

# S.A. SIG

Jewish Genealogy - South African Special Interest Group  
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Saul Issroff

As of the end of November I am still sorting out ( with a few others) some of the nearly 200 tapes of the 21st International Conference on Jewish genealogy. For those who have placed orders these should be going out shortly.

I must apologize to Beverley Olsberg for my note in the last issue placing her family reunion on the banks of the Limpopo when it was the Zambezi!! (Weariness is not a great excuse!!). I heard today that the book on the Grill and Sossen families, compiled by Beverley and her sister Marion (Sossen) has now been privately published. Maybe this can be a stimulus to others to put together similar publications.

As briefly mentioned in the last newsletter one of the consequences of the conference was the initiative of Mendel Kaplan to form a Centre for study of migration and Jewish genealogy at the University of Cape Town. I am about to go to Cape Town for the first meeting to progress this. The University has taken on the idea with great enthusiasm, and would like to extend the migration aspect to a multidisciplinary academic unit.

## THIS WEEK

The innocents of Jerusalem, Haifa and Israel, have been taken from us in brutal killings. Jews in Israel confront an ideology that sows hatred to harvest murder - its message transmitted down the highways of Islam has echoes for us all. The ties between Israel and South African Jewry are as strong as the roots they share. Our hearts go out to the bereaved and to all in Israel. We must offer not only comfort but a strong voice in support of Israel's struggle to end the evil that surrounds it. That action is fundamental to challenging, confronting and ending terror, wherever it may be.

Essentially there will be an academic arm, both research and teaching based, and a 'public' side, run probably along the lines of the new Centre for Jewish Genealogy in New York (under the auspices of the S.A. Jewish Museum in Gardens).

The role of the 'genealogists' will be to document the estimated 14,000 families of Litvak origin (Lithuania, Courland and Belarus). Preliminary points are to index the passenger records of outgoing ships from the UK to the Cape, and combine this with the database of the Poor Jews Temporary Shelter. We believe that almost all the Jewish burials within South Africa (and let us use everything south of the equator if we can). There are significant synagogue records relating to marriages in particular that have not been looked at. There must be Mohel (circumcision) registers that people know about. Ideas relating to any other under-resourced areas would be welcome. Other aspects will be to study where Jews settled in S.A. and where in the world people have migrated to.

To quote one of the doyens of genealogy. "One can't really do successful family research without knowing what we have called "context." This would include Jewish history, the non-Jewish history of the place, Jewish customs, laws, etc., archival research techniques, maybe rabbinic genealogy..."

Once again, we would appreciate input from all sources.

Saul

## EDITORIAL

Beryl Baleson

The previous Newsletter went to press prior to September 11, 2001. On that day the most serious terrorist attack in history changed the world. Two skyscrapers were removed from the Manhattan skyline in a matter of a few minutes. Once again we are reminded of how easy it is for a barbaric act to raise its ugly head in trying to destroy a people. WWII and the Holocaust destroyed 6 million Jews. The number of people killed in the U.S. terrorist attack are still unknown. Anti-semitism is rife in South Africa and this once very vibrant Jewish community is diminishing as people leave for distant shores.

Our Special Interest Group has now, more than ever, a duty to our children and grandchildren to collect as much information as we can on Jewish South Africa so that this cultural heritage will never be forgotten.

I would like to reiterate that this is your Newsletter. Feedback is imperative for its continuing success. We all lived and were educated in South Africa - and must still have fond memories of those younger, innocent times, either in the framework of a youth movement, or a small country community, or just being involved in the pace of every day living - at home, school, university, work.

Where are we to-day? What are we now doing? How have our lives been influenced by our formative years in South Africa? It is only by your feedback that we can be sure that articles and information that is relevant to you all can be published. So please contribute to the success of our Newsletter.

In this issue, besides Saul's very exciting President's message informing us of his involvement with the Kaplan Centre, Cape Town in starting up a Jewish Genealogical and Migration Research Centre, I have collected various "tidbits" of news from South Africa, including not only information on the Jewish Community of Cradock, but also Dennis Kahn's lovely description of his family who lived there. Joyce Glazer has written a very interesting article on the Worcester Jewish Community which has sadly also disappeared. The South African-Israel connection tells us about a very idealistic, Zionist group of young Habonim members who, in 1958, joined a small desolate kibbutz on a very windy, muddy area of the Jezreel Valley and turned it into the beautiful place it is to-day.

Just a reminder that if you haven't paid your subscription of \$20.- for the year July 2000-2001, please remember that this is due. Please contact Mike Getz, [mgetz@erols.com](mailto:mgetz@erols.com) for subscription details.

Please send articles for printing in the Newsletter to me at [tuis@zahav.net.il](mailto:tuis@zahav.net.il)

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## **NEWS FROM THE S.A. JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES...**

### **PRESS RELEASE RE RADIO 786 TRIAL**

The Jewish community is engaged in a major struggle concerning the broadcast of a programme featuring denial of the Holocaust and antisemitic Jewish conspiracy theories by a Muslim radio station in Cape Town. The radio station, Radio 786, in a bid to prevent a hearing on the offending broadcast, lodged a High Court application to declare that the regulations under which their license had been granted were unconstitutional and prevented freedom of speech in terms of the Constitution. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) is opposing this application and the matter has found its way to the Constitutional Court where it will be heard on 22 November 2001.

"The Jewish Board of Deputies will not easily accept that this vile racism and antisemitism is permissible on the airwaves of South Africa", said Mervyn Smith, who heads the SAJBD Cape Town committee dealing with the matter, "If this constitutes freedom of speech, then it is important that the entire country know about it as surely this kind of incitement is not acceptable in South Africa today".

If the SAJBD is successful in the case, a hearing in terms of the broadcasting regulations will be held, at which Holocaust Denial could be tested for the first time in a South African setting should the radio station persist in its attitude.

"The Board of Deputies is fighting this case not just our own community, although that of course is important to us, but also to prevent offensive, racist broadcasting in South Africa", Smith said.

Issued by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies  
Contact Person: Yehuda Kay (082 3384 745)

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## WORLD SOLIDARITY DAY

Johannesburg:

a..On Sunday 23 September, 2001, the Johannesburg Jewish Community had a successful Solidarity Rally at King David Linksfield to show support for Israel. The event drew over 4000 people who thoroughly enjoyed the event and were moved by the proceedings. Guest Speakers included Chief Rabbi Harris, the Mayor of Ra'anana Ze'ev Bielski and Ambassador Tova Herzl. Together with songs of peace and prayer, one clear message emerged from the event: South African Jewry stand united with their brothers in Israel. This incredible, peaceful display of solidarity will be an event to remember.

Durban:

a..At the Durban Solidarity event, Ze'ev Bielski, the Mayor of Ra'anana, and Rabbi NM Bernhard, the Rabbi Emeritus of the Oxford Synagogue, addressed a gathering of over 400 people. Following this, Mr John Moshal urged that a fund be set up to assist victims of the Intifada and the current violence, and he pledged the sum of R1 000 000 towards the initiative on behalf of his family.

Photographs and profiles of victims of the Intifada were displayed, and the names of each individual were read out in a candle-lighting ceremony by members of the different communal organisations. Prof Arkin, Chairman of the KwaZulu Natal Zionist Council indicated the importance of remembering each of these terrorists victims.

Cape Town: The Cape Town Solidarity event was held in the community's Albow Hall, which was packed to the brim, with people in the forecourt listening on the speakers. The Mayor of Ra'anana, Ze'ev Bielski's address received a standing ovation. The Chairman of Bridges for Peace spoke on behalf of the Christian Zionists. His expression of support for Israel and the Jewish people was well received. The excellent programme was well organised by our new Shaliach Ettie Alon. The programme was specifically dedicated to the Israelis who lost their lives in the current Intifada and candles were lit for those soldiers who are missing in action.

Port Elizabeth:

a..Approximately 200 members of the Port Elizabeth community attended the World Solidarity Day for Israel at the Raleigh Street Shul Museum on Sunday, 23 September. The function was held during the Mincha and Maariv services, with special prayers offered by Rabbi Zamir. The guest speaker was IUA Campaign director, Micha Danieli who gave an outstanding analysis of the current situation facing Israel.

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## S.A. JEWISH MUSEUM

Vivienne Anstey

The S.A. Jewish Museum was officially opened during December 2000 by Nelson Mandela, following a brief walk through, escorted by Mendel Kaplan. The audience enjoyed the entertainment of lively renderings of song by the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation choir and the Cape Minstrels of District Six.

Mr. Mandela, having just flown in from France, was in a jovial mood. He was extremely impressed by the Museum, challenging other communities to record their histories. He praised the Jewish community for the part played by its members in the liberation struggle, making particular note of the Jewish lawyers who were prominent in the defence of activists during the years of apartheid. He paid particular tribute to Helen Suzman who features in the museum and attended the function, following his opening of the Eric and Sheila Samson Gallery.

Visitors have been enthralled by the architectural masterpiece of Michael Hackner and Paul Brislin and Fabian Berman and Hackner and the ingenious interactive and experimental content and design of the Museum by Renee Sivan and Dorit Harel, both museum experts from Israel. What has been particularly interesting is the Museum's approach to critical highlights, which provide a balance of issues and perspectives experienced by S.A. Jewry in a S.A. historical context.

The South African Jewish Museum is an interactive high-tech museum that uses different medium to narrate the story of S.A. Jewry, spanning more than 150 years. It represents selected highlights of S.A. history, weaving the Jewish community's story into a meaningful dialogue of individual and organisational roles and contributions, communal deputations and political dilemmas. The Museum includes the Judaica artefact collection belonging to the original Jewish Museum, video footage of animated characters like the famous Barney Barnato and Max Rose, docu-drama enactments of Sammy Marks, documentaries, live interviews, reconstructions, models and dioramas. These have been produced in South Africa and are considered of world standards.

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## JOHANNESBURG STREET NAMES

The Jewish Connection.

\*Colin Plen

Source: Jewish Affairs.

What do Louis Botha, Hendrik Verwoerd and Herman Joseph Rosen, a Jewish boy who fought for the British in the Boer war and was killed, have in common? All three have roads named after them in Johannesburg. The father of Rosen went to the Johannesburg council and explained that he had lost his son in the war. He would pay an amount of money if the council could find a way to commemorate the boy. So they named the streets, Meyer, Joseph and Rosen after him.

I was reading through a book called "Johannesburg Street Names," by Anna Smith. Smith was the head librarian at the Johannesburg Public Library for many years and for her doctoral thesis wrote this book explaining the reasons for naming of each of Johannesburg's roads. It struck me while I was reading how many times Jewish names cropped up. So I tried to list in suburban order the roads with Jewish connections.

I counted 18 suburbs which were originally set up by Jews, and as a result the names of many streets in those suburbs are of Jewish interest. We must not forget that some streets and suburbs have names which are of Hebrew origin, such as Berea and in Riverlea, Jordan Road and Sharon Road, named for the biblical areas. Benoni is a direct use of biblical Hebrew.

In Newclare there is a Ruben Avenue, named for a Ruben who was awarded the Royal Humane Society Medal, and was honoured by the Johannesburg Council by having a road named after him. Jacobs Avenue in Fairways has the name because the widow of Jacobs insisted on it as a clause in the deed of sale when she sold the land.

When I began this task, the man who lent me his very valuable book, Isaac Lew, said "and of course you must start with Max Langermann". Now that is true. Langermann Drive in Kensington is named after Max. There is a Langerman Street in Mayfair which is named for Sir Jan Willem Stuckeris Langerman, spelled with only one 'n'.

Max Langermann is spelled with 2 'n's and he was given the honour because he was Chairman of Kensington Estates, the group that set up the township. Also, there are certain limits. Smith compiled her book to the end of 1968, which puts some limitations on the selections and also does not make it possible to include Sandton and Randburg. I know that in Sandton there is a Fredman Drive and a Chabad Street, so called because there is a Chabad Shul there. Fredman, was a Councillor and a developer.

In Boksburg there is at least one street named after Councillor Issie Kramer and in Germiston at least one named after Councillor Mannie Baker. In Mindalore in Krugersdorp, there is a Geffin, a Ruben and a Saul Jacobs Street.

In Vrededorp there is a Solomon Street. It could have been named after Harry Solomon, who was the Chairman of the Sanitary Board for several years and who could have been Jewish, or it could have been after Sir Edward P. Solomon who represented Fordsburg in the Transvaal Parliament in 1907. Some areas are named by the Council to honour famous Jews. In Greenside, there is Lionel Phillips Park, after the famous Randlord. In Roosevelt Park there is Mendelsohn Road, named after the South African mining magnate and bibliographer, Sydney Mendelsohn.

There is a Joffe Park in Highlands North. In Montgomery Park there is a Langley Levy Street named after Joseph Langley Levy who was editor of the "Sunday Times". There is another street in Montgomery Park called Max Michaelis, after the mining magnate. In Hillbrow there is the Ian Maltz playground, named after the Jewish Councillor.

Getting down to the suburbs, I was surprised to see how many suburbs were started by companies run by Jews. Sophiatown is the one that everyone knows about. It was a township developed by Herman Tobiansky. His wife was Sophia. Gold Street was named for his mother and his mother-in-law, both of whom were Goldies. Hermans Street was named after brothers, sisters and cousins. Toby was named for Tobiansky.

Staying in the South, Rosettenville was set up by a developer called Leo Rosettenstein. Julius was his son and Mable a daughter and streets were named after them. Fanny Lane was named for an aunt, Toby Lane for a cousin and Rosey Street was for Rosettenstein's own nickname.

Abraham Kleinkramer was another developer working with Rosettenstein. The surname Kramer means a grocer and I have assumed that a Kleinkramer is a small grocer. Both are not necessarily Jewish names, so that when I read that Rosina Street was named after his daughter, I was not sure whether I should include it. I then discovered that she had married and become a Mrs. Chatz, from which I am much more sure that Rosina, and therefore her dad, were Jewish.

Reuven was set up by Robert Horowitz, of Pioneer Holdings (the name Reuven being Robert's Hebrew name). The main street of Reuven is Ivanseth, named after his two grandsons Ivan and Seth. Andrea was a granddaughter. Another street there is Mandy. This was another granddaughter of Nigel Mandy, the engineer in the design of the suburb. Benray is a combination of two family names. Benrose was another suburb that was developed by Horowitz. This became the industrial suburb of Benrose on the Main Reef Road. Julbert Street is named for his partner Julius and himself, Robert. Raebor is for Rae his wife and the first three letters of his name turned back to front. Robyn was a granddaughter.

Robertsham was developed by Harry Shapiro, which explains the name Harry Street.

Caro Street has a more complex lineage. Shapiro's partner in this development was J.H. Isaacs and the partner again, of J.H. Isaacs was H.C. Isaacs. The C stood for Caro.

Westgate was developed by Harris A. Behrman. Harris Street is the main street of this little area.

Hillbrow and Berea were developed by Emanuel Mendelsohn and Samuel Goldreich. I think that the Joel brothers, nephews of Barney Barnato, were also involved but I have not been able to find out how. We all know about Goodman Terrace and Goldreich Street and Joel Road. Lily was a niece of one of the Joels. Catherine was named after Kate Joel, a sister. Doris was a daughter. Yettah was Mrs. Goldreich. There is a reference to a Nowitz Park in Hillbrow which was so named because a Nowitz had donated it.

Cyriledene was set up by a Dr. Finger. Hettie Finger was immortalised by Hettie Street and there is also a Finger Street.

Fairwood is another suburb set up by a Jewish entrepreneur, one Gettleson. Maxie Street was named after a son. Northcliff was found by a Jewish partnership, F. Cohen and J. Hochman. Hillel Street is for a son of Cohen and Hocky Avenue was for a son of Hochman. Lily was the name of Cohen. The suburb of Village deep was developed by A. and S. Inglestone, and they named a road after themselves, Inglestone Road.

A book could and should be written about the Rubinstein family and the many townships that they developed. All that Anna Smith mentions is that Yaron Street in Victory Park is named after a granddaughter of the founder of GlenAnil, who developed Victory Park.

In the North Eastern area of Johannesburg, there are large number of suburbs which fit into my classification. Sandringham, Percelia, Raedene, Fairmount, Glenhazel and several others were all developed by Jews or companies led by Jews. Elia Sandler was one of these. Sandler Road is named for him and Elray Street is named for Elia and his wife Ray. Roslyn was a daughter. In Linksfield, there is a Kallenbach Drive, named after the architect and developer Herman Kallenbach. Hannebahn Street in the same suburb is named after his niece, Hannah Lazar.

\*Colin Plen is Chairman of the Jewish Genealogical Society. He is a former Manager of the Zionist Record and the Secretary of the Shalom Independent Congregation. He ends his article with the following statement:

"This is the start, not the end of this study".

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## CRADOCK -

### Capital of the Cape Midlands

by Dennis Kahn

Cradock is one of more than one thousand rural settlements in South Africa where there is a Jewish presence. Guy Butler\*, a famous local son who spends his youth there, vividly describes the place and its personalities: "Cradock society demonstrated the hierarchy of conquest, the legacy of battles won and lost. On top were the whites, English and Afrikaner, and a few Jews and Syrians. There was a slow civil war between the first pair, which the Afrikaners were winning, but both sides were in substantial agreement about 'White supremacy'." His description also fits the period 1935-1960, two dates that coincide with my birth in and departure from the capital of the Midlands. This personal memory is open to correction and improvement; others are welcome to plaster in the gaps that occur over forty years.

The Jewish community settles in and around town late in the 19th century, reaches its apex about halfway through the 20th century, and then dwindles to one person by the end of the millennium. Settlers come mainly from the Baltic States to farm and speculate with cattle and sheep, and trade with the regional population. The town has about 10 000 inhabitants in 1940, which doubles to White 5000, Coloured 6000, Asian 35 and Black 12000 in the next forty odd years. Less than 1% of the Whites are Jews. Their numbers are slightly boosted by young asthmatics and other children who stay with families or board at school for several years, to heal in the pure Karoo climate: dry, with hot summers and cold winters. A steady stream of Jewish commercial travelers calls regularly on their retail clients; they sell their wares and stay a few days at the Grand, Masonic or Victoria Hotel.

The period 1939-1945 passes without major upheaval in the community. Jewish and non-Jewish inhabitants live in relative harmony. Butler reminds us of the prevailing mood: "If new ideas about the nature of space and time were slow to penetrate the popular mind of Cradock, new political ideas, or old ideas in new guises, found a distressingly fertile soil (...) The small communities of Jews, Syrians and Indians in Cradock had no business in Aryan South Africa: let them be sent back to Palestine, the Lebanon or Madras." Pinpricks that recall this period: Miss Froneman praises the virtues of Nazism to our primary school class; my one and only bare-fist fight at high school is due to anti-Semitism. Incidents of this kind remain exceptions, even though three-quarters of my classmates belong to the Dutch Reformed Church and sympathize with National Party beliefs. English friends leave when the Nat's come to power: the Moorcroft twins, Walker and Hyam go to prestigious church and private schools in the Eastern Cape.

The community builds its own synagogue on a double plot on Frere Street, prior to World War Two. The single storey building is symmetrically designed. The bimah is in the center of the auditorium, with the ladies gallery behind it and the men in front on either side of the elevated ark. The synagogue's executive board sits on a raised "box" to the right of the ark: the place reserved for the (absentee) rabbi. Both the decoration and the furnishings reflect the

artistic taste of the Gentile society; only the bright maroon curtain with embroidered lions covering the ark's doors is visibly ornamental. A communal hall is built adjoining the Perl Garden to accommodate functions for the congregation in the 1950s. Both buildings are undistinguished, unlike the Sendingkerk and Congregational Church and two other fine buildings that have a staunch Jewish male presence, namely the Freemasons Lodge and Cradock Club Gate House.

A salaried reverend attends to religious services, Hebrew lessons and kosher food. A cantor is usually imported to conduct the high holidays, which attract visitors from surrounding villages without a minyan. The Friday evening synagogue service is held regularly, Saturday being a normal working (half) day for the orthodox and less observant alike. Sunday is a day of rest and socializing. The elders gather in their homes, go for walks, play bowls, or drive the family to nearby Lake Arthur Dam, or First and Second Krantz on the national road towards Grassridge. Children like to swim in the Sulphur Springs, visit Halesowen Guest Farm and climb Ou Kop. Typical home cooking consists of hot soup, braised meat, roasted potatoes and pumpkin, cold salad and fresh or stewed fruit. Recipes faithfully collected by the Union of Jewish Women or Women's Zionist League are prepared and served by dark hands; a kitchen staff that understands the secrets of Ashkenazi dishes is worth its weight in gold.

Jewish men and women keep a low profile in civic affairs. Strong commercial activity gives them a good standing in local society, but weak leadership lacks a collective capacity to influence the course of events. They approve of the United Party but no one is politically engaged or elected to the local council; few if any serves on a public committee, other than one associated with raising funds for Israel, charity and social service. Some serve their country during the War but names and ranks escape me. They listen to the SABC and subscribe to the Eastern Province Herald and Evening Post for national news, The Midland News and Karroo Farmer for local events, the Zionist Record or SA Jewish Chronicle for communal affairs. The Odeon and Metro screen their latest single and double features three times weekly, Town Hall offers an occasional concert, show or performance by hypnotist Max Colley. Every self-respecting home has a family portrait by Cradock's photographer William Lidbetter.

On a more personal note, schooling starts with tri-lingual lessons from Joan Butler (sister of Guy) and Chrissie van Heerden in the Bree Street Kindergarten located between the Methodist and Anglican churches, and from Reverend Musikant in his Voortrekker Street house. The system continues into primary school, where we also learn about the seasons for marbles, kennetjie, and silkworms. When our bodies and minds ripen we are separated from the most attractive subject of all: the opposite sex. High school education for males is at Boys' High, for females at Rocklands GHS and Convent. The joy of learning for boys consists of morning classes, afternoon sport and daily threats of corporal punishment. Ignorance and disobedience are corrected with kweper-lat/quince canes, crafted into works of art. The art form consists of three to six cuts on the buttocks; flesh wounds take a few days to heal, mental anguish penetrates deeper and leaves scars. Only one teacher corrects by friendly persuasion: a retired school principal named Rosenow spares the rod and spoils the child by reading to him from the New Testament. Friday mornings are reserved for army cadet practice, when we are drilled into uniformity. For extra-mural activity we be-

long to the Boy Scout and Girl Guide movements, then to Habonim that starts in 1949 and thereafter struggles to keep going in the face of more worldly distractions.

There are about thirty-five families, at least one hundred men, women and children when I matriculate in 1951. The following list gives most of their occupations and surnames, including boarders during the whole 25-year period:

Bioscope-owner:	Treisman
Farmer:	Adler, Goldblatt, Levenstein, Perl, Thal, Touwz
Hotelier:	Abrahams, Goldberg
Optician:	Bergman
Piano teacher:	Janie Zamkov-Gluckman, Eve Allschwang
Reverend:	Averbach, Gad, Musikant, Shapiro
Shop-owner:	Berkowitz, Bricker, Edelson, Gordon, Kahn(s), Levenstein, Levitan, Lurie, Sandler, Sutner, Thal, Zamkov
Speculator:	Levenstein, Perl, Allschwang
Tailor:	Gluckman
School boarder:	Josie Breger, Heather Capon; Gisha Horowitz, Iris Platzky, Rose Porter, Goldie Sher; Stephen Abro, Arnold Gochin, Isaac Kerbel, Ivor Kotzen, Norman Meyer, Howard Segal, Basil Sklar

A dominant feature of the community is the Bergman-Kahn-Perl clan. Allowing for a bit of elasticity in the definition of a generation, kinship is shared between forty to fifty persons. Their genealogy is a mixture of intermarriage, surname changes and characteristics. For example, in my pedigree: Maternal grandfather Joseph Bergman marries his sister's daughter Lena Perl. Paternal and maternal grandmothers Mina Kahn and Lena Perl are first cousins. Perl is originally spelt Piel in Tryskiai, Lithuania; Perls also take the surnames Berman and Berger. Bergman is originally Gochin in Papile, Lithuania; one Gochin becomes Gordon. Kahn is a German surname. Although the family comes from Riga and Jelgava, Latvia; the origin is unknown, and we are not Kohanim. The clan lives within walking distance of one another on three streets: Hospital, Naested and Victoria. Five Kahn brothers, their mother, wives and sixteen children form the nucleus of an impacted group in the community. The elders discuss private business and family matters in Yiddish, address their children in English, customers in Afrikaans and blacks in Xhosa. Husbands and wives work together in business, as a rule. My father and two uncles are the exception: their jointly owned shop is out of bounds for the three wives, who thus have only a domestic role to play. Almost the only distraction from work is an annual summer holiday, spent at clan headquarters in Port Elizabeth with branches from Grahamstown, King William's Town and Uitenhage in attendance.

This overview must contain a reference to our extended family. Mita, Poppy and Rachel Booyesen live in Michausdal coloured location. The three sisters work permanently for three Kahn families; Rachel and her niece Coba are with us. They faithfully serve my parents and nurture my sisters and I for twenty-five years. Even when father dies and mother leaves Cradock, the bond between us remains intact. Several families experience the same relationship with their employees.

Cradock's regional importance is sufficient to hold its Jewish population until 1960. While some offspring are in business with their parents, others start to leave the confines of the family and the community. The site that bears lasting witness to a Jewish presence is the local cemetery. Although the shul no longer exists and the cheder tahara is being used to sleep and cook in by bergies, the quality of the graves is good. This is due to the dedication of Samuel Bergman, who attended to graveyards both here and in surrounding towns, in cooperation with the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies. His son Cedric now has a key to the burial ground along the Great Fish River; he is the sole survivor of our original community.

\* Karoo Morning  
Guy Butler, An Autobiography (1918-35)  
David Philip, 1977

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## WORCESTER

Joyce Glazer

In 1818, Lord Charles Somerset, the Governor of the Cape Colony, decided to establish a new town in the Cape. The future town of Worcester was laid out and in 1820 the first plots were sold. This picturesque town is surrounded by the Brandwag Mountains and on one side by the Breede River.

The first Jews to have stttled permanently in Worcester, arrived in 1848 - he was Dr. Diedrich Heinrich Frankel who practiced there as District Surgeon. The first Jewish dentist, in 1882, was Dr. A. Kopelowitz.

There were 3 hotels catering mainly for commercial travellers. The "Commercial Hotel" owned by Abraham and Rebecca Volks; the "Alexandra" Hotel owned by the Lipman family; and the "Masonic" Hotel owned by Mr. Fogarty. The Commercial Hotel was bought by the Volks family in 1904 who made many alterations over the years.

The first Zionist Society was formed in 1904, the founders being M. Cohen, M. Windusky and J.L. Kavonik. The first Synagogue was opened in 1904 by Mr. Hyman Lieberman, Mayor of Cape Town, the consecration of the Synagogue being conducted by Rev. Bender, Minister to the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation.

By 1926 the congregants had outgrown the Synagogue and in the same year a new Shul was constructed on the site of the old one.

The Congregation Executive consisted of:

**S. Lange - Chairman.**  
**J. Rabinowitz - Hon. Treasurer.**

**I.J. Sennett - Vice-Chairman**  
**H. Simon - Hon. Secretary**

A Ladies Society was formed in 1912 under the Chairmanship of Mrs. E. Windusky. In 1944 the Jewish Ladies Society became the Worcester Branch of the Union of Jewish Women. There was also a Junior Zionist Society as well as an active Habonim Movement.

For several years the congregation discussed the necessity of engaging a Hebrew teacher. In 1934 Mr. L. Goodman was engaged as a teacher and a Talmud Torah was established. Not only was Mr. Goodman an excellent teacher, but he also produced plays in Hebrew, staged by the Cheder children. The Worcester Jewish boys and girls attended Cheder every day after school. As a result, they had progressed so well that they were able to take Hebrew as a subject for Matric.

Many Zionist lectures and activities took place regularly in the Zionist Hall. Adv. Morris Alexander was very fond of coming to lecture at Worcester. Internationally figures, such as Nahum Sokolov in 1934, Vladimir Jabotinsky in 1937, and many others, always included Worcester in their itinerary.

The outstanding event in the Zionist history of Worcester, was the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Chaim Weizman in 1932. They spent the week-end in Worcester so as to have an opportunity to relax, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Volks. A banquet was held at which, besides the Worcester people, visitors came from as far away as Oudtshoorn.

During the 2nd World War, 37 members of the Jewish Community volunteered for Active Service. Three made the supreme sacrifice - Cpl. J.B. Abromowitz, Gunner Mar Lange, Captain S. Levin. There was an Italian P.O.W. camp in the town during this period. The prisoners went out daily to work at the many farms in the Worcester district.

The Jewish community was involved in Commerce and Industry; Civic Affairs; Sport; Culture and had good relations with all other religions in the town.

In 1953 there were 130 Jewish families in Worcester. Over the years, due to many families moving to the cities, and in recent years, leaving South Africa, there are now, in 2001, only two families left. The Shul has been sold and the wonderful Jewish Community of Worcester has ceased to exist.

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## SOUTH AFRICANS IN ISRAEL

Source: Telfed - S.A. Zionist Federation. Israel.

**HARRY HURWITZ**, CEO of the Menachem Begin Heritage Center, was recently presented with the prestigious distinction of "Magen Yerushalayim". The story of this illustrious title goes back to 1920, when Ze'ev Jabotinsky was the commander of the Hagana in Jerusalem, which had been established to defend the city's Jewish citizens from Arab rioters. Harry explains, "Jabotinsky was arrested by the British and sent to Acre Prison for his efforts. While he was in prison, the media and the Chief Rabbi Kook gave him the title 'Magen Yerushalayim'. So it is a great honor for me to carry the same title that was given to Jabotinsky".

The award, sponsored by the City Council of Jerusalem, Menorah Cultural Lodges, The Jerusalem Heritage Center and World Betar, was presented by the Mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert.

Harry, who has been involved in the Revisionist Movement for some 65 years, first in Latvia, later in Johannesburg, and from 1978 in Jerusalem, was an advisor to Prime Ministers Begin and Shamir. He will be overseeing the Menachem Begin Heritage Project, an archival library documenting all of the former Prime Minister's correspondence. A renowned public speaker and journalist, Harry proclaims, "I see myself as more than just a defender of Jerusalem, by the spoken and written word, but as a lover of Jerusalem. I love this city, for its meaning to the Jewish people and for its beauty".

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## KIBBUTZ YIZRAEL

Situated in the heart of the Jezreel Valley, Kibbutz Yizrael absorbed waves of South African Habonim "garinim" (groups) from 1958 until the late 1970s. Visitors to this beautiful kibbutz are usually impressed by three things: the magnificent view of the Eastern Yizreel valley; the beautifully set out kibbutz with its lawns, flowering trees and shrubs and the English heard on its paths and in the dining room.

The first years certainly weren't easy and the first South Africans of "Garin Habonim" in 1958 were faced with teething problems which seemed almost unsurmountable. They found themselves in a few huts on a wind-swept hill overlooking the valley, dusty in summer and muddy to the armpits in winter. Differences in culture, language and possessions made the first years difficult. Many left, but more came. Life was hard on the hill. The economy was based on agriculture with little water for the crops and low rainfall in the winter. The profit margin was so low that Yizreel began looking towards industry to supplement the income and today the Kibbutz is an important employer in the Jezreel Valley, welcoming 300 workers daily to its three factories: **Maytronics** which produces swimming pool cleaners; **Tamuz** producing metalwork for the communications industry, and **Cable Maytronics** for semi-rigid cables.

Although not relinquishing its agricultural endeavours, Kibbutz Yizrael literally dived into the swimming pool market with its highly sophisticated, robotic pool cleaning equipment. Starting some years ago with a South African patent, the kibbutz developed the product to new levels of technology and renamed it Dolphin. Maytronics, with an annual turnover of over \$40 million, has its own research and development department making it a world leader in its field to-day. Exporting 98 percent of its products, Maytronics claims a whopping 50 percent of the European market. Tamuz, founded in 1980, produces all kinds of metal packaging systems for the electronic and telecommunications industries. Employing 130 people, many of them qualified engineers, Tamuz is an approved supplier for Lucent, Comverse and ECI. The smallest factory on Yizrael is Cable Maytronics which supplies semi-rigid cables to leading Israeli electronic communication and microwave manufacturers.

While the mainstay of the kibbutz economy is firmly rooted in hi-tech, innovative approaches have kept agriculture profitable. Yizrael has an ultra-modern dairy, sophisticated chicken pens producing 750 tons of meat annually, and a breeding pond for ornamental fish catering to the European market. Cotton, corn, wheat, almonds and amaryllis bulbs carpet the landscape surrounding the kibbutz and produce a tidy income.

Arnie Friedman, former Capetonian and a member of the first South African Habonim "garin" (group) to Yizrael in 1958, is in charge of the volunteers and is part-time gardener, proudly proclaiming that there is an inescapable South African flavour to the kibbutz. We have sent a lot of "shlichim" (emissaries) to South Africa over the years and continue to keep contact with our communities abroad. Peggy Friedman, wife of Arnie, is the medical secretary in the kibbutz clinic. "We are very happy with the situation at the moment, oppose any shifts towards privatisation, and cherish the traditional values of kibbutz."

Milton Kaplan, originally from Windburg in the Orange Free State, came to Yizrael with a degree in agriculture from the University of Pretoria. He has been instrumental in the success of Yizrael's dairy, which regularly breaks records in milk production and is known for its sophisticated technologies. A "madricha" (instructor/leader) for many visiting South African groups, Milton's wife Bernice notes how hospitable the South Africans on the kibbutz have been. Yizrael has always been a welcoming place for groups and new people".

Rucks, mauls, scrums and lineouts are familiar terms to the Israeli-born children of Kibbutz Yizrael. "In fact, you might call Rugby the 'national sport' of the kibbutz", says Arnie. "Think of it, I doubt that if our garin had not come to Yizrael, the kibbutz would have run away with all the rugby club competitions".

Kibbutz Yizrael's links with the Zionist movement has been, and continues to be strong. Hundreds of young South Africans have spent time on Yizrael in various youth movement courses and on its Habonim Ulpan. To-day, Kibbutz Yizrael has 240 members and a total population of close to 600, including many South African parents who have joined their children and grandchildren on the Kibbutz.

