

SA-SIG

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<http://www.jewishgen.org/SAfrica/>

Southern African Jewish Genealogy Special Interest Group Newsletter

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In this Issue

<i>President's Message – Saul Issroff</i>	2
<i>Editorial – Bubbles Segall</i>	3
<i>On Existential Threats – Fred Zartz</i>	4
<i>Tracking South African Jewish Emigrants to America and Jewish Americans who died in South Africa – Ann Rabinowitz</i>	8
<i>Joseph Sherman passes on – Marcia Leveson</i>	13
<i>A South African Jewish Volunteer Recalls – Michael Cohen</i>	14
<i>Book Review: Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora – Saul Issroff</i>	16

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with sincere regret that Bubbles Segall has retired after five years as editor of this Newsletter. Bubbles, situated in a fairly remote part of the Northern Territory of Australia, has performed an outstanding task, seldom missing any deadlines and always producing a great overall 'product'. She is moving to one of the southern states and for personal reasons has relinquished the post. We wish her and Ian every success and happiness in their move. I personally hope that Bubbles will continue to research and contribute. Usually after a new issue comes out we receive some accolades, often from academics who have chanced upon an article and extend their compliments to the editor.

It is a pity that so few ex-South Africans are aware of the publication, perhaps all our readers can try and publicise this more widely. As a genealogical publication it ranks with the top!

The task of an editor is often thankless, and usually someone is around who will haggle and find fault, be they a potential contributor who has been spurned, or a reader who dislikes something, or someone quibbling about a reference or a typo, etc. Now we are very fortunate in having a very willing new editor, Colin Plen. This is the first time we will have a South African resident doing the job! Colin has been in at the start of South African Jewish genealogy and certainly knows the ropes, having come from a publishing background with the now defunct *Zionist Record*. We wish him every success in the post, and I hope that contributions will flow in frequently.

Colin's background is given below.

Who is Colin Plen?

Colin describes himself as a lifelong wannabe editor who never really made it. He wrote a newsletter (by hand) at school, he tried to get a job as a cub reporter but had to make do with learning to sell advertising for the local newspaper. He served an apprenticeship in the photolitho industry and became a printer, and bought a little printing shop which had its own monthly paper. He was Manager of the *Zionist Record* for a couple of years but it wasn't journalism, it was selling advertising. In 1982 he started in the life assurance industry, where he wrote a newsletter for all his clients. But his main

The Southern Africa Jewish Genealogy Special Interest Group (SA-SIG)

The purpose and goal of the Southern Africa Special Interest Group (SA-SIG) is to bring together Jewish genealogy researchers with a common interest in Southern Africa and to provide a forum for a free exchange of ideas, research tips and information of interest to those researching Jewish family history in the communities of South Africa, Lesotho (Basutoland), Botswana (Bechuanaland), Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia), Zambia (Northern Rhodesia), Swaziland, Mozambique, Kenya, and the former Belgian Congo.

The SIG has been producing a quarterly Newsletter since 2000 in which is included articles on personalities in the Southern African Jewish community, religious congregations, communities – past and present and general news about the lives our Southern African families led.

Further information on how to subscribe to the Newsletter can be found at:

<http://www.jewishgen.org/SAfrica/newsletter/index.htm>

If you would like to contribute articles to the Newsletter, accounts should include descriptions of families of the community, aspects of local Jewish life, its institutions and particular character. Jewish involvement in the community at large, its history, business life and development could be featured as well.

Articles for printing in the Newsletter should be sent to Colin Plen, Editor, at colplen@iafrica.com

General enquiries about the Newsletter can be sent either to Colin or to Mike Getz at MikeGetz005@comcast.net

The SA-SIG maintains a set of Web Pages that can be found at: <http://www.jewishgen.org/safrica>

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job for the last 25 years has been life insurance sales.

Colin was one of the founders of the Genealogical Society Johannesburg with Ivan Elion, and became chairman until he left Johannesburg to 'semigrate' to Cape Town where his son and family lived. Soon afterwards his son 'semigrated' to Durban but Colin and his wife Evelyn love Cape Town so much that they did not follow the kids again.

Colin is presently very involved in working with the Cape Town Cemetery Maintenance Council in building up a database of gravestones in Cape Town. Colin's particular project is to photograph all the stones. So far he has completed Pinelands 2 and is halfway through Pinelands 1, more than 12,500 photographs done so far. The photos are then placed in a programme being built up by the Maintenance Council.

Colin is married to Evelyn (44 years this year) has 3 children: a daughter, married, with 3 children in Atlanta, Georgia; another daughter, also married, with 3 children in Durban; and a son, married, with 3 children in Durban.

Colin can be reached at: colplen@iafrica.com.

Note: Colin signs off his emails with "Another interesting email from the well-known good looking ever-helpful Colin Plen." 'Semigrate' is not yet found in the Oxford English Dictionary, nor (to my knowledge) in the Dictionary of South African English (published by Rhodes University). The meaning is obvious, referring to those who don't feel like *shlepping* beyond the borders, but still want to make a move!

Saul Issroff

London, saul@issroff.com

EDITORIAL

As you have read in Saul's message above, this will be my last Newsletter as Editor. I have decided that after five years it is time for someone else to take over the reins. I have thoroughly enjoyed being involved in the Newsletter and have communicated with so many interesting people. My life has been enriched by your stories, and through your stories I have learned so much about our history, geography,

religion, traditions, and family life. I hope you continue to contribute articles to the Newsletter and are able to encourage your family and friends to do the same.

Ann Rabinowitz, one of our Board Members has done an interesting piece of research into South Africans who migrated to the U.S. and Americans who died in South Africa. Using the Ancestry.com website and other databases she was able to extract significant information.

Muriel Chesler, who resides at *Beit Protea*, a South African retirement home for the elderly in Israel, wrote a book titled *A Shield about Me*¹ which portrays the story of South African Jews who volunteered at the time of the Six Day War. Two of these volunteers, Michael Cohen and Fred Zartz, who now live in Melbourne and work at Bialik College, have written about their experiences as volunteers which I am sure you will find absorbing.

Our President, Saul Issroff has provided a review of a new a publication, *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: origins, experiences, and culture*. He was involved in providing a section on Africa.

Henry Katzew has written a book, *South Africa's 800* – a story about 836 South Africans who volunteered in Israel during the War of Independence in 1948. We have provided the names of 33 volunteers (with their 1948 home towns or 1968 places of residence) who are still unclassified. If anyone has information regarding their activities in 1948, please contact:

doreen@sw.co.il or lanesman@013.net

Bubbles Segall

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¹ Chesler, Muria, *A Shield about Me*, Nasionale Boekhandel, 1968. Chesler was also the author of the book, *The Six Day War portrayed in letters from Israel*, Nasionale, 1968.

ON EXISTENTIAL THREATS

Fred Zartz

On 22 May, when Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran, we knew that there would be war. Young Jews like me, all over the world, were considering what to do. I was not conscious of the word 'existential' – nor, till long after, did I know what it meant, but we knew that Israel was under threat and were caught up in the excitement of the danger. Acutely tuned in to the news, radio, and newspaper, it all suddenly became personal and we became players. This affects me.

I was then a young teacher, in the second year at my first job, teaching History and English at Herzlia High School on the gorgeous slopes of majestic Table Mountain. My boss, the inimitable Mr Katz¹ – *Corky* to the kids – passionate Zionist, was enthusiastic in his support – *but please Mr Zartz, wait till you've marked the pending exams.* A grave expression greeted me when I visited my mom who was visiting up from P.E.²; she was at my sister's place, the next street up from Herzlia's sparkling new hostel where I was a housemaster – for she too knew how I was responding to the crisis. As it built over the next week, plans became effectual. My new Fiat 1100 (the first and only new car I've ever possessed) would be put on blocks, my subscription to Purnell's *History of the First World War* would be kept up by my sister Zela.

You could touch the tension. As King Hussein joined Nasser and Assad and – with irresistible popular pressure upon Eshkol – Dayan and Menachem Begin joined the government, it was impossible to teach a lesson without reference to it. So adverbial clauses of concession became, "although the *kibbutzim* were loving manpower", and of reason became, "because all the able-bodied were conscripted", history lessons had to explain what the United Nations forces were supposed to be doing in Sinai. While Abba Eban did his business at the Quai d'Orsay, 10 Downing Street, and the White House, it was mildly amusing to observe how my mom's pleaful trepidation was transformed into a mother's pride. 'Yes, they have to go', I heard her

¹ M. E. Katz – Headmaster 1955 – 1976.

² Port Elizabeth – a city on the east coast of South Africa where I grew up.

tell Aunt Sara at Hermanus³, 'Israel needs our children.'

Everyone was caught up in it. Even the Muslim waiter at Rondebosch's drive-in hammie-hut, with stupendous views of the tabletop, wished me luck. Every hour on the hour Springbok Radio had a special newscast. So in the corridor outside my 6A class that Monday morning, 5 June, when an agitated Singer could not contain the excitement of his transistor's impossible news, that the Egyptian air force had been decimated on the ground that very hour, I decided that an episode of Chinese whispers would be a suitable way to demonstrate to my students how false rumours are easily spread.



Thus the ceasefire was already about a week old when, in the third week in June, we flew out of Jan Smuts – via Nairobi and the Straits of Tiran. This was the last flight of *mitnadvim* from South Africa that had been planned before 5 June and as a kind of senior amongst us, the main *macher*⁴ on board – for I'd been on the *machon*⁵ in my first year out of school some seven years earlier – the Jewish Agency rep in Johannesburg had given me two slips of paper: one was a fat cheque to be handed over to their rep at Ben Gurion (or was it still Lod?), the other an instruction to be read over the cockpit mike once we'd taken off from the Kenyan capital. The country was *vurshupt*⁶ with volunteers, I had to say, there was a bottleneck – we couldn't go where we wanted, not even to *kibbutzim* of our own youth movements.

Gorgeous summer heat and the distinctive smell of those deep pink blossoms as we waited in the shade, our group – a motley one – allotted to Kibbutz Dvir in the northern Negev, neighbour of Lahav, its sister *Hashomer*⁷ kibbutz, and a twenty minute drive by *susita*⁸ van to our new capital, Be'ersheva. About twenty of us, and we certainly made a difference to

³ A coastal resort not far from Cape Town.

⁴ 'Big deal'.

⁵ Institute for Youth Leaders from Abroad – a year's course split between its headquarters at Katamon in Jerusalem and the youth movements' kibbutzim.

⁶ chock-a-block.

⁷ *Hashomer Hatza'ir* – left wing youth movement of the *Kibbutz Artzi* brand of *kibbutz* where the original kibbutic principles and way of life were strictly enforced.

⁸ Israeli motor vehicle first produced in those years.

a workforce diminished to about five times our number. Not me – I was only good for picking and packing, a bit of gardening and whatever else was going, but five of our lads were *traktoristim*, and that's serious work. Mind you, at the beginning I was still main *macher*, so they got me to teach *Ivrit* to our lot for an hour a day and for starters I was the group's *sadran avoda*, work organizer and liaison with the kibbutz's *sadran*. That was until he fell in love with Margaret from Cape Town (what a marvelous lock forward he would have made in my rugby team, but they didn't have a clue, these Israelis), left his wife for her, so I was shunted off as a common labourer, leaving this *gever*⁹ to his secret *liaisons dangereuses* with our new work organizer.



Kibbutz Dvir, 1967

Yes, we did make a difference, especially Margaret. Not that we could tell how things on the kibbutz had changed these past six weeks. Exciting times, eager to discover and eager to tell exactly what had happened here, where – before 5 June – Jordan was but a stone's throw away. Stories of how they'd made a tank out of cardboard to put on the water tower to warn their good neighbours, although they never did show us what had by now been long since dismantled and I do not recall any *migdal mayim*¹⁰ on the settlement, though there must have been one. So much for memory!

And what do you do, given *chofesh*¹¹ less than a week in a land brimming with exhilarated relief and rejoicing in grateful deliverance? Off to Ramat Gan to join my Israeli family, then directly with *Eged*¹² to Jerusalem. That was the first day that, following

⁹ Muscular masculine.

¹⁰ Water tower.

¹¹ Literally 'liberty' but used in Israeli parlance as a synonym for 'vacation.'

¹² Israeli Bus Service.

*Tzahal's*¹³ glorious entry to the Old City – soon followed by Rav Goren with *shofar* – but three weeks previously, the *Kotel* was opened to the public. The bustle and chatter at The Wall – most of us in awe in that throng, crowded even though in a square only yesterday widened from a narrow alleyway where, for nearly twenty years – no Jew had dared to tread.

Stand back and gasp at these, the thread which ties me over Time and Space to my fellows, *the naked stones*.

That was also the first day that the bus service had been restored via Rachel's Tomb and the Herodion to Beit-lechem. The rumour spread fast: there's a bus to catch to a famous place, only yesterday forbidden to you. No time to think; one moment in awe, the next in dread. There we were, two aliens among a load of westbankers and their chickens on what was yesterday a Jordanian bus – even more rickety than Egged's most rickety – a bumpy ride as the near horizon filled with houses still bearing white flags on broomsticks. And there I was hastily offering Farid cigarettes to all who'd take one, making friends (I hoped) with the contents of souvenir packs I'd bought from a peddler at the bus stop. And at this Christian holy city, I'd never had so tasty a *tçhina*.



Days to remember. Shifting sackfuls of sorghum in the silo and black beer before breakfast. Picking pears on extended ladders. We shattered the Israeli record for pears per dunam; packing peaches in the heat. Don't ever wipe a sweaty brow with peach-fur on your fingers! And then there was the one in the *refet*¹⁴ existentially threatened by Bertha's vanity – Bertha, who refused to be weighed!

Cowboy for the day, I'd met Bertha's mom, George the Third, before breakfast when she was taking her turn at one of the *tnuva's*¹⁵ milking machines – five in a row – giving of her life's essence. Jotting down their daily yield was how I earned my bread that day while *raftan*¹⁶ Shimon, deft, quiver-quick, plucked the udder's suction-tits.

¹³ Acronym for IDF – Israeli Defence Force.

¹⁴ The cowshed.

¹⁵ Milk co-operative which provided the means of production and marketed the milk.

¹⁶ Dairyman.

I met Bertha after breakfast. Mom's back in the shed and duly fed, we're working now with their calves. It's weekly weigh-day. By opening and closing gates we are shunting them along – moving calves from pen to pen, our aim to shunt them one-by-one into the final enclosure. There, horror, horror, to stand upon a scale! Now *raftan* Shimon had been clear: take this stick (but gently does it), if they won't move, the slightest prod is what it takes. *But never climb into the pen – always stay upon the fence!*

They'd all gone through.
There's only Bertha in the pen.
Of all the comely congregation,
She's concerned about her figure,
Won't be weighed.
So, what to do?

Calves' horns grow slowly and that's what saved me. For yes, you guessed it, when I jumped into the pen she pinned me to the ground. The day I met my existential threat.



Ohalo was (and probably still is) the Labour Party's well-lived-in tenement resort perched high on the western slopes of the mount that runs down to the radiantly fresh waters of the *Kinneret*¹⁷. From there, on a hot day, the grey-blue reflections off the Sea, light-white, flecked bright, mirror the once hostile jagged heights on the other side. It was there that – some time in July – *Tnua Meuchedet* (our Israeli fellow youth movement) gathered all the volunteers from *Habonim* worldwide. Lounging on the lawn, now young adults all who, just a moment ago, had worn our blue shirts *with the red thread* with such pride – up front a dais where Levi Eshkol, a jubilant smile from ear to ear which so eagerly communicated to us his warm affability, makes his point then turns to wife Miriam at his side: “*nachon motek*”?¹⁸ A magic moment, as unforgettable as the next day's – now seated at the resort's amphitheatre – up front a wide stage, flanked on both sides with booths each manned by party officials whose task it was to translate, simultaneously the animated words of greeting brought to us, most donning earphones – as a curtain raiser to the long-awaited concert – by

the secretary-general of the party's *galil elyon*¹⁹ branch. How embarrassing when peals of laughter greeted the earnest words of the stunned secretary-general, a cruel half-moment soon relieved as he turned to notice that his sober words, staidly conveyed in the English and French booths, were transformed by mad gesticulations in the Spanish. What fun!

Yes, we did make a difference, the South Africans, or so they told us. Good attitude to work, serious, responsible. It wasn't only their words. “To each according to their needs ...” And so it was that in the decade when rock-'n-roll had progressed to The Twist, but the Beatles still ruled, this outpost of stolid *hashomer* socialism set aside its values and sent us by *susita* van on weekly jaunts to the bourgeois decadence of Be'ersheva's single nightspot. Not to the taste of all of us, but that's compromise: showing their appreciation by an inverted interpretation of our needs. For the kibbutz had taken in the *sochnut*'s²⁰ instruction: here is your chance to gain *olim*.²¹

We weren't the only *mitnadvim* on Dvir that summer. There were two other types. One was a group of European twenty-somethings, individuals who'd probably been in groups on summer programmes in previous years. There weren't many of them and most of those weren't Jewish, but some seem to have become summertime regulars on the kibbutz and they tended to come and go after short spells. The other type was a group, like ours, of regular volunteers, but they came later in the year and they were from the USA.

Of these, I remember only two. The first was from the latter group.

Do you remember the lyrics of ‘Sonny, di-da-da-da-da-da-da-da ...’? She was always singing it, she was always sad, this bronzed blondie. She was Sonny and she was sad when she sang it probably because it was *their* song and he had just that year been killed in Vietnam. Yes, there were many and various motivations that brought us to Israel to that year.

¹⁷ Sea of Galilee, so named because of its shape as a violin – *kinnor*.

¹⁸ “Correct, darling?”

¹⁹ Upper Galilee.

²⁰ The Jewish Agency for Israel which had organised the volunteer programme.

²¹ Immigrants to Israel.

And then there was Kirsten, my Danish lass from Odense – flaxen-haired, pretty tan complexion. She was from the former group. When we parted about six weeks later she tried to console me with the romantic idea that we'd meet again, by chance. No, I replied, we'll meet again only if one of us, at a given moment puts himself in the path of the other. For we didn't plan to write, and we didn't.



Yom Kippur at the *Kotel*. At the *machon, kol nidrei*²² night from Katamon that early morn, via this spot where erev *shabbat* seven years ago – glancing up at Zion Gate, we could go no further, then. In *shabbat* shirts, mostly Yemenite and Russian styles, (you remember the round necks, embroidered, slit in the front), moments for reflection and song:

Hachama meirosh, ha'ilanot nistalka:
Bo'u ve'neitzei, likrat shabat hamalka.
Let's go out and greet the Shabbat Queen.

But now, this first year that it's ours, the Old City, rock of ages, among *davenning*²³ figures at The Wall, I must conquer and embrace it all. Joshua did it seven times, I would circle only once. So out of Jaffa Gate I went and in again by Zion, with bullet holes still fresh on the pillars beside the gate. My holy task – to count and name the seven gates – now performed, it's time for *nei'la*²⁴.

The New Year brought also a change in my activities. Israel's new school year found me teaching English at the *Bet Sepher Miktzo'i Gimel* at Jaffa. Dawn patrols meant teaching the first few periods every day after a breakfast of *borekas*²⁵ and strong *kafeh turki*²⁶ in Shderot Yerushalayim, Jaffa's main thoroughfare and a move from the Negev to the South African hostel in Tel Aviv's Yad Eliyahu. Jaffa's Arab kids were the most diligent and industrious of all my students. My time on the kibbutz then, as before and later on some others, has always been rewarding, but this was not to be my way of life and if I was to use my time fruitfully, it was time to move on, to test a new type of Israeli life. Teaching in town, but this time only for a term.

²² The opening service of *Yom Kippur*.

²³ Swaying in devoted prayer.

²⁴ The closing service of *Yom Kippur*.

²⁵ An oriental pastry.

²⁶ Turkish coffee.

*Lebedike*²⁷ Tel Aviv, but what would kibbutniks say? Sultry nights at Mandy's²⁸, 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds': like existential threats, I'd yet to fathom what it meant. And Abie Natan's California²⁹ off Dizengoff. *Lehizdangev* is a verb I thought I'd coined in 1960 to describe a stroll down this hub of bustling energy. We'd score the beauties out of ten, army uniform gains sexy points.

Because of the war, the university year began a little later than usual, and when it did, moving to a flat in Ramat Aviv – I began reading for the M.A. at T.A.U. Because I believed then, as I did for many years, that the way ahead lay in an arrangement with Jordan, I persuaded the History Department to allow me to do a course – from the Department of Middle Eastern History – in the History of Jordan (the title of which, when the kite-flying Allon Plan achieved no response, was changed to the History of Transjordan).



And what about Kirsten? I was right. Five years later, on my way to London to begin reading for a Ph.D (like many good Israelis who achieve a good M.A, you do what you can to 'breathe fresh air' – *linshom avir*, with a further degree in *chutz l'aretz*³⁰), when I stopped over in Denmark, I remembered her. Super people, the Danes. But when I popped in to Odense's Hans Christian Andersen Museum, she wasn't there.

And Margaret? She settled on the kibbutz for a bit, but when – a few years on – I was visiting South Africa, there she was on the beach in Sea Point with her *sadran avoda* in tow.

So, with our group, the *sochnut* didn't succeed in their grand design? Well, I've lost touch with the others, so I don't know about them, but somehow I think all of us – like Margaret – have maintained our links. As for me, I didn't complete my doctoral dissertation; in London I met and married my pretty

²⁷ Lively, full of life.

²⁸ After the UK's Profumo scandal of the early 60s, Mandy Rice Davies moved to Tel Aviv where she opened her nightclub on Ben Yehuda.

²⁹ The pilot, deceased recently (October 2008), famous in the 60s for his flying peace mission to Egypt, transport of food aid to Biafra and pirate Radio Peace, moored off the coast of Jaffa. His café was on the corner of Frishman.

³⁰ Abroad, outside Israel.

sabra,³¹ *sheina meidel*, when the British Home Office eventually granted me permission to work. Perhaps I'd seen her way back then, on Dizengoff: ten out of ten. We have a flat in Tel Aviv and for the moment I rationalize that I carry Israel around with me. Well, yes, I've continued the career in Jewish Education as I set out to do those many years ago, at Herzlia: Head of Jewish History at Carmel College, Oxfordshire where for fifteen years I taught and developed London University's A-level (*bagrut*) in Modern Jewish History until the College folded in 1997. Since the millennium I teach *Ivrit* and Israel Studies at Bialik College, Melbourne. A kind of self-appointed *shaliach*³². Our Tel Aviv flat beckons.

**TRACKING SOUTH AFRICAN
JEWISH EMIGRANTS TO
AMERICA
AND
JEWISH AMERICANS WHO
DIED IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Ann Rabinowitz

It occurred to me that it might be possible to track South African Jewish emigrants to the U.S. as I knew that a number of them did come to America. Among them was my grandfather whose records I had never been able to locate.

With the access provided by Ancestry.com on its web site for WWI Draft Registration, I decided to learn whether I could access records for these emigrants.

First of all, I learned that the basic screen would not be helpful enough to do the kind of search I wanted. Secondly, I found that the Advanced Search was perfect as it allowed you to do the following actions to get the data:

- CLICK on Residences
- CLICK on South Africa
- CLICK on Exact

This enabled me to make a search of 438 entries for South African emigrants who registered for the

WWI Draft in the U.S. at their local Draft Board in 1917/1918. After a careful look through these individuals, I tried to pull out those that appeared to be Jewish or Jewish-sounding names. I am sure I may have missed some or mistaken some for being Jewish when they were not. However, my listing will give you an approximation of the types of people who did come to America.

Many of the individuals had English names as their parents had come to South Africa from England and they were first generation Britons or South Africans. Others had traditional names as their parents had probably come to South Africa directly from the Baltics, Poland or Belarus.

What follows is an index of the names which should provide some help in locating relatives whom you may not have known existed or that had come to America. It may also indicate that you had South African relatives that you had never heard of.

The names of the registrants, their birthdates and birthplaces are given below:

<i>Emigrant Name</i>	<i>Date of Birth</i>	<i>Birthplace</i>
ABRAHAMS, Joseph	June 19, 1889	Kimberley
ARNEST, Benjamin	October 26, 1894	Cape Town
BARON, Charles	July 10, 1887	Cape Town
BLACK, Isadore	March 17, 1895	Johannesburg
BLACK, Julius	July 19, 1893	Bloemfontein
BENJAMINSON, Morris	February 9, 1896	Port Elizabeth
COHAN, Julius	December 3, 1896	Woodstock
COHEN, Harry Daniel	December 8, 1895	Bulawayo
COHEN, Joseph Charles	September 13, 1886	Cape Town
COHEN, Michael A.	January 18, 1891	Johannesburg
DAVIDSON, Solomon Morley	April 10, 1897	Viljoensdrift
FISHER, Joseph	September 14, 1886	Cape Town
GEISLER, Isaac	June 8, 1890	Johannesburg
GOODMAN, Max	February 25, 1888	Kimberley

³¹ Colloquial term for Israeli-born.

³² Emissary of Jewish and Israeli culture.

HIRSCHORN, Leonard	October 16, 1891	Kimberley
JACOBS, Albert Michael	July 23, 1886	Graaff-Reinet
JAFFE, Max	April 14, 1893	Cape Town
KAMINITZ, David	June 4, 1894	Rhodesia
KATZ, Abe	May 19, 1891	Johannesburg
LEVY, Isaac	April 11, 1897	Cape Town
LEVIN, Michael Bernard	June 5, 1896	Pretoria
LEVINE, David	August 2, 1894	Cape Town
LEVINE, Marx	June 15, 1891	South Africa
LEWIN, Richard Joseph	September 11, 1875	South Africa
RAPPEPORT, Joseph	December 5, 1894	Calitzdorp
RAPPEPORT, Samuel	August 26, 1891	Johannesburg
SILVER, Monte	October 1895	Johannesburg
SOLOMON, David Percival	March 4, 1887	Newmarket
SOLOMON, Edward Miller	December 4, 1892	Pretoria
WOLFFE, Isadore	December 25, 1890	Cape Town
WYNER, Isadore Alfred	November 14, 1893	Cape Town
WYNER, Rudolph Harold	April 28, 1895	Malmesbury
WYNER, Samuel N.	May 22, 1893	Malmesbury

The South African emigrants came from various places in South Africa, lived in all sorts of places in America, and had a variety of occupations. This can be seen by viewing their actual WWI Draft Registration Records. An example of the types of data one can find if one does investigate these records is the following.

Let us take Morris BENJAMINSON as an example. He was born February 2, 1896, in Port Elizabeth, SA, and had taken out First Papers in England. He was living at 1782 Stratford Avenue, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and was married. He was a pipe fitter for the Leher Torpedo Boat Company, in Bridgeport, CT, and engaged in government work.

A different example is that of Isadore BLACK, who was born on March 17, 1895, in Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa. He was living at 2352 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA, and worked as a theatrical in the Classic Theater in San Francisco. In 1952, he is again found returning from a trip from London and perhaps before that to South Africa. He is still single and now lives at 456 Post Street, San Francisco, CA.

Another individual associated with the entertainment industry was Joseph FISHER, who was born September 14, 1886, and who settled in Boston, MA. There he became Director of Movies for Fisher Bioscopes Ltd. located in New York.

Another interesting South African emigrant was Leonard HIRSCHORN, born October 16, 1891, in Kimberley, SA, and who registered in Philadelphia, PA, and worked as a driver for the Commonwealth Brewery. He can also be found registering for the World War II Draft which lists him as Leonard A. HIRSCHORN with wife Gertrude HIRSCHORN and working for Esslingers Brewing Company. However, in this registration, his birthdate has changed to October 16, 1890.

In addition, he can be found in the 1920 Philadelphia Census listed with his wife's family, so we learn that her parents were Charles and Ida Boleg (mis-transcribed as Boley). Leonard's parents are listed as being from Russia and England. His profession is now listed as a chauffeur for a brewery. As of the 1930 Census, Leonard and wife have now moved out and are on their own. He has become an iron worker with a construction company. They apparently never had children.

Another example is Irving N. KELSON, born November 15, 1895, in Cape Colony, South Africa, who was a naturalized citizen. He was living at 711 Westlake, Los Angeles, CA, and was single and living with and supporting his mother. He was a clerk at B&B Drug Company, 401 West Pier.

One of the entries, David LEVINE, born August 2, 1894, in Cape Town, was a naturalized U.S. citizen. He was listed as a student, age 22, at the School of Rabbi Jaffe, 211 E. Broadway, New York, NY. He lived in Brooklyn and traveled to his religious school or yeshiva in Manhattan.

The record for Monte SILVER states that he is a stock clerk at the Chevrolet Motor Company in

Tarrytown, NY, and that he was born in Johannesburg, SA, and is single. What brought him to Tarrytown is anyone's guess.

A fascinating entry is for Edward Miller SOLOMON, born December 4, 1892, in Pretoria, and living in El Paso, TX. He was employed by the Langsol Mining and Development Company, in Columbus, New Mexico, where he worked in copper mining. This was probably an offshoot of work he had done in South Africa. If other records such as the U.S. Census are checked for this person, a trail of travel across the United States to various sites where he pursued his mining career can be found.

Further, there is a listing of three members of the same family, the WYNER family: Rudolph Harold WYNER, who was born April 28, 1895, in Malmesbury, South Africa, who was a citizen via his father's papers. He was living at 61 Charlotte Street, Boston, MA, and was single. He worked as a textile man doing government work in the Shawmut Woollen Mills in Staunton, MA.

His brother, Isador Alfred WYNER, is also registered living at the same address and doing the same kind of work, but is also listed as registered at Harvard College. The third brother is Samuel N. WYNER.

The interesting aspect of this family is that they can be further researched using the 1920 Census. In 1920, they are still living at 61 Charlotte Street, Boston, MA, and here you can see the entire family revealed as well as the notation that the parents were originally from Russia and Jewish.

George WYNER, the father, age 56, from Russia, arrived 1880, naturalized 1890, a real estate broker.

Gussie WYNER, the mother, age 49, from Russia.
Isadore WYNER, age 26, from South Africa, a lawyer.

Rudolph WYNER, age 24, from South Africa, President, textile company.

Edward WYNER, age 22, from South Africa, Real Estate .

Maurice WYNER, age 19, from New York, not working.

Francis L. WYNER, son-in-law, age 29, from South Africa, a lawyer.

Frances R. WYNER, daughter, age 27, from South Africa.

Anna B. WYNER, granddaughter, age 4-3/12, from Massachusetts.

As you can see, the brother Samuel N. WYNER is no longer living with the family. The WYNERs appear to have progressed rapidly in America and they can be further traced in the 1930 Census and other on-line records.

The previous records reveal those emigrants from South Africa who came to America and settled here. However, there is also another category of individuals who went from America to South Africa and died there. These individuals may have been former South Africans returning home for a visit or they may have been American tourists or those who were working in South Africa.

As proof of this, I decided to investigate the 459 entries in the Ancestry.com Social Security Death Index (SSDI) database which specified the individual as having died in South Africa.

In order to do this, you have to go to the main page of Ancestry.com as before and go to Advanced Search, then Death and Country. Plug in South Africa and you will then be able to access these records. The records reflect all those deaths which were reported to the various U.S. Consulates located in various towns such as Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria. The records contain the person's birth and death date and when and where they applied for their Social Security number.

After going through the 459 entries, I picked out the names which appeared to be the most commonly thought of as being of Jewish origin. There may be others who were Jewish, but who had more anglicized names which I did not include. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to check all the entries for themselves.

The names I found are as follows:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Birth Date</i>	<i>Death Date</i>
ABRAMS, Ann	November 13, 1901	February, 1975
APPEL, M.D., Bernard	May 1, 1914	December 8, 1998
ARONSOHN, Betsy	March 26, 1908	March, 1986
BARAK, Sylvia	October 14, 1918	February 26, 1994
BEIGEL, Richard	June 5, 1906	February, 1983
CAHN, Toni	May 28, 1905	October 3, 1996

CHAITOWITZ, Israel	October 15, 1890	August, 1979
ENGELBERG, Irving	February 19, 1892	January, 1974
FELDMAN, Rae	October 24, 1908	September, 1985
FOGELMAN, Sonia	May 5, 1905	February 4, 1989
FRANCO, Isaac	November 11, 1912	July 15, 1992
GERSON, Milly	January 1, 1918	September 15, 1994
GOLDBERG, Fannie	September 1, 1903	July, 1979
GOLDBERG, Rose	May 16, 1906	February, 1984
GOLDSTEIN, Hannah H.	October 4, 1911	January 4, 1993
GOLOVIN, Henedina	April 20, 1904	December, 1984
GOODMAN, Bernard	July 1, 1921	July, 1986
GOODMAN, Lillian	September 2, 1920	October, 1984
HEIMANN, Rosalie	October 6, 1883	September, 1976
HENDLER, Alec	July 14, 1905	February, 1990
HERZBERG, Rudolf	November 1, 1881	August, 1975
HIRSCHSON, Rosee	December 10, 1911	May 16, 1988
ISRAEL, Clara	December 21, 1909	June, 1978
ISRAEL, Philip	April 12, 1910	April 12, 1987
JACOBS, Victor	December 4, 1902	January, 1979
JOSEPHSON, Leonore	June 6, 1926	October 2, 2007
KANE, Hilda	August 23, 1914	March, 1981
KATZ, Johanna	April 27, 1887	October, 1971
LADIN, David	September 15, 1890	April, 1979
MARKS, Sarah E.	April 20, 1910	August 14, 1995
MOSS, Bessie	March 21, 1897	July, 1976
ROSENBERG, Florence R.	July 13, 1917	September 7, 2001
ROSENBERG, Philip	May 5, 1905	December, 1992
ROSENTHAL, Ida	May 12, 1905	June, 1985

RUBIN, Leslie I.	August 5, 1909	March 28, 2002
SALOMON, Julia G.	July 17, 1923	July, 1992
SAMSON, Margaret G.	November 25, 1916	January 15, 1999
SHANUS, Lena	May 9, 1896	April, 1974
SINGER, Anna	August 24, 1898	August, 1986
SOFER, Frances S.	October 13, 1935	November 15, 2000
SOLOMON, Jack	July 29, 1911	November, 1977
STERN, Betty	March 3, 1884	November, 1966
STERNBERG, Selma	October 19, 1886	March, 1980
STERNEBERG, Edward H.	May 6, 1923	April 1, 1990
WOOLF, Natalie	October 29, 1895	May, 1967
ZACKS, Grace G.	February 21, 1921	September 18, 1995
ZEITSOFF, Lawrence	June 16, 1917	March 15, 1997
ZEVIN, Lillian C.	May 20, 1899	January 1986
ZIEGLER, Frank	June 12 1904	June, 1983

Unfortunately, the only way you will be able to determine definitively if this is your ancestor is to perhaps look in the U.S. Census records prior to the date they died or to obtain their Social Security file.

In addition, the following places to look may assist you:

- Your ancestor may have also registered for the World War II Draft Registration and you will find corroborating evidence there. Apparently, there are 690 entries for the World War II Draft Registration encompassing those who were born in South Africa; a number of which were Jews.

- You can also visit the **South African Rootsbank Site**:

http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/CGI/CGI_ROOTWEB.EXE

and search for the name and see if there is any further information there such as a burial.

- In addition, there is the **South African National Archives**:

<http://www.national.archsrch.gov.za/sm300cv/smws/sm300gi?200807061014039E4EBFC E%26DB%3DRSAE>

This site can be searched for information on the family as well as the estate record.

- Also, a newspaper database such as <http://www.newspaperarchive.com> can provide valuable corroboration of the history of the person and, perhaps, their obituary.

An example of what one can learn from the basic entry is the one for Bernard APPEL, M.D.

Name: Bernard APPEL, M.D., SSN: 143-36-6103, Last Residence (U.S. Consulate) Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa, Born May 1, 1914, Died December 8, 1998, State (Year) SSN Issued: New Jersey (1962).

Going further, you can take the basic information provided for David LADIN and expand on it.

Name: David LADIN, SSN: 112-05-4899, Last Residence: (U.S. Consulate) Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, Born September 15, 1890, Died April 1979, State (Year) SSN Issued: New York (Before 1951).

While most LADIN families are Jewish and also those named David LADIN too, this listing, upon further investigation, turned out to be Swedish and he was actually named David Ferdinand LADIN. He came to America in 1929 and was an executive with General Motors Corporation. He was known for a trek he and seven others made in 1942 from Mandalay to Calcutta in 14 days to reach safety during World War II. At the time he was the manager of the General Motors' lend-lease assembly plant in Rangoon, Burma.

So, indeed, it is important to cross check all the information you can find about the person, no matter, if they seem to have a Jewish name or not. The birth/death dates given in this social security death index database certainly narrow down the possibilities of who the person might be when you are confronted with several individuals with the same name from the same place.

Some names lead to all sorts of things as did Israel CHAITOWITZ, who is listed as being born on October 15, 1890, and passing away in August, 1979 in New Jersey. If you look at his World War II Draft Registration, he is listed as Israel Harry CHAITOWITZ and his birth is listed as September 15, 1890, in Kovno, Russia, and he lives in New Jersey, as a painter.

Then, going further and looking in the New York arrivals for August 18, 1922, one finds Israel CHAITOWITZ, a British citizen, last residing in Johannesburg, SA, leaving behind his father J. CHAITOWITZ at 48 Main Street, Johannesburg, SA, and going to his mother A. CHAITOWITZ, living at 309 Madison Street, NY, NY. He is listed as being born in Abeli which is actually Obeliai, Lithuania, in Kovno Guberniya. The passenger manifest also states that he was previously in America and, sure enough, there is a prior arrival on March 16, 1906, where he arrives in Boston, MA, and his birth date is listed as being approximately 1888.

Having access to the vital records for Obeliai, Lithuania, I checked the births and there he was: Izrail Girsh KHAIETOVICH, son of Ovsei and grandson of Rubin. His mother was Genia, daughter of Movsha, and he was born October 7, 1887, in Obeliai and his family was registered in nearby Rokiskis, Lithuania. I also found that he had a younger brother Kive Berko and three other brothers, Kalman, Ruvel and Itsyk, who died as children. So, all of a sudden, from a tiny bit of information on the Social Security Death Index, a whole family tree reaching back from America to South Africa and finally to Lithuania has been developed.

In the entry for Rudolf HERZBERG, further investigation showed that his full name was Wolf Rudolf HERZBERG and that he was from Hanover, Germany, and he also registered for the World War II Draft. At the time, he was living in New York City and working for a leather goods store. In 1950 HERZBERG was naturalized.

In the entry for Lena SHANUS, further investigation found a ship's manifest for a trip to South Africa arriving back in New York in 1948. The manifest states that she was 51, single, and from Poland, and was living at 1550 N. Damned Avenue, Chicago, IL, and she traveled first class. In relation to this, there is an entry in the South African National Archives for Mrs. Lena SHANUS who has immigration papers in 1947.

Another reference to a Lena SHANUS was in the 1920 Census. However, at that time, the Lena in the record appeared to be married to Morris SHANUS and lived in Detroit, MI, with a daughter Dorothy. If it is the same Lena SHANUS as in the SSDI, then perhaps she divorced her husband and listed herself

as single in subsequent records. Or, possibly, this is an entirely different person altogether.

And finally, there was a burial entry for Lena in the SA Jewish Rootsbank Site, where her birth is listed as 1899 and death on April 24, 1974, at age 75, with burial in Johannesburg's West Park Cemetery. So, somewhat confusing data for this person which would take further investigation into her SSDI file in America and immigration papers in South Africa.

In regard to Florence R. ROSENBERG, age 84, she can be found buried in Johannesburg's West Park Cemetery and there is an estate file for her listed in the South African National Archives. Her estate file will probably provide much information regarding her family and heirs.

Rosalie HEIMANN, age 93, also was buried in Johannesburg's West Park Cemetery. This is also yet another case of where a person is found buried in South Africa rather than being shipped back for burial in the United States.

CONCLUSION

There are many more resources such as the U.S. Naturalization Records (69 entries), the U.S. World War II Draft Registration records (690 entries), U.S. Passport Applications (228 entries), Baltimore Passenger Lists (359 entries) and other port entries as well as U.S. Census records which are available and can be sorted by South African birth. All in all, these types of resources for South African Jewish research on Ancestry.com are great starters which can lead to all sorts of other information. You can expect that the available entries will be increased in the future as more years are added to the databases.

JOSEPH SHERMAN, SCHOLAR PAR EXCELLENCE, PASSES ON

Marcia Leveson

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Seldom can it be more truly said of the passing of a scholar that it leaves so enormous a gap in the Jewish literary and academic world. Coming only a few months after the deaths of others like Jocelyn Hellig and Aleck Goldberg, this loss of Joseph Sherman (pictured) – on March 20 – to our small coterie of Jewish intellectuals is a severe one.

Joseph was born in 1944 and brought up in South Africa, and this is where he first made his name as a teacher of English of exceptional intellectual energy and rigour, first at King Edward VII High School and then as vice principal of King David High School in Victory Park.

Joseph and I had been colleagues since he joined the English department at Wits in 1980. There his talent as an academic and teacher soon became renowned. "Better never than late!" he would admonish stragglers to class, but his encouragement of true scholarship and of students in need, was always unstinting. His areas of expertise covered a broad range.

He won worldwide fame for his promotion of and translation of Yiddish writing, especially that of I B Singer, whom he had met and interviewed in 1983. His specialties also included the work of Charles Dickens, and Elizabethan and eighteenth century studies.

It is not surprising that these interested him, as his enthusiasm for drama – an area in which he was

well trained – spilled over to his students and colleagues, and it was his delight to put on dramatic productions.

I well remember the fun we all had while Joseph, the director and actor, whipped us into shape and brought alive some of the writing of those times. Acting was another great talent, so seldom exercised.

He had many friends across different disciplines and his roar of convivial laughter echoed down the corridors. But, while he was one of the funniest and wittiest of men, with a special bent for satire, he could be the sternest of critics. And this did not endear him to some. His scorn was especially potent for those whom he considered to be intellectually lazy or whose work he considered sloppy. But how very few could match his energy in taking part so vividly in university life – in teaching and administration, mounting of productions, presentations at conferences, the concern for rescuing Yiddish books in the library and elsewhere, and the academic writing and publications that he seemed to produce so effortlessly.

Those who knew him well, however, understood how many long hours he worked on those subjects which were his passion. He was appointed associate professor in 1996.

I was privileged to have been his friend and to have shared with him several of his interests, especially those in South African Jewish studies, in which capacity I learned much from him. We attended many conferences, sometimes as sole representatives of Wits. Joseph translated into English the work of the South African Yiddish writers and was single-handedly responsible for bringing them to a wider audience. For a period he was editor of *Jewish Affairs*, and here too his concern for academic excellence led him to strive to transform the journal to reach an international standard.

In 2002 he left South Africa, having been appointed Woolf Corob Fellow in Yiddish Studies at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, University of Oxford, and in 2005, University Research Lecturer at the University of Oxford.

Here he found his *métier*. He told me, “It felt as if I had died and gone to heaven.”

He was constantly in demand as a reviewer in prestigious journals, he lectured around the world, and was in touch with all-important scholars in the field of Jewish and Yiddish studies. How fortunate that he had those years where his unique talents were so appreciated and honoured.

And honoured they were – for example, in December 2002 the Modern Language Association of America awarded him the Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize for Yiddish Translation.

Joseph’s much loved wife, Karen, was with him when he succumbed to complications following an illness he had contracted some months previously, while overseas pursuing his career. He was only 65. It is hard to imagine that such a luminary is no longer with us.

His familiar presence with his signature bowtie or cravat, will be very greatly missed. He was unique, and his work will ensure him a vital place in the history of Yiddish and in the community of South African and international Jewish scholars.

A SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH VOLUNTEER RECALLS

Michael Cohen

I was one of 861 Southern African Jews who volunteered to serve in Israel on the eve of the Six Day War. At the time I was undertaking post-graduate studies in History at the University of Cape Town, teaching Hebrew at an afternoon school, serving as a lay cantor at a local Orthodox synagogue and in charge of the *Betar* youth movement in the Cape Western Province.

The period leading up to the war – from the closure of the Straits of Tiran by the Egyptians, and during the ensuing weeks – was one of enormous anxiety. The local Zionist offices were flooded with applications from would-be volunteers; meetings were held in synagogues and at other venues to raise money for Israel, whose very survival was under grave threat; and potential volunteers, of whom I was one, were taken to outlying Jewish-owned farms to learn to drive tractors in preparation for work on Kibbutzim. The aim was to replace young Israelis who were being called to arms.

My parents flew down from Salisbury, Rhodesia (Harare, Zimbabwe) to spend time with me prior to my departure. No sooner had they arrived than the war broke out. Only some of my fellow volunteers had managed to reach Israel before 5 June; the rest of us departed as soon as the war ended. My group flew from Cape Town via Johannesburg. As I held a Rhodesian passport at the time, and Rhodesian citizens were *persona non grata* worldwide in the wake of Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in November, 1965, I was refused permission to board the flight. Rushed by car to the British Consulate, I was then given a one-month British visa which I was required to renew several times during my four-and-a-half-month stint as a volunteer.

At a Tel Aviv old-age home, where we were accommodated after arrival, we were sorted into groups after interviews. A select number of us, mainly those who had youth movement leadership experience or who spoke Hebrew, were despatched to Jerusalem to work as non-combat members of the Israeli army. We were accommodated in East Jerusalem, at the Jordanian Police School (*Bet Sefer La-Shotrim*), next to Ammunition Hill, in tents (the girls were located in nearby hotels). Our task was to collect the *shalal* – the 'booty' left in retreat by the Jordan army.

We joined with Israeli soldiers and, daily, were transported to locations in the West Bank where we loaded equipment – barbed wire, army boots, large bombs in canisters and other items – into trucks. I recall working near Ramallah, at a Jordanian army camp, at which an officers' marquee was erected around Jewish gravestones, used to prevent the wind from blowing into the tent. I recall, too, walking around Ammunition Hill (*Giv'at Hatachmoshet*) – today a tourist site – and seeing the large boulders placed on the hill by the Jordanian army to prevent access by Israel's armoured vehicles. Walking around the hill was sobering. There were trenches with traces of blood on the walls, and barracks with personal effects, among them family photographs, strewn on the floor. On the side of the hill, I came across a plank from a tray of fruit embedded in the ground. On the plank, in both Hebrew and English, alongside a drawn symbol of *Tzahal* – Israel's armed forces – was inscribed "Here lie buried 17 brave Jordanian soldiers". Signed – *Tzahal*.

I served briefly as the platoon's quartermaster, before we were relocated to Shech Jerach, in the Sinai Desert, our duty being to collect the hundreds of abandoned Egyptian armed vehicles. I recall, on one occasion, being given a gun and being asked to accompany a group of Egyptian prisoners on the back of a truck to a nearby army base. My anxiety levels were exacerbated by the fact that I did not know how to use the weapon! I chatted briefly with one of the prisoners whose English was passable and who told me about his family back in Egypt. Those Egyptian prisoners who had earlier escaped, making their way to the Suez Canal in an effort to return home, and who had survived on water from the radiators of abandoned Egyptian armoured vehicles, quickly gave themselves up to the Israeli forces when they discovered that Egyptian soldiers returning to Egypt were being shot to prevent news of Egypt's defeat spreading.

Those were heady days. Israeli radio constantly played the music so popular at the time – "*Yerushalayim shel zahav*," "*Sharm El Sheikh*," "*Nasser mechakeh Le-Rabin*," "*Machar*," and everywhere one saw signs which read, "*Kol hakavod Le Tzahal*" ("All honour to the IDF"). But there was anguish too. Despite the euphoria – to visit the Western Wall once again, to feel secure, albeit for a moment – there was the inordinate anguish of those who had lost loved ones. I recall returning to Ammunition Hill and seeing a mother and child standing alongside a hastily-erected memorial on the hill and weeping for a lost husband and father. I also recall talking to the owners of a bombed-out hotel in East Jerusalem, where our female volunteers had been housed, and – while playing with their children – listening to their stories of tragedy and heartache. Does war ever have any winners?

Before returning to South Africa, I spent a month on a kibbutz in the centre of Israel, picking apples and studying Hebrew at an advanced level, and another in Jerusalem, staying in Kiryat Yovel and working for the Jerusalem Municipality's Department of Social Work, tutoring English, serving as a mentor to a wayward teenager and working with an autistic child in a dilapidated building, styled as a school, for children with disabilities.

Forty years have passed, and while the memories have inevitably faded with time, the period during which I served as a volunteer in the aftermath of the

Six Day War was indubitably one of the most transformative experiences of my life.

Michael Cohen is Vice-Principal of Bialik College, Melbourne.

Book Review

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE JEWISH DIASPORA: ORIGINS, EXPERIENCES, AND CULTURE

Saul Issroff



M. Avrum Ehrlich, editor. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008.

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<http://www.abcclio.com/products/overview.aspx?productid=109923>

For this review, at the outset I declare a conflict of interest. I coordinated the region of Africa and wrote a number of the entries. As the editor of a Southern African SIG website I was initially approached to write a small section on the Jews of Kenya. It became apparent that other areas of Africa were also required, and I became involved to a very

large degree (with nominal reward!). I have previously written for the Encyclopedia of Jewish Genealogy (Avotaynu, Inc, Bergenfeld, N.J., 2004), but never had any inkling of what was involved in a larger work of this nature and the sheer process of sourcing, writing, compiling, and the editing and copy-editing that occurs. The word count of my contributions was progressively cut down, my writing became much more concise and I learnt a lot about areas that I had never before considered!

M. Avrum Ehrlich, the Editor in Chief, is an Australian-born Cambridge graduate, who is a Professor of Jewish Thought, Texts, and Culture at the Centre for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies of the School of Philosophy and Sociology, Shandong University, Jinan, China. One may rightly ask, why?? From another source I gleaned that some years back the Central Committee governing the Communist Party in China decreed that Jewish Studies were important and set up departments in some universities. However, this has been produced by ABC-CLIO in California, who specialise in encyclopaedias

To quote from the editor's introduction: "It is my wish through this work to relay the almost surreal and fantastic journeys of the Jewish people winding through time and over distances and how, without their understanding, they became a beacon for so many experiences and a microcosm of so much to be understood. It is my hope that these articles and ideas serve as a core collection for those seeking insight into the dynamics of the Diaspora. It is my wish for this collection to serve as a yavneaic foundation for the future of Jewish studies and thought. I apologize to the reader and to the memory of such places for the many regions and communities in the past and present that were not mentioned in this work."

By and large the policy gave less space to well known and readily available Western and Eastern European Jewish communities than to regions in the Caucasus or Southeast Asia. Where the literature was easily available brief overviews and references were given, but more unusual subjects were covered in greater detail. "Scattered communities in East, Southeast, and Central Asia; India; Caucasus; Africa; Scandinavia; and Latin America, as well as obscure phenomena relating to the Jewish Diaspora, mixed Jewish identities, and enigmatic themes, have been more enthusiastically covered to illuminate the

rare and eclectic elements of exilic existence.” But prominent Jewish communities have also been covered thus ensuring some uniformity and consistency.

The encyclopaedia is in three volumes. Volume one covers Jewish life, especially the basic themes and phenomena, permitting readers to understand the complexity of the Jewish Diaspora. Volumes two and three cover many Jewish communities that have existed or still exist today, and give an important basic picture of a region’s Jewry. Lesser-known regions have more in depth coverage, often with previously unpublished material. Bibliographies are pertinent and concise.

A number of well-known genealogists have written sections. These include SallyAnn Sack, Jeff Malka on some Sephardic and African communities. R. George Anticoni and Moise Rahmani on the Jews of Belgian Congo, Jordan Auslander on Hungarian Jewry, Carol Castiel on Jews of Cape Verde. Historians include William Rubinstein, Dov Levin, Aubrey Newman, Jonathan Goldstein. Demographer Sergio Della-Pergola on the Demography of Modern Diaspora Jewry.

The opening essay is thought provoking, by Gabriel (Gabi) Sheffer, on *The Need and Usefulness of Diaspora Studies*.

Migration studies are well covered, and include areas like North Africa, Russian Jews to Germany, Iraqi Jews etc. *Population Transfer of the Jews of Thessaloniki* is written by Yitzchak Kerem. M. Avrum Ehrlich and Steve Hall contributed *A Chronology of Jewish Travellers and Explorers*.

Ehrlich contributed a number of sections on Hasidism, the Chabad (Lubavich) movement and modern Zionism and the relationship of the Diaspora to Israel. Some of the more esoteric articles are by Frank Heynick; *Jews, Diaspora, and Medicine*, and Freud, *Judaism, and the Emergence of Psychoanalysis*.

Gender and the Diaspora, and in particular Diaspora women are well covered. Examples are Judith R. Baskin on *The Jewish Diaspora and the Role of Women*, Ruth Lamdan on *Sephardi Women, Marriage, and Family: 16th–17th Centuries*, and Dieter J. Hecht on *Jewish Women in Central Europe: 19th–20th Centuries*.

Cultural topics such as music and literature, Sephardi and Ashkenazi, are covered throughout the ages. Due consideration is given to the various areas of Jewish religious belief throughout the ages, from Biblical, Talmudic and Hellenistic eras to the modern period.

Most of the topics are easily accessible to someone without any previous knowledge of the area, and I personally find I can pick up any of the volumes and read at random with ease, much of it being totally new to me.

I have minor criticisms of some of the maps and images, being of poor quality and limited relevance. These were apparently done by picture researchers, as contributors were not approached for visuals. But overall this does not detract from a very comprehensive and important work that brings together the many diverse strands of our vital, often tragic, Diaspora in ways that have never been approached previously.

The set is not cheap, especially with the recent fall in the value of the pound. I would recommend it for any library related to Jewish studies, but it could also be placed in any home, or given as a gift as most of the writing is so interesting and easy to read. An e-book edition is available, with the identical layout as the printed copy, but to me it just does not have the appeal as one cannot browse, put down and pick it up again.

South Africa's 800

The book, *South Africa's 800*, by Henry Katzew (the story of South African volunteers in Israel's war of birth), shows that 836 South Africans had participated. The editing team has successfully classified 799 of them, concerning their activities at the time, military units or Kibbutzim.

The following 33 names, with their 1948 home town or 1968 place of residence are still unclassified. Anyone who might have information concerning these persons' activities in 1948 are invited to contact of these emails:

doreen@sw.co.il or *lanesman@013.net*

Aftergood, Fred – Sderot Wingate, Haifa
Benatar, Samuel – Elizabethville, Congo
Bernstein, Elana – Berea, Johannesburg
Braudo, Muriel – Gwelo, Rhodesia
Brenner, Lily – Riviera, Johannesburg
Burman, Philip – Wynberg, Cape
Capelluto, Yacov – Elizabethville, Congo
Dawson, Edwin – Wakefield, Rhodesia
Durner, Alfred – Lancashire, UK
Herman, Robert Albert – Kroonstad, OFS
Herzfeld, Lazlo – Nairobi, Kenya
Hershowitz, Thelma – Berea, Johannesburg
Horwitch, Lydia – c/o Pioneer Press, Cape Town
Israel, Albert – Chilonga, Rhodesia
Israel, Itzhak – Wakefield, Rhodesia
Jackson, Joe – Doornfontein, Johannesburg
Jacobson, Monty – Yeoville, Johannesburg
Karanowitch, Baruch – Wandel Street, Cape Town
Katz, Joseph – Salisbury, Rhodesia
Kerbel, George – Sokolow Street, Tel Aviv
Matheson, Isaac – Berea, Johannesburg
Miller, Leslie – Hillbrow, Johannesburg
Potel, Joseph – Salisbury, Rhodesia
Rabinowitch, Percy Mark – Wakefield, Rhodesia
Sacks, Zvi – Observatory Ext. Johannesburg
Shelley, George Thomas – Que Que, Rhodesia
Stark, Gerald – Glenwood, Durban
Stern Maurice – P.O.Box 203, Tel Aviv
Van Harn, Ferdinand – HaCarmel, Haifa
Wallace, David – Sunnyside, Pretoria
Weigert, Hans – Melbourne, Australia
Weinberg, Arthur – P.O.Box 3924, Johannesburg
Wilkes, Bernard – Salisbury, Rhodesia

SURNAMES APPEARING IN THIS NEWSLETTER

Vol. 9, Issue 3 – March 2009

The numbers in brackets refer to the page numbers where the surname appears:

Abrahams (8), Abrams (9, 10), Aftergood (18), Anticoni (17), Appel (10, 12), Arnest (8), Aronsohn (10), Auslander (17), Baleson (2), Barak (10), Baron (8), Baskin (17), Beigel (10), Benatar (18), Benjaminson (8, 9), Bernstein (18), Black (8, 9), Blumberg (18), Boleg (10), Boley (10), Braudo (18), Brenner (18), Burman (18), Capelluto (18), Cahn (10), Castiel (17), Chaitowitz (11, 12), Cheifitz (18), Chesler (3), Cohan (8), Cohen (2, 3, 8, 14, 16), Corob (14), Davidson (8), Dawson (18), Della-Pergola (17), Durner (18), Ehrlich (16, 17), Engelberg (11), Feldman (11), Fisher (8, 9), Fogelman (11), Franco (11), Freud (15), Geisler (8), Gerson (11), Getz (2), Goldberg (2, 11, 13), Goldstein (11, 17), Golovin (11), Goodman (8, 11), Hall (17), Harris (2), Hart (2), Hecht (17), Heimann (11, 13), Hellig (13), Hendler (11), Herman (18), Herzberg (11, 12), Herzveld (18), Hershowitz (18), Heynick (17), Hirschorn (9, 10), Hirschson (11), Horwitch (18), Israel (11, 12, 18), Issroff (2, 3, 16, 18), Jacobs (9, 11), Jackson (18), Jacobson (18), Jaffe (9, 10), Josephson (11), Kaminitz (9), Kane (11), Karanowitch (18), Katz (4, 9, 11, 18), Katzew (2, 18), Kelson (9, 10), Kerbel (18), Kerem (17), Khaitovich (12), Ladin (11, 12), Lamdan (17), Lerer (2), Leveson (13), Leviant (14), Levin(e) (9, 17), Levy (9), Lewin (9), Malka (17), Marks (11), Matheson (18), Miller (18), Moss (11), Newman (17), Ogus (2, 18), Plen (2, 3), Potel (18), Rabinowitz (2, 3, 8, 18), Rahmani (17), Rapoport (9), Rosenberg (11, 13), Rosenthal (11), Rubin (11, 12), Rubinstein (17), Sack(s) (17, 18), Salomon (11), Samson (11), Segall (2, 3), Shanus (11, 12), Sheffer (17), Shelley (18), Sherman (13), Silver (9, 10), Singer (4, 11, 13), Sofer (11), Solomon (9 - 11), Stark (18), Stern (11, 18), Sternberg (11), Van Harn (18), Wallace (18), Weigert (18), Weinberg (18), Wilkes (18), Wolffe (9), Woolf (11), Wyner (9, 10), Zacks (11), Zartz (3, 4), Zeitsoff (11), Zevin (11), Ziegler (11)



A reminder of the IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy to be held in Philadelphia, August 2 – 7, 2009.

Conference web site:

www.philly2009.org/

Conference Program:

www.philly2009.org/program.cfm

Sessions of interest to South African researchers include:

Wednesday, August 3, 2:00 pm

A Personal Journey of Discovery: Reconnecting Past and Present
Henry G Blumberg

A fascinating step by step journey of discovery that started with a few faded photos and no one to answer questions. Using Power Point the presentation examines the methodical and exciting genealogical research that led to connecting the past with the present - the valuing of my heritage and established meaningful contact with extended family in Latvia, Israel, USA and Canada. My talk traces the migration of my family from 1796 in Grobina, Latvia, to New York and then South Africa and finally to Canada. Thus, genealogy is thus far more than just a numbers game.

Wednesday, August 5, 8:15 am

The Great Trek - Finding Hidden Yidn in South Africa
Paul Cheifitz

Using my own family history as a basis I will explore South African Jewish genealogical resources including material discovered in a variety of repositories across the country and the world. Beginning with the immigrant experience the talk will follow the hunt for source material used to document the lives of my relatives, which have often led to the discovery of new family and extraordinary tales. Thereafter I will make myself available to answer questions on South African Jewish genealogical research.

Wednesday, August 5, 9:45 am

Meeting of the Southern Africa Jewish Genealogy Special Interest Group (SA-SIG)
Roy Ogus and Saul Issroff

Annual group meeting of the SA-SIG.

There will additionally be numerous sessions of interest to Litvak researchers.

More information is available on the conference website or by e-mailing the conference at:

programs@philly2009.org

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