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At least seven wounded in Tel Aviv attack

At least seven people were wounded in a terror attack in Tel Aviv as a Palestinian attacker rammed his car into people waiting at a bus stop.

Video from the scene showed the attacker then emerge from his white truck and begin stabbing patrons at a nearby street café. According to Israel Police, he was shot dead by a civilian with a gun.

Multiple victims were seriously wounded in the attack, which occurred in the city’s northern district. The attacker has been identified as a man from the southern West Bank.



The attack came while a major Israeli military raid took place in the Palestinian West Bank city of Jenin aimed at rooting out terrorist cells. It’s among the largest Israeli military operations in the West Bank in decades, involving hundreds of combat soldiers. Israeli forces have killed 10 people and injured about 100, according to the health ministry of the Palestinian Authority, which decried the operation as a war crime.

G-d’s higher plan



Rabbi Ryan Goldstein – West Street Shul

“Pick me ... please!” When I was at high school, I wasn’t much of a sportsman. I clearly remember how the selection process for soccer practice would take place every break. The two captains would slowly choose players from those on my left and those on my right, and when I was the only one left to be picked, they would fight over me. The one would say, “You take Goldstein,” and the other would say: “No, you take Goldstein.”

I don’t think that daily occurrence messed me up too badly. I always had a feeling that I would be chosen for greater things. In some way, it led me to a life of community and joining the rabbinate – where soccer skills aren’t a deciding factor – to empathise with others, and try to inspire and motivate people.

I believe that on some level, my little story is echoed behind the scenes in this week’s parsha.

Pinchas came from the illustrious family of Aharon the *kohen gadol*. His great-uncle was the great Moshe Rabbeinu. His father, Elazar, was the future *kohen gadol*, and his uncles were great leaders of the Jewish people. When Hashem stripped the priesthood from the firstborns because of their involvement with the golden calf, He chose the family of Aharon in their stead, making them all kohanim; all the sons and the future generations that would be born afterwards. Only one person was seemingly overlooked – poor Pinchas was already born at that

time and wasn’t made a kohen, no reasons given. He must have felt like the black sheep of the family.

Imagine the scene 40 years later. Pinchas witnesses a terrible public desecration of Hashem’s name. Moshe stands dumbfounded, while the head of the tribe of Shimon acts immorally with a Midianite woman. Imagine what was going through Pinchas’ head. He could have smirked upwards to G-d and thought, “How do you like the feeling?” But he doesn’t entertain such thoughts. The

Torah tells us that he ended the desecration of Hashem’s name by impaling the two sinners on his spear!

That was the greatness of Pinchas. His reward was to become a *kohen gadol* later on in Jewish history, and he was given the gift of immortality as Eliyahu Hanavi. Had he killed them as a kohen, he would have lost his priesthood, as the *halacha* dictates.

In our lives, let’s not believe that Hashem is short-changing us. In reality, He’s saving us for something much greater!



Israel Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai referenced the Jenin operation at the scene of the Tel Aviv attack on 4 July.

“We estimate that as a result of the activity in the Judea and Samaria region, the motivation and potential for a terror attack will rise,” he said, using the Israeli government’s term for the West Bank. “We’ll do everything we can to provide security.”

Russia hints at prisoner swap for journalist

The Kremlin has said for the first time that it has discussed with United States officials a possible prisoner exchange involving Jewish American journalist Evan Gershkovich, who has been held in a Russian prison since March.

The US ambassador to Russia visited Gershkovich on 3 July, marking the first time a consular official has been able to meet him since April. Meanwhile, Russian embassy officials met for the first time this week with Vladimir Dunaey, a Russian national jailed in the US on cybercrime charges.

“There have been contacts on the subject, but we don’t want them to be discussed in public,” said Dmitry Peskov, the press secretary for Russian President Vladimir Putin. “They must be carried out in complete silence.”

Gershkovich, a 31-year-old reporter at *The Wall Street Journal*, is the son of Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union. He was arrested by the Federal Security Service while on a reporting trip in Yekaterinburg on 29 March, and is being held at Lefortovo prison on charges of espionage. A Moscow court recently upheld a decision to extend his pretrial detention until at least 30 August.

A prisoner swap has long been seen by American officials as the most plausible way of securing Gershkovich’s freedom, as espionage trials in Russia are conducted in secret and it’s rare for courts to acquit a defendant. If convicted, Gershkovich could face up to 20 years in a penal colony.

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Aaron’s grandson Pinchas is rewarded for his act of zealotry. Moses is instructed on how the land is to be divided among the tribes. The five daughters of Tzelafchad petition Moses that they be granted the portion of the land belonging to their father, who died without sons. G-d accepts their claim. Moses empowers Joshua to lead the people into the land of Israel.

Israeli team brings water expertise to SA

TALI FEINBERG

A top-level delegation from Israel is heading to South Africa next week to engage with local authorities at the coalface of the country’s water challenges. It includes the director of Israel’s Water Authority, Yechezkel Lifshitz, who recently signed a memorandum of understanding on innovation and the development of water resources with Morocco as part of the historic Abraham Accords.

The delegation will meet local government and provincial officials, entities, and representatives from Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape. It will also engage with the Jewish community, business, and diplomatic sector on Israeli technology, as well as with communities affected by water-related challenges.

assist in solving the same problems for all South Africans.”

The other Israeli visitors in the team are Yehonatan Bar-Yosef, KKL water quality management and ecology expert; and Orna Toeg, the head of the South Africa desk at KKL.

“The delegation brings together a wealth of policy, governance, and practical experience that can assist high decision makers in the way that they approach the question of water sustainability in South Africa,” says Shulman. “South Africa has excellent technical people in this field, and we hope this will contribute to continued partnership on this issue.”

“Among the delegation are officials who have worked around the world on the issue of water,” Shulman says. “It’s an incredible opportunity to bring this experience to South Africa, and shows that there’s room for co-operation between Israel and South

“There’s broad support for Israel among many South Africans, local businesses, and organisations,” he said. “Providing new opportunities for partnerships to improve lives is an excellent way of strengthening the bonds that already exist between the two societies.”

Michael Kransdorff, the chairperson of JNF SA, says, “This is one of the highest-level Israeli delegations to visit South Africa in years, and has the potential to have a major impact on strengthening relations between the two countries literally at ground level, where it actually makes a difference in peoples’ lives. We would like to thank KKL for

making this delegation a reality. It highlights its longstanding special relationship with the South African Jewish community.”

Yechezkel Lifshitz



Israel has become a world leader in water technology

Photo: Kobi Gideon

“South Africa has a multitude of issues regarding our water infrastructure and accessibility,” says South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) director of public policy, Benji Shulman. “Israel, a former desert, has transformed itself into a world leader in water technology and agriculture, and literally made the desert bloom. There have been several interactions for some time now with Israeli water technology companies and organisations working in South Africa.

“For this reason, the Jewish National Fund of South Africa [JNF SA], Keren Kayemet LeIsrael [KKL], the Israeli embassy in South Africa, and the SAZF created a high-level water delegation to South Africa, so that experts in Israel might

Africans have access to clean, drinking water,” says Shulman. “Israeli technology and innovation can be used to solve a number of South African problems if all we do is ask for its guidance and expertise. This working visit helps us make that first step towards improving inter-state relations with Israel, which remains one of Africa’s most valuable partners for development and success.”

Though the African National Congress government is known for being anti-Israel, Shulman doesn’t think it will prevent these engagements. “Municipalities have a constitutional responsibility to provide water for their residents. Any attempt to prevent them from doing such would result in a break of their executive code of conduct.



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Leading global human rights group supports SA Jews

TALI FEINBERG

The Simon Wiesenthal Center, a leading international Jewish human rights organisation, has come out in support of local Jewry after the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) called for United Herzlia Schools “to be deregistered, based on the school being pro-Israel” in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament on 15 June.

EFF member of the provincial legislature (MPL), Aishah Cassiem, took her lead from African National Congress (ANC) provincial education spokesperson Muhammad Khalid Sayed, who called on education member of the executive council, David Maynier, to intervene in Herzlia’s Zionist education.

“The Simon Wiesenthal Center is denouncing the call by a South African politician who has called for Herzlia High, a Jewish community school in Cape Town, to be deregistered, said Simon Wiesenthal Center associate dean and the director of Global Social Action Agenda, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, in a statement on 27 June.

“Another bigot who tries to hide her antisemitism under the banner of anti-Zionism,” said Cooper. “What’s next, a demand to purge Jewish prayer books of age-old prayers chanted daily for 2 000 years that emphasises the dream

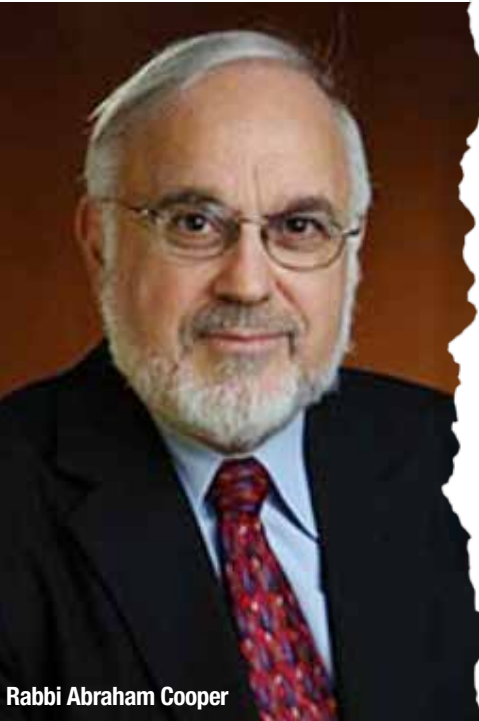
of a people yearning to return to Zion and Jerusalem? Every nation has the right to pursue its dreams and destiny,” Cooper said. “We’re proud that in 2023, about seven million Jews are citizens of the democratic Jewish state of Israel, and all those who are building their future in the ancient homeland of their forefathers.”

The Simon Wiesenthal Center confronts antisemitism, hate, and terrorism, stands with Israel, defends the safety of Jews worldwide and teaches the lessons of the Holocaust for future generations. The organisation is an accredited non-governmental organisation at the United Nations, UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe), the Organisation of American States, the Latin American Parliament, and the Council of Europe. Headquartered in Los Angeles, it has offices in New York, Chicago, Miami, Toronto, Paris, Jerusalem, and Buenos Aires.

“We stand in solidarity with Herzlia school and the community on this,” Cooper told the *SA Jewish Report* from Los Angeles this week. “We want to emphasise that this

kind of attack is an attack on every Jewish institution in the world and frankly, on Judaism.”

He said a politician targeting a Jewish school “raises an alarm



Rabbi Abraham Cooper

bell for me as it targets a Jewish community in a new way, a community which is already under extreme pressure from the anti-Zionist government of South Africa.

“In the world we live in today, everything local is global, and everything global is local, so this kind of demand – even though it was done not on a national basis but on a local basis – is also seen as a kind of ‘trial balloon’ whether this kind of pressure will be acceptable in any democracy,” Cooper said. “We’ve now gone from protests against Israeli ‘occupation’ on the West Bank, to boycotts of all Israeli products, to direct expressions of Jew-hatred in many formats.

“There’s even a sophisticated pushback against the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism because it has the audacity to actually explain when legitimate criticism against Israel morphs into antisemitism.

“I have great admiration for the

South African Jewish community going back many decades,” Cooper said. “I was once a scholar in residence of one of the synagogues in Cape Town. I was also the Jewish spokesman at the ill-fated 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban. More recently, I was brought in by Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein for the Sinai Indaba. It was a wonderful experience. We’re also lucky enough to have many expats living here in Los Angeles, many of whom I count as friends.

“The Simon Wiesenthal Center is a leading Jewish human rights nongovernmental organisation, and I’m in charge of how we interact on issues globally as well as locally,” said Cooper. He feels it’s important to speak out because “we’re all targeted by BDS [the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions group] and the adoption of the extreme Hamas language on many United States campuses. In that sense, we’re all in the same boat, no matter where we may reside in the world.”

He feels that Jewish communities should marshal other local faith leaders to push back.

“In all my visits to South Africa, including for the Durban conference, many people I interacted with, especially in the Christian

is potentially a terribly damaging and threatening breach that must be pushed back against. G-d forbid if this kind of activity were to be adopted and expanded in South Africa, I believe that you would have a massive pushback from world Jewry, and that would have very negative effects on South Africa. The bottom line is, we have the greatest respect and admiration for the South African Jewish community and a deep admiration for Rabbi Goldstein. We want to make sure that everyone knows that we stand in solidarity and are prepared to act when needed.”

Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies Chairperson Adrienne Jacobson says, “We’re reassured that the Cape Provincial Legislature unequivocally rejected this malicious attempt to smear and silence our schools. Zionism is an integral part of our heritage and values, and our community has a constitutionally entrenched right to express and identify with those beliefs.”

South African Zionist Federation National Chairperson Rowan Polovin emphasised that “Herzlia remains an exemplary and highly respected Jewish school in South Africa, whose alumni have made enormous contributions to all levels of South African society and have served with distinction in medicine, science, business, academia, and other fields. As a Jewish school

Another bigot who tries to hide her antisemitism under the banner of anti-Zionism.

community, have a love for Zionism. They hold a positive view of the Jewish state, in seeing young Jewish South Africans either going to make aliya or spending significant time in Israel. That’s something they admire, as it’s a beautiful thing to see Jewish people embrace their ancient homeland,” he said.

Regarding the call for Herzlia to be de-registered, he said, “This

with Jewish students and teachers, it’s intrinsically Zionist, with an unbreakable and proud connection to the world’s only Jewish state of Israel. Herzlia, as a Jewish school, values and promotes religious tolerance, non-racialism, understanding, and charity – much like the state of Israel values an inclusive, multicultural society in which the rights of all citizens are protected, respected, and upheld.”

Russia cracks down on former Moscow chief rabbi

GABE FRIEDMAN – JTA

Russia has labelled Pinchas Goldschmidt, the former chief rabbi of Moscow, a “foreign agent” a year after he left the country and refused to pledge his support for the war in Ukraine.

The designation cannot be contested in court and bars those assigned it from participating in many aspects of public life in Russia. The Russian government expanded the definition last year amid a crackdown on dissent following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and it has threatened to apply the label to the Jewish Agency for Israel, which helps Russian Jews emigrate.

In Goldschmidt’s case, the label is probably symbolic, as he has acknowledged that he won’t return to Russia after openly criticising the war and, from abroad, warning Russian Jews to flee.

On Saturday, in response to the foreign agent designation, he reiterated that call, saying as he has before, that Russia is on the verge of an antisemitic campaign.

“Russia has changed its face,” he said in a statement that reiterated comments he first made in December. “I call on the Jewish community to leave the country, before it’s too late.”

Many Russian Jews have left the country since the beginning of the war in February 2022, with tens of thousands emigrating to Israel. Goldschmidt, who had been Moscow’s chief rabbi since 1993, was among them, leaving Russia just weeks into the war in March 2022. He later acknowledged that he had done so after facing pressure to support the war.

“I resigned because to continue as chief rabbi of Moscow would be a problem for the community because of the repressive measures taken

against dissidents,” he told the *Guardian* in December.

He added that throughout Russian history, “whenever the political system was in danger, you saw the government trying to redirect the anger and discontent of the masses towards the Jewish community”.

“We’re seeing rising antisemitism while Russia is going back to a new kind of Soviet Union,” he said, “and step by step, the Iron Curtain is coming down again. This is why I believe the best option for Russian Jews is to leave.”

Jews weren’t allowed to practice their religion and were restricted from leaving the country while living under the Soviet regime.

Now living in Israel, Goldschmidt continues to serve as the head of the Conference of European Rabbis, a title he has had since 2011. He’s not affiliated with the Hasidic Chabad-Lubavitch movement, whose leading rabbis in Russia have had a much closer relationship with President Vladimir Putin.

But while Russian Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar and his top spokesperson, Boruch Gorin, have remained in the country, Chabad leaders have expressed concern about the war. In September, a gathering of dozens of Russian Chabad rabbis released a statement reading, “We pray that no more blood be spilled, and call upon people of good conscience everywhere to help aid those in need, including refugees, and end the suffering.”

A Russian official soon after described the Chabad movement as a “neo-pagan cult” striving for “global domination” in an op-ed that he later apologised for.



Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt

Photo: Sven Hoppe picture alliance via Getty Images

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SA public service minister omits Israel in West Bank visit

TALI FEINBERG

Another South Africa government minister has just returned from visiting the Middle East without setting foot in Israel or engaging with Israelis in any way. This time, it was South Africa’s minister of public service and administration, Noxolo Kiviet, who made an official visit to the West Bank on 24 June. She also met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

In January this year, Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco) Director-General Zane Dangor made an official visit to “Palestine”, and Dirco Deputy Minister Candith Mashego-Dlamini visited the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria in August 2022, but left Israel off the itinerary.

“The closeness of the Palestinians and Dirco is more and more evident with this visit, which is no more than a publicity stunt. The minister didn’t meet Israeli officials to mediate any peace settlement further,” says Glen Segell, visiting professor and research fellow in the department of political studies and governance at the University of the Free State and research fellow at the Ezri Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies at the University of Haifa.

Segell believes the government is following “an ANC [African National Congress] populist agenda that is anti-Zionist”.

“This has already had a backlash, given that it’s contradictory to the fundamentals and principles of the Abraham Accords, in which the Arab world is moving closer to Israel, while South Africa is widening the gap.”

He says the South African taxpayer would have funded Kiviet’s trip as an official diplomatic visit.

South Africa’s department of public service and administration (DPSA) is responsible for the organisation and administration of the public service. DPSA Communications Head Moses Mushi told the *SA Jewish Report*, “The minister didn’t interact with Israeli officials as the trip was a specific invitation by the Palestinians. The invitation came from her Palestinian counterpart, Minister Mousa Abu Zaid, who is chairperson of the General Personnel Council and head of the management board of the Palestinian National School of Administration (PNSA). The minister was also introduced to the eGovernment project implemented by the Palestinian Authority.

“This visit was funded by the department, and included a delegation from the South African National School of Government, as it was relevant to this trip. During her visit, she interacted with various government officials of her hosts, the state of Palestine, and academics.” Kiviet attended the inauguration of the PNSA, where she interacted with Abbas. “[He] conveyed his sincere gratitude to the South African people and government for their steadfast support of the Palestinian cause,” according to a statement by the Embassy of the State of Palestine in South Africa.

The embassy said the visit was “a testament to the growing diplomatic ties between our two nations, and the shared commitment to fostering mutual understanding and co-operation. This visit also marks a significant milestone in strengthening collaboration between South Africa and Palestine, particularly between the South Africa National School of Government and the PNSA.” Kiviet also met the secretary general of Fatah movement, Major

General Jibril Rajoub, in Ramallah.

Kiviet emphasised the need for “progress and peace”, and called for an end to the cycle of violence. At the same time, she compared Israel to apartheid, made no mention of any Jewish victims of terror, implied that the Jewish state was the sole source of conflict in the region, and didn’t engage with Israel in any way.

“In one of her official meetings with Dr Laila Ghannam, the governor of Al-Bireh municipality, Minister Kiviet was exposed to incidents of violence that resulted in the destruction of property, torching of vehicles, and the death of a young man who was defending the community property in the Turmus’ayya village,” said Mushi.

Turmus’ayya is a wealthy town that has been called the Palestinian “Beverly Hills”. It’s empty for most of the year until residents return in the summer. A local tourism website says the town “oozes class, due in part to the fact that many of its residents are relatively wealthy Palestinians who also hold American passports”.

“While visiting the family of Omar Jabara, a soccer star who was killed while trying to save a family from fire, the minister witnessed the harsh conditions they live under and noted that the situation undermines the two-state solution in which Palestinians and Jews can live side by side in peace,” said Mushi. At no point during her Middle East visit did Kiviet mention the four Jews who died just days before and a few kilometres away – Harel Masood (21); Elisha Anteman (17); Ofer Fayerman (64); and Shmuel Mordoff (17) – shot and killed by a Palestinian terrorist.

“The minister looks forward to training and knowledge exchanges between Palestine and South Africa as she leads efforts to professionalise the civil service in South Africa,” Mushi said.

Said Segell, “This visit is another example of the trend since the end of apartheid for the ANC to distance itself from any entity that once had good relations with it. It’s not an objective or prudent move, but populist, in which South

Africa is ostracising itself from the international community, also shown by its close relations with Russia and China.”

Local political analyst Steven Gruzd says, “This trip shows that the government isn’t interested in speaking to Israeli officials. There’s still an unofficial ban on ministers traveling to Israel [proper]. It shows the partisanship that the ANC government has taken. It’s looking only at one side of the story, and not examining wrongs by the Palestinian side.”

Meanwhile, at home, Kiviet is fighting allegations that she holds two fraudulently acquired degrees from the University of Fort Hare. In May, President Cyril Ramaphosa said he would wait for the conclusion of a Special Investigating Unit probe into allegations of a degree-conferring scam. The Economic Freedom Fighters has called on all institutions of higher learning to blacklist her, and the United Democratic Movement wants her jailed.

The Democratic Alliance said it had no confidence that an alleged exposed fraudster could fulfil public service and administration responsibilities. “It’s yet another indictment on Ramaphosa that he hasn’t just appointed one of the biggest, most bloated, and most expensive cabinets on earth, but has packed his executive with incompetents and malcontents,” the party said.

Kiviet served as premier of the Eastern Cape from 2009 to 2014. She also served as speaker of the Eastern Cape legislature.



Minister of Public Service and Administration Noxolo Kiviet and South African Ambassador to Palestine Shaun Byneveldt in Ramallah

Public Service And Administration, RSA Facebook page

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Seeing ourselves through others' eyes

When visitors leave, they often comment on the incredible strength of our community and how we band together to deal with adversity. They always comment on how astonishing it is that we have created a communal infrastructure that supports us when all else may be crumbling.

Many also speak of the strength of our Jewishness and our Jewish way of life.

I have been told on numerous occasions how the fact that those of us who are more secular than religious are still allowed to call ourselves Orthodox has cemented the community.

Do we truly recognise all of this in ourselves? Do we stop for a minute and look at what we have here, pat ourselves on the back, and let it sink in?

Or do we continue to find a reason to castigate ourselves, our neighbours, or our country?

Last week, Biko Arran wrote in the *SA Jewish Report* about the kindness of South Africans and how witnessing the way motorists treat each other at traffic lights is testimony to this. It's so true.

People are polite and helpful, and rarely make a nuisance of themselves in the traffic during loadshedding. This even happens when it's so dark, it's difficult to detect a traffic light up ahead.

I don't know about you, but there's also evidence of this in our neighbourhoods. I can't speak for everyone, but I'm on an area WhatsApp group, and when someone has water, electricity, or other fundamental but not life-threatening crises, the number of folk (strangers really) who offer help is heartwarming. True kindness!

Not long ago, I had a puncture in a very mixed suburb, and the number of people who stopped to offer help was astonishing. People came out of their homes nearby with tools to help me.

We are kind people!

As a community, we're organised and ready to help each other with almost anything.

Interviewing the delightful Liat Amar Arran as she and her family pack to head back to Israel (see page 7), it's amazing to see us through her eyes.

She was adamant that she wasn't coming to this scary, crime-ridden place until she got here, and it didn't take us too long to wheedle our way into her heart.

I love that she speaks about how we manage to be a real example of how to live a Jewish lifestyle. In this, she refers to how some of us perhaps eat out in non-kosher restaurants but still go to shul every week. Some drive to shul, but still go. Some may not go to shul, but they are at every communal function and their children are committed to Bnei Akiva or Hahonim.

Basically, she was saying that the leeway we are given to live a Jewish life makes it easier and more meaningful to be a part of this varied community. Also, she's impressed at how our rabbis don't condemn us for not being Shomrei Shabbos, fully kosher, and so it goes on.

I understand that for some in our community, this might be unacceptable, but I do appreciate that this is what makes us such a strong and bonded community and not different groups of Jews who can never accept or agree with each other.

Going back to Amar Arran, I find it amazing how she and her family have managed in little more than four years – two of which were mostly in lockdown – to have become such an intrinsic part of our community.

If you have never met her, she literally exudes warmth and kindness. I had an experience where she and I were engaging with a women's organisation that included Jewish and Muslim women. When she introduced herself as Israeli and working for the Israel Centre here, I could literally feel the Muslim women bristle with discomfort. I wondered what would happen next, but by the time she had finished introducing herself, all the women had warmed to her. They got that she's all about building bridges and, no matter where she's from, she's someone you want on your side.

While she has been here, she has steered clear of politics, which in her role was beneficial. However, it struck me that she felt that South African Jews who don't necessarily agree with something that happens in Israel should speak out. Many of us are cautious to speak about Israeli politics in a public forum because if we're pro-Israel, it gives our haters ammunition against us because this standpoint is unpopular in certain circles. But those who are critical about something in Israel are just as cautious about saying anything in Jewish circles because they will be chided for being anti-Israel and feeding the haters.

Criticising a political decision or an action of a country you love doesn't make you anti-Israel, it makes it clear that you care enough to speak out about it.

Though we love Israel, there's no rule that says we must put it on a pedestal. It's a country we love that has its own issues, as do we.

So, it's okay to support Netanyahu, and it's also okay not to. Am I going to be struck down now? I hope not. I have Amar Arran and Israeli President Isaac Herzog's permission to be vocal about my opinion. So do you.

I have to say though, it's with sadness that we say farewell to her. Her honesty, integrity, and building has served us, as has her friendship and openness to breaking barriers and building bridges. I have no doubt that she and her husband will go on to do great things back in Israel.

Saying "no" there is never as much better than you want as friends

But for those of us left behind, I agree that we should be doing what we can to enhance and build our community and our country. We have something so special in



Holocaust memorial desecrated as French riots flame antisemitism



On the night of 27 June, French police shot dead a 17-year-old of Algerian heritage named Nahel M in the Parisian suburb of Nanterre. Nahel, a delivery agent, attempted to flee the scene when police asked for his documents. Shots were fired, and he was killed by a bullet in the chest.

His death triggered violent protests in the capital, spreading to most of France's other major metropolitan areas on subsequent nights, over the weekend, and into the next week. Hundreds of cars were torched, windows were smashed, and stores were looted. More than 45 000 extra police officers were deployed. Police, fire-fighters, and demonstrators clashed regularly, with many injured on both sides. As the madness of the mob took over, protesters defaced a memorial to Holocaust victims and members of the French resistance in Nanterre. Antisemitism also reared its ugly head in these protests.

During World War II, occupied France under the Vichy regime deported 200 000 Jews to Nazi concentration camps in the east of the Third Reich. They, as well as those who fought fascism, are commemorated by the Mémorial des Martyrs de la Déportation et de la Résistance (Memorial to the Martyrs of the Deportation and the Resistance) in Nanterre. Viral videos show rioters spray-painting graffiti on the memorial, including, “Police scum from Saint-Soline to Nanterre – don’t forgive or forget.”

There are also reports of a building close by having the words “Bitches, we are going to make you a Shoah” spray-painted on it, using the Hebrew word for the Holocaust.

The European Jewish Congress tweeted, “It’s truly horrifying to witness the Mémorial des Martyrs de la Déportation in Nanterre being vandalised. This shameful act of disrespect for the memory of the victims of the Holocaust must be unequivocally condemned and those responsible held accountable”

Antisemitic chants were heard during the unrest, and firms were attacked in “Little Jerusalem”, the predominantly Jewish Parisian suburb of Sarcelles. Before the riots, official figures showed a 74% increase in antisemitic attacks in France last year.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on 2 July that Israel had been closely observing the “waves of antisemitism sweeping France. In recent days, we have witnessed criminal assaults against Jewish targets. We strongly condemn these attacks, and support the French government in its fight against antisemitism.” Netanyahu said.

France is no stranger to demonstrations – after all, the 1789 French Revolution stemmed from public protest against the monarchy. The French Revolution cost the lives of 150,000 civilians.

third largest after Israel and the United States – is dreading a repeat of the antisemitic attacks of 2014, when Jewish-owned shops and synagogues were targeted during the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The *Gilets Jaunes* (Yellow Jacket) social protests of 2017 also spawned antisemitic words and action from the far-right and the far-left, radical Islamists, anti-Zionists, and social conservatives.

ALL TOO OFTEN, IT SEEMS THAT WHEN SOCIETY SLIPS INTO VIOLENT TURMOIL AND THE SECURITY SERVICES AREN'T ABLE TO CONTROL THE SITUATION, LATENT ANTISEMITISM BOILS TO THE SURFACE.

What's at the root of the latest riots? Like South Africa, France is a society of great inequality, with a chasm between rich and poor. Many of these poor are Muslim immigrants or their descendants, living on the outskirts of France's cities. These neglected, forgotten communities are hotbeds for radicalism. Unemployment is high, and trust in authorities – especially the police – is low. These communities face race and class discrimination, and many hate the French state. The death of Nahel ignited a powder keg of rage, despair, and hopelessness that the police has struggled to control. This isn't an attempt to excuse the excessive violence, but to understand the context in which it has occurred.

The scenes of France aflame are reminiscent of the widespread mayhem unleashed by the death at the hands of police of George Floyd in the United States in 2020, which gave impetus to the Black Lives Matter movement (which at times also veered into Jew-hatred). South Africa has also recently witnessed the terror of a marauding mob. Following the imprisonment of former President Jacob Zuma in 2021, riots broke out throughout KwaZulu-Natal and in some parts of Gauteng, leaving at least R70 billion of damage in their wake, and many people injured and killed. The precariousness of South Africa's social cohesion was exposed, and confidence in the rule of law in the country took a serious knock

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The Jews become a convenient scapegoat for all societal problems. Jewish businesses, houses of worship, and people are targeted, as are cemeteries and Holocaust memorial sites. We must do all we can to fight the falsehoods and halt the hatred. Hatred of all kinds is learned, not instinctual.

- *Steven Gruzd is a political analyst at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. He writes in his personal*

‘This isn’t goodbye’ - Liat Amar Arran

PETA KROST

As Liat Amar Arran, who has run the Israel Centre in South Africa for the past four and a half years, packs to return to Israel, she encourages the local community to feel free to criticise Israel and not feel bad about doing so. “This is a truly Zionist community, and criticising Israel is healthy even if you don’t live there. You’re a part of Israel and being critical doesn’t mean you don’t support the country. It means you care about what goes on there and about finding positive solutions,” she said in her farewell interview with the *SA Jewish Report*. “Your voices matter, and if you agree or disagree, you’re entitled to be heard by the Israeli government.”

Amar Arran, who has become an intrinsic part of local communal leadership, has tackled so much more than her position warranted. As the representative of the Jewish Agency in South Africa, her role was to build the bond between Israel and the South African community, help the local community, and enable aliya.

When the COVID-19 pandemic was about to spread to South Africa, just one year into her *shlichut*, she asked communal leaders to meet to work out a strategy to tackle it. And, though lockdown was a lonely time for her, her husband, Tzvika (Biko) Arran, and their five sons, being so far from home and their loved ones, she help people to bridge the divide between South Africa and Israel where it mattered most.

The last thing she expected was for her and her family to be so sad to leave. In fact, she didn’t believe they would last more than a year here.

When she was first offered this role, she could “find only negative pictures” of life in South Africa, so she said no. “They said if I waited six months, I could go to Los Angeles.” She came here for a week to get a closer look, and her “heart started opening to this place” although she was anxious about security and curtailing her children’s freedom.

It took being at the launch of Cycalive, a bridge-building cycling initiative where she saw “*tikkun olam* in its truest form” and the possibilities of what she could do here, to get her to commit to her role.

In fact, when Israeli President Isaac Herzog, the former head of the Jewish Agency, called her at the onset of the pandemic and told her to come home because he was worried about her and her family, she refused, saying she was needed here.

When she first arrived, although her husband – who put his career on hold to support her – encouraged her, her children were devastated that she had taken them from their happy life in the Negev to bring them to this “strange place”.

“It was hard to hear them crying and not wanting to go to school because the kids thought they were weird. I often asked Biko if we had done the right thing,” Amar Arran said. “I did say it was unlikely we would stay for four years, perhaps a year and a half. I didn’t count on falling in love with this place and community.”

“Just as I understood my job professionally and was ready to start inventing things to add to it so I wouldn’t be bored, the COVID-19 pandemic hit,” she said.

“During the pandemic, work became an emergency room in which we were evacuating people from here to Israel and bringing people back. We were working to send *olim* to Israel with the regulations changing all the time,” said Amar Arran. “I wouldn’t give up as long as I could

help people.” And it wasn’t without effort that the Jewish Agency sent millions of rands to support the local Jewish community through the pandemic.

Amar Arran found herself working 24/7 trying to get South Africans to Israel or people in Israel back here for *simchas*, to be with dying parents, and other emergencies. Everyone knew they could contact Amar Arran at any time, day or night.

During the pandemic, she was the only person who could navigate the Israeli embassy, the Israeli government, and the local community. “I worked hard to get South Africa off Israel’s red list, enabling the country to visit Israel again,” she said. “It was important for me to get people in and out,

their lives. Every time I built a new bridge was a highlight for me.”

She recalled taking *shlichim* to the Garden Route for Yom Ha’atzmaut and built a wonderful connection with the community there. “We stepped into a shul and community that hadn’t seen *shlichim* before, and we had a wonderful time with them. It led to the Habonim *shaliach* returning there later and strengthening that bridge.”

Amar Arran said her time here wasn’t always easy for her family. “Biko gave up a lot in his career to be her with me, but he never wavered in his support,” she said.

“For the kids, the first six months was terrible, having their freedom curtailed and leaving all they knew behind. COVID-19 was hard for them too, but now, they don’t want to go home,” she said. “I can see that being here has strengthened their Jewish identity and their ability to manage wherever they are.” And from finding it difficult to fit in, there are a chorus of King David kids who don’t want them to leave.

“I arrived here at a time of change for communal leadership, and this enabled me to step into communal areas that in the past

wouldn’t have been open to me,” she said. So she dealt with education, youth, basically wherever they needed help.

She turned the Israel Centre into a customer-focused department where people felt they were being served in every possible way. “We were also available to meet and talk through issues,” Amar Arran said.

She purposefully stepped away from politics because she was needed elsewhere. “I believe if there are too many people around one table, I should find another,” she said.

Now that she’s heading back to her community in a small town in the northern Negev, she wants to see her children integrate easily and give her husband space to grow in his career.

She’ll continue to work with the Israel Centre until the end of the year, but mostly from Israel. In the meantime, she’ll look for a new path. “I believe I must be in Israel a while to see where I’m needed and where I want to invest my time,” she said.

“I’ll miss so much about South Africa. I’ll miss the kindness of people – their willingness to help. I’ll miss my role that enabled me to speak to the president one minute and a five-year-old the next, dealing with totally different issues.”

She marvels at the Jewish community here, saying it has “such a special way of living a Jewish life”, and Israelis have much to learn from this community. She’s impressed at how the community takes care of everything for itself, including healthcare, water, electricity, education, culture, social welfare, and more.

And she hopes more community members will take an interest and get involved in South Africa. “As long as you live here, it’s important to get involved in helping to build your country. People do a lot, but more can be done by more people,” Amar Arran said.

She also hopes younger people will step into communal leadership. “It’s vital that those between 25 and 40 get involved and bring their ideas and innovation to communal organisations,” she said.

As she bids farewell, she has a sense that “this isn’t goodbye”.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Liat Amar Arran in her South African home after all her belongings have been sent back to Israel

and to help those who really needed it.” At the same time, she was an empathetic shoulder to cry on for those in difficult and sometimes impossible situations. “Sometimes it took too long to find a solution, and all I could do was hold the family’s hands.”

Amar Arran became known for showing Israel, warts and all, to those who wanted to make aliya. “I don’t want people to make aliya, thinking it will be easy, and then fail. They have to make a decision based on an honest picture. It isn’t easy to tell someone, ‘aliya isn’t for you’, but I have done so.” In spite of this, she still sent 350 people on aliya in 2020 during the toughest days of the pandemic, 570 in 2021, and 480 in 2022. This year, she believes about 300 will go.

Sometimes it took too long
to find a solution, and all
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family’s hands.

People were determined to make aliya even when “Israeli skies were closed”, she said, and Amar Arran did what she could to help. “When Rabbi [Craig] Kacev [the former director of the South African Board of Jewish Education] was waiting to make aliya in March 2021, Israel wasn’t allowing anyone in. Eventually it approved four planes of Ethiopian *olim*, and I managed to get 12 of our *olim* on the flight. They had to be ready to be notified just 24 hours before the flight. They got to Israel, and were quarantined for two weeks, but they were happy.”

Looking back, she says it was times like that, and “managing a community under crisis”, that were so exciting. “Other highlights were the many one-on-one interactions I had with people in the community in which I could make a difference in

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Helping Holocaust survivors – a cause close to my heart

OPINION

MARY KLUK



Nearly 200 000 Holocaust survivors are still being supported by the Conference for Material Claims Against Germany (or Claims Conference), established just more than 70 years ago. The organisation is responsible for overseeing the process of restitution, compensation, and humanitarian support for victims of the Holocaust.

“We must ensure a measure of justice for Holocaust survivors as they enter their final years, and ensure that their lived experience serves as a lesson for generations to come,” said Claims Conference Executive Vice-President Greg Schneider, concluding his report at the recent board meeting.

As the survivors age, their needs are growing. External factors, most notably the disruptive impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, have posed other pressing challenges, particularly to those working in the field.

As someone much involved in Holocaust education, the work of the Claims Conference has always been something close to my heart. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies has been represented on the Claims Conference from the outset, and is responsible for communication, liaison, and administration relating to it.

I have represented our community on the Claims Conference for more than a decade. During my recent attendance at the annual board meeting in New York, I was struck once again not just by how critical the work of the organisation continues to be, but by the professionalism and unstinting dedication of those associated with it.



Mary Kluk representing the World Jewish Congress at Poland's official state ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 2018

A critical aspect of the Claims Conference’s work is to negotiate on an annual basis with the German government on behalf of survivors what the upcoming year’s allocation will be, since the needs and circumstances of survivors are constantly changing. The outcome of this year’s negotiations were exceptionally fruitful, with the granting of a significant additional sum in direct compensation and social-welfare services for survivors.

Another positive outcome was an increase in the allocation for Holocaust education. This is indeed indicative of Germany’s commitment to ensuring that survivors are cared for as they age, and helping to secure their legacy of survival for future generations.

To assist survivors in putting in their claims, Claims Conference staff members across the globe devote countless hours to gathering the required data and sitting down with each survivor to ensure that all forms are submitted

in an appropriate state to enable them to qualify for whatever reparations, pensions, or other support is due to them.

In the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, where there remain many largely impoverished as well as elderly survivors, the Claims Conference largely works through social-work organisations that do a lot of the actual work on the ground. Similarly, in Israel, much of its work is done by partner organisations involved in this social workspace.

In the course of the meeting in New York, I was moved by the extraordinary eulogies given for three outstanding leaders in the field of Holocaust remembrance and restitution, namely Ben Ferencz, Ben Helfgott, and Michael Schneider. Ferencz was chief prosecutor for the 1947 Einsatzgruppen trial, which resulted in the conviction of 22 former SS commanders for the murder of more than one million Jews in Eastern Europe. The last surviving Nuremberg

trials prosecutor, he was a voice for human rights and justice his entire life. Helfgott was a Holocaust survivor who went on to represent the United Kingdom at weightlifting at the 1956 and 1960 Olympics and in later life, became an inspirational speaker and human rights activist. He spoke at our Yom Hashoah commemoration in South Africa in 2011. As a South African, it was especially uplifting to hear tributes to Michael Schneider, who after being forced into exile because of his anti-apartheid activities went on to be at the forefront of efforts to assist vulnerable Jewish communities the world over, including the many needy survivors in the former Soviet Union countries.

We met many people involved in these activities. I remember in particular one on Zoom with three elderly women involved with grassroots endeavours to get food, medical supplies, and home care to survivors caught up in the Ukraine conflict. When Greg Schneider asked one of them how she found the strength and motivation to deal with the myriad stresses this work entails, she said she did it because of the quality of the people she did it for.

Simply expressed, perhaps, but it encapsulates both the ongoing moral obligation we have to ensure that our survivors are properly cared for and the passion and commitment of those who devote themselves to that task.

• *Mary Kluk is the national vice-president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, and the director of the Durban Holocaust and Genocide Centre.*

Distinguish between antisemitic incidents, and respond accordingly

OPINION

JEFFREY VEIDLINGER



According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), incidents of antisemitism in the United States increased 36% from 2021 to 2022. Over the past year, the highest number of incidents were recorded since the ADL began keeping statistics in 1979. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has observed similar trends across Europe.

The explanations vary: increased political, cultural, and economic polarisation; a rise in hateful rhetoric; developments in Israel/Palestine; or simply greater incentive to report incidents.

But many of these surveys fail to distinguish between types of incidents, or if they do, they bury the distinction in the fine print. All incidents aren’t the same, and shouldn’t be treated equally. As a scholar of Jewish history and the Holocaust, I teach about antisemitism. As the director of two Jewish Studies programmes in American universities; the chair of a community response group on antisemitism; and a leader of several Jewish organisations, I have witnessed and experienced many incidents myself, and have been responsible for responding to some. What I have learned is that different incidents require different types of response. The first step is to determine whether the incident is an ignorant offense, a provocation, or a threat.

In February 2023, a man posted on Twitter that he was going to “carry out the punishment of death to anyone that is Jewish in the Michigan government”. Police determined

that the man had three 9mm semi-automatic pistols registered to him, and was under investigation by Michigan State Police for stealing a fourth. He was also believed to own a shotgun and two hunting rifles. Federal agents arrested the man, and charged him. This incident was a clear and direct threat, and the best approach was for law enforcement to take the man into custody and neutralise him.

Not all incidents can be handled by law enforcement, though. Every Saturday for about 20 years, a small group of dedicated antisemites have protested outside the synagogue I

for 20 years are suddenly going to erupt in violence. They are a provocation more than a threat. The danger is that they will catalyse others to act in harmful ways. They are trying to induce a reaction, and they thrive on publicity. Since their actions are protected by the law and condemnations from municipal officials have failed to move them, the community has determined that the best approach is to ignore them rather than risk amplifying their message.

Most of the incidents I have dealt with fall under the category of ignorant offense. When I was

there was no lingering threat. A few days later, a young woman of high school age showed up at my office in tears. She confessed to having drawn the swastikas together with a friend. When she was caught, she said, her grandfather sat her down and told her how when he was her age, he was fighting Nazis in the US army. He showed her photos of the concentration camps, and told her what the swastika represented. She had no idea. She explained to me that she and a friend were wandering through campus late at night with markers, looking for mischief, and stumbled across the Jewish Studies programme. The first thing that came to mind when they saw “Jewish” were swastikas, so they set to work. If they had found themselves in mathematics, they probably would have drawn numbers. It was terrifying for my staff and me to enter our offices that morning and find the swastikas, and there is something seriously wrong with the way we educate children in that the first thing they thought of at seeing the word “Jewish” was a swastika. This incident, though, falls into the category of an ignorant offense. The best response was the education her grandfather provided.

Education also mitigates many of the blunders my students naively make in class discussions on sensitive topics. They innocently bring into discussion myths and memes that they have picked up in the media, from friends, or on campus, giving me the opportunity to correct them with facts and context. When a student equates Israel to apartheid South Africa, for instance, I’m given the opportunity to dive deeper and

educate them on the different historical contexts, the conceptual differences and similarities, and the resonances of the analogy among different audiences. There may be students in the class who take offense, but that’s the cost of education.

Each of these incidents, which took place in communities I was a part of, show the interrelatedness of different manifestations of antisemitism – conspiratorial allegations of Jewish power; holding all Jews responsible for the purported misdeeds of the Israeli state; Holocaust denial; and the spread of Nazi symbols. Yet each also signals a different level of material harm: an ignorant offense; a provocation; and a threat. In this age of rising reported incidents of antisemitism, it’s important for communities to develop measures that distinguish how to respond based on the severity of the incident.

• *Jeffrey Veidlinger is the Joseph Brodsky Collegiate Professor of History and Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. He’s the author of four award-winning books on the history of Jewish life in Russia and Ukraine, including, most recently, “In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Ukrainian Pogroms of 1918-1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust”.*
• *He will be hosted at Limmud Cape Town (Sunday 20 August); Durban (Monday 21 August); and in Johannesburg (Friday 25-27 August). His sessions will include “The Holocaust in Ukraine”, and “Marc Chagall and the Soviet Yiddish Theatre”. For information or to register, visit limmud.org.za.*



attend. For many years, they held up signs protesting against Israel and American congressional support for the Jewish state, but have recently expanded into Holocaust denial and conspiratorial allegations of Jewish power. They propagate hatred with harmful words, but the physical danger is more remote. It’s highly unlikely that the same individuals who have limited their demonstrations to hateful rhetoric

the director of the Jewish Studies programme at Indiana University, I arrived at my office one morning to find that swastikas had been drawn with markers all over the posterboards on our walls. Security cameras had recorded the culprits, and with the help of some local high school principals, the police were able to identify them as two high school students. We were assured by law enforcement that

Old Pretoria Shul’s revamp meets ‘thundering silence’

NICOLA MILTZ

The Old Pretoria Synagogue, a national heritage site with major historical significance, has been left to rack and ruin two years after a string of empty restoration promises by the department of public works and infrastructure.

The failure to restore the majestic building that witnessed the start of the Rivonia Treason Trial as well as the inquest into the death of Steve Biko, “shows either a lack of political will or complete indifference”, said Madeleine Hicklin, Democratic Alliance shadow deputy minister in the public works department this week.

The ornate building, on Paul Kruger Street in the Tshwane city centre, was the first shul consecrated in Pretoria in 1898. More than half a century of active Jewish communal life took place there as the community grew, contributing massively to the growth of the city. After it was expropriated in 1952 by the department of public works, it was converted and refurbished into a court house where famously, the late Nelson Mandela and other African National Congress (ANC) struggle stalwarts appeared.

For years a place of *simchas*

by the ANC to the citizens of South Africa, whether it’s the Jewish community, for whom this building holds so many memories, or the heroes of our modern democracy, who were sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment in the Rivonia Treason Trial that took place in this very building.”

Accusing the department and the ANC of taking no pride in South Africa’s heritage, she said they “care even less” about the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act, Section 24 and Section 9.

“These sections determine that the South African Heritage Resource Agency’s mandate to restore and refurbish heritage buildings that have fallen into a state of disrepair must be accomplished, while adhering to strict guidelines on exactly how this must be undertaken,” she said.

In July 2021, answers to her written questions to then Minister Patricia de Lille promised that “the department is planning for the restoring and linking of a suitable adaptive reuse of the heritage asset within the Tshwane Inner City Regeneration Programme ambit”.

“I was assured this was well underway, as well as a pre-feasibility study for the redevelopment of the precinct having been undertaken to maximise the state land,” said Hicklin.

In addition, Minister de Lille said, “In this regard, the recommendation is to accommodate the department of sport, arts, and culture’s [DSAC’s] head office on the property. The old Jewish Synagogue is proposed to be used as both a monument and as a multi-use centre for conferences and exhibitions, open to the public and tourists. The proposal has been submitted to the DSAC, and is awaiting its concurrence.”

De Lille said that a feasibility study had been commissioned and, pending its outcome, the execution of the project via a public-private partnership (PPP) would be on the cards. In December 2021, it was confirmed that the feasibility study had been completed years earlier but was “for internal consumption only”, according to the minister, and that the “historic value of the building was a critical factor considered during the due diligence process, which included engagements with the City of Tshwane”.

Minister De Lille confirmed that, as of 3 December 2021, only the roof of the structure had been stabilised, but that this had already been done in 2011.

“Since then, nothing has been done. Absolutely nothing. Except for the placement of the 24-hour security guard, who is nowhere to be seen,” said Hicklin.

She said the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, the



The Pretoria Shul in its heyday

Pretoria Jewish Community, and many concerned individuals would “gladly get involved in a PPP to restore this building to its original splendour given half a chance”.

Councillor Leanne De Jager, who accompanied Hicklin on two site visits, told the *SA Jewish Report* that though

they couldn’t gain access to the inside of the building, the outside was deteriorating.

“The solution would be for this building to be restored as a heritage site, and used as a possible tourist attraction or information centre in a PPP,” De Jager said.

“This matter has been brought to the attention of the

department of public works many times and has been raised as a parliamentary question several times. It’s simple, public works just has to agree to a PPP, and then it can go to people who can actually look after it.”

Diane Wolfson of the Pretoria Council of the South African Jewish Board of

Deputies, expressed sadness at the demise of the building.

“It’s falling apart which is so sad, considering that it was a place of so many *simchas*, being the main shul of yester year, a reminder of Pretoria Jewry’s significant contribution over the years to the city of Tshwane, not to mention its historical and political significance,” she said.

Hicklin said that when Nyeleti Makhubele was appointed acting deputy general in the department of public works in real estate, she asked her if there were any outstanding issues she could address.

“The matter of the Old Pretoria Shul, among others, was raised with her on 24 May 2023,” but since then, there has been a “thundering silence”, she said.

Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Sihle Zikalala hadn’t responded to questions at the time of going to print.



Member of Parliament Madeleine Hicklin outside the Old Pretoria Shul

Photo: Facebook

followed by struggle scenes of pain and anguish during apartheid, the building today lies forlorn and vulnerable to dilapidation and severe neglect.

For two years, Hicklin has seemingly been fighting a losing battle to have the building and several other buildings of historical significance, including the Union Buildings, restored.

“I’ve been stonewalled,” she told the *SA Jewish Report* this week.

“Since May 2021, the department of public works and infrastructure’s lack of commitment to the restoration of the Old Synagogue in Pretoria has been painfully evident in every engagement on this matter.”

During a site visit last Friday, 30 June, Hicklin was dismayed to see that “absolutely nothing had changed”.

Exasperated, she said, “Not even the promised 24-hour security guard, meant to ensure that the already desecrated building be spared from further plundering, was on the premises.

“This is a another example of the hollow promises trotted out

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SA photographer’s work is Netflix’s perfect find

TALI FEINBERG

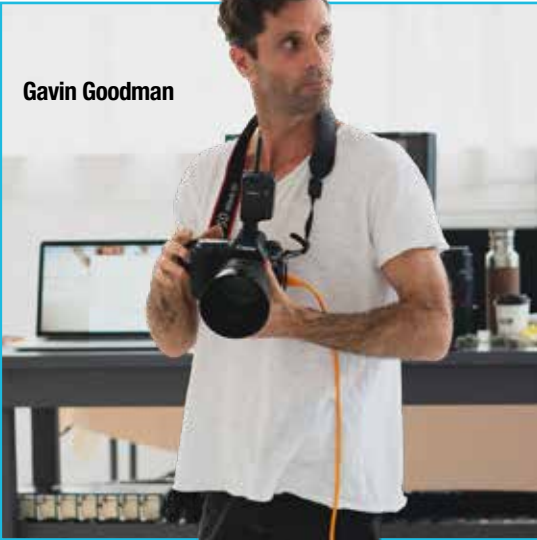
When Gabrielle Union’s character, Jenna, moves to New York City in the Netflix romcom *The Perfect Find*, her new apartment reflects the style of a woman hoping to make it in the world. Above her fireplace is a series of striking images – three photographs of a black woman adorned in pleated paper on a bold green background. The images are a series of photos titled *Luhlaza* by Cape Town award-winning commercial and fine art photographer Gavin Goodman. His work came to be in the movie because “every now and then, bigger Instagram accounts share my work, and I think what happened was the production designer who was working on this Netflix film saw this particular series that was shared on some big accounts. She reached out to me directly to say that she thought that these images would really be a great fit for Gabrielle Union’s home interior that she was designing for this Netflix film,” says Goodman.

Scene from *The Perfect Find* with Gavin Goodman’s pictures above the fireplace in the background



Netflix paid him to use the images, but the whole exchange happened two years ago, “so I kind of forgot that it happened to be honest! Then someone sent me a message a week or two ago saying that they saw my images in this film, in Gabrielle Union’s home. I went to check it out, and it’s always satisfying to see your work on that kind of level.” He created the images about two years ago. “The title, *Luhlaza*, translates to ‘green’ in Xhosa. A while back, I saw some amazing origami art, which is a Japanese or Asian style of paper folding to create delicate sculptures. I thought it would be a really interesting way to create some props and incorporate them into a concept for a photoshoot. “I approached one or two origami artists – there’s a really small community in South Africa. I connected with Maia Levan Lehr-Sacks, and commissioned her. We drew up some designs, shapes, sizes, and dimensions, and she created the origami pieces that we used in the shoot.” The model, Nkosazana Sibobosi, was styled by Kirsten Lipschitz. “The concept was inspired by tribal African headwear,” says Goodman. “I wanted to take these interesting designs that you see in tribal headwear and garments, and create a modern minimalistic aesthetic based on that concept. This was the end result.” Goodman entered this image and one or two others from previous shoots into the prestigious 2021 Hasselblad Masters competition in the fine art category and won,

earning the title of Hasselblad Master. The Hasselblad Masters Award is a bi-annual award granted by camera company Hasselblad to selected photographers each year across various specialties in recognition of exceptional accomplishment in photography. The award is among the most prestigious in the industry, honouring the best in established and rising photographic talent. The jury includes many of the most prominent names in photography, including photographers, editors, agents, and publishers. The winners are provided with Hasselblad equipment for their projects as a part of the *Masters Book* for the year. Selected Hasselblad Masters each create a chapter of original images, which are reproduced in large-format, fine art prints for exhibition in cities around the world. “I have a feeling that [the award] might have been how this production designer saw this piece,” says Goodman. “It was quite an exciting couple of months picking up that award and then getting a few other opportunities.” When he’s not behind the camera, Goodman is an avid surfer, and he has a down-to-earth approach to life. Regarding Netflix’s use of his work, he says “It’s a nice feather in my cap, but I carry on doing my thing and don’t get too affected by it. It’s more of a good-feeling-in-the-moment kind of thing.” Born and raised in Cape Town, Goodman attended United Herzlia Schools and Abbots College, and studied advertising and film. His career began 18 years ago working as a cinematographer in the local film industry. After seven years, he decided to switch to still photography. He has worked on many prestigious advertising campaigns with respected agencies around the world. His photography has been shown in Paris, Milan, Geneva, and Cape Town. Goodman is most excited about his agency, Semblance, which he formed when he saw a gap in the market during the COVID-19 pandemic. The agency creates custom, limited edition, gallery-quality art for the hospitality and residential market. “We partner with architects, developers, interior designers, and artwork procurers to create art that’s personalised to brief, budget, and timelines. Every project is an opportunity to create something unique,” he says. “I conceptualise the art and create digital mock-ups. I’ve got a small team of in-house artists who then take my art direction, or if it’s a photographic work, I create it myself. I use AI [artificial intelligence] to conceptualise an approach for some projects.” They also offer printing and framing. “I love the process and craft in image-creation,” says Goodman. “It’s something I’ve dedicated my life to. I’ve been doing it professionally for almost 20 years, and it’s something



Gavin Goodman

I’ll never stop doing. As I evolve as a person, it affects the type of work I create. It’s this really beautiful, evolving, organic process.” To others who want to follow in his footsteps, he says, “The most important thing is to find your point of view as a creative. For some, that can take many years, and you have to figure out which other artists’ work inspires you and why, what it is that resonates about their work. “Get in touch with other creatives whose work you admire, and see if you can shadow them or jump on board on one of their jobs,” he says. “Get real-life tips on how that person works, how they interact with people, how they see light and composition, and so on. “It’s important to experiment and try different types of genres,” he says. “But the most important thing is to figure out your own point of view. Have patience, and don’t compare yourself to others. Everyone’s journey is completely unique.”

Listing Jozi’s Lara Nathan keeps it real

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Exuding glamour and positivity in spite of the multiple challenges she’s faced, award-winning Pam Golding real estate agent Lara Nathan stars in BBC Lifestyle’s *Listing Jozi*, now in its second season. Having recently published a book about her special-needs son, Jamie, Nathan reveals why she lives each day to the fullest. When she was hand-picked to star in reality television series, *Listing Jozi*, which showcases some of Joburg’s most beautiful properties sold by the city’s top agents, Nathan grabbed the opportunity. It’s this kind of enthusiasm that she shows for whatever comes her way. Yet her belief in embracing life was born of tragedy. Only 20 when she lost her beloved mother to a drunk driver who was driving on the wrong side of the road, Nathan knew she had to make a choice. “I remember feeling so absolutely beyond broken and devastated, wondering how I could possibly get through this,” she says. “I was sitting one day in absolute tears, and thinking I can go north, or I can go south. And I just thought, I want to live. You never know what’s around the next corner, and I chose to live in the best way possible. I don’t ever want to focus on the negative.” This positivity was repeatedly tested. The first time, two and a half years later, was when her brother was killed in a car accident almost identical to the one that claimed their mother’s life. Then it was tested again when she lost her grandmother, and later when her father died six weeks before her wedding. Nathan says her strength and optimism come from her mother. “I absolutely adored my mother. She was my everything. She and my father divorced when I was two, and she was just so strong. She never stopped or let anything get in the way of us having the best childhood and family life. In spite of her strength, she never failed to show her emotional side, and she had a passion for life, no matter what was thrown at her.” Nathan drew on a similar philosophy when she and her husband, Colin, discovered that their son, Jamie, now nine, had cerebral palsy due to oxygen deprivation during birth. Jamie was almost eight months before he was diagnosed. In spite of assurances that her son was fine after a clear MRI scan report, which turned out to be incorrect, Nathan knew something was wrong and pushed to see a neurologist. After viewing the scan and feeling and moving Jamie’s hands and feet, the neurologist delivered devastating news. “She said, ‘He’ll never walk or talk,’ which was just crushing,” says Nathan. “But we hit the ground running. We took him to America twice for a stem-cell infusion, and returned to the United States multiple times for another form of therapy. We never sat still, we just did whatever we could, and we still do.” The Nathans have always embraced life with Jamie. “He’s been both my greatest gift and my greatest challenge,” says his mother. “For us, Jamie is our normal. We feed him through a tube and assist him with everything. Our reliable nanny also plays a crucial role in Jamie’s care. We don’t let it slow us down. We’re always on the move with him. We go overseas, we’ll never do anything without



Colin, Lara, Jamie, and Kyla Nathan

Jamie that we do as a family.” The Nathans also have a daughter, Kyla, who adores Jamie, as does Colin’s son from his first marriage. They’re also all very close to Colin’s ex-wife, Dawn, who is like a second mother to Jamie and Kyla. “We just have such a great family dynamic, which I’m so grateful for,” says Nathan. She says Colin is a hands-on dad. “Having a special-needs child can either kill or make a marriage. It’s tough for parents. We chose the high road, we chose to do it together as best we could, and I’m so grateful for that. If anything, our experiences have made us even stronger as a family.” Jamie is at a special-needs school called OWL (Occupational, Wellness and Learning) which has a swing and merry-go-round for wheelchairs. He’s also able to communicate with the use of a revolutionary eye tracker. While the part of his brain that was damaged is that which controls the muscles – used to eat, swallow, talk, walk, and more – Jamie can smile, blink, and move his eyes willingly. Through the eye tracker, his eyes are used as a cursor on a computer screen. “He has to hold his gaze on a square for two seconds and then it clicks it for him, whether it be in programmes including games, music, alphabet, numbers, colours and so on,” Nathan explains. “It speaks for him, and he builds things on the games and creates his own stories. It was such a game changer to see how smart he actually is.” Nathan is so inspired by her son and the magical effect he has on those around him that she decided to write a children’s book titled *Jamie Shai and his Superpower*, which was published in America. She’s now distributing the book in South Africa, and hopes to inspire others through Jamie’s story. “I always wanted to do the book because, for me, Jamie has this superpower,” says Nathan. “Kids are drawn to him. Once we were flying to Cape Town, and this little boy, who was around 12, was fighting with his sisters as we were coming off the plane. Colin and I were putting Jamie in his wheelchair and this little boy looked at him. Jamie just smiled at him, and he stopped fighting with his sisters and came up to Jamie and held his hand and smiled at him. His parents told us he’d never done that before.” It’s impossible not to love Jamie, says Nathan. “He just has this effect on people. He’s got this soft, beautiful nature and this beautiful smile. I always say it lights up my world, but I feel like it lights up the world for other people too. The book came about because I wanted to share that.” She also wants to encourage kids to interact with special-needs children, who love connecting with them. In addition to her dedication to her husband and children, Nathan has forged a highly successful career. As a child of divorce who witnessed her mother’s struggles, she always had a drive to be financially independent. After attaining a marketing degree and then working for Sky TV in the United Kingdom, she returned to South Africa, fell into property, and never looked back. “I really do love what I do, so the fact that I get to extend that on this platform has been such a rewarding experience,” she says, speaking of *Listing Jozi*. “I learned very early on to appreciate life; more than most would at a younger age. I appreciate every single day.”

Yachad’s tzitzit out to bat for Lord’s cricket expo

SAUL KAMIONSKY

The tzitzit worn by former Proteas batsman Mandy Yachad in his cricket match against India in 1991 has been described as the most unique item on display at the recently-opened exhibition, “Jewish Community and Cricket” at England’s prestigious Lord’s Cricket Ground.

Britain’s Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis, who was at the official opening of the exhibition on 28 June, referred to Yachad’s tzitzit as “the prize item” at the exhibition in the Community Gallery of Lord’s Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) Museum in London. And there’s a plaque next to the framed tzitzit, indicating the significance of the garment and insight into the game in which Yachad wore them.

These particular tzitzit have treaded a remarkable journey since that One Day International in Gwalior, India, to being displayed at the Home of Cricket, as Lord’s is known.

The exhibition features stories of well-known international and first-class cricketers from Australia, England, Ireland, South Africa, and the West Indies. It addresses cricket at grassroots level in Israel and the Maccabiah. It tells the story of how the Jewish community contributed to cricket, and considers the prevalence of antisemitism in the sport. It’s accessible either via a Tour of Lord’s or by ticket holders on match days.

“Jews have contributed at all levels of cricket, on and off the field of play,” reads introductory text at the museum. The South Africans highlighted in the exhibition are Yachad, Norman Gordon (1911-2014) who was the first openly Jewish test cricketer and the first test cricketer to live to 100; Sid O’Linn (1927-2016) who played cricket and soccer for South Africa and whose real name was Sydney Olinsky, the son of a kosher butcher; and Dr Ali Bacher, who captained the South African team in the late 1960s and became an international cricket administrator.

Back in 2019, two Jewish MCC members, Zaki Cooper and Daniel Lightman, approached Neil Robinson, the head of heritage and collections at the MCC, with an idea for a display on Jews and cricket.

“The approach came at a time when we were looking for ways to represent grassroots cricket in the museum and tell the story of cricket’s history from a broader range of perspectives,” Robinson said. “These ideas soon coalesced into the concept of the Community Gallery, a dedicated space where individual communities can tell their stories of their relationship with cricket.”

Cooper and Lightman put the exhibition together because they hoped it wouldn’t just inspire the next generation of Jewish cricketers, but “encourage other communities to come forward and tell their stories of their relationship with the great game of cricket”.

South African Dennis Gamsy, who played in two Tests for South Africa in 1970, says the exhibition is unique and special and “must have taken a hell of a lot of work to put together”.

Lord’s is the home of the world’s oldest sporting museum and the MCC, long the world’s foremost cricket organisation. The prestigious Lord’s honours board includes some of the most famous cricketers in history.

Mirvis said at the opening, which was the first kosher-catered MCC event at Lord’s, “This is the Lord’s cricket ground, in the same way that this is the Lord’s universe.”

The journey of Yachad’s tzitzit began soon after the match he played wearing them, when the head of Chabad House was looking for a special set of tzitzit to be auctioned and he asked Yachad if he would be willing to donate them. “Robbie Brozin [the co-founder of Nando’s] bought them and has held them ever since,” Yachad says. “When the idea for this exhibition came up, Daniel Lightman, one of the two guys who were the brains behind it, asked me if there were any items of interest which I could lend to the

exhibition.”

Yachad thought the tzitzit would be a novel item relating to the Jews in cricket, and Brozin willingly lent it to the exhibition.

Yachad was as observant as possible during his cricketing career. He kept kosher, put on tefillin daily, davened three times a day, and went to shul on Shabbat mornings when possible. “By the very nature of the fact that we played on Saturdays, it was impossible to be *shomer Shabbos* while I was playing cricket. I had an internal conflict for many years, and eventually decided to give up because I felt I couldn’t continue to play on Shabbos.” Towards the end of his career, Yachad ran from Orange Grove to the Wanderers instead of driving on Shabbos.

Yachad acknowledges the view expressed by some that he batted too slowly during his sole international game, having scored 31 off 76 deliveries before being trapped Leg Before Wicket by Venkatapathy Raju. However, he says the conditions were difficult. “Also, I was looking to build an innings, knowing you normally score a bit quicker later on in your innings. Unfortunately, I got out just as I was hoping to build the momentum. The one-day games in those days were a little different to the way they are now in terms of scoring rates and expectation.”

Yachad was never chosen for the national team again. “They felt that I wasn’t good enough,” he says. Batters like Kepler Wessels, Clive Rice, Andrew Hudson, Peter Kirsten, Hansie Cronje, and Jonty Rhodes were around at this time.

Yachad says he was inspired by the likes of Bacher

and Gamsy.

The latter says he was the first South African cricketer to speak out in favour of mixed-race sport in the country. “Upon returning from the tour of England



Mandy Yachad next to his tzitzit at the exhibition

in 1965, I was invited to talk on a platform of Helen Suzman’s Progressive Federal Party. In my speech, I informed everybody that I found it repugnant to play cricket under apartheid’s rules and laws. That made headlines in the *Sunday Times*. My letters and my phones were tapped for seven years thereafter.”

Nowadays, Gamsy is the deputy chairperson of GIB, the largest privately owned broker in South Africa, while Yachad is a legal consultant, having practised law for 15 years.

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The ABC of bullying – and what to do about it

Author and journalist **Marion Scher** has just brought out a new book called *Big Bully – An Epidemic of Unkindness*, a ground breaking look at this scourge in our society. The *SA Jewish Report* caught up with her.

What inspired you to write this book?

I've been writing about mental health for 29 years, and after researching and writing my last book, *Surfacing: People Coping with Depression and Mental Illness*, I realised that bullying was at the root of many mental-health issues. Like all my books on such topics, I simply want to start conversations and break the stigma around these vital topics.

Have you had any close encounters with bullying? If so, what happened?

Apart from prefects at high school being foul to us newbies as a whole, somehow I've managed to miss any direct bullying. As a mother of two, I saw my kids going through different bullying scenarios which hurt just as deeply as if it had happened to me. When my son came home from school and related an incident of bullying from a "good friend" of his, we simply called his mother, who came straight around with her son. After a little digging, we discovered that this kid had wanted to get in with a group of "cool guys" by being nasty to other boys. Interestingly, this little group did come under scrutiny, and

were dealt with effectively by the school.

Why are we living with an epidemic of unkindness?

It's all around us, from the people at tills in supermarkets who often get abused and rarely get a thank you, to waitrons who don't hear the words "please" and "thank you" often enough. I've noticed that it stems from the example shown by parents. If they don't practice kindness, their children will follow suit.

Do you have any statistics on bullying in South Africa?

A poll undertaken back in 2014 surveyed more than 2 000 students, and found that an astounding 58% of South African students have been targeted by bullies, according to BullyBusters.

Most of us consider bullying to be something done to schoolkids, where there is clearly a huge problem.

How did most schools react to being approached for your research?

Sadly, after contacting many major high schools including Jewish schools, I didn't even receive a reply to my emails. One school

replied immediately – Westerford High School in Cape Town. It couldn't do enough to help me, even organising a large group of pupils from Grade 9 to matric for me to talk to. It has a healthy attitude of inclusiveness in the school when it comes to bullying, gender, and LGBTQI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex) issues.

Why do you think they reacted that way?

Over my 35 years as a journalist, I've found that when schools are approached for comment on issues such as drugs or sex issues, they don't want to comment as that would mean they would be admitting to having such problems – as if they don't! Heads are firmly in the sand here.

Bullying for school children is no longer just on playgrounds, it's online, and an all-invasive, day-and-night torment. How do we stop this?

My wonderful sponsor, Lundbeck, without whom there would be no book, asked me from a legal standpoint to include only teens in the book, so while I didn't specifically talk about younger children, virtually every

issue that affects teens is the same for younger kids. Social media bullying is happening from the moment children are exposed to it. I don't believe you can stop it completely. If you don't allow your kids access to phones or computers, they'll simply use their friend's devices. Keep channels of communication open with your child, and be aware of any sudden change of mood or if they're suddenly reluctant to go to school or mix with kids who were previously their friends. Read up on the subject, and encourage schools to be more involved in this issue.

We recently spoke to youngsters who were bullied, and they told us that teachers and adults in general don't understand and can't help them. What's the truth?

There's definitely a generational gap. Schools and parents can help simply by co-ordinating their efforts and using various organisations that specialise in going into schools to talk to kids, using young people to bridge those gaps.

How does bullying play out at home in



Marion Scher

interpersonal relationships?

This is far more common than we think. Bullying doesn't have to mean hitting someone. It's often simply one partner constantly undermining the other. Emotional bullying does massive damage.

Why do people get involved with - and even marry - bullies?

Weirdly, quite a few of the people I interviewed who came from abusive homes married abusive partners. As I'm not a mental-health professional, this is difficult to answer. It does appear to be a pattern though.

How big an impact does bullying have on a victim's life?

Massive. It doesn't matter what age a person is, bullying can change their life forever. Without proper help or counselling, it will stay with them and have an impact on every relationship they have or will have.

In the workplace, what can be done about bullying, especially when a superior is at fault?

This is tricky, as I found that human resources isn't there for the employees, but for the bosses. It's particularly hard when living through a period when people are hanging on to their jobs for fear of unemployment.

Why do you believe people bully others?

From my research, I would say it's often a case of them repeating the behaviour they grew up with. In the case of workplace bullies, particularly women bosses, I think it's possibly a case of women having to work particularly hard to prove themselves, and being tough becomes part of their workplace persona.

How do you call bullies to account?

By doing something about it. Stay quiet, and nothing will change. The workplace scenario is particularly tough because of job security. In relationships, it can take years for someone to get the courage to walk out the door. This is often also tied in with financial security.

What do you hope to achieve with this book?

Just to start conversations, and stop pretending it doesn't exist.

You're already writing your next book. What's it about?

Men and mental health. A typical South African man won't talk about the fact that he's either under massive pressure, is stressed or depressed, and when it's more than just a bad day. By interviewing top sportsmen, businessmen, those left behind by suicide, and the "average" South African man, I hope once again to start more conversations, help break the stigma around this vital topic, and show that it's ok not to be ok – it's not a sign of weakness.

From stall beginnings to success, entrepreneurs find their market

HANNA RESNICK

Weekend markets abound, but Picnic and Thrift is unique in that it's a sustainable thrift market curated by young people for young people. And it's the brainchild of two former King David High School Victory Park students. It's a feat of youthful entrepreneurship, offering a platform to small, sustainable businesses ranging from baked goods to handmade crafts to second-hand clothing, and drawing diverse participants, with live music and an abundance of friendly faces.

Gabrielle Onay (24) and Ruby Lee Prager (28) met at King David High School Victory Park while rehearsing for a school play, and have been friends since.

"Gabi was this little nerdy Grade 8, and I was in Grade 11 or something at the time. I always used to take people under my wing who were in the younger grades, so she became one of my friends," said Prager.

Onay went on to start a small clothing business and thrift shop, Crybaby Thrift, while Prager began a small business, Love Yourself South Africa, which began as a skincare range and evolved into a candle range.

"In 2019, we decided to do like a little open day with just our two businesses and invite friends and family to come and look at our products and support us," said Prager. "Then, we decided to invite a few people that Gabi knew from the thrifting community who also had online stores on Instagram. We had about 15 or 20 stores at our first little market in my garden". Three hundred people showed up to that market, and after a few markets in their own gardens, it became clear that they needed to establish a venue for the events.

"Our first market at a venue took place in March 2020, about a week before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown was announced, at the Zoo Lake Bowls Club. That went phenomenally well, followed by six to eight months of nothing. But within those six to eight months, people really wanted Picnic and Thrift. We did everything we could to work within the red tape of pandemic restrictions. We had events outdoors with masks and limited entry, so we made it work."

They now host monthly markets and other events in Johannesburg, as well as markets in Pretoria and Centurion, and are planning to have markets in Cape Town by the end of the year.

"It really is a space for entrepreneurship, a platform for students and for young people in this country where youth unemployment is so high – crippling actually. It's a space where we're able to make a living, and I don't just mean pocket money, I mean, stores that come to our events and that's how they pay their rent," said Onay. "Both my business and Picnic and Thrift are fully self-funded through our profits and the fees from the stores, which then go to the venues as well as paying our DJs and live musicians, etc."

Each market has a different theme, from TV shows like *Euphoria*, *Adventure Time*, and *American Horror Story*, to decade-themed markets, such as their 70s or Y2K markets, to themes like Halloween or Cottagecore. Last month, they hosted a three-day Pride-themed event, from 23 to 25 June, beginning with the Pride Prom on Friday night, followed by two

days of markets with 150 different stalls. Customers dress up according to theme, and many stalls sell various themed items.

Prager said the idea for themed markets came about organically through their themed poster designs. "We always wanted our posters to have funky themes, so the first few events, we just had random things and we tried to have as many local artists as possible help create our posters. We thought, "Let's make the posters a theme," and everyone was just so on board with dressing up according to the poster, that we started implementing official themes, which was fun."



Gabrielle Onay and Ruby Lee Prager

They now have ambassadors that help with marketing. "These are people who want to become content creators and refine their skills in graphic design, social media management, and search engine optimisation. So, instead of giving them an internship, what we've done is make a group of ambassadors, who get paid in free products from different stores, make content for those stores, which works nicely because the stores get proper product photos, images, and content for their own use."

Picnic and Thrift hasn't just expanded its markets to different parts of the country. In addition, it has also begun hosting festivals as well as "P&T Nightlife" events.

The expansion into nightlife was a "natural progression" of the demographic of Picnic and Thrift, Onay said. "Our demographic has mostly been people around my age, just because of advertising. And so, we've all become older, and we found that our markets have diversified quite a lot, from pre-teens and middle teens to people in their 20s and onward," she said. "These events are also a really nice way to be able to highlight local artists and DJs who wouldn't previously have the opportunity to perform and get exposure. Something like this could launch their careers."

Picnic and Thrift has become a space where all identities are celebrated and accepted, with diverse crowds at all of events. "That wasn't necessarily the intention when we started," said Prager, "but because we both, in our personal lives, would foster safe spaces for people, it's just within our personalities to create an environment where anybody can feel okay to be themselves. Because that's something we both lacked growing up and in high school.

"We have a strict zero-tolerance policy," said Onay, "which means that we don't accept bullying, nonsense, or hate from any side."

Regular customers of Picnic and Thrift have found a wonderful community. "It's become more than just a market; it's like a family," said Prager, "It's a family of people that get to connect through this event. And they know that when coming here, they are safe and they are in an environment where they can be their authentic selves without fear of prejudice or judgement."



Picnic and Thrift

STAFF REPORTER

“The late Mendel Kaplan had a vision which

From 2013 to 2016, Masemola served as Limpopo police commissioner, where he reportedly played a significant role in decreasing stock theft in the province. He served as deputy national police commissioner for the country for the following six years. His most recent position was chairperson of the NatJOINTS (National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure) on COVID-19, where he aided in co-ordinating the government's efforts across a number of sectors, internationally and domestically.

Reeva Forman has done much in her years



Lance Abramson is a busy lawyer

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Digital kids need to connect offline with parents

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

From toddlers crying for more *Cocomelon* videos, to tweens losing it when you force them off their games, to teens whose lives are dominated by what happens on Snapchat, raising kids in the digital era isn't for the fainthearted. Yet by fostering strong connections with our children, we can help them ride out any online storm.

"There's a huge correlation between kids who use technology well and parents who are connected and engaged," Sarah Hoffman told an event hosted by Chevrah Kadisha Community Social Services at The David Lopatie Centre recently. A social media lawyer, Hoffman runs Klikd, which helps teens, parents, and teachers navigate social media safely, together with co-founder, clinical psychologist Pam Tudin.

Being a parent has never been more challenging than it is in today's digital age, they said. "You can't give these digital devices, essentially loaded weapons, to your kids and not play a very active role," said Hoffman. Though it's often overwhelming for parents, it's also a tough time to be a child, tween, or teen having to navigate all the challenges online platforms bring. From displaying increased levels of anxiety to dealing with cyber bullying and online predators, kids are enduring much more at a much younger age.

Yet it's not all bad news, Hoffman said. Our kids are doing some unbelievable things with tech like crowdfunding for students in need. "We can't despair, we've got to embrace tech and use it as an opportunity, as a moment of connection with our kids, as opposed to just instilling fear in them."

Though there are a mass of parental controls on the market which monitor or block certain content, our kids are digital natives who will almost always outsmart us, Hoffman said. "The greatest parental control is your relationship with your child," she

stressed. "That will stand our kids in the greatest stead when it comes to navigating online challenges." Hoffman and Tudin highlighted Klikd's "four Cs" of digital parenting – context, connection, controls, and cyber-EQ – applying emotional intelligence to the online world. In grasping the context of what's going on in our teens and tweens world at the moment, it's important to understand physiologically what's going on in their brains. While the tween or teen years are a period of extreme and rapid development, their brains are essentially like a Ferrari without brakes, said Hoffman.

"The brain's 'braking mechanism' is called the prefrontal cortex, which is what controls impulses, higher-order thinking, and decision making. It's that voice in your head that says it's not such a good idea to send that picture. That piece of software has not been installed in the brain until the age of 25." That's why teens and tweens are hardwired to seek risk.

Engagement in risky behaviour gives teens a dopamine hit, a chemical that makes them feel incredible. That's why digital devices, designed to be addictive, are so powerful. When kids are forced off their devices, if they are in the middle of a game for example, they essentially come down from that hit and they're therefore in fight-or-flight mode, and it's very difficult for them just to behave, said Tudin.

Tudin said that we've mistakenly been given the message that it's time to start letting our teens go emotionally. Though providing kids with more freedom as they mature is to some degree developmentally appropriate, she argues that we need to strengthen our connection. "It's a time of reattachment not detachment. All of our kids are using the device as the bridge to experiencing attachment, which is proof that they still want it."

Attachment is rooted in a sense of closeness and belonging. "Teens don't want to be seen to be wanting attachment, but the need remains," Tudin



said. "And so, we have to find different ways of facilitating this. They need to feel significant, like they matter to you," she said. "They need to feel loved without feeling smothered, and to know that they're understood."

"They should know they can come to you, and that you will be their soft landing place. Consequences will come later but for now, you're there to listen and have their backs." If they don't feel this, they're less likely to confide in you.

Talk to your kids in ways that promote engagement, Tudin said. When it comes to the online world, we need to be curious and ask questions, rather than be judgemental. "Our role isn't to diminish, but to guide." For example, you can ask what you can do that will help them to study rather than repeatedly harassing them to get on with it. "We have to use every opportunity for discussion rather than disdain."

Tudin also discussed the social minefield of Snapchat, where the strength of friendships is determined by the frequency of online interactions, and kids see that they are being left out of plans

by following their friends' movements on Snap Map. "Social media is an experience of power, observation, and exclusion," Tudin said. "So, you're either feeling very powerful, or powerless while observing these dynamics, which is wreaking havoc with our children in terms of their emotional health." Maintaining perspective is vital, they said. "You have to think of yourself as you were in the chocolate aisle at the shops when your children were three years old, begging you for a chocolate at 17:00," said Tudin. "You said 'no', and they said, 'I hate you!' It was a case of water off a duck's back then. Similarly, we have to separate ourselves from that rage around the device because that device is just a symptom of what's happening in their lives."

Putting clear boundaries in place is essential as you cannot be held hostage in your own home, the pair said. "If you don't instil boundaries, the device will be their 11th digit. They've got to take a break," said Hoffman. Make phone-free times and zones, set a device bedtime, and let kids earn data by helping more around the house or by being more conversational at the Shabbos table.

SAJR shares light and warmth across SA

HANNA RESNICK

The *SA Jewish Report* Online Film Festival's Share the Light campaign has distributed the first 1 300 rechargeable lights and hot water bottles to those in need in the Jewish community as well as townships throughout South Africa.

The campaign has specifically sought to help the elderly, as well as matric students who are struggling to study during loadshedding. Clive Mashishi, who got involved in the campaign through The Angel Network said, "We've been on a campaign to give lights and

hot water bottles to our Grade 12 students and elders. We chose Grade 12 students because they are struggling to study during loadshedding because it's dark and cold. With these lights and hot water bottles, they can light up their space and keep warm until the electricity comes back." Recently, Mashishi, along with the South African Jerusalem Prayer Network, visited a youth event in Mamafubedu in the Free State to give matric pupils rechargeable lights and hot water bottles. They spent the next day at Sharpeville with a group of *gogos* (grannies) and donated hot water bottles so they could



Residents in Sharpeville with their rechargeable water bottles

keep warm in the cold weather. "Thus far, along with the South African Jerusalem Prayer Network, we have visited Mamafubedu community in the Free State, the Kasi 2 Kasi organisation, Orange Farm, Kingdom of Hope Ministries, and Elders for Tshepiso in Sharpeville," said Mashishi. "This weekend, we'll visit Benoni Be Blessed Ministries to give their Grade 12 students these items, as well as Bophelong Children's Home." Distribution by other branches of the campaign is still taking place. The Union of Jewish Women in Durban has just received the items. Hazel Levin, the executive director of Jewish Community Services in Cape Town, said that the lights

and hot water bottles would go to aged members in their community, as well as others who need them. "We're incredibly grateful for the support," she said. From the outset, the response to the Share the Light campaign has been incredible, and now it has begun to reach those in need. Through the Jewish community's ongoing support, the campaign will continue to help thousands in need during hours of loadshedding. *SA Jewish Report* chairperson and webinar host, Howard Sackstein, said, "It's been an amazing campaign in which people really shared light and warmth this winter. We are so proud that we're able to do it."

Letters

CAP CLOSURES CHANGED MY LIFE – AND NOT FOR THE BETTER

Though I appreciate the clean-up work it does, once CAP put its Savoy/Waverley closures into practice, life changed for me. I live in Grenville Avenue, which CAP closed, but after complaints, now is closed only in the evenings and on weekends. If I want to drive across Louis Botha Avenue on a weekend to visit a friend and do shopping, I have to drive all the way down Grenville Avenue, turn right into Scott Street, do more turns then into a rutted Corlett Drive, which is often busy with stops at robots. I then have to travel a long way back up to Louis Botha Avenue, a journey of six or seven minutes, turn right into that busy street, travel for many streets until I come back to turn left to where I want to go. What used to take less than a minute now takes very much more. There's another route, but because of potholes and frequent roadworks, it's

often partly or fully closed. Then, when I reach one of the many booms stopping traffic, I have to slow down reluctantly, roll open my window, stretch out my arm to press the required metal, and pray that there's no criminal with a gun reaching in to grab my arm and tell me to get out of my car. Incidentally, one of the shops badly affected by the closure of Grenville Avenue has now closed down. A final thought, prompted by the article on the same page of the *SA Jewish Report*, ("Politician's Zionist conspiracies antisemitic and sad") is that his comment on the Waverley-Savoy closure would probably be, "Typical of rich Jews to force criminals into less wealthy areas." – **Anonymous Grenville Avenue resident**

KOSHER MEAT PRICES STRIP US TO THE BONE

As a Jew in the community and a divorcee who works long hours to keep up with the rising costs of living in South Africa, I was shocked to see the high prices of kosher chicken pieces – and all chicken products. I have always eaten kosher, and my late partner, who lived on that side of town, went every week to fetch my order for the past three years. Unfortunately, he passed away. I went to get chicken, and was so upset by the pricing of kosher food, I walked out with nothing. I landed up looking at the free-range chicken at Woolworths that was less than half the price, and decided that I just couldn't afford to buy kosher food. I bought unkosher chicken pieces. I cooked the food, and had one mouthful of the chicken, and just couldn't eat it.

It was as if my *neshoma* was crying. So, I guess, I'll go back to eating toast and cereal for dinner as I can't justify paying the prices the kosher butchers are charging. I was wondering if Hashem would punish a person hungry to eat a proper meal. If they had no choice but to buy unkosher food, surely the sin would fall on the people ripping off a community. I'm not the only Jew who feels this way. My son's friend saw me making chicken soup with all the kosher chicken carcasses, and said his mother cooks the bones then takes what meat is on them to make chicken mayo sandwiches. Please help fight for a community struggling to pay the prices these kosher butchers are charging. – **Simone Tate, Johannesburg**

My Family Story reveals rare heritage

JACQUI BERNSTEIN

My Family Story, run by ANU Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv, engages thousands of young Jewish students from 26 countries every year in discovering their family history and expressing it artistically. My son, Phoenix Bernstein, was one of the participants this year from King David Primary School Victory Park. He doesn't know his Israeli father very well but the project inspired him to learn about his paternal family. His father's ancestors were from the small Bene Israel Jewish community in India. He also discovered that his great-great-grandfather was a chazzan at the Knesset Eliyahoo in Mumbai. Phoenix was fascinated by the stories of his roots and the diversity of his heritage,



Phoenix Bernstein

contrasting so starkly with my pale Lithuanian roots. He decided to build a model of the synagogue in Mumbai that symbolises his connection to both the east and the northern parts of his roots. He wanted to share the story of the Indian Jews and express pride in both sides of his identity. His project was chosen as one of five finalists from English-speaking countries, and the museum sponsored his flight to Israel and an unforgettable two-day programme and awards ceremony. We joined 22 kids from around the world: finalists from North and South America, the former Soviet Union, Europe, South Africa, Australia, and Israel. At the awards ceremony, Phoenix was placed first among English-speaking country finalists. Overcome by emotion, I watched him from the audience. He walked taller, proud of his heritage, his art, and his unconventional beginnings. He had found his place in the world.

Taking ownership long after moving out

I hadn't realised it, but very few people in Glenhazel live in their own homes. They might physically be domiciled there, have paid for it, have changed both interior and exterior, added solar, redone the garden, the kitchen, and all the bathrooms, but the house isn't theirs. And won't be until they move out. It's only then that when the new occupants tell someone where they are living, they'll say, "Ahh, you live in the Abelman's house."

I was chatting to a friend on Shabbat when this realisation hit me. I didn't know that he had moved to the area as a teenager. "Really?" I said, "Where did you live?" "Ridge Road. Across from Yeshiva College." To which I instinctively replied. "Wow! You lived in the Goldberg's house!"

Not only did I prove the concept that I had until then not thought of, but I also dated myself. Because whose house you live in is an indication of an era and the period of reference. Not convinced? Try it. My son lives in the Adler's house. Even though they made aliya years ago. We live in my parent's house, spent years living the Herbert's house, and a friend lives in Hugh's house. The Mandelbergs, incidentally, live in our house. And have been doing so since around 2006. Payments, bond registrations, and even FICA documents are irrelevant. The community decides where you live. And it's unlikely to change its mind. Until you move. After which it might be reconsidered.

The one way to own a house while actually living in it, is to build it from scratch. Whereas it would be understandable to think that it was dramatic change to the property that conferred immediate community considered ownership, that isn't the case at all. Rather, it's that the entire neighbourhood

INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman



would have had the opportunity to visit the construction site during a Shabbat walk, to debate the cost, comment on the size and positioning of the rooms, and provide unsolicited feedback regarding all of the above. Community participation, it would seem, qualifies immediate and irrevocable naming rights to the property.

"Howard!" said a walker who I passed one Sunday morning. "What do you intend doing with that property on Summerway?" I was taken aback. Mostly because I hadn't thought to loop in the senior woman who now stood in front of me, hands on hips, waiting for her answer. One she clearly considered well overdue. "I'm so sorry!" I stumbled. "I had no idea you needed to know. I apologise for that," I continued, "Can you remind me why it's relevant to you?" She could not. And in disgust, motioned to her walking partner and marched ahead, deeply offended by the impertinence of the answer.

I was wrong. Because what I failed to see is that community is relevant to us all. And whereas it might seem bizarre and even rude when a stranger asked a friend of mine if he had run out of money while building his new house – there was simply a delay in materials delivery – and when people comment on items that seem to have no bearing, it's because we're connected, we care, and one man's solar can brings another man light.

No matter whose house we live in.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Cape of unease

In the first six months of this year, there were a number of concerning incidents of antisemitic threats and intimidation against the Jewish community and its institutions, particularly in Cape Town. At the time of writing, we're preparing for a high-level meeting with the national commissioner of police and his team to discuss these issues. I hope to report more fully on what was discussed and the outcomes in next week's issue of the paper.

The Cape Board has already engaged with a number of relevant figures in government, policing, and state security to raise its concerns, including with Cape Town Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis and the mayoral committee member (MMC) for safety and security. I was able to join our Cape colleagues for the meeting with the mayor and members of the mayoral committee. It was an important opportunity for us to brief them on what has been happening, and the understandable unease this has raised in our community. We trust that the City of Cape Town and the South African Police Service have taken these concerns on board, and are dealing with the matter with due seriousness.

Jubuntu 2023

When addressing the Board's 2011 national conference, then Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe emphasised the contribution that Jews could make in the vital area of social upliftment. This inspired the Board's "Jubuntu" project, whose two-fold purpose was first to document the diverse and innovative ways in which the community was then assisting disadvantaged members of the wider society,

ABOVE BOARD

Karen Milner



and second to identify ways in which the lessons provided by these projects might be adopted on a broader basis. Projects by organisations and individuals were included in the survey, which did much to highlight Jewish-headed efforts countrywide to empower disadvantaged communities through skills development and entrepreneurship training. The results were published in a book titled *Jubuntu*, a copy of which was formally presented to Motlanthe.

Since then, many further Jewish-led upliftment initiatives have been launched, with the various branches of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies itself having made social outreach an ongoing part of its core work. Consequently, we have decided that the time has come to bring out a second, updated edition of *Jubuntu*. As before, this will document the various projects being run as well as providing an up-to-date resource and directory for Jewish organisations and individuals wanting to involve themselves in such work. To achieve this, we're naturally reliant on members of our community getting in touch with us and supplying the relevant information, as well as suitable illustrative material. I urge everyone who is involved in or might know of such initiatives to contact our offices on sajbd@sajbd.org.

• 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

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1939 = R10 000 Up to R30 000



30
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Jazzing it up at Second Innings

African jazz band Africa in My Turf performed for the members, friends, and guests of the Chevrah Kadisha's life enrichment programme Second Innings on 25 June. The repertoire included a number of popular songs paying tribute to the likes of Miriam Makeba, Johnny Clegg, and many others. The band also paid respect to Jewish traditions by concluding with Hevenu Shalom Aleichem. All the numbers were performed with a uniquely African twist. The personality of the singer, Phindile Sibiya, and the professionalism of Sintu Ndzube on saxophone, engrossed the audience, which spent the morning dancing,



The Africa in My Turf show at Golden Acres cheering, toe tapping, clapping, and singing along to the show, directed by Desiree Levin and filmed by Eitan Steinberg from Simcha Live Streaming.

Sylvia steals limelight

Residents of Highlands House in Cape Town watch the documentary Sylvia: Tracing Blood, one of the movies in the recent Online Film Festival hosted by the SA Jewish Report.



Highlands House residents

Torah Academy girls spread light and joy

Torah Academy High School girls hand out Shabbos candles with lighting times for the week, part of the school's outreach programme, in which pupils visit different locations around Johannesburg every week to spread light and joy before Shabbos.



Yael Hurwitz giving out Shabbos candles and candle lighting times at Dis-Chem BluBird in Melrose

Loaves of love at Mina Lopato's challah bake

Mina Lopato Nursery School held a special person's challah bake on 30 June in which the children spent time with those special to them and baked delicious loaves. It was a wonderful bonding experience, and memories were made.



Challah bake at Mina Lopato

Yeshiva College girls soccer triumphs at Discover 2023

The Yeshiva College U9 girls soccer team beat Trinity House on 30 June to win the Discovery Cup 2023. The victory is a testament to the team's sportsmanship and teamwork throughout the tournament.



The Yeshiva College Girls U9 soccer team that won the 2023 Discovery Cup

Sunday 9 July

Chevrah Kadisha Bereavement Services hosts its Growth from Grief support group. Time: 10:00. Venue: The David Lopatie Centre, Sandringham Gardens. Contact: sheilaf@jhbchev.co.za or 011 532 9653

Wednesday 12 July

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre hosts a screening of the documentary The Paper Brigade. Time: 18:00. Contact: 021 462 5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

Sunday 16 July

Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre hosts a panel discussion on Rethinking Yiddish Theatre – Now and Then. Time: 18:00. Contact: 021 462 5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za



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INGREDIENTS:

- 1 MEDIUM ONION, CHOPPED
- 2 TABLESPOONS BUTTER
- 1 CAN TUNA, DRAINED AND FLAKED
- 1 CAN CONDENSED CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP, UNDILUTED
- 1/2 CUP 2% MILK
- 1/2 TEASPOON GARLIC SALT
- 1/2 TEASPOON DRIED OREGANO
- 1/4 TEASPOON PEPPER
- 9 LASAGNA NOODLES, COOKED AND DRAINED
- 1-1/2 CUPS 4% COTTAGE CHEESE
- 1 CUP SLICED MOZZARELLA CHEESE
- 1/4 CUP GRATED PARMESAN CHEESE

DIRECTIONS:

IN A LARGE SAUCEPAN, SAUTE ONION IN BUTTER UNTIL TENDER. STIR IN THE TUNA, SOUP, MILK, GARLIC SALT, OREGANO AND PEPPER UNTIL COMBINED. SPREAD 3/4 CUPFUL INTO A GREASED BAKING DISH.

LAYER WITH 3 NOODLES, 3/4 CUP TUNA MIXTURE, HALF OF THE COTTAGE CHEESE AND A THIRD OF THE MOZZARELLA CHEESE. REPEAT LAYERS. TOP WITH REMAINING NOODLES, TUNA MIXTURE AND MOZZARELLA CHEESE. SPRINKLE WITH PARMESAN CHEESE.

BAKE, UNCOVERED, AT 180° FOR 25-30 MINUTES OR UNTIL BUBBLY. LET STAND FOR 10-15 MINUTES BEFORE SERVING.

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