

The Blitz Family

Fay and Jacques and daughters Avril, Lorraine and Zelda

Oma Sientjie and Opa Louis Blitz were married in Amsterdam in 1920. Louis was a master diamond cutter and Sientjie was a secretary to the Frank family (Diary of Anne Frank). Oma, née Boas, was of Belgian descent and Opa was born Dutch. They had three children Rebecca (Beppy) born 1921, Jacques (Jac) 1922 and laet lammetjie, Albert born in 1931.

In 1934 Opa Louis Blitz was offered employment by the Wynberg Diamond Cutting Works (WDCW) operating in Wynberg, Cape Town and so the entire family arrived in Cape Town in 1934 (thank goodness). Louis remained with WDCW until his retirement, ending up as the works manager of the operation. Sientjie was a homemaker for her entire life in Cape Town and passed away in 1975. Louis retired at age 70 and passed away in 1981. Both are buried side by side at the Pinelands # 2 Jewish cemetery. See their graves here [Louis Blitz](#) [Sientjie Blitz](#)

At the commencement of WW2 Jacques enlisted in South Africa with the Free Dutch Forces (FDF) (affiliated to the then SANDF) and was transferred to the FDF in the UK.

Jacques met his future wife, Fay Goldberg, in London. Both of Fay's parents, from London, were in the clothing trade. He was a tailor, and she was a seamstress. Her mother taught Fay her trade and this served her well in later life, as Fay was able to find employment and to make most of her daughters' clothing.

They were married in the UK just prior to the invasion of Normandy in June 1944. He was involved in the invasion and eventually, after the emancipation of Holland, became a translator for the conquering forces. In later times, this was a part of his life of which he never spoke about

Pictured are Fay and Jacques Blitz on their wedding day in London in 1944. Jacques was in uniform about to go on the D-Day landings.



After demobilisation in late 1945, Jac returned to the UK, but as he had enlisted in the Union of South Africa, he had to return South Africa with his now pregnant bride. Their daughter Avril was born in Cape Town in July 1946 and second daughter Lorraine in August 1951.

Five years in Beaufort West

The family came to Beaufort West 1953 as they had been advised to move to a 'drier' climate to ameliorate their daughter Avril's chronic bronchitis. Jacques (or Jac as he was known in the town) became the workshop foreman at Karroo Trading Company/Karabus Ford. Their youngest daughter, Zelda (now living in Brisbane) was born in Cape Town during the five years that they lived in Beaufort West.

They threw themselves into the life of the town. Jacques became an avid bowler and a Freemason in the Masonic Lodge. He remained a Freemason until his death attaining a relatively high rank in the Masonic Order.



Daughter, Avril Lee (née Blitz)

At the time of their sojourn in Beaufort West, which was only for five years, from 1953 to 1958, Avril recalled that most of the Jewish children of the community started their schooling at the St Joseph's Convent with the dreaded German nuns. Thereafter they attended the government Beaufort West Junior School from Grade Four.

After 5 years in Beaufort West, almost to the day, the family moved to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) first to Fort Victoria and then to Gatooma.

Adventures in the Motor Trade

Jacques again affiliated to the Ford agency, Duly's, but this time as a salesperson. He subsequently moved with the family to Kitwe, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) again associated with Duly's, where they lived for 5 years. At that time, the winds of change were starting to blow in both Southern and Northern Rhodesia. Avril's mother decided that she wanted to relocate to Cape Town to get away from the Kaunda regime.

At the start of 1963, the relocation occurred, and the family occupied a flat in Kenilworth, near Avril's grandparents and uncle. Jacques then worked for Grosvenor Ford on the Sales Floor, while her mother worked for the Elna Sewing Machine agent in the city centre of Cape Town. The family subsequently moved home to Newlands.

Jacques subsequently worked for several car franchises until he eventually opened his own second-hand car sales outlet in Mowbray, Jacques Blitz Used Cars. Unfortunately, after some years, this enterprise fizzled out and he once again 'job hopped' with various used car dealers.

Fay, Avril's mother, remained with the **ELNA Sewing Machine** agency as the teacher for all clients who purchased the ELNA machine. She worked for ELNA until she could not physically

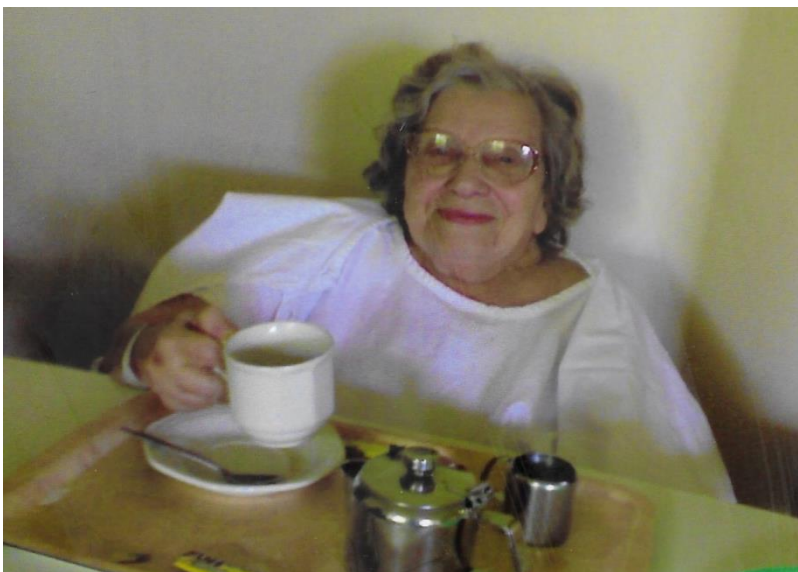
work any longer. Fay also taught her daughter Avril to sew well, and a lot of Avril's daughter Adele's childhood clothes were homemade.

Both retired to an apartment, owned by the Masonic Order, in Plumsted. Fay passed away on 6 October 2007 and Jacques on 28 July 2015. Both were cremated.



Pictured: above: Avril Lee (née Blitz) and her mother Fay

Fay Blitz - during the war in London, and smiling in hospital in Cape Town in 2007



The Next Generation

Avril married Malcolm (Mac) Lee (see Lee family story) in 1969. Lorraine, the middle sister, now living in Midrand, married in 1971 and Zelda in 1976.

Lorraine has three children, Ryan, Darren and Megan; and **Zelda** has two children, Janis and Brent.

Mac and Avril have two children.

Colin, born 1971, matriculated from the Rhodes High School. He then voluntarily joined the SANDF Airforce where he qualified as a helicopter technician. He saw no future there and branched out in his field. He is currently working in Haifa (Israel) with a private helicopter charter operator, servicing the gas-rigs offshore in the Mediterranean. He is married out of the faith, has three daughters, who live in Cape Town with their mother.

Adele, born 1974, matriculated from Sans Souci Girls' High School and then studied at CPUT to become a renal technician. She made Aliyah in 1996 and has two sons. She is divorced, living in Manchester UK, and working at King David School as an administrative secretary.



Picture of Mac and Avril, 2024, at their home in Panorama.

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The Blitz family story compiled by Natie Finkelstein from information and pictures from Malcolm and Avril Lee (née Blitz) Cape Town, August 2024

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