

KIMBERLEY EX-PAT NEWSLETTER #53

KIMBERLEY JEWISH YOUTH MIGRATION PATTERN

(Compiled by Leon Chonin – October 2022)



INTRODUCTION

Following my Newsletter #51 where I informed everyone of the new project, I had initiated to document the migration pattern of the former ex Kimberley Jewish residents, I thought I would share with you my preliminary findings and the current hurdles I am finding in collection of the data.

RESEARCH SCOPE

The intention was to limit the study to those born during the period between around 1940 to around 1970 to span one generation of 30 years. This also represented the golden period for the Kimberley Jewish community when the Jewish population reached its peak and where the community had the benefit of a full range of Jewish support structures.

The intention of this research is to document:

- The reasons for leaving Kimberley as well as the reasons for leaving South Africa

- Age when leaving Kimberley

- City of residence after leaving Kimberley and current city of residence

- Business, trade, or professional activity after leaving Kimberley and after leaving South Africa

- Alive or Deceased

METHODOLOGY

Using my memory, the resources of the internet, social media connections and the existing information in the Kehilalinks Kimberley website I prepared a draft version of the list of youth who resided in Kimberley. This list has been published by way of an attachment to newsletter #51 on the Face Book website of the Griqualand West Hebrew Congregation and circulated to all those ex-pats who had

provided their email addresses to encourage them to participate in gathering and vetting the data of the residents who had left Kimberley.

Regretfully the response has been poor hence much of the data is still missing and therefore while the results do confirm the national trend there is still vital information that has not been gathered.

Once again, I am therefore appealing to you all to please review the attached migration table version #7 and identify any data that you are able to provide for your own families or for friends that you may know. I am extremely disappointed in the Australian residents because they constitute the largest ex-Kimberley community but only a few have shared any information with me. I have engaged Marvin Cohen living in Melbourne to assist me and he too sent out emails to encourage those he had contact information to assist me in this important project I am trying to complete.

Perhaps many may consider this project as unimportant now but consider how vital it may be to future generations who would like to find out about their families who had emigrated from South Africa. There are so many Jewish genealogists like Eli Rabinowitz who wished they had more information about our ancestors who lived in European countries so that we could document it and provide an insight into how they lived and where they came from and where they emigrated.

RESPONSE STATISTICS

Population Sample	231
Response Levels Provided the following data:	
Place of residence after leaving	
Kimberley	64%
Place of residence after leaving SA	89%
Reasons for leaving	
Kimberley	42%
South Africa	20%
Business, Trade or Profession	45%

The response to the survey was poor because the best result was tracing the question to the current place of residence which approximated 84% of the population sample. The response to the question to the place of residence when leaving Kimberley dropped to 64%. The responses to the other questions were even lower which is disappointing and casts a shadow on the results but does not necessary invalidate the results.

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

Migration from Kimberley and South Africa	Exit Kimberley		Exit South Africa	
Geographic Analysis				
Johannesburg	59	42%	34	17%
Cape Town	65	46%	42	20%
Other Towns	14	10%	14	7%
Remained in SA	<u>138</u>	98%	<u>90</u>	44%
Israel	2	1%	20	10%

United Kingdom	1	1%	10	5%
United States	1	1%	31	15%
Australia	0	0%	37	18%
Canada	0	0%	14	7%
New Zealand	0	0%	1	0%
Africa	0	0%	2	1%
Emigrated	4	3%	115	56%
Total	142		205	



The population sample accounts for 231 individuals of which 18 represents schoolboys who were boarders at Kimberley schools. Hence the 213 individuals of Kimberley resident families would appear to be representative of an estimate of 89% of the total families living in Kimberley on the basis of two children per family of approximately 120 families. If the total were to include those still resident in Kimberley and hence not considered in the survey the total would increase to 218 representing roughly 90% of the Jewish youth during the period between 1940 – 1970.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN

The survey confirmed that the vast majority of ex-pat Kimberley youth have emigrated from South Africa revealing that 44% have remained showing that Johannesburg attracted 42% and Cape Town 46% of the former youth of the city but following emigration has fallen to 17% and 20% respectively. Regrettably the trend to go on Aliyah was only slightly greater than those selecting Canada as their country of preference. Australia was by far the most popular choice ahead of the United States but was slightly less than those

who had selected North America which included both the USA and Canada. The vast majority of those who have emigrated were professional people thus depleting South Africa of highly skilled talent that are desperately needed to ensure the continuing economic development of the country.

The total emigration reached 56% of the former Jewish residents of Kimberley. It would seem to correlate with the national statistical average as it is believed that a mere fifty thousand have remained in South Africa of a total Jewish population of approximately one hundred and twenty thousand.

It is perhaps tragic to note that nearly 24% of the youth are deceased which would seem to be rather excessive relative to overall mortality rates.

OCCUPATION

The business, trade and professional activities of the former Kimberley ex-pat community:

General Business	25	24%
Medical Services	25	24%
Finance & Accounting	12	11%
Academic Teaching	10	10%
Law	9	9%
Librarian	4	4%
Computer Technology	3	3%
Farming	4	4%
Trade	2	2%
Other	10	10%
	<u>104</u>	

Interesting that the business, trade and professional occupation of the former Kimberley residents is not at all dissimilar to the survey done of activities undertaken of the previous generation of Jewish residents. Both business and medical services shared equally in the most popular activity. Pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary academic teaching, finance and accounting services, and legal services all displayed an improvement from the previous generation shared at around 9% each. Farming, computer technology and librarian services accounted for about 3% each.

REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Reasons for Leaving	Exit Kimberley		Exit South Africa	
Education	63	64%	2	4%
Social & Personal Circumstances	21	21%	11	24%
Career or Business Prospects	11	11%	2	4%
Aliyah	2	2%	20	43%
Unstable political situation	0	0%	9	20%
Other	1	1%	2	4%
	<u>98</u>		<u>46</u>	

The reasons for the semi-migration exodus from Kimberley is easier to explain.

This survey verified that the predominant reason why the youth left Kimberley was to attend a university or college in the larger cities with a bigger Jewish community and well-established tertiary institutions. The statistics revealed that 64% of the of the ex-pat youth left to either attend tertiary institutions or to attend Jewish Day Schools in Johannesburg as boarders.

Approximately 21% of the ex-pats left because of social or personal circumstances that were predominantly either the death of the parent, to join their children who had moved to the larger centres or because the family relocated. Choosing to go on Aliyah only accounted for approximately 2% of the Kimberley ex-pat community. However many then chose at a later date to emigrate to Israel as the percentage then rose to approximately 10%.

The reasons for emigration from South Africa are far more difficult to determine because of the reluctance of the community to disclose their motivating factors. I would venture an opinion that the predominant motivation was the unstable political, economic, and social climate in the country. The exodus started with the Sharpeville uprising but continued at a steady flow culminating in the ANC take over of the government. The change in government only served to spread further anxiety amongst the Jewish population because of the ANC sympathetic approach towards the terrorist organizations bent on destroying the State of Israel. Their other domestic policies governing fiscal discipline, affirmative action, lack of police action against violent criminal behaviour and institutionalized corruption only served to create further insecurity for the Jewish community. Just as the European Jews encourage their children to seek a safe haven elsewhere the Jewish parents motivated their children to leave the country. Once all their children had left the parents who were now left all alone took up the challenge to join their children abroad to enjoy their remaining years with their children and grandchildren.

From those minority of ex pats who were prepared to share the reasons for emigration it seems to reveal that 20% emigrated because of an unstable political, economic or social environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere appreciation to those who have responded to my request for data gathering assistance but I once again appeal to everyone to take the time to vet the migration table and help me fill in the gaps or identify any missing individuals who would qualify for inclusion. I special word of appreciation to Beverly Solsky (nee Buirski) who has given such tremendous support in providing contact information for the Australian ex-pats. I intend to wait for another few weeks before I close the survey and prepare the final migration table with a final summary of my findings.

I extend to all the current and former members of the Kimberley Jewish community wherever you may be in the world a Chag Sameach over the current festive period and a Gmar Chatima Tova to you and all your families.

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