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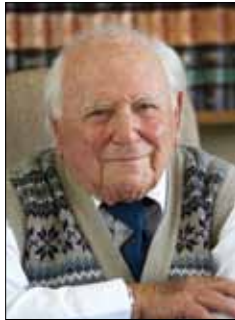
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A legend in his own lifetime

Highly respected legal giant, long-standing communal leader and family patriarch Advocate Dr. David Meyerowitz passed away on 7 February at the age of 94.



Advocate Dr Dave Meyerowitz

Dave Meyerowitz was born in Cape Town in 1917 and grew up in Salt River. After attending SACS he studied at the University of Cape Town, graduating with an LLB in 1937. A member of the Cape Bar, he took silk (senior counsel) in 1963. In 1990 he was honoured by UCT when he was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Law. When he retired two years ago, at the age of 92, he was the oldest active member of the Bar.

Adv. Meyerowitz was an expert on the administration of estates and income tax, both subjects on which he was published widely. His seminal text, *The Administration of Estates*, the first comprehensive text on the subject, was published in 1949. Described as "a legal umbilical cord for the profession," it is a book found in every attorney's office and advocate's chamber. In 1952, with two other established legal authors (Aubrey Silk and Erwin Spiro), he began and edited *The Taxpayer*, a journal devoted to the law, practice

and incidence of income tax and death duties. He continued to edit the journal until his retirement.

Dave was highly respected and held in great esteem by his colleagues. Judge Dennis Davis, who paid tribute to him on his retirement, said "He has always been, and remains, the pre-eminent practitioner in the field. To have

maintained this standard into his 90s is testimony to an extraordinary intellect and a wonderfully practiced mind... It is unlikely that South Africa will again produce a specialist able to conduct an exceptionally busy chamber practice, litigate regularly, write complex works on income tax, maintain a book on the administration of estates, and ensure – almost single-handedly – that a monthly journal is produced on time with content that is fresh, clear and of significant application to the tax community in this country. That is the unique legacy of David Meyerowitz SC."

Continued on page 19

Above photo courtesy of Shawn Benjamin / Ark Images www.arkimages.com

New Herzlia Middle School Student Council set for success!



Herzlia Middle School's new student council

see articles on pages 23 and 32

New chairman at the helm of YAD



Rael Levitt

YAD are delighted to announce that the dynamic Rael Levitt has accepted our invitation to take on the challenge of leading YAD to the top in 2011.

Most people will know Rael as the founder and CEO of Auction Alliance, South Africa's largest auction group, which he started almost 20 years ago. Rael is also an active member of the Jewish community, has served on a number of boards and committees and been involved in various communal initiatives and projects.

Continued on page 24

Peace and prayers for the city



Herzlia pupil Rachel Serraf, and her harp, enchant the crowd.

The Board of Deputies (Cape Council) recently took part in a wonderful event organised by the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative.

Called 'Prayers for the City,' it invites youth of different faiths to sing, dance and celebrate together, and to offer their prayers for the year ahead to be one of peace and harmony in Cape Town.

See more on page 9

Goldblatt exhibition extended



Kith, Kin & Khaya, the South African Jewish Museum's current exhibition of David Goldblatt photographs has been extended until May 2010. With a generous sponsorship from Cape Gate, The Jewish Museum has recently reduced its admission to R15, and children under 16 are now free!

In this image by David Goldblatt, dancing-master Ted van Rensburg watches two of his ballroom pupils, swinging to the music of Victor Sylvester and his Orchestra, in the hall of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats, at the old Court House, Boksburg, Transvaal. May 1980.

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See Chronic Ads on page 33



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GARDENS SHUL

Friday Night Live
4 March 6 pm - see page 13

Sir Anthony Sher at the Fugard Theatre
'Broken Glass' looks at the events of Kristallnacht
Visit www.thefugard.com and see page 21

UNION OF JEWISH WOMEN March AED programme

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--|
| 2 | Sybil Sands | Bring Back the Past - in memory of Percy Sieff |
| 9 | Ben Rabinowitz | From Bellville to Sea Point |
| 16 | Marieke Prinsloo | Walking the Road |
| 23 | Fran Robertson | The History of the Friends of Valkenberg Trust |
| 30 | Andy Goldman | Experiences working with the Jews in Ethiopia |

Stonehaven, 7 Albany Road, Sea Point 10 am for 10.30 am
Entrance: R20.00 (incl refreshments)

The Way IC it

is now on the web!

Irma is now a 'blogger' - sharing her take on things in generally light and humorous style ... plus puns where possible!

Connect with her at: www.irmachait.co.za chait@mweb.co.za



Tali-vision



Us and Israel

Our community is known and admired around the world for its enduring and unwavering Zionism. As Israel has developed and changed over the decades, so have we evolved with it. And along the way, despite the wars and politics, our love for the country has stayed strong.

This is indeed at the heart of Zionism - an unconditional commitment to the dream of a Jewish homeland, no matter what happens along the way. As Israeli author Amos Oz says, "I love Israel even when things are bad." Our community has been one of the strongest voices around the world who have kept to this commitment.

Loyalty such as this has meant that we do not turn our backs when Israel is struggling - whether this is in its wars, its politics or its internal issues. We fight in its battles; raise funds for its children; explore its every hill, valley and plain; learn its language; enjoy its culture, pass on its legacy and take part in a relationship that lasts a lifetime.

Like family, a relationship such as this means that we will have to continue to engage with the aspects of Israel that we find most challenging. It is extremely satisfying to revel in its achievements - such as Israel's thriving economy, which you can read about on page 10. In other moments, it is difficult to discuss aspects such as Israelis living in poverty, the divides between different sectors of society, the challenge of absorbing immigrants, or Israel's continued presence in the West Bank.

Yet our unconditional commitment calls for us to challenge ourselves in understanding and discussing these issues. In this edition of the Chronicle, Julian Resnick talks about how Israel, 'the love of his life', is

changing in challenging ways (page 4); while on page 5 former NBC correspondent Norman Fletcher discusses his new book, *Walking Israel*, which explores 'daily living rather than daily confrontation.' On page 30 we look at an organisation called the New Israel Fund, which works to uphold the vision of Israel's founding fathers, as stated in the Declaration of Independence. In the same article we speak to Eliezer Yaari, who was recently in South Africa, about Israel's internal issues as well as how he was incredibly moved by the spirit and strength of our community.

I hope these voices will welcome you into a broad and in-depth discussion on every aspect of Israel's present, past and future, no matter where you stand on the spectrum. While members of our community may have differing opinions about what we think is best for Israel, we know that this comes from an unwavering commitment to Zionism, no matter what happens. Let's make the Chronicle a space to nurture this by confronting the challenges whilst enjoying the achievements; therefore helping Israel reach its goals as they were envisioned by our Zionist forefathers - and as encapsulated by Israeli author David Grossman: "A State of Israel that fulfils the Jewish people's historical and moral destiny within human history."

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Lifetime Achievement Award for Norman Snitcher

In your February edition, tribute was paid to John Simon for receiving such an award at the Cape Law Society AGM at the end of October 2010.

The same was also made to Norman Snitcher at the AGM, who was similarly recognised by his peers.

It was significant as only until recently, with the many high profile criminal cases in the headlines, that the work done by criminal attorneys been properly acknowledged.

Norman has continued the practice started by his father Theodore Snitcher in the 1920s, and always concentrated on criminal work as a speciality. He has been known for this for many years, and many other firms referred their criminal work to him. It further followed the tradition of both his father and his uncle, Harry QC, one of the last of the Queen's Counsel, a well-known and highly respected advocate.

The reason for this is that Norman has always been prepared to represent the 'unpopular' causes and persons, because of his strong belief that every person is entitled to a (proper) defence and their day in court. His patience, understanding of people and ability to listen have been his strong points.

The motivation to the Cape Law Society to honour Norman came from his younger peers, who are the current generation of criminal lawyers, most of them having been mentored by him over the years. He was chairman of a specialist committee set up by the Cape Law Society to deal with criminal work, and in particular to comment on prospective legislation of government. He still serves on this committee as well as another committee of all role players in criminal work, made up of the various government departments administering justice. Once a month they discuss issues specifically relating to the running of the courts.

Some of the benchmark decisions applied by the courts today in this field were as a result of cases emanating from Norman's office, and taken on appeal to the highest courts.

Norman, now 77, has been in practice since 1958 and has been married to Phena for the last 51 years. They have four children – two daughters and two sons – two of which qualified as attorneys but no longer practise as such.

His daughter Lauren has been the researcher behind the Ochberg Orphans project and is further involved as recruitment co-ordinator for Melton. His other daughter Michelle (Winkler) is a teacher at Herzlia Constantia. His sons are in business. Norman and

Phena have six grandchildren.

It is indeed fitting that two leading attorneys of our community and of a similar generation were honoured at the same ceremony.

Lewis Wiener

An honourable mention

Please, please bring back the Shammash! Whenever I get the CJC, I always turn to 'Honourable Menschen' first. The snippets of information are most interesting and entertaining! I was very stressed to read that this past issue of the CJC had the last article by the Shammash. Please try to persuade the Shammash to return. Looking forward to reading 'Honourable Menschen' for many years to come.

Jackie Sachar

The honourable mensch

We've all just learnt with great regret, and may I add, dismay,

That Willie Katz's famous piece comes to an end today.

You'll find it in the CJC, page 6 to be exact,

This one's number two-eight-eight, and that's a truthful fact.

For years he's entertained us all, with tales both weird and wise,

And if he didn't have one he could always improvise.

He seems to know the history of every Yid in town,

While some have been notorious, some were of great renown.

◆◆◆

Won't someone please persuade the man that he must carry on?

There's not a better columnist from Chicago to Ceylon.

And also, please request him, if I may be so bold,

To keep on with his chocolates for people young and old.

Willie's known to everyone, be they man or wench

He'll be blessed in heaven for being such a mensch.

Maurice Kibel

Dear Jackie and Maurice,
Thank you for taking the time to write these wonderful tributes to Willie Katz. His contribution to the Chronicle was indeed an invaluable one. However, all good things do come to an end, and Willie and the CJC decided together that column 288 would be the last. We again express our thanks and admiration to Willie, and also bestow on him the title 'honourable mensch!' – Ed.

Gilad Shalit – day 1660

On day 1660 of Gilad Shalit's captivity, I was in Jerusalem. It was a day I will never forget, as on this day I met his mother. I sobbed and sobbed as I told her that on each Shabbat and festival day at shul, in my home town of Cape Town South Africa, we pray for her son.

There was a chain reaction of emotions as I spoke in my limited Hebrew, and all of her visitors at the time were as emotional as we spoke.

After I finished she quietly and softly said 'toda raba', thank you, and I saw a mother in such distress, and yet a belief that our prayers will be answered.

Gilad's family live in a tent on a street



Anthony's photo of the Shalit family's tent in Jerusalem.

corner. They will not go home until their son is free to go home with them. It is not any old street – behind the tent is the prime minister's home. He sees them every day – a constant reminder. It is now day 1684 in captivity. Please let our readers and leaders know.

Toda raba,
Anthony Frank

Nominations for philanthropy award

Do you know someone in your community who deserves national recognition for all the good work they do? If so, nominate them for the 2011 Inyathelo Philanthropy Awards. These awards publicly recognise people whose personal finances have made an outstanding and lasting contribution in South Africa. Inyathelo highlights this kind of giving to inspire others to make a difference. To nominate someone, simply go to www.inyathelo.org.za or call Inyathelo on 021 465 69 81 for more information. Entries opened on 1 February and close on 30 June.

For a list of previous awardees, please go to the above web address.

We have had awardees from all walks of life from the very well known, to the extraordinary 'ordinary' person. We'd like to increase our reach to as many people in South Africa as possible.

Kind regards,
Chantal Meugens

Opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board or its sponsoring bodies. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed. However, by agreement, the name may be withheld in the publication. Letters are published subject to space being available.

Shabbat and Yom Tov Times

Date	Portion	Candle lighting	Ends
4 March/28 Adar 1	Pekude Shekalim	6.10	7.52
11 March/5 Adar 11	Vayikra	6.10	7.43
18 March/12 Adar 11	Tzav/Zachor	6.10	7.33
25 March/19 Adar 11	Shemini Parah	6.10	7.23

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Opinion

Staying in love with Israel

by Julian Resnick



My relationship with Israel goes back a long way. As I write this from my temporary home in the Upper East Side of Manhattan, Somerset West seems a long way away (it is) and 1967 seems like deep history (in some way it is). And yet, the path I have travelled is largely because of the place that Israel has had in my life for a very long time.

My earliest memories of myself are very much connected to my experiences as a young Jewish boy growing up in a country community, where belonging was the name of the game. The names which spring to mind immediately when I think of the people who surrounded me are Posel, Levine, Ginsburg, Goodman, Miller, Teperson, Buch and Sibul. My world revolved around family and sport (my PT teacher, Abe Notnagel, played fullback for Somerset West Rugby club and Western Province, when Lionel Wilson was injured). I was very much of that place and yet was so clearly not of that place.

But, unlike many of my peers, there was something else in my life from early on: a great passion for Zionism and Israel. Perhaps because my family was so committed, perhaps because Habonim and my extraordinary madrichim opened up a world of intellectual and emotional opportunities which small town South Africa of the 1960s did not offer?

Fast forward to early January, just a few weeks ago, to the members' clubhouse of my home on Kibbutz Tzora: an email had gone out to a list of ex-South Africans living in Israel who had once worn the blue shirt of Habonim Dror before making aliyah. The reason for the email? A growing feel of unease at the direction Israeli society has been taking in recent years. Why get together a few weeks ago and not sooner? One could argue, legitimately, that many things have changed over the years in Israel and that the Israel we dreamed of is not the Israel we live in today.

"We are fearful"

So why the amazing response of over 200 ex-members of Habonim South Africa (and a few ex-Betarim as they bravely pointed out to us)? What brought olim for the 40s, the 50s, the 60s up until a chavera who came on aliyah last year, together? I will say it in a way which cannot be misunderstood: we got together because we are fearful. We are fearful that the unimaginable might be happening in Israeli society and we as ex-South Africans might just be on the brink of living through, twice in our lives, a regime based on racial discrimination and separate development. It is painful for me to even think of putting the "A" word down on to paper. But it could just become our reality if we do not take action now.

Israel is in great existential danger. The love of my life is standing on the edge of being transformed and deformed beyond recognition. The Jewish world has been wonderful over the 62 years of the existence of Israel, in that it has rallied together at the moments

of greatest despair. I remember giving all of my barmitzvah money to the UIA appeal after the Six Day War; in 1973 after Habonim machaneh a whole group of us madrichim flew to Israel to volunteer to help Israel get through the aftermath of the awful pain which was the Yom Kippur War. Will the Jewish world rise to the occasion again? When the existential danger is not as clear to all to see, will the Jewish world even understand?

Approaching the abyss

We were brought together a few weeks ago on Kibbutz Tzora because we see that those who rule us, legitimately, as they were elected by us, do not seem to be aware of the abyss next to which we are standing. The inequality of minorities in Israel; the lack of respect for the principles of civil rights when it comes to the Arab population of the West Bank, are tearing away at the moral core of Israeli society. But, as

"The love of my life is standing on the edge of being transformed beyond recognition"

ex-South Africans, there is something else happening which is even more frightening: we are developing an ability which was so typical of the South African

experience and which troubled most of us who lived through apartheid. We are developing the ability to not see what is going on because, well, you know it as well as I do, because life is basically good, if one does not look too closely.

Many Jewish leaders in the Diaspora will tell you that you should only speak up when you are in Israel, and outside of Israel you should support the country. I disagree with them. Let me be clear: **the most important support you can give to Israel right now is to make it clear to the present leadership that you will not collaborate with their behaviour. That you care too much about what Israel means to all of us as Jews to allow them to bring it to the edge of the abyss.**

That is the Zionism I learned when I was a little boy growing up in Somerset West, playing badminton in the Menorah Hall and dancing around the bimah on Simchat Torah, hoping that Harry Groll would give me an extra chocolate as I waved my Israeli flag.

Julian Resnick grew up in Somerset West and in Habonim, and has lived in Israel since 1976. He has worked in Jewish education for over 30 years and is currently serving as Central Shaliach to Habonim Dror North America. He is also the owner of a niche Jewish travel company, Jewish Journeys (www.jewishjourneys.info) and can be contacted on resnicj@gmail.com.

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A much nicer place than people imagine

By Abigail Klein Leichman

Searching for Israel's soul, Emmy-award winning NBC bureau chief Martin Fletcher chose to walk the country to cover daily living, rather than daily confrontations.

After 26 years of covering Israel's conflicts, NBC Tel Aviv bureau chief Martin Fletcher wanted to tell a different story — not of daily clashes but of daily living. And so he set out, in 2008, on a two-week meet-and-greet hike along what he calls "the most interesting hundred miles of coast in the world" — from Rosh Hanikra in the north to the border with Gaza in the south.

The Emmy Award-winning journalist spoke with Israel21c from New York as he wrapped up a 25-city North American speaking tour to promote his resulting book, *Walking Israel: A Personal Search for the Soul of a Nation* (St. Martin's Press, September 2010).

"I really wanted to make my contribution toward showing the 'real' Israel that people don't get to see," says Fletcher, who retired last January and remains with NBC as a special correspondent.

"The only time you hear about the coast is when there's a bomb or rockets. Yet 70 percent of Israel's population, Arabs and Jews, live peacefully in the coastal plain and you rarely hear about them. So by walking along the coast, meeting the people, strolling through

the towns, you get a completely fresh view of Israelis, a much more accurate one."

Peace and quiet

His conversations with Holocaust survivors, kibbutzniks, terror victims, Palestinian professionals and even a Zionist Arab revealed some new dimensions to the veteran journalist.

Although most of the world thinks of Israel in terms of war and peace, observes Fletcher, "I think Israelis are more focused on peace and quiet and stability in their personal lives. And most of them have been successful in achieving that. This reality is lost on outsiders till they come and visit and are surprised at what a pleasant place it is."

Fletcher, describing his Hebrew skills as 'pathetic,' does not consider himself an insider. Despite a total of 30 years in Israel — he was in the country from 1973 to 1975 as a cameraman, and returned to take the Tel Aviv assignment in 1982 — "I don't at all consider myself as Israeli. I never felt I particularly belonged anywhere."

"I can keep talking about this book forever"

His parents fled Austria for London in 1939, but the destination was rather random. "I was born and grew up there but I never felt British. In Israel, I belong in the sense that I'm Jewish, but I never closely identified with the whole mission of Israel as a Jewish state.

Israel must continue, and I hope to help, but I never felt I belonged."

Still, Fletcher always felt comfortable in Israel. "I enjoyed life there from the start," he says. "I was lucky to come with NBC News as a journalist for three years, and it became 28, which is a record for a TV correspondent. I came with my wife, who is Israeli, and the kids were all born here, so I immediately entered into Israeli family life. It was very easy."

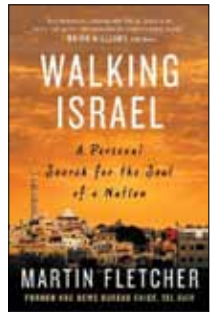
Fletcher has just completed another book, a novel about Jewish refugees in London during the last few months of 1945. Meanwhile, he is inundated with speaking requests regarding *Walking Israel*. "The Jewish Museum in New York had an evening event about the book in January. Yale invited me to come in the spring. I can keep talking about this book forever. I am very much interested in talking about its message: That Israel is not just a country of war. It is a much nicer place than the country people hear about."

Meanwhile, the description of *Walking Israel* on the Exclusive Books website includes the following perspective: "As long-time chief of NBC's Tel Aviv news bureau, Martin Fletcher is in a unique position to interpret Israel, and



he brings it off in a spectacular and novel manner. Last year he strolled along the entire coast, from Lebanon to Gaza, observing facets of the country that are ignored in news reports, yet

tell a different and truer story. *Walking Israel* is packed with hilarious moments, historical insights, emotional, true-life tales, and, above all, great storytelling."



This article is published courtesy of Israel21c. Visit www.israel21c.org

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A Board Perspective

From SAJBD National Chairman Zev Kregel



'BDS' – The latest strategy to delegitimise Israel

The strategy of boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel is often claimed by its proponents to be no more than a way of pressurising Israel to change its 'unjust' policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians.

Looking just beneath the surface, however, we quickly find that what is at issue is not this or that particular Israeli policy but the very right of Israel to exist at all. The phenomenon has manifested in various ways in South Africa – most recently in the publicity attracted by the visiting music group Faithless' professed refusal to visit Israel – and we can expect it to

continue for some time to come.

To date, Jewish organisations have worked together in confronting these attacks in every way possible, be it the attempted boycott of Ahava products, the attempt to prevent the Cape Town Opera from visiting Israel, or the campaign to sever ties between the University of Johannesburg and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. We will continue to join forces in confronting this pernicious tactic, which masquerades as a human rights campaign but in reality is a dishonest, hypocritical and manipulative attempt to drive Israel out of the family of nations.

Mandela's legacy

It is testimony to how much Nelson Mandela means to the people of South Africa that, despite his having been in retirement for over a decade, news of his admission to hospital generated nationwide and international concern.

Fortunately, the latest reports suggest that Madiba is stable and making good progress, but the scare was reminder that the day will come when Nelson Mandela will no longer be with us. When that happens, we will all reflect anew on the legacy he left us, and how we, as South Africans, can take that legacy forward. We know that during the most crucial time in this country's history, we were blessed to be led by a man of incomparable vision, dignity and moral stature. How much this contributed to the success of the peaceful transition from repressive white minority rule to multi-racial

democracy can never be underestimated.

At the same time, we must avoid the trap of attributing the South African miracle to any single individual, no matter how great. Time and again, the South African people have confounded the sceptics by pulling through – and much more – against the odds. This should be uppermost in our minds when facing up to the inevitable challenges that face us in the here and now, yet all too often we fail to muster the necessary self-belief.

We can use the example of Nelson Mandela to overcome this, not by putting him on a pedestal and treating him like a man apart, but rather by recognising him as the epitome of the national spirit that made the new South Africa a reality. For Madiba himself, one can think of no more inspiring a legacy.

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Talking Tachlis

Of cannon balls and cannibals

David Jacobson - Executive Director of the BOD (Cape Council)



I cannot write this column in good conscience without making mention of the two issues that scooped the headlines in January: Tutu and Tzipi.

The former arose out of the petition instigated by three members of our community that was aimed at our community. It created a literal PR nightmare for the Jewish community, doing a great deal of damage in the process. The latter arose out of aggressive mobilisation by the anti-Israel lobby to have Ms Livni arrested on arrival in South Africa. Both dominated the pages of the local, national and international newspapers and both required our communal organisations to rally to defend these inflammatory cannon balls.

In essence, the organised Jewish community was being pressured from two sides: external and internal. The external I understand, although the scope and relentless intensity of the attacks frighten me. But it is the internal pressure that truly petrifies me.

What is it about us Jews (as I know this is endemic to other communities too) that makes us want to cannibalise on our own? Many years ago I read a motivational book by Dr Wayne Dyer, if I remember correctly. Within its fuzzy feel-good pages, he made this telling statement: "If you squeeze an orange, you don't get lemon juice." His point was (a point I have raised many times in both personal and political discussions) that one must not blame external forces

(being squeezed) for the way in which one behaves. Simply put, if you are not a sour person, you won't behave in a sour manner even when put under pressure. You either have it in you, or you don't.

I think his 'juice analogy' has great relevance for us Jews.

We are being squeezed, as a community, and it hurts. And as this pressure builds, so people need an outlet — they need to vent. That is natural. But why they would choose to vent at their own community, to level their attack on those who, when all is said and done, stand with them on most issues, truly defeats me. Despite

all its inadequacies and failures (and there are many), the organised Jewish community in South Africa is not the enemy. There are those who think the Board should have come out equivocally

in support of Tutu and there are those who think we should have spoken out against Tutu for his harsh and unfair comments on Israel.

But whatever your feelings, if you aim your attack and your anger at your own community, surely you are aiming in the wrong direction? If those who love Israel would utilise their passion, their time and their skills to combat the external pressure, instead of creating another front on which the organised community has to fight, they would better serve their own cause as well as that of the community.

I would urge those who deeply love the Land of Israel, Eretz Yisrael, to show equal amount of love and compassion for the people of Israel, Klal Yisrael.

send in harsh letters of disapproval and complain to their friends and family. Yet, if you are truly interested in changing the tactics of our communal leaders, or are unhappy with certain decisions, then there is a simple way to make your voice heard: **get involved.**

From 'complaining to campaigning' in four easy steps

Create an ideological/political platform.

The Board tackles issues that affect the Jewish community, and each Board member brings his or her own worldview to bear upon these issues. Are your politics liberal or conservative? Do you feel we should be more outspoken against the anti-Zionist lobby? Do you feel our community should be more involved in issues that are primarily South African and less involved in Israel?

Gather supporters for your platform.

Speak to your friends; lobby at shuls and schools. Make your voice and views known.

Stand for the Board at our voting Conference in October.

12 Members are elected to the Cape Council at Conference every second year. Anyone on the communal register can stand for election but only official delegates from our affiliate bodies can vote.

Stand for the postal ballot that will take place between June and August.

Three new members are elected onto the Cape Council every two years via postal ballot. Anyone on the communal register can stand for election by postal ballot and anyone on the communal register can vote. It is the most democratic and accessible system in any Jewish communal body in South Africa.

The democracy is not perfect, but it is there for our community to use, if they choose.

"Despite all its inadequacies and failures, the organised Jewish community in South Africa is not the enemy."

"The real function of leadership is not to create unbridgeable gulfs between brethren, but to build bridges of brotherhood and understanding."

"He was not prepared to buckle under state or congregational pressure when it came to human rights abuses."

Embracing diversity should be more than at just arm's length

The Board's pages this month are filled with articles that relate to our constant struggle to encourage our community to truly accept diversity as a strength and not a weakness. In this regard, these extracts from greetings given by BOD chairman, Li Boiskin, at the recent Rabbi Dr David Sherman Memorial Lecture, are particularly apt.

It is my privilege tonight, on behalf of the Cape Town Jewish communal organisations, to honour the legacy of Rabbi Dr David Sherman.

Like Rabbi Sherman, the Jewish Board of Deputies recognises that diversity of opinions in a community is natural, inevitable and healthy. I can only echo Rabbi Sherman's words that "The real function of leadership is not to create unbridgeable gulfs between brethren but to build bridges of brotherhood and understanding, of love and kindness, of tolerance and goodwill, for the glory of G-d and the blessing of Israel."

This has not always been so. When Rabbi Sherman arrived in Cape Town 55 years ago, he faced many challenges. Fortunately Rabbi Sherman was as determined as he was principled, and he did not let negativity push him from his path.

Rabbi Sherman was a catalyst in helping our small community to accept diversity among fellow Jews, as well as in the wider community, and in this he was ahead of his time.

He was a pioneer of interfaith work and spoke to many church groups. The Sisterhood still continues the tradition he established of holding regular interfaith mornings.

The organisation he helped establish (originally meeting at the Board's premises) and which he chaired, the Interfaith Forum of Jews, Christians and Muslims, is still going strong, but with a new name — Open Hearts Open Minds — and is now part of Cape Town Interfaith Initiative. This initiative has helped to ensure that the Jewish community is recognised by the province, government and the broader community as an integral part of the whole society, and is of equal importance to other much larger or noisier religious groups.

No other city in South African has such an organisation, because no other city had a Rabbi Sherman. He did not see differences in colour or religion — he saw brothers and sisters.

Under his leadership, the Temple

set an example of service to the broader community. The annual Sisterhood Simchat Torah party still entertains more than a 1 000 seniors of all religions and races, as it did even during the apartheid years.

In the same way that Rabbi Sherman did not buckle under pressure when he established the Reform Congregation in Cape Town, he was not prepared to buckle under state or congregational pressure when it came to human rights abuses. He spoke out against the evils of apartheid, at one time requiring a

police guard around his house after anonymous threats were received.

He was one of the speakers at a mass meeting in the City Hall to protest the 90-day detention act and he was also a presence at other protest meetings. He did more than speak out, and when the government was bulldozing shacks in mid-winter; he encouraged the Sisterhood to bring lorry-loads of homeless squatters to sleep in the Temple Halls, much as the Board did with homeless victims at Herzlia Weizmann when there was the recent outbreak of xenophobia.

Rabbi Sherman also always spoke out when the equal rights of his own community were being prejudiced, thus gaining equal funding for their Hebrew schools and participation in Yom Hashoah ceremonies. He took

an active part in communal and Zionist activity, and was appointed Vice President of the United Jewish Campaign, which at that time was under the sponsorship of the Board.

Our community and our way of life is under threat now in ways that Rabbi Sherman, a committed Zionist, would not have foreseen. Our way of life and opportunity to express ourselves as Zionists is under threat with a growing boycott movement and attempts to delegitimise Israel. Our community cohesiveness is being challenged by these threats; and by an exposure in the media to a barrage of anti-Israel propaganda, and also by an angry backlash from some members of our community. Rabbi Sherman would have been one of the first to appeal for communal harmony and acceptance of diversity under these threats.

For all these reasons and more, I salute the memory of Rabbi Dr Sherman, which is being honoured here tonight.

Prayers for the City sound a youthful note of hope



'Prayers for the City' spectators listen to music and singing from youth of the Satya Sai Seva community.

"I did not realise that there were so many different faith communities living in the city," said Mayor Dan Plato. Nor did most of the audience gathered at the annual Prayers for the City event at the Waterfront.

At the beginning of each year, the youth of many different faith communities come together in song and dance, to give their prayers to the mayor and his officials for the year ahead to be one of peace and harmony for their citizens. The event is organised by the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative

Where else is one able to hear drumming from the Hare Krishna; listen to Indian musical instruments played by the Satya Sai Seva; watch the liturgical dancing of small children from Elsie's River's Dancers for Christ; hear Jewish, Christian and Muslim youth from *Faith to Faith Face to Face* singing; Hindu chanting, Muslim prayers, church

bands, African Traditional religion and much much more?

One of the highlights was the inspirational playing of Rachel Serraf, a Grade 10 learner at Herzlia. As the pure high notes of her *kinnor* (or David's harp) floated over the V&A amphitheatre, a sudden hush fell over the enchanted crowd.

Among the audience were Mickey Glass and Gwynne Robins – the Board of Deputies always assists with the function.

And if, like the mayor, you have not heard of the Satya Sai Seva, they are a Hindu-based organisation without any distinction on the basis of religion, race or nationality, who join together with the belief that service to people is service to G-d.

Coming together without any distinction to pray for a successful year ahead for all who live in our beautiful city can only benefit us all.

BOD bursaries confirm the age-old Jewish mantra: Education, education, education!

South Africa is slowly battling to improve the education of its citizens and the recent matric results, although challenged by some, did show some improvement in that direction.

Our Jewish community has always understood the inestimable value of a good education. Through centuries of persecution in Europe, Jews learnt that they could not depend on possessions or wealth for security – these could be stolen or confiscated. Education, however, was something they had no matter where they went, and no one could take it from them.

As higher education correlates with higher earning capacities, this also explains why Jewish immigrants tend to do well in their new homelands.

Unfortunately, the costs of tertiary education have become so very expensive, and coupled with the recent economic recession, has meant that many people are not able to provide their children with the opportunity to study beyond school.

This is where the Jewish Board of Deputies steps in. The Cape Council administers funds donated over the years by many generous benefactors, as well as receiving annual grants which are used up to bolster awards. This income provides bursaries for Jews living in the Western Cape who are in financial need.

Every year the bursaries sub-committee, chaired by Joe Fintz, sit to examine the many applications, and slowly and painstakingly determine the amounts that can be awarded to each applicant. The amounts are determined utilising a carefully designed computer

programme and the knowledge and expertise of the members of the bursaries sub-committee. The money is paid directly to the tertiary institution.

This year, the Cape Council's bursaries sub-committee dispersed over one million rand towards the fees of 32 new applications and 30 renewals, who are studying courses ranging from law and occupational therapy, to cat psychology and fashion, as well as to six post-graduates. This is an increase of 12 new applicants and 10 renewals. This increase, together with a huge increase in university fees, led to us breaching the million rand allocation.

Maimonides regarded the greatest level of *tzedakah*, "above which there is no other" to be that of finding people jobs so that they could become independent and retain their self-respect. Today the best way to do this is by giving them an education so that they can become independent. Don't feed them fish...

We would like to thank the many generous benefactors who continue to donate towards this worthwhile of causes.

The Cape Council also extends their best wishes to all students for a happy and academically successful 2011.

In 2010 the Cape Council embarked on a campaign to encourage all past recipients of an SAJBD bursary to give back to the Bursary Fund in order to assist the growing need for bursaries.

Although our bursaries are awarded without any legal obligation to repay them, and without prejudice, we do ask recipients to take on a 'moral obligation' to repay their bursaries when and if they are able.

So if you were indeed a past recipient and are able to afford it, please contact our offices to arrange to donate funds – your assistance will go a long way towards helping other young Jews forge a successful future.

Contact the bursary administrator at sajbd@ctjc.co.za or 021 464-6700.

The Gallipoli Campaign comes to Cape Town

The campaign in the Dardanelles (Gallipoli) was the biggest Allied disaster of the First World War. Through cowardice and bad military judgement, it became a disastrous hellhole that cost hundreds of thousands of lives for no strategic benefit.

Among the Australian, New Zealand and Ghurkha units fighting, there were 700 men in the Jewish Brigade established by Trumpeldor and Jabotinsky – Palestinian Jews with Russian citizenship, and Sephardic Palestinians keen to liberate Palestine from Turkish rule. Orders were given in English and Hebrew, the Grand Rabbi was nominated Honorary Chaplain and the Jewish officers were paid 40% less than the British.

After a nightmarish fiasco, Britain evacuated its troops to Egypt, where they reformed and regrouped. General Sir Ian Hamilton,



'Flowers of Zion' – dried flowers in the shape of a Magen David from the book 'Natural flowers from the Holy Land'.



A leaf from the Dardanelles Campaign 1915, with the military ribbon.

Commander-in-Chief in the Dardanelles, later wrote in his diary, "I have here, fighting under my orders, a purely Jewish unit – the Zion Mule Corps. As far as I know, this is the first time in the Christian era such a thing has happened. They have shown great courage taking supplies up to the line under heavy fire" and proven "invaluable to us." (Although invaluable, Britain later refused to grant the men of the Zion Mule Corps regular British army pensions.)

What has all this to do with the Board of Deputies? Among the items the Cape Council has on display in The Samson Centre is an olive wood covered book in German and Hebrew entitled *Blumen von Heiligen Land*. The word 'Jerusalem' is inscribed on the cover and inside are pictures made using pressed flowers and ferns.

But someone has pasted inside the

cover a red, white and blue British military ribbon attached to dried brown leaf, on which is written in gold ink, **Dardanelles 1915**.

How did it get here? Presumably one of the soldiers went to Palestine on leave and sent this memento as a gift to a loved one in the Cape, attaching the carefully preserved leaf as a souvenir of the hellhole he had survived.



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SOUTH AFRICAN ZIONIST FEDERATION (CAPE COUNCIL)

Israel's Economic Excellence

Simon Benninga, an economic expert from Tel Aviv University, gave an in-depth talk about Israel's economic achievements to an audience hosted by the SAZF Cape Council at the end of 2010.

Benninga is a Professor of Finance at the Leon Recanati Graduate School of Business Administration at Tel Aviv University, and directs the Sofaer International MBA at the university. The IMBA hosts South African students every year, sponsored by Investec. Mikael Hanan of Cape Town is currently on the programme, and in 2009 Nomo Khumalo did the degree, saying that going to Israel to study was "the best decision I ever made." Benninga was in South Africa to conduct professional activities with local universities, inform South Africans about the Sofaer IMBA, and to meet with Tel Aviv University supporters and donors.

Aiming to explain Israel's economy "in twenty minutes, with as few numbers as possible," Benninga said that Israel's size is both its strength and its weakness. As the 100th smallest country in the world, it is like one big city, allowing for a dynamic, fast-paced and intensive economy. At the same time, it has almost no natural resources – "the Jews wandered the desert for forty years to find the only Middle Eastern country without oil!" he quipped. Yet a recent discovery of natural gas off the coast of Ashkelon and Gaza will contribute significantly to Israel's natural resources.

Benninga said that the top three industries in Israel are high-tech, bio-tech and defense, and the country has 10% of the world's bio-tech companies.



Simon Benninga and Ben Levitas after Mr. Benninga's fascinating talk.

He explained that the plethora of high-tech startups are related to the army, as the biggest unit is intelligence. This leads to Israelis taking what they learnt in this department to begin high-tech companies. It is start-ups like these that feed the Israeli economy.

Achievements and challenges

Another positive factor is that Israel has a very well-developed stock market. Israel's top trading partners are the European Union, the United States and the Far East, and it also has good trade relations with Turkey. Israel's exports and imports are fairly balanced; and the country did relatively well in the recent economic crisis as its banks have always been conservative.

According to Benninga, Israel's biggest economic challenge is that Israeli Arabs and ultra-Orthodox Jews – who make up almost 30% of the population altogether – have a very low participation in the economy. In Israeli Arab communities, none of the women are part of the workforce, therefore taking 10% of the population out of

A view from the Chair

Ben Levitas, Chairman SAZF (Cape Council)



There is a distorted perception that Zionism is an ideology based on race, reminiscent of the infamous 'Zionism equals racism' resolution passed by the United Nations in 1975.

The basic tenants of Judaism are irreconcilable with any form of racism or discrimination; and Zionism, as the national movement of the Jewish people, is an integral part of the Jewish religion and is the modern expression of ancient Jewish heritage.

To question the Jewish people's right to national existence and freedom is not only to deny the Jewish people the right accorded to every other people on this globe, but it is also to deny the central principles of the United Nations.

Despite not being a race group or Zionism not being a racial ideology, Jews have been the victims of

racial profiling, leading to human rights violations and atrocities. As a result, since 1948 when the 'right of return' extended Israeli citizenship to every Jew, nearly 900 000 Jews who lived for over two thousand years in Arab lands escaped further discrimination to live the Zionist dream.

Israel is a truly pluralist society, racially and ethnically, where Jews, Arabs and other groups live together and the rights of man are observed before the law. No death sentence is applied and freedom of speech, movement, thought and expression are guaranteed.

It is essential to emphasise that the ideology of Zionism is merely an expression of the desire of Jews to live in the land of Israel, which they have lived in for over 4000 years.

economic activity. These factors are a major problem, which the government continues to work on.

Israel's other challenge is its size, despite this also being its biggest strength. "Small countries, like small companies, can disappear fast," said Benninga. "We have to be nimble and smart to stay ahead of the game." Lastly, Benninga lists "peace, peace and peace" as another major requirement for economic stability.

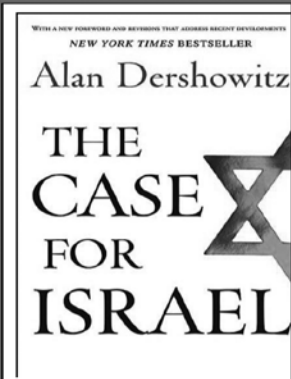
However, despite these issues, Israel is a global economic leader. It has the largest number of scientists and technicians in the world – over 25% of its workforce are employed in technical professions. It has the highest ratio of

university degrees to the population, the highest per capita ratio of scientific publications, and one of the highest per capita rates of patents filed. In proportion to its population, the country has the largest number of start-up companies in the world and the highest percentage of home computers per capita. Outside of the United States and Canada, Israel has the largest number of NASDAQ listed companies; and the Israeli GNP is higher than sum total of its neighbours.

If Israel continues to attain these staggering economic achievements while tackling its challenges, it should continue to lead the world in economic excellence.

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Encounter 2011 – Facebook and friends!

The Encounter tour of January 2011 continues to be discussed enthusiastically by those who went on the tour, and by the friends and family in Cape Town who have heard their enthusiastic report backs.

With 45 participants, our 2011 group was the second largest group that we have sent on Encounter. The programme was an eye-opening one for all the participants, whether they were first-time Israel visitors

or seasoned tourists. Much fun was had, while at the same time the group learnt about Israeli life, the challenges facing Israelis, Jewish history and the vibrant university life available to pupils. Every person on the tour had lovely

and heart-warming things to say about their experience.

Encounter and Israel itself was most aptly described by Darren Silke when he said, "I found a part of myself in Israel." Israel Encounter 2011 was truly unforgettable. On

behalf of the participants and the Israel Centre Cape Town, we would like to extend our thanks to teachers Di Dos Santos and Paul Schooling, and the madrichot, Lee Lobel and Lauren Kessler, who oversaw the tour.

"I really had no idea what to expect, but the expectations that I did have were proven wrong in that they turned out to be much better! I can't say what I enjoyed the most about the whole experience, as everything that I did made a huge impact on me and who I am with regards to my Judaism. I am very glad to have had the opportunity to go to the various Israeli universities, as I am interested in going to one of them after I have finished matric."

- Kayla Latinsky

Some Facebook updates from the trip:

6th January

In Israel now, having the time of my life. Now I know I am home.

14th January

Looking forward to my last and greatest few days in Israel, looking forward to seeing everybody back home, yet I DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE!

15th January

Leaving Israel tomorrow, but hopefully not for long. Thanks for the memories

that I will cherish for the rest of my life, and thanks to all who helped me find my way home (Israel)!

17th January

Thanks for the memories that will remain in my heart and soul for the rest of my life, thanks to all who made it happen and thanks to G-d for providing us with an amazing home that I have found after all these years. Am Yisrael Chai!

- Dean Goodson

"The Israel 2011 Encounter tour was all it promised to be and more. The trip was inspirational, educational and fun. The amazing tour guide and madrichim evoked a real love for the country in us all.

The group travelled the country; from hiking in the Golan to walking the beautiful streets of Tsfat to the Kotel in Jerusalem and shopping in Tel Aviv to swimming in the Dead Sea. We

climbed Massada, braved the tunnels in the city of David, walked through the underground Kotel tunnels, sat in Rabin Square and toured Mount Herzl.

Apart from experiencing the historical landmarks and hiking trails, we had free time to shop for authentic Israeli food, clothing and other memorabilia as well as meet the local people.

We spent our last weekend with host families near Beit Shemesh, learning about the culture, recreation, food and music of our contemporaries.

The best thing about the trip was the incredible bond formed between all the Herzlians. New friendships were created and others strengthened. There is no better way to experience Israel than with a group of close friends. The trip would not have been the same if it was not for the absolutely amazing atmosphere created by everyone involved. It was a remarkable, once in a lifetime experience."

- Candice Linde



Higher Education Expo

The Aliyah Department is hosting a very exciting and informative Higher Education Expo from March 28-30 2011 at Herzlia High School.

We will be hosting a number of delegates representing various universities and institutes of higher education in Israel. This is an invaluable opportunity for both students and those eager to continue learning to find out vital information about the study options in the country. It is important to note that Olim Chadashim up to the age of 28 have special rights for studying in Israel, with up to three years of free academic study in specific circumstances. We look forward to meeting you and helping interested parties with their quest to learn in the Holy Land.

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Holocaust Centre honours women in the Holocaust

To coincide with United Nations International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, the Cape Town Holocaust Centre hosted the exhibition *Pictures of Resistance: the Wartime Photos of Jewish Partisan Faye Schulman*, created by the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation (JPEF).

Faye Schulman, having learned photography from her brother before the war, continued her craft after joining a group of Russian partisans. The exhibition highlights her courage and the hardships she faced – often hiding her Jewish identity from the antisemitic partisans – and her determination to record her experiences. Despite being engaged in dangerous missions, she still found the time to make her own photographic materials and to develop the pictures. Faye survived, as did her images, allowing us to have a rare glimpse into the previously unseen life of a partisan.

JPEF Executive Director Mitch Braff was the guest of the Holocaust Centre, where he conducted workshops for educators. He was also invited to speak to the student body of Herzlia High school and was the keynote speaker at the event to mark United Nations Holocaust Memorial Day. Reflecting on the theme of this year's memorial day, women in the Holocaust, Braff examined the role that Jewish women played in anti-Nazi partisan movements during World War II, and the challenges and dangers they faced both within and from outside those groups.

Holocaust Survivors Ella Blumenthal, Shmuel Keren Krol, Miriam Lichterman,

Mike Breslin, Helene Joffe, Jack Shmukler, and Fryda Farkas participated in a memorial candle-lighting ceremony. Two additional candles were lit by Ernest Kajabo in commemoration of the Rwandan genocide, and by 'Righteous amongst the Nations' Truus Grootendorst to honour the rescuers.

Marie-Evelyne Petrus-Barry (Director of the UN Information Centre) read the Secretary General's message, which paid special tribute to the women who suffered during the Holocaust, who "despite appalling acts of discrimination, deprivation and cruelty [...] found ways to fight back". The message honoured these women's resistance, their bravery, and their sacrifice.



Mitch Braff, director of the JPEF, leads a discussion on one of Faye Schulman's images of partisan life at a workshop for volunteer educators.



Gwynne Robins (Deputy Director of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies) with Richard Freedman and Mr Mike Breslin, a survivor who escaped the Mir ghetto and then served as a partisan fighter in the Nalibocki forest in White Russia. His extraordinary story is told in *In Sacred Memory*, available at the Holocaust Centre.



Holocaust survivors Ella Blumenthal and Miriam Lichterman, participating in the candle-lighting ceremony held for the UN International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

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It's only a couple of weeks until Purim... the kids (and many adults) are excited about dressing up, making noises when Haman's name is mentioned, giving gifts to each other and just having a really lekker time.

With all the festivities during and after the reading of the Megillah, we overlook something that is actually extraordinary.

In the Megillah (chapter 9, verse 19-22) we read the following:

Thus the *prazi* Jews, those who live in unwalled cities, make the fourteenth day of the month of Adar a holiday, a **day of feasting, rejoicing and sending portions of food** to one another. Now Mordechai recorded these events and sent letters to all the Jews living throughout the provinces of King Achashveirosh, near and far [instructing them] to obligate themselves to celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, like the days upon which the Jews were relieved of their enemies, and the month which had been transformed for them from one of sorrow to joy, from mourning to festivity – **to make them days of feasting, rejoicing, sending food portions to one another and giving gifts to the poor.**

A careful reading of these verses will reveal that initial celebrations after the victory of the Jews in Persia included partying and sending gifts to one another. Mordechai, however, added to the celebration the need for *matanot la'evyonim* – 'gifts to the poor'.

Why did Mordechai have to add the *matanot la'evyonim*? Or more precisely, why did the Jews not include it initially? Rabbi Haskel Lookstein writes that it is not a normal response for people who are celebrating to involve more than themselves and a few friends. But Mordechai represents rabbinic tradition. He was a great scholar and a member of the Great Assembly. He taught the people that we need to link charity to our celebrations – that there is no complete joy unless it is shared with those who have no joy.

What is striking is that we see that the Jewish trait of *tzedakah* is not an inbuilt one, but rather one that has been educated to Jews throughout the world, to the point that for some it has become second nature.

The gift of giving

We can be proud of our *tzedakah* heritage. According to a recent study comparing philanthropic patterns among Americans of different faiths; Jews make more donations than people of other religions to 'basic needs' causes, which are those that focus on food, shelter and other fundamental necessities.

The study, by Indiana University and Purdue University Indianapolis

economics professor Mark Ottoni-Wilhelm, found that Jews are 15 percent more likely than members of other faith groups to make a donation toward feeding and housing the poor. They also give at least 20 percent more in dollar terms overall, Ottoni-Wilhelm says, because of the way *tzedakah*, or charity, is *taught* in Jewish literature and tradition.

And what is taught? That we simply cannot indulge ourselves in our joy. Every *simcha* must involve not only consumption, but also contribution – *tzedakah*.

This extends beyond Purim, for the timeless value of *tzedakah* pertains to every area of our lives. Our weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, bris a baby namings, special anniversary or birthday celebrations should include a contribution to a Jewish charity as part of its budget. There is a family that I know who have a tradition that every rand spent on a *simcha* is to be matched with an equal contribution to their preferred Jewish charities. Is that not how a Jew should celebrate? Celebrating moments of joy by bringing joy to others is the *authentic* Jewish way of *simcha* that we have been taught through generations.

Unfortunately, we have not fully instilled this lesson into our community. On many occasions I have approached someone who has just celebrated a family *simcha* to make a contribution to the shul or to another important cause, and the response has been "Rabbi, I would love to assist but the cost of the *simcha* was astronomical."

Mordechai taught us that exactly at this time, when we celebrate our personal joys, we should look beyond our ambit and give to others, creating a true inner joy.

Maimonides writes: "A person who gladdens the hearts of the less fortunate is compared to the Divine presence."

Let us all embrace this beautiful lesson of the special chag of Purim. To enjoy the *simcha*, the parties, the *hamantashen*, everything – but to do it by joining our community together through the beautiful *simcha* of giving.

Chief Rabbi's visit: Celebrating the enduring presence of the Observatory-Mowbray congregation

The Chief Rabbi of South Africa, Warren Goldstein, made a much-awaited visit to the Observatory-Mowbray and Rondebosch congregations on Sunday, 13 November 2010. The service was held at the Obs-Mowbray shul and was attended by about 40 men and women. Ronnie Gerdis led the *Mincha* service and the Chief Rabbi led the *Ma'ariv* service.

Dr Isaac Wolfsohn, the Obs-Mowbray shul's life president and the eldest member present, thanked the Chief Rabbi for the honour he was bestowing upon the congregation. The Chief Rabbinate had visited the shul twice during Wolfsohn's 66 years of membership (the first being 12 years ago when Chief Rabbi Harris attended the Observatory-Mowbray synagogue's 70th anniversary), and he warmly invited this Chief Rabbi to return after a shorter period.

The Chief Rabbi, speaking from the front of the shul, prefaced his talk by commending the two congregations for their visible cooperation. He noted that while some congregations compete with each other for members and fail to sustain themselves independently, Obs-Mowbray and Rondebosch have had the vision to work together. By joining forces, both shuls have survived and grown since they began sharing aspects of membership and leadership about 18 months ago. Many members consider it a *mitzvah* to keep the shuls open: one member travels from Milnerton each week, and others come from Muizenberg, Camps Bay and Bantry Bay.

Taking an active role in our Judaism Rabbi Goldstein then spoke about the pillars of Jewish learning, and how the path of Hashem is often one that a person cannot understand, but must accept. He stressed that expecting Hashem to act like a human being, with human rationale, is to undermine his immensity and power. He then discussed the differences between learning at a university and at a yeshiva. While universities teach secular subjects (or teach religious subjects secularly); yeshivot teach religious subjects religiously, and they also differ in the ways they teach. While university teaching is about 85% lectures and



At the entrance to Obs-Mowbray Shul between *Mincha* and *Maariv*. Back row: Marc Turok, Ronnie Gerdis and Colin Wolfsohn. Front row: Allan Sakinofsky, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, Selwyn Schrock, Jules Goldwasser and Hymie Lipchitz. Selwyn had his *barmitzvah* at the shul, and this was his first visit in 30 years.

15% independent learning, most yeshivot reverse these percentages with about 15% being based on *shiurim* and 85% on independent learning, where the onus is on the individual to take an active role in his own learning. Moreover, such study is undertaken with a *chavruta* (study partner), ensuring that every student has continued support in studying and questioning the sages and their commentaries.

The Chief Rabbi then spoke about what it means to take an active part in Judaism. Comparing Judaism to a business, he asked whether we see ourselves as employees or partners with G-d. Avraham Aveinu was clearly a partner – a man who saw himself as an active part of the business, rather than an employee who is content to let someone else do the work. By taking a more active role in our own Jewishness, we demonstrate its greater value to us. It is a business we cannot leave to others to look after.

The service concluded with *kiddush*, and a lavish *oneg* laid on by the catering committee of Obs-Mowbray congregation. As always, it was enough for a meal: this synagogue knows how to celebrate!

Around Cape Town



West Coast yeshiva night with the Chabad Talmidim HaShluchim.



Rabbi Silman with Ariel Katzen, winner of R1000 at the V&A Waterfront, for his attendance at the youth *minyán*.



The first Claremont Wynberg parsha *shiur* of 2011.

“Tripping the light fantastic” – 10 years of Ohr Somayach Cape Town

By Simon Apfel

For the last ten years, Ohr Somayach Cape Town has been on the road. During this time, the congregation epitomised the wandering Jew – traveling from place to place, uprooting itself regularly, not really fitting in anywhere, but somehow still flourishing.

From someone’s living room, then a school hall, a cramped basement, and another school hall, the community has grown both spiritually and in numbers, and the good vibes and good times have continued to roll.

In early 2007, Ohr Somayach Cape Town found itself a beautiful shul building – albeit one with obtrusive pillars and walls, and corners in all the wrong places. Wholesale renovations ensued, until one warm summer evening in late December 2010; the congregation finally unveiled a home of its own.

Hundreds attended the grand opening. The air crackled with electricity, hearts swelled with pride, and knees buckled at the sight of Merle Rubin’s astonishing ‘light snacks.’

The occasion found the Ohr Somayach community not tired and depleted from the long, arduous journey, but energised and excited for the future – proud of what had been achieved and eager to continue the momentum. Far from slumping across the threshold, the community sang and danced their way, wedding style, into the new premises.

And what premises! The Byzantine ceiling, stately brass chandeliers, and antique wooden floor remain from the original building, refurbished and rearranged into a new open plan layout, encompassing a new mechitza, a beautiful slab of white marble around the aron kodesh and a fresh coat of white paint still drying on the walls. Grand and dignified, but not ostentatious; smart and sleek but also warm, spacious and inviting. A building that truly epitomises the community.

300 caretakers

Chief Rabbi Goldstein remarked on the smell of paint in his opening address, enjoining the community not to forget the excitement and newness in the air and to carry that inspiration forward through times that may not be as inspiring or new.

Rabbi Gavriel Abramson (who has helmed the Ohr Somayach CT ship for more than six years) was in a similar philosophical mood. He paid tribute to the community for taking ownership of the building of the new shul (“a building with 300 caretakers”), and for how far they have come in a relatively short period of time.

“We are personally thrilled with the progress that has been made,” he said. “The growth in our daily minyanim (both in numbers and quality of genuine prayer); the numerous students who have spent time learning in yeshivot in Israel; the increased observance of Torah and mitzvot, and the incredible commitment to chesed.”

Rabbi Abramson reserved special praise for Rabbi Dani Brett and his wife Nechama, who joined the shul two years ago with a mandate to advance the area of Torah learning. “The Bretts’ wealth of Torah knowledge and ability to convey the Torah’s rich

In addition to its Shabbat, festival and weekday services, Ohr Somayach Cape Town offers a wide range of Torah learning programmes. These include a Monday Night Young Adults Shiur, a Tuesday Night Pirkei Avot Shiur, Shabbat learning programmes, a daily Gemara shiur and a Sunday morning Beit Midrash with various study groups, as well as regular one-on-one learning opportunities. Then there are a number of well-attended “Jewish life cycle” events – a barmitzvah club, a monthly ladies Rosh Chodesh club and Chagim prep courses. Rabbi Brett has also been instrumental in city-wide learning programmes such as PBM, Dad’s Spot and the Chief Rabbi’s Beit Midrash programme at Herzlia School.

wisdom to a range of audiences has been astounding, and something that Ohr Somayach, and Cape Town in general, are very privileged to have access to.”

Happiness and light

Indeed, it is Torah learning which has kept the spark alive and the twinkle in the eye of this congregation, and is the secret to Ohr Somayach Cape Town’s ongoing expansion and spiritual growth. “A Jewish community thrives when it provides opportunities for deep Torah learning,” explained Rabbi Brett. “It is the vehicle that transforms superficial rituals into deep and transformative processes, and greatly enhances every Jewish experience.”

The ceremony ended with Rebbetzin Ruthie Abramson lighting candles to commemorate each of the attributes that make this community so special, followed by a (spontaneous) rousing rendition of *Tov lehodot l’HaShem*. Arms entwined, voices lifted, candles were in the air – it was neither syrupy nor sentimental, but rather genuinely moving.

As it settles into its new home, Ohr Somayach Cape Town can look back with pride on ten wildly successful years, and forward to a path of exciting growth. This is a shul set to continue sharing its “happy light” with all of Cape Town, highlighting the true depth, beauty and fulfillment of authentic Torah Judaism.



Rabbi Abramson with Chief Rabbi Goldstein, dancing with the Torahs through a sea of children.



The crowds waiting to catch a glimpse of the newly renovated shul.



Chief Rabbi Goldstein officiating the opening.



Ohr Somayach head chazzan, Rabbi Auerbach, leading the dancing.



“This day Hashem has made – Let us rejoice and be glad on it!”



Seated in our bright and airy new shul.

Generosity that has no end

Sunday, 23rd January saw the opening of the new Samson Health Care Centre at Highlands House, endowed by Eric and Sheila Samson in memory of Brenda Miller, Sheila's sister.

Eric and Sheila affixed a mezuzah with Rabbi Abrahamson officiating. A cocktail reception was hosted thereafter by Eliot Osrin, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Highlands House, and Leon Geffen, president of the home. Eliot said the following in his address:

"Over the years Sheila and Eric have contributed to many, many philanthropy causes, both Jewish and non-Jewish, through the Eric and Sheila Samson Foundation. Their passion for assisting the less fortunate is widely acknowledged through their generous donations to schools, clinics and hospitals for the previously disadvantaged, irrespective of race and religion. They are also major benefactors of various universities and have endowed no less than a total of 10 Chairs in Israel and South Africa.

Sheila and Eric have had a very long relationship with Highlands, and not only has this healthcare centre been named after them, but also the synagogue in our home, which is named 'Ohel Beit Samson.'

Of course, besides Eric and Sheila's support for Highlands, there is simply no cause in our local community which has not benefitted hugely from their extraordinary generosity. Causes such as the United Jewish Campaign, the Holocaust Centre, Glendale, Herzlia Schools and various synagogues – in fact I believe every organisation and institution in our community – has benefitted from their generosity. It is therefore no wonder that this modest couple are so esteemed and admired. What is also pleasing is to see that their children, Franki, Steven, Dorothy and Leonard are very much involved in the community, thereby following in the footsteps of their parents.

The new Samson Health Care Centre, which has just opened, will serve the home in many respects. Firstly, it will enable us to correctly assess the needs of all future residents before they enter the home, so as to ensure that they are correctly placed in the area where they will be best looked after. Currently, it is also being used for exercise classes on a daily basis and for physiotherapy treatment.

At present, the home and other institutions in our community are served by a district surgeon, who comes to the home four days a week for a few hours a day. This district surgeon will operate from the new centre, but unfortunately we believe he will be retiring soon, whereafter we fear it will be necessary to send residents requiring medical treatment and who cannot afford private medicine to a day hospital in Hanover Park, Robbie Nurock or Buitengracht Street, where they could end up queuing for hours. Furthermore, I must mention that no residents of any community institution can be admitted to a hospital until formally assessed by a doctor.

We therefore anticipate that in the not too distant future the home will have no choice but to employ a community doctor who will look after not only the

residents of Highlands who do not have medical aid, but also the needs of various other institutions in our community such as Community Services, Glendale and Oranjia. This community doctor will obviously practise from the new facility now provided, which will be a great benefit to those in our community who cannot afford private medicine.

The staff of our organisations will also be able to access his services, thus cutting down on time needed by staff to attend state facilities for minor illnesses and repeat prescriptions.

Thus Eric and Sheila, I thank you not only for your generosity to Highlands, but I also thank you on behalf of the many Israelis and South Africans, both Jewish and non-Jewish, who have benefitted from your hearts of gold and generosity of spirit."

Eric, in his always brief reply, said that what they did for Highlands House gave the family much satisfaction, while Franki, his daughter, read a message from Brenda's children who were unable to attend. Here follows an extract:

"To all our friends and family at Highlands House, we are deeply honoured and moved that the Health Care Centre being inaugurated today is to be dedicated to the memory of our beloved mom and grandmom, Brenda.

Brenda was an incredibly special lady who bore her long and very difficult illness with great dignity and grace. She radiated a feeling of serenity, love and warmth that brought all who came to know her a sense of comfort and appreciation for just being in her presence.

Brenda would have been so proud of this dedication and of the love and generosity that has been shown by Sheila and Eric in making this new development possible, to whom we are extremely grateful.

We look forward to visiting you at Highlands House soon, and thank you again for all the love and support which you gave to our mom and grandmom, Brenda."

Eliot's words of gratitude to the Samson family were hardly spoken when Eric came to Leon Geffen and Harris Burman and made a more than generous donation to kick off the Communal Doctor Fund. Sheila, in her own quiet way, said that should we have any further projects, they would be happy to consider them on their merits.



Leonard and Dorothy Sank and their daughter Lexi; Leon Geffen, Sheila and Eric Samson, Rabbi Abrahamson, Eliot Osrin and Franki and Steven Cohen with their children Ari and Shanan.



Plaque that reads: Endowed in memory of Brenda Miller, Sheila's sister and a resident of the Home, by Eric and Sheila Samson, December 2010.



Eliot Osrin and Eric and Sheila Samson.



Leon Geffen, Maureen Sachar, Ruth Geffen, Bernard Osrin, Maryanne Hoffman and Barbara Friedman.



Estelle Yach



Leon Geffen, Eric Samson and Harris Burman.



Lily Swersky, Philip Todres, Rabbi and Rebbetzin Abrahamson and Mike and Liz Staegemann.



Part of the delicious spread by in-house caterers, Geratec.

WESTERN PROVINCE JEWISH COMMUNAL PRIORITIES AND PLANNING BOARD

Notice is hereby given that all Jewish organisations in the Western Cape contemplating Capital Expenditure in excess of R200,000 or major fundraising activities must give preliminary notice of such planned projects and activities. The same requirements apply to the sale of communal assets in excess of R250,000 and the sale of all immovable property.

All communications must be addressed to:

The Chairman or The Director, WP Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board, PO Box 4176, CAPE TOWN, 8000

The Chairman and Committee of the Western Province Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board draw the attention of the Jewish public to the necessity for proper financial planning so as to avoid excessive and inappropriate use of communal funding.

The Board points out that ALL Jewish organisations and institutions in Cape Town unanimously supported the establishment of the Priorities Board, which it viewed as being of major importance. The community was so insistent on this that they empowered the Board to take steps to prevent Jewish organisations from spending funds on alterations or of acquiring new buildings in excess of R200,000.

Later the sale of communal assets in excess of R250,000 and the sale of all immovable property was added. It was stressed that all such expenditure or planned disposal should be brought to this Priorities and Planning Board accompanied by the relevant information.

The Priorities and Planning Board was also required to monitor, regulate and control contemplated major fundraising, and relevant information in regard to such proposed activities must also be brought to the Board.

Whilst the Cape Jewish Chronicle can be used to publicise proposed fundraising and/or community functions, under no circumstances may it be used with wording that can be construed as directly soliciting funds from the community.

The Board was given the power, in the event of a transgression, to advertise through the general and Jewish press calling upon the Jewish public to refrain from supporting any unauthorised project.

All Jewish organisation are requested, in the interests of orderly communal funding, to co-operate with the Priorities and Planning Board, in terms of the aforementioned notice.

Cape Town's Melton school receives international award of excellence



On Tuesday 18th January in Israel, the Florence Melton International Award was presented to the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School of Cape Town for outstanding achievement and exemplary practice. Viv Anstey was also presented with an award for recognition of her achievement as director.

Yonatan Mirvis (International Director), Sidney Shapiro (Telfed), Viv Anstey (Director, Cape Town), Lauren Snitcher (Recruitment, Cape Town) and Judy Kupchan (Melton Head Office, North America).

Yonatan Mirvis (International Director) stated: "In receiving the 2011 Florence Melton Award, Cape Town's Melton has established itself as a global centre of excellence. Viv Anstey's achievements now serve as a benchmark for our other Melton directors in The United States, Canada, the UK and Australia."

Cape Town's success lies in two areas, said Viv Anstey at the award ceremony: "Firstly, the exceptional quality and dedication of the Melton faculty, including Jeremy Wanderer, Esther Maizels, Ronnie Gotkin, Yoni Hoffman Wanderer, Aviva Laskov and now Bryan Opert, who were handpicked for the courses they teach; and secondly, the depth and breadth of Melton's academic curriculum. It has made an important mark on Jewish learning in

the city."

Sidney Shapiro of Telfed was invited to be part of the evening, and was impressed by what Melton has brought to Cape Town. After sharing the Cape Town context with the directors and staff, he pledged Telfed's commitment to working more closely with Melton in the future, and bridging Israel and Cape Town through education.

The ceremony took place during the international director's annual conference in Israel, when 40 directors, guided by the skilled professional teams from Israel and America, learned together and from each other, toured together and experienced the highlights of Israel through an educational prism. Lauren Snitcher joined the conference, enthusiastic about the opportunity it offered her to grow and learn with like-minded colleagues.

For more info contact Viv: 082 8095414 Website: www.fmams.org.il

Bringing Israeli dancing to South Africa



Marcello

We are very excited to host the first ever Israeli Dance Seminar in Africa, to be held in Cape Town on Purim.

Join us for an unforgettable workshop with the vibrant and talented Marcello Marianoff. We are bringing him from Argentina especially for this event, where he will teach basic circle dances suitable for family celebrations, the latest Israeli folk dance and more!

While we are a non-profit organisation, we are responsible for Marcello's costs and honorarium. We are therefore obliged to charge, but hope to keep this low so that more people may attend. We hope to see you there!

19 March Welgemoed Primary School, Bellville 9am - 6pm

20 March Herzlia High School, Cape Town 9.30am - late

Refreshments will be on sale on both days.

If you are interested email your name and address to machol.ct@gmail.com

Weekly Israeli dance sessions are held at Herzlia Middle School on Thursdays from 7pm to 9pm. All are welcome. Israeli dancing has been ongoing for more than 20 years in Cape Town, and we have a dedicated core group of dancers. We ask R10 to cover refreshments, and appreciate any assistance in promoting and sustaining our dancing - it is our passion!

Contact: norengoetz@gmail.com, Celia: 082 414 7379 or Tillie on 084 5035552

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Family Announcements

BIRTH — THANK YOU

JANNA ELLA DAITSH

Many thanks for the warm wishes and gifts on the occasion of the birth of our precious daughter and sister, Janna Ella.

Ian, Kim and Jared

GABRIELLA RACHEL JAFF

Thank you to all our family, friends and various organisations for your warm wishes received on the birth of our precious granddaughter and great-granddaughter.

Mike and Laura Radomsky
Cecil and Natalie Sussman

ENGAGEMENT

HARARI AND SNITCHER

The engagement is announced between Alon, son of Tsippi and Chanaan and Tessa, daughter of Roni and late Lewis. Email: tesatura@gmail.com

CONDOLENCE — THANK YOU

KENNETH BEREZOWSKI

We, the family of our beloved Kenneth, thank each and every one of you for all the kindness love and support extended to us during the time of his passing. His loss has been devastating, and the caring of so many has been a wonderful source of comfort to us all.

Our husband, father and grandfather, the most superb human being, we will love and miss you forever.

Melanie, Nina, Gabriella, Terez, Craig, Sienna and Zachary

RACHEL HASSON

We extend sincere appreciation to family and friends for the comfort, care and support on the passing of our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

She will be lovingly remembered.

Ike and Mattie Hasson
Abbi, Reviva and Yitzhak Hasson
Melanie, Dan and Ma'ayan Saltzman

CONDOLENCE — THANK YOU

BARBARA GREENWALL

We wish to thank Glendale and Astra Centre for the many years of kindness and care shown to Barbara. To Rabbis Feldman and Liebenberg for their support and the many friends and family members for messages of condolence which consoled us greatly during the sad loss of our beloved sister and aunt.

Your kind thoughts are very much appreciated.

Pat Myers and family

CELIA LOUIS

To each and every one of you who honoured Celia by attending her funeral, visiting, calling, writing and emailing, a million thanks.

Your support at her very sudden passing has been invaluable and a source of comfort to us all.

Charlene and Errol Coosner, Ian and Lorraine Rosenberg, Zea Lewis and all their families.

LOUIS MEYERSON

We would like to thank our family, friends and communal organisations for their support, kindness, messages of sympathy and visits on the passing of our beloved husband, father and grandfather.

Queenie, Gwen, Lynne, Michael and Denise and their families.

MICHAEL ZETLER

Our heartfelt thanks to our family and friends for their love and support on the passing of our beloved husband, father and grandfather, Michael, whose memory will be cherished forever.

Greta, Lara, Julian, Leon, Les and Barry, and family.

To place a family announcement
phone Tessa 021 464-6736
(mornings)



Farewell and thank you to Estelle Segal

Estelle Segal, long time secretary of BZA WIZO, retired in January after 34 years of devoted, conscientious and loyal service to our organisation.

Estelle made many friends over the years that she worked for BZA WIZO, and members considered her part of the BZA WIZO 'family.'

Estelle is leaving South Africa to enjoy the company and caring

attention of her daughters and grandchildren in Brisbane, Australia.

We know that she will leave a gap in our lives — she touched us all with her warmth and sincerity.



Estelle Segal



Bidding farewell to Marlene Abitz

The decoupage group at Astra Jewish Sheltered Employment has been meeting every week for the past 10 years, where they are taught decoupage skills by volunteers

Marlene Abitz and Safra Katz.



Standing: Safra Katz and Marlene Abitz. Decoupage group: Anne, Lydia, Samantha, David, Hayley, Bradley and Daniel.

Marlene bade farewell to the group at the end of January.

She and her husband, Asher, will be emigrating to join their children and grandchildren in Sydney, Australia.

Astra Centre is most

grateful to Marlene for her commitment, the wonderful love and care that she has shown to the workers, and for the beautiful decoupage products that she has helped them to produce.

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better... It's not."
Dr. Seuss

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Continued from page 1

A tribute to Dave Meyerowitz

Dave's years of communal service started at the age of 16, when he became the minuting secretary of the Salt River and Woodstock Young Judeans.

He later served as secretary of the local branch of the Jewish National Fund and in 1938 as chair of the Zionist Youth Council, serving for four years.

Dave joined the Western Province Zionist Council when it was formed in 1944. He took over from the venerable Jacob Gitlin as secretary of the Dorshei Zion when Gitlin became chairman of the WPZC, and he wrote regular editorials for the then Cape Jewish Chronicle, a weekly newspaper published under the auspices of the Dorshei Zion.

Dave served with great distinction as chairman of the WPZC for eight years, during the important and challenging period of 1966 to 1974.

He also served as a vice-chairman of SAJBOD (Cape Council) for 13 years. In addition, he was a valued trustee and committee member of the Allocations Committee of the United Jewish Campaign.

A communal colleague of many years, Gerald Kleinman said, "Dave was a great community leader. His sage advice and legal counsel were always freely available to the community."

A much loved patriarch to his immediate and extended family encompassing four generations, Dr. Dave Meyerowitz is survived by his daughters Vivienne and Sandra who live in Israel, twelve grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. A legend in his lifetime, he will be long remembered and sadly missed.



Nechama

9 Gorge Road, Highlands Estate Tel: 021 465-9390 Fax: 021 465-9391 Email: nechama@absamail.co.za

The gabbai and the sixth aliyah

The gabbai's eyes moved rapidly across the familiar faces of the men packed into shul on a sunny Shabbos morning. Shloime Kaufman, the gabbai, had been going through this routine for the past twenty years - looking out over the congregation and at his many friends and neighbours, a world of warm-hearted people with whom he shared his life.

Choosing a few each week for Caliyot was a job that came with its difficulties, but it also gave him a weekly opportunity to count his blessings. This secure, contented world in which he found himself was all the more precious because, by any law of logic or probability, it should never have come into existence.

The world Shloime had known as a child and young man in Poland had been erased. It had collapsed all around him, snuffing out the lives of his loved ones. At the time, he had thought that surely the few survivors who managed to emerge from the rubble alive would be left with nothing — no yeshivot, no shuls, no great sages to guide them.

And yet, here he was, the grandfather of a beautiful, Torah-observant family, the gabbai of a thriving shul, surrounded by friends and family. Better to relish the miracle of the present than think about the searing pain of the past.

Shloime scanned the rows of men as the Torah was removed from the ark. His eyes rested on an unfamiliar face, a man about his own age with a short grey beard. He hadn't seen him in shul

before and surmised that he must be a guest. But there was something very familiar about this face.

Suddenly, the man's features and expression jarred loose a powerful flash of recognition in Shloime's mind. It was Menachem Reiner, his closest childhood friend. It was Menachem, the boy with whom he had grown up in their small Polish shtetl, with whom he had attended yeshiva in Bialystock. It was Menachem, the young man to whom he had clung, and who had clung to him, as they began their cattle-car journey into the fearsome blackness of Auschwitz. They had promised each other to stick together; they had given each other courage and hope. Bearing the numbers the Nazis had tattooed on their arms, they had found in one another the strength to hold onto their humanity and resist becoming only numbers. They had vowed to help each other survive, both in body and soul.

And they did survive, Baruch Hashem. But when the war ended, each went his own way, eager to begin anew. For sanity's sake, they each tucked the past away into a deep, locked box that would be opened only on rare occasions. Menachem had settled in Israel, and Shloime Kaufman had obtained a visa for America.

Consumed with creating a future and healing the wounds of the past, they had lost touch with each other. That was 42 years ago. Now, with unbelieving eyes and trembling hands, Shloime beheld the unmistakable face of his friend once again. He made a decision: Menachem Reiner would get the sixth aliyah.

Number 57200148

As the Torah reading began, the gabbai felt as if his heart could not be contained in his chest. He wanted to leap across the rows of men and fall upon his friend in a mighty embrace. "This must be how Yosef felt when he finally saw his brother Binyamin," he thought to himself. "All these years!"

Nevertheless, he clamped a tight lid on his emotions and performed his duty, calling up each aliyah with the traditional chant of "Ya'amod" followed by the honouree's Hebrew name. By the fifth aliyah, however, beads of sweat were sparkling on his forehead and tears were welling up in his eyes. He prayed that when the time came to call up number six, his voice would be able to break free of his tight throat.

There was no need to ask Menachem

his Hebrew name because he could never forget Menachem ben Yehoshua. For the first time, he began to wonder how Menachem would react when they came face to face.

It was time to call him up, but Shloime could not open his mouth. There were no words fit for this moment. All the suffering locked away in that figurative box was now out in the open, laid before his eyes, and it was too much to bear.

The congregation began murmuring and looking toward Shloime, fearing that the pale, trembling man was becoming ill. A deep cry rose up from the gabbai, a cry to Hashem that contained in its broken sound all of His children's cries of anguish. Shloime turned in the direction of his friend and at last found his voice. "Ya'amod, 57200148!" he called.

The baffled men in the shul did not understand what had happened. What was this number? What had become of Shloime? But in the back of the room, one man understood completely. The number was Menachem's number, tattooed on his arm as a lifetime reminder of one of the darkest periods of Jewish history, the epic tragedy of his people which he had witnessed with his own eyes.

The entire shul sat in stony silence as Menachem moved slowly toward the bimah. Finally, as they saw him approaching his long-lost friend, they understood the scene that was unfolding in front of them. Menachem needed no introduction. With tears coursing down his face, he cried out, "Shloime! Shloime! Is it really you?"

"Yes, Menachem, it's really me!" Shloime answered, embracing his friend. They wept into each other's shoulders, rocking gently. "Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay," Mr. Kaufman breathed. Words were powerless to carry his chaotic emotions.

The entire shul sat spellbound, witnessing a moment that could have melted a heart made of iron. As these two men stood together, living witnesses to the Jewish people's miraculous survival; it seemed that the heavens had opened to declare, through them, that Hashem would never forsake His people. Am Yisrael Chai! The Jewish nation is alive, and Torah has been rebuilt in the world!

The Holocaust survivors who settled around the world planted the seeds, and it is up to us to reap the fruits of their labour and continue their legacy.



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Chevruta – Perfect pairing for the greatest learning!

by Rabbi Eitan Bendavid, Rosh Yeshiva



At the Yeshiva of Cape Town, we pride ourselves on the unique one-on-one learning opportunities that we provide to the entire Cape Town community. We believe it is incumbent upon every Jew to constantly be engaged in the experience of studying Torah. Having a chevruta is the best way to do that. Coming from a yeshiva background, I realise that not everyone knows what it means to study with a chevruta. On further reflection I have penned the following piece to provide you with a peek into our world....

Chevruta is not a modern term, but an ancient Aramaic one. The technical definition of a chevruta is a study partner, but those who have studied in a chevruta setting know that 'study partner' hardly captures the full meaning of the term. The Aramaic term stems from the Hebrew word *chaver* – which means friend. First and foremost, a chevruta is a friend.

What does one actually study with a chevruta, and why? Two people engaged in a chevruta might study Jewish religious texts together in order to fulfill their religious obligation of *Talmud Torah* – Torah study. Others might do it for intellectual stimulation or mere pleasure. Many chevrotot study the Talmud, the primary text in Jewish law, in order to fulfill this obligation. The Talmud is a collection of thousands of fiery debates between rabbis on every topic of Jewish law. Studying Talmud is especially challenging because of

the linguistic barrier, the Aramaic, the terse writing style and the conceptual nature of the discussions. Studying with a partner facilitates Talmudic study by allowing people to combine their knowledge and efforts to navigate the convoluted disputes. The authors of the Talmud sought to preserve the conversational format of the legal discussions. The chevruta structure, which encourages discussion of its own, reconstructs the Talmudic discourses in the most natural way.

The importance of chevruta study rests on two assumptions. The first is that anyone engaged in the study of Torah not only has an obligation to study, but to share their Torah knowledge with others; the Talmud frowns upon those who selfishly keep their insights to themselves. The second assumption is that fiery debate and the exchange of ideas are the most effective way to sharpen our understanding of the law. A good chevruta does not blindly accept his partner's interpretation of the material, but rather challenges and questions him until they have both reached a comprehensive understanding of the content.

Like the New York stock exchange

It is hard to appreciate what a chevruta is without actually seeing one. The ideal setting to witness a chevruta 'in action' is in a study hall – a *beit midrash*. In contrast to university libraries, *batei midrashot* are anything but quiet places to study. In a crowded *beit midrash*, the

noise level can get so loud that one might not be able to hear his chevruta from across the table! Why is this so? The reason is very simple. Studying with a chevruta is both a dynamic and stimulating experience. Engrossed study partners get excited

over the material they study; some even begin to read the text in singsong and use hand motions as they refute their chevruta's reasoning. The constant back-and-forth exchange of information is an exhilarating experience to watch and especially to experience. By debating what the Talmud says so passionately, these chevrotot resuscitate the age-old Talmudic debates. The atmosphere in a lively *beit midrash* more closely resembling the floor of the New York stock exchange than it does a library!

No two pairs of chevrotot are the same. Despite similar methods of study, interpersonal dynamics make every chevruta unique. Nonetheless, there are certain chevruta 'types' that can be found in every *beit midrash*. A quick tour of any *beit midrash* substantiates this claim. In one corner, one might find a pair that constantly yell and interrupt each other. For combatant and insensitive chevrotas such as these, discussions often rapidly disintegrate into petty quarreling. If things continue this way, they might need to 'break up,' 'move on' or 'search' for new study partners. In another corner, one might find a pair who studies so quietly that they whisper as if they are sharing secrets. In fact, that might actually be the case. These people are the *batlanim* – the bums! Every chevruta enjoys taking a break from intense study to talk about life, but these people do little else. They will do anything to avoid actually studying. If one wants to find out the score in the cricket game or hear the latest news, these are the guys to which to turn. Continuing the tour, one might spot a pair studying diligently, oblivious to all the diversions surrounding them. They carefully choose their words and listen to their chevrotot patiently but critically. These chevrotot are probably



Chevruta learning at the recent Tu'BSHvat Seder.

matmidim. A *matmid* is someone who refuses to waste his precious study time. *Matmidim* compensate for all the *batlanim's* wasted time and maintain the integrity and dignity of this lofty pursuit.

On the battlefield

A teacher of mine once compared a chevruta pair to two soldiers hiding in a fox-hole in a battle scene. When one soldier sees the enemy attacking, he does not politely suggest to his friend, "John, I could be wrong but it may be in your best interests to consider ducking at the present moment, it appears that a bomb is going to explode right near your head." Rather, he screams, "John, duck! Now!" Due to the circumstances that they are in, they must communicate in a very straightforward way. The same is often the case with chevrotot. The method of study demands a certain openness and candor between the participants. In addition, the Talmudic material often provokes broader discussions about life. Consequently, chevrotot often develop into long-lasting friendships as they grow intellectually and spiritually together.

The idea of a chevruta is a testament to the fact that the two spheres of our existence – the 'intellectual' and 'the social' are not in opposition to one another, but intimately connected. A chevruta bridges together these two seemingly disparate worlds.

I look forward to seeing you and welcoming you to a chevruta!

For those interested in chevruta study, our learning starts at the following times:

Mon: Milnerton Shul, 7pm
Tues: Sephardic Shul, 6pm
Wed: Beit Midrash Morasha, 5.30pm
Thurs: Claremont-Wynberg Shul, 7pm



The Kaplan Centre offers several undergraduate and post-graduate awards. The purpose of these awards is to assist and encourage students in the field of Jewish Studies as well as those specializing in fields related to Jewish communal service. Awards will only be given to applicants who register at UCT.

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HERZLIA IN FOCUS

Constantia is blossoming



Mrs Jos Horwitz, the new principal, welcomes the new Grade 1s and their parents at their inauguration ceremony.

Trees are planted to celebrate Grade 1



Standing proudly with the newly planted trees, Roy Cohen (gr 6), with his buddy, Ryan Isserow (gr 1) and his family – parents Glen and Sharna and sister Jenna (gr 4).

The Grade 6 children helped their new Grade 1 buddies to plant olive trees, to celebrate the first day of primary school.

Pre-Primaries bubbling with excitement

Great excitement bubbled over at all five Herzlia preschool campuses, as our children returned to school. They were joined by many new playschool toddlers and preschoolers who were venturing to school for the first time – holding tightly onto their parents! Our competent and caring teachers and assistants eagerly welcomed and comforted any anxious newcomers.



At the Sarah Bloch Day Care Centre Jake Epstein, Jett Verboom, Joseph Epstein, Morris Hochstenback and Ruby Chaskalson enjoy waterplay.

2011 sees the largest intake ever at Alon-Ashel, as our community continues to grow. We now have over 200 children, ranging from 18 months to 6 years old. Extensive renovations were undertaken to make

sure that our youngest children have the outdoor space they need to play, explore and discover, and a classroom was converted to make way for a colourful and bright playgroup room.

Weizmann welcomes back alumni and their grade 1s



Back Row – Lisa Markovitz with Jamie; Tanya Golan with Katya; Gary and Martine Vogelmann with Ben; Mandy Donninger with Gabriella; Samatha Kommel with Hannah; Asher and Lauren Grevler with Emily; Lindy Sack with Ethan; Herman Varkel with Talia; Karen Nathan with Sam; Janice Segal with Jake.

Middle Row – Philip Abrahamson with Sophia; Aubrey and Kerry Miller with Ella.
Front Row – Vanessa Gawronsky with Samuel; Raene Levitan with Jacob; Warren and Janine Fleischman with Lilla; Michele Koton with Kayla; Alex Fanaroff with Ella; Hylton Arelisky; Avron Sirin with Tessa.

Highlands Primary Grade 1 orientation day

Sixty three grade 1s came together for orientation day, where they met their teachers and got to know the layout of the school.



Batya Berk receives her message book and pencil case from Ms Farrow (Head of Foundation Phase) and Mr. Gotkin at the orientation.

First day of work in grade 1

What an exciting start to the year for our new 2011 grade 1s. There are three classes, who have all settled in happily. With two new grade 1 teachers, Miss Chiat and Mrs. Minnaar, and the experience of Mrs. Bailey-Geater, we look forward to an exciting year ahead.



Settling down to their first day of grade 1 are Aaron Schwartz, Holly Cadenhead, Adi Ayache, Adam Selikowitz and Jared Daitsh.

High School

7th in South Africa



Sarah receiving her award.

Approximately six thousand candidates sat the National Microsoft Office Computer Olympiad. At the finals held recently, Sarah Edelberg (gr 12) was placed 7th in South Africa.

Herzlian to present at international conference

Max Besser (gr 11) has been accepted to give a presentation to the South African Priorities in Prenatal Care Conference in Limpopo.

In grade 10, Max presented his science project: *Breast is Best – a study of how long flash heated breast milk stays safe to drink at room temperature* – at the Herzlia Science Expo. He was chosen to exhibit at the Provincial Science Expo, where he was awarded a silver medal, but he was not able to exhibit at the Nationals. He will have the opportunity to present his work to the top obstetric and paediatric professors in South Africa.

2011 Middle School Student Council – a powerful team!

The new Middle School Student Council recently went on a leadership training camp, which aimed to bond the group through various games and activities. The councillors participated in intensive skills workshops given by Mevrou Botes, Mr Cohen, Mrs Cook, Saul Kaplan, Mr Brorson, Dr Heath, Mrs Avis and JIPSY, to enable them to have a clear vision to lead the school and their portfolios. We look forward to an exciting year with the 2011 Student Council!

(Deputy Head); Emilia Bisogno (Secretary); Sholem Hack (Judaica); Shir Eshed (Zionism); Zena Kruss van der Heever (CAG); Kelsey Buchalter (Culture); Shannon Pincus (Environment); Ashley Fischoff (Kesharim); Kayla Koping (Media); Gary Kahn (Sport) and Aaron Burstein (Technical). Deputies: Matthew Osrin (Secretary); Alon Sackstein (Judaica); Romy Cohen (Zionism); Tarryn Sher (CAG); Mark Levitt (Culture); Daniel Blacher (Environment); Jessie Froman (Kesharim); Alison Raubenheimer (Media); Yael Melech (Sport); and Adam Zackon (Technical).

The 2011 Student Council: Ariella Barnett (Head); Micaela Lurie

Investing in mathematical opportunities

UHS are delighted to announce that not only is the school continuing to invest in the international award-winning online maths programme, *Mathletics* for our primary school pupils, but that we are now extending it to the Middle School as well.

Middle School pupils will be setting online homework activities for the children. Obviously children who do not have internet access at home will be given the opportunity to complete these tasks using school computers before school, at break or after school.

This means that every Herzlia child from Grade 1 to Grade 9 will have the privilege of enjoying Maths support or extension online programmes not only at school but also in the comfort of their own homes. Those children who need further extension will even be able to test their skills using Maths curricula from Singapore, the UK or Australia! We are very excited about this opportunity for all Herzlia pupils to improve their Maths results while having lots of fun online, competing against children both nationally and internationally.

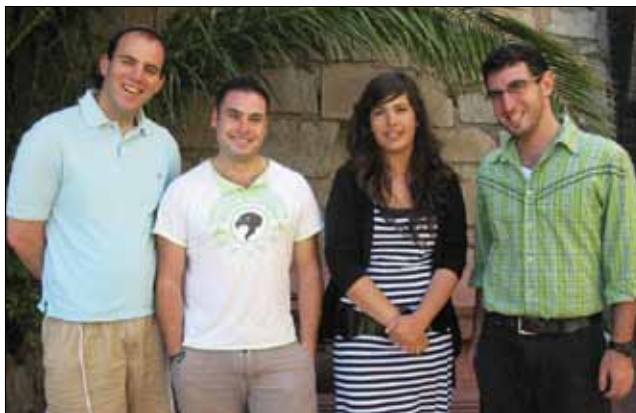
We will also continue with the wonderful *Living Maths/Lateral Thinking* programme in our pre and primary schools. The ever-popular and talented 'Mr S' will continue to 'edutain' our children in the Grade R - 3 classes with his exciting lessons. Please check out the website www.livingmaths.com for amazing educational and game-playing opportunities.

Teachers will ensure that the children also have opportunities to use *Mathletics* at school, and those who teach the Intermediate Phase and

Mr Mark Helfrich is the UHS Curriculum Advisor. He invites comments on anything educational you would like to share, query or suggest. This is an exciting UHS initiative, and the Curriculum Advisor hopes to institute many new programmes into the academic calendar.

JIPSY 2011 – bridging the gap

We live in a world today where there is a big gap between educators and learners. It is often difficult for parents and educators to relate to learners, but we at JIPSY strive to bridge that gap by being older role models to the pupils.



Greg Gelb, Justin Benatar, Samantha Benatar and Daniel Winer.

JIPSY will aim to reach their objectives by having a strong professional department, by strengthening pupils' Jewish identity through positive experiences, and by instilling them with a love for Israel.

This year we have an energetic team consisting of Daniel Winer

(head), Justin Benatar, Greg Gelb and Samantha Benatar. We are planning a year of fun, education and Zionism, and we hope to be present at all the schools' campuses in order to get maximum exposure to every Herzlia pupil in the system. We look forward to a fun-filled busy 2011!

Herzlia matric results: a reflection

I am always grateful to have an opportunity to comment on the matric results once the excitement has died down and I have had time to reflect.

As always, I am thrilled that at this inclusive school, where children with all manner of learning challenges are welcomed and their individual educational needs are catered for, we continue to maintain a pass rate of 100%. This would not be possible without all the role players, pupils, parents, teachers and dedicated professionals in the school's Learning Team working together to achieve a common goal. I am proud to say that at HERZLIA we have developed a

support system that is hard to beat.

There has certainly been more hype around matric results this year than any other, with articles appearing in the press long after the results had been released. This came about because this year the Western Cape Education Department responded to the concerns of teachers, instead of closing ranks and becoming defensive as they did in 2009 over the disastrous physical science results.

This year they acknowledged that in some subjects, notably history (thankfully, this did not affect HERZLIA'S history candidates), some markers lacked skills and a depth of knowledge. They have undertaken to avoid this happening again at the

end of 2011 – a most encouraging development which we will monitor carefully in the months ahead, when the call goes out for teachers to apply for these positions.

Incidentally, at Herzlia we had fifteen teachers involved in marking six of the matric subjects, with two being internal moderators and one being a chief marker. Regrettably, our pupils couldn't benefit from their experience and expertise.

Something that I have found particularly hurtful (and I have no doubt matriculants have, too) has been the repeated references to how easy matric has become. Perhaps it is true that it is easier merely to pass – to get the minimum number of

marks to achieve a senior certificate. However, I can assure you that it is not at all easy to qualify for a 'Pass – Bachelors' (university entrance), or to achieve the remarkable number of subject distinctions that the class of 2010 produced (238), or to be placed in the top twenty matriculants in the Western Cape, when the difference in aggregate between the pupil in place one and the pupil in place twenty is a mere 3%!

Our pupils and teachers worked extremely hard for these results. I salute them for all their efforts!

Marianne Marks
Principal
Herzlia High School



Jewish Community Services

Art and craft group ... colouring 'life-worlds'

Jewish Community Services' art and craft group was first established in March 2010, when Zia Adler, herself a ceramist and passionate craftsperson, envisioned a space for a creative outlet for the clients of Jewish Community Services.

Beginning with the simple flick of a paintbrush or the threading of a bead, the participant is almost magically transported into a new world. This is a world where a person who might otherwise be feeling isolated, alienated and alone develops a sense of belonging. Where people who may be feeling burdened with multiple stresses and challenges master a quietness of mind that facilitates a creative way of thinking extending beyond the realm of the class. A world where creative expression can assist participants to develop coping skills and search

for solutions to problems, which will contribute to a more meaningful life. It is a world where people who may be experiencing feelings of uselessness, worthlessness and disempowerment gain a sense of accomplishment through the mastery of a skill or the fresh, surprising and potent discovery of hidden or dormant talent and potential.

Classes are held weekly in the light and breezy environment of the newly renovated garage of one of Jewish Community Services' community cottages, which was converted specifically to become a space for the art and craft group.

The class is facilitated by Tania Milner, an accomplished and talented artist. Tania was educated at the Ruth Prowse School of Art, and completed a postgraduate course specialising in colour through the Foundation Art

School. She also attended the Art Summer School at Kenstate University in Ohio, which featured life drawing, paper-making and sculpture. Tania has also curated an exhibition of her own work at the Artscape.

The group is fortunate to have the services of another talented artist, Dion Futerman, who acts as a co-facilitator, locum facilitator and assistant coordinator.

A flexible environment allows for freedom of expression and to indulge in the art or craft of choice without constraints. The activities range from painting to drawing, fabric painting, beading and jewellery-making. In this context, the group has income-generating potential for members.

We have had the privilege of guest facilitators, including a paper-making workshop and calligraphy demonstration, further enriching and extending the creative palette of the participants. An exhibition of member's work has also been proposed.

The success of the project in 2010 could not have been realised without the generosity of our major donors, YAD, as well as the Sisterhood of Temple Israel and Rochelle Weinberg. However funds are much needed for 2011; for the transport of some members, facilitator costs and art and craft materials. Beads are in short supply and the group welcomes donations of any art or craft materials, particularly beads.

Perhaps you are able to volunteer your services as a guest facilitator in



The art and craft group in action

any art or craft form, to help coordinate a project, or you wish to get involved in developing income-generating potentials, or simply offer any exciting ideas?

The project invites the plethora of talented artists or craftspeople in the community to seize this opportunity to be part of an ethos of social responsibility and become involved. No contribution will be considered too small and will be deeply appreciated.

If you are a client of Jewish Community Services, the group welcomes new members.

Please contact the art/craft group coordinator Zia Adler at 021 4625520 if you are interested or able to contribute or assist in any way.

CJSA enjoy summer and soirees

The Cape Jewish Seniors Association commenced the year with an enjoyable soiree held at the home of Joy and Cyril Wilkin. Well known pianist, Derek Bernfield, on holiday from France, accompanied by vocalist Rene Osborn entertained the guests with renditions of beloved melodies.

The evening was perfect and the guests who attended thoroughly enjoyed the performance and the delicious snacks that were served. We are planning to host a number of soirees during the year.

The annual CJSA fish braai, a well-loved tradition in Sea Point, was recently hosted and attended by members. Fish cooked to perfection served with delicious salads were enjoyed by all who attended, while they sat outside enjoying the beautiful summer evening and fresh air. There will be many more occasions of enjoyment throughout the year.



At the soiree, hostess Joy Wilkin (centre) with Jean and Les Dibowitz.



Mary Borok, Freda Farkash, Hannah Abramsohn and guests at the braai.



Hilary Osrin and Sorrel Levy enjoying the fish braai.



Ena Becker at the annual CJSA fish braai.

Continued from page 1

YAD's new chairman

Rael brings with him his vibrant personality, astounding business acumen and passion for all that he undertakes.

YAD is fortunate and delighted to have Rael to inspire us, and knows that he brings with him decades of organisational know-how and experience, which will be invaluable to the YAD foundation and furthermore to the community.

We look forward to working with Rael as he applies these qualities to the business of community fundraising. B'Hatzlacha Rael!

We would also like to take this opportunity to bid a warm l'hitratot and

give a big vote of thanks to outgoing YAD chairman Robbie Lewenson, who has been at the helm of YAD for the past two years. Under Robbie's dedicated chairmanship, YAD continued to grow and expand, as he led from the front at all of YAD's volunteer-based fundraising telethons. Kol Hakavod! Robbie, we wish you only blessings and success in the future.

With a view to reaching new heights in 2011, both in terms of growing YAD's support base and achieving greater fundraising targets, we seek to make meeting the needs of beneficiaries a fun, rewarding and informative experience for all of our donors.

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Fish, family, friends and fun at Glendale

On Sunday, 6 February, the aroma of freshly braaied salmon attracted scores of people from all over the Peninsula and the Boland to the Glendale campus.

It was a perfect summer's day as old friends renewed acquaintances and new friends were made. Meeting under the massive bedouin tent around the pool, drinks table, popcorn machine and farm stall, they had gathered for

one purpose only – to support the Glendale annual fish braai (now in its ninth year), and in so doing filling the coffers of the Medical Assistance Fund.

Everyone enjoyed the delicious fish, salads, fruit and ice cream, after which guest of honour, Philip Krawitz, stressed the need for the continued support of Glendale. It is an institution that holds such a soft spot in so many hearts, and continues to meet the needs of the mentally challenged within

the Cape Town Jewish community.

Thereafter, auctioneer Joey Burke once again showed his expertise in making an auction a fun and exciting event, and in so doing raising much needed additional funds for the cause. The culmination of activities was the draw for two return tickets to London, which was won by Hazel Ginsburg.

The success of the day however, would not have been possible without the continued and magnificent

support of our major sponsors, Snoek Wholesalers and Shoprite Checkers, as well as the culmination of many weeks' work from the sub-committee of Julia Rabie, Selwyn Schiff, Bernard Zive, Selwyn Solomon, Larry Sherman and Mervyn Stein. Our grateful thanks are extended to them all. Thanks also go to all our donors, volunteer helpers, staff and all those who attended and participated in making this event a success.



Selwyn Schiff, Julia Rabie and Bernard Zive.



Glendale residents Dale and Gavin at the snoek braai grills.



Bernard Zive and a crew of volunteers ready to serve up.



Larry Sherman, Mervyn Stein, Daniel and Anthony Sherman.



Just delicious – visitors enjoying sumptuous salads



Glendale residents Joy, Dinah and Charles.



Residents Simon, Hylton and Hansie with gym instructor Luke.



Rabbi and Rebbetzin Altman and family.



Lyn Scheuer and Tammy.



Phillip Krawitz and guests.

photographer: Jenny Altschuler

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Riaan Theron and Laurian Sussman married in Thailand



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INJURIES, DRY NEEDLING

David Sheldon – art and inspiration

Cape Town artist David Sheldon's first solo exhibition, entitled *The Gift: an expression of gratitude*, is currently showing at the Avital Lang Artists Inc. Gallery in Mouille Point. David talks to the CJC about making it in the art world, how Judaism inspires him, and his perspective of living with HIV.

You exhibited your first collection of work at age 12. What inspired you at such a young age, and what did your paintings focus on at the time?

I began creating from a very early age. I remember digging up raw clay in the veld behind our home as a child, making ashtrays and using my mom's oven as a kiln. Everything inspired me to create. When I was 11, my entire diary of my visit to Israel with my parents was published in the school year book. My first exhibition at age 12 dealt with arachnophobia — one of my fears. The work was entitled "Spiders" and was done completely in pointillism. (Pointillism is a technique whereby the overall image is created by tiny dots).

What has been the inspiration for your art throughout your life?

I haven't always been an artist. I began my art career about five years ago. Before that, I studied voice training and focused on the performing arts. I also dabbled in the food and clothing industries as well as being a regular featured columnist for iAfrica. My art today is mostly inspired by modernism, texture, décor, contemporary trends and fashion. I take what I feel at the time and try to express it on a canvas.

What are some of the themes that you have explored in your art?

I have dealt with numerous themes and none are particularly related. My earlier work dealt a lot with anger. Now my pieces have become more about the celebration of life and love.



Awakening (900mm X 1150mm)



Femme Fatale (1200mm x 800mm)

her genre, making her work exciting and unpredictable.

What course of action would you recommend to young people who would like to make art into their career?

Believing in oneself and one's talent is the basis of all success. There is no place for insecurity in the art world. If you don't think your work is truly beautiful, no one else will either. Determination, passion, practice and originality are vital in becoming a recognised artist.

What are your thoughts on art in South Africa, and what challenges does it face?

Art in South Africa is of a very high standard. Other than Germany, South Africa is considered to be one of the best countries in the world to invest in art. Art generally stems from strife, pain, challenges and issues, and with its history of political conflict, South Africa certainly has had its fair share of turmoil. I would say the only challenge we face is the amount of artists there are in this country, where less than 10% of artists can actually live off their income.

You have lived with HIV for 20 years. What would you say to others who are living with HIV, and what is your



David Sheldon

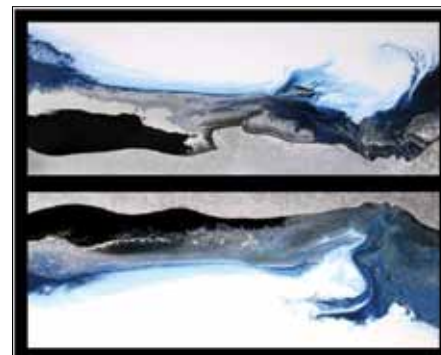
perspective of living with the virus?

Many people living with the virus feel they have been punished for being gay or some other silly reason. Healing cannot occur if we assume the role of victim. Our biggest lesson here is to learn to love ourselves unconditionally. If we can accept responsibility in our lives, we step out of the victim role. Support is imperative and keeping it a secret will literally kill us. HIV is no longer a death sentence. Medication and treatment of HIV/Aids has proved to be a miracle and is saving lives every day. Find a purpose that is important and fulfilling to you. A sense of worth does wonders for the soul. Above all, remember that fear is a useless emotion. The only thing worth fearing is fear itself.

David's exhibition at the Avital Lang Gallery, Two Ocean's House, Mouille Point runs until the end of February.



Crouching nude (1200mm x 900mm)



Oceans Apart

The magic and mystery of Larry Soffer

"Magic is the creation of our wildest dreams," says Larry Soffer about his chosen profession. As a magician and mentalist, Larry has performed to audiences that range from Prince Harry to the bar and batmitzvahs of our community. He talks to the CJC about bringing magic into our lives.

Growing up in Sea Point, Larry's dream of becoming a magician blossomed since he was five years old. His grandparents supported his ambitions by buying him his first magic set in Israel, while his parents accepted his unusual career and encouraged him to live his dream. Larry studied at the only College of Magic in the world, in Cape Town, and at the age of 16 turned his passion for magic into a thriving business by performing to a wide and extraordinary range of audiences.

"Believe to see, instead of seeing to believe," explains Larry as he discusses the principles that guide his work. By this he means that to access magic,

we need to be more like children, who don't question what they can't see, but rather simply believe it because they want to. "True belief is knowingness, so if you know that your ideas will become a reality, then they will."

Larry specialise in mentalism, "which is basically magic of the mind. I read minds, bend metal without touching it, make objects levitate and do pretty much anything that people think of being supernatural. My show also raises people's awareness of what they are capable of achieving."

Inspired by Judaism

"Through Judaism I have been inspired to find out more about myself, others and life," says Larry. "Judaism is a magical religion, filled with real stories of magic and triumph. This is truly magical, and is an inspiration for us to create great things in our own lives."

Larry has performed at a number of bar and batmitzvahs in Cape Town and around South Africa. He feels that his show is a great option for these

events, as it is "a great ice-breaker and conversation maker, not to mention a gift that your child will never forget."

"At bar or batmitzvahs I enjoy bringing magic and endless astonishment to the audience. The children really get to be pulled into a world that they have not experienced before!"

Princes and pop stars

Larry also performs at theatres, corporate dinners, prizegivings, casinos, golf days and product launches, where he draws people to a company's stand at trade shows.

But the humble magician has also had audiences that include the rich and famous. Princes, pop stars and presidents who have witnessed his work include Jay Z, Beyonce, Luke Perry, Prince Harry, the Prince of Saudi Arabia, Jeannie D, Natalie Becker, the South African rugby and cricket team and FW de Klerk, to name a few. "But please don't take the above as an indication of our prices, as we can accommodate almost anyone!" he

emphasises.

What are his plans for the future? Larry aims to get his own show on TV, add some "death-defying stunts" to his repertoire,

work to benefit charities, and expand his show to include tricks that "the world has never seen before - but I have to keep that a secret for now," concludes the ever-mysterious magic man.

Join The Magic of Larry Soffer Facebook page, visit www.larrysoffer.com, or book a show for a party or corporate event by calling Gabriela on 083 330 3326.



Larry Soffer demonstrating magic and mentalism



Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation

Consider This

by Rabbi Malcolm Matitiani



Purim and Human Rights?

As this Jewish year of 5771 is a leap year, Purim will be celebrated in March instead of February, and it so happens to fall on the day before Human Rights Day.

One can easily make a connection between Pesach and the issue of human rights — Pesach celebrates the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery, and one of the basic human rights is that of physical, intellectual and spiritual freedom. But can one connect the fun-filled, crazy festival of Purim to the serious issue of human rights?

In essence, Purim celebrates the successful prevention of a planned genocide of the Jews of the Persian Empire. The story of how Queen Esther thwarted Haman's scheme to exterminate all the Jews in Ahasuerus' kingdom is well known. The custom of concealing one's true identity on Purim, by wearing fancy dress in order to emulate Esther's tactic of hiding the fact that she was Jewish, is an intrinsic part of the festival. The drowning out of the name of the evil Haman during the reading of the Megillah symbolises the Jews' task to eradicate all ideas and actions present in the world that are contrary to the life-affirming principles of Torah.

A right to life

But a closer reading of the story reveals that the fundamental issue dealt with by the Book of Esther is the right of an individual or a community to live and worship as they see fit, provided of course that they do no harm or injury to others. The Megillah

informs us that the motive for Haman's intense hatred for the Jews is the fact that Mordechai refused to show him reverence by bowing down to him. Haman's ego was bruised and he resolved not only to deal with Mordechai, but to eradicate all members of his ethnic group. Haman did not limit his dislike of Mordechai to him alone, but extended his disdain to all who shared his ethnicity and religion. Haman's attitude was racist and bigoted, and it led him to fantasise about the murder of all Jews.

Once he resolved to implement his plan, Haman had no difficulty convincing his liege to permit him to carry it out. He played on King Ahasuerus' insecurities by making him believe that the Jews were a threat to his throne. Haman's pledge to pay ten thousand talents of silver into the royal treasury was an additional incentive for allowing the slaughter of the Jews. Thus personal enmity, illusions of grandeur, political insecurity and greed prompted Haman and Ahasuerus to deny the Jews the basic human right to life.

The denial to life need not take the drastic form of literally murdering an individual. Merely making someone's existence uncomfortable through our actions, words or gestures is a denial of the other's right to life. Blatant disregard for the safety and wellbeing of the other, and the unconscionable exploitation of another's generosity is a denial of the other's right to life. Lack of respect for another's property, possessions and personal space is a denial of the other's right to life.

Sober celebrations

One of the most tangible examples of the denial of the other's right to life in this more subtle manner is our behaviour on the roads. It is deplorable how many South African drivers flagrantly flout all the laws and rules of the road. Purposeful speeding is only one such example. I am astounded at how often motorists drive through

red traffic lights and am surprised that I have yet to witness an accident, let alone a fatal one. It is incomprehensible that people would disregard the safety of their fellow citizens

simply because they are too impatient to stop at a red light, or because they don't want to use up their break fluid by stopping.

The Talmud quotes Shemuel, who taught the dictum: *Dina D'Malchuta Dina*, "the law of the kingdom is the law". The law of the state is binding on all Jews, as long as it does not contradict the life-affirming values of *halakhah*. The laws of the road certainly do conform to Torah values. Indeed, they are legislated with the sole aim of preserving and safeguarding the lives and well-being of all road users. So, while we are instructed by the sages to celebrate Purim with frivolity and a drink or three so that we cannot distinguish between *Arur Haman* and *Baruch Mordechai*, "Cursed be Haman" and "Blessed be Mordechai"; let us be responsible and refrain from driving while under the influence. Let us remind ourselves amidst the fancy dress, shouting, eating and drinking that the festival of Purim is more than a mardi gras — it is a festival which warns us of the dire consequences of denying the other the fundamental human right of life.

"Purim is more than a mardi gras — it warns us of the dire consequences of denying the other the fundamental human right of life."

B'Sha'ot Tovot ...



Gabriel Chames
barmitzvah 19 March

Exciting events in March

Shabbat under the skies 11 March

Come and join Rabbi Greg and friends for our awesome interactive and musical Shabbat evening service, followed by a delicious meal.

Welcome the Shabbat bride under the beautiful Cape Town skies from 6:15pm.

Contact Eric Beswick at 021 762 1745 or executive-director@templeisrael.co.za for more info.

Purim - 20 March 2011

Bring the whole family to Temple Israel Wynberg from 10am to 1pm for our annual Purim Megillah reading and carnival.

Fun for the whole family

With food, a jumping castle, face painting, games for everyone, tea, hot dogs and hamentashen...

Food and games tickets will be on sale. Dress up and come along!



Purim 2010:
Above: Rabbi Greg and Rabbi Malcolm lead the Megillah Reading.



Right: Daniel Rossmeis, Justin Marks, Jason Fine and Gabriel Chames waiting for their games tickets.

Family Shabbat

Here is a Shabbat service especially designed for you and your family.

With interactive davening, Torah stories and an 'Ask the Rabbi' shiur, this is truly a service for everyone. Led by Rabbi Greg and friends, this service has taken the Temple Israel community by storm — so come join us and see what all the fuss is about!

When: Saturday 26 March
9am: 'Ask the Rabbi'
10am: Family service followed by a brocha
Where: Temple Israel Green Point

Living up to the vision of Israel's founding fathers

by Tali Barnett

"For more than 60 years, Israel has functioned as a democracy in a state of siege. Consequently, Israel's civil and human rights issues are omnipresent and difficult to resolve," states the website of the New Israel Fund. The CJC takes a look at the work this organisation is doing to ensure that Israel lives up to its Declaration of Independence.

While it is the challenges of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that dominate our discourse about the country, Israel's internal issues are equally urgent and important for us to discuss. All citizens of Israel are entitled to justice and human rights, and yet a variety of factors continue to divide and suppress certain sectors of society. Whether it is Reform Judaism, the poor, Ethiopian Jews, women, Israeli Arabs, Bedouins or other members of Israel's multi-faceted human map, these groups have sometimes been sidelined by the government or other communities within the country.

The New Israel Fund (NIF), which was established in 1979, focuses on these challenges of social and economic justice, civil and human rights issues, religious pluralism and more. It works to strengthen Israel's democracy, and has led the development of the country's vibrant civil society by seeding and supporting hundreds of national and grassroots organisations.

"It is an expression of those who want to see Israel as a pluralist, democratic state, as stated in the Declaration of Independence, which I see as the basic credo of the state of Israel," says Eliezer Yaari, former director of the NIF, who was recently in South Africa. "It exists to help the unheard voices in Israeli society participate in the public discourse that decides their future."

Achievements and challenges

Eliezer explains that Israel has come a very long way in its integration and investment of minority groups over the last decades. The status of women has improved dramatically, and investment in the Israeli Arab communities has increased. However, despite these gains, Israel's democracy and pluralism remain fragile.

He adds that a crucial challenge facing Israel is the space between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. "The social and economic gap between the upper and lower echelons in Israel is the second highest in world. This is undermining our future."

Approaching Israel's politics, Eliezer feels that "we are living in a miracle." He explains that "over the last 20 years we've probably had seven or eight administrations, three or four wars, one prime minister assassinated, and absorbed 1.5 million immigrants... yet we are a vibrant, democratic society, doing very well economically, innovative, interesting, exciting – and I think this is a miracle."

The effects of the occupation

However, he adds that all this is threatened by not achieving peace with the Palestinians, and that the occupation is eroding Israeli society from within. "The challenges of resolving the situation between the Israelis and Palestinians are hovering over everything. The fact that we are a just society, a society of refugees, a society that has struggled for survival, who occupy another people that do not enjoy the basic freedoms that we enjoy, is destructive – not only to them,

but to us. It is constantly eroding the social fabric, the legal fabric and the moral fabric of Israeli society. I think the challenge of resolving it is the most important one."

Meanwhile the NIF says that "since the beginning of 2010, we have witnessed a marked political and cultural shift in Israel, which threatens the democratic and egalitarian values which the NIF has worked to strengthen in Israeli society during the past 31 years." According to the NIF, these include "growing attempts to silence

internal critique and diversity of opinion, as evidenced by increased interrogations and arrests of peaceful human rights activists; an onslaught of

anti-democratic bills up for discussion in the Knesset; censoring of academic debate, and a repressive atmosphere of intolerance towards minorities and voices of dissent, making the role of the NIF crucial at this moment."

The NIF aims to combat this and continue to defend democracy through its work and funding. Meanwhile, its recent achievements attest to its assistance in all aspects of Israeli society. For example, in the recent Carmel fire, the NIF organized emergency grants, mapped long-term recovery needs, coordinated with environmental groups, and worked to ensure equal allocation of resources for all victims of the fire, including Jews, Arabs, and Druze.

Other recent achievements include a petition that led to the High Court of Justice ordering location-based tax breaks to be discontinued, as



Ethiopian Israeli children play soccer at the Mevaseret Absorption Centre. Photo: Vadim Lavrusik

they "discriminate against Israeli-Arab towns and villages"; ensuring affordable housing for Israelis with limited finances; and assisting Ethiopian immigrants whose children were expelled from an Orthodox Jewish pre-school because there were too many Ethiopians enrolled.

"They don't come from nowhere"

Meanwhile, Eliezer says that he "was very moved by the South African Jewish community" on his recent visit. "I first I went to Habonim camp, and saw almost 1000 kids there... they were beautiful, smart, modest, educated, passionate – it was tremendously moving for me. And they're not coming from nowhere... they're the fruits of two or three generations of very caring Jewish education and community life."

Eliezer concludes by saying that he hopes the South African Jewish community "will participate in the discourse about the future of the state of Israel – about our identity, education, our connection and our legacy." Indeed, the community has a role to play and a voice to be heard in the continued evolution of Israel.

"It exists to help the unheard voices in Israeli society participate in the discourse that decides their future."

Reflections on Limmud UK's 30th annual conference

By Rowan Polovin and Michele Stein, Limmud Cape Town Committee members



A delegation of six people represented Limmud South Africa at Limmud UK in December, joining over 2000 delegates from around the world to celebrate Jewish learning in its widest sense, which this year reached its 30 year mark.

Limmud Cape Town committee members Michele Stein and Rowan Polovin got to experience this first hand.

Rowan was blown away: "Limmud Conference UK 2010 was an extraordinary 'Jewboree' of intellectual and social celebration; an event that blended intellectual enquiry, debate and introspection with sociability, music, performance, comedy and art. The atmosphere of thousands of diverse Jews coming together, from teens to grandparents, was electrifying and inspiring."

Rowan's highlights included:

- 'Cafe Dilemma': Participants 'ordered' various controversial issues about Israeli national culture, and debated while digesting the material and ordered seconds.
- 'The Story Of Hebrew': A tour through Hebrew's unique story and the extraordinary genius and tenacity

of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda to revive the ancient holy language.

- Robby Berman on Halachic organ donation.
- Nazi looted art: Villains, victims and claimants of thousands of works by Old Masters and modern artists.
- Clive Lawton orating on unresolvable problems of Jewish identity.
- Fighting the delegitimisation campaign against Israel; particularly Miri Eisin's brilliant lecture.
- The greatest Jewish movie of all time: A hilarious and exciting debate between 'Zohan' and 'A Serious Man'.
- Avner Cohen on the remarkable and secret story of Israel's nuclear history and development.

"It was just amazing to be around Jews from all over the world with a common purpose," says Michele Stein. "There were participants from Israel Canada, America, Germany, Sweden, Hungary, Holland, Brazil and Argentina."

"This annual December pilgrimage for Limmudniks sets it apart from any other conference. It was quite an experience, with us all arriving at the beautiful Warwick university campus with magnificent old buildings, surrounded by a huge blanket of snow – it was just

a perfect postcard picture!

"For some, our first at Limmud UK, the Shabbat programme and its choices on offer served to ease us into what promised to be a real blast, which was to follow on Sunday. Havdallah took place outside, and after the service we sang and danced in the snow and lit sparklers – it was freezing, but such an amazing experience that you immediately felt warmed by the feeling of goodwill and oneness of the crowd."

"Limmud UK was fantastic and well organised, and the programme was extremely well put together. Pulled off by hundreds of volunteers, the atmosphere was friendly and helpful. I loved the variety of session topics, from politics to religion, music to crafts to entertainment, and the debates

which ranged from serious to very funny. The mix of presenters from the whole spectrum of Jewish life (left, right middle, religious, secular) is what really appeals to me. The session titles were very tantalising, making selection of sessions extremely difficult. The choices for each time slot went from 8 over Shabbat to 20 for the rest of the week, so they were a minefield to navigate, and sometimes I just felt torn into a million pieces.

"We also met and learned with other international Limmudniks, so that we could take home skills. As the week ended, I was sad to leave all my new friends and this wonderful atmosphere of learning and sharing together but happy to be going home to my family," concludes Michele.

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Never been to Limmud CT or craving more?

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Hold the date: Limmud CT residential weekend at the Protea Hotel TechnoPark, Stellenbosch, Friday 26th – Sunday 28th August.

Watch the press for more details Visit www.limmud.org.za.

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Hans Fallada: *Alone in Berlin*. Staggeringly written in 24 days and first published in German in 1947, *Alone in Berlin* is without doubt a modern classic. Inspired by the real-life activities of Elsie and Otto Hampel, the book relates the plight of two decent, hard working Germans, who, on hearing of the death of their only son on the front line, begin a small scale campaign of sending anonymous postcards throughout Berlin, attacking Hitler and the Nazi regime.

Dag Henrichsen et al (Eds): *Israel Goldblatt - Building Bridges*. In Windhoek in the early 60s, politician Clemens Kapuu knocked at the door of senior advocate Israel Goldblatt to solicit advice about dealing with the developing struggle against apartheid. This book and its many photographs pay tribute to Israel Goldblatt and the Namibian nationalists who attempted to build bridges where apartheid entrenched hatred and racism.

***Synagogues in Lithuania*.** This book catalogues the extant synagogues in Lithuania: 96 buildings in 59 cities and towns, among them 17 synagogues built of wood. Until World War II there were about 1000 Jewish prayer houses in Lithuania. Today only 10% exist, many abandoned and in different state of deterioration, and only three synagogues are active.

Sue Fishkoff: *Kosher Nation - How and Why America's Going Kosher*. In this captivating account of a Bible-based practice that has grown into a multibillion-dollar industry, Fishkoff travels throughout America and to Shanghai, China, to find out who eats kosher food, who produces it, who is responsible for its certification, and how this fascinating world continues to evolve.

David Goldblatt: *In Boksburg*. This book stands as one of the most important observations of a middle-class white community in South Africa during the apartheid years. Published in 1982, it presents an accumulation of everyday details from the community of Boksburg, through which a larger portrait of white societal values within a racially divided state is revealed.

Richard A. Freund: *Digging Through the Bible - Modern Archaeology and the Ancient Bible*. Archaeologist and rabbi Richard Freund takes readers through his excavations in the Holy Land, where he searches for information about key biblical characters and events.

Philip Roth: *Nemesis*. In the "stifling heat of equatorial Newark," a terrifying epidemic is raging, threatening the children of this New Jersey city with maiming, paralysis, life-long disability and even death.

Michael Walker: *A Statement in Stone: The Early Buildings and their Architects, Muizenberg - St. James - Kalk Bay, 1897 - 1927*. In the space of 30 years, the architects and their buildings portrayed in this book spectacularly transformed this coastline from a few farms and fishermen's huts into one of the premier holiday resorts in Southern Africa.

Graeme Friedman: *The Fossil Artist*. Russ Codron, a well-meaning optician, has dark secrets that not even his wife has been able to dig out of him, but when he is confronted with the mummified remains of his fossil-hunter father on the pages of the *Sunday Times*, the chaos of his past crashes into the stability of his present.

Assaf Gavron: *Almost Dead*. This Israeli author offers an unusual perspective on Palestinian suicide bombings in this offbeat, often satirical political thriller. While riding a bus one morning, Eitan Croc Enoch tries to reassure fellow passengers that a suspicious-looking man isn't a terrorist.

Isaac Benatar: *Rhodes and the Holocaust*. This is the story of "La Juderia", the Jewish community that once lived and flourished on Rhodes Island.

Janna Gur: *The Book of New Israeli Food: A Culinary Journey*. In this stunning new work, that is at once a coffee table book to browse through and a complete cookbook; Janna Gur brings us the sumptuous colour, variety and history of today's Israeli cuisine. It is beautifully illustrated by photographer Eilon Paz.

Melissa Muller and Reinhard Piechocki: *A Garden of Eden in Hell*. Alice Herz-Sommer was musically gifted, and by her mid-teens was one of the best-known pianists in Prague. Even in Theresienstadt, music was her salvation and in the course of more than a hundred concerts, she gave her fellow prisoners hope in a world of pain and death. This is her remarkable story.

Harold Kushner: *Conquering Fear*. An illuminating book about fear and what we can do to overcome it. An inescapable component of our lives, fear comes in many guises. In uncertain times, coping with fear can be especially challenging, but in this indispensable book, Kushner teaches us to confront, master, and even embrace fear for a more fulfilling life.

Harold Kushner: *Overcoming Life's Disappointments*. A book that shows us how to be our best selves even when things do not turn out as we had hoped. Kushner turns to the experience of Moses to find the requisite lessons of strength and faith — the lessons that teach us how to overcome the disappointments that life inherently brings.

Mendel Balberyski: *Stronger than Iron: The Destruction of Vilna Jewry 1941-1945: An Eyewitness Account*. This eyewitness account details the destruction of Vilna Jewry at the hands of the Nazis. It is a chronicle of life in the

two Vilna ghettos and is the only historical document describing life in the small ghetto from its formation until its liquidation.

Natalie Knight (Ed.): *L'Afrique: A tribute to Maria Stein-Lessing and Leopold Spiegel*. L'Afrique celebrates the lives and work of two extraordinary Jewish personalities, Maria Stein-Lessing and Leopold Spiegel, who produced an important legacy in the field of African and South African art and artifacts.

Henryk Świeboccki: *London has been informed...* This book contains three reports written between 1943 and 1944 by escapees of Auschwitz, written on the basis of their own experiences and observations. This is the first publication of the reports in their entirety anywhere in the world.

Binnie Klein: *Blows to the Head: How Boxing changed my Mind*. When Binnie Klein took up boxing in her mid-fifties, the reaction from friends and acquaintances was always the same: "You?". Why, after all, would a middle-aged Jewish psychotherapist, with no previous history of athletics, take up boxing? This is her story.

Jack Mayer: *Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project*. The inspirational story of Protestant students from Kansas, each called in their own complex way to the history of a Catholic woman who knocked on Jewish doors in the Warsaw ghetto and, in Sendler's own words, "tried to talk the mothers out of their children".

Batya Gur: *Murder in Jerusalem*. This sixth and final novel from the acclaimed Israeli crime novelist is a stunning tale of the murder of a beautiful, secretive woman set against the politically charged backdrop of the Israeli media.

Edward Alexander: *The Jewish Wars*. This book launches a counter-attack in the war of ideas over Zionism. Alexander shows how the intifada proved to be a potent propaganda tool for its organisers, and critiques prominent figures such as the late Edward Said, Desmond Tutu, Patrick Buchanan, Alexander Cockburn, Michael Lerner and Noam Chomsky.

Marion Davies: *Absence and Loss: Holocaust Memorials in Berlin and Beyond*. Photographer Marion Davies has focused her lens on the remarkable numbers of Holocaust memorials in Berlin - the sculptures, art installations and unusual plaques and signs that can be found in public places, such as on street corners and pavements, in market places or on railway lines.

New DVDs:

Benzion Miller, Alberto Mizrahi and Naftali Herstik: *The Cantors - a faith in song*. Recorded in Amsterdam's historic 17th century Portuguese synagogue, *The Cantors* brings together three of the world's most revered cantors in a rare and joyous concert of Jewish religious and secular music.

***The Yiddish Cinema*.** Yiddish film production in Eastern Europe and the United States flourished between the two World Wars. This DVD traces the history of the genre through interviews, archival photographs and film clips from many Yiddish feature films.

***Curb Your Enthusiasm* - Seasons 5 and 6!**

John Kent Harrison: *A Courageous Heart*. The story of Irena Sendler, a social worker who was part of the Polish underground during World War II and who was arrested by the Nazis for saving the lives of nearly 2500 Jewish children by smuggling them out of the Warsaw ghetto.

Yonathan and Masha Zur: *Amos Oz: The Nature of Dreams*. This is a journey into the thoughts of Amos Oz, his literary writing and political doctrine. It takes us through his memoir, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*; through his meetings with readers in Israel and all over the world; his notions about the long complex relationship between Europe and Jews; and follows him in his efforts to promote the two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

New audio books on CD:

Rachel Aaron: *The Spirit Eater*. With the pressure on after his success in Gaol, Eli Monpress, professional thief and degenerate, decides it's time to lie low for a bit. Taking up residence in a tiny seaside village, Eli and his companions seize the chance for some fun and relaxation.

Barack Obama: *Dreams from my Father*. In this lyrical, unsentimental and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American.

Yoram Kaniuk: *Adam Resurrected*. A former circus clown, who was spared the gas chamber so that he might entertain thousands of other Jews as they marched to their deaths, is now the ringleader at an asylum populated solely by Holocaust survivors.

Michael Wex: *Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language and Culture in all of its Moods*. As the main spoken language of the Jews for more than a thousand years, Yiddish has had plenty to lament and plenty to conceal. Its phrases and expressions paint a comprehensive picture of the mindset that enabled the Jews of Europe to survive persecution: they never stopped kvetching about God, gentiles, children and everything else!

Grateful thanks to last month's generous donors: Gerald and Renee Kleinmann; Michelle Shev; John Simon; Sheila Edelstein and Chanine Klein.

The Jacob Gitlin Library committee and staff would like to congratulate John Simon on the occasion of his 80th birthday, for his and Shirley's 55th wedding anniversary and also for his receiving a life achievement award from the Cape Law Society.

SALE at the Jacob Gitlin Library: Books for sale from R5! Donations of books for the sale - MOST WELCOME

5 minutes with ...

Middle School's new head students

The new head student of Herzlia Middle School, Ariella Barnett, and deputy head student, Micaela Lurie, chat to us about their exciting initiatives, the challenges of Middle School, and the best aspects of the Cape Town Jewish community.

What are some of the activities the Student Council have been up to this year?

Michaela: So far we have initiated a buddy system, pairing Grade 9 pupils with Grade 7s, where they got to know each other during a break. The environment portfolio arranged a civvies day to promote saving endangered wetlands in South Africa. We also organised a Friendship Day market for all students and teachers on 14 February.

What are some of the changes you want to bring to the Middle School in 2011?

Ariella: We would like to create more unity between students and teachers. We think that the new inclusive leadership system, introduced by our new principal, Mevrou Botes, will definitely help this aspect. We would like to have better spirit in the school, which the re-instated house system will encourage. An extension of this would be to promote more participation in extracurricular activities.

What values and principles are important to you as a leader of the Middle School?

M: As a leader I believe that respect is an essential value to have, because if you respect others they will respect you back.

What do you think are the best aspects about the Cape Town Jewish



Micaela Lurie and Ariella Barnett

community?

A: I think that the best aspect is that everyone looks out for each other, for example when the schools visit and perform at Highlands House as well as when the whole community comes together to celebrate festivals like Yom Ha'azmaut.

What do you think are the best aspects about the Middle School for Herzlia pupils?

M: The Middle School pupils have the benefit of having passionate and dedicated teachers. They also know that there will always be support and extra help for them when needed.

What do you think are the biggest challenges facing Middle School pupils?

A: One of the biggest challenges facing Middle School learners is adjusting to a new environment when coming from Grade 6. For this reason we launched a sustainable buddy system to make the Grade 7s feel more welcome.

What do you want to say to parents of Middle School pupils?

A & M: In our opinion Herzlia is an amazing school because as well as boasting high academic achievements; it is also an inclusive school and culturally enriches the learners.

What are some of the fun activities the Middle School can look forward to from the Student Council in the year ahead?

A & M: Each portfolio has numerous activities and events planned for the year. For example, Showcase (a variety show), the school magazine worked on by the Media Committee, inter-house tournaments as well as celebrating chaggim like Purim.

Bowled over by Liz and Adam

Liz Maisel, champion veteran bowls player, and Adam Zartz, a new star on the green, have both been achieving excellence in bowls in recent months. They tell us about their achievements, why they recommend bowls for younger and older members of the community, and what they love about the game.

"I was a first league tennis player, but having a few back problems decided to try playing bowls when my dear friend Elsa Chapman suggested I join a group of new bowlers who were being coached at the now defunct Oranjezicht Bowling Club," says Liz Maisel in explaining how her career in bowls began. "While finding it a bit boring after tennis, my friend would not allow me to give up. She so often says "and kyk hoe lyk jy nou!"

And the persistence clearly paid off. Liz recently won the Western Province Ladies Senior singles title, "after some hard fought games." She has represented South Africa on two occasions at the Maccabi Games in Israel, where she won gold medals. Some years back she also won the Western Province Ladies Open singles tournament, as well as the Champion of Champions. "I was fortunate enough to play with some really good bowlers, and was part of the Western Province interprovincial team from 1989 until a few years ago when I retired. We won the interprovincial gold on a number of occasions."

What does this veteran champion love about the game? "I love the competitiveness and the challenge to try and do better – I practise on my own quite a lot. The camaraderie and team spirit is wonderful, especially when your teammates support you when things aren't going so well during a game. I have made some wonderful friends through playing bowls."

She recommends bowls as a game for other members of the community, both younger and older. "It's a wonderful way to pass time for retired people who find themselves at a loose end. At Atlantic Bowling club they can play almost every day. For talented youngsters, they have a whole future ahead playing interprovincial bowls and maybe even representing South Africa."

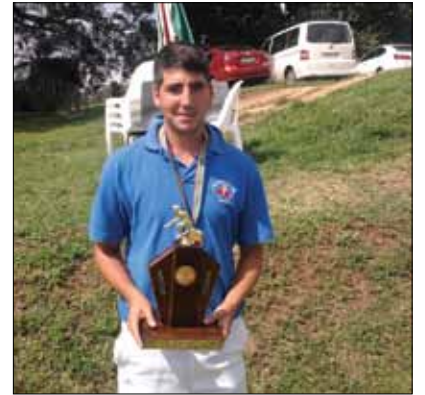
Liz emphasises that other members of the community continue to excel in bowls, and says that that Diane Goldstein was the runner-up in the Western Province Ladies Open singles championship in February. In terms of aims for the future regarding bowls, Liz says that "I would just like to continue playing competitively for as long as I am good enough to do so!"

Excellence from A to Z

Meanwhile, Adam Zartz has been shining bright as a new star on the



Liz Maisel



Adam Zartz

bowling green. The strapping 20 year old only started playing bowls a year ago, but has already made a name for himself on the scene and in the press. "I found bowls to be exciting and interesting, especially when playing in the Premiere Division amongst top players," says Adam on what drew him to the game. In addition, his bowls career has been influenced by his great aunt Riva Myers and the likes of the legendary Kevin Campbell, as well as David Epstein and of course Adam's elder brother Michael, who has played bowls for about 16 years. But despite these renowned influences, the younger Zartz is forming his own path.

Adam has received Western Province colours for surfing twice in the past, so what does the young athlete like about bowls in particular? "I love playing bowls because it requires a high level of skill and concentration. You always have to be aware of your opponent. It's like a game of chess – you are always playing to be one step ahead. The best is playing the pressure shots – that's the most exciting. We call it 'crowd pleasing' shots."

Indeed, his passion is demonstrated in his recent achievements. "In my first year, I was chosen to play for the Western Province under 19B side, which won the gold medal at the Inter Provincials. I then went on to make the semi finals of the Western Province Fours with David Epstein as skip. I also made it to the quarter finals of the Men's Trips; quarter finals of the mixed fives; and semi finals of the Western Province Men's Open singles, narrowly losing to former international Springbok Alan Lofthouse." Adam's goals for the future regarding the sport are to win the under 25 gold medal in April, and to win the WP pairs with David Epstein.

Adam recommends bowls to other young people because "Besides being an exciting game, it teaches one discipline and patience. If anybody is interested in learning to play the game, please contact the Glen Country Club on 021 438 1512," he concludes.

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HABONIM DROR

2011 kicks into action

Last month saw the first meeting of the Habonim Dror Hanhagga Artzit (National Executive) for 2011.



Some members of the Hanhagga Artzit 2011: Jayson Lazar (Shnat Madrich), Mia Candy (S'ganit Mazkir Klali), Julian Kesler (S'gan Mazkir Klali), Mika Klitzner (Mazkira Chinnuch), Gabi Altamirano (JHB Youth Worker) and Adam Steyl (S'gan Rosh Bogrim JHB).

The Hanhagga Artzit meets twice a year in Johannesburg. The meetings consist of long hours discussing many important issues, and they are always a reminder of the complex and powerful nature of Habonim Dror. Amidst the serious discussions, there is always a designated time for the Hanhagga members to visit the King David schools and to catch up with the Joburg channichim.

One of the more exciting aspects of the first Hanhagga meeting is the election of the Machaneh Va'ad Poel (Camp Steering Committee) for our 2011 December machaneh. This elected team have already started their exciting preparations that will culminate in what will undoubtedly be another unforgettable Habonim machaneh.

After a successful three days in Joburg, Habo's top leadership are re-inspired and ready to take this year by storm. The twelve madrichim who have decided to spend their gap year in Israel on our Shnat programme have landed safely and begun to explore the country. The kenim (centres) in both Cape Town and Jo'burg are already buzzing, with weekly school visits and meetings for Shomrim (Grade 11) and Bogrim (Grade 12+) taking place.

Heading up the Johannesburg ken this year are Lynzi Bennun (Rosh Bogrim) and Adam Steyl (S'gan Rosh Bogrim), under the excellent leadership of movement worker Gabi Altamirano (JHB Youth Worker). Here in Cape Town, Roxanne Joseph (Rosh Ken) will be guiding the movement alongside Lee Lobel (Rosh Bogrim) and Erin Maserow (S'ganit Rosh Bogrim).

Our first major event in Cape Town is coming up later this month. From 25 to 27 March we will be having our first mini-machaneh of 2011. It promises to be a fun-filled, educational weekend in Onrus, for Grade 3 and up. To sign up for 'mini-mach', go to www.habo.org.za/signup.

We hope to see you there!

BNEI AKIVA

Fun in the sun

Although we all wish that camp could continue forever, Bnei Akiva Cape Town has already got busy making sure that 2011 is one of the most fun, exciting and successful years ever.



Bnei chevra immersed in Talmudic studies on Tu'Bishvat.

The year started off at a frantic pace, with a new *chesed* project launched by our oldest shevet, Dvir, who collected essential items for children who have been rescued from abusive homes. To support this initiative, please call the Bnei office (021-4392740).

Madrichim have also hit the schools to visit our chanichim and maintain the bonds that were created on camp, as well as running activities at Herzlia's 'Interhouse' and 'Klitah' camps.

'Rosh Hashanah for the trees' was celebrated in style when we combined forces with the Yeshiva of Cape Town to host a Tu'Bishvat seder. The evening began with the participants learning about the Torah's perspective on the environment and waste. The 'seder' included playing game and eating delicious food, all related to the seven species celebrated on this festival.

Bnei Akiva Cape Town proudly welcomed back and bade farewell to Hachsharah 2010 and 2011 participants respectively at the 'farewell' party at the Bnei bayit; as well as to three channichim who participated in the life-altering three month programme, 'Kfar'. Eleven chaverim spent 2010 in Israel, growing, learning and experiencing the Holy

Land. This year, seven of our chevra will embark on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Bnei Akiva Cape Town wishes them *tzetchem le'shalom*.

Finally, the Cape Town madrichim met to outline their structures, leadership and goals for 2011. It was a productive time and high aims were set for the coming year. Additionally, eight madrichim went to Johannesburg for the national Bnei Akiva kinnus (conference), to be involved in the crucial debates and discussions facing the movement, as well as to give Cape Town's perspective on new directions for Bnei Akiva South Africa.

Purim is just around the corner, so call the office now to order Bnei's mishloach manot!

With so much happening, it's hard to believe that the year has just begun!

*Hashem Imachem,
Josh Sevit*

NETZER

The value of informal education

Most people feel that education is in itself, priceless. It ensures that a society's values, ideals and knowledge are sustained from generation to generation, leaving the outgoing generation with faith that the youngsters know what they are doing.

Therefore, if a society lays its foundations for future progress through the education of its youth, then this model can also be applied to the Jewish community, a microcosm of the greater South African society.

Despite its fundamental importance, education has an added element of significance in Judaism, a religion that requires us to debate, argue and question everything we know and do. Judaism is a lifestyle-based religion that fosters a culture of continuous learning, which is crucial for the growth and development of our community. It includes learning in all aspects of our faith – spiritual growth, intellectual study, exposure to the world around us, an understanding of the essence of our religion, Talmud and other texts.

This well-rounded and grounded Jewish education begins the first time the child asks "Who is God?" Unfortunately, questions like these are being tossed aside, replacing Jewish learning with a matric certificate.

Why? It is because children are leaving Jewish day schools with a desire to run far away from Judaism. They often equate their Jewish education with indoctrination, a victim mentality and it

being 'shoved down their throats'. If this mindset becomes an 'epidemic' then we will be facing a dying community.

This is where the youth movements come in. We provide informal education by the youth for the youth, about what's critical to their postmodernist, 21st century, and South African Jewish lives. Having this added advantage of being youth means that we can connect with them on an equal level.

Informal education breaks the 'factory production line' style of education by making learning individualised, focused on unleashing the unique potential of every channich/a. It does away with hierarchy for its own sake, and only adopts it in a minimal sense to enhance efficiency. We aim for 'peer led' educational initiatives, and encourage questions, criticisms, feedback and objections, making our education more meaningful and hands-on.

At Netzer, we take the power of education seriously, and follow a process of 'educate, inspire, initiate and activate.' This is applied to a specific and relevant annual educational theme. We strongly believe that our role as informal educators is pivotal in building the future leaders of our Jewish community – leaders who make informed, inclusive decisions.

'The quest for knowledge begins with a sense of awe at the mystery of existence' – Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

*Lauren Kessler, Rosh Chinnuch
Nilmad ve' na aseh – we will learn
and we will do*

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Maccabi News

IFA Soccer Tournament – Israel team excels!

On Sunday 16 January, Western Province Maccabi entered an Israeli team into the International Football Association 5-a-side soccer tournament at the Hellenic Club.



The Israel team at the IFA Soccer Tournament:
Top Row: Adam Lutzno, Michel Joffe, Gadi Cohen and Jamie Frank. Front Row: Auri Benatar, Robbie Mallach, Aron Freeman and Andrew Herman. Absent from photo: Mikael Gurland.

The countries that participated in the tournament were Spain, Greece, Italy, Portugal, the United States, South Africa, Bulgaria and Israel.

Israel was drawn in a group with Spain, Italy, USA and South Africa. After beating Spain 9 – 0, Italy 4 – 0, USA 3 – 1 and drawing with South Africa 2- 2, Israel managed to top their group with 10 points.

Israel then proceeded to the semi-finals against Greece, but narrowly lost 2 -3.

The players had a great time and

represented Israel with much pride.

The day was a tremendous success as the different teams representing various countries mixed well with each other and learnt a lot about new cultures.

SA Maccabi Interprovincial Tournament

Western Province Maccabi is very excited to be hosting the SA Maccabi Interprovincial Tournament in Cape Town on 20 and 21 March.

The tournament will consist of junior soccer (U10, U12 and U14) and squash (U14, U16 and U19).

If you would like to find out more information about the tournament, please contact WP Maccabi at maccabi@ctjc.co.za or wp@maccabi.co.za.



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