

# Kimberley Ex-Pats Newsletter # 48 20 March 22

Pre-Pesach Zoom, Purim in Kimberley

Community History On-Line (CHOL) Second International Conference

Memorial Road Synagogue 'Tour', Fundraising for Kimberley Shul

---

## Maybe it's time to get together again on Zoom?

Would you like to have a



### Pre-Pesach Kimberley Zoom, on Sunday 10 April at 5.00pm SA time.

I have a few people in mind to invite to talk to us – maybe about Ladies' Fashion shops in Kimberley or about preparations for – or memories of Pesach in Kimberley etc. If you would like to be a speaker or if there is a subject and speaker you would like to hear – please contact me and we can try to set this up.

Please say if you can join our Kimberley Zoom on Sunday 10 April at 5.00pm, South African time.

This is the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81104050877?pwd=YTIJTE13S2RUTC9oWEdXWVBncldWZz09>



---

## Purim in Kimberley:

The Kimberley congregation members and guests enjoyed a warm and meaningful Megillah reading for Purim in the Kimberley Shul. Present were Chairman Barney Horwitz and his wife Maud, President David Allen and his wife Shirley, Trevor Datnow with his family and Barry Katz and partner. There were also at several non-Jewish guests.



Barney says: 'This year the struggle between good and evil had so much more relevance and resonated with our interfaith guests, all of whom learnt about Haman and Mordechai for the first time. The after-party was great and the Hamantaschen lasted no more than three minutes. They were lovingly made by a friend of my wife under her watchful eye. It really is amazing that far flung Kimberley can still produce the real thing.' Barry Katz, who is shortly leaving Kimberley for Cape Town says: 'We each read a portion and ironically enough, there were just about four sentences left to be read after each person had read their portion. Barney does a sterling job keeping the Shul going'.

See more pictures here on the [Kimberley Shul Facebook](#)

---



## Community History On-Line (CHOL) – a new Conference on Zoom

**Wednesdays: 30 March, 6 and 13 April**

Starting on Wednesday 30 March at 2.00pm South African time there will be three, weekly sessions of about 90 minutes each, on various aspects of preserving the footprint of the South African Jewish communities online. (The other two sessions are Wednesdays 6 and 13 April)

Speakers will be talking about and showing their fascinating work on **'Documenting the Dorpies'**; **'South African Jews in medical practice'**; looking through **film and audio archives**; and having a tour of **mining**

**camps of very early Johannesburg.**

**Gwynne Robins** (née Schrire) of Cape Town (who lived in Kimberley from 1949 – 1955 and had her Barmitzvah there – a historic first) will talk about the pros and cons of publishing online (of which she has done both online and hard copy). **Rabbi Silberhaft** – everyone's favourite travelling Rabbi to small communities, will talk about how online helps him. **Bramie Lenhoff** in Delaware will talk about the website he made of the dorpie where he grew up – Uppington.

**Roy Ogus** in California will talk about resources of the South African Special Interest Group. (This middle session on **Wednesday 6 April starts at 8.00pm** South African time to accommodate those in Delaware and California)

I myself will be speaking, not about Kimberley this time – but on the virtual online **diamond jubilee reunion of the Wits Medical class of 1960**. You can see the Newsletters and biographies of these amazing people (including both my brother Theo and my husband Ronnie) who have made their mark as innovators, professors, deans, and medical practitioners in South Africa, the UK, USA, Canada and in Israel.

[https://wits\\_medical\\_alumni\\_1960.mailchimpsites.com/](https://wits_medical_alumni_1960.mailchimpsites.com/)

See the full programme including how to start an online presence for your family or town and register for the 'CHOL-IC' click this link: [Register for CHOL sessions](#)

To be sure to hear updates about the CHOL-IC (ie CHOL-International Conference) and post your queries and suggestions, please join the **CHOL email discussion list** as below:

To join send an email to [listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk). Leave the subject line BLANK and in the Message say: SUBSCRIBE CHOL followed by your First name and your Last name only (please delete any automatic signatures). (If you have any queries or difficulties send an email to [geraldine.auerbach@gmail.com](mailto:geraldine.auerbach@gmail.com) and I can help you subscribe.

To see the sessions from the previous CHOL-IC go to the South African Jewish Museum videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SAJewishMuseum/videos>

~~~~~

## Responses our 'Shul Tour'

Thank you to those who sent comments, new pictures, queries and requests.

Many thanks again to the wonderful photographers who have taken amazing pictures of the synagogue from all angles and whose whole albums of photos are on the website here:

[Shawn Benjamin](#) [David Jawno](#) [Marvin Cohen](#) [Alon Berman](#) [Jono David](#)

(we will soon be adding a Gallery from Colin Bloch)

Having all those wonderful pictures already on our website – it seemed a good idea to use them in this way. We are also grateful to Barney for permission to use the picture of his daughter Ida under the chupa in the shul in September 2019 in the latest version - attached. Barney says: 'It was the most notable event in the shul in 30 years!'

To see the history and tour of the Memorial Road Synagogue, please go to the 'Synagogue' pages of the website <https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/kimberley/Synagogues.html>



**Daphne Gillis (née Toubé) in Cape Town said:**

What a wonderful record of 'our' Shul. It holds so many memories of services attended, weddings and barmitzvahs celebrated, attending cheder, and just generally being part of our lives.

**Sarah Goodman (née Cohen) said:**

This really took me down memory lane. Both my brother, Lennie (Webby) Cohen, and my sister, Fay Cohen who married Nathan Cohen of the Savoy Hotel, have passed away. My nephews and nieces are spread all over the world, but we keep in touch with them. Thank you for doing this, it is very much appreciated.

**Trevor Toubé said:**

A lovely set of photos, Geraldine. And an interesting introduction to the history of the shul. I wonder if you have any information about what the set of buildings above the Ark are supposed to be. As you will recall, there is an almost identical structure above the Ark in the New West End Synagogue in London. I am often asked by visitors what they represent. When I was a kid, I was told they were 'The Temple'. but we know neither the 1st nor the 2nd Temple were circular. So, what are they?!! (Trevor is going to do some research to find out)

**Alma Steinberg says:**

I found your article on the Kimberley Shul very interesting and the photos are magnificent. Even as a child I realized that the shul was very special. I remember the cheder rooms, where I used to attend classes regularly.

### David Levinsohn (b1935) says

Looking at this reminds me of the times we went to shul and had no idea how unique it was. Whether it was before or after cheder we would either play soccer or Kenneky in the back area until Rev Chaim Goldberg would come out and scold us and tell us to get inside. I remember some of the group involved. Wonder how many of us are still around. They included the current President, David Allen, Ellie Shles. Alan Dave, Norman Horwitz, Max Kaplan, Herbert Hendler and Ivor Haberfeld (when his dad Gus would not be watching. ) We were all too dumb to realize the beauty and importance of this place of worship.

### Brian Cohen wrote:

Thank you for time and detailed work on this and all the other aspects you have covered.

### Roy Ogus (who edits the South African special interest group journal said:

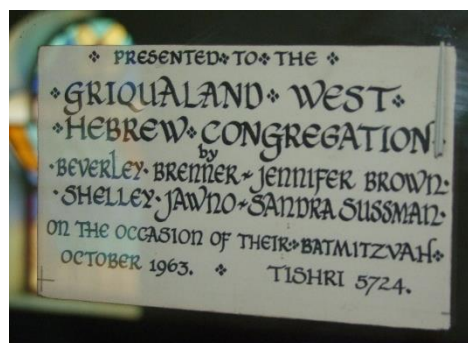
A beautiful article! and the pictures are outstanding! Thanks for sharing. (Roy has invited me to submit this 'tour' for the South African Special-Interest Group of Jewish Genealogy Journal).

### Ann Bremner wrote:

Many thanks for this. Oh my dear, a great delight. I have spent the most wonderful hour, looking at this building a the most magnificent Synagogue with bits of a castle added. Oh yes, I know it so well, as we passed every day, from Beit House to Boys High for our daily swim instructions. And went to musical recitals, by Holocaust Survivors. A very, very rich beautiful history indeed.

### Shelley Catzel (née Jawno) wrote:

When we had our Batmitzvah we donated a mirror to the upstairs of the ladies' foyer with our names engraved on it. My second cousin is David Jawno took some of the photos and he said it is still there. I wonder if the photo can be included in the tour of the synagogue. I still have my Batmitzvah invitation with the girls' names on it. It has always left me with fond memories, but I have no photos. I also have the Batmitzvah photo taken with Rabbi Werner.



### Colin Bloch says:

Thank you for this which, as an architect, is one of my favourite buildings. I may be wrong, but I understood that the Memorial Candelabra was given by a family that had lost sons in WWI. We have made further enquiries and have been told they were all related but were not siblings. Ida has told us all the names of those memorialised, which are:

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Denis H. Krauss – North Staffordshire Regiment, died of wounds on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1917
2. Lieutenant Herman Feinhols – Cape Corps, died 8<sup>th</sup> October 1918
3. Lieutenant William Joffe D.S.O. – Yorkshire Light Infantry attached to the RAF, killed in 1918
4. Private Isaac Michael Kovenski – 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment S.A.I., killed 8<sup>th</sup> October 1918
5. Private Albert Weinberg – S.A.M.C. killed at Le Cateau 17<sup>th</sup> October 1917
6. 2/15 D. Co. Private Michael Joffe – London Regiment, killed 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917
7. 1908/A Cor. L. Lipschitz – S.A.M.C. died 9<sup>th</sup> October 1918
8. Captain Abraham Liebson MO – R.A.M.C. killed 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1918
9. Lieutenant Robert Dreyfus – Croix de guerre, Le Croix de Chevaliende, killed 16<sup>th</sup> October 1915

I do not recognise any of these names in relation to Kimberley families (Except perhaps Weinberg). Does anybody else? And is there anybody who knows anything more about this item - or where it was made why and when it was donated.

For instance, built into the very fabric of the foyer of the synagogue, there is the huge memorial tablet to 114 servicemen who fell while fighting for the British in the Boer War. None of them had any relationship to Kimberley. My research shows that such plaques (similar ones were placed at Central Synagogue and other places in England, were to show to the public the willingness of Jews to take up arms and make the ultimate sacrifice for King and Country. This Boer War plaque was donated to the synagogue by Sydney Mendelssohn, diamond magnate son of the second minster – Meyer Mendelssohn, but the memorial itself has nothing to do with Kimberley. Maybe this WWI memorial is something like that?

Barney says: 'All we know about the MEMORIAL CANDELABRA (pictured right by Barry Katz) is on the Facebook page. It was presented by the families of the deceased. 'The fact that it has 9 candles on it enables us at Yom HaShoah to light 6 candles for the Jewish victims, one for the 5 million forgotten non-Jews who also perished in the Shoah including the Roma, one for those murdered for their sexual orientation and political beliefs and one for the servicemen and women on the



allied side who died in the war. 'Each year we invite other religious leaders to light these extra 3 candles which enables us to perpetuate a consciousness of the worst genocide in History far wider than just in our own community. I frankly find it appalling that it is only the Jewish Community that remembers its fallen in the genocide, and that the wider non-Jewish community has long since forgotten its fallen.' Ida has posted pictures of the inscriptions for each soldier on the [Kimberley Shul Facebook page](#).

**Arnold Bayer writes:**

I have some information for you with regards to the memorial for the 9 soldiers killed in the 1914 - 1918 war.

Michael Kovenski was a half brother to my mother Helen Kovensky [ I don't know when they changed the spelling of their name ] he was a pupil at CBC and ran away from school to join the army. When his father discovered this, he traced him and the commander of the camp was informed that Michael was under-age to be in the army Michael was sent back to College, only for him to run away again and joined the army under a false name and the family were unable to trace him. [ I was trying to think of the name he used to join up, but couldn't remember, but it has just come back to me I'm sure it was Isaacs.] He was shipped to Europe and was wounded and was in hospital in England. He recovered and stayed with an uncle and aunt in Birmingham. After being declared fit again, he returned to the front.

Unfortunately, he was killed one month before armistice.

To the best of my knowledge the memorial was donated by the families of the fallen soldiers who were not connected to each other except for their common grief.

Best regards.

Arnold Bayer.

**Dennis Hammer wrote:**

For a few years I acted as a "junior" Gabbai....assisting with aliyot, etc. By the way, for my barmitzvah on 14th October 1961, my Mom had a Barmitzvah cake made in the shape of the Shul. I have a photo somewhere.....just need to find it!! Yes, please Dennis – it would be great to see it.

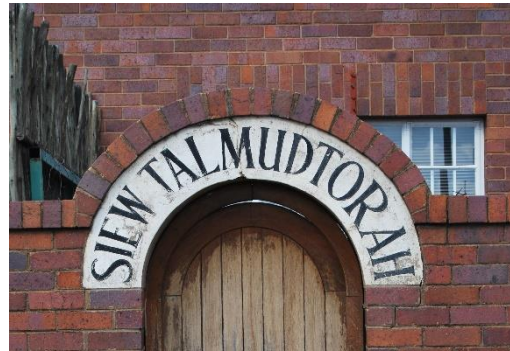
**Raymond Ellis** (below) recalls he too was regular attender at shul. He was at CBC and had to attend Synagogue - or present himself for Cadet parade! Because of his constant attendance, he too was appointed the Junior Gabbai at the shul services. He had the job of calling up the members for honours



such as reading from the Torah and dressing the scrolls. He was given an award for this position. It was called the Lionel and Lily Jawno Cup for Youth Gabbai. Did anyone else other than Dennis and Raymond have this honour, I wonder?

### Bar and Bat Mitzvah Pictures

Above we see Raymond with his parents and sisters at his bar mitzvah which took place in the Kimberley shul in 1962. We have a special section earmarked for Bar- and Bat Mitzvahs in the Kimberley community. We have a few lovely Bat Mitzvah pictures. As yet this is the only Bar Mitzvah picture I have been sent. **Come on boys!!!** [Bar and Bat Mitzvahs](#)



Apparently, a Mrs Helena Siew gave the money for the classroom and the block where we all went to Cheder. The block was called the 'Siew Talmud Torah' (Did you know that? – I did not). Can anyone shed any light on who Mrs Siew was, I wonder?

### Fundraising Certificate

In going through my father's papers, I came across this 'share certificate' showing that Dr Noel Kretzmar had bought two 'theoretical' shares, no 24 and 25 in the property of the Griqualand West Hebrew Congregation. It shows the silver model of the shul and also the interior and exterior. I am not sure of the year of this issue (a portion of Lot No. 909). What I do know, is that when Noel was President of the Shul from 1944-1946. He conceived of and established a building fund for the preservation of the building – which I believe is still standing the community in good stead.



It seems that this is still operational. In a picture taken in the synagogue foyer by Alon Berman in 2010, it says: Support our Fundraiser!!! Buy a Sq. Meter Share of our Shul, for R150' (and an extra R10 if you want it in a gold frame). It asks locals to contact any committee member, and visitors passing through to liaise with 'our Minister' – or send a cheque.



This is perhaps an appropriate moment to suggest that those who want to continue to preserve the fabric of the building might like to make a donation to the Griqualand West Hebrew Congregation. Just to remind you – the bank account to transfer to is:

**Accountholder:** G.W. Hebrew Congregation  
**Bank:** Standard Bank  
**Branch:** Kimberley  
**Branch Code:** 050002  
**Account Number:** 040054446  
**Swift Code:** SBZAZAJJ  
**Reference:** Donation to the GWHC

---

**Kimberley Ex-Pats Newsletter #48      20 March 22**  
Pre-Pesach Zoom, Purim in Kimberley  
Community History On-Line (CHOL) Second International Conference  
Memorial Road Synagogue 'Tour'  
Fundraising  
**Compiled by Geraldine Auerbach MBE, London March 2022**