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■ Volume 23 – Number 26 ■ 19 July 2019 ■ 16 Tammuz 5779

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Hamba kahle to the Jewish ‘white Zulu’

TALI FEINBERG

He has been described as a son of Africa, a white Zulu, a voice of revolution, a genius, a teacher, student, and mentor, but before all of these, at birth, Johnny Clegg was Jewish.

Clegg died on Tuesday at the age of 66, after a four-year battle with pancreatic cancer. Ziona Levin, who grew up across the road from Clegg’s aunt, recalls him being “different from most of us. His dad wasn’t around. He was at his aunt [where he was most exposed to Judaism] a lot. He was part of my childhood along with his sister.”

“He was proud of his Jewishness, and he wrestled with it at times,” says his close friend of 35 years, Anthony Chait. “Once, when performing at Sydenham Shul in 2008, he quipped that ‘in the first instance I’m a Zulu, then a Jew’, but he never forgot his Jewish identity, and never hid it or suppressed it.” After this performance, singer Choni G and Rabbi Yossy Goldman went to Clegg’s home to affix a mezuzah with an African casing that they gave him as a gift.

Clegg came from a humble background. Born in Britain in 1953, his Jewish mother took him to Israel, Zimbabwe, and Zambia before they settled in South Africa. He grew up in Yeoville with his family struggling financially at times, says Chait. Decades later, when Chait accompanied Clegg on tour in Australia, he was approached by a man who asked to meet the musician.

It turned out that when Clegg matriculated from Yeoville Boys High, his family couldn’t afford the blazer needed for the ceremony, so this same man, now Dr Andy Garfagnini, had lent him his blazer. “Johnny was so humbled, and remembered immediately,” recalls Chait.

He says Clegg’s mother, Muriel,

was a jazz singer, and the musical gene was definitely passed down to her son Johnny, and later to his son Jesse. “As a teenager, Clegg accompanied his crime reporter stepfather to the townships, and encountered the city’s Zulu migrant workers’ music and dance,” says Chait.

“He was really an activist with a guitar – he could quite easily have gone into politics, but music was his preferred language, and his tool for stirring the social conscience,” says writer Gus Silber, who interviewed Clegg over the years.

“Discovering aspects of traditional Zulu migrant-labour culture enabled me to create an African identity for myself,” said Clegg in an interview with Howard Feldman on *ChaiFM* in 2017. “It was a very intense journey for me. I discovered Zulu street guitar music when I was 14. I realised it was a unique genre of guitar music, like the blues in America. I thought, ‘This guitar style exists only here, and I want to learn to play it.’ It gave me an amazing window into another life.”

In the *ChaiFM* interview, Clegg said his mother would say, “the Zulus have stolen you away from me” as he spent all his time with them, even being arrested in a hostel when he was 15. But Clegg was smitten, searching for an African identity, and his place in this world.

Under the tutelage of Charlie Mzila, a cleaner who lived around the corner from him, Clegg mastered the Zulu language, and the maskandi guitar and isishameni dance styles of the migrants. He formed the band Juluka with Sipho Mchunu. After their song *Scatterlings of Africa* became a smash hit, Clegg had to decide if he was going to follow the path of an anthropologist or a musician. “It was a fork in the road,” Clegg said in the *ChaiFM* interview.



Johnny Clegg

Photo: Ian Ossendryver

Jewish youngsters at King David Linksfield were introduced to Clegg’s musical prowess when a then Grade 11 pupil, Alain Soriano, organised for Juluka to perform at a King David School Battle of the Bands. “It was 1981, and I wondered how it would be received,” says Soriano, who had seen Clegg perform at venues around Johannesburg. “Juluka had just become a full band, and people had no idea what they were about to hear. It completely threw them for a loop, and the crowd went so wild, I had to beg Johnny to do an encore.” Another King David pupil at the

time, Gary Rutstein, remembers this performance, saying “raw energy rippled, creating a sound wave and cultural sonic boom which awoke us all and became part of our lives through thick and thin”.

Writer, researcher and media commentator Arthur Goldstuck was the South African correspondent for *Billboard* music magazine during the 1990s. “Every encounter with Johnny was memorable. It started at Wits [the University of the Witwatersrand] when this offbeat anthropology lecturer was invited to give a guest lecture to our psychology class. Even in

that dry academic setting, he was captivating, and his enthusiasm infectious,” he recalls.

“As a music journalist in the 1980s and 1990s, it was a privilege to get to know him,” says Goldstuck. “On one occasion, I went with him to the home of another pioneering musician, Paul Clingman, where Sipho Mchunu was living ‘illegally’, pretending to be a gardener because he was barred by the Group Areas Act from living in a white suburb. The interview was inspiring and sobering, highlighting their struggle not only to make music together, but simply to be friends.

“Possibly the strangest memory of that day was giving Johnny a ride from his home to Sipho’s in my first car, a beaten-up old Beetle, because he didn’t have a car at the time. For me, the memory symbolises the extent to which his rise to fame was never easy, and the extent to which his humility was always a defining character,” recalls Goldstuck. “This was when the *Universal Men* album had already shaken up South African music, and Johnny and Sipho were iconic figures, but had not yet become international stars.”

Clegg’s record-breaking and award-winning musical career followed, including his cross-cultural band Savuka selling more than a million copies of its debut album.

“It’s a cliché, yet true to say that his music transcended human and musical barriers. But it wasn’t merely that he crossed over genres and political obstacles. He infused his cross-cultural vision with a powerful sense of pride, hope, and love,” says Goldstuck. “It was no accident that so many people adored Johnny and Sipho: they spoke to the deepest of our most positive emotions.”

Clegg was declared a *Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres* by the French government in 1991, an order of merit that recognises

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Pink defends kids’ behaviour

Jewish popstar Pink has defended a photo she posted of her children running at Berlin’s Holocaust memorial.

The singer, whose real name is Alecia Beth Moore, shared photos on Instagram on Sunday from her trip to the German capital. One of the images showed her two young children running among the large stone blocks that make up the vast memorial.

Some commenters said their behaviour was a sign of disrespect at the solemn site. In response, the singer posted, “[F]or all of the comments, these two children are in actuality Jewish ... The very person who constructed this believed in children being children, and to me this is a celebration of life after death. Please keep your hatred and judgment to yourselves.”



Egyptian in ‘blood matzah’ libel

A scholar working in Saudi Arabia told an Egyptian public broadcaster that some Jews use blood to make matzahs for Passover.

Fouad AbdelWahed, a professor at King Saud University, repeated the centuries-old canard during an interview for the show *Blue Line* on Channel 2, part of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union, the Middle East Media Research Institute reported.

Asked where the blood comes from, he said: “By Allah, I don’t know where they get the blood from.” He also said that only “extremist” Jews do this.

Injured teenager joins elite unit

A teenager who as a baby was seriously wounded in a rocket strike from Gaza has been accepted to the Israeli army’s counterpart of the Navy SEAL (sea, air, and land) unit.

The recruit to Shayetet 13 overcame a crippling disability as a result of sustaining 147 shrapnel injuries to his body at the age of 16 months in 2002, when a Qassam rocket from Gaza exploded in his backyard in Sderot. News reports from that incident identify him

Torah Thought

Crouched in wait for destiny

The Talmud (B’rachot 12b) records that certain sages raised the idea of including an extra section in the Sh’ma, above and beyond the three we read already. This, they suggested, should be taken from this week’s *sidrah* (portion) – Balak. The only reason they refrained from doing so is that it would make the Sh’ma too long for the community.

Such a statement startled the sages as much as it startles us. What on earth could the prophecies of a confirmed anti-Semite (the prophet Bilam) have to offer above and beyond the profundity encapsulated in the Sh’ma?

Our sages reply that it is due to one line in Bilam’s prophecy, “He couched, he lay down like a lion, like an awesome lion; who shall rouse Him? Those who bless You are blessed, and those who curse You are cursed.” (Numbers 24:9).

Rav Kook (in Ein Ayah) explains that the reason our sages sought to add the whole section just for this verse is related to the idea of Jewish peoplehood, purpose, and

obligations.

There are so many grand visions and “isms” in the world. Some of them appeal to us deeply because of the G-dliness of our souls. Socialism is one of these. Who wouldn’t prefer a world where no child went hungry, where everything was shared? Yet the gap between grand vision and actual implementation is vast, so vast that often in the rush to build utopian heavens on earth, humans all too often wind up making a hell. The histories of China, Soviet Russia, and North Korea, are just some of the examples of how wide the gap is.

So is it with Jewish ideals. How we achieve these ideals in a manner which will uplift the world?

The answer is the Jewish people. Jews have lived for thousands of years with the obstinate insistence that they have a mission, a responsibility. They have crouched like that lion, waiting patiently for its moment, convinced (many have thought ludicrously so) that the world would one day be ripe for our ideals, and

as Shilo Naamat.

Shayetet 13 is considered among the best special forces outfits in the world. It has participated in some of the Israeli army’s most daring operations, including the transport of Ethiopian Jews from Sudan in the 1980s. It’s often employed against Hamas in Gaza.

Minister refuses to shake hands

Israeli Education Minister Rafi Peretz, under fire for his support of “conversion therapy” for gays and for calling assimilation among United States Jews a “second Holocaust”, has been criticised for not shaking hands with a teenage girl at an official event.

Peretz on Sunday gave a medal to the teen, Nguyễn Khánh Linh of Vietnam, without shaking her hand at the International Physics Olympiad. He then gave medals to three other boys and shook their hands, news portal *Mako* reported.

Gadi Taub, an influential right-wing columnist and writer, on Monday called for Peretz to step down following that and other incidents. “You’re extreme, even to many right wingers, not only on gays. An extremist [of any side] shouldn’t be education minister,” Taub wrote to Peretz on Facebook.

‘Daily Stormer’ told to pay damages

The publisher of a neo-Nazi website who instructed readers to troll a Jewish real estate agent must pay the victim \$14 million (R195.5 million), a federal judge ruled.

US Magistrate Judge Jeremiah Lynch also recommended that the court order Andrew Anglin of the *Daily Stormer* to remove all posts and photos that he used to victimise Montana resident Tanya Gersh, her husband, and her 12-year-old son in 2016.

The website had called on readers to unleash a “troll storm” on Gersh. The threats began after Anglin accused Gersh of trying to force out the mother of a white nationalist from the mountain resort community of Whitefish.

Sarah Jessica Parker in Israel

Sex and the City’s Sarah Jessica Parker is on a private visit to Israel, but that didn’t stop Israeli paparazzi from snapping her photo while she was out for dinner on Friday night in Tel Aviv.

Parker’s father, a native of Brooklyn, is Jewish, descended from a Jewish family from Eastern Europe, and she reportedly identifies as Jewish. Her husband, actor Matthew Broderick, has a Jewish mother.

• All briefs supplied by JTA

Apology

In a letter to the editor from Chaim Myerson in the 5 July edition of the *SA Jewish Report*, Myerson claimed that *mashgichim* in Cape Town don’t have to be *shomer* Shabbat (Shabbat observant). This is factually incorrect, according to Rabbi Desmond Maizels, a *dayan* (judge) of the Cape Town Beth Din, and head of its kashrut department, as well as the Johannesburg Beth Din. Every *mashgiach* has to keep Shabbos. *The SA Jewish Report* apologises for running the letter without verifying the facts. – Editor

Rabbi Ramon Widmonte



for our refounded nation and state. Even in the darkest days of slumbering nationhood, we remained committed and poised.

This commitment, this truly selfless sense of devotion to a mission and obligation bigger than the self (an idea which is rapidly untranslatable to a society increasingly ensnared by the idolatry of self, me, I, and “my rights”) is what has enabled our ideals to permeate the world so profoundly. How else did a bunch of nomads in the Sinai Peninsula manage to put its ideals onto the walls of the United Nations, “they shall beat their swords into ploughshares...” in the face of all the outnumbering competition?

Those of us who can tap into this, who “bless this”, are surely blessed with a sense of community and mission stretching back three thousand years and forward, across space, joining us to Hashem.

south african

Jewish Report

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Subscriptions Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860 525 200 • Board of Directors Howard Sackstein (Chairperson), Herby Rosenberg, Dina Diamond, Herschel Jawitz, Shaun Matisonn, Benjy Porter. Advertisements and editorial copy do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff and board of directors. Tel: 011 430 1980.

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‘Where Netanyahu goes, I go,’ says SA-born spokesman

NICOLA MILTZ

In the space of a few weeks ex-Durbanite Evan Cohen has gone from being a linguistics professor in Tel Aviv to becoming the face of the Israeli government to the rest of the world. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday appointed the South Africa-born academic as his international press advisor, catapulting him into the public eye. No stranger to politics, the outspoken gay rights activist was formerly the founding chair of Likud Pride, the party’s caucus for LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer questioning) rights. While he is not known to have any prior experience in public diplomacy, it didn’t deter the prime minister

from personally seeking him out for the position. Netanyahu saw Cohen being

the SA Jewish Report in a telephonic interview between meetings with the prime minister.

The first thing that stood out was his broad, familiar, South African accent, in spite of having left our shores 41 years ago at the age of nine, returning only once last year on a visit to Cape Town. “You can never get rid of the Durban accent,” he said jokingly. Cohen, 51, has until now been teaching linguistics at Tel Aviv University, where he received his academic degrees. His partner of 21 years, Omri Rosenkrantz, is also an academic. Cohen said Netanyahu had “advised me to go home and talk it through with Omri before accepting the position”, which is highly demanding, and has already altered the couple’s lives considerably. “Where Netanyahu goes, I go,” said the Ramat Gan resident, who remembers with fondness the



interviewed several weeks ago on i24news, an Israeli 24-hour news channel. He was impressed by Cohen’s views on recently appointed Justice Minister Amir Ohana becoming the first openly gay minister. Cohen’s ability to present the Likud worldview scored him points with the prime minister. This week, Cohen caught up with



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Durban neighbourhood in which he lived. “We lived in Wright Place, in Carrington Heights,” he said with nostalgia. He attended Sharona Nursery School, followed by a stint at Carmel College, before making aliyah in 1977 with his parents, John and Hermione, and three siblings. The family settled in what Cohen fondly calls “Ra’ananafontein” – Ra’anana being popular amongst ex-South Africans. His loving parents, both aged 80, insist that the entire family – including great grandchildren and grandchildren – gather for Shabbat dinner every Friday night at their home. It’s a tradition they’ve kept since their Durban days. “Our parents have always supported us in everything we’ve done. Growing up with this kind of support meant everything,” he said. Although he considers himself 100% Israeli, South Africa still holds a very special place in his heart. “I am more emotionally tied to South Africa than any other country,” Cohen said. “The South African Jewish community has been through many changes over the past 40

Continued on page 4>>

Cross-over icon and social connector – farewell to Johnny Clegg

PETER FELDMAN

When Johnny Clegg was 16, his mother, Muriel, the public relations officer at a record company, begged me to speak to her teenage son who was fraternising with a Zulu musician named Sipho Mchunu. Mchunu, then a gardener, and Clegg spent much time together while the former taught the Jewish teen the fundamentals of Zulu music, and traditional Zulu Inhlanguwini dancing. In her office one day, Muriel broached the subject of her son. She was afraid, she admitted, that he would be arrested by the apartheid police. I thought this over for some time but decided, in my wisdom, to leave it, because I knew he would find the right path. And he did. He was the forerunner of combining Western musical styles with African ones, sparking a revolution in South African music that can be still be heard in the work

of artists today. Most potently, Clegg had the ability to connect people through his music. He was a pioneer in social cohesion in South Africa. He also provided a portal for international audiences to gain a deeper understanding of the anti-apartheid movement, and the journey towards, and ultimately into, freedom. For this, Clegg has received many different honours including an OBE (Order of the British Empire), the South African Order of Ikhamanga, as well as several honorary doctorates. Through his bands Juluka and Savuka, Johnny pioneered a uniquely South African hybrid music during a time of cultural and racial segregation. His music always offered a vision of how South Africans could find each other, and the possibilities of a non-racial future. In October 1989, Roddy Quin, Clegg’s manager and promoter, offered me a trip to Paris to watch him performing at the famed Le Zenith with Mchunu and the band. My job as a music journalist was to

report on my experience, watching a massive French audience singing along to all the hits. It was an amazing, uplifting, proud-to-be-South African moment. He was bigger than Michael Jackson there. On opening night, there was a surprise guest – world famous folk artist Joan Baez – who together with Clegg and Juluka, sang several of his numbers. Clegg was adored by the French, and given the moniker “*Le Zulu Blanc*” (The White Zulu). It was on that tour that he was presented with the French *Chevalier des Arts et Lettres* (Knight of Arts and Letters). Ever since I have known Clegg, he has always been a humble soul. Intelligent, articulate, warm, and with a strong philanthropic side, Clegg never changed, remaining the same even at the height of his creative powers. He was so proud of the success of his son, Jesse, that whenever I met him, this topic would eventually come up. It seemed, sometimes, that Clegg was reluctant to talk about himself.

A high moment in my relationship with him was when he married his beloved Jenny at a quiet ceremony on an estate outside Johannesburg. He seemed a bit awkward in the tight suit he was wearing for the occasion. They also had a traditional Zulu wedding later in KwaZulu-Natal. I celebrated my 70th birthday at a Johnny Clegg concert at the Joburg Theatre as his guest of honour. Later, surrounded by many of my friends, Clegg and I cracked the amber liquid, reminiscing about the good times. I was one of the first journalists in the early 1980s to write about him and Mchunu. White radio stations were reluctant to play his cross-over, hybrid music, and few would grant him interviews. Each interview I did with him was a revelation. His sense of history was a dominant factor, and throughout, I remember his positivity, which was always a driving force in his life. In April 2017, he embarked on his final world tour, “The Final Journey”. Clegg had been

diagnosed with cancer two years earlier, and underwent chemotherapy. Throughout the treatment, he continued to tour locally and internationally, undertaking a nine-week tour of America and Canada in 2016. He managed to complete a new album in this time, and his autobiography. While in remission, he decided to use the opportunity to perform a final set of concerts in South Africa and overseas to thank his fans for their support on his long musical journey. President Cyril Ramaphosa is quoted as saying, “Johnny Clegg is more than just one of this country’s finest musicians and entertainers. He is a national treasure who has brought together all South Africans, and reminded us what makes us great as a country.” Quin added at the time, “It’s been a privilege to have travelled such a long journey with Johnny, and an honour to have worked and shared so many incredible experiences with him. It has truly been inspiring.”

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Weatherman Simon Gear says Israel engagement essential

TALI FEINBERG

Simon Gear, *Eyewitness News* (EWN) weatherman and science correspondent, has just returned from a trip to Israel, and he thinks it would be wrong if South Africans cut Israel off.

“It would be a pity if large institutions made blanket bans on engagement with Israel,” Gear says. “Rather, I’d like to see each case considered in a rational and thoughtful way. It’s probably easier to advocate for better conditions somewhere like Gaza as a partner of Israel than as an enemy.”

Gear was on a tour with other South Africans to explore Israeli innovation and technology. He was joined by academics from the University of the Witwatersrand, University of Cape Town, University of Johannesburg, University of Pretoria, Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of the Free State, University of Venda, University of Stellenbosch, and a national government research agency. Those directly connected to the universities haven’t been named because they still have to report back on the trip to their universities and consider options for co-operation.

They went in spite of the current climate surrounding this issue in South Africa, including a motion for an academic boycott of Israel at the University of Cape Town. The tour’s main sponsor was the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It was guided by Benji Shulman of the South African Israel Forum.

Gear’s opinions on Israel and the fact that he travelled there incurred a bit of a backlash on Twitter, specifically from Iqbal Jasset of the Media Review Network, and Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions South Africa. However, he says the response from the South African public has generally been positive.

“The strong response from the anti-Israel lobby was quickly diffused into reasonable and rational discussion, which was an important part of my overall experience,” says Gear. “I’ve been careful to engage in a respectful and thoughtful manner with everyone who has reached out to me.

“That seems to have worked, as people quite quickly responded in kind, regardless of their initial vehemence. The same can’t necessarily be said about the engagement between the two opposing sides on my social media thread.”

To anti-Israel lobby groups that say he shouldn’t have visited Israel, he says, “They have a valid point that needs to be considered. The comparisons with apartheid South Africa, and the sanctions on that regime are also valid. The issues are not identical, but the similarities are inescapable. The Israeli-Palestinian issue is more complex than that faced by pre-democratic South Africa.”

Yet, Gear’s approach is one of engagement with the place and the people instead of boycott and censorship. “I learn best through experience, and speaking to people. I undoubtedly have a

better understanding of Israel and Palestine than I had two weeks ago. If the choice is ever between learning from someone or not learning from someone, I believe experiencing other

teenager in 1994. “I was keen to return to see how things had changed,” he said.

He was struck by “how much more peaceful and affluent modern Israel

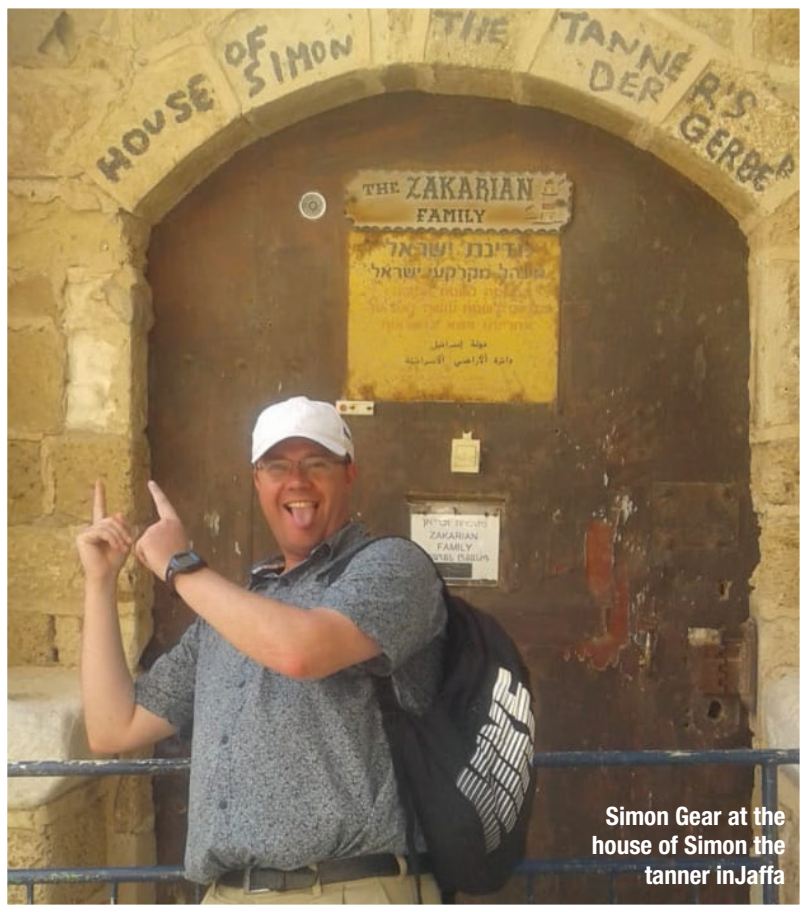
entrepreneurs and academics and as a result, the people we spoke to were overwhelmingly Jewish Israelis. So, we certainly had an opportunity to get a sense of how this sector of the population viewed the conflict. In our group were a number of people – and I would include myself in this – who were knowledgeable about the conflict and so we were able to question and explore these views wherever possible.

“It was important to me to learn the role that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] plays in tech development in Israel. [This is] one of the reasons why Israeli Arabs are finding it so hard to break into the sector, because national service often acts as a springboard into tech start-ups.”

He was amazed to realise that the area he thought of as Israel was different to the perceptions in the country. “I’ve always included all territories that are disputed but under Israeli control [including Gaza and the West Bank] as part of Israel. Israelis very clearly exclude those areas from their notion of the country. This is a problem, as it allows Israelis to ignore the Palestinian narrative and condition in any consideration of how the country is doing.

“Palestinians are excluded from statistics, making the region look more successful and prosperous than it actually is. An example of this was asking a water expert if Israel exported water and power to her neighbours. The first two foreign ‘countries’ he mentioned were Gaza and the West Bank.” Gear understands that the Palestinians don’t especially want to be included in Israel either, and is not offering a solution, just an observation.

If some South Africans bow to the pressure of anti-Israel lobby groups, and decide not to go Israel, Gear says, “I think that that’s entirely within their rights. That that choice needs to be respected. If one does go, it’s incumbent to try and explore the issues as deeply as possible, and try and talk to as wide a range of people as possible.”



Simon Gear at the house of Simon the tanner in Jaffa

people’s culture should always win,” he says.

“With that comes the responsibility of getting as many perspectives on an issue as possible. It would be morally and ethically wrong to visit Israel and completely ignore the geo-political context of the country.” He therefore thinks that other South Africans should visit Israel, “but in doing so, they have a moral obligation to learn from as wide a range of views as possible”.

Gear says he has “enormous sympathy for both sides of the intractable problem that faces Israelis and Palestinians”. He decided to go on this trip as he has had a life-long fascination with the region. He hadn’t been back to Israel since visiting as a

feels compared to the country I knew in 1994”.

He spoke of “hardly a piece of litter to be seen”, and said that “Tel Aviv is now a world-class city”.

“The country feels peaceful and prosperous. I’ll be the first to recognise, though, that this peace has come at enormous human-rights cost to the Palestinians, and I do worry that it is, as a result, not sustainable in the long term.”

He enjoyed the opportunity to speak to many successful Israelis, and get their view on a wide range of subjects. “It gave me a nuanced overview of how middle-class, secular, and orthodox Israeli society views itself,” he says.

Gear points out, “The nature of the trip was to speak to tech

‘Where Netanyahu goes, I go,’ says SA-born spokesman

>>Continued from page 3

years, and many Jews have left the country. I believe we are going through a rough period diplomatically, and I’m hoping things will improve in time.”

His official title is international media consultant for the prime minister working alongside the head of state. The position has to do with perceptions of government and Israel in general, Cohen said.

His job will entail interacting with foreign-media stakeholders, and establishing relationships with editors across foreign-media platforms.

“What the foreign press needs from me is information. I’m hoping to provide this straight from the prime minster himself – his views, what he thinks, what he does – so that foreign media can provide fair and balanced reporting on the government and Israel.”

Asked how he felt when he received the call from the prime minister’s office, Cohen said, “I’ve always been a big supporter of Netanyahu. I’m not embarrassed to say this. I think he’s doing an excellent job. It was great to meet him, and the opportunity to work with him is amazing.”

Cohen has been a fan of Netanyahu ever since he heard him being interviewed several years ago on how he would like to be remembered one day.

“He told the interviewer that he would like to be remembered as the person who fortified and strengthened the state of Israel. This is what he has been doing. Economically and diplomatically, he is doing an amazing job,” said Cohen.

Cohen doesn’t believe the 17 September Knesset

elections pose a threat, saying that in spite of the outcome, he would remain committed.

“I believe he will continue after the elections. I will serve under him as long as he wants me there,” he said.

In the meantime, life for Cohen and his partner has changed dramatically.

“I was a university lecturer before this. You can’t compare the hours and degree of intensity. This isn’t a nine-to-five job.”

There was criticism following the announcement of Cohen’s position this week.

Some criticised Netanyahu’s timing, considering last Saturday’s highly controversial statements by Israeli Education Minister Rafi Peretz. During an interview with Channel 12, Peretz – an orthodox rabbi and a member of the Union of Right-Wing Parties – said that it was “possible” for homosexuals to be converted through conversion therapy.

Netanyahu immediately responded by calling Peretz’s remarks “unacceptable”, and asserting that they did not reflect the government’s position.

Cohen insisted that he was considered for the post several weeks ago, and it had nothing to with the fact that he is gay.

In his spare time – which is now going to be curtailed somewhat – Cohen is the director and founder of the Tel Aviv Scrabble Club, and has competed in several world scrabble championships. He is hoping to visit South Africa again soon.

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International relations minister softens approach to Israel

NICOLA MILTZ

Minister of international relations and cooperation, Naledi Pandor, last week said that the government would be ready to re-engage in discourse with Israel when Israel took “genuine steps for peace”.

The minister was responding to questions during a debate following her budget vote speech in the National Assembly last Thursday.

During her lengthy speech and response, she made no mention of the downgrading of the South African Embassy in Tel Aviv. There was also no mention of the appointment of a new South African ambassador for Tel Aviv.

Pandor displayed a more even-handed diplomacy than her predecessor, according to insiders, giving relatively equal attention to other global humanitarian conflicts, and not singling out Israel.

Political analysts and insiders told the *SA Jewish Report* the minister’s references to the Middle East conflict appeared more balanced, devoid of the usual anti-Israel bitterness. Notably, she also said it was “absolutely imperative” that when it came to the Middle East, discussion also took place on Yemen and Syria.

“On the Middle East, we take sides with the oppressed,” she said. “We don’t reject Israel when it wishes to discuss a genuine settlement.”

She said that the two-state solution remained the objective of all members of the United Nations, but “we are concerned at the lack of movement, at the lack of freedom”.

However, her comments signalled a willingness on the part of the government to remain engaged.

“When there are genuine steps for peace, we are ready to consider again, but it cannot be that we act as though matters are normal when there exists a condition where a people enjoy no rights whatsoever. We cannot attach purely to the theoretical, we must signal that we are concerned. That does not mean we give up, it means we are ready to engage in discourse leading to a solution.”

Responding to another question, she said South Africa “must stand shoulder to shoulder” with the Palestinians. However, she made it clear that the government would “be there with

the people of Israel and its government once it is ready to recognise that the two-state solution must be brought into reality”.

“It should be understood what our intentions are. We would be most happy when we discuss the Middle East that we talk about Syria, we talk about the humanitarian disaster in Yemen, we talk about all those who suffer. We mustn’t neglect to mention other actors in that region that are exacerbating the negative conditions of humanity. [It’s] absolutely imperative that we do that.”

Steven Gruzd, an analyst at the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), said the minister remained consistent with longstanding themes in South African foreign policy. However, he said, her speech “adopted a different, more measured tone” to some of her previous utterances on the Middle East.

“It contains the usual support of the Palestinians, but lacks vitriol against Israel – even though she still blames Israel for the stalemate in peace negotiations,” Gruzd said.

Gruzd pointed out that Pandor reiterated support for the two-state solution, “even though it is moribund at present” in the Middle East.

“Interestingly, she says that other problems in the Middle East must be discussed, including Yemen and Syria. Is this a real move away from obsession with Israel? Time will tell.”

In essence, Gruzd said her speech showed a slight softening in approach “but in style, not substance”.

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies

problems,” Pandor said.

“I’m hopeful that the same stance will be applied with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian situation,” Kahn said.

The minister gave Palestine similar attention to other conflict-ridden countries.

“The world has improved vastly from the world in which racial domination could thrive, yet Palestine is still occupied and not free, South Sudan has internal conflict, Western Sahara is still occupied and not free, Cuba remains blockaded, and extremism and terrorism destabilise the world. Africa, too, continues to have many development challenges.”

Pandor said South Africa would affirm trade and strategic partnerships with the United States, while also working to “support measures for peace in South Sudan, freedom and justice for the people of Sahrawi, and freedom, security and democracy for the people of Palestine. We will also continue to strive for the end of the unilateral economic blockade against Cuba, and continue to strengthen our collaboration.”

Political analyst and author, Ralph Mathekga, told the *SA Jewish Report* that Pandor took a measured yet firm approach without being “attention seeking”.

“She demands commitment to do things differently, and progress in attaining a two-state arrangement,” he said.

Darren Bergman, the Democratic Alliance shadow minister of international relations and cooperation, said, “Minister Pandor is a highly capable and intelligent minister, probably with the most experience in cabinet. We hope this will lead her to seek peace on both sides, and be responsible when engaging in highly emotive disputes.”

However, he cautioned that it was still the “honeymoon period”.



Naledi Pandor

(SAJBD) remains cautiously optimistic. National Director Wendy Kahn said she was encouraged by the minister’s “balanced and professional approach”.

“While I differ with her holding Israel solely accountable for failure to make meaningful progress towards realising a two-state solution to the conflict, I welcome her more measured remarks,” Kahn said.

She also welcomed Pandor’s reiteration of South Africa’s commitment to a two-state solution, and “its readiness to re-engage with Israel when it believes the time is right”.

Also reassuring was the minister’s reference to issues on our continent and globally, she said, pointing out that her remarks did not single out the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Kahn said the minister’s comments about Sudan were heartening. “As South Africa we stand ready to assist where we can. Our experience in conflict resolution and in drafting a progressive constitution, make us a partner genuinely able to resolve complex national

Pretoria in plain sight for Palm Springs socialite

NICOLA MILTZ

South African-born businesswoman and couture handbag designer Lana Marks is one step closer to Pretoria and filling the shoes of the next United States ambassador to South Africa.

At the time of going to press on Wednesday, the immaculate Marks was preparing to go before a United States senate committee hearing for the ambassadorial nomination to South Africa. The hearing forms part of the lengthy and necessary procedures for nomination.

US embassy spokesperson Robert Mearkle told the *SA Jewish Report*, “We can confirm that Lana Marks, the White House’s nominee for ambassador to South Africa, is scheduled to have her confirmation hearing in front of the US senate’s foreign relations committee today in Washington.”

It’s unclear what the hearing entails, or what takes place thereafter, but it’s one of the first steps in the confirmation process. The relevant committee would then be required to send the nomination to the full senate, which would then finally vote on the nomination.

Marks, a known socialite in Palm Springs, Florida, and the owner of Lana Marks Collections, is reportedly a close friend of US President Donald Trump and first lady Melania. Earlier this year,



Lana Marks

she was officially re-nominated by Trump to be ambassador to South Africa. This is a formality that occurs when a new congress begins, and all nominations that have not been acted upon have to be resubmitted. Marks has spent the past few months preparing for her senate confirmation hearing.

Trump’s nominee was born and raised in East London, and has little if any experience in diplomacy. She was originally nominated for the position on 14 November last year.

If confirmed by the senate, Marks will join a long list of distinguished Americans who have served in this important position. The US has not had an ambassador in South Africa since Patrick Gaspard vacated his post in December 2016, with its mission being overseen by a *chargé d’affaires*.

Though Marks left South Africa about 40 years ago, she claims to be fluent in Xhosa and Afrikaans.

She is best known for her company, Lana Marks Collections, which produces five and six-figure exotic leather handbags, worn by red-carpet celebrities like Benoni-born Charlize Theron, and for her friendship with the late Diana, Princess of Wales.

Though the confirmation process for individual nominations typically follows a number of steps, the majority of presidential appointments are approved.

If Mark’s appearance goes well, it will be just a matter of time before she has the coveted position in the bag.

Singing our journey and hopes for SA

“One of the greatest soundtracks of our lives has just ended,” wrote Arthur Goldstuck on Facebook on Tuesday night, just hours after legendary musician Johnny Clegg had died. For many of us, Clegg was exactly that. His music, songs, and stories gave a particularly rich flavour to our lives as South Africans. And so, many of us have a “Johnny story” or two, be it a personal encounter or just the memories that his songs evoke.

Johnny Clegg epitomised the South Africa democratic dream, the ability to take black and white and make it beautiful together. This young Jewish boy, who enmeshed himself in the Zulu culture, brought the world a dancing, singing picture of South Africa that so



many of us wanted to believe in. And, this was way back in the 1980s, in the dark days of apartheid.

Clegg chose to dismiss segregation in the country, bringing black and white culture together in his music, and showing us what was possible.

When I was starting out as a young reporter back in 1987, I interviewed Clegg, who referred to himself as a “crossover”. He told me, “I have always been fascinated with places in which people left evidence of their passing through.” As he leaves us this week, this is particularly poignant, as he leaves a musical legacy that will always save the space as one he passed through. He has left an indelible mark in our community, our lives, and our country.

His fascination back then with the lives of migrant workers in hostels, where he would go and dance, he told me, was based on his vision of “the terrible magnificence of the fight against impermanence”. This was another prophetic statement so long before his fight against cancer began.

He spoke about the migrant workers who he saw as “living with such intensity” and “leaving traces in the music and dance of the streets of Johannesburg”. Reading my story from back then, it was astonishing how he could have been speaking about himself, not just migrant workers.

Just as he spoke of his music being his journey, so too his music peppered so many of our journeys. I – like many of you – have loads of memories that are firmly attached to his music, and when I hear a particular song, it takes me back to a time, place, and people.

He spoke to me back then about the success of Juluka and Savuka as being the fact “that we deal with essential problems that have not yet been explored. Blacks and whites emotionally resonate with different elements of our music. We deal with relevant issues such as love, hate, fear, and horror.

“I come from a tradition that says, ‘I will survive no matter what you do to me, and better than that, I can still laugh at you’,” he said. And, laugh and live he did with so much passion.

How sad it is to read this now, because as much as he had a will to live, cancer eventually took him from us.

On stage you might have seen him as pure showman, but the person I interacted with on this and a few other occasions in my career was a deep thinker, who lived with passion and much contemplation and analysis. Crossing over into African culture was not done lightly. He was an anthropologist, and loved learning about other cultures and ways.

Interestingly, at the time he told me that he didn’t enjoy listening to music. “I suppose it’s because I’m constant playing my own. To relax, I would rather go and see a movie or rap with friends.”

He spoke of his love of Joburg, which he described as being “like an onion, with layers you can peel off. Each layer has something to it. There are certain layers I’m more at home with, those that for me have more magic like the seedy side of Joburg.”

In spite of being loved by so many around the world – and right here at home – he said he found it hard to relate to people seeing him “as a famous object that if they come close, some of it might rub off”, pointing out, “I’m a simple person, certainly not a star.”

He might have been a simple person, but his star will shine brightly forever in our skies. Clegg epitomised everything that we wanted – and still want – our country to be. We want to live in harmony with other communities, not necessarily absorbing their culture, but being able to enjoy and celebrate them, and vice-versa.

As our country and community mourns the loss of this iconic musician who had such foresight and vision, let’s learn from him. Let’s break down barriers, and build respect and love for one another “in the spirit of the great heart”.

His death just two days before Mandela Day, which would have been the iconic leader’s birthday, seems meaningful. It doesn’t seem so long ago that Clegg’s song, *Asimbonanga*, about never having seen Nelson Mandela who was still in prison on Robben Island, was banned.

I guess I’m really showing my age, but though both icons of non-racialism and the South African dream are gone, I hope their legacy will remind us what we can have. This holy grail should be part of a real effort to cherish the various communities in this country as we would our own.

It’s vital to have commissions of enquiry into state capture and corruption, and rid our country of that toxicity. Then, we need to help rebuild the rainbow nation we all dreamed of.

So many of us are losing hope, and getting stuck in a rut of negativity. That’s a choice. Let’s choose to love this “cruel, crazy, beautiful world”!

Let’s let the legacy of Clegg and Mandela rebuild a harmonious and successful country.

Shabbat Shalom!
Peta Krost Maunder
Editor

Israel warns soldiers of fake friends on social media

Israel is stronger than Hamas on the ground. But in the digital sphere, the Gaza militant organisation is fast developing cyber capabilities that if the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is not vigilant, could seriously compromise its troops.

Israeli soldiers were again this week warned to be careful when using social networking sites. This came after Hamas operatives were found to be posing as Israeli soldiers on the WhatsApp messaging service. They texted messages to soldiers stationed along the Gaza border, asking them confidential questions about troop movements, and brigade exercises.

The IDF says it’s “aware of the enemy’s activity, and is following its efforts on social media”. It has launched an investigation.

According to experts, the good news is that Hamas’ current cyber capabilities don’t constitute a major threat to Israeli security. The bad news is that this can change overnight.

In the past, Hamas has used online dating platforms to pose as attractive women in an attempt to “honeypot” male soldiers. The photos and personal details they use are stolen from real Facebook profiles. In some they are scantily clad, and in others, there are women kissing each other. Accompanied by a convincing fake Facebook profile and written in fluent Hebrew, they initiate flirtatious exchanges with Israeli soldiers, mostly stationed along the Gaza border, before encouraging them to download online messaging applications.

Already as far back as two years ago, the IDF uncovered dozens of accounts on Facebook and other social networks that were being operated with false identities. Once a connection was made with a soldier or officer, he was asked to download a specific application to take part in a video chat. It seemed innocent enough, but the application in question would, without the soldier knowing, infect his phone.

Hamas operatives then had access to the soldier’s photos, location, text messages, and contacts. Unbelievably, they could also use the phone’s camera and microphone, and secretly record the soldier’s conversations.

Though some targets’ phones were infected with the virus before it was uncovered, the official word from the IDF is that the attack was foiled, and its impact was minimal.

In a separate case, the IDF uncovered a cell behind suspicious online actions in which soldiers were contacted from an Israeli number, and instead of being encouraged to download a virus through an illegitimate source, they were asked to download an application from Google’s official store. It then worked much the same as previous efforts, compromising the soldier’s phone. Google has since deleted the apps from its store.

Sometimes soldiers became suspicious because of poor Hebrew spelling and grammatical errors. But Hamas operatives covered their mistakes by writing in their online profiles that they were new immigrants.

Attempts by Hamas to infiltrate cyberspace to gather intelligence on the Israeli army is nothing new. Over the past decade, it has been investing significant resources to create and upgrade its online capabilities.

During Operation Cast Lead in Gaza in 2012, the group took responsibility for an attack on Israeli sites, including the Homefront Command site and the IDF spokesperson’s site. Hamas declared at the time that the cyber-attacks were an integral part of its war against Israel.

Israeli civilians have also been targeted.

DATELINE: MIDDLE EAST

Paula Slier

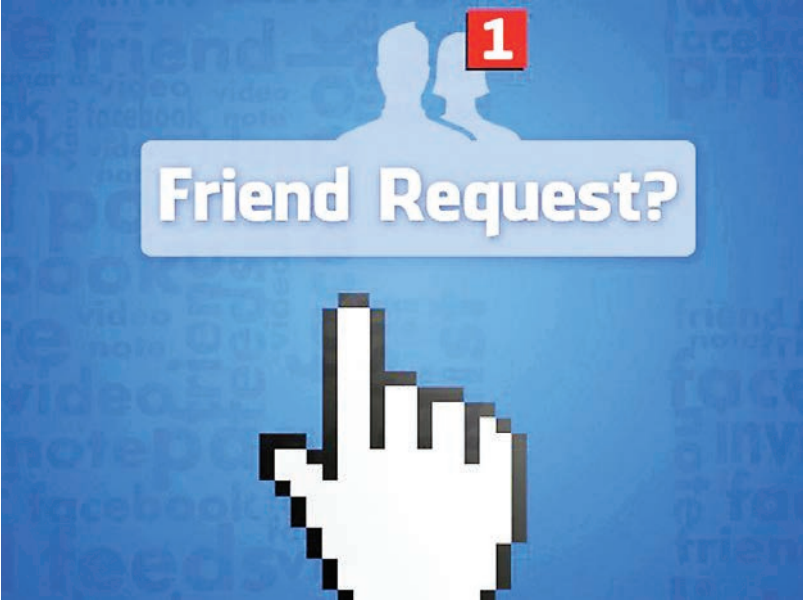


In the most recent round of fighting, Hamas sent fake WhatsApp messages to ordinary Israelis warning them not to answer calls from specific numbers, and claiming that doing so would allow Hamas to track them and fire a missile directly at their location. The fake messages were designed to spread panic among Israelis.

Previously the group used an app that mimicked the much-accessed and relied upon “red alert” app that provides real-time alerts every time a rocket is fired at Israel. Israelis rely on this app to give them accurate information about when to rush to a bomb shelter. In this instance, Hamas apparently timed its cyber-attack with the launch of hundreds of rockets against Israel. The compromised app then took control of the target’s phone.

Alongside the 2018 FIFA World Cup, Hamas went so far as to open a Facebook group inviting soccer fans to join and receive updates, watch live broadcasts, and bet on games. Those who did so and clicked on the accompanying links exposed themselves to cyber penetration, and the takeover of their computers.

Foreign journalists working in Israel have also been on the receiving end of threatening



SMS messages. I was one such journalist, and was immediately advised by the Foreign Press Association in the country to ignore the texts.

Israel has responded to the movement’s increased hacking proficiency with force. In May this year, it struck a building in Gaza that the army claimed was the workplace of Hamas cyber operatives. The assault is the first known attack on a physical target in response to a cyber-attack. Israeli army spokesperson, Brigadier General Ronen Manlis, claimed at the time that “after dealing with the cyber dimension, the [Israeli] Air Force dealt with it [Hamas] in the physical dimension”, saying that “at this point in time, Hamas has no cyber operational capabilities”.

The official word today is that the group’s technological capabilities have not developed to a level that can cause serious damage to Israel, and it’s doubtful that they will constitute a genuine threat to the country’s security in coming years. Hamas’ cyber activity – at least at the moment – is primarily focused on gathering information and intelligence for the purposes of spying. Experts insist that Hamas’ cyber ability does not exceed that of unsophisticated hackers, and is a long way off from Israel’s cyber offensive and defensive capabilities, and those of other players in the global cyber domain.

The IDF has now once again warned all its soldiers – including reservists – to be aware that if they are approached by a stranger online, it might be an attempt to “honeypot” them, especially if the suspicious individual is unable to meet in person.

It’s advice that all of us can heed.

Mandela Day can be the new normal

OPINION

MARC LUBNER



Mandela Day is a special day in many of our lives when we reflect on the values Nelson Mandela stood for. But it also allows us to ascribe to values beyond those he might necessarily have thought of.

Pondering Mandela’s values of conscious leadership, we create our own additional thoughts about living a life of service for others.

Mandela Day has been mooted as a day of doing good deeds for others. Many South Africans are motivated to spend 67 minutes consciously engaged in activities that are about giving. However, Mandela Day achieves a greater purpose insofar as it creates the opportunity to cross lines of diversity. Corporates bring staff members together in acts of random kindness and in doing so, cultural, racial, and religious barriers are diminished as teams pull together.

It’s critically important for our Jewish community to showcase how we can be a light unto the nations by using this day to integrate with various other communities in activities that promote a sense of well-being for the receiver, and the parties who are giving.

The economic woes of our country are a direct result of deficiencies within our system. High unemployment is a result of poor productivity. However, productivity is influenced by factors such as the majority of South Africans still living

in townships with limited public transport to places of work. It is influenced by the fact that people live in areas with hopelessly inadequate resources, so when adults go off to work, they don’t know that their children are being cared for in safe environments, with adequate health and educational support.

“A rising tide lifts all boats.”
In giving, we become the ultimate recipients.

Mandela Day creates an opportunity for those who are insensitive to such conditions to cross over Louis Botha Avenue into townships like Alexandra, to see just how difficult living conditions are for residents in that community. Equally, visits to Alex on Mandela Day create the opportunity for insight into the magic of the people living within these communities.

Too often, we simply discredit township communities because they might be financially impoverished, without realising the colour, creativity, and humour that exists within these communities. In most instances, people end Mandela Day with a sense of awe and respect for the majority, who create social

structures and a functional network in spite of huge infrastructural gaps.

It’s important that Jewish parents use Mandela Day to teach their children about the gift of gratitude. Often, I see how children from fortunate homes go home at the end of the day with a sense of appreciation and an awareness for the simple fact that they have food in their fridges, and running water in their toilets.

I don’t think our community realises just how good our lives are in relative terms. Too often, I hear people bemoan the lack of financial support they get from the Chevrah Kadisha. Comparatively, a youngster attending an Afrika Tikkun centre is filled with song and laughter simply because he/she is given one or two basic meals, some home and work support, and the knowledge that somebody cares enough to offer some momentary love.

We celebrate many Jewish holidays where it is beholden on us to practice acts of *tzedakah* (charity). Invariably, we do this through contributions made to members of our own society or to community support programmes.

Mandela Day should be a day where we realise that we have an obligation to care beyond the needs of our own community. This is not to discount our community for a minute, but to recognise that we are fortunate to be able to support our own and other

South African communities.

According to author Yuval Harari, homo sapiens is the dominant species on the planet as a result of its ability to form social pacts and work in unison. The world is changing, and the age-old boundaries which people use to define their associations are being redefined. The internet says that we are no longer bound to associations based on geographical limitations. Common purpose now bonds individuals together on themes such as dealing with environmental issues to forming political parties.

South Africans can be pro or anti Brexit, and through social media, can participate in ways that influence the views of others across the globe. Members of the Jewish community can align with any one of an array of political parties without necessarily negating their faith. It’s therefore imperative that as a community, we show a sense of responsible kindness in defining who we are, and what we stand for.

Mandela Day gives us the opportunity to do this, not merely by putting money into a yellow arc, but by consciously giving thought to the outcomes we would like to achieve. We need to consider how we might get involved in bringing about meaningful change. Mandela Day should be a day where our community gives thought to actions and deeds directed at using our influence to make life better for those around us,

in a sustainable manner.

We can resolve to greet those pesky street beggars, recognising them as fellow human beings, irrespective of whether we support giving cash as a donation. We can ask ourselves how Mandela would respond to the plight of children who are in desperate need of surgery, but whose parents can’t afford medical aid.

Instead of thinking about impoverished township communities, we can recognise and respect the efforts that individuals within these communities make to build lives of dignity, and we can find ways, whether through mentoring on an ongoing basis or co-funding a bursary – or a variety of other methodologies – to uplift our fellow South Africans.

There is a wonderful expression that says, “A rising tide lifts all boats.” In giving, we become the ultimate recipients.

Mandela Day also provides an interesting umbrella, in which this awareness can be unlocked without individuals feeling that they have to be beholden every day thereafter. It’s accepted that life returns to ‘normal’ after Mandela Day, but hopefully the definition of what’s normal changes in a positive and ever more conscious way as a result of the magic of the “Madiba moment”.

• Marc Lubner is chief executive of Afrika Tikkun.

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Jeffrey Epstein scandal shows sinister methodology of sexual predator

TALI FEINBERG

The United States billionaire, financier, and friend of presidents, Jeffrey Epstein, was arrested on 6 July for sex trafficking minors. Epstein is accused of paying girls hundreds of dollars in cash for massages, and then molesting them at his homes in Palm Beach, Florida, and New York from 2002 to 2005.

“The arrest by the FBI-NYPD (Federal Bureau of Investigation-New York Police Department) Crimes Against Children Task Force comes about 12 years after the 66-year-old financier essentially got a slap on the wrist for allegedly molesting dozens of underage girls in Florida,” said *The Daily Beast* in its coverage of these events.

The story has exploded across the world, with quick justice expected in the #MeToo era.

“Epstein’s bust comes mere months after a federal judge ruled that his 2007 non-prosecution agreement – secretly inked under former US attorney and [now former] Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta – violated federal law by keeping Epstein’s victims in the dark. Under the ‘sweetheart deal’, Epstein dodged federal charges that might have sent him to prison for life. Instead, he pleaded guilty to minor state charges in Palm Beach, and served 13 months in the private wing of a county jail, mostly on work release,” according to *Daily Beast*.

The charges, filed in New York, carry the potential of up to 45 years in prison, according to the *Times of Israel*. It was covering the fact that former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak had received financial support from Epstein.

Times of Israel quoted a story in *Ha’aretz* saying, “Barak was an active business partner of the disgraced financier as late as 2015. He formed a limited partnership company in Israel that year, called Sum (E.B.) 2015, to invest in a high-tech start up. A large part of the investment money was supplied by Epstein.”

Barak said he saw no problem at the time in going into business with Epstein. “He’d served his sentence for soliciting prostitution. The indictment didn’t say she was a minor,” but he pointed out, “according to the information now, he’s committed very serious offenses”.

Barak is just one of many friends of Epstein from high places. Donald Trump, Bill Clinton, Prince Andrew, Woody Allan, Harvey Weinstein, Alec Baldwin, and Ralph Fiennes are reported to have been friends. He was also apparently close to people in the scientific community including the late Stephen Hawking, theoretical physicist Lawrence Krauss, and artificial intelligence expert Roger Schank.

Meanwhile, Epstein’s alleged system of sex trafficking was supported by others.

“There was the team of recruiters and enablers bringing Epstein dozens of underage girls to sexually abuse, federal prosecutors allege,” *Times of Israel* reported. “There was the assistant who scheduled those encounters, and the butler who cleaned up afterward and doled out cash and gifts to the girls, authorities contend in court records.

“There were the mansions in New York and Florida, the sprawling ranch in New Mexico, the private island in the Caribbean that kept prying eyes at a distance, and the forms his employees had to sign swearing they wouldn’t speak about him publicly. All of it served to insulate Epstein with layer upon layer of secretiveness, investigators say, like a kingpin.”

“This is relevant to our community,” says Rebbetzin Wendy Hendler of Koleinu South Africa, a non-profit organisation offering support for victims of abuse via an

anonymous and confidential helpline. “These predators are, by nature of their wealth or status, in a position of authority over these young girls. The girls are seduced by the glamour and the glitz of that world.

“They may be girls with low self-esteem, and often they are vulnerable to start off with, but not always. I think it’s the excitement that world represents to them that makes them so vulnerable to this person’s power,” says Hendler. “These predators know this very well, and cleverly utilise it to bring these girls ‘under their wing’ or so-called protection.

“They shower them with gifts, and give them a lot of personal attention. Slowly, they get drawn in by what seems like harmless behaviour like massages, which then escalate, by which stage the girls are completely under the person’s power.”

Hendler says this is the same methodology

Sidney Frankel used to abuse children in Johannesburg. “The circumstances may look very different, but the modus operandi and psychological methodology is the same. We need to take this seriously, and make it relevant, so that our girls and young women are protected from predators of this nature.”

Epstein allegedly paid the abused girls more if they brought other girls into his network.

“When girls and young women are disempowered and desperate for money, they are sitting ducks. At the time, they often don’t realise they are victims of a sexual predator. They may feel chosen and special, and not realise the damaging consequences. Often, they are happy to bring other girls into that milieu”, says Hendler.

“How do we protect? Educate, educate, educate. That’s why it’s so important that every child in the Jewish school system – we are starting in Grade R – should be educated consistently on how to keep themselves safe.

“It’s a crying shame that Epstein initially got such a light sentence. It’s an indictment on the legal system,” says Hendler. “Most likely, it was an unconsciousness response to a person of such influence. He is well-known in the scientific community, a philanthropist, and there’s an unconscious bias in favour of people like this. That needs to change.

“When you have a sexual predator that has been operating for so many years, the likelihood of them changing their behaviour is extremely low. He needs to go to jail for a very long time. The message needs to go out that there is no place to perpetrate these heinous crimes, and this message should go out in South Africa as well.”

Manny Waks, himself a survivor of child sexual abuse, and the founder of Kol v’Oz, an advocacy group to prevent sexual abuse in the global Jewish community, says this case is troubling “because it indicates that if you are rich and powerful, you can buy your way out of taking responsibility”.

“This is similar to the case of singer R Kelly. In both cases, we see how these people don’t act independently. They have a network of staff, supporters, and even fans that facilitate these sexual-abuse crimes. I hope that in this case, they are all held fully to account, both for the sake of justice, and as a deterrence.”

Waks says that child sexual abuse often happens in families or within close relationships like a neighbour or babysitter. So these allegations – of a significant child-sexual-abuse industry with dozens of victims and crossing state boundaries – are very disturbing. “We obviously need to examine how this was allowed to happen in this day and age in the US. The bigger issue is how our society allows and facilitates such behaviour.”



Jeffrey Epstein



“The message needs to go out that there is no place to perpetrate these heinous crimes, and this message should go out in South Africa as well.”

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Ex-South African helps dads with divorce

JULIE LEIBOWITZ

Getting divorced is traumatic, but for men, it can be particularly destructive. All too often, men lose contact with their children following a divorce. They also generally don't have the levels of social integration women do, or seek the help they need.

It's no surprise that some male divorcees can be suicidal, and are prone to alcoholism, weight gain, and mental-health issues.

In South Africa, revisions made to the Children's Act have to a certain extent levelled the playing field for dads. The law now gives dads the same rights and responsibilities as moms, as well as the right to maintain contact with their children, unless a court determines otherwise.

"The court's decisions are entirely based on the interests of the child," says Trudi Bisset of the Family Life Centre in Johannesburg. The law also allows for children to reside with one parent, or to share residency with both parents, once again depending on the child's/children's needs.

However, many fathers still face bias by judges and in society, including "boundless allegations, prolonged lawsuits, and a deliberate indifference towards the law", according to the local Law For All website. There is also an outdated concept called the "tender years" doctrine, which presumes that children under the age of four should be under their mother's protection.

"Though the law is changing, there is still the assumption that the mother will look after the children following a divorce and have most of the responsibility," says Akiva Quinn, an ex-South African who lives in Melbourne,

Australia. Quinn stepped into the counselling world 12 years ago after experiencing a hostile divorce himself.

Following unsuccessful mediation with his ex-wife, Quinn went to family court to sue for a greater share of custody of his only child. He won six nights every two weeks, and managed to build a strong relationship with his son in his formative years. They remain close. Quinn's experience motivated him to support other divorced fathers to be the best men and fathers they could be.

He helped to start DadsLink, now a YMCA-based programme in the Australian state of Victoria, run in conjunction with Relationships Australia and the Life Is Foundation.

"DadsLink works with fathers who are excluded for various reasons," Quinn says. "Fathers must fight to have something close to equal time with their children. It's not so much about fighting for rights, it's about working constructively with the circumstances to reach acceptable solutions."

DadsLink helps fathers to integrate socially, and strengthen their relationships with their children. It supports them and organises regular activities where they can do things together. DadsLink also helps dads (and moms) to work out shared parenting arrangements – negotiating and setting up workable schedules. Critically

DadsLink provides ongoing support after divorce. This is often what is most needed by all the members of the family, who face long periods of adjustment.

"Fathers often don't have enough social networks," Quinn says. "They can have barriers to involvement if they don't know others. It's also about harm minimisation. There are risks around separation, such as strained inter-parent or parent-child relationships; the exclusion of fathers; suicide – one of the highest suicide demographics is separated men. There is also the issue of the economic hardships experienced by single moms.

"We need to support and educate men regarding conflict and separation management. Some men are not comfortable with their emotions and sharing their feelings."

Men also need help with parallel parenting – parenting separately but with some kind of mutual schedule – which can be formal or informal. "Shared parenting is good for dads and their kids. It's also good for moms, as it shares the burden. But it's often difficult to share parenting with your ex," Quinn says.

Regarding active parenting, he asks, "How many activities build precious family connections?" DadsLink holds monthly activities for dads, kids, and families that are "hands-on" like pool

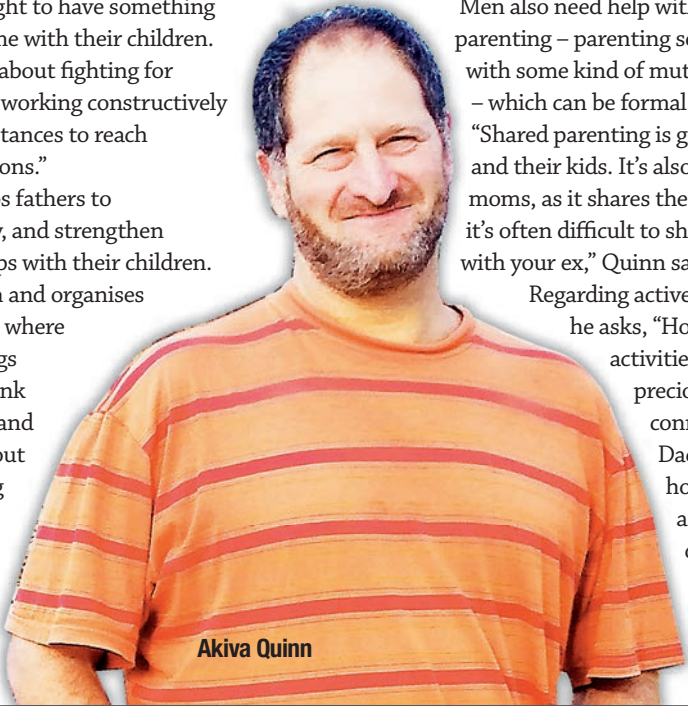
days, zoo visits, or watching sport, which gives fathers the opportunity to be engaged parents. But, he admits that it's "not that easy to get dads to come out and play".

As DadsLink Activities Co-ordinator, Quinn also runs a monthly support group called the "Dads Gatherings" and a one-day retreat that discusses themes such as self-care, social connection, life skills, and social skills, relationships with children and community, and "how to be your own friend".

A similar kind of ongoing support is offered in South Africa by the Mankind Project (MKP), which helps men to make the difficult transition into a new sense of purpose and healthy mature manhood. Some of them are divorcees who are "at a crisis point in their life", says Kevin Rudham, a coach at the organisation, who says Mankind completely changed his life.

"How do you go through a divorce without feeling angry or rejected?" he asks. "Can you own your role in it? Also, what's really important now, and what are you going to do to make it happen?" Men often feel alone at this time", and have been taught not to share their deeper emotions because "cowboys don't cry". It makes it very hard to ask for support. MKP men sit in small groups, listening, supporting and challenging each other to look with fearless honesty at their life.

"We don't know what real masculinity looks like anymore. Young men and boys see stereotypes of 'real men' in film and media, and in the absence of healthy role modelling, try to be just like them. Perhaps we are lucky enough to have a great man in our lives, but, in general, there is a lack of role models and mentors for boys and men. We need to help men to find the mature masculine inside of themselves, their authentic true self."



Akiva Quinn

ISRAEL

THE UNTOLD STORIES

South African Zionist Federation 49th National Conference 2019

OPENING NIGHT: SAT 27TH JULY

7:00pm	Arrival & Cocktails
8:00pm	Conference Opening
	Chairman Welcome Address Ben Swartz - National Chairman SAZF
	Video Messages of Goodwill
	Greeting Message WZO Gusti Yehoshua Braverman - Head of the Department for Diaspora Affairs
	Keynote Address Isaac Hertzog - Chairman Jewish Agency
	Presentation of Awards Nicci Raz - National Director SAZF Ben Swartz - National Chairman SAZF
	Paula Slier Hosts The Untold Stories Gal Lusky - Founder & CEO Israeli Flying Aid Daniel Limor - Chairman Nachshon-The Israeli Educational Institute for Social Leadership
	Closing and Thanks Rowan Polovin - Chairman, SAZF (Cape Council)
	Anthems Yudi Cohen - Chazan of Sydenham Shul

CONFERENCE DAY: SUN 28TH JULY

9:00am	Registration & Tea
	Welcome Paula Slier - Master of Ceremonies and Panellist
	Chairman's Detailed Report Ben Swartz - National Chairman SAZF
10:00am	Untold Stories From Women Risking It All Panel Discussion Followed by Q&A Gal Lusky - Founder & CEO of Israeli Flying Aid Paula Slier - War Correspondent & News Anchor Gusti Yehoshua Braverman - Head of the Department for Diaspora Affairs
	Moderator Dina Diamond – Businesswoman and Board Member SAZF
11:00am	Tea Break and Voting
12:00pm	Untold Stories - Israel and The Middle East Panel Discussion Followed by Q&A Dr Nir Boms - Middle East Expert & Activist Ron Brummer - Executive Director of Operations at the Ministry of Strategic Affairs Isaac Hertzog - Chairman Jewish Agency Amb Lior Keinan - Israeli Ambassador To South Africa
	Moderator Jamie Mithi – Author and Political Analyst
	Announcement of Newly Elected Office Bearers Ben Swartz - National Chairman SAZF
1:30pm	Formal Closing and Anthems
	Buffet Lunch and Networking
3:00pm	Ends

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Comparison of intermarriage to Holocaust sparks controversy

MIRAH LANGER

The recent comparison of intermarriage in the United States to a “second Holocaust” has been commended and condemned by world Jewry.

Israeli Education Minister Rafi Peretz said in a cabinet meeting that the rate of intermarriage in America was “like a second Holocaust”, according to Israeli news reports. Rabbi Ron Hendler, who works in the office of the South African chief rabbi, and is the registrar of conversions, told the *SA Jewish Report* this week that it was important that the comment be contextualised. “[Peretz] is not trying to trivialise the Holocaust. Look at the essence of what he is saying: it’s about the survival of the Jewish people, and there, he is right.”

“People call it a silent Holocaust. What is a holocaust in terms of Jewish history? A Holocaust is the destruction of the Jewish people as a unique nation with a unique message, and unique identity. If it no longer exists, in a sense it is a Holocaust,” says Hendler.

“Just because it doesn’t have violence or anti-Semitism attached to it, doesn’t mean that it isn’t the destruction of the Jewish identity, and Jewish people”.

Hendler says it’s important to distinguish between America and South Africa when it comes to intermarriage. Recent studies show that well over a half of all US Jews are marrying out of the faith. In South Africa, although definitive statistics aren’t available, the rate isn’t comparable.

A possible reason for this, says Hendler, is that in America, reform and conservative movements are prevalent, whereas “in South Africa, the orthodox is much more dominant as the religious stream”.

“[Regardless of] whatever level of religious observance they practice, most [South African] Jews associate, belong to, or identify with the orthodox.”

Rabbi Asher Deren, the head of

the reality of changing times.

“The South African Jewish community has changed dramatically since the fall of apartheid. Couples that would never before have been together, are now together. The old



Israeli Education Minister Rafi Peretz

Chabad of the West Coast in Cape Town, also made the distinction between America and South Africa when it comes to intermarriage. “As an American expat living here, I have always felt a unique appreciation for the South African rainbow nation as opposed to the American melting pot,” he says.

“A rainbow is a celebration of unique, vibrant, diverse colours. A melting pot is a grey morass of colours that have lost their individual identity.

“When people share how they see Judaism as more bland grey than bright rainbow, I’m reminded yet again of the need for supporting uniquely Jewish marriage that leads to creating the bright colours of a joyous Jewish home.”

For Rabbi Greg Alexander of the Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation, intermarriage reflects

assumption that if someone married out of the faith their parents would say *kaddish* (mourn for them), is no longer the case. Parents want their children to be happy; to settle down with someone that they love.

“While no rabbi, orthodox or progressive, is going to encourage intermarriage, the challenge for rabbis is how to support couples, and encourage them to raise their children within the community.”

For Lee and Elton, a married couple who come from a Jewish and Christian background, the Israeli minister’s Holocaust comment requires deeper probing.

“He is, maybe, coming from quite a fearful point of view, because the belief is that intermarriage leads to assimilation, and that through intermarriage, the Jewish people will die out within a generation or

two. From that perspective, I can understand why he might want to use such emotive and strong words,” Lee says.

Yet to focus on this angle, is a “lost opportunity”, she suggests.

“It’s only a Holocaust, if you don’t embrace the non-Jewish person and their children. If you make the decision to welcome them into Judaism, then it’s not a loss, it’s a gain,” Elton says.

This has been his experience. “They [the community] have done this for me. I’ve been fortunate. I’ve been a pole holder at Jewish weddings. I’ve [accompanied the funeral procession] when Lee’s relatives were buried. I was the chairman of my daughter’s Jewish nursery school governing body. I am part of the Community Security Organisation, so I feel a part of the Jewish community even though I’ve never officially done a course on it. For me, it’s an adopted community.”

Aimee, a third generation Holocaust survivor who comes from an Eastern European, Yemeni, and Israeli Jewish background, is married to Zee, an agnostic with a Zulu father and British mother. She says the comment comparing intermarriage to a second Holocaust feels “disrespectful and completely heart breaking”.

In fact, it is her husband – who was born into exile due to apartheid, facing his own experience of discrimination and hatred – who is the one consistently affirming the preciousness of her Judaism. “He has never done anything but make me feel proud to be Jewish. He’s the one person who has pushed me to be proud of who I am, and where I come from.”

The interfaith couples say assimilation and intermarriage are not synonymous.

Aimee and Zee, for example,

host traditional Shabbat dinners resplendent with challahs, wine, and all customary blessings. Lee and Elton make sure their daughters get the “best of both worlds” when it comes to tradition and ritual.

Michele and Ian, who are both Jewish, and have been married for 25 years, believe that diversity can be celebrated within Judaism. Michele notes that while she connects to the religion from a more mystical perspective, Ian enjoys intellectual engagement with its values and ethics. For them, these layers of Judaism have “imbued every moment with meaning and dimension”.

Marc is married to Cara, who shares a similar Jewish background. He, Michele, and Ian, see having a Jewish partner as essential to honour the past and build the future.

“Seventy years after the Holocaust where we were nearly wiped out, we have to rebuild,” says Marc. “I grew up in a very traditional family. To have children and continue the faith was critically important.”

For Michele, building a Jewish family was a mark of respect for all those who suffered for their Judaism, be it in the Holocaust, pogroms, or inquisitions.

Rabbi Deren suggests that the broader discussion should, indeed, be about “traditional Jewish marriage, and by extension, the Jewish home, as the sacred eternal heartbeat of our nation”.

The rising intermarriage rate, he says, is a symptom of societal change in which people’s connection to Judaism is shifting and sometimes distancing.

But, “rather than focusing on the symptom alone”, worldwide Jewry needs to ensure that its people find “relevant and personal” connections with “a joyful inspired Judaism that ignites enriched identity, deep faith, and knowledgeable commitment”.

Widespread Jewish campaign against US detention centres ‘just getting started’

BEN SALES – JTA

If you’re going to physically block an entrance to an ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) detention centre, the handbook says, don’t be nice about it. Do chant in Yiddish. Do sing Hebrew prayers.

“Defiant, angry, urgent, Jewish,” reads the #NeverAgainIsNow action toolkit, a six-page Google document meant for Jews planning to protest at ICE detention centres.

This is the digital handbook for a protest movement called Never Again Action that was born two weeks ago, and is growing fast. The movement’s first action was to protest at an ICE detention centre in New Jersey, where 36 people were arrested. Two days later, 18 people each were arrested in similar actions in Boston and Washington DC. At least six actions in total have taken place at ICE facilities across the country, co-sponsored with other groups, according to Sophie Ellman-Golan, an organiser of the New Jersey demonstration. Never Again Action is planning another demonstration in DC on Tuesday as a culmination of this round of protests, though movement leaders say it’s only the first stage of a broader campaign.

“What is happening at the border is an abomination, but I also know that there are children in my own city, in my own community, that have gone to bed over the

past three weeks without their parents,” said Amy Fischer, 33, one of the Washington protesters who was arrested.

The demonstrations, which are live-streamed on social media, employ Hebrew songs and Jewish chants. The organisation’s materials suggest saying the mourner’s kaddish for migrant children who have died in United States’ custody.

According to organisers, protestors aim to draw attention to the detention of migrant families and children, close the detention centres, reunite separated families, and ensure protection for undocumented immigrants in the country.

When the group uses the phrase “never again”, and describes the detention centres as “concentration camps”, it’s intentionally alluding to the holocaust. The protesters believe that what’s happening at ICE facilities is an atrocity, and that the Jews’ history of persecution, especially at the hands of the Nazis, compels them to act on behalf of other persecuted groups.

In that way, the group is explicitly taking a side in a debate that has raged ever since Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

called the detention centres concentration camps nearly a month ago. Organisers dispute the claims of Ocasio-Cortez’s critics, who say the comparison to Nazi concentration camps both overstates the situation in ICE facilities, and trivialises the Holocaust.

Never Again Action draws on some of the same cohort of youthful activists who have riled legacy Jewish groups, either because they can be harshly critical of Israel or ally with others who are. But while several establishment Jewish groups condemned Ocasio-Cortez’s use of Holocaust terminology, there has been little public Jewish criticism of the Never Again Action protesters and demonstrations. In the past, Jews

across a wide political and religious spectrum have supported immigrant and refugee rights.

Mark Hetfield, the chief executive of Jewish refugee aid organisation HIAS (the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), said he thought the Holocaust analogy was inappropriate, but the protests were worthy.

“This is something we need to be protesting. These are basically atrocities that the US is committing along the southern border.”

Other Jewish organisations also are working on behalf of the migrants, especially as the Trump administration plans a mass roundup of undocumented immigrants on Sunday. T’ruah, the liberal rabbinic human rights group, runs

a network of synagogues that provides or assists with sanctuary for undocumented families, has sent delegations to the border, and has members who have participated in the Never Again Action protests. HIAS has deployed lawyers to provide aid on the southern border, and soon will do so in northern Mexico.

Boston’s Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), an umbrella local policy group, has provided bond for 90 detained migrants.



Grooming no longer a hairy subject for men

JORDAN MOSHE

Waxing, threading, and facials are words which for years have been associated with women only – until now.

The belief that beauty treatments are “not for men” is on the decline, with the number of men adhering to grooming routines on the rise. Equally, Jewish men have started taking grooming seriously, making beauty treatments a priority.

“Men are going for treatments, and loving it,” says Justine Lever, the owner of Beauty in The Mews salon in Johannesburg. “Men account for a good 40% of our clientele, and the numbers keep going up.”

Lever says that when she started working 18 years ago, she never thought she’d see the day that men would embrace beauty treatments. But over the past few years, men have begun to understand the value of self-care routines, becoming more confident over time.

“The few that did come in a few years ago came in through the back, and wanted to use the private treatment rooms only,” she laughs. “Today, they walk in all the time, and have no issue with sitting in the front of the salon, and enjoying their treatments where everyone can see them.”

Men are also starting to book appointments of their own volition, though some of them started

going for grooming appointments at the instruction of their wives. After getting a taste of pampering, however, they were soon back for regular visits, and have become better clients than their female counterparts.

“The women come in for the *losh* (gossip),” jokes Lever. “Men require far less attention and maintenance. They never forget an appointment, always arrive on time, and on the whole, need far less admin. They actually make the best customers.”

These include dozens of Jewish clients coming in for anything from a laser treatment to an eyebrow tint. Other requested treatments include manicures, facials, massages, waxing (including nostrils and ears), and threading.

Says Lever, “Manicures and pedicures are hugely popular among men. I have a client who comes in regularly every two weeks for a manicure. He said that because he signs multimillion-rand deals, people tend to look at his hands to ascertain two things: the pen he’s using, and the state of his nails.

“These things have started mattering to men. No segment of the beauty industry is exclusively for women anymore.”

Beauty is, in fact, redefining

masculinity. Bonafide Beards barbershop’s owner, Monique Fleming, says that the rise of both the meticulous metrosexual and the rugged lumberjack look made the trend of caring for one’s appearance take off in recent years.

“Men [have] realised that there’s more to cleanliness than showering,” she says. “The hipster beard trend may be over, but the impact it had on how seriously men take their appearance is certainly lasting. More men are embracing a care routine.”

Fleming says that this has created a new class of man, born where metrosexual man meets rugged “manly man”. “The meticulous care the metrosexual man gives his appearance has been taken up by people who don’t fit this class. These are hairy guys who are out there doing ‘manly’ things, but who take the time to look after their appearance. At the same time, professionals like bankers are growing beards instead of shaving. There’s a new space taking shape.

“I’ve had product orders from an Afrikaans farmer in the Free State,” she says. “Even the typically rugged

man who lives on a remote farm wants to care for his beard. Grooming is certainly breaking down borders.”

The male grooming trend is a growing category worldwide. David Simmons, media and events manager at Sorbet Man, says that men of all ages and nationalities have embraced all aspects of grooming, and this trend is not segmented within different communities.

“From a global perspective, big brands promote grooming to an extent that men feel more empowered to look good. There are more male grooming bars opening, which encourage men to look after themselves.”

The self-care continues at home, too, with men buying all types of skincare and beauty products to use after treatments. “Clients contact me for suggestions on what products they should use,” says Lever. “I have men asking me after a treatment what nail cream I use because they want to buy some for themselves. They are becoming increasingly diligent about their care routines.”

Both Lever and Fleming believe that the industry will continue to

grow, though it might be some time before the more religious Jewish man takes to such treatments.

Says Lever, “Most men are no longer shy to ask about treatments, and have any kind of treatment done. Once they get a taste, they’re hooked. Of course, the Jewish clients are the more secular ones, but the numbers keep increasing.”

Fleming says she hopes these numbers will soon include *frum* (religiously observant) men. “I hope these men will soon make use of what is available out there,” she says. “There are so many of them with gorgeous beards, and with the right product, they can really change their image for themselves and their wives.

“There is no one trend or grooming routine for anyone. It’s a very personal thing, and men need to find what works for them. I once went for an eyebrow threading and cried for days afterwards, so I stick to wax. Some men sit down for threading, and don’t make a sound. “You don’t need to be a metrosexual to groom yourself,” she says. “You can still be manly, and cross the perceived boundaries of grooming.”



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Going beyond Mandela Day

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Mandela Day comes around once a year, getting people rallying to do good. These Jewish organisations – among many others – don’t wait for Mandela Day to make a difference. They show daily dedication to uplifting South Africa’s vulnerable communities.

Afrika Tikkun

“We believe we have a responsibility as a Jewish community to upskill people and provide, as Chief Rabbi [Cyril] Harris used to say, a light unto the nations,” says Marc Lubner, the chief executive of Afrika Tikkun. “That means we have to think about providing support, infrastructure, and what we call responsible kindness to a wider spectrum of individuals than those in the Jewish community.”

Founded as a charity initiative in 1994 by the late chief rabbi and late philanthropist and businessman, Bertie Lubner, Afrika Tikkun has evolved to become a nongovernmental organisation (NGO) that offers holistic development to disadvantaged communities.

“Fifteen years ago, when I joined,” says Marc, Bertie’s son, “we changed the vision to an organisation that had employment or entrepreneurial development as its outcome.”

In pursuit of that goal, Afrika Tikkun developed a “360-degree cradle-to-career model” offering early childhood development, child and youth development, and career development.



From preschool, children are taught Tikkun’s values, as well as numeracy and literacy skills.

Youth development is then cultivated through five youth centres in Gauteng and the Western Cape for kids between seven and 19. “Centres have structured programmes that help kids to take responsibility for themselves and their decisions,” says Marc. Career development and job-readiness programmes promote skills development, while Afrika Tikkun Services annually place 3 000 people in jobs and learnerships.

“There are 15 000 to 16 000 kids that come to the centres regularly, and a further 10 000 are reached through our primary healthcare efforts and schools,” says Marc. Afrika Tikkun works together with the communities in which it operates, a factor key to its success.

Mensch

Non-profit organisation (NPO) Mensch creates and empowers a network of change-makers, mobilising positive social activism based on Jewish values.

“I started Mensch in 2014 while working at the South African Jewish Board of Deputies in Cape Town,” says Executive Director Gina Flash. “We launched a network of Jewish people doing social-enterprise work or serious volunteering. The network stretched to include public health and HIV doctors, academics, and those working in the public or development sectors.”

In early 2016, Flash left the board and launched Mensch as an NPO. “Today we have about 70 members in Cape Town and about 20 in Johannesburg. We’re a network of organisations that go beyond the Jewish community.”

Mensch supports, grows, and empowers individuals in their network and the organisations with which they work, to create greater impact. “We do that by offering professional development services, training, and workshops,” says Flash. “We create programmes and engagements linking people directly to network members and their particular work.” Members also support one another through networking and peer mentorship.

Flash says helping those outside of our community is the “essence of being Jewish”.

“I’ve travelled, studied, and worked all over the world,” she says. “I’ve come back to South Africa with a feeling shared by many of my generation: if you’re going to live here, you should be doing something to help. Being white, Jewish, and young, we don’t really know what our identity is. There’s a lot to be said about stepping up and in, not wanting to be part of a generation of Jewish South Africans that didn’t do enough.”

Union of Jewish Women

The Union of Jewish Women (UJW) supports Jewish and broader South African communities.



water to almost 26 000 people for the next five years,” says Gersun Mendelow. “We handed out 412 dignity kits – with underwear and reusable menstrual pads – to schoolgirls, and 1 500 hygiene kits to communities affected by Cyclone Idai.”

Mitzvah School

The Mitzvah School, founded by Lesley Rosenberg and Molly Smith in 1987, aimed to address the education crisis during apartheid. “Our kids were safely in good schools and the kids from Alex were just down the road from us, and unable to write,” recalls Rosenberg, who’s now the school’s director. “We decided to do a *mitzvah* (good deed), and the rest is history!”

Initially established for just one year on the Bet David synagogue property, the school offered quality education to Alexandra-based students in their matric year. Yet, in response to the lingering education crisis, the school remains operational more than 30 years later. Mitzvah School has a consistent 98% pass rate, and an average university pass rate of 75%, well above the national average.

The school currently has 29 students. “To contribute to uplifting the people of South Africa has been a great joy,” says Rosenberg. “Most of our financial support has come from big companies with a Jewish chief executive, although individuals contribute too.”

“Kids who studied by candlelight now return here in their motorcars, and say, ‘If it wasn’t for you, we don’t know where we would’ve been.’ We change lives – those of students, teachers, and our own. Many

students achieve their potential, and leave here with a feeling of self-worth.”

Students also pay it forward. “Together with the Kehillah Sisterhood at Bet David, we also run a daily feeding scheme in Alex, started by a past student.”

Jewish National Fund

By promoting environmental awareness and educating communities about self-sustainability, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and its offshoots have had a significant impact.

“The JNF is the guardian of the land and ecology of Israel,” says Education Officer Bev Price. “We deal with land, water, and vegetation. We also take Israel’s experience, and try to bring it to our people. JNF South Africa is one of the only JNFs in the world that has had an impact locally, rather than just on Israel.”

The JNF Walter Sisulu Environmental Centre in Mamelodi creates a culture of community conservation. Through environmental education, it builds awareness amongst the youth, motivating them to preserve the wealth of our natural heritage.

Food and Trees for Africa

Celebrated NGO Food and Trees for Africa was founded in 1990 by a group of eco-conscious individuals and organisations including environmentalist Jeunesse Park and Isla Feldman, the latter the national chair of JNF South Africa. Focused on food security, environmental sustainability, and greening, the organisation teaches self-sufficiency.

Hamba kahle to the Jewish ‘white Zulu’

>>>Continued from page 1

significant contribution to the arts. He also received an Order of the British Empire, and Chait remembers that he was not entirely comfortable with all the pomp and ceremony.

In 1993, Savuka’s last trademark album was nominated for a Grammy Award for best world music album. Clegg’s alma mater, Wits University, conferred on him its highest honour, the degree of Doctor of Music *honoris causa*, saying that, “Johnny Clegg’s life and productions give meaning to the multiculturalism and social integration South Africans yearn for.”

In 2007, he won the Art Award at the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards, and a few years later, he returned to present awards.

Two weeks ago, the national executive council of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) unanimously chose Johnny Clegg to be the recipient of the Rabbi Cyril and Ann Harris Human Rights Award at its upcoming national conference in November. Sadly, that award will now be given posthumously. SAJBD National Chairperson Shaun Zagnoev says that the

board’s decision was motivated by “the bold, innovative, and in many ways unique role” that Clegg played in furthering the cause of democracy and human rights in South Africa.

Chait says that his friend always remained hopeful that he would beat pancreatic cancer, buoyed by the positivity of his medical team. He did rounds of chemotherapy until the end, but in many ways accepted that his “crossing” was imminent. Chait says Clegg decided his final resting place would be Westpark Jewish Cemetery where his mother is buried.

Speaking to the *SA Jewish Report* in December 2018, Clegg reminded readers that they could always find him through his music. “All artistic and cultural expression elevates our sense of self, and puts us into a different quality space. This can be momentary, or last a lifetime, like a life-changing book or a song that captures a moment in the listener’s life, and presents it back in a new way, forever linking them to that time or moment.”

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Kruger Park wake-up call

I woke up this morning to find that my family had left me. It was 05:20, and it was clear that they had exited in a hurry. Beds were hastily made, the kitchen was a mess, and my wallet lay open at the entrance table. All visible cash had been removed. They couldn't have been gone long, as the kettle was still hot to the touch.

So, I made myself coffee (it seemed silly to waste the freshly boiled water), sat down, and contemplated what it all meant.

My family had gone into the Kruger Park, and left me alone in the chalet. For the day. And, as much as I tried to muster even a little outrage, if I was to be honest, I couldn't be certain that it could get any better than this.

I had, after all, been banned from the Kruger the day before. Not by the park authorities, but by my family, who had determined that I was simply no fun to have around.

"Fun?" I asked. "How is 'Stop! Go back! I think I saw something! Go forward! No! A little back. Back! Back! There! No, it's a tree. But I'm sure I saw something,' fun? In the history of 'Go back ... no forward!' has an animal ever been sighted?" I pleaded.

That was my first warning.

The second came when we chanced upon a Kruger of cars, (the collective noun for a bunch of cars gathered around a rock, hoping it's a leopard)

and we asked what they were looking at. "Look across the riverbank," said a kindly lady, no doubt judging us for not having any binoculars.

“After the first tree that looks like a unicorn, to the left of the rock that is shaped like Moses, and you will see two lionesses lying down.” The family were overjoyed. We had seen a lion. “Rubbish!” I said, not meaning to burst bubbles, but wanting to keep them honest. “Would any one of you stand up in court, raise your right hand, and swear, so help you G-d, that what you saw today was a lion – let alone two?” I thought my wife would be proud of me for taking that moment to talk about honesty, G-d, and the legal system. But she wasn’t.

All she said was, "You aren't coming with us tomorrow." Apparently, she meant it.

If there was a chance of her changing her mind, it was dashed at the lunch stop (at 11.30) when I couldn't get the skottel (braai top) working properly. I'm sure it was faulty, but I could see my wife looking around at all the other families, and the fact that the other dads were braaiing with ease. I have never felt less of a man to my family. I know she didn't mean to judge, but I could sense her thinking, "If he can't even skottel, what use is he?"

It probably didn't help that I laughed uproariously at our son, who thought the braai was called a brothel, not a skottel. Apparently, as a family, we don't find this sort of thing funny. To be fair, this is the

same kid who said we needed to go back to Viagra Falls. "What?" we asked him, my wife and I both unable to breathe, before realising he had conflated Niagara and Victoria Falls, not intentionally of course.

It's not that I don't like a game-reserve holiday like the rest of South Africa. But for me, it's more about the tranquillity, the open spaces, the sounds, and the views. I love the sunrises, the air, and the different colours of the trees.

I feel G-d's presence in it all, and I find that being here allows me to connect with my soul. I don't even mind the animals – not really.



INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman

But I'm as happy to drive around and take in the beauty as I am to see the big five in a morning of driving. I love chatting to park visitors (most of whom look eccentric and bizarre to me), and to the wonderful staff you meet along the way. I also love being with my family, who are ridiculously serious about it all, but who I'm hoping will let me back into the car tomorrow.

Zuma appearance shows tenacity of SA's legal system

South Africa's legal system has shown its effectiveness through the dignity and thoroughness of the commission of inquiry into state capture. This should be noted by people who feel uncertain about where the country is headed. Among the many South Africans who have left the country over the years because they lack confidence in its future, there is lots to think about. Perhaps some might even consider coming back.

The appearance before the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture of humbled former South African President Jacob Zuma to explain his role in the corruption of the nine years during which he was in charge, is an example of this. Zuma is accused of allowing or encouraging the “capture” of state institutions by criminal elements, including the notorious Gupta family.

He is being given every possibility to “have his days in court”, which is what everyone is entitled to. Justice Zondo on Tuesday went to great lengths to insist that Zuma and his legal team be given all the necessary protection to ensure their safety and shield them from intimidation.

The remarkable thing is that, in spite of attempts to undermine it, the country's basic legal foundation has held fast. South Africans can raise a glass to that. It was gratifying to see this once powerful man, the former president, talking to the judge at the commission's premises in Parktown, Johannesburg, as if he was just another citizen facing the law trying to explain his way out of a difficult situation. It remains to be seen if he manages to outwit those using legal process to tie him down.

There are numerous examples of people taking the legal route for rulings about adherence to the constitution of the republic. However, some who

TAKING ISSUE



Geoff Sifrin

left the country will still be relieved that they have built other lives elsewhere, where political complications are less severe. Others might miss the country they were brought up in, as it performs in ways they never thought possible.

On the negative side, if a society's health is judged by crime figures, South Africa comes out badly. For example, spectacular headlines were made this week about the situation in the Cape Flats, the impoverished area near Cape Town, where gangsterism has escalated so drastically that 900 people were murdered in the first six months of 2019, according to mortuary statistics.

What does this have to do with the ordinary South African? As always, in the wealthier suburbs, life continues differently, and often elegantly. Many white South Africans know the “white areas” of Cape Town such as Sea Point on the Atlantic coast from living or holidaying there in the past. Sea Point, in particular, has always been a very Jewish area, with beautiful buildings, delightful beaches, and a boardwalk and pools in which children swim.

Sea Point's residents have always known about the poverty and crime in the Cape Flats. It's important now, as the country tries to consolidate the things it has in its favour, that everyone becomes more aware of what happens in places like the Cape Flats, and looks at ways in which they might be able to help.

Helping in a situation like this isn't easy for the average person without resources or know-how. But a spirit of optimism about the country and belief in it in spite of its difficult past and the challenges it faces, might itself be of help.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Preserving the heritage of SA Jewry



Shaun Zagnoev

The archives also play a vital role in preserving and safeguarding documentation relating to Jewish organisations that would otherwise be irrevocably lost once the latter have closed down. These include the records of scores of former small-town congregations which have been used extensively by, amongst others, the SA Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth in its work. A most welcome recent addition is the archives of B'nai B'rith, one of Johannesburg's most active Jewish communal bodies, which for more than three quarters of a century assisted the underprivileged of all races and creeds.

Sadly, the organisation finally closed its doors earlier this year, but past members at least have the assurance that the good deeds it performed, and the contribution made by the many good people associated with it, are being preserved for posterity.

- *Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM, every Friday from 12:00 to 13:00.*

*This column is paid for by
the SA Jewish Board of Deputies*

A promotional advertisement for Killarney Mall's Winter Sidewalk Sale. The background is a dark teal color with a large, light blue diagonal stripe. On the left, the text 'WINTER SIDEWALK SALE' is written in large, bold, white capital letters, followed by '25 JULY - 5 AUGUST' in a slightly smaller font. Above this, the Killarney Mall logo is displayed, consisting of a stylized 'M' icon and the text 'KILLARNEY MALL' in white and blue. Below the logo, the tagline 'CONVENIENTLY YOURS!' is written in white. On the right side, there are three circular callouts: the top one says 'UP TO 75% OFF', the middle one says 'SPEND AND WIN R60,000 IN PRIZES', and the bottom one says 'FREE DELIVERY'. Below these callouts, there are images of a green parka, a tan handbag, a black boot, and a purple scarf. At the bottom right, there are logos for the Leisure Portfolio Association (lpa) and Honda, along with the text 'The Choice is Yours' and 'BEST DEALS ON HONDA'. The Honda logo is a red 'H' inside a white circle, and the text 'HONDA' is in red. Below the Honda logo, it says 'The Power of Dreams' and 'www.hondajhb.co.za'. At the bottom left, there are social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. At the bottom center, the contact information 'T: 011 646 4657 • KILLARNEYMALL.CO.ZA' is displayed. At the bottom right, the City Property logo is shown, which is a stylized 'CP' inside a circle, with the text 'CITY PROPERTY' and 'Creating the Future' below it.

Hermann Kallenbach – architect of Linksfield Ridge and Gandhi’s friend

JORDAN MOSHE

Linksfield Ridge looms large over King David School and areas that were traditionally Jewish. So, many of us are familiar with it and the roads leading up to it, but few know its history.

The steep inclines and breathtaking views of Linksfield Ridge might never have become accessible were it not for Hermann Kallenbach. This German-Jewish-South African architect was not only a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi, but was also responsible for establishing the suburb of Linksfield Ridge.

In fact, according to Kathy Munro, honorary associate professor in the school of architecture and planning at the University of the Witwatersrand, “Linksfield Ridge was the only Johannesburg suburb established by an architect.”

“Kallenbach is the man credited with building the north-to-south cutting through the steep cliff face, namely Sylvia Pass. He built his own house at number 5 New Mountain Road, and he built the road from the bottom of Sylvia Pass to his house.”



The pass leading from The Ridge Road to Kallenbach Drive

Photo: Alkis Doucakis

The history of the Linksfield area can be traced back as far as 1910. This was when the Muller Plantage Sijndikaat approached the municipality with a proposal to establish “the township of Linksfield” on the grounds of its plantation. In spite of many agreements, arrangements, and transfers, it wasn’t until 1922 that the project was gazetted and formally approved.

It is into this scene that Kallenbach and his architect partner, AM Kennedy, entered, buying up portions of land that would be merged into a single suburb.

“It seems the two men consolidated the portions to create the suburb of Linksfield,” writes Alkis Doucakis, the author of *In the Footsteps of Gandhi – An Illustrated History of Johannesburg’s Linksfield Ridge and Environs*. “Kallenbach bought the first portion that was to become the north-eastern sector of Linksfield Ridge.” In 1939, he would become the owner of the ridge itself. He continued to expand the suburb by buying property in the area well after it was established.

Born in 1871 in Neustadt, Kallenbach was an immigrant who arrived in South Africa in 1896. He spent much of his professional life in Johannesburg where he left his mark.

“He was highly successful in his profession,” says Munro. “He is remembered and known in the city for some well-regarded period buildings ranging from churches to synagogues, office blocks to retirement estates.”

Kallenbach introduced numerous elaborate terraces, stairways, retaining walls, and stone garden tables on Linksfield Ridge, according to Doucakis.

was born a Jew, and I will die a Jew.”

He was an equally ardent Zionist, a fact which made Kallenbach arguably the most important link between the Indian nationalist movement and the Zionist movement. Not only was he a close friend to the Indian community, he also developed a deep connection with one of its greatest leaders: Mahatma Gandhi.

Says Munro, “It was Kallenbach’s karma to befriend Gandhi, but it was both his good fortune and perhaps his misfortune that this should have been the intense and best-known relationship of his life. The link to Gandhi gave Kallenbach an enduring place in the Gandhi story.”

She explains that their friendship was based on strong mutual attraction, shared interests in diet and vegetarianism, enduring physical tests, and deep philosophical debate about human values.

“Together they hammered out the tactics and organisation of passive, non-violent resistance, and *satyagraha* (devotion to the truth), and applied these evolving methods to oppose the Transvaal government’s new law insisting on the registration of the Indian population,” Munro says.

The two shared a strong bond, living together for a time during which they often meditated and even showered outdoors. Their shared ideology resulted in them creating a rural, co-operative, pre-industrial community at Tolstoy Farm at Lawley to the south west of Johannesburg, where people grew their own food, made their own sandals, and became skilled carpenters and bricklayers. Munro maintains that this project influenced Gandhi’s later creation of ashrams in India, and could be a strand in the shaping of the



A statue of Mahatma Gandhi and Herman Kallenbach in Lithuania

Photo: Martynas Ambrazas

kibbutz in Israel.

Gandhi had a hand in shaping Kallenbach’s outlook on life, including his Jewish and Zionist values. “Kallenbach is an interesting figure, far removed in outlook and temperament from the mainstream of South African Jewry of the time,” says Sarid. “He not only adopted Gandhi’s asceticism, but proposed fresh austerities.” It was Gandhi who urged that Kallenbach devote his resources to saving his own people, the Jews. Kallenbach would eventually bequest the better part of his wealth to the establishment of the state of Israel late in his life.

“Together, they shaped a philosophy and strategised around political positions,” Munro says. “They developed a programme of action for justice that had far reaching consequences.” Sadly, wartime conditions terminated the partnership in 1914, and it was not until 1937 that Kallenbach visited Gandhi in India.

“For ten years, theirs was a close and intense friendship. They were soulmates,” says Munro.

Kallenbach passed away in 1945, and his niece, Hanna Lazar (after whom the Ridge’s Hannaben Street is named) transported his ashes to Israel for burial at Kibbutz Degania. In October 2015, a statue of the architect and Gandhi was unveiled in Rusne, Lithuania, recognising Gandhi’s creation of the concept of non-violent resistance, and Kallenbach’s pivotal role in shaping Gandhi’s ideas and testing them in practice.

According to some, Kallenbach not only lives on through his legacy and architecture, but at Linksfield Ridge itself. Residents who have lived in the Kallenbach house and surrounding properties have, since the 1970s, reported hearing footsteps and knocking sounds late at night. One woman even claims to have seen Kallenbach himself entering her home through the bathroom window.

Doucakis concludes, “Could it be a coincidence that these adjacent houses on New Mountain Road were built on what, at one time, had been someone’s hallowed ground – one for meditation?” Kallenbach may be gone, but he clearly remains alive in more ways than one.

Emmy 2019: all the Jewish nominees

JOSEFIN DOLSTEN – JTA

It’s Emmy season again, and Jews in the TV industry have plenty of reason to celebrate.

Out of all the nominees announced on Tuesday, here’s a roundup of the Jewish picks on the list.

The winners will be announced on 22 September at Los Angeles’ Microsoft Theater.

The Marvelous Mrs Maisel, which follows the life of feisty comedian Midge Maisel from the very Jewish 1950s Upper West Side, was nominated for outstanding comedy series. Rachel Brosnahan was nominated for best comedy actress for her titular role, while Tony Shalhoub also got a nod for playing her father. Marin Hinkle and Alex Borstein both were nominated for best supporting actress in a comedy series. Luke Kirby, Rufus Sewell, and Jane Lynch were all nominated for best guest actor and actresses for their roles. The series won eight Emmys last year.

Russian Doll, about a Jewish New Yorker named Nadia Vulvokov who finds herself in a pickle, a la *Groundhog Day*, was also nominated for best comedy series. Natasha Lyonne got a nod for best comedy actress for the lead role.

Schitt’s Creek, which had a notable episode about celebrating Christmas and Chanukah, also got a nomination for best comedy series. Eugene Levy and

Catherine O’Hara were both nominated for their roles as married couple Johnny and Moira Rose.

Patricia Arquette, whose mother is Jewish, was nominated for best actress in a limited series or movie for her role in *Escape at Dannemora*.

Jewish comedian Sarah Silverman’s show, *I Love*



Natasha Lyonne at the Women in Film Annual Gala in Beverly Hills, California

Photo: Emma McIntyre/FilmMagic

You, America With Sarah Silverman, was nominated for best variety sketch series.

Maya Rudolph, whose father is Jewish, was nominated for best guest actress in a comedy series for her role in *The Good Place*.

Canadian-Jewish actress Sarah Goldberg got a nod

for best supporting actress in a comedy series for her role as Sally Reed in *Barry*.

Adam Sandler was nominated for best guest actor in a comedy series for hosting *Saturday Night Live*. He also was nominated for best writing for a variety special for his stand-up special *100% Fresh*.

Amy Schumer was nominated for best writing for a variety special for her stand-up show, *Amy Schumer Growing*.

Sacha Baron Cohen and three of his co-directors were nominated for outstanding directing for a variety series for the Showtime series *Who Is America?*

Filmmakers Julie Cohen and Betsy West were nominated for outstanding documentary directing for *RBG*, their documentary about Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Tim Wardle got a nod for directing *Three Identical Strangers*, a documentary about a pair of Jewish triplets who were split up at birth without their knowledge. Both films also got nominated for exceptional merit in documentary filmmaking.

Love, Gilda, a film about the late Jewish comedian Gilda Radner, was nominated for best documentary programme.

The production team behind Jerry Seinfeld’s *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee* was nominated for outstanding informational series.

Ilana Glazer and Abbi Jacobson were both nominated for outstanding actress in a short for comedy or drama series for their web videos titled *Hack Into Broad City*.

Michael Douglas was nominated for best lead comedy actor his role in *The Kominsky Method*, while Alan Arkin got the nod for supporting actor.

Concert pianist teaches resilience through music and memories

JORDAN MOSHE

Acclaimed American concert pianist Mona Golabek learned to play the piano, but her mother Lisa Jura gave her far more than an education in music. Through her music lessons, she learned to rise above circumstances. This was something Jura – born in Austria before World War II – was forced to do. She had last sight of her own mother when she was 14, when her mother put her on one of the Kindertransport trains, along with 10 000 other Jewish children, sent to safety in Britain. The last words Jura recalled her mother saying to her at the train station were, “Promise me that you will hold onto your music. Let it be your best friend.” Jura did just that, and then taught her daughter how to bring light into the world in the darkest of hours. It is this lesson that Golabek is sharing with audiences across the globe today. “When my mother taught me to play the piano, she said that each piece of music tells a story,” says Golabek. “Between Bach and Beethoven, I heard the stories of her youth: the glorious Vienna of another century, her childhood dream of becoming a concert pianist, and the words my grandmother said to her at the train station, which remained in her heart for years after that.” Golabek, also an author, recording artist, and radio host, will visit Johannesburg and Cape Town next

month as part of her mission to share her mother’s lessons with the world. Through musical storytelling, she will illustrate the life of her mother, then a destitute 14-year-old Jewish musical prodigy, who arrived in London in 1938 to escape the Nazi threat to Europe. Her show, *The Pianist of Willesden Lane*, tells the story of Jura’s life, marked by loss, separation, determination and triumph. Golabek’s own piano playing brought her to this project. “In my thirties, I played the Grieg Piano Concerto with the Seattle Symphony. I woke up one morning and realised that it was the piece my mother so often talked about. I recalled the stories she told me, the people she’d mentioned, and events she’d recounted. “I felt it had to be shared in a book, or perhaps a movie. If I could get something out there, I could inspire others with the powerful universal messages in my mother’s story.” Her vision came to fruition in 2002, with the publication of *The Children of Willesden Lane*, co-written with Lee Cohen, and chronicling her mother’s life from Vienna to the United States. Golabek’s mission resulted in her crossing paths with Hershey Felder, a notable actor, playwright, composer, producer, and director who decided he would create a one-woman show around the story. “He took a chance on me,” says Golabek. “He created the *Pianist of Willesden Lane*, which

opened in Los Angeles in 2012. He changed the course of my life, and allowed me to spread my mother’s message.” The show proved popular the world over, a fact which Golabek attributes to the universality of its story. “The story forces you to ask the question: what do you hold onto in the darkest of times? My mother’s story is one of man’s humanity to man, which is the reason why I do this,” she says. “I tell audiences that I’m alive because a decision was made by another generation to save the lives of 10 000 Jewish children. It’s essential that we ask what our purpose is on earth beyond ourselves, what our dreams are, and how we will pursue then.” Golabek says that pairing this instructive lesson with music was the heart of the project. “I had a reputation for telling stories at the piano. It was how I sold the book to publishers – I gave them a taste of the music which was so much a part of it. The music is the secret arrow of

the entire project. There are so many extraordinary stories in the lives of humanity. Music complements them, and gives them an edge.” This combination is an essential education tool, she says. Golabek used every opportunity available to further her educational mission, working closely with various partners in book readings and performances to bring the valuable lesson of her mother to youth across America. “I went around the US to do readings. Montgomery, Alabama, was the first. It’s in the deep south, and I was awed to see how African American students celebrated the story of a Jewish teen in World War II. It left me feeling ecstatic. Their response is the reason I keep going.” Jura’s story is gaining traction among youth of all walks of life, including Asian, Hispanic, Arabic and others. Golabek recently held a show in London with the Holocaust Educational Trust for about 9 000 students, among them many Muslim youth who spoke of how connected they felt to her work. Some even

asked when an Arabic translation of her book would hit the shelves, giving access to their parents with whom they are eager to share Jura’s experiences. “The story shows us that instances of man’s humanity to man can reach into hearts and break down walls of hatred, prejudice, racism, and anti-Semitism,” says Golobek. “It opens us up to empathy and sensitivity to another person’s life.” Youngsters find Jura’s story relevant, seeing in her a mirror of some of their own difficulties. “Young people tell me that the story is more relevant today than ever before,” says Golabek. “They relate to a young person having a dream, to kids banding together, growing up, and falling in love. They can relate to loss, and having the strength to overcome.” Though it happened many years ago, this story clearly continues to resonate, not least with Golabek herself. Although Jura passed away before the book was published, Golabek says she hopes that wherever her mother is now, she realises she is an inspiration. “I’ve come away with such admiration for who my mother was, her willpower to survive, and make something of her life. She could also be a total flirt, with every man in any room she walked into falling in love with her. She was magnificent and complex, and if I use her story to inspire others, then I think I’ve done something right.”



Mona Golabek



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A

The Bullet who showed his metal on the Tour de France

SAUL KAMIONSKY

The Tour de France, one of the most-watched sporting events with an average TV viewership of 2.6 billion, currently has cycling fans fastened to their sofas.

One of these spectators is New Yorker Doug Shapiro, 59, who competed in the world’s most popular multi-staged race in 1985.

He finished 74th out of a field of 220 riders in spite of not being in the tour competing for a place. His role in cycling parlance was to be a domestique for Joop Zoetemelk, who had come second in the Tour de France six times. “I had to keep [Joop] out of the wind, bring him food and drink from the car, keep him at the front coming into climbs,” Shapiro says.

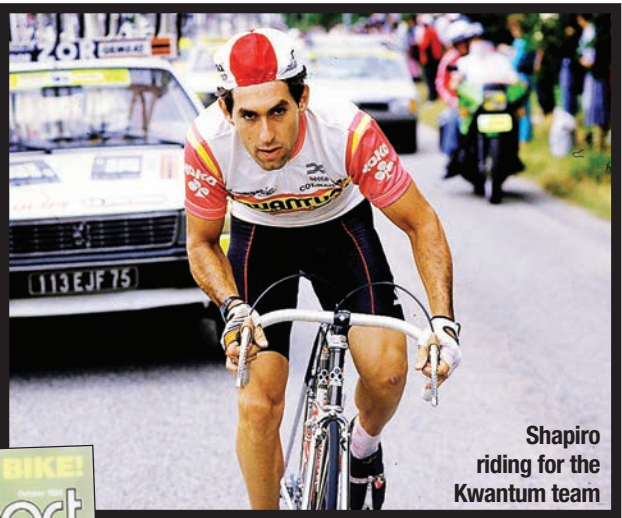
“Joop didn’t speak English, and my ‘Nederlands’ wasn’t the best, but most of the team spoke English. I found that I got stronger and stronger as the race went on. It was very rewarding for me,” he says.

In this year’s race, many of the favourites are also hoping for that last spurt of strength. They include Geraint “G” Thomas, Nairo “Nairoman” Quintana, Vincenzo “The Shark” Nibali, and Rigoberto “Rigonator” Urán.

Shapiro, like this year’s favourites, also has a nickname, “The Bullet”. This weapon-like sobriquet was due to the immense power he possessed in his armoury as a hill climber and sprinter.

Shapiro caught the cycling bug as a youngster in spite of initially being a keen footballer. “I grew up just outside New York City, and played soccer, like most kids,” says Shapiro, who was the third ever American to finish the tour, following Jock Boyer, and three-time winner Greg LeMond.

“When I was 13, during the off season, our coach suggested that we do another sport to keep fit. There was a German language professor



Shapiro riding for the Kwantum team

in the school who ran a cycling club, so I joined it, and we went to see a race. I was like, ‘Wow! I want to do this’.”

The following week, he rode that same race and won it. That was just the beginning.

Shapiro was a member of the American Olympic Team in 1980 and 1984 respectively. However, he was not able to participate in the former due to United States’ boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics. For this, he and his teammates received a Congressional Gold Medal at the White House.

With a medal in his trophy cabinet, an emboldened Shapiro went on to win what was then American’s top cycling stage race, the Coors Classic, in 1984, and he describes this as “probably my biggest achievement”.

“Many of the riders who rode the LA Olympics were there, and the likes of the 7-Eleven team were riding too. There was a guy called Bob [Eucher], he was a talent scout for Kwantum, and he saw my performance. That led to a ride with a composite team in the Olympia Tour of Holland, where I went well.”

This race was so highly cherished that, in the subsequent two years, it was won by LeMond and five-time Tour de France champion Bernard Hinault. The latter would go on to win the 1985 tour ahead of LeMond and Stephen Roche.

Shapiro’s cycling career has been dogged by some “very bad accidents”.

“In 1987, I was out with Eric Heiden on the bike,” Shapiro says. “We were on the way to the

cyclocross nationals, test riding some new tyres. I slipped, came down, and broke my femur. Eric had just started at medical school, and I might have died were it not for him being there.”

He was even more unlucky the following year. “I was in the break of four at the Coors Classic in Reno, and the four of us came down on a corner. I was okay, but as I got up, the bunch rode into me at full tilt,” Shapiro says. “I was in a wheelchair, I couldn’t walk, and my leg has never been the same since. I came back in ’89. My last race was in September of that year, and I came second.”

A year later, however, Shapiro was back

in the sport, albeit in a different role. He acted as the technical advisor and writer for the video *Cycling for Success*, produced by the 7-Eleven bike team. The video was the first of its kind to offer cycling safety tips and techniques.

Today, Shapiro, who resides in Marin County, California, owns and operates Shapiro & Associates. “I’m a crime-scene investigator in situations where cyclists and cars have collided. But I also keep in touch with guys like Chris Carmichael and Bob Roll, and watch all the races.”

Shapiro is also a public speaker, and has hosted many cycling training camps and educational seminars for bike shops, cycling fanatics, and racers of all levels.



Shapiro on the front cover of the October 1984 issue of *Bicycle Sport* magazine

Katz king of Klerksdorp Rotary

There isn’t much that Cheryl Katz, the new president of Klerksdorp Rotary Club, can’t do. Inducted to the presidency last weekend, Katz is the first Jewish woman in the city to be appointed to this position.

Katz has been a member of the Klerksdorp Rotary club since 2011, and has held numerous portfolios including supplying wheelchairs to the needy, a global campaign to end polio, and supporting the Rape Crisis Centre in Klerksdorp with care kits. About 60 rapes are reported in the area every month involving men and women aged between three months and 90 years. The kits include basic toiletries and other items that help to restore the dignity of victims.

Rotary’s theme this year is “Rotary – connects the world’. Katz has chosen to focus on peace and conflict resolution, given the unrest in the country. It is direction that Rotary supports strongly, and the club will focus on training people in conflict resolution. Katz jokingly says she feels qualified in this area, as she is continually refereeing conflict between her two strapping young sons.

Beyond Katz’s work for Rotary, she runs and owns two Chatz Vodacom franchises and a Glasfit franchise in Klerksdorp.

She is also chairperson of the South African National Blood Service Donor Committee, and has served in the South African Police Services Reserves, where she continues to take an active role.

It’s rare for two sisters to be awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship (PHF) Award, the highest international award by Rotary, which recognises outstanding commitment to Rotary and/or to the community. Katz received her PHF two years ago, while her sister, Diane Wolfson, received hers 29 years ago in what was then the Pretoria 6 Rotary Club. Their father, the late Ivor Goodman, was an active Rotarian in Witbank for most of his life. Having been president elect twice, he declined the presidency, preferring to concentrate on his portfolio of service to the aged and the community in general. Clearly service to the community runs high in this family.



Cheryl Katz with her sister Diane Wolfson at the induction ceremony

Letters

JUDAISM CAUGHT BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE ON GAY ISSUE

In the wake of the recent tragic suicide of a young Jewish teenager at a time when he was questioning his sexuality, there has been a call for change in the Jewish stance on homosexuality.

It appears, however, that this call is coming from the less religious members of our community, while there has been largely silence – at least in the press – from more religious community members, specifically our religious leaders.

And, who can blame them?

If someone was to say that homosexuality is a sin, not only would that be incredibly disrespectful to the family of the deceased, but that person would probably be stoned to death.

But what is the attitude of the majority of the Jewish community towards LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer Questioning) people? Judging by the views expressed in the *SA Jewish Report*, one gets the impression of majority support, but is that

really the case, or is it currently not politically correct to make homophobic comments, and so those who do feel this way remain silent when this issue is discussed? Calls for a change in the Jewish stance on homosexuality pose a conundrum for the Jewish religion, and hence for our religious leaders. On the one hand, if they stand by the religious view that homosexuality is a sin, they risk the Jewish religion being seen as outdated and disrespectful of the rights to freedom of expression

and dignity enshrined in the South African constitution. On the other, if they change the religious stance to accept homosexuality, they risk the Jewish religion being seen as doing what suits itself, and/or not respecting the laws of the Torah.

Judaism is therefore caught between a rock and a hard place on the LGBTIQ+ issue, and I, for one, will be keenly following events to see how this all unfolds. – **Tony Kamionsky, Johannesburg**

EXPOSING JEWISH CROOKS IS NOT ‘LASHON HARAH’

While I differ from you on some matters, I support your exposure of Jewish crooks. Such exposure is not *lashon harah* (gossip). Keep up the good work!

I look forward to your paper every week. There is always something worth reading. – **David Grinker, Johannesburg**

LIMMUD NOT DIMINISHED BY RABBINATE’S DECISION TO BOYCOTT

Our rabbinate has recently been harshly criticised, both on the pages of this newspaper and in the privacy of many homes. Its stance on Limmud seems to have attracted universal disapproval.

We have a rabbinate and Beth Din staffed by devoted and committed leaders, many of whom have comforted us in times of need, celebrated with us in times of joy, and made the South African Jewish community their life’s work. Their approach to Limmud comes as part of

that package.

I, for one, support our Beth Din and rabbis. I choose not to attend Limmud because it does not sit well with my religious world view, yet I am happy that it exists. Limmud is not diminished in any way by the decision of our rabbinate not to attend, and the value and legitimacy of Limmud as a project should not be affected by them.

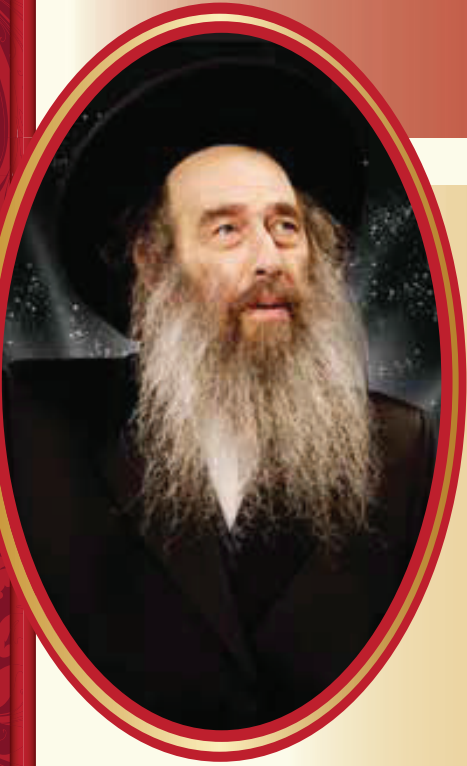
Limmud should simply shrug it off, and say, “Their loss!”. – **Dean Lutrin, Johannesburg**

Sunday (21 July)
• The Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre (JHGC) presents a lecture by Dr Tracey Farber on <i>Integrity versus despair – the experience of traumatised child holocaust survivors</i> . Time: 11:00. Venue: 1 Duncombe Road, Forest Town. RSVP to dowi@jhbholocaust.co.za or 011 640 3100. Free admission, donations welcome.
Monday (22 July)
• The Union of Jewish Women (UJW) hosts Ali Bacher, renowned international sportsman and South African cricket administrator, on the role of sport in politics. Time: 10:00. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Donation: R40. Contact: UJW office 011 648 1053.
Wednesday (24 July)
• Second Innings hosts a guided tour of the new permanent exhibition at the JHGC. Time: bus departs at 09:00; guided tour starts at 10:00. Meet the bus in the parking below Golden Acres. Venue: 1 Duncombe

Road, corner Jan Smuts Avenue, Forest Town. Cost: bus: R120; donation to Holocaust centre: R40; Lunch at Issy’s for own account. Contact: 011 483 7425.
Thursday (25 July)
• JHGC presents a workshop by Dr Stephen Muir titled, <i>Singing songs of revolution, remembrance and reflection – a participatory workshop</i> . Time: 10:00. Venue: 1 Duncombe Road, Forest Town. RSVP to dowi@jhbholocaust.co.za or 011 640 3100. Free admission, donations welcome.
• Learn Yiddish every Thursday with Tamar Olswang and the UJW. Time: 10.00 to 11.00. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Cost: R100 per person, R80 for pensioners and UJW members. Includes tea/coffee and refreshments. Contact: 011 648 1053.



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Thursday, July 25

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Ohr Somayach

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Johannesburg

Glenhazel

Saturday, July 27

7:00pm-10:30pm

Mizrachi Shul

2 Long Ave

Orchards

Sunday, July 28

1:00pm-5:00pm

Pine St Shul

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Rouxville

Sunday, July 28

5:30pm-10:00pm

Sydenham Shul

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Musikanth's relationship with Small was cemented when Musikanth was appointed St John's College's director of rugby. Shortly after he started his new job, Musikanth noticed a young under-16 full back, and was impressed with Kieran Houlston's abilities as a player

Small's presence in the St John's rugby environment was too good to be true, and Musikanth duly recruited him into the Maccabi

"In the end, the game was exceptionally tight. We had to defend a slender lead with six men. James' tenacity and presence in that tournament was why we won those two medals."



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