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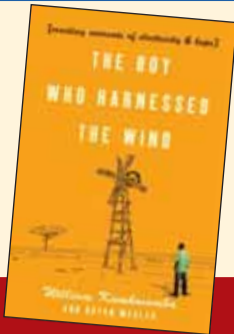
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Jewish Report 

www.sajewishreport.co.za Friday, 16 April 2010 / 2 Iyar 5770 Volume 14 Number 13

Polish President Kaczynski's death a loss to Jews, Israel

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NOW A BADGE OF HONOUR

Holocaust survivor Dr Nathan Durst, displays the yellow star with the word "Jood" (Jew), he and other Jews in Europe were made to wear during the Second World War. Today that anti-Jewish symbol, has become a symbol of dignity of a people who would not surrender to the Nazi plan to exterminate them. Durst was guest speaker at the Yom Hashoah commemorations in Johannesburg. (PHOTOGRAPH: ILAN OSSENDRYVER) **SEE PAGES 4-6, 24**

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PARSHA OF THE WEEK

The ethical symbolism of milah

WHILE THE instruction to Abraham to circumcise himself and all the males in his household provides a model for the institution of berit milah, "covenant of circumcision", the command to circumcise a baby boy on the eighth day of his life, is found in the first portion of this Shabbat's double parshah:

"The Eternal spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Israelite people thus: 'When a woman at childbirth bears a male, she shall be unclean seven days; she shall be unclean as at the time of her menstrual infirmity. On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.'" (Leviticus 12:1-3)

Although scholars are not quite certain as to the symbolism of circumcision, the Torah calls it an ot berit, "a sign of the covenant" (Genesis 17:11). Thus the removal of a child's foreskin is a symbol of the covenant concluded between G-d and the People of Israel at Mount Sinai.

Circumcision is a sign in the flesh of a male Jew, reminding him of his unique relationship with the Divine. Since G-d is the Source of Creation, the removal of the foreskin is a fitting sign of the covenant. Indeed, the Talmud (Shabbat 108a) points out that the word "orlah" "uncircumcised" is used in the Torah to refer to fruit that is forbidden to be consumed (Leviticus 19:23), as well as the foreskin (Genesis 17:14).



PARSHAT TAZRIA/ METZORA

**Rabbi Malcolm
 Matitiani**
 Cape Town Progressive
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To quote the Talmud: "Just as there (Leviticus 19:23) something that produces fruit [is meant], so here (Genesis 17:14) too something [the limb] that produces fruit [is meant]."

Thus the removal of the foreskin can be understood as a symbol of G-d's control over our sexual activity and our procreation by means of halachah (based on Leviticus 18) which governs our sexual relations, placing limitations on how and with whom we have sex.

A Jew is circumcised to symbolise that he subscribes to the life-affirming limitations of the Torah and Jewish tradition, limitations that protect the sanctity of life and the honour of the individual.

Another possible explanation for berit milah focuses on the fact that the rite is performed on the eighth day. The number seven is considered a complete and perfect number in Judaism and therefore symbolises Divine Perfection.

G-d created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh, sanctifying it as a Shabbat of rest

for all time. Having attained perfection of nature, the Creative Energy of the world rested on the seventh day.

Shabbat is considered by the sages as a foretaste of the Messianic era, a period which they referred to as yom she-kulo Shabbat, "A day that is all Shabbat".

The Messianic era - a time of symbiosis and harmony between all the elements of creation - will be brought about by the efforts of humanity to create a better world and a less fragmented society.

Perhaps this human contribution to the perfection of G-d's creation, is symbolised by the eighth day of the baby boy's life - seven (symbolising Divine perfection) plus one (symbolising human involvement in repairing the world).

A Jewish male is circumcised on the eighth day of his life because the removal of the foreskin represents the perfection of the male human form, and by extension the perfection of the world. On the eighth day of his life the male child is entered into the covenant with its ethical and moral precepts and life-affirming values.

The eighth day reminds us of our obligation to complete creation - a task so important that the performance of berit milah takes precedence over Shabbat and even Yom Kippur.

While many cultures practise circumcision as a rite of passage, the Jewish rite of circumcision has ethical overtones. Being a sign of the berit, it shares the same meaning as

SHABBAT TIMES

April 16/2 Iyar
 April 17/3 Iyar

Tazria/Metzora

Starts	Ends	
17:34	18:22	Johannesburg
18:05	18:55	Cape Town
17:19	18:08	Durban
17:38	18:27	Bloemfontein
17:36	18:27	Port Elizabeth
17:28	18:18	East London

Shabbat and tefillin, both of which are also symbols of the covenant between G-d and the Jewish People (Exodus 31:16 - 17 and in Exodus 13:9, 16, Deuteronomy 6:8, 11:18).

While circumcision is limited to male Jews, Shabbat, and by extension the festivals, is a sign of the covenant which is accessible to all Jews, male and female. Shabbat reminds us, not only of G-d's role as the Source of all Creation and Life, but also of our ethical responsibilities to our fellow living creatures (Deuteronomy 5:12 - 15).

We are commanded to observe Shabbat because our ancestors were once slaves in Egypt. Now that we are free, we are obligated to remember the plight of those who are enslaved both literally and figuratively and we are instructed to ensure equality and the dignity of all life.

Thus while only men bear the physical sign of the covenant, women are equally obligated to fulfil the ethical and ritual precepts of the Jews' unique relationship with G-d, thereby contributing to tikkun olam.

Muizenberg memories - a nostalgic trip

EDITED BY MOIRA SCHNEIDER
 FROM A REPORT BY DAVID
 LAZARUS
 PHOTOGRAPH BY JUNE HAYMAN

FORMER MUIZENBERG fruit vendor, fondly known as "Leibke" (holding microphone), regaled the audience with several Yiddish expressions at a Muizenberg reunion attended by over 250 enthusiastic lovers of the seaside town.

The gathering was inspired by the "Memories of Muizenberg" exhibition currently on at the South African Jewish Museum.

"Leibke" - real name Sidney

Daniels - whose mother was a domestic worker in a Jewish household, "spoke Yiddish before he even learned English or Afrikaans". He was a special guest at the event along with centenarian Rosalie Wolpe, whose mother ran a tearoom next to the Empire Cinema in the days when a cup of coffee cost four pence.

Muizenberg School songs, guests relating humorous stories from their school days and two specially composed songs about Muizenberg, plus a medley of songs from yesteryear, were the highlights of the event, contribut-



ing to the atmosphere of nostalgia and reminiscence.

Others in the photograph include (on "Leibke's" left): Ronnie Derman (gesticulating) and (standing, to "Leibke's" right)

Dr Basil and Sheila Sacks (in sunglasses).

The Memories of Muizenberg exhibition is at the SA Jewish Museum running until June 11 (021) 465-1546

Road to dignity shown by some of SA's philanthropists

ROB BAIRD

SOME 350 philanthropists of the South Africa's Jewish community, gathered at the house of David Hall in Gauteng on Wednesday, March 24, to help raise much needed funds for Young Adults Learning and Earning (YALE). Nearly R450 000 was raised.

The organisation is the brainchild of Val Blumenthal, who began the foundation 21 years ago when her daughter, like many others with disabilities in learning and motor co-ordination, fell into a realm often overlooked, as she

did not require institutionalisation, nor was she able to cope in society at large.

Today, YALE employs and houses 24 fulltime adults who, through a chain gang process of "supply chain management", assist with posting invoices for fashion outlet, Rage, as well as packaging kitchen cloths for Premium, through to complex packaging of Something Special's jewellery collection for Edgars.

"Each individual works according to his or her skill set, and the aspiration to move up the chain instils a sense of pride in all of



Val Blumenthal (YALE chairman) and Eric and Sheila Samson.

them," commented auctioneer of the evening, Ariella Kuper of Auction Alliance.

Those gathered enjoyed exquisite cuisine and a play by Natalie Knight, produced by Helen Heldenmuth. The finale was an auction that managed to raise R441 000. Included in the auction, was a Fifa poster signed by William Kentridge that fetched a

stellar R56 000. Honourable mention was made to Eric Samson and Eric Ellerine, whose tireless dedication to charity was attributed as the main reason that YALE has survived through the years with no government subsidies.

To contact YALE for their service offerings, call (011) 640-1530/5005.

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Goldstone 'barred' from grandson's barmitzvah

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

THE AFTER-SHOCKS of the Goldstone Commission into the Gaza conflict continue, this time reaching into the heart of a family simcha. Mr Justice Richard Goldstone is effectively being barred from attending his grandson's barmitzvah, due to be held in Johannesburg early next month.

Following negotiations between the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) and the Beth Hamedrash Hagadol in Sandton, where the event is due to take place, an agreement has been reached with the family. As a result, Justice Goldstone will not be attending the synagogue service.

Some of the role-players were tight-lipped Avrom Krengel, chairman of the SAZF, said: "We understand there's a barmitzvah boy involved - we're very sensitive to the issues; at this stage there's nothing further to say."

While Krengel said the SAZF had "interacted" on the matter with the chief rabbi, the Beth Din and others, his organisation was "coming across most forcefully because we represent Israel".

Rosh Beth Din Rabbi Moshe Kurtstag confirmed that the Beth Din had not been officially involved - though there had been "private talks" - and had not been asked by the synagogue to give a ruling on the matter. "But I know that there was a very strong feeling in the shul, a lot of anger (around the issue of Justice Goldstone attending).

"I heard also that the SAZF wanted to organise a protest outside the shul - (there were) all kinds of plans. But I think reason prevailed."

Signalling his agreement with the turn of events, Rabbi Kurtstag said he believed Justice Goldstone had done "a tremendous

disservice not only to Israel but to the Jewish world. His name is used by hostile elements in the world against Israel and this can increase anti-Semitic waves.

"I understand that he is a judge, but he should have had the sense to understand that whatever he said wouldn't be good and he should have just recused himself. People have got feelings about it, they believe he put Israel in danger and they wouldn't like him to be getting honour (in synagogue).

"I think (the agreement) was quite a sensible thing to avert all this unpleasantness."

Reached in Washington where he is currently based, Justice Goldstone was reluctant to comment save to say: "In the interests of my grandson, I've decided not to attend the ceremony at the synagogue."

Mr Justice Dennis Davis said that while he respected Justice Goldstone's decision, he assumed that pressure had been brought to bear on the family. "If that assumption is correct, then it is outrageous because it seeks to place a ban on somebody participating in his grandson's barmitzvah.

"Have we now got to the point that because we don't like what somebody says or does, we place a 'cherem' on them? What right do we have to do that? I would like to add that people who are gleeful about it must remember what Pastor Niemoller said: 'Who will speak up for them when they are finally excommunicated for some misdemeanor?'"

Retired president of the Constitutional Court, Mr Justice Arthur Chaskalson said it was "disgraceful" to put pressure on a grandfather not to attend his grandson's barmitzvah. "If it is correct that this has the blessing of the leadership of the Jewish community in South Africa, it reflects on them rather than on Justice Goldstone. They should hang their heads in shame."

'High Notes' will be different

ROBYN SASSEN

"THIS IS the first major Jewish event in which I have been involved on this level," says multi-award-winning musical director Bryan Schimmel of High Notes, the Yom Ha'atzmaut musical spectacular produced by Linda Starkowitz and Gavin Opert for the SA Zionist Federation.

High Notes showcases local tenors Oshy Tugendhaft, Adam Davis, Elan Lea and Mark Samowitz, as well as two international tenors who performed at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Maccabi Games last year, namely New York-based Hananel Edri, who is studying at the Juilliard Music School; and Liron Lev, who came third in Israel's Idols.

They will be supported by a choir of young tenors, led by Adam Golding. "It will be like the backing of a boy band," Schimmel says. His express aim was to create a "non-shul sounding choir".

The vocals will be accompanied by a 12-piece band. "They are the A-list musicians I always work with," he adds.

At the piano, Schimmel seamlessly blends swing, klezmer and jazzy riffs. The Hebrew lyrics are arranged to fit beautifully. He's arranged four of the pieces; the rest are by Eitan Sobol from Israel. It's about blending musical ideologies to create something new.

The combination of this shaven-headed, tattooed star, obviously more at home with rock and jazz than chazzanut - attested to by his current Naledi award for Knights of Music - and kippah-wearing tenors is interesting. Music is the equalizer.

His first tattoo - that of his Hebrew name -



In happy rehearsal: musical director Bryan Schimmel, at the piano, with choristers and soloists from High Notes. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ILAN OSSENDRYVER)

was done in 2000. "It's a very clear motivation of my pride and rebellion. I am proud of my Jewish heritage and am not religious. This show is a celebration of Israel. It is not religious."

A statement not without controversy: Schimmel was instructed by the organisers that there were to be no women performers. "I argued this but was shouted down. I was told that if we have females in the show, it would exclude sectors in the community from the audience. So, there are no girls. There are no dancers.

"But there is a major emphasis on lighting and sound design. A lot of the show's budget will go on top industry professionals."

When Starkowitz and Opert approached him to musically direct the show, he was delighted.

"Working with Oshy has been a long time coming for me. The same with Elan, who is often compared to Danny K.

"In this show, I invest in my relationship with Gavin and Linda, the Zionist Fed and the community. I want to be asked back."

• High Notes is at Theatre on the Track in Kyalami on April 19. Call (011) 645-2541 or book online: www.sazionfed.co.za

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WHAT **CNN** FORGOT TO TELL YOU



The Shoah message will live forever

ROBYN SASSEN

"MOMMY...", a three-year-old stood at a window 65 years ago, watching her mother leave. Forever. She carried this memory to adulthood. This anecdote of Dr Nathan Durst, keynote speaker at Yom Hashoah, hosted by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies at West Park Cemetery in Johannesburg on Sunday, set the tone for the sombre ceremony.

Known secularly as Holocaust Remembrance Day, this ceremony, like others worldwide, was commemorated in Johannesburg by war veterans, survivors, the community and its leadership.

Featuring readings of Holocaust literature in Yiddish, Hebrew, Ladino and English, it included a reading of victims' names, a lighting of memorial flames, *hazkarah* and communal *kaddish*, as well as compelling speakers.

On the podium, sculpted in 1959 by Herman Wald in memory of the Holocaust, voices of representatives of the Jewish day schools and the youth movements, intermingled with those of the Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir.

While long-standing member of the Jewish Ex-Service League of South Africa, Zelik Bedell held the organisation's flag, its National chairman, Major Peter Bailey, told the community to "remember also the soldiers who gave their lives in battle with the Nazis". This sentiment was corroborated by Ya'akov Finkelstein, Deputy Chief of Mission in the Israeli Embassy, who invoked remembrance of the Romany and others killed: they were considered gender and political opponents.

He spoke of his experience as a diplomat in Poland some years ago. "I wondered why there is no Yom Hashoah in Poland. One answer is it is commemorated everyday there: in the march of the living between Auschwitz and Bialystok, the renovation of shuls, the reopening of the Lublin Yeshiva and the inauguration of Warsaw's new Jewish Museum.

He asked the community to remember Poland's President Lech Kaczynski, killed in a plane crash that same morning. They had been travelling to a commemoration to the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre - an execution of 20 000 Polish prisoners of war, by the NKVD. Kaczynski was a driving force in establishing Warsaw's new Holocaust Museum.

Durst was born to observant Jews in Berlin in 1930. He was four when Nazis burned the books of Europe. Four years later, 191 synagogues were destroyed. The youngest child and only son of four siblings, Durst called himself a *kaddish zoger* (singer).

"I remember when the Brown Shirts came in November 1938. I was

excited. Such a spectacle I had never witnessed before. I didn't understand the magnitude of the event. My father was taken away.

"In December my mother sent me and my oldest sister, Channa, to Holland. Our two other sisters, Fanny (15) and Yenny (12), were to follow. We hadn't papers or money. Fanny and Yenny got to Holland, but were caught; they were deported back to Germany in 1941. A year later, with my mother, they were transported to Poland and murdered.

"In 1940, discriminatory laws dictated that we wear the Yellow Star. I was told to be proud to be a Jew wearing it. I wanted to. But being spat at because of it made me less proud; more frightened.

"I was angry at my mother. Why did she send us away? She told us never to come back. By the time the city was declared *Judenfrei*, we had stopped wearing the star. We still hadn't papers, but we spoke German. And we had *mazal*."

In 1943, Nathan and Channa were taken in by a family. "They saved our lives, but we were never really safe anywhere.

"And then, the war was finished. For six years, I had learned how to survive, but what did it mean to be free? My world had vanished. I had lost ambition.

"I joined the youth movement *Tikvateinu* (Our Hope), as a *madrich*. There I learned again to be, to tell stories, to give and receive love.

"I married. Only when I became a father did I understand what my mother had gone through when she sent us away. I had felt deserted and angry. I made peace with her. She had given me life twice."

At 30, Durst began studying, attaining a PhD in psychoanalysis from Groningen University. "I came to terms with my guilt about surviving."

In 1971, he made *aliyah* and was employed by a psychiatric hospital in Israel. He co-founded *Amcha* (Israeli Centre for Holocaust Survivors and the Second Generation) in 1987.

"You are also from there?" I was asked often, when I arrived in Israel. I knew what 'there' meant. I would reply I had been only a child. With time, I examined this answer. Why was I using 'only' to describe my status as a child? Ostensibly a child wouldn't understand and therefore would not remember.

"My fear a Pandora's Box of uncried tears. That child is still inside me. I was a powerless victim. Now I am a proud survivor."

"To be a Jew is to live with history's extremes," said Stephanie Hodes, national chairman of the SA Union of Jewish Students, carrying the torch forward. "Six million is impossible to understand; one Jew died at a time. Six million times."

Yom Hashoah in Pretoria

DIANE WOLFSON
PRETORIA

GUEST SPEAKER Dr Anthony Court, Associate Professor and Chair of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Unisa, who has been to Auschwitz numerous times, said in the main address at last weekend's Yom Hashoah commemoration in Pretoria that it was a deeply moving experience visiting the site of Auschwitz, the former concentration, forced labour, and death camps in the present-day Polish town of Oswiecim.

"Yet it is also a troubling experience, for reasons that might not be immediately apparent. For although two of the camps are largely intact, they represent ghostly remnants, unable to bridge the chasm between the stark physical landscape that confronts the visitor and its erstwhile reality, which was a relentless terror and a ceaseless process of human destruction.

"The place we know as 'Auschwitz' no longer exists. It needs to be stressed that visitors to the former Nazi camps who are not themselves survivors, cannot truly fathom the horror and suffering that was the daily experience of the victims.

"Those who died in the Holocaust did not die for any comprehensible 'reason'. The victims were classified as such by a perverse, anti-humanist ideology that brought about the destruction of European Jewry and laid waste an entire continent."

"The study of the Holocaust is itself an act of remembrance, a commitment to keeping alive the memories of millions of individual human beings whose killers attempted to destroy not only lives, but also the memory and identities of the victims."

On his third visit to Auschwitz in the summer of 2008, his perception of a terrain, which had been already familiar to him, had been fundamentally changed.

He had been particularly troubled by the fact that the sites of human remains and material objects were relatively unprotected and one saw footprints in the ashes.

This annual Yom Hashoah ceremony was attended by a large number of representatives from various embassies and political parties, religious organisations, Members of Parliament, and Gill Marcus, governor of the SA



Gill Marcus, governor of the SA Reserve Bank, with Israeli Ambassador Dov Segev-Steinberg.



Speakers at the Pretoria Yom Hashoah commemoration: Victor Gordon; Ivan Sive; Dr Anthony Court; Talia Fine; and Kira Kumin.

Reserve Bank.

Heart-warming and most unexpected, was the arrival of the representative from the Polish Embassy to offer his ambassador's apologies for not attending the ceremony due to the tragic death of their president, his wife and 90 passengers in a plane crash in Russia over the weekend.

Six memorial candles were lit by representatives of the various Jewish organisations and a seventh in memory of a Righteous Gentile, Theodore Criveanu, by his son Willie.

Chairman of the Pretoria branch of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, Victor Gordon, requested each person to "twin" him/herself with the victim of the Holocaust whose photo and details were handed out to the attendees on arrival, and to so commemorate and pay homage to those lost souls, to read their names and reflect for a moment on a life lost - for no reason other than that they were Jews.

Kira Kumin, head girl of Crawford College Pretoria, gave the address on behalf of the youth. She read a poem by Eva Pickova who died in Auschwitz at the age of 14, echoing the emotions of the six million victims.

"Today I speak to you as a young adult growing up in the freedom of living in a democratic country. The harrowing thought of having to wear a yellow star on my arm, being denied the right to an education, or being forcibly removed from my home and deported in a cattle truck to a death camp, is too frightening to contemplate.

"It is, however, essential that we keep every fact and detail we know about these atrocities

imprinted on our minds forever. We are the generation of today, responsible for shaping the world of tomorrow... we are the voices that must speak out for the six million who were silenced."

Israel's Ambassador to South Africa, Dov Segev-Steinberg, brought a message on behalf of the State of Israel. His short but strong message had personal significance, being the son of two Holocaust survivors. His father survived the Holocaust in Poland while his mother came from the Czech-Hungarian side and was sent to the Jewish Ghetto in Budapest.

"As an Israeli, the threat of genocide continues and is ever present (today) as we, as a nation are faced with the threat of nuclear annihilation from what has become our greatest enemy, Iran."

Segev-Steinberg said the threat of extinction seemed destined to never leave the Jewish people despite the hopes of Theodor Herzl that the creation of a Jewish homeland would provide the security to ensure that Jews need never fear the consequences of anti-Semitism again.

A message on behalf of the Jewish Ex-Service League was delivered by Ivan Sive, a veteran of the Second World War.

"It is the right and responsibility for every human being to aspire to a peaceful and prosperous existence and it was the unswerving devotion to these fine elements that drove all brave men and women we remember today.

"The cemeteries remind us of the young who never made it home and whose memories we cherish for making the supreme sacrifice."

Yom Hashoah remembered in the smaller centres

DAVID SAKS

YOM HASHOAH this year was observed not only in the main urban centres, but also in Klerksdorp in Northwest Province and Kimberley in the Northern Cape.

Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, spiritual leader to the SA country communities, participated in the Klerksdorp ceremony held in the community's synagogue, reciting the traditional *hazkarah* prayer.

The six memorial candles were lit by community members Sam Kramer; Michael Hack; Michael Waks; Ghita Subel; Marlene Waks; and David Frame, with Jacky Shall giving a short address on the significance of the day.

The commemoration conclud-



Pictured are the Klerksdorp community members in their shul.

ed with poetry readings and the singing of *Ani Ma'amim* and *Hatikvah*, followed by the *Maariv* service.

The Kimberley ceremony was held in the town's beautiful and historic synagogue, in the presence of both Jewish community members and a number of non-Jewish residents.

The latter included the princi-

pal of St Patrick's College, which three Jewish learners attend. At the school's assembly the following morning, grade 11 learner Roy Horwitz, son of the congregation's chairman, Barney Horwitz, recited a poem on the theme of Yom Hashoah, which was followed by a moment's silence observed by the entire school.

Today we can again smell the fumes of anti-Jewish hatred...

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MOIRA SCHNEIDER CAPE TOWN

THE HAUNTING sound of a siren heralded the start of the annual Yom Hashoah V'Hagevurah commemoration at Pinelands cemetery last weekend, setting the tone for the solemnity of the occasion along with the mournful theme to Schindler's List played by young violinist Kieran Crowe.

Holocaust survivors kindled memorial lights to the strains of Cantor Barry Braun and the choir of Milnerton Hebrew Congregation and Temple Israel's rendition of Ani Ma'amin, confirming the sombre atmosphere.

Among the approximately 1 200 attendees were German Consul General Andreas Kauke, Minister of Science and Technology Naledi Pandor, ACDP MP Steve Swart and Nathan Holt, public affairs officer of the United States Consulate.

Frequently battling to contain his emotions, David Shmukler recounted his father Jack's story of

a childhood spent on the run from the Nazis. Jack recalled his family's escape from the ghetto in the mainly-Jewish shtetl of Iyve to a forest outside the town, where they spent 18 months moving from hideout to hideout.

"There were times when the three of us, my sister Sarah, my cousin Avremel and myself, aged five to eight, had to sit underground hoping we wouldn't be found and that our parents would return safely. Our physical deprivations of food, warmth, shelter and clothing was not the worst of it. The most terrible part was the fear of being discovered and killed."

Jack was eight years old when the Russians liberated his village and his family made their way back. "We were amazed at the indifference shown to us by the authorities and the local population and even had difficulty in reclaiming our own house," he remembers.

"Life in the shtetl as my father knew it was utterly destroyed. Only 70 individuals out of a community of 3 500 returned.

"We then had to face the full impact of the loss of our dear ones. Especially traumatic was the loss of my two-year-old brother, Chaim. He had been given to a couple in a close by village before we escaped, with the hope that he would pass off as their child and thus survive the war.

"Unfortunately this was not to be. When my parents went back to fetch him, he was nowhere to be found and no clear explanation was offered."

The family was in limbo for two years, with most countries refusing to grant them entry. They were eventually granted a permit to enter then-Rhodesia.

Delivering the main address, Professor Milton Shain, director of the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research at the University of Cape Town, spoke of "the danger of toxic ideas", warning that these were "far from extinguished."

"Sixty-five years after the furnaces of Auschwitz were destroyed, we can once again smell

the fumes of anti-Jewish hatred percolating mainly from the Arab and wider Muslim world."

He stressed that they were fanned by a "deviant stream of Islamic thought" which was implacably hostile to the Jewish State.

Referring to the Hamas Charter which incorporated the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Shain said: "Such ideas are dangerous and the world needs to take heed. While Muslim rage relates in some way to their experiences over the last two or three centuries, we need to appreciate that ideas have consequences."

Describing Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's utterances as "chilling", Shain said they could not be ignored. "Similar rhetoric was last heard in Nazi Germany."

"Too few people took seriously Hitler's prophecies. Murderous ideas have to be challenged."

In a message read on his behalf by Moonyeen Castle, chairman of the Western Province Zionist Council, Israeli Ambassador Dov Segev-Steinberg lamented that "the threat of extinction is destined to never leave the Jewish people, despite the hopes of Theodor Herzl who believed that the creation of a Jewish homeland would provide

the security to ensure that the Jews need never fear the consequences of anti-Semitism again".

Li Boiskin, chairman of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Cape Council) under whose auspices the event was held, said that one had to respect democracy, but also recognise its fragility.

"We must challenge abuse of power and highlight the danger of apathy in the face of abuse. By doing so, we give respect to the victims and to our precious survivors."



Ninety-two-year-old Holocaust survivor Santa Pelham, assisted by her daughter Aviva, kindles a memorial light at the Yom Hashoah V'Hagevurah commemoration at Pinelands cemetery at the weekend.



Praying for a world where people will care more

NAOMI DINUR

HOW FICKLE is human memory! Walking in the peaceful and rural Irene Village near Pretoria, I was shocked to discover the "Concentration Camp" signs. They read: "Concentration

camp... Enter at your own risk."

Between the years 1900 - 1902, during the Anglo-Boer War, over 26,000 women and children died in South Africa in concentration camps set up by the British army. There they died of hunger and diseases.

Lack of humanity towards the victims was shown in the form of preventing the minimum nourishment and sanitation.

On April 11, the Day of Commemoration, I wanted to remember all the innocent victims of South Africa's past, together with the six million innocent children, women and men, who were murdered just because they were born Jewish - and nobody cared...

We can just pray and hope for a more tolerant, caring and sensitive world.

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Shoah survivors carry sense of loss and guilt

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY
RITA LEWIS

DR NATHAN Durst who was the guest speaker at the Yom Hashoah, commemoration day at West Park Cemetery in Johannesburg last weekend, addressed a group of about 100 people of the Friendship Forum at Golden Acres that same afternoon.

Speaking on a totally different aspect of the Holocaust, Durst explained that he did not use the term Holocaust. "I prefer to use 'Shoah'."

Explaining this, he said: "Holocaust is a Greek word which means 'burnt offering'. I ask you, did we offer our mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers to be burnt offerings?"

He said the killing of the six million Jews of Europe by the Nazis during the Second World War, was not a sacrificial offering to G-d.

"We are talking about a Shoah, a catastrophe - destruction, cruelty of the worst kind."

Changing the subject, he asked what

people thought were the main emotions suffered by survivors of the Shoah.

Many answers were given, but he explained that the most common emotion of them all was "loss". He said loss was often accompanied by a sense of guilt, and the often asked question was: "Why have I survived and the others haven't?"

Many survivors worried that they should have stayed behind and tried to help - but hadn't.

He said that as a young man of around 16, living in the relative safety of Holland, that was how he felt.

He described how many survivors were prone to dreams and illusions of their family and friends returning. This caused much trauma with the one side of the brain, the intellectual side, knowing that this could not be, as they were dead and the emotional side desperately wanting and waiting for them to come back.

"It is part of human life to hope that things will get better; even when things are really bad, we still hope," he said.

He described how, when he felt he had nothing to live for, he believed he was a "nebach" - a nothing. "I had no one, no G-d to pity me, nothing.

"But one day I told myself: 'I am sick of feeling like this'. I started to work on myself. I couldn't change the reality of my circumstances outside, but I found that a person could make something of himself, inside."

Durst told about a gold chain his mother had. "I desperately wanted that chain back. That was my mother's. I thought endlessly about it."

He recalled how he had told a friend about the chain and the friend suggested he buy another one! "I realised that I could actually go out and buy another chain - and I did.

"It is not written that we should not love ourselves. Supporting others starts with loving yourself first."

Durst spoke of his reasons for starting Amcha, an organisation which sees and counsels some 12 000 survivors a week, with the number steadily increasing.

He spoke of the importance of survivors writing everything down... "Then when they tell that it didn't happen, it will be there in writing for all to see. We can then say to them: 'There is the proof.'"



Sarah Zada; Keren Netzer and Esther Taitz.



Liora Glazerson and Riche Zada.



The Chevrah Kadisha's Brenda Solarsh makes a presentation to Dr Nathan Durst.



Dr Nathan Durst sings "Hinay Ma Tov UmaNayim" as the introduction to his speech.



Mark Furman and Vanessa Feldman.



Above: Brenda Solarsh addresses the gathering thanking Sandra Goldberg (on left) and the committee, while Dr Nathan Durst listens with interest.

Left: Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre's Janine Cohen, with psychologist Tracey Farber.

COMMUNITY BUZZ

LIONEL SLIER

082-444-9832, fax: 011-440-0448,

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RAE SANK FROM SOUTH SURREY, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA, (CONT):

"Meanwhile, a young man, David Smulowitz, some 14 years older than Eva Smulowitz, journeyed from his home in Tsolo, Transkei, via East London and Port Elizabeth, to Cape Town, probably to find a wife. While there, he visited Oranjia. Someone asked where he was from and jovially, he replied: 'Oh, I'm from lots of places... Tsolo... East London... Port Elizabeth...'

"Port Elizabeth,' the person cried. 'Why, we have someone here who was just in Port Elizabeth!'

"Eva was immediately called downstairs to 'meet a man from Port Elizabeth'. Thinking it was the boy she loved, she flew down the stairs, only to be greeted by a much older stranger. She was crushed with disappointment. However, David invited her out for lunch with his sister. Jumping at any chance for an outing, she accepted...

"Although my grandfather was probably instantly smitten by this lovely young woman, the feelings were not returned as quickly. However, within a few weeks, Eva was persuaded to marry him by the chairwoman of the Oranjia Committee and she decided to take the advice.

"She left the orphanage and went to stay with Baruch Chidekel, my grandfather's step-brother, until her wedding day. She was 17 when she got married and was the first of the Ochberg orphans to do so.

"Daddy Ochberg' gave her away. There was an article in The Jewish Chronicle about the event.

"She returned with her new husband to the tiny hamlet of Tsolo, set in the beautiful but isolated hills of the Transkei, where my grandfather ran a general dealer store. Later it grew into a small-holding with cattle and fields of maize.

"She was horrified to find how tiny and lonely a place it was. However, being a woman of immense courage, strength and determination, she threw herself wholeheartedly into the activities of the village. She taught herself to become an outstanding cook and baker - using a wood stove - no electricity in those days in the Transkei.

"She learnt how to can and preserve fruit and made delicious bottled peaches and jams. She made wonderful homemade cheese and

butter and baked her own bread. She became an accomplished bridge player and a competent tennis player - competing in tournaments and even winning a trophy or two.

"She taught herself how to knit and was an expert at knitting socks for soldiers during the Second World War. In addition to the English she'd learned when she was brought to South Africa as a little girl, she added Afrikaans and Xhosa to her language skills.

"Most importantly, she had three children, Edith, Sonny and Rae, whom she adored."

To be concluded.

• Tsolo is a little dorp 40 km from Umtata (now Mthata). The name is Xhosa after the pointed shape of the surrounding mountains.

PORT ELIZABETH

From Mary Wailer:

"Like David Abel, I have the same special memories of Rev Klaff, a gentle, fair-minded man without any malice. I first met him in Port Elizabeth, where he was friendly with my future father-in-law, Dr Archie Wailer.

"I was married at Wolmarans Street Synagogue. Rev Klaff attended my wedding. Some years later he was at Wolmarans Street Synagogue. He stayed in a flat with his wife, Pauline, not far from the shul. When I was able to, I would visit the Klaffs.

"Years later I again met up with the couple at Sandringham Gardens and whenever I was visiting there I would see them. They were really good menschen.

"I would also like to meet up with Rev Klaff's daughter, to keep the memory of her parents alive."

JOHANNESBURG

In the Jewish Report of April 2, there was an item about most Johannesburg Jewish men being unable to fix an electrical fault.

This is what happened last year: In a Jewish home the electric kettle stopped working and the lady of the house asked her husband to "have a look at it", which is "woman's speak" for "fix it, you nerd!"

The man of the house took a screwdriver and dismantled the kettle. That was the easy part. Simple he thought. He then "fixed" it and as he was plugging it in, he noticed two parts left out. However he switched on the plug. Disaster! The whole house was plunged into darkness.

Shock! Horror! Just then the phone rang and it was Mrs Cohen from next door asking whether their electricity was down. He looked out of the window and saw that the whole neighbourhood was

in darkness. Had he caused this?

Panic and despair followed. However, he decided to keep shtum about what he had done. Four hours later the lights came on again. Saved. Next day the man of the house purchased a new kettle.

Note: This was at the start of the power outages which caused so much gloom and misery last year and people were not yet philosophical about adapting to the situation on intermittent power cuts.

EASTERN CAPE

From Marc Kopman:

"After Elliott I went up the beautiful Barkly Pass where, in the winter months the phenomenon of 'black ice' occurs, when a film of ice covers the tarred roads and which is extremely dangerous.

"The Barkly Pass Hotel, belonging to the Spilkin family from East London (originally from Umtata), was a regular stopover. Then on to the town of Barkly East to service our agents, the Attorneys Spence, who directed me to the only Jew in town, Lazar Bortz. I went to visit him and his wife. They had a son whom I did not meet. Mr Bortz mentioned that he had family in East London and on the East Rand.

"Later, on another trip, I visited the cemetery where there were about a dozen graves in good condition, obviously cared for by Mr Bortz. One of the graves, 'Rosenberg', turned out to be family of Dr M Rosenberg (now in Australia) who was my doctor when I eventually settled in Krugersdorp.

"Years later, in 2003, on a trip to this area, I visited Barkly East and the Spences informed me that Mr Bortz had passed away.

"The only remaining person of Jewish descent, was his son, age 39. When I enquired, I was informed that he was not well and so I missed the opportunity to meet him.

"There has never been a synagogue in Barkly East, although the community had Torahs in their possession which they donated away in the early '50s when the community had dwindled.

"Travelling further upcountry, one crosses over Moshesh's Ford where there is evidence of previous farms and trading stores and where, Dr Rosenberg was born.

"I arrived in Rhodes, a tiny village where the Rhodes Hotel is still a main attraction, being nearby the famous Tiffendale's Ski Resort."

• Marc Kopman is vice-chairman of the United Hebrew Institutions of Krugersdorp.

WIZO Biennial Campaign



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Kaczynski leaves legacy of Polish-Jewish reconciliation

DINAH SPRITZER
PRAGUE

FOR JEWS, Poland's late president, Lech Kaczynski, was a man of many firsts.

He was the first Polish president to attend a service at a Polish synagogue, the first to celebrate Chanukah at the presidential palace, the first Polish leader to provide support for a Jewish history museum on Polish soil.

His death in last week Saturday's plane crash along with his wife and 96 members of Poland's political elite, represents a huge loss for Polish-Jewish relationships, Poland's chief rabbi, New York native Michael Schudrich, told JTA.

"A lot of those who are politically right of centre are open to Jewish contributions to Polish culture, but if you had a different person in power they would have been quiet about it. Kaczynski empowered those people to also have a voice," Schudrich said.



Polish President Lech Kaczynski and his wife visiting the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, on September 12, 2006. (PHOTOGRAPH: OLIVIER FITOUSSI / FLASH90/JTA)

Schudrich had been invited to accompany the presidential delegation to the April 10 event in Katyn commemorating the 1940 massacre there of 20 000 Poles by Soviet forces, but the rabbi could not attend because it was on the Sabbath.

On Sunday, mourners packed Warsaw's Nozyk Synagogue, where Kaczynski once visited, for a memorial service for the victims of the crash. Nearby, some 100 000 Poles filled the streets as the president's coffin passed by in a procession.

It was one of the great ironies of Polish history that a nationalistic, ultra-conservative Catholic who may have counted some anti-Semites as his supporters, was a pivotal figure in the post-Communist healing of grudges that have so long divided Poles and Jews.

Kaczynski's death, as tragic as it may be, is not likely to set back Polish-Jewish or Polish-Israeli relations, insiders say. The role of president is largely ceremonial in Poland; the government is run by the prime minister, currently Donald Tusk. Tusk and his Cabinet are considered allies of Israel and the United States, and are friendly to Jewish concerns.

"Fifteen years ago, such a calamity would have serious repercussions, but today relations are well established," said Andrzej Zozula, executive director of the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland.

Zozula said he had been friendly with the late president since their days together in the anti-Communist opposition in the 1980s. "The interests of all are more important than one man, even a person such as Mr Kaczynski," Zozula said.

Examples of the president's dedication to Jewish issues, reads like the refrain in Dayeinu, the Passover hymn: "It would have been enough if..."

As mayor of Warsaw before winning the presidency in 2005, Kaczynski donated public land

and money for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, to open in 2012.

In 2008, as president, he restored Polish citizenship to the 15 000 Jews exiled in 1968 by Poland's Communist government in the throes of an anti-Semitic frenzy. Kaczynski was among Europe's top political supporters of Israel.

"The president and his wife were great friends to Israel," Israel's former ambassador to Poland, David Peleg, said. "And those who travelled with him on that plane were not only personal friends of mine, but were dedicated to the preservation of Jewish sites in Poland."

Peleg singled out for praise Janusz Kurtyka, head of the National Remembrance Institute, Deputy Culture Minister Tomasz Merta and presidential adviser Mariusz Handzlik. Handzlik was so close with the Jewish community that he attended the batmitzvah of Schudrich's daughter.

Peleg, now head of the World Jewish Restitution Organisation, noted that Kaczynski lobbied against the Goldstone Report criticising Israel for its actions in the 2009 Gaza war. He also upgraded military, economic and cultural co-operation between Israel and Poland and opposed anti-Semitism by emphasising the shared history of Jews and Poles.

"In my first discussions with him as mayor, he talked about the Jews at Katyn," said Peleg, referring to the Russian site where Kaczynski was headed when his plane crashed. "He made the point that more than 10 per cent of those killed in Katyn were Jewish officers."

This focus took on special meaning when post-Communist Poland began re-examining its history without Communist censorship.

Long-simmering confrontations erupted: Some Jews felt Poles were too sympathetic to Hitler's Final Solution; some Poles insisted that their suffering



Polish President Lech Kaczynski, left, at a 2008 Chanukah candle-lighting ceremony at the presidential palace, with Rabbi Michael Schudrich, holding a candle. (PHOTOGRAPH: WARSAW JEWISH COMMUNITY)

under Hitler was ignored by Jews. There were condemnations of Jewish-Communist collaboration, and of Polish Catholic disdain for Jews.

All along, the conservative Kaczynski, from the Law and Justice Party, did what he could to bring the two sides together.

"I would never vote for his party, I have leftist views," said Oskar Skuteli, a member of Zoom, a Polish youth organisation. "But the amount of things that Kaczynski did for Jews had never been done before by a leftist government. He was even called a Jewish agent by the radical right."

To be sure, there were bumps in the road to Polish-Jewish reconciliation that still have not been quite smoothed over. For a short period, the Law and Justice Party partnered in a government coalition with the League of Polish Families, whose members have been accused of anti-Semitic rhetoric.

Kaczynski also never fully turned his back on Radio Maryja, a Catholic fringe broadcaster who accused Jews of terrorising Poland with demands for property restitution.

Progressive Jews also found some of Kaczynski's social positions disdainingful. He twice banned gay pride marches in Warsaw, citing fears that homosexuals were trying to "spread their lifestyle".

But few would deny that Kaczynski, along with others who worked to preserve Jewish culture and died in the plane crash, collectively represented a brain trust of Jewish-Polish-Israeli relations.

"Kaczynski and those around him, they are not replaceable," said Monika Krawczyk, CEO of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland. "His approach to Jewish issues has to do with his personal experience and convictions. We hope for people similarly sensitive, but they will not be the same."

For now, the speaker of the Polish Parliament, Bronislaw Komorowski, assumes the presidency until elections are held in two months. Komorowski is one of several top candidates for the post. All are likely to continue Kaczynski's path of Polish-Jewish reconciliation, observers say. (JTA)

The man who exposed Mohammed al-Durrah blood libel

DAVID SAKS

CHARGING the Jews with the merciless slaughter of innocent gentile children, has historically been an especially potent form of anti-Semitic incitement.

This was why the image of the doomed Mohammed al-Durrah cowering terrified behind a barrel by his frantic father's side amidst a hail of Israeli bullets, proved to be so devastating a propaganda weapon for the Palestinians at the start of the "Second Intifada" in September 2000.

Al-Durrah rapidly became a worldwide icon, a Palestinian Hector Pieteron who likewise was mown down by the agents of a brutal regime. His martyrdom inspired numerous reprisal attacks, not just on Israelis, but on Jews worldwide.

One of them was the journalist Daniel Pearl. In the video showing his beheading, the image of Mohammed al-Durrah and his father, is clearly visible in the background.

It was the French television station France II that was responsible for releasing the harrowing footage to the world. From the start, there were some who questioned the authenticity of the incident.

One of the earliest objections raised was that the bullets that supposedly killed the boy, were

not coming - indeed, could not have come - from where the Israeli soldiers were alleged to be positioned.

A German television programme casting doubts on the affair, amongst other things compared the boy in the footage to the one subsequently shown in a Gaza morgue and demonstrated that they were not one and the same. (Later, it emerged that the corpse had been received several hours before the alleged shooting even took place).

Still, although questions were mounting, the original France II version of what took place at Netzarim Junction on September 30 2000, remained largely unchallenged.

What really proved decisive in exposing it as a gruesome propaganda hoax from start to finish - the "Best Picture" Oscar of the "Pollywood" industry - was the tireless investigative work and bulldog tenacity of French journalist Philippe Karsenty.

Just before this Pesach, Karsenty was brought out to South Africa by the SA Zionist Federation to speak about the Al-Durrah affair, and on the topic of politically motivated media fraud in general. He addressed large audiences in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, as well as meeting with journalists, lay leaders and media activists.

Speaking at Beyachad on March 23, Karsenty went through the key arguments he had presented to the French court in a successful bid to have his previous conviction for libel overturned.

From the outset, he stressed that none of the sources he used had ever been contested, not even by France II.

He then systematically demonstrated how, once subjected to rigorous scrutiny the Palestinian version of events as broadcast by France II (with former Israeli photo-journalist Charles Enderlin doing the script and voice-over) rapidly crumbled.

If, as the Palestinian cameraman insisted, Israeli soldiers fired "hundreds" of bullets at the trapped couple for over 45 minutes, why were there only eight bullet holes in the wall afterwards? Why, moreover, did ballistic evidence reveal that even those could not possibly have been fired from where the soldiers were (supposedly) positioned?

The father was said to have received 12 bullet wounds, mostly in his right arm, yet it was with this same bullet-riddled arm that he was shown frantically waving to the soldiers to stop shooting.

True, he had subsequently been able to show various scars on his



arm, but these, as the Israeli doctor who treated him testified, had been from a previous operation.

And always present was the nagging question of why there was no blood, either during the actual shooting or even on the very spot immediately after the father and son had been removed?

Particularly damning was how even in the footage actually broadcast, the "dead" boy was seen to raise his head briefly and peek at the camera before slumping down again.

A crucial aspect of Karsenty's court case was obtaining the raw footage from which the report was compiled. Given what this revealed, it was not surprising that the station dragged its heels in making this available.

The footage showed typical "Pollywood" faked scenes being set up in the vicinity (such as a man being "shot" and an ambulance pulling up less than two seconds after he hit the ground).

In one faked scene, Mohammed

al-Durrah and his father can be seen in the background sitting behind the soon-to-be-famous barrel, waiting their turn to be filmed.

What greatly hampered the efforts of Karsenty and others to expose the hoax, was the extraordinarily diffident attitude of the Israeli army and government. The original Israeli reaction had been

to apologise and promise to institute an investigation.

Even when evidence about what really happened was mounting, it provided little help. Indeed, the fact that the Israeli army had up until then declined to help Karsenty, was used to justify the original court verdict finding him guilty of libel in 2006.

Karsenty regards Israel's failure to expose and publicise the hoax right from the start as a huge mistake. It was because the Palestinians had got away with this and other hoaxes that the world at large could be continually convinced of Israel's supposed guilt.

As Karsenty put it: "Mohammed al-Durrah had a child, and that child is the Goldstone Report."

He believed that as a result, the international mood against Israel was as bad as it had been against South Africa in the last days of the apartheid era.

AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

CHINA ON BOARD FOR IRAN SANCTIONS

WASHINGTON - China will join efforts to sanction Iran, US officials have said

Obama administration officials announced the breakthrough on Monday during a summit in Washington on containing the threat of nuclear terrorism. Ben Rhodes, a deputy national security adviser to the White House, said a new set of UN Security Council sanctions would be ready within "a matter of weeks".

The announcements came after President Barack Obama met with Chinese President Hu Jintao.

China, one of five veto-wielding members of the Security Council, was the final holdout. It's not clear how strong sanctions approved by China would be; China remains one of Iran's major trading partners, particularly in the energy sector.

US officials have spoken of expanding the existing Security Council list of individuals and entities subject to international financial and travel sanctions, and of targeting Iran's banks.

The Obama administration has asked Congress to delay passage of punishing unilateral sanctions until it exhausted efforts to expand international sanctions. The Congressional sanctions target third parties that deal with Iran, raising objections from some of the countries that otherwise are ready to co-operate on international sanctions targeting only Iranian entities. (JTA)

OBAMA MEETS WITH KING ABDULLAH

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama and Jordan's King Abdullah discussed Iran's nuclear programme during a bilateral meeting.

At the meeting on Monday, part of the two-day Nuclear Security Summit, the two leaders agreed on the importance of strengthening the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Obama stressed the importance of international efforts, such as sanctions, to pressure Iran, while Abdullah argued for resolving the issue through diplomatic avenues.

The two also discussed how to advance Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace, elections in Iraq and Jordan's efforts to improve conditions for the people of Afghanistan. (JTA)

West Bank settlers a simmering powder keg in ME, says Slier

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY
MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

IT WAS only a matter of time before there was another war with Gaza, Hezbollah or Iran, South African-born journalist Paula Slier now based in Israel, told a session of The Living Newspaper, adding: "It's not exactly a safe time now in Israel."

Slier is a correspondent for Russian television, covering the Middle East and the Balkans for Russia Today, a 24-hour news channel in English, broadcasting from Russia.

Recounting her experiences in the field, she said she "probably" was afraid when entering an area like Jenin, "but I would never tell them that I am Jewish. I am South African and the Palestinians have a high regard for South Africans - I never have problems being able to talk to them."

On the release of Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier captured by Hamas, Slier said that many Israelis felt that the release of 1 000 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the kidnapped Israeli soldier was a price that was "just too high to pay. We were told he's in Gaza and that the Israelis know where he is, but he is underground with four or five suicide bombers, so if they try any rescue operation, he's going to be killed."

"Nobody really knows what to do - it's not that Israel has forgotten about him," she said.

"I think Gaza is getting worse," she stated. "They talk about Al-Qaida operating there."

Slier said that the 400 000 Israelis living in the West Bank were "much more passionate" than those who had been



Avron Kaplan, convener of The Living Newspaper; Tania Jacobson; journalist for Russian television, Paula Slier and Lulu Peelle, at the session addressed by Slier.

evacuated from Gaza. "They say: 'What you saw in Gaza is nothing compared to the resistance we're going to give', if attempts are made to evacuate them."

"They have their own anthem, they're going to become a new Israel," Slier warned. "They call themselves the 'Land of Israel' as opposed to the 'State of Israel'."

Turning her attention to Lebanon, Slier noted that the 40 000 Palestinians living in refugee camps there were forbidden to practise 73 professions "so that they don't become too comfortable and not want to return to Israel". Entering the country soon after the 2006 war, she said the feeling was that the destruction suffered was "a fair price to pay to fight the Israeli army. Hezbollah (purportedly) gave them back their pride."

Describing as "sad" a museum created by Hezbollah out of a bunker from which soldiers had fired, she said it included a multi-media presentation of an Israeli tank, Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah screaming that they were going to kill Israelis, with Israeli mannequins lying on the floor. "There were families around saying, 'This is

fantastic, this is what our children need to see'," Slier recalled.

"After the war, it became a very dangerous country for me to go back to," she added. "Last time I went, I was told I wasn't welcome there - I don't know if they discovered Google!"

Referring to the atmosphere in Israel, she said there had been many drills in the last few months and gas masks had been handed out. "The Israeli army says there's nothing to worry about, but I can tell you, Israelis are afraid," she maintained.

"Many Israelis feel Israel has missed the boat as far as attacking Iran goes. There are several nuclear reactors and they are far beneath the ground, so they will have to send in ground forces too."

"The Israelis are going to need the permission of the United States and most analysts in Israel don't think America is ready to attack Iran right now."

On the controversial housing units being built in east Jerusalem, Slier said that the Palestinians who build the settlements "ironically, say they want the building to continue because they need the work. But they wouldn't say it on camera - they lie to their families about where they go each day."

Speaking of her time in Afghanistan, Slier, who often had to don a bullet-proof jacket and a burqa in some places, said she had spent two weeks embedded with American soldiers. "I come from a nice Jewish family in Johannesburg," she quipped. "The closest I ever got to camping was Habonim - it didn't really prepare me for an army camp in Afghanistan!"

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OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Jewish Report

The Nazi past and terrorism's present

AFTER ALL Holocaust survivors have passed on, the "guardianship" of Holocaust memory passes to generations with no direct experience of it. This will not be long coming: in Israel, for example, there are today only some 220 000 ageing survivors, down 50 000 from just two years earlier.

"Memory" of the Holocaust takes many forms: the annual "March of the Living" in Poland, which this year attracted 10 000 people to walk the three kilometres between the Auschwitz compound and Birkenau; Holocaust Day ceremonies worldwide; Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, with its archives and research; poignant personal gestures such as the grandchildren of an 83-year-old survivor living in Beth Shemesh, Israel, who had their arms tattooed with the same number - 157621 - that was branded on his right arm in Auschwitz; and others.

Recorded voices of survivors such as Hanna Weiss, quoted in Ha'aretz this week, are precious: "I left Auschwitz alive. I feel that I triumphed. I have had a full, rich life. Every day that a person lives is a holiday."

Children of survivors are born into a paradoxical reality. Dan Bar-On, an Israeli psychoanalyst and expert on post-Holocaust generations, says: "My parents' generation grew up in a world without a Holocaust... but for us there could be no such world."

Indeed. For people born after 1945, the world is permanently scarred by it. Previous generations grew up when such a thing was unthinkable - a more ideal world.

We must take to heart the words of Eva Hoffman, author of the book "After Such Knowledge", a daughter of Polish parents who had survived with the help of gentle neighbours, but whose entire families perished.

She wrote: "And yet, unless we want to fall into permanent melancholia or nihilistic despair, we cannot take the Holocaust as the norm that governs human lives."

Could there be another Holocaust? Increasing reference is made today to Iran as a potential new source, with its alleged aspirations towards nuclear weaponry and vows to annihilate Israel. The Iranian Fars news agency reported on Tuesday that Iran would join the "world nuclear club" within a month.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned about Iran at the official ceremony for Holocaust Remembrance Day last Sunday: "The world gradually accepts Iran's statements of destruction against Israel and we still do not see the necessary international determination to stop Iran from arming."

The comparison is misleading. It implies Jews need to flee Israel, as those who were able to escape fled Nazi Europe. On the contrary, the Jewish State of Israel is unlike European Jewish communities who were defenceless against the Nazis.

Israel can protect itself and act - as it did at Entebbe in 1976 - to protect Jews elsewhere. If there had been an Israel during the Second World War to rescue Jews, European Jewry's fate would have been very different.

Israel's creation was triggered by the murder of the six million Jews. Without the guilt feelings of nations who failed to stop it, the UN General Assembly would not have reached the necessary majority for the partition resolution of November 1947.

Now, six decades later, the guilt has subsided. Israel is on its own, its allies' support based more on "interests" than guilt. The country needs to be strong to defend itself and Jews elsewhere.

Terrorism is our era's new threat, nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists our nightmare. US President Barack Obama this week hosted leaders of 47 countries in Washington - the biggest such gathering since the Second World War - to seek ways of keeping nuclear material from terrorist hands. Obama has hailed the meeting as a resounding success.

Pakistan's stockpile of nuclear warheads, for example, is believed to face "immense" threats from theft or attack.

Eva Hoffman sounds a warning about terrorism: "If September 11 was not September 1, 1939, was it perhaps November 9, 1938 - a Kristallnacht of a globalised world, with the shattering of glass effected across borders, rather than within the country of terror's origin?"

"Or was it, even more worryingly, something like 1933, an early warning signal whose real meanings would not emerge for several years?"

Is South Africa a future Zimbabwe?



**BARBARIC
YAWP**
David Saks

IS SOUTH Africa in the process of being Zimbabwefied? Not too long ago, even to ask such a question would lay one open to charges of Afro-pessimism and worse, but no longer.

The parallels that are emerging are simply too in-your-face to be ignored. There is in common the all-pervasive and apparently out of control corruption, a de facto emergence of exculpatory immunity for law-breakers when they are politically well connected, seriously deteriorating public services and infrastructure and political stagnation resulting from the dominance of a single party, reliant less on its actual performance but the emotional appeal of its liberation-era mystique.

An especially disturbing parallel is how open expressions of anti-white antagonism, even when emanating from high-paced office-bearers, is being tolerated, thereby directly flying in the face of the principles of firm non-racism that underpin the Constitution in such unambiguous terms.

At worst, it manifests as possible incitement to attack and kill white farmers, already a highly vulnerable group disproportionately represented in the roll of South African murder victims since liberation.

There is, at least for the time being, another side to the story. The South African economy remains resilient, civil society vigorous and the basic institutions of democracy - an independent judiciary, freedom of the media and academia, etc - yet to be confronted with a serious challenge, some disturbing rumblings notwithstanding.

Signs of a lurch towards the low road to basket case status are real, but the situation is not irreversible. One can only hope, for the sake of nearly 50 million South Africans and countless more across our borders, that those empowered to make the big decisions will recognise the seriousness of our current malaise and take appropriate remedial action.

Many citizens of such failed states as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo at least were able to make their way to South Africa and build a

new life for themselves there, but if South Africa goes, all that remains is a long stretch of ocean culminating in Antarctica. For the subcontinent as a whole, this is make or break time.

It goes without saying that should South Africa not make it, it will be tickets for its strong, vigorous Jewish community. This would be a tragedy on many levels, given what has been achieved and how much has been invested in the future. Even so, such an eventuality would have a small silver lining.

Not on a whim has the global movement to delegitimise and isolate Israel invested so much effort in projecting a quasi-South African paradigm onto the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

By doing so, it has been able to successfully milk the legacy of moral authority that the anti-apartheid liberation movements enjoyed. Israelis correspond to the oppressive whites who wanted to keep everything for themselves at the expense of everyone else, while Palestinians are the ill-used blacks who want only to share the land in peace and equality for all.

That the ruling ANC has so fulsomely identified itself with the Palestinian cause, has helped lend an aura of moral righteousness to the latter, against which even the most pointed counter-arguments showing how the two movements differ from one another in their aims and actions, have negligible effect.

Never was the ANC's standing higher than in 1994, the year of South Africa's remarkably bloodless transition to democracy and in the ensuing years of Nelson Mandela's term of office.

Advocates of the "one-state solution" to the Middle East deadlock, make regular references to the South African example as proof of how a

host of different racial groups can overcome a deeply divided past and coexist peacefully and equally within the same territory.

If South Africans could do it, the argument goes, what's to stop Israelis and Palestinians coming to the same arrangement? And if the latter cannot do so, then it must be the fault of the Israelis who, unlike their white counterparts down south, are still stubbornly resisting facing up to the realities of their morally and materially untenable position.

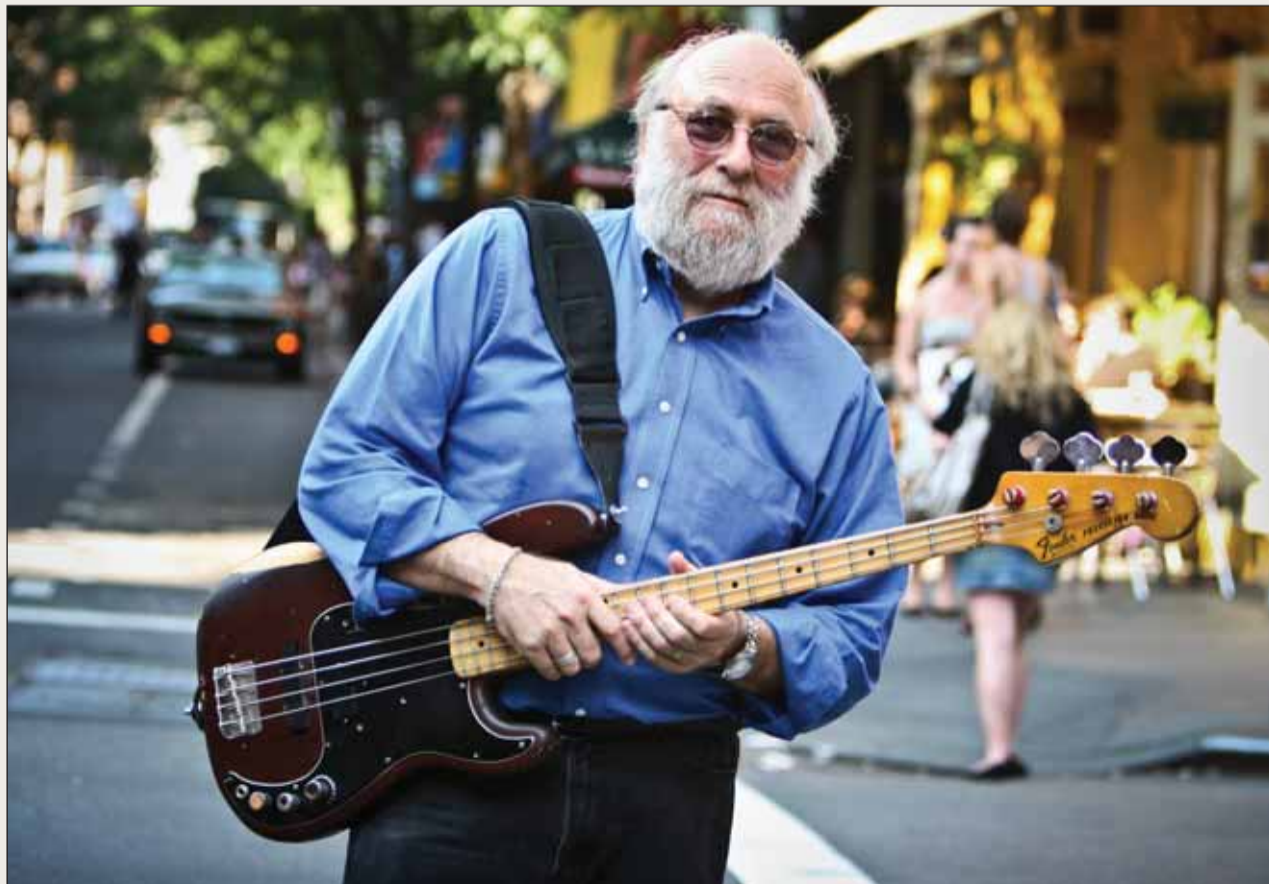
White South Africans were turned into international pariahs and boycotted across the board in order to pressurise them into doing the right thing. Now, the world must do the same against Israel.

The trouble is, when post-apartheid South Africa ceases to live up to its political miracle status and instead begins to resemble a Mugabestan in the making, all these arguments, even for those unwilling to recognise their essential speciousness, begin to have a hollow ring.

What is more, the impact of South Africa's round condemnation of Israel on international platforms is much diminished when its own shortcomings in the human rights field become too obvious to be ignored.

UN Watch, an NGO that is proving effective in exposing how the UN's mandate is being undermined by gross political bias, has done much to expose the incongruity of South Africa purporting to speak with special authority on human rights issues in view of the consistent support it has shown for the world's most egregious human rights violators on the international stage. The up-and-coming neo-conservative analyst James Kirchick, has likewise written effectively on the subject.

Should this country's domestic situation likewise become besmirched, then no amount of invoking the inspirational glories of the Mandela era will be of much use to those who wish to use the South African experience as an anti-Israel propaganda resource.

Aliyah in the golden years... **SEE STORY ON PAGE 11**

Harvey Brooks, 65, a bass guitar player who once played with Bob Dylan, is among a growing number of older American Jews making aliyah. (PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY NEFESH B'NEFESH)

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Nuclear Iran could become 1st 'suicide state'

PROFESSOR LOUIS RENE BERES

PRESIDENT BARACK Obama who has just launched a special nuclear security summit in Washington, finally acknowledges that Iranian threats to annihilate Israel are serious.

Still, Obama fails to understand that applying so-called economic sanctions to Iran will be ineffectual. Somehow, despite very good reasons to the contrary, the president is now insisting that Israel learn to "live" with a nuclear Iran.

Obama confidently assumes that Tehran could be dealt with using the normally-compelling dynamics of nuclear deterrence. The problem with such threat-based optimism, however, is the always-underlying presumption of enemy rationality. Without rationality, deterrence will fail.

No system of nuclear deterrence can operate unless all of the involved countries value their own physical survival more highly than anything else. Significantly, Tehran's new nuclear status could coincide with an unshakable leadership belief in the Shi'ite



apocalypse.

Here, Israel would face not only more Palestinian suicide-bombers (President Obama's recycled "Road Map" toward a "Two-State Solution" will only encourage Palestinian terrorism), but also a "suicide state".

Obama stubbornly fails to recognise something critical. This is the unspeakable goal of all Israel's Islamist enemies, which remains Jewish extermination. Oddly, this expressly genocidal goal is unhidden. In the bitterest of ironies, an ancient nation that was ingathered in 1948 precisely to prevent another Holocaust, has become the fevered focus of another "Final Solution".

The goal of all Israel's enemies, especially Iran and the soon-to-be-born (and Obama-favoured) Palestinian state, is to be left standing while Israel is made to disappear.

For these refractory enemies, there can be no coexistence with Israel. At the end of the day, this is because their own survival is believed to demand Israel's extinction.

Pressured by Obama to exchange land for

nothing, Israel is being pushed to collaborate in its own disappearance. Israel's prime minister should take notice. It would be a fatal mistake for Benjamin Netanyahu to embrace Obama's cheery belief that reason and rationality govern the world, a belief implicit, for example, in the president's hope for "a world free of nuclear weapons".

Obama will not save Israel. Once Iran had decided to launch nuclear missiles at Israel, perhaps a plausible prospect in just a few years, Washington's best assistance would be confined to help bury the dead. Even for this "assistance", whole Israeli cities would first have to be converted into cemeteries.

Whether in Gaza, the West Bank (Judea/Samaria) or Tehran, Israel's jihadist enemies wish to kill Jews because every such homicide is a deeply felt and genuinely sacred obligation. For them, killing Jews remains a praiseworthy expression of religious sacrifice.

Obama should bear in mind that such killing is expected to confer upon the perpetrators immunity from personal death. Could there ever be a more compelling expectation? In the Islamic Middle East, power over death always trumps all other forms of power.

There is no greater power in the Dar al Islam (the World of Islam) than the religiously-authoritative promise of immortality, and this promise is always linked to total war against "unbelievers".

The core idea of death as a zero-sum commodity - "I kill you; I therefore remain alive forever" - has already been explained in certain literatures, and in psychology.

It is captured perfectly in philosopher Ernest Becker's paraphrase of Nobel Laureate Elias Canetti: "Each organism raises its head over a field of corpses, smiles

into the sun, and declares life good."

Just to stay alive, Israel must understand what Freud inner-circle member Otto Rank once called a general principle of psychology: "The death fear of the ego is lessened by the killing, the sacrifice, of the other; through the death of the other one buys oneself free from the penalty of dying, of being killed."

Israel's enemies, to remain standing, and to prevent Israel from standing up, seek to sacrifice the Jewish State on a joyously blood-stained altar of protracted war and terror.

This planned destruction of Israel is not about geopolitics. It is integrally part of a system of religious worship that is directed toward the conquest of personal death.

True peace in the Middle East will never be brought about by political clichés and empty witticisms. Real wisdom is necessary, and this insight will need to be based upon a true awareness of jihadist goals and capabilities.

For Obama, this calls for a much deeper understanding of the interpenetrating and existential threats to Israel posed by Iran and "Palestine".

Professor Louis Rene Beres (pictured), professor of political science at Purdue, was educated at Princeton (PhD 1971). Born in Zurich, Switzerland, at the end of the Second World War, he is the author of many major books, monographs and articles dealing with international law, strategic theory, Israeli nuclear policy, and regional nuclear war. In Israel, where he served as chairman of "Project Daniel", his work is known to selected military and intelligence communities.

• This article is the author's personal opinion and is not the opinion or policy of the newsgroup "Myths and Facts", who distributed it.

Making aliyah in the golden years

DINA KRAFT
TEL AVIV

IN 1948, Harold Levine of the Flatbush neighbourhood of Brooklyn was rumbling through Israel's Negev Desert in a mobile dental clinic servicing recruits of the fledgling Israeli army.

He did not know it would take him more than 60 years to fulfil his dream of making the country his home.

Last December, Levine finally made aliyah. Now 85 and living in Jerusalem, Levine is one of a growing category of immigrants from the United States: senior citizens. Some, like Levine, nurtured Zionist dreams of living in Israel over a lifetime and have refused to let age get in the way of that vision. Motivating many is an additional bonus: joining children and grandchildren who already have moved to Israel.

"It's very exciting and fulfilling to be here, and I'm enjoying the process of getting settled," said Levine, whose two sons and their families live here. "It's another adventure."

It's not his first here. The now-retired orthodontist helped smuggle weapons, including rifles and handguns, and primitive radar equipment for the Jewish fighting forces onto the freighter he sailed here on in 1948.

Nefesh B'Nefesh, the organisation that oversees North American immigration to Israel, says it has seen a gradual rise over the past four years in the number of older people making aliyah from North America.

Joy Epstein, clinical supervisor for Nefesh B'Nefesh's department of social services, which counsels seniors before they arrive on how to choose where to live, their finances and how to navigate the Israeli medical system, says these immigrants come from a range of financial backgrounds, ranging from the wealthy to those dependent on social security checks.

The US recession has played a role in the decision of some to make aliyah, she said: There are those who decide that if they are going to live with a measure of financial insecurity, it might as well be in Israel, where they have long wanted to live.

Once here, older olim tended to tap into a rich cultural scene of concerts, classes and travel, often geared specifically for English speakers, Epstein said. Many enrol in ulpan Hebrew-language classes. One ulpan in Jerusalem caters to older English-speaking olim, who meet for classes three times a week for almost a year.

Among the recent arrivals to Israel is Harvey Brooks, 65, a well-known bass guitar player who once played alongside such musical legends as Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, the Doors and BB King. He says he

caught the Zionist bug from his wife of 21 years, who for years took her daughters to Israel on backpacking trips and whose eldest daughter now lives here.

Through repeated visits, he became comfortable in Israel, and last summer he and his wife made aliyah from Tucson, Arizona.

"I'm very relaxed here. I'm with my people," Brooks said. Although he is not religious, Brooks said he felt spiritually connected to Judaism after long years where he felt music was his only religion. He's been checking in with the local Israeli music scene, meeting musicians, and he'll be performing at a well-known club next month.

His wife, Bonnie, who continues to work in film production and had contemplated aliyah earlier in life, said they embraced the idea together of making such a big change.

"When it comes to deciding how to spend your last 25 years, what do you have to lose?" she said.

Eighty-eight-year-old Frances Greenberg waited a very long time to immigrate.

She had first thought she was coming when she boarded the ill-fated Exodus ship in 1947 along with some 4 500 other Holocaust survivors. At the time, she was alone in the world, the sole survivor of her Polish Jewish family. She stared out in disbelief when the British authorities, then in charge of Palestine, forced the ship to sail back to Europe. The ship docked in Hamburg, Germany.

Greenberg remembers the sinking feeling at being turned back.

"I didn't believe it. I thought it couldn't happen after all this," she said. "I realised we really were wandering Jews."

In Hamburg, Greenberg, suffering from bad stomach pains, was taken to a hospital where she was reunited with a boyfriend who had wanted to go to the United States, not Palestine. He found her in the hospital and announced: "Francis, you've suffered enough," and promptly told her they would marry and move to Pittsburgh where he had family.

Two years ago, soon after her husband died, Greenberg made aliyah herself. She knew she would eventually make it here, and she joins a daughter who immigrated here many years ago.

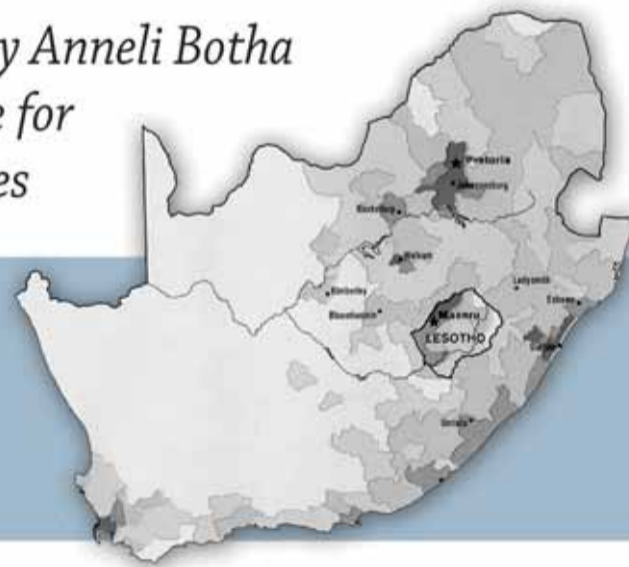
"It's not easy after all these years living in America, but I'm settling down here slowly," she said, then joked that she could not afford to acclimate too slowly at her age.

Living in an independent living community in Ra'anana, near Tel Aviv, she attends an ulpan, but gets frustrated when people speak too quickly.

"It does feel different to be a citizen," Greenberg said. Tapping into her new inner Israeli she adds: "I'm just not crazy about the politics here." (JTA)

Threats to South Africa from International & Local Terrorism

Presentation by Anneli Botha
of the Institute for
Security Studies



The SA Jewish Board of Deputies invites you to a seminar on the threats to South Africa from both local and international terrorism.

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Dance Factory, Newtown: "In the Eye of the Storm", the third collaboration between Danish/Israeli Butoh experts, Anika Kristensen Barkan and Boaz Barkan and Sibikwa, on April 17 and 18, (011) 422-4359.

David Krut, Rosebank: In the Workshop, an ongoing exhibition by Ryan Arenson, "Hard Work", (011) 447-0627.

Joburg Theatre, Braamfontein: In the Mandela, Opera Africa performs "La Bohème", until April 25. In the Fringe, "Spiders and Mayonnaise" with Kurt Schoonraad, until April 24, (011) 877-6800. In the People's Theatre, Kipling's "Jungle Book", directed by Jill Gerard and Keith Smith, until April 18, (011) 403-1563.

Market, Newtown: In the Laager, Patrick Marber's "Closer" until May 2; in the Barney Simon, "Death of a Colonialist", directed by Craig Freimond, until May 9, (011) 832-1641.

Montecasino, Fourways: In the Studio, "Unplugged: The Musicals", with Angela Kilian until April 18. In the Main Theatre, "Boeing Boeing", directed by Alan Swerdlow until May 2, (011) 511-1818.

National Children's Theatre, Parktown: Johanna Spyri's "Heidi", directed by Joyce Levinsohn, until April 17, (011) 484-1584.

Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton: "uNik" with Nik Rabinowitz, until May 1. The Friday concerts feature a recital of Zigeuner (gypsy) music with Miro Chakarayan (violin) and Jacob Swart (piano) on April 16, and Candis Angelene (soprano) and Mark Cheyne (piano) in concert on April 23, (011) 883-8606.

RCHCC, Oaklands: Caren Arenstein, Lesley Jasven and Miriam Perkel show new work, until April 29, (011) 728-8088.

Theatre on the Track, Kyalami: "High Notes", under the musical direction of Bryan Schimmel, featuring the musical skills of Oshy Tugendhaft; Mark Samowitz; Elan Lea; Adam Pelkowitz; Adam Davis; and Adam Golding, as well as international stars Liron Lev and Hananel Edri, on April 19, in honour of Yom Ha'atzmaut, (011) 645-2500.

Wits, Braamfontein: In the Amphitheatre, until April 24, John Kani directs "Othello". In the Theatre, Gina Shmukler directs "Songs for a New World", until April 24, (011) 717-1380.

Butoh - where dancers improvise from their emotions

ROBYN SASSEN
PHOTOGRAPH BY
RUPHIN COUDYZER

TWO YEARS ago, South African dance audiences were privileged to see an unusual cross-pollination of dance ideologies, bringing together Japanese, Israeli, Danish and South African values.

This is Butoh, under the tutelage of Israeli-born Feldenkrais, practitioner Boaz Barkan and his Danish wife, Anika Kristensen Barkan, danced by the Barkans themselves and members of Benoni-based Sibikwa.

Founded in Japan by Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno in 1959, Butoh grew out of European post-war avant-gardism and represented aesthetic and emotional values corresponding with post-Hiroshima trauma.

Known as "body weather", Butoh offers no idle-by-rote dance steps - the dancers improvise from their emotions, using every muscle and organ, including eyes and tongues to express themselves.

Sibikwa's artistic director, Phyllis Klotz first encountered Butoh in 1996 in Los Angeles through Boaz, her second cousin. Time passed, vague plans were made; nothing was ratified.

In 2006, Boaz "googled" Phyllis. The rest is dance history. The Barkans

had "an incredible urge to come to Africa"; in spite of no budget, they made it happen.

They're back, with "Eye of the Storm", a piece freshly workshopped, to be accompanied by the Sibikwa Arts African Indigenous Orchestra led by Neo Leleka, which includes rare African instruments like mokhoyani, uhadi, stolotolo and dinaka panpipes as well as the more popular marimba and djembe.

The orchestra was taught by Geoff Tracey, of the famous Grahamstown-based Tracey family, whose grandfather, Hugh founded the Indigenous Library of African Music in 1954.

Geoff gave them particular emphasis in horn work; when you think horns, cast your mind aside from French or English ones. These are kudu horns, producing a sound not unlike that of the shofar.

It is a mixed Butoh bill, featuring not only a collaborative piece, but four solos and a new work by Sibikwa Arts Dance's new artistic director and company manager, Cherise Mangiagalli.

The solos have been designed and choreographed by Sibikwa's dancers who first encountered Butoh in 2007 and have been building on their skills with the discipline since. Boaz elaborated: "In



Anika Kristensen Barkan and Freddy Zwane in "In the Wake of the Body", workshopped and performed in 2007.

Butoh in the US and Japan, practitioners are expected to generate their own solos every three to four months."

Adds Magiagalli: "We aim to create a unique Butoh aesthetic specific to Sibikwa. It interweaves African and contemporary dance values."

Dancer Freddy Zwane shares his own experiences: "Unlike traditional South African dance which has much energy, Butoh internalises values."

His colleague, Taemane Mothosi agrees. "It is like understanding your body from the inside out."

Boaz acknowledges: "Most Butoh practitioners in Denmark have never slaughtered an animal - or touched anything raw. These South

African dancers, bring an embodied memory of what it feels like to touch these things, to engage with a raw reality.

"The first time we worked with Sibikwa, many dancers wanted to be involved. But as time passed, many decided it was too scary, and that it probes too many boundaries.

"Life experience enables and strengthens a Butoh performer. Rawness is what we seek - many Butoh masters go out of the city to get closer to their own sense of self. Sibikwa's performers' willingness to experience new things is fresh and inspiring."

"Eye of the Storm" is at the Dance Factory, on April 17, 18, (011) 422-4359.

Farcical scenes galore as chickens come home to roost

Show: Boeing Boeing (Pieter Toerien's Montecasino Theatre, Fourways, (011) 511-1818)

Writer: Marc Camoletti

Director: Alan Swerdlow

Cast: Alan Committie, Robert Fridjhon, Jo Galloway, Bronwyn Leigh Gottwald, Louise Saint-Claire, Nina Lucy Wylde

Until: May 2

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA KENNEDY

IF EVER you needed convincing to avoid polygamy - or even infidelity - like the plague, the uproarious farce Boeing Boeing provides a thousand good reasons to stay faithful, or risk getting yourself into a right pickle.

Based on a classic French farce, Boeing Boeing is literally about just that: one artful bachelor "boing-boinging" between three lissome air hostesses from three different airlines.

It's an utterly daft premise, and the resulting on-stage high jinks are way beyond the realm of probability - but it's handled so deftly by the seasoned performers and impressive newcomers that you'll happily go along for the implausible ride.

Despite the two-act show stretching on a bit too long, award-winning director Alan Swerdlow holds the



Tying himself in telephone cord knots: Robert (Alan Committie) with the nanny of his friend Bernard, played by beehive-adorned Louise Saint-Claire. (PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY MONTECASINO)

strings and maintains the tempo so adroitly that you won't find yourself getting fidgety while the merry mayhem plays out on stage.

South Africans love a good farce, with its multiple pratfalls, contrivances and general tomfoolery. They will not be disappointed with Boeing Boeing, which was recently revived to great acclaim on the West End and Broadway, and the South

African production, with tweaks by the cast and director, is set to replicate that success.

It was once listed by the Guinness Book of Records as the most performed French play in the world - and one can see why. The humour may be a touch smarter than your usual sledgehammer slapstick, but don't let that fool you: it's still laugh-out-loud funny.

Robert Fridjhon - who previously played a cad visiting old squeezes in Some Girls - features as Bernard, an architect living in Paris.

Cool as a cucumber, this suave urban sophisticate juggles three "fiancées" simultaneously - relying on flight timetables and an uber-efficient but grumpy maid (a bewigged and bespectacled Saint-Claire) to keep his unofficial harem up in the air and blissfully oblivious of one another's existence. Talk about taking advantage of the city of love!

Enter his "country bumpkin" chum, Robert (Committie), who cannot disguise his incredulity at how Bernard manages his triple shot of bombshells. Robert is a fumbling, bumbling, nervous type who has a tendency to walk into doors and trip over pouffes. He's not exactly a hit with the ladies - but that's all about to change.

Bernard thinks he has everything in control in stringing along Gabriella the Italian (Gottwald), Gloria the American (Galloway) and Gretchen the German (Wylde). One takes off, another lands, another is in the air - and ne'er the three shall meet. Except in the world of high farce, of course!

Thanks to the introduction of the new super-fast Boeing planes, the flight attendants suddenly find themselves with more time on their hands, and guess who they want to spend it with? No prizes for guessing that these three chickens come home to roost - all at the same time.

What follows is a chucklesome romp in which physical comedy and mind-boggling mix-ups take centre stage, with the actors handling the jolly pandemonium with finesse.

As with many farces, there are multiple doors in the set - seven, to be exact - which swing open and closed at strategic times as the misunderstandings and cover-ups escalate.

It's all very over the top, with every last drop of satire squeezed out of this way-out scenario, but is skillfully managed by all concerned and makes for delightfully silly, shambolic fun. Will Casanova get his comeuppance? You betcha!

FELDMAN
ON FILM

Peter Feldman

PICK OF THE WEEK

The Prophet (un Prophète)

Cast: Tahar Rahim; Niels Arestrup; Adel Bencherif; Hichem Yacoubi; Reda Kateb; Jean-Philippe Ricci; Gilles Cohen; and Antoine Basler

Director: Jacques Audiard (French with English sub-titles)

There have been a slew of films dealing with life in prison, but few have been as gruelling and as riveting as this superb French production.

It is the story, painfully put together with a great eye for detail, of 19-year-old Arab

immigrant Malik El Djebena (Tahar Rahim) who is condemned to spend six years in a tough French prison. He cannot read or write and this is the first time he has been exposed to this brutal world.

Arriving at the jail entirely alone, he appears younger and more fragile than the other convicts, but he has an astute mind and is keen to learn the ropes. Cornered by Cesar (a brilliant depiction by Niels Arestrup), the leader of the Corsican gang who is the real power in the prison, Malik is given a number of "missions" to carry out, which he does successfully.

His first one is to murder a mob informant and if he refuses or fails he will be killed himself. It's a dilemma he has never faced before.

His servitude serves to toughen him up and as he gains the leader's confidence, he begins plotting a course of action that will eventually place him at the very top of the heap.

Though Jacques Audiard's production is long, with some acute observations on the social, moral and political dimensions of prison life, it never feels excessive or indulgent as it

records the vigorous process the character undergoes in his spiritual and physical transformation. His education is a lesson in blood.

It would be easy to compare this film with the popular American TV series "Oz", but it's far more cerebral in its approach and closer in tone to presenting, perhaps, a Gallic version of "Goodfellas".

What transpires here is a thoroughly absorbing, even poetic, tale that's gripping and exciting. In one harrowing scene Malik learns a killing technique in which he has to place a sharp razor blade in his mouth - and the practice sessions in his cell are shown in bloody detail.

Tahar Rahim convinces as Malik, but of all the characters it is Cesar who is the most fascinating. He provides the face of a lifetime of moral corruption, of evil choices, yet in his eyes one detects a residue of humanity.

"The Prophet" has reaped a number of top French awards and was nominated for an Oscar in the Best Foreign Film category. It's easy to see why.

TAPESTRY

ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

Dream comes true through grit, despite ridicule

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer (HarperCollins, R199,95)

REVIEWED BY GWEN PODBREY

BORN AND raised in a tiny rural community in Malawi, Kamkwamba - the only son among several siblings - is the son of a huge, hard-drinking, but good-natured Chewa maize and tobacco farmer nicknamed "The Pope" for his comparatively moral lifestyle during his youth, and a Yao mother.

Like all the other children in his village, Kamkwamba grew up immersed in Chewa superstition, dreading the "witch planes" (flying vessels piloted by sorcerers) that threatened unwary souls. Life was an unchanging cycle of planting, harvesting, lessons and boyish pursuits.

Except that Kamkwamba, from a very young age, showed an avid interest in mechanics, science and - above all - electricity, something enjoyed by only two per cent of Malawi's population. Fascinated by the mechanics of bicycles, transistor radios, magnets and cars, the boy revelled in school, where teachers could satisfy his curiosity.

However, Kamkwamba's scholastic career was dogged by misfortune. As first drought, then severe famine and disease descended on rural Malawi in 2001, small farmers like his father were devastated. The book describes, unforgettably, the starvation which drove the Kamkwambas and their neighbours to grovel in the mud for anything even remotely edible: insects, ashes, grass blades, even wood shards.

Without the means to feed his family, let alone pay school fees, Kamkwamba's humiliated father was forced to stop his son's education.

For the 14-year-old boy, this brought a keen awareness that his future was being scripted by forces beyond his control.

"I couldn't blame my father for the famine or our troubles. But... I [also] could not look him in the eyes. Whenever I did, I saw the rest of my life. My greatest fear was coming true: I would end up just like him, another poor Malawian farmer labouring in the soil," he recalls.

The situation was exacerbated by Malawi's (then) president, Bakili Maluzi, who not only withdrew all agricultural aid to the country's farmers, but - while scores of its people died each day - flatly denied that there was a famine at all.

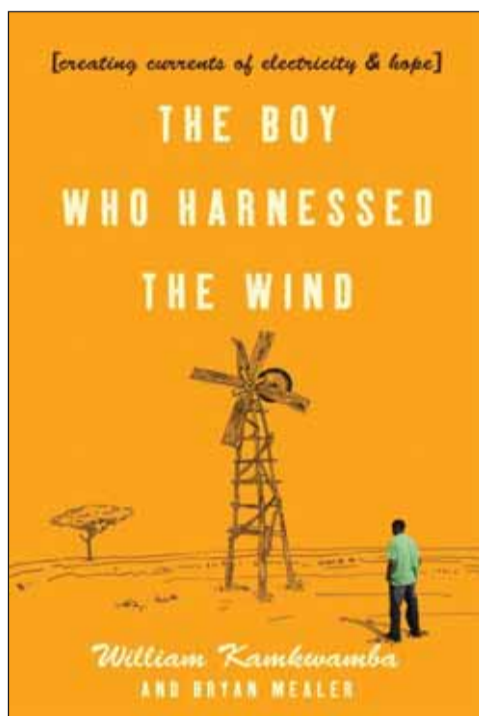
Kamkwamba's daily battle for survival makes shattering reading: a fight between two of his younger sisters for a scrap of food; his scavenging for meat off a fly-infested goat skin; the gradual swelling and aching of his body.

Yet he remained desperate to continue his education. Unable to attend school he might be, but he still had access to the tiny school library - a makeshift shack comprising three shelves of old, discarded American textbooks. Poring over these, Kamkwamba came across one entitled "Using Energy", which eventually changed his life.

The book contained a very rudimentary explanation of power principles, and included a diagram of a windmill. Kamkwamba's fascination quickly turned into obsession.

"The blades on the windmill were driven by the wind... I could have light... With a windmill, I could stay awake at night reading instead of going to bed at seven with the rest of Malawi. But most important, a windmill could also rotate a pump for water and irrigation...

"A windmill could also provide my family with a year-round garden... No more skipping breakfast; no more dropping out of school... I knew if windmills existed on



the cover of that book, it meant another person had built them. [And] I felt confident I could build one too."

Yet, the obstacles were endless: firstly, the book - written in English - contained phrases Kamkwamba could not understand. Continually referring to a dictionary, the 14-year-old battled to translate them. Even then, his lack of scientific knowledge presented further problems, to be overcome purely by trial and error.

Then came the enormous task of sourcing materials. Kamkwamba began scouring the local scrapyards, amassing metal, plastic, rubber and discarded bicycle spokes and chains to begin a laborious assembly of parts.

Lacking even nails and screwdrivers, he continually improvised - with brilliant imagination - using whatever nature and the community provided. Old maize cobs doubled as hammers; rubber from his flip-flops was used for insulation material; abandoned spades, drainage pipes and tractor fans were cleaned, heated over a small bush fire and then moulded and adapted. The boy's inventiveness and resourcefulness make one gasp.

There was another problem, too: the taunts of the villagers, to whom the sight of the youngster, running around with all manner of old, rusted scraps and boughs pulled off bluegum trees, was both ridiculous and objectionable. Yet, unfazed, Kamkwamba persevered.

So it came to pass that one day, Kamkwamba completed his bizarre, makeshift construction - and it worked, bringing first light, then water to his impoverished community. News of his accomplishment quickly spread beyond Malawi's borders. Within months, the boy was a celebrity, with his windmill mounted in the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry.

A 2007 TED Global Fellow, he is now a student at the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg and will take up a bursary to an American college in due course. He has been profiled in the Wall Street Journal and his story will also soon be filmed.

In a world accustomed to reading only bad news from this continent - poverty, disease, corruption and political tyranny - this is an African story that includes all of those things, but is also a tale of such courage and ingenuity that it frequently reduces one to tears.

"If you want to make it, all you have to do is try," declares Kamkwamba.

Written with humility, wry humour and disarming candour, it should be obligatory reading for all.

Writers at Wits in for a WALE of a time

OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE WITS Arts and Literature Experience (WALE) 2010 on next week, is billed as a platform for stimulating interaction with some of the country's best writers.

Wits Writers Live, book launches and panel discussions by the Wits University Press and Pan Macmillan are just some of the literature-focused events taking place. Also part of the programme is Writing an Artist: a Wits Writing Centre Experiment that puts the writing of several young literary risk-takers in the spotlight.

Wits Writers Live offers the chance to get up-close-and-personal with four writers from the MA Creative Writing Seminar: Jacqui Aires, author of *Girlhood*; Rehana Rossouw, Financial Mail Features Editor; renowned television scriptwriter Rohan Dickson; and Ingrid Hurwitz will read from their creative writing projects.

They will also engage with each other and the audience in a discussion chaired by Prof Leon de Kock, head of the School of Literature and Language Studies (SLLS) and convener of the MA in Creative Writing.

SLLS Authors in Conversation turns the spotlight on four authors from the School of

Literature and Language Studies whose works have been published over the past year. The authors, Veronique Tadjó, Chris Thurman, Leon de Kock and Judith Inggs, will engage with each other and the audience about their new books.

Pan Macmillan is using WALE 2010 as a platform to celebrate a trio of recently published books - *The State We're In: The 2010 Flux Trend Review* (ed) Dion Chang, *Last Summer* by Craig Higginson and *The Emperor Can Wait* by Emma Chen.

Wits University Press is also making its presence felt at WALE this year with a series of joint panel discussions and book launches that use three newly published works to get to the heart of several key issues currently facing South Africa.

Writing an Artist: a Wits Writing Centre Experiment brings together writings by Amanda Kenqu, Tapuwa Moore, Kgaogelo Lekota, Vuyo Seripe, Boitumelo Matlala, Mbongisi Dyantyi and Jennifer Musangi. Each has written pieces engaging with one artistic icon. The stories will have in common a reflection of the same fashionable artistic presence.

• WALE 2010 is at Wits University, in Braamfontein April 21 - 24. See www.wale.co.za

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Religious leaders and also others, should value the sovereign State of Israel

MOTTY SACKS
(In his personal capacity)



SEVERAL YEARS ago I was privileged to serve as chairman of Maccabi Golf in South Africa. During my term in office, a resolution of discontent was passed at a provincial membership meeting, objecting to the amount of the annual Maccabi membership subscription.

"Its ridiculous!" declared one of the members. "We pay Maccabi R50 every year, but what do we get for it?"

Quite obviously, the pride of identity and belonging, the affinity with fellow Maccabi members, the bonds of kinship, and the affiliation with Jewish sociability, was of little value to these people and this, without considering the golfing privileges facilitated by Maccabi, the regional and national tournaments, the traditional Trophy events, the Maccabi Games selection opportunities, and so many other institutional and relationship advantages.

This type of self-absorbed and mercenary complaint is unfortunately not inconsistent with the arrogance and presumption contained in letters to the Jewish Report, which articulate the sacrosanct right and entitlement by South African Jews, to criticise the State of Israel for aspects of its custom and governance.

So, in similar vein, to quote one of your recent letter writers (with some licence): "It's ridiculous," writes one of your readers, "we pay the IUA R50 every year, but what do we get for it?"

So let's consider that on one theme alone.

Since Israel's birth in 1948, Jews have made astounding, observable and acclaimed progress in the Western world in virtually every sector of endeavour, in business, in politics, in the professions, in the United Nations, and perhaps most paramount, in the visible and overt communication and expression of its religious rituals.

Prior to 1948, however, and for centuries before that, Jews may have made transient advances in society in certain places, but Jewish success was always fragile and anxious and its religious worship and practice was deliberately cautious, discreet and unobtrusive.

With the Jewish National State restored to its people and the immediate opportunities presented to Jews everywhere in terms of the "Right of Return", Israel's national sovereignty has given Jews of the world greater freedom, greater independence, a new sense of identity and belonging and has unquestionably restored Jewish pride and dignity.

Jews have become less self-conscious about expressing their religion, have become bolder in expressing their political opinions and can now as citizens of Israel enjoy diplomatic representation, protection and commercial opportunities in most countries, a privilege unknown to any Jewish community before 1948.

Many of those who had previously treated Jews with suspicion and contempt, now regard the Jewish people with a certain respect and as the years have passed, even with admiration for their extraordinary progress and their enormous contribution to society as a whole.

Jewish people in the Diaspora have grown with pride and confidence both as individuals and as a community. Simple logic dictates that by supporting and defending the State of Israel, Jews in the Diaspora are simultaneously protecting and defending their very own freedom and liberty.

On these facts alone, it's not a bad deal for R50 per annum.

So, now let's give some thought to life as a Jew without the existence of

the State of Israel. Our experience, unfortunately, speaks for itself - a frightening 3 000 year history, hopefully never to be repeated again.

Notwithstanding the horrors of our past history and the acts of Jewish ethnic cleansing we are reminded of every day, fundamental human nature is such, that our comfort zones in South Africa and our good fortune, obscure the realities and we tend to take Israel's actuality for granted.

Support for the State of Israel is therefore not a matter of primitive ethnic solidarity, but a profound personal and collective Jewish imperative. Few Jews in South Africa appreciate the important role that a secure and sovereign State of Israel plays in their daily lives.

Given the priceless advantages that South African Jews unconsciously enjoy and extract from Israel's independence every day, too many in our community do not find it necessary to support Israel.

Can you believe that nearly 60 per cent of South African synagogue and Jewish school membership will not sing Hatikvah, will refuse to recognise the Israeli flag, nor will they willingly celebrate or associate themselves with Israel-related functions, national causes and more particularly honour the State of Israel's Day of Independence (Yom Ha'atzmaut).

Tens of thousands of Jews in South Africa uncaringly fail to reciprocate the profound generosity provided by Israel to these Jewish people every day of their lives, securing their freedom, their dignity, and consequently their general prosperity.

So, where does the problem and responsibility lie? In my opinion, the problem and responsibility lies at the doors of certain of South Africa's religious leadership and their followers for their lack of recognition of Israel's sovereign importance, their rejection of the symbols and emblems of the State of Israel and generally the influence they exercise over broader communities and congregations in such matters.

I would think that simple human decency alone, would dictate a level of reciprocity to the State of Israel and for the blessings of the A-mighty, who has protected the State of Israel for more than 60 years, without those who preach and/or propagate divisive issues and who elevate and promote factors of unnecessary risk to the State of Israel's existence and sustainability.

In the face of the dangers to Jewish lives in Israel every day, including the threats for Israel's destruction by its enemies in the Middle East, it is nauseating to read the continuous condemnation, the fault finding and the ill-informed allegations against the State of Israel, consciously seeking to undermine Israel's standing and security, its rights to defend its citizens and on so many other misguided allegations of human rights abuses and breaches of codes of moral conduct.

With great respect, it's time that all the smart Alects, the smart Richards, the smart professors and certain of the supersmart religious leadership, considered the adverse consequences to Israel of their dismissive attitudes and the damage (to the delight of those who daily express the wish to exterminate us) that these critical allegations and complaints cause to the State of Israel.

The priceless advantages which the State of Israel provides to every Jew in the world, will only survive through the broadest possible community support.

Respectfully, there can be no compromise on such an obligation.

LETTERS

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

Guidelines for letters: Letters up to 400 words will get preference. Please provide your full first name and surname, place of residence, and a daytime contact telephone or cell number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.

Disclaimer: The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report

OPEN SHUHADA STREET'S 'SELF-ABSOLUTION' DOESN'T WASH

NATHAN GEFFEN makes the plea: "Let's debate, but let's stick to the rules of civil and lawful behaviour", (Jewish Report, April 9). Can this tiny band from Open Shuhada Street truly not appreciate the profound pain they have elicited within the South African Jewish community? Or are they simply so infatuated with their personal nobility and infallibility that such considerations mean nothing to them?

For the record (addressing OSS directly), let it be clearly known the anger is not about your opinions, demonstrably selective, decontextualised and biased though they are. It is about your actions: your devious and systematic attempts to publicly cast Israel as a pariah state, to sow division within the Jewish community and to undermine Israel's existence as a Jewish State free to realise her own destiny as a member of the community of nations.

You camouflage your behaviour under a cloak of a disinterested concern for human and Palestinian rights, but few buy into this self-absolution.

The picture on your website, your name, the constant references to apartheid, the exaggeration, decontextualisation and selective focus on what you perceive as "weak points", are all part of a branding exercise in pursuit of your ideological goals. In short, far from any interest in assisting Israel reach its best ideals, you are bending every sinew to reverse 150 years of Jewish self-renewal and sacrifice and the work of some of the most heroic figures in Jewish history.

Your associates in this task include the usual cadre of the gullible and psychologically obsessed. But, more importantly, you and your ilk are manna from heaven for the David Duke brand of rightwing

anti-Semites and their leftwing counterparts, Islamist fanatics and other assorted political Neanderthals in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Your claim to have the interests of the Palestinians at heart is cynical. The campaign being conducted by OSS promotes the belief among the maximalists on the Palestinian side that, with time, erosion of global support combined with internal demoralisation and other elements of a paramilitary onslaught, will result in the collapse of the Jewish State.

But the consequences of such a strategy are highly unpredictable and could be disastrous, not for the Jews only, but for the Palestinians themselves. At the very least, such illusions hinder rather than help serious negotiations towards a peaceful resolution and so delay much needed Palestinian realism and self-renewal.

You have had, and still have, ample opportunity to reconsider your stance. There are ample avenues open to anyone of goodwill and a semblance of humility to convey genuine concerns and differing perspectives in a way which promotes respectful debate and the chance of learning from one another.

But having selected the course of confrontation, can you truly wonder why your behaviour has drawn such revulsion from a wide spectrum of perspectives within the Jewish community? I do not condone personal threats or abuse, but you have chosen to throw your lot in with the Israel-baiting mob; you have no grounds for complaint.

Mike Berger
Cape Town

WE SHOULD EVERY DAY FACE OUR IMAGE IN THE MIRROR

I REFER to Toby Axelrod's JTA article in your issue of April 9, regarding Ravensbruck concentration camp for women and men.

I was incarcerated in the these camps from February 1944 until March 1945 and would like to comment as follows:

To the best of my knowledge Axelrod's article is accurate. I think that she could have cast a better perspective on this camp by mentioning that out of the estimated 132 000 women and children held there, approximately 92 000 died, in other words, three out of every four.

During most of the six years of its existence, there was no gas chamber in the camp, thus illustrating the conditions under which the inmates existed and perished.

Axelrod discusses whether such periods in history ought to be commemorated and if so, then to what purpose and how. Please allow me to comment.

Mass murders have been part of the history of most peoples on this planet and are continuing to this day. Yet, when one meets another person face to face, he or she seldom turns out to be a monster. Those of us who have experienced the conditions mentioned, will know that they can provoke uncontrollable fear and/or rage.

Once the threat or provocation has subsided, people return to normal and I am describing you and me.

How do we stop ourselves from becoming perpe-

DRAMATIC SHIFT IN RELATIONSHIP WITH ANIMALS NEEDED

AS A Jew and vegetarian, I concur with John Balcombe, renowned scientist and ethologist, that we need to reject the belief that non-humans are objects to be exploited for food and science and that we urgently need a new ethic and dramatic shift in our relationship with animals.

Nobel prize-winning Yiddish author Isaac Bashevis Singer who lived above a slaughterhouse observed: "There is only one little step from killing animals to creating gas chambers à la Hitler and concentration camps à la Stalin."

Singer saw the disturbing parallels between the systems of confinement, abuse, and slaughter of Jews and that of factory-farmed animals. While the victims are different - except in their ability to feel pain, love, joy, fear and grief - the methods of oppression and persecution are the same.

In factory farms animals are crammed together in small, unhealthy spaces violating their natural and normal expressions of behaviour. Chickens have their beaks cut off; cows have their horns pulled from their head; calves (for veal) live their lives in tiny stalls unable to lie or move around. Then they are transported in death trucks to the slaughterhouse. (Heather Moore, Care 2)

Rabbi David Rosen, Israeli Orthodox rabbi and former chief rabbi of Ireland states that "the current treatment of animals in the livestock trade definitely renders the consumption of meat as

trators? Watch children and one sees that they are not born hating. Religion may or may not have been an overall positive influence, but it has not stopped the killing and massacres. I believe children should be brought up to be aware of their conscience and their instinctive knowledge of right and wrong.

To read of remarks made by today's Germans as to why they should pay for past crimes, begs the question of whether crimes should be paid for and if so, then by whom?

Even if only one's grandparents were involved, then were they guilty or living in the house of a murdered Jew and using his furniture and belongings? Is the questioner not benefiting in some way from the Holocaust?

Another says that he wants his grandchildren to learn about the Holocaust, "but it should not be exaggerated". What room for exaggeration is there in the murder of six million people including one and a half million children?

Axelrod begins her article by stating that it is not easy to face the cold stare of a Nazi perpetrator, even in a photo. Doesn't part of the answer lie in facing our own image in the mirror on a daily basis?

Don Krausz
Chairman, Association of Holocaust Survivors in Johannesburg

halachically unacceptable as the product of illegitimate means." (Rabbis and Vegetarianism, Micah pub1995 pg 53)

The term nefesh chaya "living soul" applied in Genesis (1:21,1:24) to animals as well as people.

In terms of our health, in Jewish law the body needs to be kept healthy so that it is an effective instrument for the spirit's activity. Richard Schwartz, PhD maintains that eating meat can be injurious to one's health. And he (also) refers to Rabbi Rosen's contention that it is halachically prohibited to harm oneself; meat consumption is halachically unjustifiable. (Rabbi David Rosen - Rabbis and Vegetarianism, Micah, 1995, pg 54.)

In its 1997 position paper on vegetarianism, the American Dietetic Association stated that scientific data suggest a positive relationship between a vegetarian diet and reduced risk of chronic degenerative diseases, including obesity, coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and several types of cancer.

Be it on health or ethical grounds, there appears to be a substantial body of Jewish law and strong debate on the need to regard animals who are sentient beings, with respect and acceptance that they suffer as we do.

Heather Howe
Rondebosch, Cape Town

COMMUNITY COLUMNS



ABOVE BOARD

Zev Krengel,
National Chairman

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

NOT SURPRISINGLY, the murder of Eugene Terre'Blanche and possible links between this and the inflammatory rhetoric emanating from the president of the ANC Youth League have dominated our media of late. The question increasingly being posed is whether this marks a dangerous departure from the principled commitment to non-racialism and peaceful inter-ethnic co-existence that has underpinned South Africa's post-1994 democracy.

Fears of an imminent race civil war are certainly exaggerated. In its recent past, South Africa has come a great deal closer to this, without going over the brink. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the Terre'Blanche murder, coming as it did at a time of already heightened concern over the provocative statements being made, has created a precarious situation in this country.

Defusing this volatile, potentially explosive state of affairs is probably the most

Critical for Government to allay fears

pressing challenge the Zuma administration has yet to face. Certainly, it has recognised the seriousness of the matter.

The significance of President Jacob Zuma convening a special press conference for the specific purpose of lambasting ANC Youth League President Julius Malema for his intemperate statements and behaviour, should not be understated.

Normally, the ruling party sorts its problems out behind closed doors, and it is highly unusual for it to publicly censure one of its senior office-bearers.

The Government is well aware that it cannot allow a situation to develop where a large minority of its citizens feel so threatened that they will become radicalised in their

turn. This makes it critical for it to take appropriate action to allay people's fears in the months to come, not least because it has become an international issue as well.

Its immediate response to the Terre'Blanche killing cannot be faulted. Despite this being the Easter weekend, top government officials, including the Minister of Police, hastened to meet with the Terre'Blanche family, and an enormous amount of effort is now being put into calming people's fears and ensuring that matters do not spiral out of control.

Eugene Terre'Blanche was no friend of the Jews nor, for that matter, of any minority group in South Africa outside of his own. As such, he and the AWB movement with which

he was synonymous, were diametrically opposed to the basic inclusive, nonracial ethos of our post-apartheid society.

Regardless of what Terre'Blanche's views might have been, however, his brutal murder, and in a wider sense any incitement to violence or hatred on the basis of race, ethnicity or any other grounds, is unacceptable and has no place in the kind of just, peaceful society we are trying to build.

We do not see there being a specifically Jewish angle to this matter. As citizens of this country, however, it is obviously a cause for concern and we are monitoring developments very carefully.

This column is paid for by the SAJBD

LETTERS

DRAMATIC US TURN-AROUND ON ISRAEL VIRTUALLY UNREPORTED

THE DRAMATIC about-turn of its Middle Eastern policy by the United States, on Saturday March 20 and Sunday March 21, of this year, remains largely unreported.

Ironically, it was the Arab TV news channel, Al Jazeera, which told most of the story by giving full coverage, "live", to the speech by US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton in New York, before the Jewish lobby-group, AiPAC, on March 21.

The reason was the special attention, suddenly devoted, almost worldwide, to an Orthodox Jewish housing scheme in the eastern part of Jerusalem. Clinton's speech was deliberately inserted into the AiPAC programme at short notice, in order to precede a previously-arranged address by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

A day earlier, on March 20, we were treated to not only hostile, but even downright poisonous, anti-Israel statements - not only by Clinton, but also by the US special envoy to the Middle East, George Mitchell.

These could have been due to oil-rich Saudi Arabia's pressure. Saudi Arabia, not only - unwisely - backs Mahmoud Abbas in the "West Bank", but is infuriated by the rededication of the Churvah Synagogue.

But, on Sunday, March 21, already prior to the Clinton speech, the situation reports took on a much milder anti-Israel tone. Even the UN secretary-general's highly negative comment on the housing scheme (China's oil-concerns?) was modified.

Israel had stood firm and neither China nor the US can afford a Middle Eastern conflagration.

Clinton's AiPAC speech attempted to reconcile two separate policy trends. But she even called the Goldstone Report "deeply flawed" and she reassured Israel of the US's firm support.

So, what's the answer? Mahmoud Abbas is discredited after losing the general election in 2006 and sweeping the 2010 election under the carpet. He is clutching at straws. The Orthodox Jewish housing scheme, in eastern Jerusalem, is one of them.

The answer could be to ditch Mahmoud Abbas! The only Arab politician with solid support in the "West Bank" is Marwan Barghouti, presently serving three concurrent life-sentences in Israel, for terrorism.

As in the case of PW Botha and Nelson Mandela, couldn't someone like Yuval Steinitz (or even someone from Saudi Arabia) quietly visit Barghouti in jail to find out his bottom-line? Is a presidential pardon by Shimon Peres impossible?

Julian Schragenheim
Cape Town

More letters on page 16

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LETTERS

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

THERE ARE WIDER ISSUES AT PLAY HERE THAN HATE SPEECH

THERE HAS been a huge amount of comment on the Goldstone Report, both International and local, the vast majority of which has been reasoned analysis and critique, some in great depth, available to all.

One does not have to read, as suggested by Mr Justice Dennis Davis ("Play the ball not the man", JR March 26) all 600 pages to be able to formulate an informed opinion. A few local yokels have indulged in character assassination and loshan hora against the person of Justice Richard Goldstone. Yet Davis chooses to focus on this small minority, unacceptable as they are, as if they represented normative community values.

It is the same tactic used by those who complain that every criticism of Israel is silenced by being branded anti-Semitic. The few becomes the whole. There is a difference between loshan hora and, in light of the outrageous lack of judicial ethics which beggars belief, justifiable questioning of Goldstone's motives.

Surely, especially as Davis points out, he was held in such high esteem, (that) Goldstone's conduct of the investigation was highly uncharacteristic, erratic and irregular not to mention in particular the conclusions damning and insulting of a whole nation.

Yet, we are asked to censor all these concerns because it insults and impugns a distinguished jurist. We must be careful not to lose perspective. When Davis writes that "speech directed at the diminution of the esteem of a reputation represents an egregious attack on the dignity of the targeted individual", I am sure he is not implying that the rest of us without such esteemed reputation should not also be treated with dignity.

No reasonable person can take issue with the writer in his condemnation of hate speech. But there are wider issues at

play here. With "The Jury is Out" there is always the agenda of correcting the shortcomings of a perceived right-wing community leadership. A default PC position has developed in public discourse that "right" is wrong and "left" is right.

The "left" are noble and good and true; the "right" are not. This tendency encompasses other buzz terms employed regularly such as "progressive" and "pluralism" - whatever these mean. The implication being that the Jewish community's sensitivity to compassion and human rights, is held only by self-styled social justice Jews.

David Forman writing in the Jerusalem Post states that "there is no rule that says political and social views must be consistent with one another. The late Knesset member Yuri Shtern (Israel Beitenu) was a political rightist and yet was a true social democrat whose concern for human rights, both in Israel and the territories, made him the deeply moral human being he was".

The same applies to political leftists who criticise Israel to promote dialogue because they genuinely wish for a "better" Israel as they see it. The problem lies in extreme positions, accusations and language so as to demonise. Hence Goldstone is a traitor, Israel is committing genocide and apartheid. Communication ceases.

In fact, it is a pity that these labels of left and right should be used at all. Meaningless generalisations only serve to encourage the "Good Jew / Bad Jew" syndrome. We should be well to remember this in our engagements within our community to have a better chance of not talking past each other all the time.

We have enough enemies from without.

Stephen Paul
Three Anchor Bay
Cape Town

THE WORD 'KITKE' GETS SA JEWS A-THINKING

GWEN JACOBSON asked about the origin of the word "kitke" used in South Africa to refer to the plaited bread used on Shabbos or Yomtov.

Philologos published an article in the Forward (2005), entitled "South African Challah", in which he discussed the matter. (Philologos writes about matters of linguistic interest, particularly pertaining to Yiddish).

The answer to Gwen's question is contained, according to him, in an extensive article published in Vol III of YIVO's Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic

Jewry. In Eastern Europe there were five other words used to describe challah - including kitke.

For some inexplicable linguistic reason, the word was in very common usage throughout Lithuania, hence its frequent usage in South Africa - known in Jewish terms as a "province" of Lithuania.

Cedric Ginsberg
Johannesburg

Also see Naomi Dinur's and Rabbi Liebenberg's letter on the subject - Editor.

GORDON MISREPRESENTS ATTITUDE OF CHRISTIAN READERS TOWARDS ISRAEL

IN A bizarre coincidence, my Yom Hashoah 2010 did not start at the Jewish Cemetery of Pretoria, but at the early morning mass of the Roman Catholic Church at Sunnyside (Pretoria) on the same morning of April 11.

The priest, Evantus Kene spoke about Jews being murdered in gas chambers just because they were "different". For about 10 minutes, he related about Victor Frankl, the Jewish Holocaust survivor who wrote a book about his experience ("The Meaning of Life"). I wish I'll one day have the opportunity to read in the SA Jewish Report about Victor Frankl's writings.

To my understanding, Victor Gordon misrepresented the attitude of Christian readers towards Israel at the Yom Hashoah remembrance. Just as anti-Zionism infested only a minority of Jews (some of them religious, the most leftist), so is anti-Zionism not infesting mainstream Christians.

Rather than to lump Christian anti-Zionism with rampant Muslim anti-Zionism/anti-Semitism, he could have compared it to Jewish anti-Zionism.

The message on behalf of the youth, given by Kira Kumin was, of course, touching. I wonder, however, if her perception that Judaism was dominating the intellectual life of most of the murdered, corresponds with reality: How many times in his life did Albert Einstein, for example, see the inside of a synagogue? Were millions of the murdered Jews not Jewish to the extent that Albert Einstein was?

The keynote address of Anthony Court

THE SOURCE OF THE WORD 'KITKE' AND ITS SA SOURCE

I REFER to a letter in Jewish Report enquiring after the origin of the word kitke. Did you know that Kitke is actually a town in Lithuania?

Was it the town where the first "twisted loaf of bread" was baked? That remained a mystery. However, the word is alive and listed in Harkavy Yiddish-English Dictionary. There it is defined as "a twisted loaf".

Volume III of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research's Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry is devoted to the various words by which Sabbath and festival breads were known to the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe.

Although "Challah" or the Yiddish "Khale" has taken over, nearly eradicating all of its rivals, five other words exist for such a bread namely berkhes, dacher, koylatsh, shtritsl and kitke.

Back to kitke: According to Fred Hamori in his "Tabulation of words", kitke derived from proto FinnUgor. We can also find it in

was very saddening: How could post-Holocaust Jewry allow such disrespect of the perished people in Auschwitz?

The climax of the remembrance was, in my opinion, the Partisan Song. To think that Mordechai Anielewicz, the leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Revolt was singing it in the weeks before he was gunned down... However, thousands of Jewish fighters who died for the same cause in the Holy Land, in the last 100 years, were even younger than Anielewicz.

It is interesting that the last word that was uttered in the Remembrance was "Jerusalem", because it is the last word of the Israeli national anthem. Is there mention of a capital city's name in any other national anthem?

But Barack Obama with David Axelrod and Rahm Emanuel (both Jewish) on his sides and (pro-"choice") speaker Nancy Pelosi at his back, contrive to compel the Jewish nation to share Jerusalem with an alien country.

It seems that the Republican (pro-"life") Party and the Christian right will not allow it to happen. On the Voice of America news bulletin of April 12 (05:30 SA time) a study of the Institute for Research of Anti-Semitism of the Tel Aviv University, was cited on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day. It clearly vindicated my remark regarding Gordon's address.

Dan Friediger
Pretoria

German Kitt and the Slavic suffix -ke, which is found in many Yiddish words and names. (Like pushke, kishke and katshke) Moreover, kitke, as is shown by the Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry, was a Yiddish word restricted entirely to Lithuania, where it generally existed in tandem with khale. This explains why it is so prevalent to this day among South Africans. Litvish Yiddish is the reason.

On a short trip in the "Johannesburg Bible Belt" on Friday, you will be welcomed by wonderful aromas of warm baked delights coming from the many bakeries which are now offering a variety of different kitkes - traditional, sweet, wholewheat, rye with sesame seed or without and more - a real taste of Shabbat in Johannesburg. Yes, kitke is proudly Litvishe South African!

Naomi Dinur
Sunningdale (aka Bible Belt)
Johannesburg

Literary circles mourn the death of Shirley Kossick

DR LYNDA GILFILLAN

LITERARY CIRCLES in Cape Town lost a luminary when Professor Shirley Kossick, professor emerita in English at the University of South Africa, passed away on February 25 at St Luke's Hospice in Fish Hoek, Cape Town. Professor Kossick who was 76, had fought a long battle against cancer.

From 1995, the year she retired from the Department of English at the University of South Africa, Shirley Kossick was a well-known figure among book lovers in Cape Town. Over a 15-year period, she generously shared her love and knowledge of literature with people who were captivated by her comprehensive lectures on contemporary writers of fiction.

A formidable figure with an alternately steely and mischievous stare, Shirley's immediate impact as she stood behind a lectern was to reduce the audience's chatter to an expectant silence. She would pause, then launch into the kind of lecture that became her signature.

She was a voracious reader with catholic tastes, and she seemed to read every new book that arrived on the bookshelves. Every so often, she gave a lecture to a variety of audiences on these new arrivals, covering plot, character and theme in an effortless and entertaining manner. Her powers of recall were astonishing as she moved from one book to the next.

During question time, only a fool would risk asking an irrelevant question or offer-



ing a misdirected comment. On such rare occasions, after a brief but telling pause, Shirley would communicate her displeasure in a few well-chosen words that unfailingly hit their target.

She was fearlessly forthright. I recall her riposte to my recommendation that she attend Antony Sher's performance of "Primo", where he portrayed Auschwitz survivor Primo Levi: "Thank you, Lynda, but I don't do the Holocaust as entertainment."

Brevity and directness were her hallmarks, reflecting a sharpness of mind and wit that penetrated to the core of an issue.

A no-frills type, she used language as a tool of communication rather than a means of embellishment. This was also

reflected in the way she presented herself: businesslike, neat, meticulously groomed, precise both in expression and appearance.

It is perhaps not surprising that Shirley's first employment was in the business world - she excelled in the field of advertising - yet, fortunately for her many students and followers, her love of literature was a powerful counterforce.

The self-knowledge and decisiveness required by a career change (which some questioned as dubious), were among Shirley's strongest attributes.

Her talents and insights were honed during a brief spell in England where, shortly after joining Unisa in the 1960s, she took up an appointment at the Open University. On her return to Unisa, Prof Kossick contributed to academic journals and was the editor of the departmental journal, "Unisa English Studie".

She was an editor of "A University Anthology of English Poetry" as well as the revised "A New University Anthology of English Poetry", published in 1993 - the latter still a prescribed work in the Unisa English Department.

Yet her abiding love was teaching, and she guided and inspired countless undergraduates and also mentored postgraduate students - becoming, eventually, head of the department's postgraduate section.

Upon retiring from academic life after 30 years' service in the Department of English, she was made professor emerita.

Born in Sea Point, the only child of Margaret and Sydney Kossick, Shirley

retired to the Peninsula, where she lived in Fish Hoek with her companion, Claudia Taynton. She remained active in the field of literary studies, becoming a book critic for the Mail and Guardian newspaper, a counsellor on the English Academy's Language Advisory Service, and giving a number of lectures on various topics, such as 'Women and the Booker Prize'.

Although she had interests in fields as diverse as Old and Middle English, Shakespeare and contemporary fiction, her particular field of specialisation was women's writing, and her lectures ranged across a broad landscape, covering well-known international writers such as Zadie Smith and also more obscure local authors such as Dora Taylor, a fearless advocate of human rights who lived in South Africa from 1926-1963.

Second only to Shirley's love of literature was her love of fine art, and she numbered among her closest friends the late Cecil Skotnes as well as Cecily Sash - the latter being her co-editor in the study of art historian Heather Martienssen, "Art and Articles". Shirley was also the editor of "Insights: Selected Essays of Heather Martienssen", and wrote the introduction to it.

Shirley Kossick will be remembered not only for her incisive mind, but also for her fierce courage in refusing to allow disease to disengage her from life around her. By opening up other worlds to those she encountered, she has left the world a richer, more resonant place.

LETTERS

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A RABBI RESPONDS TO THE KITKE DEBATE

I AM responding to Gwen Jacobson's request for more information regarding the word "kitke". As she correctly states, the word is used almost exclusively by South African Jews of Lithuanian origin.

However, it is not a South African invention of the 20th century, but has its roots in pre-First World War Lithuania. Every country in Europe had its own dialect of Yiddish and when Jews immigrated to countries such as America, Australia or Canada, the immigrant population would generally use the dialect of the majority group. That is why words such as "kitke" fell into disuse in the United States.

Many Lithuanian Jews began to use the words, phrases and pronunciation of the predominantly Polish dialect of Yiddish, including "bubby" instead of "bobba" and "zeidy" instead of "zeida".

However, many older "Litvaks" preserved their unique dialect and held on to the words of their youth. My late rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi AC Goldfein, of blessed memory, once related that while on a visit to his native America, he spent Shabbat with one of his teachers at the famed Telshe Yeshiva in Cleveland.

The faculty of the Yeshiva at the time consisted largely of Lithuanian rabbis who had escaped the Holocaust. Rabbi

Goldfein, having spent many years in South Africa, used the word "kitke" when referring to the Shabbat bread, prompting his host to comment that he had not heard that word since his youth in "der heim".

Apparently it comes from the word "braid" in the Lithuanian language, since traditionally Shabbat bread consists of several plaits. This is perhaps a more accurate description than that conveyed by the Hebrew word "challah", which simply

denotes a loaf.

Some years ago I was studying the excellent work on Jewish law entitled "Aruch HaShulchan" by Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein (1829-1908) of Navardok, Lithuania.

In the section about Purim (Orach Chaim 695:7) the author notes that it was customary to place on the festival table "the important bread called kitke".

Obviously this was a delicacy in Lithuania reserved for special occasions such as Purim, Yomtov and Shabbat.

Although I am a third generation South African, I believe it is important to preserve the traditions of our Lithuanian forbears who had a unique manner of observing Judaism and whose style of Torah learning has been mimicked in almost every yeshiva. Words like kitke should not be allowed to disappear from the mouths of our youth.

Rabbi Matthew Liebenberg
Claremont, Cape Town

YOM HAZIKARON CEREMONY

The South African Zionist Federation, Embassy of Israel, Israel Centre, IUA-UCF & SA Zionist Youth Movements, invite you to commemorate Israel's fallen

6:30pm at the Solly Liebgott Hall, Yeshiva Campus, Long Avenue, Glenhazel
For more information: 011 645 2531



STILL MORE LIGHT SHED ON THE ELUSIVE CHOIR PHOTOGRAPH

I READ the article in the Jewish Report of March 26 (page 28) headlined: More light on the elusive choir photograph and noticed a picture of myself. I therefore wish to correct and provide some additional information.

Number 30 is not Trevor Nathan but myself, Vernon Nathan. Trevor is my brother. Number 32 is a photograph of Ian Merkel who lives in Vancouver, Canada.

I still have the original photograph taken at that time.

Vernon Nathan
Johannesburg

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YOUTH TALK

Alison Goldberg youthsajr@global.co.za

From a lofty ideal to a practical outcome

JORDAN MOSHE, GRADE 10
PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED

WHEN I look back at how far Yeshiva College's Pesach appeal project has come, it feels surreal. I guess it started like all things start, with an idea and ended up with an amount of approaching R40 000. I remember thinking: "How do I go about raising money for an appeal?" From there everything just slowly fell into place.

Managing a Pesach appeal was not going to be easy, but when the determination is there, anything can be accomplished.

As the head of the Yeshiva Chessed Committee, I had to decide on a new fundraising project for a worthy cause, and nothing seemed more worthy than donating to the Chevrah Kadisha for Pesach.

After much thought and preparation, the Pesach appeal was launched at our school. The plan was formulated that any high school class could donate money and the class that raised the most would win a trip to Gold Reef City.

After the project was launched, I remember thinking that the road would be easy from there. However, it didn't turn out like that, as by the middle of week two of three, we had under R500 donated, and our positivity took a dive.

I remember how despondent I felt. The project was looking grim and it looked like no money would be given to the Chevrah this year.

But suddenly a miracle happened in an instant. While sitting in class, one of my friends approached me and said: "Hey, has anyone given money to the Pesach appeal yet?" and I shook my head and replied: "It's not looking too great..."

Suddenly his face broke into a massive grin and he said: "So, we can win the trip?" I laughed and said: "If you bring in enough funds." And he was gone, calling out to the rest of the class, telling them all to bring



Jordan Moshe handing over some of the money to Hedley Lewis of the Chevrah Kadisha.

money the next day. And that was just the start of a huge turnaround.

And obviously, when the money came in, the race was on. Not only were the grade 10s involved, but the grade 8 girls also wanted to be a part of this, and joined in with vigour. Slowly, one thing led to another; the grade 7 boys soon joined in. And already, things were looking a whole lot better.

Money kept coming in for the whole week, and the competition was tough. Even moments before Friday's deadline, donations were brought in. And by the end of the day, we had raised an amazing R36 000! It was truly unbelievable!

I would like to thank everyone who helped us, but there are particular thanks that I want to make. Firstly, I want to thank Mrs Bloch and Rav Perez for giving me the opportunity to run such a project, which will hopefully start many more.

I want to thank my friends and family for their encouragement and support, without which I would have given up all hope. And lastly, but most certainly not least, the classes that took part in the project - the grade 7s, 8s and the grade 10s, who I also wish to congratulate on their winning the competition.

This project has really been brilliant and I hope we can have many more like it, or even better than this one.

Lots of fun and laughter with a visit from Little Bright Stars

MELISSA BRAITHWAITE
PHOTOGRAPHER: MAUREEN SHAGAM

THE MIDDLE group children from Herzlia in Cape Town were very excited to welcome visitors from Little Bright Stars, a pre-school in Heideveld.

Twenty two children arrived on the day and they joined our children for some music and fun. Percussion, singing and dancing, enabled the children to get to know each other.

Fruit and sandwiches were shared under the trees in Herzlia's new play area after each school said their different prayers.

Fun activities were set up on the outside verandahs for the children. The most fun was had, though, with the simple joy of playing in

Herzlia's beautiful new playground and making friends with the visitors.

Little Bright Stars has invited Herzlia to come and visit their school, in Heideveld and Herzlia looks forward to such a visit next term.

A special thank you to Jacqui d'Offay, Mandy Goldberg and June Hayman, for making the day such a success.



KDVP High's new Junior Councillors

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY
Yael Gordon

KING DAVID High School Victory Park's Johannesburg Junior Councillors for 2010 - 2011, are Galit Seligman and Saul Moross, pictured here.



SAUJS committee members are pictured with kids from the Just One Child Orphanage. Back: Rafael Eliasov; Carine Pick; Ori Tobias; Daniel Lifshitz; Itai Propheta; and Joshua Schewitz. Middle: Daniella Propheta; David Simmons; Mpho; Megan Barlin; Valencia; Joseph; Sarit Swis; Janet; Petra; and Yaffit Swisa. Front: Stephanie Hodes with Thembi.

SAUJS again spreads its helping hand far and wide

STEPHANIE HODES
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, SAUJS
PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED.

ALL SAUJS' focus lately has been on community work, and it has been committed to doing its bit for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Our recent event, "Sing for your Supper", that took place on March 17, was a resounding success. Students turned out in their numbers to sing karaoke for charity, had fun, and raised R4 500 for IkamvaYouth, a non-profit organisation that enables young South Africans to get themselves out of poverty and into university or employment.

This amazing organisation provides after-school academic support, mentoring, computer classes, HIV awareness workshops, testing and counselling and extracurricular activities to learners in grades 9 to 12. It was an honour to have been able to contribute to this admirable cause.

On Sunday April 4, SAUJS members threw an Easter Party for the children of Just One Child Orphanage in Wendywood. The orphanage is home to 10 children between the ages of five and 14, some with disabilities and others orphaned by HIV/Aids.

At Just One Child the kids are clothed, fed, and cared for by loving volunteers. SAUJS kept them busy with a chocolate egg-hunt, followed by icing Marie biscuits and making Fruitloop necklaces, and after lunch the boys played soccer and the girls had a dancing competition.

The children were delighted with the goodie bags we gave them, that were filled with bubbles, pens and stickers, and enjoyed the company of the energetic bunch of students who came to bring a little joy into their lives.

In Cape Town, SAUJS committee members have been volunteering at the Haven Shelter soup kitchen in Claremont which is currently providing temporary shelter to 18 adults, as a result of the Claremont bypass road having caused the destruction of the old shelter.

The community portfolio within the SAUJS structure is one that is both important and valuable to us, and under the exceptional leadership of community officers Megan Barlin, Sarit Swisa and Nathan Rose, students are thriving on the opportunity to be able to give of themselves, not only to the Jewish community, but to our broader South African one too.

Oh, what fun on top of a horse!

REPORT AND PHOTOGRAPH BY RABBI
MOTTI HADAR

A YUD SHVAT campaign at Torah Academy Boys' High spanned three weeks of classes during break, spot quizzes, Sunday davening, adding stringencies in their personal Judaism, with the climax: a day of fun with the reward of horse-riding at a ranch near Soweto, topped with pizza at Michelo's, bowling in Bramley, swimming, and a braai at the home of Ari and Chani Zwick.

Pictured are Menachem Deutch, Mendy Wineberg and Yudi Segal on horseback.



Netzer's Shabbaton Shorashim: Discovery of our roots

SOFIA ZWAY

THREE WEEKS after an incredible Hadracha seminar, Gauteng's talented madrichim put their skills into practice at Netzer's Shabbaton Shorashim.

The theme of the sleepover, Shorashim (meaning roots), provided channichim and madrichim with a diverse educational theme to discover. The Shabbaton began with Netzer madrichim leading the service at Beit Emanuel. The service was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

As the weekend progressed, the amount of ruach and kef grew rapidly. The 19 channichim who attended the event, were treated to a fun-filled, educational weekend, the Netzer way.

Activities included peulot about Jewish/South African identity, a Parshat Hashavua activity about sacrifices and

peulot about Pesach.

Channichim learnt more about their own identity and the meaning of Pesach in their lives. There were many fun games, delicious meals and unbreakable bonds, shared by all. The huge success of Shabbaton Shorashim serves as a positive indication of the exciting year ahead that Netzer has planned.

As madrichim, we aim to educate and inspire our channichim. The truth is that we are educated and inspired by the incredible channichim who attend this movement. Netzer is not just a place where children come to learn. It is a place where we are inspired to harness our Judaism.

It is a place where we are inspired by our leaders to become leaders. It is a place where friendships are made. Netzer is a home away from home... the perfect place for your children to be.

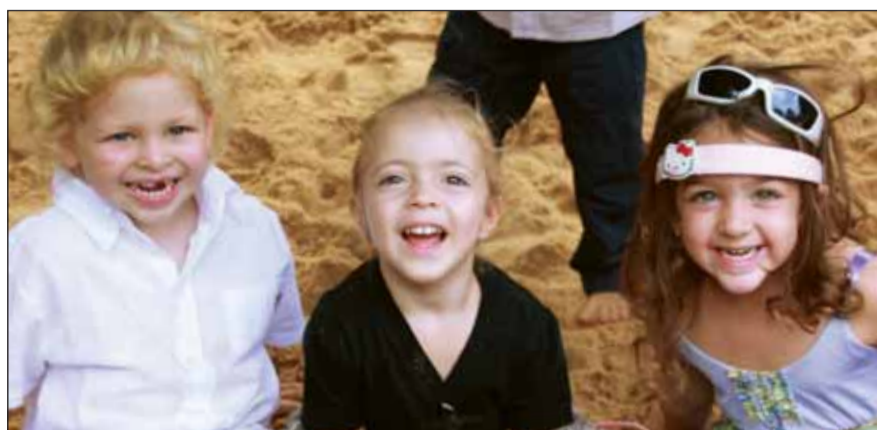
YOUTH TALK

Alison Goldberg youthsajr@global.co.za

Pine Street tots raring to go

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY HAILEY FOX

THE PUPILS from Pine Street Play School pictured here - Benjamin Levin; Mia Berger; and Jessica Woznica - could not wait to get back in the sandpit in their playground when school reopened last week Monday.



Look at these Hebrew Pre-Primary busy bees!



STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY SUE BENJAMIN

The children at Sydenham Hebrew Pre-Primary have had a lot of fun building with coloured crates in the garden. Jordan Jacobson is hard at work! Eitan Miller, Yoni Porter and Jordan Mosselson are sitting at their computers!

Congratulations to KDL's Kate and Hillel

JODI STARKOWITZ

KING DAVID High School Linksfield's newly-appointed Johannesburg Junior City Councillors are Kate Berkenfeld and Hillel Tradonsky.



With bated breath, watching the eggs hatch

SHEVA MESSIAS, PRINCIPAL. PHOTOGRAPH: ROMY ADLER

After vigilantly watching and monitoring eggs in an incubator at Yiddish Folk and patiently waiting for them to hatch, the thrill of finally holding these adorable fluffy chicks, was great! Pictured are Michael Gingell and Jake Herman.

When the tots literally saw red

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDRA HIRSCH

EVERY WEEK at Rosabelle Klein (Waverley) Nursery School, the children learn about a new colour.

Last week they learned about red so on Thursday, all of them dressed in red.

Lauren Kier shares the colour with the children in the younger group. They are surrounded in red - red clothes, red tablecloth, red building blocks and even red pictures in the background! It also means stop when you see a RED traffic light.



Lauren Kier with her kids celebrating the colour red.



Reminiscing about Herzlia are Eric Michaels; Gordon Futeran; Eliot Orsin; and Gerald Kleinman.

Herzlia at 70 celebrates in style

TRACY KLASS PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW EMDON

HERZLIA SCHOOLS have turned 70. And to mark this glorious occasion, the city's Jewish community is celebrating with the school.

Herzlia is one of the jewels in the crown of the Cape Town Jewish community. Over 5 500 pupils together with their parents, have passed through our doors over the last 70 years. "Let us make this a year to remember," the schools are urging parents, friends, former Herzlians and learners.

A "Herzlia Heroes Cocktail Party" was held on Thursday March 18, to kick off the celebrations, where the chairman and the chairman of the board of trustees who hosted the event, thanked and honoured all those lay leaders who gave so generously of their time to make Herzlia the success that it is.

"Celebrate 70" is a stage show starring Herzlians past and present, to mark the 70th celebrations.

Directed by Roxy Levy and her artistic team of Linda Gawronsky; Jacqui Kowen; Ivor Joffe; Aviva Pelham; and Selwyn Shapiro, the function will be held on Monday May 31 at the CTICC Auditorium 1 at 17:00 and 20:00. Tickets will be R120 for adults and R60 for learners and are available through the PTAs, or contact Rynette Ritz on (021) 464-3300 or rritz@herzlia.com

Herzlia will host a host of events from August 1 - 8. Some of the highlights are:

- Alumni versus pupils debate on Tuesday August 3, promises to

be a stimulating debate between the Herzlia debating team and some of the school's world-class alumni. For more information e-mail Mark Helfrich on mhelfrich@herzlia.com

- Alumni Golf Day on Thursday August 5: for more information e-mail Tanya Golan on Tanya@portfoliobureau.co.za

- Shul services will be held at all shuls on Friday night August 6 and Saturday morning the 7th. Services will be run jointly by the congregation and Herzlia alumni, co-ordinated by the Jewish studies department of Herzlia. Contact Goldie Norris on 464-3310 or e-mail her on gnnorris@herzlia.com

- Gala dinner, Sunday night August 8. The venue has still to be confirmed. Tickets will be available through the schools' PTAs. Details will be published at a later date.

- Herzlia soccer jerseys: - "Player 70" soccer jerseys have been designed for Herzlians to wear on Fridays. These magnificent personalised shirts are available from Dafna at a cost of R150 to R180, depending on size. Contact Sharon, (021) 551-7481 or e mail secohen@herzlia.com
- United Herzlia Schools' 70th AGM will be held on May 12.

"Fan Park" in the Middle School for the duration of the Soccer World Cup, will provide a safe and secure environment for Herzlians, parents and family to watch the World Cup, eat wonderful food and get into the vibe.

Herzlian alumni are planning reunions all around the world. Contact Paula Cohen at the alumni office on (021) 464-3393, or on oldherz@herzlia.com for more information.

FAREWELL TO MR JACK GARB

The South African Board of Jewish Education invites all members of the Jewish community who would like to take the opportunity to express their gratitude to a renowned educator.

Function details are as follows:

- Date:** 22 April 2010
- Time:** 4.30pm
- Venue:** H.O.D. 58 Oaklands Road, Orchards
- RSVP:** Adri de Bruin (before 19 April) Email: debruina@sabje.co.za



The South African Board of Jewish Education ישיבה החרדית הדרום אפריקאנית



SMS Code 70
Andrea Falk
 (née Bruyns)
Groom: Daniyel
Married: March 22 2010
Chuppah: Oxford Shul
Photographer: Ilan Ossendryver



SMS Code 71
Loren Salkinder
 (née Samowitz)
Groom: Wayne
Married: August 5 2009
Chuppah: Great Park Shul
Photographer: Toni Jade



SMS Code 72
Jeanine Danilewitz
 (née Blumenau)
Groom: Saul
Married: November 8 2009
Chuppah: Oxford Shul
Photographer: Bruno Gila



SMS Code 73
Tarryn Davis
 (née Milner)
Groom: Russell
Married: October 14 2009
Chuppah: Campbell House
Photographer: Quinton Quinn



SMS Code 74
Donnay Wizman
 (née Baetz)
Groom: Yaron
Married: March 14 2010
Chuppah: Sandton Shul
Photographer: Trevor Sachs



SMS Code 75
Simone Schneider
 (née Goldman)
Groom: Grant
Married: January 14 2010
Chuppah: Waverley Shul
Photographer: Toni Jade



SMS Code 76
Mandy Lee Solomon
 (née Davis)
Groom: Darryn
Married: November 22 2009
Chuppah: Yeshiva Glenhazel
Photographer: Greg Reynolds



SMS Code 77
Bianca Sidelsky
 (née Talpert)
Groom: Russ
Married: February 21 2010
Chuppah: HOD
Photographer: Toni Jade



SMS Code 78
Belinda Rabbie
 (née Shapiro)
Groom: Eddie
Married: March 11 2010
Chuppah: Suikerbossie, Cape Town
Photographer: Brian Tjasink



SMS Code 79
Lauren Gerson
 (née Gritman)
Groom: Dean
Married: January 14 2010
Chuppah: Ronmar Road, Morningside
Photographer: Christiaan David



SMS Code 80
Nicole Penn
 (née Kurland)
Groom: Marc
Married: March 23 2010
Chuppah: Suikerbossie, Cape Town
Photographer: Clifford Alexander



SMS Code 81
Kayla Canin
 (née Ferrer)
Groom: Greg
Married: March 18 2010
Chuppah: Sandton Shul
Photographer: Mario Sales



SMS Code 82
Hanni Ress
 (née Rosenfeld)
Groom: Gavi
Married: June 9 2009
Chuppah: Suikerbossie, Cape Town
Photographer: Shawn Benjamin

Jewish Brides: Now the 'great wait' is here

OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE POPULAR bridal competition, a joint effort between WIZO Aviv Shaff and the SA Jewish Report, with Lechaim.co.za providing online voting facilities, has run its course. The deadline was March 31.

Jewish Report will still publish photographs of brides who entered BEFORE the deadline, but whose photographs only arrived AFTER the deadline.

This competition has rightly so, become a highlight on the Jewish social calendar. The function to announce the winning bride will take place on May 30.

The stunning array of brides which we have already published on our pages over many months, is testimony to the fact that there are no losers here - they are all winners. This is why the public, by voting online for their favourite bride, can assist the panel of experts in charge of judging.

Download your entry forms or vote for your favourite brides online at www.Lechaim.co.za

Please SMS "WIZO" and "Number of Bride" to 34008 to vote via SMS. Unlimited SMS entries allowed. SMSes are charged at R2 each. All proceeds are donated to WIZO

Each bride has been assigned an SMS code (it appears at her entry) and friends, family and the public are encouraged to go online and SMS their vote as per the instructions above.

There again will be a host of mouth-watering prizes to be won by the bridal beauties.

Rolene Marks and Sandy Kramer are the WIZO contact persons. They can be reached at (011) 645-2522 or on email: wizopublicrelations@beyachad.co.za

The brides on the shortlist must be present in Johannesburg at the time of judging. The top 25 finalists must be in Johannesburg for the final interview judging, at their own expense, or they will be disqualified.

The winner must become an active member of WIZO for one year following the competition.

All photographs submitted were judged with the original photograph, so no digital images were permitted.

Please send in your photograph with:

Bride's first and maiden names _____

Groom's name _____

Place of chuppah _____

Date of wedding _____

Name of photographer _____

Contact telephone number (bride) _____

Contact telephone number (groom) _____

E-mail address _____

Postal address _____

_____ postcode _____

Cell number _____

Signature, consenting to the printing of this photograph _____

Would you like to get your photographs back? YES / NO

Note: No entries will be accepted unless all the fields (name, telephone number, e-mail address etc) are filled in correctly.

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making sport count

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Issy Singer - a centenarian of note

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TZIVIA GRAUMAN

IT'S NOT every day one comes across a person blessed to celebrate 100 years. But the way in which Israel Singer did it at Sandringham Gardens on March 15 this year, was truly extraordinary.

Issy is one of the most positive, pleasant and happy people one can ever wish to meet. He exudes optimism; his open, ready smile is wholehearted and warm.

He attributes his longevity to his belief in G-d and the strength of his prayers, which remove stress and negative emotion from his life; in being active and in caring for others.

At Sandringham Gardens, the home for the aged where he has been resident since 2007, Issy is totally independent and extremely popular. His cheerful attitude is infectious and his company, a delight. He loves going for walks, socialising with his friends and leading an active life.

Born in Lithuania on March 15, 1910, Issy was the oldest sibling of four boys and a girl. His father was in the army; his mother ran a cafe/restaurant to make ends meet. As a boy, Issy rode horses and often travelled long distances to collect orders and make deliveries for his mother. He went to the local Jewish school, but left for South Africa at the age of 16.

In South Africa, he lived with relatives who were employed on a mine close to Boksburg and

On a sound note, welcome to the Beders

RITA LEWIS

THE EXPRESSION, "it's all in the genes", could not be more apt than it is in the case of the three generations of the Beder family who all got together recently to put on a remarkable musical soiree for a number of close friends at the home of their matriarch, Stella Beder in Melrose, Johannesburg.

The occasion was the visit of Brendan Beder and his two children, Justin 11 and Michael 15, were here from the UK to visit Brendan's mother, the well-known opera singer, Stella Beder who has been the lead soprano in many operetta productions at the Civic Theatre, Pretoria's State Theatre and in many parts of the country. She was lead soprano with 'Pact' for some 22 years and is now part of the groups "Tony Bentel and Friends" and "Klass Act" which perform at corporate and private functions in Johannesburg.

After many requests from family and friends who had heard of the visit of the two sons and their father who had emigrated to the UK many years ago, the three, including Stella decided to put on a soiree.

Brendan accompanied his mother Stella on the piano and also sang a duet with her. He is an accomplished pianist and has inherited his mother's singing ability which he showed off with his baritone voice singing various Hebrew medleys.

While still living in Johannesburg, he and his mother recorded two albums for the Jewish Board of Hebrew Education (one when he was only 10 years old).

During the 1980s, Brendan created a band "The Connection", which became a leading South African gig band

Now in the UK, he sings and plays keyboard for "Harmony" a band he started in 1990 with which he frequently plays at popular West End venues, including the Dorchester, Claridges and Hilton hotels.

Despite being divorced from the lead singer of the band, Brendan continues to sing and perform with Felicia, the mother of his two children, herself the daughter of a concert pianist.

On his Jewish side, he sings in the Alyth Community Choir which often swells to over 2 000 over the Festivals.

His two talented children have both sung solo in front of audiences from a very early age.

Michael (15) was selected from London's best young Jewish vocalists to sing on "A Sephardi Celebration" CD, a project to preserve and record the music of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation.

He has also sung solo in London's large Bevis



Issy Singer's cousins, Philip and Arlene Ginsberg, his son Stanley, who lives in Canada, and cousin Daniella Assness, surrounding Issy, the "celebrant of the moment".

he entered the clothing industry, where he quickly learned to speak English, isiXhosa, seSotho, isiZulu and Shangaan. After joining the South African army a few years later, he learned to speak Afrikaans as well.

At the age of 43, he married Sonia, a 30-year-old Holocaust survivor, who had lost most of her family in the death camps. In South Africa, she worked for a furrier, while Issy doubled as a parking attendant for the city council for 17 years, and also worked as a real estate agent. The couple had two children, Celia and Stanley. And the family grew, adding three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

After Sonia's passing in 2007 at the age of 83, Issy moved to Sandringham Gardens. He celebrated his century with his children and cousins and the many friends he has made among staff and residents. He is happily looking forward to the next 50 years, insistent that he is not at all tired of life.



Four members of the musically talented Beder family: Justin; Brendan; Stella and Michael Beder.

Marks Synagogue and participated in a CD of children's songs.

As a boy soprano he performed a solo part of Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms and recently sang in the Jewish Youth Choir to an audience of over 3 000 in Trafalgar Square. He also sang with the choir at various venues, including on the top of Masada, when they visited Israel.

Michael has also blown the shofar for a congregation of over 2 000. He also plays the clarinet, piano and guitar and has composed several songs. He hopes to join his parents' band as a singer and guitarist in the near future.

Together with three of his grandparents (including his 101-year-old London-based great-grandmother) and his maternal grandmother who is a concert pianist, he has performed for many charity affairs.

His aunt and uncle are also well-known professional musicians in London, as are Stella's other two sons, Laurence and Andrew.

Younger brother, Justin (11) also shows much talent as a singer and guitarist.

He was chosen as the lead male vocalist in Europe's largest Jewish school, the Jews Free School Soul Band - despite being five years younger than everyone else.

He also sings with the Jewish Youth Choir in London and has performed in front of thousands of people in Trafalgar Square, the Victoria and Albert Museum and London's Roundhouse.

Stella Beder herself needs no introduction. Being an opera singer, she has sung with the Johannesburg Operatic Society from the age of 15. She has sung the lead with Anne Ziegler and Webster Booth in Night in Venice and in New Moon with Sergio Galli Franci.

She spent 22 years with the Metropolitan Opera.

Yom Ha'atzmaut carnival at Gold Reef City!

EXCITING THINGS are set to happen at Gold Reef City in Johannesburg on Tuesday afternoon April 20, at the Yom Ha'atzmaut carnival.

Aerial displays, helicopters, skydivers, "build-a-bear"... are just some of the excitement awaiting members of the Jewish community.

It promises to be a spectacular, sensational, superb celebration!

It will run from 13:00 - 19:00 and there will be something for people of all ages. Tickets at R50 are available at the Jewish day schools or from (011) 645-2550/(011) 645-2512.

AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

MERIDOR: ISRAEL NOT MENTIONED AT NUKES SUMMIT

WASHINGTON -- No one had publicly discussed Israel's alleged nuclear weapons capability at the summit in Washington, the leader of Israel's delegation said.

"We are not the central topic here, the main topic is preventing nuclear terror," Dan Meridor, the deputy Israeli prime minister said. "No one has mentioned us, even among those you might expect to."

Meridor, speaking to Israeli reporters on Tuesday afternoon, cautioned that the conference was not yet over, but his report seemed to undercut the explanation advisers gave for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's last-minute decision not to attend. The advisers had said it was Israel's understanding that Arab and Muslim nations would call for greater transparency from Israel on the nuclear issue.

Meridor said he exchanged a friendly greeting with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has been one of the most vocal critics of Israel's policy of "opacity" - refusing to confirm or deny reports that it has up to 200 nuclear warheads.

Meridor said the atmosphere was "good, one of co-operation," and that Israel's attendance as one of 47 nations spoke to its status among advanced nations. "This is a substantial forum of nations that wish to preserve the international order," he said.

Meridor said the Israeli delegation had a brief meeting with President Barack Obama. (JTA)

IRAN EXCEPTED FROM OBAMA'S NEW NUCLEAR POLICY

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama's new strategy to limit US use of nuclear weapons would not apply to "outliers like Iran and North Korea", he said.

The new policy, which Obama discussed in an interview with The New York Times that was published on Monday, ahead of the president's planned nuclear security summit, would apply strict conditions on when the United States would be able to use nuclear weapons. It would commit the United States to avoid using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states in compliance with the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, even if such states attacked America with non-conventional arms such as biological or chemical weapons. (JTA)

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After big win, Avram Grant visits Auschwitz

ISRAELI COACH Avram Grant's celebrations after steering newly-relegated English Premier League club Portsmouth - because of its financial woes - into the FA Cup final, were tinged with sadness as he prepared to make an emotional pilgrimage to honour family members who died in the Second World War, Associated Press reports.

Debt-ridden Portsmouth's remarkable 2-0 victory over Tottenham Hotspur coincided with the start of Holocaust memorial day in Grant's native Israel and throughout the semifinal Grant wore a black armband.

However traumatic Portsmouth fans may feel their season has been with the club nearly going out of business, it's all put into perspective for Grant by his family's history.

When Grant travelled to the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau for the annual "March of the Living", he was remembering family members who froze or starved to death in a Russian forest after fleeing Poland in 1941.

Providing added poignancy for Grant is that he travelled to the commemorations in Poland two years ago, the morning after guiding Chelsea into the Champions League final.

"It's emotional - I wanted to win anyway, but for the second time it has happened, to reach the final at this time," the Israeli said in broken English. "It's more than symbolic."

This time Grant didn't travel with his

father. Meir Granat died in October shortly after urging his son to return to management at Portsmouth. Grant was the only family member to survive Siberia and had to bury his parents and siblings - some of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

"My father suffered a lot but he was the most optimistic guy I ever met in my life," Grant said. "He said: 'Don't live in the past, live in the future.' My father was always happy, never hated people, even when they did wrong."

That optimistic outlook inspired Grant as he battled to keep Portsmouth in existence as the owners were forced to seek bankruptcy protection.

"I tried every day to keep the club alive and give hope to people who didn't do anything wrong," Grant said.

As a result of entering financial administration, Pompey were docked nine points by the Premier League, which doomed them to relegation. That was confirmed last Saturday by West Ham's victory over Sunderland.

But Grant, who was discarded by Chelsea after missing out on the 2008 Champions League title on penalties, has pulled off an incredible achievement by beating a Tottenham side packed with many of the players Portsmouth was forced to sell to



Avram Grant attends the "March Of The Living" as part of Holocaust Remembrance.

raise cash.

"We had a belief and the courage to win this game; we knew we could do it," Grant said. "They are a good team with a great manager, but tactically we played very well. The players gave their hearts. It was not easy."

"Five players were not 100 per cent and some players did not play in their right positions and we did not even have one defender on the bench. In spite of this, we played football, scored two goals and I could not ask for more."

Now Grant is looking to end the season - and potentially his stint at Portsmouth - by beating his former employer, Chelsea, in the May 15 FA Cup final.

"This club, this year... I will not forget it all my life," Grant said.

Daniel keeps up proud family tradition

JACK MILNER

PLAYING WATER polo is a Yach family custom and now 18-year-old Daniel, in matric at Herzlia, is keeping up the tradition. He is the third generation of the family to compete at the top level of the sport.

Daniel has been selected to play water polo for Western Province under-19 A at Currie Cup level in the senior men's division

to be held in Durban this month.

Consensus is that he is the first Herzlian to compete at senior Currie Cup level while still at school.

But he still has a little way to go to quite step into the family flippers. Grandfather Solly and father Theodore have represented South Africa at the sport. Solly took part as a Springbok in the Olympics of 1952.



Daniel Yach has been selected to represent Western Province in water polo.

Running bug bites Laurice

JACK MILNER

LAURICE MENDELOWITZ née Bolnick, grew up in Johannesburg, where she attended King David Linksfield and matriculated in 1977.

She has lived in Israel for the past 26 years with her husband Peter Mendelowitz and their two children, Shiran 24 and Reuel 20.

Laurice caught the running bug late in life, at the age of 39, when a friend invited her to join her on a jog along the beach.

"I agreed and told her I would walk while she ran," she says. "Maybe it was the sea air and the energies that did something, but I ran and thoroughly enjoyed it. I got hooked and next time when I was invited to join her, I no longer hesitated."

In no time she found herself running her maiden long-distance run, a 12 km course near Tiberius. She took part in that run mostly to experience the atmosphere of the event. However, as she ran further, a competitive instinct seemed to creep in.

"I saw someone pass me and wanted to overtake her just to see if I could," she says. "I ran past her and then those ahead of her."

She drove back to her home in Kochav Yair and forgot about the whole thing. The following day she received a call from a friend who had attended the award ceremony and accepted the third-place prize for her age category on her behalf.

After that, it didn't take long - within a year she had worked her way up to running marathons.

At the last Tiberius marathon in



Laurice Mendelowitz.

January, she made history. Laurice placed first over all Israeli women and second in the international event, setting a time of 02:58:50, (her personal best is 02:58:12).

Today Laurice belongs to the elite group of only 13 women ever to complete the marathon in under three hours, and she is the oldest Israeli woman (50 years) to have ever won the title of "Israeli women's Marathon champion".

Laurice, as well as being one of Israel's five top woman runners, also holds all the Israeli records for her age group for 5 km, 10 km, 15 km, road and track half-marathon, and marathon.

Laurice, who heads the aerobics, Core, spinning and pilates department of an Israeli country club, as well as being an instructor herself, is cautious not to come across as over-ambitious.

"My ambition was always to break the three-hour boundary," she says. "I thought I'd calm down after that, but now I still want to improve. I can feel it in my feet."

Whether or not she improves her personal best time, one thing she knows for sure is that this will not be her last marathon.

"I plan on running for as long as I can," she vows. "I don't know how many more years I can remain competitive, but in any case I won't stop running. It's an important part of me. It's my oxygen, my daily meditation."

She adds: "Running is me. Every day that I can lace my running shoes, I am satisfied with the reward - the reward that running is my sport and no one can pull me from my passion. I believe in me, and I believe in the run."



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