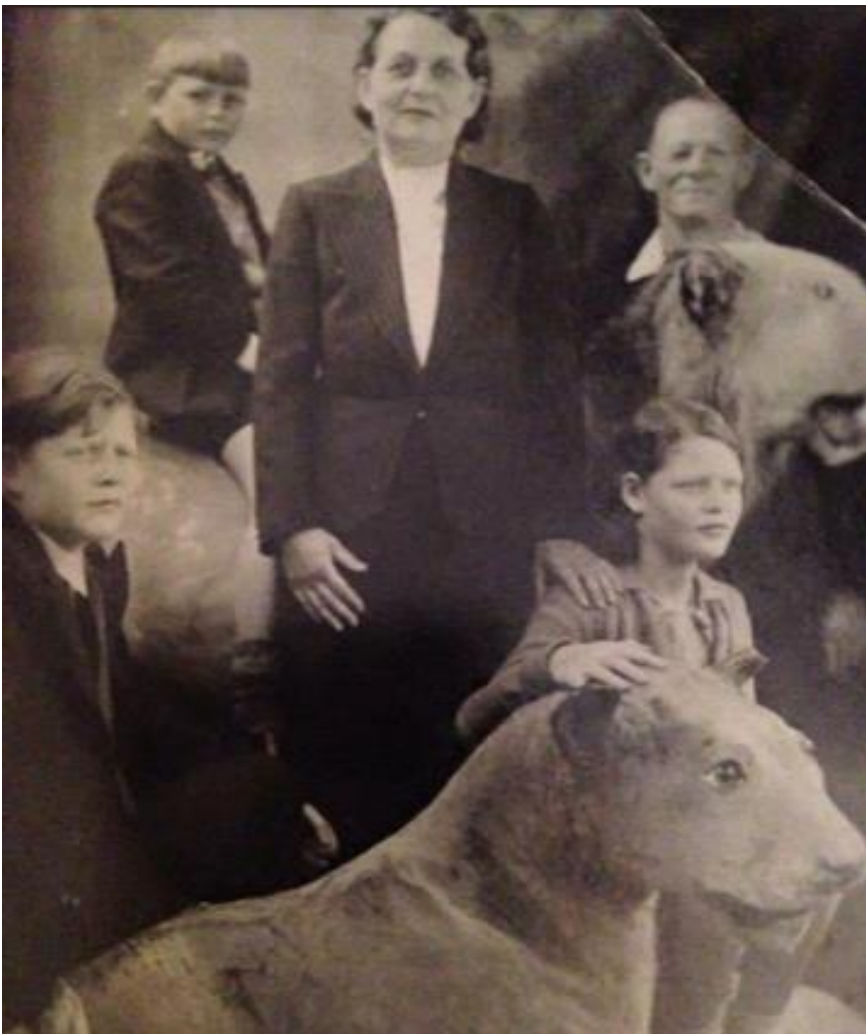


Basil Louis Benjamin



Basil Louis Benjamin was born in Kimberley to Hinda and Solomon Benjamin who came to Kimberley from Telz in Lithuania in the 1920s. He had an older sister Esther b. 1927 in Lithuania and younger brother Philip born in Kimberley.

Sandra Meltz Basil's daughter says: Got to love this classic family picture with the stuffed lions in the cabin on Muizenberg beach. (We must all have one of these!)



Basil my dad is front left his sister Esther in front right. Brother Phillip is on the lion and mum Hinda (known as Hilda) and father Solomon Benjamin standing proudly by. Hinda Benjamin (nee Garb) was born in Gorzd, Lithuania. She, died in 1984, and is buried in Kimberley,

Solomon started **Benjamin Brothers**, wholesalers and retail store in fabrics in Main Road with his brother Japie Benjamin. It lasted two generations. Solomon died many years before Hinda, in 11/04/1956, and is buried in Kimberley.

Solomon's younger brother Yechiel Benjamin came to

Kimberley in the early 1930's. He joined Solomon and Japie in the Benjamin Bros. Yechiel married Freda Rosenstein in 1937, who was well versed in accounting and business admin and had her own Commercial College. After a few years Yechiel and Freda started their own wholesale business and E Benjamin & Co, Wholesale Softgoods Merchants was born. In 1955, aged 17, their son Bernard joined them in the business, and it was then renamed E. Benjamin & Son. That also survived two generations until 1981 when Bernard left for Cape Town.

Esther trained as a nurse at the Johannesburg General Hospital. She married Electrical and Mechanical Engineer Mr **Strano** of Johannesburg in 1954. They settled in Kimberley until 1962, when they left for Cape Town for better Jewish education opportunities for their children. Today in 2020 they live in Jerusalem. See their picture on [Strano \(nee Benjamin\), Esther](#)



Sandra thinks this is in Kimberley. Her father Basil is on the left and his brother Philip Benjamin in the middle standing by their very smart American car.



Here my father in the back row surrounded by a bevy - and Esther his sister

World War II



Sandra writes: 'My father Basil Benjamin (seen on the left in this picture) was in the Natal Caberneers. He was at Cedar College as the war broke out and ran away to join the army. He was sent 'up North' where he fought. Then after that he was shipped off to Italy where he seems to have walked all the way from the bottom of the toe of Italy – to the top of the boot (or visa versa?). He never wanted to walk again after that!

We never learnt much from him about the war only knew that not many of his friends came back and that I don't think he ever got over the time he spent in the war. I believe he was a sniper. There was a story told that he let some of his men play cards late one evening and they were bombed. I don't think he ever forgave himself.

I think a man called Trevor Sassin came back with him. It's a name I remember. I know he knew the famous Sailor Malan very well. But unfortunately, I don't know any other information, maybe some of your other members can shed some light.

My father never really wanted to talk about the war and unfortunately, we never pushed him, so will never really know what happened to him



Basil Louis Benjamin

Compiled and edited by Geraldine Auerbach MBE from information and pictures sent by his daughter Sandra Meltz, Johannesburg? South Africa, with some added information by his sister Esther Strabo and nephew Bernard Benjamin

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