipients expressed heartfelt appreciation for the unexpected gift. We were also grateful to the Milnerton Shoprite manager, who donated plastic bags and helped with the distribution.

We returned to our centres knowing that, through a simple act of kindness, we had shared warmth, dignity and nourishment with many deserving members of the wider community.

DRIVING SAFELY AS WE AGE

Each month we highlight an issue relating to healthy ageing. This month's focus is driving ability and safety.

For many older adults, driving represents independence and freedom. While age alone is not a reason to stop driving, certain medical conditions or changes in physical or cognitive ability can affect safety. Family doctors play an important role in identifying these changes and helping patients make informed decisions.

Rather than relying on a single test, doctors assess the abilities needed for safe driving. They will observe whether a patient has difficulty with mobility, memory or attention, and look for factors that may increase risk, including dementia, stroke, macular degeneration, medication side effects, alcohol or drug use, blackouts,



Mandela Day Outreach to Koeberg Road Day Hospital



Rabbi Tamara Shagas walking with Milnerton Members



Milnerton Housekeeper, Poppie Gonu filling Jars of Hope

vision problems, or concerns raised by family members.

If concerns are identified, doctors will discuss the person's recent driving history, including accidents, near misses or becoming lost, before carrying out a more detailed assessment. Three key areas are evaluated:

Vision – including visual acuity and visual fields.

Cognition – using recognised cognitive screening tools.

Motor function – assessing strength, mobility and reaction time.

Depending on the results, recommendations may include continuing to drive, limiting driving to daylight hours or quieter roads, changing to an automatic vehicle, or retiring from driving altogether. Doctors should also discuss alternative transport options and involve family members where appropriate.

In cases where a person continues to drive despite posing a significant risk to themselves or others, a doctor may recommend that their licence be revoked. Where new medical conditions are identified, referral for appropriate treatment is essential.

The goal is not to take away independence, but to ensure that everyone remains as safe and mobile as possible.

CREDIT FOR INFORMATION: Kathleen Ross, MB ChB, FCP (SA), Cert Geriatrics (SA), Geriatrician in Private Practice, Cape Town

PEOPLE WHO ENTER OUR LIVES

There is a well-known saying that people come into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime.

Some arrive when we need guidance, comfort or support. Others walk alongside us for a period of growth, bringing joy, laughter or valuable lessons before moving on. Then there are those rare lifetime relationships that shape who we become and provide a lasting emotional foundation.

Every relationship has something to teach us. If we embrace those lessons with gratitude, we carry them forward into every new friendship and chapter of life.

Diana Sochen, Executive Director



West Coast Members listening to a presentation on JEWELL by Natalie Barnett

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

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

Births: Janice Bloch – Great Granddaughter, Shirley Elvey – Great Granddaughter, Ruth Mink – Great Granddaughter. Sandra Sheinbar – Great Granddaughter

Batmitzvah: Julian and Jenny Jacobs – Granddaughter

Anniversary: Diamond Wedding Anniversary – Selwyn and Merle Furman, Seymour and Jocelyn Stoch

Birthday: Issa Werb – 90th

Engagement: Shirley Cohen – Granddaughter

Welcome to new members: Michele Rosenthal, Lorna Harris, Tanya Goldman, Isa Herring, Susan Lipman, Ian Lipman, Ruth Keret

Wishes to those who are not well: Temma Gad, Mary Rapaport, Sandra Sheinbar, Lola Krafchik, Yvonne Levin

Our condolences to members who have lost loved ones.

Thelma Rozen's husband, Morris, Harriet Baitz – Daughter, Ann



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OUR VISION

To be recognised as a leading provider of innovative services that promote quality of life, guided by Jewish ethics and values, building a caring, self-sufficient community with dignity, harmony and hope.

OUR MISSION

To develop and deliver social protection and poverty reduction solutions for the vulnerable in our community, providing quality support that empowers individuals and families to meet life’s challenges with dignity and care.

620

Perishable and Non-Perishable Hampers, on average, are distributed monthly by the JCS Tikvah Foodbank.
Average Monthly Expenditure - R393 000

6500

Meals on Wheels are distributed, on average, monthly to recipients. In addition to vouchers.

165

Jewish Community Services is currently assisting 165 individuals who are unemployed.

225

Individuals in our community are currently struggling with mental health conditions and substance abuse.

296

Older persons are seeking assistance from Jewish Community Services.

650

Individuals receive financial assistance, rentals, food, medical, electricity and water.

785

On average 785 individuals, monthly, in our community are requiring social services.

238

We provide shelter and accommodation for 238 individuals (including rental contributions to clients).



CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Dangerous ideas and difficult conversations

Change is difficult. It can be frightening and often provokes fear.

That is why the Jewish Democratic Initiative (JDI) titled its recent conference *The Festival of Dangerous Ideas*. As conference co-organiser Raymond Schkolne explains, “Ideas that make one re-examine long-held beliefs and force one to rethink them are often seen as dangerous because they challenge us.”

Yet the ideas explored at the conference were not dangerous in the conventional sense. They centred on what a future Israel might look like if it embraced peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians. Rather than promoting conflict, the discussions examined possible paths towards peace – hardly a radical objective.

Israel has repeatedly sought negotiated solutions – the Oslo Accords in 1993 and the Camp David Summit in 2000, for instance. Alongside these official efforts, civil society initiatives have continued to explore ways of fostering coexistence, however remote that goal may seem in a post-October 7 world.

Held over two days in mid-July and simultaneously streamed to audiences in both Cape Town and Johannesburg, the conference presented perspectives that differ from the dominant narratives heard in Israel and in many Jewish communities abroad. The conventional narrative is an ‘Us vs Them’ view, an approach not conducive to the idea of peaceful coexistence.

“While the views shared at the Festival span a wide range of perspectives, they are all intended to make people think more deeply about Israel and its relationships with its Arab population and the Palestinians,” says Raymond. “We want delegates to leave questioning some of the more ‘official’ narratives. That is



Avrum Burg addressing JDI

crucial in any democratic society. People need a secure space in which to express criticism and different opinions.”

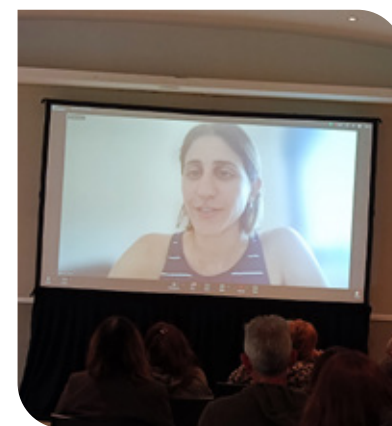
A core presenter was former Knesset Speaker Avrum Burg, who has become a prominent peace activist. Described as “the eloquent, outspoken conscience of his people”, Burg opened and closed the conference, urging renewed efforts to break the cycle of violence through negotiation.

Other sessions introduced delegates to speakers from societies that have faced deep conflict or who advocate alternative approaches to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. South Africa’s own experience of overcoming profound division, Burg argued, places it in a unique position to contribute meaningfully to the conversation.

The South African setting was reflected in the timing of the conference: during the week of Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July, the day which marks Madiba’s birthday. Among the speakers was Azhar Cachalia, a founding member of the Free Mandela Campaign, who appeared alongside a leader of the Free Marwan Barghouti Campaign. This reflects the hope that learnings from the South African experience can be shared with those seeking peaceful negotiation in the Middle East.

Palestinian and Arab Israeli perspectives were also represented, including Arab Israeli politician Sally Abed, whose newly launched political party seeks support from both Jewish and Arab Israelis. Early indications, she said, suggest the party is gaining traction among Arab Israelis, many of whom reject Hamas.

Speakers identified Iran as Israel’s most significant external threat, while warning that the country’s far right also poses serious internal challenges. Rabbi Arik Ascherman, former head of Rabbis for Human Rights, argued that “the issue of settler violence against Palestinians is a major concern in Israel. Although it is perpetrated by no



Sally Abed talks to the audience in Cape Town

more than a handful of people, it is tolerated by the current Israeli government.” He added that extremists were exploiting the trauma of October 7 to deepen hostility towards Palestinians in the West Bank.

Closing the conference, Burg reflected: “Part of our responsibility as activist Jews is never to stop being the conscience of the world, and to challenge the establishment. It’s our responsibility to bring ‘dangerous’ ideas to the world if those ideas impact in ethical and moral ways, and are geared to repair the world.” ●

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STORIES

An unexpected homecoming: a Kaufhaus Galliner ashtray returns after 92 years

JEANINE HACK

In 1909 my great-grandparents, Emil and Martha Galliner, opened *Kaufhaus Galliner*, a department store in Finsterwalde, Germany. Twenty-five years later, in 1934, they marked the milestone by presenting commemorative ashtrays to valued customers.

No one could have imagined that one of those small glass ashtrays would survive the Nazi era and, 92 years later, find its way back into the hands of their descendants in Cape Town.

In November 2025, I received an unexpected email from Babette Weber, head of the Museum Association in Doberlug-Kirchhain, Germany. She wrote that additional *Stolpersteine* ('stumbling stones') had been laid in nearby Finsterwalde, commemorating victims of Nazi persecution. Among those honoured were Leo Hensch, who survived Kristallnacht and eventually escaped to the United States; Max Schmidt, who was executed for telling a political joke; and Paul Liehr, who died in a concentration camp after being imprisoned for his Communist beliefs and for secretly listening to Radio Moscow.

At the *Stolpersteine* ceremony, a descendant of Paul Liehr, Ina Liehr from Hamburg, asked whether anyone was in contact with descendants of the Galliner family. She had inherited what she believed was an advertising ashtray from Kaufhaus Galliner and felt it belonged with the Galliner family.



The ashtray

When Babette contacted me with the news, I was astonished. Because South Africa's postal service is unreliable, Ina kindly agreed to send the parcel to my daughter in France. During a recent visit, I brought the ashtray safely home to Cape Town.

The ashtray had taken a very different route from my great-grandparents' own extraordinary journey, but at last it had reached its rightful home.

Ina later explained how it had come into her family's possession. Her parents had lived in a house in Finsterwalde that had belonged to the family for two generations. When the house was eventually sold, the ashtray was one of the very few possessions she chose to keep and took with her to Hamburg.

Only after attending the *Stolpersteine* ceremony for her great-grandfather did she learn the story of Emil and Martha Galliner and the persecution that forced them to flee Germany. Returning home, she looked at the ashtray with new eyes and realised it was not simply an old souvenir, but an important family memory that should be returned.

Inside the parcel was the commemorative ashtray together with a beautifully handwritten postcard in German that moved me deeply. It read:

"Good day Mrs Hack. Here is the small ashtray in your hands. I am delighted to deliver it to you. My parents lived in a house in Finsterwalde that had belonged to our family for two generations, and somehow this ashtray remained there, probably because Kaufhaus Galliner had once been such an important business in the town. When the house was sold, I took the ashtray to Hamburg. It was one of the very few things I kept. At the *Stolpersteine* ceremony in honour of my great-grandfather, I heard the story of your great-grandparents. Once back in Hamburg, I saw the ashtray through new eyes. It gives me great pleasure to return this item of memory to your family. With kind regards, Ina Liehr."

Her postcard resonated particularly strongly with me because my book, *Epitaph Of No Words / Epitaph Ohne Worte*, is itself built around postcards. They tell



Emil & Martha Galliner

the remarkable story of Emil and Martha Galliner's 19-year odyssey as displaced persons after Kristallnacht.

On 10 June 1941 they escaped Nazi Germany by train to Moscow, travelled across the Soviet Union on the Trans-Siberian Railway, continued through Manchuria to Dalian – a city in China – and crossed the China Sea to Shanghai, spending the war years in the Shanghai Ghetto. In 1947, they were evacuated by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) to the United States aboard the troop transport SS *Marine Adder*. After struggling to establish themselves in Chicago, they eventually travelled via Britain to South West Africa (now Namibia), where they were reunited with children and grandchildren they had not seen for sixteen years. Their long journey finally ended in Johannesburg.

The little ashtray made a different journey, but one that was no less remarkable.

For nine decades it survived in the home of a family whose own ancestors had suffered Nazi persecution. It remained quietly preserved until a chance encounter at a *Stolpersteine* ceremony connected two families whose histories had intersected in Finsterwalde almost a century earlier.

Sometimes history returns not through official archives or museums, but through the kindness of strangers.

Holding the ashtray in my hands, I realised that it had survived where so much else had been lost. This small commemorative ashtray is now far more than a piece of advertising. For more than nine decades it had quietly endured, passing from one family to another until history, memory and human kindness combined to bring it home. It is no longer simply a commemorative gift from a department store. It is a tangible link to a lost family business, to lives interrupted, to families connected across generations, to a vanished Jewish community, and to the enduring generosity of people who believe that memory should find its way home. ●



BUILDING A MACCABIAH LEGACY

For Jacqui Boyd, representing South Africa at the Maccabiah Games has become a lifelong journey spanning more than three decades.

This year, at the event held after its postponement in 2025, she once again demonstrated why she is one of South African Jewish sport's most accomplished tennis players, adding two more gold medals to an extraordinary collection.

Jacqui claimed the Women's Masters Singles title for the third consecutive Games, having previously won the event in 2017 and 2022. She also successfully defended her Mixed Doubles crown alongside her Argentinian partner, a title they first won together in 2022. Remarkably, it was her fifth consecutive Mixed Doubles gold medal, following victories in 2005, 2013, 2017, 2022 and now 2026. She did not compete at the 2009 Games.

The latest triumphs bring her overall Maccabiah tally to an impressive 11 medals – nine gold and two bronze.

Reflecting on the achievement, Jacqui says it is difficult to believe how far the journey has taken her.

"This was my sixth Maccabiah. I first competed in 1993 as

a 14-year-old and was the youngest member of the South African delegation that year. To still be competing and winning more than 30 years later is incredibly special."

She faced a familiar opponent in the Women's Masters Singles final, defeating the same Russian-Israeli player she overcame to win the title in 2022.

Jacqui previously represented South Africa in the Open category before moving into the Masters division from 2017 onwards.

Tennis has long held a special place in South Africa's Maccabiah history. It remains the only sport in which South Africa has competed at every Maccabiah Games since 1935 and has delivered more medals for the country than any other sporting code.

This year's Games carried particular emotional significance. Postponed from last year until 2026, they became the largest gathering of Jewish athletes in Israel since October 7, 2023, under the theme, *More Than Ever*.

"These Games were even more meaningful because of everything that Israel and Jewish communities around the world have been through," says Jacqui. "It was amazing how many of the Israelis we competed against thanked us simply for coming and being part of the Games."

She says the experience extended far beyond the tennis court.

"Israel really put on an incredible Maccabiah. I'm so grateful to have been there, competing as a proud Jew and a proud South African." ●

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Left: The opening ceremony; Above: Cape Town's seven delegates

Connecting with colleagues from the World Union for Progressive Judaism

Our global umbrella body, the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), in conjunction with the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ), celebrated its 100-year anniversary in London with the Darkeinu (our path) Conference at the end of June.

Seven of our members were incredibly fortunate to be there to enjoy the city – unbelievable heat and humidity included – and to celebrate this momentous occasion. We also were delighted to have Mel and

Eric Beswick serve on the conference Steering Committee under the leadership of our friends and former visitors Rabbis Mark Goldsmith and Lea Mühlstein. Other friends such as Rabbi Charley Baginsky, Rabbi MK Gilad Kariv, Carole Sterling and Miriam Kramer were also present.

More than 180 delegates from 25 countries were in attendance and enjoyed a host of sessions dealing with topics such as Progressive Judaism and Zionism, youth programming and challenges, creating generational leadership succession, history of Progressive Judaism, and technology. We enjoyed Erev Shabat services and dinner at various *shuls* in the city, with the morning service at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue (where the WUPJ was founded) in St John's Wood serving as a reminder of all that is beautiful about our wonderful movement. Shabbat afternoon was spent on various walking tours, with a Netzer / Tamar led



Daniella Beswick with Rabbi Sergio Bergman, Julia Ulman Hevron, and the Netzer and Tamar delegation from Italy, France, Germany, Brazil and Australia



havdallah service bringing Shabbat to a glorious close.

More sessions were held on Sunday morning before we all bid a sad farewell to London.

We are very grateful for the support of the Sherman Foundation and Netzer Olami in making our participation possible. We look forward to the next Connections conference in Jerusalem in March 2027. ●



Diana Sochen and Jeanne Livingstone with Rabbi MK Gilad Kariv and Rabbi Sergio Bergman

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Memories are made of this

When I go onto Facebook, at least half of the posts I see are about Israel, or about Occupied Palestine, depending on who is writing the post.



JULIAN RESNICK
writes from Israel

And many of them are so toxic it makes me want to throw up. Filled with hate for the other, overwhelmingly intellectually a wasteland, throwing phrases around, rejoicing in hurting those who disagree with them.

When I am asked to talk about Israel to different groups of people, the news dominates, which is reasonable, as I am supposed to know about what lies behind the headlines that we all consume. It has become our 21st century digital equivalent of our 'Daily Bread' (Did I just give away the fact that I went to a very Christian high school?).

The wonderful thing about writing for the *Chronicle* is that I am able to take you all on a journey to other parts of the reality which is Israel. A more nuanced journey, not an easy or escapist journey, but one which includes complexity, joy, celebration and pain. Let's go for just one evening at the beginning of July, July 4th in fact.

We last 'met' in the *Chronicle* around the beginning of July, just days before the big party I had with family and friends to celebrate the 50th anniversary of my Aliyah to Israel. It was an extremely powerful day – by chance and not by design – as I arrived in Israel, my new home, on a day which coincided not only with the 200th Anniversary of the United States, but also the day that Israeli Commandos

rescued the Jewish Hostages being held in Entebbe, Uganda, which was overwhelming and unforgettable.

Why did I leave on July 4th? Well, my birthday is July 2nd, and I wanted to celebrate with my maternal grandparents (my Resnick grandparents had passed away many years before, on Tisha B'Av in 1960 – but that is another story), because it was the 1970s, way before digital media allowed us to communicate easily with those left behind, and who knew when I would see them again? And, also, I needed to get out of South Africa as soon as possible after my birthday as I was just one hop, skip and a jump ahead of reporting for my military service in the SADF – and there was no way I was going to serve in the army of *Apartheid*.

What an extraordinary 48 hours the 3rd and 4th of July turned out to be. When I flew to Johannesburg on the 3rd, the hostages were still being held by the terrorists in Entebbe, and when I woke up to leave for my ElAl flight the next day, I heard to my great joy that the IDF had freed them.

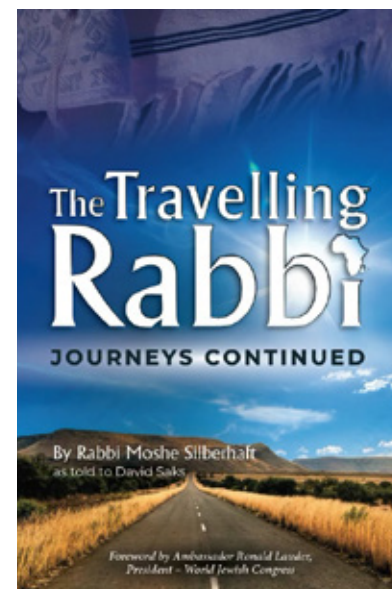
I realised something when I decided to celebrate my Aliyah, and that is that I remain – with all the difficulties that life in Israel involves right now – delighted to have moved here, and really still wanted to celebrate the most crucial decision I ever made.

Besides wonderful food made by family and friends, there was of course content to the evening – and lots of it. We started with a *Kabbalat Shabbat* doing the blessings on the candles, blessing the children, *kiddush* and a *Motzi*. My wife

This article continues on the *Cape Jewish Chronicle* Website. Click here to go straight to it.

The Travelling Rabbi's journey continues

For over 30 years, as CEO and Spiritual Leader of the Small Jewish Communities Association of South Africa – and formerly as the country communities Rabbi of the SAJBD – and of the African Jewish Congress – Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft has travelled thousands of kilometres to serve some of southern Africa's smallest and most isolated Jewish communities. Now, those remarkable experiences have been brought together in a new book, *The Travelling Rabbi: Journeys Continued*.



Written by Rabbi Silberhaft, as told to David Saks, the book continues the story first shared in *The Travelling Rabbi – My African Tribe*. While the earlier volume chronicled his first 18 years on the road, the new publication picks up where that story ended, following his travels and encounters through to the present day.

Rabbi Silberhaft's journeys have taken him to almost every corner of South Africa – from Musina in the far north to Mossel Bay on the southern Cape coast, from Springbok in the west to Mbombela on the country's eastern border. Along the way, he has ministered to Jewish communities that, although often small and widely dispersed, have maintained a lasting connection to Jewish life and tradition.

For many Jews living far from the major urban centres, Rabbi Silberhaft has become far more than a visiting rabbi. He has served as a spiritual guide, mentor and friend, providing a vital link between isolated communities and the broader Jewish world.

The book offers a rich collection of stories gathered over decades of travel, documenting the people he has met, the places he has visited and the enduring legacy of communities that once flourished and, in many cases, continue to maintain a Jewish presence today. It is both a personal memoir and a valuable record of an often-overlooked chapter in southern African Jewish life.

The Travelling Rabbi: Journeys Continued is both a celebration of those communities and a testament to one rabbi's unwavering commitment to ensuring that no Jew, however remote, feels forgotten.

The book was launched to a large crowd at an event organised by the SA Jewish Museum and the Jacob Gitlin Library during July at which Rabbi Silberhaft was in conversation with Emeritus Associate Professor Richard Mendelsohn, sharing stories and reflections from his continued journeys serving Jewish communities across Southern Africa. It is available for purchase from the SA Jewish Museum shop and for lending from the Jacob Gitlin Library. ●

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



BOOK OF FORBIDDEN WORDS BY LOUISE FEIN
Recommended by **SHERYL SCHKOLNE**.



Louise Fein is a British author specialising in historical fiction. Her fourth novel interweaves two stories: one set in Britain and Paris in the 1500s, when strict religious and political conformity was essential, and the other during

the 1950s McCarthy era in the USA, when neighbours reported on those displaying ‘unAmerican’ behaviour. Published earlier this year, in 2026, at a time when immigrants in America are persecuted by ICE and those who oppose conservative ideas are often victimised, the novel’s themes feel especially relevant and heartbreaking.

Book of Forbidden Words places the role of middle-class women in the 1950s at its centre. Milly, fluent in multiple languages including Ancient Greek and Latin, worked during WWII at Bletchley Park, Britain’s top-secret code-breaking centre. Staff were bound by the Official Secrets Act, and it was only in the 1970s that the government began declassifying information about their work. Married women in the 1950s were expected to devote themselves to their homes, children

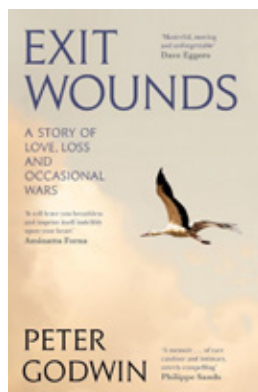
and husbands, with little recognition that many longed to use their intellectual abilities. Unable to tell her husband about her wartime role, Milly secretly agrees to decipher a 400-year-old encrypted French manuscript at the request of her former boss from Bletchley Park. She also uses its contents as the basis for a monthly column, published under a pseudonym in a popular women’s magazine. The articles encourage housewives to rethink their roles, becoming central to an atmosphere of censorship, conspiracy theories and paranoia.

I preferred Milly’s story, about a Brit who moves to America with her husband, to the equally anxiety-filled narrative set in the 1500s.

This is a timely novel about censorship and the role of women in a restrictive society. As John Milton, quoted at the beginning of the book, writes: “He who destroys a good book kills reason itself.”

People Like Us, another novel by Louise Fein, tells the story of forbidden love in Nazi Germany. It is available from the Jacob Gitlin Library.

NON FICTION



A SELECTION OF BOOKS BY PETER GODWIN
Recommendation by **EDITOR**

Having recently heard Zimbabwean-born author and journalist Peter Godwin speak at a book fair, I

revisited his memoirs: *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa*, *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun* and *Exit Wounds*.

Mukiwa offers a beautifully observed account of Godwin’s childhood in Rhodesia, capturing both his close relationship with his mother and his connection to the country’s people and landscapes. *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun* recounts his experiences as a conscript in the police force during the civil war preceding the 1980 elections and the transition from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe. *Exit Wounds* focuses on his ageing mother’s illness and their relationship during her final years.

Most striking across all three books is Godwin’s enduring love for the country of his birth. Despite living abroad for many years, his affection for Zimbabwe, its people, its bush and its formative influence on his life remains profound. Along the way, I gained valuable insight into Zimbabwe’s civil war and the political and

economic turmoil of the 1990s – history that deserves wider attention, including in South Africa. Equally moving is Godwin’s portrayal of his relationship with his mother and his later discovery of his father’s concealed Jewish heritage beneath a distinctly English identity.

PODCAST



PODCAST EPISODE 310. DAVID BADDIEL

Recommended by **MATTHEW BERMAN**, a World War II history enthusiast



British Jewish writer and comedian David Baddiel has explored Jewish identity extensively in his work. His best-known book,

Jews Don’t Count, was later adapted into a television documentary.

In this entertaining episode of the WW2 Pod: *We Have Ways of Making You Talk* series, Baddiel shares his family’s experiences during World War II. His mother was only five months old when her parents fled Germany in 1939 for the relative safety of Britain. Although she was too young to remember the move, the trauma of her family’s sudden departure left emotional scars that stayed with her throughout her life. Britain brought further hardship when her father was interned on the Isle of Man as an enemy alien soon after arriving.

Baddiel’s account of his grandfather’s internment offers a refreshing and humorous perspective on what is usually viewed as a dark chapter in Britain’s wartime history.

Other topics of particular interest to Jewish listeners include contemporary antisemitism, the dilemma of qualifying for a German passport while feeling reluctant to associate with the country that devastated your family’s lives a generation earlier, and more.

I am thoroughly enjoying the entire series, but especially recommend the David Baddiel episode. *Cape Jewish Chronicle* readers are likely to find themselves laughing about subjects that are usually treated with great seriousness.

The Jacob Gitlin Library has David Baddiel’s autobiographical book *My Family*, in which he tells the family history. ●

NOTE: The views expressed in these recommendations do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Cape Jewish Chronicle*.

BOOKS

The Shock of the Light

I was broken by the time I finished reading this book.



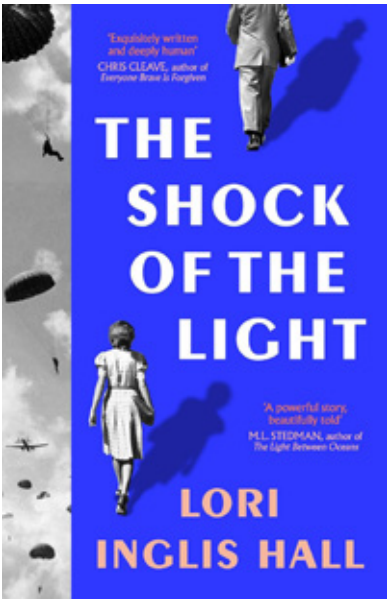
Reviewed by BERYL EICHENBERGER

Lori Inglis Hall’s debut novel *The Shock of the Light* tugs at you, pulls you in and then tosses you about as you navigate the darkness of the Second World War, the role of women sent into occupied France, the lack of acknowledgment by the British government post war, as they strove to hide their mistakes. When the truth is finally revealed, it is as if a piercing light has suddenly come on.

The Special Operations Executive (SOE) was a secret British World War II organisation formed in July 1940 to conduct sabotage, subversion, and espionage in occupied Europe. Thirty-nine women travelled behind the lines in enemy occupied France – sixteen paid with their lives. Women who adopted new identities; women who took the ultimate risk; brave women.

This is the fictional story of one of them, loosely inspired from some of the testimonies of counterparts, which now reside at the Imperial War Museum in London. As Inglis Hall says, “I have liberally plundered real events”. And these real events are another stain on the harbingers of war.

Twins: there is a bond, one that can sometimes be unreadable to other siblings. Theo and Tessa Armstrong share that bond – inseparable as children, so close it is if the light cannot penetrate between the two



their former closeness has shifted. Theo enlists in the RAF and, unknown to her family, Tessa joins the SOE to go back to her beloved France. Both suffer the trauma of war and separation, but two years later only one returns.

Chilling, heart breaking, I can use so many superlatives to describe this book, but its depth and empathy sit with you. There is humour, love and daring escapes – it is well rounded as Inglis Hall lives her characters. Delving into the mire of false identities, loyalty and trust, this debut novel has an important place in WWII historical fiction. ●

Lori Inglis Hall has an MA (research) in history from Goldsmiths College, University of London, and works as a researcher and rights manager for the estate of the photographer Lee Miller. Previously, she spent a decade working in politics at the House of Commons. *The Shock of the Light* is Hall’s first novel.

LISTEN TO THIS BOOK REVIEW

Scan or click on the QR code to listen.

bodies. Until Tessa opts to study at the Sorbonne while Theo is at Cambridge. When she returns that summer, she has changed,

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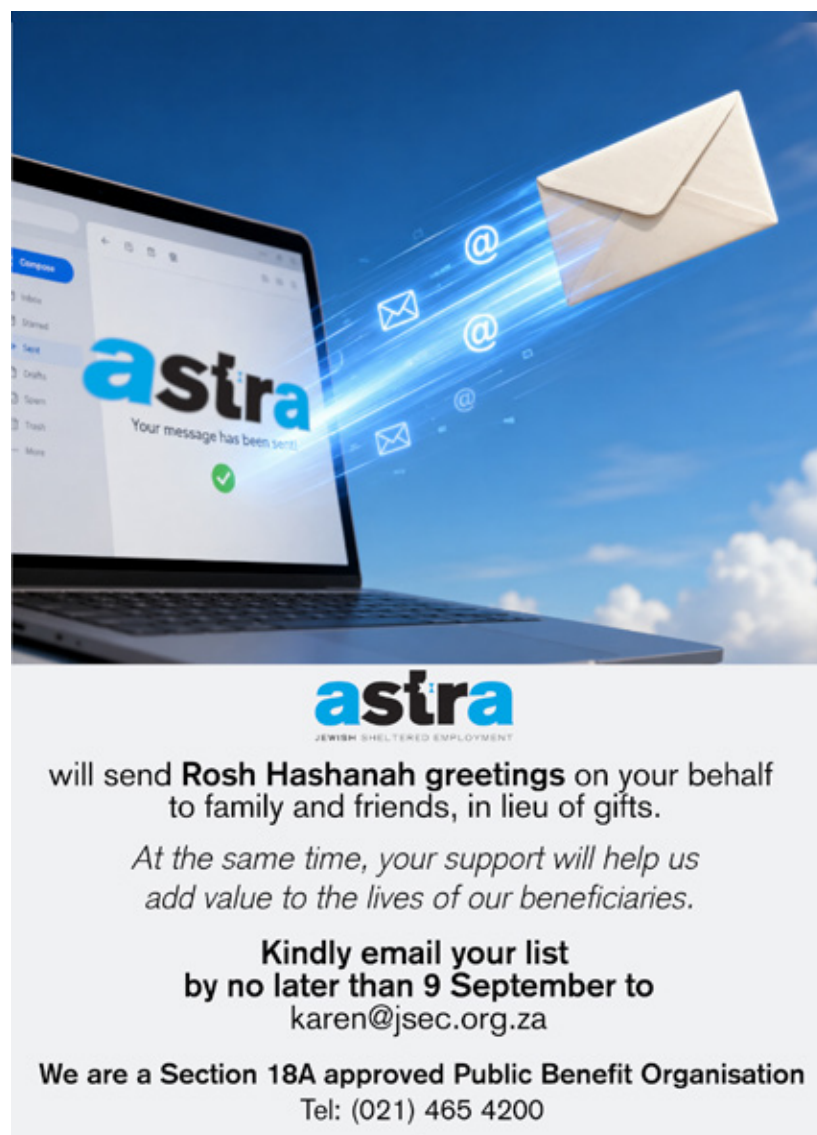
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COMMUNITY NEWS

CELEBRATING THE WOMEN OF HABONIM DROR SOUTHERN AFRICA

This Women's Month, Habonim Dror Southern Africa is proud to celebrate the incredible women who make our movement stronger every day.

Through four inspiring individuals, we showcase the journey of women across every stage of Habonim.

Together, they reflect the leadership, dedication and spirit that define Habonim Dror Southern Africa.



FORMER CHAVER AND NOW A PARENT: ABIGAIL SMITH

Habonim was part of my story long before I was born, and some of my earliest memories growing up in Habonim were that we were encouraged to think deeply, question respectfully, and care for one another and the world around us. It gave me an unshakable pride in my Jewish identity and the confidence to ask difficult questions, challenge ideas, and find my own voice. The movement's deeply egalitarian culture taught me from an early age that leadership, responsibility, and opportunity were never defined by gender, shaping my belief that I could do anything my male peers could do. Those lessons became the foundation of how I lead, work, parent, and build community today. Above all, Habonim taught me to meet every person with dignity, compassion, and humanity – a gift that has shaped every part of my life.



LONG-STANDING HABONIM SUPPORTER: GABI ALTAMIRANO

Habonim Dror didn't just prepare me for the real world – it made me believe I belonged in it. Long before I had a career, I was trusted to lead, make difficult

decisions, organise large-scale projects, and use my voice with confidence and respect. It taught me resilience, critical thinking, and that leadership isn't about having all the answers, but having the courage to step forward. Every young woman deserves a space that believes in her before she has to prove herself. Habonim was that space for me.



CURRENT MADRICH AND LEADER: LEAH BENJAMIN

Just weeks ago, I served as one of the roshim of Habonim Dror's winter camp, an experience that taught me resilience and confidence, and showed me the power I have, as a woman in leadership, to shape future generations. Habonim is a uniquely pluralistic space, and over the years it has taught me that compassion and love are just as important as strength and intelligence. This is the kind of leader I hope to be, and a small part of the legacy I hope to leave for the girls who will one day stand where I stand.



CURRENT CHANICHA: MILA NATHAN

Within a fiercely supportive community, I not only discovered my voice but also myself. This year at Winter Camp, I was the only girl in my age group. Rather than being discouraged, it made me step up as a leader, unlocking one of my greatest qualities. Now, I step into the real world ready to occupy spaces where women are missing and pull others up with me. ●

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONDOLENCES – THANK YOU

MORRIS ROZEN

Our family would like to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who visited, phoned, and messaged on the sudden passing of our beloved husband, father and grandfather, Morris (Maish).

It was vastly appreciated by Thelma, Gavin, Anthea and family.

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