

Sam and Edith Ellis and family

Compiled by Leon Chonin (Toronto) from stories and photos from their son, Raymond Ellis (Israel)
Edited by Geraldine Auerbach MBE London
April 2021



Ellis Origins in Portugal and England

Solomon Ellis, known as Sam, (Hebrew name Shlomo) was born in 1909. He married Edith (Hebrew name Edit) (nee Barkhan) from Johannesburg in 1947. Sam was 38 years old, and Edith 24.

Edith's father was born in Belarus. Edith Barkhan had had a difficult childhood raised together with her sister and one brother at the Arcadia Jewish Orphanage in Johannesburg. Another brother apparently wasn't brought up in the orphanage. His name was Percy Barkhan. Son Raymond remembers: 'When I lived in London, I used to visit Percy and his wife Ruth in Seven Oaks Kent. They were both in the Medical profession.

Sam's father, Isidore born in London in 1880, (see his birth certificate below) had emigrated from

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON

Application Number 8354 H

REGISTRATION DISTRICT St Giles South in the County of Middlesex

1880 Birth in the Sub-district of St Giles South

No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
233	<u>Eighteenth June 1880</u> <u>St Giles South</u>	<u>Isidore</u>	<u>Boy</u>	<u>Samuel Ellis</u>	<u>Julia Ellis</u>	<u>Isidore Ellis</u>	<u>Isidore Ellis</u>	<u>18th June 1880</u>	<u>Isidore Ellis</u>	<u>Isidore Ellis</u>

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 1st day of October 19 75

This certificate is issued in pursuance of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953. Section 34 provides that any certified copy of an entry purporting to be sealed or stamped with the seal of the General Register Office shall be received as evidence of the birth or death to which it relates without any further or other proof of the entry, and no certified copy purporting to have been given in the said Office shall be of any force or effect unless it is sealed or stamped as aforesaid.

CAUTION:— Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution.

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London with his parents Samuel and Julia Ellis. They came to live in Kimberley. Raymond does not remember what they did there. Isidore died in 1935 and was buried in the old Kimberley cemetery.

Sam's mother Bessie had also emigrated from England with her father Morris Sloman (previously Solomon). Raymond says: 'Morris Sloman's family was descended from the Toledano and Mendoza lineage and their family history has been traced back to the expulsion of Jews from Portugal. The Toledano side come from Morocco and Gibraltar. Daniel Mendoza was crowned British Boxing champion four times and is even mentioned at the Wingate Institute (Israel) as a legendary Jewish boxer. My son Ronen was very happy to hear that, because he himself was crowned Israeli champion of mountain biking four times. He is now a professional coach at the Wingate Institute.

'The roots of all our families are extremely interesting. The person doing the research in the family has discovered that my grandmother's grandmother on my father's side was part of the British Royal family and she was disowned by the royal family for converting to Judaism. She was married to Joshua Toledano in the Bevis Marks (Spanish & Portuguese) Shul in London. I know the Shul well. It was built about 300 years ago. There is a sister Shul, just like it in Amsterdam.

Sam and Edith family life in Kimberley

Sam and Edith had three children, Raymond (Reuven Yitschak) born 1949, Carol Arlene (Kayla Elka) born 1952, Marilyn Dawn (Miriam Dina) born 1954.



Raymond says:

'I don't have many pictures of life in Kimberley – but here is my father and a car with Kimberley numberplate CC2723. (I don't know who the lady is.)'

Sam Ellis, was educated at Christian Brothers College (CBC). Thereafter he worked in the financial section of the Goods Division of

the South African Railways Northern Cape Division for 27 years. He also worked part-time in the financial division of Tattersalls. At 60, probably when he retired, he became an assistant manager in the mortgage department of the Permanent Building Society. He took Raymond to see a renamed street with a shining new sign 'Ellis Street' in Kimberley – named for the family. It is between Anderson Road and Floor Street in the West End. Raymond does not know the details surrounding this accolade.

Sam enlisted in the army during the Second World War and was also an active member of the Hebrew Order of David

Edith Ellis managed a clothing store before becoming a full-time mother and home provider, but she remained active in community work as she helped in running a soup kitchen for the poor. Raymond says he worked there too and helped dish out the soup and prepare the soup which consisted of meat and vegetables. He felt that that too had been a good education for him. Edith also worked at one stage for St. Johns Ambulance. Raymond remembers a book at home that he was very interested in. He said, 'My mother once took me to see an open-heart operation on a big screen in a hall. There were many people there including medical people. Some people fainted but I found it fascinating. My mother took me because my father didn't want to see it.

Raymond's Childhood Memories



'A funny thing I remember, is us as children going to the Greener or Grinne Shul on Simchat Torah. The main attraction for us was receiving a Cadbury's chocolate. Another thing I remember is going with my father to the butcher when it opened at five in the morning to get the best cuts.

My father made biltong with game meat and it was dried in the pantry. He also took me to the vegetable market early in the morning and he always bought, or more correctly bartered for the vegetables. My father prepared Mr Govenders accounting records. We had a lot of fruit trees in our back yard'.

In Kimberley, the Ellis family lived in Belgrave Road. Raymond recalls the walk to the synagogue on Shabbat up to Pan Road then crossing the road, the trek up the hill in Memorial Road. He

remembers the Selmann family and the family of Louis, Gertie, Mervyn, and Hilton Toubé living in close proximity.

Raymond, like his father, was educated at CBC, the only private school in Kimberley. Several Jewish families sent their sons there, but Raymond says he was the only Jewish boy in his class throughout his schooling. Raymond's sister Marilyn attended Kimberley Girls High School but completed her schooling at Barnato Park in Johannesburg, while his other sister Carol attended the Northern Cape Technical College.

Although Raymond attended a Catholic faith school, he regularly participated in Shabbat shul services because the CBC Brothers required that he be at shul on Saturdays otherwise he would have to be at cadet parade.

Raymond recollects that the Brothers would regularly contact Rabbi Werner to ensure that he had been in shul.

Right: Raymond (centre, with glasses) in his standard 6 class at CBC with teacher Maggie Miller – who was murdered in Zimbabwe several years ago.

He also recalls that he because of his regular attendance at shul he 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 given an award for this position. It was called the ***Lionel and Lily***

Jawno Cup for Youth Gabbai.



Below we see Raymond with his parents and sisters at his bar mitzvah which took place in the Kimberley shul in 1962. Below that there is a picture that many families may have) of a family holiday in Muizenberg.



Raymond said: 'Funny, I never thought about Kimberley until a family member in USA decided to investigate our ancestors. I then went online to find things about the family history in Kimberley. And because of that I found you folks – Eli, Leon and Geraldine who are managing a very interesting site. And on the site I was surprised to find that I am in a photo that Beverley Buirski posted. (see below) I hadn't seen the photo before. I am second row from the back on the left just behind Rabbi Werner. And then Leon Chonin says he was my Habonim Madrich and I don't remember him and just remember his name. Small world'. These were my Kimberley compatriots:



Back row 14 people left to right: David Goldberg, Jeffrey Geller, Basil Hummel (KHS boarder from Upington) Jack Klein, Roger David, Dennis Hammer, Colin Kanushefsky, Bernard Werner, Michael Lusman, Louis Awerbuck, David Lenhoff (KHS Boarder from Upington) Ronnie Shapiro, Steven Kurland (KHS boarder from Upington) Leslie Brenner

2nd row from back 11: **Raymond Ellis**, Shelley Jawno, Cheryl Brown, Barbara Tuch, Lynette Buirski, Jeffrey Sussman, Philip Kretzmar, Beverly Buirski, Jennifer Brown, Shelley Hotz, Brian Levinsohn

3rd row from back: 10: Rabbi Werner, Marjory Tuch, Rosemary Shapiro, Barbara Klein, Malka Werner, Natalie Mehl, Sandra Sussman, Beverley Brenner, Sharon Mehl, Mrs Leah Werner

4th row from back 9: Lesley Talmud, Robin Apter, Hilton Toubé, Jeffrey Selman, Jeff Katz (drapery) Sydney Sacks, Seville Chonin, #, Colin Frank

Front row 8: Franklyn Dubowitz, Brian Dubowitz, Selwyn Kanushefsky, David Klein, Brian Jawno, Jules Lusman, Neil Odes, Jonty Sandler

Leon, as Rosh Madrich in Kimberley, very clearly remembers Raymond as an active member of Habonim. He was a reserved and very well-mannered young boy. He was also one of the few Kimberley Habonim members who attended the Onrust annual camps near Cape Town.

Teenage years

As a teenager, Raymond says, 'On Saturdays I also worked at Tattersalls as an assistant cashier. I worked with the Cashier who was the father of my best friend at CBC. The pay was so good that I was very happy to be there. It enabled me to have freedom to buy things like golf clubs and bikes. I used to cycle to the golf course with my golf bag and clubs tied to my bike. Tough riding but great exercise.

On Wednesdays I cycled to the airport after school to work at the weather bureau where I learnt to make weather reports by reading all the instruments, learning the cloud formations and interpreting the pilots reports of weather conditions nearing Kimberley'.

After matriculating Raymond was immediately drafted into the South African Defence Force (SADF) for nine month's compulsory military service. He says: 'I did my basic training at Tempe in Bloemfontein and then was sent to Middleburg and from there to active service on South Africa's borders and towards the end of the service to Milnerton in Cape Town. After that period, I thought that I was finished with the SADF, but the Kimberley Regiment immediately drafted me into the reserves. I found myself doing a month every year of service all over South Africa, We were told by the towering Sergeant Major, Arnold Rauff, that every Thursday we had to appear at the Regiment's grounds to do military exercises or parade ground!

By this stage Raymond had entered a career with Standard Bank and so approached his employer for a transfer to ensure his release from the burdensome obligation to attend the Kimberley Regiments weekly parades. His sisters soon followed him to Johannesburg.

Move to Johannesburg, then London and finally Israel

Once all three of their children had moved to Johannesburg, Sam and Edith like many former Kimberley residents, left to join their children.

It was Raymond's involvement with the Zionist Youth Movement, Habonim and being exposed to other Jewish youth at Habonim camp, that planted the seed of ultimately making Aliyah to Israel. However, Raymond first spread his wings by living for a few years in London where he was employed in financial positions. (right: 1978 Raymond and his mother in Trafalgar Square)

Raymond recognized that higher education was the key for career advancement and studied towards the British professional qualification as a Chartered Secretary.



After four years of study alongside work commitments Raymond passed the gruelling final examinations in London and shared first place in the finals with another student.

After completing the required six years of appropriate work, Raymond was granted the right to use the letters A.C.I.S after his name. Raymond served as Company Secretary of several companies. He continued his studies in finance through correspondence at Edinburgh University. He was also a lecturer in Business Administration in London and his book "The Business Organisation and its Environment" was used for studies throughout the British Commonwealth.

Making Aliyah

Raymond however had this burning desire to emigrate to Israel and after making Aliyah from the United Kingdom in 1978 he broadened his career in economics and finance becoming Financial Controller to several companies. Raymond married an Israeli. She was a police officer serving alongside her father in Akko. After only two years in Israel, Raymond and his family returned to South Africa to be with his mother before she passed away, Sam had died a few years earlier. They returned to Israel in 1985.

He continued in finance and had a spell in export marketing and visited several countries setting up exhibitions and marketing the company's products - with memorable trips to Finland, India and elsewhere.



Raymond decided to take a break from the world of Economics and Finance and try some other professions. He said: 'I divided my day into three sections for ten years and took a job in Finance in the mornings, Social Work in the afternoons and Lecturing in Business English and General English in the evenings'.

To hold these positions, he returned to his studies of Psychology at Haifa University and also obtained an English teachers' certificate.

Raymond as well as having served in the SADF also served in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF). During his basic training with the IDF in the West Bank, at the age of 38 years, he was under the supervision of a 19-year-old female officer who attempted to knock the new recruits into shape. He served both on the Golan Heights and in South Lebanon in the reserves for at least one month every year until aged nearly 50. He says: I felt proud to serve in the IDF and the officers took a different view to the rigid view of my experience in the SADF and the Kimberley Regiment.

Family life

Raymond married an Israeli woman. They have three children. Here they are with their eldest son Doron. They have three grandchildren.



Left is Doron, his middle child's Bar Mitzvah at the Wailing Wall.

In pinkish dress my late sister Carol, my late ex wife Chaya, my late mother-in-law Naomi, my daughter Maya, her cousin, my ex wife's sister.

Forests and Mountains



He says: 'My kibbutz near Haifa is in a forest and that is great because I can just hop on my mountain bike and do some hills in the forest. I also do yoga to keep as fit as possible.

'My youngest son Ronen keeps me on my toes and is my coach. He is a professional coach from Wingate Institute.

In the photo is Ronen when he was crowned Israel Men's Mountain bike Marathon Champion.

In the years before that he was Israel's child and then cadet

marathon champion. He was also Israel's Junior cross-country champion. This was my side job managing this son's sports career.



Just four years ago I asked Ronen what it is like to be in a mountain bike race. He said that he will train me and find a suitable race. The training was hard for me, but I was taught many of the technicalities. I was terrified to find that I was with two hundred and fifty riders at the start line of the thirty km race with riders aged 16 to 68. I was the oldest rider in the race and to my

amazement I came 99th out of 250 in the stunning time of one hour and 22 mins. (see above)

My older son Doron walks with me occasionally, but my daughter Maya (below left with me and my youngest grandson) is a walker and I battle to keep up with her and the grandchildren.'

Maya is a Technical Designer in High Tech. Doron is a Warehouse Manager, and Ronen is a professional coach from the Wingate Institute and is a champion marathon rider. The photo is from this year 2021.

Raymond's sister Marilyn continues to live in Johannesburg with her children and grandchildren, but regrettably sister Carol passed away in 2004 at the young age of 52. Her children and grandchildren live in Johannesburg and Sydney Australia.



Raymond concludes, 'I have always been a highly independent person and did not find it difficult to go it alone. I have never felt the need to lean on people generally or family and friends. I have always said to myself that it is up to me how things turn out. I haven't been married for many years but do now have a partner and she is about my age and lives in Haifa. I cook dinners for all the kids and

grandchildren and sometimes for my partner and her children and grandchildren. I didn't feel at home in South Africa or England, but I have always felt at home in Israel.

My children, family and friends appreciate my optimism and in fact welcome it. My curiosity, creativity and my imagination made it possible to have all these experiences.

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