

KIMBERLEY JEWISH YOUTH MIGRATION PATTERN

(Researched and written by Leon Chonin – November 2022)

INTRODUCTION

It is common knowledge that many of the youth left Kimberley for the larger Jewish communities in Cape Town and Johannesburg, but there were those who emigrated to the predominantly English-speaking countries of North America, England, Australia, and also those who embarked on Aliyah to Israel.

It has also been established that the Kimberley Jewish population peaked around the nineteen sixties to the nineteen seventies when the youth moved to the larger South African cities to either continue their education at universities or to find better job opportunities. However, this trend was not only restricted to the youth but also to families who had lost their bread winners because the surviving spouse decided that for economic and social reasons the bigger centres offered better opportunities for their families. The Eberlin, Edelman, Garsh and Lusman families left Kimberley soon after their fathers passed away preferring to start again in either Johannesburg or Cape Town.

Because Kimberley lacked tertiary educational institutions the youth who wished to continue their studies had no choice but to move to the larger cities with well established colleges and universities. While the University of South Africa offered correspondence courses it could only attract students with a high degree of discipline who could motivate themselves to focus on their studies. The preference was for students to attend in person lectures with the ability to have personal contact with their lecturers.

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 scope of this research was limited to documenting:

- 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

The writer using his memory, personal email contact, the resources of the internet, social media connections and the existing information in the Kehilalinks Kimberley website prepared a draft version of the list of youth who resided in Kimberley. This list was then published by way of a newsletter 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.

RESPONSE TO FIRST DRAFT OF THE MIGATION TABLE

The ex-pat response to the draft migration table was pathetic as a mere 33 former Kimberley residents responded with their contribution of errors and omissions. This represents a 13% success rate in validating the dataset. Many fields were not completed because data could not be sourced hence the results of the study could only be interpreted from very low sample population. The following is a summary of the survey responses:

Population Sample	260
Response Levels Provided the following data:	
Place of residence after leaving Kimberley	68%
Place of residence after leaving SA	96%
Reasons for leaving	
Kimberley	48%
South Africa	23%
Business, Trade or Profession	48%

The only field that provides reliable verifiable results is the place of residence after leaving South Africa with a 96% accuracy rate through response levels, web online access to data, or third-party confirmations. While the other datasets response levels were low and casts a shadow over the interpretation of the results, they don't necessary negate the statistical analysis.

The population sample including data that had to be excluded because of lack of vital data totaled 260 which based on a Kimberley family population of roughly 120 represents 72% of the target population on the assumption of an average of 3 children per family or at best 100% assuming an average of 2 children per family.

The results therefore are reflective of substantively most of the Jewish youth of Kimberley born between 1940 to 1970.

Because I could not trace any supporting information, nor would anyone provide the essential data such as parents and current city and country of residence the following individuals were removed from the migration table:

Michael Brauer Norman Friedman Anita Kaplan

GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The table has documented 257 individuals of which 18 represents schoolboys who were boarders at Kimberley schools. Hence the 239 individuals of Kimberley resident families are listed on the attached [Migration Table](#).

	Exit Kimberley		Exit South Africa	
Geographic Analysis				
Johannesburg	77	43%	50	20%
Cape Town	77	43%	46	18%
Other Towns	18	10%	21	8%
Remained in SA	<u>172</u>	96%	<u>117</u>	47%
Israel	2	1%	20	8%
United Kingdom	2	1%	13	5%
United States	3	2%	38	15%
Australia	0	0%	43	17%
Canada	0	0%	16	6%
New Zealand	0	0%	1	0%
Africa	0	0%	2	1%
Emigrated	<u>7</u>	4%	<u>133</u>	53%
Total	<u>179</u>		<u>250</u>	
Unknown	0	0%	7	3%
Final Total	<u>179</u>		<u>257</u>	

The low response level and the difficulty in establishing the initial city of residence after leaving Kimberley reflected in the discrepancy between the exit from Kimberley and the emigration from South Africa.

GEOGRAPHIC PATTERN

The results confirmed that the vast majority of the youth left Kimberley for the larger metropolitan areas of Johannesburg and Cape Town both cities attracting 43% of the Jewish population sample who responded to the question of the city of choice after leaving Kimberley.

The survey confirmed that the vast majority of ex-pat Kimberley youth have emigrated from South Africa revealing that 47% have remained showing that Johannesburg retained 20% and Cape Town 18% of the former youth of the city. Regrettably the trend to go on Aliyah was 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 well below 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 53% 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 at its peak.

It is perhaps tragic to note that nearly 23% of the youth are deceased which would seem to be rather tragic and excessive relative to overall mortality rates.



OCCUPATION

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

General Business	34	27%
Medical Services	33	26%
Finance & Accounting	14	11%
Academic Teaching	10	8%
Law	11	9%
Librarian	4	3%
Computer Technology	3	2%
Farming	5	4%
Trade	2	2%
Other	10	8%
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	126	

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 almost equally in the most popular activity at 26% of the former Kimberley ex-pats. Finance and accounting represented 11% of the surveyed sample reflecting its popularity amongst Jewish youth. Pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary academic teaching; and legal services displayed an improvement from the previous generation shared at around 8% each. Farming, computer technology and librarian services accounted for an average of 3%.

REASONS FOR MIGRATION

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 63% of the of the ex-pat youth left to either attend tertiary institutions or to attend Jewish Day Schools in Johannesburg as boarders.

Approximately 24% 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 8%.

The reasons for emigration from South Africa are far more difficult is 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 has been established that 18% who provided a response indicated that the unstable political, economic, or social environment in the country was their motivation for emigration.

	Exit Kimberley		Exit South Africa	
Reasons for Leaving				
Education	78	63%	3	5%
Social & Personal Circumstances	30	24%	20	33%
Career or Business Prospects	13	10%	4	7%
Aliyah	2	2%	20	33%
Unstable political climate	0	0%	11	18%
Other	1	1%	3	5%
	<u>124</u>		<u>61</u>	

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Without their help errors and omissions would not have been revealed and an inaccurate table would have been published. I also wish to thank Marvin Cohen in Australia and Geraldine Auerbach in the UK for their participation in this project.

If anyone identifies any further errors or omissions kindly contact me by email as periodic changes will be recorded once sufficient changes warrant the correction of the Migration Table and related statistics.

WEBSITE LINKS NOTE

Links could not be provided to many of the names listed on the migration table that have individual or family biographies due to space constraints but can be found in the Family menu page.