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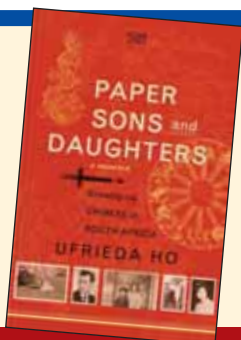


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# Jewish Report



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Friday, 13 May 2011 / 9 Iyar, 5771

Volume 15 Number 17

## Israel celebrates Independence Day amid reminders about Gilad Shalit

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### ISRAEL'S 63<sup>RD</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED IN STYLE

A musical extravaganza at the Lyric Theatre at Gold Reef City in Johannesburg on Monday night, was a fitting and joyous birthday bash to celebrate Israel's 63rd year of independence. "Footsteps to the Future", organised by the SAZF, did Israel - and the SAZF - proud. Pictured on stage are "host" Oshy Tugendhaft (in the suit), with some of the background singers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ILAN OSSENDRYVER) **SEE PAGE 6**

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May 13/9 Iyar  
May 14/10 Iyar

Behar

Starts	Ends	
17:13	18:03	Johannesburg
17:37	18:30	Cape Town
16:55	17:46	Durban
17:15	18:06	Bloemfontein
17:09	18:01	Port Elizabeth
17:01	17:53	East London



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PARSHA OF THE WEEK

Jews must be ambassadors to the highest value

THE EXPERIENCE of Mount Sinai - and the revelation of the Covenant that remains the binding force for Jews in contract with G-d - are the asserted source for the social legislation of this week's sedra.

First listed among these halachot is the sabbatical year for the land. Like Jews who are commanded to rest on each seventh day, the sacred soil, blessed by Divine Providence, shares a rhythm of sevens, to be followed by shnat hayovel - the jubilee year. This is seen as a means of guaranteeing continued blessing and continued leadership in the land.


Torah also sets forward a plan of land distribution and the return of parcels to the original tribal holdings in the 50th year. This is curious legislation from several standpoints, both in its applicability in Biblical times and in its re-application through generations of halachic change.

From earliest rabbinic teachings, it is clear that many already found the zeroing out of all debt in the seventh year counterproductive: Hillel introduced the prozbul - making the debt property of the assigned holder and transcending the sabbatical rules - in order to ensure a stable credit market.

With the destruction of the First Temple, the differentiation of the tribes was greatly disrupted; by the time of the destruction and exile that ended the sacrificial worship and Jewish self-rule until recent times, our ability to know to whom land might return were even further diminished.

During recent days the world has noted the 63rd anniversary of the State of Israel. That State is a modern legal and democratic entity. The rules of land ownership, of indebtedness and social provision for those in need, are established on principles differing from Torah, and more akin to the halachah.

The overriding principle remains directly connected to the Torah. Social justice stands at the heart of a Jewish society: in the words of the Torah - one



**PARSHAT BEHAR**  
**Rabbi Robert A Jacobs**  
*Bet David, Morningside  
Chairman SA Association of Progressive Rabbis*

law for the stranger and the home-born.

As Jews in the Diaspora, the hope that led to the establishment of Israel through the United Nations-approved resolution of November 29 1947, is our hope that even as minority communities around the world, we have a stake in the world at large and a homeland to call our own.

This Torah portion, and its usual partner - Bechukotai - do contain important and relevant instructions to us about our responsibilities to others in our community and in our employ.

Whether from "our group" or from outside that group, the affirmation of the humanity of every individual are signal values that underlie Judaism. They have taken root in much of the good work of Jewish communities around the world.

When we look to Israel, we are able to see that despite the ugly face of conflict since the State was proclaimed in 1948, the quiet and ongoing assistance for those in need in neighbouring nations - Jew and non-Jew alike - constitute a remarkable record in support of human rights.

It is sad that we live in a time when vilification of Israel, especially through the BDS (Boycott, Disinvest, Sanction) campaign too easily crosses the boundary to be addressed to all Jews in the form of a new anti-Semitism.

As a community in South Africa, our place remains a catalytic one - our commitment to justice, equality and fairness represent the leadership of a covenanted people to democratic society.

Judaism - the covenanted relationship - has been carried for untold generations by the spiritual successors and descendants of Jacob/Israel.

The times ahead encourage us to be unified as a community, to set aside our internal disagreements about practice and serve individually and collectively as ambassadors for the highest values and most significant teachings that have made Jews Am Olam—the Eternal People.



Holocaust survivor Miriam Lichterman; Cape Town executive mayor Dan Plato; and Rwandan Rissa Niyobuhungiro; at the tea hosted by Plato at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

Mayor Dan Plato honours survivors of Holocaust, Rwandan genocide

**STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MOIRA SCHNEIDER CAPE TOWN**

THE FACT that six genocides had commemoration anniversaries during the month of April, was "a tragic testament to the international community's inexcusable failure to stop inhuman and barbarous acts".

So said Richard Freedman, director of the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, at a tea hosted at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre by executive mayor of Cape Town, Alderman Dan Plato, to honour survivors of the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide.

Members of the Rwandan community and of the Holocaust survivors' organisation, She'erith Hapletah, were present at this, the first such gathering, as was Alderman Belinda Walker.

While January 27 had been designated International Day of Holocaust Remembrance by the United Nations, Freedman said an annual event was insufficient to maintain public awareness. He praised the mayor's office for seeing the need to honour survivors and for showing a commitment to genocide prevention.

Referring to recent genocides across Africa, Plato said those occurrences reminded one that "such atrocities should not be repeated and we have a responsibility in this regard. We need to walk the democracy walk and talk the democracy talk," he said, adding that South Africa could play a leading role in this regard.

"I know that many here have lost family to the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide - let it be known that our thoughts and prayers are with you," he said. "I hope that every person here will never forget these atrocities and work hard to combat those that are happening today."

Turning his attention to the role the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was playing, he said: "You must continue spreading your message. You're doing a great job."

"People across cultural and religious lines need to embrace each other and accept each other as people. That's the reason for the presence of the mayor's office today."

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Israeli and Diaspora youths taking part in the March of the Living walk by the walls of Jerusalem's Old City on Israel's Independence Day on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH: MIRIAM ALSTER/FLASH90/JTA)

# On Independence Day, a reminder about Gilad Shalit

MARCY OSTER  
JERUSALEM

AS ISRAELIS celebrated the country's 63rd Independence Day, they had much more on their minds than barbecues and fireworks.

The carefully crafted theme of the day, "Looking after one another - the year of mutual care," raised the hackles of some Israelis who do not believe the State is looking after everyone.

At a ceremony on Monday night at Mount Herzl that ushered in Independence Day celebrations, Yoel Shalit, the brother of captive Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, disrupted the iconic torch-lighting by bolting with his girlfriend to the stage shouting and waving a sign that read "Gilad is still alive". He was quickly ushered away by security personnel.

Later, opposition leader Tzipi Livni, head of the Kadima Party, went to talk with him.

Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin dedicated his celebratory torch to Shalit, along with Israel's other MIAs and convicted spy Jonathan Pollard.

The 12 torches representing the 12 tribes of Israel, were lit by Israeli citizens chosen to represent various sectors of society. Among the honorees were an Israeli Prison Services employee honouring the police cadets killed in the Carmel forest fire; Rabbi Shimon Rosenberg and his grandson Moshe Holtzberg, whose parents, Gavriel and Rivkah Holtzberg, were killed in the 2008 terrorist attack at Mumbai's Chabad House; Orit Dror, who donated her son's organs upon his death from an illness; and Barbara Goldstein, deputy executive director of Hadassah in Israel, which is marking its 100th year.

In Independence Day interviews in the Israeli press, President Shimon Peres called for peace negotiations with the Palestinians, despite a unity agreement signed between Fatah and Hamas, the terrorist group that rules the Gaza Strip.

Peres addressed regional threats: "We are still facing evil forces, especially those that emanate from Iran," he said.

"This call, by a regime that is a danger to the entire world, should be met by an uncompromising mobilisation of the international community. We are determined, together with our supporters everywhere, to fight anti-Semitism and delegitimisation."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also offered a televised statement. "On this



Yoel Shalit, brother of captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, is led away by security after interrupting an Independence Day ceremony at Mount Herzl in Jerusalem on Tuesday. PHOTOGRAPH: MIRIAM ALSTER/FLASH90/JTA)

day, it is our duty to celebrate our great achievements, success and hopes that have been realised."

Referencing Israel's national anthem, "Hatikvah," Netanyahu said: "The saying, 'Being a free nation in our country' has become the reality of our life, and these are the moments when we can put all our differences and disagreements aside.

"We know that there are many things which must be fixed, but we must be proud of what we've achieved and, above all, feel the power and strength of unity."

As is custom, Israelis spent the day at barbecues, picnics and hikes at national parks and nature reserves. Some 63 national heritage sites were open free to visitors on Tuesday, including Independence Hall in Tel Aviv.

The Israel Defence Forces also opened several of its bases - including the Navy Air Force and Ground Forces - to visitors on Tuesday, where special events were held. At Beit Hanassi, the president's official residence, Peres, Netanyahu, Defence Minister Ehud Barak and IDF Chief of Staff Lt Gen Benny Gantz gathered for an annual Independence Day celebration. They each sang their favourite Israeli song in duet with a famous Israeli musical artist.

Shlomo Edelman, a high school yeshiva student from Nof Ayalon, won the International Bible Contest on Tuesday, an annual Independence Day event held in Jerusalem. The Israel Prize, awarded each year on Independence Day, was set to be awarded on Tuesday night to 10 recipients in areas including law, sports, music and Israel studies.

The weather, as usual, was bright and sunny. (JTA)

# El Al honours Shalit, Arad in Independence Day flyover



THIS YEAR El Al, the national carrier of Israel, dedicated its Independence Day Flyover to the families of Israeli captives Gilad Shalit and Ron Arad, to the victims of Israel's wars and terrorist acts and to the families of soldiers who are missing in action.

El Al CEO Elyezer Shkedy, said in a media release: "On Israel's 63rd Independence Day, El Al... salutes the Shalit and Arad families and the families that have suffered casualties as a result of Israel's wars and of acts of terror, as well as families of those missing in action and prisoners of war, on behalf of the El Al family and the citizens of the State of Israel."

The names of the planes which took part

in the flyover, had been changed for the week of Independence Day to:

The 747 Aircraft, "Jerusalem" - "We all support the families of casualties of Israel's wars and acts of terror."

The 777 Aircraft, "Sderot" - "We all support Gilad Shalit."

The 767 Aircraft, "Daliat el Carmel" - We all support Ron Arad."

The 737 Aircraft, "Degania" - "We All Support the Families of Captives and Missing Soldiers"

The flyover took place midday on Yom Ha'atzmaut, May 10, and flew in a formation of four Boeing aircraft: 737, 767, 777 and 747. The flight began over Nahariya and headed southward, along the coastline, up to Ashdod.

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BY YORAM BOGACZ



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בס"ד



# Young Jews with Christian help, take up cudgels for Israel

ALISON GOLDBERG  
PHOTOGRAPH: YESHAI COHEN

“IT IS important to know, that we as Jews do not stand alone. Although it may seem that the world is against us, the truth is that there are millions of South Africans who are very passionate about Israel and very aware of the lies and the challenges Israel faces.”

This was said by Daniel Levitt, co-director of Companions of Israel, when he addressed a rousing Bnei Akiva Yom Ha’atzmaut celebration at Sydenham Highlands North’s Seeff Hall on Monday night.

Rosh Bnei Akiva Johannesburg, Joshua Hovsha, exhorted the predominately youthful gathering, who were joyously dancing from the get-go, not to be afraid to speak up for Israel and recalled the moment 63 years before on erev Shabbat when the nation came into being, defying all expectations that in a world where might was right, Israel would fall.

Levitt, who became active in Companions of Israel in response to the Turkish flotilla debacle when an Israeli soldier was battered with iron bars by a lynch mob and thrown onto the lower deck of the Mavi Marmara, which also left nine Turkish would-be invaders dead, described the body as a group of individuals who had come together to form an influential and powerful voice for Israel here in South Africa.

Its purpose was to advocate and strengthen the support for Israel and “to put a stop to the false, fabricated and ridiculous delegitimation of our land and people”.

Many of the individuals who support Companions of Israel, were leaders within Christian communities, some of them representing up to 1.2 million people.

“My friends,” said Levitt, “We are undoubtedly fighting a war. It is happening on our university campuses, on the front pages of our newspapers and on our computer screens. It is the youth who understand the world of social networking and who must be on the forefront of it.

“The world loves the underdog. But the Palestinians are not the underdog; they are part of a religion that has over a billion followers. It is the Jews who are the underdog. We are a very small nation that has been persecuted in every generation for most of our history and this generation is no different.

“Know this: the students who are attacking us on university campuses have only at most six years of political indoctrination. We as Jews have grown up with it. Never feel for one moment that you are not educated or experienced enough to fight back. If we stick to the truth, if we express reality, our truth will always overcome lies.

“It is time for us to build our own media platforms in as many new ways as possible. Therefore we have started by launching a news and information website called Newscrate.co.za. We ensure that when it comes to Israel, the truth is reported in full.

“The site has now gone into its fourth month, our readership is majority Christian and to date we have received thousands of visits, hundreds of thousands of hits and are becoming an influential voice. This is one small part of a very big challenge and we will focus immense energy to build platforms across a wide spectrum of media, to counteract the lies and build the truth.

“It is the belief of many religious Christians that if a government, any government officially speaks out against Israel, that country will be punished. Thus following the Gaza flotilla incident, a delegation of Christians was sent to the Kotel to pray for the well-being and safety of South Africa.

“In a recent article published on Ynet, ‘A Mideast without Christians’, the writer said this was the saddest Easter in the long history of Christians in the Middle East and that the cross is near extinction in the region and that the much-vaunted diversity in it was going to be reduced to the flat monotony of a single religion: Islam.

In Durban, Christian evangelist Angus Buchan, who has the capability of communicating with about two million South African Christians, and attracts a crowd of over 400 000 at his annual conference, told Levitt, Rabbi Ramon Widmonte and Ben Swartz of the SA Zionist Federation, that Jews were the chosen nation, that he was an absolute friend and would do what he could to support Israel.

Following the meeting, he wrote on his Facebook blog, which has over 295 000 followers: “We need to pray for the peace of Jerusalem now like never before and that we can no longer be those who sit on the fence waiting to see which way the wind blows.”



Companions of Israel co-director Daniel Levitt.

# Yom Hashoah commemorated in PE, the Friendly City

MICHAEL SIMMONS  
SA ZIONIST FEDERATION  
EASTERN CAPE  
PORT ELIZABETH

A WELL-ATTENDED Yom Hashoah service was held on Sunday May 1 in the Raleigh Street Shul, now named The Jewish Pioneers Museum, an architectural gem now 100 years old

and a national monument.

Special readings of the Hannah Senesch story and the Partisans story were read by learners of the Theodor Herzl School with beautiful violin accompaniment of suitable Jewish music.

The keynote speaker was Anthony Court of Unisa in Pretoria, whose address, “A Jewish Family in

Oswiecim”, the story of a family living in this Polish town whose family members had negotiation with Adolf Eichmann, which Court had personally researched, was much appreciated by his audience.

Although the (small) Jewish community in Port Elizabeth is dwindling even more, functions of this nature are important and well received.

# Yom Ha’atzmaut celebrated in Klerksdorp

MARLENE WAKS  
KLERKSDORP

YOM HA’ATZMAUT was celebrated in Klerksdorp in style; the hall was appropriately decorated with Israeli flags and everyone who was in town was present.

First there was the usual maariv shul service. Everyone came into the hall, the Hazkarah was recited by Sam

Kramer followed by Hatikvah.

The gathering was addressed by Dawn Rottanburg who had recently returned from a visit to Mumbai. She spoke on the Jewry of Mumbai and her experiences. Dinner was served and a quiz, ably put together by Mannie and Jackey Shall and Myrna Hellman, who was the question master, on the State of Israel, was very popular. The gathering was divided into three teams and a lot

of fun was had by all.

The birthday cake candles for Israel’s 63rd, were lit by our youngest boys, Devon and Ryan Katz and everyone tucked into the delicious chocolate cake.

On Yom Hashoah members gathered in the shul and after the maariv service a story was read by Myrna Hellman and Shelle Hack to commemorate this day.

# Lots of fun at Yom Ha’atzmaut in CT

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY MOIRA SCHNEIDER  
CAPE TOWN.

CAPE TOWN’S Jewish community celebrated Yom Ha’atzmaut in style at the Herzlia Weizmann Primary School in Sea Point. Rabbi Laurence Perez, rabbi of the Mizrahi Organisation of South Africa, was the guest speaker, while comedian Alan Committie, children of the Phyllis Jowell Jewish Day School choir and bands Saffron and Nogapsbetween entertained revellers.

Ya’acov Finkelstein of the Israeli Embassy addressed the gathering and Israeli dancing and a Chassidic dance group got toes tapping. A shuk and food stalls plus a variety of children’s entertainment, added to the carnival atmosphere. Cheryl Puterman won the lucky draw of two air tickets to Israel.



Jack Espel-Richards (3) got into the spirit of Yom Ha’atzmaut with the help of his brother, Matthew.



Grade five learners of Weizmann Primary enjoying themselves at the Yom Ha’atzmaut celebration: Joshua Russak; Alexa Jackson; Anna Valkin (dressed as Funky Bunnies); Max Russak; and Adam Rawraway.



Zaria Janks-Gelvan (3) has her face painted by Esther Surdut at the Emunah stall at the Yom Ha’atzmaut celebration.

# Lots of fun at SAZF’s Israel birthday bash

RITA LEWIS  
PHOTOGRAPH: JOE YUDELOWITZ

WALKING AROUND the South African Zionist Federation’s Yom Ha’atzmaut Fun Fare, at Gold Reef City’s Theme Park in Johannesburg on Tuesday, it was impossible not to know that South African Jews were celebrating the 63rd year since the creation of the State of Israel.

Large Israeli flags were grouped along the walkways and everyone seemed to be holding and waving small ones.

With the majority of the crowd being of school-going age, this was, for them, an event not to be missed. And missed it wasn’t.

Rides, rides and more rides - and they were all for free. Ice-cream, candy floss, popcorn was there aplenty, freely available.

This year there were no speeches which was a relief for many who listened to the live music including a “Battle of the Bands”.



Drummer Joseph Marcus, with guitarists Dylan Rendel, Devon Horowitz and Jonathan Judin.



# Israel’s fallen remembered in sombre ceremony

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY RITA LEWIS

ON TUESDAY night, Yom Hazikaron was celebrated at the Glenhazel Shul Hall in Johannesburg, with everyone standing in silence and tribute as they remembered the more than 22 000 soldiers, ordinary men, women and children who died before their time, in wars and terrorist attacks.

The Israeli flag was lowered by Shimon Shamila with the haunting notes of the “Last Post” being played. Present were Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and the Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Dov Segev-Steinberg. Together with all the other rabbis, dignitaries and hundred of others, they watched the proceedings with the same pain in their hearts.

Far away in Israel, people spent the day visiting military cemeteries, watching and listening to stories of fallen soldiers on TV and on the radio and stopping whatever they were doing, cooking, driving the car etc, to stand to attention for two minutes while the memorial siren sounded.

The silence everywhere was palpable; the entire country mourned together.

“In South Africa Jews mourn with them. Tonight we too have unified in order to give honour and remember our brothers and sisters who fell victim to terrorism or have given their lives in the defence of the State of Israel,” said the evening’s MC, Josh Brook.

He said we could relate to the pain felt in Israel because there were also South Africans who had paid the ultimate price.

“There are South African Jews who connect with Israel, who care about its well-being, who are interested in its culture, politics or news... who feel deeply about the fact that Israeli Jews defend the state and may lose their lives doing so.”

Prayers for the safety of the soldiers of the



Lighting the candles set out in the shape of Magen Davids.

Israeli Defence Forces were recited by Dean Sher and Neil Daskal after which a video of the Fogel family who were brutally murdered recently in Itamar, was shown.

Ambassador Segev-Steinberg then lit the flame of remembrance after which there was a minute’s silence, followed by Yizkor recited by Rabbi Samuel Suchard.

Chief Rabbi Goldstein described how on this day we gathered as a community and part of the Jewish world, not to philosophise but to mourn.

“The family feels the pain every day. We can’t take that pain away. What we can do is to give them support by saying: ‘We are with you in your grief.’”

The Chief Rabbi said we should stand back in awe and humility and see what sacrifices had been made by people.

Rabbi Goldstein was followed by Ambassador Segev-Steinberg who said that “today, amid the turmoil in the Middle East we remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

“No other people have had to endure what we have had to. We pay tribute to those of our children who have been born into war.”

Guest speaker of the evening, Cheryl Mandel, spoke of her son who had been killed some eight years before. Among his many other attributes, he had developed strong leadership qualities and was the leader of his group.

While she spoke, a video on his life was shown. She said it didn’t matter if you were strong, beautiful, rich or whatever, if you were in the wrong place at the wrong time, that was it.

They were olim chadashim, new immigrants. “We did not understand until it was too late. “You have a choice of how to deal with the loss. We decided we were going to do positive things in this world to make it a bet-

ter place. Like our son, we have had to carry the burden. How can you bear the grief,” she asked rhetorically.

“It is a privilege to live in Israel but with it comes the risks. However, the more of us there are out there, (in Israel) the stronger we are and the danger is spread out.”

Candles of remembrance were then lit by those who had fought in the Israel wars.

The last candle was lit by the head boys and girls of the Jewish day schools, for victims of terror.

Choni Goldman then sang Hanasich Hakatan - about a prince who turns into a soldier and is killed - while Adam Davis sang El Ma’le Rachamim.

Kaddish was recited by Rabbi Suchard and the Hatikvah was led by Adam Davis and Choni Goldman.

## Responding to life’s challenges

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY RITA LEWIS

TUESDAY, AT the Yeshiva College Girls School in Johannesburg, Cheryl Mandel from Alon Shvut in Israel gave a very special and personal presentation. She showed a video called “Dancing Through Life” and afterwards emphasised some of the points that had been raised in the video.

From Mandel and her video it becomes clear that although we cannot control what happens to us in life, we have a choice of how we respond to them.

The video tells the story of Mandel’s life and her love of dance. It was made in Israel and shows her dancing from when she was a small child until now, as a grandmother. The video is based on a dance performance that Mandel created to mark her 60th birthday and was filmed in Alon Shvut.

Mandel is the mother of Lt Daniel Mandel z”l, who was killed during a military operation that he was leading to arrest terrorists in Nablus eight years ago on April 15. At the Yom Hazikaron ceremony in Johannesburg



Guest speaker Cheryl Mandel with Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein at Yom Hazikaron.

in 2003, Tova Herzl who was then Israel’s ambassador to South Africa, spoke about this incident as the operation in which Daniel was killed, was also the one at a bus stop in French Hill, her niece was killed in.

Mandel was hosted in SA by the SA Zionist Federation and Bnei Akiva to speak at the Yom Hazikaron remembrance ceremony.

She gave an inspiring talk to some 1 600 people at the Solly Liebgott Hall in Glenhazel, talking about her son the soldier and his abilities and desire to do something - “not for his Ima but for Jews everywhere”.

Mandel is presently building an unusual park in memory of Daniel, in Alon Shvut.

This park will be the first of its kind and will create much fun for the children who will play there as well as for the adults who accompany them.

• For those who would like to make a donation to finish the park, the banking details are: Bnei Akiva, Nedbank, Diamond exchange Branch Code: 193205, Account Number 193225483.

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Shimon Shamila enjoys himself with Omri Rotbard.



Omri Rosenzweig has fun with the audience.



Reeva Forman with Carol Brown and Israel's Ambassador to South Africa Dov Segev-Steinberg.

# Many happy returns, dear Israel

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RITA LEWIS

ONE OF this year's celebrations of Israel's 63 years of independence, took the form of a musical extravaganza organised by the SAZF and held at the Lyric Theatre at Gold Reef City. It was entitled, "Footsteps to the Future" - a future for Israel that every Jew hopes will be filled with peace, security and happiness.

"While Israel was born amidst war and suffering... tonight we celebrate its successes. Israel is a nation that against all odds has achieved more than any other in the past 63 years."

These were the words of Avrom Krengel, chairman of the South African Zionist Federation, who added that the winds of

change were blowing through the deserts of the Sahara and Arabia.

He said the dangers to Israel at this time were great, but "we hold our collective breaths that Islamic fundamentalism does not fill the vacuum of power left by those who have been deposed."

"We hope and pray that Israel will no longer know only war and suffering; that its parks will be filled with laughter and happiness and that it continues to travel on its magnificent trajectory of a people who are a beacon of light unto the nations."

Krengel then welcomed Israel's Ambassador to South Africa Dov Segev-Steinberg, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and other dignitaries.

He thanked everyone involved in the cre-

ation of the function, including the executive producer, Isla Feldman, musical director Bryan Schimmel, the Beyachad staff and Linda Starkowitz who, with Gavin Opert, had produced the event.

Krengel made a presentation to Starkowitz "for her dedication and commitment to the community, staging many musical events both locally and overseas".

The evening's entertainment started off with a bang when a shower of silver sparkling fireworks rained down "from the heavens" on to the stage.

A live 12-piece orchestra under the hand of Bryan Schimmel and backing vocalists, joined the three Israeli singers Hananel Edri, Omri Rotbard and Omri Rosenzweig in the first song of an evening of foot tapping, jumping, clapping and an unrivalled ruach.

The energetic three pranced around the stage obviously tremendously enjoying the event as did the entire audience who clapped and sang along with them.

Host Oshy Tugendhaft's voice and Hebrew vocals blended with the three guest soloists who were accompanied by some dozen other background singers.

Rotbard who had given up a very prestigious concert in New York to be in South Africa, was very much at home here, having been one of the guest artists here at last year's event.

Tugendhaft was joined towards the end of the concert by two youngsters, Jared Greenstein (12) and Joshua Michel (9), who had been auditioned by him and trained by Schimmel. The three had a good rapport and the youngsters were not at all self-conscious singing in front of a packed but joyous auditorium.



Above: Avrom Krengel makes a presentation to Linda Starkowitz.



Right: Cheryl Mandel, an inspirational travelling speaker who lost her son in Israel eight years ago.



The Lucky Draw winner, Alan Magid with El Al's General Manager for Southern and Eastern Africa Ros Bukris and Isla Feldman.



Host singer Oshy Tugendhaft (second from left) with some of the Israeli guest singers.



Jared Greenstein (12) and Joshua Michel (9) who "brought the house down".

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# COMMUNITY BUZZ

## LIONEL SLIER

082-444-9832, fax: 011-440-0448,  
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### GENTLE RIGHTEOUS GENTILE

Tina Bassi, living in Johannesburg, describes her life in Milan under the Nazi occupation. She tells of her uncle, Aldo Ronchese (her mother’s brother) who had been captured by the British in North Africa and put in a prisoner-of-war camp in Egypt:

“One night he and two other Italian prisoners escaped and managed to jump onto a ship in Suez. They had no idea where it was heading for.

“As it turned out, it came to Durban. They were prisoners on the boat and were handed over to the military in Durban and taken to Sonderwater prisoner-of-war camp near Pretoria.

“They were well treated and in fact worked on a farm in the area. My uncle absolutely loved South Africa and when the war ended he opted to remain here.

“The family in Italy never heard from him, except that he was in South Africa and in 1945, after the war ended, I was sent to South Africa to find out what had happened to him. Was he dead or alive?

“I contacted the SA Red Cross who could give me the information that he was alive and also was married to a South African girl. It turned out that he had never received any letters from the family in Italy who had tried to make contact through various channels.

“I met my uncle and then, when I returned to Italy, I said to my husband, now back from the war: ‘Let us all go to South Africa.’ Which we did.”

The story now shifts to Tina’s daughter, Ady, who was born in South Africa. Ady went to school at Parktown Convent in Johannesburg where she was very friendly with a Jewish girl. In fact she often went with her to shul.

“However, I married an Italian and went to live in Italy. Then once, when I was pregnant and in hospital, I was visited by a stranger, Oberto Levi. This surprised me and I asked him why he had come to see me.

“Oberto replied: ‘We love your mother because of what she did for us during the war.’ He spoke about Jews being hidden by her and being brought food regularly and so on.

“I later asked my dad about this and he confirmed it. Tina said that she had never told her parents in Italy during the war what she was doing, about hiding Jews, as she did not want to implicate them, or for them to worry about her. She kept her silence.

“Tina said: ‘Mussolini was an aberration. The Italians are not a nation that hates.’”

### POTCHEFSTROOM

From Fay Oppenheim, Calgary, Canada:

“Our home was well supplied with two English language newspapers coming daily from Johannesburg, namely The Rand Daily Mail and The Star.

“This meant that for myself the awareness of the political landscape of South Africa started at a very early age and the Sharpeville shootings definitely made an impression on our young minds, instilling fear in us of the great and inevitable ‘freedom revolutions’ in which we would surely be the victims.

“Through the daily newspapers, I observed from afar the domino fall of colonial powers north of us, and I believed that it was only a matter of time before it reached us.

“As we came of age in the sixties, there was distant thunder coming from the architects of apartheid which had little obvious day-to-day effect on our own lives.

“Potchefstroom did not seem to share the demographic balance of the townships that were close to Johannesburg.

“Increasingly the laws of detention without trial, solitary confinement and house arrest, publication bans and frequently introduced new draconian laws, prevented liberal minded individuals (including many Jews) from changing the course of this oppression.

“This caused so many of my compatriots, from all over the country, to emigrate when we were able to do so.

“I remain grateful for the good schooling which I had access to - the freedom of information which existed in my growing years and the many sources of greater education and enlightenment.”

### BULAWAYO

Shulamit Kagan continues:

“The shul was filled to capacity on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and was well attended on Friday nights and Saturdays. There was a children’s service on Shabbat morning and other holidays.

“We had two minyanim every single day and all weddings and bar-/batmitzvahs were celebrated with decorum and dignity.

“Unfortunately the shul was burnt down a few years ago. Two brave congregants, risking their lives, managed to run through the flames and save the Torah scrolls. These are now used in services in the hall which used to belong to the Reform Shul.

“(The Reform and Orthodox congregations amalgamated when the community started diminishing).”

### CAPE TOWN

Start of a diamond cutting industry:

“The question of the establishment of a diamond cutting industry in South Africa appeared to have been first mooted seriously at the beginning of 1919. In March of that year, General Louis Botha, premier of South Africa, was anxious to encourage the proposed industry. At that time he was in London where he met the directors of De Beers.

“It was reported that his government was determined to carry the project through, but would consider the company’s views. These views were opposed to the project for various reasons, one of the chief being that that it might be a possible outlet for stolen (rough) diamonds.

“In May 1919, F Hirschorn, A Brink and P Ross Frames, left for Cape Town to interview Henry Burton and F S Malan on a draft bill to establish diamond-cutting. Sir Ernest Oppenheimer accompanied the deputation.

“The De Beers board appreciated the efforts made by these four gentlemen. The Bill was modified in certain respects and introduced in the House (of Parliament) on May 16.

”The Bill in Committee of the House in June, emerged and duly passed by both Houses, became the Diamond Cutting Act No 38/1919.”

From “The Story of De Beers”, by H A Chilvers (London 1938)

To be continued.

### ISRAEL

Beth Protea, Herzliya:

Beth Protea Retirement Home is a southern African Jewish project in Israel of which the South African community can justly be proud.

Among the many contented residents are two well-known South Africans. One is Wilf Rosenberg who, in his day, was a great Springbok rugby centre. Whenever the subject of the Jewish rugby Springbok minyan comes up, one of the first names is Wilf Rosenberg. (The 10 Jewish rugby Springboks).

The other resident at Beth Protea that must be mentioned is Arthur Goldreich who made an immense contribution to the Struggle when he was living here. To remind those who don’t know, Goldreich owned the Lilliesleaf home in Rivonia where the high command of the ANC hid out and where they were subsequently arrested by the security police.

Nelson Mandela also lived there but had been arrested earlier in (then) Natal.

Goldreich was one of those charged with high treason, but he (and Harold Wolpe) made that breathtaking escape from Marshall Square police headquarters in Johannesburg, dressed as nuns, and reached Europe. Goldreich subsequently went to live in Israel.

The thought occurs: If a dedicated fighter for freedom and justice, Lionel Bernstein, received the Order of Luthuli in Gold (posthumously) from President Jacob Zuma, for his contribution in the Struggle, then Goldreich could deservedly be given one as well.

### POLOKWANE (PIETERSBURG)

From Morris Jedwood:

“I went on Mahal to Israel in 1962 and I wonder what has happened to my friends Jackie Nissenbaum, Les Franks, Zalman Flink, Adrian Breger, Chilk Schefz and Jules Milner.

“I am still living in Polokwane. My address is PO Box 417. Polokwane, telephone (015) 295-3403.”

• Community Buzz would appreciate it, if anyone contacting Morris Jedwood would also contact us.

# Holocaust Survivor Cookbook author to visit SA again

## OWN CORRESPONDENT PHOTO SUPPLIED

NEXT YEAR South Africans can look forward to a visit by Joanne Caras, of Port St Lucie, Florida, USA, creator of the Holocaust Survivor Cookbook, an amazing collection of 129 stories and over 250 recipes from Holocaust survivors all over the world.

The project took Caras and her family more than two years to complete.

A chance meeting between Torah Academy Girls’ High School alumnus Devorah Chaiton, who was attending summer camp in Florida, and Caras, led to the school’s fundraising involvement with the project.

Chaiton brought back the book to Johannesburg, where the idea was taken up by her former school. The project snowballed and is now convened by TA Girls’ High parent Ariella Glassman, who describes it as “one of the best fundraisers in which we have ever been involved”.

Later this year there will be a second book, Miracles and Meals - Volume 2 of the Holocaust Survivor Cookbook.

This book incorporates stories and recipes of South African survivors of the Holocaust from Cape Town and Johannesburg.

“I am hoping next year to work with a few South African groups and to come over for a speaking tour in your beautiful country. I visited last in 2000 and I would be honoured to come back.”

In total, Caras has spoken to more than 150 groups. “My husband Harvey and I have travelled from Florida to Massachusetts, New York to California, Israel, Mexico and Canada.



Joanne Caras with the Holocaust Survivor Cookbook.

“We sell the cookbook to Jewish groups at the wholesale price so that they can sell it to their members at the retail price and earn money for the important work they do,” Caras said. “To date we have raised over half a million dollars for shuls and other Jewish groups.”

The Caras family personally donates all of its profits from the sale of the cookbook to Carmei Ha’ir, a soup kitchen in Jerusalem that feeds over 500 poor and hungry Israelis every day.

Another important aspect of the cookbook is that it is being used to teach Holocaust studies and tolerance in public schools in the USA.

There are still copies of the Holocaust Survivor Cookbook available from Torah Academy Girls’ High School. Anyone wishing to order one should call Lee at the school on (011) 485 3871.

# Researchers show why DNA breaks down in cancer cells

JERUSALEM - Damage to normal DNA is a hallmark of cancer cells. Although it had previously been known that damage to normal cells is caused by stress to their DNA replication when cancerous cells invade, the molecular basis for this remained unclear.

Now, for the first time, researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem have shown that in early cancer development, cells suffer from insufficient building blocks to support normal DNA replication.

It is possible to halt this by externally supplying the “building blocks”, resulting in reduced DNA damage and significant lower potential of the cells to develop cancerous features. Thus, hopefully, this could one day provide protection against cancer development.

In laboratory work carried out at the Hebrew University, Prof Batsheva Kerem of the Alexander Silberman Institute of Life Sciences and her PhD student Assaf C Bester



Dr Batsheva Kerem.

demonstrated that abnormal activation of cellular proliferation driving many different cancer types leads to insufficient levels of the DNA building blocks (nucleotides) required to support normal DNA replication.

Then, using laboratory cultures in which cancerous cells were introduced, the researchers were able to show that through external supply of those DNA building

blocks it is possible to reactivate normal DNA synthesis, thus negating the damage caused by the cancerous cells and the cancerous potential. This is the first time that this has been demonstrated anywhere.

This work, documented in a new article in the journal Cell, raises the possibility, say the Hebrew University researchers, for developing new approaches for protection against precancerous development, even possibly creating a kind of treatment to decrease DNA breakage.



# JTA's new digital news archive marks historic first

JTA STAFF  
NEW YORK

KNOWN TODAY as the massacre at Babi Yar, the killing near Kiev of tens of thousands of Jews by German troops at the end of September 1941 is remembered today as one of the most grisly chapters of the Holocaust in Ukraine.

In the weeks after the slaughter, however, the world did not know.

Historians believe it was a November 16, 1941 dispatch from JTA — published without a byline and with the dateline “Somewhere in Europe” — that broke the news to the West and English-speaking readers.

That first report of the massacre at Babi Yar is one of more than 250 000 JTA articles from 1923 to the present that are now available online as part of JTA's new digital news archive.

The archive itself marks a historic first: It's the only collection of English-language reporting covering the Jewish world in the 20th century available online. And it's free.

Until now, those interested in Jewish reporting over the last century or so, had to find libraries that housed the yellowing tearsheets of Jewish news dispatches. A daunting task even for seasoned scholars, the originals themselves often were difficult to decipher either because of their poor condition or because they were in Yiddish. But with the launch of JTA's archive on May 3, anyone with an Internet connection has access to all of JTA's original articles.

“There is no American Jewish source with this reach,” says historian Jonathan Sarna, the Brandeis University professor who oversaw the JTA archive project. Sarna is also a JTA board member. “The archive has the potential to spark an interest in the past that will transform the future.”

This week, blogger Menachem Butler called the JTA's archive “a milestone into the history of 20th-century Jewish journalism” that “provides a window into nearly 90 years of Jewish reporting on world affairs”.

Founded in 1917 to be a voice of and for the Jewish people at a time when news of what was happening to the Jews of Europe and Russia was hard to come by, JTA has been a primary source of English-language Jewish news on everything from Hitler's rise - the first JTA report about Hitler was printed on January 30, 1923 - to the struggle to free Soviet Jewry, the founding of Israel and the long arc of 20th-century American Jewish history.

“This archive is a testament to journalists dedicated to chronicling the story of the Jewish people, through triumph and travail, throughout the world,” said Ami Eden, JTA's editor-in-chief and CEO.

“It is a testament to journalists devoted to the idea that there is a narrative connecting Jews in the United States, Israel and around the world, whether



Laurel Leff of Northeastern University.



Prof. Jonathan M. Cohen of NYU.



Joyce Mann, English teacher.

rich or poor, oppressed or thriving, religious or secular, hawkish or dovish.”

JTA remains a leading source for news of Jewish interest and concern, providing content to about 80 newspapers and publications around the world, including the SA Jewish Report. JTA also publishes a daily e-mail news bulletin called the JTA Daily Briefing, and all of the agency's material is available online at JTA.org.

“For anybody who wants to see how Jewish history has meaning and implications for us today, we need the JTA historical archive,” said Steven M. Cohen, director of the Berman Jewish Policy Archive at New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. “It opens up a whole world of the past.”

In the 1940s, when the Nazi gas chambers were running strong and news of the genocide of the Jews was buried in papers like The New York Times, JTA was transmitting a ceaseless stream of news from the front that painted a detailed picture of the emerging Holocaust.

Decades later, historians would turn to these dispatches as evidence that news of what was happening to Europe's Jews indeed was available in real time - and widely ignored.

“There was and still is a lot of conventional wisdom that Americans didn't know about the Holocaust while it was happening,” said journalism professor Laurel Leff of Northeastern University. “With this archive, people can go and they can actually look at the bulletins that JTA sent out during this period and see that much of the information was in fact available.”

It was perhaps poetic justice that the painstaking labour of digitising the files - converting yellowing news clips and fading microfiche slides into digital files by typing them up - was outsourced to young Cambodians, members of a society that is still emerging from the genocidal history of the Khmer Rouge.

The work was overseen by Digital Divide Data, a non-profit organisation that provides jobs to disadvantaged youths in Southeast Asia.

The initial planning and digitisation was funded by the Gottesman Fund, George S. Blumenthal, the Grace and Scott Offen Charitable Fund, and Robert Bildner and Elisa Spungen Bildner in honour of her mother, Norma Spungen.

Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation and The Charles H. Revson Foundation paid for the development of the actual website, which can be accessed at archive.jta.org.

JTA, a nonprofit organisation, is reaching out to other foundations and philanthropists to cover remaining start-up costs and create programmes to enhance the archive's effectiveness as an educational tool for younger users. In addition, JTA hopes reader donations will help cover the ongoing maintenance of the archive.

The archive itself is a stockpile of stories, significant and insignificant, chronicling major milestones and figures in Jewish history, as well as forgotten episodes and personalities.

The archive's more than 900 articles on the Ku Klux Klan tell the story of the racist group's anti-Semitism. A 1928 article tells the story of a blood libel in upstate New York. In August 1929, JTA informed US readers of the massacre of Jews in Hebron.

A 1933 dispatch details a Purim parade in Tel Aviv that included some 10 000 Arabs. A 1965 article informs that black marchers in the American South donned yarmulkes as “freedom caps” in deference to the rabbis who marched with them.

Following the recent passing of Elizabeth Taylor, bloggers and reporters around the Internet cited a 1977 dispatch reporting that an Israeli official said the Hollywood starlet offered herself up in exchange for the Israeli hostages being held in Entebbe.

The archive covers everything from the construction of a dolphinarium in Tel Aviv to American Jewish women organising boycotts of Nazi products. When the Jewish State was founded in May 1948, JTA printed Israel's declaration of independence in its entirety.

Researchers say the archive will provide new insight into the ongoing evolution of American Jewish life, including the role of women, intermarriage and the history of Judaism in the United States. JTA's dispatches also chronicled US Jewish activism on several major issues, including civil rights and Soviet Jewry.

With the material now so easily accessible - not just to scholars in libraries but to students, journalists and casual Jewish and non-Jewish readers around the world - the archive had the potential to inaugurate a new era in understanding of American Jewish history, Sarna said.

“Until now, JTA has been the global news service of the Jewish people,” he said. “Now it is the educational resource for the Jewish people.” (JTA)

## AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

### EUROPEAN JEWISH, MUSLIM LEADERS DENOUNCE EXTREMISM

PARIS - Jewish and Muslim leaders in several European countries are joining to denounce the rise of far-right extremist groups in their countries.

In a month-long initiative co-sponsored by the European Jewish Congress, the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding, the Muslim Jewish Conference, the World Council of Muslims for Interfaith Relations and the World Jewish Congress, Jewish and Muslim community leaders are uniting to speak out against the increasing popularity of far-right extremist groups throughout Europe.

On May 8, under the auspices of the Jewish-Muslim Friendship of France, participants called on

Muslims and Jews to reject the right-wing National Front Party, which has been gaining in the polls since its new leader, Marine Le Pen, has taken power.

“We are holding this event to make unmistakably clear that the Jewish and Muslim citizens of France stand united in opposition to the National Front,” said Rabbi Michel Serfaty, president of the Jewish-Muslim Friendship of France.

“Despite claims to the contrary, Marine Le Pen has not changed one iota the racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic politics of her father,” he said, according to reports, referring to the founder of the National Front party, Jean-Marie Le Pen. (JTA)

### ITALIAN PRIEST POSTHUMOUSLY NAMED RIGHTEOUS AMONG NATIONS

ROME - The local priest in a small town in northwest Italy has been named Righteous among Nations for saving a Jewish family during the Second World War.

Father Martino Michelone, who died in 1979, hid four members of the Segre family for nearly two years between 1943 and 1945 in Moransengo, near Turin.

Israel's ambassador to Italy, Gideon Meir, conferred the honour posthumously on Father Michelone, presenting the award to his relatives at a ceremony last Sunday in Moransengo. Luciano Segre, who was sheltered by Father Michelone along with his parents and an aunt, attended the ceremony, as did local dignitaries and Jewish leaders. (JTA)

### LAWMAKERS INTRODUCE HOLOCAUST EDUCATION FUNDING BILL

WASHINGTON - Lawmakers in both houses of the US Congress introduced a bill that would budget \$10 million for Holocaust education over five years.

“This critical legislation will serve to honour the memory of those who perished during one of the darkest chapters in human history by educating future generations about the dangers of intolerance and hatred,” US Senator Robert Menendez (Democrat New Jersey) said in a statement he issued on May 6 jointly with US Representatives Carolyn Maloney (Democrat New York) and Gary Ackerman,

New York Democrats who have introduced identical legislation in the US House of Representatives.

The law is named for Simon Wiesenthal, the late Nazi hunter.

“From remembering those who perished to learning from the past, it is critical to preserve and expand Holocaust education programmes,” said Ackerman, a former public school teacher. “It is imperative that future generations are taught the facts and history of the Holocaust so that the lessons from this dark chapter in human history are never, ever forgotten.” (JTA)



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OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Jewish Report

A flower in obstinate ground

ONE HEARS hardly a peep on events in Syria from the Israel-bashing lobby which spends its life loudly depicting Israel as an evil entity in the Middle East. In Syria - Israel's northern neighbour - over 600 people have been killed as the regime of Bashar Assad clings to power by sending tanks and troops to crush demonstrators demanding rights.

Why is Syria not publicly damned as a "pariah state"? Is that status reserved for Israel alone?

Truth is, the Israel-bashers have been relatively quiet about Israel lately - what can they say, as despotic Arab regimes that seemed rock-solid until recently are being toppled? Tyrants who have ruled with an iron fist for decades are being thrown out by protesters talking to each other on Facebook and Twitter.

As the regional geopolitics changes, no-one knows where it is heading - to democracies, radical Islamist states, or what? Knesset speaker Reuven Rivlin, speaking about the uprising in the Arab world, in Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, said: "...Although the destabilisation has raised the fear of a new, extremist Middle East, we must recognise the courage of those fighting for their freedom."

In the light of all that, our recent local saga where the University of Johannesburg ended research ties with Ben-Gurion University because of the "moral implications" of such a relationship, seems so nebulous - a moral grandstanding totally out of touch with the present Middle East reality.

Israeli statehood was declared on May 14, 1948, a day before Britain's United Nations mandate over historic Palestine expired. Its population was then just 806 000. At its 63rd anniversary celebration this week, its population is 7,746 million.

Jews in Israel comprise some 75,3 per cent-the largest Jewish community in the world today - surpassing that of the United States, which until recently held that title; Israeli Arabs make up 20,5 per cent. Today, 14 cities in Israel have more than 100 000 residents - in 1948, Tel Aviv was the only metropolis, with more than 100 000.

Israel has huge problems and many warts, and the conflict with the Palestinians seems far from a solution. But this little sliver of a country roughly the size of the Kruger National Park, has stable governance, a burgeoning economy, a vibrant democracy. Its populace was recently ranked seventh - the same as New Zealand - among 124 countries in a Gallup poll of the 'happiness' level of their citizens. Not bad for a state that has never known a day of real peace with its neighbours!

In almost all the recent uprisings in the Arab countries, Israel has featured very little in the public discourse. The populations may - and do - continue to hate it, but they are more concerned about their own situations, wanting rights other countries take for granted.

Their leaders have not succeeded in deflecting their people's anger towards Israel as a scapegoat, as they have so successfully done for decades. Their bluff has been called; their citizens won't buy it the way they used to.

The "Arab Spring" will inevitably influence Israel. In what way we don't yet know. The question for its leadership is what it will do with the moral high ground Israel occupies at this point, compared with its neighbours. Creative leadership is needed to use this moral capital to advance peace and prosperity in the region. Does Israel have such a leadership?

For Diaspora Jews, including those in South Africa, Israel used to be seen as the "poor cousin": you took things there when you went, because Israel didn't have them. Today it has everything - and more. It is a mature, successful country.

Aliyah has increased from South Africa and has also undergone a change. In the old days you went to Israel for primarily ideological reasons, to build the country. Today, many immigrants go there as much for practical reasons - jobs, education, healthcare, a safe environment, etc.

President Shimon Peres said during an Independence Day ceremony: "We proved that we can create a budding garden out of obstinate ground."

Indeed. Happy birthday, Israel! May there be many peaceful and prosperous years to come.



New Yorkers gather near Ground Zero to celebrate the news that Osama bin Laden has been killed. (PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD VIA CREATIVE COMMONS)

Torah injunction for Jews not to celebrate enemy death

RABBI JEREMY ROSEN

*When your enemy falls, do not rejoice. (Proverbs 24)*

OF COURSE I am delighted that Osama bin Laden has been sent to his grave. Doubtless there are billions of other humans who are mourning his loss. I wonder how all those children named Osama or Usama after him are feeling today; I am sure a goodly percentage of them will aspire to follow in his bloody footsteps.

But I am sad, too. Every time I have seen Arabs and Muslims rejoice over the deaths of women and children I have felt positively sick at their primitive and barbaric bloodlust. Modern communication enables us to see this revolting behaviour. I cannot erase from my mind the way young men dipped their hands in the blood of those two Israeli reservists who were torn to death when they strayed into enemy territory, or the celebrations in Gaza when young Israeli children were wantonly slit apart in their beds.

I know war is war and both sides want to win, but I always derived quiet satisfaction from the fact that you never saw Israelis dance in the streets when Palestinians were killed.

There might have been rogue soldiers and acts of brutality. There have been coldblooded mafiosi killings and rapes in Tel Aviv. But the mood of the Jewish people has never been one to rejoice in public displays of delight at the death of others.

It is ingrained in our tradition that every human being, however malevolent, is still a creature of G-d. So, on Passover when we celebrated the overthrow of an Egyptian tyrant who made bin Laden look like Cinderella, we were commanded at the seder to reduce the amount of wine we drink in memory of the suffering of the Egyptians.

Then after the first day, we recited a shortened Hallel prayer of thanks, because, according to the Midrash, G-d told his angels: "My children have died in the Red Sea, how can you sing songs?"

It is true we sang songs of deliverance when we survived Pharaoh's pursuit at the Red Sea. It is true Devorah sang her song of deliverance when the Canaanite chariots of Sisera were caught in the Jabok floods. She uttered those famous words: "Thus may all your enemies perish," and I identify of course with that sentiment.

May those who try to destroy the Jews and their land perish indeed and may those Jews who behave inhumanly go the same way. But nevertheless, there is a difference between rejoicing at one's survival and rejoicing at the deaths of other human beings.

The Talmud tells that Rabbi Meir was suffering because of local gangsters and prayed for their deaths. His wife, Bruria, asked him to stop and instead pray for the death of evil. One can hate evil people but that is not the same as celebrating their elimination.

Bin Ladin, the successor to the mediaeval Muslim Assassins, was the manifestation of the distorted tradition of jihad which has been as twisted out of its spiritual meaning as has the notion of crusade in Christianity, and (lehavdil) the idea of a Chosen People, on a purely theoretical level.

All of them are, in spiritual abstract, no more than a call to be a better person. Sadly, in Islam it has led to actions that consistently belie a vision of peace that is said to give Islam its name. The history of all religions is the history of religious fanaticism all but destroying the purer visions of their idealistic messages.

Nevertheless, I did not enjoy watching the reaction in the US to the

announcement of bin Laden's death. I noticed that most of those who survived 9/11 and relatives of those who perished expressed quiet satisfaction.

I did not see them dancing in the streets. I can understand the army recruits who celebrated wildly because so many of them may still lose their lives in the battle against fanaticism, oppressive dictators, and mullahs. But still, I found the Times Square and Washington parties more reminiscent of a Saturday night club frenzy or frat raves on campuses.

President Barack Obama was dignified in his moment of triumph and success. They were not.

I fail to understand the Western mentality that still thinks it is possible to do business with religious fanaticism. Hamas condemning bin Laden's death and lauding him as a great Muslim hero, rationally shows how far their real mental state is from peaceful coexistence.

It is clear that bin Laden was sheltered in a military zone in Pakistan, next door to an army academy and surrounded by retired generals. Is this the sort of failed state the West should be funding?

And why, while the American economy is in such dire straits and the welfare of its peaceful citizens is at risk through lack of funds, are billions being spent supporting the corrupt, two-faced (Hamid) Karzai in Afghanistan?

I applaud striking at evil dictators who massacre their own (and bin Laden killed more Muslims than anyone else).

I certainly don't expect the UN or any organisation that can invite Syria to sit on the Human Rights Council to approve or agree. But just because others lose their sense of humanity in the pursuit of political power, we must not.



OPINION AND ANALYSIS – FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

# Israel only ME country where Christians are increasing

WHILE JEWS agonise over anti-Semitism and Muslims rail against Islamophobia, both of which are alleged to be on the rise everywhere you look, remarkably little is being heard on behalf of arguably the world's most persecuted religious group today, namely Christians.

Even more puzzling, little is being heard from the Christian community at large about the outrages being perpetrated against their co-religionists elsewhere.

In ages past, the mere rumour of Christians being maltreated was enough to whip up support for a punitive Crusade. As early as the 1850s, it was used as an excuse by Russia to go to war with the Ottoman Empire, thereby sparking off the Crimean War. Now, the silence is overwhelming. Even the Pope makes far less noise about it all than one would expect.

It will come as no surprise to anyone that anti-Christian persecution primarily occurs in Muslim majority countries.

Historically, this is a fairly new phenomenon. Christian and other minority religions have always been to some extent discriminated against under Islam, but in general its adherents, so long as they acquiesced in their minority “dhimmi” status under the law, were left alone to practise their faiths. What is happening now is that they are being systematically hounded out of the lands they have occupied for many centuries, indeed from a time preceding the emergence of Islam.

Just from the rapidly declining numbers of Christians in Muslim majority states, it should be obvious that something is very wrong. According to a US Department of State report on religious freedom, there are now just 85 000 Christians in Turkey, down from two million.

In Lebanon, where they once constituted a majority, they now make up no more than one-third of the population. Once as much as half the population in Syria, they now constitute perhaps four per cent. In Jordan, they make up two per cent, when they were once close to one in five.

Especially ironical is how the US-



**BARBARIC  
YAWP**  
David Saks

led invasion of Iraq, rather than benefiting the Christian population, has had exactly the opposite effect. Once kept in check by the Saddam regime, hard-core Islamists have now been left free to persecute their Christian neighbours and have done so relentlessly.

The massacre of 37 worshippers at Baghdad's Sayyidat al-Najat Syrian Catholic Christian Church in October last year, was just one of multiple incidents of anti-Christian violence in Iraq.

That the law officially strongly opposes such acts makes little difference. In practice few are arrested, let alone punished, for attacks on religious minorities, even those involving murder. The impact of this undeclared reign of terror has been dramatic, with the Christian population – 1.4 million strong at the time of the 2003 Coalition invasion - dropping 50 per cent in less than a decade.

All this is happening in the Palestinian territories as well. In Gaza, assaults, firebombings, seizures of homes and businesses and death threats against Christians happen continually and usually with impunity. Today, barely 3 000 Christians remain there. The West Bank's Christian population likewise has dropped sharply, even in Bethlehem, Christianity's birthplace.

What is now happening to Arab Christians has already happened to Jews in those countries. In the 20 years following the establishment of Israel, the North African and Middle Eastern Jewish communities left en masse after being subjected to systematic, usually state-orchestrated persecution.

Well over 95 per cent of those communities and their descendants, now live elsewhere. It was one of the 20th century's forgotten enforced exoduses, and now it is happening all the time to Christians, likewise without

eliciting much comment from the world at large.

Perhaps the muted response is due to Christianity having for so long been the flagship faith of the marauding West and itself associated with oppression, intolerance and aggressive proselytising.

So far as religious persecution throughout history goes, it is the infamous Spanish Inquisition that has become most associated with the horrors people are capable of perpetrating in the name of the A-mighty.

Therefore, an element of Schadenfreude might be at work. Still, persecution by Christians happened a long time ago. I doubt whether there is today a single Christian majority country in which non-Christians are in any way disadvantaged, let alone actually persecuted, for their beliefs.

A number of answers could be suggested for the Christian world's abject response to all of this, among them post-colonial white guilt and weakening belief among both its clergy and laity.

Christianity, certainly in Europe and Anglophone countries, has been fighting a losing battle against secularism for well over a century and a half. Whatever the reason, Christendom seems paralysed and impotent.

There is only one Middle Eastern country where the number of Christians has grown since the Second World War, and that country, of course is Israel. Numbering just 34 000 in 1949, its Christian community is now 163 000-strong and is expected to reach 187 000 by the end of this decade.

Are Archbishop Emeritus Tutu, his fellow liberation theologians and sundry liberal Protestant churches, aware of all this, I wonder, and does the plight of Christians subjected to an increasingly aggressive and intolerant Islam bother them at all?

Given how it is Israel they wish to boycott and not countries that tolerate and even orchestrate anti-Christian persecution, the answer is apparently “no”.

That's the Middle East for you. Just when you think things couldn't get any more bizarre, they do.

## AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

### CLINTON SENDS ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY GREETINGS

JERUSALEM - US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in an Independence Day message on behalf of President Barack Obama and the US people, called Israel "a beacon of hope".

In the statement issued last Sunday, Clinton called Israel, on its 63rd birthday, "a young nation, but (with) a rich history that holds deep meaning for so many".

The statement added: "Your achievements are a testament to your hard-working citizens, innovative economy, and commitment to democratic institutions. Israel has been a beacon of hope and freedom for so many around the world. "Our two countries are unit-

ed by a deep, unshakable friendship and bond. We are bound together by our shared values and history pursuing freedom, equality and democracy. And this relationship is deepening every day."

She called Israel's security "a cornerstone of US foreign policy" and said the United States "will continue to strive for a comprehensive peace between Israel and all of its neighbours."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is scheduled to meet with Obama at the White House on May 20. The effort to restart the Israeli-Palestinian peace process reportedly will be the main item on the agenda. (JTA)

### OBAMA TO HOST SECOND JEWISH HERITAGE RECEPTION

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama will host another Jewish American Heritage Month reception, days before Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrives in Washington.

The White House announced plans for the May 17 reception on Monday.

"The reception will highlight and celebrate the history and unique identity of Jewish Americans and their profound and ennobling contributions to the American story," the announcement said.

"Invitees include grassroots Jewish community leaders from across the country, rabbis, Members of Congress, and

a broad range of leaders engaged in business, the arts, education, and public and community service."

Netanyahu will be in Washington the following week to meet with Obama and address a joint meeting of both houses of Congress.

The Obama White House hosted the inaugural Jewish Heritage Month reception a year ago.

That reception was marked by an interview an attendee had with veteran newspaper correspondent Helen Thomas, in which she said Jews should "get out of Palestine". The subsequent controversy all but ended her career. (JTA)



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**Venue** Maroela Room, Sandton Sun, Sandton  
**Dress** Smart Casual **Cost** R12 000 per table (incl. VAT)  
**Contact** Danny Blumberg  
**Tel** 011 646 7340/1 **Fax** 086 632 4903  
**E-mail** [danny@mscsports.co.za](mailto:danny@mscsports.co.za)

   
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**Adler Museum of Medicine, Wits Medical School, Parktown:** “Reflect”, an exhibition by Elaine Hirschowitz, until July 11, (011) 717-2067.

**Art on Paper Gallery, Milpark:** “Still, life”, drawings by Terry Kurgan and Ruth Rosengarten, until May 28, (011) 726-2234.

**Baxter Theatre, Rondebosch:** “REwind: A Cantata for Voice, Tape and Testimony” composed by Philip Miller, May 12 - 14, (021) 685-7880.

**Fugard Theatre, District Six:** The world premiere of Athol Fugard’s “Birdwatchers”, directed by Fugard, until June 4, (021) 461-4554.

**Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg:** “A fearless vision”, major retrospective of the late Alan Crump, curated by Federico Freschi, until June 12, (011) 726-3130.

**Linder Auditorium, Parktown, Johannesburg:** On May 14, Andrey Baranov (violin) and Maria Baranova (piano) perform works by Bach, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Van Dijk, Wieniawski and Gershwin, for the JMS, (011) 728-5492. On May 18 and 19, JPO plays Kodály’s “Dances of Galanta”, Schumann’s ‘Cello Concerto and his Second Symphony. Conductor: Michal Dworzynski, soloist Dmitry Kouzov (‘cello), (011) 789-2733.

**Market Theatre, Newtown, Johannesburg:** In the Laager, “A Teacher in the Bushveld”, based on the writings of Herman Charles Bosman, performed by David Butler, until June 12, (011) 832-1641.

**Montecasino, Fourways:** In the Studio, “Love, Loss and What I Wore” until June 12, (011) 510-1988.

**Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton:** “Bend it like Beauty”, until May 21. Friday concerts: Umoya Wind Quintet, May 13; Laurelin Trio, May 20, (011) 883-8606.

**Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg:** “Listening to Distant Thunder”, a Peter Clarke retrospective, until July 2, (011) 631-1889.

**Wits University Campus, Braamfontein:** May 11 - 14 is the Wits Arts Literature Experience (WALE) week. It includes “Life of Bone” in the Origins Centre, an exhibition by Joni Brenner, Gerhard Marx and Karel Nel until May 31, (011) 717-4700; walkabouts of the public art collection assembled by Natalie Knight and of Wits’ heritage buildings on West Campus - reservations: nanette.dasilva@wits.ac.za, and more. See www.wale.co.za for the full programme.

TAPESTRY

ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

Philip Miller’s REwind masterpiece on in the Baxter

PAUL BOEKKOOI

QUITE A number of years have passed since Cape Town audiences were treated to the premiere of REwind: A Cantata for Voice, Tape and Testimony, arguably the most universally known work by the Johannesburg-based South African composer Philip Miller. That was way back in December 2006.

Scored for four soloists, choir and string octet, it was commissioned by the Spier Arts Summer Season. A different and partly new performance of this multi-media work is staged this week in the Baxter Theatre.

It opened this Thursday; two more performances can be heard there on Friday and Saturday at 20:00. Indispensable in any performance of this masterpiece is the voice of our legendary

contralto Sibongile Khumalo.

Miller has once again contracted her to sing, but also brought us the talents of Nozuko Teto (soprano), Stéfan Louw (tenor) and Otto Maldi (bass).

A combined choir consisting of the Cape Town Voice of the Nation Chorus and the Heavenly Voices Chorus will perform alongside a string octet led by the well-known ‘cellist Marian Lewin. A visual context of this wordy opus was designed by Gerhard Marx. It illuminates the extensive power of the composition by using animated back projections of photographs as well as the texts of various testimonies in an ingenious way.

A CD recording taken from the performances of REwind at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg during 2008, is now available (see



**A scene from Philip Miller’s “REwind Cantata”, when it performed in Brooklyn, New York City in 2007, under the baton of Brad Wells. Singing of atrocities committed in the banality of everyday life, is contralto Sibongile Khumalo (far right). In the background is a loaf of bread and a glass of milk, used to premise the story of Ethel Nobuntu Plaatjies about the loss of her son, Luthando. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RANDY FIP-PINGER)**

Overwhelming and emotionally draining

PAUL BOEKKOOI

*Philip Miller: REwind - a Cantata for Voice Tape and Testimony. Various artists. CD available through www.cdbaby.com*

Live performances of Philip Miller’s magnum opus were overwhelming and emotionally draining. One remembered being stunned after the experience. Listening to the multi-miked CD recording, edited from three performances, has various advantages even if it can’t be as “immediate” as hearing it at a concert venue.

The greatest one is the fact that one now can

hear every word spoken in the original testimonies. One remembers that the music itself was so moving that one didn’t want to concentrate on the intruding monologues. On the soundtrack it is somehow easier to multi-task and take it all in. Also, the diction of the soloists and choir (The Gauteng Choristers) sounds much clearer on this recording.

Musically spoken this is already a very fine rendering of a work that will never be static and should develop and share its riches with each new public performance. A cornerstone within the oeuvre of contemporary South African music.



FELDMAN ON FILM

Peter Feldman

NOT QUITE PICK OF THE WEEK

Master Harold and the Boys

**Cast:** Freddie Highmore; Ving Rhames; Jennifer Steyn; Michael Maxwell; Patrick Mofokeng  
**Director:** Lonny Price

Athol Fugard’s “Master Harold and the Boys” is a South African literary classic. It has been brought to the screen by director Lonny Price who played the Hally character in a Broadway production 30 years ago.

Its universal theme has registered with audiences not only in South Africa, but in many other parts of the world where it’s been staged to generally critical acclaim.

Set in Port Elizabeth in the apartheid ’50s, Harold Ballard or Hally (Freddie Highmore) is a schoolboy whose resolute mother, Betty (Jennifer Steyn), runs a tea room in St George’s Park.

The crippled father, Harold Snr (Michael Maxwell), is an alcoholic who has been hospitalised after a fall and is now preparing to return home, much to Hally’s consternation.

Two black waiters, Sam (Ving Rhames) and Willy (Patrick Mofokeng), share an affinity with the young Hally. Sam, especially, has managed to connect with him and over time has grown to understand the many demons that have been eating away at the poor boy. But the frustrations of school and the act of continuously looking after his dad eventually boil over and culminate in an explosive finale.

Translating a Fugard play to the big screen is a tricky job because by opening it up and expanding its parameters it tends to lose much of its intimacy. Also, employing overseas names to bolster box-office appeal never works satisfactorily as it’s difficult for non-South Africans to grasp the nuances and inflections of the local accent, an aspect vital in making the production even vaguely authentic.

We saw it fall apart in the American screen treatment of “Boesman and Lena” with Danny Glover and Angela Bassett.

With Price’s “Master Harold and The Boys”, there was a fear this may happen again but, thank goodness, it doesn’t implode, though the work is not exactly flawless, either.



Composer Philip Miller (left) and designer Gerhard Marx. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DWAYNE BENJAMIN)

review below), but this time during the Baxter concerts a professional team will shoot a video for release later in the year.

Since international plaudits started raining on REwind, Philip Miller has scarcely had time to reflect. Apart from writing lots of music for films like White Lion (available on both DVD and CD), The Bang Bang Club (releasing on July 22) as well as the recent Paradise Stop, he is also starting work on a new BBC drama series, The Borrowers.

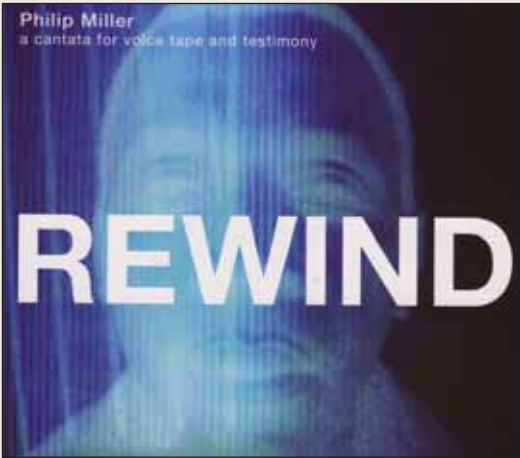
He also composed the music for the film Master Harold and The Boys, which releases today (and is reviewed below).

What excites Miller most is a new project he is working on with William Kentridge. “It is a contemporary, multi-media performance piece we’ll put together for the Biennale in Kassel, Germany in June next year.

“It’s called ‘The Refusal of Time’ - a combination of, among other elements, moving sculptures and operatic performance. We’ll be working with wonderful young talent, like the soprano Linda van Coppenhagen. I specially quoted Handel for her, and from there the work will develop its interactive course, partly through involvement from the public, and go into space with moving objects which will need choreography.

In the light of its title, I’ll apply electronic sounds, as well as those of metronomes, while - going back in time - we’ll be using samples of clocks from 18th century Paris, among others. I love to explore across boundaries and disciplines. For this, you’ll understand, the concert hall is not necessary always the ideal venue...”

• Tickets for REwind at the Baxter are available through Computicket or at the theatre’s box office prior to the performances.



The key roles of Hally and Sam are portrayed by a British teenager, Freddie Highmore, and the respected American actor Ving Rhames and, despite a brave attempt to capture the essence of the characters, there is something amiss in their interpretations. It lacks authenticity.

As Sam, Rhames fails to connect with the character’s inner soul and for most of the film he comes across as a static entity. Highmore fares much better, but, again, I was unable to fully buy into the character and the emotional turmoil he is undergoing.

In adapting the play for the screen, South African actor and writer Nicky Ribelo has expanded Master Harold’s world. It is no longer totally confined to the Port Elizabeth tea room, where all the action occurs, but moves into Hally’s school and an outing in the park with Sam, who teaches the young boy to fly a kite.

The heart of the production unfolds in the confined space of the tea room where the interplay between the young Hally and Sam, which demonstrates the underlying institutionalised racial bigotry of the time, is tellingly relayed. However one cannot ignore a feeling that these sequences still resemble a film version of the play.

“Master Harold and the Boys” is a bold move to capture on film another Fugard masterpiece but, in this instance, it doesn’t wholly succeed.



# Powerful testimony of courage

*Paper Sons and Daughters* by  
Ufrieda Ho (Picador Africa, R211)

REVIEWED BY GWEN PODBREY

IT IS tempting to compare the experiences of Chinese immigrants to South Africa with those of Jewish ones, but that would be entirely disingenuous.

For one thing, the tiny Chinese community in this country - from the time of the first piece of segregationist legislation in South Africa, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1904 in the Cape Colony, to later legal barriers designed by Hendrik Verwoerd and John Vorster to prohibit them from integration - were invariably “aliens”, living on the good graces (or otherwise) of white citizens and forced to survive by their wits and good fortune.

For another thing, the Chinese population - forbidden to attend white schools or universities, own property or live in white areas (the best they could hope for was a “grey” suburb, where authorities turned a blind eye to the racial mix) - had no access to the industries on which South Africa’s wealth was built. Nor, for many years, could they enter, or practise, the professions, other than among their own or other “non-white” communities.

Not qualifying as “honorary whites”, like the Japanese, Chinese individuals wishing to improve their quality of life had to approach their prospective neighbours or educational institutions to ensure they had no objections to having “yellow” students or residents in their midst.

The book includes a picture of the certificate issued to Ho’s father by the South African Railways, attesting to his being a “gentleman

of social standing” and thus preventing him from being thrown off trains.

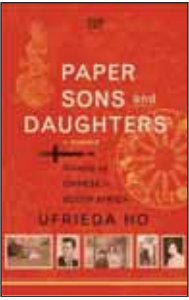
In this searing autobiography, Ufrieda Ho spells out in vivid detail the daily infractions of life undergone by a Chinese family in Johannesburg, in a country where they had no recognised niche or socio-political alliances.

Like so many other Chinese immigrants, Ho’s parents and grandparents arrived in South Africa by stowing away on a ship and enduring a traumatic voyage to a completely unknown country, which they could only hope would provide better prospects for them than their existence as impoverished, disempowered villagers in China.

The easiest way to ensure entry was to arrange for a falsified name and identity papers - often posing as the children of existent Chinese citizens - and thus to assume, at least theoretically, an identity which would pass muster with any bullying policeman or magistrate: hence the “paper sons and daughters” of the book’s title.

Ho’s maternal grandparents - who arrived 18 years apart - were not only aliens in a hostile land, but also aliens in a hostile marriage, which eventually disintegrated to the point of their occupying separate living spaces.

Her own parents, however, were far better matched. Ho describes a warm, loving and intensely united family, in a home where the front door could shut out financial hardships, the sight of privileged whites enjoying luxury and other reminders of their precarious existence in apartheid South Africa, allowing her, her three siblings, her



parents and - above all - the traditions and rituals of their culture to restore hope and stability to their lives.

Resourcefulness, independence and diligence were intrinsic to this domestic unit, where dignity and discipline were non-negotiable, nothing went to waste, routine was rigidly structured and duties unquestioningly carried out.

There was no room for sentimentality, either: Ho recalls coming home one day to find her pet rabbit served for dinner. Yet, for the most part, food and eating at home were opportunities to reinforce solidarity, while mirroring the diversity of the family’s Sino-South African identities: “A hybrid... a bit like the common sweet sesame cake that is served up at so many Chinese gatherings... these ‘jeeng dui’ balls are multi-dimensions of taste and texture, all crisply fried and studded with sesame seeds on the outside before giving way to a chewy, glutinous layer and a surprise ball of dark, sweet lotus paste in the centre. That is us, layers, unusual textures and the surprise in the middle, all in one tiny package.”

Both Ho’s parents were accustomed to unrelenting slog, initially as the proprietors of an “eating house” near a black township. Later, while her mother devoted her energies to being a housewife and mother, her father earned an income as a “fahfee man”, or “machina”: an illegal, but ubiquitous figure in black townships.

“Fahfee men” facilitated daily betting stakes in these communities, numbers games in which superstition, desperation and ran-

dom choices played decisive roles. “Fahfee needed two groups on the edges of society, separate but bound together, to connect momentarily in the collusion of circumventing the ways of the economic mainstream.

“The end goal for both groups was to walk away with a few extra rand in their pockets, even if it meant they were taking from each other. Theirs was a pact forged from their mutual conspiracy against the apartheid system.”

Working 14-hour days and risking constant harassment or arrest, Ho’s father nevertheless found time to be a watchful, but tender parent who provided not only necessities, but

also treats, outings and unconditional support of his children, up until his tragic death.

As a voice relating a long-overlooked chapter of South Africa’s story, its bitter ethnic histories and the vagaries with which its indomitable Chinese minority was forced to contend, Ufrieda Ho’s book is invaluable.

As an eloquent account of a tiny stoical and tightly-knit community for whom political involvement was often too perilous to venture, it is illuminating. And as a powerful testimony of courage, dignity and love for an adored father, it rends the heart.

## At 79, Fugard will not slow down

MOIRA SCHNEIDER  
CAPE TOWN

ATHOL FUGARD’S Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre, due to be presented to him in New York next month, could be regarded as the pinnacle of his career. South Africa’s premier playwright is hoping this is not the case.

“The trouble with the Tony Award is that it’s beginning to feel as if it’s a hint to me to stop and I have no intention of stopping,” the 79-year-old tells me indignantly in a telephonic interview on the eve of the world premiere of his latest play, *The Bird Watchers*, that he is directing for the Fugard Theatre in this city.

“This is a play I’ve waited a long time to do,” he says, “because it concerns two of my most cherished friends and comrades during my years in theatre in South Africa.”

He is referring to late theatre greats Barney Simon and Yvonne Bryceland, and says the play pays tribute to “the memorable hours we spent watching birds and talking in the shade of the umGwenya tree at my home in the Eastern Cape”.

There are three characters in the play: The director (played by Guy de Lancey); the actress (Dorothy Ann Gould); and the playwright (Sean Taylor) who Fugard says “bears some resemblance” to him. The work is celebratory at many levels, he says, beginning with a celebration of Simon’s wisdom.

“There is a line where the playwright refers to the director’s profound and unfathomable Jewish heart. That was so true of Barney,” Fugard recalls.

“He just was such a powerful



Athol Fugard (right) in a brainstorming session with cast members Dorothy Ann Gould and Guy de Lancey. (PHOTO BY JESSE KRAMER)

presence in my life - generous to the extreme and wise. Of course, in the case of the actress, there’s the extraordinary talent that was Yvonne Bryceland, which was also so important in my career.

“I don’t know if I would have been talking to you if it hadn’t been for Yvonne and Barney,” he says modestly.

Fugard and Taylor have worked together many times. The playwright says he “just seems to go from one play to another with him in mind”.

What is it that makes the actor so suited to Fugard’s roles, I wonder. “He understands personal conflict,” Fugard says, choosing his words carefully, then, throwing caution to the wind, he adds: “He is a tormented man at levels, in exactly the same way that I am.

“He understands a disturbed, troubled soul and that is certainly the case with the character he plays in this play.” To say nothing of Taylor’s “absolutely formidable” talent that has “matured like a bottle of good wine”.

At this stage of his prolific career, when he could just sit back and rest on his laurels, Fugard says he has had no thoughts of slowing down. “What would I do?” he asks plaintively. “I can’t hit a nail in straight!”

Fugard, who is based at the University of California in San Diego, talks fondly of his grandson with whom he spends time fishing and bird-watching, but that is “not enough” to fill a life that’s been filled with writing, acting and directing.

Along with the theatre, bird-watching is a passion, hence the title of his latest work. “Watching birds has kept me alive,” he explains.

“I had a drinking problem at one point in my life; I needed quite a few little survival mechanisms - bird-watching was one of them.”

The Fugard Theatre, a 280-seater, is “the perfect size” for staging his work, he says, adding: “It means that the actor can reach everybody in the audience.”

As for his writing, he dismisses the notion that it is affected by his absence from the country. “What I need from South Africa is already inside me. When they cut me open one day to find out why I died, they’ll find a Karoo kopje, birds, strong winds...” he says wistfully.

Audiences will be delighted to learn that Fugard “definitely” intends returning on a regular basis to direct his work.

• *The Bird Watchers is on at the Fugard Theatre until June 4, (021) 461-4554.*

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LETTERS

The Editor, Suite 175, Postnet X10039, Randburg, 2125 email: carro@global.co.za

<b>Guidelines for letters:</b> Letters up to 400 words will get preference. Please provide your full first name and surname, place of residence, and a daytime contact telephone or cell number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.	<b>Disclaimer:</b> The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report
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DERSHOWITZ STORY LOOKS LIKE A CUT AND PASTE JOB

I AGREE with Albert Glass. It’s time to cool the exchange between Mr Justice Dennis Davis and Harvard law professor, Alan Dershowitz (SA Jewish Report, April 29).

The letters in the same issue (on the subject) do not serve to clear the air and the report by Robyn Sassen (on UCT’s stance on the venue) muddies the water further. Her story raises more questions than it answers.

In her second paragraph she refers to Justice Davis as a critical supporter of Israel (whatever that may mean) who has been in dispute with Prof Dershowitz. So what’s new? But there is no comment from the judge.

Any journalist knows that it is only fair to give the other side their say. So where was the response from Mr Davis?

The statement from UCT’s Gerda Kruger makes it clear that it was not the university’s decision to initiate the change of venue and this is confirmed by Julie Berman, director of the SA Zionist Federation, Cape Council. But Dershowitz insists that it was a lame excuse by UCT.

Then he says he was told that the

move was motivated by a distinguished member of the Jewish community who spoke to the dean. So who is this distinguished member? If we knew, maybe it would help us to understand an important issue that is polarising the Jewish community.

So, why didn’t Dershowitz name him or her? Why didn’t Sassen ask the professor who it was, or if she did, why didn’t she say he refused to tell her.

The report that Sassen wrote seems to be a rehash of the professor’s letter with the statements by UCT and Berman a cut and paste job.

The story was a waste of space and readers of SA Jewish Report deserve better.

Sassen should stick to writing about arts and entertainment.

**Brian Josselowitz  
Milnerton, Cape Town**

*We cannot agree that the story mentioned was a “waste of space”. Whatever the source(s), it conveyed some valuable information on the matter to the Jewish community. It was a well put-together, balanced report. - Editor*

DO THE SHOFARIM AT MEMORIAL FACE THE WRONG WAY?

ONCE AGAIN we have paid our respects to our six million victims of the Shoah. I prefer not to call them Kiddushim for Kiddushim are martyrs and martyrs are people who go to their deaths voluntarily, out of conviction, for a cause.

We gathered together in front of the impressive memorial created by the Jewish sculptor Herman Wald. We listened to memorable speeches, to a fine and sensitive chazzan and choir and a principal speaker who was himself a Shoah survivor.

There was the recital of the names of some victims, their often very young ages, to remind us what the occasion was about.

Some of our youth were there. They helped convince us that Am Yisrael Chai, Mir Zeinen Do, Anachnu Po. Jews and Judaism have survived nearly 4 000 years of vicissitude, persecution and genocide.

We did not abandon our faith or its ethics. We did not give up our claim to our ancient homeland. We will stand steadfast against those who heap calumny upon us, even when such were

born as Jews themselves.

I have often wondered about the configuration of the memorial. It consists of six gigantic fists forcing themselves through the earth, each holding an enormous shofar. These shofarim face inwards, towards each other and form a canopy over the bronze central everlasting flame consisting of letters that create the sixth commandment: Thou shalt not murder.

The symbolism is obvious, the message clear, but surely as a memorial to the Shoah the shofarim should have faced outwards to the world, proclaiming the ancient commandment Lo Tirtzach, upon which the survival of Man’s morality and existence depends.

I have been unable to ascertain Herman Wald’s intention in the positioning of the shofarim. In facing each other the shofarim appear to proclaim their message to themselves.

Did Herman Wald foresee that ultimately only Jews would listen to the message?

**Don Krausz  
Killarney, Johannesburg**

ALSO LOOK AT THE 3 000 UNARMED VICTIMS

THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury, the spiritual head of the 80-million strong Anglican communion, says the killing of an unarmed Osama bin Laden left “a very uncomfortable feeling”.

The plus minus 3 000 people killed on

9/11 were not armed.

The Archbishop begins to show signs of Alzheimer’s disease.

**Mario Rocha Pires  
Bedfordview**

ME UPHEAVALS SHOW ISRAEL IN A POSITIVE LIGHT

JEWS MUST now view the sudden, and historic, outburst of Middle Eastern and North African democratisation (and expression of a genuine popular will!) with realism and understanding. It is a remarkable development that is wholly in Israel’s favour.

It has caused further deep embarrassment in wide circles, which were so far not prepared to admit that the Jew has reappeared, unmistakably, on the world scene.

Although little is said outright, the fact that Israel, with its revival of its ancient Hebrew culture, is the only politically, economically and socially stable national organism in the entire Arabic-speaking area, has created a tremendous impression in power-centres, such as Beijing, Moscow, London and the EU capitals.

It has done more to wipe away the cobwebs of traditional prejudices, engendered, over the centuries, by, once prevailing, religious and cultural doctrines, than any other historic development of the past 150 years.

Ironically, current events in North

Africa and the Arabian peninsula could, eventually, recreate a unified Islam with renewed spiritual and intellectual vigour, such as existed between the 10th and the 13th centuries, and in which the Jews had an integrated share.

Symptoms of such a new beginning are apparently unconnected events, such as the very necessary, symbolically important, executions of, first, Saddam Hussein and, more recently, Osama bin Laden.

At the other end of the spectrum, we have a somewhat opportunistic recantation by Mr Justice Richard Goldstone.

Did the respected judge, too, sniff a refreshing breeze amid the smell of blood and death, emerging from the, currently totally disrupted, North Africa and Middle East? Indeed, isn’t it sad that, here in South Africa, there are still those, wasting their time with petty intrigues against Israel - while, far in the north, a new era is dawning?

**Julian Schragenheim  
Pinelands, Cape Town**

UCT INNOCENT BYSTANDER IN DAVIS-DERSHOWITZ SPAT

WITH REFERENCE to Professor Alan Dershowitz’s letter published in the Jewish Report of April 29 (“Prof Alan Dershowitz replies to Justice Dennis Davis”), the University of Cape Town wishes to place the following facts on record.

UCT’s Law Faculty was approached by organisers of Dershowitz’s trip to South Africa and they agreed to a seminar at the Law Faculty. The seminar was planned for March 29.

Days later, the organisers informed us they would like to shift the event to another venue as they were concerned about the low number of responses we had - the seminar fell in UCT’s vacation time – and believed they could better handle security matters surrounding the event at the new venue.

Prof Dershowitz subsequently indicated in a Cape Times article (March 28) that the seminar was moved for reasons unrelated to UCT. However, in later articles, he mentioned that he was barred from speaking at UCT and his blog indicated a similar belief.

UCT has informed Prof Dershowitz that we were not involved in cancelling the seminar or in applying pressure in order for it to be cancelled. The organisers have also written a public statement to confirm our position.

COHEN GADOL BY PROXY

IF YOUR maternal grandfather is a Cohen Gadol, do you attain any benefits even if your father was a Yisraeli?

My maternal grandfather was a Cohen. Harry Kaffel was buried in East London. My mother was Laura Solomons (nee Kaffel).

A Cohen Gadol is a high priest blessed with the powers of blessing and praying for others.

REAL THREAT TO ISRAEL COMES FROM JEWS - WITHIN AND ABROAD

WHAT CHANCE does Israel stand? It can deal with military and terrorist actions against the state, it can deal (albeit not too well) with a hostile world media.

It is about to face an onslaught at the September UN General Assembly for a call for recognition of a Palestinian state and prior to that event another blockade-breaking flotilla is planned.

We have also recently witnessed provocation in the form of the barbaric murder on an innocent family (the Fogels) in Itamar, as well as an attack on a school bus and more rockets fired from Gaza.

All the above are worrying and of great concern, but Israel will find a way of dealing with this and securing the well-being of its citizens and inhabitants and ensuring that Jews worldwide will always have a refuge.

The danger is, however, not from the Arab and anti-Semitic world, but the real threat to Israel is from the Jewish world both within and abroad. J Street is doing a wonderful job undermining US support so vital to Israel and is gaining much credibility among the politically cor-

REPRIMAND FOR CELLPHONE-TALKING, DRIVING JEWISH MOMS

I HAVE recently returned from a trip to Johannesburg, where I was horrified to see so many Jewish women driving – some with children in their vehicles – and either talking on their cellphones or texting while driving.

This is grossly negligent and irresponsible behaviour. Not only are these motorists endangering their and their children’s lives, but the lives of pedestrians and other innocent motorists who abide by the laws that state that one may not hold a cellphone while driving.

There are devices such as hands-free kits and earphones, which obviate the necessity to hold the phones while driving.

MODERN VERSION OF ANTI-SEMITISM PRACTISED AGAINST ISRAEL

I HAVE been following the controversy concerning the attitudes of Mr Justice Dennis Davis and Professor Alan Dershowitz and the war of words between them and between their supporters.

As someone who grew up in South Africa and has been living in Israel for 36 years, where I served in the army and raised my children, I find it difficult to believe that a former chairman of the Cape Jewish Board of Deputies, whose function it is to protect the interests of the local Jewish community, fails to see that the openly expressed opinions of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, directed against my country and its policies, including false accusations (such as that Israel is practising apartheid), are, in reality, the modern version of classical anti-Semitism.

History is rife with examples of Jews supporting

We were committed for the seminar to proceed. The organisers have also assured us that they have on various occasions made it known to Prof Dershowitz that he was not barred by UCT from speaking.

We hope that the facts above assist in clearing up the matter. UCT strives to uphold the principles of academic freedom, and we strive to have speakers representing the full spectrum of political and academic viewpoints. In fact it is our constant intention to expand these engagements.

\*\*\*

UCT takes note of David Hersch’s comments in Jewish Report of May 6 (“Many unanswered questions about cancellation to Dershowitz venue”).

UCT has now placed on record our version of events. We stand by the comments made in our previous statements on the matter and reject the allegation that UCT was pressurised or was in any way involved in prohibiting Dershowitz from speaking on our campus.

**Gerda Kruger  
Executive Director: Communications and Marketing  
University of Cape Town**

PS: I do have the ability to split my little and ring finger from my middle and index finger to form a V - a property of the high priest or Cohen!

Here’s hoping,

**Dr H D Solomons  
Highlands North, Johannesburg**

rect, with absolutely no conscience in order to show the world just how politically correct US left thinking Jews are - selling their souls for a bowl of pottage.

Some of the most disgusting pictures posted on the Internet showing our haredi brothers burning the Israeli flag in front of the Ponavez Yeshiva in Bnei Brak on Yom Ha’atzmaut, was more than sickening.

These people don’t want to recognise the State, but are happy to accept money to sustain their life of learning (from the State); they wont serve in the army but are happy for the protection afforded to them (from the State), yet they view this as their entitlement and underscore this by burning the (Israeli) flag that pays and protects them - indeed their entitlement!

We have just commemorated Yom Hazikaron for the fallen soldiers - many of whom having been killed while protecting these people who spit on their graves by burning their flag!

**Allan Wolman  
Norwood  
Johannesburg**

If these motorists had ever seen how many deaths and horrific injuries are caused by people driving and using cellphones simultaneously, they would think twice before doing so.

It seems that the only time someone gets a “wake-up call” is when they or their children are involved and injured in an accident. They will then stop this practice pretty quickly!

Can a call or text message be so important that it can’t wait?

**Ashne Beinart Segal  
Milnerton  
Cape Town**

anti-Semitic dignitaries in different countries, only eventually to find themselves victims of official actions.

I would have thought that a former Board of Deputies chairman would be able to see what effect the views such as those expressed by Tutu may have on the Jewish community in the future. Defending Tutu’s statements now will not protect Davis or his offspring from blatant anti-Semitic attacks in the future.

Davis has the right to disagree with some of the actions of the present Israeli Government, but defending Tutu’s views should not be part of his opposition to these policies.

**Robyn Rotberg  
Kfar Saba, Israel**



COMMUNITY COLUMNS



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Zev Kregel,  
National Chairman

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

THE GROUNDSWELL of popular agitation for democracy that is sweeping much of the Arab-speaking world is also impacting significantly on the Palestinian territories. It can plausibly be argued that it was the ongoing instability in Syria that was decisive in paving the way to the Fatah-Hamas reconciliation agreement.

Now that there is a genuine prospect that the days of the current Syrian regime, on whose support it is so reliant, may be numbered, Hamas is anxious not to be left out in the cold.

Israel should actively advance democracy in ME

That the reconciliation deal was so enthusiastically welcomed by Gazans further suggests that the Hamas itself may face a popular challenge by the populace it currently governs with an iron hand.

Is the apparent healing of the Hamas-Fatah breach a good or a bad thing for Israel? Here, we see how one can plausibly adopt either a positive or a negative view.

The latter would be that the merciful calm that has prevailed between Israel and the West Bank over the past five years will be endangered through the reintroduction of the extremist ideologies Hamas embodies.

On the other hand, it is equally possible that the more pragmatic approach of Fatah will rub off on Hamas, steering it away from a policy of perpetual confrontation

with Israel towards one of peaceful co-existence. In being necessarily realistic, we should not fall into the trap of becoming over-pessimistic; excessive caution often results in a failure to take advantage when windows of opportunity arise.

Of course, the Iranian threat is a serious one, but by focusing on this exclusively, Israel may be losing out on an unprecedented opportunity to help in advancing the cause of democracy in the Middle East.

It has long been correctly pointed out that Israel has long been the sole democratic state in a sea of authoritarianism. That might be true, but in these rapidly changing times, merely asserting it is not enough. Rather, Israel should be looking to have a positive influence on events, at the very least by expressing support for those who,

at great personal risk, are campaigning for change.

Ordinary Israelis themselves should be looking to find ways to reach out to their counterparts across the border now fighting for the very democratic rights that Israelis take for granted.

Israel did not achieve its many extraordinary successes by throwing up its hands when confronted by apparently insurmountable obstacles. It has done so through showing boldness, initiative, a willingness where necessary to take risks and a hard-headed realism epitomised by the adage “ayn breira” - there is no choice.

That is why, I believe, Israel

should not now be taking a passive role over the stalled peace process with the Palestinians. Such a final settlement is ultimately just as important to it as it is to the Palestinians themselves, not least in safeguarding Israel’s international legitimacy.

The popular uprisings we are witnessing in the Arab world demonstrate ordinary people everywhere refusing to toe the party line and insisting on the right to make up their own minds. In light of this, we surely need to look beyond simply assuming that the hostility of Israel’s neighbours is so immovably entrenched as to render further peace efforts futile.

*This column is paid for by the SAJBD*

LETTERS

GOLDSTONE RETRACTION, LAMENTABLE, SELF-SERVING SET OF EXCUSES

THE RECENTLY-PUBLISHED “retraction” in the Washington Post by Richard Goldstone of certain conclusions contained in the UN-sponsored report on the Gaza conflict, has not unexpectedly generated a vast array of opinions as to his motivations and its probable impact.

Whether this latest piece was motivated by a belated attack of conscience or the accumulation of a mountain of confuting evidence or even as the result of political pressure (as has been suggested), hardly matters.

Objectively viewed it is little more than a lamentable, self-serving and disingenuous set of excuses from the principal author of a scurrilous and defamatory document.

Does Goldstone seriously still suggest that Israel should have co-operated with a morally bankrupt, manifestly hostile organisation such as the UN Human Rights Council as he himself now implicitly acknowledges it to be?

The real question is why Goldstone accepted the mandate in the first place, knowing the character and disposition of the organisation he served.

Goldstone suggests that he has now reached different conclusions

because “new facts” have come to light.

To the contrary, Goldstone was alerted by legal experts even before the commission started its work that it was fundamentally flawed and was incapable of producing a fair and impartial outcome.

After the report was published, it was meticulously dissected and its multitude of deficiencies exposed by reputable scholars across the world, including for example, Professor Irwin Cotler a former minister of justice in Canada and Moshe Halbertal, a professor of philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

In short, the UNHRC report on the Gaza conflict was sponsored by an organisation overtly hostile to Israel with a clear political agenda, was constituted by members, three out of four of whom had publicly opined that Israel was an “Aggressor Nation” and employed preposterous reasoning, cherry-picking its facts and then drawing sweeping and utterly damning conclusions, now shown to be clearly wrong.

No wonder the commission produced a piece of legal claptrap of which any first-year law student would be ashamed.

Against this background it is difficult

to believe that Goldstone, an experienced lawyer, has only recently seen the light.

The fact is that he deliberately and willingly helped manufacture a spurious document which caused and continues to cause immense damage to the State of Israel and has literally exposed its officials to arrest and physical harm.

These matters should not be allowed to rest. There must be a calling to account and lawyers and others in South Africa who value truth and justice should see to this.

Goldstone’s name is still reflected on the roll of advocates in South Africa. There is legal precedent for causing the names of retired lawyers or judges who have brought the legal profession into disrepute to have their names struck off the roll of practitioners. We have had a recent such case here in Australia.

I would urge concerned members of the South African community to take up this matter, not only in defence of Israel but in defence of the truth.

Errol Price

Director Legal  
Diversity Consulting  
Jones Bay Wharf  
NSW, Australia

ARNOLD LEVY IS WRONG REGARDING BAAL SHEM TOV

I REFER to Arnold Levy’s letter in last week’s Jewish Report, titled: “Answer to Baal Shem Tov debacle may lie in its title deed”.

Levy, makes an unsubstantiated statement that “inherent in every residential title deed in Johannesburg is the right to hold church services”. I challenge him to prove this. He quotes Act 200 of 1993.

This Act was repealed when it was surpassed by Act No 108 of 1996, which was the Promulgation of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Nowhere, in either of these Acts, is the term “church services” mentioned, nor is it implied.

In fact, the only reference which comes near Mr Levy’s assertions is Clause 31 of Act No 108 of 1996 which states that (paraphrased) every person has a right to practise their religion as long as it is not “inconsistent

with any provision of the Bill of Rights”.

Regarding the title deeds for Baal Shem Tov, and indeed virtually all title deeds in Orange Grove, there is nothing which remotely even hints “that church services are indeed allowed to be held on the property”.

Levy is also obviously not aware that, according to the National Building Regulations, every building must have approved building plans. These regulations take precedence over any town planning scheme because they are regulations in terms of an Act of Parliament.

Thus, if the approved plans are for one type of building, say, a house, it may not be used for any other purpose unless new plans are submitted and approved by the local authority. Baal Shem Tov has NO approved plans.

Any change of use of a build-

ing is required to have approved building plans for the health and safety of the occupants and this is done through the department of Building Control at the relevant municipality.

Whether the complainant has a bias towards any institutions, religious or otherwise, is of absolutely no relevance in matters relating to the town planning scheme of that municipality. Defendants should be careful not to cast prejudicial aspersions where none may exist in order to prove their point.

Rather confine oneself to the legislation pertaining than to ascribe prejudice or religious bias to the complainant.

Common decency requires that, surely.

Helen Aron

Bellevue  
Johannesburg

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Vitamin C converts the ferric to the ferrous form of dietary iron, which is better absorbed. Thus one needs a certain amount of iron or meat in one’s system in

order to feel vibrant and healthy.

True vegans need vitamin 12 injections to avoid megaloblastic anaemia. So eat well and stay healthy.

Dr H D Solomons

Rouxville  
Johannesburg



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Daniel Cramer lighting a candle.

# Israel’s fallen are remembered at KDVPP

CARLA LIPSCHITZ  
PHOTOGRAPH: SHIRA TOLLMAN

KING DAVID Victory Park Primary in a Yom Hazikaron ceremony paid tribute to

the memory of the soldiers and victims of terror who have fallen in Israel. A moving PowerPoint presentation was shown and learners lit candles, read poems and recited Yizkor.

# YC tots have wheels, will travel...

OWN CORRESPONDENT  
PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED

AFTER SLAVERY comes freedom. The Haggadot now done, the children of Morah Tanya Filder’s class of four year-olds feel free to zoom around the garden in the wagon pulled along by Ashira Rau. The thrill of the experience is zooming on four wheels. The children of Yeshiva Pre-primary School make daily use of the tricycles, scooters and wagons. In the wagon are seven very happy and excited little girls who have formed an amazing bond in their first term at the school. Front to back in the wagon: Ayelet Bloch; Liat Feigenbaum; Gila Smith; Ariella Rabinowtiz; Emunah



kretmaer; Ella Zimmerman; and Lia Levy. For Yom Ha’atzmaut the tots had a ruach song and dance session with falafel, pita and ice-cream cake, ending off with Hatikvah and a happy birthday to Israel song.

# Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha’atzmaut at KDHL

KEREN ZWICK  
PHOTOGRAPH: GARY BLOCK

AS ALWAYS, Mazal Sacks organised a spectacular day at KDHL to commemorate both Yom Hazikaron (Day of Remembrance) and Yom Ha’atzmaut (Day of Independence for Israel) this week. The day began in the hall with a remembrance ceremony for the lost soldiers recognised annually on Yom Hazikaron. Beautiful ballet and a poignant dance were followed by Yizkor and the reading of various psalms and poems. The Israeli flag was raised and lowered and a musical interlude of melancholic music was presented by the KD JAM learners. Kate Berkenfeld, head student leader of KDHL gave a remembrance speech that touched every person present. After a moving rendition of Hatikvah, a slideshow illuminated the grieving, mourning and loss that accompanies recollections of a our fallen soldiers. Hatikvah was sung and a moment’s silence observed. Finally, the Israeli flag was raised yet again.



KDHL learners proudly waving Israeli flag during their Yom Ha’atzmaut celebrations.

## YOUTH TALK

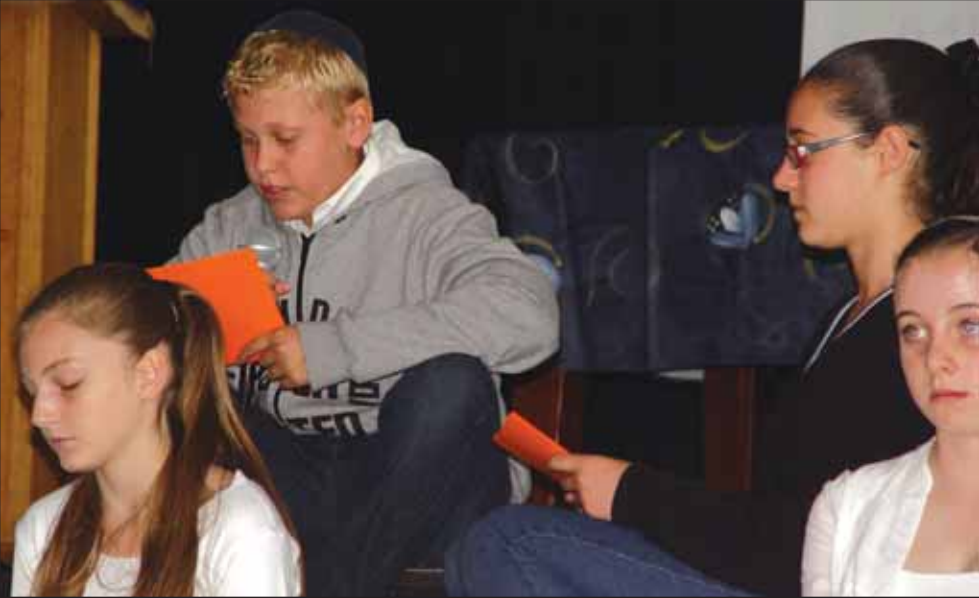
Alison Goldberg youthsajr@global.co.za

# Moving Yom Hashoah ceremony at KDVPP

SHALYA HIRSCHSON  
PHOTOGRAPH: SHIRA TOLLMAN

SILENCE LINGERED in the hall of King David Victory Park Primary School, long after the Yom Hashoah commemoration ended last Friday morning. Grade 7 learners put together a presentation of what they had learnt during their Israeli Culture and Jewish Identity lessons. “Hold on to what we believe”, “Know who you are”, “Teach every generation”, and “Never give up hope”, were some of the thoughts they shared during class and then again with the rest of the school. The poem, “Blessed is the Match”, was read with the kindling of a flame, cherishing the spirit of those who live on in all our hearts. Two learners read “El Malei Rachamim”, remembering the souls of men, women and children killed in the ghettos and concen-

tration camps during the Shoah. With perfect understanding and appropriate tone, the learners echoed the words “I believe” - “Ani Ma’amin”, before reciting Pave Friedmann’s famous poem, “The Butterfly”. A young girl related the story of Rabbi Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman who travelled throughout Europe searching for long lost Jewish children in orphanages and churches, after the Second World War. After being turned away from many of the homes, he insisted on returning in the evening and while children prepared for bedtime, he gently called out the words of the Shema. Tear strained voices encouraged him to continue and joined in with what little they could remember. As the commemoration came to an end, teachers and learners swayed gently to the powerful song that reminds that in pain and in rejoicing, we must not forget, we will not forget, what we have learnt.



Back: Jared Class. Front: Kelly Heyman and Shayna van Vuren. Back right: Abigail Brenner.

# KDLJP’s efforts bag classroom for Ikage Primary School

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH RONEL ZEFF

KING DAVID Linksfield Junior Primary (KDLJP), won R50 000 for their sister school, Ikage Primary, in last year’s Woolworths’ MySchool Play it Forward Competition. With the help of builder Colin McArthur from Kab Fix, KDLJP, the King David Schools’ Foundation (KDSF) and Woolworths, Ikage Primary now has a new

mobile classroom for their grade ones. The opening of the classroom took place recently and Principal Margaret Mthebule thanked guests from KDLJP, KDSF and Woolworths with these words: “We have 60 learners per class. The classroom has come as manna to us - you don’t know how much we appreciate it. “It may seem like a little classroom but to us it is huge - out of this classroom we are going to produce leaders.”



Ikage grade ones enjoying their new learning space.



# Julia’s stocks still high after hitting 100

RITA LEWIS

MANY PEOPLE think that the cause of longevity is due to having an extended life of ease and rest, but Julia Rajak who this week celebrated her 100th birthday, said it was her work - mainly at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange - that had kept her going all the years.

However, the quality and extent of her work and civic interests, were demonstrated by the many congratulatory letters she received, all acknowledging her standing and worth within the South African community.

Among others, letters were received from Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein; President Jacob Zuma; Mayor Amos Masondo of



Centenarian Julia Rajak (PHOTO SUPPLIED)

Johannesburg; and from Humphrey Borkum, president of the Stock Exchange, who said she “had been the steel beneath the velvet”, and also from Geoff Rothschild.

Rajak who has been living at Golden Acres for the past 15 years, was born in Durban, where she attended Durban High School. While attending a Young Israel Camp in 1929, she met her future husband, Harry whom she married two years later.

The couple moved to Johannesburg where she joined the staff of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange which was then situated in the old Diagonal Street in downtown Johannesburg.

“Mrs R” as she was known, was the second woman stockbroker in South Africa (after Ann Carolyn Mackeutan) and worked at the JSE in various positions for 58 years, retiring at the age of 85.

During her early years she was very socially conscious and civic minded and for many years volunteered to man the phone over the Christmas period for some Johannesburg fire stations.

The couple had three children Carmel (who now lives in Spain), Ethne (who has since died) and a son Herbert.

She had an inborn love of children and joined the board of the Oxford Shul Nursery School of which she was the chairman and president for many years and is now the honorary life president.

Her husband, Harry Xavier, known as Harry X, was one of the founders of the Oxford Shul in 1941. He served the shul in

various positions.

He, together with his wife, went to the US to meet and appoint Rabbi Norman Bernhard to the position of rabbi at the shul.

To celebrate Rajak’s actual birthday, a family gathering took place on April 23 at her son and his wife’s home at which all Rajak’s direct family were present: two children; six grandchildren - one from Spain, two from London and three from Johannesburg; as well as her seven great-grandchildren from Johannesburg.

To ensure that the residents of Golden Acres could also be involved in the celebrations, a second party was held there last week in her honour, attended by some 150 guests - around 70 being family and friends and the balance Golden Acres residents.

Also attending were (now retired) Rabbi Bernhard and Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, the present rabbi.

In his congratulatory speech, Rabbi Chaikin said Rajak had been the backbone of the nursery school and the cause of much of its success.

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Further details of the position can be found on the Carmel School website: [www.carmel.wa.edu.au](http://www.carmel.wa.edu.au). Applications should include a comprehensive resume with the names and contact details of four referees.

Applications marked “Confidential” should be presented by email to [carmel@carmel.wa.edu.au](mailto:carmel@carmel.wa.edu.au) by 31st May, 2011



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## Enjoyable practice run for the real McCoy

Blanche Kaplan and her friend Beccy Flekser enjoy the music at the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra practice session held last week at The Greenside in the Johannesburg suburb of Greenside. The JPO, under Richard Cock, entertained an appreciative Mother’s Day crowd last weekend at a concert at Johannesburg Zoo. (PHOTO-GRAPH BY ILAN OSSENDRYVER)

# Chazak again walks the walk with wheelchairs

MICHELLE VINOKUR  
PHOTOGRAPH: LISA VINOKUR

ON THURSDAY April 7, Chazak presented another 10 wheelchairs, this time to a variety of churches. The presentation was made at Andrew Murray Church. The churches were very grateful for their wheelchairs.

Chazak Foundation is a non-profit organisation whose core objective is to educate people about disabilities as well as to support, assist, guide and help people who are experiencing a disability.

The evening was introduced by the host, Reverend Rudi Swanepoel who spoke about disabilities. He emphasised that everyone of us had a disability but only the visual disabilities were usually noticed.

Pieter du Preez, a quadriplegic spoke about how the able world could help a disabled person.

He pointed out that, for instance, able people taking up disabled parking bays were doing a great disservice to those who are disabled.

Michelle Vinokur told her inspiring Story and how Chazak was started.

It was a great evening and all left feeling good and with many thoughts how they would try and help the disabled.



Michelle Vinokur and Pieter du Preezat the Chazak presentation.



WHAT’S ON

Barry Bilewitz [barry@sajewishreport.co.za](mailto:barry@sajewishreport.co.za)

**NOTE:** Deadline for all entries is 12:00 on the Friday prior to publication.

Today Friday (May 13)

• **RCHCC** presents “The Ivy Artists” until May 25. Exhibition opens at 18:00. Contact Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378 or after hours (011) 728-8378) for viewing times.

• **UZLC** presents Avrom Kregel on “Report-Back on SAZF Conference”.

Sunday (May 15)

• **Second Innings** presents Digby Ricci on “Leni Riefenstahl and the Nazi Cinema”.

Monday (May 16)

• **UJW Johannesburg** presents Prof John Lubbe on “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Caves” at 09:30.

• **The Jewish Learning Institute and Great Park Synagogue** presents a six-week course “An Oasis of Time - The Gift of Shabbat” starting at 19:45. Cost R200. Contact Rabbi Shmuel Simpson on 079-106-4777 or [shmuelsimpson@gmail.com](mailto:shmuelsimpson@gmail.com).

Tuesday (May 17)

• **WIZO Fortnightly Forum** presents Mr Justice Percy Blieden, Mr Justice Ivor Schwartzman and Mr Justice Ralph Zulman on “The Lighter Side of Law” at Beyachad at 09:30. Cost R35.

• **UJW Johannesburg** has Estelle Sher presenting Mahler’s Fifth Symphony at 301 Eton Place, Kernick Ave, Melrose North at 09:30. Donation: R30.

• **RCHCC** presents Arthur Goldstuck on “Urban Legends, Panic and You” at 19:30. (Rescheduled from April 6).

Wednesday (May 18)

• **SFCC** presents Nadine Lemmer on “Whats And Hows of Arthritis”.

Friday (May 20)

• **UZLC** presents Peta Krost Maunder on “Is the Press in South Africa Under Threat?”.

Monday (May 23)

• **UJW Johannesburg** presents Prof John Lubbe on “The Dead Sea Scrolls - The Ruins and the Graves” at 09:30.

Wednesday (May 25)

• **Federation of Synagogues Women's Guilds of SA** hosts Prof Celine Bernstein and Rebbetzen Eidel Kazilsky on "Maximising a Healthy Diet for Both Body and Soul" at 09:30 for 10:00 at HOD Centre. Donation R30. RSVP Hannah (mornings only) (010) 214-2600.

• **UJW Johannesburg** presents Dr Lorraine Chaskalson on Elizabeth Gaskell’s “North and South” at 09:30.

• **UJW Cape Town** presents June Juritz on “Yachting in Green Point in the 1890s: One Family’s Story”.

• **Balfour Park Parkinson's Disease Support Group** meeting in the Boardroom, Randjes Estate, Randjeslaagte Road, Highlands North, at 10:00. Lee Baker will give an update on the medicines used to control the symptoms of Parkinson’s Disease. Contact Rosemary Burke on (011) 640-3919.

• **Second Innings** outing - a guided tour of the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Gardens. Meet the bus at 09:00 at Oxford Shul parking. Cost: R130 per person, includes bus, entry fee to the park, the guided tour, lunch and a drink.

Sunday (May 29)

• **Second Innings** presents Dr Wendy Friedlander on “Cultural Aspects of Psychiatry in South Africa”.

• **HOD** presents the Jewish Guild Orchestra at the HOD Centre at 15:00. Cost R60 per adult, R30 for children of 14 and under. Book on (011) 640-3017.

• **JWBS** is holding its annual book fair and morning market at the Jabula Recreation Centre, Sandringham from 08:30. Enquiries on (011) 485-5232.

• **Stellenbosch Hebrew Congregation** has a Friday evening service every week in shul, starting at 18:45. Contact (021) 886-5257.

• **The Yiddish Academy** offers weekly basic, intermediate and advanced classes on Monday evenings at 19:30, Tuesday mornings at 10:30 and Thursday evenings at 19:30 at the RCHCC, Glenhove Road, Houghton. Conversational groups. Details: e-mail [yiddishacademy@gmail.com](mailto:yiddishacademy@gmail.com) or call Hazel Cohen on (011) 728-8088.

• Supervised bridge with **Jeff Sapire** Tuesday morning 10:00 - 12:00 (intermediary) and Wednesday morning 10:00 - 12:00 (advanced), at the Clive M Beck Auditorium. Booking: Hazel or René, (011) 728-8088/8378. E-mail: [hazelc@greatpark.co.za](mailto:hazelc@greatpark.co.za) or [renes@greatpark.co.za](mailto:renes@greatpark.co.za)

• **Beis Midrash Chofetz Chaim** is offering a second ma’ariv minyan every weekday evening (Monday - Friday) at 21:00, cnr Elray and Michel Streets, Raedene. Open to broader community. Don’t fret if you need a later minyan. Secure parking provided.

• **Sunday Scrabble Club** meets every Sunday at 10:00 at Zahava’s, Grant Avenue, Norwood, off 9th Street. Cost R5. Players of all strengths welcome. Larry 082-888-5355.

• **Orchid Florist**, a project of WIZO Johannesburg, offers beautiful arrangements of flowers and fruit for every occasion. No occasion too large or too small. Contact Annette (011) 728-4513.

• **JWBS Johannesburg**, urgently requires secondhand clothing, kitchenware, household goods, books and bric-a-brac for its secondhand shop. Contact (011) 485-5232.

• Celebrating a bar/batmitzvah? Why not give a donation to **WIZO’s bar/batmitzvah** project in Israel? You get a beautiful certificate to give to the bar/batmitzvah child here. Certificates are available from WIZO tel (011) 645-2548.

• **Second Innings** runs a series courses and activities including scrabble, bridge, discussion groups, play reading groups, women’s and men’s reading groups, symphony concert rehearsals, bowls, pilates, Yogic Pranayama, walking and aerobics, Golden Oldies Cine Club, weekly workshops (by arrangement) on “falls education for the elder adult”, and organises regular activities such as, Friendship Forum for Holocaust survivors, and volunteer opportunities. Contact Sandra Goldberg (011) 532-9721 for information.

• Don’t miss the opportunity to do a mitzvah. Visit the **Selwyn Segal Shop**. Gifts priced from R45. Glassware, pewter, silver, white ceramics and Selwyn Segal products. Phone: (011) 485-1344 or (011) 640-5171.

• **Benarc Gift Shop** - Gift presentations for all occasions, made to order. Call (011) 485-5232, JWBS. All kosher under the Beth Din. Proceeds to support the less fortunate in our community.

• **Quizwizz** - a fortnightly quiz at Wally’s Pub and Restaurant (Hume Road, Dunkeld, part of the Rosebank Bowling Club Complex). The quiz is on Thursday nights from 19:30. Booking 082-888-5355 (Larry).

• **RCHCC Yiddish Academy** lessons: Monday night and Tuesday morning.

• **WIZO Elise Gift Shop** in the Genesis Shopping Centre, Fairmount, entrance from Bradfield Drive opposite Shula’s Bakery. Exciting range of baby gifts and gifts for all occasions available at reasonable prices. Hours: Mon - Thurs 09:00 - 17:00, Friday 09:00 - 13:30, Sunday 10:00 - 13:00. (011) 640-2760.

• **WIZO’s Wize Buys** in Raedene, requires nearly-new clothes, shoes, kitchenware (pots and pans, cutlery, crockery) bric-a-brac, etc. Phone Sandy (011) 645-2515 for goods to be collected, or deliver to WIZO office at Beyachad, Raedene.

• **WIZO Lunch and Learn shiur** - every Monday 13:00 - 14:00 at Beyachad, 2nd floor. Rabbi Michael Katz. All welcome. R20 includes light lunch. Bookings Joyce (011) 645-2548 or (011) 645-2515.

THE BRIDGE LOUNGE by Jeff Sapire

These days, all serious partnerships have a host of systemic agreements and conventions. The Italians are no exception, and they have been very innovative over the years in this regard.

North dealer, EW vul. (Teams)

NORTH

♠ 1043

♥ J6

♦ AJ87

♣ 10542

WEST (Lauria)

♠ K765

♥ K9

♦ K632

♣ AQ3

EAST (Versace)

♠ AJ9

♥ Q87432

♦ 10

♣ K86

SOUTH

♠ Q82

♥ A105

♦ Q954

♣ J97

West

1NT

2H

2NT

4H

East

2D

2S

3NT

All pass

Opening lead: C4

(The spade suit can be picked up for three tricks by the spectacular line of a backward finesse – leading the jack first, and if covered, finessing against the ten - but this is a rather inferior approach).  
Lauria looked deeper - on the same lead he won in dummy and played a diamond towards the king. When South covered the ten with the queen, he ducked.  
South erred by playing back a second diamond which he ruffed in dummy. (This defence helped declarer strip the hand). Now a heart to the king and a heart towards dummy, ducking when the jack appeared, same as in the CR.  
Now North played a second club which he won in hand. He ruffed a third diamond and crossed to the ace of clubs.  
This was the position:  
Lauria now ruffed the king of diamonds

West

♠ K765

♥ -

♦ K

North (immaterial)

♠ Q82

♥ A

♦ 9

East

♠ S AJ9

♥ H Q8

♦ D -

South

♠ Q82

♥ A

♦ 9

in dummy (North still had the ace of diamonds) and exited with the queen of hearts to South’s ace, who was now endplayed – forced to play a spade, giving declarer his tenth trick.

*Every Tuesday (Intermediate) and Wednesday (Advanced) I run bridge workshops from 10:00 – 12:00 at the Great Park Shul – alternating play hands one week and a bidding lecture on the other. Corner Glenhove Road and 4th Avenue, Houghton. E-mail me at [jeffshirl@telkomsa.net](mailto:jeffshirl@telkomsa.net))*

CROSSWORD NO 209

BY LEAH SIMON

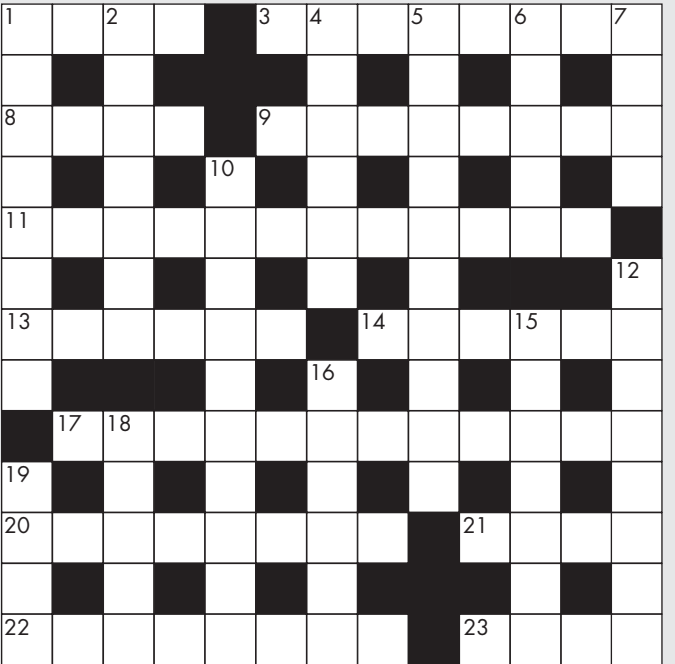
- ACROSS:**
- Rent on an elevated level, we hear (4)
  - Trade leader expresses pain at spilt gin – that’s poignant (8)
  - Sensory organ – or one of intellect, we hear (4)
  - In erect position in mast and in gun-room (8)
  - How electrician gets revelation? (4, 3, 5)
  - Nothing to storm for engines (6)
  - Accountant returns into disorganised movement (6)
  - Cramped for space – and in a bit of trouble (2, 1, 5, 4)
  - Court me, I am upset by Shakespearean character (8)
  - Nothing to this if one’s courting (4)
  - Rest around rack for those who follow spoor (8)
  - Rave about the girl (4)

- DOWN:**
- Give a bit, being good-looking (8)
  - Crept in south-east for veneration (7)
  - Not at home, permit an exit (6)
  - So if coin can’t be turned into seizure of illicit articles (10)
  - Flower gets hothead, being Gaelic (5)
  - Muffles the jokes (4)
  - Dazzled by limelight, despite being slapped by celebrity (4, 6)
  - Somehow, AA anth-

- em is absolutely intolerable (8)
- Beg for fairy legend (7)
  - Gruel in east is even less attractive (6)
  - Roman upset by Bellini opera (5)
  - Leave out in room items (4)

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD NO 208

**ACROSS:** 1. Site; 3. Infinite; 8. Amen; 9. Graduate; 11. Bus conductor; 13. Ninety; 14. Stooze; 17. Shoots to kill; 20. Blisters; 21. Hang; 22. Intimate; 23. Sift.  
**DOWN:** 1. Slap bang; 2. Treason; 4. Neruda; 5. Indication; 6. Idaho; 7. Even; 10. Post mortem; 12. Red light; 15. Origami; 16. Esprit; 18. Hoist; 19. ABRI.





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# sport

## Israeli disabled bowlers take part in Pretoria

DIANE WOLFSON  
PRETORIA

LAST WEEK, a team of 17 members of the Israeli Lawn Bowls for the Blind and Disabled, arrived in Pretoria to compete in the International Bowls for the Disabled World Championships, being held at Wingate Park Country Club.

The team is headed by Dr Sara Schapiro and comprises two players in wheelchairs and the others being visually impaired who are assisted by sighted helpers.

According to Brian Sneag (from Krugersdorp), who is president of International Bowls for the Disabled as well as of Disabled Bowls South Africa, Israel is one of 11 countries taking part, with seven categories of disability.

Disabled bowlers have four centres in Israel and this is the fourth tournament in South Africa for many of them. In 2005 Israel came second, with the team receiving five personal medals and three medals in 2009.

Bowler Itzik Baranes who has been participating in international tournaments



The contingent of disabled Israeli bowlers in South Africa. (PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED)

since 1993, has only praise and appreciation for the South African hospitality, specifically the help given to the team by the Wingate Park Country Club management and staff which includes the special kosher meals prepared, the repair of the wheelchairs as well as assistance on the greens by the greenkeeping staff.

They also requested that their appreciation be expressed to Killarney Club for allowing them the use of their bowling greens for practices.

## Jewish triathletes shine

JACK MILNER

TRIATHLON HAS a huge following and Jewish athletes are among its hoards of enthusiasts and achievers. The Spec-Savers Iron Man South African Triathlon took place at Nelson Mandela Bay recently and it was an enormously well supported event.

The race is like no other. Dancers and musicians entertain not only at the pasta party and awards ceremony, but they are on hand for the race start and at the finish line as well..

The 3,8 km swim started at Hobie Beach in perfectly calm conditions, the only turbulence coming when the 1 800 athletes surged forward into the sea.

The bicycle route, with a slight breeze from the south-west, assisted the competitors as they made their way along the coastal road. The 180 km ride consists of three laps of 60 km and the race ends off with a 42,2 km standard marathon run, the early part of which was in the heat of the day, amidst crowds of cheering spectators.

The cut-off came at midnight, after 17 hours. A number of athletes suffered from heat exhaustion and dehydration. Only 1 466 actually completed the distance.

The men's event was won by Raynard Tissink, South Africa's premier endurance triathlete, in eight hours and 5,36 minutes. He has now won eight Iron Man events worldwide.

The women's title went to a triathlete from Norwich, England; Chrissie Wellington. She won in 8:33,56, and remarkably finished eighth overall with the quickest marathon time, breaking her own world record for the Iron Man distance by 12 minutes and the course record by 42 minutes. She also finished 35 minutes ahead of her closest competitor.

This was her 11th title, which includes three world championship Iron Man titles.



Triathlete Mark Sack on his way to victory in his age group at the Spec-Savers Iron Man South African Triathlon in Port Elizabeth last month.

She has never been beaten over the distance. As one of the most hardcore of human endurance athletes, is known as the Iron Lady.

Her alma mater, Birmingham University, recently awarded her an honorary doctorate and she has also received an MBE.

In this epic record breaking day, 39-year-old Mark Sack once again showed what a special talent he has by winning his age group - 40-44 - by three minutes in a time of 9:30,45, putting him 32nd overall and the sixth South African after professionals Tissink, James Cunnama (third), Kent Horner (13th), Bryn Freeman (22nd) and age grouper (30-34) Andre Booyens (21st).

In Sack's age group, 320 started; 244 finished. Conditions on the day suited Sack, who had a comfortable swim and a solid bike ride.

He started the run in third place in his age group. He was second after five km and took the lead at around 21 km into the marathon, maintaining that position to the end, to finish 12 minutes faster than his previous best over the distance.

Clive Sack, Mark's elder brother, who competed in the same age group, had a comfortable day (11:04) as did brothers David and Jonathan Boyer in 10:58 and 11:05 respectively, in the 35 to 39 age group.

Other Jewish competitors to complete the course included Jonathan Cohen (30-34) 11:46, Jodi Zulberg (35-39) 12:18, Lance Krowitz (30-34) 12:53, Dylin Edel (11:48), Darryl Bark (14:01) and Jonathan Pauwen (16:39), all three in age group 25-29.

At the Spec Savers 70.3 Iron Man East London, where they were faced with challenging conditions, Mark Sack had control of his age group until 200m from the end, when he was unexpectedly overtaken, finishing 12 seconds behind (4:46.40) and 32nd overall. Ian Schwabsky came fifth (5:03.43) with Gavin Mofsowitz seventh (5:05.25) close behind, both in age group 25-29.

## Maccabi South Africa honours weightlifting great, Ben Helfgott

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY  
ILAN OSSENDRYVER

THE MACCABI SA national executive, met with Holocaust survivor and British Olympian weightlifting captain, Ben Helfgott at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg last weekend, where Maccabi SA made a presentation to Helfgott.

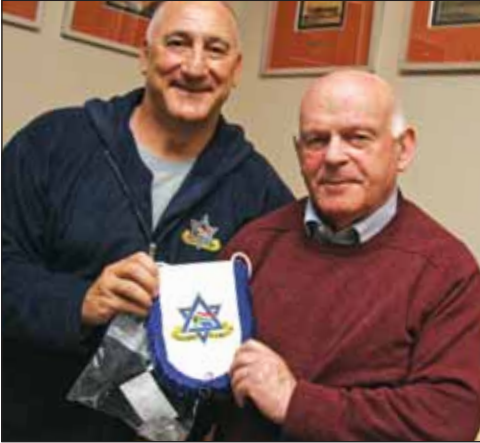
Helfgott was the British weightlifting captain at the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne and in 1960 in Rome. In 1958 he won a bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games in Cardiff, Wales, while in 1950, 1953 and 1957 he won a hat trick of gold medals at the Maccabi Games. He attended numerous Olympics as a British team official and press representative.

He was one of the last people to have seen and spoken to the 11 murdered Israeli athletes at the ill-fated 1972 Munich Olympics in Germany.

Helfgott was inducted into the prestigious International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame at the Wingate Institute of Sport in Israel.

He believes that through the interaction of sport, people of different backgrounds can come to understand and tolerate each other and their differences and become more unified as human beings.


Besides Maccabi SA Chairman Cliff



Maccabi SA Chairman Cliff Garrun, makes a presentation to Olympic weightlifting great, Ben Helfgott.


Garrun, making a presentation to Helfgott, another Jewish Olympian was honoured. Egyptian-born, Yoav Raanan represented Israel in diving at the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, in 1956 in Melbourne and at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

In the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, Raanan was an adjudicator, while in 1954 he won a gold medal at the Asian Games. Yoav and Ben have been friends for the past 60 years since their Olympic days.



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