



Pale Natives and white trash: a brilliant play. (page 10)

South African Jewish Report

www.sajr.co.za

Photo: Geoff Sifrin



On a fugitive mission

Members of the Shavu Banim sect of Hassidim, part of the entourage of the Breslov Hassidic leader Rabbi Eliezer Berland, seen outside the Genesis Centre in Glenhazel, Johannesburg last Thursday. Berland was accused of committing indecent acts against several young female followers; he was wanted in Israel for questioning. However, he fled Israel with his followers before he could be arrested, to the US, Italy, and Switzerland. He eventually settled briefly in Morocco, before moving to Zimbabwe, then to South Africa. The group has been in Johannesburg since before Pesach and has been hosted by members of the SA Jewish community, and have attended the Sephardi Shul in Elder Street, among others. See pages 2 and 3. For more on this story, see www.sajr.co.za.

Huge confidence in redevelopment of Johannesburg CBD

Under Jonathan Liebmann of Propertuity and Mark Kaplan of Arrowhead, Maboneng is booming.

4

50 years on, remembering the rally that launched the Soviet Jewry movement

"We had the indignation of college students, we were outraged over an injustice and anxious to do something."



6

Hedy Davis grows Muizenberg exhibition into most readable book

With a trajectory from the 1830s Davis has researched a living, breathing story that will resonate with everyone in the community.

11

Yom Hashoah events abound

This Sunday, those murdered in the Holocaust are remembered throughout the community.

4, 9

'Notes from a headmaster's desk'

Ultimately, if we equip them with the right set of skills and attitudes, our children will turn out just fine

14

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Fugitive rabbi and his many followers cause an uproar in Johannesburg’s Jewish community



ANT KATZ AND ROBYN SASSEN
PHOTOS BY GEOFF SIFRIN

In the face of hundreds of followers of alleged Israeli sex-pest Rabbi Eliezer Berland, 77, in Johannesburg, over Pesach, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein retracted his earlier instruction to the SA Jewish community not to shelter or support the rabbi or his followers.

According to The Star of April 15, Rabbi Goldstein urged the community to assist the rabbi’s “destitute” followers. “Many who travelled with Berland were without food or shelter during Pesach.”

Rabbi Goldstein said: “Given the dire circumstances, those who are able to help these destitute people over the course of Pesach should do so on the following condition: that after Pesach, the entire group of these followers must agree to return to Israel immediately.”

Rabbi Goldstein added that Rabbi Berland should return to Israel to face the criminal justice system there. He added, referring to talks with the Chief Rabbi of Israel and South Africa’s Rosh Beth Din, Rabbi Moshe Kurtstag, it would be “untenable and unconscionable to harbour a fugitive”.

Rabbi Berland is the head of the Shavu Banim Hassidic sect, associated with the Breslov Hassidic movement and its Jerusalem-based Yeshiva. According to the Jerusalem Post he is accused of sexual abuse by a number of his female followers, including a 15-year-old girl.

Shavu Banim members at Pick ‘n Pay Supermarket in Genesis Centre

To page 3

Ahavat Yisrael - true love



Parshat Kedoshim

Rabbi Michael Katz
Chabad of Illovo

“V’ahavta L’reyacha Kamocha - And you should love your fellow as yourself” - Parshat Kedoshim.

A famous Hassidic rabbi, Reb Moshe Leib of Sassov once commented that he had learned the meaning of true Ahavat Yisrael - love of your fellowman - from a discussion he had overheard between two peasants who were drinking at a local inn.

When they were well intoxicated one

turned to his friend and asked: “Do you love me?”

His friend replied: “Of course I love you.”

A short while later the question was rephrased: “Do you really love me?”

To which the second peasant replied: “I already told you that I love you.”

The first peasant responded: “If you really love me, tell me what I need.”

“How should I know what you need?” replied his friend, “Am I a mind reader?”

“Well how can you say you love me when you don’t know what I need?”

True Ahavat Yisrael entails a sensitivity to the feelings and needs of another, not only those with those whom we come into contact, but even our fellow Jews within

our own community, or even those far from our own community, who we may never even have met.

There is one most important sphere of love that we perhaps don’t think about often enough, and that is the sharing of our most valuable and precious assets, with those who are needy.

Our true assets and attributes are not only financial or material, but are spiritual - our Holy Torah and its mitzvoth.

So, as we move away from the beautiful Chag of Pesach and advance further into the year, let us try and show some more Ahavat Yisrael - love of our fellowmen. Not only in a physical way, by ensuring that everyone has their material needs, but

in a deeper spiritual fashion, sharing our Torah, our knowledge and the splendour of our mitzvoth with our fellows who are less fortunate than ourselves.

This will undoubtedly help us to live up to the overall command of the week - to really be a Holy People.

Shabbat Times		
April 25/ 25 Nissan		
April 26 / 26 Nissan		
Parshat Kedoshim		
17:25	18:14	Johannesburg
17:54	18:45	Cape Town
17:09	17:59	Durban
17:29	18:19	Bloemfontein
17:25	18:16	Port Elizabeth
17:17	18:08	East London

South African

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A taxi driver receives his fare from members of Shavu Banim outside Genesis Centre.

From page 2

These allegations first came to light in 2012, and include allegations that Rabbi Berland fled as police opened investigations in Israel. Shortly after he fled, his son and several other followers were arrested on suspicion of fraud and money laundering.

Having fled from Israel seven months ago, he has previously hidden in the US, Switzerland and Morocco. He entered Zimbabwe on a 90-day religious tourism visa in December and set up shop in and around Bulawayo - eventually settling on a disused mine 20 km outside the town as his new headquarters.

Although a deal had been struck with local Jewry that the Hareidim would not daven at their shul, a member of the small Bulawayo Jewish community (who asked not to be named) told Jewish Report that “150 of them arrived at Bulawayo Shul erev Purim and overran the place. Our community was devastated.

“Berland was surrounded by four heavily-armed guards at all times,” he said. The community had in particular complained about the schechting of a sheep on the pavement outside the shul, calling local residents Ni**rs, and “urinating and defecating on the public pavement,” he said.

Berland was expecting many hundreds of his followers to join him for Pesach in Bulawayo. But, on Monday April 7, the fugitive rabbi and 12 of his followers whose visas had expired, were arrested, fined \$200 and deported on Wednesday. Under international conventions, deportations are to the country from which the deportee entered, in this case South Africa.

Last Sunday, outside Mooz Bros in the Sandringham “kosher strip”, there was a vociferous protest by members of the community, under the leadership of Rebbetzen Wendy Hendler.

Rebbetzen Hendler, the leader of anti-abuse advocacy group Koleinu, said: “I made this demonstration in my own capacity, but it is consistent with Koleinu’s message of taking a stand against any hint of sexual abuse.

“A person wanted for questioning in regard to serious allegations of abuse, should not be

harboured by this community. The time has come for our community to say it out loud that we don’t turn a blind eye or pretend things away.”

She was very clear that the protest - which was attended by some 50 members of the community - was held about Rabbi Berland’s alleged sex crimes and his presence in South Africa and not the situation of his followers.

“Our message had nothing to do with the followers,” she said, referring to the Jewish values of compassion and chesed that caused many community members to open their homes to members of the Shavu Banim sect. “The response,” she added, “was very positive. I even got an e-mail from a woman who elected to remain anonymous, who spoke of damage she had experienced because of the fraud allegations of Rabbi Berland’s family.

“I did not want to make this into an Ashkenazi vs Sephardi thing and hope this doesn’t cause damage in this area of our community,” she referred to Chief Rabbi Goldstein’s statements. “I felt that he did not substantiate his first instruction to the community not to help the Haredi Jews, but I trust his leadership and believe he is an enormous advocate against sexual offenders. “

She confirmed that the SA Jewish Board of Deputies was in talks with several government departments to arrange for Berland to be deported.

Police are still investigating his entourage, including a rich businessman whose private jet it is believed they were using.

Last week it was reported that one of Rabbi Berland’s followers had transported kosher-for-Passover food to Zimbabwe in advance of the chag. Further, it was established that a wealthy Jew from Johannesburg, allegedly, donated some 400 kg of matzah and 60 cases of wine for the consumption of the rabbi and his followers during Pesach.

Efforts to get updated comment from Rabbi Goldstein, were not successful.

• For more on this story, go to our website www.sajr.co.za



Walking down Summer Way, Glenhazel.

EVA AT YOM HASHOAH

Eva Schloss is a Holocaust Survivor and Anne Frank’s stepsister. She is author of the play “And then they came for me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank” which has been produced internationally, sharing the values of tolerance and reminding us that life is precious and fragile.

She has written two books on her life story; ‘Eva’s Story’ and ‘The Promise’ and has travelled the world speaking against violence and bigotry that continue to plague our world.

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Photograph courtesy www.kent.edu Photo by David Labelle

Remembering the six million who died during the Second World War

Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss (pictured), is the keynote speaker at a commemoration ceremony at the Martyr’s Monument, West Park Jewish Cemetery this Sunday, April 27, at 11:00, for the six million who perished during the Second World War at the hands of the Nazis, Beyachad announced in a media release.

She will recount her compelling tale of a mother and daughter who managed to survive Auschwitz/Birkenau and whose lives were saved by miracle and chance.

Eva will recount how she escaped her homeland in Austria, survived two years in hiding, captured on her 15th birthday, spending nine months in Auschwitz/Birkenau, her repatriation and the death of her father and brother.

“She overcame the poison of bitterness, the burden of grief and the integration of loss to today, where she works tirelessly to end the violence and bigotry that continue to plague our works.”

After the war, Eva’s mother married Otto Frank, the widowed father of diarist Anne Frank. Eva is involved in Holocaust memory and is the author of two books, Eva’s Story and, And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank. Eva is a trustee of the Anne Frank Educational Trust in the UK.

• For more information, contact Charisse Zeifert on 082-427-2788 or e-mail charisse@beyachad.co.za

Board takes in views of all political parties



Fikile Mbalula (ANC) Helen Zille (DA) Kenneth Meshoe (ACDP)

As part of its “Make Us Count” election awareness campaign, the SAJBD is hosting two political meetings at Beyachad this week to give the Jewish community leadership an opportunity to meet and engage with the Democratic Alliance and the African Christian Democratic Party, the Board said in a media release.

The meeting with the DA took place on Thursday evening (April 24), and the meeting takes place today (April 25) with the ACDP over lunch.

Among those attending will be the leadership of the SAJBD and SAZF, as well as representatives of some of the key affiliate organisations of the SAJBD.

Previously, the Board hosted an evening for the Jewish community to be addressed by a representative of the ANC, when Minister of Sport Fikile Mbalula, spoke at an evening for the young Jewish leadership in March.



Huge confidence in redevelopment of Johannesburg CBD

STAFF REPORTER

The Maboneng precinct in the eastern sector of downtown Johannesburg, is set to boom with an expected 20 000 people living within a one kilometre area by 2020.

Jonathan Liebmann , founder and chief executive of Propertuity, the company which established the precinct which has revitalised that section of the inner city, recently sold eight properties within Maboneng to Arrowhead Properties for R180 million.

Maboneng is a mixed-use urban neighbourhood, east of the Johannesburg CBD, which comprises 40 commercial, residential and industrial buildings, a hotel and retail buildings.

The precinct has become a highly popular weekend and tourist destination with thousands of people attending its Sunday morning market.

Liebman started it by purchasing one building, called Arts on Main. The eight buildings acquired by Arrowhead, with a lettable area of 58 000 square metres, are mainly industrial. They are all developed and function-

ing, fully-rented buildings.

Liebmann said the funds from this sale would “propel” Maboneng into its next development phase to reach its 2020 aims.

“It is our intention to further develop and sell properties to Arrowhead. Propertuity is focused on development while Arrowhead is focused on acquiring developed property with solid yields.

“Arrowhead’s overall strategy is to increase its portfolio to R10 billion by 2016 through the acquisition of properties that offer attractive yields. It currently owns properties valued at more than R5 billion,” he said.

This follows on the purchase of two other landmark buildings in the Maboneng district in December. The two multi-storey buildings are Access City and Hallmark Towers. They are collectively 75 000 square metres in extent and are partially filled with tenants. Hallmark Towers, a 17-storey building, has tenants involved in light industrial manufacturing - mainly clothing.

Liebmann said the two buildings would become icons on the Johannes-

burg city skyline. They would serve in connecting Maboneng to other areas which were being upgraded on the northern and eastern sides of the city.

“Their huge, cumulative size will provide a huge base from which Maboneng can grow significantly north towards our important neighbours at Ellis Park and the University of Johannesburg. Both buildings will be key contributors to the recently legislated New Doornfontein CID which will ensure that the previously degenerated area will become clean, safe and well-managed,” he said.

Jonathan Liebmann in Maboneng Precinct.



Photo courtesy www.mblife.co.za

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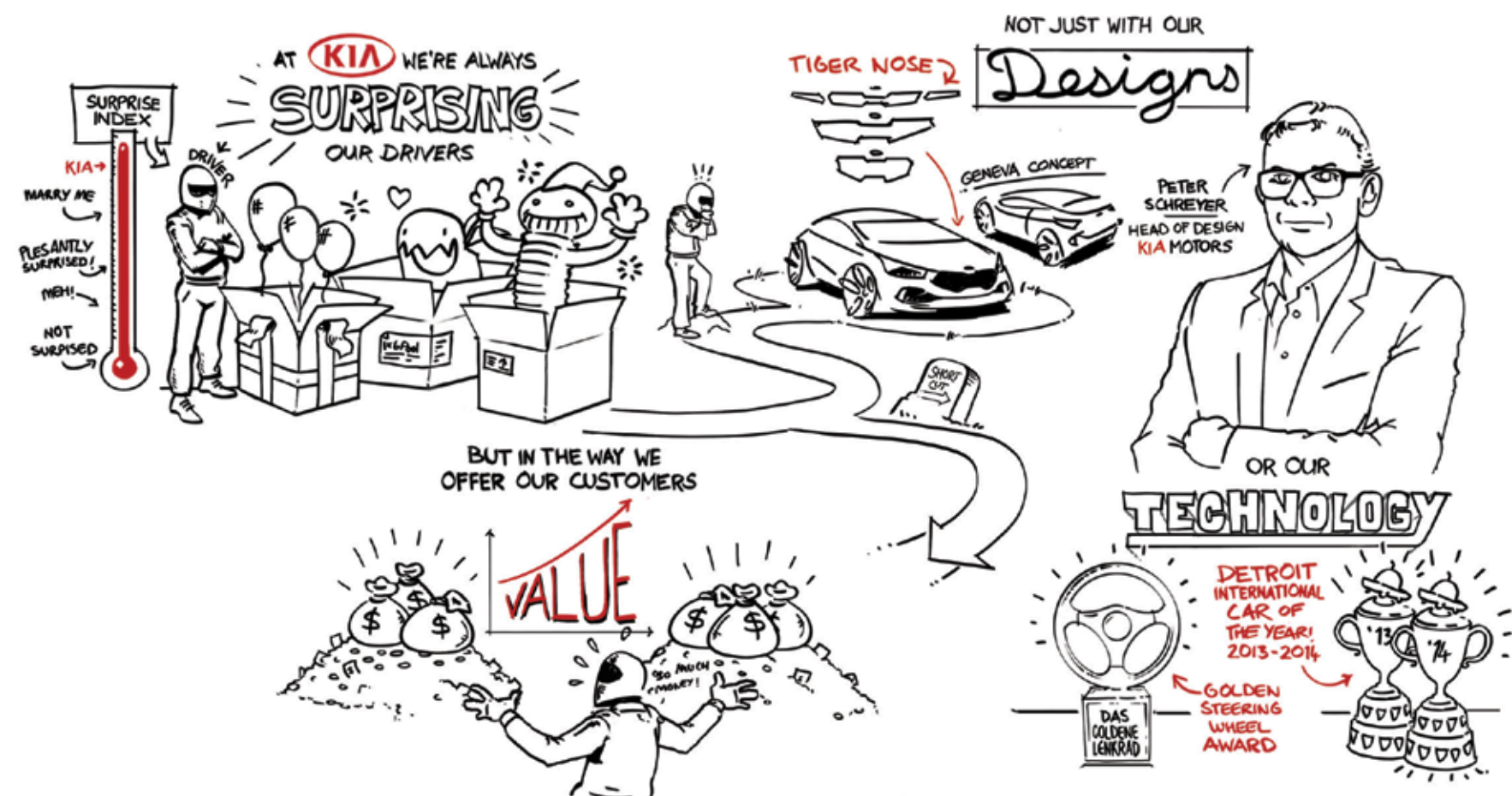
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South African
Jewish Report

What weight for Israel stance in May 7 poll?

Who are you going to vote for on May 7? Deciding this amidst the complex politics and myriad burning issues of South Africa, is not easy. Emotion and rational thinking factor in, often pointing in opposite directions.

Twenty years after our first free poll in 1994, our democratic institutions are holding up, and this election looks likely to provide interesting results. But it is clear our time-worn political landscape, with one party - the ANC - dominating national politics, has become tired and in need of a shake-up.

The ANC itself needs a fresh wind, as an increasing number of its stalwarts are calling for. According to Global Voices Online, Struggle veteran Ronnie Kasrils, for example, backed by internationally acclaimed cartoonist Zapiro and Struggle icon Horst Kleinschmidt, have made no bones about their disillusionment with the party, encouraging people who would otherwise have voted ANC, to instead spoil their ballot papers - for example by scribbling over President Jacob Zuma’s image. And, should you vote, do so for one of the “smaller” parties.

Kasrils has been widely lambasted for this strategy. He doesn’t advocate voting for another party, saying the ANC is still the best, but the “present” ANC of Zuma needs a wake-up call on corruption and other matters.

A party’s attitude to Israel is a hot topic for Jewish South Africans. What weight should it be given? Many people would scorn the idea of voting principally on this issue - using backing for Israel as a litmus test for a party. And what are the criteria for this? Must it be unquestioning? Or is support for Israel’s existence, but also criticism of certain Israeli government actions, or the occupation, good enough?

It would be wrong for Jews to let this election turn around this single issue for them. What if a party is positive towards Israel, but has other items in its bouquet which are problematic for South Africa?

What about its stance on corruption, abortion, affirmative action, its economic policy, or even e-tolls - all issues which affect the lives of South Africans dramatically?

Single-issue politics is a legitimate part of democracy, and narrow advocacy groups can play an important role. Such groups in other countries have lobbied on things like abortion (“pro-life” or “pro-choice”), the environment, taxation and gun control.

In the United States, a heavyweight advocacy group is the National Rifle Association, whose primary concern is any political party’s attitude towards gun control. All major parties take account of it when formulating their election platforms.

On May 7, the first obligation of adult citizens is to actually vote. Brave South Africans fought a long and hard struggle, often at the cost of their liberty and even lives, for the freedom to vote democratically, to throw out a government not doing its job and replace it with a better one. It is a precious right, which must be used and safeguarded. Madiba would be horrified at the idea of deliberately spoiling ballot papers.

The second obligation is to be clear about why you are voting for a particular party, to know what it stands for on a range of issues, not just Israel. One might consider voting for a party whose Israel stance is not quite as unequivocal as one would like, but whose positions on other critical South African issues are spot on, and who one might be able to influence regarding Israel after the elections.

Huge weight should be given, for example, to a party determined to address South Africa’s catastrophic education system which is producing generations of scarcely educated and unemployable young people, making the future of this country increasingly precarious. Or a party which will tackle head-on the scourge of corruption eating away at the nation’s soul.

The Jewish organisation whose mandate is to lobby for Israel as a single issue is the SA Zionist Federation. Other Jewish organisations and individuals must balance the Israel issue against matters impacting on the lives and wellbeing of South Africans, and the parties most likely to succeed in tackling them. Loyalty towards Israel and patriotism towards South Africa must not cancel each other out, but rather work together.

– Geoff Sifrin, Editor

50 years on, remembering the rally that launched the Soviet Jewry movement



RAFAEL MEDOFF/JNS.ORG
NEW YORK

“We didn’t know you couldn’t organise a mass rally in four days, and sometimes if you don’t know, then you just plunge ahead - and you do it.” So says Glenn Richter, one of the organisers of the rally in New York City, 50 years ago on May 1, which launched the Soviet Jewry freedom movement.

In the spring of 1964, not many American Jews were paying attention to the plight of their three million co-religionists in the Soviet Union. But Yaakov (Jacob) Birnbaum and Morris Brafman were.

Their personal experiences had made them keenly aware of the commandment to not stand idly by as fellow Jews were persecuted. Birnbaum, 37, was born in Germany but raised in England, to which his parents fled from the Nazis. Brafman, 58, was a refugee from Austria. His nephew - prominent criminal defence attorney Ben Brafman - has written about how on Kristallnacht, his father, Sol, and uncle Morris “ran into a burning synagogue and rescued a Torah that would otherwise have been consumed by the flames”.

In 1960, the Brafman brothers, living in New York, established the first fledgling Soviet Jewry group, the American League for Russian Jews.

In April 1964, after reading reports in the press about the mistreatment of Soviet Jews - including the Kremlin’s refusal to allow Jews to obtain matzahs for that year’s Passover holiday - Birnbaum and Brafman decided to call a meeting on the campus of Columbia University to brainstorm about the situation. Glenn Richter, a Queens College sophomore, was one of those who attended.

Richter told JNS.org that about 150 students attended that meeting - a surprisingly large number, considering the Soviet Jewry issue was almost com-

pletely unknown at that point.

“It was an amazing scene, kind of electrifying,” he recalled. “We had the indignation of college students, we were outraged over an injustice and anxious to do something.” One of the students suggested they hold a rally outside the Soviet Mission to the United Nations, on Manhattan’s 67th street, on May 1 - just four days away.

“Sometimes enthusiasm makes up for experience,” Richter said. “Nobody in that room had the experience to know how difficult it would be to organise a serious rally in just four days - so nobody thought it was impossible. We just jumped into it.”

Birnbaum was instantly attracted to the rally proposal because of the symbolism of holding it on May Day - the international holiday of the Communist movement. Rebuking the Soviets on their own holiday was exactly the kind of irony that he believed would attract public and media attention. And he was right.

“Symbolism was everything to us,” Richter noted. “Many of us were active in the black civil rights movement, where we were constantly looking for symbolic ways to dramatise our cause. When we started organising for Soviet Jewry, we borrowed heavily from what we learned in the civil rights movement.”

Richter himself had been a regular volunteer in the New York offices of the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), a leading civil rights activist group. Later, anti-Semitic black nationalists took over SNCC and many of its Jewish members departed. Some ended up in the Soviet Jewry movement.

“For four days, we ran around like crazy, pasting up posters, handing out leaflets on college campuses, ‘talking up’ the rally everywhere we could,” Richter said. “We really had no idea how many people would show up.

“When the day arrived, we watched in amazement as the people started coming, and then more, and then more, until more than 1 000 students were marching up and down the street. It was an incredible moment.”

The large photograph and article that appeared in the next day’s New York Times - on page 2, to the students’ great surprise - reveals a lot about the young protesters. They are well-dressed, picketing in calm, orderly fashion, holding placards with well-thought-out slogans. The sign that is most prominent in the photo is remarkably informational: “Report from Russia: 1956 - 400 Synagogues; 1964 - 80 Synagogues - 1970 - ?”

“We understood that it was, first of all, a battle for public opinion,” Richter explained. “Nobody had heard of the issue. We had to educate the public. The slogans were carefully planned. The students were instructed to be on their best behaviour. We were trying to make Soviet Jewry into an issue that Americans would take seriously.”

That would not happen overnight. There would be decades of demonstrations and other protests - by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, led by Birnbaum and Richter, by other activist groups, and eventually by the mainstream Jewish organisations.

There would be battles in Congress and empty chairs set at Passover seders and American Jews sneaking into the USSR to help Soviet Jewish refuseniks. It would ultimately become one of the proudest chapters in American Jewish history.

All that had to start somewhere - and it did, 50 years ago on May 1, with a handful of college students who did the impossible because they didn’t know it couldn’t be done. (JNS.org)

Dr Rafael Medoff is founding director of The David S Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies.

A miracle in Uganda as the Abayudaya grow

**GERSHOM SIZOMU
NABAGOYE, UGANDA**

As we celebrate Passover, it is important to remember that as great as the miracle of the Exodus was, freedom was only the beginning. I know this from reading the Torah, but I also know from personal experience.

I was born in Uganda to Jewish parents at a time when it was illegal to be a Jew in my country. Uganda’s dictator, Idi Amin, was a modern-day Pharaoh, outlawing everything Jewish from prayer to practice.

Many of our Jewish elders, including my father, the community rabbi, were beaten and imprisoned. Our synagogue was destroyed. Under these dangerous conditions, most of the 3 000 Jews in Uganda abandoned their faith.

Nearly a decade later, on April 11, 1979, corresponding to 14 Nisan, 5739, Amin was deposed. It was the first night of Passover when the government declared freedom of worship. For us, it was a true Passover miracle.

However, as exciting and meaningful as the Passover celebration was for us that year, it was, as in ancient times, only the beginning. In the days, months and years that followed, we have engaged in the task of rebuilding our community.

Like the journey of the Israelites in the desert, that work has been filled with many joyous moments as well as

challenges.

Over the last 35 years, the Abayudaya, as the Jews of Uganda are called, have experienced many successes. Like the Israelites, one of our first priorities was building a place of worship. Our small synagogue serves not only as a house of prayer but also as a meeting place for education and gathering for the entire community. And just as Jethro deputised leaders to help Moses, we have built a yeshiva that is training the next generation of African Jewish leaders.

But as we know from the Israelite experience, growing and moving a community forward is difficult, and complaints are inevitable. Throughout the wanderings in the desert, the Israelites grumbled and complained. Had this been the dominant narrative of the ancient biblical wanderings, it would have only fuelled the discontent and hindered progress.

Among the Abayudaya there are similarly those who grumble as we grow. It is unfortunate that these complaints and some religious differences within our community have been the recent focus of mainstream Jewish media - disproportionate to their importance.

For all our successes, there are indeed challenges. We are a poor community, and our resources are limited.

But focusing on the complaints shows an incomplete picture of the real miracles of growth, connection and possibility that we have



Members of Uganda's Abayudaya Jewish community outside a synagogue in Nabagoye.

created in a short 35 years. There is more work to be done, and there are theological disagreements - we are Jews, so it could not be otherwise. But today there are African children learning Hebrew, and men and women are celebrating Shabbat, and we have not had a death from malaria in five years. It is extraordinary.

Unlike the ancient Israelites, our vision of a Promised Land is not solely focused on Israel. Rather, we dream of continuing to grow a vital and vibrant Judaism that thrives naturally in our native Uganda.

Because our numbers have swelled, with the help of Be’chol Lashon and

Jews around the world we are about to build a new synagogue and community centre. Not only will it serve as a house of prayer, but also, like the manna, feed those in need through a sustainable food programme.

Additionally, it will house a childcare centre, so that mothers of all faiths can study and work, and children can be provided with a stimulating environment to learn.

These vital services benefit more than just the Abayudaya, allowing us to proactively combat anti-Semitism and live in peace with our Muslim and Christian neighbours.

No institution or community is

perfect, and we understand that even as successes come, discontent is inevitable. But do not be fooled. These are minor complaints that should not take away from the miraculous re-emergence of Jewish life in Uganda, no matter the denomination.

And at Passover, more than any time of year, we as Jews should be celebrating this miracle.(JTA)

Rabbi Gershom Sizomu, a graduate of the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies in Los Angeles, is the leader of the Abayudaya Jewish community in Uganda and Be’chol Lashon’s Africa regional director.



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PRESENT'S

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Guest Speaker: Mark Fish

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Mark Fish, former Bafana Bafana player and current host of Survivor South Africa

Fish is best remembered as being a crucial part of South Africa's victorious national soccer squad when they won the 1996 African Cup of Nations. In total he won 62 caps for the South African national team.

**For more information contact Waverley Shul
(011)786-0437 or info@waverleyshul.co.za**

Liberty continues to lead in digital innovation

Following the release of its Claim Statistics Insights report last month, in which it published that it paid R2,7 billion in claims in 2013, Liberty has announced yet another digital innovation in the risk product space - Claims Explorer.

Claims Explorer is an interactive online tool that allows users to see Liberty's claim statistics for specific groups. In particular, by entering their age and gender, users will be able to obtain information that is customised to their demographic group. For example, users will be able to see:

- The percentage of Liberty's overall claims that are accounted for by the selected group
- The main types of insurance claimed for in this group, such as life cover, loss of income protection or critical illness cover
- The leading causes of claims within each type of insurance
- Case studies of actual claims where personal information will be de-identified
- Further specific insights about the risks and insurance needs of each specific demographic group

As the first long-term insurer to start releasing its claims statistics to the public in 2006, Liberty has expanded on its leading position as an innovator with the development of Claims Explorer.

Ryan Switala, head of Risk Product Development at Liberty, says: "While it has become common for insurance companies to publish their claims statistics, these remain generic and the companies make no clear link as to how such statistics affect the individual consumer.

"This is where Liberty saw an opportunity to develop a tool like Claims Explorer which provides the public with the means to analyse the statistics in a simplified manner and see the trends of how people of a similar demographic to them have claimed.

"This makes the statistics much more meaningful and personal to the individual and as a result it helps them understand the reality of the risks they face. Knowing your risks means positive action can be taken to ensure financial preparedness in the event of the unfortunate occurrence," he says.

Switala explains: "Digital is a new influence that is driving massive change in consumer expectations.

Organisations need to ensure that they become more customer-centric by matching their products and services with consumer expectations, hence the continuous drive to raise our digital game."

This innovative tool comes shortly after the successful launch of other major digital innovations from Liberty - Risk Revealer and the Risk Explorer App.

Risk Revealer has had over 25 000 customer engagements since its launch in October last year. It is a web-based tool that allows clients to calculate their level of lifestyle and accidental risk by asking them approximately 20 interactive questions in a fun and engaging way and then uses that data to produce a risk profile of the client. Customers with a favourable risk profile may qualify for discounts on a Liberty risk policy.

Risk Explorer is a tablet-based App that was launched in 2012. It takes the user through a journey of the risks they face, based on their particular context including age, smoking habits and gender, and then provides them with information about the various types of cover they should consider purchasing to help protect themselves and their families against these risks.

"As with Risk Revealer and Risk Explorer, Claims Explorer in no way replaces the expertise of the financial adviser," Switala emphasises. "Each individual is unique within a demographic group, and as such, should still consult an accredited financial adviser for comprehensive advice.

"Our main goal with the development of these tools is to enable our clients to be more engaged in their financial matters and to understand the rationale behind why certain insurance products are necessary for them at different stages throughout their lives. Together with a financial adviser, Claims Explorer is another way Liberty is rolling up its sleeves and adding value to its customers' experiences," concludes Switala.

- Access the Claims Explorer on www.ClaimsExplorer.Liberty.co.za



For more information, speak to your broker or a Liberty financial adviser. You can also contact the Liberty contact centre on 0860 327 327.



Disclaimer The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report.
Guidelines for letters Letters up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime contact phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.
The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: sharon@sajewishreport.co.za

CHILDREN IN BERLAND ENTOURAGE NEED STABLE ENVIRONMENT

On Sunday, Erev Pesach, April 13, a small but effective protest was held in front of Mooz. This was a busy day for Pesach preparations but these Jews felt so strongly about this cause that they gave up of their time.

Jews representing various segments of the Jewish community were protesting the arrival in Johannesburg of Rabbi Eliezer Berland, a Breslov rabbi from Israel who is wanted on several counts of sexual abuse.

Instead of facing the law in Israel, he - and many followers - has sought refuge in several countries including Morocco, Zimbabwe and now South Africa.

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein in a statement warned Jewish South Africans not to shelter Rabbi Berland.

"Berland must return to Israel to face the criminal justice system," he said. Despite this warning, Berland and his followers are being hosted by Jews in Johannesburg.

During the protest, an irate man verbally condemned the protesters, using offensive language. There was a reporter there from The Star newspaper who asked if she could speak with Rabbi Berland so as to be able to print both sides of the story.

The man said no and then told the reporter: "If you would meet him, you would fall on the floor", presumably out of awe or as a sign of respect for his greatness compared with the smallness of other people.

And therein lies the problem: Judaism espouses that people are people. People are NOT deities to be worshipped and bowed to. A man,

no matter how great he is, is still a man and NOT above the law.

Israel, South Africa and the Torah, all have laws and judiciary systems. In fact, the Torah stipulates that one of the seven laws of Noah, essential for the non-Jews to keep, is that they set up courts of law.

This is because courts of law are fundamental to the fair running of any society. How much more so should a big rabbi abide by the law instead of running from country to country like a fugitive?

But Berland is not alone. His "followers" also traipse around the world with him: men, women and children. Presumably these "men and women" are the parents of these children. Is moving from country to country every few months in the best interests of these children?

Don't children need a stable home environment? Don't they need to form secure relationships with friends, teachers, etc? How can they fortify these relationships if they are being herded from country to country like cattle? Are they even attending school?

Finally, the irate man accused the protesters of not caring about these families, especially about the Jewish children. They are hungry. He had to buy them milk and pay for their laundry.

The question is: If they have money to frequently fly around the world, then why isn't there money to give the children milk and food?

**Michele Engelberg
Johannesburg**

IN IUC'S RADIO 786 CASE, BOARD SCORES AN OWN GOAL

My letter in the Jewish Report of April 11, about the SABJD and the IUC, headlined "Ubuntu settlement doesn't sit well with letter writer", has clearly touched a raw nerve. The way SAJR slapped down my letter attests to this.

For those who have just tuned in, so to speak, herewith a quick recap.

- 1998: Islamic station Radio 786 broadcasts an interview discussing Zionism and the State of Israel in less than endearing terms.
- 1998 - 2014: SABJD makes a series of unsuccessful attempts to elicit a retraction and an apology.
- April 4, 2014: SAJR headline "Radio 786 case settled - in spirit of ubuntu" reports that the SABJD has agreed to cease pursuing any retraction or apology.
- April 11, 2014: Stan Luntz blasts the above headline, saying it conceals the ignominious defeat of the Board's attempt to get Radio 786 to backtrack on its anti-Israel broadcast.
- SAJR does publish the letter - but with a slap-down retort underneath the letter.

Those who wish to respond will by now have had time to do so.

In reply, I simply highlight how the IUC is (deservedly) crowing about its triumph, vs the SABJD's (latest) own goal. IUC vocalises the

very sentiment other letter writers and I have attempted to convey in disgust.

"The recent conclusion of a 16 year-long court battle between the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) and the Islamic Unity Convention (IUC) is a victory...

"SAJBD withdrew its complaint, leaving Radio 786 free of making a public apology...

"...Johannesburg-based journalist Zahid Asmal (said): 'I think it's a huge victory.'"

"The nature of the settlement is a good one. The IUC did not bow down to pressure. In fact, SAJBD have bowed down to an enormous amount of pressure and have now gone back to their constituency with a tail between their legs." (My italics)

My point is this: Understood that we won't win every battle we engage in. But when we get soundly beaten, please credit your readers with some intelligence and don't try to smokescreen it with cheerful sounding ubuntu headlines. Man up and call a spade a spade.

An honest headline would have read: "SABJD fails to get retraction from Radio 786". The ubuntu excuse might be good enough for the likes of Pravda (or certain public broadcasters), but is that what SAJR thinks of its readership?

**Stanley W Luntz
Kensington, Johannesburg**

Information sought on a long-lost Gordon

Cliff Marks of Vashon Island, Washington, in the US, writes: "I will be visiting South Africa in June and I would like to try to find out if I have any relatives there, descendants of my grandfather's brother.

"My grandfather's brother emigrated from Zagare (Zhagar), Lithuania to South Africa around 1900. One of the problems is that I am not 100 per cent sure what his actual name was - we think it was Lazar (Eliezer?) Gordon.

"What is certain is that his brother (my grandfather), was Isadore (originally Isaac) Gordon who ended up in Los Angeles; his other brother was Harry who ended up in Ohio; there was a sister named Rose who ended up in Chicago. Their mother was Feige (who died in Lithuania in 1935) and their father was (probably) Israel Zelig Gordon."

Marks can be contacted at c.v.marks@att.net

The Orthodox movement could very easily have avoided the embarrassment of picking a fight with singing women if they wished to do so. As many of you can remember, the prohibition is a new one; no-one found it necessary in previous years. If the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris walked out when women sang at memorials, I have not been told of it.

Now what needs to be done? It is time for “Et La’asot Le-Hashem, heferu Toratecha” - time to act for Hashem against the violation of his commandments. Refuse to take part in Holocaust memorials which discriminate against

Amen, so be it.

Rabbi Sa'ar Shaked
Beit Emanuel Progressive Synagogue,
Johannesburg

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A nostalgia-rich play of sheer brilliance

Pale Natives by Paul Slabolepszy, directed by Bobby Heaney Market Theatre, Newtown (011) 832-1641 until May 11

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

If you were white, young and English-speaking in the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s in South African suburbia, you may have been privy to a particular lexicon of words like “tit” (nice), “jislaiik” (an expression of wonder), “kotch” (vomit) and “boghouse” (toilet). We were under cultural embargo. Apartheid was rife. The army had every young white man in its cross-hairs. And the culture of the time was

tinctured by the bravado-filtered-hypocrisy specific to white South Africa in the run-up to the first democratic elections in 1994. This alphabet of idiosyncratic values was embraced by playwright/performer Paul Slabolepszy; what a treat it is to see one of his classic dramas grace our stages again. Paying tribute to the late Bill Flynn who originally reprised the role of powder-blue-safari-suited Eddie, who whips up the comic element of the piece with astonishing savvy and is played now by James Cairns, this play is simply brilliant. It serves you a slice of nostalgia, rich with triggers to make you laugh,

cry and remember, its sophisticated comic timing defines serious moments forever. Five guys in their mid-forties arrange a stag party. They were schoolmates 25 years ago. Each is a sensitively crafted, beautifully performed stereotype, which you recognise instinctively. Eddie is not overburdened, with his hilarious blend of stability, ineptitude and folly. He’s a rising damp specialist with a wife and kids. His earnest doggishness protects him from the nuanced bigger picture. Roux (Antony Coleman) is a loser to his fingertips, in his green shirt and striped wide tie. He’s living in his garden shed while his marriage crumbles. Ashley (Ashley Dowds) is the one who “made it”. Though he drives a flashy car, he has skeletons in his closet. With his combed, neatness, he’s the one you creditably picture as the boy who’d rather read than be in a rugby scrum. Many-married Dave (Iain Paton) is the foil for their party: it’s the eve of his third wedding. And then there’s Kyle (Lionel Newton). His teenaged swearing and fornicating credentials earned him his peers’ awe. Today, in a T-shirt under a dressy jacket, with his cigarette clasped between index finger and thumb, he reels from a life lived in the shadow of one-upmanship. Pale Natives is a coming of age story, not structurally very different

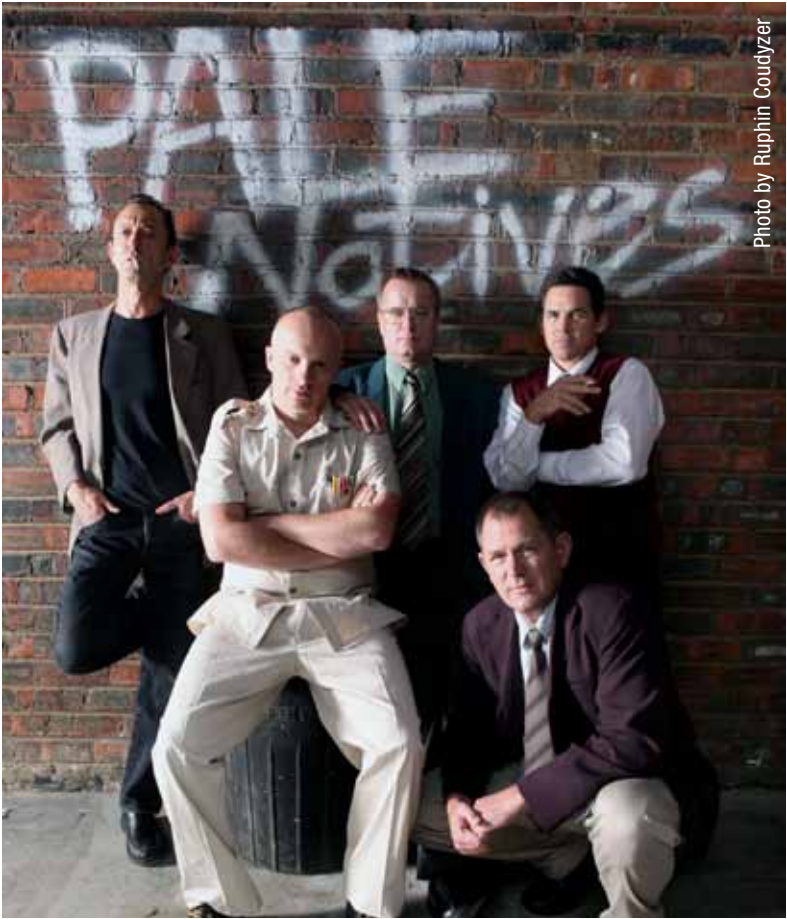


Photo by Ruphin Coudyzer

The guys: (from left) Kyle (Lionel Newton); Eddie (James Cairns); Roux (Antony Coleman); Ashley (Ashley Dowds); and Dave (Iain Paton).

from Cairns’ play “Dirt”. In crafting it, Slabolepszy held up a mirror to white South Africa on democracy’s cusp, rotten as it was with embedded racism and homophobia. He’s spiced it heavily with slang, an interface with local ad slogans and songs like Procol Harum’s A Whiter Shade of Pale, and others from the 1960s. In flaying open ordinary society, the play reveals poetry in the unlikeliest of situations. Not only about a stag party, it touches the core of life and death, success and failure. Armed with invectives against privilege, cigarette smoke and hard liquor, it never slips to sweetness, but runs with delicious fluidity that belies its two-hour length.

NEWS OF THE EMPIRE

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Too many characters lose the plot

Monkey Nuts, directed by Geraldine Naidoo, Auto & General Theatre on the Square, Sandton (011) 883-8606, until: May 10

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

With a magically economic sense of persona, armed with hats, accents and the sudden altering of the angle of his head, performer Matthew Ribnick (pictured) conjures up a whole community onstage. He’s always a joy to watch. Since he debuted in 2002 with his hilarious Chilli Boy, and in 2006 equally successful Hoot!, he’s won audiences over with unique narratives moored in the melting pot of South Africa and filled to overflowing with local colour. Monkey Nuts (2011) is no different on paper. On stage, the main protagonist gets lost in the swirl of things and there’s a level of stereotyping which borders on offensiveness. It’s a complex tale of a lonely man with a history of insanity and an insatiable urge to enter competitions. Edgar Chambers is a bank teller. He lives alone in a large

complex and his neighbours fascinate him with their musical choices and their noisy busyness. He’s particularly idiosyncratic in his social priorities and skills; his closest relationship is with a monkey in a pet shop. And then, the unthinkable happens. Edgar wins a big competition on live radio, which necessitates he find some travelling companions, if not friends, pronto. The monkey disappears and thence unfolds a crazy tale of chicanery, old unburied high school axes, and making friends in the most bizarre of circumstances. There’s a Zulu yoga teacher, a telesales guy named Skunk, Malcolm who has Tourettes Syndrome, which makes him swear outrageously and involuntarily as he talks, and Rudolph, a gay guy who works in Foreign Exchange and punctuates his rudest and most noteworthy comments with the expletive “Ra Ra”. Local colour aside, these characters swing between nonsensical anachronisms and insultingly shallow stereotypes as it lumbers into laughing at people with disabilities. The hilarity stakes are also threatened when the thread of the story gets trod



Photo by Pagiel Chetty

on once too often and the lightning quick change of character, complete with forays into Bollywood movies and songs and a bit of Zulu traditional gesture tossed in, submerges Edgar completely. In the second half of the tale, we barely hear his voice at all, which causes the play to shudder into the soporific: there’s just too much happening at the same time. Thus the plot is lost. That said, Monkey Nuts does offer a foray into the meaning of friendship, examining the inherent contradictions with what making friends on social media means.

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Two win prestigious Brett Goldin Bursary Awards



Tony Bonani Miyambo, Kate Liquorish and Denise Goldin (centre).

Kate Liquorish (30) and Tony Bonani Miyambo (26) clinched the 2014 Brett Goldin Bursary Awards at an event held at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg on Friday, April 11, just five days ahead of the eighth anniversary of the young actor’s murder over the Easter weekend in 2006.

The Brett Goldin Bursary was set up after the young actor and his friend, fashion designer Richard Bloom, both 28, were killed over the Easter weekend on April 16, 2006, just days before he was due to leave for Stratford-upon-Avon.

The bursary is for a short post-graduate course designed to enhance and fine-tune actors who are committed to the need and desire to expand their knowledge and acting ability of Shakespeare. Furthermore, on their return they should be willing to use the skills gained to enthuse and encourage others towards a love and understanding of Shakespeare.

A most readable book on Muizenberg

ROBYN SASSEN

You might remember the Muizenberg exhibition that launched in 2009 locally and has travelled everywhere (it’s currently in Perth). It was a project bigger than historian Hedy Davis’ (pictured) wildest dreams: so much was uncovered in the research that she decided to make a book of it: before Pesach, she told SAJR she felt the exhibition didn’t sufficiently celebrate the community’s essence.

“They’re buying it in threes, fives and tens,” she says of her book Muizenberg: The Shtetl by the Sea, self-published this year. She’s selling it in Cape Town and to the expat Jewish global arena.

“The organisers asked me to step in 18 months before the opening. The late Professor Jocelyn Hellig, who had steered the brilliant Seeking Refuge exhibition a few years earlier, was running this project. And then she became ill. She died in October 2008; I met her that May.”

Davis’ research credentials were earned through her masters dissertation on South African poet Arthur Nortje.

“Over 2 000 old, old photographs were digitised, recorded and cleaned. I worked 18 hour days on this project, which was designed to be a walk down memory lane.” But, as a result of sparse information regarding Muizenberg’s hotels, for instance, the exhibition had holes.

Davis’ book is modestly sized; its parameters are truly astonishing. She’s constructed a living, breathing story with a trajectory reaching from the 1830s to today.

“I grew up in Newlands, not Muizen-

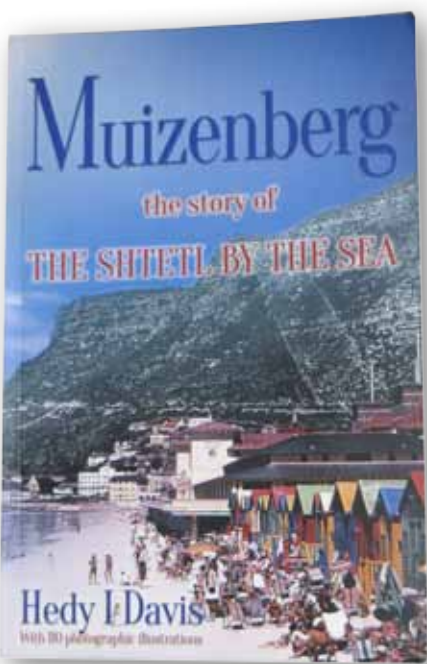
berg,” she continues. “When I was 14 my best friend lived in Muizenberg. So did my first boyfriend. I met my husband Jeff there.” Muizenberg’s roots were Yiddishist, frum and Zionist, but it waxed and waned with the world around it.

“I felt the exhibition lacked a sense of this community; it wasn’t weighted correctly,” says Davis. Indeed, over and above the 110 beautiful photographs in this book, are the myriad anecdotes, from petty machlakhes to deep historical shifts, illustrating the path of a South African Jewish community from inception to demise.

Among others, Davis quotes Muizenberger Frank Herbstein: “It was like growing up in Paradise, until one turned 15 and began to realise how small and dirty and limited it was.”

The book is the result of old-fashioned research, trawling repositories like shul minute books. Davis bemoans the fact that so much archival material is now secreted in university libraries, inaccessible to an independent scholar.

She relates how she managed to find a way in, though. She also proudly recalls how



Rose Norwich, historian on the SAJBD-published books on the country communities, contacted her. “She said: ‘In the story you have told of the shtetl by the sea, you’ve given life to every South Africa Jew.’”

It’s not an exaggeration: Stories spill out in all directions from Davis’ research; from the roots of Rabbi Ephraim Mervis - England’s chief rabbi - to bits of racism by Yiddish-speaking South African Jews, to pages and pages of people who wrote, correcting and connecting facts.

This invaluable body of research reflects who we are with depth, groundwork and sincerity.

Visit: www.muizenbergshtetl.com or www.muizenbergshtetl.co.za



The South African Centre for Religious Equality and Diversity (SACRED) invites you to



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The Memorial is open to anyone who would like to commemorate the victims and survivors of genocide and the Holocaust, of any faith or background.



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Community Talk

'Taste of Pesach' at Sydenham Shul



Sydenham Shul was once again extremely honoured and privileged to host over 140 friends from Sandringham Gardens, Madison Gardens, Our Parents Home, Jaffa Pretoria and Queen Alexandra Home in Orange Grove, for our annual Taste of Pesach.

Jonty Cohen, executive director of Sydenham Shul, said that since its inception in 2006, this event had become an eagerly anticipated and permanent fixture within the Shul's calendar.

He said the event, which was the brainchild of Leon Klugman, a long-standing active member of the congregation, was an outstanding example of tzedakah in its humblest form and stated that a function of this nature is only as good as its helpers and the organised manner in which the event took place was indicative of the help from our volunteers.


"The world is judged with goodness, and everything depends on the abundance of good deeds" (Pirkei Avot)

From the outstanding musical talent of Costa Nicolas, to the Sydenham Shul choir, to the Pesach packs, eagerly and excitedly packed by our younger generation, the organising committee of A Taste of Pesach wish all our friends much kindness, good fortune, blessing, good health, life and sustenance and we look forward to celebrating our bumper 10th event in 2015.



SYDENHAM-HIGHLANDS NORTH
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Piet Byleveld guest speaker at Waverley Shul



Over the past two years Waverley Shul has hosted some very successful Friday night sushi evenings with interesting and engaging speakers. This year I attended the shul's pre-Pesach Friday night dinner.

The dinner is organised on an annual basis to lighten the load of having to prepare a Friday night meal in the days before Pesach. The guest speaker at this year's dinner, attended by approximately 200 people, was Brigadier Piet Byleveld.

Byleveld is an impressive man. He is recognised as one of the world's foremost detectives. His career spans more than 40 years. In that time he lost only one case... and that was due to the witnesses getting cold feet. His resumé includes the Leigh Matthews case and the Wemmer Pan serial killer. He was also consulted on the Brett Kebble case.

What impressed me was Byleveld's humility. He displays absolute respect for all people he encounters. His conviction that, as an investigator, one should be demonstrating the

utmost courtesy, even to the accused, left a particular impression on me. Ultimately he claims that to be the best way to get co-operation and closer to the truth. Some of Byleveld's observations on the current Oscar Pistorius case were also fascinating.

Jenny Diner, the shul's caterer, prepared a delicious spread. I think many were grateful for the respite from the chaos of having to prepare for the chag. Altogether, it was an enjoyable evening.

I have enjoyed the package Waverley Shul is currently offering its members. The choir, under the direction of Joel Sacher, has been a particular highlight. The presentation of the services and the musical arrangements are innovative and fresh. The choir is young and combines really well with Chazzan Elton Krawitz.

I am looking forward to up-coming sushi evenings such as the one scheduled for Friday night, May 2, with Mark Fish, Bafana Bafana's inimitable midfielder.


A great seder at Great-Park Synagogue

The Great-Park Synagogue continued its tradition of affording its members and the broader community the opportunity of a communal seder on the first night of Pesach.

The tables were beautifully adorned for the scrumptious Yomtov meal. The taste of hand-baked shmurah matzah added to the experience of reliving the journey through our history. A hallmark of the Great Park seder is the participation and involvement by all present.

Children and adults were given additional readings and explanations which they were called upon to share at different points during the seder. These insights helped make the passages of the Haggadah illuminating and relevant to our present-day pressures and struggles.

A dignified spiritual atmosphere permeated the seder with joy and inspiration that culminated with the spirited song and prayer Leshana Haba'ah Birushalayim.



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A Pesach to remember at Palace of Lost City



Few Jewish holidays evoke the same warm sentiments as Pesach. Memories of family and friends gathered as the four cups of wine are poured, the four questions asked and the matzah served, all contribute to the festival's popularity.

What's the most memorable and liberating way to celebrate the festival of liberation? This year, Chabad House and Cape Kosher joined forces in offering Pesach at the magnificent five-star Palace of the Lost City, truly a symbol of luxury and splendour as Pesach celebrates.

The festivities began on Monday, April 14, with a lavish welcoming buffet lunch, leaving all the 200 guests who came from throughout the country and abroad, enough time to unpack and unwind from their journey before the commencement of the Yomtov.

The sederim were events of quintessential elegance; though some celebrated just with their families, while others were part of the communal seder offered, everyone joined together in a spirit of unity to sing the beautiful songs in harmony.

All the delectable meals which were of the highest kashrut standards satiated the most sophisticated palettes with a wide variety of menus, wines, refreshments and a delightful tea room.

Not only was there gastronomic food for all, but plenty of spiritual food from the smorgasbord of rabbis including Rabbis and Rebetzens Tanzer, Masinter, Kievman and Altman, who all shared the responsibilities of leading shul services, giving lectures and inspiring the participants.

The children were also well looked after with fabulous fun kids programmes around the clock.

In the afternoons, families were seen strolling together in the lush botanical gardens, surrounded by the resort's trickling streams and hidden walking trails.

During Chol Hamoed, there was no shortage of entertainment for all. In addition to the hotel's sprawling pools and gardens, Sun City offered plenty of entertainment as well as the Pilanesberg Game Reserve situated very close by, many guest seized the opportunity to escape the luxury and connect with the beauty of nature and wild life.



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Singing for the seder in Umhlanga

SARAH LEVY

The children from the pre-primary and reception class at Umhlanga Jewish Day School, welcomed guests to a lively Passover seder. Parents and family members were entertained with lots of singing as the children told the story of the Jews leaving Egypt.

Each child enjoyed (or in some cases ignored) the items

on the individual seder plates and tucked into chicken soup and kneidlach before opening the door for Elijah.

Rabbi Pinchas Zekry was impressed with the knowledge showed by learners and parents could see all the related artwork that the children have done during the term.

A big thank you to Morah Carryn Meltz and Rebbetzen Ronit Garber for their hard work and for encouraging these enthusiastic young learners.



Enjoying the four cups of wine are Sadya Garber; Jade Selikow; Gabriella Berger; Ariela Mizrachi; and Yishai Shapiro.

A Pesach celebration for all faiths in PE



OWN CORRESPONDENT

In Port Elizabeth, Theodor Herzl School’s Jewish pupils, family and friends, gathered for a joyful mock seder in the school hall, on April 10, in preparation for Pesach, the Festival of Freedom.

Children of all faiths are included in the Jewish festi-

vals at this multicultural school and encouraged to share in the universal values and lessons.

At the high school, the Judaica Forum led a special Pesach assembly for all pupils, while the entire primary school, along with Jewish children from the pre-primary, participated in a heartwarming Pesach presentation on the last day of term.

Minnie Bersohn tots get into spirit of Pesach

MICHELLE VINOKUR

The children at Minnie Bersohn Pre-Primary School in Johannesburg, had a mock seder on Tuesday April 8. They arrived at school and cleaned their lockers; they then searched for the chametz and burnt it. Thereafter they had a seder where the teachers acted out the story and they ate all the symbolic Pesach food. The most favourite was kneidlach and soup.

Pictured are Seth Ash; Talya Lutrin; Tali Pogir; Max Shewit; and Matt Angel.



Crawford Prep learners celebrate Pesach with verve



Crawford Prep Sandton learners singing out of the Haggadah.

CHRISTELLE WOLMARANS

Recently the Jewish learners at Crawford Preparatory Sandton, celebrated the chag of Pesach. This festival commemorates the freedom of the Jews in slavery in Egypt, to become a free and independent people.

“Our learners went through the Haggadah, a workshop book that illustrates by various symbolism what they will experience with their own families during the Passover holiday,” said Heather Bank, Jewish Studies teacher at Crawford Preparatory Sandton.

The ACDP supports the right of Israel to exist within safe and secure borders and its right to self-defence. We have a proven track record and are committed to standing for Israel and actively opposing the Boycott, Divest and Sanctions campaign (BDS), both in South Africa and internationally.

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ChaiFM scoops two prestigious MTN Radio Awards

At the 2014 MTN Radio Awards Saturday night April 12 at the Sandton Convention Centre, 101.9 ChaiFM walked away with two awards. For a second year in a row the Jewish radio station has been award winners. Last year it won one award and this year, two.

The station - a mere five years old - walked away winners in two categories: "Best Daytime Show - The Law and You", presented by Garry Hertzberg and for a second year in a row, "Best Promotion/Stunt" for the 2013 Radiothon - Yad Aharon.

Station Manager Greg Cohen said in a media release: "The MTN Radio Awards this year was bigger than ever and the competition was very tough, so to walk away winners in two categories is a massive achievement. Well done to the ChaiFM team for their tremendous work and to

Garry Hertzberg for winning for his show.

"A special thank you must also go out to our loyal listeners who made the "Yad Aharon Radiothon" so special."

101.9 ChaiFM is a Johannesburg-based Jewish talk radio station which broadcasts to northern Johannesburg and audiostreams to the rest of the world via www.chaifm.com. The station is also available via the 101.9 ChaiFM app.



Garry Hertzberg - winner: "Best Day Time Show - The Law and You".



The 101.9 ChaiFM team, winner of Best Promotion/Stunt for the Yad Aharon Radiothon. Thabo Mlangeni, Greg Cohen, Kathy Kaler, Sasha Starogrod, Lauren Dansky and Craig Guthri.

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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

The 786 Saga and what was achieved by it

In the previous Jewish Report issue, several correspondents expressed disappointment over the outcome of the Radio 786 case. In essence, they felt that in light of how blatantly anti-Semitic the relevant programme had been, the station should have been held more expressly accountable than was the case.

This viewpoint is understandable, but it fails to take sufficiently into account the history of this protracted matter and what was actually achieved in the end.

For the greater part of the 16-year-old saga, 786 not only refused to acknowledge that there had been anything wrong with the programme it broadcast, but went to extraordinary lengths to try to deny the Board a platform in which it could even argue its case.

For our part, we were determined that technical and constitutional niceties would not prevent us from getting our day in court, and to that end fought a series of complex legal battles that twice reached Constitutional Court level. In the end, we were successful: 786 finally ran out of options, and were forced to sit down with us before the relevant complaints tribunal, while our complaint was heard.

Over four days, our expert witnesses systematically and with the greatest erudition demonstrated why the programme was defamatory, factually baseless and motivated by the deepest anti-Jewish prejudice; 786, it is important to stress, made no attempt to refute this, and indeed its counsel and spokespeople at various times acknowledged that much of it had been "obnoxious", "nonsensical" and "pseudo-history".

What it argued was that it nevertheless did not meet the Constitutional definition of prohibited hate speech, but was permissible under the right to freedom of expression. How the tribunal would have ruled in the end on this (by no means straightforward) question of law, is an interesting question, but in the end it was not required to do so as at this point a settlement was reached.

Crucially, this entailed an acknowledgment by 786 of the offensive caused by the programme and that parts of the latter could indeed be regarded as anti-Semitic. Previously, 786 had adamantly refused to make the slightest concession in this direction. On the advice of our legal counsel, we decided to accept the proffered settlement, since we had by now substantially achieved what we had set out to achieve, and realistically did not feel that anything significantly different would be gained by persisting with our complaint.

Yom Hashoah, 2014

From our point of view, the high point of the 786 case was the four-day hearing in December 2012 when we finally had a proper opportunity to present our case. In light of the programme having included noxious statements denying the truth of the Holocaust, among the expert witnesses we led was Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss.

The stepdaughter of Otto Frank, father of Anne who remarried after the war, she presented powerful and moving testimony regarding her wartime experiences.

We are grateful to Eva for taking on this emotionally demanding task on our behalf, and also for accepting our invitation to be the keynote speaker at Yom Hashoah this year.

Yom Hashoah ceremonies will as usual be taking place under the auspices of the SAJBD in all the major centres. Eva will be speaking in Johannesburg, and afterwards Durban, this Sunday.

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

This column paid for by SA Jewish Board of Deputies

‘Notes from a headmaster’s desk’

The challenges of education, parenting and teenagers

**KING DAVID LINKSFIELD
HEADMASTER MARC
FALCONER**

Publication: April 2014
ISBN: 978-1-77010-352-8
eISBN: 978-1-77010-353-5
Price (print): R230
Price (eBook): R184
Category: Non-fiction (Education)
Format: TPB 234 x 153 mm
Extent: 224 pp



"On this fraught journey with the pressure of our country's future and the lives of our children at stake, a sense of humour does help to keep the trip in perspective. 'Life is', as Oscar Wilde said, 'much too important to take seriously'," Marc Falconer (pictured) writes in a preface to the book.

Falconer is the first non-Jewish headmaster at King David High School Linksfield (Johannesburg) since its establishment in 1955. As both headmaster and parent, he provides behind-the-scenes anecdotes and insights into the true state of the nation's schools and educators as well as into the mysterious workings of teenage minds, interpreting situations that he encounters on a daily basis.



A media release says he provides a humorous look at some of the issues he has come across and the experiences he has had in order to remind readers that, at the end of the day, as much as we worry about education in South Africa and how to mould our children into the upstanding members of the community we envision them to be, the journey does not have to be painstakingly difficult.

Ultimately, if we equip them with the right set of skills and attitudes, our children will turn out just fine as they are more resilient than we realise.

"This is an entertaining and thought-provoking account of the issues and challenges of education, parenting and teenagers in South Africa today," the release states.

• Falconer has been involved in private schooling for the greater portion of his life, having previously taught at Thomas More in Kloof (KwaZulu-Natal) and at a host of independent schools in the UK and New Zealand. When he returned to South Africa he taught in the English department and then headed the A-Level College at St Stithians. He was appointed headmaster of King David High School in January 2005.

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Sunday (April 27)

• Yom Hazikaron commemoration at the Martyr's Monument, West Park Jewish Cemetery. Time: 11:00. Keynote speaker Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss, will recount her compelling tale of a mother and daughter who managed to survive Auschwitz/Berkenhau, and whose lives were saved by miracle and chance. After the war, Eva's mother married Otto Frank, the widowed father of diarist Anne Frank. Information: Charisse Zeifert, 082-427-2788 or e-mail charisse@beyachad.co.za

Tuesday (April 29)

• WIZO Forum commemorates Yom Hashoah with candle-lighting, Haskarah by Chazzan Chilly Chrysler and the screening of a documentary on the Holocaust, "The Flat" written and directed by Arnon Goldfinger. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 09:30. No charge. Contact: (011) 645-2515 or sandy@beyachad.co.za

Wednesday (April 30)

• Chev Social Services/CAJE's "Enrich Your Life" series present Wayne Katz and Luke Lamprecht on "Help! There's a Stranger in My House!" Navigating

• UJW Leora Project, lending of rehabilitative appliances: Need a walker, wheelchair, crutches? Borrow equipment on a short-term basis for a refundable deposit. Information: (011) 648-1053.

• The Brakpan Hebrew Congregation holds services on Friday nights and Saturday mornings every week. Personal Haskarrahs and individual Mishaberach are made from the bimah for the sick and for those attending the service when requested. Contact: Jeff Waner, 082-424-8417.

• Join WIZO every Thursday for a "Lunch & learn" shiur with Rabbi Michael Katz at 13:00 at Beyachad. Information: WIZO office, (011) 645-2515.

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• Chabad House hosts a series of events throughout the year. Chai Seniors - Holistic & Kabbalistic Nourishment". Daily programmes: Men's Kolel Mon-Fri at Chabad House Library, 09:00 -11:00, followed by lunch. Ladies Kollel Tuesdays & Thursdays. Special programmes: Mondays: Brain Worx with occupational therapist, Cynthia Liptz for brain exercises, 09:00 - 13:00. Both men and women welcome. Tuesdays: Guest lectures. Info: Rabbi Ari Kievman (011) 440-6600 or e-mail rak@

the teenage years. Venue: Sydenham Shul Hall. Time: 19:45. Cost: R30 (light refreshments served). Booking: Sharon, (011) 532-9616 or sharonp@jhbchev.co.za

Sunday (May 4)

• Embassy of Israel, SAZE, Israel Centre SA, IUA-UCF and the Zionist youth movements, host a Yom Hazikaron ceremony memorial day for Israel's fallen. Time: 18:30. Venue: Yeshiva Campus, Glenhazel, Solly Liebgott Hall. Information: Miriam Garb, (011) 645-2531, fax (011) 640-1325 or e-mail: miriam@beyachad.co.za

Tuesday (May 6)

• WIZO Johannesburg hosts a Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration with live music and a tea. Time: 09:30. Cost R75. For venue details and bookings, Sandy, (011) 645-2515.

Sunday (May 11)

• Second Innings hosts Fiona Ramsay, actress and voice coach, on "Giving Voice to Souls". Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors. Contact Grecia Gabriel. (011) 532-9718.

• BZA WIZO biennial cam-

paign, hosts guest speaker Dr Bernd Wollschlaeger, son of a Nazi officer who converted to Judaism. Venue: President Hotel, Bantry Bay. Time: 17:00. Information: (021) 464-6729.

Wednesday (May 14)

• WIZO Johannesburg hosts "Turn a Life Around" with Dr Bernd Wollschlaeger: "I am the Son of a Nazi". Time: 18:30. Venue: Kilarney Country Club, Lower Houghton. Cost: R220 (incl finger supper). Contact: (011) 645-2515 or sandy@beyachad.co.za

Thursday (May 15)

• WIZO Johannesburg hosts "Turn a Life Around" with Dr Bernd Wollschlaeger: "I am the Son of a Nazi". Time: 09:30. Venue: Kilarney Country Club, Lower Houghton. Cost: R180 (incl tea and refreshments). Contact: (011) 645-2515 or sandy@beyachad.co.za

Sunday (May 18)

• Second Innings hosts Dr Howard Rybko on "From Fat and Tired to Lean and Keen" (based on his book of that title). Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. 10:00 for 10:30. R20 members, R40 visitors. Grecia Gabriel. (011) 532-9718.

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• Bnoth Zion Association WIZO is collecting anything of value for its store. Contact (021) 464-6729 or Linda Saban 072-245-3225 or Cherna Kredo 084-589-8588.

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

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

• Supervised bridge with Jeff Sapire Tuesday morning 10:00 - 12:00 (intermediary) and Wednesday morning 10:00 - 12:00 (advanced), at the Clive M Beck Auditorium. Booking: Hazel or René, (011) 728-8088/8378.

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

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

• JWBS Johannesburg urgently requires second-hand clothing, kitchenware, household goods, books and bric-a-brac. Proceeds to support the less fortunate in our community. Contact (011) 485-5232.

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Soccer stars on the rise - all with a dream

ILAN HERRMANN

We’ve had some phenomenal Jewish soccer players in days gone by - the likes of Morrie Jacobson, Julie Kaplan, Martin Cohen, Roy Wegerle, just to name a few. Today the most prominent is of course Dean Furman who is a favourite for Bafana Bafana and plays professional soccer at Doncaster Rovers in England. Perusing the local soccer scene there are a

few up-and-coming Jewish soccer stars who are making a name for themselves in the competitive PSL (Professional Soccer League) and National First Division. Three players who have made great strides and command first team places for their respective sides, are Larry Cohen and Darren Lurie both of Johannesburg-based team Moroka Swallows and Wade Miller who is first team goalkeeper at FC Cape Town, a team in the SA National First Division.

Larry, at 26, is in the prime of his career. At 18 he joined Jomo Cosmos. He is an inside left back with an ability to play the ball out of defence with composure and intelligence. Inspired by his father, Martin Cohen, a household name in South African soccer circles in the ‘70s, Larry began to express his soccer passion as early as he can remember and is doing what he has always dreamed of.

His passion and commitment to the game and his ability to motivate and drive his teammates, are some of the attributes he feels are great assets to the team.

Asked if he had reached the plateau of his aspiration, he responded: “Ultimately it’s every soccer player’s dream to be at the heart of the soccer world and that’s in Europe. However, the opportunities don’t come along so easily.”

Darren Lurie at 21 is a striker who is hungry and has exceptional talent. He is strong, has a lethal boot and good aerial capacity. He has had international experience, having played in Mexico and in the US. Locally he played with Platinum Stars before moving to Swallows under coach Zecka Marques.

Darren is very ambitious. “My aspiration is to play for either Israel or South Africa,” he says. For now he’s playing alongside Larry with the aim of trying to help his club climb the ladder from mid-table to contend with the big boys like Supersport, Chiefs, Pirates and Sundowns.

Wade Miller’s athleticism is apparent. He covers the goal area with lightning speed and agility and does not shy away from a challenge.

Having relocated to Cape Town from Johannesburg to play for FC Cape Town, he too is living the soccer dream. He speaks frankly about making a living from the game here in South Africa, which he says is realistic and feasible and could be the course his career takes.

He admits, however, that his dream is to break into Europe, the hotbed of world football and play there. Wade can’t be missed in the streets of Cape Town. His long beard has become his trademark and not even Hashim Amla can boast his sprightly growth.

All three players have played together in Israel for Maccabi South Africa and are friends off the field.

While the span of a soccer player’s career is short, it is often a dream come true for youngsters who have devoted themselves to making it in the game.

Passion and ambition are the priceless commodities that can lead a footballer on the road to footballing greatness. In South Africa it’s not always easy to break into what

has become very much a black culture-dominated game, but the door is always open for those who persevere.

The months and years that follow will determine just how far these players will go.



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Wade Miller

A come-back to remember

ILAN HERRMANN

Wednesday night two weeks ago, was astonishing and a sight to behold. Balfour Park veterans having been penalised for arriving 10 minutes late for a the cup semifinal, were defaulted from the game and carried a two goal deficit coming in to the second leg of the league cup semifinal.

Alan Nossil, the manager, was livid as he explained the circumstance of a natural human error of mixing up the home and away arrangement causing the marginal late arrival. “They could easily have agreed to play but they refused and took a two goal advantage,” he said of the opposition side, Kempton Park.

Fast forward to last week and the second leg. Balfour, after 20 minutes are a further two goals down. That’s 4-0 with a quarter of the game gone.

Enter Warren Lewis, previously of Moroka Swallows and Bafana Bafana, who leaves his central defence position and goes up-front in a desperate bid to change the momentum.

“The tide of the game turned in an instant. From being pinned back we were suddenly on the offensive,” said midfielder Lawrence Sacke.

An incredible four goal spree - three by Lewis - saw Balfour tie the game. Extra time followed and Kempton Park in shambles, had a player sent off for a wild tackle. Balfour cruised through eventually 6-4. The Balfour change room was jubilant.

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