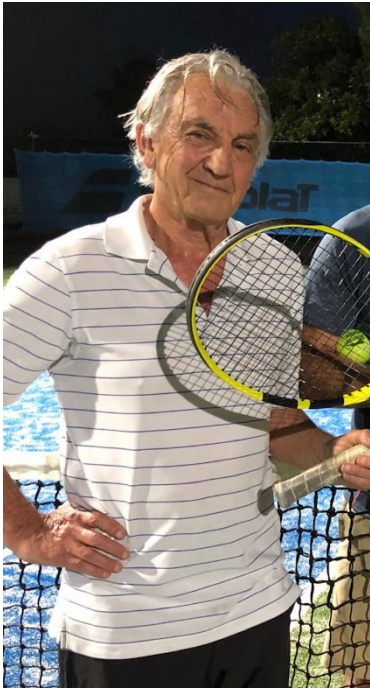


Kimberley Ex-Pats Newsletter #45

Family profiles and updates, Rinderpest, and Listen again
Salkinder, Datnow, Sagar, Cohen, Toubé

Compiled by Geraldine Auerbach MBE, London, January 2022



I am still refining the 'Sports Prowess' Newsletter (which I will post again soon as #46). Thanks to all those who sent me many new stories and photos from far and wide covering schoolboy sporting highlights as well as veterans such as Michael Sperber in Australia (pictured left) who told me he is still playing tennis for Maccabi at the age of 84!

So for this Newsletter #45 I am sending you links to more family stories that have been developed or updated and posted on the website – since August! There are new words and pictures for the families of **William Sagar, Harold Hecht, Cecil and Jean Cohen** and their sons **Raymond, David and Brian**. Also, Cecil's father **Barney Cohen** who was Mayor of Kimberley 1931/32 has his story on the website. You can find them all under families and also, I will give some of the links below that you just have to click to get to the website.

(The whole point of the Newsletters, by the way, is to create and populate the Kimberley Jewish Community website, which is the reincarnation of the community in its glory days and right from its very beginning. So, I do hope you are dipping in often and discovering gems as you dance about its pages. As we get more family stories, so they clear up certain mysteries....



The People of Kimberley and their stories~



Since our last Zoom session in August, we have posted **Joy Capon's** booklet, a tender and loving tribute to her parents and her family. She welcomes you to read it here [Capon, Joy](#).



Leon Chonin has compiled extensive illustrated family biographies for

Louis and Gerty Toubé with sons **Mervyn and Hilton** (pictured left) [Toubé, Louis, Gerty & Family](#), and also

Morris and Nancy Edelman and sons **Gerald, Bernard and Lionel**) Leon and his family were friends of these families. [Edelman Family](#).

Cyril Salkinder's story will soon be uploaded. Not only will you be able to read all about his exceptional sporting activity – but there is also much history of the Salkinder family and their Kimberley roots. Cyril's Great Aunt Sarah, married the Datnow patriarch, Benjamin Datnov in Kimberley in about 1900 filling in part of our Kimberley jigsaw. Here they are below. Rev Harris



Isaacs is top row Left. It would be wonderful if we could identify anyone else in the picture. Perhaps next to the bride are her brother Abraham Salkinder and seated maybe their mother? click [Salkinder, Cyril](#)

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**William Sagar update**

We have been sent, by Robert Hart of the McGregor Museum, some wonderful pictures and articles about **William Sagar** who was such a distinguished figure in Kimberley both in the Jewish community and in the civic life of the town itself. We have a picture of his auctioneers' rooms on the Market Square, some adverts for goods and land, a picture of him in his attire as the first Jewish Mayor of Kimberley in 1903, and this picture on the right that appeared in an article on 'Men of the Times'.

It was William Sager, as Mayor of Kimberley who received the keys and deeds to this Kimberley landmark the McGregor Museum in Chapel Street from Mrs McGregor, wife of the deceased in September 1907. Read about this in his updated story here: [Sagar, William and Family](#)



## Cecil and Jean Cohen – a diamond related family story

**Sheila Grant**, née Frank, wrote a superb story of her father Masel's family – the Franks. You can read this here: [Grant \(nee Frank\), Sheila](#). She dearly wanted to do the same for her mother, Anita (née Cohen's) family. Sadly, Sheila passed away at the end of 2020 before she could complete the task. Fortunately, she had been in contact re the family history with her cousins – the sons of her uncle **Cecil Cohen**. Through them and particularly with contribution from David Cohen's wife Adele in Vancouver, we have been able to create fascinating Kimberley family stories of both her grandfather [Cohen, Barnerd \(Barney\)](#) – who was Mayor of Kimberley from 1931 to 1932, and for her uncle Cecil's story.



**Milton Jawno** wrote **Cecil Cohen** (uncle of my dear friend Jeff Frank) was a friend of the great Sir Ernest Oppenheimer. He worked for De Beers in Kimberley House. Cecil was sent to Sierra Leone to crack a diamond smuggling syndicate. And, for very special services Sir Ernest rewarded Cecil with a diamond 'sight' and great fame and fortune. I am sure you will enjoy reading his story here. [Cohen, Cecil and Jean](#).

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## Geraldine Auerbach – my own stories

I have also updated my own story on the website, from which there are links to my work in Jewish music as well as my parents' and grandparents' and also husband Ronnie Auerbach's stories are now all up on this website

- **My Millennium Jewish music memoirs** [Newsletter #38 April 2021](#)
- **My comprehensive survey of my work** in Jewish music in a Jewish Music Institute Newsletter of Autumn 2010. <https://www.jmi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/JMI-Newsletter-Autumn-2010-optimized.pdf>
- **My mother** [Kretzmar, Beryl \(née Bergman\)](#)
- **My father** [Kretzmar, Noel](#)
- **My maternal grandparents** [Bergman, Jacob and Amalia, \(née Friedlander\)](#)
- **My Husband Ronnie Auerbach** [Auerbach, Ronald](#)

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## List of all Kimberley people

I have also posted at the top of the families page, the [List of Kimberley people](#) that I have been informed about. Where their names are blue underlined links, you can click them to see the family stories. There are 233 names on the list. I know there have been many more people than that in Kimberley so if you see any gaps and want to add any names and information that would be great.

## Article Updates

### Spanish Flu

Also updated, is the story of the Kimberley experience of the [Spanish Flu Epidemic](#) of 100 years ago. We have learned of new Jewish casualties in Kimberley – especially pertaining to the Cecil Cohen family in which his wife Bertha was but one casualty – leaving six small children. This family shockingly suffered four more deaths. This story is surely still pertinent as we are 21 months into the next pandemic (and who knows when or where it will end. Maybe there is light at the end of the tunnel coming from South Africa.)

### Kimberley Jews and World War Two

I have also updated the story of the [Kimberley Jews and the Second World War](#). We now have notes of 48 of the allegedly 50 of those who served. You can see the list on page four of the article (which now has 49 pages). The article also includes the cutting I found from the DFA about the function in the Constance Hall welcoming the soldiers back to town – and back to their families. In this cutting they record my father, in his welcoming speech as President of the community at the time, saying: *'Their deeds throughout their many campaigns up North, and as part of the Sixth Division would be written in the annals of the Jewish community.'* How, I wonder, as I have said before, did he know, (or did I know for that matter?) that one day, his daughter Geraldine would reach out and compile the stories of those individual soldiers, from memories and pictures contributed by their children and grandchildren, and that she would one day make a website to highlight and memorialise the 'annals of the Kimberley Jewish Community!'

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Mysteries of our families in the early days of Rhodesia

Somehow the more stories we collect – the more clarity we have about the early days and are able to clear up mysteries and tie things together.

For one thing I knew that my grandfather **Jacob Bergman** and his younger brother **David Bergman** (who died in the 1918 flu epidemic) had gone from Kandau in Courland, Latvia with their father **Osser Bergman** in 1897. They had gone 'to the North' to what was then or soon to become Rhodesia for two years. But why they went or what they did was a mystery.

In Cyril Salkinder's story, there is a possible explanation. He told us that his grandfather **Abraham Salkinder** had come to South Africa from Talsen in Latvia in 1897. He then went North to the country newly opened for pioneering whites, where Rhodes had 'dealt with' the Matabele. Abraham spent three years there 'speculating in cattle'.

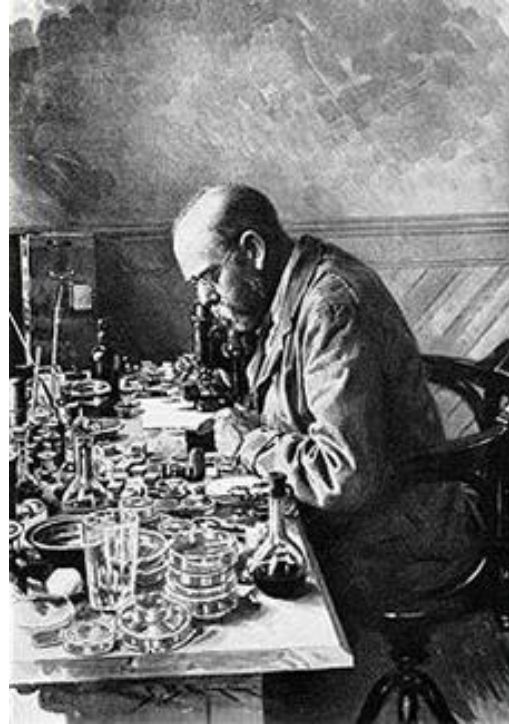
I am just reading **Sarah Gertrude Millen's** insightful and exciting biography of Rhodes. (her friend Smuts told her she had ready got under the skin of the man). Rhodes and his Chartered Company had 'sequestered' many thousands of heads of cattle from the Matabele, and it is highly likely that he needed people like Abraham and the Bergmans to be the brokers and speculators selling the cattle on to the pioneering colonialists. (Rhodes is reported to have said, 'if the Jews will come to my country, then we will be alright'.)

So, this may have been what my grandfather was doing in 1897. Looking after Rhodes sequestered cattle in Rhodesia. And it is possible that Benjamin Datnov, (who married Abraham Salkinder's sister Sarah in Kimberley in 1900) also went on this mission with his soon to be brother-in-law. In this way they all gained a strong foothold in the country, earning good money and a forging close association with Cecil Rhodes and De Beers, which helped in drawing them to Kimberley and setting themselves up in businesses and farming, supported by De Beers.

Rinderpest

Another element of the story was the catastrophe of the great animal **plague of the Rinderpest** travelling down from the horn of Africa where it had started in 1889. It reached the Zambezi in 1896 – destroying not only the majority of domestic bovines along its route, but also considerable numbers of indigenous antelopes. It ruined the farmers and the Africans whose life rested on cattle. And there was Rhodes with his thousands of sequestered herds. Something drastic had to be done.

Barriers were erected to try to exclude this terrible scourge from entering Rhodesia. They managed to delay the onslaught long enough for Rhodes with De Beers funds, to install the famous German physician and pioneer bacteriologist HEINRICH HERMANN ROBERT KOCH, in Kimberley to search for the Rinderpest microbe to try to develop a vaccination for the terrible scourge. (On the right he is working in his laboratory in Kimberley.)



By February, 1897, Koch had devised a method of immunization and Rhodes immediately set up a massive inoculation programme throughout southern Africa. This was perhaps another reason why Rhodes needed the likes of Abraham Salkinder and other Jews to help. Before the end of 1898 more than two million head of cattle in southern Africa had been successfully inoculated. At the end of 1898 rinderpest was under control and temporarily disappeared from South Africa.

Maybe our families were involved with inoculating cattle against the Rinderpest?

You can read about Koch in Kimberley and his work on the Rinderpest and other diseases here <https://www.kimberley.org.za/?p=1832>

Our families settle around Kimberley

Rhodes was hoping, even expecting, to uncover another gold laden 'Witwatersrand' in his newly declared country that he called Rhodesia. That never materialised. So, it seems that after the cattle job was done **Abraham Salkinder** and the brothers **Jacob and David Bergman** and **Benjamin Datnov** came back South again – to settle around Kimberley where things were less primitive and there was business to be done to serve the population working on the great diamond mines. I wonder if others have such a story regarding Rhodesia in their family histories or can clarify what may have happened.

In the [Datnow Family](#) story we said that **Benjamin Datnov** had come to South Africa in 1903 with his wife Sarah née Salkinder and two small boys, as is proven by their travel documents and stay at the Jews Temporary Shelter in London. It was thought that they must have married in Latvia in 1900. However, now that we have pictures of Rev Harris Isaacs, we can recognise him in the Datnov wedding picture (above Rev Harris is at the top left). It is therefore clear that Rev Harris Isaacs officiated at their wedding which therefore must have taken place in Kimberley. So, I am surmising that Benjamin was on the Rhodesia trip with Abraham (who was soon to become his brother-in-law). Benjamin and Sarah, née Salkinder, Datnov seem to have returned to Europe before finally emigrating with two small boys to Kimberley and starting to farm in the Kimberley area, probably courtesy of some support from De Beers.

Read [Isaacs, Rev Harris](#) story. The [Datnow Family](#) will be updated on the website in due course. Can anybody identify any others in this wedding photograph? ~~~~~

Rev Israel Segal

Another mystery that the Salkinder family story resolved was who was Rev Israel Segal. I had found a picture of his tombstone in the Kimberley cemetery – but I could find no intimation that a Rev Segal had ever served as a minister in Kimberley. Well, Cyril and Anthonette Salkinder, confirmed that he was the Minister to the Jewish Community at Bloemhof – a small town in the Transvaal on the way to Johannesburg, where diamonds had been discovered (hence a Jewish population needing a minister). The Kimberley connection is that he was Cyril Salkinder's grandpa. Rev Segal's daughter Fanny married Cyril's father, Louis Salkinder. Fanny settled in Kimberley where she joined Louis and the family in the Hardware business.

Cyril writes: You have done an absolutely, superb and outstanding article on my family and my sporting achievements. I have improved my knowledge of our family, which is greatly appreciated, once again toda rabba. Thank you so, so much. Kindest regards Cyril

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## Kimberley Heritage Update

I am sure you are all keen to hear about the progress on preserving the Kimberley Jewish heritage. We have set up a small international Heritage Steering group (which includes Barney). We met once with Barney in August. We compiled a questionnaire to ascertain the precise size and content of the Kimberley Jewish footprint which we asked Barney to complete. He said he would.



We arranged for the Director of the South African Jewish Museum, Gavin Morris to visit Kimberley in October for a few hours on his way to Johannesburg in order to see the lie of the land view the cemeteries, the shul and the registers to assess and advise us on what needs to be done in digitizing and safeguarding the Kimberley Jewish footprint. Sadly, Barney put him off and neither he nor anyone else in Kimberley was willing to welcome Gavin and show him round for those few hours. These are the essential first steps to help Barney and the few individuals left in Kimberley in their stated mission of preserving the footprint of Jewish Kimberley.

We hope that Barney will facilitate and reschedule this visit very soon, but realise that Gavin as the Director of the Jewish Museum is a very busy man. Once Gavin reports to the Steering Group, the group will commission the work with independent resources to pay for it.

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Kimberley Losses

Meantime the footprint gets smaller - On 11 October Barney Horwitz Wrote on the Facebook page: Dear Congregants and friends, sadly I have just heard that Esther Klein passed away in the early hours of this morning and will be buried at 2.30pm this afternoon in Johannesburg. Esther was a courageous woman who came to Kimberley in 1966 following tremendous personal tragedy and built a whole new life with her beloved husband Phillip and her children. She made a major impact on our community, was sorely missed when she and Phillip left in the late 1990's and will be fondly remembered. Our sincere condolences to the Klein family. I must also bring you the news that Hilda Boiskin, also a stalwart of the 1970's and 80's in Kimberley passed away in Cape Town about a week ago. Our sincere condolences too, to her sons and daughter. We will remember both Esther and Hilda before Shabbos goes in on Friday afternoon at 5.45pm in shul.

Listen again

If you missed the Kimberley zoom reunions on August and September you can see them here.

<https://youtu.be/1Z4MKyB1x0M> Kimberley 29 August

<https://youtu.be/463T7s9az84> Kimberley 5 September

Community History On-Line (CHOL)

Out of the work we have done together to make the Kimberley website – we have now created an organisation for all those preserving their communities online in some way. In March we will be having another ‘international conference’ where we will hear about the South African special interest group of Jewish Gen, a blog about Doornfontein and the Wits medical school 60th anniversary of the 1960 Graduates.

If you missed the first series which we kicked off with our Kimberley website described by me: you can **Listen again here** <https://www.youtube.com/user/SAJewishMuseum/videos>

Web links related to this conference

Kimberley <https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/kimberley/Home.html>

Jewish Gen Kehilalinks <https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/>

SAJM archives <https://sajmarchives.com/>

Vryburg [Home | Vryburg_new \(wixsite.com\)](#) and [The Families | Vryburg Families \(wixsite.com\)](#)

Muizenberg <https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/muizenberg/Shul.html>

Zimbabwe Jewish Community <http://zjc.org.il/showpage.php>

Cape Jewish Cemeteries Board <https://www.jewishcemetery.co.za/>

Kaplan Centre archives <http://www.kaplancentre.uct.ac.za/kaplan/research/archival-research-inquiries>

For further information about this series: <https://www.sajewishmuseum.co.za/event-1>

To join the mailing list of Community History On-Line (CHOL) email info@sajewishmuseum.co.za

Kimberley Ex-Pats Newsletter #45 Family updates, rinderpest, listen again

Compiled by Geraldine Auerbach MBE London, January 2022