

Sell with us on auction

Accepting art, antiques, objets d'art, furniture, and jewellery for upcoming wunderkammer auctions.

For more information 011 789 7422 • info@rkauctioneers.co.za • www.rkauctioneers.co.za
Bram Fischer Centre, Lower Ground, 95 Bram Fischer Drive, Cnr George Street, Ferndale, 2194



18k Gold Master Banker Master Of Complications Franck Muller gentlemen's tank curvex watch
SOLD R70 000



9K yellow gold & diamond halo ring
SOLD R9 500



Large silver .800 centrepiece bowl
SOLD R22 000

Mid-century Danish teak veneered high sideboard
SOLD R24 000



Simon Montenave for Goldscheider, Egyptian revival bust of a woman
SOLD R38 000

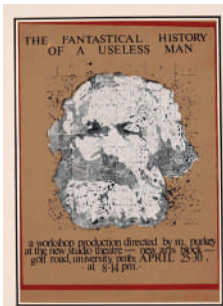


Canteen of Gorham 'English Gadroon' sterling silver cutlery
SOLD R22 000

Vintage feathered-walnut and Burr-walnut inlaid gentleman's wardrobe
SOLD R11 000



William Kentridge, *The Fantastical History of A Useless Man*
SOLD R36 000



SCAN THE QR CODE TO DOWNLOAD OUR APP



South African Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

www.sajr.co.za

Soldier's death breaks SA granny's heart

TALI FEINBERG

When a heart-shaped stone that Staff Sergeant Nitai Metodi had given to his South African-born grandmother, Riva Hellman, fell and chipped last Friday morning, she knew something was wrong. Later that day, she was told her beloved 23-year-old grandson was killed fighting Hamas in Gaza.

Hellman, a South African *olah*, was there for every step of Nitai's childhood. Having made aliya from Durban soon after her daughter, Lara Metodi, about 30 years ago, the family lived and thrived in Ashkelon.

"After school, Nitai and I would often walk on the beach. When he was five years old, he found a heart-shaped stone on the sand," says Hellman in her Durbanite accent. "He said to me, 'Googi [his name for his grandmother], this stone is my heart to your heart.' We wrote, 'Nitai to Googi, 31 July 2006' on the stone and I've kept it with me ever since. On Friday, 23 August, the stone fell out of my pocket, and a piece broke off."

When the stone chipped, "it was like he was saying to me, 'I know I broke your heart, but please believe I'm okay'", she says.

When sharing this story at Nitai's funeral at the military cemetery Ashkelon on 25 August, there wasn't a dry eye among the 3 500 people who attended.

At his graveside, Nitai's mother, Lara, recounted how on 7 October, Nitai rushed back to Israel from holiday in Australia to enlist in the reserves. Since that day, he returned to military service three times, prioritising his country above all else.

"You came back voluntarily to join your friends on this noble mission," said his mother in her eulogy. "And although we begged you not to keep going to *miluim* [reserves], you kept saying, 'I cannot leave my team.' Today, I say, you never



Lara Metodi speaking at the funeral of her son, Staff Sergeant Nitai Metodi, on 25 August

killed at 08:00 that morning."

Now, she's enduring the unimaginable devastation of losing a grandchild. "You never think it can happen to you. He was a very special young man, who touched so many people. He had no option but to go [to serve], but he was always texting me, saying, 'Googi,



Nitai Metodi

left your team – you gave your life for them."

In the last words he wrote in his notebook, Nitai said, "I'm staring at the ceiling, thinking about what a crazy time this is. Nonstop thoughts running through my mind, just waiting for the silence to come," perhaps a premonition of the sacrifice he would ultimately make.

Hellman says that she last saw Nitai on 21 August, when he was allowed to come out of Gaza to celebrate her husband Selwyn's birthday. He returned to Gaza the next day. On Friday mornings, she usually sends a Shabbat message to her grandson without fail. "For some reason, on Friday, I forgot. I remembered at 11:00, and quickly sent it. But he never received it. He was

don't worry, I will let you know if anything happens.' Our bond was so strong."

After serving twice in *miluim* in Gaza, Nitai was in France visiting his girlfriend, with whom he was "very much in love", says close family friend Sharon Friedman. But when he was called up a third time, he left France, put on his uniform, and headed back into battle. He was killed in an explosion in Gaza City.

Two other soldiers died, and seven were injured. Along with the other soldiers killed that day, Nitai brings the number of fallen soldiers in the current war to 700. He is at least the seventh young man with South African roots to die in battle on or since 7 October.

Lara is known for starring on the *Big Brother*

reality show in Israel and owns a Pilates studio. She and her Israeli husband, Lior, raised three children – Nitai was the eldest, followed by a daughter, Shai, and younger brother, Niv.

"I was there when Nitai was born," says Friedman, who is Lara's best friend and made aliya from South Africa about the same time as her. "He was a true ray of sunshine who loved his family to bits and was wonderful at everything he did. All he wanted was to live a simple, happy life. I can't believe I'll never see his face again."

Lara and Lior divorced about seven years ago, and "Nitai was Lara's rock, he kept the family laughing and together through everything," says Friedman. The family stood united at Nitai's funeral, comforting each other as they paid tribute to their son and brother. Niv, also doing his army service, came in his uniform, standing resolute alongside his father as they recited kaddish.

Lara sobbed as Nitai's fellow soldiers stood to attention around his grave and family and friends gathered to sing songs of comfort. But her heartbreak was contrasted with her inner strength as she delivered his eulogy.

Speaking with a strong South African accent, Lara said, "Nitai, the day you were born, daddy found a tree at the hospital and carved your name on it, so no-one will ever forget. Today, I'm here to speak, so once again, no-one will forget the son you are. You are our light, a hero, and an inspiration to anyone who knows you. You were the best brother to Shai and Niv, the best nephew to your aunts and uncles, and the best grandson to your grandparents.

"The void left in our hearts will never be filled, but I hope as time goes by, we will see a point to all of this. I have just one request from my country: ensure that Nitai's sacrifice wasn't in vain," she continued, her voice breaking in pain.

Continued on page 5>>



Spread some Sweetness

Send an e-card

www.jhbchev.co.za



Fridges, Dishwashers,
Washing Machines, Stoves
Tumble Dryers & more

Call Jason
082 401 8239 / 076 210 6532
FREE QUOTATIONS



ETERNAL MEMORIALS

Rabbi Ryan Goldstein
083-458 9965
RabbiRyanG@gmail.com

"I will help you through this difficult time in your life with all the necessary tombstone requirements"

Continuing Rabbi Sher's z"l Legacy

EXECUTIVE UNIT TO RENT ORCHARDS JHB

Furnished + equipped kitchen
+ uncapped WiFi no charge.
Main bed/Luxury bathroom.
Suits single person. Secure, near to mall and gym. Serviced optional.
083 326 3647

GOOD HOPE PARK, MOUILLE POINT

One bedroom apartment in retirement security complex in excellent condition. Spacious, with beautiful view of urban park. One meal daily provided. Comfortable and convenient.
Phone Adele 082 9257 548
R19,000 per month or available for purchase

Hostages must be brought home, says veteran journalist

PETA KROST

Israel has a moral obligation to bring the hostages home now, says Yaron Deckel, a senior Israeli journalist who is now the head of the Jewish Agency in Canada.

"It's time to make a deal and bring them home, we cannot waste another moment," Deckel told the SA Jewish Report in an interview at Limmud Johannesburg last weekend.

Deckel, who was in South Africa to present at Limmud, said, "We have a moral obligation to get the hostages home. In fact, according to the Torah, we have to do so. It's a huge mitzvah to redeem our captives. We must do whatever we need to bring them home. It won't be easy, and it will take its toll, but I don't believe there's one Israeli or Jewish person who believes they should leave them there. The only question that's splitting Israelis right now is how best to do that."

As a veteran television and radio journalist, Deckel has covered 10 prime ministers in Israel and interviewed three American presidents. He was also the last journalist to interview Yitzhak Rabin, just 10 minutes before he was assassinated in November 1995.

He said that though he cannot give answers as to how to secure agreement to bring the hostages home, he does believe Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu could pull it off.

"Remember, Netanyahu has a record of having made a prisoner exchange deal to bring back Gilad Shalit, whom Hamas held captive for five years. It's not the same coalition as it was and the situation is very different, but it's ultimately the prime minister's decision."

Deckel went on to say that all of Israel is clear that the longer the hostages remain in Gaza, the less likely those who are alive will survive. He said the six hostages whose bodies were brought back last week were testimony to this as they were alive when they were kidnapped into Gaza.

Deckel agreed that nobody in Israel had expected the war to last this long, but said, "Israel cannot allow Hamas to continue because if it agrees to a ceasefire, Hamas will just rearm itself and carry on. And then, in 10 years, we will have the same Hamas."

He said Israel was in a complex situation in having to agree to a ceasefire with Hamas, the same terrorist organisation that had committed the atrocities of 7 October. This, Deckel said, was the ultimate dilemma for Israel's negotiators.

Since 7 October, the Israeli population has had to endure much hardship, but it shows great resilience in the face of it, Deckel said. However, the unity that existed in the country after Black Shabbat has diminished over the issue of how to end the war and bring the hostages back.

Living in Canada since 7 October, Deckel said, had "been heartbreaking", knowing what his country, family, and friends were going through. But as tough as it has been for him not to be in Israel, he recognises that he has his work cut out for him in Canada in, among other issues, helping the community deal with an increase in antisemitism.

Though much of the antisemitism has been on social media, Deckel spoke of shots being fired into a Jewish school in Montreal at night, and swastikas daubed on places recognised to be connected to Israel or Jews.

"There was also an incident where pro-Palestinians came to Jewish homes and yelled

at and insulted the Jews who lived there when they were walking to work," he said. "And there was the case of a Jewish child being hurt after a stone was thrown at him."

He went on to say how painful it is for him when Jews, especially young students, are afraid to wear Magen Davids and other emblems that show their Judaism. "We cannot hide who we are, and should never have to do that," he said.

Deckel said he believed that much of the antisemitism that had emerged since 7 October was already there, just hidden among the extreme left and right. He believes the war in Gaza was a perfect opportunity for them to express their true feelings. "Until then, it was mostly hidden as it wasn't politically correct to be antisemitic. I do think many people have been influenced by the awful footage coming out of Gaza, which in many cases has fuelled anti-Israel sentiment into antisemitism.

"Not everyone who is anti-Israel is antisemitic," he said. "There are many who are vehemently opposed to how Israel is dealing with the war, and that isn't antisemitism, that's criticism of Israel. However, it crosses the line into antisemitism when they demand that the Jews in the

Continued on page 3>>



Kaid Farhan Al-Qadi, the hostage who was rescued by the Israel Defense Forces this week, on the phone to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shortly after he arrived back in Israel

FRANK SOLOMON HEARING CENTRE

Have a love at first sound experience.

Phonak Audéo™ Paradise

There's nothing like the sound of Paradise

- Experience exceptional sound performance
- Connect seamlessly to Bluetooth® devices
- Rechargeable so you'll always stay connected
- Remote Support for the ultimate in convenience



AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR PENSIONERS

- Affordable for Pensioners
 - 2-Year Warranty
 - No Follow-Up Charges
 - Latest Technology
 - Small and Discreet
 - Extensive Wireless Communication Portfolio Available
 - Supplements for Tinnitus
- Treatment approved by the American ENT Association

Hearing Aid Batteries Reduced to R40

Contact us today on our new number
(011) 728 7016
082 953 4628
Fairmount
6 George Ave,
Sandringham

See and we will be seen

Torah Thought



Rabbi Ari Kievman Sandton Central Shul

The month of Elul is upon us. It's a time to prepare ourselves for the high holidays and the new year, when we hope we'll all be showered with abundant blessings.

The Torah portion this week is Parshas Re'eh, which continues Moses's farewell address to the Jewish people. It begins with him urging us to re'eh (see) that G-d gives us a choice between a life of blessings or curses.

"Who is wise?" asks Pirkei Avot. "One who can see what will be," is the response. The key word perhaps is to "see". What and how do we envision?

Many understand the results of their behaviour conceptually. Consider a smoker, who sees the warnings of potential dangers from smoking clearly posted on the packet, yet smokes anyway.

To "see" means to envision. Positive visualisation has indeed become a common psychological practice.

In the kashrut laws enumerated in our parsha is a bird called ra'ah (the kite). It's known for its extraordinary eyesight for catching prey. In the Talmud, its vision is described thus: while "it stands in Babylon it sees a carcass in Israel". Considering the geographic distance, that's quite impressive.

Yet it isn't considered a kosher bird. One rationale could be that it chooses to see only corpses, the negative aspects of Israel.

Much of the media we're familiar with is negatively biased in its reporting of Israel. The

same could be said for ourselves in some of our interactions with others. What do we choose to focus on, their good traits or their faults?

Will my life be affirmed or afflicted? Do I see opportunity or opposition? What will the result be, blessings or curses?

It very much depends on the lens we choose to view our world through. Use that optimistic lens, and tremendous blessings await!

Elul's elevated spiritual nature gives us the opportunity to connect

to G-d unlike any other time in the year. We begin blowing the shofar as a wake-up call to focus on what's important. We increase the quality and quantity of our prayers, and we're more charitable. We reflect on the year gone by, on our physical and spiritual goals, and are more mindful of our thoughts and actions, with an emphasis on our relationships and friendships.

Let's "see" the blessings, and merit that they be showered upon us all in abundance!

Shabbat Times brought to you by **Spencer Schwartz from You Realty**
Residential Property Sales and Rentals + Auctions

	Starts	Ends
Johannesburg	17:39	18:27
Cape Town	18:09	19:02
Durban	17:22	18:13
Bloemfontein	17:42	18:33
Gqeberha	17:41	18:33
Plettenberg Bay	17:49	18:42
East London	17:32	18:24
Jerusalem*	18:29	19:41
Tel Aviv*	18:45	19:44

*Israel is one hour ahead of South Africa

Spencer Schwartz • 084 524 4616 • spencer@yourealty.co.za

You. Realty

G-d could cut out the middleman and feed the hungry Himself. But the purpose of creation is to create a world of kindness. G-d gives us the opportunity to give. When I help someone more needy than myself, I am also being nourished. I am giving food, but I am receiving much more. I am receiving the gift of purpose.

VEHICLES WANTED

ANY MAKE ANY MODEL ANY CONDITION

BEST PRICE GUARANTEED



Arnold Orkin 082 823 7826

New Joburg mayor, same decrepitude, say leaders

NICOLA MILTZ

Johannesburg has ushered in its 11th mayor since 2016, Dada Morero, following the welcome exit of Al Jamah-ah's Kabelo Gwamanda, regarded as a puppet mayor who accomplished little.

With the city firmly in the grip of coalition chaos, Morero's early promises of action are being met with scepticism. Will he break the cycle of ineffective leadership, or is he destined to become just another fleeting face in the city's revolving door of mayors?

For now, hope remains overshadowed by doubt. This especially following his early announcement that residents shouldn't expect big improvements in his tenure.

Morero has often been seen donning a keffiyeh and chanting, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free", dutifully following the African National Congress (ANC) party line over the Middle East and its anti-Israel stance. Some commentators

have asked whether he cares as much for the residents of the city, with its population of more than six million grappling with a multitude of challenges, as he does for those thousands of kilometres away.

Karen Milner, the national chairperson of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, said Johannesburg Jewish residents, like all other citizens of Johannesburg, would like to see Morero put the interests of this city first.

"It should be clear that the ANC's national stance of putting the Palestinian cause above the needs of ordinary South Africans is out of touch with what all citizens want. This is even more the case at local level. We hope that Morero, despite his utterances that nobody should expect anything from him and his team during his tenure, will work towards restoring Johannesburg as the economic hub of the country. Hopefully, he'll work at creating an environment in which all its inhabitants can thrive, with access to clean water, electricity,

efficient service delivery, and no corruption. Rather than alienate the Jewish community, we encourage Morero to reach out to us to forge partnerships that result in a better city for all."

Ann Bernstein, the executive director of the Centre for Development and Enterprise, remains sceptical.

"South Africa's largest cities like Johannesburg are central for growth and inclusion. They need to be cities of hope and expanding opportunity for everybody and especially the poor. The new mayor in Johannesburg, together with the same team in place as the previous mayor,



New Johannesburg Mayor Dada Morero

does not bode well for the city. It's hard to see the same group of people who have allowed Johannesburg to deteriorate so much will have the vision, determination, and expertise to turn this city around," she said.

"Johannesburg, and its precipitous decline, is a national issue of enormous concern. This is the country's window to the world. We should be the most important, dynamic, and prosperous city on the sub-continent, not a dirty metropolis in decline. The city needs real leadership and executives who are able to develop a new vision and action plan to fix Johannesburg."

Echoing this sentiment, Jack Bloom, the member of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature representing the Democratic Alliance, said he had low expectations of Morero, whom he said was the puppet master for the previous mayor.

"Little has changed," Bloom said.

"He won't act against incompetent ANC cadres in the administration, or break up the criminal syndicates which feed off the city

i-deal

FURNISHERS

Midways Mall,
280 Corlett Drive, Bramley Gardens
Monday to Friday 9:00 – 17:00
Saturday 9:00 – 13:00 | Sunday 9:30 – 13:00

BARGAINS GALORE
Clearance Sale!

We're clearing all stock. Massive savings on furniture, beds and appliances.

☎ 011 887 5456 | 011 440 9571 | www.ideal-furn.co.za

Don't miss out on these great deals!

offers. Premier Panyaza Lesufi didn't follow the Government of National Unity route because it would disrupt the ANC's patronage and corruption networks, and the same applies to Johannesburg," he said.

"Ideally, a mayor should focus on basic services provided cost-effectively, and implement a vision that attracts businesses to create the jobs needed for a flourishing city. Hospitals and most clinics are a provincial function. The city should concentrate on environmental health by cleaning up the city and cutting pollution."

Johannesburg city councillor Daniel Schay of the Democratic Alliance has limited faith.

"The massive corruption and cadre deployment and other ills are going to continue to the detriment of the residents of the city and especially the poor," he said.

As Schay pointed out, there seems to be little confidence in the new mayor's ability to deliver results. "The mayor himself indicated that no significant progress should be expected in the next two years, further reinforcing the belief that a mere change in mayorship isn't enough to resolve the deep-rooted issues of corruption and poor governance.

"The city needs a mayor to provide political,

strategic leadership. Morero has already been in control of the city for more than a year behind the scenes, acting through a puppet mayor. Joburg needs fresh elections to allow for the residents to select a new capable government that will put them and their needs first," he said.

Earlier this week, Morero was forced to withdraw his proposal to hire legally documented foreign nationals to boost the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police's crime fighting capacity.

Last weekend, Morero said that the city might have to consider recruiting qualified and properly documented foreign nationals to assist with bridging the language barriers when foreign nationals are arrested.

But the proposal was swiftly shot down by his own ANC and other parties in the metro following a backlash.

Morero made the remarks during the ANC lekgotla over the weekend.

On Monday, during a briefing in Joburg, Morero apologised for his comments.

"I withdraw my proposal, and apologise for the anxiety it might have caused to the residents of Johannesburg and the people of South Africa," he said.

Hostages must be brought home, says veteran journalist

>>Continued from page 2

Middle East go back to Europe, or say they have no right to live in Israel or defend their country."

Deckel insists that Jews can't sit back in the face of antisemitism, they have to fight back. "We should do this through governments, municipalities, and on social media. We must be vocal and speak out loudly, clearly, and with pride," he said.

"I recognise that not everything Israel has done has been right. It's not so simple."

However, Deckel said the claim by Al Jazeera journalist Youmna El-Sayed, who is touring South Africa, that Israeli forces are purposefully targeting journalists, is "pure nonsense".

"Israel isn't targeting journalists in Gaza. Unfortunately, those who claim to be targeted journalists are generally members of Hamas. It's so distressing when journalists make these bold statements that are untrue. You want to believe them because they are supposed to be telling the truth - that's our role.

"Unfortunately those 'journalists' who support Hamas are their propaganda machines. The only way to defy lies is to bring the truth, even if it's unpleasant truth. This is why Israel has spokespeople in Arabic so they can respond to questions, no matter what they are."

Working in the Jewish Agency and being a conduit for the connection between Israel and the diaspora is his "soul's work", Deckel said.

The bond between Israel and the Jewish world has "strengthened" since 7 October, he said, and the Jewish world is feeling Israel's pain and is doing what it can to support the Jewish state. "It's amazing to know how the Jewish world stands behind us. It is, however, so important for Israelis to open their eyes to the challenges in Jewish communities around the world and know that what they do has an influence and impact on diaspora Jews.

"Israel and the Jewish world survive because of each other's support. We are the same people in the same boat, and we need to be united," he said.

JAWITZ

Leading

REAL ESTATE COMPANIES OF THE WORLD

FOR SALE



GLENHAZEL | R 2 299 000

4 2 Web Ref: JRL21656
Border Sunningdale. 24/7 access security. Lounge and dining room, covered patio, garden and pool. Large playroom. Study. Eat in kitchen, separate scullery, and walk in pantry. 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (main en suite) and guest toilet. Double staff accommodation. Borehole. Irrigation. 4 car garage plus double carport.

 Joel Harris: 082 926 0287
Lauren Shalpid: 083 789 0229

FOR SALE



SYDENHAM | R 1 650 000

3 2 Web Ref: JRL22030
Genuine Oregon pine floors and pressed ceilings. Garden with great entertainment areas. 2 elegantly renovated modern bathrooms (main en suite). Lounge and dining room with fireplace. Eat-in kitchen with gas hob/stove. Laundry room. WFH / staff accommodation. Solar inverter system. 1 Lock-up garage and 2 carports.

 Joel Harris: 082 926 0287
Lauren Shalpid: 083 789 0229

FOR SALE



WAVERLEY | R 2 050 000

3 2.5 Web Ref: JRL21951
Whether you are starting out or scaling down, this might just be the perfect place to begin your next chapter. Double-storey 3 bed, 2.5 bath apartment with lounge, dining, study, patio, 2 covered parkings, in Waverley Ext, housed within the greater Waverley security enclosure.

 Chrissie Hammer: 082 568 0440

FOR SALE



MORNINGSIDE | R 4 999 000

4 4 Web Ref: JRL20993
Perfect layout for young family. Great location close to all popular amenities & minutes from major highways. Gorgeous summer pool and lavish patio for effortless entertaining! Triple garaging, spacious staff.

 Linette Oosthuizen: 082 572 5314

'I knew they were coming,' says army observer

ELKA COHEN

"Every one of us is going to die!" screamed Ariella Ruback (21) to her commanding officer, as she stared at the security cameras watching hundreds of armed Hamas terrorists hurtling across the border towards them.

As an Israel Defense Forces (IDF) border observer stationed at the small southern base of Kissufim, Ruback's unit was the closest base to Gaza. It was 06:30 on 7 October, and she realised she could do nothing to stop the nightmare that was about to unfold.

Masked terrorists on foot, in trucks, and on tractors were coming in droves. "They were no more than five minutes away from us," she recalls, reliving the day with painful clarity. Suddenly, in that moment, she found herself helplessly trapped on a tightrope between life and death.

Luckily, Ruback was rescued after several hours by specialist IDF soldier Eytan Berman (22). Both soldiers shared their eyewitness accounts in an inspiring testimony at Sydenham Shul, on Tuesday, 27 August. Their presentation was punctuated by raw video footage, vlogs, voice notes, messages, and pictures of the friends they lost that day. Thirty-two soldiers from Ruback's base weren't as lucky as she was.

For 14 months prior to the attack, Ruback had been stationed at the Kissufim base, one of four army bases that guarded the southern border, protecting six surrounding kibbutzim in the area.

"My 7 October started six months prior in April 2023," said Ruback, whose job it is to monitor the southern border. "While on duty, I saw some disturbing things on the security cameras. I saw Hamas terrorists practicing how to kidnap soldiers, I also saw them timing the 300m run towards the border. I made sure to record these reports as I witnessed them from my operations room, but sadly, I don't know what happened after that. Then on Yom Kippur, I told my friend, 'There's going to be a war just like the Yom Kippur War.' I was off by only two weeks."

"It didn't matter when all the security cameras suddenly lost signal. I knew they were coming," Ruback said.

Ruback also knew that on that weekend, only a third of the soldiers were on base. She realised that there weren't enough soldiers to protect even one kibbutz, let alone the six that surrounded their base, while the Nova festival was occurring simultaneously not far away.

"As the rocket fire continued, it felt like missiles were landing right on top of us. I tried to remain calm and started calling all my friends to tell them to come to the operations room. Some girls, still in their pyjamas, had already made their way from their rooms to the bomb shelter. I told my friend, 'Rather die from a missile than from a terrorist!'"

Ruback recalls how quickly the situation turned crazy. "The operations room soon became a field hospital. Every time I looked out from my hiding place, I saw another one of my wounded friends being brought in for help from the doctor."

On the four other bases along the Gaza border were many girls just like Ruback, their job to observe and report from the operations room. "Not all of them were as lucky as me. Most were either shot in the bomb shelter or burnt alive. It took more than 35 days for the country to identify their remains. In the room I shared during my training with three other girls, I was the only one to survive. Today, there are about 3 000 girls watching, monitoring, and protecting the borders of Israel through security

cameras, just like I do," she said.

As Ruback recounted the brutal deaths of each of her friends that day, she paid special tribute to every fallen soldier, showing their picture, saying their name, and pouring her heart into the many personal anecdotes of their shared friendships and fights.

At 21:30 that evening, Ruback and the few remaining soldiers still alive were rescued by Berman, who was serving as second commander in a specialist unit.

"Everyone is gone, everyone is dead!" Ruback kept repeating to Berman, soon after he arrived promising to get them out alive. Which he did.

Eighteen months of training for the special forces couldn't have prepared him for that day, Berman said.

His commander woke them up at 07:00 saying, "It's war, get your

equipment, we're heading south!" and within 30 minutes they were on their way.

"As we get closer, I see clouds of smoke. I'm looking at the streets, seeing dead bodies, civilian cars with bullet holes in them, terrorists with cars filled with ammunition, and I'm thinking, 'This is my country, the place I'm supposed to feel safest in,' Berman recalled.

When his commander ordered the unit to clear an army base that had been captured, Berman couldn't process it. "Our base?

The strongest army in the world has been captured by Hamas terrorists?"

Only when he entered the Kissufim base and saw IDF soldiers lying dead at the entrance,

inside, and all around the base, did he know it was real. He devised a plan to secure what remained of the base with the help of satellite phone imaging. Killing a few terrorists and losing a few of his best friends was simply part of the reality.

"By 01:00, we had got the surviving soldiers out on foot and went back to rest, before going back in to fight four hours later, and for the rest of that week, and for the next six months in Gaza," he told the stunned community of South African supporters.

Ruback and Berman's stories are buoyed by the courage and gusto of the many lives lost that day. "I have no choice but to live without my friends, but I live for them too now," she says.



Ariella Ruback and Eytan Berman

Slain hostage's mother a symbol of fight and forgiveness

STAFF REPORTER

Yotam Haim's mother, Iris, was excited to go and watch him perform on 7 October, but by the time he was meant to perform, he had already been taken by Hamas to Gaza.

Iris was prevented from making any contact with Yotam from the time he was captured until he was killed by friendly fire in mid-December. He had been taken hostage by Hamas terrorists from Kibbutz Kfar Aza along with more than 250 other innocent Israelis. On that same day, more than 1 200 Israelis were brutally murdered in southern Israel by terrorists who killed, raped, and burned people alive.

Since then, Iris, a palliative nurse, has become a public figure, going around the world spreading her story of forgiveness and strength in spite of her inordinate pain.

Her beloved son, Yotam, was born in 1995 to what she described as a "happy and musical family".

"Yotam loved music. He had been drumming since he was three years old. My husband used to take him to the music room on the kibbutz and put him on the drums. That's what he chose to do later, he wanted to become a professional drummer.

"He practised a lot, and joined a heavy metal band called Persephore."

Yotam had been scheduled to perform with his band in Tel Aviv on 7 October at the PsychoWard



Festival. "He invited all of us to watch him perform in Tel Aviv at 14:00. He had rehearsals on Friday evening and on the way home, he came past us. He gave me a big hug and said, 'See you tomorrow at 14:00'. But as you know, 7 October started at 06:29," said Iris.

"Yotam lived on Kibbutz Kfar Aza, which is very close to the Gaza fence. But when he said he was going to live there, we weren't afraid," she said. "We thought it was a good, nice place. Our perception was that everything was okay, everything was safe."

Throughout the morning of 7 October, Yotam updated his family via messages and uploaded humorous videos to his Instagram story. Iris said Yotam's use of humour was something she considered a strength.

However, at 10:30, Yotam messaged his family telling them that terrorists were shooting in his room and burning his house.

"I was seven minutes away from Yotam, but I couldn't do anything. All the roads were blocked

with terrorists shooting everybody who passed," Iris said.

"The only thing we could do was tell him that everything would be okay, that the army and police were on the way."

Yotam's last message to his family came at 10:44, saying, "I'm afraid to go out, everything is burning." Yotam was one of 17 Kfar Aza residents kidnapped by Hamas terrorists.

For three weeks after 7 October, Iris heard nothing from or about her son. "The automatic thought in this situation was that Yotam was dead. This wasn't weird as every day, we heard about the bodies of friends and friends of our children being found," Iris said.

"But I said, 'No. We can choose to think in a positive way. Why do we need to believe that he's dead if we don't know it? What if he's alive?' It wasn't easy."

Soon after that, the Haim family got information from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) explaining that Yotam's phone had been located in Gaza at 12:00 on 7 October, and it had confirmation that he had been taken hostage.

After that, Iris, along with many other families of hostages, began making television appearances. "Most people who talked were angry about what happened in Israel, but I wasn't angry. I spoke about Yotam, and told them that though I didn't choose

Bibi's party, I put my trust in the government.

"I said that I believed we had the best army and intelligence, and that they would bring Yotam and everyone else home. And I started to say a lot of 'thank you's' – to those who helped us and especially the mothers of soldiers trying to find my son."

Iris said people started to listen to her, and many

media houses began to invite her to speak. "People began to hear my voice, which was full of hope and trust," she said. "I didn't realise it, but I was giving people power."

Two days before Chanukah, on 5 December, the Haim family received encouraging information from an intelligence officer. A freed Thai hostage, Wichian Temthong, had shared a cell with Yotam in captivity and reported that he was still alive, that his spirits were high, and that in the cell he was drumming on the floor, singing, and sharing words of encouragement with those in the cell with him.

However, on 15 December, 70 days after Yotam was taken hostage, the Haim family was notified by the IDF that Yotam, Alon Shamriz, and Samer El-Talalka had escaped from Hamas captivity on 10 December. However, after five days of freedom, the three were tragically mistaken for terrorists and killed by IDF soldiers.

"After 36 hours of feeling broken, I understood that Yotam had the chance to free himself, and he

took this chance," Iris said. "He knew that he might not survive. Like the partisans of the Holocaust, he preferred to die a free person than stay alive in prison. And when I understood this, I was able to breathe and see the light again."

"While sitting shiva, the wife of one of the officers of the soldiers who shot Yotam, Alon, and Samer came to visit us," said Iris. She told Iris that the morale in the army was extremely low because they had killed hostages they came to save, and the soldiers couldn't continue to fight.

"I said to her, 'What do you mean they can't continue fighting? They must continue fighting, otherwise what will become of us? What will become of Israel? I want to talk to them!'"

Iris then recorded a message for the soldiers which said, "Hello, this is Iris Haim. I'm Yotam's mother. I wanted to tell you that I love you very much and that I'm sending you my hugs from afar. I know that everything that happened isn't your fault. It's no-one's fault except Hamas. May Hamas's memory be erased from this earth."

"At the first opportunity, you are invited to come to our home. Anyone can come. We want to see you with our own eyes, to hug you, and tell you that you did what you had to do. As much as it hurts to say such a sad thing, it was the only thing you could do. It was probably right in that moment. And none of us are judging you. Not me, not my husband, Raviv, not my daughter, Noya, not Yotam, may his memory be blessed, not Toval, Yotam's brother. We love you very much."

These words of forgiveness inspired many, including the soldiers, and Iris became a symbol of forgiveness, unity, and hope in Israel.

Yotam's funeral took place on 18 December 2023. On his gravestone, his family wrote that he was a sensitive soul and a brave heart. As a young adult, Yotam had struggled with mental-health issues, dealing with anxiety and depression.

Said Iris, "Yotam had 32 tattoos. One of them, a special one, was a tattoo of a dot and a comma. A dot means the end, and a comma means continuation. Yotam dealt with this question. He asked himself, dot or comma. He had this tattooed on himself as a reminder that he could continue even if life got very hard. That there was a way to continue."

Said Iris, "I don't have any tattoos on my body, and I don't think I ever will. But I tattooed the dot and comma on my heart. We can use the dot when Yotam was killed. We can use the dot on 7 October. But I choose to use the comma, to continue to talk about Yotam's legacy and what he believed in, to make the world a better place and unify society."

"To help people see others for their strengths, not their weaknesses," she said. "The Jewish people will never use the dot, we need to use the comma, and continue."

She and her family had made the decision to "talk about Yotam as a hero, as a person who fought for his freedom, not as someone who was killed by the army. He was a hero in life and death."

Regulator delivers technical knockout to anti-Israel advertisers

STEVEN GRUZD

Anti-Israel sentiments on billboards alongside Gauteng’s roads have abounded since the Hamas terror attack of 7 October, but now the public has recourse against anonymous adverts of this nature.

A new ruling by the Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB) instructs its members not to erect outdoor advertising calling for Israel to be banned from the Olympics – never mind that the Paris Games are long over – where the advertiser isn’t identified on the billboard itself.

Though the decision doesn’t judge the substance of these “political” messages, it does prevent such no-name advertisements from being installed or carried. These billboards are part of a broader campaign to ban

Israel from international sport, a tactic well employed against apartheid South Africa.

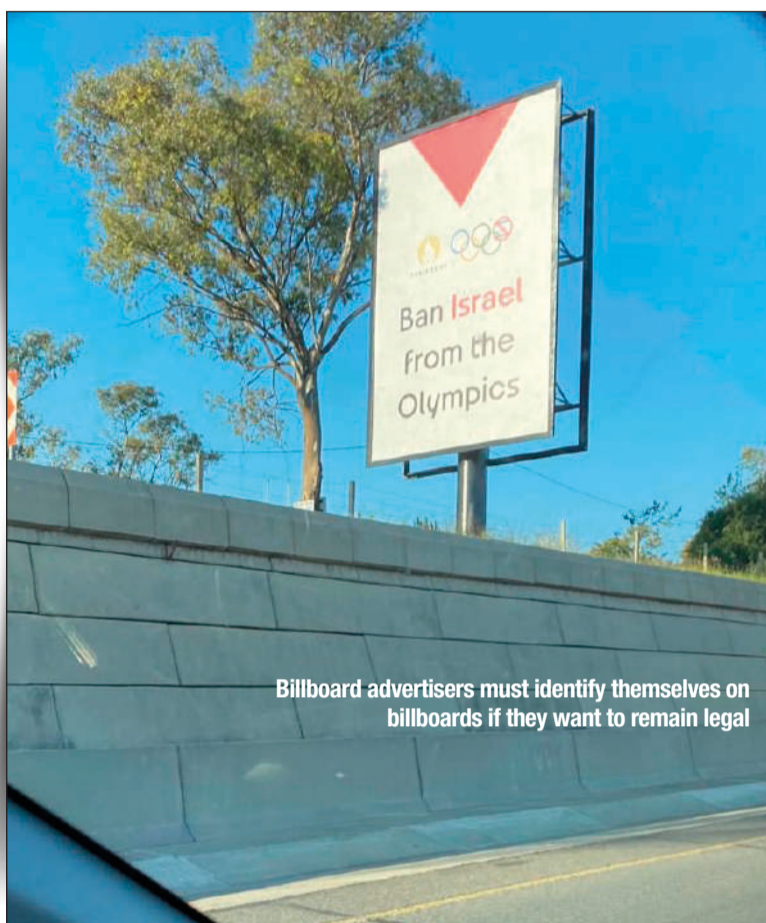
A complaint against the Olympic-ban billboards was lodged with the ARB by a member of the public. This outed the advertiser as the notorious anti-Israel lobby group Africa4 Palestine. The complainant said the billboard “calls for the ban on a sovereign country because they are mainly Jewish and they are fighting back in a war thrust upon them. It’s hate speech, it incites violence, and is despicable.”

The ARB approached Africa4Palestine for a response, to no avail.

Gail Schimmel, the chief executive of the ARB, told the *SA Jewish Report*, “We are the industry self-regulatory body for the content of advertising. A billboard expressing an opinion on an issue isn’t really advertising in the true sense. The ability for people to communicate their views is a function of freedom of speech, providing it doesn’t become hate speech.

“This said, our code is specific about this type of material. While we don’t deal

with controversial opinions, it requires the identification of exactly who it is that placed the material. It was this aspect that we ruled on. Whether or not it was hate speech is a complaint for the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), not the ARB. Since October last year, we have received a number of complaints about material relating to the



Billboard advertisers must identify themselves on billboards if they want to remain legal

situation in Gaza from both sides, and in all cases, we have referred the complainants to the SAHRC.”

“The important take out,” Schimmel said, “is that if you see material of this nature, the ARB can help if you just want to identify who placed the material. The SAHRC is the correct body if you believe the content goes beyond an opinion and amounts to hate speech.”

The ARB said that in the spirit of free and fair speech, its Code of Advertising Practice “seeks to limit the [ARB] directorate’s considerations to claims capable of objective interpretation, without getting dragged into controversial and emotive social discourse. In controversial matters, there’s unlikely to be an objective single truth, which is why the ARB code expressly precludes the directorate from weighing in on such matters, as doing so would run contrary to the intention and purpose of the ARB.

“There can be no dispute that the protracted war between Israel and Palestine is a controversial and emotive issue. It’s therefore

not surprising that people hold strong opinions over who they perceive to be the aggressor and who they perceive to be retaliating, or what they believe would end the bloodshed. This means that the directorate isn’t empowered to express a view on this matter insofar as the content and likely interpretation of, or impact on, reasonable viewers would be.”

The South African Constitution protects free speech, but the ARB said knowing the identity of the advertiser “allows any person who holds strong views to reach out and make contact with the advertiser, should they choose to do so”. Not displaying these details “robs consumers of the opportunity to engage with the advertising and/or advertiser in any meaningful manner”.

Even though the 2024 Olympics are long over, the ARB instructed its members “not to accept the advertisement ... without clear identification of the advertiser, or clear and current contact information.” There will be other Olympic Games, and this campaign is likely to continue. The focus now is shifting to ban Israel from international football.

Said Israeli journalist Rolene Marks, “Once again, Africa4Palestine is looking to sow division and import a conflict into South Africa by any means necessary. Sport has always been a great unifier and bridge-builder between people. Africa4Palestine seeks only to break down any potential discourse or peace or bringing together of communities, especially at a time when children – Muslim and Jewish, Israeli and Palestinian – deserve a better future than the current politics of blame and intimidation.

“It’s typically cowardly behaviour of Africa4Palestine to intimidate and threaten and then hide behind anonymity – a tactic often displayed by the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions coalition and its supporters,” Marks said.

Frans Cronje, an independent analyst, strongly disagreed. The issue should be whether a message complies with the laws of the country or not, he said. “In this case, the message that Israel be banned from Olympic competition surely does comply. Discouraging its placement on account of the advertiser not being identified seems like a censorship device to keep the message from being broadcast. This is a freedom-of-speech issue. If some find the billboard offensive, that’s tough. Many people find Israel offensive. The pro-Israel lobby in South Africa loses because its strategies are inferior to those of its opponents. It cannot make up for that by banning the other side.”

Independent marketing consultant Heidi Brauer said, “Advertisers have a duty and responsibility to be clear and honest about who they are. This is so that the consumer can read their messaging in that context, and make informed decisions about how to process the information they contain. In fact, in financial services, there are strict rules about such clarity and disclosure, resulting in sanctions and fines for offending advertisers.

“Outdoor advertising used ‘anonymously’ could be both a way to show a body’s support base – that it’s sufficiently bold about a position to make it so loudly – and could also be a way to intimidate those in the opposition. Not revealing the identity of the advertiser dilutes the impact of the message for both sets of recipients. It causes assumptions to be made, and can add to distrust in an already intensely flammable environment.”

While the ARB’s ruling may seem technical, remember that mafia kingpin Al Capone was eventually nailed and jailed for tax evasion rather than his many mobster crimes.

Soldier’s death breaks SA granny’s heart

>>Continued from page 1

“This fight mustn’t stop. We must continue until peace is achieved, so the next generation won’t have to sacrifice their lives as well,” she said, as family and friends sobbed around her.

“Nitai *sheli* [my Nitai], you’re an angel in heaven, as you were an angel on earth,” she said. “I love you to the moon and back. *Am Yisrael Chai.*”


Nitai was buried near Staff Sergeant Shahaf Nissani (20), a female observation soldier who was killed when Hamas terrorists overran the Nahal Oz base on 7 October. Nitai’s grave being so close to hers made clear how Israel’s best and brightest continue to put their country first.

Ashkelon Mayor Tomer Glam called Nitai “a son of our city”, saying “our hearts break with the devastating news. My deepest condolences to his parents and his dear family. The Ashkelon municipality will support them in any way necessary

during this painful and difficult time. May you know no more sorrow, and may you find comfort from heaven. May your memory be blessed, hero.”


Nitai’s sister, Shai, said she “refuses to believe it [Nitai’s death]” and that her big brother was “the light of the house: the most beautiful laughter, the most beautiful smile, the most beautiful hair, and the sharpest sense of humour. Thank you for 21 years that I had the privilege to be your little sister.

“Today, I stand with my head held high, proud to say this is my brother,” she said. “The brother who fought for his family, for his country, who fought to bring back people he didn’t even know. But that’s Nitai, always putting everyone before himself. I remember our last conversation, you told me you were ready to be a father. I was happy. I know that if you were here, you would shout to everyone to ‘Smile, because I’m glad I had the privilege to fall for my country.’”



JEWISH WOMEN'S BENEVOLENT SOCIETY
Formed 1912

FUNDS RAISED GO TOWARDS TERTIARY EDUCATION BURSARIES



A BOOK IS A GIFT YOU CAN OPEN AGAIN AND AGAIN

THE EXCEPTIONAL JWBS BOOK SALE

Sunday, 1 September 2024


Time: 9 am - 2 pm
Venue: Genesis Conference Centre - 10 Sandler Road, Fairmount (Mezzanine Level - one escalator level up from Pick n Pay)

☎ 011 485 5232
 🌐 www.jwbs.co.za
 ✉ office@jwbs.co.za

📄 **BOOKS R30 EACH**

📄 **Novels; Judaica - English and Hebrew, Religious and Secular; Nonfiction- subjects diverse and interesting; Children - all ages; Recipe books; Dictionaries; Plays; Poetry; Game books; And more!**

DONATE NOW



south african Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

Changing the narrative

Don't you just love it when the antisemitic narrative of Israel being an apartheid state is once again proven to be so wrong?

The international anti-Israel lobby goes all out to persuade the world that Jews are genocidal racists, and that Israel is proof positive of that. Since 7 October, it has done so by finding visuals and making claims about the war in Gaza to prove its point. And in doing so, the lobby throws out loaded terms like "apartheid Israel", and "genocidal Israel". I could go on and on.

Only, these words have meanings that are opposite to everything that Israel stands for. It generally doesn't take much to prove that these narratives are fictional – if you are open to the truth, that is.

However, on Tuesday, when a 52-year-old Muslim Bedouin citizen of Israel was saved in a massive military operation specifically to rescue him, this "apartheid Israel" narrative totally collapsed.

Not only that, it proved the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is out there to safeguard, protect, and secure every single citizen of Israel, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Bahai, or those who don't fit into a specific religion.

Kaid Farhan Al-Qadi, a father of 11 from Rahat, a Bedouin town in the south of Israel, was kidnapped by Hamas terrorists on 7 October. He was taken hostage from Kibbutz Magen's packing factory, where he had been employed as a security guard. He was held captive for 326 days in Gaza.

Israel sent the elite Shayetet 13 unit in a complex operation on Tuesday to rescue Al-Qadi. The unit was supported by the IDF Southern Command and Shin Bet, who located him alive in a tunnel.

Then, once rescued and brought to safety, he is being treated by a religious, Orthodox Jewish doctor at the Soroko University Medical Center. And this, our haters, believe is the work of an apartheid regime, a regime that cares only about Jews! Really?

Here we have, once again, proof positive that their narrative is pure exaggeration and lies. I wonder what the media who support these lies are going to say about this rescue operation. Perhaps they won't say a word and just ignore it because it doesn't fit their mission.

The best social media post I read in the wake of Al-Qadi's rescue was, "My favourite aspect of apartheid is when the whole Jewish world is celebrating the rescue of a Muslim Arab Bedouin hostage." And that's a fact.

It was tough not to be moved while watching the videos of his sons running to see Al-Qadi for the first time in more than 10 months. It was a gift to be able to hear the calls he had with both Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog, which were so telling. Both leaders called him on his return to Israel.

It was obvious both Herzog and Al-Qadi were quite emotional when the president said, "Dear Farhan, how moving it is to hear your voice! Our brother has come home! Our brother has returned!"

Al-Qadi thanked the president, saying, "I'm grateful to the state of Israel, to the army who came. People are suffering there. Do everything you can to bring people home. Work 24 hours, don't sleep until they return. People are really suffering, you can't imagine."

He went on to tell the president, "Suddenly, I heard someone speaking Hebrew outside the door. I couldn't believe it, I couldn't believe it. I thank you very much. This is thanks to our army, they are doing a sacred duty, risking their lives. Thank you very much, Mr President."

The president reiterated, "The most important thing is to bring everyone back. There are still so many brothers and sisters there, and we want them all home. The entire nation of Israel is with us."

As we wait for some kind of positive outcome to the drawn-out negotiations over the hostages and the war, Al-Qadi's return has sparked excitement in Israel and around the Jewish world. Somehow, it has brought some hope, except as the Hostages Families Forum made clear, "The opportunity to bring everyone back is slipping away with each passing day."

This Wednesday, the families of hostages led a massive vehicle convoy from Hostage Square in Tel Aviv to the Gaza border. They called out to their loved ones using powerful loudspeakers mounted on a crane.

Having just seen the excitement of Al-Qadi's family, I can only imagine the anguish of those whose loved ones are still being held hostage in Gaza. Hopefully, we'll have good news soon.

Going back to the fake narrative about Jews and Israel, I can't help but reiterate something that Haviv Rettig Gur, a seasoned Israeli journalist and analyst, made clear at Limmud last weekend. It was around the claim that Jews have colonised the land that is Israel. Just the term itself is astonishing in that it points to Jews not having a history with the country despite the connection between Jews and Israel going back to the Bible.

Also, colonisation means "the subjugation of one country by another, leading to political, social, and economic change", and I'm not sure which country our haters think Jews represent.

Gur makes it clear that Israel is made up of refugees from all over the world who have nowhere else to go because the countries they come from – a large proportion of them in the Arab world – certainly won't have them back.

As Gur puts it, it isn't because Israel is this huge might – with America as its ally – that it will always win, it's simply because Israelis have no choice, they have no place else to go.

It's also for this reason that while there's no Constitution in Israel and there are very few basic laws, democracy will prevail because no matter the difference in belief, politics, and sentiment that exist in Israel, Israelis have to find solutions to their problems because no-one is going anywhere. The world isn't waiting for Jews.

And, he said, if those who hate us think that terrorism or wars will scare Jews out of Israel, they are on the wrong track. Again, Jews will keep fighting because for Israelis, it's their only home.

Here's to bringing all the remaining hostages home!



BDS – more chaos than coalition

OPINION

BENJI SHULMAN



In the incessant din of antisemitism that has invaded our public square since 7 October, it can be confusing to understand where it's coming from and why.

However, if you disentangle from the noise, it's easier to deal with. Anti-Israel groups in the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) coalition converge in their opposition to Israel, but diverge in their motivation, tactics, and ultimate goals.

Broadly speaking, four philosophical currents animate the BDS movement in South Africa: Islamists; extreme African nationalists; Stalinist leftists; and what's known as the "new left" – "identitarians", or "wokists". Each of these groups brings its own strengths, weaknesses, and internal contradictions, making the BDS campaign a potent force and a fractured coalition.

While these distinctions aren't absolute, this framework can help us to understand the movement.

Islamists shouldn't be confused with Muslims. While Islam is a faith practised by millions, Islamism is a political ideology that seeks to establish states governed by Islamic law, often through coercive means.

Some Islamists even advocate for the use of violence, commonly referred to as jihadism. In the context of the BDS campaign, Islamists view Israel as an impediment to their broader goal of establishing theocratic governance in the Middle East. For them, the existence of a Jewish state in what they consider Muslim lands is intolerable.

In South Africa, Islamists have been particularly vocal, organising protests in cities like Cape Town. They are well-funded through countries like Iran, ideologically driven, and highly organised. However, their violence and confrontational approach often alienates potential supporters.

African nationalists, including some parts of the African National Congress/Economic Freedom Fighters have historically aligned themselves with the Palestinian cause. However, their support for the BDS campaign isn't purely ideological, it's also driven by economic considerations.

African nationalists often have a xenophobic strain to their thought, and view Jews in South Africa as competitors for economic dominance. This economic paradigm, coupled with historical ties to the Palestinians, fuels their involvement.

Africanists aren't primarily focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but if they do become involved, their outsized influence on state power makes them dangerous.

The historically Stalinist left in South Africa, exemplified by the South African Communist Party, approaches the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the lens of anti-imperialism. It views Israel as a tool of global imperialism, primarily serving the interests of the United States. For Stalinists, Israel is part of a broader network of capitalist exploitation. They believe that antisemitism isn't a real phenomenon, and will eventually disappear when a global workers' revolution materialises.

The Stalinist left has numbers on its side, particularly through its influence within trade unions and other mass movements. However, its rigid ideology and dogmatic approach often limits its ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

The identitarian faction within the BDS movement can normally be identified through its love of prefixes – feminists/

queers/environmentalists/Swifties/Jews for a free Palestine.

Comprising feminists, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning) activists, and other progressive groups, such groups view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the lens of oppression and privilege. They see Israel as a "white" colonial power oppressing "brown" Palestinians, and their discourse often revolves around issues of race, gender, and social justice.

Identitarians are often skilled at shaping public opinion through social media and OpEd columns. However, their influence is largely confined to elite circles and online platforms. In spite of their eloquence, they lack the numbers and grassroots support of the other factions within the BDS movement. Their insistence on ideological purity can also alienate potential allies, particularly those who don't share their specific social-justice framework.

What unites these groups is their shared opposition to Israel's right to exist and their lack of faith in the values of liberal democracy. However, this unity is tenuous at best. Each faction is "totalising" in its worldview, meaning that it seeks to impose its vision of society on everyone else. This creates significant internal contradictions as the different factions often have mutually incompatible goals. For example, Islamists are vehemently opposed to the LGBTQ+ rights championed by identitarians, while Stalinists find religious fanaticism an affront to their secular ideology. African nationalists, for their part, are wary of both Stalinists and Islamists, fearing that their wealth and power could be threatened by either group.

These internal tensions make the BDS movement in South Africa chaotic, disorganised, and rife with backstabbing and intrigue. Occasionally, however, these disparate elements can come together to pursue their shared goals, such as during moments of heightened conflict in Gaza or political instability.

The recent South African elections provided a rare moment of such unity. Various factions rallied around the cause while the fighting heated up in Gaza and the International Criminal Court focused its attention on Israel. However, the elections didn't go as planned. The splintering of the ANC/leftist formations, the identitarian parties' failure to gain significant traction, and the loss of key Islamist enablers like Dr Naledi Pandor in Parliament were all important blows.

As the conflict in Gaza has started to turn against Hamas, and as pro-Israel parties have gained power in South Africa's new government, the BDS coalition has once again fragmented. Each faction has retreated to its own corner, pursuing a hodgepodge of unrelated agenda items, some writing scathing OpEds, others trying to ban Israel from international events, and a few attempting to block South African exports to Israel, the full movement not working together in spite of the noise.

Overall, the past few months have taught us that in spite of the noise and tough politics, South Africans are a tolerant people and there's no broad support for the extremism of any of the factions of BDS. We even have our own network of pro-Israel allies. Together, we can turn the tide for a more pro-Israel, positive South African future.

• Benji Shulman is an executive office bearer of the South African Zionist Federation.



The hostage families leading the convoy to the Gaza border on Wednesday 28 August

Shabbat Shalom!

Peta Krost
Editor

SA volunteers help kibbutzniks return to Nir Am

ROLENE MARKS

A circle of yellow flags, symbolic of the hostages who remain captive in Gaza, greet you as you enter Kibbutz Nir Am – a painful reminder of that Black Shabbat. Every so often, the dull boom of combat in neighbouring Gaza punctuates the air. The symphony of war continues.

Kibbutz Nir Am (Nation Meadow) is situated in the south of Israel, close to Sderot and about 2km from the Gaza border. The closest point of the kibbutz is less than a kilometre from Gaza. On 7 October, as Hamas terrorists invaded the communities and kibbutzim of the Gaza envelope, Nir Am was one of a few that avoided casualties. Nir Am's security team or "kitat konenut" managed to repel the terrorists. Their story is nothing less than extraordinary.

I stood at the perimeter fence at the closest point to the Gaza Strip, totally exposed. It was a clear indication of just how vulnerable these communities were on 7 October.

On the morning of my visit, news had just broken that the Israel Defense Forces had recovered the bodies of six hostages, brutally kidnapped from their homes on neighbouring kibbutzim on that dark Saturday. There are still 109 in captivity in unbearable conditions.

Many of the residents of Nir Am have started to return, having been evacuated to the Herod Hotel in Tel Aviv. It's a profoundly emotional and sensitive time, as war still rages and many still feel the trauma of that day and are concerned about their safety. A ceasefire seems to grow increasingly out of reach. It's understandable that the return to their homes is overwhelming and bittersweet. Residents have started returning to other kibbutzim as well.

The most pressing need for these communities to start returning is to feel safe.

Responding to their needs, the Jewish Agency for Israel has launched Communities2Gether, which partners 25 Israeli communities with communities around the world with the goal of ensuring that no community is left behind. Nir Am was partnered with South Africa. Though Nir Am wasn't breached on 7 October and there's no physical damage to any of the structures, emotional or "people-to-people" support is needed.

The Communities2Gether project – in partnership with Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund; Jewish National Fund South

Africa; ORT South Africa; the South African Zionist Federation; and olim organisation Telfed – is committed to ensuring that the residents have all the support they need. A busload of volunteers including two handymen and a locksmith descended on Nir Am to help clean and organise the four kindergartens so that they are ready for the return of children on 1 September. Volunteers helped pack up the makeshift *ganim* (kindergartens) at the Herod Hotel, and wanted to continue to give support as many of the residents started to return.

"Our volunteers just wanted to give back, and we're going with the flow, understanding that we're dealing with a wounded community," Debbie Dash, the deputy chairperson of Telfed, told the *SA Jewish Report*. "Many are returning with mixed feelings after living in a hotel for 10 months with little privacy, but still not feeling safe. It's important that we can give people-to-people support".

Chairperson Maish Isaacson echoed her sentiments, saying emotional support was critical, especially as many felt a sense of trepidation about the security situation. "Residents left under extreme duress, and even though the kibbutz wasn't destroyed, we want them to return knowing they are well cared for," he said.

Volunteers worked to prepare the four kindergartens for the children's return. Israel Tzadok is head of education for Nir Am, served as a soldier for three months as part of a tank unit, and was stationed at the kibbutz.

"I wanted to do more than protect, I wanted to help rebuild.

Helping to revive the kibbutz is exciting and emotional, and I hope the children have a sense of feeling at home. The first of September will be a dream come true. I hope the children take as much as they can from all the support they are receiving. It's important to help the parents as well as they deal with their anxiety. We want them to know that their children are safe. We know how to take care of the kids, but the parents also need to be taken care of," he said.

As parents start to prepare for the start of the new school year later this week, there's a lot to take into consideration. Counsellor Ofir Ohayon cautions that this isn't a regular school year for children of the south. They have effectively lost a year crucial to their development and maturity. And there has been some emotional regression because of the immense trauma that they have faced. They need to feel safe and secure as they experience many emotional difficulties.

"Parents need to be extra sensitive to their children," Ofir said. "If they are emotional, their parents tend to be extra sensitive, and of course, children pick up what their parents are feeling. Their lexicon has changed. They speak about death, and many of them lost friends and family, and the parents may not be emotionally strong yet."

The Communities2Gether project will be that physical and emotional support system for communities who have endured incomprehensible trauma. For the volunteers helping to prepare the kindergartens, the feeling of pride in giving back in such a meaningful way was so great, they immediately asked to return to help prepare other parts of the kibbutz.

• *Telfed arranged the volunteering initiative.*



Volunteers organising kindergartens at Kibbutz Nir Am as residents start returning home

Rwandans reinvent themselves through forgiveness for genocide

LEE TANKLE

Thirty years after the violence of the genocide in Rwanda, Carl Wilkens, a humanitarian aid worker who lived in the country at the time of the genocide, is still grappling with what he saw.

Wilkens – speaking at Limmud Johannesburg on Sunday 25 August – moved to Rwanda with his wife and children in 1990 to build schools and generally improve the living conditions of those in Rwanda. However, when the genocide started in April 1994, many American citizens were told to evacuate Rwanda to escape the violence.

Wilkens and his wife made the seemingly impossible decision that he would stay in Rwanda to try and save the two people living in their house who were Tutsi and marked to be exterminated by the Hutu militia. His wife and their three young children went to Kenya.

While in Rwanda, Wilkens saved about 400 people and still returns annually to meet people impacted by the genocide, many of whom lost family members to murder.

Wilkens told the story of one woman, Maria, whose husband and sons had been murdered in the genocide by a man called Philbert, and how she and this man had forged a close relationship in the years since the genocide. When Wilkens heard that Philbert was the one who killed Maria's husband and sons, he couldn't understand why Maria would have a relationship with such a person.

However, Maria told Wilkens that though she was

angry and hurt that her husband and sons were no longer alive, through Philbert, she was able to find out where they were buried.

While Maria tells Wilkens all the positive things about Philbert, he is left dumbfounded and angry at such an ease of forgiveness.

He told the Limmud audience, "I'm really upset with myself for the way I'm reacting to this. I don't like it, but it's the way I'm reacting," he said, "And I realise I'm stuck in 1994. Maria isn't stuck in 1994. I'm stuck in seeing him as a mass murderer. She's not stuck in seeing him this way."

Wilkens believed that Maria's befriending of Philbert and having a positive attitude towards him diminished his accountability, but he came to realise that this is the way that the Rwandan people have tried to move forward.

"Rwanda isn't hell-bent on punishment and prosecution of ordinary people, it's hell-bent on healing," said Wilkens.

Maria had told him, Wilkens said, that "she would never forget that he had killed her husband and sons, but she's no longer surrounded by anger, she's surrounded by wonder and amazement that she was able to have closure."

In telling this story, Wilkens realised his anger came from a real place, but he also realised that, "I put Maria in the spotlight. I'm asking her all the questions. She's

graciously responding. But when she gets a chance, she steps out and puts Philbert in the spotlight. She starts trying to help me see life from Philbert's perspective. That's a massive key to getting free of anger and bitterness and being able to see life from the perspective of the perpetrator."

Although this perspective does repulse him at times, "It's becoming less revolting as the years go on," he said. "It's obscene to me. It's not fair to me. This idea of fair has ruled my mind ruthlessly all my life, and I didn't even know it until I started confronting restorative practices."

Wilkens said Rwanda had set up its courts in response to the genocide in a way that says, "We aren't prioritising blame, we're trying to understand the harm so we can heal."

To this day, "Rwanda is trying to restore peace and security so that you can have some empathy and safety. You can then begin to unpack the harm because if you unpack the harm without empathy and safety, you'll make things worse.

"You can't pay back for murder, rape, and all those things," Wilkens said. "But you can show that you're more than the worst thing you've done. You can show you're more than one thing. And so, these opportunities for people to reinvent themselves are vital."



Carl Wilkens speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

HOLD REAL ESTATE

SECURING YOUR FUTURE IN ISRAEL



WED, SEPT 4TH 2024

TEL AVIV'S URBAN REAL ESTATE EVOLUTION

The city is evolving, unlocking exciting opportunities for future buyers



Join our webinar to discover the dynamic real estate market and cutting-edge urban planning strategies transforming Tel Aviv. Gain exclusive insights from urban planners, developers, and real estate experts.

- ✓ How urban renewal is shaping the city
- ✓ The impact of the new Metro in Gush Dan Metropolitan on urban planning
- ✓ Pre-sale developer incentives for new buyers

Guest Panelists



Daniela Paz-Erez
CEO & Founder
Paz Group

Back by popular demand! Daniella will be discussing the dramatic impact of the Metro in Gush Dan Metropolitan on urban planning in the city.



Julian Nathan
Managing Director
Hold Real Estate (Sales & Marketing)

Julian will be discussing real estate market trends and the process for foreign buyers looking to invest in Israel.



Kate Kabili
International Sales Director
Hagag Group

Kate will be presenting Hagag's brand new luxury projects in Tel Aviv with a special promotion for webinar attendees!

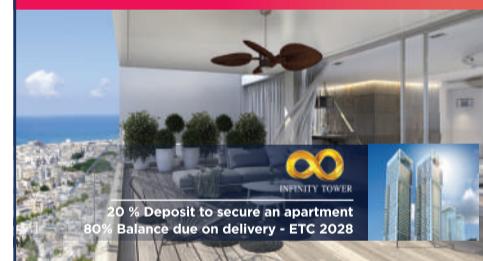
Facilitated by



Nicci Raz
Head of Marketing & Sales
Hold Real Estate

FEATURING NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Infinity Tower, Tel Aviv



20% Deposit to secure an apartment
80% Balance due on delivery - ETC 2028

Masterpiece Bavli, Tel Aviv



15% Deposit to secure an apartment
85% Balance due on delivery - ETC 2030

In association with
HAGAG GROUP



Scan to register

WED, SEPT 4TH 2024

8:00 PM IDT / 6:00 PM BST / 1:00 PM EDT

Contact us:

✉ info@hold.co.il | ☎ +972 58 631 9754

Visit our website www.hold.co.il

Disclaimer - Specific apartments and prices are subject to availability, and advertised materials are as of the date of advertising. Prices and availability could change and vary from time to time without prior notice. We cannot guarantee a specific apartment or price without signing a registration form.

Years of ‘traumatic peacemaking’ and no path ahead

GILLIAN KLAWSKY

The foundational Israeli experience, the fact that so many Jews came to Israel because they had nowhere else to go, has profound consequences for any strategy employed to destroy the country. That’s according to Haviv Rettig Gur, a veteran Israeli-American journalist and a senior analyst at *The Times of Israel*, who spoke at Limmud Johannesburg on the weekend of 23 to 25 August.

“Why doesn’t terrorism destroy Israel?” Gur asked. “Why have Israelis not fled Israel in large numbers? Why do we thrive and flourish while constantly being terrorised? It’s because when you murder the children of a people who have nowhere to go, their response will be to stay put and fight. Terrorism hasn’t destroyed Israel, it’s destroyed Palestine,” Gur said.

In looking at Israeli politics, wars, and peace efforts, Gur examined trends in voter turnout – the best measure of trust in the political system. After decades of a more than 80% voter turnout average in Israel, voter turnout fell to 62% in 2001. Ever since, Israeli voters have consistently voted in ways that are totally unpredictable.

The great tragedy of the Second Intifada is that it’s an absolute mystery and it remains one even today - the question of why it happened when the Palestinians were getting everything they wanted.

In some ways, Israel is considered a prosperous, happy country, said Gur. “But in other ways, in Israel, you’re walking around a post-traumatic society. That trauma goes back to the Second Intifada [which began in 2000].”

The First Intifada began in 1987, when tensions boiled over after 20 years of Israeli military rule over Palestinian cities. “One element of the First Intifada has burned itself into Israeli psyches even if they don’t know it,” said Gur. “This is ‘the children of the stones’, where during the First Intifada, Palestinian kids leaving school would throw rocks at Israeli soldiers on a mass scale.”

Armed to the hilt but helpless in this situation, these soldiers didn’t know what to



Haviv Rettig Gur speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

do. “It was the Palestinian population turning to the Israeli public and asking, ‘What’s your plan?’” Gur said. Ultimately, the plan came in the form of the first Oslo Accords.

They provided a framework for Israeli-Palestinian peace and the First Intifada ended in 1993.

“In 1995, Oslo 2 becomes an actual treaty between Israelis and Palestinians,” Gur said. “This commits Israel to pulling out of civilian population centres and to establishing Palestinian autonomy with security. Yet in November 1995, Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by an Israeli Jew opposed to this peace process.”

Benjamin Netanyahu ultimately won the 1996 elections by an extremely narrow margin, and though he didn’t advance the peace process, he implemented most of what Rabin had agreed to. He was later voted out of office, and Ehud Barak came to power in 1999. “Barak starts negotiating for the establishment of a Palestinian state and for shared sovereignty of the Temple Mount,” said Gur. “And then

in 2000, the Second Intifada begins. Over three years, there were 140 suicide bombings targeting Israeli civilians and it shattered the Israeli left for generations to come.”

This is because the intifada upended the left’s popular narrative, Gur said. “The left’s story was that the Palestinians are under occupation, under military rule, and they don’t elect the people who rule them. That’s a moral debt that we owe them – the right not to be under someone else’s military rule. The left therefore makes a promise that if we give the Palestinians their independence, they will give us peace and security.”

Yet with the Second Intifada came the collapse of this promise. While we know the conflict was sparked by Ariel Sharon’s visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the timing was difficult to understand. “The great tragedy of the Second Intifada is that it’s an absolute mystery and it remains one even today – the question of why it happened when the Palestinians were getting everything they wanted,” said Gur. Israelis are convinced Palestinians are just extremists, violent, and committed to our destruction, but there’s more to it than that, he said.

Sharon won the 2001 election, and following the 2002 Passover Massacre, in which a terrorist killed 30 people at a public seder, he launched Operation Defensive Shield, which sought to renew the Israel Defense Forces control of major cities in the West Bank. Highly successful, it brought an end to the bombings and ultimately led to the 2005 Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and an end to the Second Intifada. “This was perceived as a right-wing solution to a problem the left couldn’t figure out,” Gur said.

In 2006, after Sharon’s debilitating stroke, new Prime Minister Ehud Olmert intended to withdraw from the West Bank. Yet that year, Hamas carried out its first tunnel operation, kidnapping Gilad Shalit. This was swiftly followed by Hezbollah’s first cross-border attack six years after Israel pulled out of Lebanon. “Olmert has a problem, two places that Israel pulled out of are now at war with Israel,” said Gur.

You cannot deter a Hezbollah or a Hamas, Gur said. That was the lesson of 2006, and it ultimately led to the construction of the Iron Dome and the Israeli belief that nothing works with the Palestinians. This was how Netanyahu got back into power, by promising to do very little to advance peace or to ignite war, Gur said.

Fast-forwarding to today, Gur called Netanyahu a “horrific leader in wartime” who is constantly campaigning, not visiting devastated Kibbutz Nir Oz due to bad optics, and refusing to give interviews to the Israeli press.

“Yet, the criticism that he’s the reason that 7 October happened isn’t fair,” Gur said. “His strategy was exactly what Israelis wanted because all the previous experiments were terrible failures. Netanyahu’s theory always was that these enemies – Hamas and Hezbollah – are destroyers of their own societies and we are so strong and capable, all we need to do is contain them and flourish.” How wrong he was!

“We have no idea what to do, we’ve earned our confusion and frustration in rivers of blood. Israelis know more than the foreigners who make moral judgements, not less. And because we know more, we don’t see a path forward.”

Pushing boundaries for Jewish women

LEE TANKLE

“How are you meant to be a woman involved in Jewish life when you are left out of the central elements of Jewish life?”

This is the question posed by Dr Channa Pinchasi, the director of the Maskilot programme in Israel and an active feminist, to the audience at Limmud Johannesburg.

Pinchasi said it was a challenge and opportunity for our generation to start to take a more leading role while still being able to keep Jewish values and abide by *halacha*.

“When we get to Jewish tradition, we have to say clearly that women are on the margins of Jewish tradition in a substantive way,” said Pinchasi. Women are left out of four main elements of Jewish culture otherwise known as four houses: the Temple, shuls, the rabbinical courts, and Torah study. However, there are places where women can and should take a leading role, she said.

“The Jewish library misses half of its people. We haven’t been heard, and this is because the Torah says, ‘You should teach it to your sons or children’, but not

explicitly to your daughters.”

The best way to look at masculinity and femininity in a culture is to look at the central values and roles in a culture, Pinchasi said. Generally, men adopt the central values and roles, while women are left on the margins. For example, “In the early days of the kibbutz movement, men were the ones working the land, while the women were the ones left in the kitchen,” said Pinchasi.

“The point is that I want to have a full cultural life. So, if I were haredi, I would want to study Torah like they do. If I was a kibbutznik, I would want to work the land and not be stuck in the kitchen,” said Pinchasi. “It’s not about me wanting to be a man, I want to be a part of the culture and my community.

“I have trust in Jewish tradition that it can be changed,” she said. “We have a cultural mechanism that enables us to internalise a

new understanding of life and at the same time keep our core Jewish identity.

was impossible.”

Pinchasi said nothing in *halacha* prohibited women from running the Pesach seder. “Leading the seder is not a halachic thing, it’s a leading role. There’s no reason why a woman can’t lead the seder.”

Women have generally occupied the private sphere, whereas men have occupied the public sphere, she said. The major achievement of the first wave of the feminist movement is that women are now occupying more space in the public sphere, and even in *halacha*, women can take roles that were assumed to be strictly for men, like running the Pesach seder.

“It’s crucial to understand this mode of thinking, because once you can imagine a woman leading a seder, it will enable girls to go out and lead and it will enable us to have a more inclusive society,” said Pinchasi.



Dr Channa Pinchasi speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

“It’s our role as Jewish women and feminists today to be active in Jewish culture. We live in a time that our grandmothers thought

She said that at her daughter’s wedding, her daughter decided to break the glass at the chuppah, and while there was discussion about it, it was never held on the grounds of *halacha*. “It has nothing to do with actual marriage, but this is the moment when this chuppah becomes public.”

This action wasn’t a problem in terms of *halacha*, but it was almost seen as a political statement.

Similarly, Pinchasi questioned why women are left out of the public element of mourning such as eulogising at the funeral or saying kaddish. “If *halacha* has this deep understanding of mourning, then women should take part in it,” she said. “If kaddish is something that respects the dead and life, women should say kaddish.”

Perhaps the only way to integrate feminism into Jewish culture is by pushing the boundaries of what a woman can or can’t do within *halacha*, Pinchasi said, as “once we speak the language, the Jewish language, we’ll be able to change it”.

The secular Jewish renaissance sweeping Israel

LEE TANKLE

While 40% to 60% of Israeli Jews identify as secular, it's not the kind of secular most people imagine it to be, said American-Canadian-Israeli queer Jewish educator-activist Elliot Vaisrub Glassenberg.

"It's kind of its own unique thing," Glassenberg told a Limmud Johannesburg audience last weekend. "They range anywhere from being agnostic to practising Judaism, vehemently atheist, to people who are deeply connected to Judaism and maybe even believe in G-d, but don't sit in synagogues, except maybe at Yom Kippur just to hear the shofar," he said.

Speaking from his own experience growing up in Chicago, Glassenberg described his experience with Judaism as being secular-refo-conserva-dox. This means his family would walk to shul every Shabbat, but would come home from shul and watch exclusively Jewish movies.

Similarly, he attended a Jewish school in Chicago, but for him, "Judaism is being Jewish. It's going to synagogue; it's praying; it's hearing the Torah; it's

keeping kosher; it's keeping Shabbat. And giving *zedakah*. But it's also Jewish humour, literature, and stories."

"A lot of people, when they make aliya, stop going to synagogue or stop keeping Jewish traditions because for many, like me, one of the main reasons I went to synagogue was to connect to the Jewish community," said Glassenberg. "In Israel, I have a Jewish community in my day job and in my day-to-day life. So, I had to question what Judaism looks like to me without those Jewish institutions."

Glassenberg described the majority of Israeli secular Jews as like the son from the Pesach seder who doesn't know how to ask.

"Many Jews were growing up not even knowing what questions to ask about their Jewish identity. But then they started asking questions: why are we here? What are we fighting for? What does it mean to be Jewish? What does it mean to be Israeli? What does it mean to be an Israeli Jew?"

"People started asking questions. And secular Israelis started creating Jewish groups of secular Israeli prayer.

Artists started integrating Jewish texts more into their art, and exploring what it means to be a Jewish Israeli artist," said Glassenberg.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Elliot Vaisrub Glassenberg speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

"This idea of the Hebrew cultural renaissance, that we need to create new forms of connection to Judaism, was something that was thriving in the early 1900s outside of Israel and in Israel."

The turning point in this process was the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 by right-wing religious extremist

Yigal Amir.

"Many secular Israelis who up until that point, and especially youth movements, were kind of ignorant or ambivalent about Judaism became antagonistic towards Judaism. They would say, 'It was Judaism that killed Rabin. Judaism is anti-peace. Judaism is anti-LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender], and anti-women, and all this,'" said Glassenberg, "but then underneath that, there was a countercultural movement of small groups of Israelis saying, 'That's not Judaism. I know there's more to Judaism than that. My parents didn't teach me, but I know there's more.' These people went to find out how to recreate a Judaism that's true to the values of their grandparents, the people that established the state of Israel and the kibbutzim."

Similarly, Glassenberg has witnessed a shift in the secular Jewish community since the right-wing government came to power in Israel and since 7 October. "A lot of secular Israelis, or I might even say liberal Israelis, had a big wake-up call when this new

extremist right-wing government was elected and tried to do things that shook the status quo in Israel," he said.

"There was what we call a social contract in Israel. Many secular Israelis would like things to be more secular, more democratic, and more liberal. Many religious and right-wing Israelis wanted things to be more conservative and more religious. There was a status quo of tension, a delicate balance – or imbalance – and this new government said, 'You know what, we're just going to change the rules of the game. We're going to change the power of the Supreme Court. We're going to pass dozens of new laws. But include religious coercion, perhaps reintroducing discrimination against LGBT people. And also, we're going to start introducing mandatory Jewish Studies in secular schools, but it's going to be overseen by Orthodox people.'

"So, there's pushback on all of these things from all kinds of Jews. You see people fighting for the need to have a democratic state, not just a Jewish state. But something that's different from the 1990s is that they're saying we need a democratic state because that's what our Judaism is," said Glassenberg.

Furthermore, since the events of 7 October, "deep pain and trauma is prevailing all of Israel. A lot of secular Israelis needed sources of strength and spiritual support. When they felt like the ground had been taken out from under them, their sources of support – the army, the land, and the state – were also taken out from under them. Many secular Israelis were seeking Jewish sources of support," he said.

Glassenberg said many of these secular Jews had been looking toward prayer and rituals like Kabbalat Shabbat to gain strength over the past 10 months, even having Kabbalat Shabbat at Hostage Square in Tel Aviv.

"It's not like secular Israelis are suddenly showing up in Orthodox synagogues. But they want to use the Jewish tools that exist on their terms and in their way to provide strength and support."

Samaria 'mostly normal', but sometimes a bumpy ride

LEE TANKLE

Ofir Dayan grew up in the community of Ma'ale Shomron in the West Bank, where, she said, "Jews and Palestinians coexisted".

Though people have fixed ideas of so-called "settlers", Dayan told a Limmud Johannesburg audience that West Bank Israeli communities were generally made up of a third secular, a third national religious, and a third ultra-Orthodox communities.

Dayan lived in Samaria for 23 years before she moved to New York for her education. "Setting aside the Second Intifada, I've never had any security issues there, not a Molotov cocktail, not a stone, nothing".

She said the West Bank, otherwise known as Judea and Samaria or the "occupied territories", was initially established as an area delineated by an armistice agreement between Israel and Jordan.

The area is divided into three areas set out by the Oslo Accords in 1993: area A, with full Palestinian control; area B with civil Palestinian and Israeli security control; and area C, where there is full Israeli control.

Palestinian teenagers were running towards the bus with lit torches wanting to burn the bus down.

"Our bus driver made what I now know wasn't a very smart decision to stop the bus. He opened the door, got out of the bus, and shot twice in the air. It didn't help. The Palestinian teenagers kept running towards us. He shot another shot in the air, and they ran away. Thankfully, nobody on either side was hurt," said Dayan.

There are now about 2.5 million Palestinians in the West Bank under the governance of the Palestinian Authority, with 92 000 Palestinians working in Israel. The number of those working in Israel has diminished since 7 October.

There are different reasons why Jewish people move to these areas, she said. For national religious communities, they do so because they want to be in the areas where stories of the Torah occurred.

The ultra-Orthodox community move there because they want to live in an area with a high concentration of ultra-Orthodox. Though the main concentration is in centres like Jerusalem, it has become too expensive, so they live in the West Bank.

"Life is mostly normal in communities in Judea and Samaria. People live there at the end of the day because it's liveable. Most go to work. They send their kids to school. It's mostly normal.

"On the ground, a lot of initiatives are bridging the gap, contributing to talks, and on a day-to-day basis, shopping centres are shared by Palestinians and Israelis. This is where they interact," said Dayan, "Unfortunately, this is also where sometimes we see terror attacks, taking advantage of the fact that they can easily get to a place where many Jews assemble. But it's mostly a place of coexistence.

"In the past few years, maybe decades, we've been looking at it all wrong," said Dayan, "In 2005, Israel decided to disengage and expel all Jews from the Gaza Strip and four communities in northern Samaria. Before that, the Israeli government, headed by Ariel Sharon, said, 'If we just give the settlers money, they will leave willingly. They'll buy a house in Tel Aviv, Kfar Saba, or Herzliya, and it's going to be fine.' It failed because people who are ideologically motivated aren't going to take money and leave. This isn't how it works. And if we think that if we just give Palestinians work permits in Israel, or a few more dollars, whether it be in Gaza with Qatari money, or in Judea and Samaria with other money, they'll just get up and leave, or the radical elements among them wouldn't want to fight Israel anymore, that's not only wrong, it's racist.

"Thinking that others are less ideological than yourself and you can just bribe them not to fight you for what they believe in isn't how it works. It's a problematic way to think about this issue," said Dayan.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Ofir Dayan speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

"It's important to know that the Oslo Accords was never meant to be a permanent solution. They were supposed to be a starting point for negotiations," said Dayan, "However, that all fell apart with the intifada, with thousands of Israelis murdered in the streets of Tel Aviv, Judea, and Samaria, Jerusalem, and other places. So, the negotiations never materialised."

Dayan grew up in the height of the Second Intifada, which lasted from September 2000 to February 2005, in which 1 083 Israelis were killed, of whom 741 were civilians.

When she was in Grade 1 in 2000, her memory of her first day at school was being taught by her teacher to duck and hide under the seats of the bus on the way to and from school.

"This is how we drove to school for the next two or three years – under the seats. It's not normal for a six-year-old to have to know to do that," said Dayan.

One of Dayan's most memorable moments was when on the way home from school in Grade 1, a group of

Independent living for senior citizens





From R14 999,00 per Month
Fully furnished suites in magnificent surroundings
24-hour security | serviced 5 days a week
Affordable rates – **no monthly levy**

Situated in Orchards, Garden Place offers the ultimate in **choice and value for money** when it comes to independent living for senior citizens.

WE'LL CREATE A PACKAGE THAT SUITS YOUR STYLE OF LIVING

Three different types of accommodation to choose from:

- Standard units:** Double bedroom en-suite
- Studio units:** Overlooking the garden, double bedroom en-suite with fully equipped kitchenette
- Cottages:** Lounge/dining room, double bedroom, bathroom en-suite, bath and walk-in shower, TV in bedroom and lounge, queen size wall-bed in living room (ideal for grandchildren or overseas visitors), fully equipped kitchen

- All units are fully furnished with DSTV, Wi-Fi, air-conditioning/heating, fridge, microwave, safe, bed linen, towels, crockery and cutlery
- Take your unit fully furnished or bring your own special pieces – either way, we will help create your home away from home
- Let us provide your meals and teas in our dining room or in the privacy of your unit, or choose to make your own meals
- Use our shuttle service or take your own car

The CHOICE is yours!

THE COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE YOU DESERVE FOR A GREAT PRICE

RATE INCLUDES

- Electricity, Wi-Fi, DSTV, 24-hour security and parking
- Idyllic gardens with two swimming pools
- Dining room and braai area
- Conference facilities at your disposal – have a game of cards or listen to a guest speaker
- Easy access to doctors, dentists, nurses, physio and Hatzolah
- Full-time management living on the property
- Daily shuttle to Norwood Mall, Melrose Arch and Balfour Park
- Laundry service available
- Situated close to clinics, fitness centres and golf courses
- Within walking distance to 4 shuls

CALL US TO VIEW

011 485 3800
53 Garden Road
Orchards Johannesburg
www.gardenplace.co.za
info@gardenplace.co.za

US antisemitism on the uptick with social media

LEE TANKLE

As many as 24% of Americans are antisemitic, Steven Windmueller, emeritus professor of Jewish communal studies at the Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles and specialist on American Jewish political behaviour, told an audience at Limmud in Johannesburg on 23 August.

Windmueller said the Anti-Defamation League maintains that this is far higher than before, even compared to periods in which antisemitism was rampant in the United States (US). "We saw in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s that antisemitism disappeared in many ways," said Windmueller, "But now, we're witnessing a radical jump. Especially among Gen Zs and millennials, who are showing the greatest signs of being antisemitic."

According to a study conducted by the Pew Foundation in 2020 and then verified in 2023, "Nine out of 10 American Jews worry about antisemitism in 2023," Windmueller said. "However, if you had asked this question before, that number would have been far less – almost 75%."

"In the period from 2015 to 2024 we have seen this extraordinary recalibration on the part of American Jews about their fears, concerns, and behaviours," he said, pointing out that nearly half of American Jews no longer wear items that identify them as Jewish.

Antisemitism in the United States has been rising consistently in recent years, going from 912 reported incidents in 2014 to 8 873 incidents in 2023.

"We began to note the rise of antisemitism in 2010. We believe a factor was the election of Barack Obama as US president in 2008. Over the two years following his election, more than 1 000 new hate groups were born – militant groups, white supremacists, and various other groups focused on 'taking back America,'" Windmueller said. "This was the first African American elected to the presidency of the US. It infuriated and challenged the far right, and led to the organisation of hate movements that we would see with these groups."

More concerningly, Windmueller said, young Americans from the ages of 18 to 35 were more likely to be anti-Jewish compared to older generations.

"This is concerning to the American Jewish establishment. Because it tells us that something has gone awry. Young people have different perspectives and views about Jews, Israel, and Judaism to their parents or grandparents. There are several reasons why, such as distrust in institutions and

the pervasiveness of social media. Certainly, the events since 7 October 2023 haven't helped. They are much more deeply embedded in society than we initially thought."

Windmueller said in the US campus scene, out of 147 universities, only 10 created civil unrest, and no more than 20 000 people were involved in antisemitic encampments and protests.

"In reality, the anger directed at Israel, in support of the Palestinians, and in anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist sentiment is relatively small in terms of participants but large in impact," he said.

One of the reasons for the rise in antisemitism among Gen Zs and millennials is the lack of civic education in America, he said. "American kids are growing up with less information about their society – the groups in their society and how societies in the US are designed to work."

The way young people get their information is also problematic as in social media, the truth and facts aren't defined. This is "changing the equation of what constitutes reality, truth, and information that needs to be understood about any group," Windmueller said. "But in this case, we see it with highly negative attitudes to Jews. And this is particularly concerning because it's a younger population that will replace, lead, and be the change agents in society in the future."

However, all is not lost, he said. In a study done by the American Jewish Committee this year, Americans in general started to say that antisemitism was a serious concern. Though Jewish communities around the world may feel alone in this trend, "non-Jews are as conscious of the rise of hate and antisemitism. In many cases, they see it as problematic, not only to the Jewish community but to society as a whole."

Americans need to start "preparing our kids going off to college, going into public education about what to expect and how they need to respond to acts or actions taken against them, Jews, Israel, or Zionism. It requires a lot of retooling and reorganising of our community in ways that will figure out how best to manage a new but very real challenge. And we're going to have some very tough conversations moving forward," Windmueller said.

"On 7 October, we woke up to realise that many of the allies we once perceived as part of the coalition that Jewish organisations were connected to aren't there. They didn't show up on 7 October. That means there's a good deal of work to be done to rebuild community relations with various groups in the Latino, African American, Asian American, Protestant, and Catholic worlds, and other circles. And we need to figure out what will make people feel safe," he said.

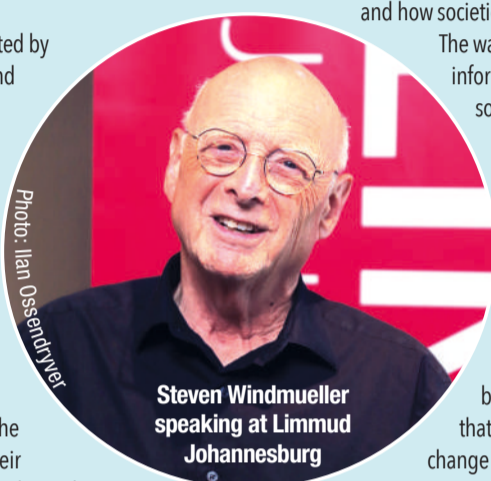


Photo: Ilan Ossentofsky

Steven Windmueller speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

Criticising Netanyahu not enough – Israel needs new leaders

GILLIAN KLAWSKY

Rocket fire from the north and south; the looming threat of war with Iran; more than 100 000 displaced Israelis; a rising death toll on both sides; and hostages still trapped in Gaza. Israel is coming closer to an existential threat than ever before.

That's according to Charisse Zeifert, the deputy director of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, who moderated a Limmud panel titled, "Israel: Tomorrow and the Day After", which weighed up different scenarios for the country.

"The future is certainly unknown," said award-winning Israeli journalist Yaron Deckel, the head of the Jewish Agency in Canada and former chief executive of Galei Tzahal – Israel's army radio station.

"We don't know when the war will end, whether it will expand, or when the displaced families and hostages will be able to return home.

"One thing is known – the government of Israel is working for its survival," he said. First presenting a pessimistic view, Deckel said the war would go on as long as the government deemed it necessary, even if it took years. This was because any ceasefire deal would be with Hamas, which it aims to eliminate. Moreover, the two right-wing parties that keep Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in power are against any deal, so making one would threaten the coalition and his political future.

"The prime minister also wants to continue the war because for as long as it goes on, there will be no enquiry into what led to 7 October," Deckel said. "Hamas is, however, not the same organisation it was on 6 October. The Israel Defense Forces has had success and Hamas is weaker, but it still has the ability to control the Gaza Strip and fire some rockets." Israel cannot accept that, but it also cannot afford an endless war, literally and figuratively. There needs to be a clear alternative for the future of Gaza once Hamas is gone.

Yet, Deckel spoke of the surprises in the Middle East over the past few decades, including an ever-increasing willingness by Arab countries to sign peace treaties with Israel. "Looking back at the past 30 years, we have good reason to be optimistic," he said. Finding lasting peace would require new and courageous leadership on both sides.

Ofir Dayan, a researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies in Israel, looked at Israel's challenges beyond the war. Though an election is slated for only the end of 2026, she predicted that the Israeli public would push for it to happen sooner.

"A big influence in those elections are new,

emerging parties of younger people who come from outside the realms of traditional politics but have clear vision." This is something she argued was sorely needed at a time when many politicians weren't worthy of their positions. "I want to feel that my representatives are better than me. This is a key part of democracy," Dayan said.



Yaron Deckel, Ofir Dayan, and Yonatan Mizrachi speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

Photo: Ilan Ossentofsky

Dayan also stressed the need for a government that protects Israel's right to exist and takes care of Jews in the diaspora. "I lived in New York for five years, and I watched how Israel knowingly ruins connections with diaspora communities," she said. "What's more, Israel has neglected and politicised public diplomacy to the point that it's a true danger to its future." Global perceptions of Israel will shape the thinking of the future leaders of the United States and influence its foreign policy.

Yonatan Mizrachi, research associate at the Forum for Regional Thinking and co-director of Settlement Watch in the Peace Now movement, said that his vision for Israel's future went beyond the current government.

"Israel has abandoned the idea of having peace with the Palestinians," he said. "Yet, the future of Israel very much depends on the future of the Palestinians. If we want to make a change, it means we have to ask ourselves what the price of this change will be, and how we get along not just with our neighbours but with the people who live among us, the Palestinians."

"This is the most important thing – it shapes everything in Israel from corruption to the way Israel treats its own civilians." Though it's popular to be anti-Netanyahu in Israel, he said, it's not enough. "I don't see a radical change in Israel if we don't find a political solution with the Palestinians."

Yet after the horrors of 7 October and the fear and suspicion it has entrenched, reaching an agreement with the Palestinians seems unlikely any time soon, Dayan said. Nevertheless, without such a solution, said Mizrachi, we run the risk of fighting a useless war. "A political solution is possible," he stressed. In finding it, Mizrachi suggested looking beyond hate to find humanity.

G-d was very much present on 7 October

GILLIAN KLAWSKY

Where was G-d on 7 October? Rav David Stav, the founder and chairperson of Tzohar, a modern Orthodox rabbinical organisation that connects with the broader Israeli population, answers this prevalent question by saying that G-d was there all along.

Just like any other religion, Judaism believes there's a connection between our behaviour and G-d's reward and punishment, Stav told Limmud this past weekend. In fact, according to the Rambam, believing that terrible events like 7 October are coincidental is a "cruel" way of thinking. It's never simply a matter of statistics, he said.

We also cannot discount the role that our own decisions play in what happens to us, in other words, we cannot blame G-d for our own stupidity, said Stav. We need to take responsibility. "If you make mistakes, you shouldn't be asking, 'Where was G-d?', but rather, 'Where were you?' When we fight among ourselves, as was the case before 7 October, the external threat is functioning and we're too focused on our internal fights to notice."

Yet, who is, in fact, authorised to explain why G-d does what he does? Stav asked. No human being can know His reasoning – we may analyse it, but we'll never understand His ways. This is a privilege afforded only to prophets.

"My argument is that G-d was actually working extra hours on 7 October," Stav said, referring to multiple miracles that occurred on that day and those that followed. The very survival of the Jewish nation, when throughout history so many have sought to destroy us, is the biggest

miracle of all, he argued.

Other miracles include the fact that our enemies' original plan was to attack Israel simultaneously from the north and the south, but this didn't transpire. "The more than 1 600 people that have lost their lives over the past 10 months is a terrible disaster," said Stav. "But this would have been multiplied by at least 10 if Hezbollah had taken advantage of the fact that we weren't prepared by attacking us at the same time." It reportedly didn't believe that Hamas would carry out the attacks, and therefore abandoned the plan.

Mere days before the war broke out, thousands of pilots and intelligence officers said that they wouldn't fight a war under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Stav said. "Yet, since the war began, the percentage of soldiers drafting has reached 140%." People from all over the world – even those that were against the government – paused their studies or jobs and understood that it was a time for unity, he said. In spite of the disputes that preceded 7 October, we have shown solidarity ever since.

Sharing a miracle that involved his own family, Stav told a story of one of the many war heroes willing to sacrifice his own life to save those of others. This hero was from Stav's community in the city of Shoham.

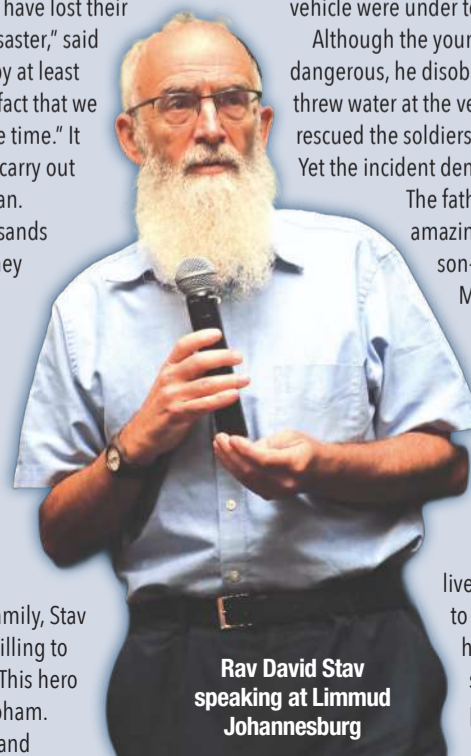
"He was a captain in the elite Golani unit and

was killed in one of the terror attacks. At one of my *shiva* visits, the boy's father opened his phone and showed me a picture of a burned armoured vehicle. He said, 'My son was nearby and six soldiers in the vehicle were under terrorist ambush. Their vehicle was on fire.'

Although the young man was ordered to leave the area as it was too dangerous, he disobeyed as he couldn't leave the soldiers to die. He threw water at the vehicle, quelled the flames, opened the door, and rescued the soldiers. He survived this ordeal but died a few days later. Yet the incident demonstrated his conviction and courage.

The father called Stav a day after the visit, to share an amazing miracle he'd just discovered. "He told me, 'Your son-in-law was the commander of that burning vehicle. My son saved your son-in-law.' I was shocked." After a few days, Stav managed to contact his son-in-law who confirmed the story and said he had even taken a picture of the soldier who had saved him. "He told Stav, 'Two days later, we crossed paths, and when I was told who he was, I hugged him. Two days after that, my unit had to risk our lives in order to save his body.'

"Thousands of people are ready to sacrifice their lives for us, for the state of Israel, and they are proud to do so," Stav said. "The Torah teaches us that the heroic behaviour of human beings who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the values they believe in is part of the blessings G-d has gifted us. It's a part of his presence."



Rav David Stav speaking at Limmud Johannesburg

Answering the call of animals howling for help

TALI FEINBERG

The massive challenges facing the animal-welfare sector in South Africa were brought to light when dogs and cats had to be rescued from a Cape animal shelter on 22 August.

In a place that was supposed to provide safety, it was clear the animals had been neglected, their illnesses and injuries untreated, and they were living in overcrowded squalor.

“This story is a tragic example of good intentions gone wrong,” says Carolyn Borland Dudgeon, one of several Jews working in the animal-welfare sector.

“It highlights the desperate need for strict guidelines on shelter management, and encourages us to ask questions and visit shelters to see how they operate before offering support.”

“Animal welfare in South Africa is in crisis,” Borland Dudgeon says. “There are more unwanted animals in shelters and foster-based organisations than available homes to adopt them. The challenges are a lack of regulation and resistance to sterilising pets. But there are also successes: those who are ethical and responsible, waking up every day to serve animals in need.”

Yael Sacks, the founder of African Tails, a non-profit organisation which sterilises and cares for neglected animals in the Cape, says, “The main take-out here is that each animal rescue organisation needs to be practical in the number of pets they can save without compromising the care of other pets in the organisation. This is why it’s essential to ‘adopt rather than shop’. There are so many beautiful souls waiting for homes. The way a rescued pet looks into your eyes is second to none.”

Borland Dudgeon found her way into working in this sector because of a love of animals. “After adopting my first dog and learning his heartbreaking story, there was no way I could turn a blind eye,” she says.

At the age of 36, she’s the founder of Paws-A-While (PAW), which she launched while being a part of the Democratic Alliance’s first provincial leadership academy. “We were tasked to find a social cause and make a difference. PAW was meant to be a once-off concept to highlight the desperate need for sterilisation of companion animals. But it has since grown, and we now focus on pet-owner education and adoptions. We’ve helped nearly 1 000 pets find homes through our adoption fairs and social media platforms.”

Says Borland Dudgeon, “I’ve been fortunate to be taken under the wing of

legends in the sector, and recently worked through Mdzananda Animal Clinic in Khayelitsha. I’ve participated in discussions on the City of Cape Town’s animal-keeping bylaws, and have begun conversations with the social development minister in the Western Cape to find a department to take ownership of animal welfare within government structures.”

Jolene Harris, the chairperson of Lamberts and Elands Animal Protection Services (LEAPS), says, “Overall, we have a dedicated group of people desperately trying to help animals in South Africa. However, we must have the support of the government to function effectively. “Laws need to be updated, animals need to be regarded as sentient beings, and people who commit abuse need to be appropriately punished,” she says. “Financial support needs to be provided by municipalities to assist smaller organisations. We receive no funding from the municipalities we operate under.”

Harris’s journey to animal welfare began when she went for a run in Elands Bay, 220km up the West Coast from Cape Town, and passed a township, seeing neglected dogs. “Besides my ongoing job as an attorney, I was volunteering with children. I shifted my efforts to working with animals in need, which in turn helps people in townships. That was 15 years ago! I now run my own full-time law practice and am chairperson of LEAPS.”

She has done it all, “from administration, to adoption, working in the townships, building kennels, distributing food, transporting animals, fostering, and fundraising.”

After seeing the dogs in the township, Harris found people working in Lambert’s Bay and Elands Bay assisting animals with the resources they had. “We decided to start a new charity from scratch, incorporating Lambert’s and Elands Bay. Since then, we have incorporated the enormous township of Vredenburg, and are constantly asked to assist in other areas. We’re on standby for emergencies, and are the only organisation in some areas. Our closest vet is 60km away.”

The organisation relies entirely on foster homes to care for animals until a permanent home is found. “We have about three foster homes, but have on average about 30 dogs looking for homes at any given point in time.” Successes include “the thousands of animals we have sterilised, and the difference we make in the lives of township animals daily. When we see our advice being put into play by pet owners, it brings such joy.”

Sacks worked in the corporate world before finding her calling in animal welfare.

“If you feel there’s a gap, ask questions, follow your heart, and most importantly, be part of the solution. When the opportunity arose in 2006 to tackle prolific pet overpopulation in the Western Cape, I could no longer ignore my deep-seated passion to be a voice for neglected dogs and cats.

“This would turn out to be the start of a fascinating 18-year journey, still going, encompassing much sweat and tears and countless ups and downs. In the beginning, we had no staff, and volunteers were juggling with what was essentially a start-up business. We eventually hired a dedicated team, many of whom are still with us today. African Tails has now matured into a pivotal Cape-based animal rescue organisation, having sterilised more than 16 500 dogs and cats, homed more than 2 300, and fed thousands of hungry tummies.

“We strive to make a sustainable long-term impact through mass sterilisation and pet-care education. Seeing abandoned or surrendered animals get a second chance, often from death’s door, makes it all worth it,” Sacks says.

There have been many challenges, “including the mind-blowing statistic

that one unsterilised female dog and her unsterilised litter can produce 67 000 puppies over a six-year period. It’s tough when our team face resistant pet owners who want to breed, and cases of animal abuse.”

Harris expresses her gratitude to those who support animal welfare organisations. “We literally can’t express what this means to us and for animals. We continue to do the best we can. We believe people want to help, and just need to know where to begin. Hopefully, this is the beginning of a beautiful relationship.”

All three women emphasise that their main obstacle is funding, and call on the community to consider supporting animal-welfare organisations to make a widespread impact.

“Sterilise pets, get involved with your nearest shelter, volunteer to walk dogs, open your home to fosters, and help us educate,” says Borland Dudgeon. Meanwhile, “I’ll keep pushing forward – asking the right questions to the right people in the hope of stronger regulations to protect animals.”



Carolyn Borland Dudgeon



Yael Sacks

Photo: Nikki van Diekmann

Life is more than a balancing act.

Empowering the Jewish community with interest-free loans, helping to build lives on a solid foundation.

CREDIT CARD DEBT • DEBT RELIEF • CARS • MEDICAL • HOUSE • SCHOOL FEES • LIVING EXPENSES • SIMCHAS

Together with the Rambam Trust, we'll help you overcome life's financial obstacles, building a stronger and more resilient community. Learn more about our interest-free loans during these challenging times. T's & C's apply.

RAMBAM
CHARITABLE TRUST

Full confidentiality and privacy guaranteed.
011 485 5441 • rambam@mweb.co.za
rambam.co.za

Unity Community Responsibility

Imperfectly parenting: Raphaely helps us survive 'adulthood'

There's much chatter about the recently released book, *We Were Perfect Parents Until We Had Children*, written by **Vanessa Raphaely** and Karin Schimke. The *SA Jewish Report* caught up with Raphaely, the founder of The Village, a social media parenting platform, to talk about it.

What inspired you and Karin to write *We Were Perfect Parents Until We Had Children*?

The huge amount of meaningful, wise, and warm content uploaded to The Village Facebook community every day. Over a six-month period, more than 9 000 posts garnered more than 250 000 reactions!

How did you research the book?

We searched along subject lines in existing posts, or asked directly for answers to questions. Opening up a conversation and then engaging with Villagers worked a charm. Because of the degree of trust – Villagers chat to our admin team freely.

How did you put it together?

The Village tells us what's current and relevant daily. It's 60 000 diverse people all sharing their truth every day. If something is bothering South African families, if South African families are enthused about anything, that theme or subject will find its way onto our platform. Picking up the trends and the *zeitgeist* is quite easy if you're on the group daily, as we both were, during the process.

What made you choose the title, and why did it stick?

The title was actually the first tagline of the online community. It always makes me smile, and when I ask where the book is when I'm hassling sales staff at book shops to give it a better placement, it makes them smile too! *We Were Perfect Parents Until We Had Children* is honest, reassuring, and shows that as a parent, you can't take yourself too seriously – then you'd be the one having meltdowns, sulks, tantrums, and misbehaving, not your teenagers. So basically, it's the essence of The Village community in one line.

As a parent yourself, what has been your biggest challenge?

My greatest challenge has also been my most important epiphany. The discovery that you cannot protect or prepare human beings for the slings and arrows that life will inevitably hurl at them. I'm a helper, a fixer, an offerer of advice, by nature, and yet so much of parenting is just keeping *schtum* or at least not interfering or wishing for an outcome which will suit you. Plodding alongside your child, being the cheerleader or the reassuring, loving voice from the sidelines. Your children's lives are theirs to lead, after all.

The Village is specifically for parents. What are the biggest gripes and toughest parental issues people are facing?

Life is tough. Days spent when everything is going swimmingly are to be treasured – so "gripes" and problems can flood The Village.

to be a part of. People tell us, "I no longer feel so alone"; "I don't feel like the worst parent ever"; "I don't know where I would be without The Village."

Who did you write this book for?

The parents of tweens, teens, and young adults. We're a community of South African families trying to support each other to forge a better future for all our children.

What do you hope they will take home from the book?

I hope they will feel supported. And that they find advice and insights that resonate and inspire thought, and help them to be the parent they want to be.

Do you believe South Africans have unique parenting problems? If so, what are they?

Yes, this is a scary and tough place to raise a resilient adult. But our unique South African spirit – our secret sauce of *ubuntu*, *voortwaarts*, and *maak 'n plan* – all mean that we do have some advantages up our sleeve. We're not brought up to consider the world an easy ride if we're South African.

Does parenting get easier as you have more children?

Parenting is never easy. Emerging from any cocoon, whether womb or adolescence, is meant to hurt. It's how we humans are woken up, shocked into life, alerted to what's required to thrive in the big, wide world. And, of course, parenting is totally humbling. I want to make t-shirts for The Village saying, "I was hot until I had children." Or maybe that can just be the title of the next book.

You have three of your own children who are mostly out of their teens. How do they think you did as a mom? What mistakes do they think you made?

They think I'm terrible at dealing with technology. When they want me to buy them stuff, they think I'm the "best mom alive"; when I'm irritating them, they ask me what it was like to grow up when we travelled to balls in carriages. And what it was like to dance to Bach at my matric dance. If they want to up the ante, they tell me that I can be both terrifying and irritating. They aren't put on

this planet to make me look like mom of the year! But we do love each other very much. I think they are grateful that I'm respectful of their right to autonomy and free thought. I'm glad that we have all always been able to talk to each other, through good times and bad. I think they understand that I respect them. Not treating your kids with respect is a huge mistake that many parents can make. I'm also not an overly anxious mother, which I think has helped them to become courageous and confident. Love served up as anxiety is a parental cancer, which is extremely bad for children. But, and this is a huge caveat, there's no one right way to raise a decent adult. My way certainly isn't the best or even the only way. All of us just stumble along, figuring our way through the shambles as we go along, to be honest.

How do you think you did? What mistakes do you believe you made?

I continue to make mistakes. I'm always mad at myself when I lose my temper. I'm obviously not "perfect", as it says on the book. I didn't take enough holidays and worked too hard. I don't believe there's a parent alive who doesn't think that they should have been more conscious and present in the "family" years. But hey, we had to put food on the table!

In hindsight and from The Village, are parenting years more difficult for the parents of babies and toddlers, tweens, teens, or adult children? And why?

Teens, of course. If you think staying awake all night with a crying infant is bad, try staying awake all night with a crying adolescent. Your heart will hurt in ways you have no idea it was capable of. But those teen years also are the most magnificent and tender, as you witness the human adult take shape. Life isn't meant to be easy, anyway – have I said that before, twice? So, no matter what stage you're in, it's best to keep your ears pricked, your nose twitching, and then to be kind to yourself. Give yourself and them a break. Happy parenting is less striving for success and assuming that you will somehow be rewarded by the show-offy adult finished product you desire – that would be narcissism. It's more about finding delight, love, and pride in who emerges on their own terms to live their own life.

- You can join The Village here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheVillageHQ> or follow *thevillagesa* on Instagram. You can buy *We Were Perfect Parents Until We Had Children* on *Takealot*.



Choose from loneliness; how to deal with devices; failure to launch; self-harm; sex; drugs; rock and roll; the transition from pre-adolescence to adolescence; money; gender and sexual issues; intergenerational conflict; depression; anxiety; rebellion – and you'll have scratched the surface.

Why do you believe parents have such a need for a book like this, and a Facebook community like The Village?

Communities are broken worldwide. Ask a single person over the age of 30 how it's going, trying to find a mate, and you'll see that the way we're meant to be living is not how we're living. We're isolated. We work remotely or alone. To thrive, we should be in bustling bars, around community sports fields, and village squares in our leisure hours. Instead, we come home to houses behind high walls, we order Uber Eats, and watch Netflix. We're supposed to chat to each other, learn from each other after a day's work, not this. So, The Village offers a solid "plan B" for our desire for community. It's also a safe, non-judgemental, supportive and kind, informative, and a fun space

William Smith sums up inspirational teaching

OPINION

LINDA MARK

The sad passing on 21 August of William Smith, an exceptional mathematics and science teacher, has given many South Africans a moment's pause and reflection on the influence and inspiration that is possible in the teaching profession.

Smith was famous for being "the television teacher" and for creating The Learning Channel, funded by Hylton Applebaum. But older South Africans will remember Star Schools, which Smith created and which provided educational supplementation and support to all students preparing for their matric exams. It was especially helpful for those students whose Bantu education system was, by design, preparing them to fulfil only blue collar jobs. Smith also ran his first multiracial school in the 1970s despite facing threats from the apartheid government.

I remember my own teachers at King David Linksfield like Don Lowry, June Barclay, and Elliot Wolf. I remember Mr Lowry, our history teacher's, eccentric swirling of his formidable *kuif* with his right hand and, unashamedly and in defiance of the apartheid network of spies, speaking out against unprincipled hegemonies.

I remember June Barclay, our mathematics teacher who exemplified resilience, empathy, and self-regulation, and whose orange nails dug into my head in her personal and affectionate style of discipline.

I remember Elliot Wolf, whose English language lessons were a masterclass in wit.

I have also had the privilege of teaching with outstanding colleagues: the inimitable Digby Ricci, my mentor and friend; Reverend Metzner, whose gentle dignity allowed him to view all scruffy students through a lens that elevated them to the status of Talmud *chochem*; Morah Nili Amiel, who was an exotic bird in passionate flight; Renee Freedman, an elegant and rigorous role model; Sheryl Benjamin; Mr Johnson; Bev Bouwer; Peter Szewach; Lorraine Srage; and Morah Sacks who continue to steer students through the muddy waters of matriculation.

These teachers, among many, many others, inspired generations of students whose South African and diasporic lives and careers were moulded in classrooms. These reflections make me ponder the purpose of education.

I've always believed that we must educate students to be citizens who exemplify the values enshrined in the Constitution. Education should promote a culture of debate in a safe space independent of marks and

awards by interrogating ideas rather than rote learning.

Critical thinking comes from teaching children to be curious; to ask questions; to challenge dogma; to understand how to seek and process information; how to be in community; how to be inclusive and welcome diversity and neurodiversity and understand that they are vital to progress. This spirit of enquiry teaches life skills and truly prepares children for the world.

Education must create systems of thinking that are sustainable and not only driven to support the kind of capitalism which privileges a minority based on exploitation of others and of resources.

These are heady principles that exist outside of the digital direction of artificial intelligence and inside the ethos of William Smith.

George Bernard Shaw unwisely said, "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach". I prefer Aristotle's, "Those who know do, those who understand teach."

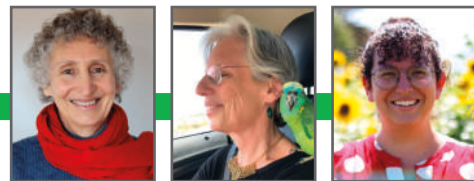
- Linda Mark teaches English at St Mary's School and did her schooling at King David Linksfield.



Nic Wolpe – Liliesleaf visionary’s legacy honoured

TRIBUTE

PETA WOLPE, TESSA WOLPE, AND ALICIA CHAMAILLÉ



Nic Wolpe wanted to make Liliesleaf a place of inspiration, liberation, and dialogue; a place to keep memory alive. For his work, he was knighted by the king of Sweden and received the Royal Order of the Polar Star.

Like his favourite fictional secret agent, James Bond, our brother – and Alicia’s uncle – Nic had several brushes with death. When he was six weeks old, he survived a rare pneumonia. As an adult, he survived a benign spinal tumour, a heart attack, and a few other near-death experiences.

On Saturday, 24 August, he died after a two-year battle with a brain tumour. He was 61 years old.

Nic’s life wasn’t easy. He was born into a struggle family. Our parents, AnnMarie and Harold Wolpe, were prominent during the struggle years and beyond. Harold avoided being tried and sentenced with Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and others in the Rivonia Trial by escaping from prison in August 1963 with Arthur Goldreich, Mosie Moolla, and Abdullah Jassat.

The escape made headlines, and Harold fled to the United Kingdom (UK), where AnnMarie joined him, followed three months later in October 1963 by their daughters, Tessa and Peta. Nic was able to join his family only in the spring of 1964 as he was still weak after his bout of pneumonia.

Nic’s childhood was hard. He described feeling lonely, and he suffered from severe dyslexia. One of his teachers told his mother that he wouldn’t even be able to work as a dustman. However, Nic was tenacious and driven, and in 1988, obtained a degree in sociology at the University of Warwick in the UK.

His first job was with Joel Joffe, one of the Rivonia Trial lawyers, at Allied Dunbar, a life insurance company. He came

home from work one day in 1990 to find his mother on the phone. She handed him the receiver and to his astonishment, Nelson Mandela, who’d only recently been released from prison, greeted him.

Nic returned to South Africa in December 1991 shortly

Nic came up with the idea to make Liliesleaf a place of inspiration, liberation, and dialogue; a place to keep memory alive. He approached Mendi Msimang, whom he knew when Mendi was the chief representative of the ANC in the UK, and with his encouragement, Nic forged ahead. In 2001, President Thabo Mbeki announced the formation of the Liliesleaf Trust.

Nic realised that they first needed to acquire the farm and the main buildings. Mendi introduced Nic to Adam Fleming, a businessman and the nephew of Ian Fleming, the author of the James Bond novels, and asked him to become a trustee. In February 2002, Adam invited Nic to join him for breakfast. By the end of that breakfast, Nic’s journey in creating what is now a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation World Heritage Site had begun.

About 40 years after Harold had signed the purchase of Liliesleaf in 1961, Nic was buying it back. He created an interactive museum full of press clippings, video recordings, and memoirs. Not only did Nic create a museum, he had an auditorium built – a space for meetings and conferences.

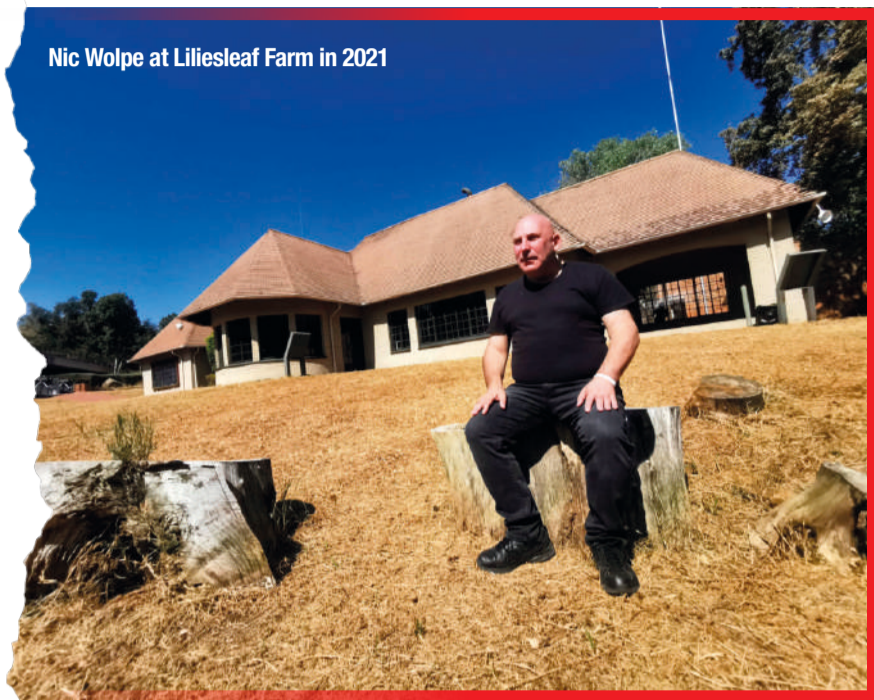
Nic advocated for the role of heritage, saying, “Liliesleaf is a site of memory that recalls the stories and events through immersive and dynamic interactive exhibitions, and in so doing, ensures that this period in South Africa’s recent history is preserved for current and future generations.”

For his work, he received the Royal Order of the Polar Star in 2017, a knighthood awarded only to foreigners and members of the royal family.

Nic is survived by his older sisters, Peta and Tessa, his brother-in-law, Will, and his four children, Jade, James, Liam, and Olivia.

We’ll miss you Nic, your unbelievable memory, your recounting of scenes from the Marx Brothers’ movies, your love of music particularly Elvis Presley, your sense of humour, your devotion to Manchester United, and that cheeky twinkle in your eye when you smiled.

• Peta and Tessa Wolpe are Harold and AnnMarie Wolpe’s children and Nic’s sisters. Alicia Chamailé is Peta’s daughter. A longer version of this article was published in Daily Maverick.



Nic Wolpe at Liliesleaf Farm in 2021

after his parents came back. He worked in a bar at Cape Town’s Waterfront. Later, he joined Operation Hunger and worked for the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, before becoming a business consultant in 2000.

It was at this time that he became interested in Liliesleaf, its history, and its role as the nerve centre of the liberation struggle. Liliesleaf was the headquarters of the underground movement. On 11 July 1963, the African National Congress (ANC) held one last meeting there. The police raided the farm, and many of the leaders were arrested and received life sentences at the Rivonia Trial.

COLLECTORS INVESTMENTS

Dealers in coins, banknotes and medals since 1959.



**WE GIVE FREE VALUATIONS.
WE PAY TOP PRICES.
Call to book an appointment.**

**Please be advised on sale of items an Identity Book or Drivers Licence is required.
Banking details are required for an EFT.**

32 Fricker Road, Illovo Johannesburg.
Email: info@collectorsinvestments.com / Telephone - 011 880 9116 / Cell - 076 741 8801

WE BUY SOUTH AFRICAN COINS, WORLD COINS, GOLD, SILVER AND COPPER COINS



'Veldpond'
R30 000 and up



Kruger 5 Shilling
R1 000 and up



One Rand Coin
1966-1969 R100



Gold 15 Rupee
R30 000 and up



Silver 2 Rupee
R1500



Gold Full Sovereign
R8 150



20 Lire
R700



Russian Rouble
R1 000

WE BUY OLD WRIST AND POCKET WATCHES, JEWELLERY, GOLD AND SILVER ITEMS



WE BUY MILITARY MEDALS AND MILITARIA



R1 000 and up

All three (Trio) R1000
Single R100

R2 000

WE BUY BANKNOTES



FIVE SHILLINGS
1947 to 1950 = R175
1951 to 1964 = R110
1959 = R2000



TWO & HALF SHILLINGS
1923 to 1950 = R60
1951 to 1964 = R50
1931 = R7000 Up to R10 000



TWO SHILLINGS
1923 to 1950 = R50
1951 to 1964 = R40
1925 = R300 Up to R2 000
1931 = R8000 Up to R10 000



ONE SHILLING
1923 to 1964 = R20
1931 = R500 Up to R3 000
1939 = R500 Up to R30 000
1949 = R400 Up to R4 000



60
1923 to 1964 = R10
1931 = R500 Up to R3 000
1939 = R10 000 Up to R30 000



30
1923 to 1964 = R5
1931 = R10 000 Up to R50 000

There for Paralympians from start to finish

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Professor Wayne Derman will be in the thick of the action at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris as the International Paralympic Committee's chief medical director.

Derman, the director and chairperson of the Institute of Sport and Exercise Medicine at Stellenbosch University, will be alongside the athletes on the warmup track and at the finish line, as was the case with previous Olympics and Paralympics he has been involved in.

Derman says the nice part of his job is getting to see so much great sport.

His role as medical director includes troubleshooting any medical issues, overseeing the medical teams at each venue, and doing injury surveillance and research.

"It was a nice surprise to be approached by the International Paralympic Committee to be the medical director for the Games," Derman says. He joined the committee in 2012 following the London Games, and has been a part of it ever since, serving as chairperson and research lead.

He previously served as a chief

medical officer for the South African team in the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the Athens Games four years later. "I then looked after the South

and the Beijing Winter Games."

For this year's Games, "We work closely with the French local organising committee, which takes

athletes.

"On the illness side, we make sure that the conditions are absolutely optimal for peak performance and if there are any illnesses, we manage those accordingly. We also make sure that conditions are as healthy as possible and don't expose the athletes to unnecessary risks of illness. For example, we monitor the heat, contagious diseases, air pollution, and water quality in the Seine."

A surveillance dashboard is used by doctors to track if athletes are ill or injured. "We can look at why those injuries occur, and then put in place mitigating rules and regulations to diminish the risk.

The dashboard was an iterative design that we started in 2012. IT programmers assisted us through the University of Stellenbosch. We have subsequently published the results after every Games in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*.

"We made improvements to the dashboard and system at every Games and upgraded it to cater for new sports. By doing that, we see what the profile of injuries are in these sports

and can work out a programme to diminish them."

Derman says working with many top para-athletes, such as 13-time Paralympic Games gold medallist Natalie du Toit from South Africa, and other countries has been "an absolute eye-opening experience".

"Paralympic athletes are much less likely to complain," he says. "They have a broadly accepting quality. They are happier with what is, and can be in the moment. They possess a wonderful sense of humour, with an ability to have a good old laugh at themselves, and don't take life as seriously as perhaps some other athletes do. I've always found that incredibly refreshing and humbling."

Derman's focus has always been on trying to make sure that every athlete at a pinnacle competition, be it a Paralympic or Olympic Games, doesn't suffer injury or illness.

The athlete's village for Paralympians in Paris boasts a polyclinic, a big medical facility with various specialist medical services.

Derman has always been passionate about sport. He has fond memories of the King David cross-country races. "In matric, I graduated to long-distance running," he says. "Then, when I did medicine, I played football. When I finished medicine, I realised that there was no particular area of specialisation that interested me."

His outlook changed when Professor Asher Dubb told him, "One of the recipes of success is to marry your passion with your work direction."

Derman went on to play a part in the growth of sport and exercise medicine, an unknown field at the time. "I had to put in a lot of hard work pioneering in a speciality that didn't exist. Many sleepless nights. But I'm happy I pursued this career."

Following his passion has helped him go from being a straight-C student at school, where several subjects never piqued his interest, to being involved at the pinnacle of sporting competitions. He tells his children that doing what you love is one of the recipes for success.

"That was the turning point. I hit a double thrust when in medical school, I was fortunate to be one of the top students and to combine that with sport, my absolute love."

Derman looks forward to seeing which South African athletes put their hands up at this year's Paralympics. "A lot of the multiple medal winners for South Africa have retired. Charl du Toit, Anruné Liebenberg, Ilse Hayes, Arnu Fourie, Oscar Pistorius, and Natalie du Toit all left the sport. Hopefully new gold medal winners will come through in the next couple of quadrennials."

Derman, who recently became a grandfather, has four children, who all got provincial colours in sport. "Your children help you find the balance," he says, "because they quickly tell you when you're not spending enough time with them. My youngest not only keeps me close, he keeps me active as well. He's the one who pulls me into the garden for a soccer match or a game of table tennis. These days, I'm playing a full set of table tennis most nights."



Professor Wayne Derman at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris

African Paralympic team in Beijing [2008] and in London [2012]. When I subsequently went over to the international body, I did the Sochi Winter Games, the Rio Summer Games, the South Korea Winter Games, the Tokyo Summer Games,

care of

the staffing of all

the various different events to make sure that the athletes are safe and get the best possible care in the French health system," Derman says.

He also helps the medical team shift gear from working with Olympic athletes to working with Paralympic

Theodor Herzl continues the miracle, 65 years on

LEE TANKLE

When the Jews of Port Elizabeth, now Gqeberha, started Theodor Herzl School, they had no idea that it would still be going 65 years later. However, its original motto, "If you will it, it's no dream" still stands as it embraces a more multicultural identity while holding on to Jewish values.

The community formulated the idea of establishing a Hebrew school where children could learn Hebrew and Jewish Studies in Port Elizabeth back in 1918, but the actual school was established only in 1959.

First, the Port Elizabeth Hebrew School was opened in 1937, and by 1940, 40 pupils were studying the full school syllabus from Sub A (Grade 1) to Standard 1 (Grade 3). These were mainly Orthodox Jewish children and children from German immigrant families.

This school later closed, and in 1959, Shlomo Levin established the Theodor Herzl School with the help of the United Hebrew Institute. Levin was its first headmaster.

"Theodor Herzl School was founded after the Shoah as part of the post-World War II Jewish day school movement," said United Hebrew Institute chairperson Ian Meyer. "It was based on an ideological commitment to give Jewish pupils a secular and traditional Jewish education in a context where they had the opportunity to develop an authentic Jewish identity."

Soon after its establishment, the primary school moved to its present-day campus in Walmer.

In 1961, the school had 70 pupils across three grades, and two years later, the school had double its numbers. In 1964, Theodor Herzl had 200 pupils.

At that time, the school's leadership decided it needed to build a high school. "The community rallied together to raise the funds to build it," said the present headmaster of Theodor Herzl, Viktor Kurz, "Even today, plaques are still visible all around the school showing donations given to the school by various families.

"Our first matric class matriculated in 1970, and set the tradition of academic excellence, which we keep to this day," said Kurz.

However, the Jewish community started to dwindle from its peak of 2 500 families to the current 400 people.

In 1977, the school was faced with a difficult decision, whether to close its doors because there weren't enough halachically Jewish children in the area or to open its doors to the wider Port Elizabeth community.

Said Meyer, "We were struggling with only halachically Jewish enrolment. So, the board decided to open it up to Jewish identity. It was opened to those whose children wouldn't be considered halachically Jewish for whatever reason. We also opened it up to children who were reform or whose parents had gone through conversion.

"It was a marriage of convenience because we needed their enrolment to keep going, and they wanted a top Jewish education."

Furthermore, The Holy Rosary and Marist Brothers schools in Port Elizabeth had closed their doors in the early 1980s, and many parents saw Theodor Herzl as a good alternative.

"In 1982, the decision was taken that we would accept children who weren't Jewish, creating what is today a multi-faith school," said Kurz. "The non-Jewish parents quite liked the idea of keeping Shabbat because it gave them time on the weekends," said Meyer.

Kurz said that in his four years as headmaster, he has been amazed at the values that the school has taught its pupils.

"At the end of the day, it's a values-based school, and Jewish values are universal. My deputy head boy is Muslim. There's absolute respect. It's very much about the individual," Kurz said, "Our Jewish ethos is central. Even though we're evolving, we're not losing the heart on which the school was founded."

"It says a lot for a school that decades after leaving, most alumni still remember the words of the school song," said Glynne Wolman, an alumna of Theodor Herzl, and the founder of The Angel Network.

"Those of us lucky enough to have gone to Theodor Herzl remember the many traditions, from celebrating the *chaggim* to school tours, Shabbat Nachamu [of consolation], inter-house sports days, galas, and school plays. There's no doubt that we were taught to play as hard as we worked. We learnt the value of team effort and though we were seldom – if ever – the strongest, we often managed to overcome more favoured opponents because of our enthusiasm and ability to work together." Kurz said he's extremely proud of the fact that since war in Israel broke out on 7 October, there have been no unpleasant incidents.

Said Meyer, "Since 2002, when Theodor Herzl School had 320 pupils in three schools and the future looked very uncertain, we were advised that the way forward was to sell. Since then, our student numbers have grown exponentially to the point where we have 520 students, albeit with a Jewish enrolment of only 7.5%, and we have added additional classrooms and started a parallel stream in the primary school, funded by school fees, in the absence of major donors or any government funding.

"Part of our Jewish success is that Theodor Herzl School still employs a rabbi, runs a kosher kitchen, honours Shabbat, plays a benevolent role, and offers a Judaica programme. It not only contributes to Jewish community survival in Port Elizabeth, but to the development of an educational and community paradigm that can be generalised well beyond our boundaries."

Geoff Mendelowitz, a member of the board of trustees, said the fact that Theodor Herzl had been able to survive for 65 years was "nothing short of a miracle of biblical proportions".

"It's amazing that we have been able to create this environment rooted in Jewish values that's open to everyone. It's an example of how we should all be living our lives."



Students and staff of Theodor Herzl School celebrating the school turning 65 years old

Photo: Theodor Herzl Schools Facebook Page

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

G-d has a thankless job



INNER VOICE
Howard Feldman

I would hate to be G-d. Whereas having the power to do pretty much anything must be cool, the job comes with terms and conditions that would make me run a mile – not that I can run a mile. Forget the fact that with the best of intentions, He created a magnificent world and then added humans in His image, that He made sure that it's sustainable, magnificent, and has both Cape Town and Kruger, but anytime anything goes wrong, He's the one who takes it on the chin.

He literally can't catch a break. Worse than that, even when He realises that we can't be left to our own devices and help is needed, we don't acknowledge it. If He decides to stretch out His arm, perform what back in the day would have been called a "modern-day miracle", He still gets zero credit.

Israel's pre-emptive attack on Hezbollah last Sunday is case in point. With the terror organisation a mere 15 minutes away from launching a major attack on northern and central Israel, the Israeli airforce hit the launch sites in a blitz compromising more than 100 fighter jets, and in doing so, destroyed a significant part of its capabilities.

G-d received hardly a mention. Which had to have been more than a little frustrating.

It reminded me of a case study used by famous business analyst Rory Sutherland. It's apparently known that first class mail in the United Kingdom is delivered the next day. According to the internal assessment, the post office was achieving a close to 98% success. Yet people weren't happy. So they embarked on a campaign to improve this already high number. The improvement was almost negligible, but the strain nearly broke them.

They shouldn't have bothered. Rather, they should have assessed what the public

thought the delivery rate was. Had they done so, they would have noticed that most people thought it was closer to 60%. All they really needed to do was to embark on a marketing campaign that communicated to customers that they were achieving 98%, and everyone would have been happy. Or most people.

Much like the Royal Mail, it's possible that G-d needs a public relations campaign. When it comes to Israel and the war launched by Hamas on 7 October, there have been numerous examples of events where His outreached hand was active. As horrific as the events were, and as tragic as the consequences remain, it doesn't take much imagination to picture how real the existential threat to Israel and its citizens has been.

Israel has endured because of G-d, through the Israel Defense Forces and the resilience of her people. It's natural for a secular media to report on the army, the human aspects, and on politics. And politicians, especially those less connected to religious faith, benefit more from lauding voters than they do from thanking G-d.

Which means that G-d's public relations is potentially at risk of being neglected. Unless others are prepared to take on the responsibility. These include the religious community in Israel and around the world, observant Christians, and those who see G-d's hand and His work.

It can't be easy being G-d. The least we can do is give Him a hand from time to time.

Limmud: learning amidst grief



ABOVE BOARD
Karen Milner

Last week marked a significant milestone with the hosting of the largest Limmud conference in our history and one of the most substantial globally. In the aftermath of 7 October, Limmud underscored the vital importance of community and unity, offering solace through the collective experience of learning and connection. The sessions were diverse, spanning a wide range of topics, yet they were all interwoven with a shared sense of pain and communal grief.

Though some countries chose not to hold Limmud this year, we take immense pride in our organisers and community for creating an extraordinary space for Jewish learning and enrichment. Although I attended only the Johannesburg event, I've heard that the Limmud gatherings in Cape Town and Durban were equally exceptional.

I had the privilege of participating in a presentation on the state of antisemitism on campuses, alongside speakers from other countries. It made me realise how fortunate our students and academics are to attend universities in this country. Additionally, I co-hosted a session with South African Jewish Board of Deputies National Director Wendy Kahn, in which we explored the nature of antisemitism in South Africa, particularly in the wake of 7 October. We discussed how the Board assesses and addresses each antisemitic incident and determines the most effective response. Remarkably, despite an initial surge in incidents following 7 October,

antisemitism has now returned to the low levels we witnessed before, with only two incidents recorded in August.

It's always heartening to hear the high regard in which South African Jewry is held, and the positive comments from international participants about the resilience and vibrancy of our community are inspiring. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to the Limmud team for orchestrating such an uplifting and energising Limmud 2024.

However, the learning continues. This week, several Board professionals are attending the 34th International Nahum Goldman Fellowship in Stellenbosch. This year's fellowship, titled "Authenticity, Courage, and Belonging: New Paradigms for the Jewish Communal Future", brings together Jewish leaders from around the world to engage in dialogue on the complex issues impacting Jewish life internationally. The Board's past president, Marlene Bethlehem, is a former president of the Nahum Goldman Memorial Foundation, and Cape Town Board member Rael Kaimowitz holds the presidency.

Over the years, many of South Africa's Jewish communal leaders have benefited from this fellowship, and it's a true honour to host it again in South Africa after a 17-year hiatus.

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

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

A WORLD-CLASS JEWISH EDUCATION
INFUSED WITH ARTS & CULTURE

KD CULTURE FEST 2024

KDVP
1-8 September

- Teachers Got Talent
- Clash of Titans Wrestling
- Speak Up, Stand Out
- Zak Henrikz aka Gavin Greef Interview
- Colour Chaos on the Wall
- SFX Makeup Workshop
- Mamma Mia Movie Night
- An afternoon with Banyana Banyana Goalkeeper – Kaylin Swart
- Mixed martial Arts workshop
- Hou Jou Bek Karaoke



KDL
8-11 September

- KDL'S Got Talent
- Drone racing
- Creative writing
- Whose line is it anyway?
- Pot plant painting
- Face painting
- Dogg's Hamlet performance
- Art, pottery & photography showcase
- Photo dash
- One act plays



For more information contact: King David High School Victory Park (011 446 7860) | King David High School Linksfield (011 480 4500)

Mina Lopato foundation stone returned after 18 years

DYLAN BERGER

Mina Lopato Nursery school in Greenside has reclaimed its foundation stone after 18 years.

The stone, which has been at the Emmarentia Shul in Komatie Street, near the school's original premises, is now back at the school's present home at the Greenside Shul.

This reunion was spurred on by a call from Rebbetzin Wendy Richard of the Emmarentia Shul, who is also a former teacher at Mina Lopato, contacting Mina Lopato principal Marissa Koffler to ask if she wanted the foundation stone for the school.

"I jumped at the opportunity to get it back," says Koffler.

"It's really meaningful to have it back at the nursery school. The foundation stone is part of the rich history of Mina Lopato, and connects the nursery school to its roots."

So, on Thursday, 22 August, a bakkie went

to the site of the Emmarentia Shul to collect the foundation stone. With the help of six burly men, the heavy foundation stone made the short journey, 2.5km from Emmarentia to Greenside.

"We still need to find a proper place to put the original stone, and we're hoping to have some kind of ceremony when we officially place it," says Koffler.

The foundation stone was laid at the original location of Emmarentia Shul on Barry Herzog Avenue by Isaac

Lopato back in February 1961.

The ceremony was attended by more than 100 of the shul's congregants.

Lopato was a well-known benefactor at the time who had established multiple institutions of Torah learning. He had a burning desire to



Marissa Koffler with the original foundation stone of Mina Lopato Nursery School



Transporting the foundation stone

start a nursery school in memory of his late wife Mina, who had died during the Holocaust.

Mina Lopato Nursery School opened its

doors on Sunday, 26 February 1961, and is still open today, albeit in a different location. The school moved from Emmarentia to Greenside in 2006.

Earlier this month, Emmarentia Shul, which subsequently moved to the corner of Kei Road and Komatie Street in Emmarentia in 2008, had a deconsecration ceremony in which the shul closed its doors after serving the north-western Jewish community of Johannesburg since the 1950s. Emmarentia Shul has since merged with the Victory Park Shul.

Knitted comfort for new beginnings

The New Beginnings Knitting Group, which started in April 2023, has been assisting the Union of Jewish Women by knitting items for its Bags for New Beginnings initiative. This initiative, under the leadership of Bev Cohen, and with the help of numerous volunteers, delivers more than 400 bags annually. Filled with goods for newborn babies, they are given to mothers at Edenvale, Hillbrow, and Eastbank hospitals, and at The Glo Movement Hope for Hopeless.



The New Beginnings Knitting Group

KosherWorld

TRULY KOSHER

MANY MORE SPECIALS IN-STORE

Spring Savings

באחדותם כוחם

12⁹⁹

PEPSI MAX SOFT DRINK 2L

44⁹⁹

LANCEWOOD FAT FREE SMOOTH COTTAGE CHEESE

15⁹⁰

LANCEWOOD CREAMED SMOOTH COTTAGE CHEESE FULL CREAM & FAT FREE 250G EACH

32⁹⁹

STEINZ LIGHT TUNA CHUNKS IN BRINE 170G EACH

33⁹⁹

COLAVITA SELECTED PASTA 500G EACH

21⁹⁹

POT O' GOLD MUSHROOMS SLICED IN GARLIC 400G

21⁹⁹

MIAMI TOMATO PUREE 410G

71⁹⁹

SHNEIDERS PASTA SAUCE ASSORTED 400G EACH

129⁹⁹

OSEM SOUP CONSOMME 400G

199⁹⁹

ATLANTIS HAKE BATTERED ORIGINAL 2KG

129⁹⁹

CLOVER TUSSERS CHEESE 800G

4⁹⁹

CEREBOS INSTANT NOODLES CHICKEN & SPYKOS 1'S EACH

34⁹⁹

MONTAGU APPLE WEDGES 100G

104⁹⁹

MONTAGU MANGO STRIPS 250G

29⁹⁹

MEXICORN NACHOS ASSORTED 250G EACH

Hometown Pharmacy

Caring about your Oral Hygiene

119⁹⁹

SUPER COREGA WHITENING CLEANSER 30 TABS

087-803-4000 | 082-711-4342
HOMETOWNPHARMACY@PROPHARM.CO.ZA

22⁹⁹

PILLOWY SOFT TISSUES 2 PLY 180'S

IN A HURRY?
FRESH BLOOMS,
CONVENIENTLY
READY FOR YOU.

11⁹⁹

OK SERVIETTES WHITE 50'S

Feigels

21⁴⁹

Muffins - Carrot, Bran and Lemon & Poppy Seed

KOSHER AT EVERYDAY PRICES

Offers valid till 4 SEPTEMBER 2024 or while stocks last

CONCIERGE SHOPPING SERVICE orders@kosherworld.co.za

1 Long Avenue, Glenhazel 011 440 9517 | www.kosherworld.co.za

Actual offers may differ from visuals shown. KosherWorld is available at selected Checkers stores. We reserve the right to limit quantities. While stocks last. E&OE.