

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

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The other side of repentance



BONNY FELDMAN
 Editor

Growing up, Rosh Hashanah meant the warmth of family. Aunts and uncles, cousins and the occasional friend would gather around the table for a meal that always felt special – my mother’s brisket and *tzimmes*, followed by the heavenly pareve chocolate pudding reserved for special occasions.

Shul on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur felt different. There was a certain heaviness to those days. We understood that this was a time for introspection – for reflecting on the year that had passed, acknowledging our sins and asking forgiveness.

As a young child, I remember wondering what sins my parents could possibly have committed. They were law-abiding, family-focused and honest. What could they have done that required forgiveness?

Looking back, I realise there was something missing from my childhood understanding of the High Holy Days. I thought largely in terms of wrongdoing: What have I done wrong, and how can I be forgiven? What I have come to understand is that this is only part of the reckoning. We should also be asking: What good have I done – and what more could I do?

Repentance matters, but so does positive action. Providing for those in need, treating others with dignity and kindness, and making ethical choices in our everyday lives

are also expressions of our values. How we choose to live should matter at least as much as asking forgiveness for the times we have fallen short.

This comes to mind when I encounter people who make much of their religious observance. Someone may be scrupulous about never eating *treif*, for example, and that is entirely their choice. But religious observance surely carries greater meaning when it is accompanied by decency, compassion and respect for others.

Recent events have provided painful reminders of the opportunities we have to put those values into practice. The devastating fire in a Sea Point apartment block and the disturbing aggression directed towards foreigners living in South Africa have confronted us with people facing circumstances largely beyond their control. They have also given us opportunities to respond with humanity – something we have seen from many within Cape Town’s Jewish community.

HOW WE CHOOSE TO LIVE SHOULD MATTER AT LEAST AS MUCH AS ASKING FORGIVENESS FOR THE TIMES WE HAVE FALLEN SHORT.

Perhaps that is one of the challenges worth carrying into the High Holy Days this year. Alongside asking where we have gone wrong, we can ask where we have done right – and where we could do more.

Because living ethically is not simply about avoiding wrongdoing. It is also about noticing the people around us, recognising when they need us and choosing, wherever we can, to make their lives a little better.

SHANA TOVA

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SHABBAT AND YOM TOV TIMES

DATE		PORTION	CANDLE LIGHTING		
			Earliest	Latest	Ends
4/5 Sept	23 Elul	Nitzavim – Vayeilech	17:19	18:13	19:05
11/12 Sept	1 Tishrei	Rosh Hashanah I	17:22	18:17	
12/13 Sept	2 Tishrei	Rosh Hashanah II	19:10		
18/19 Sept	8 Tishrei	Ha’Azinu	17:26	18:22	19:14
20/21 Sept	10 Tishrei	Yom Kippur	17:27	18:23	19:16
25/26 Sept	15 Tishrei	Succot I	17:29	18:27	
26/27 Sept	16 Tishrei	Succot II	17:16	18:08	19:00

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TO OUR DEAR CAPE TOWN JEWISH FAMILY

We are celebrating 10 years of Chabad on Campus this year, since we moved our Home to become the Chabad House on Campus.

And we just want to say a deeply heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who has been with us on this journey: to the over one thousand students who've walked through these doors; to those of you who believe in what we're doing here and support our work with your hard-earned money; to those of you who entrust your children into our care; and to the community leadership who've been champions of Chabad on Campus from Day One!

It is the absolute privilege of our lifetime to be the Lubavitcher Rebbe's *Shluchim* to Cape Town's Universities and empower our Jewish students to go on to build strong, proud Jewish families to keep the flame of a joyous Judaism alive for many more generations.

May this year be the year in which we all experience the ultimate goal of Creation: the coming of *Moshaich*, immediately!

Rabbi Nissen & Ariella Goldman

Please enjoy a reflection on Rosh Hashanah by my friend and anonymous author of the highly recommended book: PneiHashem.com

L'CHAIM TO TEN YEARS!



Chabad house WARMING on Campus 2016!

Beginning the year with an uncomfortable but fundamental spiritual truth

What is yours?

**Is your house yours?
Your car?**

**Is your spouse yours?
Your children?**

**Is your body yours? Your
personality? Your talents?
Your faults?**

**Are your problems
yours? Your debts? Your
challenges? Your sins?**

**Are you good deeds yours?
Your Soul? Your life? Your
history? Your future?**

What really belongs to you? And what does that even mean? Is it that it cannot be taken from you? Or that you are not truly you if you do not have it? Or that it is so central to your being that you would not be willing to give it up for anything?

We like our things. We like to acquire things and hold on to them. We collect things, we amass things, we protect our things, and display our things. They are a sign of our success and an indication of our status. The more things we have, the more mastery and control we have demonstrated over life and our ephemeral existence.

And yet we are willing to sacrifice things if we have to. In our more philosophical moments, we are aware that our things do not define us. And, if push comes to shove, we know that we can live without most things. They are not really ours in essence. "You can't take them with you", as the saying goes.

If we are forced to choose what to hold on to, what to save if the ship is sinking or the house is burning, we will reach not for our objects, not even for our most expensive purchases or our hidden stash of currency, but for our loved ones. We will give our lives

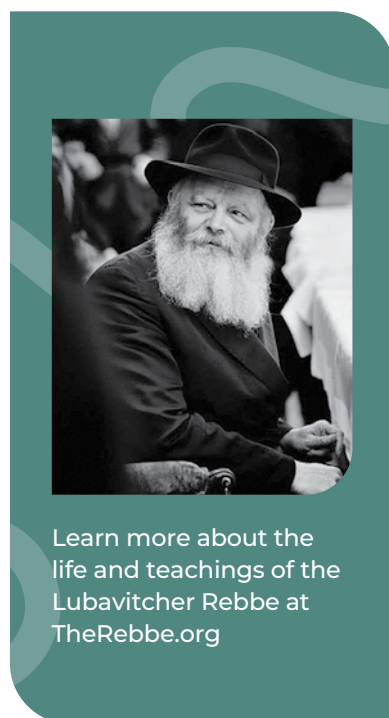
trying to rescue our spouse, our parents, especially our children. They are our most prized 'possessions'.

But are they really ours? Do they belong to us? What if we were asked to give them up as well?

On Rosh Hashana we will read two stories of parents giving away their children. The Torah reading on the second day of Rosh Hashana is the Akeida, the story of Abraham's binding of his son Isaac. The *haftarah* on the first day of Rosh Hashana is the story of Chanah tearfully praying for a son. When she was reproached by Eli the high priest for being drunk in her prayer, she explained that she desired a son not for herself but so that she could dedicate him to God's service. Indeed, when she was blessed with the birth of Solomon soon after, she raised him to weening, and then brought the toddler to Eli and gave him to serve for life.

What are these difficult stories trying to teach us, and why are they read at the very beginning of the new year? The lesson is simple, but not easy: Nothing, not even those things that are most precious to us, is ours. The beginning of our service is the recognition that we must relinquish all 'ownership', all grasping, all control, and we must understand that we, and everything that we hold dear, belong to God. Our possessions, our children, even our very lives, are not our own.

This is no easy pill to swallow. It is not a comfortable concept, particularly for those of us who have grown up to value family, individuality, personal liberty, and success. Yet it does not mean that we cannot or should



Learn more about the life and teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe at TheRebbe.org

not adore, nurture, and protect our loved ones. It does not mean that we should not work hard to succeed and thrive. It means that, even as we live within the world, we must be aware that the world does not contain or define us. There is a far bigger story than the one we are currently experiencing. And when we release ourselves from the narrow parameters of this earthly human narrative, we can access our infinite essence. When we do so, we are not afraid of losing what we treasure, because we know that, not only was it never ours, but furthermore, and more importantly, it is never gone. When the limits of this reality do not define us, its losses cannot deprive us!

We are divine beings, fragments of eternal Godliness pretending to be finite. At the start of the new year, we remind ourselves of our boundlessness and thereby access our ability to free ourselves from worldly constraints and concerns. We are then able to operate within the creation without being controlled by it. We can serve without self, love without fear, and grow without limit or end.

Q&A WITH RABBI MOSS

Is your love unconditional?

QUESTION

If G-d loves us unconditionally, why does Judaism have so many conditions? Keep the laws and you're good; don't keep them and you're in trouble. What type of unconditional love is that?

ANSWER

My kids ask me the same question:

If you love me for who I am, why do I have to go to school?

You love me no matter what, so do I really need to clean up after myself?

I am your child and always will be. Even if I speak back to you disrespectfully, ignore you when you tell me it's bedtime, and leave my shoes lying around in the middle of the hallway.

So why do you demand so much of me? Why do these things matter if you love me unconditionally?

The answer is obvious. Demands and unconditional love are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they go hand in hand. I demand from

you because I love you. I have expectations because I care. I want to see you become the best person you can be.

Unconditional love means the relationship is unbreakable. It doesn't mean your behaviour is inconsequential.

And yet, I will love you however you turn out. Because you are my child.

G-d's commandments are not conditions to earn G-d's love. They are expressions of that love. As the Midrash says, the *mitzvos* were given to refine people. Our loving Parent wants to see us thrive.

And if we don't, He still loves us. The way back is always open. That's why every year we have the High Holidays, days of repentance and renewal. We can fix what went wrong and start over.

Deep down, my kids know why they have to keep the rules. Even if they complain about it, they want to do the right thing. And even as I trip over their shoes in the hallway, I smile and think how much I love them.

And hope they'll put them away next time.

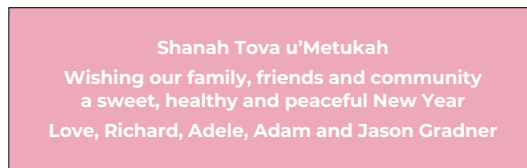
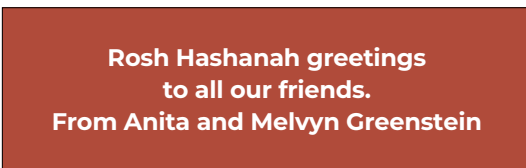
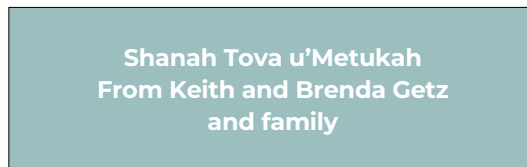
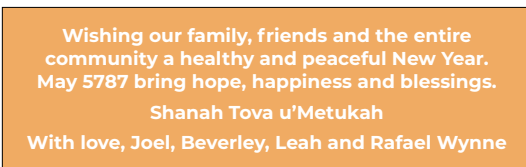
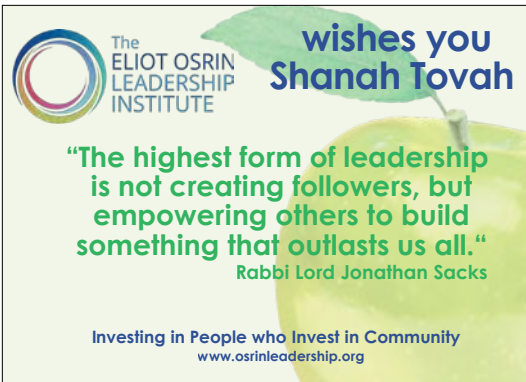
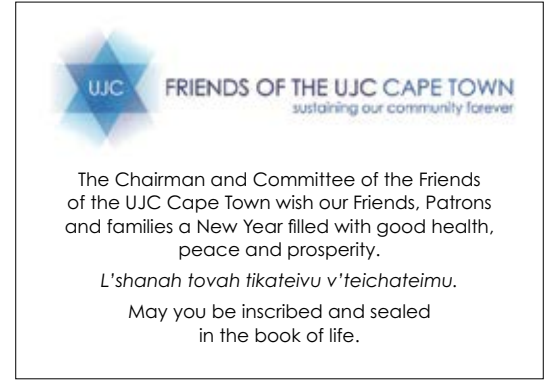
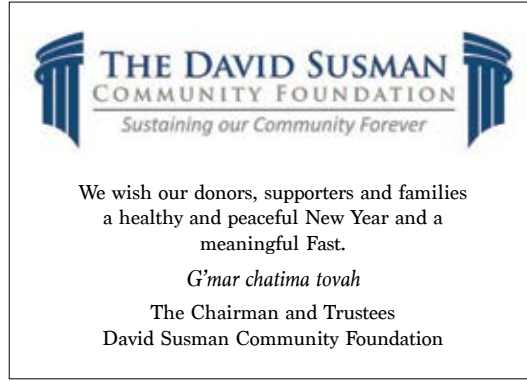
Rabbi Moss

Source: Bereishis Rabbah 44:1



Rabbi Moss's book of Q&As is available for reading, amongst hundreds of other Jewish educational titles from the Katz Family Lending Library at Chabad on Campus. ●

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו



The future of Cape Town Jewry is being born right now

The Kaplan Centre's latest demographic report on the Cape Town Jewish community contains a piece of good news that should lift all of our hearts: an uptick in the number of births over the last two years.

After a period of historic lows, the number of births in the community has risen significantly. The report notes that births averaged 45 a year in 2022 and 2023, and then rose to an average of 76 a year in 2024 and 2025 – a 70% increase.

These statistics bring home a very simple truth: the key marker for the future of the community is children.



CHIEF RABBI
WARREN
GOLDSTEIN

If we are planning the future of the Cape Town Jewish community, and there have been many important strategy documents and discussions, then we must be clear that the future of the community depends on one thing: Jewish children born each year. It is as simple as that.

More important than buildings, institutions, and trust funds are Jewish children – born to Jewish parents, raised in Jewish homes, with Jewish values, who want to continue Judaism and the Jewish way of life. Then there will be children to fill the schools. Then there will be young families to fill the *shuls* and every part of Jewish life. Then there will be a bustling, growing future for our beloved Cape Jewry.

And, therefore, every effort needs to be dedicated to this.

It begins with values. Our young people will only want to marry Jewish, have children, and raise young Jewish families in Cape Town if we are able to hand over to them the beauty, relevance, and truth of

Judaism, and the sense of privilege of being born into it and passing it on.

That is the sacred work of the team of brilliant Rabbis and Rebbetzins that our Cape community has been blessed with. Through their leadership of our *shuls* we can reach every Jew in the city.

And the schools. Our sages in Talmud say that the world exists in the merit of young children learning Torah. Why? Because the future depends on the handing over of our values from one generation to the next. And this work does not end at primary school. We must double down with our teenagers and university students by supporting the remarkable work of those organizations involved in Torah engagement and *kiruv*.

This is the lifeblood of the community.

We must invest every bit of effort and money in inspiring, educating, uplifting and bringing our young people closer. Because, when young Jews love Judaism, they will get married to Jews and have Jewish children. Then we will have a thriving future.

This latest report gives us reason for hope. Not complacency. It gives us our mission for the new year, and beyond. ●

How connected are you?

Have you ever been without data or Wi-Fi, desperately needing to connect your phone? Perhaps you are travelling overseas and suddenly need to connect back home. No Wi-Fi. No data. No connection.



RABBI OSHER FELDMAN
The Gardens Shul; Chair of the
Rabbinical Association
of the Western Cape

There is another option. You find someone with connectivity and ask them to turn on their hotspot. For a few precious minutes, you use their connection.

It works. But there is a difference between being connected yourself and borrowing someone else's connection.

And perhaps that is a useful metaphor for Jewish life.

There is a difference between Judaism that I receive from somebody else and Judaism that has become mine. One is something I can access; the other is something I carry. One gives me a connection; the other allows me to become a source of connection for others.

We find a fascinating version of this idea in Jewish law.

Imagine my kosher burger patty is mistakenly grilled alongside a non-kosher one. Has my burger become non-kosher? And can it, in turn, transmit the non-kosher taste it absorbed to another kosher burger?

There are numerous *halachic* variables, which we will leave for another *shiur*. But the question illustrates an important principle – what we can transmit to others depends on how deeply something has entered us.

The same is true of Jewish life.

When we are immersed in community, we naturally bring others in. When we are on fire in our own spiritual journey, we can illuminate the way for others. And when we truly believe in something, we can pass it on to our children.

Not simply by acting as a hotspot – relaying the Judaism of the rabbi, teacher or school – but by becoming the Wi-Fi ourselves. Living it. Believing it. And transmitting it.

I often hear discussion about whether Jewish schools are responsible for ensuring that our children acquire basic Jewish knowledge, skills and values. Certainly, our schools carry significant responsibility. They are most successful when their teachers don't merely transmit Jewish information but embody the Judaism they teach.

But ultimately, the most powerful Wi-Fi signal in a child's life is usually the home.

Long after the lesson has ended, children remain connected to the values they saw lived by their parents. And when life takes them somewhere where there seem to be 'no bars' of connectivity, it is often that childhood connection they search for again.

As Rosh Hashanah approaches, perhaps it is a good time to reflect on the strength of our own connections. Where in my Jewish life am I borrowing someone else's connection, and where have I made it truly mine?

Perhaps this year, we can take one area of 'hotspot Judaism' and turn it into Wi-Fi – something deeper, lived and genuinely ours.

Because, when the connection becomes part of us, it doesn't only change us. It gives everyone around us something to connect to. ●

New Vintage: The surprising revival of Paarl and Stellenbosch Jewry

Decades after congregations dwindled across the rural Western Cape, Jewish life in Paarl and Stellenbosch is experiencing a rebirth.



JULIA COSCIA

For years, South Africa's small-town Jewish communities seemed destined to fade into memory. By the 1980s, many in the Western Cape had declined significantly, and synagogues from Worcester to Caledon stood locked and empty.

But today, the silence is gone. Defying demographic trends across the country, Paarl and Stellenbosch are experiencing a modern-day renewal of Jewish life, though it wears two different faces.

OLD ROOTS, NEW VINTAGE

Stellenbosch's close-knit Jewish community dates back to the early 1890s, and in 1923 it established the Stellenbosch Synagogue on Ryneveld Street. Although the congregation

contracted from 85 families in the 1960s to around 20 by 1980, it retains its Jewish pulse thanks to the leadership of Ian and Gabi (née Zetler) Katzeff, ensuring continuity even during university breaks. This enduring foundation now supports an interesting new chapter.

Over the past three years, the number of Jewish students at Stellenbosch University has more than tripled to about 150. Drawn by a welcoming, less polarised campus atmosphere, these students are turning this Cape Winelands town into a lively centre of next-gen Jewish pride.

Leading the way is SAUJS, which assists new students in adjusting to campus life and facilitates connection with one another through social events and their shared Jewish identity. Gemma Cohn, secretary of SAUJS Stellenbosch, notes that the group works alongside Ohrsom Student to promote the well-attended monthly First Friday Shabbat service at the Stellenbosch Synagogue. "The evening starts with pre-drinks, followed by a Kabbalat Shabbat service and dinner at the *shul*. Other initiatives include the

Minyanettes, which aims to involve more female students in *shul* life," she says.

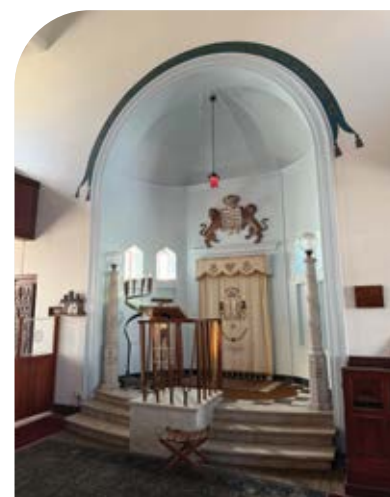
SAUJS also maintains close ties to Chabad on Campus, which in 2024 established a permanent home under the leadership of Stellenbosch graduate Rabbi Chananyah Duthie and his wife, Rebbetzin Eliana. Operating from a dedicated Chabad House near university residences, Rabbi Duthie reflects: "Many more Jewish students are looking for Jewish community when they arrive, and I'm struck by the resilience of these students and their dedication to their studies while remembering their *yiddishkeit*."

TRANSPLANTED

While Stellenbosch thrives on seasonal, youthful energy, in Paarl, 30 minutes away, the renewal has a more permanent, family-focused face.

This growth is the latest chapter in a story that began over a century ago. In his book *The Light of Israel*, Charles Press describes the trajectory of one of South Africa's most historic rural Jewish communities, tracing its roots back to the late 19th century, with the arrival of Germans, Dutch, and, later, immigrants from Lithuanian Russia. These Litvaks were mostly from the provinces of Kovno and Northern Suwalki, and the majority of the community appears to have come from the historic Jewish shtetls of Plungė and Biržai. By 1893, the community had formally established the Paarl Hebrew Congregation and built the Paarl Synagogue (also known as the *Ohr Yisrael* Synagogue) on Breda Street, officially opening its doors in 1904.

By balancing a life of Torah and *mitzvot* with civic loyalty and respect for local law, Jewish life flourished along the banks of the Berg River. At its mid-century peak, the congregation was a dynamic hub complete with a Jewish school, active Zionist youth movements, and a packed *shul* every Shabbat. Deeply Zionist, the community



From top: Paarl Shul, Ida Jacobson

hosted visits from luminaries such as Chaim Weizmann and Menachem Begin.

However, like many rural towns in South Africa, Paarl experienced a demographic decline by the late 1970s and 1980s. "Like in most rural towns in South Africa, Paarl's older generation was comprised of shopkeepers, farmers, and small business owners," explains Charles Press. "The younger generation was more educated than their parents; many qualified as doctors, architects, and lawyers, and either moved to the city or abroad for better career opportunities, or made *aliyah*."

Despite this, a devoted remnant has sustained Jewish life in Paarl. Ida Jacobson (née Borochowitz) remains one of the living bridges between the community's past and its resilient present. Born and raised in the shadow of the Drakenstein mountains, Ida is the unofficial *balabuste* of the Paarl Jewish community. From preparing weekly *shul brochas* to keeping an eye on *shul* affairs, Ida, alongside her fellow committee members, is a steadfast guardian of local heritage, and Paarl Shul remains the only synagogue in the region outside Cape Town to have maintained a regular weekly Friday night *minyan* for decades.



Stellenbosch Synagogue and crowd for centenary celebrations 2023



Clockwise from top left: Purim, Challa Bake, Paarl Shul, Rebbetzin Chana Opert, Rabbi Bryan Opert



Paarl has experienced an influx of new families over the past six years, driven by shifting lifestyle choices and the rise of remote/hybrid work setups following the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawn by secure lifestyle estates, top-tier schooling options such as Paarl Boys' High and Bridgehouse, and easy access to Cape Town, new residents are laying down deep roots.

Tanya Glazer, who moved to Paarl from Muldersdrift 30 years ago and serves on the *shul* committee, has witnessed this evolution firsthand. "I love living here," says Tanya. "It's quiet, peaceful, and close enough to Cape Town. There's a small, caring Jewish community, and, over the 30 years, it has grown a lot."

In late 2019, Rabbi Bryan and Rebbetzin Chana Opert took up the part-time rabbinic position at the Paarl Shul to serve the then-community of around 20 souls. The couple came to understand early on that in a small outlying congregation, spiritual connection often manifests through identity rather than strict ritual observance. The Orthodox Jewish community infrastructure of Cape Town, such as its kosher establishments, day schools, learning opportunities and vibrant volunteer organisations, did not exist in Paarl. "What the local Paarl families possessed was a fierce, deep-seated connection to

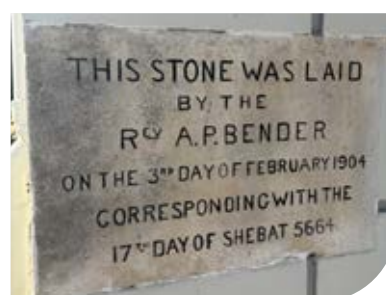
their roots," says Rabbi Opert. "They honoured the memory of their grandparents who built the *shul* and recognised the irreplaceable role the congregation played in the regional tapestry. For them, coming to *shul* was an act of identity."

Rather than demanding *halachic* shifts, the Operts focused on creating warm, accessible entry points. The couple introduced communal Friday night dinners and two-night Pesach Seders, making it explicit that attendance at formal services was never a prerequisite for joining the meal. Recognising that the *minyan* was the beating heart of the community, Rabbi Opert proposed establishing Shacharit services on Yom Tovim. "Many of the men had not attended a Shacharit service in decades. Yet, once the commitment was made, the community's loyalty shone through. Week after week, without fail, the quorum has been met."

About three years into the Operts' tenure, new resident Selwyn Chatz joined the committee as Chairman and proposed creating the Paarl Power Shabbos to connect families moving into

surrounding estates. "It took me some time to start going to *shul*, but when I noticed new Jewish families moving into the area, I thought it would be great to come together so people wouldn't have to drive all the way to Cape Town for services," says Selwyn. "The committee gave its buy-in, and before long, people started coming and brought their kids with them. It is a huge blessing to see 70-80 people of all ages coming together on Friday nights, as well as great attendance for morning services during Yom Tov."

Held every six to eight weeks, the Paarl Power Shabbos draws families from across outlying areas, even as far as Strand and Somerset West. To engage the youngest members, Rebbetzin Chana instituted a 25-minute Children's Service right before



Around the Shul

Kabbalat Shabbat to teach Torah values and holiday traditions. The response was immediate, spurring a wave of community gatherings, including a Sukkot celebration at Babylonstoren, an inaugural *challah* bake, and a Purim party. This renewed energy has revitalised the congregation, leading to Paarl's first Bar and Bat Mitzvahs in nearly 30 years and its first *shul* baby-naming in four decades.

Growth, however, meant meeting congregants where they actually were, notes Rabbi Opert. "In small communities, interfaith marriages are a reality. We observed families who supported the *shul* deeply but maybe felt spiritually sidelined because the non-Jewish spouse lacked a formal place within traditional structures. Guided by compassion and *halakha*, we sought a meaningful solution."

That solution is the Abraham Membership, which allows non-Jewish spouses and interfaith families to become official 'identity' members of the Paarl congregation. While strict *halakhic* boundaries remain – such as not being included in the numbers for a *minyan*, receiving *aliyahs*, or voting at the AGM – these families receive full communal recognition. Their birthdays and *Yahrzeits* are honoured, their support is celebrated, and their children belong. Today, around 10 families participate in this membership, helping to expand the overall congregation membership by an astonishing 50%, including country members across South Africa and abroad.

"Our approach offers a gentle model for small congregations worldwide: people do not need to be pressured into compliance to feel the warmth of their heritage," says Rabbi Opert. "And when a community leads with unconditional love, clear boundaries, and accessible entry points, connection naturally flourishes, and Paarl Shul is an enduring testament to the power of Jewish identity and belonging." ●

BEEES TO BUSINESS

It felt like an early Rosh Hashanah for a group of Cape Town women – and two men – when they dipped apple in honey during a Women’s Day event in Franschhoek. Organised by Mensch, the event showcased an exciting JDC beekeeping project and included a honey and wine pairing – hence the early Rosh Hashanah celebration.



Visitors to the beekeeping site enjoyed a honey and wine pairing tasting

Through the contacts and networking that epitomise Mensch, the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) has expanded its reach beyond its traditional focus on Jewish communities worldwide. Today, the JDC provides a range of support initiatives throughout the world, including South Africa. Joining forces with Mensch, it has initiated the Ubuntu Beekeeping Project. The implementing partner for the project is Ripples for Change.

The JDC explains that the project is part of “the JDC Imagine More initiative with local Jewish community partners and the NPO Ripples for Change that trains South African women in beekeeping and how to launch and manage their own honey production businesses. Bees are key to their economic empowerment.”

The Ubuntu Project currently has nine sites throughout South Africa, with two in the Western Cape, including one in Franschhoek. Located in the Cape Winelands Biosphere Reserve (CWBR), the site is in a particularly beautiful part of the country – and one rich in food for bees.

As Mark Heistein, CEO of the CWBR, explained to the group, “Franschhoek has a plethora of food sources for bees: the fynbos on the mountains, the many eucalyptus tree forests, and the residential gardens. Residents of Franschhoek take great pride in their gardens, and so we



Candles made from beeswax

have plenty of flowers throughout the year. All these factors make this a perfect spot for beekeeping and honey production.”

Ripples for Change, led by Director Galit Cohen, is the on-the-ground partner. “The support from the JDC comes in the form of beekeeping equipment and training. The training covers a range of elements: from beekeeping itself, to managing a business, to knowledge about plants and the role of bees in the natural ecology.”

Women with entrepreneurial skills are identified and become mentors, recruiting other suitable women to join the project. “The seasoned mentor not only imparts essential beekeeping skills but also shares insights from their successful honey-production business. Going beyond mere provision, our programme emphasises hands-on learning through tailored training and mentorship,” Galit says.

Becoming involved in beekeeping has been a sea change for many of the women. Those at the Franschhoek event spoke of their previous fear of bees – insects they knew largely for their sting – and how they have come to love them and understand the positive role they play in our world. Local mentor Brenda Mgxilwa explained that her knowledge of bees had previously been restricted to their role in a Xhosa cultural practice. In Xhosa culture, honeybees are deeply revered as spiritual messengers from deceased ancestors. “But I did not know that one can use bees to make honey, or that one can earn income from bees,” she said.

While the Franschhoek project is still relatively young – having started in 2024 – its prospects look good. It is already producing honey for sale and expects increased harvests as it grows.

“Through our involvement with the Ubuntu Beekeeping Project, Mensch



Women at the event visited the bee hives, wearing protective clothing.

HONEY TIPS

Honey will last for a long period if kept in a tightly-sealed container

Honey loses its health benefits if put into hot water above 45 °C. Use warm, not hot, water.

There has been little research done on the health benefits of fynbos honey but it is anticipated that research will reveal significant health benefits.

has undertaken to boost the sales of the Franschhoek initiative by offering Rosh Hashanah honey this year for sale to Cape Town’s Jewish community and anyone else interested in buying it,” says Gina Flash, Director of Mensch. “The honey is Kosher, and carries the Beth Din stamp.”

Thus far, the women involved – all of whom have other jobs and participate in the project part-time – have not taken home any of the profits. “We have reinvested our profits so that we can grow the project,” one beekeeper explained. “But we do foresee a future in which we will be able to earn a living from our beekeeping, and in which some of us will be able to work full-time as beekeepers.”

The women also spoke of the therapeutic value of the project in their lives. Coming together regularly as a group of women to tend their bees gives them the chance to forget about their usual concerns – for a time at least – and to enjoy the warmth of the group members.

The support offered by organisations within the Jewish community to people who need a leg up is heartwarming. May the beekeepers continue to prosper and realise their dreams. ●

WOOLWORTHS

HAPPY ROSH HASHANAH

Wishing all our Jewish
customers and staff a
blessed Rosh Hashanah.



What a new Demographic Report by the Kaplan Centre tells us about Cape Town Jewry

Is the Cape Town Jewish community growing or shrinking?



REVIVA HASSON
Research Officer
at the Kaplan
Centre for
Jewish Studies
and Research

Demographers understand population change through a surprisingly straightforward equation. Communities grow through births, in-migration into the area, and people joining through conversion. They decline through deaths, out-migration, and assimilation – i.e. where a person no longer identifies as Jewish.

The Kaplan Centre's recent demographic report set out to examine these trends within the Cape Town Jewish community. By bringing together existing data from multiple community organisations including schools, the Beth Din, United Orthodox Synagogues, the Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation, and other communal records, the report provides an understanding of Cape Town Jewry's demographic trajectory.

Over the long term it's clear that the Cape Town Jewish population has declined. At its peak in the 1980s, the community numbered 27 000.

In contrast, the 2019 Jewish Community Survey estimated Cape Town Jewry at around 12 500 people. This represents a population decline of roughly 50% over four decades.

However, over the past decade, the Cape Town Jewish population appears to have remained remarkably stable with current estimates of the community being between 13 000 – 13 500.

NATURAL POPULATION DECLINE

The most basic measure of whether a community is growing or shrinking is the relationship between births and deaths. When more people die than are born, a community experiences what demographers call natural population decline.

The Cape Town Jewish community has excellent records of deaths and increasingly reliable records of births. While the longer-term trend has been one of declining births, one of the most encouraging findings in the report is that this trend has improved in recent years.

At its lowest point, during 2022–2023, there were almost five deaths for every birth in the community, yet in 2024–2025, births increased significantly, resulting in the ratio improving to approximately 2.5 deaths for every birth.

This improved death-to-birth ratio is a key demographic development in the right direction, yet it still reflects a community experiencing natural population decline – albeit at a slower pace.

Why births have increased is not yet entirely clear. The trend may reflect a combination of factors, including young adults and families choosing to remain in Cape Town, increasing semigration from elsewhere in South Africa, and a delayed post-COVID effect as weddings

and family formation returned to more normal patterns after the pandemic.

MIGRATION

Emigration has long been one of the defining features of South African Jewish life. Since the 1970s, large numbers of South Africans have emigrated, contributing significantly to the decline of the country's Jewish population. Indeed, previous research by the Kaplan Centre suggests that there may be more South African-born Jews living abroad than in South Africa.

For much of the last couple of decades, more families were leaving Cape Town than moving into it. School-based data, however, suggests this pattern has shifted towards relative equilibrium, with approximately one child arriving for every child leaving.

While the community remains smaller than it was a generation ago, the demographic outlook for Cape Town Jewry is more positive than many assume.

When focusing only on movements within South Africa, it's evident that more Jewish families are moving to Cape Town than are relocating from Cape Town to other parts of the country. Most are arriving from Johannesburg. This in-migration is likely one of the reasons why the Cape Town Jewish population has remained relatively stable in recent years despite experiencing natural population decline.

RELIGIOUS SWITCHING

Since 2002, the Cape Town Jewish community has welcomed more than 600 converts from both the Orthodox and Progressive conversion programmes.

Measuring the number of people who cease to identify as Jewish is far more difficult. One indicator often used by demographers is intermarriage. Nationally, 12% of Jewish

individuals living with a spouse are in interfaith unions. 18% in Cape Town.

Intermarriage is an imperfect measure of assimilation. Many intermarried households are active members of the Jewish community and are raising children with a strong Jewish identity.

At the same time, research from Jewish communities around the world indicates that the children and grandchildren of intermarried unions are less likely to identify as Jewish.

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Emigration is often seen as the primary driver of population decline because it is the most visible. However, it is not the only factor. The community has also been shrinking quietly through natural population decline, as deaths continue to outnumber births. In addition, assimilation gradually reduces the number of people who identify as Jewish from one generation to the next. Unlike emigration, these demographic forces are less visible, yet their cumulative impact has been a significant contributor to the long-term decline of Cape Town Jewry.

At the same time, the findings from the Kaplan Centre's Cape Town Jewish Community Demographic Report suggest that there are reasons for cautious optimism. Births have rebounded strongly in recent years, slowing the pace of natural population decline, and migration patterns appear to have shifted from net out-migration towards relative equilibrium. While the community remains smaller than it was a generation ago, there is evidence that Cape Town is attracting Jewish families particularly from Johannesburg as well as a smaller number from overseas. It is too early to know whether these developments represent a temporary fluctuation or the beginning of a longer-term trend, but the demographic outlook for Cape Town Jewry is more positive than many assume. ●



MIRA RUDNICK

For more than 60 years, Sunset Pharmacy has been a cornerstone of the Sea Point community. Despite many changes, one thing has remained constant: a commitment to personalised healthcare with the warmth and attentiveness of a family-owned business.

Founded in 1964 by Ellis Henen, Sunset Pharmacy began as a small independent pharmacy with a simple vision – to put people first. Over the decades, it has grown alongside the community, becoming more than a place to collect prescriptions. Many generations turn to it for trusted healthcare advice and everyday essentials. Longstanding customers



Ellis Henen (far right)

have watched it grow, while newcomers to Sea Point discover the value of an independent pharmacy where customers are known by name, and conversations are not rushed. Today, healthcare can often feel impersonal, so the familiarity remains a defining strength.

That family philosophy has also shaped the businesses around it. In 1997, Liora Henen founded Health Matters, an independent natural health store behind the pharmacy. At a time when complementary healthcare was still relatively

unfamiliar in South Africa, she created a space where people could explore natural health options, receive professional guidance and take a more proactive approach to their wellbeing.

Liora's sister, Danielle Henen-Reinders, is also involved. She does the buying of many of Sunset Pharmacy's front-shop, including educational gifts and toys, and assists with the day-to-day administration of both businesses.

Health Matters complements the pharmacy with a holistic approach that considers the physical, emotional, environmental and spiritual aspects of wellbeing, while recognising the value of both conventional medicine and complementary healthcare. Together, the businesses give customers access to pharmaceutical expertise, natural health products and wellness support in one location.

The pharmacy is also passionate about reminding people of the important role pharmacists can play in everyday healthcare. Highly trained and readily accessible, pharmacists can advise on common ailments: colds, flu, allergies, minor skin complaints and digestive issues. They can recommend appropriate over-the-counter treatments, help manage symptoms safely, and recognise when further medical attention is needed.

For many people, consulting a pharmacist can therefore be a quick and cost-effective first step when feeling unwell, providing trusted, evidence-based advice without necessarily requiring a doctor's appointment.

After more than six decades, Sunset Pharmacy continues to show that longevity comes from evolving while remaining true to the values that earned the community's trust. ●



Shana Tova

We wish you a sweet, happy and *Healthy* New Year







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✉ sunsetpharm@mweb.co.za

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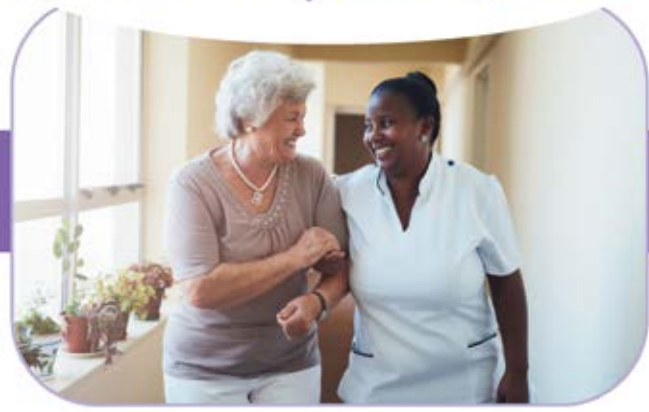
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Building bridges through the Galilee Dreamers project

Meeting people we perceive to be our enemies can sometimes reveal an unexpected truth: they are often far more like us than we imagine.

Yet we so easily place people into opposing camps, missing opportunities for meaningful engagement and understanding.

Challenging those assumptions is at the heart of the Galilee Dreamers project. As Capetonian Raymond Schkolne, one of the local drivers of the initiative, explains, “Our activities are designed to break down barriers of mistrust and replace them with bridges of hope and understanding.” Through dialogue, leadership development and shared experiences, the project seeks to build mutual respect and lasting relationships between Jewish and Arab communities, fostering a long-term commitment to a shared society.

In Israel, where most schools remain separated along Hebrew- and Arabic-speaking lines, the organisation pairs Jewish Israeli schools with Arab Israeli schools. The programme brings teenagers together as equals, allowing them to form relationships that challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

“The reality is complex,” says Schkolne. “When Jewish Israeli students finish school and begin military service, they can effectively become the enemy to friends they made through the programme.” Even so, those personal connections often endure, encouraging participants to see one another as individuals rather than symbols of conflict.

Although centred in Israel’s Galilee region, the project’s lessons have broad relevance. They resonate strongly in South Africa, where our own history



has demonstrated both the deep damage caused by division and the possibility of reconciliation.

With this in mind, Barbara Miller and Jos Horwitz developed the recent Galilee Dreamer programme that brought a delegation of 12 educators: school principals and senior teachers from Israel to South Africa to learn from our country’s experience of overcoming *apartheid*. The group reflected the rich diversity of Israeli society.

“Many people tend to see only two groups – Jews and Palestinians – but Israeli society is far more diverse than that,” Raymond says. “In fact, in this group, we had members of the Druze and Jewish communities, Muslim Arabs, and a Christian Arab – and this included one Jewish teacher who teaches the Arabic language.” Journeying together embedded strong relationships between them, as a basis for sustaining the connections between their respective schools in the future.

During the week-long programme, participants explored both Cape Town’s cultural heritage and the legacy of *apartheid*. Visits to the Dompas Museum in Langa, the Bo-Kaap Museum, the Cape Heritage Museum at the Castle of Good Hope and the Institute for Healing of Memories provided insight into the effects of segregation and exclusion, while the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre offered powerful personal testimony about the impact of discriminatory laws on families.

Druze members of the delegation with local school students and others at the CTHGC

The delegation also spent time engaging with young South Africans.

“Because these educators work with teenagers every day, it was important for them to hear directly from young people here,” says Schkolne. The programme included discussions with learners from Crestway, St Cyprian’s and Trafalgar High Schools.

“The interaction with the youth was incredibly powerful,” says organiser Jos Horwitz, reflecting on the deep concerns expressed about the future of South Africa. “Many of the students spoke openly about unemployment, crime and violence, and the feeling that they are still not truly free because they remain economically disadvantaged.”

For Schkolne, the process of organising the visit reflected the very values the project promotes. Working with partners from both within and beyond the Cape Town Jewish community demonstrated how collaboration can overcome long-held assumptions.

“Bringing a Jewish and Israeli presence into spaces that some may perceive as hostile is an important way of breaking down barriers,” he says. “Dialogue and shared experiences create opportunities to build trust, challenge perceptions and strengthen relationships across communities.”

Rachel Ravid of Oranim Academic College of Education in the Galilee, the Director of Galilee Dreamers and head of the delegation to South Africa for the third time, commented that, “Throughout our journey as a group of Jewish and Arab leaders and educators, we found ourselves undergoing personal and group healing processes. These processes were amplified through observation, exposure to the stories of local heroes, and joint activities with youth and local spiritual and educational leaders.”

Ultimately, the Galilee Dreamers project is founded on a simple but powerful belief: lasting peace begins not with politics, but with people who are willing to meet, listen and discover their shared humanity. ●



RAIDA HASSAN, ONE OF THE DELEGATES, REFLECTS

Between these two photos are the same people, but not the same relationships. The first was taken when we arrived at Cape Town Airport, and the second just before we left. We came to Cape Town as a group of Arab and Jewish participants, eager to learn from South Africa’s experience of living through conflict and building hope for a shared future. Along the way, we discovered something equally meaningful: we didn’t just learn together – we built genuine friendships and human connections.

A Sweet New Year Starts Around the Table.

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Gary Willicott with his son

From a jar of cents to a passion for coins

Gary Willicott knew virtually nothing about coins or numismatics when he inherited a jar filled with old one cent pieces.

But wondering whether there might be something valuable among them would ultimately turn him from a curious novice into a collector – and eventually a numismatic dealer.

“I asked myself, ‘Is there some treasure in there somewhere?’” Gary recalls.

He began searching online for information about valuable South African coins and discovered that a particular 1965 one cent coin could be worth several thousand rands depending on its condition. There wasn’t one in his jar, but his curiosity had been sparked.

Then came another discovery. Online information suggested that R5 Nelson Mandela commemorative coins could be worth as much as R150 000. Gary had some of these and began wondering whether he had stumbled upon something valuable.

The reality was rather different. Coin dealers told him that the R5s he had were only worth their face value. It was an early lesson about the misinformation surrounding coin values online – and the risk of scams.



A graded 1965 Afrikaans 1 cent, valued at R18 000 - R20 000

By then, however, Gary was hooked.

“One develops a treasure hunt mentality in the search for a valuable coin,” he says.

He began collecting gradually, researching and buying selected pieces. When he came across a 1965 one cent coin in reasonably good condition, he paid R8 300 for it – a purchase his wife considered both ‘madness’ and risky.

He later sold it for R11 500 when he was ready to buy a similar coin in a higher grade.

The experience showed him that, with knowledge and careful buying, there was value in trading coins.

Over time, Gary observed that some collectable coins show fairly consistent growth in value, although identifying them requires research and patience. For example, one of the most famous South African coins, the *Single 9* pond, sold on auction last year for a record-breaking price of over R40 million rand, a good investment considering it was purchased 10 years earlier for around R20 million.

But his fascination goes beyond financial returns. “I believe I own a piece of history when I own a coin,” he says. “I am really just a custodian of the coin for a certain period. I like to learn about the history of the coin.”

FROM COLLECTOR TO DEALER

Gary’s transition from collector to dealer came when he realised that buying and selling would allow him to handle and learn about far more coins than he could ever keep in a personal collection.

Relationships within the numismatic community have been an important part of that journey. He learnt who the reputable dealers were and built friendships with people in the industry, which helped him develop as an accredited dealer for the South African Mint.

He has also seen growing interest in coin collecting in recent years. Social media has helped educate people about numismatics, increasing awareness and demand – and, consequently, prices.

However, greater online activity also creates opportunities for scammers. Gary advises collectors to be cautious about claims made online and, where possible, to consult reputable dealers, particularly those registered with the South African Association of Numismatic Dealers (SAAND). His business, Investment Coin & Bullion, is

one such registered firm. He also encourages newcomers to visit coin shows, where they can meet dealers, see what is available, and learn more about the field.

ADVICE FOR ASPIRING COLLECTORS

For anyone interested in starting a collection, Gary’s first recommendation is simple: establish a budget and stick to it. The excitement of finding a desirable coin can make it easy to overspend.

“The best collectors are those who stick to their budget and exercise patience,” he says.

That patience extends to knowing when not to buy.

“Don’t chase a coin. Don’t overpay for the coin because you think you’re desperate to get it. Rather wait for the coin to come to you. In time, you’ll find the coin at the right price and within your budget.”

Research is equally important. Collectors should learn about grading, realistic market values and the history of the coins that interest them rather than relying on sensational claims online.

For Gary, what began with a jar of old cents and the possibility of finding hidden treasure has developed into something much richer – an appreciation of history, the excitement of the hunt, and friendships built around a shared fascination with coins. ●



For those that have coins which they would like to have valued, Gary can be contacted via his website investmentcoin.co.za.

Visit the next Cape Town coin show in November. See more here: capetowncoinshow.co.za

LAYERS OF MEMORY

*A Journey Through the Palimpsest of
Jewish History in Eastern Europe*

Poland,

with an Optional Lithuania Extension

July 2027

(Exact dates will be announced in due course.)



Layers of Memory is an immersive study tour organised and led by the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, offering participants a unique opportunity to explore the rich and complex landscapes of Jewish history in Poland, with an optional extension to Lithuania. Taking place in **July 2027**, the programme will trace the many layers of Jewish life, destruction, remembrance, and renewal that continue to shape these countries today. Exact travel dates will be confirmed in due course.

Guided by the Director of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, participants will visit historic towns and cities, former ghettos and camps, memorial sites, museums, and places where

Jewish communities once flourished. Along the way, they will meet local historians, educators, community leaders, and both Jewish and non-Jewish activists who are actively engaged in preserving memory, confronting difficult histories, and contributing to the revival of Jewish life and culture.

More than a historical journey, *Layers of Memory* invites participants to reflect on the enduring legacy of the Holocaust, the resilience of Jewish communities, and the ways in which the past continues to shape contemporary Europe. Through expert guidance, meaningful encounters, and immersive experiences, the tour offers a deeper understanding of memory, identity, and the responsibility of remembrance.

Study Tour Highlights

POLAND:

Warsaw: POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Jewish Historical Institute, and a guided walk through the former Warsaw Ghetto, including resistance sites such as Mila 18 and the Umschlagplatz

Lublin & Zamość: Brama Grodzka and Zamość's Renaissance Old City, home to a unique Sephardi Jewish community

Sites of Destruction: Bełżec death camp, Zbysitowska Góra mass-execution site, and other key memorial landscapes

Jewish Heritage: Visits to beautifully preserved synagogues, including Kraków, Zamość and Łańcut

Kraków: Jewish history in the Old City, Kazimierz, and the former Ghetto

Auschwitz-Birkenau: Guided study visit to the most infamous site of the Holocaust

Reflection & Renewal: Learning session at the Galicia Jewish Museum, Shabbat in Kraków

OPTIONAL LITHUANIA EXTENSION:

Vilnius (Vilna): The "Jerusalem of the North," Jewish museums, the site of the Great Synagogue, and Ponary

Šėduva: Visit to the Lost Shtetl Museum and exploration of Lithuania's former shtetls

For expressions of interest and more information:
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At Achuzat Sara

Children are Smiling!
Achuzat Sara - Children's Home

EMUNAH SOUTH AFRICA

We are a band of women under the Chairmanship of Judy Moritz in Johannesburg and Rebbetzin Nicole Green in Cape Town who support Achuzat Sara Children's Home which is affiliated to World Emunah Israel. These children are brought to the home traumatized, abused, and left on their own without food or care. The home is situated in Bnei Brak. The safe environment and care given by the dedicated staff and teachers help to build these children into proud and productive members of Israeli society.

The children are clothed, fed, educated, and given medical treatment when required. There are also social workers who come work with the children every afternoon when they return from school, as well as during school holidays. We also provide ceremonies for their Bar and Batmitzvahs, provide outfits for the occasion and invite their families to attend. A lot of these children who benefitted from the home come back to Achuzat Sara as adults to help restore dignity into others' lives.



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FROM THE COMMITTEE OF EMUNAH SOUTH AFRICA

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COMMUNITY NEWS

L'Shanah Tova



Mandela Day – packing self care gifts

Over the past few months, the Union of Jewish Women has continued to turn compassion into action, making a meaningful difference across both the Jewish and broader communities.

From our 93rd AGM and Chai Kitchen volunteer days to Young Women of Courage workshops, Mama Flo's 6th birthday celebrations, wellness workshops, Mandela Day initiatives, and community partnerships, every event reflected the power of people coming together to make a difference.



Rock climbing

Alongside our ongoing projects which include supporting mothers of premature babies, feeding the children in our Early Childhood Development Centres, and providing a space where organisations can meet and learn, we also celebrated a vibrant calendar of events.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our volunteers, donors, members, partners and supporters. Your kindness enables us to respond where help is needed most and strengthens the spirit of community that has defined UJW for more than 93 years.



We hope you will feel proud of what we have achieved together – and inspired by the many lives that have been touched through acts of kindness, generosity and hope. Together, we continue to build stronger communities, one act of kindness at a time. ●



Simcha Blanket handover to Spes Bona

Have you joined JEWELL? Cape Town's Jewish Wellness Space



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- Information, support and connection
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- Individual wellbeing resources

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A ROSH HASHANAH 5787 MESSAGE

As we leave 5786 behind and step into 5787, we take this moment to reflect on the year that has passed and to look forward to the opportunities the new year will bring.

In the spirit of the season, we ask forgiveness from those we may have wronged, and we offer forgiveness in turn, so that we may begin 5787 with a clean slate.

5786 was the year Israel finally struck at the source of the threat, taking the fight directly to the Iranian regime that has spent decades funding and directing terror against Israel and across the region. Iran emerges from this year weakened and diminished. Edmund Burke said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." Good men finally stood up to the evil Iranian regime.

Here in our own community, we have also seen many good men and women standing up for what is right. Standing up for Israel and the Jewish people against a tide of hate



JOSH SCHEWITZ
SAZF Cape Council

and lies spread by those who march under Iranian regime flags alongside Hamas and Hezbollah flags. We take this opportunity to thank you, our community, for your strength and moral clarity in standing with Israel.

EDMUND BURKE SAID, "THE ONLY THING NECESSARY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL IS FOR GOOD MEN TO DO NOTHING."

With Israel heading into national elections, and all the uncertainty that entails, we hope that whoever is elected will lead the country with strength, honesty, and a willingness to do what is necessary for Israel to continue going from strength to strength. Many challenges lie ahead, from completing the task against Hamas in Gaza



and Hezbollah in Lebanon, to addressing the many matters facing Israel at home.

In the year ahead, the SAZF Cape Council will continue to build on the foundation laid over the past few years. We will continue to grow, nurture relationships across our community, and stand proud and firm for our community, for Israel and for Zionism.

To stay up to date with the SAZF Cape Council's plans for 5787, and to get important breaking news and updates from Israel, please join our WhatsApp group. Simply scan the QR code below.

Shana Tova U'Metuka – wishing you and your family a sweet and meaningful new year. ●

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OUR COMMUNITY



**SOUTH
AFRICAN
ZIONIST
FEDERATION
CAPE COUNCIL**

Shana Tova

Wishing you a sweet, happy & healthy New Year
from the South African Zionist Federation Cape
Council



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**SCAN TO JOIN OUR
WHATSAPP GROUP**





Every harvest begins with **one** seed.

May the year ahead be filled with
opportunity, growth and sweet rewards.

Shana Tova



36ONE

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VIEWS

CONNECT, COLLABORATE, COMMUNITY

Apples, honey and a mighty sting

Can you believe it's already time for apples dipped in honey? Where has this year gone?

By the time you read this article, we will be just a week-and-a-half away from celebrating Rosh Hashanah – the Jewish New Year.

Dipping apples in honey on Rosh Hashanah symbolises our prayer and hope for a good and sweet new year, invoking divine blessing, abundance and the spiritual sweetness of the Garden of Eden. There are also deeper interpretations, including the connection to the bee – a symbolic reminder that something sweet can come from a creature that also has a sting, representing life's challenges ultimately turning into positive outcomes.

Now, I'm not going to get too philosophical or spiritual on you, but I would like to focus on the symbolism of the bee and how it connects to what we do at the Cape SAJBD.

I have mentioned in previous articles that the Cape Board will be 'dominating' the Equality Court over the next several months as we tackle antisemitism and hatred head-on. In fact, by the time you read this article,



DANIEL BLOCH
Exec. Director Cape SAJBD

we will have been in court for our second of several cases, which takes place on 25 August 2026.

So why do I compare the Cape SAJBD to a bee?

Sure, we may have a bit of yellow and black in our logo colours. But, like the bee, we represent a minority community (small in size) in comparison to many others – yet we punch well above our weight. Some may even say we pack a mean sting. (I know it should be 'punch', but I'm trying to keep the mighty bee analogy going!)

There are those who seem to think they can get away with spewing hatred online, targeting members of our community, attempting to boycott Jewish businesses, or trying to silence and repress our Jewish identity.

But they consistently underestimate the resilience, determination and strength of our community.

The Cape SAJBD is sending a clear message: we will not tolerate hatred directed at our community, and we will stand up and fight back when necessary. And, yes, we will deliver a mighty sting to those who attack us.

Our legal approach to combating antisemitism is often our last resort –

what some might call the tip of the blade; the point designed for piercing. Our preference is always to focus on restorative justice, education, engagement and dialogue. But sometimes a more assertive approach is required when dealing with individuals who persist in spreading hate.

And just like the tip of a blade, the bee's stinger is designed to pierce through and serve as a reminder that actions have consequences.

For the record, only honeybees die after stinging, while other bees, such as bumblebees and carpenter bees, can sting multiple times. The Cape SAJBD is a very different kind of bee: we possess multiple stingers, and we will continue to use them wherever hatred rears its ugly head.

But enough about stinging. What about those apples dipped in honey?

This Rosh Hashanah, we must all celebrate the *Chag* with our family and friends. Go to *shul*. Sing along with the choir and *chazan*. Stay awake during the Rabbi's *droshe*. Eat as much brisket and *tzimmes* as possible. And, of course, take a large slice of apple and dip it generously into the honey – making sure you get a fair chunk of that sweet goodness!

And as you say the *brocha*, take a moment to think about our amazing community. Think about how vibrant and thriving our Jewish way of life remains. Think about our resilience, our strength and the way our community continues to stand together.

And pray for another sweet, healthy and prosperous year for us all.

Wishing everyone a *Shana Tova Umetuka!* ●



JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Our Executive Director, Daniel Bloch, explores our community – talking to community members, stakeholders and partners.

From Cape SAJBD board members to personalities like Gareth Cliff, to individuals living in George and Oudtshoorn – in our Ed Talks podcast, Daniel highlights the work of the Board, discusses serious issues affecting our community, and showcases positive stories. All while having some fun.

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ED Talks is serious... But not too serious.

Watch on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. #EDTALKS #capesajbd



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VIEWS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

One email, one people, one heart



SIMONE SULCAS
Chairperson
Cape SAJBD

This Rosh Hashanah again feels different in our house. For the past four years, my younger son has been studying in the United States, so every Rosh Hashanah came with a little ache. There was always an empty chair at the table. This year, he is home.

But family life refuses to stand still. Just as one child returns, another prepares to leave. My older son will shortly be heading to Europe to begin his master's degree. So once again, there will be an empty chair at our Rosh Hashanah table. Different son; same feeling.

Naturally, my mind went straight to the usual questions. Will he settle in? Will he thrive? And, very importantly, will he find his people? And then something notable happened.

One email. That was all it took.

He contacted the local *shul* in the city where he will be studying. Within a day, he had been connected to a Jewish student group. There were invitations for a *Shabbaton*, plans for Rosh Hashanah and a WhatsApp group. Before he has even boarded the plane, people he had never met had already made space for him.

I was amazed. My son was not.

To him, this was not extraordinary. It was exactly what he expected would happen. Of course, the local Jewish community would help. Of course, there would be students to connect with. Of course, someone would make sure he had somewhere to go for Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah. What felt remarkable to me felt completely normal to him. That, I think, says something deeply beautiful about Jewish belonging.

We often speak about Jewish identity in big terms: history, continuity, responsibility and shared destiny. All of that is true. But sometimes Jewish identity is much simpler. It is a quick reply to an email. A name passed on. A WhatsApp group. A seat at a Shabbat table. A practical, no-fuss welcome that says: you are one of us, so come in.

In a world that can feel fractured and uncertain, there is something comforting about that instinct. Jews may disagree about almost everything, usually with impressive enthusiasm, but here remains a thread that binds us. We look out for one another. We recognise one another. We make room. Long before WhatsApp groups, Jewish communities understood hospitality. Someone far from home could arrive in an unfamiliar place and find a *shul*, a meal, a familiar calendar. Technology has changed the way we find one another. The impulse remains the same.

This Rosh Hashanah, our family will be in different places and time zones. There will be messages, photos, video calls, and probably a moment when I look at the empty chair and wish that my son was sitting in it. But there will also be appreciation: that a community I have never visited is already looking out for him; that strangers have welcomed him; that he will hear familiar songs thousands of kilometres from Cape Town; and that he will begin building his own Jewish memories.

As parents, we worry about whether our children will feel at home when they are far away. This experience reminded me that Jewish children carry a remarkable gift with them wherever they go. They carry belonging.

The fact that I find that extraordinary is one thing. The fact that my son finds it completely ordinary may be the most reassuring thing of all. Our children may travel far from home. But wherever they go, our people have a remarkable way of helping them find it again.

One people. One heart. Many homes.

Shanah Tovah. ●

REPORT ANTISEMITISM & HATRED

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

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

Report incidents of antisemitism and hate by sending a Whatsapp message to the

Antisemitism Hotline on 079 994 5573.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE



CAPE SAJBD
Engage | Educate | Empower

**NO
PLACE
FOR HATE**

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

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

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



CAPE TOWN





Empowering Gr. 12s for the journey ahead

In early August, the Cape SAJBD team had the pleasure of spending time with the Grade 12s at Herzlia as they prepare for an exciting new chapter beyond school.

Together with SAUJS Western Cape, SAUJS Stellenbosch, Rabbi Nissen Goldman (Chabad on Campus) and our Chairperson, Simone Sulcas, we spoke about life after matric and navigating university and tertiary campuses with confidence and Jewish pride.

This annual programme has become an important opportunity to engage with students before they embark on their next journey, equipping them with practical knowledge, introducing them to the work

of the Cape SAJBD and the support networks available to them, and encouraging them to embrace campus life with confidence and openness.

The focus of the session was to introduce the students to our *Know Your Rights* guide: a practical resource developed by the Cape SAJBD covering topics such as students' rights, religious accommodation, and what to do if they encounter discrimination. The aim is simple: to ensure our young people feel informed, supported



and empowered as they take their next steps, knowing that the Jewish community is behind them every step of the way.

A sincere thank you to Herzlia High School for hosting us once again. We always value

Learning about navigating university and tertiary campuses with confidence and Jewish pride

the opportunity to connect with our youth and wish the Class of 2026 every success as they begin this promising new chapter. ●



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5787

The Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies wishes the community a happy, healthy and sweet New Year and a meaningful fast. May you be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life.

לשנה טובה ומתוקה
L'Shanah Tovah U'metukah

גמר חתימה טובה
G'mar Chatimah Tovah



September 2026 Community Events

ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	FOR MORE INFO
UJW	Rosh Hashanah Lunch	Wed, 2 Sept, 12h00	RSVP: projects@ujwcape.co.za
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Webinar: From Victims to Heros – Dr Shay Pilnik	Wed, 2 Sept, 19h00	RSVP: admin@holocaust.org.za
UJW	Chai Kitchen	Thurs, 3 Sept, 08h45	RSVP: projects@ujwcape.co.za
Temple Israel	Reverse Tashlich Beach Clean-up Hout Bay	Sun, 6 Sept, 16h00	RSVP: Executive-director@templeisrael.co.za
ORT SA CAPE JET	Webinar with Danya Amoils – Becoming Before Doing: The Hidden Psychology Behind Business Growth	Wed, 9 Sept, 12h00 – 13h30	RSVP: jet@ortsacape.org.za
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Film: The Granddaughter	Wed, 23 Sept, 18h00	RSVP: admin@holocaust.org.za
ORT SA CAPE JET	Business Breakfast Club with Dovi Stern – Are You Built for the Storm	Wed, 23 Sept, 08h30 – 11h00	RSVP: jet@ortsacape.org.za



This Rosh Hashanah make a fresh start: become a paid Cape Jewish Chronicle subscriber!

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Rabbi Doron Perez: living with joy and brokenness

For Rabbi Doron Perez, the devastating loss of his son has deepened his understanding of a central idea in Jewish thought: that life inevitably holds both *simcha* (joy) and brokenness. It is this apparent contradiction, he believes, that strengthens the Jewish commitment to love, resilience and the sanctification of life.

Speaking at the inaugural event of the ELEVATE Inspire 2026 Series, Rabbi Perez reflected on the different ways he and his wife, Shelley, have coped with the trauma they have endured since 7 October 2023, when their younger son, Daniel, was taken from them.

A young tank commander stationed at the Nahal Oz base on Israel's border with Gaza, Daniel was captured by Hamas during the attacks. For 163 days, the Perez family believed he was alive and being held hostage.

Rabbi Perez, Executive Chairman of the World Mizrahi movement and President of the World Zionist Organisation, described that period as living as a "hostage family". Shelley was consumed by anxiety, constantly wondering whether Daniel was being tortured or receiving



Rabbi Doron Perez

enough food. He, by contrast, immersed himself in activity.

"I made a conscious effort to disconnect from Daniel emotionally during this period," he said.

Their contrasting responses, he explained, reflected two different ways of coping with overwhelming trauma.

After 163 days, the family learned that Daniel had been killed, although his body was returned only some time later.

"The first 163 days were like a torture chamber for Shelley," Rabbi Perez said. "She felt a sense of relief when we were told that he had died."

For him, however, the news marked the beginning of a far more difficult period. "Before that, I had occupied my time with all sorts of things, including being a hostage parent. But when we got the news, I did not know what to do. There wasn't anything for me to do anymore. And so, for me, the past 10 months have been really difficult."

When Daniel's body was finally returned to Israel, the family became, in his words, a "bereaved family".

"I now feel the brokenness at all times. And I know that I will live with that brokenness

ELEVATE INSPIRE 2026

THE ELEVATE INSPIRE 2026 SERIES IS ORGANISED INTO THREE CATEGORIES: CHANGEMAKERS, JEWISH THOUGHT, AND WELLBEING.

TIKVA TOVA SERVICES FOR ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR

The Cape Town Jewish community includes a unique congregation known as *Kehilat Tikva Tova*.

For the past 20 years, the congregation has run Egalitarian Orthodox services, which follow the Orthodox Services, while embracing gender equality. Men

and women count for a *minyan*, daven, are given an *Aliyah* to read from the Torah, and all may enjoy the honour of opening the Ark.

Our services are participative (and somewhat shorter than most traditional services) while the sermons are directed at making our tradition relevant to the context of our times. ●

EGALITARIAN SHUL SERVICES

ON ROSH HASHANA & YOM KIPPUR 2026

Kehilat Tikva Tova will be holding services over the 2026 (5787) High Holidays.

We follow the traditional Orthodox liturgy and include familiar tunes. Our services are fully gender-inclusive and participatory.

We are excited to have Chazanit Deb Houben from Jerusalem back with us this year.

ROSH HASHANA

1st Night	Friday 11 September at 18:30
1st Day	Saturday 12 September at 10:00
2nd Night	Saturday 12 September at 18:30
2nd Day with Shofar	Sunday 13 September at 10:00

YOM KIPPUR

Kol Nidrei	Sunday 20 September at 18:30
Morning including YIZKOR	Monday 21 September at 11:00
Ne'ila with Shofar	Monday 21 September at 18:00

For more information, contact us
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SERVICES ARE BEING HELD AT SAME VENUE AS PREVIOUS YEARS.

forever. But that is also an important realisation: one has to learn to live with the brokenness, and not allow it to prevent one from living."

That experience has transformed the way Rabbi Perez understands both suffering and Jewish tradition. He now identifies brokenness everywhere, yet believes it must always exist alongside a wholehearted embrace of life.

"That is the contradiction I see all the time," he said. "And it's

in our Torah and other texts, too. Judaism teaches us to live with this contradictory state all the time."

He pointed to Jewish texts and practices that embody this idea. Key to Pesach, for example, is *matzah*, which symbolises both redemption and affliction.

Ultimately, Rabbi Perez believes that, "Jewish thought teaches us that life is a package deal: there is *simcha*, and there is brokenness." ●



**Rosh Hashanah invites us to look inward -
not only at ourselves as individuals, but at what
kind of community we want to build together.**

At the UJC, that question sits at the heart of everything we do. This year, as we celebrate our community - its warmth, its resilience, and its people - we are reminded of just how much there is to be proud of.

Through our work alongside beneficiary organisations and the many people who give their time, resources, and care, we are reminded daily that a community is only as strong as its commitment to each of its members.

That commitment - quiet, consistent, and heartfelt - is something to be celebrated. It shows up in the meals delivered, the support offered, and the doors kept open for those who need them most.

It is, in many ways, our collective answer to the call of the shofar.

As we welcome in 5787, we are grateful for every person who makes this community what it is and who gives us so much to celebrate.

Wishing you, your family and our entire community good health, happiness and success in the year ahead.

L'Shanah Tovah U'Metukah



Don't Just Take our Word for It



Joel Gamsu Cohort V 2026

"The Eliot Osrin Leadership Development Programme has begun to shift the needle in my own leadership journey. As I reinvent myself, it has connected me with inspirational leaders and organisations. My hope is to use modern platforms to help us make smarter, more connected decisions, and pay it forward to the generations to come, so that the Cape Town Jewish community becomes the global standard for how a Jewish community attracts, grows and thrives."



Simone Sulcas Cohort 1 2018 & SAJBOD Cape Chair

"EOLI did not only shape my leadership journey in the Cape Town Jewish community, it was where that journey began. The programme provided a unique opportunity to develop leadership skills and build meaningful relationships, while reflecting deeply on the type of community engagement I wanted to pursue and where I could make the greatest contribution. Through that process, I found a strong calling toward communal leadership, advocacy, and the fight against antisemitism. Since then, I have had the privilege of taking on leadership roles that allow me to strengthen communal institutions, represent and advocate for the Jewish community, and help mobilise responses to challenges facing our community. EOLI laid the foundation for my growth as a leader and continues to influence how I approach service, advocacy, and community impact today."



Dvorah Stein EOLI Faculty & Board Member

"My journey with EOLI has been a real evolution. Bringing insights from the years of pattern recognition working with leaders in corporate, business and global organisations. Rather than arriving with the answers, staying in relationship with what this community needs in a powerful co-creation of learning. If there's an impact I hope I've made, it lives in the ripples - a leader who found their voice, a conversation that shifted how someone showed up for their team. A new initiative that's helping many people's lives. These are never mine to claim. They belong to the people who were impacted and the people they went on to impact. For me, leadership isn't a position you're granted. It's something you remember you already hold."



Investing in People who Invest in Community

The Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute (EOLI), a pioneering non-profit, is dedicated to "people-proofing" the Cape Town Jewish community by investing in the individuals who drive it forward. By facilitating communal collaboration and sparking innovative solutions to complex challenges, EOLI is actively shaping the future trends of communal leadership and developing leaders to be the best version of themselves to lead our community into the future.

Visit or contact us:

www.osrinleadership.org | info@osrinleadership.org

Welcome to EOLI's
Incoming Chair

Russel Berman
Cohort IV 2024



SHANAH TOVAH

May your home be filled with
the sweetness of honey and
the joy of family this Rosh
Hashanah

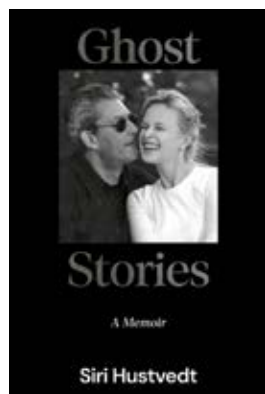


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LOOK OUT FOR THESE BOOKS

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.

MEMOIR



GHOST STORIES. A MEMOIR BY SIRI HUSTVEDT

Recommended by **SHERYL SCHKOLNE**

Siri Hustvedt, the novelist and scholar, published this memoir in 2026, recording the illness and subsequent death of her beloved husband Paul Auster. Auster was a novelist, poet and film maker who won numerous awards. While

exploring 'Cancer land', Hustvedt writes in a poignant, tender and deeply personal manner. At times one almost feels a voyeur while she explores their 43-year marriage which ended with Auster's death in April 2024.

Included in the book are essays that Auster wrote to his grandson Miles, who was only 4 months old when Auster died. Both Auster and Hustvedt wrote from separate rooms in their home and were the first readers of each other's work. She described their relationship as "an intellectual-erotic connection". Unflinchingly describing the early years when Auster was still married to his first wife and had a son Daniel, she shares their love and support for one another. She does not shy away from the

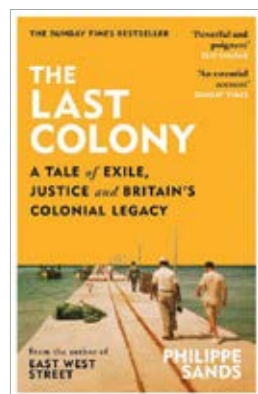
tragedy of Daniel accidentally killing his 10-month-old daughter in 2022 with a drug overdose nor when Daniel was subsequently charged with manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. While home on bail, he dies from an accidental overdose. Hustvedt talks about this at Auster's funeral service as she says it was "the elephant in the room", and she feels Daniel's drug addiction over many years and subsequent behaviour were the emotional triggers that caused the most immense pain in Auster's life.

Hustvedt comments on their close friendship with Salman Rushdie, as well as the Israeli writer David Grossman.

Auster, who was Jewish, and Hustvedt, who comes from a Norwegian-American family, blended their lives in a way that acknowledges both their backgrounds. Many extracts of writings from their books are included in this observation into their intertwined lives – but one doesn't need to have read their books to be engrossed by the beautiful, compassionate and sensitive writings of both Hustvedt and Auster in *Ghost Stories*.

This book is available for borrowing from the Jacob Gitlin Library, which also has four novels by Paul Auster.

NON-FICTION



THE LAST COLONY: A TALE OF EXILE, JUSTICE AND BRITAIN'S COLONIAL LEGACY BY PHILIPPE SANDS

Editor's recommendation

I have found every book by Philippe Sands, a British-French Jewish international human rights lawyer and author, a worthwhile read – and this one is no different. I recall first hearing



of him at the Franschhoek Literary Festival a number of years ago, when he spoke about his book *East West Street: On the Origins of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*.

What I loved about that book was the intertwining of the academic discussions about law and the author's personal family story when he realised that his legal research involved the same location as the

PHILIPPE SANDS TALKS ABOUT THE BOOK AT THE JAIPUR LITERARY FESTIVAL

You may be interested in watching a recording of Philippe Sands discussing this book and others he has written at the Jaipur Literary Festival in India in 2025. He explains the historical and legal issues that preceded the case of the Chagos Islands, as well as the potential future ramifications of the outcome of the case in the international arena.



Scan this QR code to view the recording, or search YouTube for: *The Last Colony: A Tale of Exile, Justice and*

Courage | Philippe Sands with Selma Dabbagh

place his grandfather had come from, the city of Lviv.

Sands uses the same intersection of the legal framework for a case he worked on for many years and a personal story – that of a woman called Madame Elysé (Liseby Bertrand Elysé). She was born in 1953 in the Chagos Archipelago, a group of islands in the Indian Ocean. After Britain secretly created a new colony there in the 1960s – at the very moment when her other colonies were gaining their independence – Madame Elysé and the other residents were forcibly removed from the Chagos Islands. Her efforts to return home eventually brought her to a 2018 hearing at The Hague, where she spoke to the International Court of Justice bench by means of a subtitled video. After a prolonged legal battle, the World Court ruled against Britain. Theoretically, this means that Madame Elysé and her compatriots should be able, finally, to return home. However, this has not yet happened.

Readers may find some of the legal theory a bit complicated to read, but I suggest that they persist and focus on the personal story of Madame Elysé and the power of law to give justice to ordinary people like her. ●

The Jacob Gitlin Library has many of Philippe Sands's books, including this one for lending.



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The Big Small Firm

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We are recognised for our skilled property law practitioners, extensive experience handling complex property matters, and dedication to exceptional client service. Our commitment to excellence and understanding our clients' unique needs has grown our firm into arguably the largest property law practice in South Africa.



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Composed of numerous property law specialists, STBB's Development Law Unit has extensive expertise in various aspects of development law. Our knowledge spans construction law, spatial planning legislation, local government regulations, and renewable energy law. Crucially, the Unit functions as a one-stop shop for property developers, which helps streamline the approval process for development projects and strengthens the position of developers.

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BNEI AKIVA

BNEI HADRACHA

Hadracha is Bnei Akiva's annual three-week programme that takes Grade 10 learners to Israel. The best way to hear about the experience is from Grade 10 *madricha*, Yael Lerato Robins Kallmann, who was

fortunate enough to experience the trip herself!

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT?

Our last *Shabbos* was a highlight. On Friday night there was an optional *Tisch* at the Kotel, about an hour's walk from our hotel. Walking together and singing our

hearts out at the Kotel was an incredibly meaningful and unforgettable experience.

IF A CHANNIE/MADDIE WAS GOING NEXT YEAR, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THEM?

Say 'yes' to every opportunity. Not in the mood for Aqua Kef? Go anyway. Stayed up too late to hike Masada? Take those first steps. Don't like singing? Try the *Tisch*. Sometimes the

things you least feel like doing end up becoming your favourite memories. Be open to every experience – you'll surprise yourself with how much fun you have.

IF YOU COULD GO BACK TO ONE PLACE TOMORROW, WHERE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Eilat. We had such a relaxed day at the water park, and then getting to explore the city on foot that night made it even more special. It was the perfect mix of fun and adventure.

WHAT SUPRISED YOU THE MOST?

How much fun I had. Every day seemed to bring a new highlight, and each experience somehow topped the last. ●



DILLER TEEN FELLOWS

TIKKUN OLAM

One of the values spoken about a lot on Diller is *Tikkun Olam* – repairing the world. We got the chance to put what we have learnt into practice by going to play netball and soccer at Afrika Tikkun. We arrived with no expectations, just excitement to be somewhere new and doing something different. But the lessons we took home were some of the most important of our year. *Tikkun Olam* is often

misunderstood as volunteering. Through our time there, we learnt that it is so much more than that. It is about working on yourself so that you can be a better person to those around you, sharing light, laughing, building connections. *Tikkun Olam* is about giving, but it is also about receiving.

In a world where we can learn so much online, we sometimes forget that it is when we go face-to-face with something or someone different to ourselves that we actually learn the most. ●



BBYO

GROWING JEWISH LEADERS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

This Rosh Hashana, we wish our community a sweet, reflective year – may we grow in responsibility, compassion, and courage. BBYO will continue to provide mentorship and real-life opportunities to practise leadership – aiming to prepare the next generation of inspired Jewish leadership.

As we enter the new year, BBYO invites Jewish teens to join our global movement that builds lifelong friendships, leadership skills, and a deeper connection to Jewish life. BBYO offers local chapter events, social action projects, teen-led programming, American summer camp experiences, and international conventions that empower members to lead with purpose.

Interested teens and parents can contact our Regional Director Martine Kawalsky Katz at martinekatz@bbyo.org or southafrica@bbyo.org. ●



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CHANGE**



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Shana Tova U'Metuka!

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**Buy your honey for Yom Tov and
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By purchasing this delicious honey, you are helping the Ubuntu Beekeeping Initiative, a programme empowering rural women across South Africa to build sustainable livelihoods through entrepreneurship.

Founded and supported by the JDC (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee), delivered by Ripples for Change, and proudly brought to the Jewish community by Mensch, just in time for Rosh Hashanah.

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For more info and to buy, visit www.mensch.org.za/ubuntubees



לשנה טובה ומתוקה

L'SHANA TOVAH

u'metukah!

May you be inscribed for a good and sweet year.
From your Herzlia family



THE HERZLIA
FOUNDATION TRUST
SECURING JEWISH EDUCATION



HERZLIA
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION





Celebrating the Herzlia journey

As we welcome a sweet New Year, we celebrate what makes a Herzlia education special.

From discovering passions to reaching milestones, each stage shapes confident, creative and connected young people. These photographs capture moments that make the journey memorable.



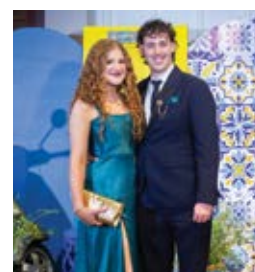
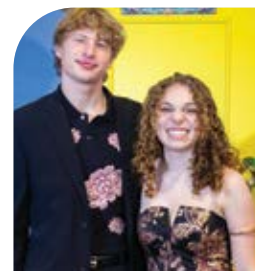
GROWING THROUGH MUSIC

Music is one of the many ways Herzlia pupils discover confidence, creativity and self-expression. From first lessons to accomplished performances, every child is encouraged to find their own voice.



CELEBRATING MILESTONES

The Matric Dance is one of the defining moments of the Herzlia journey. It's a celebration of friendships, memories and the transition from school life to the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. ●



Mazaltov to the Herzlia Matric Class of 2026



ART BURSARIES CHANGING LIVES

“Cape Town is the best place in South Africa for anyone interested in art.” That is the view of SAFIM Art Collaborative Executive Coordinator Lisa Truter, who points to the city’s wealth of world-class institutions, including the Zeitz MOCAA, the Norval Foundation and leading art schools such as the Ruth Prowse School of Art.

SAFIM (South African Friends of the Israel Museum) Art Collab’s partnership with the Ruth Prowse School has become one of its most meaningful initiatives. The organisation sponsors talented students whose financial circumstances might otherwise prevent them from completing their studies.

Originally, SAFIM Art Collab funded South African art students to attend a curatorial programme at the Israel Museum. Following the events of October 7, 2023, and the resulting security concerns, that programme was paused and resources redirected to bursaries in South Africa.

“There is no question about the value of this focus,” says SAFIM Art Collab Co-Chair Suzanne Ackerman. “There is so much need in our country, and we feel we should be giving back to South Africa in whatever way we can.”

The bursary programme is designed to be both aspirational and inspirational. Students are considered only after completing at least one year of study, allowing SAFIM Art Collab to assess both talent and commitment.

“We want to motivate students to give their very best during the remainder of their studies and ensure they complete their qualifications,” Suzanne explains.

“We want to motivate students to give their very best during the remainder of their studies and ensure they complete their qualifications,” Suzanne explains.

The support is substantial. Annual tuition can cost around R70 000, while art materials, transport and other expenses add significantly to the financial burden.



Celina Ndzana with her work as it went under the hammer



Zoli Ngxongo, *Reclaimed* (detail)

Working with the Ruth Prowse School has been particularly rewarding, Suzanne says. “Because it is a small institution, each student’s unique needs are well understood. That allows us to tailor support to their individual circumstances, giving them the greatest chance of success.”

The results have been impressive. SAFIM Art Collab’s first bursary recipient, Lona Ndzimande, who creates layered portraits using a range of media, graduated in 2023 and has already established herself professionally. After winning the WORLDART10 competition, she earned a solo exhibition at WORLDART and was selected to exhibit at the 2026 Investec Cape Town Art Fair.

“Art is giving Lona the opportunity to build a commercially viable career, which is no small achievement,” Suzanne says.

In 2024, SAFIM Art Collab expanded the programme to support two more students, Celine Ndzana and Zoliswa (Zollie) Ngxongo, both of whom graduated from Ruth Prowse last year.



Lona Ndzimande, *Ilanga Elibukayo*

Celine, who specialises in pencil, pen and charcoal drawings, is training as an art teacher while running her own studio part-time. Last year she was commissioned by Cape Town Tourism to create *Waves of Pride*, a mural on the Sea Point Promenade recognising the resilience of Cape Town’s LGBTQ+ community.

Zollie’s journey into the profession may take longer, but SAFIM Art Collab remains committed to helping her succeed. “We hope to find an established artist who can mentor her or take her on as an assistant,” Suzanne says. Having overcome an exceptionally difficult childhood, Zollie found stability with foster parents who encouraged her artistic ambitions. Suzanne believes her final graduation project reflected not only artistic growth but also growing confidence and self-belief.

The talent of all three bursary recipients was recognised at this year’s SAFIM Art Collab Gala & Art Auction, the organisation’s principal fundraiser. Each sold a work, with Zollie’s *Reclaimed* achieving the highest price of the three at over R60 000. The painting explores a woman’s ability to reclaim her strength and identity after suffering harm.

Reflecting on the experience, Zollie says: “I could never have anticipated the success of my piece *Reclaimed* at the auction. Meeting the couple who bought my painting and witnessing what it meant for them to own one of my pieces made everything come full circle.”

“It was an emotional moment for both audience and artist when the students’ works came up for bidding,” Suzanne recalls. “Having a work on auction is itself an achievement for a young artist, and a sale gives the kind of affirmation a budding artist has been hoping for. I believe that the

Continues on page 59



JACOB GITLIN
LIBRARY

Explore New Books to Fuel Your Soul

JACQUI RODGERS, Director. Just like a brand-new book, the New Year brings a blank page full of potential. Books bring exciting stories to take you on journeys full of promise to new horizons. We at the Gitlin hope your upcoming year is filled with wonderful new chapters, inspiration and cherished moments with your loved ones. Visit the Gitlin to pick up your festive reads. Contact: admin@gitlinlibrary.co.za or phone 021 462 5088.



THE WOMAN & HER STARS by PENNY HAW

Based on the true story of Caroline Herschel, an 18th century

astronomer, the author shines a light on her life as the sister of astronomer William Herschel. Caroline quietly studies the stars, falling in love with her telescope. An awe-inspiring story set within the societal boundaries of the Georgian era.



FIGHTING THE HATE by MELANIE PHILLIPS

The author has written an insightful and practical book to

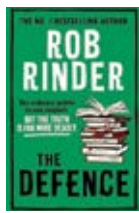
help Jews face a barrage of tough, sometimes hateful, questions about Israel. Phillips encourages Jewish communities to reach out to "liberals with moral vertigo" with facts only.



LONDON FALLING by PATRICK RADDEN KEEFE

A spell-binding account of a family devastated by the supposed

suicide of their 19-year-old son Zac Brettler. Zac plummeted into the Thames from a luxury apartment in 2019. It was owned by a Saudi princess and occupied by a feared London gangster David Sharma. A journey into the urban underworld beneath London's glittering surface.



THE DEFENCE by ROD RINDER

At the glitzy launch event for a bath salt that promises to reverse ageing, former MP now wellness guru

Adrain Wells unknowingly places his life in danger. As Adrian lowers himself into the architectural copper tub to showcase his miracle product in front of many influencers, it becomes clear that something is amiss. Another riveting read by Rinder.



ALL AFTERNOON by SUSAN KLEINMAN

Marilyn gave up her literary dreams 20 years ago when she married

Jerry. This changes when Henry Goldfarb, an old friend comes to dinner. He is a best-selling author and asks Marilyn for feedback on his new novel. He encourages her to write again and she begins sneaking into Manhattan every week to see him.



PORCUPINES by FRAN FABRICZKI

Sonia left Hungary as an 18-year-old to visit her sister in the United States and

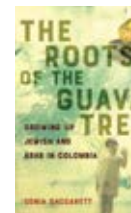
overstayed her visa. In Hungary, her family led a very secular life. After she falls pregnant, Sonia cuts herself off from her family. As Sonia's daughter Mila raises questions about her father, the safety of Sonia's world starts unravelling.



STEPHEN SONDHEIM by DANIEL OKRENT

The author delves into Sondheim's personal and

professional relationships in American theatre. He examines this icon's life with humour and intuition. Sondheim wove his emotions into words and music. The book is full of meaningful anecdotes from this unique composer's life.



ROOTS OF THE GUAVA TREE by SONIA DACCARETT

This moving memoir is about the daughter of a Jewish

mother and a Palestinian Christian father in Colombia. Beyond Daccarett's distinctive childhood, the book is enhanced by evocative details of life in 1970s and 1980s Colombia. Later, Colombia's drug cartel violence led to her leaving for the United States. ●

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

The Cape Jewish Chronicle records its appreciation of the continued support given by the following sponsors:

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**Here for the
New Year**

**And every
day that follows**



For the New Year. For new life. For the first day of school.
For the simchas and the milestones. For the pick-ups and
drop-offs, the stroll home from shul, and the daily routines.

CSO Cape Town is always here. For the moments you celebrate.
The moments you barely notice. And everything in between.

Shana Tova to you and your loved ones.

THRIVING TOGETHER





COMMUNITY NEWS

Mark Regev talks Israel in Cape Town

Mark Regev is a figure whose face many of us know from the major international news channels, such as CNN.

As the International Spokesperson for the Prime Minister's Office from 2007 to 2016 – during which time he served both Ehud Olmert and Benjamin Netanyahu – he became a figure well known throughout the world for presenting Israel's case. And now, despite his retirement, Regev is still engaged in the promotion of Israel among people around the world.

During a visit to South Africa in July, Regev spent some time in Cape Town, engaging with both the local Jewish population, and with Zionist Christian groups, for whom he ran a number of educational workshops. In addition, he spoke to the public at a large event hosted by the South African Friends of Israel (SAFI), the SA Zionist Federation Cape Council (SAZFCC) and the Jewish Report. His extensive knowledge of both Israeli history and politics, coupled with an in-depth understanding of world affairs, made for an entertaining and thought-provoking evening.

When one considers the events of October 7th, 2023, and the subsequent ongoing conflict, it seems like the hope for peace is more distant than ever before. Yet, Regev commented, "I am optimistic about peace in the Middle East. If Israel concludes more peace agreements with Muslim states, the Palestinians will eventually follow suit,

because they will become more isolated."

His opinion comes in the wake of the various Normalisation Agreements concluded with Israel's neighbours in recent years. In 2020 the process known as the Abraham Accords resulted in Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kosovo, Sudan and Morocco agreeing to normalise relations with Israel.

Regev also argues that the threat posed by Hamas to Israel is far weaker than it was two years ago. Although Israel has not yet achieved its goal of completely neutralising Hamas, "the IDF now controls around 70% of Gaza, including, most importantly, the area around the southern border where so many kibbutzim were attacked on October 7th," he explained. But Hamas still has power over the Palestinian citizens in the rest of Gaza. According to Regev, "Hamas is not a threat anymore to Israel. It is certainly, though, a threat to its own people."

Referring to the opportunity that October 7th presented to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Regev believes that Abbas has lost a great deal of the support he used to have among some of the Israeli Left. Had Abbas condemned his long-standing enemy, Hamas, immediately after the attacks, he would have been able to position Fatah as a potential peace partner for Israel, and this would have strengthened Fatah's position.

Howard Sackstein, David Cohen of the SAZF Cape Council, Mark Regev, and Josh Schewitz of the SAZF Cape Council

As for Israel's political scene, Regev believes that Prime Minister Netanyahu's political career was potentially finished immediately after October 7th, considering the fact that his leadership of the country had been premised on the promise of security for all Israelis. However, Netanyahu has regained a great deal of support throughout the war. Ultimately, the upcoming October elections will show whether he still has a political future. Regev further spoke about South Africa's approach to Israel, saying that, "If South Africa truly wants to enhance peace in the Middle East, why are the South Africans not talking to all sides? Why are they giving airtime only to the most extremist sides of the Palestinians?"

In fact, South Africa's 'soft power' – the respect the country enjoys internationally because of the peaceful transition to a democratic state in the Mandela years – should be harnessed to

SOUTH AFRICAN FRIENDS OF ISRAEL (SAFI)

A dedicated movement committed to uniting South Africans in support of Israel and the Jewish community. Founded in response to the rise of anti-Israel sentiments, our organization aims to challenge these narratives by promoting a positive, informed understanding of Israel's vital role in the world today." The organisation works with the millions of Christians in Southern Africa, who "embrace the biblical call to support Israel".

SOURCE: www.safisa.co.za

reflect our country's role as a superpower with a credible voice in the global arena.

If this were to happen, South Africa could play a significant role in working towards peace in the Middle East. ●

As we reflect this Rosh Hashanah, we give thanks for a year of growth and transformation across ORT SA CAPE

A YEAR OF IMPACT

EDUCATION

- 1,000+ teachers to be trained via the Khulani Nathi Innovation Fund partnership
- 65 new ECD learnership students inducted
- Online ECD qualification launched nationally, alongside our ECD Hubs of Excellence Project in George & Upington
- 80+ graduates qualified as ECD practitioners in June

YOUTH

- 249+ youth placed in work opportunities
- 190 youth supported through our Alumni Programme

JET

- 512 entrepreneurs supported through JET events
- 36 businesses receiving dedicated mentorship

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS

INSPIRING YOUTH

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS

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How to reduce stress and live a better life

Stress is a natural part of life, and we all experience times when our stress levels rise.

While we cannot always avoid stressful situations, learning to manage them effectively can help protect both our physical and mental well-being.

Chronic stress can lead to burnout and mental exhaustion and may contribute to longer-term health problems. It is therefore important to recognise when stress is becoming difficult to manage and, if it persists, to seek assistance from a medical professional.

IDENTIFY AND REDUCE STRESSORS

Start by identifying what is causing you stress. Make a list of your concerns or known triggers and consider which ones you can do something about. Small, practical changes can make a difference. If finances are causing anxiety, for example, drawing up a budget may help. If busy days leave little time to eat properly, preparing meals in advance could ease the pressure.

Other useful strategies include limiting time spent on social media or following the news if these make you anxious; reducing unnecessary social commitments; setting aside specific times to read and respond to emails rather than feeling obliged to reply immediately; and asking for help with chores when needed.

Creating a calmer environment by reducing excessive noise and other distractions can also help you feel less overwhelmed.

MAKE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES

Looking after your physical health can have a positive effect on your mental well-being. Regular physical activity, a balanced diet and good-quality sleep can all help the body cope better with stress.

Try to move regularly throughout the day, even if only for a few minutes at a time, and choose activities you enjoy. Eat fresh, nutritious foods where possible, limit highly processed foods and stay well



Sea Point members enjoying an outing to Coffee Cartel

hydrated. Establishing a regular sleep routine and allowing yourself some quiet time before bed can also be beneficial.

Surround yourself with people who support and encourage you, keep up with appropriate medical check-ups and seek professional assistance if you need help with substance use or other concerns.

Most importantly, make time to relax. Reading, art, crafts, exercise, or simply enjoying a calming activity can provide a valuable break from daily pressures – even for a short while.



Birthday boy – Selwyn Furman celebrating in Sea Point, 27 June 2026



Birthday treats at West Coast



West Coast members enjoying an art morning

TIME TO SHINE

CJSA will host its fifth Art and Craft Exhibition on 27 October, celebrating the creativity of senior citizens. Anyone over the age of 55 is invited to submit artwork or crafts, and the exhibition will be open to the public throughout the day.

Those interested in exhibiting can request information and entry forms from the CJSA office or find details in the weekly programme distributed by email. ●

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

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

Births: Sandra Sheinbar – great grandson in Israel

2nd Barmitzvah: Selwyn Furman

Birthday: Pinchas Gutter – 91 years

Engagement: Shirley Cohen – granddaughter

Welcome to new members: Bernard Lurie

Wishes to those who are not well: Lola Krafchik, Sandra Sheinbar

Our condolences to members who have lost loved ones. Harriet Baitz on the passing of her beloved daughter, Shelley.

Condolences to the families who have lost loved ones who are CJSA members: The Bernstein family on the passing of Milnerton Member, Henny Bernstein.

ROSH HASHANAH WISHES

Our Chairman, Robyn Black, the CJSA Executive Committee and the Staff of CJSA wishes everyone a Shana Tova and an easy and meaningful Fast. We hope that the High Holy days and this time of reflection gives you peace and the opportunity to spend special times with those you love.

Have a great month!
Warm regards,
Diana Sochen, Executive Director

A NEW YEAR BUILT ON HOPE: A MESSAGE FROM DORRON KLINE, CEO OF TELFED



Wishing you & your family a year of health, safety, connection and renewal. *Shanah Tovah.*

Choosing to build a life in Israel means choosing to be part of something bigger than ourselves.

The South African community has always been one that contributes, builds and gets involved. We take pride in strengthening the country we proudly call home, not just through our presence, but through our actions.

That spirit was on full display when Telfed volunteers travelled to Kibbutz Kissufim in the Gaza Envelope to help

elderly residents return home after over two-and-a-half years of displacement. As they began unpacking their lives once again, our volunteers rolled up their sleeves, moving furniture, unpacking boxes and helping transform empty houses back into homes.

For the returning Kibbutz residents, the practical support they received meant far more than helping them to carry boxes. It was a reminder that they were not returning alone. Their homecoming marked another step in Israel's recovery, and our volunteers were honoured to help make that transition a little easier.

The past few years have tested every Israeli. Our community has experienced the same uncertainty, loss and challenges, yet those experiences have strengthened



Telfed volunteers with Marcelle and Beora Margolis outside their father's home in Kibbutz Kissufim, helping prepare the house for his long-awaited return.

community with pride," said Telfed CEO Dorron Kline.

"Every act of service reflects the values that have shaped Telfed for generations: responsibility, compassion, a love of Israel and a willingness to make a difference wherever we are needed."

As we welcome the new year, may we continue to choose kindness, generosity and service as we help build Israel's future together. ●

rather than diminished our commitment to Israel. Recovery is built by ordinary people who choose to show up, lend a hand and support one another, and we are proud to play our part.

"As South African Olim, we carry the reputation of our

"As South African Olim, we carry the reputation of our community with pride," said Telfed CEO Dorron Kline.

Shana Tova Umetukah!

NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS. START YOUR ALIYAH JOURNEY WITH US.



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**JEWISH
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**
CAPE TOWN

Building dignity. Supporting lives. Strengthening community.

Jewish Community Services is the central welfare organisation serving Cape Town's Jewish community, providing holistic care to those who need it most. Rooted in compassion, dignity and service, JCS delivers practical support that empowers individuals and families to navigate life's challenges with strength and stability.

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

[JCS.ORG.ZA](https://jcs.org.za)

INFO@JCS.ORG.ZA

[021 462 5520](tel:0214625520)



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.

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Danny shows off his cooking

LUNCH WITH DANNY

KAREN MILLER

I arrived at Ladles of Love's warehouse in Epping Industria expecting to interview the founder of one of South Africa's most remarkable hunger-relief organisations. Instead, I found Danny Diliberto standing over a stove.

It was a Monday, and Mondays have their own ritual at Ladles of Love. Everyone – warehouse staff, packers, sorters, administrators and Danny himself – sits down to lunch together. The meal is cooked on a rotating basis by a member of the team. That day it was Danny's turn.

I was invited to join them. The menu was simple: curried beans and vegetables with rice, made from the very ingredients distributed to Ladles of Love's beneficiaries. It was delicious, but more than that, it felt symbolic. There was no separate table for the founder. No executive dining room. Everyone ate together.

The vast warehouse itself surprised me. Warehouses are often noisy, frenetic places. This one radiated order, calm and purpose. Those qualities, I soon realised, reflect the man at its centre.

Most readers will know what Ladles of Love does. Its website tells the story well enough: nutritious meals for preschool

children through Early Childhood Development Centres; the Dignity Kitchen in Roeland Street serving people facing hunger every day; thousands of volunteers, partnerships with farmers, and an organisation, driven as much by data as by compassion. In just the first six months of 2026, more than 13 000 children received nutritious meals through 165 Early Childhood Development Centres, over 51 000 meals were served at the Dignity Kitchen, more than 15 000 volunteers gave their time, R3.8 million supported local farmers, and 330 tonnes of food were diverted from landfill.

Statistics, however, don't explain Danny Diliberto.

The day before our meeting, Cape Town had been bracing for an anti-foreign-national march. Friends had collected money to provide food for people who might have to flee violence. I asked Danny whether Ladles of Love could use the donation. He politely declined. The money, he said, should go directly to the organisation co-ordinating relief, and he referred me to the Mensch Network instead. It was a small moment – but it revealed something important. For Danny, partnership matters more than ownership. Helping is not about receiving the credit. His philosophy surfaced repeatedly over lunch.

UNDERLYING HIS OUTLOOK IS THE EASTERN CONCEPT OF SEVA – SELFLESS SERVICE – WHICH RESONATES STRONGLY WITH THE JEWISH IDEA OF *TIKKUN OLAM* – REPAIRING THE WORLD.



Ladles of Love staff dish up lunch

He talks about creating partners rather than beneficiaries; about relationships rather than transactions. Donors, volunteers, staff and those receiving meals all become part of the same ecosystem. Again and again he returned to the importance of keeping ego in check. As he puts it, things happen "through me, not because of me."

Danny was born in Zimbabwe. His father came from an Italian background, while his mother is Sephardi, born in the Congo before the family eventually settled in Zimbabwe and later South Africa. His childhood memories are filled with tables groaning under abundant food. Food was associated with generosity and joy. His lunchbox was famously overfilled, and he remembers happily sharing it with classmates.

At eleven he was sent to King David High School in Johannesburg, boarding in the hostel. It was a difficult transition, but one that taught him independence. He remembers one teacher in particular, a Mr Garb, whose consistency and calm left a lasting impression. Those same qualities still underpin the way he leads today.

After school he knew that academia was not his calling. At eighteen he left home, shared a flat with friends and entered the hospitality industry, where food remained at the centre of his life.

Today, his daily routine reflects the discipline that is woven through everything he does. Meditation is non-negotiable. So is exercise, whether running, hiking or going to the gym. Inner peace, he believes, has to be cultivated deliberately. He speaks candidly about letting go of emotions from a turbulent childhood and becoming "comfortable in your discomfort". Growth, he believes, often comes through challenge.

Underlying his outlook is the Eastern concept of *seva* – selfless service – which resonates strongly with the Jewish idea of *tikkun olam* – repairing the world. They come from different traditions, but both insist that spirituality is measured less by belief than by action. A bowl of soup offered with dignity can embody both.

Perhaps nothing illustrates Danny's intuitive nature more than the early days of the COVID pandemic. Just three days into lockdown, sensing the food crisis that was coming, he posted a simple appeal on social media asking for support. Donations poured in almost immediately. Opportunities seemed to arrive when they were needed, including the warehouse that eventually became Ladles of Love's home after its temporary base during Covid at Grand West Casino.

The real story of Ladles of Love is not simply about millions of meals. It is about the quiet power of consistency, humility and service. Danny Diliberto has built an organisation that feeds thousands every day, but perhaps his greatest achievement is creating a culture in which dignity is served alongside every meal. ●



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A NEW CHAPTER FOR THE CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST & GENOCIDE CENTRE

Twenty-five years after the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre (CTHGC) pioneered Holocaust education in SA, its permanent exhibition is set for a significant transformation. Director Jakub Nowakowski tells us more.



JAKUB NOWAKOWSKI
CTHGC Director

WHY DOES THE CENTRE NEED A NEW CORE EXHIBITION?

Our current exhibition was created when the Centre was established 25 years ago and was updated in 2016. It was groundbreaking – the first permanent Holocaust exhibition in South Africa – and helped pave the way for Holocaust education to become part of the national curriculum, as well as for the establishment of centres in Durban and Johannesburg.

But scholarship, technology and the way we teach difficult histories have changed considerably. Our exhibition also does not deal with other genocides as extensively as our sister centres do, particularly the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. We need an exhibition that reflects current research and responds to the educational challenges of today.

DOES THIS MEAN THE HOLOCAUST WILL HAVE A REDUCED ROLE?

The Holocaust will remain the central narrative. What will change is the way we place it in conversation with other histories.

Traditionally, museums have tended to present different genocides in separate spaces.

Our approach will instead create 'bridges' between them.

Alongside the Holocaust, we will explore the genocide against the Herero and Nama in present-day Namibia and the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

The intention is not to equate these events, but to examine both their similarities and their differences, and understand the processes that can make mass violence possible.



A guide shows visitors around the Centre

WHY IS THIS COMPARATIVE APPROACH IMPORTANT?

I have been influenced by the concept of 'multidirectional memory', coined by scholar and author Michael Rothberg: the idea that remembering one history does not diminish another. Different histories of suffering can be brought into dialogue without creating false equivalences.

This can actually deepen understanding of the specificity of the Shoah. At the same



A group of visitors being shown the current exhibition

time, visitors can recognise recurring patterns – prejudice, propaganda, dehumanisation, discriminatory laws, exclusion and, ultimately, violence.

HOW WILL VISITORS EXPERIENCE THAT APPROACH?

Rather than simply moving chronologically through three separate histories, visitors will encounter themes and processes. The proposed exhibition begins by introducing three histories through three objects, before exploring the origins of hate, stereotypes, ideologies of elimination, organised exclusion, the

unleashing of violence, and mechanisms of destruction.

It will also examine acts of defiance, the aftermath of genocide, justice and reconciliation, before considering apartheid and the broader question of how we understand genocide.

WILL THE EXHIBITION LOOK AND FEEL VERY DIFFERENT?

But technology should never overshadow the human story. There will also be tactile and analogue elements that encourage visitors – particularly young people

Continues on page 53.



Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre entrance

TECHNOLOGY SHOULD NEVER OVERSHADOW THE HUMAN STORY.

Continued from page 52.

accustomed to experiencing the world through screens – to slow down and engage more personally with history.

Yes. We want to combine new technology with the power of physical objects, photographs, documents and testimony. Digital elements such as interactive maps, large screens and technology will enable visitors to engage with recorded survivor testimony.

WHAT PLACE WILL SURVIVORS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS HAVE IN THE NEW EXHIBITION?

A proposed Gallery of Survivors will foreground survivor voices, while the Repository of Living Memory will take remembrance into the second, third and fourth generations.

Through testimonies, personal objects and memoirs, we want to show not only what was destroyed, but what endured. Jewish life continued. Families rebuilt themselves, identities were reclaimed, and memory was passed on. It is a story of loss, but also of dignity, continuity and resilience.

WE WANT TO SHOW NOT ONLY WHAT WAS DESTROYED, BUT WHAT ENDURED.

WHO IS THE NEW EXHIBITION PRIMARILY FOR?

One of our most important audiences is the thousands of Grade 9 and 11 learners who come here through their school curriculum. Most are not Jewish, and for many this may be their only opportunity to engage deeply with Holocaust and genocide history.

The Jewish community is equally fundamental to the CTHGC. The exhibition must remain a place of remembrance



and mourning, but also one of learning, healing, resilience and hope – and a place where younger generations can take ownership of this legacy.

WHAT DO YOU ULTIMATELY HOPE THE RENEWED CENTRE WILL ACHIEVE?

We want people to leave understanding that genocide does not begin with mass killing. It develops through processes: through language, prejudice, propaganda, exclusion, laws and institutions.

The Centre should give visitors the knowledge and critical tools to recognise dangerous patterns in the present.

The renewed exhibition will build on what the Centre has achieved over 25 years, while ensuring that its work remains relevant to the generations who will walk through its doors in the decades ahead. ●



See this video produced by the CTHGC that explains more. Scan QR code, or go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IgiYL2VZGr4&t=2s>

HEALTH

Save me a seat!



SHELLY KORN
Founder,
Sunset Care

Last Rosh Hashanah, for the first time, my father-in-law was unable to join our celebration. His care needs made it impossible for us to bring him home or take him to *shul*. His place at the table was empty. His seat in *shul* remained unoccupied.

I knew he was safe and cared for. I understood why he could not be there. But none of that made his absence less painful. Throughout the *Chag*, I carried a deep anguish and a growing sense of guilt that I had somehow failed him – and failed our family. Perhaps the empty seat was so painful because it offered a glimpse of a future I was not ready to face. He was still alive, yet our family was already experiencing his absence.

Serious illness, ageing and dementia can bring many losses before death. A person may lose their independence, their familiar role in the family, their place in the community, and their ability to participate in traditions they once helped create. Gradually, they become less involved, less visible and easier to leave out. And so, the first loss is not always death. Sometimes it is the moment a person stops being expected. Usually, nobody intends for this to happen. Their disappearance is hidden inside reasonable concerns:

It may be too tiring for her. He won't cope with the journey. She becomes unsettled around so many people. It is simply easier if he stays where he is.

Sometimes these concerns are entirely valid. Inclusion should never mean forcing a frail person through an occasion they can no longer tolerate. But it should make us pause and ask: **What**

would help them feel that they still have a seat at the table? Perhaps they come only for *Kiddush* or leave after the soup. Perhaps someone sits beside them in *shul* or brings them home before the service ends. Perhaps the *shofar*, apples and honey, family stories and warmth of the celebration are taken to them. These gestures may be small, but their message is profound: *You are still part of us. There is still a place for you here.*

On Rosh Hashanah, we pray, *Zochreinu l'chaim* – “Remember us for life.” Perhaps, while asking G-d to remember us, we must also ask ourselves: Whom among the living have we forgotten?

The High Holy Days call us to return – not only to G-d, but to one another, especially those who may have quietly slipped beyond the circle of family and community life.

One day, when they are truly gone, we may honour them by preparing their favourite recipes. While they are still here, let us bring them a taste. One day, we may retell their stories. While they are still here, let us ask them to tell us one more. One day, their seats will be empty in the final sense. Until then, let us not empty them too soon.

Last Rosh Hashanah, I feared it might be our last *Chag* with my father-in-law. Thank G-d, he is still with us, living in a nursing home. This year, we have been given more time – time to prepare, and to find a way for the *Chag* to reach him. It is never simple or perfect, and the ache does not grow smaller – for him or for us. Still, we bring what we can: a familiar taste, a favourite *Niggun*, a family story, our presence. Small pieces of the *Chag*, carried with love. Perhaps, in each one, he hears the promise beneath them all: *Your place in our family remains.*

Wherever we gather, we have saved you a seat. ●

L'Shana Tova Umetuka

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the home you share it in.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

A new season, a new beginning

How is it Rosh Hashanah already? There is something about this time of year that makes us wonder where the months have gone. Somehow, here we are at Rosh Hashanah again. It feels as though the year has flown by, with all the highs, lows, surprises and ordinary moments that make up our lives.

Rosh Hashanah gives us an opportunity to slow down and reconsider our actions.

The Jewish calendar is built around cycles: the year, the changing seasons, the rhythm of work and rest, beginnings and endings. Yet every cycle brings us back to a familiar place, while giving us the opportunity to begin again. A new year is not simply about turning the page. It is about

deciding what we wish to carry forward and what we are ready to leave behind.

As we enter 5787, I find myself thinking about what it means to usher in a new season. What do we want to cultivate? Where do we want to grow? What kind of community do we want to build? Most importantly, how can we turn our hopes for the year ahead into action?

This is also a good time to think about our own purpose. We need to consider what it means to be a blessing to the world around us and how we can be a little kinder, more generous and more present. We need to consider what we would like people to experience because we were part of their lives. And what does that look like in practice, in our families, communities, workplaces and



SHELLEY TROPE-FRIEDMAN
President,
WIZO SA

the wider world? We don't need grand answers, but we do need to answer these for ourselves.

All of this sits at the heart of what WIZO does. For more than a century, WIZO has created opportunities for people to turn their values into action, to build, support, educate and strengthen communities. It is a reminder that purpose does not always have to be something we find; sometimes it is something we create through what we choose to give. Each new season is an invitation to participate. Rosh Hashanah reminds us that a new beginning doesn't simply

happen because the calendar says so.

It asks us to look at the year behind us and be honest about what we've learnt. If we want the year ahead to look different, what are we prepared to do differently? We can choose where we put our energy, who we make time for and what we contribute. So, as we gather together, hear the *shofar* and wish one another *Shanah Tovah*, I hope we will all ask ourselves how to do things differently this year.

May 5787 be a year of renewal, purpose and possibility for us all. With love and purpose, may we have the courage to help make it so.

Shanah Tovah u'Metukah. With love and warmth, Shelley Trope-Friedman ●

 **WIZO** South Africa
Women's International Zionist Organization



A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

Recent crises in Cape Town again demonstrated the willingness of the Jewish community to respond quickly when people are vulnerable – both from our own community and beyond.



Mika Abramowitz of the Cape SAJBD handing relief parcels to members of the Burundi community

STANDING WITH THOSE AFFECTED BY XENOPHOBIA

Amid recent xenophobic unrest and threats directed at migrants, Jewish organisations, along with those from other communities, mobilised to provide practical assistance and a public message of solidarity.

Mensch used its platforms to counter xenophobic narratives, affirm the dignity of migrants and share information from HIAS South Africa, part of the global Jewish organisation supporting refugees and displaced people.

As the humanitarian crisis unfolded and needs changed daily, Jewish organisations and individuals began working together in new ways. According to Andrea Kuti, a collaborative think tank emerged, creating a broader organisational structure through which the community could respond more strategically and in a co-ordinated way.

Mensch, EOLI, Herzlia, Habonim, ORT SA Cape and the Union of Jewish Women worked collectively to provide practical assistance, including food, hygiene essentials and children's activity packs for migrants.

Horwitz and Heneck Re-granting provided R25 000 towards emergency hygiene packs, while a Jewish Cape Town response WhatsApp group connected volunteers and donors.

The Cape SAJBD also received a portion of funds raised by the national SAJBD for communities affected by the unrest, enabling it to provide food parcels to

approximately 100 members of Cape Town's Burundi community.

Kuti believes this collaboration demonstrated what becomes possible when organisations and individuals combine their resources, expertise and networks. But, she stressed, responding to immediate need is only one part of the responsibility. Advocacy is also essential to help prevent future humanitarian crises.

Quoting Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, she said: "Some are guilty, but all are responsible."

RALLYING AFTER THE SEA POINT FIRE

A different emergency brought the community together following the devastating fire at the Dorchester apartment building in Sea Point on 30 July.

One person died and residents faced the loss of homes and possessions. Among those affected were three *bachurim* from the Yeshiva of Cape Town. During the fire, Harel Iluz twice re-entered the burning building, helping to save two babies and their babysitter.

Continues on page 59.

QUOTING RABBI ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL, SHE SAID: "SOME ARE GUILTY, BUT ALL ARE RESPONSIBLE."



Apartment block fire

LISA KOPPEL'S STORY CARRIES AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER

The death of Lisa Koppel, wife of South African musician Danny K, at just 41 carries an important message about colorectal cancer – particularly for younger adults.

Lisa was diagnosed with colorectal cancer in November 2023, passing away from the disease in August this year.

Her family has now chosen to share her diagnosis in the hope that her experience may help others.

THEIR MESSAGE IS SIMPLE: DO NOT ASSUME COLORECTAL CANCER IS ONLY A DISEASE OF OLDER PEOPLE.

Colorectal cancer is increasingly being diagnosed in younger adults. International guidelines now recommend routine screening from age 45 for people at average risk, while those with an increased risk may need to begin earlier.

Just as importantly, persistent or unexplained symptoms should not be ignored because of your age.

Their message is simple: do not assume colorectal cancer is only a disease of older people.

Speak to your doctor and ensure that concerns are properly investigated.

Ask about your individual risk, particularly if there is a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, and discuss when screening is appropriate for you.

Lisa's family hopes that the lesson others will take from the tragedy is a potentially life-saving one: know your risk, pay attention to persistent symptoms, and do not delay seeking medical advice. ●



A little piece of forever made personal

Today, the engagement ring is less about tradition and more about telling a love story of your own. The classic round brilliant diamond solitaire will always hold its place, but today's couples are drawn to diamonds with character, individuality and a story of their own. Ovals continue to enchant, while the romantic marquise has found new admirers following Selena Gomez's engagement ring. Taylor Swift's 2025 ring has further awakened a love for the past, inspiring, renewed appreciation for cushion cut diamonds and vintage inspired designs.

Colour, too, is becoming more expressive. Soft champagne and honey-toned diamonds, alongside luminous fancy yellows, bring warmth and individuality, particularly when paired with yellow gold.

Yet beyond every trend lies something more timeless: choosing a ring that feels deeply, unmistakably yours, a little piece of forever made personal.



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In Synagogue, from Somerset West Hebrew Congregation to... Marrakech?



JULIAN RESNICK
writes from
Israel

I travel a lot. No, I go on Journeys. There is a difference. Journeying demands a focus, an awareness, an ability to remember that we have not arrived yet, may never arrive, as arriving is not the purpose; the purpose is being on the Journey.

On my Journeys I generally go to visit the local synagogues. I have been to the synagogue in Tykocin in Poland (no Jews, glorious murals); Veria in Northern Greece (first visit, one local Jewish woman left – she married a local Greek Orthodox man; second visit she had passed away, and lovely Evie, whose mother, she told me, had seen the Jews taken away by the Germans, opened the synagogue for me); the Remuh in Krakow (where some *Yeshiva Bochers* were singing and I could not guide as my eyes and throat were filled with tears, their singing, was so beautiful); in Meknes, Morocco (there were Jews, but when they started trying to speak with me, I understood that they had been left behind, as they were all learning disabled – and this totally threw me, as well as my group.)

I have been to synagogues in Madrid, Lisbon, Budapest, Florence, Fes, London, Manchester, Leeds, Brighton, Essaouira, Tetouan, Tangier, Paris, Porto, Thessaloniki – the list goes on and on – and in every synagogue something powerful happened to this ex-Somerset West Hebrew Congregation (once) little boy who, to be totally honest,

has never self-defined as a religious Jew in any way. So, the question must be, 'Why?' What is it that I have found in these synagogues, or, possibly, what am I looking for? I do not have a complete answer to either of these questions, but I thought that I would at least tell you about two moments in synagogues I have visited which might give us a clue as to what makes meaning in life as a Jew. (I thought this would be a great Rosh Hashanah piece, as you and I will probably be in *shul* soon).

The first moment happened in the synagogue on the island of Rhodes. I went to the synagogue even though this was a family holiday, as I always visit the local synagogue and cemetery wherever I go, and in Rhodes I was aware that I would find on the *Yizkor* board Menashes, Amatos, Mallals, and other families I had had connections with in Cape Town. It was a Monday, and to my great surprise, when I walked into the Synagogue which doubles as the local Jewish Museum, instead of half a dozen inquisitive tourists in the museum, I walked into Shacharit. And what a Shacharit it was. It was a double Bar Mitzvah. One of the Bar Mitzvah 'boys' was an elderly man, and the other his grandson. I was totally overwhelmed when I discovered that the elderly man had been in Auschwitz on his Bar Mitzvah after being captured by the Germans on Rhodes, and that he had decided to return to this, the synagogue of his youth, to celebrate his *bar mitzvah* together with his thirteen-year-old grandson. This moment alone made the family holiday worthwhile.

The second moment was in a very different synagogue: the Slat Al Azama on Rue Talmud Torah in the Marrakech Mellah (ancient Jewish Quarter). It



was May, 2022, the final day of a 12-day Moroccan Jewish Journey I had guided with a group of 12 people from the United States and Canada. We were upstairs in the Woman's Gallery having our final circle (once a Habonim *Madrach*, always a Habonim *Madrach*) when an Israeli group walked in carrying a *Sefer Torah* and singing *Am Yisrael Chai*. (I found out later that they had

borrowed the *Sefer* for their Shabbat services in their hotel as they were Orthodox and their hotel was too far away to walk to the synagogue). We stopped talking. In a way, this synagogue with almost no Jews still living in the Mellah, all of a sudden was filled with life, light, joy and music.

And then another sound. The sound of crying, of sobbing. One of the members of the group was crying his eyes out. "I do not know why this is happening to me," he said between tears. "I am a secular Jew. I never go to synagogue. I have not touched or read from a *Sefer Torah* since my Bar Mitzvah (and he was 70), but I am totally overwhelmed with emotions I do not understand."

Shana Tova and Gmar
Chatima Tova! ●

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'Art bursaries changing lives'
– Continues from page 40

sales will serve as stepping stones to even greater things."

The auction raised around R1,6 million. A notable portion of the proceeds from the sale of the three graduates' work was paid back to them, as an investment in their studio practice. The balance has been invested directly back into the bursary programme, in order to support future aspiring artists. Other funds raised on the evening will support an upcoming local curatorial programme, as well as an educational initiative for Ethiopian-Israeli children at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

For SAFIM Art Collab, the success of its bursary recipients demonstrates how purposeful financial support can unlock exceptional talent and transform lives through art. ●



The three graduates

'A community that cares' – Continues from page 56



Apartment block fire

A network of organisations quickly mobilised. The Cape SAJBD provided community updates and liaised with organisations providing assistance, while CSO managed on-site liaison with emergency services. Jewish Community Services provided counselling and practical support.

The *Step Forward* volunteer programme, Cape SAJBD and JCS co-ordinated collections, while Jewish institutions

and members of the wider community contributed essential items and funds.

The SAZF Cape Council helped amplify fundraising efforts, with Christian Zionist supporters also contributing.

A JEWISH IMPERATIVE TO CARE

Why does the community mobilise so readily? Rabbi Bryan Opert points to both Jewish teaching and Jewish experience. The Torah emphasises Jewish unity, he explained, while centuries of persecution have reinforced a strong tradition of taking responsibility for one another. That responsibility does not end with fellow Jews.

The concept of *tikkun olam* – repairing the world – encourages responsibility towards wider society and those in need.

Rabbi Opert believes the response is often instinctive rather than consciously religious: a history of suffering can deepen sensitivity to the suffering of others.

Both crises showed a community prepared not only to respond, but to work collectively – bringing together organisations, volunteers and resources to offer meaningful assistance when it is needed most. ●

VIEWS CONSIDER THIS

Being Holy in 5787: Lessons from the people in my life

With the High Holy Days upon us, I find myself asking a surprisingly scary question this year: What does it actually mean to be holy in 5787?



RACHAEL SARA

The word 'holy' often feels intimidating – lofty and distant. Most of us do not wake up thinking, "Today I shall be holy." We think about meetings, checklists, traffic, shopping, messages, and how to squeeze in some exercise. And yet, as we reach 5787, this season insists on the question.

For many of us, the High Holy Days mean pausing our routines, returning to *shul*, hearing the ancient melodies that stir something within us, and taking stock of the year that has passed. We ask: Who have I been? Who am I becoming? Who do I still hope to be? And perhaps the hardest question is not what we want to become, but how we get there.

In a world that often seems determined to pull us in the opposite direction, I feel at a loss. We are surrounded by war, cruelty, outrage, poverty and inequality – and sources of inspiration are scarce. So I decided to conduct a very unscientific survey.

I asked my very wise and confident five-year-old niece what it means to be holy. Without hesitation she said, "To love yourself [as you are]." Her answer was profound. Holiness is not about becoming someone grander than we are, but becoming more fully ourselves

– more honest, alive, real and true to who we are. And, as any adult knows, self-love – in fact, any love – is not merely a feeling; it is regular work.

I asked the woman who helps clean my home. She simply answered: "Gratitude." No theology. No philosophy. Just gratitude – the ability to notice what is already present rather than constantly chasing what is missing or better. Gratitude, too, requires work. To appreciate something means to actively hold it close and nurture it.

The security guard in my building answered: "To take care of one another." This felt beautifully connected to the work he does every day. Holiness is protection, attentiveness and responsibility for the people around us. Surely, if everyone looked out for the people in their lives, fewer people would get metaphorically 'left behind'. That feels like a holier society to me.

Lastly, I asked my partner, who said: "Seek out the love, spread the love, and nurture it." It means intentionally noticing the beauty that is out there and refusing to believe that the problems tell the whole story. Love is there. Our task is to find it, notice it, strengthen it and cultivate *chesed* [loving-kindness] in all that we do.

Not one answer involved angels, miracles or mystical experiences. No one mentioned perfection or suggested withdrawing from ordinary

WINEberg Route

A fabulous afternoon of great wine, delicious food, wonderful music and fantastic company. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped make this event such a success. Thank you to our generous prize sponsors, and congratulations to all our prize winners!



Clockwise from top left: Roy Fine and Eric Beswick; Kelly James, Danielle Kushlick and Julie Resnikov; Tamlyn, Lindsey and Johnny Schwatz

life. Actually, holiness sounds remarkably practical – not a seasonal conundrum at all.

Being holy in 2026, I have learned, is not about escaping the world. It is about refusing to let the world harden us, and instead making it a holier place through small daily practices.

As we enter 5787, I implore that we let go of the frightening image of holiness as perfection. Holiness is a practice of presence – being present for ourselves, for others, for the world around us, and for the quiet sacredness hidden inside ordinary moments.

BAR MITZVAH MAZAL TOV!



To Ollie Hindmarch and family.

May this season invite – no, insist – that each of us become a little more loving, a little more attentive, a little more grateful and a little more true to ourselves. ●

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Lexi Phillips - Herzlia Learner

"Volunteering has shown me that even something as simple as sitting and talking with someone can make them feel seen, valued, and less alone. I've learnt that making an impact doesn't always require a huge gesture. I've found the biggest impact comes from showing up consistently, listening, and reminding someone that they matter."



Mira Rudnick - Limmud SA

"Choosing to give our time, skills and energy to something greater than ourselves strengthens not only the lives of those we serve, but also the fabric of our communities. Volunteering has taught me that every contribution, no matter how small, has the potential to create a ripple effect when combined with the efforts of others."



Lee Jaffe - Chai Kitchen

"After being involved in Chai Kitchen for the last 3 years, I can see that it really isn't really about cooking. It's about reminding people that they matter. Every meal we prepare carries hope, every handwritten note says, 'you are not forgotten,' and every volunteer proves that even one hour of kindness can change someone's Shabbat, and most times the volunteer's Shabbat."



Muriel Levin - UJW & Simcha Group Blanket Project Lead

"I buy beautiful colour wools for the blankets, so that poor don't have to be subjected to grey. Grey takes away all your dignity. Grey has got no life. All the colours had to be bright and beautiful and lift their spirits."

Volunteering wasn't taught to us, we picked it up diligently. My mother and my father always gave and that influenced me."

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Building SA's future through early childhood growth

South Africa faces many urgent challenges, but one that often receives too little attention is the crisis in early childhood development (ECD) – a challenge with profound implications for the country's future.

That was the central message from Tracy Winde, founder of Hearthshine NPC, in her keynote address at the inaugural ORT SA CAPE Elevate & Connect Conference 2026. The conference, described by ORT SA CAPE CEO Bev Da Costa as the organisation's first of its kind, brought together ECD practitioners and stakeholders from across the country to exchange ideas and explore solutions for strengthening the sector.

ORT SA CAPE is an education-focused NGO committed to transforming lives and communities through quality early childhood development (ECD). Its work encompasses ECD teacher training and support, leadership and entrepreneurship development, and youth empowerment. Through education, training, meaningful work experience, mentorship and networks, ORT SA CAPE equips individuals with the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to thrive, creating hope and laying the foundations for stronger, more resilient communities.

While ECD is widely recognised as laying the foundation for success in primary school and beyond, Winde argued that it has not received the co-ordinated national attention it deserves.

"The national response to the education crisis has been fragmented," she said. "We have a system that was built for children who are safe and secure, but the reality of most of our children's lives is very different."

She noted that many children grow up in environments shaped by violence and instability, making it essential that education equips them with emotional regulation and resilience from an early age. "Young children should learn how to regulate both their bodies and their



Bev Da Costa (middle) with colleagues from ORT SA CAPE, Nicole Friend and Lisa Wingham.

emotions, so that we can restrict the growth of a violent society," she said.

A SECTOR UNDER PRESSURE

Several speakers highlighted the alarming state of education in South Africa. Statistics presented at the conference showed that 80% of children cannot read for meaning by the age of 10, while almost half of children attending ECD Centres experience developmental delays.

The City of Cape Town has recognised the importance of addressing these challenges. Deputy Mayor Alderman Eddie Andrews outlined the City's efforts to help informal ECD Centres – many established by women in township communities – meet registration standards so they can qualify for government funding.

Funding remains one of the sector's greatest obstacles.

One panellist described ECD as "the Cinderella of education", arguing that it continues to receive insufficient recognition and investment despite its importance in shaping children's futures.

Speakers also stressed that many ECD Centres operate as small businesses and that founders need stronger financial and management skills to ensure long-term sustainability. Understanding budgeting, fundraising and compliance can make the difference between an ECD Centre surviving and thriving.

THE LANGUAGE CHALLENGE

Language was another major theme.

Dr Xolisa Guzula of the University of Cape Town highlighted the difficulties many children face when they are required to learn in English or Afrikaans from around

Grade 4, despite speaking another language at home.

"Demanding English from children whose knowledge of the language is limited leads to them being silenced, and to them exhibiting poor class participation," she said.

The gap between home language and classroom language often prevents children from fully understanding concepts and applying what they have learned.

Guzula advocated for Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education, noting that bilingual schooling opportunities currently exist mainly for English- and Afrikaans-speakers, while equivalent English-isiXhosa options are lacking.

She encouraged parents to support language development by reading aloud in both the home language and English, and by using games and conversation to build children's vocabulary in both languages.

TECHNOLOGY AS A SUPPORT, NOT A SUBSTITUTE

The conference also examined the growing role of technology in education.

Leora Hessen, creator of the Hello Aida app, explained that she developed the platform in response to concerns that generative AI tools could undermine children's critical thinking.

"An AI tool that delivers answers is not the right thing – all it does is create dependency," she said. "The right tool is one that develops the thinking to allow the student to reach the answer."

She emphasised that AI should complement, not replace, teachers, and that children still need activities such as reading physical books, playing board games and singing to develop essential thinking and social skills.

Other presenters noted that technology can also help ECD Centres with administration and business management, although many practitioners require additional training to make effective use of these tools.

The conference concluded with an engaging address by Professor Jonathan Jansen, who shared stories from his work supporting schools on the Cape Flats.

Throughout the conference, one message emerged consistently: investing in early childhood development is not simply an education priority – it is an investment in South Africa's future. Stronger support for young children, their teachers, and the centres that serve them will ultimately strengthen communities, improve educational outcomes and help build a more resilient society. ●

A life across continents: from Asia to Europe to Africa

Some books preserve history. The finest ones remind us that history is meant to shape the way we live.

RABBI NAFTALI Y. SILVER

Rabbi, Sephardi Hebrew
Congregation

While this book – *Stella: A Journey Through Loss and Time* by Fabio Diliberto – follows the extraordinary journey of one woman, Stella, I found myself drawn beyond any single individual. What captivated me was the world that emerges through these pages – a world of faith, family, courage, resilience, and unwavering Jewish identity. Through Stella's story, Fabio has done far more than recount the life of his beloved grandmother. He has opened a window into the lived experience of an entire generation.

As Rabbi of the Sephardi Hebrew Congregation of Cape Town, I have had the privilege of serving many of the descendants of the families whose lives fill these pages. Although I never had the opportunity to know Stella or so many of those whose stories are told here, through their children and grandchildren, their traditions, and now through Fabio's remarkable storytelling, I feel I have come to know them. More importantly, I have come to appreciate that the true measure of a generation is not simply what it achieved, but what it successfully passed on.

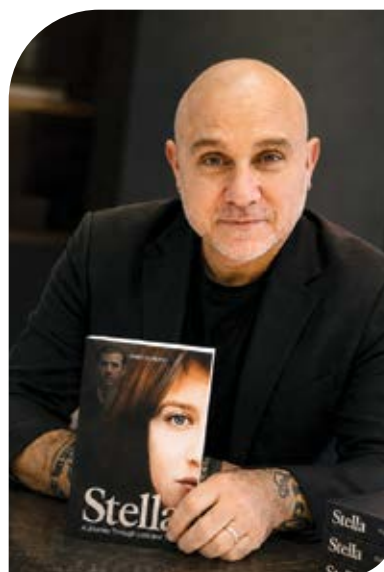
One of Fabio's greatest achievements is that he does not simply recount history. He allows us to experience it. As readers, we find ourselves

walking the streets of Rhodes, crossing unfamiliar seas, entering homes filled with warmth and uncertainty, and sharing in moments of joy, heartbreak, courage, and hope. For those fortunate enough to know these families, the pages seem almost to breathe. History no longer feels distant; it becomes deeply personal.

This is not merely one family's story. It is, in many ways, the story of countless Jewish Sephardi families whose journeys began in Rhodes, Turkey, and across the Balkans, before carrying them to new homes throughout Africa and beyond. While every family's path was unique, they shared the same determination to preserve their faith, their traditions, their language, their communities, and one another.

This book reminds us that Judaism has never been preserved by monuments alone, but by ordinary Jews who chose, day after day, to live Jewish lives – speaking its language, praying its prayers, celebrating its festivals, raising Jewish families, and carrying one another through both joy and sorrow. Their actions became their legacy.

As I read these pages, I found myself asking a difficult question. If a generation that endured exile, uncertainty, loss, and unimaginable hardship could preserve its faith and identity with such devotion, what might our generation achieve with the blessings we have been given? We live in a world of unprecedented comfort and opportunity, yet many of the traditions that sustained our grandparents now struggle to find their place in our daily lives. The challenge before us is no longer merely survival – it is continuity.



Fabio Diliberto with his new book *Stella*

Perhaps that is the greatest lesson this book offers. It does not ask us simply to admire the past; it asks us to continue it. Jewish memory is never an end in itself. We remember in order to live differently. We honour those who came before us not merely by telling their stories, but by carrying forward the

values that shaped their lives. The generation portrayed in these pages did not preserve Judaism because life was easy. They preserved it because they understood it was essential. Our generation must make that same choice. Not out of necessity, but out of conviction.

Fabio has given his grandmother a beautiful tribute. In doing so, he has also honoured an entire generation whose quiet courage and steadfast faith continue to echo through the lives of their descendants. He has preserved not only their history, but their spirit. The greatest gift of this book is not what it preserves, but what it awakens within its readers. May we close these pages inspired not simply to remember those who came before us, but to become worthy ancestors for those who will come after us. ●

The book is available for purchase directly from Fabio or from the Sephardi Shul, and for borrowing from the Jacob Gitlin Library.

The image shows the front cover of the 'Elevate' magazine, specifically the 'Shanah Tovah' issue. The cover has a warm, cream-colored background. At the top, the word 'ELEVATE' is printed in a large, bold, dark blue sans-serif font. Below it, in a smaller, dark blue font, is the text 'inspired by Cape Town Kollel'. The central focus is the title 'Shanah Tovah' in a large, elegant, dark blue serif font, positioned on the left side. To the right of the title, a large, sculptural, cream-colored wave-like shape curves upwards. Perched on this shape is a pomegranate with its seeds exposed and some green leaves. In the foreground, on a lower part of the wave, sits a small, ornate glass jar filled with honey and a silver honey dipper. Below the title, there is a small decorative diamond symbol flanked by horizontal lines. At the bottom of the cover, the text 'Inspiration · Education · Connection · Community' is written in a small, dark blue font. Below this, there is another decorative line with a central diamond, followed by the website address 'myelevate.co.za' in a small, dark blue font. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and elegant, with a focus on traditional Jewish symbols like the pomegranate and honey.

SHANAH TOVAH U'METUKA

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When a Get is withheld: Divorce, dignity and the law

For Jewish couples, the end of a marriage may involve two separate processes, which is the civil divorce and the *Get* required under Jewish law.

Ideally, these processes take place alongside each other, allowing both spouses to bring the marriage to an end and move forward with their lives.

But what happens when one spouse refuses to co-operate?

A *Get* is the religious document required to dissolve a Jewish marriage. Traditionally, it is given by the husband and accepted by the wife. Without it, a civil divorce may bring the



BENITA ARDENBAUM
Family Law Attorney

legal marriage to an end, but the wife may still be regarded as married under Jewish law and unable to remarry within the faith. This creates an obvious imbalance of power.

In difficult divorces, the *Get* can become caught up in the wider conflict between the parties. It may be withheld because of anger or resentment, or used as leverage in negotiations over money, property or children. At that point, something that should allow both people to bring their marriage to a close can

instead become another means of continuing the conflict.

South African law has recognised this difficulty. Section 5A of the Divorce Act 70 of 1979 provides an important safeguard. Although the legislation does not specifically refer to a *Get* or to Jewish marriages, it deals with circumstances where a civil divorce would leave one spouse unable to remarry according to the rules of their religion. In simple terms, the court has a discretion to refuse to grant the civil divorce until the spouse who is able to remove that religious barrier has taken the necessary steps to do so. The court may also make another order that it considers just.

The court is not granting the *Get* and is not deciding a question of Jewish law. Rather, section 5A recognises that there may be a very real injustice in allowing one spouse to obtain the benefit of a civil divorce while deliberately preventing the other from being free to remarry according to their faith.

There is, however, an important practical point, and that is the question of whether the *Get* should be raised at the beginning of the divorce process. Section 5A is most useful while the divorce is still before the court. If the civil divorce is finalised without the *Get* having been addressed, the position may become considerably more difficult to resolve.

For anyone going through a Jewish divorce, the *Get* should therefore not be treated as something to attend to once the lawyers have finished with everything else. It forms an important part of bringing the marriage to an end.

Divorce is already an emotionally difficult process. Neither the civil nor religious process should be used to punish, control or gain an advantage over the other spouse.

Ultimately, ending a marriage should be about closure, and allowing both people to leave the marriage with dignity and the freedom to begin the next chapter of their lives. ●

BENITA ARDENBAUM

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Benita Ardenbaum is a very **skilled and professional attorney**. She and her team have with great commitment and success helped me through a difficult and complicated **international child abduction case**. Her vast experience quickly led me to belief that I had found one of the best lawyers you can get in the field of **family law**. I would definitely recommend Benita Ardenbaum and her team for international family law matters and **hague abduction**.

Bjarne

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Highlands House is more than a frail care home. Highlands House is a place where life continues to be lived with purpose, where every individual is supported to make the most of each day.

Here, each day brings opportunities to connect, learn, create and simply enjoy being together. Residents participate in art, music, exercise, discussion groups, celebrations and cultural events. Many also share their own talents by leading activities, giving talks or encouraging others, reminding us that everyone has something valuable to contribute.

One resident arrived at Highlands House almost blind and living in very difficult circumstances. After cataract surgery arranged following his admission, he was able to see again. He picked up a paintbrush and returned to a lifelong love of art. Today, he spends his days painting and is an active part of life at the Home. His story is a reminder of how much a person's life can change when they are given the right care and support.

The family of a resident who recently passed away wrote to thank our staff for the care, comfort and happiness their mother experienced during her final years. Knowing she felt safe, respected and loved brought them enormous comfort too.

These are the moments that define Highlands House.

As our residents' needs change, so must we. This year, we are adapting one of our residential floors to better support those who require a higher level of care, while continuing to provide the warmth and compassion that families have come to trust.

Our commitment extends well beyond meeting residents healthcare needs. We strive to ensure that every resident continues to experience purpose, belonging and meaningful human connection, regardless of the challenges that age, illness, or disability may bring. Whether through shared laughter over a cup of tea, participating in favourite activities, celebrating special occasions, or simply enjoying the comfort of familiar faces, each day offers opportunities to live well.

With your support, we can continue to provide not only person-centred care, but the activities, therapies and human connection that transforms Highlands House into a true home.

Thank you for partnering with us.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Learning to listen: inside three days at Limmud Cape Town



JEFF GUTMAN

The beauty of Limmud lies in one of its core values: everyone should be a student and anyone can be a teacher.

Herzlia Weizmann School played the role of Cape Town host to Limmud this year, one of the Jewish community's most important annual events.

From 14–16 August, local and international speakers gathered for three days of learning, debate, and joyous intellectual sharing in a way completely unique to the essence of Limmud. For those uninitiated, let me share how my Sunday went.

At 9:15, I listened to Hilton Rudnick – who holds a PhD in Psychology – walk us through five world-shifting psychology experiments. Straight after, an expert-laden panel on the homelessness crisis in Cape Town focused on how we restore dignity to those unhomed. A panel on the upcoming Israeli elections followed, with senior authorities such as Linda Dayan, Dan Fefferman and Roni Fantanesh Malkai sharing their knowledge on what's to come at the end of October. To finish, still riding high on election fever, I found myself at a session led by eNCA's

Chief Election Commentator, Wayne Sussman, who gave a breakdown of the upcoming local South African elections.

Friendly reminder: this was just on the Sunday. Friday and Saturday also proved to be a profoundly inspiring couple of days, with a mixture of tales of heroic courage and interesting insights on display.

In what other environment can you listen to experts in their industry, and then speak to those same people over lunch? Perhaps we take for granted this world-class programme that we have the privilege of attending every year. It would be wrong just to mention the programme, however, as the incredible work of the full-time team and volunteers ensured the whole weekend ran seamlessly.

Limmud once again proved why I wait for this weekend on the calendar more than any other. In a world of vitriol and rage-baiting debate tactics, Limmud continues to provide the tonic against it. The only shame about Limmud is that it can't extend beyond the Jewish community, as it serves as a utopian ideal of how greater society should function.

It is inspiring that we still have an annual event that champions the ideals of friendly debate and active, cross-generational learning. If you've never attended Limmud, you have to keep 27–29 August open next year. I can guarantee you will learn more from one weekend of Limmud than the other 51 weeks of the year. ●

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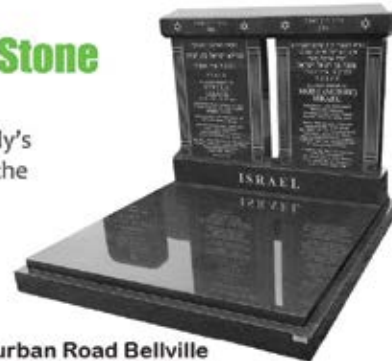
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