

***THE JEWISH COUNTRY COMMUNITIES
OF LIMPOPO/NORTHERN TRANSVAAL***

By Charlotte Wiener

Dedicated to my family

Grateful acknowledgement is made for the financial support of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation Trust

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INTRODUCTION

European settlement in the northern Transvaal commenced in the late 1830s as part of the mass northward migration of mainly Dutch-speaking immigrants known as the Great Trek. The Transvaal was the last area in South Africa to be explored by these independent, adventurous pioneers. They trekked north from the Cape and opened up the way for others to follow and settle in the vast open spaces of the interior.

The Transvaal was one of the four provinces established in terms of the Act of Union of 1910 that brought into being the modern-day state of South Africa. The Northern Transvaal or Northern Province was the northern-most area of the Transvaal. On 27 April 1994, a new division of South Africa into nine provinces officially replaced the old four-province system. The northern-most of these provinces was renamed Limpopo after the famed Limpopo River¹ that forms its western and northern boundaries with Botswana and Zimbabwe. The capital of Limpopo changed its name from Pietersburg to Polokwane on 25 February 2005.

Gold was discovered for the first time in South Africa at Eersteling in the northern Transvaal in 1871. The first Jews came to the northern areas of the Transvaal from England, Germany and Holland as prospectors, attracted by the discovery of gold. They were adventurers who had come to make their fortune. When the gold deposits failed to produce good yields, many of them settled down in remote areas as traders, hotel keepers and farmers. They endured severe hardships from hostile tribes, wild animals, diseases, poor roads and long distances between settlements. They even had to endure hold-ups from men, such as 'Captain' Nelson, who spent most of 1897 systematically raiding every store in the northern Transvaal².

After 1880, they were joined by Jews from Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, who fled the poverty and restrictions of the Pale of Settlement for the promise of freedom and riches in southern Africa. When these solitary Jews had earned sufficient money, they brought their wives and children out to South Africa. They also brought their extended family and set them up in existing trading stores or helped them establish new ones on black chiefs' tribal lands. Their shops became the centres of the areas for both the black tribes and the white farmers. The traders could also speak the black languages and came to be trusted by the local black tribes.

As people travelled in the vast hinterland, they needed places to stay and often spent the night in the back rooms of general dealer stores. Hotels were then established by Jews in areas where gold was found and in other small villages. Most of the remote trading stores and small hotels were owned by Jews, who contributed to the building up of new settlements and small towns. Several Jews owned farms in the area and some of these farms were divided up into plots, which were sold and towns declared, such as Soekmekaar, Roedtan and Settlers. Jews learned to speak Afrikaans, a task made

easier by the fact that it resembled Yiddish. They integrated so well that many of them fought on the side of the Boers in the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.

However, the traders and hotelliers eventually had to move to Pietersburg because the co-operatives put them out of business and improved transport eliminated the need for overnight stops. As their children grew older, they wanted them to obtain a Jewish education and so they moved to Pietersburg, which had the best Jewish facilities in the area. Jews were easily accepted by the general community as they had established themselves right from the beginning of settlement. This meant that there was very little anti-Semitism and they easily rose to positions of esteem in the municipalities, education and health boards, agricultural unions and service clubs. 'Old Timer' wrote in the Zoutpansberg Review in 1931 of happier days³, 'when in the evenings in Mare Street under the trees, there were card-playing groups with their beer tankards –they were Boers, British, Germans, Jews, all nations and no-one cared one dam [sic] what they were' and again he wrote 'Only today 40 years later that the names of Altentroxel, Plange, Dicke brothers, Max Israelsohn are beginning to historically stand out in object lessons of what Germans and Jews can accomplish in taming the wilderness despite the terrible nature forces they encountered, through sheer pluck, high intelligence and dogged determination⁴.' In contrast Senator Munnik⁵, speaking on the Immigration Bill, said 'the people who come from Eastern Europe into our country don't know our language ...they come here in the one way or the other only to make money and will never be absorbed in the people of the country. They will live in a colony by themselves, and do we want such people.'

On the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the new synagogue in Pietersburg on the 14 September 1952, Dr Tom Naude, the minister of forests and railways, a Pietersburger himself, spoke of the Jews in the northern Transvaal as "true pioneers who pulled their weight in all respects to develop the country to its present stage." He named "Patsy Cohen of Mara, the Israelsohn brothers of Syferkuil, Himmelhoch of Louis Trichardt, Hirschmanns of Houtbosdorp, Barney Herman, Eichholz and others as playing a leading part in church and communal matters and our most exemplary and respected citizens. South Africa was indeed their fatherland and they demonstrated their undivided loyalty and love for this country of ours."

In South Africa, the new settlers tried to uphold their Jewish values and traditions. They established the Jewish institutions and societies that they had known in their old homes. Most of these Jews came from religious families, who had kept the Sabbath and maintained kosher homes. However, they found that in South Africa, they had to keep their stores open on Saturdays in order to make a living and kosher food was difficult to obtain. In 1893, a handful of Jews in the northern Transvaal attempted to collect a *minyan* for the High Festivals⁶. They almost had to abandon their idea, when 'to their surprise the local blacksmith, a Swede, turned out to be a modern-day Marrano, when, self-confessed with a *machzer* in hand, he joined the eager nine at the house of Mr Rosenberg⁷, who himself officiated at the service. This was the first congregation in the northern Transvaal'.

It was especially difficult in the country areas to employ Hebrew teachers and *shochtim*, due to the long

distances from organized religious centres, the small classes and problems with payment for qualified people. Only Pietersburg and Louis Trichardt managed to build synagogues, the remaining towns never having enough members to warrant the building of a synagogue. Some centres managed to conduct services on High Holy Days, with help from family members or *yeshiva* boys from Johannesburg, who often brought *Sefrei Torah* with them. When they could not hold their own services, they used to travel long distances to the nearest synagogue for *minyans* and religious holidays. Kosher meat came from Pietersburg or by rail from Johannesburg. Families from the country towns enjoyed regular gatherings in Pietersburg to celebrate family days. Slowly religious practices decreased, until Jews came to observe a mode of Judaism that they themselves called 'traditional religious' as opposed to being strictly Orthodox.

Jews in the country districts were staunch Zionists. They were already contributing to Zionist funds from the beginning of the 20th Century. Every town had a Zionist society, as well as a Women and Youth Zionist society. Speakers often came to speak to these societies. As a result, a large percentage of country Jews eventually made *Aliyah* to Israel.

When they died, Jews from country towns were buried in the Jewish cemeteries of Pietersburg, Louis Trichardt, Messina and Potgietersrus. Gradually, the members of the congregations decreased as the young people moved to the larger cities to further their education and to make a living, and their parents followed them. The Pietersburg and Louis Trichardt synagogues were closed down, the *Sifrei Torah* were passed on to other recipients and the only memorials to a Jewish presence in the towns of northern South Africa are the Jewish cemeteries and the memorial stones placed in them. Similar closures were happening in all the small towns in South Africa, leaving little trace of the vibrant Jewish lives that had been lived there. Now the local population no longer knows any Jews nor anything about them. An exception to this was the mayor of Lydenburg, who told Marlene Bethlehem, the chairman of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies [1995 to 1999] that his mother had worked for a Jewish family in Pietersburg. He remembered being asked as a young boy to run to Jewish houses to call the men to help make up a *minyan*⁸. Some blacks remember the generosity of the Jews to their communities, such as the community centre donated by Solly Colman.

In many of the country towns of South Africa, the Jewish facilities were abandoned or plundered by the last remaining Jews. Some were more organized before they closed. Potgietersrus handed over their assets to the Pietersburg community. In other centres, the last remaining Jewish families decided to dispose of the assets themselves, such as the Klaffs in Messina, the Brenners in Louis Trichardt and Basil Hack in Warmbaths. The Pietersburg synagogue committee had forward-thinking members, who wanted to create a memorial to their special congregation. They decided to follow the example set by Kaplan-Kushlick Foundation and the Mowszowski family, who transferred the contents of the Parow synagogue in South Africa to the Shivtei Yisrael Synagogue in Raanana, Israel. After the Pietersburg synagogue building was sold, its contents and foundation stones were sent to furnish the Mevasseret Zion Synagogue in Tel Mond in Israel. A memorial wall in the entrance of this synagogue has been dedicated to the Jewish community of Pietersburg and features the foundation stones and photographs

of the Pietersburg synagogue, as well as a time-line of its history.

Also, to perpetuate the memory of the community, the Pietersburg Trust was set up with the money received from the sale of the synagogue buildings. The Trust maintains the Pietersburg cemetery. The stones have all been laid flat to prevent vandalism, their inscriptions have been refreshed and a concrete pallisade wall has been built around the cemetery. The stones have also been laid flat in the Jewish cemeteries in Messina, Louis Trichardt and Potgietersrus by Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, the country communities Rabbi of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies [SAJBD]. The Pietersburg Trust also helps support ex-members of the Pietersburg Jewish community, as well as other charities.

The Pietersburg synagogue committee decided several years ago to commission the story of their community in order to perpetuate its memory. I was living in Pietersburg at the time and became interested in the history of its Jewish community. The Wiener family had been in Pietersburg since 1936 [Dina, died 28 January 1946 aged 69 and Elias Wiener, died 6 July 1948 aged 81, Morris, died 21 January 1978 and Judyth Wiener, died 21 January 1978 are all buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery]. I undertook to research and write "The History of the Pietersburg/Polokwane Jewish Community" for my Master of Arts thesis through the University of South Africa. This thesis is available on the internet. Afterwards, I found that I had also accumulated a lot of information about Jewish life in the other towns of the northern Transvaal, besides Pietersburg. I felt that it was important that this information be made available to the descendants of the Jews who had lived in the area and who might be looking for their roots, as well as for genealogists and historians.

Beth Hatefutsoth in South Africa has done an admirable job of presenting the histories of the small communities in South Africa in their series of books, such as "Jewish Life in the South African country communities Volume 1, which deals specifically with Limpopo/Northern Transvaal. However, I have attempted in this book to go deeper into the life of the communities by providing more insights and stories about the Jews of Limpopo. Because I have already dealt with the Pietersburg history in my Masters thesis, I have only included the stories of the Pietersburg residents after they moved there from the smaller surrounding towns. These towns were all satellite towns of Pietersburg. I have used the original names of the towns as these were the names used at the time. The story starts north of Warmbaths along the Great North Road to Pietersburg, then turns east before continuing north to the Rhodesian border.

Many of the Jews of Limpopo are related to each other as they tended to marry Jews who were also from this remote area. I have compiled family trees for the larger families, concentrating mostly on the members who actually lived in the area and not necessarily their descendants, who lived elsewhere. When I first came to live in Pietersburg, I was warned by my mother-in-law not to speak badly about anyone in the community as they were all related to each other and I have since proved this to be true.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous help that I received from the late Wally Levy, whose prodigious memory could recall every Jew who lived in the northern Transvaal, as well as their

relationship to each other. The family trees have been presented in an 'outline descendant' form. For those of you who do not know how to read a descendant tree, the consecutive numbers before the names depict successive generations. All those with the same number belong to the same generation. The plus sign before a name depicts the spouse of the person above it.

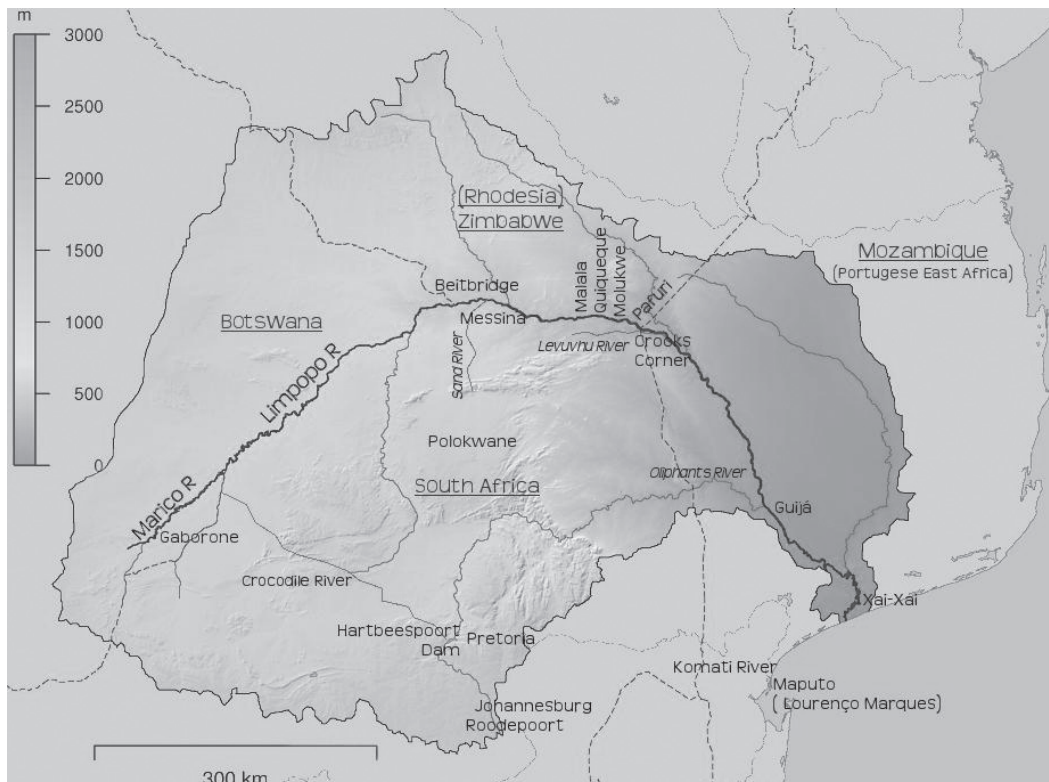
I want to thank all those who, on being asked for photographs, pulled out boxes from under their beds, the tops of cupboards and their attics, in order to happily present me with their wonderful memories. Also, thank you to all those who helped me with their family trees and to genealogist Paul Cheifitz for his assistance. I have tried to the best of my ability to be accurate in all the details, but apologize if there are any inconsistencies of which I was not aware.

Thank you to David Saks for copy-editing my book and to Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft for always being there when I needed information. Last but not least, thank you to my family for your support during the many years that it took me to complete this book. Thank you to my husband Dennis for your patience and for your help in scanning the large amount of information I have collected.

PART I:

THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL – A SHORT HISTORY TO 1902

The Zoutpansberg was a name once commonly used to refer to the large area in the north of South Africa bounded by the Limpopo River, the Waterberg mountain range and the Olifants River⁹. The history of the colonization of the Zoutpansberg area by whites goes back to the early 19th century¹⁰. This is the period when the first adventurous hunters and explorers ventured north from the Cape Colony into the northern areas of Southern Africa. At that time, several black tribes occupied the area. In 1836 a few groups of white migrants known as *Voortrekkers*¹¹, who were part of the Great Trek, decided to leave the Cape Colony to escape the influence of the British. Hans van Rensburg and Louis Trichardt were the leaders of the first two *trekker* groups to travel northwards and pass through Strydpoort in the Molepo Mountains towards the Zoutpansberg Mountains. The two groups had a disagreement and went in different directions. Louis Trichardt and his followers went further north and settled near the salt pans of the Zoutpansberg for almost a year, before moving on to Delagoa Bay on the east coast of Southern Africa. They were followed in 1848 by another *trekker* group, which was led by Andries Hendrik Potgieter. This group settled in the same area that Trichardt had occupied near the Zoutpansberg. They established a town, which was first known as “de Oude Dorp” and later as Zoutpansbergdorp [located on the outskirts of present-day Louis Trichardt]. Some trekkers settled further south in the area where Pietersburg would later be established. Andries Potgieter was appointed Commandant-General of the Zoutpansberg area¹².



Map of Limpopo showing Limpopo and Olifants Rivers [brownieramke.com]



Zoutpansberg [courtesy of Hugh Exton Museum, Pietersburg]

Britain recognised the independence of the area north of the Vaal River, when the British and the *Voortrekker* leader, General AWJ Pretorius, negotiated the Sand River Convention at Sand River on 17 January 1852. This was the first official British recognition of a *Trekker* Republic, the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* [ZAR], also called the Transvaal Republic. However, the Transvaal settlements were torn apart by the dissension between the *Boer* leaders AWJ Pretorius, based in Potchefstroom, and Andries Hendrik Potgieter, based in the Zoutpansberg area. Potgieter supported local, instead of centralized authority and he refused to ratify the treaty. However, on 6 March 1852 peace was declared in Rustenburg between these two Boer leaders. Subsequently, on 19 March 1852, as a result of a request by Commandant-General Andries H Potgieter, the *Volksraad* decided to found a town called Vredenburg in Makapanspoort in honour of this peace. Vredenburg was to be the future site of the town of Potgietersrus, where several Jewish families were to make their homes¹³.

Although Nylstroom was only proclaimed in 1866, families were already living in Nylstroom in 1859. The first white family to live in the Naboomspruit area was Nicolaas van Heerden and his wife Dorothea, the daughter of Voortrekker leader A H Potgieter. They lived on the farm Kromloof, 30 kilometers from present-day Naboomspruit. However, it is believed that beside the van Heerden family, there were no other whites living in the area further north of them until Schoemansdal, the area of present-day Louis Trichardt. As whites began to enter this area, they had to face the attacks of Makapaan's tribes and often had to flee to the safety of Nylstroom.

Andries Potgieter died in December 1852 and was succeeded as Kommandant-General by his son Piet Potgieter. In 1854 Piet Potgieter's brother Hermanus Potgieter was killed near the Nyl River in the Waterberg district during an outbreak of violence with the black chief Makapaan. Commandant-General Piet Potgieter gathered commandos to attack Makapaan, who took refuge in the Makapan caves. In the subsequent siege of the caves, Piet Potgieter was killed by a sniper and *Veldkornet* Paul

Kruger [who was later to become the President of the Transvaal Republic in 1883] heroically retrieved his body. Makapaan, as well as many of his followers, were killed. The town of Vredenburg was renamed Pietpotgietersrust after Piet Potgieter in 1854¹⁴.

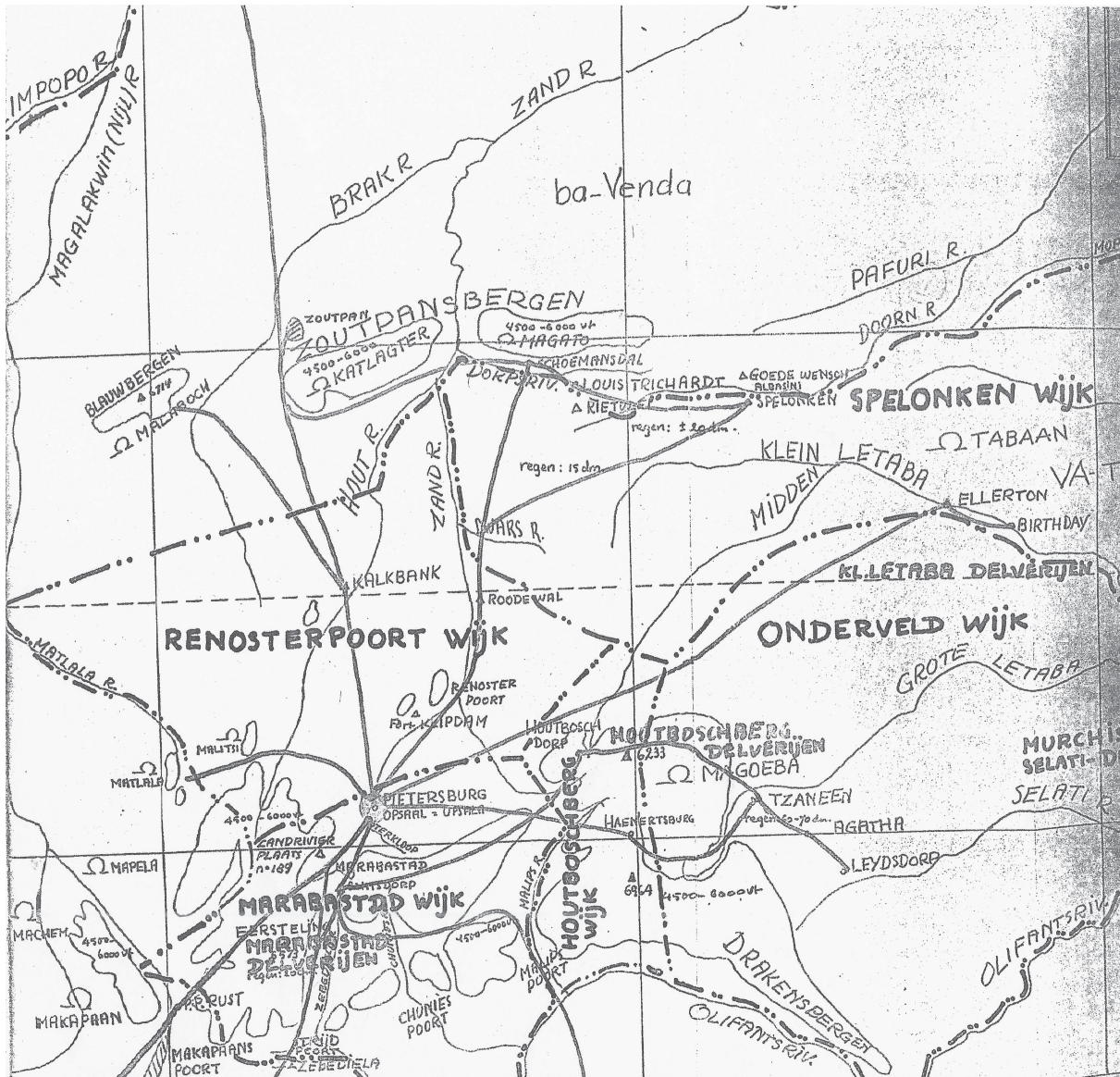
A small garrison protected Pietpotgietersrust¹⁵, but by April 1870 so many Europeans had died from malaria that the town had to be abandoned¹⁶ and only in 1890 did the whites return to the town, renamed Potgietersrust¹⁷. Marabastad became the northernmost settlement of the Transvaal Republic and the official seat of the '*landdrost*'¹⁸.

The people in the Zoutpansberg in the 1860s numbered about 700 whites, most of whom earned a living through hunting and the ivory trade. As the Government had no money and was too far away for proper policing, the whites in the Zoutpansberg had no regard for Government rule. The settlers supplied black trackers with guns and ammunition for hunting. These guns were used by the black tribes in their skirmishes with the Whites in 1866. Relations between the whites and the Bavenda tribe under Magato deteriorated drastically because of disagreements over grazing and hunting grounds. The *Zuid-Afrikaner* Administration did not have sufficient funds to protect the whites. As a result, on 15 July 1867, the defenders of Schoemansdal under Commandant-General Paul Kruger, were forced to abandon the village, which was then burned by the Bavenda. Some retreated south to Sterkloop, the farm of Hannes Venter and the future site of Pietersburg,¹⁹ and a few families also went to Marabastad, near the deserted village of Chief Maraba. In 1868 Paul Kruger finally managed to overcome the hostile black tribes in the Zoutpansberg to ensure the safety of the whites. What remained of 'de Oude Dorp' can nowadays be seen on the outskirts of Louis Trichardt²⁰. The Transvaal Republican Government promised to compensate these whites with land, but it was to be 19 years before they were to be granted land in the new town of Pietersburg²¹. These plots were given to the people as their 'Burgher-Right'²². According to the list of the first farms registered in the district between 1863 and 1870, in Changuion's *Pietersburg Die Eerste Eeu 1889-1989*, Appendix A p. 238, there appear to be no names of Jewish origin.

Some Whites remained in the Schoemansdal area, but lived in *laagers*²³ for protection. Gradually, during more peaceful times, they began farming further away and spread west to Kalkbank, east to Rietpol and Kalkfontein, Turfloop, Houtboschberg and Mathibaskraal and south to Eersteling and Deelkraal²⁴. In later years Jews established trading posts in many of these areas.

Gold was found in the Transvaal in 1871 on Frans du Preez's farm 'Eersteling' near Marabastad²⁵. This led to the first gold rush in the Transvaal²⁶. Lured by the promise of gold, many prospectors braved the harsh conditions in the northern areas of the country. It was uncharted territory beset by malaria, heat, wild animals and problems with the black tribes. Living conditions were rudimentary and the Government buildings, including the jail, consisted of tents. Travel by horse or ox-wagon over rough terrain was very difficult²⁷. Gold was also discovered near Haenertsberg, Agatha and Leydsdorp to the east of Pietersburg around 1887.

HAND-DRAWN MAP OF THE FAR NORTHERN TRANSVAAL IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY



Van Asten, F.G. *Die Geskiedenis van Pietersburg en omgewing 1833-1899*. MA UNISA, South African National Archives.

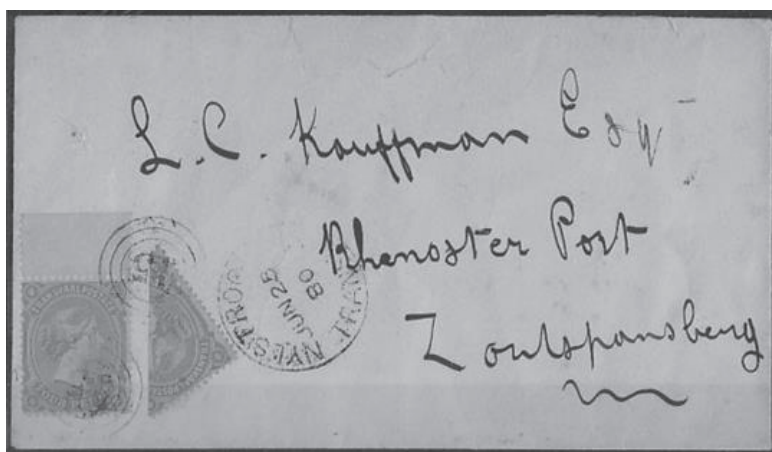
In 1877, the Transvaal was annexed by the British. The Boers, after diplomatic efforts to reverse the decision failed, rose in revolt in mid-December 1880, sparking off what is generally referred to as the First Anglo-Boer War 1880-1881²⁸. The war lasted a little under three months, during which the various British garrisons in the Transvaal [including at Marabastad] were besieged and a British relief force was decisively defeated on the Natal side of the border when it came to their aid. The end result was that the British gave back a large measure of self-rule to the Transvaal. The Boer victory over the British was celebrated on 16 December 1881 in the Zoutpansberg district²⁹. The declaration of peace saw a fresh rush of diggers and prospectors to the fledgling village of Marabastad.



Marabastad [courtesy of A P Cartwright and N Cowan]

As Pietpotgietersrust and Schoemansdal no longer existed, on 8 October 1883, *Kommandant-Generaal* Pieter Jacobus Joubert, the head of the South African Republic's defence force and Vice-President of the Transvaal Republic under President Paul Kruger³⁰, visited the Zoutpansberg district to decide where its capital should be established. Several meetings were held to discuss the various options for the new town. At the first meeting at Fort Klipdam [Rhenosterpoort], 72 men proposed that Sterkloop should be the site chosen. Amongst the names on this document signed at Renosterpoort on 20 October 1883 were L C Kaufmann and A J Marcus³¹. These family names are similar to those later found in the Jewish community of Pietersburg. This is probably the first record of a Jewish presence in Pietersburg.

There are several references to L C Kaufman with different spellings. South African National Archives TAB Ref SPR 946/87 mentions the 'ontvlugting' [flight] and bail of L C Kaufman in 1887, but the circumstances of this event are not known. His name appears on another document SP653/87 sent from the charge office in Pietersburg on 3 October 1887 to the State Prosecutor. On January, 1931, a Pietersburger, B H Dicke, wrote in his memoirs in the *Zoutpansberg Review* of a time in 1893 when Chief Matjatje's "natives" attacked his farm Middelspruit. A member of the Shangaan tribe, who was with him, managed to escape to find help, but no-one arrived. Only at 10 p.m. that night, a certain Louis Kaufman arrived with 20 Shangaans, following a forced march of 23 miles, after he heard that they were in danger. This could be the same Kaufman mentioned in the above document.



Postcard addressed to L C Kauffman Esq dated 25 June 1880 from Nylstroom [courtesy of The Salesroom Auctions]

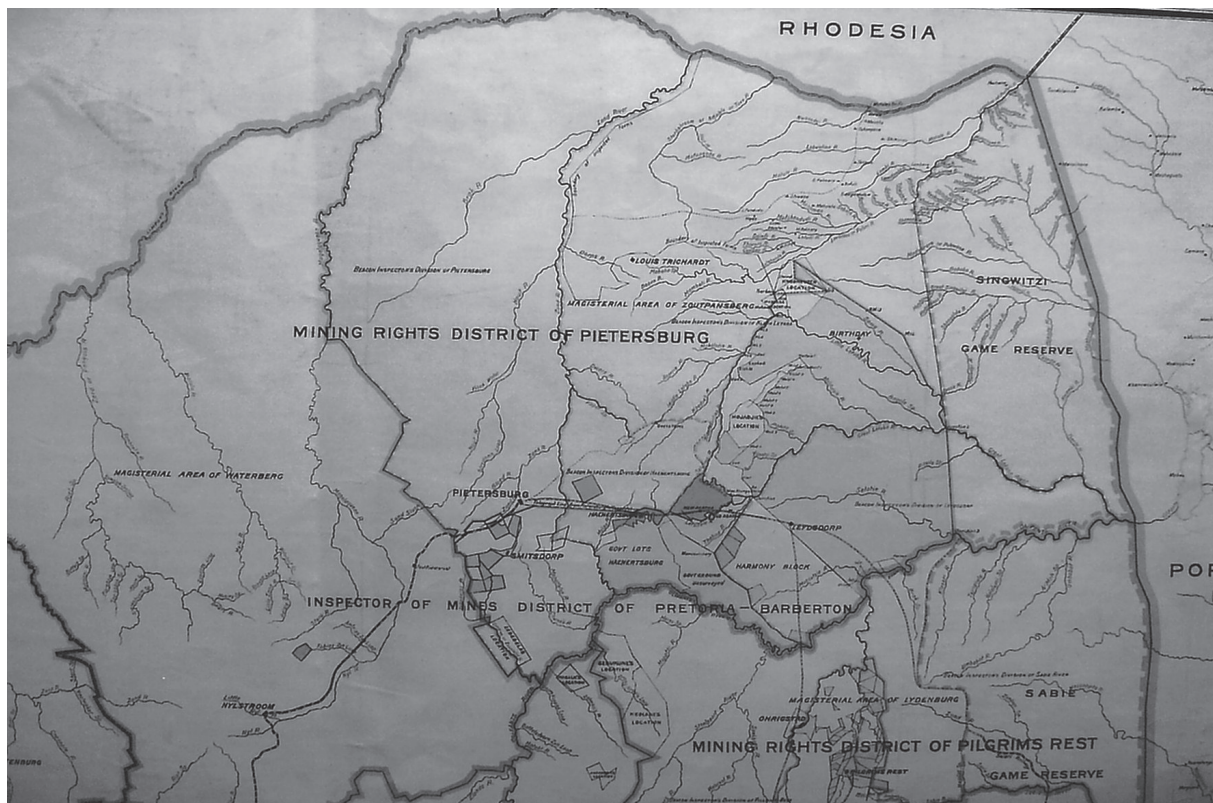
According to South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives file SA, p. 142, a Jewish family by the name of Kaufman was living at Sandfontein before 1914, Jacob Kaufman traded at Palmietfontein mine in 1916, I Kaufman had an inn in Naboomspruit in 1910, but it is not known if they were related to L C Kaufmann, as here too the spelling is different.

South African National Archives Ref SPR 6431/99 refers to S Marcus concerning the sale of a farm in 1899. South African Jewish Board of Deputies file SA, p. 313 refers to the Jews I Marcus and L Marcus living in Pietersburg in 1918. It is not known if they were related to A J Marcus. Max Marcus, the future mayor of Pietersburg came to Pietersburg in 1904. Because these names were found amongst Jews in the area, it is therefore possible that the Kaufmann and Marcus mentioned in this document were Jewish.

Joubert decided to establish the new town on Opzadel [Sterkloop], then owned by B J [Rooi Barend] Vorster and Gert Emmenis³². The town was called Pietersburg, after *Kommandant-Generaal* Pieter Jacobus Joubert. General Joubert's³³ anti-Semitic statement manifesto against the *Uitlanders* stated that if the burghers did not make him President, he would turn his hand against the Jews and render their existence impossible. 'This land is for you and me, and us only; place me in power and I shall break the neck of the Hollanders, Jews and Gentiles of the land.' This manifesto could not have endeared General Joubert to the Jews.

On 29 January 1884, the Government bought these farms and the land-surveyor G R von Wielligh laid out 150 plots. Of these, 94 plots were given free of charge to people who had owned property in Schoemansdal and the rest were sold to the public for £6 each. A list compiled by *Landdrost* D S Mare of the owners of the first plots, do not show any names that could be Jewish³⁴. On 26 July 1886 the magistrate's office was moved from Marabastad to Pietersburg and on 31 July 1886 Pietersburg was officially established³⁵. The C H Zeederberg Coaching Contractor began to run the Zeederberg coach northwards to Pietersburg in 1886. The firm established relay stations so that the mules pulling the coaches could be exchanged for fresh animals. Small shops and hotels with bottle-stores sprang up around these stopovers. Mr Kaufman had a shop at one of these stops at Naboomfontein³⁶. The coaches faced many hardships including potholes and mud, attacks by elephants and lions and highwaymen. Before the 1920s, very often when the heavy rains came, Naboomspruit and Nylstroom were effectively cut off from the northern Springbok Flats as the road was impassable for the wagons. Eventually the Government voted the funds to build a road over the Nyl River.

Marabastad ceased to exist by 1887 as it proved to be too far from the claims sites. Instead on 21 November 1887, the diggers moved to Smitsdorp, southeast of Marabastad, and named after General N J Smit. However, because this shantytown had little water, it was moved two kilometers away to a place called *Nuwe Smitsdorp* [New Smitsdorp]³⁷. The Caledonian Hotel and a sporting club were built and the Zeederberg mail coach connected the town to Pretoria.



Map of mining rights in the northern Transvaal [courtesy of the National Archives]

In the 'List of European male inhabitants of Pietersburg, Haenertsberg and Smitsdorp in 1889'³⁸, the following Jewish names are mentioned and are probably amongst the earliest Jewish settlers in the area:

Haenertsberg [Woodbush]: Hayman storekeeper,

Pietersburg: Green, storekeeper, Lichtenstein A, storekeeper

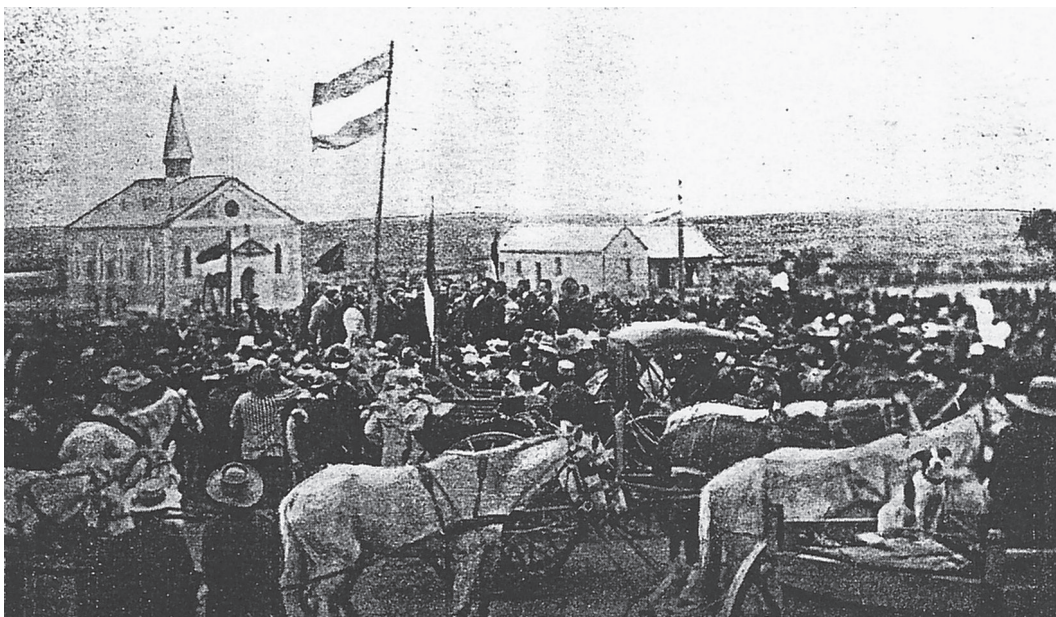
Smitsdorp: Benjamin A, Bloom J, Cohen W, Herman B, Rubenstein H.

Hayman is probably Julius [born Jacob] Heimann who was a Jewish storekeeper and prospector in Haenertsburg [see later]. No other reference to Green has been found, as well as to A Benjamin. However, a Jew by the name of H E Benjamin farmed in the Nylstroom district in 1904³⁹ and a Jennie Benjamin [born 1889] was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 24 July 1936. A Jewish family with the name Bloom lived in Potgietersrus in the 20th century, but do not seem to be related to J Bloom. The only other reference to A Lichtenstein is in the South African National Archives⁴⁰, but gives no proof as to Lichtenstein's Jewishness, other than that he was a storekeeper, as were so many Jews in Pietersburg. W Cohen is William E "Patsy" Cohen, together with his business partner H Rubenstein [see under Louis Trichardt], and B Herman is Barney Herman.



Barney Herman [courtesy of Justine Rapeport]

Barnard [Barney] Herman [born 18 May 1867 in Weksne, Russia] was lured to the Northlands [as the Northern Transvaal was referred to then] in January 1888 and spent some time as a prospector at New Smitsdorp⁴¹. He moved to Pietersburg in 1891 where he first owned the Cafe Royal hotel and general dealer store and then became a farmer. He sold coal to storekeepers at Eersteling. He was very active in the growth of the Jewish community and the town. In 1898 a Hebrew Congregation was formed and Barney Herman was elected president, a position he held for most of the next 34 years. Municipal government was granted to Pietersburg in 1903 and in 1904 Barney Herman was elected a member of the Town Council and served for 18 years being elected as mayor twice. He was a founder member and chairman of the Hospital Committee, the Public Library, the Farmers' Union and the Agricultural Society and the Pietersburg-Zoutpansberg Zionist Society and Worshipful Master of the United Masonic Lodge. He was captain of the Polo Club and a foundation member of the Turf Club.



President Kruger's visit to Pietersburg [courtesy of Zoutpansberg Review]



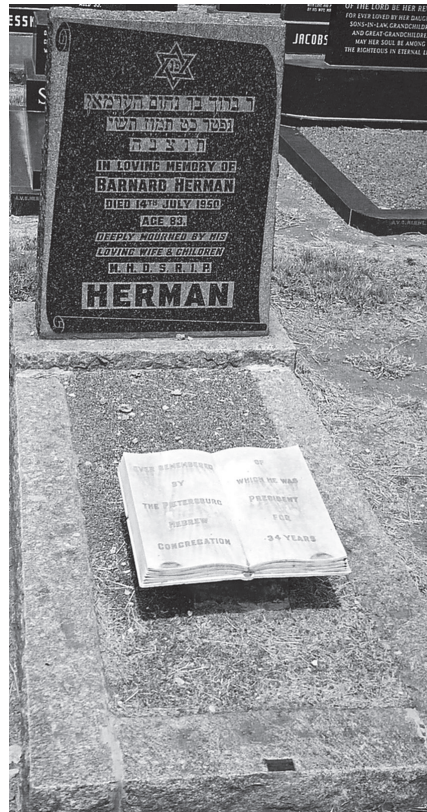
Pietersburg Jewish cemetery – early 1900s

When President Paul Kruger visited Pietersburg in 1896, the Jews of Pietersburg, led by Patsy Cohen and Barnard Herman, came as a deputation to ask Kruger for a plot of land for a Jewish cemetery. The *Landdrost*, Senator Munnik⁴², reported that Kruger asked: “Why can’t you lie among the rest of my people when you are dead?” Patsy replied that certain ceremonies had to be performed in a building at the gate. The President then asked Senator Munnik how big the Christian cemetery was and he answered four morgen. The President told him to “Instruct Surveyor Devenish to measure off two morgen for them, and send up the diagram and I will issue a title”. When Patsy Cohen asked why they were getting a graveyard only half the size of the Christian cemetery, Kruger instantly replied: “Because you believe in half the Bible”. After much protestation by Cohen, Kruger gave in and allocated four morgen to the Jews because “I acknowledge that you Jews are good and law-abiding citizens wherever you fix your abode, so I will give you four morgen also”.

When the Prince of Wales visited Pietersburg in 1922, he was entertained in the town hall. Barney Herman gave the speech of thanks to the Prince, embarrassing the community by thanking him “from the bottom of my heart and my wife’s bottom also”⁴³!

Barney Herman married Lena Ginsberg [born 23 August 1879 in Neustadt, Lithuania, died 14 October 1952 in Pietersburg] in Cape Town on 20 August 1903 and they had two children Joseph Nathan [Nat] [born 12 October 1904 in Pietersburg] and Evelyn [married Harris Smidman]. Nat’s children were Justine [married Louis Rapeport] and Erica. Lena lived in style as her house was furnished with a complete home ordered from England and included was a diagram to show where the furniture should be placed. The glass bookcase in the study came filled with books. Her carriage and pair was driven by a coachman in uniform. She had a white maid to help her in the home. As the wife of the president of the congregation, Lena Herman used to visit every new Jewish family that settled in Pietersburg to help them settle in to their new home, a function taken over in later years by the Jewish Women’s Guild⁴⁴. Lena personally collected the monthly donation from every member of the Jewish community to the

Orphan Fund. Lena Herman was awarded the Member of the British Empire [MBE] for the work she did during World War II. Barney Herman died 14 July 1950 aged 83 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. A memorial stone on his grave reads 'Ever remembered by the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation of which he was president for 34 years.' Lena Herman died two years later, aged 73, and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 14 October 1952.

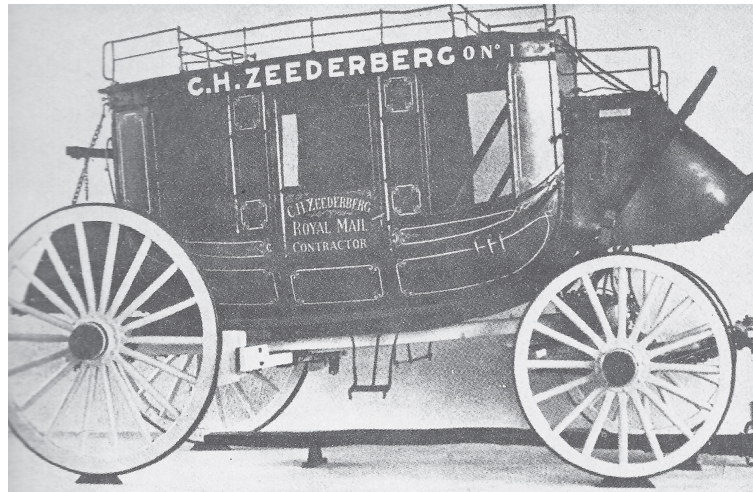


Grave of Barney Herman with Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation dedication [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

As the Republic needed settlers in the Zoutpansberg area to strengthen their forces there, the *Volksraad* in 1886 passed Law Number 8 [Occupation Law for Government land situated in the district of Zoutpansberg and a small area in the north-eastern corner of the Waterberg district]. This law enabled burghers of the Republic and, after them, people who were already in the country who might become burghers at a later date, to buy farms at a nominal price⁴⁵. This law, with its opportunity to acquire land, brought more settlers to the remote northern areas of the Transvaal Republic than the discovery of gold had done. Farms were allotted to any man who wanted to settle on the land, provided he possessed a rifle and ammunition and a horse and saddle, and was willing to do military service when called upon to do so⁴⁶. Although these farms were smaller than the huge farms allotted to the original Trekkers, they were eagerly taken up. This was despite the obligation of commando duty and the prevalence of malaria and the rinderpest cattle disease, especially in the Tzaneen and Duiwelskloof areas. These pioneers also managed to survive by trading, transporting goods and hunting.

In 1888, G G Munnik became the Mining Commissioner in New Smitsdorp. He decided to move the town in its entirety to Pietersburg⁴⁷. By 1894 there were only three whites left in New Smitsdorp and

the town effectively ceased to exist. Soon after the establishment of the town of Pietersburg, there was a demand for plots by people who were entitled to farms according to the Burgher-Right's farm scheme, but who preferred plots in the town. The Government declared that they were each entitled to three plots in town⁴⁸.



C H Zeederberg coach [courtesy of Harry Zeederberg in Veld Express]

The C H Zeederberg Coaching Contractor inaugurated a coach service between Pietersburg and Spelonken in 1891⁴⁹. The route lay via Klipdam, Dwarsrivier, Sweet Waters and Grieves. The population of Pietersburg grew quickly from 200 whites in 1889 to 800 in 1893. In 1899 the railway was completed from Pretoria to Pietersburg, opening up the north even further. The town of Pietersburg achieved municipal status in 1903. Pietersburg became the hub of the north as it was the industrial, commercial and financial centre of the Northern Transvaal.

Although the majority of Jews in the Northern Transvaal remained neutral in the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902, several Jews volunteered to fight on the side of the Boers, such as *Kommandant* Kaplan and Moses Miller, who was related to the Israelsohn family. Kaplan⁵⁰ served under General Pienaar until the end and rendered good service. He was efficient in the use of the pom-pom gun, which he had learned to use in Russia. Also included as possibly being a Jew from Pietersburg is Julius Baumann. Sascha Schmahmann and Joel Charles Duveen fought valiantly for the Boers [see later]. K Jacobson 25442-26689, a Captain in the Waterberg district, was on the list of Prisoners Of War sent to Bermuda on 1 December 1900. Most of the Jews fighting on the side of the Boers were single men and were therefore spared the ordeal of having wives and children put into concentration camps. However, some Jewish families did land up in concentration camps. The Hirschmann family was arrested, their farm was confiscated and they were put in an internment camp at Houtbosdorp⁵¹. The Kallmeyer and Palte family, together with several other families from the district, moved into Pietersburg during the War. The Kallmeyers were first put into the interment camp in Pietersburg, but then were allowed to move to their house in Pietersburg, due to overcrowding in the camp.

Several Jewish names in the northern Transvaal are to be found in the South African National Archives

files claiming compensation from the British Government after the war for shops destroyed and goods lost. Very few received any compensation because they had served in the Town Guard and had sold goods to the Boers. As these Jews had left Russia illegally, they had no Russian passports and therefore no proof of Russian citizenship. As a result, the British used this loophole in the law to prevent them from having to pay compensation to Jewish claimants. William [Patsy] Cohen was a partner in the firm Cohen and Rubenstein. In 1903 he claimed losses of £272 to their business in Louis Trichardt⁵². They were awarded compensation of £150 for a wagon and team, but nothing for the rest. Barney Herman carried on the business of a hotelkeeper in Pietersburg until he surrendered on 8 April 1901 at Pietersburg under Lord Robert's Proclamation. He then left for Pretoria in April 1901 where he was placed under parole for a short time before leaving for Cape Town. Herman claimed an amount of £3000 for board supplied to commandos and for horses, feed and goods sold in connection with his business. He claimed to be a burgher of the former South African Republic, having received his Burgher Rights ten years earlier when he was commandeered to fight in one of the 'Kaffir Wars'. His claim was disallowed by Major Bolton, as all burgher claims were disallowed under Government Notice 570. However, the ex-Burgher Fund awarded him £846 on 15 January 1905. Mr S S Himmelhoch was a general dealer up to 13 May 1901 at Louis Trichardt, Boschkopjes and Schoemansdal, at which time he left for Rhodesia. His claim for compensation for damages was disallowed as he was considered a "general purveyor to the *Staats* Artillery of the late Government". He had also not produced a Russian passport⁵³. Herman Hirschmann was the manager of a store for Mr Kallmeyer at Rietfontein. He was in possession of commandeering notes to the value of £191 from the Transvaal Government. He claimed to have been neutral during the War but supplied the Boers with horses⁵⁴. His claim was disallowed as he had no Russian passport. Isaac Mates, a Russian Jew, also ran a general dealer's business in Pietersburg before the Anglo-Boer War⁵⁵. He was sent to Pretoria and whilst he was away his place was totally destroyed and all his goods were removed. Mates claimed £372 in compensation. He was given no award as he had no Russian passport and because he had remained in Pietersburg until April 1901 assisting the Boer Government.

In 1885, Heimann [Chaim] Taback, along with his son, David, and brother, Louis,⁵⁶ arrived from Shadova [Seduva] in Lithuania and settled in the Pietersburg area⁵⁷. David had a general dealer's business at Makapansgat on the road between Pietersburg and Pietpotgietersrus on the premises of Messrs T W Becket & Co. During the Second Anglo-Boer War, whilst Taback was away in Pietersburg, the British troops under General Plumer entered Makapansgat on 6 April 1901 and took away Abel Klein, a Russian Jew, whom he had left in charge of his store. Klein claimed he was forced to leave the business "just as it was" and that the troops that escorted him to Pietersburg had taken goods from the shop with them. Both Taback and Klein, although they considered themselves neutral, were sent to Pretoria by the British on 13 April 1901. Despite the fact that the British would not let him return to Makapansgat to assess the damage to his shop, Taback made a claim of nearly £300 for all of its goods. His Consular Certificate of Russian Nationality dated 15 May 1902 was considered insufficient proof of Russian nationality by the British authorities. It only served as proof that he had not registered himself as neutral at the start of the War. To prove his Russian nationality, the British agent for foreign claims told him to produce his

“Russian Passport, a small green book 6 x 3 x 1/4 inch, without which you could not have left Russia”⁵⁸. As he could not do this, having left Russia illegally, his claim was disallowed by the British.

Louis Taback was a Russian citizen who left Russia in 1885, but had no Russian passport. He had three oxen on the farm Syferkuil, owned by the Israelsohns, about 18 miles from Pietersburg and tended by a ‘native’ Philip. All cattle “owned by white people, but running with ‘native’ cattle,” were taken away by the Boers. As Taback was removed from Pietersburg by the British, he claimed for the loss of his wood and iron building, which he had taken down and stored, and also for his furniture and goods. On 15 April he obtained a consular passport on the evidence of his brother and three witnesses. He admitted to serving in the Pietersburg Town Guard, but only for one night as: “The Town Guard did duty by night, the Boers did duty by day”. He had not returned to Pietersburg but was informed by his friends that all his things had disappeared. He became a cabdriver but unfortunately one of his horses, after nearly killing him, had to be destroyed and Taback was considered to be “in a bad way”. He claimed £150 from the British Government for damages sustained through the action of British troops. He was only paid £21 on receipts on 19 August 1904⁵⁹.

Heimann Taback also had no Russian passport, but obtained a consular passport in September 1899. He too served in the Pietersburg Town Guard at night and had Boer receipts to show that he had paid the special war tax of £10. He claimed £150 for an iron building that had been removed by the military and for the furniture that had been taken to the military hospital and a store destroyed in Pietpotgietersrus. The *Kommandant* decided that as the furniture was stored in Pietpotgietersrus, the claimant could have recovered it. The earliest receipt was dated May 1900 so he also believed that the Boers must have paid him in cash for goods taken before this date. He further said that the claimant incurred the loss by remaining and carrying on business. He might possibly be paid for the buildings that had been destroyed but it was noted that he had no proof of nationality and that he had served in the Boer Town Guard. In the end, as his nationality was not proved and his Russian passport was not produced, he received no award.



The first group of soldiers leaving the Pietersburg Station to fight in the Second Anglo-Boer War [courtesy of Pietersburg Review 90th birthday edition 1976]

Jews were members of Freemasonry from the inauguration of various lodges in the northern Transvaal. Records found of the Zoutpansberg Liberty Lodge show that Barnard Herman and Simon Frenkel were founder members in 1894. In 1897 William Cohen became a member and in 1903, Jacob Hirschmann and Adolph Israelsohn were amongst the early members. In 1904 Solomon Marcus and in 1908 Barnett Lewis and George Himmelhoch also joined the lodge. In 1910, a large number of Jews joined, as can be seen from the following records [courtesy of the Library of Freemasons]:

278 Zoutpansberg Liberty Lodge							
No. 2485 from N 39							
DATE OF INITIATION.	PASSING.	RAISING.	SURNAME.	CHRISTIAN NAME.	AGE.	RESIDENCE.	PROFESSION.
1894			Johnson	John Williams			
"			Davidson	Donald Macintosh			
"			Lombek	Simon			
"			Kirsten	John Frederick			
"			van der Burg	Herbertus			
"			Herman	Bernard			
"			Krenni	Francis Charles			
"			Frenkel	Simon			
"			Dietzsch	Alfred Richard			
"			Verwee	Frede Michael			
"			Brown	William			
1896			Kleimenberg	Petrus Stephanus			
1897			Cohen	William			
1899			Hodgson	Nicholas Frederick			
"			Kirsten	John Pieter			
"			Hatt	William			
1903			Palmer	Mark			
"			van Rooyen	Herman			
"			Hirschmann	Jacob			
"			Hossiter	William Leopold			
"			Scrutton	Edward Phipps			
"			Wolf	Jacobus Johannes Frederick			
"			Israelsohn	Adolph			
1904			Marcus	Solomon			
"			Levinburne	John			
"			Munnick	George Glaeser			
"			Louwer	Henry George			
"			Connor	Arthur Fisher			
"			Brown	William Booth			
1905			Mentz	Hendrik			
"			Edwards	John Christian			
1906			Langton	Johannes Wilhelm			
"			Kuist	Charles Matthews			
"			Watson	Alexander			
"			Edwards	Herbert John			
1907			Lenney	Duncan			
"			Matthews	Arthur Edgar			
"			Oelrichs	Alexander Hans Victor			
1908			Kope	George			
"			de Wilde	Andries Keytjell			
"			Lewis	Barnet			
"			Charris	John			
"			Himmelhoch	George			
"			Nicholson	Leonard Luke			
1909			Himmelhoch	Max			
"			Boltman	Jacob Cornelius			
"			Gottliche	Leopold			
"			Letterfield	William John			
"			Andrew	Harry Mills			

279

Name altered to Pietersburg United Lodge
Zoutpansberg Liberty Lodge

No. 2485 contd.

DATE OF INITIATION.	PASSING.	RAISING.	SURNAME.	CHRISTIAN NAME.	AGE.	RESIDENCE.	PROFESSION.
1909			Johnson	Charles Wessels			
"			Nickham	Rupert Burton			
1910 Jan 4			Allam	David		See old registers for fees and particulars for 1910.	
"	March 5		Bowery	Blawett Benjamin			
"	do		Levy	Benjamin			
"	do		Letterfield	Thomas Vincent			
"	July 5		Brochke	Herman			
"	Aug 2		Goldstone	Maurice			
"	do		Wienand	Charles Walsh Austin			
"	Aug 9		Kille	Simon			
"	Sept 20		Branstom	Charles Edgar			
"	Oct 18		Jacobson	Ludo			
"	Sept 7		Pyper	George Ephraim			
"	Nov 1		Kellmerist	Joseph			
"	do		Kies	Edward			
1911 May 3 Aug 1			Jones	Thomas John Buckley	42	Pietersburg	Education Dept
"	June 6 July 4 Aug 1		van Opstall	Jacobus Marimio	25	do	Clerk
"	Oct 3 Jan 2 Jan 9		Abrams	Arthur George	33	Shewass	Constable T. &
"	Nov 25 March 12 May 6		Glossoli	Alexander	42	Pietersburg	Inscht.
"	do Jan 9 March 5		Marcus	Max Louis	25	do	Clerk
"	Dec 5 Feb 6 Oct 2, 1910		Marrico	Clifford Louis Reeves	32	Shewass	Gov. Sub.
"	do Jan 2, 1912 Feb 6		Metzger	John Frederick	35	do	Storekeeper.
1912 Feb 16 Oct 7, 1912 Oct 14, 1912			Hessmann	Hunter v.d. Holtz	24	do	Gov. Sub.
"	Oct 1 Dec 3 March 18		Jackson	John Edward	30	Pietersburg	Agent
"	do do Feb 4, 1913		Israelsohn	Wolf	40	do	Farmer
"	Nov 5 Jan 13 March 19		van Duuren	Anthony Arnoldus	55	do	Land Owner
"	Dec 3 do do 18		Hone	John Rhys	47	do	Head Inspector
1913 June 3 rejoined			Four	Percy George		do	Merchant
"	July 1 Aug 5 Oct 7		Haude	Josua Francois	24	Pietersburg	Solicitor
"	Sept 2 Nov 4 Dec 2		Gradel	Abram	29	do	Inscht.
1914 Aug 14 Sep 8 Dec 1			Van Duuren	Anthony Arnoldus	21	do	Clerk
1916 Nov 7 May 2 July 4			Hinton	Job Alton Bloede	25	do	Master Mechanic
"	June 10 from 20/11/10		Mc Beechies	Andrew		do	Farmer
"	" do do		Verning	James Alfred		Windhoek	Civil Servant
"	" do do		Krause	Ludwig Emil		Pietersburg	Solicitor
"	" do do		Dempster	William		do	Civil Servant
"	" do do		Annalyne	Edeneyer		do	Chemist
"	" do do		Moschke	Hermann		do	Farmer
"	" do do		Williams	Herbert Edward		Windhoek	Civil Servant
"	" do do		Beckett	John Lawrence		Tyuan	Farmer
"	" do do		Piggs	Theodore Combs		Middleburg	do
"	" do do		Bely	Jaob Georg		do	Wine Merchant
"	" do do		Cowan	Rough		do	Blacksmith
"	" do do		Harvey	Ernst John		do	Agent
"	" do do		Salvatore Schulte	Otto		Drusels Kloof	Farm Agent



Limpopo Province: Tourist and Street Atlas. Map Graphics cc: Johannesburg, 2006, pp.4-5.

PART II:

THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES OF LIMPOPO

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A] 1] Nylstroom [Modimolle] | 2] Duiwelskloof |
| 2] Naboomspruit [Mookgophong] | 3] Soekmekaar |
| 3] Settlers | 4] Tzaneen |
| 4] Potgietersrus [Mokopane] | 5] Phalaborwa |
| 5] Roedtan | 6] Gravelotte |
| 6] Marble Hall | D] 1] Louis Trichardt [Makhado] |
| B] 1] Pietersburg District | 2] Messina [Musina] |
| C] 1] Houtbosdorp/Haenertsburg | |



Map of Northern Province's main roads [courtesy of the Automobile Association]

A] Nylstroom, Naboomspruit, Settlers, Potgietersrus, Roedtan, Marble Hall

1] NYLSTROOM [MODIMOLLE]

Nylstroom was established by a Voortrekker group under Jan Adam Enslin called the Jerusalem gangers or 'Jerusalem travellers', who in the 1840s left Groot Marico in the Western Transvaal to go to the Holy Land. When they reached the area of present-day Nylstroom, the Mogalakwena River was in flood. Because they had travelled so far from the Cape, they thought they had reached the Nile River in Egypt. Therefore, they called the area Nylstroom [stream of the Nile]. Nylstroom is in the Waterberg area and is 125 kilometers north of Pretoria. Farmers established themselves in this fertile area with abundant water. The town of Nylstroom was situated on the farm Rietvlei which belonged to an Englishman Ernest Olferman Collins. He divided the farm into plots and gave the streets English names. In March 1866 the areas of Waterberg and Pietpotgietersrust amalgamated. Nylstroom became the administrative centre.

The roads at the time were very bad making travel hazardous. The firm C H Zeederberg Coaching Contractor instituted a transport enterprise from Pretoria to Pietersburg in 1888 with many stops along the way to change the mules⁶⁰. It made Middlefontein, just beyond Nylstroom, a post relay station. The farm had been the home of Commandant-General Piet Potgieter and was sold in 1867 to the Berlin Missionary Society which provided a place to stay for travelers.

Major Joseph Huneberg, a German Jewish veteran of the Franco-Prussian War of 1871 was made *landdrost* at Waterberg in 1880. Disaster struck the area when the Rinderpest disease killed off all the cattle. This was followed by the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 which resulted in the destruction of most of the farms. Gradually after the war, the farmers began to return and rebuild their farms⁶¹.

One of the earliest Jewish pioneers in the Nylstroom district was Mr H E Benjamin, a farmer in the Waterberg district in 1904⁶². An article in the Zoutpansberg Review on 2 December 1932 quotes from the *Sunday Times*:

"In 1911 Sam and Edward Benjamin found a gold mine on their farm Buffelsdoorn on the Great North Road near Naboomspruit, but it didn't seem to be worth working. One day Edward was found with his throat cut. This was deemed the area's first suicide. However sometimes confidants were asked by Sam 'What would you do if you killed your brother?' making them wonder if he had killed his brother. In 1927 Sam hung himself from a tree. After his death, his wife arrived on the scene. She said she had been a stewardess on an Australian liner. She quickly spent Sam's hard-earned savings. She employed the Stott family from Edinburgh as manager of her farm. Her son Frank went out one day with a gun and by accident killed a black man. She appeared to be unstable, as on several occasions she threatened to kill herself and shot the walls above the picture railings. She eventually did kill herself whilst in Pretoria".

Soon after the Anglo-Boer War Maurice and Sarah Schlosberg, who came to South Africa from Shadova [Seduva], Lithuania in 1884, moved to Nylstroom with their two children Freda and Sheftel. Maurice ran the Nylstroom Hotel and a shop with his son and a partner, Mr P Slesing. Maurice Schlosberg later became a leading member of the Pretoria and Johannesburg Jewish communities. In 1892 he attended a meeting in Boksburg with President Kruger to discuss transport problems on the Witwatersrand⁶³.

Descendants of Yehuda Mates

1	Yehuda Mates		
	+Batya Fradea		
..... 2	Hannah Mates	1876 - 1958	
	+Isaac Lipshitz	1871 - 1954	
..... 3	Rose Lipshitz		
	+Jacob Serman		
..... 4	Neil Serman		
..... 4	Shirley Serman		
..... 4	Faith Serman		
	+Mr Basckin		
..... 4	Malcolm Serman		
..... 3	Doris Lipshitz		
	+Charles Whyte		
..... 4	Lesley Whyte		
..... 4	Gwen Whyte		
	+Mr Heiman		
..... 3	Abe Lipshitz.....	1908 - 1957	
	+Daphne Manaschewitz		
..... 4	Leo Lipschitz		
..... 4	Lola Lipschitz		
	+Mr Harris		
..... 4	Shifra Lipschitz		
	+Mr Weiss		
..... 3	Esther [Essie] Lipshitz		
	+Harry Serman		
..... 4	Neville Serman		
..... 4	Dennis Serman		
..... 2	Tilla Mates		
	+Mr Segal		
..... 3	Isaac Segal.....	- 1955	
	+Bessie Rosenberg		
..... 4	Sydney Segal		
	+Ilana		
..... 4	Edward Segal		
..... 4	Greta Segal	- 1957	
..... 4	Phyllis Segal		
	+Philip Brook		
..... 4	Leonard Segal		
	+Jeanette Klisser		
..... 4	Ruth Segal		
	+Ivan Skuy		
..... 4	Raymond Segal		
..... 3	Harry Segal		
	+Miss Slabbert		
.....	*2nd Husband of Tilla Mates:		
	+Herman Barnett Sadowsky		
..... 3	Aron Sadowsky Morrison		
..... 4	Moirra Schneider		
..... 4	Dorothy		
..... 3	Annie Sadowsky.....	1898 -	
	+Wilfred Eitzmann		
..... 4	Jonathan Eitzmann		
..... 4	Alexander Eitzmann		
..... 3	Ida Sadowsky		
	+Bert Garb		
..... 3	Rebecca Sadowsky		
	+Rudolph Zway		
..... 3	Louis Sadowsky		
..... 2	Isaac Mates		
	+Celia Nathan		
..... 3	Rose Mates		
	+Sam Bloch		
..... 3	Dorothy Mates		
..... 3	Clarice Mates		
	+Mr Shapiro		
..... 3	Fran Mates		

Descendants of Judel Sadowsky

1	Judel Sadowsky	
..... 2	Aaron Eliezer [Lazar] Sadowsky	
	+Basa	
..... 3	Herman Barnett Sadowsky	
	+Tilla Mates	
..... 4	Aron Sadowsky Morrison	
..... 5	Moir	
	+Unknown Schneider	
..... 5	Dorothy	
	+Mr Falkenstein	
..... 6	Aron Falkenstein	
	6 Sol Falkenstein	
..... 4	Annie Sadowsky 1898 -
	+Wilfred Eitzmann	
..... 5	Jonathan Eitzmann	
	+Elaine [Sara]	
..... 5	Alexander Eitzmann	
..... 4	Ida Sadowsky	
	+Bert Garb	
..... 4	Louis Sadowsky	
..... 4	Rebecca Sadowsky	
	+Rudolph Zway	
..... 3	Abraham Sadowsky	
	+Hester Vermaak	
..... 3	Simon [Kalman] Sadowsky	
	+Betsy Linder	
..... 3	Malka Sadowsky	
..... 3	Sarah Sadowsky	

The Nylstroom Hotel was sold to the Serman brothers in 1922. Harry and Jacob Serman were two brothers from Louis Trichardt who married two sisters Esther [Essie] and Rose Lipshitz from Nylstroom. Harry and Esther Serman had two children Neville and Dennis⁶⁴. Jacob and Rose Serman had four children Neil, Shirley, Faith and Malcolm.

The Lipshitz family was living in Nylstroom by 1918. Isaac Lipschitz [1871-1954] was a general dealer. He married Hannah Mates [1876-1958] the daughter of Rev Yehuda Mates in Russia. Isaac Lipschitz first came to the Cape where he was a *smous*, before coming to Nylstroom. His wife Hannah only came out to South Africa later on. Hannah's sister Tilla [Tilly] Mates first married Mr Segal and they had two sons, Isaac [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery 17 October 1955 aged 60] and Harry. Isaac Segal married Bessie Rosenberg and their children were Sydney [married Ilana Shmueli in Pietersburg –children Stella, Saranna and Gary], Edward, Greta [buried 2 June 1957 in Pietersburg Jewish cemetery aged 24], Phyllis [married Philip Brook in Pietersburg on 20 May 1956], Leonard [married Jeanette Segal], Ruth [married Ivan Skuy in Pietersburg on 26 December 1965] and Raymond. Harry Segal married a non-Jewess, Miss Slabbert.

Tilla's second marriage was to Mr Herman Barnett Sadowsky of Pietersburg⁶⁵. Barnett was born in Sadowa, Kovno around 1873 and died in 1931. He first went to London then came to Pretoria before moving to Pietersburg. He had two brothers, Simon [Kalman Sadofsky] [married Betsey Linder in June 1897 in London [related to the actress Annabel Linder]] and Abraham [married Hester Vermaak] and two unmarried sisters Malka and Sarah in England. Barnett Sadowsky had a son Aron from his first

marriage, who changed his surname to Morrison when he could not get work in Rhodesia⁶⁶. Barnett and Tilla's children were Annie [married Wilfred Eitzmann, children Jonathan and Alexander], Ida [married Bert [Hyman] Garb born 26 December 12 buried 20 June 1986 in Pietersburg, son Desmond; his second wife was Rae Diamond, daughter Aisne] [Rae was a cousin of Sylvia Dusheiko, nee Pinkus], Rebecca [married Rudolph Zway] and Louis [married a non-Jewess].

Hannah and Tilly's brother Isaac Mates married Celia Nathan and their children were Rose [married Sam Bloch], Dorothy, Clarice [married Mr Shapiro] and Fran. Mr and Mrs Isaac Mates and Mr and Mrs A Mates were general dealers in Nylstroom.



Lipshitz family with Abe Lipshitz on extreme left [courtesy of Gwen Heiman and Beth Hatefutsoth]

Isaac and Hannah Lipshitz had four children, Abe, Doris [married Charles Whyte], Esther [married Harry Serman from Louis Trichardt, children Neville and Dennis] and Rose [married Jacob Serman from Louis Trichardt, children Neil, Shirley, Faith [married Mr Basckin] and Malcolm]. Abe Lipshitz went to an Afrikaans school in Nylstroom and he was in the first matriculation class at the school. In the afternoons, he delivered mail on a bicycle. One of his customers was the lawyer J G Strydom, who became prime minister of South Africa from 1954 to 1958 and represented the Waterberg constituency for nearly 30 years. Abe would often play tennis with Strydom. He would also give Afrikaans lessons to a group of lawyers. Abe's sisters eventually clubbed together to send him to Pretoria University. His son Leo, remembers his father as being a real country boy who only wore short pants until he went to university.

Around 1927 or 1928, when his sister and brother-in-law Doris and Charles Whyte, went on holiday, Abe looked after their hotel. One Sunday afternoon, Abe was sitting on the front porch of the hotel, when a pathetic-looking poor couple in a run-down ox-wagon appeared in front of the hotel. They were very concerned for their ill baby and asked if they could buy a little *brandewyn* [brandy] for their child. As it was Sunday, Abe said he could not sell it as it was against the law to sell liquor on a Sunday but that instead he would give them half a bottle from the bottle store. Later on he found that he had had a narrow escape as the couple was from the Liquor Board and had tried to trap him⁶⁷.

Abe Lipshitz married Daphne Manaschewitz, sister to Mrs Laura Cohen of Pietersburg and Sybil Manaschewitz. Abe and Daphne's children were Leo Lipshitz, Lola Harris and Shifra Weiss. During World War II, when Abe was serving with the Union Defence Force, Daphne moved to Pietersburg with her children for the duration of the war to be near her sister Laura. Daphne died in childbirth. The Daphne Lipshitz Community Centre for pre-natal and post-natal care was established in her memory in 1948. The Lipshitz family left Nylstroom before World War II. In 1951 Abe Lipshitz became the first headmaster of King David Primary School in Linksfield, Johannesburg, a position he held until his death at age 49 in 1957.

Middelplaas is thought to be the same place as Middelfontein, the post relay station for Zeederberg Coaching Contractors around 1889. Mr Friedland was in business with Mr Shapiro in Middelplaas in the 1920s. Also working there were Mr Queit, who owned Queit Bros, and Mr M Klein. Louis and Jane Dawidowitz owned a shop at Middelfontein.

Marcus and Chasa [Jessie] Pack owned Waterberg Supply Stores in Middelfontein in the 1920s. Marcus was a general merchant, produce and coal merchant and a butcher. He owned a hotel in Nylstroom in the 1920s. Marcus and Chasa's children were Miriam [died at 20], Sophie, Ethel, Sarah and Betty [born Nylstroom 1920]. They later lived in Warmbaths. The Pack children were all trained musicians. Betty played chamber music and in 1952 formed the Youth South Africa Chamber Orchestra. In 1960 she formed the Betty Pack Trio with Alan Solomon and Johann Potgieter. She was also a lecturer at Witwatersrand and Potchefstroom Universities. After her death in 1977, the Betty Pack Foundation was launched⁶⁸. In 1914 Julius Pack, Marcus Pack's bachelor brother, came from Calvinia, where he had been an ostrich farmer. He lived in Nylstroom where he worked as a cattle dealer, mill owner and feather buyer. He owned Waterberg Milling Company in the 1930s.

In the 1920s there were several Jewish businessmen in Nylstroom. Messrs A and H Alge owned Alge Bros situated on plot 75 in Potgieter Street. They were general and livestock dealers in Nylstroom in the 1920s⁶⁹. Mr and Mrs M Morris and Mr S Shulman took over Alge Bros in the 1930s⁷⁰.

Rubin Morris came to Nylstroom in 1925. He lived in Northern Ireland for many years before coming to South Africa in 1902. He owned a coalmine outside Witbank, but during the 1922 Rand uprisings, his mine was flooded and the family lost all their money. His sons went back to England for a while and he moved to Nylstroom to try his luck as a trader. He owned Morris and Company⁷¹. Rubin Morris had four daughters, Mabel, Rae, Dora and Evie, who went to school in Natal and three sons, Joe, Bernard and David. Both Joe and Bernard Morris became doctors. David Morris went off at a young age to join the Royal Air Force several years before World War II. He was one of the youngest flight lieutenants and fought in the Battle of Britain. Dora Morris married Hyman Wolf Berks. Rae Morris married Abraham Wolman of Frankfurt.



Dr Bernard Morris [courtesy of South African Jewish Year Book 1929]

Dr Bernard Morris was a deputy mayor of Nylstroom and became the leader of the United Party in the town. He was in the definite minority as Nylstroom was the hub of the Nationalist Party, breeding Messrs Strydom, De Klerk and Odendaal. Jan de Klerk was the father of F W de Klerk, the president of South Africa [1989-1994] and Nobel Peace Prize winner. The town hall of Nylstroom was built in 1931 and the foundation stone mentions the name of Dr B Morris as a member of the town council. In 1939 Jan Smuts, prime minister of the Union of South Africa came to Nylstroom and was presented with money that had been raised to buy a spitfire aeroplane. Bernard Morris married Francis and their children are Michael, Roger and Adrian. The Morris family left Nylstroom in 1939⁷².



Nylstroom street scene with Morris business on the right [courtesy of Nylstroom Town Council]

Other Jews who served on local committees were Mr E R Schoch who served as president of the Waterberg Districts Agricultural Union⁷³ and Mr M I Isaacson who served on the F H Odendaal Hospital committee⁷⁴.

Jews in Nylstroom donated money to Zionist funds as early as 1913. In 1918 a *minyan* was held in the home of Mr and Mrs Isaac Lipshitz on *Yom Kippur*. *Minyanim* were also held in the home of Mr and Mrs Isaac Mates. Rev Nathan Dove [Jedidovic] came to Nylstroom in 1925. His wife and two children, Walter [Ze'ev] and Benzion, came from Shavli [Siauliai], Lithuania to join him in 1927. The family left Nylstroom in 1929 for Pretoria. He was the only minister to serve the Nylstroom Congregation, and also served as *shochet* and *cheder* teacher. A congregation was established in Nylstroom in 1926 with Mr R M Morris as its first president. Messrs J and M Pack, P Slesing, B Morris and H S Cohen were on the first committee⁷⁵. According to Dr Morris there was no synagogue or Jewish cemetery in Nylstroom. When his brother died in infancy he was buried in Pretoria. After Rev Dove left, there were no Hebrew classes for the children. Although the Nylstroom Jews associated themselves with the Warmbaths community, in the 1960s they were invited to family day celebrations in Pietersburg.

Mr and Mrs J Friedberg of Nylstroom were members of the Warmbaths Hebrew Congregation in the 1940s. Their children are David, Mary and Tarla. Rev Dove taught David Friedberg his *Barmitzvah*. Mr Friedberg owned Friedberg and Booyens and sold the business to Schoeman and partners in 1946⁷⁶. The Friedbergs were living in Johannesburg by 1949. David Friedberg became a gynaecologist. Dr H S Cohen was married and had two sons and practised in Nylstroom in the 1920s. Woolf Newman's name is mentioned in connection with the golf club in Nylstroom⁷⁷.

Sidney Levin owned a farm at Vaalwater⁷⁸, north-west of Nylstroom. One day he set a trap with a loaded gun to catch a leopard that had stolen some of his calves and it went off in the night. Whilst inspecting the trap, the leopard attacked him from behind. He managed to squeeze its throat until it fell at his feet and then a labourer killed it with a spade. Sidney only suffered some scratches. He was only worried that the skin of the leopard might have been damaged.

There was considerable anti-Semitism in the Nylstroom area in the 1930s. Louis Weichardt and Zuidemeer, leaders of the South African Christian Nationalist Movement, toured the area and spoke in the Nylstroom Town Hall in 1935⁷⁹. In 1939, Mr Dowalsky, Country Communities Organiser for the SAJBD described Nylstroom as one of the most anti-Semitic areas in the northern Transvaal. A resident of German descent who had a bottle-store in Nylstroom and was the agent for German-made cars had a swastika at the entrance to his business and wrapped purchases in anti-Semitic literature.

There were 15 Jews recorded as living in Nylstroom in 1939 according to communal records. This number went down to 12 in 1943. By 1972 no Jews remained in the town⁸⁰.



Nylstroom street scene [courtesy of Nylstroom 1866-1966]

2] NABOOMSPRUIT [MOOKGOPHONG]

The town of Naboomspruit, located on the main road north, about halfway between Warmbaths and Potgietersrus, was proclaimed on 8 June 1910. It was originally known as Kaufmann's Place after a Mr Kaufmann who owned a shop and an inn with a stable that was used by the Zeederberg Mail Coach to house their horses. The town is situated 176 kilometers north of Pretoria on the edge of the Springbok Flats at the foot of the Waterberg Mountains. The name Naboomspruit is derived from the Naboom or Candelabra Tree [*Euphorbia Ingens*] that grows in the region. The farm Naboomspruit, situated next to the railway line to the north, belonged to Richard Curry and was subdivided in 1907. The town was proclaimed on 8 June 1910. In 1911 the population only numbered 11 souls but by 1919 there were 130 inhabitants. The first town council was elected in 1938 and amongst its members were the Jews Z Jaffet and S Freeman⁸¹.



Naboom [*Euphorbia Ingens*]

Tin was discovered on the farm Doornhoek, west of Kaufmann's Place, some time before 1908 and the company South African Tin Mines Ltd was floated in 1908. Several houses built on the property were the beginning of the town. In 1910, Philip Cohen, opened the first hotel in Naboomspruit, called the 'Naboom Hotel,' together with a general dealer store opposite it. The mine closed down in 1914 due to the low price of tin and bad mining conditions⁸². In July 1923 the first discovery of platinum in South Africa was found on the same mine. The Doornhoek Platinum Mine acquired the mineral rights, but was closed in 1927 due to the fall in the price of platinum. In 1929 a full report of the potential of the property was again submitted by a Mr E R Schoch, but no action was taken⁸³. Since then the mine was opened and closed several times.

The original Naboom Hotel was a simple building consisting of a large eating area, a pantry, kitchen and bar on the streetside. A passage separated these rooms from a small sitting room, a couple of bedrooms and a small bathroom. The bar was a meeting point for everyone in the district where a cooling drink could be obtained after a dusty journey and the latest news could be heard. A small butchery was begun in a section of the shop, where Cohen would occasionally slaughter a buck or a cow. This business grew until he developed the first butchery in Naboomspruit. He sold it in 1936 to a non-Jew Frikkie Geyser who changed the name to 'Naboom Slagtery' [Butchery]. In 1918 Cohen started with a small mill on a concrete block so that he could mill half a bag of mielies for the farmers⁸⁴. Sam Abrahams, another Jew, started the second butchery in Naboomspruit which he called 'SA Slaghuis'.

According to immigration records, in 1925 Abraham Shapiro came from Shat [Seta in Lithuanian] to South Africa to join his uncle Mr and Mrs R Cohen, a general dealer in Naboomspruit. This could be Philip Cohen. The Eugene Marais Primary School in Naboomspruit sported a set of bronze bells used by a group of bell-ringers who appeared on television. These bells were bought with the help of businessman Mr Philip Cohen in 1944⁸⁵.

Another prominent Jewish businessman in Naboomspruit was Barney Reichman⁸⁶. He opened a business one year after Philip Cohen on the eastern side of the railway line. He built his house behind the shop. He had a mill similar to Cohen's on the right-hand side of his shop. In 1925 a large wood and corrugated iron building was built and used for a few years as a mill on the land now used by Pep Stores. It is believed that this building was also owned by Reichman. It was later used as a hall for large functions. The Reichman properties were taken over by the Busch family around 1928/30.

Mr Isaacson lived at Haakdoring, 16 kilometers north of Naboomspruit, in the 1920s. Sammy Freeman was a charcoal manufacturer and his business Freeman Bros was situated at Haakdoring in the 1930s. The first medicine depot in Naboomspruit was situated in a building owned by Mrs Scholl⁸⁷, who owned a large number of buildings in the town in the 1920s⁸⁸. Mrs Scholl and Sammy Freeman erected a block of buildings in the main street between the present Bron Pharmacy and Naboomspruit motors in 1957. Situated in the complex is the 'Naboom Butchery', which Frikkie Geyser moved from its original building in 1958. Ellis Camberg, Mrs Scholl's brother owned E Camberg and Co. He left Naboomspruit for Johannesburg around 1949⁸⁹.

Maurice and Hannah Levi came to Pietersburg from Potchefstroom in 1929. Maurice was a Sanlam insurance agent for the Northern Transvaal. He later bought Central Motors in Mare Street, Pietersburg. Their son Alfred [Alf] went to the joint English-Afrikaans medium primary school in Pietersburg. He had his *Barmitzvah* in Pietersburg in 1938, and was taught by Rev J I Levine.



Alfred and Hanna Levi [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Hannah Levi was very active in the Zionist organization, the National Council of Women and the Transvaal Agricultural Union women's section in Pietersburg. She was also assistant editor of the Zoutpansberg Review. The family moved to Haakdoring in 1939, where Maurice Levi ran a store. As there was no electricity or water there, drinking water was brought to them twice a week by train and water for washing was transported in barrels by a farmer on an ox-wagon. During World War II, Alf Levi alleged that the anti-Semitic Leibbrandt gang set fire to the store by pouring petrol under the door and setting fire to it. The family received no compensation⁹⁰. Robey Leibbrandt, a member of the Ossewa Brandwag, returned to South Africa from Germany in 1941. He held a meeting in Pietersburg, which was well attended by Pietersburgers. Leibbrandt expounded on his ideal to free the country of 'British-Jewish domination'. Shortly thereafter, the Pietersburg police received orders to arrest him for subversive actions against the government. He managed to evade capture whilst hiding on a farm in the Zoutpansberg area, but was later arrested near Pretoria⁹¹.

The first permanent doctor in Naboomspruit in 1930 was Dr Joel, followed by Dr Schlom, both of whom were probably Jewish. Another Jewish doctor working in Naboomspruit in 1949 was Dr Shear⁹². Mr Alge owned a café in Naboomspruit in the 1930s⁹³. Mr and Mrs E Morris owned the Naboomspruit Hotel together with Mr N Weiner in the late 1940s. Mr and Mrs Barney Freedman owned the Central Trading Store. In 1946 a branch of the Transvaal Women's Agricultural Union was started in Naboomspruit with Mrs N Freedman as treasurer⁹⁴.

The community records show only nine to eleven Jewish families living in Naboomspruit in the 1940s

and 1950s⁹⁵. As there were no Jewish congregational facilities, the Jews of Naboomspruit participated in those of Potgietersrus. There was one family living in Naboomspruit in the 1970s but by 1977, Rabbi Engel reported only a Mrs Freedman lived in Naboomspruit⁹⁶. Today there are no Jews living in Naboomspruit.

3] SETTLERS

The town of Settlers, 29 kilometers south-east of Warmbaths, dates back to 1902 after the Second Anglo-Boer War, when Sir Alfred Milner introduced a programme of attracting British immigrants to the former Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics in the hope of preventing a resurgence of Boer nationalism. As a result, Settlers is predominantly English-speaking⁹⁷. Much of the town of Settlers is on the farm Cardiff, which was bought by a Jew, Charles Whyte in 1929. Charles Whyte married Doris Lipshitz of Nylstroom in about 1928. Doris was the sister of Abe Lipshitz who married Daphne Manaschewitz of Pietersburg, and Rose and Esther, who married the Serman brothers of Louis Trichardt. Charles owned a general dealer's store at Tuinplaas [formerly Tuinplaats], 20 kilometers east of Settlers in the early 1920s. Whyte's cousin Tevel [Tevye] Cenciper [Zipper] came to South Africa and joined him at Tuinplaas in 1928. Tevye was a brother to Fanny Mulerov of Warmbaths [daughter Menucha Kutner] and Zelda Jacobson. Charles Whyte brought out the Donde brothers of Potgietersrus to South Africa as well as his nephew Leon Zaiden, who worked at a shop in Tuinplaats. Mocha Smolson and Theo Zipper were in partnership with Percy Wingrin, a cousin of Charles Whyte⁹⁸. Percy and Tina Wingrin were buried in the Warmbaths cemetery on 23 May 1979 and 19 May 1983 respectively. When the farm was sold, the Whyte family moved to Settlers and Charles began buying farms in the area. The 12-roomed Settlers Hotel was built in 1919 and was later owned by him. When Charles died the family left Settlers but still retained their assets there. Whyte's daughters Gwen Heiman and Lesley Levy put the town up for sale. It includes the hotel, bottle store, garage, general dealer and post office. They held on to it for so long because of the family's long association with it.

Jews living in the area of Settlers include Mr and Mrs Davidowitz [Jane Davidowitz was buried in the Warmbaths cemetery on 17 September 1959] and Mr H Fuchs who by 1914 was trading at Mackenzie, a railway siding south of Settlers. Messrs M and L Pack were in business at Settlers and at Skilpadfontein, 29 kilometers south-east of Settlers in the 1920s. They were general dealers and blacksmiths. Mr B Z Hyman, Mr Rogoff, and Mr Segal with Mr Steele were general dealers in the 1930s at Skilpadfontein as was Israel Shapiro. Mr and Mrs Liefer were farmers there in the 1940s⁹⁹. Mr Solomon and Mr Kaplan were in business together in a general dealership in Settlers¹⁰⁰. Mr I Goldberg owned the Settler Commercial Hotel. In 1947 a Zionist function was held at the farm Victory owned by Mr and Mrs Liefer to raise money for Youth Aliyah to Israel.

In 1943 there were 43 Jews in the Settlers area, but by 1953 only three remained¹⁰¹. There were no Jewish institutions in Settlers so the Jews living there were associated with the Warmbaths community. However many of the Jews in Settlers were also associated with Nylstroom through business dealings and family connections.

4] POTGIETERSRUS [MOKOPANE]

Potgietersrus lies 58 kilometers south of Pietersburg. Jews lived in large regions to the north and west of the town up to the Botswana border and also in an area to the south-east of the town. In 1906 tin was discovered on the farm Zaaipplaats, 32 kilometers west of Potgietersrus. In 1935, Potgietersrus officially became a town. Jewish records report that in 1943 the Jewish population comprised 56 souls, with nine in Sterkwater and 16 in Zebedelia. By 1953, the number had dropped to 25 in Potgietersrus and 14 in Zebedelia. However, by 1964 the number had increased again to 56 in Potgietersrus, although only two remained in Zebedelia. There were 15 Jews living in Steilloopbrug in 1973. Unfortunately, by 1980 there were only 16 Jews left in Potgietersrus, 10 in Steilloopbrug and one soul left in Zebedelia. The official census records show that there were 110 Jews in 1936 and 105 in 1951 in Potgietersrus, which does not tally with the Jewish records. However by 1980, the census records 15 Jews and by 1991, five Jews, which is more in line with the Jewish records¹⁰².



Zaaipplaats Tin Mine 1915 [courtesy of Gerald Susser]



Potgietersrus Hebrew Congregation 1932
[courtesy of Beth Hatefutsoth and Annette Bergman and Molly Becker]

Potgietersrus had no synagogue but it has a Jewish cemetery. When someone died, the Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* would travel to Potgietersrus to help them prepare the body. When needed, Jewish men came from Pietersburg to help make a *minyan*. Later the Jews of Potgietersrus would travel to Pietersburg for the High Holy Days. Over the years, the children were taught *cheder* classes, either by a teacher living in the town or by a Rabbi who would travel from Warmbaths, and who would also slaughter kosher meat on his visits.

The Potgietersrus Hebrew Congregation was formed in 1927¹⁰³, becoming the registered owners of erf 194, Potgietersrus on 30 April 1928. The erf was to be used solely for religious purposes. It had no resale value and only minimum assessment rates were charged¹⁰⁴. However, no synagogue building was ever erected. The congregation's records only go as far back as 1957, when the community was asked to pay assessment rates as the property was not being used for the purpose it was intended. The community decided to keep the property in case it would be needed in the future. The property still had to be maintained by the congregation as letters were received from the Potgietersrus Health Department complaining about the long grass and weeds on erf 194 in February 1975, 13 May 1976 and 16 June 1976.

In July 1972, Mr Donde consulted with the SAJBD and advocate Richard Goldstone as to what should be done with the property. The members of the congregation were always too few in number to warrant the building and maintenance of a synagogue and the numbers were dwindling even further. On 18 December 1972, the SAJBD advised Mr Donde to negotiate with the Potgietersrus municipality as the title deed stipulated the erf must be returned in their favour if no synagogue was erected thereon or if the congregation could no longer pay the assessment rates. The town council refused them the right to sell the erf to other religious bodies or to build flats on it.

In 1976 the erf was rezoned for flat rights. The congregation received an account for R230 for arrear assessment rates on 23 February 1976. Being no longer able to pay the higher rates, the congregation wrote to the town council in June 1976 asking them to take possession of the erf on the understanding that they refund the congregation the assessment rates already paid in the past. They should compensate them for the difference of the land value from the time the gift was registered in the congregation's name and the present value. They also asked that if the property was put up for resale, the congregation be given first option to purchase¹⁰⁵. The town council considered their appeal but was unable to accede to their request because of the conditions laid down at the time the erf was granted to the congregation¹⁰⁶. On 2 June 1976 the town clerk granted the congregation an interview for Monday 21 June 1976 on the condition that it submitted a memorandum setting out its representations. After a meeting of the town council on 28 June 1976 it was agreed to refund the rates to the congregation on condition that erf was transferred to the town council and that all rates were paid up to date.

On 24 August 1976 it was resolved that the congregation should approach Barclays National Bank, Potgietersrus for overdraft facilities for the amount of R1000. The congregation appointed Messrs Abe Donde and Abe Urson to negotiate with the municipality. They agreed to abide by their decision and to

share all costs in final settlement of the matter. This agreement was signed by M and R Plaut, A Donde, A Urson, A Bloom, J Fisher, I Glasser, S Lurie and S Albers. The transfer of erf 194 at 89 Pretorius Street, from the Potgietersrus Hebrew Congregation to the Potgietersrus town council was registered at the Deeds Office on 7 December 1976. The municipality paid the congregation R2665-04 on 20 May 1977. A deposit was placed by the congregation in Barkleys Bank for the amount of R1694-14 on 20 July 1977. The Potgietersrus cemetery was looked after by the local municipality from 1977 under the supervision of the Country Communities Department of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies.

The only recorded minister serving the Potgietersrus Jewish Congregation was Rev M I Reichenberg, who came from Warsaw in 1928. Max Weizman was the secretary at that time. As there was no synagogue in the 1930s, services were held for the High Festivals in Holly Hall, attached to Mrs Holly's tearoom. Later the services were held in private homes. In the 1960s, Friday evening services were held once a month, alternating between Potgietersrus, Marble Hall and other towns in the region, followed by a communal dinner. Services were conducted by Mr A Donde¹⁰⁷. A Potgietersrus Helping Hand and Burial Society was started, with the name of Pietpotgietersrust Helping Hand and Burial Society, but the date of its origin is not known¹⁰⁸.

One of the oldest pioneers of Potgietersrus was Leib Levin Schmahan [born 1852] who came to South Africa in 1895. He and his wife Minna [nee Horner, 1855-1941, Latvia] had a shop at Slyphsteendrif, north east of Vaalwater and west of Ellisras [Lephalale] on the Botswana border. They had 11 children, namely Emma, Lily, Bernard, Rosa, Yetty, Hermann, Sascha, Jeannot, Dani, Alex and Zelma, not all of whom lived in South Africa. Bernard married Bertha Zweibeck and they lived in South Africa. Alex came to South Africa in 1905 at the age of 15, according to his daughter Marian, and went to work for Bernard and Sascha. Hating the work, he moved to America, coming back briefly at his mother's insistence but returning thereafter. His girlfriend was reputed to be Merri Himmelhoch. Leib Schmahan died at Slyphsteendrif and was buried in Pietersburg on 10 March 1898, mourned, as his tombstone records, by his wife and children Rosa, Emma and Sascha.

Sascha Schmahan fought for the Boers in the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902¹⁰⁹. He was nicknamed Sasha Snyman or 'Jan Snyman die Jood [the Jew]' because his real name Schmahan was considered unpronounceable. He was also so nicknamed, not in a derogatory manner, but to distinguish him from another Boer with the same name. A number of Jews took part in the great Boer victory at Colenso on 15 December 1899. Young Sascha Schmahan of Slyphsteendrif was one of the sharpshooters on the Tugela who forced the British to abandon ten of their guns¹¹⁰.



Leib Schmahmann's tombstone [courtesy Charlotte Wiener]

Sascha Schmahmann told his story to Roza van Gelderen in April 1943¹¹¹. He arrived in South Africa in 1895. As soon as the Anglo-Boer War broke out he joined up at the age of 17. As he was considered too young to fight, he originally served as a Red Cross orderly. He participated in the action at Rhodes Drift and at Colenso in Natal. The Boers regarded him as a mascot, as the unit had not lost a man since he joined them. Later Schmahmann returned to Slypsteendrif in the Northern Transvaal. It was very difficult for the settlers during this trying time to protect their homes as the country was in turmoil. Schmahmann tells how on 1 April 1900, two Boers camped outside his house to sew their blanket into a pair of trousers with a portable sewing machine and to demand some food. The soldiers' clothes were in tatters and they had to make do with whatever they could find. Ten minutes after they had left, an Englishman arrived looking for food and lodging. As it was Passover Schmahmann and his sister had no bread, nor did they have any *matzos*, so they fed him potatoes and let him sleep on the counter in the shop. A little later, the Boer Commandant Moller arrived and he also demanded food and a bed. They gave him biltong, warned him of English soldiers in the vicinity and saw him on his way. Then they woke the Englishman, warned him of the presence of Boers and saw him off the premises.

Three days later Sascha and his family were captured by Colonel Plumer of the British army and sent to Pietersburg and then to Pretoria. There they were persuaded to escape as the prisoners in the Irene concentration camp were dying like flies. Sascha and his brother made their way to the provost marshal, who put them on parole due to their youth. Schmahman also fought in World War I under General Botha throughout the German South West Africa campaign and was awarded three medals. In the Second World War he volunteered again, but was considered too old to fight, so he joined the Civic Guard. Sasha married Rachel Himmelhoch, a cousin of the Louis Trichardt Himmelhochs.

Wilfred Eitzmann, a Jewish schoolteacher in Pietersburg, collected samples of bone in 1924/5 from Makapansgat Caves, 16 kilometers north-east of Potgietersrus, and sent them to Professor Raymond Dart¹¹² at the University of Witwatersrand. Eitzmann also discovered the 'Makapansgat Pebble' which is naturally shaped to resemble a human face from 3 million years ago. It is believed that an Australopithecus found it and brought it into the cave. It has been suggested that this represents the

earliest example of symbolic thinking of early hominids. Professor Dart's discoveries and interpretations were rewarded with many honours. In 1945 students working under Professor P V Tobias, a well-known palaeoanthropologist at Witwatersrand University, found more bones in the cave. In 1947, J Kitching found the first specimen of the ape-man *Australopithecus* in these caves¹¹³.

Amongst the names first recorded in Potgietersrus is the name of Mr F D Cohen who was an account-holder in the first three months of the existence of Barclays Bank in Potgietersrus in the year 1904. F D Cohen farmed near Potgietersrus and was also a produce dealer¹¹⁴. He married a non-Jewess from St Helena. He was nicknamed 'Schwarze Cohen' [Black Cohen] by the community, as his wife was a coloured woman. It is believed that when he died he was buried next to the fence of the Jewish cemetery in Potgietersrus with the grave in the opposite direction to the other graves, as he had married out of the faith. To bury a person who had married out of the faith near the fence used to be a common practice in Jewish cemeteries. This was done in Potgietersrus, Louis Trichardt and Messina but not in Pietersburg¹¹⁵. Every year Cohen's family would come as a delegation to Mr Fisher at his hotel, as he was the head of the congregation at that time. They requested that Mr Cohen be buried in the Jewish cemetery proper and the grave should be turned the right way round. They were told to contact Rabbi Aloy, the head of the *Beth Din* in Johannesburg. Rabbi Engel, the Country Community's Rabbi, sent his list of those buried in Potgietersrus to the Potgietersrus Hebrew Congregation on 8 July 1975. F D Cohen's name 'male 78 years buried 11.1.51' is included. However his body has since been removed from the Potgietersrus cemetery as the grave is no longer to be found in the cemetery and its whereabouts is unknown¹¹⁶. His family moved to Pretoria but there is no F D Cohen buried in the Pretoria Jewish cemetery.

Another Jew who married a black lady in Potgietersrus appears to be Levy Lipschitz, who married Jacobeth Nong¹¹⁷. The family believe that he was killed after it was discovered that he had married a black lady. After his death, his widow and children were put off the farm in the area of Potgietersrus. The family also reported that his great-grandson, Victor Lipschitz, was allegedly murdered at the University of Pretoria in 1997. He was the first student of colour to complete a B.Sc. at the University. Nobody was ever charged with either murder.

There were several Jews living and trading in the Potgietersrus district in the 1920s. Amongst these were Mr M Alge at Beauty [160 kilometers north-west of Potgietersrus on the Botswana border], Mr Berman and Mr and Mrs Zelig Blesovsky at Gilead, Sol Davin at Grassvalley, Mr A Saget at Mogalakwena and Mr T Tankelowitz and Abraham Lemkin at Sterkwater on the Sterk River, 32 kilometers north-west of Potgietersrus. Abraham Lemkin used to come to the hotel in Sterkwater for his periodic 'binges' and regale everyone with his tales of fighting the Cossacks¹¹⁸. Mr and Mrs Raiken, whose son Bruno became a renowned pianist, also lived at Sterkwater. Leon Karol and his mother had the Groenfontein Cash Store at Sterkwater, previously owned by Elya Falkow, a brother of Gerald Susser's grandfather. Deborah Rebecca Karol died on 17 September 1940 aged 66 and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery. Mr and Mrs S Geselowitz [Gesin] had a general dealer store at Zaaipplaats Tin Mine near Sterkwater which was later taken over by a relative, Mr Glasser. Mr and Mrs Geselowitz's children

were Nathan and Rebecca¹¹⁹. Samuel Lewis Geselowitz died on 5 April 1944 aged 61 and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery. Mr and Mrs Wine farmed near Beauty about 160 kilometers from Potgietersrus. Mr and Mrs Solomon Hurwitz owned trading stores at Beauty and Swartwater¹²⁰ where they farmed tobacco. They came from Kudan, Lithuania before 1930. They had two daughters and a son who attended King David School in Johannesburg. A Fisher traded at Molsgat as A Fisher & Co in 1924¹²¹. M Yatt lived at Molsgat. Abe and Charles Donde traded at Mapedi and farmed near Potgietersrus. Max Lewis married a non-Jewess and lived in Gilead. Mr and Mrs R Kaplan lived at Tolwe, north of Steilloopbrug, 160 kilometers from Potgietersrus.

Simon Jankelowitz came from Riga in 1927 to join his uncle Mr and Mrs Liebson, who owned a store called Liebson Brothers at Zebedelia, 50 kilometers south-east of Potgietersrus. Abram Gerson Jacobsohn and his wife Miriam lived at Zebedelia. [An A G Jacobsohn and his wife Florence had lived earlier in Duiwelskloof but it is not known if this was the same A G Jacobsohn.] Abram died on 8 July 1966 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. Joseph L Gilkowitz [known as Joe Gill] of Zebedelia died in April 1930¹²². Arthur Vos, with his wife Katie, owned a shop at Zebedelia in partnership with George Susser called Susser and Vos. Vos and his wife later moved to Pietersburg where he owned Vos Implements and Hardware. Abraham and Ray Tankel owned a hotel at Zebedelia in the 1930s. They had a daughter Jane. Abraham Tankel was buried in Pietersburg on 30 November 1936 aged 48. Isaac Levin traded at Zebedelia. He was drowned in a flash flood on the way to Pietersburg and his shop was later owned by his sons Cecil and Barney Levin for a short while before they sold it.

Max and Pauline Gordon had a shop at Zebedelia. Max and Pauline Gordon's children were Issy, Philip, Stanley and Esther, who married Sir Herbert Samuel's grandson¹²³. Max Gordon established Flats Milling Co [Pty] Ltd with Mr Brenner and Mr Smythe, a non-Jew. The business was later owned by Messrs Abe and Dave Bobrow who also owned Potgietersrus Malt and Grain Co [Pty] Ltd [the latter with a Mr St C Finaughty]. Abe Bobrow's wife Edith had converted to Judaism. Their children were David and Michael. David married Pauline and their children were Louis and Amanda. Louis and his wife had a daughter named Maisie. Abraham Bobrow was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery on 22 February 1965. He was mourned by his wife Edith and children David and Pauline and grandchildren Louis and Amanda. Jack and Florrie Bobrow [children Morris, Herbie, Mickie and Sheila] first lived in Potgietersrus and owned Jack's Cash Store. Also together with Israel and Sam Fine, he went insolvent at Bakeberg, Masibi's Location and on the farms Malokong, Ham, Prospect Limburg¹²⁴. In the 1970s Florrie moved to Abbot's Poort with her son Mickie.

The firm Hersov Bros owned several trading stores in the northern and eastern areas of the Transvaal in the 1920s. They employed Jews to run their businesses, giving them an option to buy after a year. They offered the workers free accommodation and free cigarettes¹²⁵. The Jews they employed included Charlie Bailey, Sol Daven and Max Smolson at Molsgat, which was later taken over by Solly Colman, and A Duchon at Gravelotte. Max Smolson was an excellent cook and baker and was rather effeminate. Some people referred to him as 'Mrs Smolson' behind his back, which he did not approve of¹²⁶. Alec Dusheiko [married Sylvia Pinkus –children Carol [married Leonard Skok], Geoffrey and Lynne] worked

at Gravelotte, Grass Valley and Molsgat before World War II when he was sent to Madagascar to serve in the Airforce. Leonard Skok was the son of Benny and Ellen Skok and the grandson of Adolph and Sophie Skok [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 3 July 1934 aged 66 and 19 August 1945 aged 45 respectively]



Solly and Jessie Colman [courtesy of the Review]

Solly Colman came from Kurshan in Lithuania in the 1920s and he was the manager of the Mine and Country Stores in 1934, then in 1944 he bought S.B. Cash Stores in Pietersburg¹²⁷. Solly Colman built a school in Mphalele and was a lifelong friend of Dr Cedric Phatudi [1912 -1987] chief minister of Lebowa. Solly Colman donated a wing for the Sandringham Old Age Home in Johannesburg and also one for the Pietersburg Old Age Home as well as a nursery school in Israel. He also donated the *Tahara* House at the Pietersburg Cemetery in memory of his first wife Miriam [nee Pogrund][buried 9 January 1963 aged 41 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery][sister of David Pogrund [buried 18 July 1990 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery], married to Marie; children Morris and Miriam]. They had a daughter Vivienne. His second wife was Jessie and he adopted her two sons, Roy and Charles, as well as his nephew Sonny Norman when he was orphaned at the age of 15. Vivienne married Richard Lee-Warden, they divorced, and then she married Charles Colman. Roy was killed in a work accident in Bloemfontein. Solly Colman was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 1 July 1987.

Lionel Lissoos was a bachelor who owned Gompies Trading Store at Gompies which was 20 kilometers west of Zebedelia. His parents [Mrs Lissoos died in 1966] bought the Goldfields Hotel in Pietersburg, the Duiwelskloof Hotel in Duiwelskloof [now called Modjadjiskloof] and the Messina Hotel in Messina [now called Musina]. Lionel took over the running of these hotels. He was a very generous man. He became so well known amongst the *meshulochim* that none of them missed calling on him to collect money¹²⁸. Mr and Mrs S Sarfin and his mother also had a shop at Gompies, Zebedelia. Their children

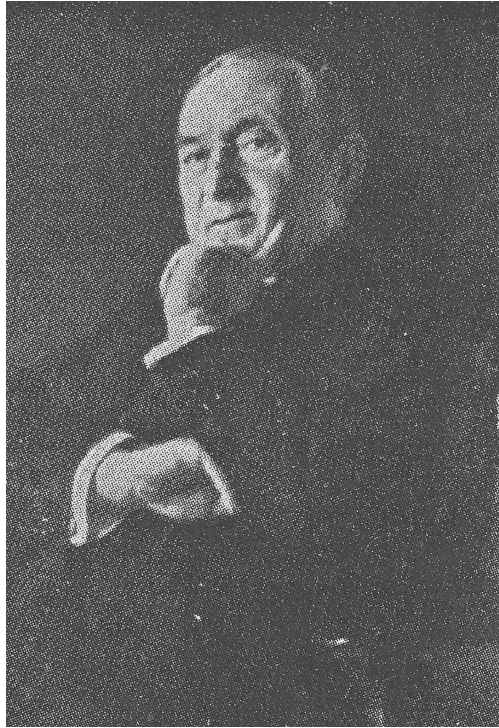
were Barney, Pauline and Teddy. After Teddy Sarfin's *Barmitzvah*, his older brother Barney and Solly Colman had an accident whilst driving back to Johannesburg. They drove into a lorry with an iron girder hanging over the back. Barney was killed outright and Solly carried a mark on his forehead thereafter¹²⁹. Mr J Essakow owned Zebedelia Cash Store in the 1950s¹³⁰. Allen and Nancy [nee Borman, sister of Bessie Meyer of Pietersburg, married to Julian Meyer: children Ralph, Jeffrey and Susan] Blieden were farmers in the 1970s. Their children were Meryl, Peta and Robert. Robert Frank Morris was appointed a Special Justice of the Peace at Zebedelia in 1930¹³¹. His wife Katie died in 1932. She was buried in New England and left a six-month old baby. It is not known if they were Jewish.



Sydney and Dorothy Lurie [courtesy of Rabbi M Silberhaft]

Sydney and Dorothy Lurie farmed near Steilloopbrug, 100 kilometers north-west of Potgietersrus. In 1978 they moved to a farm Zoetveld, eight kilometers from Potgietersrus, but went twice a week to their shop at Steilloopbrug. Their children Edward and Josef attended Yeshiva College in Johannesburg. Alec and David Lurie [a batchelor] were Sydney's uncles. Two brothers by the name of Lurie, charged with arson arising out of the burning of a store at Steilloop, were found not guilty at the Potgietersrus Circuit Court¹³². The business, called Alec Lurie, at Maastroom in the Potgietersrus district was sold to his wife Jane Lurie. His farm Donkerwater was part of his insolvent estate. Alex [Alec] died on 10 October 1955, aged 60, and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery. His tombstone lists his daughter as Loraine and his brothers as David and Isaac and sisters as Bessie and Mary.

At the Gompies Dam, there is a sign reading 'You are now entering Zebedelia, the World's largest citrus estate – a Schlesinger organisation'. Zebedelia was the home of the Amandebele, a tribe that assisted the Transvaal Republic in the war against the Sekukuhne by supplying 400 men, corn and cattle. In 1885 the area was named Zebedelia's Location after the diplomatic chief who had earned the name 'Madediela' – 'the one who pacifies' and this in time became Zebedelia. In 1918 the first planting of orange trees took place.



Isidore William Schlesinger [courtesy of South African Jewry 1976-77]

Isidore William Schlesinger, one of a large family of Hungarian-Jewish immigrants to America, came from America to South Africa. He founded a chain of insurance and banking companies in the 1920s, as well as the country's first chain of radio stations which he sold to the government and which became known as the South African Broadcasting Corporation. He developed the single largest citrus estate in the world at Zebedelia¹³³. The Zebedelia Estate produced three million cartons of citrus annually, of which 70% was exported. In the beginning in order to promote the products of Zebedelia, Schlesinger would give away through his Publix supermarkets a free pocket of oranges with every five shilling's worth of goods purchased. Schlesinger employed thousands of labourers.

Although he had never lived permanently in Zebedelia, when I W Schlesinger died in 1949 at the age of 78 he requested to be buried on his estate. The Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* performed the last rites and he was buried on a hill facing his Zebedelia Estate. A few years later Mrs Schlesinger died and was buried next to her husband. Her son John flew to Zebedelia for her funeral. The Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha*, including Messrs Smulke Solomon, Saks, Palte and Wally Levy once again traveled to Zebedelia to perform the last rites. The conversation at the cemetery turned to the fact that they had not yet been paid for the late Mr Schlesinger's funeral. Mr Wally Levy was authorized to write to the Estate claiming the princely fee of £150 for both funerals. John Schlesinger received a copy of the letter and paid the account promptly. A letter from Nan Diamond, the Director-Public Relations of the Schlesinger Organisation stated that Mr Schlesinger was shocked and surprised to hear that the account of £75 for his father's funeral was still outstanding. A cheque for £500 was included, £150 to cover services rendered in relation to the burial of the late Mr and Mrs Schlesinger and £350 as a donation. In 1974, the South African government bought Zebedelia Estate for R8 million. Today the Zebedelia Estate has been mostly abandoned but the Schlesinger graves are still there.

Amongst those living in the town of Potgietersrus in the 1920s were Mr J Susleias who came from Kursan in 1928 to join his brother-in-law Mr W Soll and Mr and Mrs M Horvitch and their children Gertie

[who was an attorney], Merci and another child¹³⁴. Mr W Sonnenberg was an attorney in Potgietersrus and he and his wife had three children - Gigi, Dina and a son. Mrs Ida Perevoskin from Kupishok [Kupiskis], Lithuania came in 1928 to join her husband. Their children were Chaja, Ester and Rochel. Morris and Taube Clein owned Clein & Co. He was a livestock dealer. Their children were Harold, born in Potgietersrus in 1919, David and Freda. Morris Clein was a brother-in-law of Israel Landy. According to the SAJBD Archives Morris Clein and Israel Landy [died 31 March 1940] and George Susser were buried in the Potgietersrus cemetery. There are no graves at present with these names in the Potgietersrus cemetery but they could be amongst the few that are unmarked. Meyer Schuster, married to Betty, owned the Johannesburg Tailoring and Outfitting Company in the 1940s. Motti and Judy Bergman lived in Potgietersrus in about 1935 with their children Lela, Marjorie and Billy¹³⁵. Mr J and Ann Cowan ran Boston Motor Trading together with Mr M Greenberg and Mr L B Robinson in the 1950s. Their children were Diane and a son. Mr and Mrs Dworsky lived in Potgietersrus with their children Winnie and Aubrey. Mr and Mrs Kruger had four children - Lorna, Jeffrey, Sydney and Myra¹³⁶. They also lived in Louis Trichardt in the 1930s. There was a Dr M Shapiro and a Dr S Kaplan living in Potgietersrus in 1950. Mr Jacob Aronowitz died on 7 January 1942 aged 68 and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery. Peggy Joan Marsden died on 2 April 1932 and is likewise buried there.

Jacob Urson came to South Africa from Dushat [Dusetos], Lithuania in 1913. His wife Bertha joined him in Oudtshoorn in 1921. As he had a brother living in Johannesburg, Jacob moved there and worked in a concession store. Mr A Zaacks from Pietersburg was on a buying trip in Johannesburg when he met Jacob and persuaded him to come and work for him in the Pietersburg area. Jacob first worked at Rosencrantz Trevers, then in 1914 near Riete Dorpenso, 30 kilometers from Pietersburg. Later he opened his own business. He came to Potgietersrus in 1952.



Urson shop at Rosencrantz Treves about 1913 [courtesy of Harold Starkowitz]

Jacob and Bertha's four children Abe, Ann, Sarah, and Lee all settled in the Potgietersrus area, working in stores after they married. Abe married Bernice Kessel; they had a son Arnold. Ann married Louis Bloom [died 14 April 1970, buried in Potgietersrus] in Pietersburg on 29 March 1952; they had two children Ernest and Sonia. Sarah married Sonny Albers, a non-Jew. They had three children - Brian [married a non-Jewess], Clifford [married Jenny - their children are Greg, Brad, Liza, lived in Pietersburg, then Pretoria] and Charlene [married non-Jews Mr Zajic then Mr Lovkis, adopted son Joshua is non-Jewish], Lee married Solly Starkowitz in Pietersburg on 29 June 1947. They had two sons - Charles [married Sandy - their children are Brandon, Jadene, Belinda] and Harold [married Hilary Levy in Pietersburg on 2 March 1975- their children are Neil, Caron and Arnold] and lived in Pietersburg. Lee Starkowitz and her son Charles still live there. Jacob Urson died on 9 April 1962 and Bertha Urson died on 13 April 1969. Both were buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery.



Solly and Lena Starkowitz's wedding [courtesy of Harold Starkowitz]

Back row: Ann Bloom [nee Urson], Wally Levy

Front row: Lily Starkowitz [Abe Starkowitz's wife], Solly Starkowitz, Lena Starkowitz [nee Urson],
Bertha Urson, Jacob Urson, Abe Starkowitz



Back: Brian Albers, Charline Lovkis, Clifford Albers
Front: Sarah Albers [courtesy of Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft]



Solly Starkowitz, Lee Starkowitz, Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, Charles Starkowitz
[courtesy of Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft]



Max Herr's tombstone [courtesy Charlotte Wiener]

Max Herr came from Latvia and went first to Johannesburg and then to Potgietersrus. Max was a trustee of the Potgietersrus Congregation, as was Dr Philip Leftwich in the 1920s¹³⁷. The Waterberg Trading Store was opened by Messrs Max Herr and PA Goetsch, a non-Jew, in 1922 on the corner diagonally opposite the Jones Hotel. In 1931 they moved to what was at the time the most modern store premises in the town. The firm ceased operations not long before the untimely death of Max on 5 October 1941 at the age of 54. He was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery. Messrs Herr and Goetsch established a depot for the handling and processing of groundnuts and eventually disposed of this concern to the Waterberg Farmers Co-op Ltd.

When he came to South Africa, Max Herr hoped to make enough money to bring his wife and daughter Ester out from Latvia to South Africa but he never did manage to do that. Instead he met and married Sylvia Lowenstein in South Africa. Max and Sylvia had three children Helman, Enid and Stanley. Sylvia had a brother Mr L C Lowenstein, whose wife was not Jewish, who worked as a clerk at the Waterberg Trading Store in the 1930s. After Max died, his daughter Ester, who had moved from Latvia to Switzerland, contacted his South African family as her mother had died and she needed help. When she heard that Max had died, she asked that her name be added to his tombstone¹³⁸. The name of Ester can be seen to be added on at the bottom of Max Herr's tombstone in the Potgietersrus cemetery.

Max brought out to South Africa his brother Zachar [Sachar] Herr who married Ada. Their children were Stanley, Dinky and Judy. They had a store at Gilead, 64 kilometers north of Potgietersrus. Zachar gave

the place its name Gilead from the Bible. The young Plaut boys, Abe Donde and Max Lewis used to stay with the Herrs on the High Holy Days. Zachar Herr and his family used to have card games on their farm for Zionist funds and Jews used to come from the whole district for the day. The children were not allowed inside and had to watch through the windows. Zachar Herr died on 29 July 1949, aged 62, and Ada Herr died on 14 November 1982. Both are buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery. Max Herr brought out another brother, I Herr, who was later joined by his fiancé, Masa Chitritt from Riga in 1927¹³⁹.



Max Weizman [courtesy of South African Yearbook 1929]

Louis Hersh was instrumental in acquiring land to establish the Potgietersrus cemetery around 1925¹⁴⁰. Mr and Mrs Louis Hersh's children were Milly, Bella, Judyth, Rose and Theresa. Milly married Max Weizman, a cousin of the first president of Israel, Chaim Weizmann, in 1927. Max was born in Libau, Latvia in 1893 and came to Potgietersrus about 1925. Their children were Myer Simon and Annette. Max was the Hon secretary of the Potgietersrus Hebrew Society and Burial Society. Chaim Weizmann visited them when he toured South Africa in 1932. They left Potgietersrus in 1936. Louis Hersh died on 27 July 1934 and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery.



Back row: Milly Weizman, Max Weizman, Judy Hersch, Rose and Bella Hersh
Front row: Annette Weizman [courtesy of Annette Bergman, Molly Becker and Beth Hatefutsoth]

Zachar [Sender] Hersch was born in Zager, Lithuania in 1888. He immigrated to the Cape where he became a trader. His wife Paula Feitelberg was the daughter of a rabbi and came from Piltan, Latvia. They came to Potgietersrus soon after their marriage in 1925. They opened Rand Furniture Store and their son Oscar Hersch also worked there. The Hersch family moved to Johannesburg in 1939. Their children were Molly, Oscar and a baby Isaac Nathan, who died at the young age of five and a half on 20 August 1935 and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery.



Chippy Kier [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Eddie [Edward][born 1 June 1922] and Chippy Kier [nee Fisher][born 13 July 1923 in Johannesburg] lived in Potgietersrus and had five children- Michael [born 24 April 1950 in Johannesburg], Raymond [born 22 May 1954 in Johannesburg], Sharon [born 14 January 1956 in Potgietersrus], Riva [born 8 November 1957 in Potgietersrus] and Ian [born 5 March 1959 in Potgietersrus]. They moved to Pietersburg in the 1970s but Eddie still worked in Potgietersrus and retained membership of the Potgietersrus Hebrew Congregation.

The first burial in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery was that of Ida Rosa Susser, nee Sohn [1892-1930], wife of Solomon Susser and mother of Phyllis Gertrude and Mervyn Wilfred Susser. Her grave is separated from the other graves as the family reported that she had committed suicide. Solomon Susser was an hotelier, general dealer and butcher and lived at Groenfontein Hotel at Sterkwater from 1914 to 1944. His son Mervyn Susser was an active member of the African National Congress. He became a doctor and was one of the pioneers of epidemiology. He and his wife, Dr Zena Stein, moved to Columbia University. They were amongst the first to draw attention to the AIDS epidemic in South Africa. He was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship for National Sciences USA and Canada¹⁴¹.

Solomon Susser had a brother George Susser [called Gershon der Greener as he was the last one to come to South Africa] who went to live in Piet Retief. Solomon Susser was a cousin of Asher, George and Solomon Susser. This George was called Gershon der Weise by the family as he had flaxen hair [there was another cousin George in Johannesburg called Gershon der Schwartz as he had black hair]. Solomon Susser was a boxer who, under the name Solly Marks, was the Yorkshire Lightweight Champion. Solomon was also a coalminer who contracted phthisis and came to live in Pietersburg where he died and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery around 1934. George with flaxen hair had a shop at

Zebedelia in partnership with Arthur Vos called Susser and Vos. He later moved to Pietersburg and then back to his cousin Solomon in Sterkwater, where he died in 1945. Asher Susser [committed suicide on 25 January 1938 in Rustenburg]¹⁴² married Dora Falkow in June 1915. They lived in Sterkwater near the Zaaiploaats Tin Mine when they first married. He owned A Susser & Co in Sterkwater in the 1920s. Their children were Hilda [born at Sterkwater], Mavis and Gerald.



Gerald and Minnie Susser [courtesy Gerald Susser]

Gerald and Minnie Susser moved to Pietersburg¹⁴³ and owned Northern Transvaal Agencies. He later took Solly Mymin in as a partner¹⁴⁴. Gerald and Minnie had three children Leslie, Asher and Lynette. Gerald Susser and Wally Levy used to go by train from Pietersburg to Sterkwater to attend dances on weekends. Gerald Susser became a sergeant-major in World War II and a personal account of his wartime exploits is to be found in the book *South African Jews in World War II*¹⁴⁵. The family went to live in Israel in the 1960s. Prof Asher Susser is head of the Moshe Dayan Centre at the University of Tel Aviv and is the author of several books on Jordan. Leslie Susser PhD is a senior writer for *Jerusalem Report* and Israeli correspondent for Deutsch Welle Radio.

Descendants of Mr Donde

1	Eliezer Donde	
	+Unknown	
..... 2	Charles [Yecheskel] Donde	
.....	+Unknown	
..... 3	Rebecca [Becky] Donde	
	+Ralph Plaut	
..... 4	Martin Plaut	
	+Lynette	
..... 5	Samantha Plaut	
..... 5	Michelle Plaut	
..... 5	Romy Plaut	
..... 5	Daniella Plaut	
..... 4	Doreen Plaut	
..... 4	Irwin Plaut	
	+Karin	
..... 5	Beverly Plaut	
..... 5	Cheryl Plaut	
..... 4	Leslie Plaut	
	+Marcelle	
..... 5	Rodney Plaut	
..... 5	Adrianne Plaut	
..... 5	Merryl Plaut	
..... 3	Izzy Donde	
	+Shirley Goldberg	
..... 4	Anton Donde	
..... 4	Rael Donde	
..... 4	Clive Donde	
.....	*2nd Wife of Izzy Donde:	
	+Jewel Closenberg	
..... 4	David Donde	
.....	*2nd Wife of Charles [Yecheskel] Donde:	
	+Lily	
..... 2	Abraham [Abe] Donde	1900 -
	+Rachel [Rae] Ossinowsky.....	1915 -
..... 3	Heather Donde	
..... 3	Leonard Donde	
	+ Margot	
..... 4	Lee-Ann Donde	
..... 4	Jonathan Donde	
..... 4	Lindsay Donde	

Abraham [Abe] Donde was born in Kersovka, Latvia on 16 March 1900. Abe was the youngest of seven or eight children. His father Eliezer died when he was 13, and as a result he had to leave school and went out to work selling salt. He came to South Africa by boat, via St Helena, at the age of 25 to join his brother Charles, who had left Eastern Europe to escape being drafted into the army. Charles and his wife's children were Rebecca [Becky] and Izzy. Izzy Donde was married to Shirley Goldberg; their children were Anton, Rael and Clive. Izzy's second wife was Jewel Closenberg. They had a son, David, and another son who died when he was 8 months old. Charles Donde wanted to buy his brother Abe out of the business but Abe managed to obtain a loan and bought Charles out instead. There was some bad feeling between the two brothers as a result, so Charles went to live in Warmbaths. There he married Lily who had adult children¹⁴⁶.



Abe and Becky Donde and grandchildren Guy and Dannie [courtesy of Heather Donde]

Abe Donde had a concession store in Mapela location near Potgietersrus, where he sold dry goods and cattle. He owned the farm Trefusis, where his son Leonard later lived, and another farm De Hoogedoorns, where he himself lived. Abe met his wife Rachel [Rae] Ossinowsky [born 5 September 1915] from Benoni when his niece, Becky Donde, brought some of her friends from Johannesburg for a visit. Abe and Rae Donde's children were Heather and Leonard. Leonard married Margot and their children are Lee-ann, and twins Jonathan and Lindsay. One day, after being away from the farm for a day, they were told that a witch doctor had been looking to abduct the twins for *muti*. Margot Donde and the children later went to live in Pietersburg so the children could attend school there and returned to Potgietersrus at the weekends. The family moved to Sydney, Australia in 1998.

Rae sold the cream and butter she made on the farm to the Pietersburg Creamery. Heather relates that her father Abe Donde had brought a *Sefer Torah* from Latvia to the farm. It was kept in an ark in his office and on Friday nights, before *kiddush* was said, the Donde's children Len and Heather were taken to kiss the *Sefer Torah*, along with any visitors who were there for the meal. On the High Festivals the Dondes would stay in Potgietersrus or go to family in Benoni. As the number of Jews living in Potgietersrus began to decline, Abe decided to donate the *Sefer Torah* to the Pietersburg synagogue in 1967. The Potgietersrus community had no synagogue, so the community would hire a hall for the High Festivals. They arranged for someone to come from Johannesburg to conduct the services. One year they even used the town hall. They would also gather for *yahrzeits* and Abe Donde would lead the service. Sometimes they would go to the Pietersburg synagogue for a *minyan*. The Plauts, Donde, Krikst, Glasser, Urson and Fisher families were called on for a *minyan* and if needed, they would ask a travelling salesman staying at a hotel to make up the necessary ten men. Abe Donde headed the *Chevrah Kadisha* in Potgietersrus.

Rev Hazdan used to come from Warmbaths to teach *cheder* once a week and to slaughter chickens. However, as there was no permanent *shochet* in Potgietersrus, Abe Donde used to slaughter animals for his family himself. Heather says he knew how to remove the necessary veins from the animals that rendered them *treif*. The family kept separate dishes for meat and milk. For Passover the family would obtain their *matzah* from Johannesburg and would soak their glasses to make them kosher for *Pesach*. Heather Donde went to school in Pietersburg and she was amongst those students who had to carry their desks from the Pietersburg primary school to Capricorn High School when the school first started. She later went on *aliyah* to Israel. When it was time for her son to have his *Barmitzvah*, she brought him to South Africa to have the celebration in Pietersburg. However, her father Abe died on Christmas Eve just before the *Barmitzvah* and was taken to Johannesburg to be buried. The Potgietersrus ladies took the food that they had prepared for the *Barmitzvah* to Azne Krikst's house in Johannesburg instead. Every night thereafter for the week of *shiva*, Jewish men traveled from Pietersburg to Potgietersrus to help to make up a *minyan*.



Becky Plaut [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Max and Ralph Plaut came from Willingshausen, Germany, and farmed in the district of Steilloopbrug and Marken, 100 kilometers north of Potgietersrus. Max married Sadie Daniels from Cape Town; they had no children. His second wife was Gertie. Max used to fast the day before *Pesach*, as the oldest son is supposed to do. Ralph Plaut married Becky Donde and they had four children - Leslie [married Marcelle; their children are Rodney, Adrienne, Merryl, moved to Australia], Martin [married Lynette - children Samantha, Michelle, Romy and Daniella], Doreen [moved to England] and Irwin [married Karin - children Beverly, Cheryl, they moved to Australia]. Motti Benson with his wife Judy, was the farm manager for the Plauts. Leslie Plaut was born prematurely so Ralph bought the first incubator in Potgietersrus.

Morris Pleaner called his shop Mozambique Stores as it was on the farm called Mozambique. He sold it to Charles and Abraham Donde, trading as Donde Brothers, on 12 June 1930¹⁴⁷. Abraham Lotz came from Rezitsa, Latvia in 1928 to join his brother-in-law Mr J Pleaner. Lotz and Pleaner were partners

in a shop selling animal skins. Lotz also ran a hotel. Abraham Lotz's wife [nee Nagel] and daughter came to South Africa in 1936. He also had a brother who arrived in South Africa in 1935. Abraham's son Issy joined the South African army in World War II at the age of 17. After the war, Issy stayed in Potgietersrus for a short while, before leaving for Benoni where he joined his uncle, Mr Pleaner, who had moved there¹⁴⁸.

In 1922, Mr L Brodie ran the Queens Hotel, the forerunner of the Grand Hotel. Jacob and Morris Polovnik owned the Potgietersrus Hotel in 1925. John and Becky Fisher ran a bottle store at Jagersfontein, then a hotel at Trompsberg and Rouxville. They came to Potgietersrus in 1936 at the time of the Depression as they hoped their prospects would be better there. Mr Dave Grossmark was Becky Fisher's brother and was the manager of Jones Hotel, which was previously owned in the 1930s by a Jew, Mr Brown. Mr and Mrs Grossmark's children were Gillian and Jonathan. Later, John Fisher ran the Grand Hotel. Sam Kaliski was a Jewish barman there.



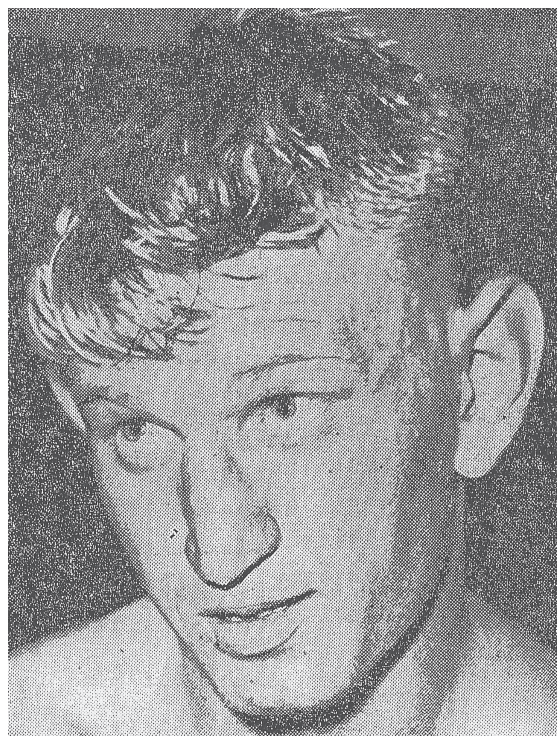
Jones Hotel, Potgietersrus [from the collection of the Pietersburg Museum]

John Fisher was a member of the Nederlandic freemasons. John and Becky Fisher's children were Estelle [married Tim Joffe] and Jose [married Marcelle - children Selwyn, Kevin and Cheryl [married Andrew Slome and living in Mauritius]. John Fisher died aged 56 and was buried in Potgietersrus on 2 November 1941. A memorial gate was consecrated at the Potgietersrus Cemetary in November 1958, in the name of the late Mr John Fisher, by the Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha*. After John died, Becky managed the Jones hotel until their son Jose was old enough to take over. Jose was a partner with Mr Dreyer in the Orinoco Hotel in the 1970s. Estelle Joffe [nee Fisher] says that she was taught at school in

Potgietersrus during the war years by German nuns, who treated her very well despite her being Jewish. The Afrikaans speaking inhabitants treated her family with respect. She returned to Potgietersrus in 1955 to help run the hotel with her brother Jose¹⁴⁹. Montague Gordon Fisher died on 17 April 1951 and was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery.

Rubin Essakow [died 4 February 1952 aged 65 and was buried in Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery – his tombstone is in Afrikaans] was a Jew who owned Rand Furniture Store, a business started by Mr Sender Hersch and a transport business. Rubin Essakow married a non-Jewess and they had seven children – Morris, Paul, Ruth, Hubert, Den, Orpah and Naomi. Ruth married a Jewish man, Max Lewis.

Hubert Essakow [born 9 May 1934] received renowned acclaim in South Africa as a boxer, who wore a *magen david* on his shorts. However, in 1956, Hubert was knocked unconscious by Willie Toweel in a boxing match. He lay in a coma for 14 days before he died. After he died, the citizens of Potgietersrus took it for granted that he would be buried in the Jewish cemetery as the family had always been regarded by the local townsfolk as being Jewish. They came to ask the local Jews for the time of the burial and whether they had to wear hats to a Jewish funeral¹⁵⁰. The Potgietersrus Jewish community was in a predicament, as Hubert was not considered Jewish according to Jewish requirements, as his mother was a non-Jewess. Mr John Fisher phoned Chief Rabbi L Rabinowitz to ask his advice. The Chief Rabbi gave his permission for Hubert's burial in the Jewish cemetery. The Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* performed the last rites. Mr Wally Levy, a member of the *Chevrah Kadisha*, clearly recalls that Rev Levine performed a token bris on the body before Hubert was buried, which was most unusual. He was buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery on 22 March 1956. The Rand Daily Mail reported that a memorial service for Essakow, conducted by Chief Rabbi Rabinowitz and attended by such prominent Jewish sports personalities as the wrestler Abe Wiseman, soccer referee I Woolf and former South African lightweight champion Dave Katzen, was held in the Great Synagogue in Wolmarans Street.



Hubert Essakow



Hubert Essakow's tombstone [courtesy Charlotte Wiener]

Although he was not technically Jewish, Hubert's brother Paul Essakow [born 20 July 1928] was also buried in the Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery on 22 March 2005, allegedly by the local priest, as there was no Jewish congregation left in the town. The tombstone also has the name Hetta 18 August 1934 inscribed on it. It is presumed she will want to be buried in the same place, although she is not Jewish at all.



Mrs S L Solomon 1930

There were several Jewish men in Potgietersrus who married non-Jewish women who were converted to Judaism. Harris Solomon, brother of Samuel Solomon and Mrs Friedman, owned Potgietersrus Produce

Company with Mr Barney Krikst. Mrs S L Solomon [Dora] was a convert to Judaism and kept a kosher home. Barney and Miriam Krikst's children were Azne [married Sydney Dinkelspiel of Pietersburg, divorced, then married Aaron Len of Messina], Charmaine and Brian Krikst. Mr Jack Friedman was a shopkeeper and he and his wife had three children Dora, Fanny and Bertha.

Another woman from Potgietersrus wrote to the congregation asking to be converted to Judaism. She was a Seventh Day Adventist who kept the Sabbath and had been inspired by Israel's Independence. Her case was referred to the Johannesburg *Beth Din*.

Mr S R Glasser lived near Zaaiplaats Tin Mine. Issy and Sarah Glasser were at Sterkwater. Their children were Myer and Aaron. They moved to Hammanskraal district in 1976 to join Aaron who had a farm at Hammanskraal and Rust de Winter. Myer Glasser, married to Maisie, also farmed in Hammanskraal and Rust de Winter around 1968, before going to Israel from 1975 until 1981, then he returned to Pretoria. Myer commuted twice a week to the farms. Their children were Avi, Saul and Ilan.

Aaron Glasser married a non-Jewess, Anne Penz, whom he met whilst teaching. Ann wanted to convert to Judaism but the *Beth Din* would not allow it. Abe Donde believed that the *Beth Din* would comply if the applicant's community requested it. In 1967, Messrs Kier and Donde wrote on behalf of the Potgietersrus community to the *Beth Din* in Johannesburg to support Miss Anne Penz's application to convert to Judaism. They believed that Mr Aaron Glasser of Pretoria, who had grown up in the Potgietersrus district, had 'always been a fine son and a good Jewish boy'. His parents had a 'real *Yiddishe hartz*', and they had worked hard all their lives. They lived far from the center of Jewish life but they were heart-broken at the thought of his marriage to a non-Jewess. They hoped that Anne could convert to Judaism. Whether their application had any influence or not, the *Beth Din* did subsequently agree to convert Anne. Aaron and Ann Glasser's children were Leonard, Kathy and Meryl.

Potgietersrus produced some famous men and women. Mr and Mrs Raiken's son, Bruno, became a renowned pianist. Gertie Horvitch, daughter of Mr and Mrs M Horvitch, a general dealer in Potgietersrus, studied law at Natal University, did her articles in Potgietersrus for Louis Peens and then moved to Johannesburg when women lawyers were the exception. In 1938 she became a partner in the law firm, Jack Behrman and Horvitch, and played a leading role in the management of the Johannesburg Attorney's Association. Miriam Kinkel became president of the local branch of the National Council of Women in 1958¹⁵¹.

As Potgietersrus did not have a minister, they were constantly looking for a teacher to teach their children. Chief Rabbi L Rabinowitz visited Potgietersrus in 1950 to visit the Jewish facilities. He arranged that Rev Levine, the minister in Pietersburg, would visit them once in every two months. Rabbi Hazdan, the minister of Warmbaths, could also be called upon if necessary to help them¹⁵². In 1955, Rabbi Dr J Newman, the Country Communities Rabbi, toured the northern Transvaal. He found that Rabbi Hazdan had been visiting Potgietersrus once a week since 1953 to teach the six children *cheder* and to provide *schechita*. The arrangement was that the Potgietersrus community would contribute £25 per month

towards the funds of the Warmbaths community and the National Country Communities committee would pay his traveling expenses of the same amount. However, the Potgietersrus community had not been paying Rabbi Hazdan. As a result they were £350 in arrears. Rabbi Newman discovered that only three of the eight families then residing in Potgietersrus were interested in paying for the minister as the others did not have children in the *cheder* nor did they keep kosher. It was decided that the outstanding amount must first be paid to Warmbaths and in future Potgietersrus would pay the South African Jewish Board of Deputies [SAJBD] its monthly payments and the SAJBD would then pay Warmbaths. Rabbi Newman felt that this committed the SAJBD to £600 per annum, which they could not afford. Potgietersrus was already receiving a higher subsidy than most other communities. On his return to Potgietersrus a few days later, the community handed him a cheque for £300 to forward to the Warmbaths Congregation. They promised to forward a cheque for £75 quarterly.

Rabbi Hazdan reported that the children of Potgietersrus made full use of the correspondence courses lessons. A suggestion that Rev Mannschein of Pietersburg travel to Potgietersrus by taxi to give *cheder* lessons, did not appear to work out as the children were already used to Rabbi Hazdan. Rabbi Hazdan had been employed by Warmbaths on the understanding that he would also serve another community to supplement Warmbaths funds. The only other communities near Warmbaths were Brits, 134 kilometers, or Bronkhorstspuit, 145 kilometers from Warmbaths, neither of which showed an interest in acquiring his services. Potgietersrus is 120 kilometers from Warmbaths¹⁵³ and was the only community that showed an interest.

Mr A Levine delivered a lecture to the Jewish community of Potgietersrus on 8 June 1958. 20 members attended, some traveling from as far away as 96 kilometers. He also addressed Jews and non-Jews at the National Council of Women, of which branch Mrs Krikst was president. Mr Levine reported that 11 children received tuition from the Warmbaths minister who traveled to Potgietersrus once a week¹⁵⁴.

Between 1959 and 1962, there was no *shochet*, but in 1964 kosher meat was obtained from Pietersburg¹⁵⁵. Asne Krikst taught three children in 1961. The Potgietersrus Congregation asked that Rabbi J Scherer of Pietersburg help their community once a week with *cheder* classes in the 1960s as they had been sending their children by car to Pietersburg for lessons. Unfortunately it proved impossible to arrange this and they were advised to find alternate arrangements.

Rabbi E J Duschinsky, the Country Communities Rabbi, visited Potgietersrus on 23 August 1964. A communal meeting was held at Mr Kier's home. All the Jews of Potgietersrus and the surrounding areas attended, as well as Rabbi and Mrs Scherer and a five-member delegation from Pietersburg. The Rabbi suggested that the Potgietersrus community should send their children for the weekends to Pietersburg, where they would stay with the Scherer family and attend *shul* services. All the ladies agreed to source their kosher meat from Pietersburg. The Rabbi exhorted them to foster a spirit of togetherness among the Jewish community. He reported that the Potgietersrus cemetery had a fine *Tahara House*¹⁵⁶.

A retired Rabbi, Rabbi Meyer Gordon, was brought out to Pietersburg by Mr Sam Palte and lived in Potgietersrus in 1966 with his wife Ruth, a qualified Hebrew teacher. Ruth established the Potgietersrus *Talmud Torah* in 1966 and agreed to teach the children two to three times a week at R80 per month. However, the Potgietersrus community needed a subsidy of R40 from the SAJBD to be able to afford this. They wrote twice to the SAJBD and the only reply to their request was that the matter was receiving attention from the appropriate committee. The Potgietersrus Community was upset as they felt they paid money to the United Communal Fund and did not see any help coming from them. They became so desperate that they even approached Mrs Palte to assist them, as she was the Pietersburg representative at the SAJBD. It was said at the meeting 'if Mrs Palte cannot do anything about the matter, nobody can'. The matter was put before the SAJBD but no money was forthcoming. There were no funds available to assist them and the SAJBD had not given any subsidies since 1959, so the community decided to stop asking.

The first *Batmitzvah* ceremony was held in Potgietersrus in 1966, celebrated by Sonia Bloom. Rabbi J Klevansky, Inspector of Hebrew Schools of the South African Board of Education, was the guest speaker. Mr E Kier, chairman of the Potgietersrus Congregation, welcomed them all. Other speakers were Ruth Gordon, who had instructed the *Batmitzvah* girl, Rabbi Scherer of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation, Mr Beron, chairman of the Pietersburg Congregation and Mr Brenner, chairman of the Pietersburg Hebrew classes¹⁵⁷. Also in 1966, a *Sefer Torah* was handed to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation by the Potgietersrus community for safekeeping.

Mrs Gordon then asked for an increase in salary from £80 to £100 as her husband, who was now selling agricultural implements, was struggling in the drought. Only a few families had children of school going age and these families could not afford to send several children to Hebrew classes. Rabbi and Mrs Gordon moved to Parys in 1967, where Rabbi Meyer Gordon became the minister of the congregation there.

Mrs Donde and Mrs Kier took over the *cheder* classes until 1971. In 1972, Rev Belitsky traveled to Potgietersrus to teach the classes. After that, children were sent to boarding school in Pietersburg, attending Hebrew classes in the afternoon. Boarders in Pietersburg included Albers, Blieden, Urson and Fisher from Potgietersrus, B Isaacs from Francistown, and Silberman from Bandelierkop¹⁵⁸.

A letter was received by the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation from Mrs B Urson of Potgietersrus explaining that Rev Wolfson had prepared a tape and ordered the book to teach her son Arnold his Barmitzvah portion for 3 June 1972, as he maintained this date coincided with 23 June 1972, his Jewish birthday. Her son had been prepared for his Barmitzvah by Mrs Donde in Potgietersrus, but when he visited Rev Belitzky during December, he was told by him that the *maftir* and *haftorah* were incorrect and had to be changed to 24 June 1972. He had since become a boarder at school in Pietersburg and was able to learn the new portions from Reverent Belitzky. It appears that Reverent Wolfson also made the same mistake with Ian Kier of Potgietersrus¹⁵⁹.

The Potgietersrus and District Women's Zionist Society was formed before 1954, when it was represented at the 24th Zionist Conference. It had sub-committees for the Jewish National Fund, cultural activities, catering and sewing groups. On 15 November 1973, following the Yom Kippur War, the Potgietersrus Congregation sent a cheque for R1689 to the Women's Zionist Council for their Emergency Israeli Appeal. They raffled a hi-fi set and held a jumble sale. The members of the Potgietersrus Zionist society in 1975 were Mesdames S Albers, A Bloom, Florrie Bobrow [Abbot's Poort], R Donde, M Fisher, S Glasser [Tinmyne], D Lurie, R Plaut and S Plaut.

Today, the only Jews left in Potgietersrus are the Albers family. The Potgietersrus municipality looks after the Jewish cemetery. The tombstones have been laid flat and there is a wire fence around the cemetery. The *ohel* is still standing but it is used by the municipality to store lawnmowers. There are two retired families in the Waterberg district near the Entabeni Game Lodge. The last Jew in Warmbaths are the Hack family. Mr Hack has sold the Warmbaths synagogue and Rabbi's house.

5] ROEDTAN:

Roedtan lies 50 kilometer south-east of Potgietersrus. It was laid out on the farm Bysonderheid and was proclaimed a town in 1956. The name Roedtan comes from the Dutch word 'rottang' which means cane, a plant that was grown in the area.

The earliest known Jews living in the area were Mr and Mrs I Skolsky [Skoll]. He owned Mutue Fides Store at Grass Valley in 1922 on the tin mine with the same name, 25 kilometers south east of Roedtan. He moved to Naboomspruit in 1927. Hymie [born 1910] and Julius Pulerewitz came to Johannesburg in 1926 and 1928 respectively from Janisok [Joniskis], Lithuania. They came to Roedtan together with their cousin, Simon Polokowsky, in 1930 and opened a trading store in the area. The Pulerewitz brothers bought property in the Roedtan area and in 1956 they established the township of Roedtan on their land, just as Mr Kahan had done in Soekmekaar [see Soekmekaar]. They built a hotel, a police station and a post office and gave land to build a health clinic. The Pulerewitz family moved to Johannesburg and left a manager, Mr Lazarof, in charge of their businesses. Julius Pulerewitz was an executive member of the Revisionist Party, worked for the IUA and in 1932 was one of the founders of the journal 'Basad', which dealt with art, cultural and literature matters. He was also chairman of the Orange Grove Hebrew Congregation. Hymie Pulerewitz was president and chairman of the Sydenham Highlands North Congregation and a member of the Federation of Synagogues and the SAJBD¹⁶⁰.

Ruben Essakow lived in Roedtan before 1930 and worked as a speculator [see Potgietersrus]. Mr and Mrs J Blecher owned Blecher's Trading Store and left Roedtan in the 1960s. Their children were Michael, Rosie, Claris, Masha and Sheila. Mr and Mrs S B Davin lived in Grass Valley and had two children. Mr and Mrs M Bletcher lived at Roedtan.

As there were no religious facilities in Roedtan, Jews were included in the Potgietersrus community from the 1940s to the 1960s. In 1966, monthly Friday night services were rotated between Potgietersrus,

Roedtan and Marble Hall. By 1978 there were no Jews left in Roedtan, although some of the businesses were still owned by Jews.

6] MARBLE HALL:

Marble Hall lies 96 kilometer south-east of Potgietersrus. Marble was found there in 1907. Two Jews from Pretoria, Messrs Solomon Selesnick and S Michaelson, established the Marble Lime Company in 1929 and Solomon's son Abe came to build the plant. The name Marble Hall comes from the Afrikaans word 'Hol' [hole] referring to the depression in which the marble was first found. The village was proclaimed in 1945.



Abe and Bess Selesnick [courtesy of Beth Hatefutsoth]

Amongst the earliest Jews living in the area were Mr and Mrs I Maltz, who in 1928 had a general dealer's store in Nebo, 30 kilometers east of Marble Hall. They were joined in 1929 by Louis and Fanny Maltz from Witbank. Jeffrey and Molly [nee Wingrin] Gaddin took over Marble Hall Mills from Percy and Tina Wingrin [buried in Warmbaths] in 1972. The Gaddin children are Jo-anne Helen, Lorna Cheryl, Devina and Daniella. Percy and Tina Wingrin were members of the Warmbaths Congregation. Louis and Solly Weizmann owned Marble Hall Trading Company in the 1950s and 1960s, which was taken over by Solly Chaskelson in 1971. Solly commuted during the week between Johannesburg and Marble Hall. Several Israeli families came to Marble Hall in the 1970s to teach the farmers about cotton farming¹⁶¹. Hymie and Jane [Illman] Himmelhoch came from Bandelierkop and started a business in the village. Hymie lived there but commuted to his family in Pretoria on weekends. One of their children is Shirley, who married Solly Herr.

There was no Jewish minister living in Marble Hall. In the 1960s, it was therefore proposed that Rabbi Scherer of Pietersburg visit to teach the children *cheder*. However, this did not materialize. In the 1970s Mesdames Gaddin and R Becker taught the children *cheder* using the SAJBD's Mother-Teacher Scheme. In 1988, SAJBD Country Communities Rabbi S Zaiden, officiated at the wedding of Mr and Mrs J Gaddin's daughter in Marble Hall.

On 18 November 1965, the Marble Hall branch of the Women's Agricultural Union held its annual International Evening with Israel as its chosen country for that year. A five-course dinner was prepared under the instructions of Mrs Percy Wingrin. Mr Jack Hirschmann of Pietersburg was the guest speaker and he illustrated his talk with slides and a film on Israel¹⁶².

B] PIETERSBURG DISTRICT

B] PIETERSBURG [POLOKWANE¹⁶³]

Jews owned trading posts or farmed in remote areas around Pietersburg, many on black tribal lands. The *Zoutpansberg Review* used to publish the sale and transfer of various businesses and farms in the the area, enabling us to capture a small piece of the history of these isolated Jews, as well as giving us a record of who lived there. Mr E Toderovitz had a burglary at his Legalies Store in 1930, the first burglary in his twenty years of business. Blankets, clothing, suitcases, biscuits and sweets were stolen¹⁶⁴. Oscar Heymann and Hermann Hirsch traded as Oscar Heymann and Co on the farms Lissa, Buffelshoek, Inveraan, Bouwlust, Gemarke and Borkum¹⁶⁵. Oscar Heymann transferred Madyetane Trading Store at Matala's 'location'¹⁶⁶ to Max Hirschowitz, Lissa Store to Max Miller and Tibanefontein Trading Store to Louis Mincer¹⁶⁷. Julius and Manny Kruger were produce and grain merchants at Legalies in 1916. In August 1930, the partnership between B Bloch and Judel Bloch was dissolved. The general dealer store called P Boyarsky and Son on the farm Lanark number 971, district Pietersburg was owned by Peretz and Abram Boyarsky. The business J Katz & Co operating at Piesanghoek, Gordon and Fleurfontein was sold by J Katz, I Katz and S Katz on 1 February 1930¹⁶⁸. K Markowitz, a farmer of Mynhartskraal, appeared in the Pietersburg Magistrate's Court for assaulting a Messenger of the Court, who came to seize his assets. He claimed to have none, but he had five cattle, two donkeys and poultry. He was fined £5, suspended for three months¹⁶⁹.

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives recorded the names in the early 1900s of several Jews owning trading stores in remote areas surrounding Pietersburg, who donated money to Zionist funds. Gershon Feldman had a shop in the settlement called Nobody in 1919. Leon Katz was born in Dvinsk in 1911 and he lived at Kalkbank and Dendron, where he owned Dendron Stores. He was a country member of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery in 1986. His wife was not born Jewish. Mr and Mrs I Wolffe lived at Blinkwater.



Leon, Jack, Phyllis, Barney, Harold Levin [courtesy of Scully Levin]

Ellis Levin [buried 31 July 1960 in the Pietersburg cemetery, married Frieda Chasen] had farms at Kareebosch, Bandelierkop and Tzaneen. He also owned the Pietersburg Mineral Water factory. Their children were Harold, Jack, Leon, Barney and Phyllis. Barney was a volunteer in Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Harold's son Scully Levin flew for South African Airways. Ellis Levin's wife Frieda [nee Chasen] was a first cousin to the authoress's mother Ethel Chazen [buried Pietersburg 30 April 1984].

Myer Tankel had a shop at Dwarsrivier and Sandfontein. Myer [30 Dec 1892 - 29 Dec 1975] and his wife Hannah [25 December 1894 - 9 March 1976] are both buried in Pietersburg. Their children were Jack and David. Several Jews were farmers in the Pietersburg area. Messrs T and S Rosenthal were farmers at Marabastad in 1904. Willy Halberstadt farmed in Sekukuneland [children Marcia and Fonda; the latter married Mark Dubb and lived in Pietersburg]. Other farmers around Pietersburg were Victor Miller, Sam Bolon, Sydney Segal, Simon Worms, Solly Tager and Raymond Katzman.

Paul [Phillip] Fainberg had a general dealer shop at Dwarsrivier. He married Sarah [Sekkies] Wolpe, [daughter of Abraham and Bessie Wolpe and sister of Rachel [married Louis Menachemson; children Mervyn and Cynthia] in Pietersburg on 26 May 1940. Their children were Colin, Eve [married Albert Akres in Pietersburg on 9 August 1964] and Fay. The Wolpes were related to Harold Wolpe, who escaped with Arthur Goldreich from prison.

Arthur Goldreich [born 25 December 1929] was actively involved in political resistance against the Nationalist Government¹⁷⁰. Arthur was the son of Samuel and Sadie Goldreich and brother of Doreen [married Reeve Arenstein in Pietersburg on 8 January 1949] and Hilary. Samuel's parents came from England at the end of the 19th Century. His father fought in the Anglo-Boer War for the British. Samuel had arthritis so he moved to Pietersburg in 1937 to a warmer climate. He was a manager at Remmers and Niss Furniture Store. Goldreich was educated in Afrikaans at the Pietersburg *Höerskool*¹⁷¹. A noteworthy incident during this time was his refusal to read a Hitler Youth magazine as part of his German instruction and demanded – successfully that he and his fellow Jewish pupils be taught Hebrew instead¹⁷². He explains that he was affected by what happened to the Jews in Europe during World War II and equated racism in Europe with South African apartheid policies. His parents supported Zionism and Arthur was a volunteer during Israel's War of Independence in 1948, where he learned how people were prepared to fight for their freedom and independence. This influenced him to support armed resistance in South Africa. He served in a kibbutz unit of the Palmach based on Kibbutz Mayan Baruch. Thereafter, he lived in Israel for several years before returning to South Africa in 1954, and becoming a successful abstract artist and designer.

Arthur became active in the Congress of Democrats and became a front man for the communist underground movement. He was captured together with Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the *Umkhonto we Sizwe* underground movement in 1963 at Liliesleaf Farm, the group's secret headquarters in Rivonia, Johannesburg. Goldreich, together with Harold Wolpe and two other prisoners, escaped from Marshall Square Police Station in Johannesburg and fled South Africa through Swaziland. Wolpe had relatives, the Fainbergs, in Pietersburg and their house was watched for some time by the police in case he sought refuge with them¹⁷³. When interviewed, Goldreich declared that he was disappointed that the Jews of Pietersburg supported the National Party's policy of white supremacy¹⁷⁴. Goldreich finally settled in Israel and Wolpe in England. Arthur became a professor of interior design and architecture at the Bezalel School of Arts in Israel. He died on 24 May 2011 in Israel.

Harry Lidven was an Ochberg orphan¹⁷⁵. He married Dora Bloom [born Parys, 14 March 1914], daughter of Joseph and Sophy Bloom [both buried Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, 15 September 1970 and 30 August 1971 respectively] on 20 February 1938 in Pietersburg. They settled at Leshoane, 30 kilometers outside Pietersburg, around 1938. Dora's sister, Sarah [born 1909, died 25 September 1967 and buried in Pietersburg] and brother-in-law Joseph Jedwood [born 1896 and died 27 April 1973 and buried in Pietersburg] already lived in Leshoane [Legalies]. Jedwood [Jedwovsky] came from Grodno, Poland to Johannesburg before he owned a general dealer's store at Legalies. They eventually sold it to the Lidvens. Joseph was a private during WWII. The Jedwoods had three sons, Simon, Norman and Morris and all three lived in Pietersburg. Simon married Lynette Dinkelspiel [daughter of Fritz and Martha, sister of Sydney - daughter Sharon] in Pietersburg in December 1966, they divorced then he married Marilyn; daughter Jo-anne. Marilyn had a son Jason Ovsiovitz from her first marriage. Norman married Rena Polessky [daughter of Leon and Luba - buried 6 March 1966 and 1 July 1975 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery respectively] children- Angela, Glynn and Leon]. Sarah Jedwood died accidentally when she ran between her son Morris and a burglar he was shooting towards. The bullet went through his mother and the burglar. The burglar was found dead a block away from the house.

The Lidvens moved into Pietersburg in 1951, where they ran Lidven's Credit Store. They had two daughters, Laurane and Anita. Laurane married Louis Klingman [20 November 1936 - 4 August 1985 - buried Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] in Pietersburg. Their children are Hillel and Jodi. Mr Lidven used to help with the kosher slaughtering when the minister was unavailable. He died on 9 May 1957, aged 47, and Dora died on 21 August 1990. They are both buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery.

There were several instances where brothers arrived in Pietersburg with different names. Michael Benjamin Bolon and David Lewis were brothers with different surnames. It was often the practice for one of the younger sons of a family in Eastern Europe to take on the name of a neighbor who had no sons, in order to avoid conscription.

Hans Loeffler was the brother of Max Levor¹⁷⁶. He went to America as David Levor, but on arrival in South Africa, he no longer wanted to be known as a Jew so he changed his name to Hans Loeffler. He became the stalwart of the German Club in the 1930s, where they sang the German anthem and gave three cheers for van Hindenburg, the Reichspresident. Loeffler lent them a painting of Bismarck and welcomed the German consul, General von Kessler, when he visited Pietersburg in 1932. He was also the deputy-mayor of Pietersburg. He did not practice his religion as can be shown by the complaint registered against him by the Jewish mayor, Max Marcus, saying that Loeffler phoned him on *Yom Kippur*. In a letter written afterwards, Loeffler claimed that Marcus used the holy day as an excuse to postpone a meeting concerning the new delineation of wards. Loeffler's first wife was Katharina Thom and his second wife was Gertrude Friedman and they had one child. He and Max worked at Imperial Cold Storage. Hans was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 31 October 1941 aged 65 and Max Levor was buried on 1 November 1942 aged 63.



Boris, Max, Bertha and Chaim Chaitow in Pilgrim's Rest [courtesy of the Pietersburg Museum]

Charles [Chaim] and his wife Bertha Chaitow lived in Pilgrim's Rest in 1910, where they had two boys Max and Boris. They moved to Pietersburg in 1937. Max [born in 1904 in Ludzin, Latvia, married Irene Finestone from Manchester: children Brian and Leon] became a lawyer and Boris joined the legal firm Edelman and Chaitow before going to America to study chiropractic. He ended up running the famous High Rustenburg Hydro in Stellenbosch.

Most of the Jews, who moved to Pietersburg from the smaller country communities participated fully in the Jewish community. They were amongst the founders of the Pietersburg Synagogue, the *Chevrah Kadisha*, the Zionist societies, the Jewish Women's Guild and the Hebrew Order of David. They were also founder members of non-Jewish organisations. Almost all the founders of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation came from small communities outside Pietersburg, before moving into the town. These included Patsy Cohen, S Frenkel, M Rosenberg, B Herman, Joseph Kallmeyer, Herman Hirschmann, Max Israelsohn, Wolf Israelsohn, Jacob Hirschmann, Adolph Israelsohn and Herman Eichholz.

The Jewish members of the Pietersburg Ambulance Fund Committee in 1929 were Mesdames S H Solomon, S L Solomon, A Susser, Ed Young, Hirschmann, Gifter and Skok.



Pietersburg Ambulance Fund Committee 1929-1930

Standing: Mesdames H Holford, T Lorentz, T J Shannon, Miss E Krause, Mrs S H Solomon

Sitting: Mesdames S L Solomon, O'Reilly Merry, A Susser, Maynard-Page [President],
Ed Young [organizer, Hon Sec], Le Roux and Hirschmann

Inserts: Mesdames H Gifter, A Skok [Hon Treas], L J Steyn, A L Shackleton [Chairlady]



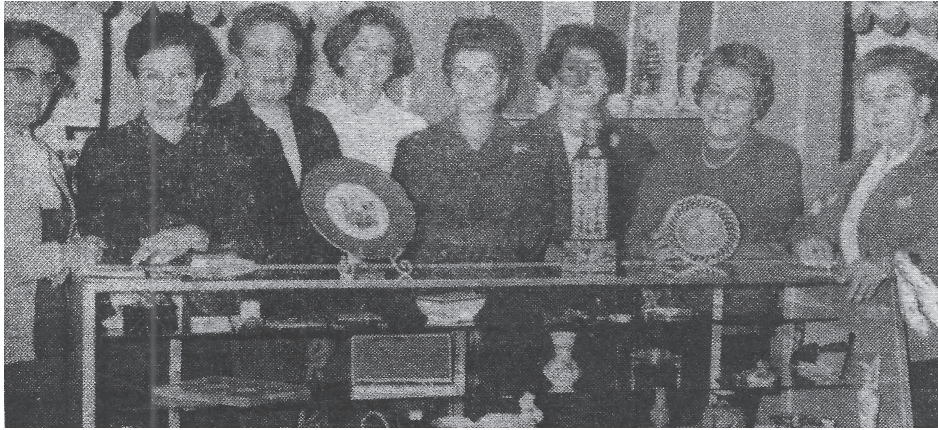
Members of the Hebrew Order of David [courtesy Northern Press, Pietersburg] 1954
 Sitting: Left to Right: D Pogrud, Rev Manschein, M Kaplan, S Colman, M Cohen, M Schechter, A Sacks,
 Rev J I Levine, J B Notelovitz, S Solomon, S Zway
 Middle Row: Left to Right: B Skok, G I Reubensohn, H Beron, A Notelovitz, G Mendelsohn,
 A Dusheiko, B Krikst, A Donde, S Rakusin, S Worms, L Menachemson
 Back Row: Left to Right: A J Lewis, H Edelman, D Lifschitz, S Israelsohn, H Danzig, J Hirschmann



Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation committee 1928
 Back: Sam Palte, Ellis Levin
 Middle: Ted Young, Max Israelsohn, Wolf Israelsohn, Ben Levy
 Front: Herman Eichholz, Barney Herman, Rev M M Levy, Max Friedel, Max Marcus



Women's Zionist Rally 1958: [courtesy of Zoutpansberg Review]
 Front Row: Lydia Brenner, Rose Stutson, Unknown, Gertie Feinberg, Lily Rakusin, Sarah Jedwood, Yetta Korber
 Back Row: Jenny Worms, Sadie Hirschmann, Ellen Skok, Millie Zaacks, Unknown, Lena Miller, Mabel Israelsohn



Ladies Emergency Fund Shop for the Six Day War in Israel 1967 [courtesy of Zoutpansberg Review]
Left to right: Mesdames S Hirschmann, A Brenner, M Israelsohn, M Vides, B Stein, A Beron, R Stutson, J Feinberg



Ladies Emergency Fund Shop for the Six Day War in Israel 1967 [courtesy of Zoutpansberg Review]
Mesdames S Fainberg, M Israelsohn, G Solomon, B Meyer, S Golden, J Gordon and S Hirschmann



Pietersburg Zionist League ladies making lunch in Dendron for the Farmer's Union 20 October 1970:
[courtesy of Zoutpansberg Review] R Abro, Luba Polesky, Celia Tankel, Rae Garb, Rena Jedwood,
Nora Tager, Rita Mendelsohn, Gertie Feinberg, Rose Stutson, Sadie Hirschmann, Francis Rakusin,
Mabel Israelsohn and Lily Rakusin.



Pietersburg Jewish ladies in the 1970s

Back: Eva Stein, Gertie Solomon, Jenny Worms, Dora Lidven, Shoshana Belitzky, Anita Lidven, Ida Lewis, Sadie Hirschmann, unknown, Laurane Klingman, Becky Plaut, Nora Tager
 Middle: Bessie Meyer, Jessie Colman, Hilary Starkowitz
 Front: Chippie Kier, Maureen Notelovitz, Phyllis Price, Benita Stein



In the 1990s: Back: Charlotte Wiener, Jackie Fisher, Hilary Starkowitz, Marilyn Jedwood, Illana Segal, Marilyn Markus, Rene Levy
 Front: Laurane Klingman, Eva Sitbon, Jessie Colman
 Bnei Zion-Habonim Camp 1961-2 [courtesy of Telfed Magazine April 2001]



Back Row: Irwin Beron, Bryan Rakusin, Dani [madrach], Leib [madrach]
 3rd Row: Sylvia Poss, Asné Krikst, David Hirschmann, Leslie Susser, Hugo Kohn, Herman Eichholz, unknown
 2nd Row: Lesley Waldman, Charmene Krikst, Heather Donde, Lynette Dinkelspiel, Penny Hirschmann, Beverly Israelsohn, Joan Stein, Lynn Dusheiko, Vivienne Katzman
 Front Row: Brian Krikst, Asher Susser



Bnei Zion: Back row: Ivan Kallmeyer, Jack Perlmann, Hymie Notelovitz, Leon Levy
Front: Jack Notelovitz [courtesy of Leon Levy]



Petersburg Jewish boys late 1960s: Back row: Charles Colman, Roy Colman, Unknown, Attie Skok
Middle row: Unknown, Morris Pogrund, Jonathan Levy, Trevor Sacks, Barry Schechter
Front row: Glen Notelovitz, Michael Notelovitz, Tager, Wade Stein, Tager, Unknown, Russell Schechter, Clifford Sacks



Petersburg Synagogue Committee 1980s [courtesy of Harold Starkowitz]
Back Row: Joss Reiter, Jack Notelovitz, Laurane Klingman, Solly Starkowitz, Harold Starkowitz, Norman Jedwood
Front Row: Julian Meyer, Leon Levy, Arnie Stein, Solly Tager.

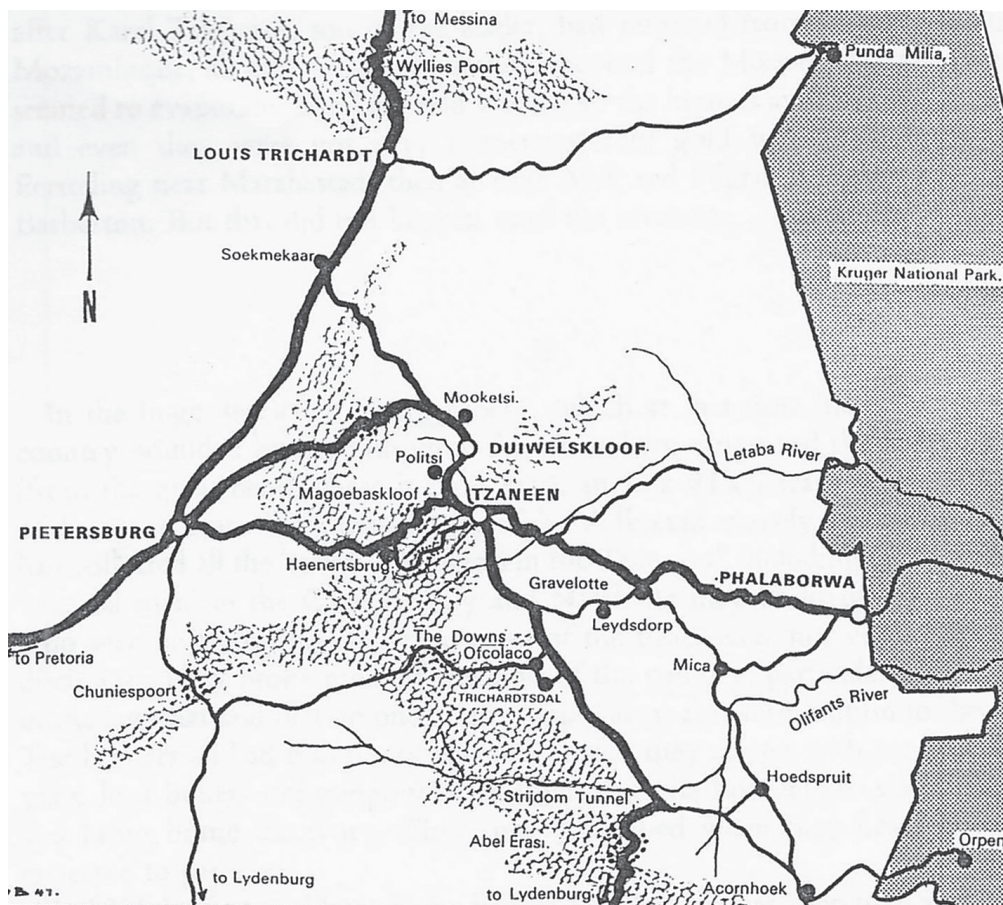


Motzei Yom Kippur Pietersburg 2002: [Courtesy of Rabbi M Silberhaft]:

Back row: Five *Yeshiva boys*.

Front row: Mandy Wiener, Lee Starkowitz, Morris Pogrud, Jessica Lister, Celia Lister, Charlotte Wiener, Wally Levy, Yossi Silberhaft, Dennis Wiener, Charles Starkowitz, Morris Jedwood, Solly Starkowitz, Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, Jack Klaff, Dina Klaff.

C] Duiwelskloof, Houtbosdorp/Haenertsburg, Soekmekaar, Tzaneen, Phalaborwa and Gravelotte.



Map of Tzaneen area [courtesy of A P Cartwright in 'By the waters of the Letaba']

The towns lying to the east of Pietersburg never had any formally constituted Jewish organisations as there were never enough Jews in each area to support such institutions. There was no synagogue, minister or Jewish cemetery in any of these towns or villages. If a Jewish person died, the Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* came out to the area to prepare the body, after which the deceased was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. Jews travelled from these isolated areas to Pietersburg if they wanted to attend synagogue on the High Holy Festivals or for a *minyan*. As there was no *cheder* teacher, the children had to attend school in Pietersburg as boarders and go to *cheder* classes in the afternoons. *Bar-* and *Batmitzvahs* were also celebrated in Pietersburg. Very often Jews travelled into Pietersburg and stayed at a hotel in order to hear a guest speaker or to attend a Jewish function.

1] HOUTBOSDORP/HAENERTSBURG

Haenertsburg, named in 1894 after its discoverer, C F Haenert, was the centre of the Woodbush Gold Fields. The first gold discoveries near Haenertsberg were made in 1887 and prospectors tried unsuccessfully to make their fortunes. There were very few white families living in the area before this time. The small community consisted mainly of Boers and a few German and Scottish settlers but by 1890 there were Jews living in the Haenertsburg and Houtbosdorp district. Most of these Jews were traders, hotelkeepers and farmers. Jewish traders were to be found in the remotest areas of the Transvaal. Many came as prospectors but when their hopes of riches were not realized, they turned instead to trading. One Jewish prospector was Salli Kahn, from Germany, who prospected at Haenertsburg for a short while around 1890. He was employed as a storekeeper for the railway contractors at Kaapmuiden, east of Nelspruit, for a short time around 1892. Salli was the grandfather of Margot Donde from Potgietersrus.



Prospectors panning for gold in Woodbush [courtesy of A P Cartwright & N Cowan]

Friends and relatives were brought out from Eastern Europe and they in turn opened more trading stores. Their shops became the centre of African life. Mary Kropman in her MA thesis 'The Contribution of the Pioneer Traders to the Ciskei'¹⁷⁷ explains that the trading store was a place where people gathered to gossip and see their friends as well as to transact business. The trader created confidence and trust amongst the local people. He could speak their language and was intimately connected with the daily lives of his customers and could give them advice when necessary.

Examples of lone Jewish traders in remote regions of the Northern Transvaal in the early 1900s abound. Googoo Thompson in her book 'Between Woodbush and Wolkberg: Googoo Thompson's Story'¹⁷⁸ tells the story of her husband, Louis, who was a medical doctor and who had rooms in the Grand Hotel building in Pietersburg. He was always looking for new patients and one day he was told by a Mr Kruger of an 'old Jew who had an African store on the Limpopo who was very ill and very, very rich, no wife, no children and I think you should go out there and help him.' Louis fetched him and cured him of his malaria, charging him very little. His wife accused him of having no business sense. The name of this man is not recorded.

Mr A E McKechnie, who lived on a farm outside Pietersburg, remembers in his memoirs 'A Man to Remember'¹⁷⁹ that in a remote area on the road through Chief Mphahlele's location, there was a small native store run by a diminutive Jew who claimed that his name was Plantagenet¹⁸⁰. This was a mystery to all who knew him, as nobody could imagine this scruffy little man having a drop of royal blood in his veins. In his shop he displayed a notice which read: 'God helps those who help themselves but God help those who help themselves here'.

Julius [born Jacob] Heimann was a Jewish storekeeper and prospector in Haenertsburg¹⁸¹. Heimann's great-granddaughter Hazel Dakers¹⁸² has Julius Heimann's last will and testament and death certificate. He was born in Luegde in the Hannover area of Germany on 16 April 1845. He came to South Africa in 1863 and died in Brakrivier, Zoutpansberg in 1897. He married Sarah Norden, a member of the well-known Jewish family of that name who came to the Eastern Cape with the 1820 Settlers. They had a daughter, Henrietta Violet [Hetty] born 7 August 1875 and three sons - Bernhard (born 1877), Joe (1879) and Herman Paul (1889).

There are several references in the South African National Archives to correspondence with Heimann. Reference SS R6002/88 dated 1888, consists of three pages requesting verification of Julius's signature. His response is dated 21 June 1888 from Fort Klipdam, Zoutpansberg, the headquarters of the Zoutpansberg district. In Reference SSR15076/89 dated 24 April 1889, a power of attorney was given to Julius Heimann who was living in Haenertsburg and was also a storekeeper in Smithfield, Orange Free State. This was to do with the transfer of an *erf* in Smithfield. In July 1889 Reference SS R9792/89 consists of letters written by the mine commissioner at Haenertsburg in reply to Heimann's request for the return of legal documentation. Reference SS R8348/89 refers to a letter written by Heimann from Haenertsburg dated 8 August 1889 requesting return of \$100 security from the market master.

Reference SSR13481/90 of 25 August 1890 requests information about the transfer into his name of two farms: 'Waterval', erf 624 – size 200 *morgen* and 'Uitschart', erf 628 – size 300 *morgen*. In Reference SSR10268/92, Heimann requests to hire *erven* 44 and 45 on Mare Street, Pietersburg for 10-20 years. Reference SS R1807/94 refers to the naturalization of Julius Heimann, shopkeeper of Haenertsburg. In reference SS R8471/96, Julius Heimann of P O Box 646 Johannesburg dated 30 June 1896 warned the government of a rinderpest problem. It is not sure if this is the same Heimann as the other references. Julius Heimann was a founder member of the Zoutpansberg Liberty Lodge on 21 August 1895.

Hazel Dakers writes that according to his daughter-in-law, Lily Chapman (who never actually knew him), Heimann was involved in illicit diamond buying, a serious offence in South Africa. His granddaughter, Maxine Heimann, also remembered being told this and that he died in the *veld* of a fever, alone except for a servant who returned to Sarah Norden, his widow, saying 'Massa dead, I bury'. She remembers being told that the dying Julius persuaded a missionary to go to the place where he had been prospecting to stake his claim. When the missionary returned, Heimann had died. He died on 8 March 1897 at Brakriver, Zoutpansburg. His body was probably not re-interred in a Jewish cemetery as there is no record of this grave in the area¹⁸³. The last will and testament of Julius Heimann, 'a General Merchant residing in Haenertsburg in the South African Republic' dated 19 October 1891 leaves everything [nothing in fact] to his wife Sarah and his children, not to be used by his children during his wife's lifetime, except that due to their daughter Henrietta Violet Heimann on her marriage on the condition of an antenuptial contract. His will was signed at Haenertsburg Houtboschberg Golfelds South Africa Republic¹⁸⁴.



Road building in Haenertsberg [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]

During the Second Anglo-Boer War [1899-1902], the Boers had four Creusot cannons, of which one had been damaged at Ladysmith. In order to repair it, the end of the muzzle had to be cut off, after which the Boers called it 'The Jew' as it had been circumcised. Towards the end of the war, the Boers took a last stand at Haenertsberg. When they realized they were about to be overrun by the British forces, they blew up their last cannon on 30 April 1901. Many years later, the pieces were recovered and made into a monument in Haenertsberg, with the label of The Jew featured on a plaque next to it.





Sir Lionel Phillips [courtesy of The Randlords by Geoffrey Wheatcroft]

Sir Lionel Phillips, the wealthy Jewish mining magnate, bought 14 farms in the depressed economic times after the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902. Googoo Thompson explained in her book *Between Woodbush and Wolkberg*¹⁸⁵ that Sir Lionel's wife, Florence [nee Ortlepp] wanted a farm in the Woodbush region. Googoo described how her father showed Lady Phillips five farms belonging to Mr Altenroxel and Mr Plange and Sir Lionel promptly purchased all five at £100 each. They were renamed 'Broederstroom Stud Farm'. The Phillipses intended breeding polo ponies and municipal mules, but the venture failed due to the unsuitability of the soil. As the soil lacked the calcium necessary for the formation of strong bones in growing animals, the foals died. The idea of a stud farm was abandoned and instead Aberdeen Angus and Shorthorn cattle were raised. Lionel Phillips was knighted by the British King as 'Sir Lionel Phillips Bart of Broederstroom, Northern Transvaal'¹⁸⁶.

Lionel's son, Harold, later became the manager of Broederstroom, but he soon became bored. As a result, his father sent him to study agriculture in Canada. There he met and married Hilda Hills, a non-Jewess. Sir Lionel presented them with Westphalia as a wedding present and the farm was registered on 2 June 1914 in Harold's name. However, the young couple did not enjoy living there. Later, Sir Lionel also transferred the farms Piesangkop and Rosendal to Harold. Otto Klosterschulte was kept on to manage Westphalia and married Plange's widow. When World War II broke out in 1914, Harold joined the Witwatersrand Rifles. Harold was well known for the many parties he held on the estate. The latter started declining as the soil was worked out and trees were felled, depleting the water supply. Harold was found dead in his bed in 1926¹⁸⁷. Gradually Sir Lionel lost interest in farming. The eight farms comprising Westphalia were sold to Johannes Merensky in 1929, for £38 331.

Sir Lionel Phillips commuted between his homes in Haenertsberg, Johannesburg, Cape Town and England. Several well-known names visited him in Haenertsberg, including the writers Sir Percy Fitzpatrick [*Jock of the Bushveld*], John Buchan [*Thirty-nine Steps*], L S Amery [*The Times History of the War in South Africa*] and the biologist Dr Rudolf Marloth, who did plant research in the area¹⁸⁸. In March 1932, the Zoutpansberg Review reported that Sir Lionel hiked from Haenertsberg to Leydsdorp, a fair distance.

Sir Lionel's wife Florence contributed much to the area. On 25 June 1910, she started a branch of the South African National Union [SANU], which promoted the export of South African products and industry as part of a rebuilding process after the Second Anglo-Boer War. She also tried to promote the furniture trade, and persuaded the architect Sir Herbert Baker to use Jim Smith of Magoebaskloof to do the woodwork in the Union Buildings in Pretoria. Florence also wanted Sir Herbert to design and build a house for her in Haenertsberg, but at this extravagance her husband finally put his foot down. Sir Lionel contributed extensively to forestry and the wood industry in the Haenertsberg area, as the government began promoting the planting of exotic fast-growing varieties of pine and eucalyptus. He founded the Woodbush Timber Company with Oscar Schlimmer and set up De Hoek Sawmills.



Saul Blondes [courtesy of Ruth Baker]

Saul Blondes also lived in Houtbosdorp. He came from Kovno, Lithuania, and worked for the Jewish family Hirschmann. Unfortunately he was one of the victims of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic and was buried in Pietersburg. His death notice read: Blondes, Saul, of Woodbush Village, died at Pietersburg Hospital of pneumonia, on the 31st October, aged 27 – Inserted by his sorrowing friend, Louis Mindel¹⁸⁹.



Unveiling of Saul Blondes Tombstone 1920 [courtesy of Ruth Baker]

BACK: Messrs Symons, unknown, Herman Skok, unknown, Max Korber, unknown, Isaac Brenner, Jack Hirschmann, unknown, F Grimbeek [non-Jewish], unknown, unknown, Wolf Israelsohn, unknown, unknown, unknown, Jack Kallmeyer, Ben Levy, Herman Eichholz, Solomon Solomon, Max Marcus, Joseph Kallmeyer, Samuel Blondes, Julius Kruger, Barney Herman.

FRONT: Max Israelsohn, unknown, unknown, Sam Palte, unknown.

Two years later his brother, Sam Blondes, who sailed in the American navy, put into port in South Africa. He travelled up to Pietersburg and in the presence of the Jewish community unveiled a tombstone on his late brother's grave on Sunday 21 February 1920. A large number of the late Saul's friends attended the ceremony. Amongst those appearing in a photograph taken at the gravesite were Messrs B Herman, J Kallmeyer Snr and Jnr, H Kallmeyer, J Kruger, Rev Kellen, M L Marcus, H Eichholz, B Levy, A Levy, H Hirschmann, M Cramer, W and M Israelsohn, S Palte, A Rosenthal, G Feldman, M Heim, S Zwilling, M Hotz, M Korber, A Hyams, I Brenner, Symons, H Skok. Non-Jews were also present as the names of H L Neethling and F Grimbeek are mentioned¹⁹⁰.

Nearly 80 years later on 14 March 1999, Sam Blonde's daughter, Mrs Ruth Baker, came on a pilgrimage from America to visit her uncle's grave. She brought several photographs of the earlier unveiling ceremony with her and they included many of the congregation's members. An article was written about her journey in an American travel magazine extolling the friendliness and hospitality of the Pietersburg Jewish congregation¹⁹¹.

Descendants of Mr Solomon

Mr Solomon	
..... 2	Samuel Lewis Solomon
	+Dora
..... 3	Miriam Solomon
	+Barney Krikst
..... 4	Azne Krikst
	+Sydney Dinkelspiel
.....	*2nd Husband of Azne Krikst:
	+Aaron Len
..... 4	Charmaine Krikst
..... 4	Brian Krikst
..... 3	Hilda Solomon
..... 2	Solomon Harris Solomon
	+Ida Israelsohn
..... 3	Minna Solomon
	+Mr Kramer
..... 3	David Solomon
	+Ros Judaiken
..... 3	Rene Solomon
..... 2	Sister Solomon
	+Jack Friedman
..... 3	Dora Friedman
..... 3	Fanny Friedman
..... 3	Bertha Friedman
..... 2	Brother Solomon
..... 3	Smulke Solomon
	+Clara Solomon
..... 4	Brenda Solomon
..... 4	Rosie Solomon..... 1935 - 1958
.....	*2nd Wife of Shmulke Solomon:
	+Gertie Kugel
..... 4	Miriam Solomon
..... 4	Wolfie Solomon
..... 3	Harry Solomon

Samuel Lewis and Dora Solomon ran a general dealer's store, Leshoana Store, on the farm Doornfontein at Woodbush. It was abandoned in 1930. Mrs Solomon was a convert to Judaism. Their children were Hilda Solomon, who developed a brain tumour and despite an operation in London never developed properly and became blind and Miriam Solomon, who married Barney Krikst [son of Mr and Mrs B Krikst and brother of Martin] in Potgietersrus on 12 October 1941¹⁹². Miriam and Barney Krikst's children were Azne [married Sydney Dinkelspiel, son of Fritz and Martha Dinkelspiel of Pietersburg, divorced then married Aaron Len of Messina], Charmaine and Brian Krikst. Sydney's sister Lynette Dinkelspiel married Simon Jedwood, son of Joseph and Sarah. Sam and Dorah Solomon later owned Potgietersrus Produce in Potgietersrus with A Donde, which was taken over by Miriam and Barney Krikst when Sam and Dora Solomon moved to Klerksdorp.



Lasfontein 27 June 1917 [farm now Kalkbank] [courtesy of Victor Miller]
 Back: Lena Levy, Ida Solomon, Solomon H Solomon, Adolph Israelsohn [small]
 Front: Minna & Dave Solomon



Mrs S H Solomon [Ida] [courtesy of the Pietersburg Museum]

Sam Solomon's brother Solomon Harris Solomon married Ida Israelsohn, sister of Fanny [married Ben Meyer], Adolph [married Golda], Mala [married Sydney Sacks] and Chaiah, mother of Aaron and Morris Ellison. Solomon Harris Solomon was a butcher and produce dealer at Kalkbank in 1916 and then owned Cash Butchery in Pietersburg. Their children were Minna [died 1994] [married Mr Kramer], Israel David [born 1916 in Pietersburg] [married Ros Judeiken] and Rene. Sam and Harris Solomon had a sister who married Jack Friedman who ran a shop. Their children were Dora, Fanny and Bertha¹⁹³. Samuel [Smulka] and Harry Solomon were brought to the area by their uncles Solomon and Sam Solomon. Mr Hirschowitz's Matala's Trading Store and Madyetane Stores were sold to I H and S Solomon respectively¹⁹⁴. They also had a farm near Burgersfort. Smulka Solomon married Clara and their children were Rosie [15 February 1935 - 10 July 1958 and buried in Pietersburg] and Brenda. Smulka and Clara divorced, and Smulke married Gertie Kugel. Their children were Miriam and Wolfie, who was on the radio as Dr Paul. Smulke lost his life in Pietersburg when he was shot by a builder after arguing with him over money. He was buried in Pietersburg on 24 April 1958 aged 59.

Descendants of Mr Korber

1	Mr Korber	
..... 2	Rachel Korber	1900 - 1952
	+Boris Bloch	
..... 3	Ethel Bloch	
	+Maxwell Zway	
..... 4	Charlene Zway	
..... 4	Denise Zway	
..... 4	Roy Zway	
..... 3	Helen Bloch	
	+Naphtaly Blau	
..... 3	Wally Bloch	
..... 2	Yetta Korber	
	+Dave Lifschitz	- 1972
..... 3	Max Lifschitz	
..... 3	Cyril Lifschitz	
..... 2	Max Korber	1894 - 1949
	+Gittel Gurwitz	
..... 3	Sylvia Korber	
	+Isaac Gibbert	1928 - 1962
..... 4	Maxine Gibbert	
..... 4	Mark Gibbert	
..... 4	Shelley-Ann Gibbert	
..... 3	Alice Korber	
	+Jack Sacks	
..... 4	Michelle Sacks	
..... 4	Martin Sacks	
.....	*2nd Husband of Alice Korber:	
	+Sydney Robins	
..... 3	Florence Korber	
	+Isidore Bloch	
..... 2	Revil Korber	
..... 2	Boris Korber	
..... 2	Harry Korber	

Max Korber lived in Houtbosdorp and owned a shop in 1920, before moving to Pietersburg. Max Korber was born in Vilna in 1894 and his wife Gittel Gurwitz in Rakeshik. He died on 14 May 1949 aged 56 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. Max Korber brought out his three sisters and two brothers to South Africa. One sister, Revil, and two brothers, Boris and Harry, lived in Pietersburg for a short while before moving to Cape Town. Yetta Korber married Dave Lifschitz [buried Pietersburg 25 March 1972 - children Max and Cyril] and Rachel Korber [buried Pietersburg 14 March 1952 aged 52] married Boris Bloch [children Ethel [married Maxwell Zway, children Charlene, Denise and Roy], Helen [married Naphtaly 'Tuxie' Blau, who served in the Israeli airforce in the 1948 Israeli War of Independence] and Wally].

Max Korber and his two brothers-in-law, Dave Lifschitz and Boris Bloch, all had shops next to each other in Market Street, Pietersburg. Max Korber's shop was called Maxims, Lifschitz's was OK Stores and Bloch's was Ray's Fashions. Gittel and her daughter, Sylvia Gibbert, ran a shop called Astra Fashion. Max and Gittel Korber's children were Alice [married Jack Sacks in Pietersburg on 22 January 1955 - children Michelle and Martin], then married Sydney Robins], Sylvia [married Isaac Meyer Gibbert - children Maxine, Mark, Shelley-Ann] and Florence [married Isadore [Manny] Bloch in Pietersburg on 5 September 1954]. Isaac Gibbert committed suicide on 17 January 1962 aged 34¹⁹⁵. Harold Levin took his gun away from him, but he connected a hosepipe to the car's exhaust instead.

Boris Korber married Lily, Fanny Notelovitz's sister. Fanny ran Notels dress shop with her husband Abraham Notelovitz [children; Hymie Isaac [born 1930 in Cape Town, married Maureen Jacobson; children Glen, Michael and Gavin], Morris, Rae [married Alec Rosenberg; daughter Yvette] and Jack [married Adene; children Leon, Steven, Linda and Mark].



Harry Klein [in his book 'Valley of the Mists']

Harry Klein¹⁹⁶ was an aspiring Jewish journalist who wrote eight books of South African historical and military interest. In 1935, he decided to walk through the low-country to the Limpopo River, despite the dangers of malaria and wild animals, and write about his exploits. With only a horse for company, he passed through Duiwelskloof and the Downs. He wrote of his exploits in his book 'Valley of the Mists'. He stayed in Wolkberg and took General Smuts up the mountain with Major George Murray, a neighbour. After World War II, Klein's stockbroking business slumped and he returned to the Downs in 1950 with his wife Peggy and daughter Jane. They settled on the farm of Orrie Baragwanath's sister, Grace Lance. Orrie was a member of the renowned non-Jewish Baragwanath family, whose farm became the site of Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg. Orrie and his partner, Frank Klein, were among the first white discoverers of the Northern Rhodesia Copper Belt, but were never to make a fortune from it.

In 1950, Harry Klein acquired an interest in The Downs Logging Company from Jack Blandy, who was married to Orrie's daughter Joyce and whose mother Zelda [nee Woolf] was Jewish. However after many setbacks, including rotten trees, mud and the lorry breaking down, the business had to be liquidated and Harry and his family left the area. Harry and Peggy later divorced, and Harry married Sheila. They had two boys, Mark and David. He did not return to the Downs to live.

Harry Klein mentions a Mr Israel who was the Native Commissioner at Tzaneen in the 1930s¹⁹⁷. He was a non-practicing Jew who married a non-Jewish woman and was buried in the non-denominational section of the Pietersburg cemetery. Lebonu, the regent of the Sekorrero tribe was upset because Buthelu, the place of the dead where their ancestors were buried, had been violated by the cutting of a water furrow through it by a white farmer who had recently moved into the district. Mr Israel was called to settle the dispute. He inspected the sacred ground, where no white man had been allowed to go before by the tribe, and recommended to the Government that the people of Sekorrero be allowed to buy back their land that had been taken for a white man's farm for £50. They were in agreement with this proposal and thanked Mr Israel.

Mr Symons, Mr Feldman, Mr M Gordon, the farmer Mr W Herchenson and Mr J Zwilling are also recorded as living in Houtbosdorp in the second decade of the 20th century. Mr and Mrs Hosiasohn built a hall for entertaining in Haenertsburg¹⁹⁸.

Many of the first pioneers in the Pietersburg area were trailblazers for their families. Once they had established themselves on farms or in stores, and after they had accumulated enough money, they sent for members of their families who were still living in Europe, Russia and Poland. In this way large numbers of the same families settled in the area. The two largest families in the Haenertsburg/Woodbush area were the Hirschmanns, who lived and traded at Woodbush, and the Israelsohn brothers, who farmed at Syferkuil. These two families, strangely enough, did not intermarry at all until Kuba Rakusin, a nephew of the Hirschmann family, married Lily Levine, daughter of Rev Levine [name originally Kaplan]. Lily's sister Sarah Levine had married George Eichholz, a member of the Israelsohn clan, in the 1930s. Lily always called herself the 'missing link'.

Descendants of Isiah Hirschmann

1	Isiah Hirschmann	
	+Unknown Kallmeyer	
..... 2	Bryna [Bertha] Hirschmann	
	+Boris Rakusin	
..... 3	Samuel Rakusin	
	+Francis Tager	
..... 4	Bertha Rakusin	
..... 4	Hedda Rakusin	
..... 3	Kuba Rakusin	
	+Lilly Levine	
..... 4	Lena Rakusin	
..... 4	Brian Rakusin	
..... 3	Shaia Rakusin	
	+Rachel	
..... 4	Rosa Rakusin	
..... 2	Meisin Hirschmann	
	+Mr Levy	
..... 3	Sarie Levy	
	+Mr Kahn	
..... 3	Solly Levy	
	+Kay	
..... 4	Jonathan Levy	
..... 4	Gabriel Levy	
..... 2	Herman Hirschmann	1866 - 1922
	+Doris Thal	

.....3	Jack Hirschmann	1898 - 1977
	+Sadie Kark	1908 - 1981
.....4	Herman Hirschmann	
.....4	Richelle Hirschmann	
.....4	David Hirschmann	
.....3	Hylda Hirschmann.....	1900 - 1970
	+Mr Elkin	
.....3	Isaiah [Charlie] Hirschmann.....	1904 - 1973
	+Cecily Goldblatt	
.....4	Harley Hirschmann	
.....4	Lesley Hirschmann	
	+Henry Stonefield	
.....5	Gregory Stonefield	
.....5	Wendy Stonefield	
.....3	Bertha Hirschmann	1902 - 1988
	+Max William Meskin	
.....3	Morris Hirschmann	1906 - 1982
	+Elsie Kahn	
.....4	Louis Hirschmann	
.....4	Richard [Dickie] Hirschmann	
.....4	Rosemary Hirschmann	
.....2	Johanna Hirschmann.....	1871 - 1961
	+Joseph Kallmeyer.....	1859 - 1931
.....3	Bertha Kallmeyer	
	+Simon [Sam] Palte	
.....4	Rhoda Palte	
	+David Rabinowitz	
.....5	Barry Rabinowitz	
.....5	Alan Rabinowitz	
.....4	Lorna Palte	
	+Natie Rabinowitz	
.....5	Anne Rabinowitz	
.....5	Basil Rabinowitz	
.....4	Ziffie Palte	
	+Arthur Lurie	
.....5	Carol Lurie	
.....5	Martin Lurie	
.....4	Joy Palte	
	+Hymie Philip Mervis	
.....5	Aviva Mervis	
.....5	Shelee Mervis	
.....5	Ari Mervis	
.....4	Eleen Palte	
	+Harold Stein	
.....5	Lionel Stein	
	+ Diane Rosen	
.....5	Joan Stein	
	+Alan Weissman	
.....3	Annie Kallmeyer	
	+Leo Salomon	
.....4	Theodor Salomon	
	+Toni Pimstone	
.....4	Julian Salomon	
.....4	Joselyn Salomon	
	+Gunter Friedland	
.....3	Jack Kallmeyer	
	+Sophie	
.....4	Ivan Kallmeyer	
	+Sally Feinberg	
.....3	Harry Kallmeyer	
	+Berchon Rosenberg	
.....4	Paulette Kallmeyer	
	+Benjamin Cohen	
.....4	Unknown Kallmeyer	
.....4	Unknown Kallmeyer	
.....3	Shaiah Kallmeyer	
	+Gita Ezekov	
.....4	Geoffrey Kallmeyer	
.....2	Jacob Hirschmann	1879 - 1935
	+Erna Ethel Raick.....	1887 - 1918

.....3	Samuel [Chummie] Hirschmann	1914 - 1960
	+Gertie	
.....4	Jacob Hirschmann	
.....4	Ezra Hirschmann	
.....4	Saul Hirschmann	
.....3	Edward Hirschmann.....	1916 - 2008
.....2	Joseph [Brahle] Hirschmann.....	1886 - 1974
	+Rachel.....	- 1976



Hirschmann/Kallmeyer family 1898 [courtesy of Richelle Hirschmann]
 Back row: Herman Hirschmann, Joseph Kallmeyer holding Jack Kallmeyer, Jacob Hirschmann
 Front row: Doris Thal, Bertha Kallmeyer, Isiah Hirschmann holding Harry Kallmeyer and Jack Hirschmann,
 Annie Kallmeyer, Johanna Kallmeyer

Isaia Hirschmann married a Miss Kallmeyer, who was the sister to Joseph Kallmeyer. Their children were Johanna, Jacob, Joseph, Herman, Bryna and Maasin. Herman Hirschmann [born about 1866]¹⁹⁹ came out from Latvia, receiving his South African naturalization papers on 12 August 1895²⁰⁰. He established himself in Woodbush near Haenertsburg, where he owned a farm and a store. His brothers and sisters also came out to the Pietersburg area.

Herman Hirschmann very quickly integrated himself into the Afrikaans-speaking settlers living in Woodbush, so much so, that when his brother visited him from Russia, he despaired at the lack of Jewish girls for Herman to marry. On his return to Russia, Herman's brother found a suitable wife, Doris Thal from Mitau, Latvia for him. The Thal family had fallen on hard times as the father, Leizer, had lost his job, otherwise it was doubtful if she would have agreed to travel so far to marry Herman. Doris very bravely ventured into an unknown backward country in 1897 at the tender age of 17. She was appalled at the primitive conditions of the roads as she arrived by ox-wagon accompanied by her future father-in-law and brother-in-law. She was distressed by how much her future husband resembled the local

Boers. She was a cultured lady who brought out an English governess from England to Woodbush to speak English and to teach her children. As they were *Courlanders*²⁰¹, Herman and Doris spoke German to each other when they did not want their children to understand them. Later the children went to the Pietersburg Afrikaans Primary School. Two of Doris's sisters visited the Hirschmanns. They were amazed to see the blacks eating outside and invited them inside to eat with them. Herman was furious at this 'communist inspired' behaviour²⁰².

According to the Zoutpansberg Review, Herman and Doris's wedding in 1898 was the first Jewish wedding in the Woodbush district²⁰³. They married in Woodbush Village at the residence of Herman's sister Mr and Mrs J Kallmeyer. The civil portion of the wedding was performed by *Landdrost* G G Munnik and the religious ceremony by Rev Mr Friedmann from Pretoria 'under the canopy'. Breakfast was served on the verandah. Mr Hirschmann's father and brother travelled from Russia to be at the wedding. Amongst the guests were B Herman, S S Himmelhoch and W and M Israelsohn. Non-Jewish guests included Mr and Mrs von Reiche, Richter, Herbst [of the Lutheran Mission] and Assistant Field Cornet de Beer. There was no honeymoon and the couple spent the day 'frolicking and feasting followed by a dance in the evening'.

Googoo Thompson, a non-Jewess,²⁰⁴ tells how her family moved to Houtbosdorp, as her father was the government forestry officer. They first lived in a wagon but when the rains of 1903 came, she and her mother were forced to move in with the Hirschmann family. Their house was a long building behind Hirschmann's shop. The Hirschmanns lived on one side and the Thompsons on the other. The chief of police Mr Arnot also lived in a flatlet at one end of the house. Googoo describes Mr Herman Hirschmann as "clean-shaven, not very tall and rather podgy, but good-looking. Mrs Hirschmann was a kindly woman."

Besides running a general dealer shop in Houtbosdorp, Herman Hirschmann for a time also ran the Tzaneen Hotel. According to Minute 3242 of the Prime Minister's office, he could exchange four English acres of his farm Zaagkuil No 125 District Zoutpansberg for Lot No 60 in the township of Duiwelskloof, which he did according to the Executive Council Minute No 1716, dated 10 February 1909. Farmers unwilling to travel the long distance to Pietersburg used to do their shopping at Hirschmann's general dealer's store at Woodbush, buying on credit²⁰⁵. When the debt went as high as £150, Hirschmann, who also had to make a living, would apply pressure and the debtor would be forced to relinquish his farm. Many farmers, who could not sustain themselves in the Woodbush area when the timber resources had been exhausted, moved to the Zoutpansberg.

During the Second Anglo-Boer war, the Hirschmann family was arrested by the British, put in an internment camp at Houtbosdorp and their farm was confiscated²⁰⁶. Hirschmann claimed to have been neutral during the War but had supplied the Boers with horses²⁰⁷. He was in possession of commandeering notes to the value of £191 from the Transvaal government. His claim for compensation from the British government was disallowed as he had no Russian passport²⁰⁸.

Herman and Doris Hirschmann's five children were Jack [born in Houtbosdorp on 26 September 1898 and who married Sadie Emma Kark], Isaiah [nicknamed Charlie, married Cecily Goldblatt], Hylde [married Mr Elkin in the Pietersburg Synagogue August 1929 and died 7 May 1970 in Pietersburg]²⁰⁹, Maurice [Mo] [married Edith] and Bertha [married Dr Max Meskin].

When Herman Hirschmann died suddenly from a heart attack on 14 November 1922 aged 56, his wife Doris moved into Pietersburg. Herman had bought and sold properties and was in debt when he died. Sam Palte and the Pietersburg Jewish community gave Herman and Doris's son Jack support to help him pay off all debts²¹⁰. Jack kept the farm at Woodbush and the family went there for two months during the polio epidemic.



Doris Hirschmann [courtesy of the Pietersburg Museum]

Doris was the vice-chairman of the Pietersburg-Zoutpansberg Zionist Society and the founder and first chairlady of the Pietersburg Women's Zionist League in 1932. She was an active member of the South African Party committee and the honorary treasurer of the Ambulance Fund committee. She was a foundation member of both the Child Welfare Society and the Pietersburg Outpost of the National Council of Women. She was also one of the founders of the Transvaal Agricultural Union, women's section and was its first honorary treasurer. Doris became a member of SAWAS, the South African Women's Auxillary Service, but due to ill health could not take part in its work. She showed boundless hospitality, especially over the Jewish festivals²¹¹. Both Herman and Jack were born on *Yom Kippur*, which was celebrated with a large breaking-of-the-fast party. She died on 27 September 1942 in Pietersburg, a special tribute was paid at her funeral by the sisters and pupils of the St Pius Convent in Pietersburg.

Doris Hirschmann's brother, Maurice Thal, established a shop at Chief Mamabula's village. He married Ida and they had two children, Ruth and Bella²¹². He then divorced, and Ida married a Mr Lief. Later, together with his second wife Yetta, Maurice lived with Jack and Sadie Hirschmann. A Mr Thal was also a bookkeeper for S S Himmelhoch in Louis Trichardt²¹³.

Herman and Doris Hirschmann's son Isaiah [Charlie] Hirschmann became a lawyer and lived in Pietersburg. He married Cecily Goldblatt and their children were Harley and Doris [Penny] [married

Henry Stonefield in Pietersburg on 7 July 1968]. Jack Hirschmann became a pharmacist and owned Last's Chemist in Landdros Mare Street in Pietersburg. The property was the site of a salesyard for donkeys before Hermann Hirschmann bought it from Messrs Natorp and Ireland in 1909. He built a chemist shop on the property for Willem Last, for whom Jack Hirschmann worked until taking over the business when Mr Last moved to Johannesburg in 1922.

Jack Hirschmann was the vice-president of the Pietersburg Chamber of Commerce in 1929 and became president in 1930. He was a president of the Hebrew Order of David Lodge and the Pietersburg Rotary Club in 1972 and a founder member of the Pietersburg Publicity Association. He supported the Siloe School for the Blind and tried to start a coloured Boy Scout movement in Pietersburg. Jack was the third person to own a car in Pietersburg.

Jack Hirschmann appeared in court in September 1934 under the Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Act²¹⁴. The charge was that he had not kept his pharmacy under 'continuous personal supervision' on the Day of Atonement. Mr Hirschmann and his brother, also a pharmacist, had left instructions that no prescriptions were to be made up in their absence and no poisons were to be sold. During the day he had repeatedly phoned the pharmacy and had come down to the pharmacy when a prescription had had to be filled. He had been unable to close the business as patients needed to have repeat prescriptions that could not be filled at other pharmacies. Hirschmann was found not guilty as the judge said it was unreasonable to expect a pharmacist to close the pharmacy every time he had to leave the pharmacy. It was sufficient that there would be personal supervision by a pharmacist when required.



Farewell party for Herman Hirschmann on his way to Israel [Zoutpansberg Review]

[courtesy of Richelle Hirschmann]

Back row: Cecily Hirschmann, Harley Hirschmann, Sadie Hirschmann, Jack Hirschmann, David Hirschmann

Front row: Johanna Kallmeyer, Rahel Hirschmann, Joseph Hirschmann, Richelle Hirschmann, Max Brenner

Sitting: Penny Hirschmann, Herman Hirschmann



Jack Hirschmann [courtesy of Review]

In the years leading up to World War II there were some manifestations of anti-Semitism in Pietersburg. On 16 November 1938, Jack Hirshmann wrote a letter to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies [SAJBD] in connection with General Manie Maritz's anti-Jewish meeting in Pietersburg. Maritz had been quoted as railing against the Jews in Lichtenberg ('who are our masters today? They are the biggest blood-suckers in the world - the Jews'). As this meeting had taken place on an empty property belonging to Jack, resulting in much criticism from the local Jewish community, he felt that he had to justify his actions to the SAJBD. Jack stated that he had been informed on the previous Friday night, that the meeting was to take place the next afternoon on a vacant plot of ground belonging to him. He had approached the District Commandant of Police, who had agreed to prevent the meeting from taking place. The next day, after 200 people had gathered, the police intervened to thwart the meeting. A local prominent supporter of the movement then approached Jack to ask if they could proceed with the meeting. He had been unhappy at the prospect and told the man he would not permit anyone who insulted him and his people onto his property. The supporter advised him to allow the meeting to proceed quietly, whereupon he agreed to allow it to continue. His reasoning was that they would probably move on to another vacant property if he refused, and as most of the vacant properties in the area belonged to Jews, the situation could be aggravated when the supporters realized how much property was in Jewish hands. He also suspected that the meeting had been held on Jewish property on purpose so that the meeting would be stopped, thereby provoking the supporters. In the end, the meeting proceeded quietly, with not much enthusiasm from the supporters. Jack stated that the decision had been most distasteful to him²¹⁵. No response from the SAJBD can be found, although the letter was stamped as being received on 22 November 1938.

Herman's sister, Johanna Hirschmann, was born in Talsen, Latvia in 1870. She married Joseph Kallmeyer, her uncle, in Holland in 1891 and they immigrated to Middelburg, South Africa. In 1896, she and their two daughters, Bertha and Annie, came by ox-wagon to Houtboschdorp to join Joseph. They preferred Houtboschdorp [Woodbush] to the greener Magoebaskloof as there was no malaria in the

area. However, Joseph Kallmeyer's obituary in the Zoutpansberg Review 3 April 1931 states that he had already come from Mapok's territory in 1889 to join H Hirschmann, his brother-in-law in the Woodbush district. The Kallmeyers shared a house with the Hirschmanns. General Piet Joubert, the Kommandant-General of the South African Republic 1880-1900, often visited their home. Mrs Kallmeyer was also hostess to President Kruger on his visit to the town. In the drought years, they used to distribute food to the blacks in the surrounding areas. The Kallmeyers kept a *Sefer Torah*, which had been brought out by Isiah Hirschmann, in an *Aron Kodesh* in their home. It was eventually donated to the South African Zionist Federation museum²¹⁶.

During the Second Anglo-Boer War, Joseph and Johanna Kallmeyer and their children Bertha, Harry and Annie were moved into a concentration camp in Pietersburg²¹⁷. However, when the camp became overcrowded the family was allowed to move into their own house by the British and placed under house arrest. They started their own business, African Stores, in Pietersburg in Moschke's building²¹⁸. Today it is a national monument.



Market square in Pietersburg with Moschke's building second on the right [courtesy of Zoutpansberg Review]

Johanna and Joseph Kallmeyer had six children. They were Bertha [born 1892 in Johannesburg, married Simon 'Sam' Palte on 21 October 1917], Annie [buried 21 August 1981 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, married Leo Salomon [buried 1 March 1979 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] –children Theodor, Julian and Joselyn [married Gunter Friedland in Pietersburg on 29 March 1959], Morris, Jack [died 25 May 1949 aged 52 and buried in Pietersburg] [married Sophie and had a son Ivan], Harry [married Berchon, daughter of Marcus Rosenberg], and Isaiah [married Gita]. Harry and Jack Kallmeyer were in the family business, African Stores, with their brother-in-law Sam Palte, but later went their own ways.

Joseph Kallmeyer, son of Jacob Halevi, died on 1 April 1931 aged 72 in the barber's chair. Rev Levine conducted his burial service at the Pietersburg cemetery. The masonic rites for the dead were carried out by the Pietersburg United Lodge 'after which the Brethren perambulated the tomb'²¹⁹. Mrs Johanna Kallmeyer participated in war sewing parties during World War I. In 1929 she started the Star Seaside

Fund in Pietersburg and she was chairlady of the Jewish Orphan's Fund for several years. She died on 25 May 1961, aged 90, and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery²²⁰.

Joseph and Johanna Kallmeyer's daughter Annie married Leo Salamon on Sunday 28 August 1949 in the Pietersburg Synagogue. Leo's father, Siegfried, changed their family name from Zalman to Salamon when they came from Germany. Siegfried and Ida lived in Kingwilliamstown. He established a coffee factory in the early 1900s and was the proprietor of a steam mill. He served on the town council for many years and was mayor of Kingwilliamstown from 1912 to 1913²²¹. Leo [born 1896] became a barrister but after moving to Pietersburg, taught mathematics at Capricorn High School. He used to play the violin for patients at the local hospital. Leo and Annie's children were Theodor [married Ethel [Toni] Pimstone in Pietersburg on 28 August 1949], Julian and Joselyn [married Gunther Friedman]. Theo and Toni Salamon's children are Melvin and Glynis. Toni's sister Zelda Pimstone was a talented pianist who played in the Eddie Rees band in Pietersburg. She never married, but she had a baby out of wedlock with a member of the band, after imbibing too much alcohol one night after a concert. Her family sent her to Johannesburg under the pretext of having a gynaecological problem. Many years later, a letter arrived from her daughter, Beverley, but Zelda refused to acknowledge her daughter, despite agreeing that the signature on the adoption papers was hers. Her family wrote to the daughter in Cape Town, welcoming her into the family²²².

When the Pietersburg synagogue was closed in 2003, members of the Palte family claimed that a *Sefer Torah* in the Pietersburg synagogue belonged to the Palte family. It even had the family name inscribed on the handle. Believing that this was a Palte family *Sefer Torah*, Lionel Stein had borrowed it several years before for his son's *Barmitzvah* in Johannesburg. However, through synagogue minutes and letters, it was proved that in 1958, Mr Palte had left a bequest to the Pietersburg Synagogue when he died and this money, together with a supplement provided by the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation, had been used to buy the *Sefer Torah* in America with the aid of Rabbi Kahane. The synagogue committee, through the treasurer, offered to sell this *Sefer Torah* to the Palte family for 50% of its value. This offer was refused.

Lionel Stein and Alan Rabinowitz then took the matter up with Rabbi Kurstag, the head of the South African *Beth Din*. Lionel Stein²²³ wrote a letter to the treasurer, Dennis Wiener, saying that the *Sefer Torah* was not to leave Pietersburg/Polokwane until the matter had been resolved by the *Beth Din*. Should this happen, they would have no option but to 'get a Rabbinic injunction against any assets of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation or the assets of any member of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation that may be in Israel'. This referred to the Wiener family as they had recently made *aliyah*. The matter became more complicated when it was found that the two of them did not represent all the members of the Palte family. Rabbi Silberhaft and Mr Justice Ralph Zulman from the South African Jewish Board of Deputies represented the Pietersburg Trust and the matter dragged on for 10 years. Eventually, Lionel Stein paid the Trust the amount of R10 000 for the *Sefer Torah*. The accompanying silverware was sold to a private collector for R30 000.



Palte family at the Hachnasat Torah ceremony in Pietersburg in memory of Sam Palte 1958 [courtesy of Joy Mervis]: Joy, Rhoda, Lorna, Bertha, Eleen and Ziffie Palte

Bertha Kallmeyer, daughter of Joseph and Johanna Kallmeyer, married Simon [Sam] Palte [born 22 May 1883] on 21 October 1917. Sam came from 'Vexler' [Vieksniai], Lithuania at age 13 to Rhodesia to join his brother Joseph²²⁴. Sam's father was Eliyahu Palto, his mother Shifra [Sophia] Lane and his siblings were Aaron and Chaia. He then went to Mafeking where he became a partner in a hotel. When his partner brought his own family into the business, Sam left for Houtboschdorp [Houtbosdorp] where he hired a shop from Leo von Reiche, a non-Jew. His merchandise consisted of paraffin, blankets, sugar, soap and beads. He supplied building materials by donkey-cart to Sir Lionel Phillips's newly-acquired farm at Broederstroom in 1906. Sam's nephew Michael Palte had a shop in Duiwelskloof. Sam brought out Max Gordon who then worked in a store in Zebedelia. Max Gordon married Pauline [see Zebedelia].



Ziffie Palte and Arthur Lurie Wedding: [courtesy of Joy Mervis]

Back: Lorna and Natie Rabinowitz with Anne, David and Rhoda Rabinowitz with Alan, Harold and Eleen Stein, unknown

Middle: Johanna Kallmeyer, Bertha and Sam Palte, Ziffie Palte and Arthur Lurie, unknown, unknown, Joy Palte
Front: unknown, Joan and Lionel Stein

Sam and Bertha's children were Rhoda, Lorna, Eleen, Zifre [Ziffie] and Josefa [Joy]. Sam was so convinced that their fifth child would be a boy, that he sent Bertha to Palestine, so that he could be born in the land of the Jews. However, this child was also a girl²²⁵. Rhoda married David Rabinowitz on 5 September 1943, Lorna married Nathan Rabinowitz on 5 November 1950, Ziffie married Aron Lurie on 26 December 1952 and Joy married Hyman Mervis on 14 June 1959 in Pietersburg. Eleen [born 4 January 1919 and buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 1 December 1961] married Harold Stein; children Lionel and Joan].

Lionel Stein claims he is a facilitator in helping incarcerated Jewish prisoners regain their freedom²²⁶. He tells the story of Miron Marcus, who lived with his wife Marilyn [nee Sussman] and children Talia, Ryan and Nicola in Pietersburg for several years, after leaving Rhodesia. Miron came from Russia to Israel in 1971 and then went to Rhodesia in 1974, where he met Marilyn. Marilyn was Lionel Stein's step-mother's niece. On the 4 September 1976, Miron Marcus and his brother-in-law, Jacky Bloch, were flying home to Bulawayo, when they were shot down after straying over the border to Mozambique. Jacky was killed and Miron was shot four times. He was jailed as a spy in Lourenco Marques [Maputo]. Whilst incarcerated in jail, he managed to escape twice, but was caught and returned to jail. His family tried every avenue to get his release. Wolfgang Vogel, an East German lawyer, the right-hand man of President Honecker of East Germany, who had secured the release of Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot that had been brought down by the Soviets, agreed to provide assistance.

Rabbi Ronnie Greenwald, who had run the Jewish community vote in the Republican Presidential campaign for Richard Nixon, was visiting Israel when he too was persuaded to help. He managed to get U S Congressman Ben Gilman to assist with a three-way international spy swap, involving Miron, an American student Alan van Norman, held in East Berlin and an East German spy, Robert Thomson, held in an American jail for 12 years. Greenwald and Gilman arrived in South Africa the first night of *Pesach* and stayed with Rabbi Tanzer, who had been at the Telz *Yeshiva* with Rabbi Greenwald. They attended synagogue, where they met the congregation. That night after *Shabbat*, they left for the Mozambique/Swaziland border and the next day, at 4 pm, they, together with Miron's wife, met Miron, on his release.

As a result of meeting Rabbi Greenwald, Lionel Stein also managed to facilitate the release of South African prisoners-of-war in Angola, when he asked Rabbi Tanzer, during his trip to the USA, to ask Rabbi Greenwald whether he could broker the release of the POWs. Rabbi Greenwald agreed. Lionel started negotiations with Mannie Mulder, a senior South African government official. After several months the POWs were released.

Sam Palte moved to Pietersburg where he, as part of the Kallmeyer family, founded African Stores²²⁷. Sam Palte was honorary life president of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation and treasurer for nearly 30 years. He was a committee member of the Jewish Burial Society for over 40 years and its chairman for 17 years. He was also chairman of the Jewish Benevolent Society for nearly 30 years. He was vice-president of the Pietersburg Chamber of Commerce and a Freemason. The Review of 2 May 1958 described Sam as a man with an acute mind, sound judgement, a balanced outlook and experienced.

He died, aged 74, in Durban in 1958 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 24 March 1958.



Laura and Moss Cohen, Sam and Bertha Palte with Rabbi I and Mrs Brodie, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth on a visit to Pietersburg on 19 April 1950 [courtesy of Laura Cohen]



Mr Chaim Weizman's visit to Pietersburg in 1931 [Pietersburg congregation collection]
 Standing: Mr Herman Manaschewitz, Mrs Vera Weizman, Mrs Brahle Hirschmann, Mrs Dora Manaschewitz,
 Dr Chaim Weizman, Mrs Bertha Palte,
 Front: Mr Moss Cohen, Mr Sam Palte

Sam's wife Bertha Palte also made her mark on the Jewish and general Pietersburg community. She was born in Johannesburg on 23 October 1892 and was educated in Pietersburg and Pretoria, where she studied to be a teacher. She later taught in Pietersburg. Bertha was a section leader and recruiting officer for the Womens' Auxillary during World War II, and a founder member of the Pietersburg Outpost. She was a founder and honorary life member and honorary life vice-president of the National Council of Women's Pietersburg branch and its corresponding member for education. The family was close friends with Senator Tom Naude and Bertha took a large part in the establishment of the Tom Naude Technical High School in Pietersburg. She was a member of the Transvaal Agricultural Union, and a founder member of the Cripple Care Association in Pietersburg. She also ran a Girls Club and held monthly tea parties for the aged and lonely at her home.

Bertha's contribution to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation is legendary. She kept a kosher home and entertained Chaim Weizman, Nahum Sokolow and other distinguished guests in her home. She ran a reading circle for the Jewish youth before there were any Hebrew classes. She was held in such high esteem by the children that she was presented with a book inscribed 'To Mrs Palte with love and gratitude from her pupils on the first anniversary of the 'Children's Class' 29/9/29'²²⁸.

This was signed by Sybil Manaschewitz, Minna Solomon, Hilda Susser, Mavis Susser, Renie Solomon, David Solomon, S Hirschmann, C Hirschmann, Lily Zway, F Kaplan, P Susser, Miriam Solomon, Hilda Solomon, Eleen Palte, Rhoda Palte, I Leveton, H Levin, B Levin, L Levin, W Levy, R Levy, B Skok, O Skok and G Susser. Several of her ex-pupils testify that she inspired them with such a love of Zionism that they made *aliyah* to Israel as a result. When Bertha left Pietersburg in 1970 she was presented with a certificate signed by the chairman of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation Monty Schechter and the honorary secretary Leon Levy:

'in appreciation of her lifelong selfless and unstinted devotion and service to the Jewish community of Pietersburg in all its spheres of endeavour, encouraging Zionism, Youth activities, Education Welfare, Religion and Charity. She was successful in achieving for the Jewish women of Pietersburg recognition as full members of the Congregation: was the founder of the Jewish Women's Guild and a foundation member of the Pietersburg and District Women's Zionist League.'

Bertha was made honorary life president of both the Pietersburg Jewish Women's Guild and the Pietersburg Women's Zionist Society. She died on 13 February 1984 aged 91²²⁹, and was buried in Pietersburg. Sam and Bertha Palte's remains were re-interred in Jerusalem in 2002.

Herman Hirschmann's brother Jacob married Erna Ethel Raick, who died at a young age. They had two sons, Samuel [Chummie] and Edward. Herman's other brother, Joseph [Brahle] married Rachel [Rahel]. They brought up Chummie and Edward when Jacob died in 1935. Herman's sister, Bryna, married Mr Rakusin in Poland. Their children came out to the Tzaneen area where they owned a store. They were Jacob, nicknamed Kuba, who married Pietersburg's long-serving minister, Rev Levine's, daughter Lily

in Pietersburg on 15 August 1937 [children Lena and Brian] and Samuel Rakusin, who married Frances Tager in Pietersburg on 22 March 1936 [adopted daughters Bertha and Hedda], daughter of Elles Tager of Pietersburg. Both families later moved to Pietersburg, where they bought SB Cash Stores from Mr Sadowsky. Samuel also owned the Empire Bioscope. Samuel was president of the Pietersburg Chamber of Commerce in 1930.

Maasin Levy [nee Hirschmann]'s children, Solly Levy and his sister Seri [married Heinrich Kohn in Pietersburg on 21 July 1940], also lived in Pietersburg. Solly and Kay Levy had two children Gabriel and Jonathan. Kay had a son, David Evans, from a previous marriage.



Hirschmann/Rakusin family Bialystock 30 April 1926 [courtesy of Richelle Hirschmann]
 Back row: Rahel Hirschmann, Chummie Hirschmann, Solly Levy, Rachiel Rakusin, Shaia Rakusin,
 Serie Levy [Kahn]
 Front row: Brahle Hirschmann, Bryna Rakusin, Avram Rakusin, Jacob Hirschmann with Eddie.

The Perlmann family of Tzaneen was also related to the Hirschmann family. Abraham Perlmann married Bertha Michaelsohn, a sister to Regina, who married Israel Berman. The Perlmann's children were Thelma, Jackie and Paddy.

Amongst the founders of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation were Joseph Kallmeyer, Herman Hirschmann, Max Israelsohn, Wolf Israelsohn, Jacob Hirschmann, Adolph Israelsohn and Herman Eichholz²³⁰. Jacob Hirschmann was one of the champions of the women to get a vote on the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation committee. The members of the Hirschmann family were all keen Zionists. Mesdames Sadie and Rahel Hirschmann were chairladies of the Pietersburg and District Women's Zionist League. Jack was the chairman of the Pietersburg branch of the Israeli United Appeal²³¹. He was a guest speaker on 18 November 1965, when the Marble Hall branch of the Women's Agricultural Union held its annual International Evening, at an evening in Vivo and also at the Transvaal Agricultural

Union in Naboomspruit in 1974. Herman Hirschmann, son of Jack and Sadie Hirschmann joined the Israeli army in 1957. Unfortunately he was badly injured in a shooting accident whilst serving. He and his sister Richelle settled in Israel.



Samuel [Chummie] Hirschmann [courtesy of Hirschmann family]

The Pietersburg and District Zionist Youth Society was established in 1935 by Samuel [Chummie] Hirschmann²³², who was also a member of the Transvaal Zionist Youth Executive²³³ and of the Executive Council of the South African Zionist Federation. Chummie and Rabbi Zalman Schwartz travelled throughout southern Africa, as far north as the Belgium Congo, in order to collect Zionist funds. Chummie was one of the founders of Universal Airways, which was taken over by El Al Airlines flying to South Africa from Israel. For many years, he was a volunteer station manager for El Al in South Africa.

Descendants of Isak Israelsohn

1	Isak Israelsohn 1815 -	
	+Rachle 1818 -	
..... 2	Yehuda Benjamin Israelsohn	1842 - 1897
	+Chaje 1845 - 1876	
..... 3	Keile [Clara] Israelsohn	- 1953
	+Herman Eiccholz	1869 - 1942
..... 4	George Eiccholz	
	+Sarah Levine	
..... 5	Leonard Eiccholz	
	+Sarah	
..... 5	Rhona Eiccholz	
..... 5	Herman Eiccholz	
..... 4	Minna Eiccholz	
	+Morris Ellison	
..... 4	Helena Eiccholz	1895 -
	+Benjamin Levy	
..... 5	Ruby Levy	
	+Aaron Golach	
..... 6	Desmond Golach	
..... 6	Herman Golach	
..... 6	Merle Golach	

.....5 Leon Levy
+Rene Sussman
.....6 Cecil Levy
.....6 Brian Levy
.....5 Walter Levy
+Sheila Blecher
.....6 Hilary Levy
+Harold Starkowitz
.....7 Caron Starkowitz
.....7 Neil Starkowitz
.....7 Arnold Starkowitz
.....6 Benjamin Levy
.....6 Lynn Levy
.....4 Bessie Eicholz
+Louis Brenner
.....5 Angie Brenner
+Sam Bolon
.....6 Alan Bolon
.....6 Kevin Bolon
.....3 Menachem-Iser [Max] Israelsohn 1866 - 1930
+Briana [Betty] Israelowitz
.....4 Solomon Hirsch Israelsohn
+Miriam Feinberg
.....5 Beverly Israelsohn
.....5 Cedric Israelsohn 1950 -
.....4 Eleazar [Lazar] Israelsohn
+Josine Du Toit
.....4 Chaia [Helena] Israelsohn 1900 - 1972
+Max Miller
.....5 Mendel Miller
+Sonia Neppe
.....6 Ann Miller
.....6 Jeffrey Miller
.....6 Mark Miller
.....5 Victor Miller
+Marion Worms
.....6 Deborah Miller
.....6 Joanne Miller
.....6 David Miller
.....5 Beulah Miller
+Zvi Lipman
.....6 Natan Lipman
.....6 Tsilla Lipman
.....6 Yonel Lipman
.....3 Wolf Israelsohn 1870 - 1952
+Bertha Wilson
..... *2nd Wife of Yehuda Benyamin Israelsohn:
+Rose Blumenau ... 1854 -
.....3 Sholom-Ruvim [Solomon Rudolph] Israelsohn - 1893
+Ethel Berman - 1948
..... *2nd Wife of Sholom-Ruvim [Solomon Rudolph] Israelsohn:
+Mabel Cohen
.....3 Sara-Feiga Israelsohn 1890 - 1941
+Zalman Karp 1882 - 1942
.....3 Morris Israelsohn 1880 - 1919
+Bertha Wilson
.....4 Julius Israelsohn 1917 -
+Stella Klein
.....5 Hilton Israelsohn 1948 -
+Elain Fisher
.....6 Brandon Israelsohn
.....6 Taryn Israelsohn
.....3 Aba-David [Adolf] Israelsohn 1891 - 1950
+Golda
.....3 Duda [Gute] Israelsohn 1893 - 1942
+Max Apel
.....3 Minna Israelsohn 1895 - 1941
+Samuel Hosiason 1890 - 1941
..... 2 Levin-Leib Israelsohn 1844 -
+Chaje 1842 -

.....3 Feige [Fanny] Israelsohn 1882 -
 +Ben Meyer
3 Ida Israelsohn 1880 -
 +S. Harris Solomon
4 Minna Solomon
 +Mr Kramer
4 David Solomon
 +Ros Judaiken
4 Rene Solomon
3 Menachem [Adolph] Israelsohn 1871 - 1934
3 Male Israelsohn
 +Sydney Sacks
4 Louis Sacks
4 Mannie Sacks
4 Ray Sacks
4 Minna Sacks
 +Lionel Spanner
3 Chaiah Israelsohn
 +M Ellison
4 Aaron Ellison
4 Morris Ellison
 +Minna Eichholz
3 Lina Israelsohn 1872 -
3 Caroline Israelsohn 1876 -

Descendants of Mr Eichholz

1 Mr Eichholz
 2 Herman Eichholz
 +Clara Israelsohn
3 George Eichholz
 +Sarah Levine
4 Leonard Eichholz
 +Sarah
4 Rhona Eichholz
4 Herman Eichholz
3 Bessie Eichholz
 +Louis Brenner
4 Angie Brenner
 +Sam Bolon
5 Alan Bolon
5 Kevin Bolon
3 Minna Eichholz
 +Morris Ellison
3 Helena Eichholz
 +Benjamin Levy
4 Ruby Levy
 +Aaron Golach
4 Leon Levy
 +Rene Sussman
5 Cecil Levy
5 Brian Levy
4 Walter Levy
 +Sheila Blecher
5 Hilary Levy
 +Harold Starkowitz
6 Caron Starkowitz
6 Neil Starkowitz
6 Arnold Starkowitz
5 Benjamin Levy
5 Lynn Levy
 2 Unknown Eichholz
 +Unknown Meyer
3 Hannah Meyer
 +Meyer Tinkel
4 Jack Tinkel
4 David Tinkel
 +Celia Katzman

.....5 Jonathan Tankel
5 Keith Tankel
3 Ben Meyer
 +Fanny Israelsohn

Brenner Family

1 Mr Brenner
 +Feige Wittert
 2 Louis Brenner
 +Bessie Eicholz
 3 Angie Brenner
 +Sam Bolon
 4 Alan Bolon
 4 Kevin Bolon
 2 Isaac Brenner
 +Mary Lewis
 3 Ernie Brenner
 +Elinor Yudelman
 4 Jeffrey Brenner
 4 Terry Brenner
 4 Ian Brenner
 2 Chaim Brenner
 +Zina Moross
 3 Arnold Brenner
 +Ethel Jones
 3 Stan Brenner
 +Gillian
 3 Maish Brenner
 +Isobel Gutkin
 3 Riva
 3 Channah
 2 Joe Brenner
 1 Yaakov Brenner
 +Sheina Wittert
 2 Ruby Brenner
 +Martha
 2 Max Brenner
 +Lydia Ralstein
 3 Sylvia Brenner
 +David Glasser
 4 Nadine Glasser
 +Kevin Marcus
 4 Benjamin Glasser
 3 John Brenner
 +Toby Kimmel
 4 Martine Brenner
 +Lyall Horwitz
 4 Jonathan Brenner
 2 Leibe Brenner
 +Rachel Sacks
 3 Miriam [Micky] Brenner
 +Leslie Vides
 4 Mark Vides
 4 Lyn Vides
 +Ian Katz
 4 Phillipa Vides
 4 Amanda Vides
 3 Jack Brenner
 +Marcia Aron
 4 Lionel Brenner
 4 David Brenner
 4 Shana Brenner
 +Mark Friedgat
 4 Lorin Brenner
 3 Ginger Brenner
 +Rose Naturman
 4 Marilyn Brenner
 4 Gail Brenner

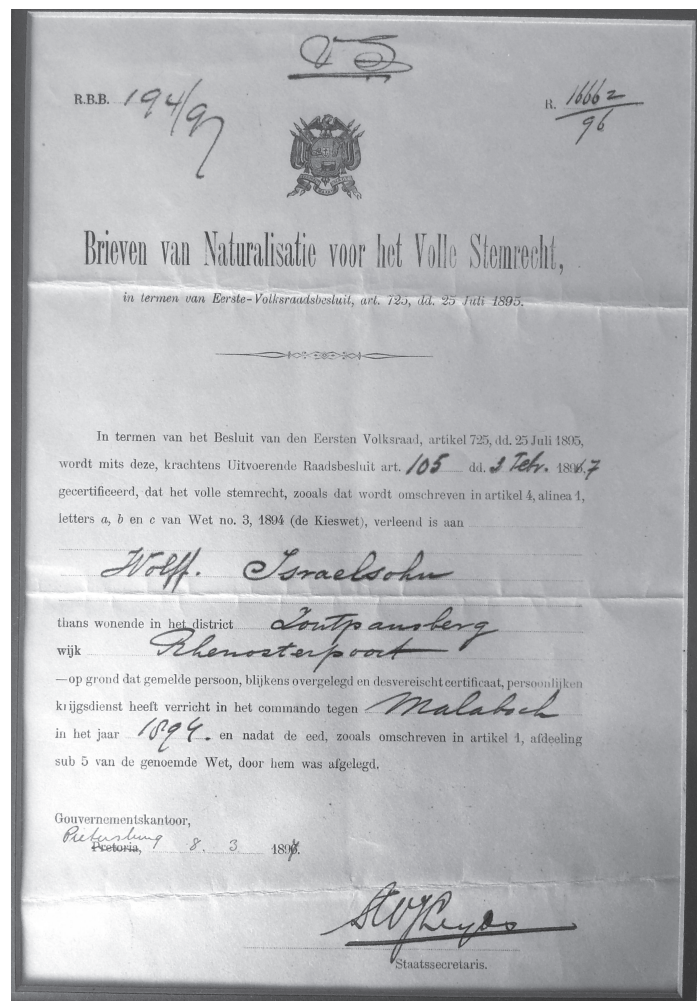
..... 4 Billy Brenner
 +Brenda Josselowitz
 3 Joseph [Joe] Brenner
 +Ann Vides
 4 Beverley Brenner
 +Jack Shap
 4 Leonard Brenner
 +LeeAnn Isaacs
 4 Moira Brenner
 +Bob Poole
 2 Lemach Brenner
 +Rose Chitrin
 3 Sheila Brenner
 +Raymond Hasson
 4 Neil Hasson
 4 Lewis Hasson
 4 Marion Hasson
 3 Harry Brenner
 +Miriam Levin
 4 Ayal Brenner
 4 Gil Brenner
 4 Shelley Brenner
 3 Sonny Brenner
 +Peta May
 4 Zara Brenner
 4 Joanny Brenner
 4 LeeAnn Brenner
 2 Sotze Brenner
 +Zalman Brenner
 3 Shulamit Brenner
 +Joss Gill
 4 Leonard Gill
 4 Francis Gill
 4 Jennifer Gill
 3 Debby Brenner
 +Sydnay Orrelowitz
 4 Gillian Orrelowitz
 4 Beverly Orrelowitz
 4 Steven Orrelowitz
 1 Third Brenner
 2 Beryl Brenner
 +Sadie Glick
 3 Paulette Brenner
 3 Lynette Brenner
 +Ivan Buchman
 4 Aharon Buchman
 4 Hiram Buchman
 4 Sharon Buchman
 3 Charlotte Brenner



Israelsohn Family [courtesy of Victor Miller]: Zara [Sara-Feigel] Israelsohn, Judel/Yehuda Benjamin Israelsohn,
 Rose [nee Blumenau] Israelsohn, Rudolph Israelsohn, Adolph Israelsohn, Duda [Gute] Israelsohn

The Israelsohn/Eichholz clan was pioneered by Max Israelsohn [died 10 November 1930 aged 64 and buried in Pietersburg], who came to South Africa from Talsen, Courland in 1888²³⁴ with his father Yehuda Benjamin Israelsohn. Yehuda did not like the country as everything was too foreign and strange for him, so during his stay he never left Cape Town. He eventually returned to Talsen, where he died and was buried in the Talsen cemetery²³⁵. Yehuda's first wife was Chaje [1845-1876] and their children were Max, Wolf and Clara. His second wife was Rose Blumenau and their children were Rudolph, Sara-Feige, Morris, Adolph, Gute, and Minna. Rose had a daughter Eva from her first marriage. Eva's daughter Millie married Abraham Zaacks.

Max went to Woodbush Village, where he was in the employ of Mr Hirschmann and Mr Kallmeyer. His brother Wolf went to America, but was not there long before he came to South Africa to join Max²³⁶. Wolf had seen service in the Russian armed forces²³⁷. He fought in the 1894 Malaboch War against Chief Malabogho²³⁸, and both he and Max took part in the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902. Wolf received his ZAR citizenship in 1896 as a result of having fought in the Malaboch War. However, after the Anglo-Boer War, he renounced his ZAR citizenship in 1902 under duress and claimed British citizenship, in order to secure the rights and privileges of living in the Transvaal under British rule. Wolf hated the British his entire life as he was apparently mistreated as a prisoner of war in Pretoria²³⁹.



Wolf Israelsohn ZAR citizenship document [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]

E.R.

No. **125**
5066

WHEREAS, at the time of the outbreak of hostilities between the Government of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria and the Governments of the late South African Republic and the late Orange Free State, I, the undersigned,.....

...*Wolf Israelsohn*.....

of ...*Lyons*.....*N. S. N. S. N. S.*

.....*Lyons*.....

now residing at.....*Lyons*.....

was a burgher of the South African Republic, and

WHEREAS the said South African Republic has been annexed to, and become part of, the dominions of His Majesty KING EDWARD THE SEVENTH; and

WHEREAS, I am desirous of formally claiming and securing all and sundry the rights and privileges of a British subject, which, by reason of the fact of annexation as aforesaid, I am now justly entitled to do;

Now, THEREFORE, I hereby formally declare that I acknowledge myself to be a subject of His Majesty KING EDWARD THE SEVENTH, and I do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Most Gracious Majesty, KING EDWARD THE SEVENTH, His Heirs and Successors according to law.

Wolf Israelsohn

Sworn and declared before me at.....*Lyons*.....

this...*3rd*...day of...*May*...190*2*..

W. H. H. H. H.

Special Commissioner.

• Fill in name of farm or town, ward and district.

[T.O.]

Wolf Israelsohn's British citizenship certificate [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Wolf Israelsohn 1905 [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Haenertsburg Mill & Store [courtesy of Victor Miller]

The Israelsohn brothers, acting on Mr Hirschmann's advice, obtained a government loan to purchase the farm Turfloop at Sovenga, where the University of the North now stands. They built a small house on Syferkuil on the main road linking Houtbosdorp and Pietersburg and built an earth dam on their farm, which unfortunately did not withstand the first rains. They toiled away for several weeks with their little wheelbarrows to try and fix the breach in the dam. The mining entrepreneur Sir Lionel Phillips and his wife Lady Phillips happened to be passing by on the way to their property in the Woodbush area. The hard labour of the two men so moved Sir Lionel that he donated four coco-pans from the mines to replace the wheelbarrows. They were delivered by Zeederberg's transport and as the brothers had no prior knowledge of the gift, the Zeederberg man was hard-pressed to get them to accept it²⁴⁰. The Israelsohn brothers kept a boat on their dam but sold it to Mr McKechnie when their nephew was washed over the spillway and drowned²⁴¹. The Israelsohn brothers also owned Haenertsburg Mill and Stores as well as a butcher shop in the early 1920s. Wolf had a shop at Soekmekaar.



Israelsohn & Eichholz Store [courtesy of Victor Miller]

According to the National Archives Reference 3369/97 Source SP²⁴², George Bailey stole a team of donkeys and transport from A L Devenish and sold them to Max Israelsohn, who paid him. During this transaction a messenger arrived from Devenish looking for the stolen donkeys. Bailey fled the scene. Israelsohn sent his black workers after him and they captured Bailey where he was hiding in the bushes. Bailey was brought to town and was sentenced to 18 months in jail for theft. According to this archival reference, Israelsohn claimed costs of £13.3.6 on 23 January 1897 from the government for costs incurred during the incident for 43 shirts, two bottles of brandy and tobacco for the “kaffers”, and a guard for the prisoner for seven days and nights. The amount was approved even though he had had no authorization to catch the prisoner.



Betty and Max Israelsohn 1910 [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Clara & Betty Israelowitz [photos courtesy of Victor Miller]



Solly and Lazar Israelsohn



Helena Miller [nee Israelsohn]

Max Israelsohn married Betty Israelowitz [died 21 April 1940 and buried in Pietersburg], sister to Clara Israelowitz who married Josef Himmelhoch. They had three children, daughter Helena [died 7 June 1972 and buried in Pietersburg] and twin boys - Solly and Lazer [born 10 October 1907]. Lazer [married Josine du Toit] was buried in Pietersburg on 11 November 1978. Solly married Miriam Feinberg in Pietersburg on 11 November 1945, daughter of Joseph and Martha Gertie [buried Pietersburg 11 September 1956 and 8 February 1977 respectively] children Cedric and Beverly [married Norman Gluckman in Pietersburg on 30 March 1969]. Gertie's brother Abraham Wolpe married a non-Jewess, Bessie, who converted to Judaism. Their children were Sekkie [married Paul Fainberg – children Colin, Eve and Fay] and Rachel [married Louis Menachemson - children Mervyn and Cynthia].

Helena Israelsohn married Max Miller [Mel] [son of Avigdor Mel and Miriam Gifter, sister of Harry Gifter] who was born in 1899 and died 18 April 1962 and was buried in Pietersburg. He came to Pietersburg in the mid-1920s. Their children were Mendel [married Sonia Neppe], Victor and Beulah [married Zvi Lipman]. Victor Miller [born 26 April 1930] married Marion Worms in Pietersburg on 25 June 1961, daughter of Simon and Jenny [nee Bernstein- brothers David and Alec - children Jo-ann, Deborah, David] and sister of Beryl Worms [married Heine Wohl]. Simon and Jenny were buried in the non-denominational cemetery in Pietersburg. Simon's sister, Millie married Fritz Poss [buried 17 November 1955 aged 55 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] and their children were Sylvia and Dorothy.

Max Israelsohn retired around 1920 and moved with his family to Pietersburg. Nicknamed 'Maake' Israelsohn, he became the honorary treasurer of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation.

When Max died on 10 November 1930, both Rev Gadd and Rev Woolf of Johannesburg, officiated at his funeral. It was claimed that his cortege was the longest yet seen in Pietersburg. Being an avid Zionist, his coffin was draped with an Israeli flag. In the oration at the graveside he was praised for adopting one of Isaac Ochberg's orphans, Chaim Reichman²⁴³. Chaim's brother Abram was placed in the care of the Kruger family in Pietersburg. It was also said that anyone, Jew or Christian, could come to Max with their problems and would always find him ready and willing to assist them.

Max's uncle, Moses Miller [Mel] [son of David died 22 June 1940 aged 92 and buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] lived in the Pietersburg area and fought for the Boers in the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902. He married Sarah Rebekah [Sannie] [died 12 December 1937 aged 63 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] and they adopted Moses's sister's two children, when she was killed by a blade from a windmill - Samuel²⁴⁴ [had three children David, Boris and Yvonne] and Sarah [born 1883, died 2 December 1978 in Johannesburg], who married Harry Gifter [parents Jacob and Bertha Gifter] [born 1874, died 22 September 1946 aged 73 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery]. Harry Gifter was a livestock dealer and lived at Bandelierkop in 1922²⁴⁵. Harry Gifter's sister Miriam married Avigdor Mel. Sarah and Harry Gifter had two children, Cecil [born 18 December 1906 in Pretoria, and died 11 August 1978 in Durban, married Ruby Gevisser, children Gillian and Jennifer] and Lily [married Hyman Basner in Pietersburg on 7 October 1934].

Max Miller and Cecil Gifter owned a general dealer store and butchery at Ontevrede in the Pietersburg district. Harry and Cecil Gifter had an asbestos mine at Bewaarkloof near the Olifants River, as well as the Gifter Corundum Mine at Bochum near Louis Trichardt [which was a partnership between Mr Gifter and Mr Friedel, before Mr Friedel retired in 1932²⁴⁶]. Ruby Gevisser was a *Habonim* leader, a championship squash player, a drinker and smoker and a poker player with the 'boys'. She was also a concert pianist and became a music teacher. Cecil Gifter was an 'endearing hard-drinking mining buccaneer who was into sporting, drinking and women'²⁴⁷. Cecil Gifter's parties at Bewaarkloof with the neighbouring miners, were legendary and lasted all night. A free dance was held at the Royal Hotel in December 1932 where the Sadovsky's orchestra played²⁴⁸.



Miller family [courtesy of Gil Berger nee Gifter]
Back: Rebekah Miller, Moses Miller, Samuel Miller, Harry Gifter, Sara Gifter
Front: Lily Gifter, Cecil Gifter



Syferkuil [courtesy of Victor Miller]
Lena Miller, Minna Ellison, Baby Julius Israelsohn, Morris Israelsohn, Bertha Israelsohn, Ben Levy, unknown, Adolph Israelsohn [small]

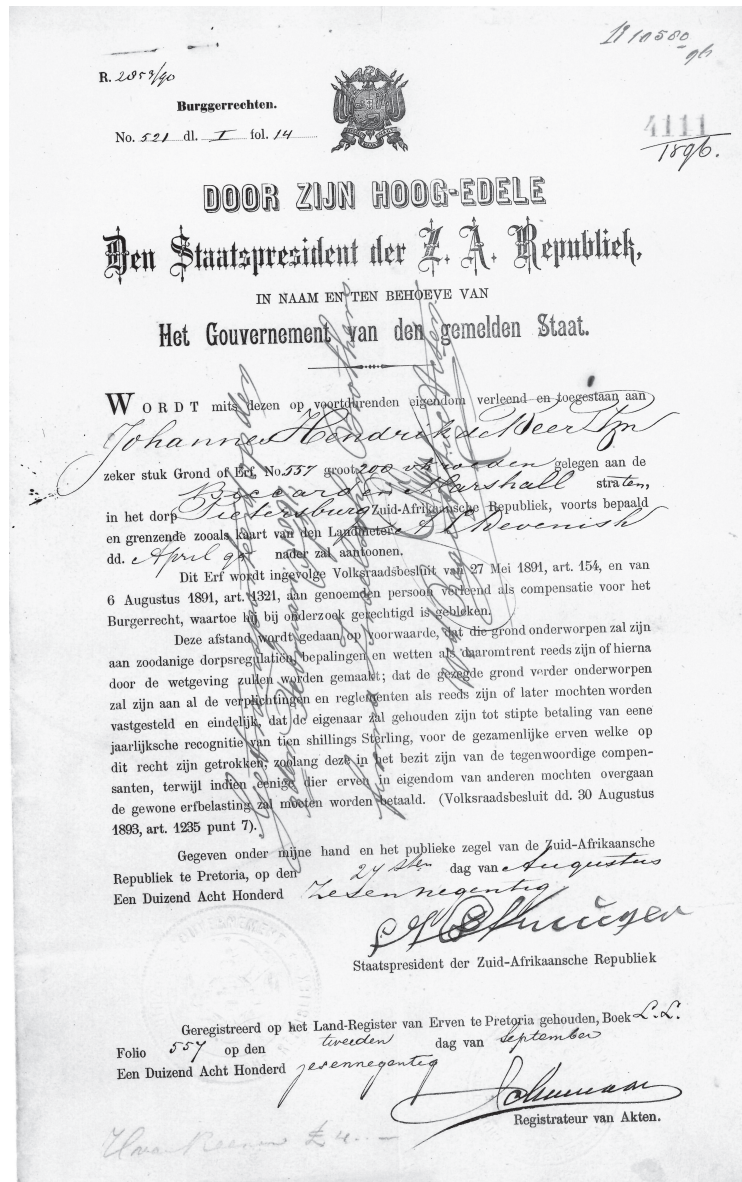


Bertha, Morris, Julius Israelsohn 1917 [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]

Wolf Israelsohn married his late half-brother Heiman Morris Israelsohn's wife Bertha [nee Wilson]²⁴⁹ who had come from England. Wolf adopted Morris and Bertha's son Julius. Julius celebrated his *Barmitzvah* at 'the Gables', the residence of Mr and Mrs W Israelsohn in 1930. Wolf moved from Syferkuil to Pietersburg with Bertha and his stepson Julius and travelled regularly to his farm at Goudplaas²⁵⁰. The farm was initially called Goudplaats in Dutch and then changed to Goudplaas in Afrikaans. He had also purchased the adjoining farm Dassieshoek, and the combined farms had an area of almost 5000 acres which he farmed himself. Wolf Israelsohn met a number of times with President Paul Kruger at his house in Pretoria and was given personal permission to extend the farms Goudplaats and Dassieshoek in order to obtain more water from rivers outside the existing boundaries. A railway line was built through their farm and land was expropriated for a siding. Wolf supplied the trains with water, but this led to a dispute with the South African Railways, as he did not have enough water during the drought years²⁵¹.



Wolf and Morris Israelsohn [courtesy of Victor Miller]



Title Deeds to Erf 557 between Biccard and Marshal Streets, Pietersburg transferred to the Israelsohn brothers on 3 Feb 1897 and signed by President Kruger [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Railway siding [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



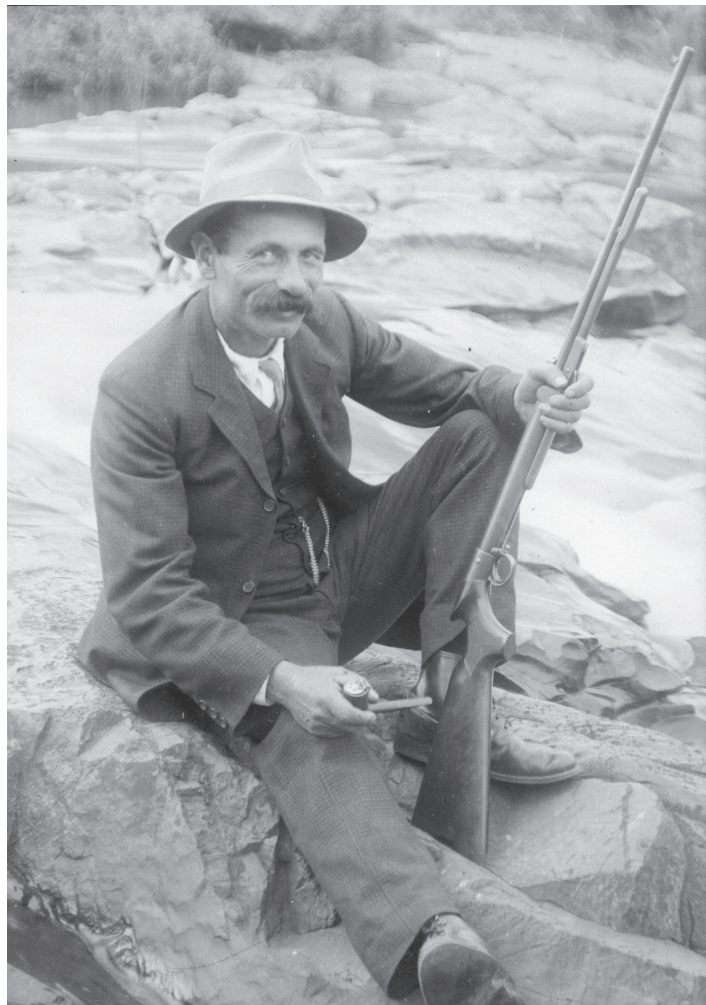
Goudplaats Harvest time c 1930 [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Statice fields –Goudplaas [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Transport vehicle [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Wolf Israelsohn 1930 [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



1919. Max, Morris, Rudolph, Wolf and Bertha Israelsohn [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Morris & Bertha Israelson's wedding. 12 November 1916 [courtesy of Victor Miller and Hilton Ellison]

Back row: Rudolph Israelsohn, Unknown, Adolph Israelsohn [big], Wolf Israelsohn, Adolph Israelsohn [small]

Second Row: Ida Solomon, Baby Solomon, Solomon Solomon, Fanny

Meyer, Ben Meyer, Lena Levy, Ben Levy, Daisy Wilson, unknown, unknown

Third row: Max Israelsohn, Betty Israelsohn, Ann Wilson, Morris Israelsohn, Bertha Israelsohn, Joseph Wilson, Clara Eichholz, Herman Eichholz, Mala Sacks

Front row: Sydney Sacks, Minna Eichholz, Rae Sacks, Minna Sacks, Lena Israelsohn, Solly Israelsohn, George Eichholz, Lazar Israelsohn



Pietersburg TAL registered car. Adolf Israelsohn, Rudolph Israelsohn, Wolf Israelsohn, unknown, Herman Eichholz. Seated in car Bertha Israelsohn [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Family picnic. Rudolph Israelsohn, Morris Israelsohn, Wolf Israelsohn, Ben Meyer, women and children unknown [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Clara and Herman Eichholz [courtesy of Leon Levy]

No. 40554

P E R M I T

TO ENTER AND RESIDE IN THE TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

Name.....*Mrs Keile Maake Eichholz*.....
(With Christian Names in full)

Nationality.....*Russian*.....

Occupation.....*None*.....

Last Address.....*% Consul Cape Town*.....

District to which proceeding.....*Pietersburg*.....

Place of Issue.....*CAPE TOWN.*.....

Date of Issue.....*MAY 8-1903*.....

Authority for Issue.....*F.S.*.....

Issuing Officer.....*[Signature]*.....

PERMIT SECRETARY,
MAY 8-1903
CAPE TOWN.

This Permit authorises the holder to enter and leave the Transvaal or Orange River Colony freely, and need not be renewed.

This Permit is not transferable, and any person making use of it, other than the original holder, will be liable to prosecution and to the penalties provided in Section 9 of Ordinance No. 5 of 1903. [SEE BACK]

Signature of Holder.....*Keile Maake Eichholz*.....

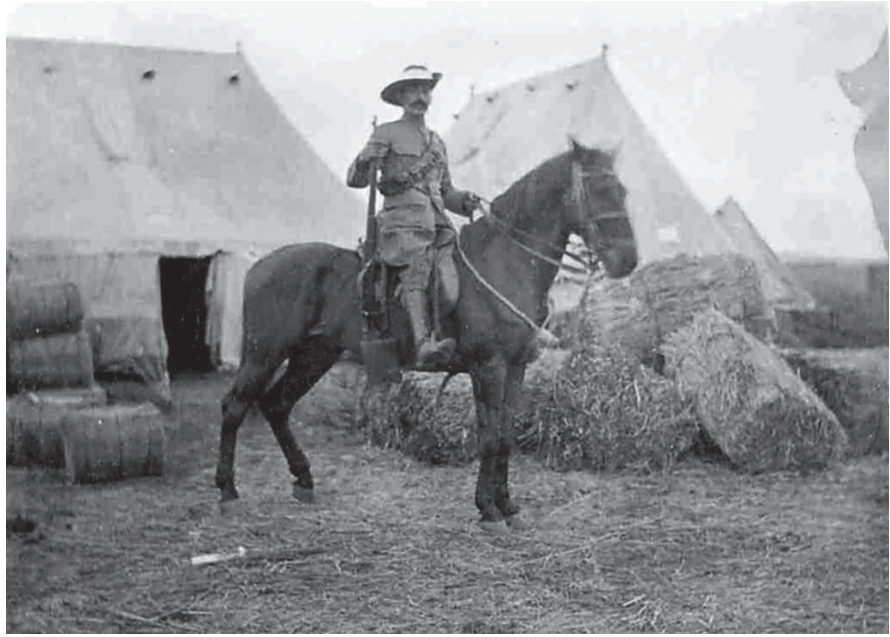
Permit for Keile Eichholz to reside in the Transvaal [courtesy of Levy family]

In 1898 Max and Wolf Israelsohn brought their sister Clara's husband Herman Eichholz [born in 1869, died 3 January 1942 aged 73] out from Lithuania and set him up in a trading store in Haenertsburg. In 1903 Herman Eichholz brought his wife Clara [Keile] [died 8 July 1953 aged 76 in Pietersburg] and eight year old daughter Helena from Riga, Latvia, out to South Africa, as well as his nephew Benjamin [Ben] Meyer²⁵². Herman and Clara had four children, Helena [died 28 December 1958 aged 63, buried in Pietersburg, married Ben Levy who died 1 February 1954 aged 69, buried in Pietersburg], George [died 5 April 1959 aged 52, buried in Pietersburg] who married Sarah Levine in Pietersburg on 17 March 1935 [died 15 February 1965 aged 53 and buried in Pietersburg, children Leonard, Rhona, Herman], Bessie [born 14 April 1904, died 4 May 1977 aged 73 and buried in Pietersburg, who married Louis Brenner [died 9 August 1963 aged 69, daughter Agnes, born 19 October 1929] and Minna [died 1 February 1996 buried in Pietersburg] who married Maurice Ellison [died 15 May 1993 buried in Pietersburg] in Pietersburg on 7 January 1940. Ben Meyer [buried Pietersburg cemetery 29 January 1963] married Fanny Israelsohn [buried in Pietersburg 27 August 1963]. He later brought his own sister Hannah Meyer [born 25 December 1894, died 9 March 1976, buried in Pietersburg] out from Lithuania and she married Meyer Tankel [born 30 December 1892, died 29 December 1975 buried in Pietersburg], who had a trading store at Sandfontein near Matlala. They had two sons, David [born in Pietersburg on 5 October 1927, married Celia Katzman [born Lachwa, Poland on 10 October 1929, married in Pietersburg 20 August 1961; children Jonathan and Keith] and Jack Tankel.



Family picnic 1914, with Eichholz and Israelsohn families and friends [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]

Helena [Lena] Eichholz, Herman and Clara Eichholz's daughter, married Benjamin [Ben] Levy on 26 December 1920²⁵³, son of Wolf and Riva [nee Ginsberg]. Ben Levy came to South Africa from Shukjan²⁵⁴, Lithuania in 1898 and lived in Cape Town for a short while. There he worked as a smous, selling trinkets from house to house, before joining an uncle on a dairy farm near Benoni. He left for Pietersburg in 1905, as there were too many brothers working on the farm. Ben had heard that Pietersburg was a prosperous area. He opened a shop in Mare Street, Pietersburg selling cattle feed and donkeys. Ben Levy was a partner in Haenerts Mills from about 1918 with his father-in-law Herman Eichholz and a non-Jew Tom Haenert. They sold the mill in 1933 to Louis Brenner for £4000. They also ran stables on the corner of Market and Jorissen Street, Pietersburg. Ben's brother, Sidney Levy, worked for him in Pietersburg for a short while. Ben and Lena Levy had three children, Walter [Wally - born 13 January 1922, married Sheila Borer [nee Blecher] [born 25 January 1935] in Pietersburg on 9 December 1956, children Hilary, Benjamin, Lynn], Leon [born 11 July 1928, married to Rene Sussman, married Cecil and Brian] and Ruby [married to Aaron Golach on 30 April 1949 in Pietersburg – children- Desmond, Herman and Merle]. Aaron Golach was a magistrate who worked in Pietersburg and Potgietersrus for a couple of years, before moving to Natal.



Ben Levy in army uniform [courtesy of Wally Levy]



Left: Ben Levy and Ben Meyer [courtesy of Leon Levy]
 Right: Adolph and Rudolph Israelsohn 1905 [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]



Levy Family [courtesy of Wally Levy]
 Back row: Ruby Golach [nee Levy], Leon Levy
 Front row: Wally Levy, Ben Levy and Lena Levy



Ben and Lena Levy Wedding 26 December 1920 [courtesy of Wally Levy]
Back Row Left to Right: Isaac Levy, Ben Meyer, Frank Levy, Mr Kramer, Wolf Israelsohn, Max Coll, Joey Levy, Sidney Levy, Sidney Sacks, unknown, Rudolph Israelsohn
Second Row: Marla Saks, MeriLinda Kramer [nee Levy], Louis Saks, Fanny Meyer, Gertie Coll, Zelda Kramer, Adolph Israelsohn, Lena Israelsohn, Rita Kramer, Ida Solomon, Manie Saks, Solomon Solomon [holding Rene Solomon], Bertha Israelsohn, Adolph Israelsohn
Third Row: Paulina Oshry [nee Levy], Max Oshry, Helena Levy, Ben Levy, Clara Eichholz, Herman Eichholz, Betty Israelsohn, Max Israelsohn
Fourth Row: Ray Saks, George Eichholz, Minna Saks, Minna Eichholz, unknown, Lena Kramer, Eleazer Israelsohn, David Solomon, Solomon Israelsohn, Julius Israelsohn, Minna Solomon

Max and Wolf Israelsohn also brought out their three younger half-brothers Morris, Adolph [died 10 August 1950 aged 59 and buried in Pietersburg] [nicknamed Little Adolph] and Solomon Rudolph [died 23 June 1983 and buried in Pietersburg], the first two trading in Haenertsburg and Ga-Ramokgopa, as well as in Pietersburg. Rudolph joined Ben Meyer at Soekmekaar and then bought him out. Rudolph married Ethel Berman, who died on 29 June 1948 aged 51 and was buried in Pietersburg and then he married a Scottish woman, Mabel Cohen, who died on 10 July 1982 in Pietersburg. He had no children.



Left to right: Kay Kevy, Rudolph and Mabel Israelsohn, Miriam Israelsohn [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]



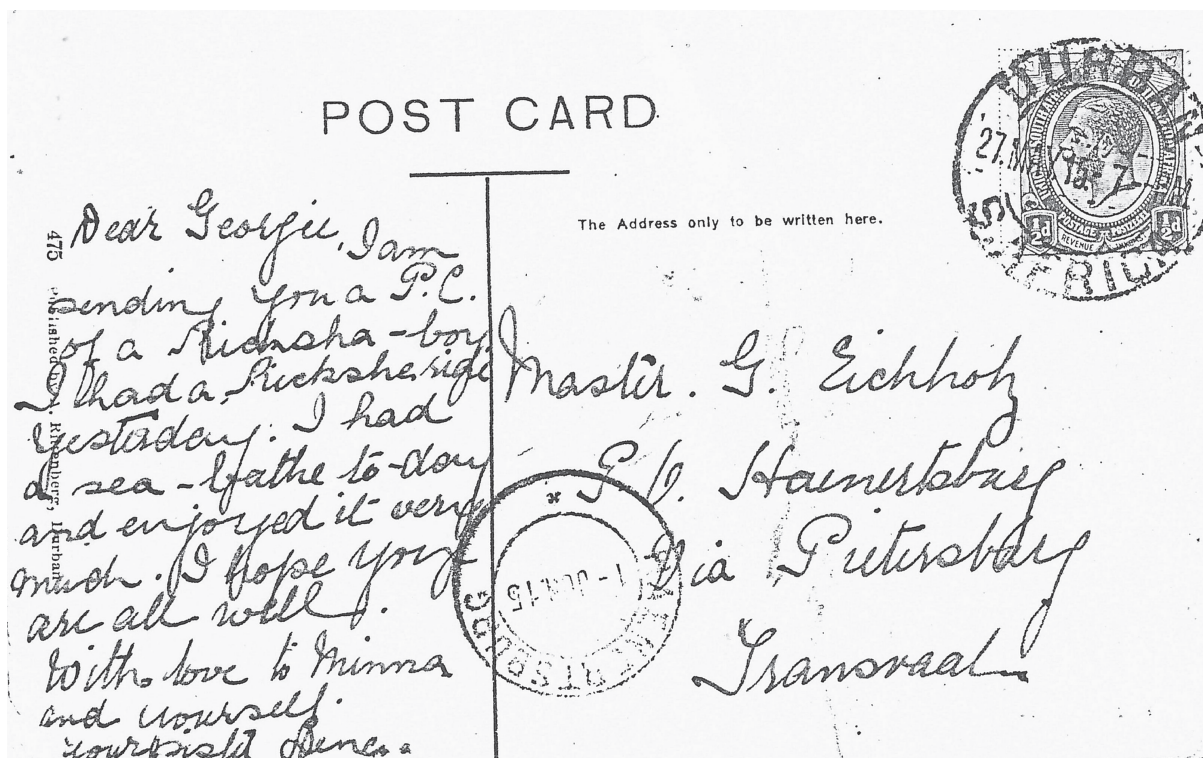
Adolph Israelsohn at Groot Spelonken [courtesy of Victor Miller]

Adolph Israelsohn [died on 1 November 1934, aged 63, and buried in Pietersburg] [nicknamed Big Adolph], a cousin of Max and Wolf, also came to South Africa in the late 1890s from Talsen, Courland, and farmed and traded at Groot-Spelonken. Big Adolph brought out three of his sisters to South Africa. Male Israelsohn married Sidney Sacks, Ida Israelsohn married Solomon Harris Solomon and Fanny Israelsohn married Benjamin Meyer, Clara and Herman Eichholz's nephew. Ben and Fanny Meyer joined Fanny's brother Big Adolph on his farm Boskoppies and managed the four trading stores whilst Big Adolph attended to the farming. The partnership between Adolph Israelsohn and Benjamin Meyer who owned a general dealer store at Deelkraal and another at Vlakfontein was dissolved in December 1929 and only Meyer continued to run the business²⁵⁵.

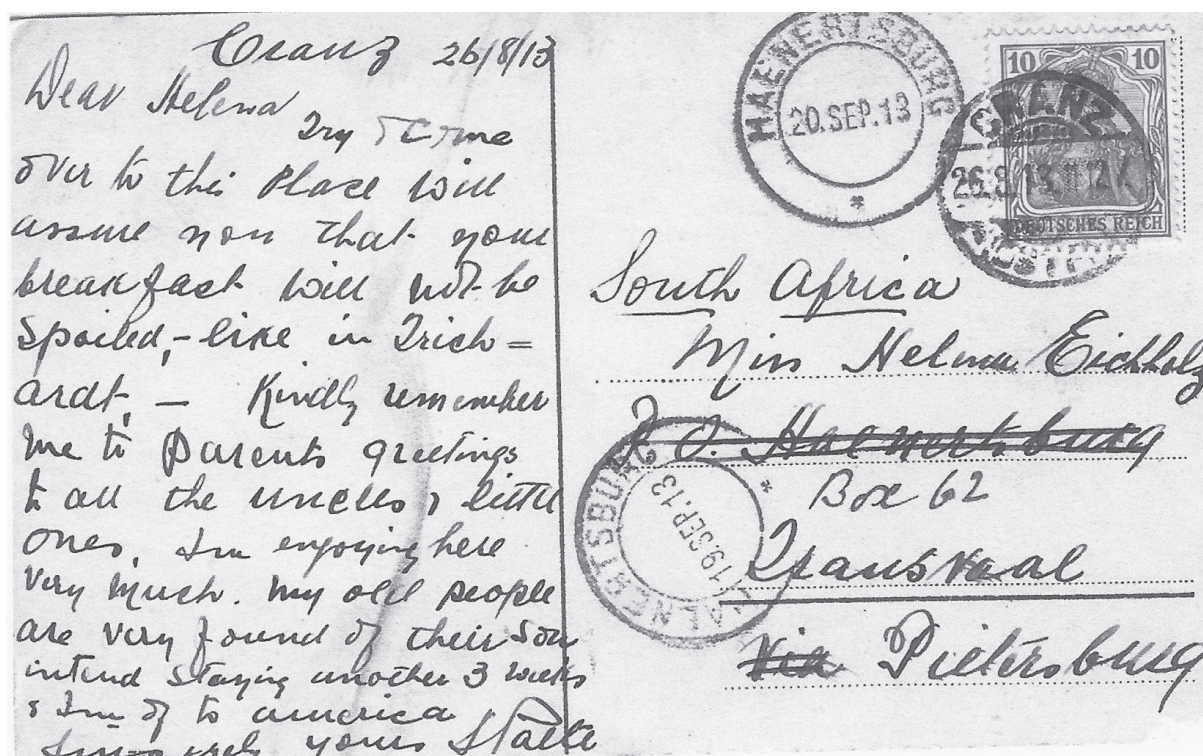


Haenertsburg 1914. Unknown, unknown, Ben Meyer, Fanny Meyer, Lena Levy, Morris Israelsohn, Lena Israelsohn, 3 children unknown [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]

Ben Meyer brought out his wife Fanny's sister, Chaiah Ellison's son Aaron from London on 4 June 1925 at the age of 18 years, to join him at Grootspelonken. Aaron's brother, Maurice, came to Pietersburg in the 1930s and started a ladies and gents hairdressing salon. Maurice [died 15 May 1993 in Pietersburg] married his cousin Minna Eichholz [died 1 February 1996 in Pietersburg], daughter of Herman and Clara Eichholz in 1939. Minna was born with a cleft lip.



Postcard from Lena in Durban to her brother George Eichholz in Haenertsburg 27 May 1915
 [courtesy of Leon Levy]



Postcard from Sam Palte in Germany to Lena Eichholz 26 September 1913 [courtesy of Leon Levy]

Descendants of Zundel Wittert

1	Zundel Wittert
..... 2	Lemach Wittert
..... 3	Hirsch Wittert
..... 3	Sheina Wittert
	+Yaakov Brenner
..... 4	Ruby Brenner
	+Martha
..... 4	Max Brenner
	+Lydia Ralstein
..... 5	Sylvia Brenner
	+David Glasser
..... 6	Nadine Glasser
	+Kevin Marcus
..... 6	Benjamin Glasser
..... 5	John Brenner
	+Toby Kimmel
..... 6	Martine Brenner
	+Lyall Horwitz
..... 6	Jonathan Brenner
..... 4	Leibe Brenner
	+Rachel Sacks
..... 5	Miriam [Micky] Brenner
	+Leslie Vides
..... 6	Mark Vides
..... 6	Lyn Vides
	+Ian Katz
..... 6	Phillipa Vides
..... 6	Amanda Vides
..... 5	Jack Brenner
	+Marcia Aron
..... 6	Lionel Brenner
..... 6	David Brenner
..... 6	Shana Brenner
	+Mark Friedgat
..... 6	Lorin Brenner
..... 5	Ginger Brenner
	+Rose Naturman
..... 6	Marilyn Brenner
..... 6	Gail Brenner
..... 6	Billy Brenner
	+Brenda Josselowitz
..... 5	Joseph [Joe] Brenner
	+Ann Vides
..... 6	Beverley Brenner
	+Jack Shap
..... 6	Leonard Brenner
	+LeeAnn Isaacs
..... 6	Moirra Brenner
	+Bob Poole
..... 4	Lemach Brenner
	+Rose Chitrin
..... 5	Sheila Brenner
	+Raymond Hasson
..... 6	Neil Hasson
..... 6	Lewis Hasson
..... 6	Marion Hasson
..... 5	Harry Brenner
	+Miriam Levin
..... 6	Ayal Brenner
..... 6	Gil Brenner
..... 6	Shelley Brenner
..... 5	Sonny Brenner
	+Peta May
..... 6	Zara Brenner
..... 6	Joanny Brenner
..... 6	LeeAnn Brenner
..... 4	Sotze Brenner
	+Zalman Brenner

.....5	Shulamit Brenner
	+Joss Gill
.....6	Leonard Gill
.....6	Francis Gill
.....6	Jennifer Gill
.....5	Debby Brenner
	+Sydney Orrelowitz
.....6	Gillian Orrelowitz
.....6	Beverly Orrelowitz
.....6	Steven Orrelowitz
..... 2	Feige Wittert
	+Aharon Brenner
.....3	Louis Brenner
	+Bessie Eichholz
.....4	Angie Brenner
	+Sam Bolon
.....5	Alan Bolon
	+Gillian Ross
.....6	Michael Bolon
	+Karen Tulen
.....7	Samuel Bolon
.....7	Zackary Bolon
.....6	David Bolon
	+Tammy Nutman
.....6	Jonathan Bolon
	+Claudia van den Berg
.....7	Ashley Bolon
.....6	Lindy Bolon
	+Mathew Bernath
.....5	Kevin Bolon
	+Fulvia Bochiola
.....6	Stefan Bolon
	+Lara Kosseff
	Mila Bolon
	+Nadav Ravid
.....3	Isaac Brenner
	+Mary Lewis
.....4	Ernie Brenner
	+Elinor Yudelman
.....5	Jeffrey Brenner
.....5	Terry Brenner
.....5	Ian Brenner
.....3	Chaim Brenner
	+Zina Moross
.....4	Arnold Brenner
	+Ethel Jones
.....4	Stan Brenner
	+Gillian
.....4	Maish Brenner
	+Isobel Gutkin
.....	*2nd Wife of Maish Brenner:
	+Isobel Gutkin
.....3	Joe Brenner

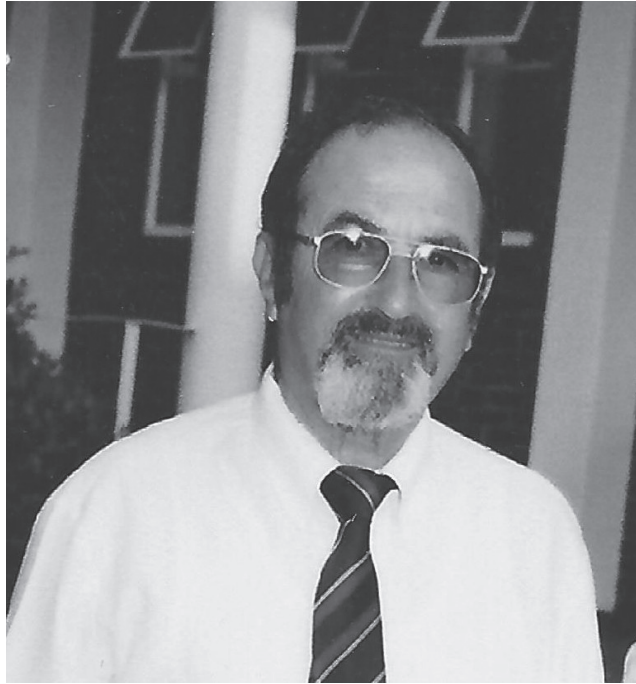
The Brenner family also married into the Israelsohn/Eichholz family. Aharon Brenner married Feige Wittert, daughter of Zundel Wittert, and their children were Louis, Isaac, Chaim and Joe Brenner, all of whom lived in the northern Transvaal. Louis Brenner [died 9 August 1963 aged 69 and was buried in Pietersburg] married Bessie Eichholz [died 4 May 1977 aged 73 and buried in Pietersburg], daughter of Herman and Clara Eichholz and sister of Helena Levy, George Eichholz and Minna Ellison. Louis and Bessie had a daughter Agnes, who married Sam Bolon on 6 August 1949 in Pietersburg and their children were Alan and Kevin. Sam Bolon's father, Michael Benjamin, brother to David Lewis, [sons of Shmuel Meir] died in Pietersburg on 13 September 1967, whilst visiting his family and is buried

there. The brothers, who had different surnames, were both originally Bolon. David and Dobe Itel Lewis [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery 1 June 1951 and 26 June 1949 respectively] had two children – Mary and Abe. Mary married Isaac Brenner and they adopted Ernie Brenner, a family member, son of Issy Richards²⁵⁶. David Lewis's son, Abe Lewis, born in Lutzen 21 September 1899, married his first cousin Ida Sacks [born 3 March 1910, buried 11 May 1990 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] [daughter of Adolph and Dora Sacks – buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 10 February and 12 January 1962 respectively]; children – Leon, Adele [married Henry Halpern in Pretoria on 1 July 1970] and Monty [born 11 April 1933, buried 4 June 1998 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery]. Dora was a sister to David Lewis and Michael Bolon. Dora and Adolph's other children, besides Ida, were Benny and Faigie [who married Mike Glick, brother of Sadie, married to Beryl Brenner and Ann, married to Harry Beron].

Abe and David Israel Lewis owned Bridge Trading Stores²⁵⁷. D Lewis sold his store to I M Kahan on the farm Koedoes River. Sam Bolon ran Pietersburg Milling Company with his father-in-law Louis Brenner. Isaac Brenner had a trading store near Boyne, between Sovenga and Haenertsberg, which was later taken over by his brother Louis Brenne,r when Isaac moved to Pietersburg. This movement to the larger towns was to become a trend amongst the isolated Jews, especially as their children grew older and needed schooling. Isaac Brenner was a Revisionist supporter. When the revisionist leader, Ze'ev Jabotinsky visited Pietersburg, he stayed overnight with Isaac Brenner, but as he had no support in Pietersburg, there was no communal meeting²⁵⁸. Isaac Brenner was buried on his farm outside Pietersburg as he 'did not want to be buried with the dishonest Jews of Pietersburg'²⁵⁹. His grave is now in danger of being overrun by a squatter camp. Joe Brenner traded in a shop near Dwarsriver.

Chaim Brenner lived in Louis Trichardt and married Zina Moross [see Louis Trichardt]. Their children were Arnold [married Ethel Jones], Stan [married Gillian, granddaughter of Elya Falkow; their children are Shelley, Fran, Larry, Josh and Tracy], Maurice [Maish] [married Isobel Gutkin; their children are Gabby and Haley], Riva and Channah.

Feige Wittert's brother was Lemach Wittert²⁶⁰. His daughter, Sheina Wittert, married Yaakov Brenner. Yaakov died at a young age and Sheina came back to South Africa to her brother Hirsch Wittert in 1924. Yaakov and Sheina's children were Leibe, Max, Lemach, Ruby and a daughter Sotze. Leibe, Max, Lemach, Ruby and Sotze Brenner were related to Louis, Chaim, Isaac and Joe Brenner through the Witterts and not through the Brenners. Leibe Brenner married Rachel Sacks and their children were Jack [married Marcia Aron], Joseph [Joe][buried 31 December 1982 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] [married Ann Vides, children Beverly, Leonard and Moira], Miriam [Micky] [married Leslie Vides, Ann's brother, children Mark, Lyn, Phillipa, Amanda] and Hymie [Ginger] [married Rose Naturman].



John Brenner [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Max Brenner [born 5 December 1905 and buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 11 July 1973] came to Dwarsriver in 1924 and married Lydia Ralstein [born 26 December 1911 and buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 18 February 1973] and they had two children John [married Toby Kimmel] and Sylvia [married David Glasser]. They later lived in Pietersburg, where Max started the Pietersburg Sweet Factory in 1928. The *sukkah* built adjacent to the J I Levine communal hall was presented by John and Sylvia Brenner in the name of their grandfather, Morris Ralstein, in September 1953.

Isaac Sacks and Max Brenner traded as Brenner & Co. Louis and Max Brenner traded as Brenner Bros at the farms May and Claraskraal which were sold in 1930²⁶¹. They owned Brenner's Roller Mills. Ruby Brenner lived as a batchelor at Norfolk Block, where he had a store, and he also farmed at Koedoesvlei, west of Louis Trichardt. He later moved to Zimbabwe and married Martha. They had no children. Ruby served in World War II. Lemech married Rose Chitrin. Sotze married Zalman Brenner.

Barney Brenner [son of Pinchas, died 25 December 1980 and was buried in Pietersburg], who was a cousin to Isaac, Louis, Joe and Chaim Brenner, through the Brenner side, came to Pietersburg in the late 1920s to work for Isaac Brenner. He married Sadie Glick [died 14 May 1992 and buried in Pietersburg] and their children were Charlotte [married to Itamar Shein in Pietersburg on 5 April 1964], Paulette and Lynette [married Ivan Buchman: children Aharon, Hiram and Sharon]. Sadie Glick's sister was Ann who married Harry Beron and their children were Irwin and Victor. Victor was killed in a car accident with a donkey [buried 20 February 1966 aged 24 years in the Pietersburg cemetery]. Irwin Beron married Lynette Silberman, daughter of Bill and Madge and sister of Sharon Silberman of Bandelierkop.

The Lewis family was fond of suing members of their family. Mr A J Lewis wrote to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation informing them that two days before his mother, Dora Lewis, died in June 1949, she had told her daughter to sell her fur coat or keep it for herself, but she must then donate £100 to the Hebrew Congregation. Mr Lewis complained that his sister Mrs Mary Brenner had kept the coat but had not yet paid the money to the congregation. Instead, she was going to give the money to the Johannesburg Jewish Old Age Home. He requested that the congregation ask Mrs Brenner for the money or he would take legal action against her as he was determined that his late mother's wishes should be carried out²⁶². He asked the congregation to inform him if they were willing to ask her for the money. The committee informed him that it was not interested in taking the matter further.



Lewis business – on the wall can still be seen “Telegrams Lewsak” [courtesy of Charlotte Wiener]

Mainly due to the efforts of Louis Brenner, the Jewish communities of Pietersburg, Louis Trichardt, Potgietersrus and Zoekmekaar donated an ambulance in 1948 for the use of the *Haganah* in Israel²⁶³. Louis also donated a fountain in front of the Pietersburg Town Hall.

Three Zaacks brothers lived in the Pietersburg area. Barney Zaacks [died 3 August 1935 aged 65 and buried in Pietersburg] owned a hotel at Slyphsteen. Abraham Morris Zaacks [died 1 April 1963 aged 73 and buried in Pietersburg], who farmed and traded at Smitsdorp, married Milly Blumenau [died 31 May 1984 and buried in Pietersburg], the daughter of Eve Blumenau [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 29 March 1931 aged 66], who was a step- mother to Max and Wolf Israelsohn. Israel Zaacks died on 3 November 1937 aged 72, and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery.

The only Jewish grave in Haenertsburg is that of Mrs Violet Fridjohn, who lived and died there. She was prepared by the ladies of the Pietersburg Burial Society and buried in the general Haenertsberg cemetery in 1964 by Rev Scherer. Only the area of her grave in the cemetery was consecrated. There

is no headstone on her grave, but she is buried next to Colonel and Mrs Wolff under the Keurboom tree next to the Garthorne's resting place²⁶⁴. Violet Fridjohn and her daughter Ruth came from Pretoria where her husband, Maurice, had owned a furniture shop. Violet ran a boarding house in Haenertsburg. Ruth was born in Uitenhage and was a poet, teacher and painter. She married Wolfe Miller and lived in Johannesburg. She was awarded the Ingrid Jonker Memorial Prize in 1966 for her first volume of poems 'Floating Island'. She died in 1969 aged 50.

2] DUIWELSKLOOF

The small hamlet of Duiwelskloof [ravine of the devil] lies 24 kilometers north of Tzaneen. The name was given because of the stick-fast mud which impeded the passage of transport wagons²⁶⁵. In 1886, to encourage white settlement, the government made 'occupation farms' available. The mud, heavy rains, heat and malaria made living conditions there very difficult. The village is situated on the farms Skraalkans, Vrystaat and Mooimeisiesfontein. Duiwelskloof was declared a town in 1920 and was managed by the Duiwelskloof General Improvement Society until the establishment of a health committee in 1921. In 1919, the progressive society admitted women members at a subscription rate of 50 cents a month. Amongst the women elected in February 1919 were Mrs Jacobson, who contributed to Zionist Funds in 1919²⁶⁶, Mrs A Morrison and Mrs Burman, who could be Jewish. Later a village management board managed the village of Duiwelskloof. There is some confusion about the various Jacobsohn families. Florence Jacobsohn [born 15 March 1876], wife of A G Jacobsohn, was buried in Pietersburg 19 July 1936. Mr and Mrs Abram Gerson Jacobsohn had a shop in Duiwelskloof²⁶⁷. Sydney Jacobson of Upington, son of Mrs A G Jacobson of Duiwelskloof, married Sarah Dunhen of Kingwilliamstown. An Abram Gerson Jacobsohn and his wife Miriam also lived in Zebedelia. Abram Gerson Jacobsohn died on 8 July 1966 and his tombstone in the Pietersburg cemetery reads that he was mourned by his wife Miriam and that he was from Duiwelskloof.

Government population statistics show that the highest number of Jews living in Duiwelskloof and Tzaneen was 61 in 1936 (by 1991, there were only eight). Community records show that there were only 10 Jews in Duiwelskloof in 1953. By 1994 there was only one family, Peter and Urna Shulman left in Duiwelskloof.

Duiwelskloof had a few pioneering Jewish families. E and R Abramowitz and Mr Hersfield were general dealers in Duiwelskloof in the early 1900s. [Isaac and Adolph Abramowitz had Abramowitz Bros in Louis Trichardt. It is not known if they are the same family]. The assistant secretary of the Duiwelskloof District Farmers' Association in 1929 was E Heimann²⁶⁸. Samuel and Rae Fine moved to Duiwelskloof from Johannesburg in 1932 as there were no jobs available in the city due to a depression in the economy of the country²⁶⁹. The Fines then moved to Tzaneen in 1936 where they opened Fine's Store. They had three children Doris [married Mr Ossip], Cyril and Avril [see Tzaneen]. Michael Palte was a batchelor who lived in Duiwelskloof before he moved to Pietersburg. Mr J M Schwabel was an attorney in Duiwelskloof in the 1930s. Constance Marion Schwabel died on 21 May 1950 at the age of 51 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery.

Descendants of Sarah [Zara] Hosiasohn²⁷⁰

1	Sarah [Zara] Hosiasohn	1855 - 1927
	+Henry [Elchanan] Osterman	1858 - 1941
..... 2	Hannah Osterman	1882 - 1962
	+Herman Yudelowitz	- 1929
..... 3	Betty Yudelowitz	
	+John William Dalzell	- 1962
..... 4	Elizabeth Ann Dalzell	1940 -
..... 4	Jonathan Elchon Dalzell	1943 -
..... 4	Leslie Basil Dalzell	1946 -
..... 2	Henrietta [Ettie] Osterman	1884 - 1950
	+Aubrey Lapin	- 1938
..... 2	Dorothy [Dora] Osterman	1887 - 1966
	+Simon Hosiasohn	1888 - 1963
..... 2	Sophia Osterman	1890 - 1960
..... 2	Abraham [Abe] Osterman	1891 - 1973
	+Aida Lovell	
..... 2	Leah Osterman	1894 -

Henry Osterman was married to Sarah Hosiasohn. He was buried in Pietersburg on 27 July 1941. Their children were Hannah, Henrietta, Dora, Sophia, Abe and Leah. Hannah [died on 22 November 1962] married Herman Yudelowitz, who was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery in 1929. Hannah and Herman's daughter Betty Yudelowitz married John Dalzell, a plumber, in Pietersburg. Mr Yudelowitz from Duiwelskloof took part in shooting competitions and was presented with a prize by the Defence Rifle Association in December 1929²⁷¹. Abe Osterman's wife was a musician known by her professional name Aida Lovell²⁷². She performed with the Cape Town and Johannesburg Orchestras. She was also a broadcaster and lecturer and president of the South African Music Teachers. A Miss Yudelowitz donated six *siddurs* and six Books of Esther to the Pietersburg Synagogue on 5 February 1969²⁷³. Simon Hosiasohn married Dora Osterman and ran the Duiwelskloof Hotel in the 1930s. In 1949 Mr Lissoos of Zebediela bought the Duiwelskloof Hotel.

Today there are only a couple of Jews left in Duiwelskloof, including the Shulmans.

3] SOEKMEKAAR [MOREBENG]

Soekmekaar is a small village 65 kilometers south-east of Louis Trichardt. The name in Afrikaans means 'look for each other'. It refers to parties of men who lost their way and had to look for each other. Another explanation could be that the bodies of white settlers killed in Schoemansdal by the BaVenda tribe in 1867 were brought to Soekmekaar and the survivors came there to look for their family members. Community statistics show that 50 Jews lived in the area in 1943, four living in Groot-Spelonke [place of big caves], but the number went down to 14 in 1953. No Jews are living there at the present.

Isaac Meyer Kahan was born in Belarus in 1885 and came to South Africa in 1901. He worked first in Johannesburg and then in Krugersdorp, as a butcher. Meyer Kahan met his wife Pauline Kravitsky at a luncheon held at her parent's home in Krugersdorp, they married in 1912, and their children were Adelaide [Ada], Fay [Feige], Maxim [Maxie] and Joshua. Sam Palte organized work for Meyer Kahan in a shop at Groot-Spelonke, north of Soekmekaar. It was here where the Kahan's first baby died and was

buried and where their second child Adelaide was born. They then moved to Soekmekaar and opened a general dealer and butcher shop. The building had Kahan's name written in large letters across the roof.



Isaac Meyer Kahan [courtesy of South African Jewish Year Book 1929]

Meyer Kahan bought land in the Soekmekaar area. His good Jewish friend the surveyor Herman Manaschewitz from Pietersburg persuaded him to let him survey the area of Soekmekaar and to submit the plans to the government. Meyer then sold property in the area for settlement and so the town of Soekmekaar was born. The streets of the new settlement were named after Meyer Kahan's family. There was Kahan Street, Pearl Street named after his wife, Feigele, Adelaide and Maxim Streets after his children and Restoration Street, named for the hope of the restoration of the Jewish people to Israel.



Map of Zoekmakkar [Soekmekaar] with streets named after the Kahan family [courtesy of the Kahan family]

Meyer also owned the Soekmekaar Hotel and had a shop in Mooketsi²⁷⁴. The shop was destroyed in a fire started by burglars.

Soekmekaar was a railway junction for Mozambique and for Rhodesia. In 1925 the Prince of Wales passed through Soekmekaar by train. A grand ball was held for him in Soekmekaar. Feigele [Fay] has a photograph of the Prince shaking Meyer Kahan's hand.

The Kahan children went to boarding school in Pietersburg. Their father would drive for three hours on dirt roads to take them to school. When they came to town for parties or functions, they would stay at the Royal Hotel. The High Festivals were celebrated in Pietersburg with meals at the Hirschmanns' or Paltes' homes. School holidays were spent in Soekmekaar playing tennis, fishing and hunting with their black friends. Max was a real country boy and only wore short pants until after he wrote his matriculation examinations at Pretoria Boy's High. The home language of the Kahans was Yiddish. The black man who worked in their shop for twenty years also spoke Yiddish.

As there was no synagogue in Soekmekaar, Max Kahan celebrated his *Barmitzvah* in Pietersburg. A large party was held in their home in Soekmekaar on the Sunday with everyone in the district arriving to celebrate²⁷⁵. Over 200 people braved the cold and the bad roads to give expression to the very high esteem in which Mr and Mrs Kahan were held by a wide circle of friends. A sumptuous luncheon was served on the verandahs presided over by Mr B Herman. A toast to the *Barmitzvah* boy was given by Rev Levine and to the parents by the mayor of Pietersburg, Mr Marcus and by Mr Manaschewitz. Many stayed on all night.

Meyer Kahan was a proud Jew and Zionist. One day a farmer entered his shop wearing a swastika around his neck. Kahan refused to serve him and he was summarily ejected from the shop. Kahan learned Afrikaans and the Afrikaners used to come to him to ask about the Bible and to 'hear the Hebrew word'. In 1931 Meyer Kahan went back to Poland to visit his mother. The Review reports that Kahan was seen off at the station in Pietersburg by 'a huge crowd of co-religionists and fellow Zionists'²⁷⁶ who came to wish him bon voyage. On the way back to South Africa, he stayed for a month in Palestine to visit family members, including Rabbi Meir Berlin [Bar-Ilan], who inspired the founding of Bar-Ilan University. Meyer Kahan loved Palestine so much that he decided that he was coming back to stay as soon as possible. It was only when Max finished his matriculation examination in 1934 that the family sold up their holdings and left for Palestine. Whilst waiting to leave Meyer Kahan busied himself learning Hebrew. A traveling rabbi collecting money arrived in Soekmekaar and Kahan persuaded him to stay for a month to teach him Hebrew. Faigie [Fay] Kahan was a member of the Pietersburg Zionist Society and was presented with candlesticks by them on her departure. Kahan also wanted to take his children to Palestine as he was afraid they would not find Jewish spouses in South Africa. The family settled in well in Israel. Maxie Kahan became a major in the Jewish Brigade during World War II and then a brigadier in the Israeli Defence Force. He founded the National Police Academy, was the first Commander of the Frontier Force and Police Commander of the Northern District of Israel. His son, Dani, was killed fighting for Israel, and Maxie built a shooting range near Caesarea in his name.

The steps in front of the Kahan's house were decorated with *magen davids* on the balustrades. Opposite the house was the Dutch Reform Church, built on a plot donated by Meyer. The farmers would come to *Nagmaal* in their carts and wagons. The Kahans have a photograph of the Church Council in their black suits taken in front of their house with the *magen davids* featured prominently in the background. After the Kahans left Soekmekaar, someone hacked the symbols out of the wall.



Fay and Max Kahan [courtesy Max Kahan]

Most of the original settlers of Soekmekaar were Jews. Mr Sam Katzman [born 3 March 1905, buried in Pietersburg on 20 July 1978] and Mr Aaron Kanchuk came from the same town in Poland. Mr Kanchuk saw an advertisement in the newspaper promoting immigration to South Africa. Sam Katzman's father also encouraged them to go to South Africa. They met someone who knew Mr Kahan in Soekmekaar and they wrote to him for help. When after a few months they had not heard from Mr Kahan, they decided to leave Poland anyway. The two young men arrived in Cape Town harbour in 1928 but did not have enough money to enter the country as the amount had been increased whilst they were still travelling on the ship. Luckily, a fellow Jew who met the incoming ships helped them find Mr Kahan's phone number in Soekmekaar. He immediately transferred the money needed to a Cape Town bank. They travelled to Soekmekaar by train and were surprised to be met by the Kahan family in Pietersburg as they had come into town to visit the *bioscope*.

Meyer Kahan organized work for Mr Aaron Kanchuk in a shop at Middagson near Soekmekaar. In later years, Mr Kanchuk moved to Israel. Mr Katzman first worked in a general dealer's store in Roedtan, thereafter he moved to Politsi where he owned a store. The blacks used to grow grain and then bring it to the stores, where the storeowners would fill bags and take them to be milled in town. These stores would also sell beads, denim, dock cotton and paraffin in tins. At first Sam Katzman did not earn enough money to bring his wife Genia [born 27 November 1906 and buried in Pietersburg on 24 December 1980] and their eldest daughter Celia from Poland as he only earned £1.1.0. He used to send his wife the shilling for food. However his job in Politsi meant a substantial increase so he could send his family the necessary money to travel. After they arrived in Politsi, both Genia and Celia contracted malaria, which was rife in the area. They survived the disease and then they moved to Soekmekaar. Sam and Genia Katzman had four children Celia, Raymond, Joe and Vivienne. When Meyer Kahan left Soekmekaar, he sold the Soekmekaar Hotel to Sam Katzman and the shop to Mr and Mrs Frank Boner. Frank Bonner married Ida Safferand they had a daughter, Isabel²⁷⁷. The hotel had eleven rooms

and outside toilets. The generator was switched off at 10 o'clock at night and candles had to be used thereafter. Mrs Katzman was in charge of the kitchen and when her husband was away she also ran the bar²⁷⁸.

Rabbi Newman visited Soekmekaar on his pastoral tour in June 1955. He visited Mr and Mrs Katzman at their hotel. The Katzman's youngest daughter Vivienne was then seven years old and received lessons by correspondence. The family moved to Pietersburg in 1961. Rabbi Newman also visited Mr Edelman, whom he reported as being 'the sole resident of a nearby place'²⁷⁹. Barney [Dov] Edelman, an ex-boxer, also worked at the Royal Hotel in Pietersburg and was buried on 4 March 1962 in Pietersburg. His brothers were Joseph [Joe] Edelman [married to a non-Jewess], who was a lawyer and then editor of the Zoutpansberg Review and John Albert, who was an estate agent and auctioneer. Simon Edelman [born 1848] was a general dealer.

Celia Katzman married David Tankel and their children are Jonathan and Keith. They lived in Pietersburg. When Celia passed away in a hospital in Johannesburg on a Thursday night, the Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* arranged with the Johannesburg *Chevrah Kadisha* to transport her remains to Pietersburg. The funeral was to take place on Friday afternoon the 21 October 1994 at 2 p.m. However, by Friday morning 11 a.m., the body had not yet arrived in Pietersburg. Urgent phone calls to Johannesburg ascertained that Doves Funeral Parlour had dispatched their driver early that morning with Celia. At two o'clock, the driver had still not arrived, and at 3 o'clock, the mourners were sent home, as there was to be no funeral. Later that night, the driver finally arrived, claiming he had gone to visit his family, who lived in a town along the way, taking Celia with him. He had not known that the funeral was to be that same day. Everyone returned on Sunday morning for the funeral. A year later, a member of the Johannesburg *Chevrah Kadisha* arrived in Pietersburg in order to transfer the remains of the Paltes to Israel. On being told the story of Celia's delayed funeral, he took full responsibility. He had been a new recruit and did not realize that a Jewish body should always be under Jewish supervision and had not sent someone with the driver. He promptly went to pray at Celia's grave in order to beg forgiveness.



Celia and David Tankel [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Meyer Kahan brought out his sister and brother-in-law Sara and Simon Hofstein [born 1887, died 5 September 1954 and buried in Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery aged 67] to Soekmekaar in 1927. They had twin daughters Celia and Taube and a son Avram, who died of an asthma attack whilst he was away

from home travelling by car. Mrs Kahan's sister Hilda and her husband Hymie Kaplan lived at Munnik, south of Soekmekaar, before moving to Pietersburg. They had three children, Florence, Richard [Dickie] and Myra.

Mrs Hofstein, previously of Soekmekaar, wrote to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation committee on 2 April 1971 telling them that her husband had given the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation a *Sefer Torah* for safekeeping 33 years earlier. She had relocated to Salisbury and she wanted to transfer the *Sefer Torah* there as her son-in-law was vice-president of the congregation. The committee had consulted with Messrs Rudolf Israelsohn and Katzman who lived in Soekmekaar plus other older committee members, including Mrs Palte of Pietersburg, but they could not remember Mr Hofstein giving their congregation a *Sefer Torah* for safekeeping. Nor could they remember receiving a cover many years later presented by Mrs Hofstein's cousin, Rabbi Meyer Berlin of Israel for the *Sefer Torah*. The secretary Mr L Levy also asked Mr Chaim Brenner if perhaps the *Sefer Torah* had been given to the Louis Trichardt Synagogue, but Mr Brenner said that it had not. A letter was written to Mrs Hofstein by the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation explaining the position.

Other Jews who lived in Soekmekaar included Mr I Weinberg, who was a general dealer at Ga-Ramokgopa, and Rudolph Israelsohn, who lived on the other side of the river as they did not want to pay Kahan for land in the town²⁸⁰. Rudolph and Ethel [nee Berman] Israelsohn moved to Pietersburg. Rudolph's second wife was Mabel Cohen from Scotland. Rudolph Solomon Israelsohn was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 23 June 1983 and Mabel on 10 July 1982. Mr and Mrs J Cohen traded as Cohen Bros at Soekmekaar and Doringboom²⁸¹. Joseph Nathan of Zoekmekaar [sic] applied for a liquor license in October 1930²⁸².

John Lewis, born in London on 8 October 1876, was a batchelor who ran a shop in Soekmekaar. Every morning he used to phone Mr Katzman at 9 o'clock. At that time Soekmekaar had a manual telephone exchange. One day Mr van Rensburg, who manned the exchange, phoned Mr Katzman at ten past nine to enquire why Mr Lewis had not phoned him. On investigation, they found that he had died during the night. John Lewis was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 26 June 1957²⁸³.

Jews were also found at Groot-Spelonke near Soekmekaar. These included Adolph Israelsohn Snr [Big Adolph] [died 1 November 1934 aged 63 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] and his brother-in-law Ben Meyer. Wolf and Bertha Israelsohn, widow of his brother Morris, previously at Haenertsburg, owned a shop at Soekmekaar and farmed at Groot-Spelonke and at Goudplaas. The family moved to Pietersburg and Wolf commuted to the farms. Adolph Jnr Israelsohn and Golda traded at Ga-Ramokgopa. He died in 1950 and was buried in Pietersburg [see under Haenertsburg].

Isadore Myers moved from Groot-Spelonke to Makwassie in 1923. M Saks also lived in Groot-Spelonke. Heyman Herman [born 23 September 1878, died 1951 and buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] and his wife Adie [nee Gouws] traded at Groot-Spelonke and Doringboom. She converted to Judaism. Their children were Louis, Girlie and one other child. Their son Louis Herman died on 23 December 1937 at the age of 19 from a motorbike accident in Pietersburg when he rode into a wire pulled across

the road. L Gittleson and W Herman traded at Daviesville. Mr Gerry Jacobson owned a general dealer's store at Munnik, south of Soekmekaar. Their children were Raymond, Len and Julia. His brother-in-law was Mr Katzenellenbogen. Kurt Marx, a manufacturer of blinds from Germany, and Esther Poselyte from Silverman's Post - both aged 27, married at Grootspelonken on 29 April 1937²⁸⁴.

4] TZANEEN

Tzaneen lies in the Letaba Valley at the foot of the Murchison Range of mountains (named after Sir Roderick Murchison) 104 kilometers east of Pietersburg [Polokwane]. Gold was discovered in the Murchison Range around 1870. It was also discovered near the Klein-Letaba River around 1886 and in Houtboschberg, 45 kilometers east of Pietersburg, at the foot of the Wolkberg, where, in 1887, the village of Haenertsberg, was established²⁸⁵. None of these goldfields yielded much gold nor did they give rise to any large towns. In 1888, new discoveries attracted a rush of gold-diggers and led to the establishment of the new townships of Leydsdorp, New-Agatha and Joubertskroon²⁸⁶. A tortuous track called the Coach road was built from Haenertsburg via New Agatha to Leydsdorp. Amongst the adventurers attracted to the area were several Jewish prospectors, fortune hunters willing to brave the harsh conditions of the Lowveld. Malaria, black-water fever, wild animals, hostile black tribes, heat and poor roads were the many problems that had to be overcome by these intrepid pioneers. Long journeys were undertaken on horseback or by ox-wagon over mountainous terrain and poor tracks. However, for an enterprising young man, land was cheap and fertile and game plentiful. 'A farm, a wagon and a gun – these were all a young man needed to live a care free life'²⁸⁷.

The small numbers of Jews in the Zoutpansberg district in the 1880s attempted to keep their Jewish customs and practices alive to the best of their ability. As they were so far away from any organized centers of religion, they had difficulty in knowing the exact dates of the festivals. A case to illustrate this was the occasion when *Yom Kippur* was celebrated for the first time by four young Jews, shortly after the opening of the Low Country gold fields. A letter was published in the *London Chronicle* on 15 November 1889 under the title 'How we observed *Yom Kippur* in the Low Country by 'One of the Four'. This article also appeared under the heading 'Jews of the Northern Transvaal, The first Pioneers' by S.A. Rochlin²⁸⁸. These four young men, three of them from England and one from Germany, came together at *Yom Kippur* at a general dealer's store in Fountain Gorge, a very remote area in the Murchison Range of mountains. Their names were Joseph Jacobs [Plymouth], Maurice Freeman [Newport], Louis Goltman [Hull] and Isidor Rosenthal [Thorn].

The store [and hotel consisting of two beds at the back of the store] was owned by Messrs Jacobs and Edwards, the latter being away at the time. On Thursday 3 October 1889, Maurice informed the young men that the next day was *Yom Kippur* and that they must begin to fast that very night. They ate a hearty meal of curried chicken and rice before sundown and then closed the shop with a notice that they would be closed for the following day. They spread a blanket on the table, lit three candles in bottles and proceeded to sing *Kol Nidrei*, Maurice acting as the cantor. They attempted to recite the rest of the service to the best of their abilities despite their lack of a *machzor*. After the service, they

went out for a walk, but after a few minutes, Isidor remembered that *Yom Kippur* could not fall on a Friday, the day before the Sabbath, as preparation for the Sabbath would not be able to be carried out. After much argument, they concluded that they had started the fast a day too soon! Being so remote from a recognised Jewish authority and probably without a *luach*, it would have been very difficult for Jews in remote areas to know the exact dates of the Jewish festivals.

The next day they found themselves in a predicament as they had no bread or meat left for their evening meal and the nearest place to get anything was nine miles distant. Joseph had an inspiration and saddled up his donkey and went to the nearest black village and returned with six fowls and a bottle of milk. They killed the chickens in the only orthodox style they knew, by chopping their heads off and cooked them up for a sumptuous meal. They then repeated the prayers of the night before, feeling very righteous. They fasted the whole day of Sabbath and broke their fast with tinned salmon, meal baked on the grid-iron 'quite raw' and boiled tapioca 'very much burnt'. The next day, Goltman saddled up his horse to do business in Haenertsberg and the prospector Rosenthal rode off on his donkey on a two day journey home.

The editorial comment in the *London Chronicle* on 22 November 1889 commended the fact that these four young men had overcome immense difficulties to be able to celebrate their Judaism and its teachings. They could just as easily have abandoned their observances but their religious upbringing overcame all odds and served as a lesson to those living in civilized surroundings and who did not have to make any sacrifices to observe their religion.

Farms that had been surveyed in the northeastern Transvaal were given out by President Paul Kruger by Deed of Grant in the 1890s. Few farmers made a success of farming as the land was far removed from the markets and their only transport was by slow-moving wagons and coaches. In 1893 Heinrich Altenroxel and Conrad Plange²⁸⁹, two non-Jewish German immigrants, purchased the farm Krawefontein number 1899. They formed the Thabina Farming Associated Company, with capital from Germany, to run their farms. In 1895, they also bought the farm Buk-Hannie, changing its name to Westfalia. The Transvaal government purchased the 11 farms belonging to the Thabina Company in 1903, despite competition for the purchase from a consortium led by Sir Lionel Phillips, the Jewish mining magnate²⁹⁰. The government wanted to establish a small colony of reliable farmers of British origin to farm tobacco and experiment with different crops in the area. The farms were called the Tzaneen Government Estate. H W Schneider superintended the planting of experimental plots of sugar cane at the Governmental Station in Tzaneen to demonstrate the possibilities of this industry²⁹¹. However this Tzaneen Experimental Farm became a loss making experiment as it was not run on the proper economic lines that had been used by Altenroxel. In 1905 Altenroxel sold his half share to Plange for £1000. In 1913, Phillips made a loan reputed to be £10 000 to Conrad Plange for a new Fowler Steamplough in exchange for an option to buy Westphalia. That same year, after the death of Conrad Plange, Sir Lionel exercised his option despite pleas from Mrs Plange and Otto Klosterscult, who owned 25%, not to do it. He purchased the Westfalia block of farms in 1914 for £16 000 for his son Harold and his new wife (see Houtbosdorp/Haenertsburg above).

In 1912 a railway line was finally completed from the east coast to Tzaneen via Komatipoort. However, the farmers still clamoured for a rail connection to Pietersburg to transport their goods and to open up the Lowveld for development. In 1916, the Selati Railway was connected to the Pietersburg line at Soekmekaar.

In 1916 the Government decided to subdivide the farm Pusela No 55 into 26 portions for settlement by white farmers. However, it was only in January 1919 that 50 plots were surveyed at the Tzaneen Station by Mr H Manaschewitz, a Jewish gentleman of the Pietersburg firm Gracie and Manaschewitz, to be sold as freehold²⁹².



Herman and Dora Manaschewitz [courtesy of Lara Cohen]

In October 1919, a Certificate of Township Title was issued by the government for the Township of Tzaneen, on Portion 26 of the farm Pusela Number 55. This was the actual birth date of the town of Tzaneen. On 20 April 1920, 40 erven were sold at a public auction. Among the names of buyers mentioned is that of A Perlmann, a Jew, who bought stand number 54 for £37²⁹³. Mr Abraham Perlmann [or Perlman as he was known] is believed to have been the first trader to settle in Tzaneen. After he bought corner stand number 54²⁹⁴, he built his shop along the Yamorna street frontage, with an adjoining flat at the back on Agatha Street. He also built two *rondavels* on the station side of the stand from where he conducted a monkeynut shelling and processing business. The huge heap of shells produced by this process caused the health department to protest at the rats it attracted. Ironically, Perlman and Heyman Gould were foundation members of the Tzaneen Health Committee.

Abraham Perlmann [buried 23 February 1945 aged 60 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] married a French woman Berthe [nee Michaelsohn] [buried 31 October 1961 aged 61 in the Pietersburg Jewish

cemetery] and they had three children, Jack, who died in 2012, Paddy who died in 1985 and Thelma. Jack Perlmann was a founder member of Round Table Number 96 Tzaneen. Its first meeting was held in February 1963 in the doctor's waiting room in Nyala buildings. Perlie is considered one of the founding fathers of Tzaneen. He bought a large number of farms in the district and moved onto the farm 'Oceana', where he lived for many years.

Perlie leased the shop, Tzaneen Stores, on Yamorna Street to another Jew, Hymie Gould, who ran it for many years. Gould lived for a time in the flat at the back of the shop²⁹⁵. Hymie married Marie Maritz, a non-Jewess, who worked in the shop. They sold groceries, had a ladies and a gents department and a household goods section. Hymie used to enjoy catching his customers with the coin glued to the counter trick. The coin was connected to a car battery under the counter and gave anyone who tried to pick it up a mild shock. He was a gambling man and often challenged a customer to a game of matches playing double or quits on an item bought or sold in the shop. Hymie was a shrewd businessman and entrepreneur. As there was no ice cream to soothe the hot inhabitants of Tzaneen, he arranged for ice cream to be railed from Pietersburg packed in dry ice and was often already sold out on the station platform.



Tzaneen Stores [courtesy of the Pietersburg Museum]



Hymie Gould [courtesy of Louis Changuion in Tzaneen-75 1919-1994].

Gould didn't trust cheques. He would go to the bank every day and cash them and then return to the shop and make out a deposit for the cash. He took on the Central News Agency selling day old newspapers and periodicals. Mrs Gould also ran a bottle store. When he closed the store in the afternoon, he would enjoy a drink with the local telephonist, who would not put any calls through at this time²⁹⁶. Hymie Gould also took over a farm from J C Alberts in Tzaneen.

Several Jews contributed to Tzaneen's economic development, although they never lived there. Prior to 1917, Wolf Carlis owned two farms near Tzaneen, where they experimented with cotton growing. I W Schlesinger owned three large citrus estates, one of which was at Letaba, near Tzaneen. In the 1930s it was the second largest citrus estate in the world²⁹⁷. The largest was Schlesinger's Estate at Zebediela. Mr I E Judes and Mr Gluckman played a part in the early development of the Letaba Citrus Estates.

In about 1924 one of the oldest shops in Tzaneen was run by two Jewish gentlemen Israel [Issie] Berman [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 25 August 1956] and Barney Horwitz. The shop was registered as Berman and Horwitz. Both men took over the Tzaneen Hotel in 1924 and registered it as being run by Horwitz and Berman. However Berman decided he preferred running the shop and so withdrew from the hotel in 1930. He built a new shop called I Berman General Dealer opposite Tzaneen Stores and lived in a house behind the shop. He was known as a tight-fisted man²⁹⁸. Berman later become Mr Abraham Perlmann's brother-in-law when in 1949 he married Perlmann's wife Bertha's sister, the French widow, Regine Michaelson, [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, 4 October 1971] who already had a daughter, Janine²⁹⁹. Many of the books in the public library in Tzaneen came from Berman's farm³⁰⁰.

The main street of Tzaneen was called Yamorna Street before being renamed Danie Joubert Street. Yamorna was constructed in a 'dogleg' so as to call at Mr Leibowitz's store [where Mr Crown's store

stood in later years] and then swung left past Morgan's Hotel [later the Tzaneen Hotel]³⁰¹. Joseph Leibowitz, a Lithuanian Jew, owned a shop catering to the black trade. He lived in the back of the shop before he married. One night the shop caught on fire and his rescuers found him in bed in his nightdress with his boots still on. Thereafter he was known as 'Boots'. Leibowitz built another shop on the site of the burnt-out shop³⁰². Leibowitz's wife was Sarah and she owned a ladies boutique next door to his shop. She came from Goldinger, Latvia. Their children were Naphtali Herz Leibowitz, who married Lily Orkin from England - they had a son Joseph and a daughter Bertha who married Yudel Smuskowitz and their children are Esther and Hymie who were born in Tzaneen and Yossie³⁰³. Yudel Smuskowitz had a general dealer store on the farm Nooitgedacht.

Joseph Orkin and Julius Lissos had a 'native eating house' trading as the Harper Mine Store on the farm Vogelsang in the Zoutpansberg district which was sold to Abraham Theodore Daniel³⁰⁴. They set up a business that developed into Limpopo Trading Stores. Hyman Orkin was a pioneer of the tea-growing industry in Tzaneen. His concession to plant tea and coffee in the Lowveld was thwarted by the Second Anglo-Boer War and never reached fruition³⁰⁵. J W Lotz was a blacksmith and wagon builder who started a workshop behind Morgan's Hotel. He may have been Jewish³⁰⁶.

Another general dealer store was run by two Jewish brothers, Samuel and Jacob [Kuba] Rakusin. Their shop was very modern and spacious with big display windows. Bryna [nee Hirschmann] and Avram Rakusin lived in Bialystock, Poland, and had three sons, Shaiah, Samuel and Jacob. Two of the Rakusin brothers, Samuel and Jacob, in their early twenties, were encouraged to come to South Africa in 1925 by their family, the Hirschmanns, who lived in Woodbush. Kuba came to South Africa on 4 February 1925 at the age of 17 years and worked in a shop in Zebedelia for Abraham Isaac Tankel [died 30 November 1936 aged 48] and Ray Tankel [they had a daughter Jane] and in the Lowveld for Perlie Perlmann. His brother Samuel was a keen Zionist and belonged to the Zionist movement in Poland. He first settled in Palestine for a few years, where life was very hard for him, as he worked in a cement factory and built roads. Kuba encouraged his brother to leave Palestine and come to South Africa in 1928. They owned a shop in Letsitele in the Lowveld. Eventually the two brothers settled in Tzaneen where they opened the business 'S and J Rakusin' together. The brothers arranged for their parents, their brother, sister-in-law and niece to come to South Africa in the 1930s. However their brother was happy in Danzig and delayed making his decision. Having finally decided to come in 1939, their luggage was sent ahead, but they never made it to South Africa. Their little girl was taken to a school picnic and never returned. The family died at the hands of the Nazis in 1939.

Kuba Rakusin married Lily Levine, daughter of Rev J I Levine in Pietersburg on 15 August 1937. Rev Levine was the minister of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation for over thirty years. Kuba and Lily had two children, Lena and Bryan. Samuel Rakusin married Francis Tager, daughter of Elles Zelek and Hode [nee Zway] and they adopted two children Bertha and Hedda. Kuba, like all the inhabitants of the Lowveld, also contracted malaria but recovered. The brothers moved to Pietersburg, Samuel being the first to leave Tzaneen. They opened S B Cash Stores in Pietersburg.



Rev J I Levine, Kuba Rakusin and Lena outside the synagogue house in Pietersburg [courtesy of Lena Wolf]



Harry Crown [courtesy of Cartwright A P in *By the Waters of the Letaba*]

Harry Crown was born on 9 May 1893 and came out from London as a boy. He worked at Goldie's, the tobacconist, in Johannesburg, before coming to work in Tzaneen for Perlie Perlmann before the First World War of 1914-1918. He served in the South African army during the First World War. When he returned he opened a store in Mohlaba's location in the Letsitele Valley. The blacks regarded the warm-hearted generous man as their friend and counselor³⁰⁷. He owned 22 trading stores throughout the district³⁰⁸ as well as a general dealer store in Duiwelskloof. He was the first wholesaler in the Tzaneen district. Crown met his future wife Frances [Fronnie] Karstein in Johannesburg when she was 15, and

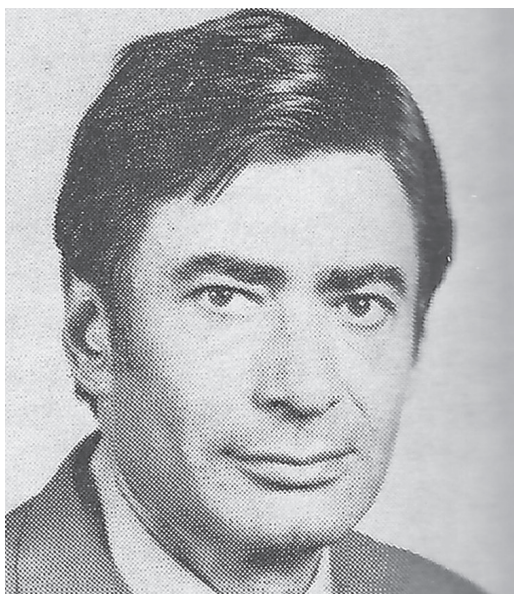
they married when she was 18. She remembers their honeymoon journey to Tzaneen in an old Nash car. At Haenertsberg the exhaust fell off, a little further on the lights failed and from Politsi they had to complete the journey in a buggy drawn by four mules³⁰⁹. The Crowns had two sons Norman and Bernard. Norman won many Transvaal and South African swimming records when he was young. He married and they had four children who attended King David School in Johannesburg. In 1974 Norman commuted daily to Gravelotte.

Life was difficult in the Lowveld for the Crown family and Harry Crown almost died from blackwater fever. Harry used to enjoy cycling and he was in the habit of wearing a jersey with a crew neck that amused the blacks who thought that he was wearing a sock around his neck. This led to his nickname 'Masokis'. Crown and the other Jewish traders enjoyed playing poker and bridge until the early hours of the morning. Harry Crown died on 3 April 1964 and was buried in Pietersburg. Fronie moved to Cape Town in 1974.

Among the early Jewish traders recorded in the Tzaneen area is a Mr I Hirschfield who owned a small canteen or pub called Strangers Rest Store in the early 1900s³¹⁰ and Mr S Hirschfield who ran the Tzaneen Hotel in the 1920s, after which the partnership of I Berman and B Horwitz ran the hotel. John Gluckman and Mr Judas ran the Union Citrus Company in the early 1920s. It is not known if Maurice Woolf was Jewish. He had a store at the junction of the Leydsdorp and Downs road which was used by the Ofcolaco [Officers Colonial Company] community of German officer settlers who had settled there after World War I. A J Jacobson worked at the Letaba Estate in 1939. Mr J Halperin was recorded as being at the Valencia Citrus Estate in 1929 and Mr M Harery in 1933³¹¹. A Fischer and Co at Naaupoort was sold to Joseph Halperin³¹². Joseph and Joan Benator owned President Furnishers in the 1960s. He was a nephew of Jack Cohen, who traded as Cohen Brothers at Soekmekaar and Doringboom³¹³. Their children were Neville and Judy. Joan Benator was Rita Mendelsohn's sister from Pietersburg. C Isaacson was recorded in the Zionist Record as being at Letaba in 1928.



Gerry Jacobson [courtesy of Louis Changuion in Tzaneen-75 1919-1994]



Monty Schechter [courtesy of South African Jewry 1976-77]

Jews were also involved in many of the mines in the district. Albert Schechter was the manager of Cape Asbestos and Mostert and Schechter Asbestos Mine [Pty] Ltd, and his son Monty Schechter was a director. In a court case that took place in Pretoria, Stephen Lebedina, a prospector, claimed £100 000 from Michael Haskel and Albert Schechter in terms of an agreement dated 22 August 1929, being a share of the proceeds of asbestos claims of Consolidated Block, the Montana Block and the Central Block in the mining district of Pietersburg that they sold to S A Consolidated Asbestos Ltd and Dominion Blue Asbestos Ltd. They denied that they had agreed to pay him a share³¹⁴. At a later date, Lebedina saw Schechter and drew a fully-laden pistol on him, but was prevented from shooting him by the intervention of a bystander. At a subsequent courtcase, he was found guilty and fined £5³¹⁵.

Bill and Kitty Levine were on the asbestos mines at Bewaarkloof. Bill persuaded the Department of Education to start the Asbes Primary School. Their son Chris Levin, who was born in Pietersburg, but grew up in Bewaarkloof, became a renowned couturier. Stan Reubensohn owned Uitkyk asbestos mine at Bewaarkloof near Chuniespoort as did Mr Klatzkow. An American Jew, Mr Gordon, worked at the Treasury Mine but left after an incident in which a man was shot³¹⁶. According to Zelda Blandy [nee Wolf]'s grandson, she was born Jewish. Her son Jack Blandy was a mixture of farmer, miner and saw miller³¹⁷ and worked on a mine at Gravelotte. He fought in World War II. Jack Blandy married Joyce Baragwanath, a member of a well-known non-Jewish Pietersburg family. Charles, Jack and Bob Hersov farmed at 'Haakdoorn' in the Northern Transvaal. Bob learnt a great deal about asbestos in the Chuniespoort and Malipsdrift districts, which later led him to take up a large claim in the Northern Transvaal, resulting in the formation of the Consolidated Asbestos Mines Ltd³¹⁸. Mr H Friedman was the manager of the Consolidated Asbestos Mine at Malips until he left in 1930.

In 1936 the Tzaneen, Duiwelskloof and District Zionist Society was formed after a visit by Rabbi Schwartz of Poland campaigning for the *Keren Hayesod* appeal. The society was recorded as an affiliate member of the South African Zionist Federation in 1937³¹⁹.

The Jews of Tzaneen were subjected to more anti-Semitic incidents than those of Pietersburg in the 1930s. In 1936, Mr Moss Cohen sent a report to the SAJBD reporting that anti-Jewish meetings had taken place at the German colony outside Tzaneen and “a considerable amount of agitation appears to have been carried on”. One of the main agitators in the area was Hans Merensky, owner of the estate, Westfalia, near Duiwelskloof. He received several warnings from the local magistrate. When some of his employees were incarcerated in 1939, the situation became much quieter. Two employees at Mr I W Schlesinger’s Letaba Estate were also engaged in anti-Semitic propaganda.

During World War II there was an *Ossewa Brandwag*³²⁰ [O B] Internment Camp at Tzaneen. The O B movement was a fascist, anti-Semitic movement. The Tzaneen branch of the German Labour Front [*Arbeitsdienst*] built a communal hall and named it after Wilhelm Gustloff, the leader of the Swiss Nazi party who had allegedly been murdered by a Jew. At the opening ceremony, the German Consul, Herr Stiller, spoke on behalf of both the German Reich and the Nazi Party. The movement however did not include the German settlers who had been in the area for a number of years and who ‘may be said to be the leaders of the German community in Tzaneen’³²¹. The Tzaneen Jews lived in fear of their German neighbours. The O B had meetings in town on a Saturday morning and Jews were scared to walk past them for fear of being attacked. Messrs S Fine, S Rakusin and I Berman served on the local Jewish Vigilance Committee, formed in Tzaneen in 1939³²².

Samuel and Rae Fine came from Duiwelskloof in 1936 and ran a general dealer’s store called Fine’s Store. Their children were Doris [married Mr Ossip], Cyril and Avrielle. Doris tells how they celebrated the High Holy Days in Tzaneen by inviting all their relatives to travel to Tzaneen to make up a *minyán*. They had as many as 40 people attending the service. Rae’s grandfather, Isaac Katz, brought a *Sefer Torah* with him and the service would be held in their home. As he was also a *shochet*, they had kosher meat for a while after his visits. The Fine family left Tzaneen in 1942 for Johannesburg. The family members were keen Zionists and two of the Fine children moved to Israel. Dr Cyril Fine became the official *mohel* for Russian immigrants in Israel.

During World War II, the schools were institutions of propaganda and Jewish children were made to feel unhappy. The Fine’s children went to the Tzaneen Primary School. At school they had their hair pulled and they were called ‘bloody Jew’ every day. Because of this harassment the Fines decided to send their two girls to boarding school at the convent in Pietersburg. The children used to spend *Shabbat* with the Palte, Tager or Segal families. However because Mr Fine came from a religious family, he was upset that his children attended a catholic school. When their son had to go to school, the Fines decided to move to Johannesburg in 1942³²³. They sold their shop to Jean Ernst who married a Jew by the name of Mr Baker.

In contrast to the Germans’ anti-Semitism, a non-Jewess, Mrs Doris Eland of the farm Ravenshill near Duiwelskloof, wrote to the Society for Jews and Christians in 1938, offering assistance and training for Jewish refugees from Europe on her farm.

Rabbi A H Lapin visited Tzaneen on his pastoral tour on 19 May 1941. He reported that there was no setback in the commercial lives of the Jews as a result of the O B's presence in the town. They did not boycott the Jewish businesses as Jews owned most of the stores in the town. However, the potential danger was there. This movement was strong in membership but greatly in need of funds. Before the war, there had been cordial relations between the Jews and the Afrikaners, but during the War they only greeted each other formally. Rabbi Lapin arranged that the book '*Israel die Sondebok*' should be presented to all the municipal libraries in order to present the Jewish viewpoint.

Government official statistics show that there were 61 Jews in the Tzaneen and Duiwelskloof area in 1936. The numbers went down to 24 in 1951 and eight in 1991. Community records for Tzaneen show only 16 Jews in Tzaneen in 1943, down to four in 1964 and two in 1999.

Rabbi Dr Newman of the SAJBD visited Tzaneen in June 1955 on his pastoral tour. There were only two Jewish families left in the town, Mr and Mrs Jacobson and Mr and Mrs Gould³²⁴. Jack and Carol Wolman lived in Tzaneen in 1984 and Mr Bentine in 1989. In the 1990s Selwyn and Sue Dolgoy came to Tzaneen from Warmbaths and lived with their children Georgina, Joshua and Benjamin in Tzaneen. She was not born Jewish. He was a motor spares dealer. The children attended Charlotte Wiener's cheder classes in Pietersburg before immigrating to Australia in 2002.

As in other small country towns, today there are only one or two Jews left in Tzaneen. One of them is Dick Hymen and another is David Protter, who currently is the director of Community Crisis Centre in Tzaneen. He calls himself Colonel Dave Protter. He served in the Israeli army but was discharged as unfit for service. He became notorious when he was arrested in April 1975 for carrying out an attack on the Israeli Consulate in Johannesburg, where he was employed as an assistant security officer. He held between 20 and 30 people hostage under the muzzle of a machine-gun and also went on a shooting spree that ended in the deaths of four people and the wounding of 82. He was found guilty with extenuating circumstances and sentenced to 59 years for murder, kidnapping and assault, the terms to run concurrently. He was supposed to serve 25 years in all but only served 15 years before being released.

5] PHALABORWA

Phalaborwa is situated 104 kilometers east of Tzaneen, near the Kruger National Park. Phalaborwa means '[the place that is] better than the south'. This name was given to the area by a black tribe which traveled across the Limpopo River because they preferred this place to a previous one. They were metal workers and were pleased that they had found iron ore in their new home³²⁵. The first mine in the area was the Guide Copper Mine, started in 1904, but it was forced to close due to heavy transport costs. In 1938, vermiculite was mined on the farm Loole Kop. The farm was owned by a Jew from Johannesburg, Mr Hyman, but he did not own the claim rights.

Several Jews were involved in the economic development of Phalaborwa. In 1930, South African Phosphates was started as a supplier of fertilizer. Later, this company's claims were taken over by the Phalaborwa Phosphate and Vermiculite Company. In 1940 this company was set up by Joseph Steinlauf,

together with his co-directors, Sam Edinburgh and Eric Rosen of Denver Metal Works. Steinlauf lived for a few years in Phalaborwa. The government bought the company in 1951 for R700 000 and the Phosphate Development Corporation [Pty] Ltd 'Foskor' was registered³²⁶. It would eventually supply the whole country's need for phosphate. Foskor established a town on the farm Laaste to house its employees.

Phalaborwa only grew as a mining town from 1955 and it was proclaimed on 31 July 1957, making it one of South Africa's youngest towns. Most of the buildings were supplied with air-conditioners as the summers are extremely hot. Being only three kilometers from the Kruger National Park, residents also have to contend with elephants and other wild animals. Phalaborwa Mining Company created one of the largest copper mining areas in the world.

The few Jews living in the town in the 1950/60s only lived there temporarily whilst they were involved with the construction of the mine. There was no synagogue in the town, so Jews attended services in Pietersburg on the High Festivals and for Family Days, when all the Jews in the country areas were invited to gather together in Pietersburg for a day of fun under the auspices of the SAJBD. In 1966, Rev Scherer, the minister in Pietersburg, visited Phalaborwa and persuaded three families to keep kosher homes. They obtained their kosher meat from Pietersburg. A number of mothers taught their children through the SAJBD's Mother-Teacher Programme³²⁷.

Jews living in Phalaborwa included Charles Kitay, who was a design engineer with Hume Pipe Company, which was involved in the overland water piping from the Olifants River to Phalaborwa. Isaac Leslie Meyerowitz was a mechanical engineer and Lewis Neuberger was a planning engineer with Roberts Construction Company. Abe Sher was a civil engineer. Julius Kaplan was a metallurgical chemist who worked for Foskor.

The town grew quickly. Community records show that there were 12 Jews in 1966. Mr Kay, together with his wife, was a furniture dealer in the 1960s. Mr Kuritzky was a businessman who lived in Phalaborwa. He died in a car accident in 1970. He had a sister who also lived in Phalaborwa. His wife sold the business and left Phalaborwa in 1974. Lesley and Mary Rosowsky owned Bargains Unlimited. Mary's parents Mr and Mrs Lazar Paul [Polonsky] also lived in Phalaborwa. Mr Paul died around 1971 and Mrs Paul moved to Cape Town in 1974. Henry Sher, an optometrist, and his wife Sandra lived in Phalaborwa for a few years until 1985. Martin Schmiedt was an hotelier. Mr and Mrs B Stern lived in Phalaborwa in the 1970s. Their children are Evelyn, Sylvia and Norman. Mrs Heather [nee Sher] Dilianos was a Jewess married to George, a non-Jewish Greek café owner and was the last Jew to live in Phalaborwa. She died in May 2015 and was buried in Phalaborwa. She did not have a Jewish burial as the relevant Jewish authorities were not informed by the family. They had two children, John and a daughter, who went to school in Pietersburg. Today there is a Jewish veterinarian and game farmer in Hoedspruit.



John, George and Heather Dilianos [courtesy of Dennis Wiener].

6] GRAVELOTTE

Gravelotte is situated 30 kilometers west of Phalaborwa and east of the Murchison Range. It was established as a mining town in 1916 on a farm bought by a Prussian missionary, Fritz Reuter. He named it Gravelotte as he had fought in the Battle of Gravelotte during the Franco-Prussian War. Gravelotte is the site of the only emerald mine in South Africa. Other minerals mined there include antimony, mica, silica and cinnabar.

The first Jewish activity in the area was recorded in the London Jewish Chronicle in 1889, where it was recounted how four Jewish men celebrated *Yom Kippur* in the Murchison Range [see Tzaneen]. Three Jewish mining magnates were involved with mining activity in Gravelotte. In 1923 the Harmony Proprietary Company, which owned 26 farms, was acquired by Messrs Hersov and Menell. In 1933, together with Norbett Erleigh, they formed the Anglo-Transvaal Consolidated Investment Company [Pty] Ltd. In 1934 they floated the Consolidated Murchison [Transvaal] Goldfields and Development Company to recover antimony and gold³²⁸.

There was no Jewish congregation in Gravelotte. The first Jews were mainly hoteliers. Mr and Mrs Kramer, Mr Duchon, the Resnick brothers and Bert Garb owned the Gravelotte Hotel at different times. Mr Lionel Pallatt married out of the faith. His tombstone in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery only bears his name. Mr B Jack Shmuckler owned the Lowveld Trading Store. He married out of the faith. By 1973 he was the only Jewish resident in Gravelotte. Today there are no Jews in Gravelotte.

D] LOUIS TRICHARDT AND MESSINA



Louis Trichardt

Louis Trichardt [renamed Makhado in 2003] and Messina [renamed Musina in 2000] are small towns situated 100 and 200 kilometers north of Pietersburg respectively. Louis Trichardt had a synagogue and a Jewish cemetery. Kosher meat was sourced from Pietersburg by the one or two families who kept kosher. Messina had no synagogue, but it had two Jewish cemeteries; the new cemetery was started after they hit bedrock in the old cemetery. The Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* used to travel to these towns when needed to help with the burials. In Messina, religious services were held in private homes. When there were no *cheder* classes, children were sent to Pietersburg to learn. Both towns used to ask post-*Barmitzvah* boys from Pietersburg or the *Yeshiva* College in Johannesburg to help them make up a *minyan* on the High Holy Days. Jewish soldiers from the local Air Force base in Louis Trichardt also used to help make up a *minyan*.

1] LOUIS TRICHARDT [MAKHADO]

In 1836 the Trekker leader Louis Trichardt settled at Mara [means tears] in the Zoutpansberg. In 1847, Hendrik Potgieter selected the site of the town of 'de Oude Dorp', renamed Zoutpansbergdorp, in this area. In 1852, Stephanus Schoeman then renamed the town Schoemansdal. The town had to be abandoned on 15 July 1867 after tensions with the Bavenda tribe and was burned to the ground. In later

years, the whites returned. The town of Louis Trichardt was proclaimed on 15 February 1899³²⁹. It was destroyed during the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 and the women and children were evacuated to Pietersburg. The town was rebuilt after this war. The first health committee was established in 1912, a town council was formed in 1915 and the town became a municipality in 1934³³⁰.

The Zoutpansberg Hebrew Congregation, which comprised of members from both Pietersburg and Louis Trichardt, was formed in 1897. Around 1912, Pietersburg formed the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation and the Zoutpansberg Hebrew Congregation name was retained by the Louis Trichardt community. Members of the Zoutpansberg Hebrew Congregation paid subscriptions to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation until 1934. They also paid affiliation fees to the SAJBD.

No matter how far away Jews found themselves from Jewish centres, they still kept their ties to Judaism. This was born out by Rabbi Dr Hertz³³¹ when he went on the first pastoral tour of the Jewish communities of the British Overseas Dominions. He said: 'From Johannesburg and Pretoria I went to Bulawayo...I found Jewish hearts throbbing with enthusiasm for all forms of Jewish endeavour, and nowhere more so than in many a wayside station with its 2 or 3 Jewish inhabitants'.

The 1904 government census recorded 75 Jews in the Zoutpansberg district. The 1951 government census recorded that Louis Trichardt had 123 Jews. According to community records, there were 31 Jews in Louis Trichardt in 1943 and eight in Bandelierkop [35 kilometers south of Louis Trichardt], but the number had dropped to 16 Jews by 1959 and in 1969, only five families remained³³². In 1980, there were nine Jews in Louis Trichardt and two in Bandelierkop. Reasons speculated for the discrepancy between the government and community records are that there were Jews living in the area who did not openly admit to being Jews, or there were several travelers or salesmen staying overnight in the area. However, this still cannot explain the large inconsistency in the numbers, especially as in small towns anyone with any Jewish ancestry would be known to the other Jews residing in the town.

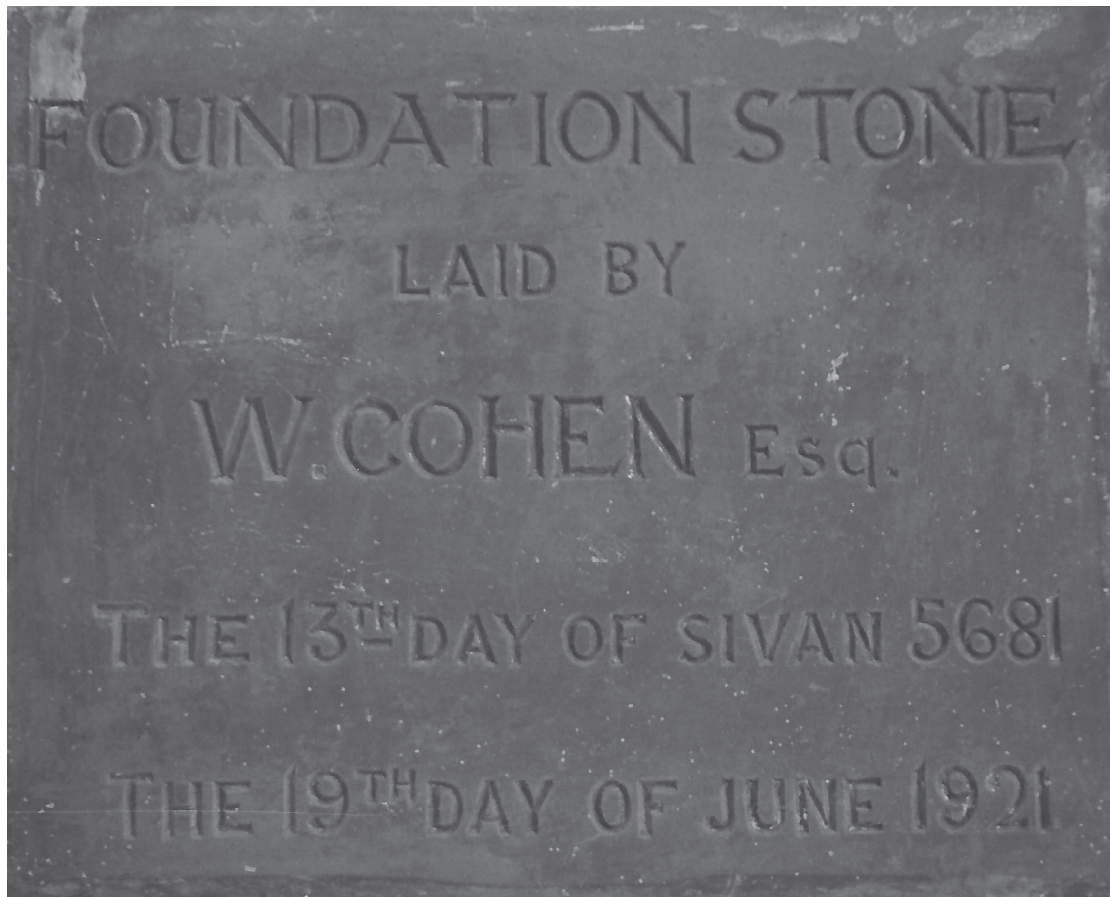
The first Jewish grave in the Louis Trichardt cemetery, dated 21 December 1907, was that of Mrs Miriam Lewis, wife of Barnett Lewis, who died at the age of 38 years. There are seven unmarked graves in the Jewish cemetery and there is some doubt as to whether they are all Jewish³³³.



Patsy Cohen [from the collection of the Pietersburg Museum]

William E [Patsy] Cohen [born on 15 April 1853] was one of the earliest Jewish pioneers in the Zoutpansberg area. The eldest of six children, he left Eastern Europe in 1875 and went to Ireland before coming to South Africa, hence the nickname 'Patsy'³³⁴. He arrived in the Louis Trichardt area around 1885³³⁵. Patsy first lived in Smitsdorp near Pietersburg. He later lived on his farm Koedoesvlei near Mara, 27 kilometers west of Louis Trichardt, where he had a general dealer's store. His family believes that he bartered the farm from an African chief³³⁶. He also had a business at Lasfontein and Louis Trichardt, in partnership with Mr Rubinstein of Bulawayo, as well as a portion of a farm Kalkfontein³³⁷.

A document sent by the Mine Commissioner to the Government in 1889³³⁸, refers to a request he had received for a liquor licence to be granted to Cohen and Grauman. Because their hotel had been moved from Marabastad to Smitsdorp in January 1888, they needed to renew their liquor licence. It can be presumed that the Cohen referred to was Patsy Cohen and is one of the earliest references to a Jew in Smitsdorp. The gold rush soon petered out because the deposits of gold in this area proved to be very small, especially after large deposits of gold found on the Witwatersrand in 1886 drew prospectors to the new fields.



Foundation stone of the Pietersburg Jewish Communal Hall 1921 [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Patsy married Mrs J van Gelder [nee Myers] of Johannesburg on 8 December 1907. They had three children. David van Gelder, who was adopted, became a customs officer in Durban and married a non-Jewess, Samuel, an apprentice pharmacist, was killed in World War II and Hylida, a solicitor, never married and died in 1961. W Cohen Esq [William Cohen] laid the foundation stone of the Jewish Communal Hall in Pietersburg in 1921. He represented the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation at the first Board of Education conference in Cape Town on 7 January 1929. He died at the age of 74³³⁹ and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 2 November 1925. His Hebrew names were Yisrael Zev, son of Freida Yakov HaKohen.

Patsy's youngest brother Samuel Cohen [born November 1874], studied at a *Yeshiva* in Lithuania before coming to South Africa, just after the Second Anglo-Boer War³⁴⁰. Their other four siblings immigrated to the United States. Samuel's Certificate of Naturalization is dated 5 March 1914. He attended SACS school in Cape Town. Samuel learned his English in Cape Town. He married his German-born wife Paula Bamberger on 3 October 1926. The marriage certificate reflects Samuel's status as divorcee but his daughters Hilda and Hannah do not know who his first wife was. The family spoke English and German at home. Later Samuel ran a general dealer's store at Mara [Hout River], which he bought from Mr Katz. At one time, Samuel was the postal agent. The family moved to Pietersburg in 1939 when the shop was sold. Hilda was a personal student of Rev J I Levine and obtained a distinction in Hebrew in her matriculation examination at Pietersburg High School. She became a pharmacist. Hannah was one

of the first group of girls to celebrate their Batmitzvahs in Pietersburg, on 30 November 1945. Hannah was 16 years old at the time. The girls were each presented with a Bible by Mr and Mrs L Brenner. Hannah became one of the first female chartered accountants in South Africa on 23 February 1951. Hannah married J R Levy on 2 December 1966.

Sydney Saks came from England in 1905. He was in the employ of Patsy Cohen at Lasfontein in 1905 and with time he acquired the business for himself. Later, he and his wife Deborah owned a store at Malietsieskopje. Deborah died on 11 November 1907, aged 38, and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. Sydney was a very charitable man and used to get up in the middle of the night to help any passing traveler with a meal and a blanket from the store. He was called 'Baas Sakkies' by the blacks.



Julius Louis, Mannie, Sydney and Male Saks [courtesy of Hilton Ellison]

Sydney and Deborah Saks had two sons Julius Louis and Mannie. Julius Saks was a pharmacist and an optometrist who helped establish optometry as a profession in South Africa. He was made Honorary Life President of the South African Optometric Association and was awarded the distinguished service award by the American Academy of Optometry. He was also a free mason and became master of the Concordia Lodge. Mannie Saks managed the Great North Road Hotel in Pietersburg. Sydney Saks sold

the shop to Solomon and Solomon and moved to Bandelierkop around 1918. Sydney and his second wife, Male Israelsohn, owned the Bandelierkop Hotel until 1928. Thereafter, they moved to Pretoria, where he ran the Masonic Hotel. Sydney had two daughters, Minna and Rachel, with his second wife Male³⁴¹. He died in Pretoria.

Mrs Silberman³⁴² [born 1880, died 1974], mother of Barney Silberman ran the hotel at Bandelierkop. Bandelierkop was named after an incident in which a burgher, Jan du Preez, was sent back to fetch the bandolier³⁴³ he had left behind when the commando struck camp. Mr and Mrs Barney Silberman owned Bandelierkop Stores at Bandelierkop at the end of the 1940s. They sold the business in 1975 but continued to live on the farm. They had two children Lynette and Sharon who moved to Johannesburg around 1970. Lynette married Irwin Beron, son of Harry and Ann Beron of Pietersburg. Irwin Beron's brother Victor Beron died in a car accident on 20 February 1966 aged 24. Laurance Silberman married Beryl Rosalia Polson [nee Conley] in Pietersburg on 25 March 1945 and he also ran the Bandelierkop Hotel and Stores.

Joel Charles Duveen was born in Holland in 1876³⁴⁴. He came to Louis Trichardt in the mid-1890s. Several Dutch Jews had been encouraged by President Paul Kruger to reside in the Zoutpansberg during the 1890s, partly in order to staff his civil service. Duveen became a hero in the Second Anglo-Boer War [1899-1902] fighting for the Boer forces. Duveen was described as a "well-built blond daredevil". In 1898 when one of the stores of the State Artillery in Louis Trichardt caught fire and several artillerymen were unable to escape, Duveen dashed in, ignoring the exploding bullets and shells, and rescued the trapped men. When the Anglo-Boer War broke out in October 1899, he joined the Zoutpansberg commando and took part in the siege of Ladysmith. At the battle of Spioenkop, it is said of him that when a British officer threatened to shoot his *Veldkornet*, Duveen threw his at the time unloaded rifle to his shoulder and shouted: "If you shoot him, I will shoot you", whereupon the officer dropped his gun on the spot. Duveen went on to feature prominently in the guerilla operations in the Eastern and Northern Transvaal. By now holding the rank of lieutenant, he was selected by General Beyers for dangerous intelligence work behind enemy lines. Not satisfied with this, Duveen persuaded Colonel Mentz and Major Dommissie (whose mother was Jewish) to form a small scouting party to harass the British. On one occasion, they tried to derail a train a few miles from Naboomspruit. Although his party was surrounded, he managed to get them to freedom without a casualty. His own horse was killed and he had to take cover in a thick bush to escape his pursuers. On another occasion he displayed great courage when he rescued his fellow officers from hundreds of mounted men with just seven Boers.

Duveen, at the age of 25, was wounded in the stomach and sent to the hospital in Pietpotgietersrust, where he was captured in October 1901. He was sent to India on 2 November 1901 to sit out the last eight months of the War. After his release, he settled in Pietersburg with his Afrikaans wife and son and opened a store. In 1904, on a trip to his store in Thabina in the Lowveld, he contracted blackwater fever, which proved fatal. Already dying, he was taken to the store of a nearby shopkeeper, but such was his dislike of the English, that he insisted he be put on the floor to die. He is reputed to have said: "I am going to die, but I refuse to die on an Englishman's bed. Put me on the floor".

Several well-known financiers invested in the Louis Trichardt area although they did not live there. Norbert Erleigh, a Witwatersrand mining magnate owned Cloud's End farm. In 1933, together with Messrs Hersov and Menell, he formed the Anglo-Transvaal Consolidated Investment Company. In the late 1940s the Louis Trichardt town council bought Erleigh's farm to provide additional water for the

town. Arnold Hyman of Johannesburg owned the farms Vryburg, Heidelberg and Nigel in the 1940s. He became the executive director of a milling, oil expressing and cotton ginning enterprise called H Lewis & Co. The cotton ginnery in Louis Trichardt was later added to his other ginneries in Swaziland and Kempton Park³⁴⁵.



Alois Nellmapius [courtesy of The Randlords by Geoffrey Wheatcroft]

Alois Hugo Nellmapius [1847-1893], a Jewish financier and the trusted friend of President Kruger, never lived in the Zoutpansberg area, but owned property there in 1888. In 1890 he was granted a concession for a 50-year lease of salt-pans in the area with the rights for refining. In 1872 when gold was discovered at Pilgrim's Rest he organised a system of native carriers for goods from the coast to Lydenburg because wagons could not get through the mountains. He became the biggest landowner in the Transvaal. Nellmapius was the son of Albert and Charlotte Neumann, wealthy mill owners in Bielsko, Poland but he changed his name to Nellmapius. He married a non-Jewess Johanna Corlydia 'Lily' Hofmann³⁴⁶ in Durban, and they had four children. Their daughter Irene married Hendrik Jacobus Smit and they retired to Moorddrift farm near Potgietersrus. Their son William and his wife June [nee Goetsch]'s children are Sue, Vicky [married to Tom Shearer of the Ranch Motel], Michael and Ken Smit. All except Michael still live in the area.

Descendants of Wolf Himmelhoch

1	Wolf Himmelhoch	
..... 2	Jacob Himmelhoch	1822 - 1903
.....	+Rose 'Rochel' Unknown	1822 -
..... 3	Sachne Shimon Himmelhoch	1846 - 1921
.....	+Feige Asne 'Fanny' Weinberg	1852 - 1931
..... 4	'Shlomo' Solomon Wolf Himmelhoch	1874 - 1896
.....	+Yetty Schmahmann	1877 - 1970
..... 5	Ethel Himmelhoch	1896 - 1898
..... 4	Tsesse Himmelhoch	1876 - 1876
..... 4	Lena Himmelhoch	1877 - 1960
.....	+Abraham Galant	1877 - 1924
..... 5	George Galant	
..... 5	Jack Galant	
..... 6	Aline Galant	
..... 5	Bertha Elizabeth Galant	- 2002
.....	+Ronnie Levy	
..... 6	Anne Levy	
..... 5	Rae Galant	
.....	+Sydney Feigenbaum	
..... 6	Alan Feigenbaum	
..... 5	Miriam Galant	
.....	+Ivan Lazarus	
..... 6	Cheryl Lazarus	
..... 4	Danie Himmelhoch	1879 - 1929
.....	+Joseph Palte	1882 - 1934
..... 5	Jack Palte	1909 - 1980
.....	+Matilda Bernstein	1912 - 1997
..... 6	Rodney Palte	1935 -
..... 6	Erica Palte	1939 -
..... 6	Denise Palte	1938 - 2012
..... 5	Sydney Palte	1922 - 2007
.....	+Sonia Klein	1927 -
..... 6	Jonathan Palte	1951 -
..... 6	Howard Palte	1956 -
..... 6	Stephan Palte	1961 -
..... 5	Ellis Palte	1924 -
.....	+Yvonne Orkin	
..... 6	Daniella Palte	
..... 5	Daughter Palte	
..... 5	Daughter Palte	
..... 4	Max Himmelhoch	1882 - 1945
.....	+Ann Serman	1899 - 1939
..... 5	Nathan Himmelhoch	1932 -
.....	+Edna Raban	1935 -
..... 6	Anat Himmelhoch	1959 -
..... 6	Alon Max Himmelhoch	1960 -
..... 5	Stanley Himmelhoch	1934 -
.....	+Shulamit German	1935 -
..... 6	Yaron Himmelhoch	
..... 6	Smadar Himmelhoch	
..... 6	Ayelet Himmelhoch	
..... 4	George Himmelhoch	1885 - 1917
..... 4	Betsy Himmelhoch	1890 - 1908
..... 4	Hyman Himmelhoch	1892 - 1967
.....	+Jane Illman	1906 - 1979
..... 5	Phyllis Himmelhoch	1934 -
.....	+Solly Hare	1930 - 2004
..... 6	Melanie Hare	
..... 6	Ivan Hare	
..... 5	Shirley Himmelhoch	1940 - 2008
.....	+Jack Sachs	1932 - 1997
..... 6	Saul Sachs	
..... 6	Evelyn Sachs	
..... 6	Howard Sachs	
..... 4	Olga 'Golda' Himmelhoch	1896 - 1974
.....	+Joseph Adolph Melman	1877 - 1969
..... 5	Eric Melman	1921 - 1939
..... 5	George Melman	- 1992

	+Nelli	
.....6	Geoffrey Melman	
.....6	Eric Melman	
.....5	Selwyn Melman	1929 -
	+Sybil	
.....6	Andrea Melman	
.....6	Karin Melman	
.....6	Jodi Melman	
.....4	Merri Himmelhoch	1897 -
.....3	Yosef Himmelhoch	1849 – 1917
	+Dina Brenner	1858 - 1890
.....4	Ettie 'Henrietta' Himmelhoch	1878 - 1941
	+Louis Kallmeyer	1875 - 1941
.....5	Dina Kallmeyer	1909 - 1995
.....5	Meri Kallmeyer	1911 - 1941
.....5	Esther Kallmeyer	1914 - 1941
	*2nd Wife of Yosef Himmelhoch:	
	+Kiela 'Clara' Israelowitz	1863 - 1947
.....4	Mary Himmelhoch	1893 - 1983
	+Harold Kay	1894 - 1964
	*2nd Husband of Mary Himmelhoch:	
	+Herman Blum	1883 - 1947
.....5	Wally Blum	1915 - 1972
	+Betty Lurie	1920 - 2010
.....6	David Blum	
.....6	Hermione Blum	
.....6	Teresa Blum	
.....5	Maurice Blum	1917 - 1966
	+Charlotte	
.....6	Roy Blum	
.....6	Linda Blum	
.....6	Lesley Blum	
.....5	Lionel Blum	1918 - 2005
	+Joan Abrahams	
.....6	Brian Blum	
.....6	Rosemary Blum	
.....6	Barbara Blum	
	*2nd Wife of Lionel Blum:	
	+Thelme	
.....5	Jeannot Blum	1924 - 2009
	+Norma Eckstein	- 1973
.....6	Carol Blum	
.....6	Maira Blum	
.....6	Neville Blum	
.....6	Bryce Blum	
	*2nd Wife of Jeannot Blum:	
	+Susan Meyer	1945 -
.....6	Nicola Blum	
.....4	Danie Himmelhoch	1895 -
	+Yosef Israelsohn	
.....5	Beatrice Israelsohn	1915 - 2006
	+Martin Herz	
.....5	Jack Israelsohn	
.....4	Suzanna Himmelhoch	1897 - 1965
	+Alec Karp	- 1972
.....5	Monty Karp	
	+Celia	
.....6	Alan Karp	
.....6	Celia Karp	
.....5	Jack Karp	- 2002
	+Merle Hirschmann	1941 -
.....6	Lauren Karp	
.....6	Linda Karp	
.....5	Eddie Karp	
	+Linda	
.....6	Hazel Karp	
.....6	Suzelle Karp	
.....4	Beatrice Himmelhoch	1898 - 1983
	+Lewis Blum	1881 - 1929
.....5	Jose Blum	1917 - 1997

		+Ruby Joffe	1921 - 2006
.....	6	Leon Blum	
.....	6	Therese Blum	
.....	6	Neil Blum	
.....	5	Doreen Blum	1920 - 1959
.....		+Benno Wasserstein	1906 - 1956
.....	6	Lewis Wasserstein	
.....	5	Lesley Blum	1923 - 1989
.....		+Marja-Laena Hemmelainen	1929 - 2006
.....	6	Alison Blum	
.....	6	Martine Blum	
.....	4	Rachel Himmelhoch	1902 - 1978
.....		+Sascha Schmahmann	1882 - 1962
.....	5	Margaret Theresa Schmahmann	1928 - 2011
.....		+Austin Kark	1926 - 2000
.....	6	Catherine Kark	
.....	6	Teresa Kark	
.....		*2nd Husband of Margaret Theresa Schmahmann:	
.....		+Dennis Solomon	1920 -
.....	6	Marc Solomon	
.....	6	John Solomon	
.....	5	Ian Joseph Schmahmann	1930 - 2008
.....		+Joan Grimbeek	1922 -
.....	6	Ryk Schmahmann	
.....	6	Antoinette Schmahmann	
.....	6	Kim Schmahmann	
.....	6	Alexis Schmahmann	
.....	4	Charles Himmelhoch	1909 - 1968
.....		+Olga	1914 - 1972
.....	5	Janice Himmelhoch	1949 -
.....		+Mr Maguire	
.....		*2nd Wife of Charles Himmelhoch:	
.....		+Annie Elsie Harty	
.....	3	Levin 'Leon' Himmelhoch	1854 - 1910
.....	3	Wolf Zeev Himmelhoch	1857 - 1906
.....		+Minna Schmahmann	1870 - 1944
.....	4	Ethel Thirza Himmelhoch	1892 - 1948
.....		+Goldstein	
.....		*2nd Husband of Ethel Thirza Himmelhoch:	
.....		+Joseph Miller	- 1920
.....	5	Walter [Woulfie] Miller	1920 -
.....	4	Solomon Samuel Himmelhoch	1893 - 1962
.....		+Lily Grevler	1917 - 1995
.....	5	Myrna Estelle Himmelhoch	1944 -
.....		+Toby Leibowitz	1933 -
.....	5	Marlene 'Wendy' Himmelhoch	1946 -
.....		+Arnold Lever	1944 -
.....	6	Steven Lever	
.....	6	Mandy-Reine Lever	
.....	6	Errol Lever	
.....	4	Hedwig 'Hetty' Himmelhoch	1898 - 1983
.....		+Harry Bloom	1886 - 1965
.....	5	Diana Shirley Bloom	
.....		+Mickey Don	
.....	6	Beverley Don	
.....	4	Rachel 'Rae' Himmelhoch	1900 - 1959
.....		+Barney Joffe	1889 - 1962
.....	5	Jack Joffe	1925 - 2001
.....		+Audrey May Starling	1929 - 1992
.....	6	Mark Joffe	
.....	6	Gillian Joffe	
.....	6	Steen Joffe	
.....	6	Roger Joffe	
.....	5	Walter Joffe	1922 - 1974
.....		+Rosalie Segal	1926 -
.....	6	Lena Joffe	
.....	6	Jonathan Joffe	
.....	6	Kevin Joffe	
.....	4	Nachmann 'Nico' Himmelhoch	1902 - 1981
.....		+Rae Back	- 1986

.....5	Dennis Wolf Himmelhoch	1936 - 1948
.....5	Desiree Himmelhoch	1939 -
	+Norman Sandler	1928 -
.....6	Edna Sandler	
.....6	Leonard Sandler	
.....6	Renee Sandler	
.....6	Brian Sandler	
	*2nd husband of Desiree Himmelhoch:	
	+Edward Farkas	1939 -
.....5	Ivan Louis Himmelhoch 1954-	
	+Moir Shandling	
	*2nd Wife of Ivan Himmelhoch:	
	+Helene Oberman	
.....6	Stefan Himmelhoch	
.....6	Gabriele Himmelhoch	
	*3rd Wife of Ivan Himmelhoch:	
	+Heather Crockart	
.....3	Tsemach Himmelhoch	1860 - 1900
.....3	David-Ruben Himmelhoch	1864 -

Descendants of Yeshia 'Bern' Schmahmann

1	Yeshia ,Bern' Schmahmann	
	+Ette Hartsburg	
.....2	Nachman Schmahmann	1839 - 1897
	+Sophia Dinah Friedberg	1842 - 1913
.....3	Minna Schmahmann	1870 - 1944
	+Wolf Zeev Himmelhoch	1857 - 1906
.....3	David Schmahmann	
.....3	Ariyeh Leib ,Arthur' Schmahmann	1873 - 1939
	+Josephine Behrmann	1889 - 1974
.....3	Yaakov ,John' Schmahmann	1879 - 1935
	+Henrietta ,Yetty' Brenner	1885 - 1966
.....2	Leib Levin Schmahmann	1852 – 1898 Pietersburg
	+Minna Horner	1855 – 1941 Libau, Latvia
.....3	Emma Schmahmann	
	+Joseph Guinsberg	
.....3	Lily Schmahmann	
.....3	Bernard Schmahmann	
	+Bertha Zweibeck	
.....3	Rosa Schmahmann	1874 - 1876
	+Isidore Harry Lewsen	1878 - 1955
.....3	Yetty Schmahmann	1877 - 1970
	+ 'Shlomo' Solomon Wolf Himmelhoch	1874 - 1896
.....4	Ethel Himmelhoch	1896 - 1898
	*2nd Husband of Yetty Schmahmann:	
	+Robert Behrmann	- 1920
.....4	Edythe Behrmann	
	+Eric Certer Johnson	
.....4	Samuel Lionel Behrmann	
.....4	Tecla Lily Behrmann	1900 -
	+James Shirtcliffe	
.....3	Herman Schmahmann	1878 - 1941
	+Esther Sachs	1877 - 1941
.....3	Sascha Schmahmann	1882 - 1963
	+Taube-Rivka Dubrovitsch	
.....4	Tereze-Miriam Schmahmann	
	*2nd Wife of Sascha Schmahmann:	
	+Rachel 'Rae' Himmelhoch	1902 - 1980
.....4	Margaret Schmahmann	
.....4	Ian Schmahmann	
	+Joan Grimbeek	
.....3	Jeannot Schmahmann	
.....3	Danie Schmahmann	1889 - 1941
	+Morduchs Hillman	1875 - 1940
.....3	Alex Schmahmann	1890 - 1989
	+Minna Kramer	
.....3	Zelma Schmahmann	

The Himmelhoch family was a major pioneering family of Louis Trichardt as they were already well established there in the 1890s. The late Martha Lev-Zion from Israel compiled an extensive family tree of the Himmelhoch and Schmahmann families, who were scattered throughout the Transvaal. Jacob [Jankel] Himmelhoch was married to Rachel [Roche] and they lived in Goldinger [Kudinger], Sassmachten, Courland, Latvia. He fled the Russian uprising in 1865 to South Africa, then returned to Latvia. They immigrated to America in 1887 with two of their sons. Four of their six sons came to South Africa - Sachne Simeon, Yosef, Wolf and Tsemach. Tsemach's whereabouts are unknown, but an unidentified S Himmelhoch was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery about 1887 and this could be [T]semach. Yosef went to Belfast, Wolf to Middelburg and Sachne Simeon to Louis Trichardt.

Yosef Himmelhoch's first wife, Dina Brenner, died in Latvia in 1890. Their daughter Henrietta [Etta] stayed in Latvia, married Louis Kallmeyer and they had three children. Etta, Louis and two daughters were murdered in the Holocaust. Yosef proposed to his second wife Keile [nicknamed Clara] Israelowitz³⁴⁷ [buried in Johannesburg on 22 February 1947] in Tuckum, Latvia after only knowing her a week. Clara's sister, Betty Israelowitz, married Max Israelohn, who lived in Turfloop and then Pietersburg [see under Haenertsburg]. Yosef and Clara Himmelhoch moved to Belfast, Transvaal in 1892, then to Pretoria in 1902. They had seven children – Mary, Danie, Suzanna, Beatrice, Rachel, Charles. Their daughter Rachel [Rae] Himmelhoch married Sascha Schmahmann, the son of Leib Schmahmann [born 1852, buried Pietersburg 1898] and Minna Horner [1855-1941] of Slypsteendrift, east of Vaalwater in the northern Transvaal. Sascha Schmahmann fought in the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 for the Boers [see under Potgietersrus]. One of his sisters, Yetty [1877-1970] married Shlomo Wolf Himmelhoch [1874-1896], a son of Sachne Simeon Himmelhoch. Yosef Himmelhoch's son Charles [Charlie] Himmelhoch became a dentist, married a non-Jewess, Olga Roberts, and moved to Pietersburg. Danie Himmelhoch married Yosef Israelohn, Mary and Betty [Beatrice] Himmelhoch married Herman and Lewis Bloom and Suzanna [Suzie] Himmelhoch married Alec Karp.



Charles and Olga Himmelhoch [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]

Jacob Himmelhoch's son Wolf Ze'ev Himmelhoch [born January 1857 in Sassmacken, Courland, died 13 October 1936 in Middelburg] married Minna Schmahmann [born about 1870 in Courland, Latvia and died 1 August, 1944 in Johannesburg] in Amsterdam, Holland. She was the daughter of Sophia Dina Friedberg and Nachman Schmahmann, brother of Leib Schmahmann and a cousin of Yetty and Sascha Schmahmann. They immigrated to Middelburg, Transvaal. Their children were Ethel Thirza, Solomon, Hedwig, Rachel and Nachmann.

Jacob's other son Sachne Simeon, was born in Sassmacken, Courland, Latvia in 1846 [buried in Louis Trichardt 6 March 1921 aged 73] and came to South Africa in 1891. His wife Feige Asne 'Fanny' [nee Weinberg] [born 1850, Sassmacken, buried in Louis Trichardt 26 July 1931 aged 78] came with her children in 1905. At the time of the Second Anglo-Boer War, Sachne owned a general dealer's store in the village and two in the district at Boschkopjes and Schoemansdal³⁴⁸, employing Mr Thal as his bookkeeper. He also became a butcher and large property owner and was one of the pioneers of the Jewish community in Louis Trichardt. His wife was the first Jewish woman to live in the town³⁴⁹.

Sachne was a strong aggressive man who became a legend in his own time. Several anecdotes are told about him. After a fight with a man, he was brought to court and fined £5. Instead he paid £10 as he declared he was going to hit the man again. Another time he pulled a tree out of the ground to hit a man and on a third occasion he carried a heavy stone five kilometers to throw at a man in case there were no stones nearby.

Simeon Sachne Himmelhoch claims in his application for compensation after the Anglo-Boer War, that he had been residing in the district of Louis Trichardt from 1891³⁵⁰, but his children are recorded as having been born in Russia as late as 1896. Sachne Simeon and Feige Himmelhoch had 10 children – Solomon Wolf, Tsesse, Lena, Danie, Max, George, Bella, Hyman, Olga and Meri³⁵¹. Their daughter Tsesse died in Latvia on 19 May 1876, aged only two months. Most of their children married Jews from the Northern Transvaal, thereby interlinking many families who continued to live in the area. Their eldest son Solomon Wolf [born 28 July 1874 in Sassmacken] married Yettie Schmahmann, daughter of Leib Schmahmann [born in Courland, Latvia]. They lived in Ruigtevlei, Spelonke, in the Louis Trichardt-Soekmekaar area. Solomon Wolf died there on 19 October 1896, aged 23 and was buried in Pietersburg. His wife and their daughter Ethel [born August 1896] returned to Slypsteendrift to live with her parents Leib and Minna Schmahmann³⁵². Ethel died on 30 April 1898 in Slypsteendrift and was buried there. Yettie Schmahmann married Robert Behrmann and they had three children, Edythe, Samuel and Tecla. Yettie's brother Jeannot Schmahmann was mayor of Middelburg in 1933-4.

Sachne and Feige's daughter Sarah Leine [Shore Lena] [died 1960] married Abraham Galant from Louis Trichardt [died 1924]. He had a postal agency in his general dealer's store in 1918. They had five children – George, Jack, Bertha, Rae and Miriam. Jack's wife died whilst he was on active service during World War II. Sachne's daughter Danie [born 18 November 1879 in Sassmacken] married Joseph Palte, from a family in the Pietersburg area and they moved to Rhodesia [Zimbabwe]. They had a son, Jack, and two daughters. Danie went back to Latvia with the two daughters to meet their grandparents, whilst Jack stayed with one of the family in South Africa. The Second World War broke out, caught them there and

the two girls starved to death. After returning to South Africa, Danie had two more sons Sydney and Ellis.

Descendants of Nathan Serman

1	Nathan Serman	
	+Sarah	
..... 2	Ann Serman.....	
	+Max Himmelhoch.....	
..... 3	Nathan Himmelhoch.....	
..... 3	Stanley Himmelhoch.....	
..... 2	Louis Abe Serman.....	
	+Lena	
..... 3	Julian Serman.....	
..... 3	Becky Serman	
2	Jacob Serman	
	+Rose Lipschitz	
..... 3	Neil Serman	
..... 3	Shirley Serman.....	
..... 3	Faith Serman.....	
..... 3	Malcolm Serman.....	
..... 2	Harry Serman	
	+Essie Lipschitz.....	
..... 3	Neville Serman.....	
..... 3	Dennis Serman.....	
..... 2	Minnie Serman.....	
	+Abraham Sax	
..... 3	Rona Sax	
..... 3	Sidney Sax.....	
..... 3	Beryl Sax	

Sachne Himmelhoch's son, Max, [born 9 February 1882, buried in Pietersburg 29 April 1945] married Ann Serman in 1923 [born 1902 in Port Elizabeth, buried 26 August 1939 in Pietersburg]. Anne's father, Nathan Serman, [married Sarah who was buried in Louis Trichardt on 8 December 1930 aged 74] and her uncle, Louis Serman, ran a general dealer's business called Serman and Serman in Louis Trichardt in the early 1920s [later sold to the Wolf family], as well as the business Serman and Son. Ann Serman's sister, Minnie Serman married Abraham Sax. Her brother, Louis Abe Serman [born 1883 and died 1969 and buried in Louis Trichardt] married Lena and they lived in Louis Trichardt with their two children Julian [Boet] and Betty. Anne's two other brothers Jack and Harry Serman married two sisters Rose and Essie Lipshitz from Nylstroom [see under Nylstroom]. The third Lipshitz sister, Doris, married Charles Whyte, a cousin of the Donde family of Potgietersrus, and they lived in Settlers [see under Settlers]. Their brother Abe Lipshitz, a principal of King David School in Johannesburg, married Daphne Manaschewitz, daughter of Herman and Dora Manaschewitz of Pietersburg see under Nylstroom].



Moss Cohen [courtesy of Lara Cohen]

Daphne's sister Laura Manaschewitz married Moss Cohen, who became a mayor of Pietersburg, in Pietersburg on 14 August 1932. Jews in the country areas often tended to marry Jews who lived in nearby country districts because they came from a background similar to them and they were hampered in meeting new people because of the long distances to the cities.

Sachne and Fanny Himmelhoch's son Gerson [George] born 2 January 1885 never married. He died in Elim [23 kilometers south east of Louis Trichardt] aged 32 and was buried in Louis Trichardt on 7 April 1917. Their daughter Bella [Betsy] Himmelhoch was born on 17 January 1890 and died at the age of 18. Another son Hyman [Chaim] Himmelhoch [born 28 March 1894 in Sassmacken, died 12 November 1967 and buried in Johannesburg] married Jane Illman [born 1907, died 17 January 1979 and buried in Johannesburg] in Johannesburg. For some years they lived in Bandelierkop, 35 kilometers south of Louis Trichardt, where they ran the Bandelierkop Hotel. Jane became interested in cattle farming and built up a large herd. They later sold the hotel and moved to Marble Hall. The hotel was later owned by Sydney and Deborah Sacks. Hyman and Jane then moved to Pretoria and travelled to Marble Hall for weekends. Their children were Shirley and Phyllis [married Solly Hare]. Olga Himmelhoch [born 28 May 1896 in Lithuania] married Joseph Melman in Greylingstad and lived in Pietersburg for a while. Sachne's youngest daughter was Merri, birthplace unknown.

King George Hamilton Sebeka was a coloured man who was born on 19 March 1918 in Mara on a farm called Kranspoort, 48 kilometers from Louis Trichardt. His mother Mary Sebeka, reputedly had an affair with a white shopkeeper for whom she worked and his 'name sounded like Himmelhoch'. His daughter was looking for her family roots and believed that her grandfather might have been either Chaim, Max or George Himmelhoch. However she has no proof that this might be true.

Amongst other well-known Jewish settlers was Mr W Herschenson who was farming in the Zoutpansberg district before 1904. Mr A Ancell was one of the first Jewish speculators in the Louis Trichardt area. The shop Abramowitz Bros was run by Isaak and Adolf Abramowitz before 1909³⁵³. Adolf had a son born in 1909. Isaak Abramowitz married Anna Neuman from Riga on 13 December 1914 at the home of his brother Adolf in Louis Trichardt³⁵⁴. Mr Jacob Hirschon was a produce dealer and owned a mineral works in the 1920s. His wife was not born Jewish; they had a daughter Hermine and later moved to Pietersburg. Mr and Mrs Sacks were in Louis Trichardt in the 1930s. Their children were Barney and Belle.

Joe Kaufman traded at Maleboch and Mara [27 kilometers west of Louis Trichardt]. He had a shop at Alldays. The small village got its name from the shop that was open on 'all days'³⁵⁵. A police station and a garage opened next to the shop. Joe Kaufman's wife was Miriam Ranger from Kimberley. Joe's sister, who lived nearby, married a Mr Skok and they had eight children. Unfortunately both parents were killed in a car accident and Joe adopted all of them. Joe Kaufman died on 12 September 1948 and was buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery. He was the brother of Jacob Kaufman [buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 20 July 1963], who traded in the 1920s at Palmietfontein mine, about nine kilometers from Pietersburg. Jacob Kaufman was married to Minnie and their daughter Bessie [buried 30 March 1990 in Pietersburg aged 71] married Stanley Reubenson in Pietersburg on 3 December 1944. Stanley was the son of Selim [Ruby] Reubenson and Yetta [buried Pietersburg Jewish cemetery 18 April 1954, aged 73 and 14 September 1966 respectively] and brother of Gerald Reubenson [buried Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, 19 May 1975]. Stanley and Gerald were on active service during World War II. Stanley later owned Uitkyk asbestos mine at Bewaarkloof beyond Chuniespoort. Stanley and Bessie Reubenson had two boys, Geoffrey and Ivor. Sabsey Kaufman lived at Bandelierkop. Simon Kaufman was a general dealer at Sandfontein in 1914.

Other early Jewish settlers³⁵⁶, included Barnett and Miriam Lewis [buried 21 December 1907 in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery], D Lewis, B Myers, Bertie Lissack [died September 1949, aged 61, buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery], a garage owner whose wife was not born Jewish, Lionel Lyons, a general dealer whose wife was likewise not Jewish, R Joffe, I Kaufman, Moses Pinchas Kramer and his brother who came from Birz in 1927, Leiser Novochetz who came from Bausk in 1928 to join his uncle Mr N Adelstein³⁵⁷, Myer Sulski and his sister Seina and brother-in-law A Raganas. Harry Simon who was a butcher and baker owned The National Butchery until it was transferred to Henry Rufus Smythe³⁵⁸. Harry Simon and Solly Greenberg ran Star Cash Butchery. Aaron Behr was a butcher. His wife was Sally and their children were Tobi and Estelle. Mr M Lewin served with the Union Forces 1914-1915 as a private in the Red Cross Regiment³⁵⁹. Mr Werner Wolff [born 13 October 1914] was a farmer and general dealer. He and his wife had a son George and another child. Werner Wolff was buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery on 17 November 1970. John Neville Cohen, a pharmacist, married Gertrude Tannenbaum of Roodepoort in 1927. Their children were Lawrence [Laurie] and Hilary.

Some settlers lived in remote areas outside Louis Trichardt in the 1920s. They included W Gotlieb at Albert [north-west of Louis Trichardt] and S Hayman, a livestock dealer, at Bandelierkop in 1922. Herbert

Goldman [Goldie] [born 7 September 1883] was a batchelor who ran the post office at Bandelierkop before moving to Louis Trichardt, where he owned a bottle store, 'Beyers and Thomson', which he later sold to the Brenner brothers³⁶⁰. Herbert Goldman died on 7 October 1962 and was buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery. Lewis Sieff and F Morris were general dealers at Dendron [Mogwade]. L Sieff was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, no date stated on the tombstone. Max Henschell was a general dealer at Mara, Mr E Gavronsky at Sibasa [72 kilometers north-east of Louis Trichardt], and S Gerselowitz and L Korol at Piesanghoek [29 kilometers from Louis Trichardt].

Descendants of Mr Zway

Mr Zway	
..... 2	Hode Zway
	+Elles Zelek Tager
..... 3	Francis Tager
	+Samuel Rakusin
..... 4	Hedda Rakusin
..... 4	Bertha Rakusin
..... 3	Samuel Tager
..... 3	Issy Tager
..... 3	Solly Tager
	+Nora Goldman
..... 4	Robin Tager
..... 4	Jonathan Tager
..... 4	Susan Tager
..... 4	Michelle Tager
..... 3	Joseph Tager
..... 2	Saul Zway
	+Chanah
.....	*2nd Wife of Saul Zway:
	+Anna Tager
..... 3	Maxwell Zway
	+Ethel Bloch
..... 4	Charlene Zway
..... 4	Denise Zway
..... 4	Roy Zway
..... 3	Rose Zway
	+Barney Kellen
..... 4	Ted Kellen
..... 4	Lalie Kellen
..... 3	Lily Zway
	+Shewitz
..... 4	Natalie Schewitz
	+Harris Baum
..... 4	Jonathan Schewitz
..... 5	Jackie Schewitz
..... 4	Ivan Schewitz
..... 4	Sharon Schewitz
..... 2	Norman Zway
	+Sarah
..... 3	Evelyn Zway
..... 3	Stanley Zway
..... 2	Rudolph Zway
	+Rebecca Sadowsky
..... 2	Leib Zway

Rudolph Zway was the first chairman of the Warmbaths Hebrew Congregation in 1928³⁶¹. Norman and Leib Zway came from Korsoura in 1928 and traded in Sibasa. Norman was married to Sarah and their children were Evelyn and Stanley. A Mr Zway traded at Molsgat as Donde and Zway in the 1920s. Saul Zway was first a shopkeeper at Radium near Warmbaths. He also traded at Piesanghoek in 1920 and owned Progress Mills and a mineral water factory. In Russia, Saul Zway was married to Chanah, who

committed suicide. He then married Anna Tager [Elles Tager's sister, died 20 November 1934, aged 46, buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] and their children were Joseph Michael [Maxwell] [born at Elim hospital, Louis Trichardt, died 10 February 1956, married Ethel Bloch, sister of Helen Blau, in Pietersburg on 10 June 1945 - their children were Charlene, Denise and Roy], Rose [married to Barney Kellen in Louis Trichardt on 11 April 1937 - their children were Teddy and Lalie] and Lily [married Mr Schewitz - children Natalie, Jonathan, Ivan and Sharon]. Saul moved to Pietersburg in the mid-1940s. Saul Zway died on 17 July 1959 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. Joseph Michael [Maxwell] Zway and Ethel divorced. He died of a gunshot wound on his farm Voetpad, Veekraal on 10 February 1956, aged 33, and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, despite asking in his will to be cremated. His murderer was never apprehended. In his will he asked that his business Van Riebeeck Wine & Brandy Co be sold and his estate to go to Mrs N C Gunning.

Descendants of Mr Tager

1	Mr Tager
..... 2	Elles Zelek Tager
	+Hode Zway
..... 3	Francis Tager
	+Samuel Rakusin
..... 4	Hedda Rakusin
..... 4	Bertha Rakusin
..... 3	Samuel Tager
..... 3	Issy Tager
..... 3	Solly Tager
	+Nora Goldman
..... 4	Robin Tager
..... 4	Jonathan Tager
..... 4	Susan Tager
..... 4	Michelle Tager
..... 3	Joseph Tager
.....	*2nd Wife of Elles Zelek Tager:
	+Hennie Hirschowitz
..... 3	Harris Tager
	+Louise Tager
..... 3	Sarah Tager
	+Liber Varejes
..... 3	Sidney Tager
..... 3	Ann Tager
..... 2	Anna Tager
	+Saul Zway
..... 3	Maxwell Zway
	+Ethel Bloch
..... 4	Charlene Zway
..... 4	Denise Zway
..... 4	Roy Zway
..... 3	Rose Zway
	+Barney Kellen
..... 4	Ted Kellen
..... 4	Lalie Kellen
..... 3	Lily Zway
	+Schewitz
..... 4	Natalie Schewitz
	+Harris Baum
..... 4	Jonathan Schewitz
..... 5	Jackie Schewitz
..... 4	Ivan Schewitz
..... 4	Sharon Schewitz



Elles Tager [courtesy of Norah Tager]

Elles Zelek Tager [died suddenly on 11 July 1938 aged 58 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery] was in business with Saul Zway at Radium near Warmbaths in 1918 and also traded at Codrington in the Warmbaths district. He owned Sibasa Trading Store in 1924 and Kalkbank Trading Store, which was transferred to Elchan Rubin Hirschowitz on 1 July 1931³⁶². It was reported in the Zoutpansberg Review³⁶³ that Miss Ackermann arrived from Germany in 1929 and she was affianced to Elchonen Hirschowitz. Elles Tager's first wife was Hode Zway and their children were Frances [married to Samuel Rakusin with adopted children Bertha and Hedda], Samuel [who died in World War II, when he was run over by a tank], Issy, Solly [married to Nora Goldman - children Robin, Jonathan, Susan and Michelle] and Joseph. Elles used to say

'I am Tager, the lion of the north!' Elles Tager ran the Empire Bioscope and started a price war with the only other bioscope, as he believed there was only room for one bioscope in the town.

After Elles died, Solly Tager bought out his siblings and farmed at Blinkwater. He and his family moved to Pietersburg, where he owned the Empire Bioscope and later Penguin Pools. Solly was a very friendly man but he used to get very upset when people didn't stand up to sing 'G-d save the Queen' and he would confront them outside the cinema and hit them³⁶⁴. Hode Tager's brothers were Saul, Norman, Rudolph and Leib Zway. Hode Tager died young and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 19 December 1925, aged 31. After her death, Elles was left with several children to look after, so he decided to go to Eastern Europe to find another wife. He left the children in Israel whilst he was away in Europe and brought back a wife, Hennie Hirschowitz³⁶⁵. Elles and Hennie's children were Harris Tager [married to Professor Louise Tager], Sarah [married to Liber Varejes in Pietersburg on 19 August 1950], Sidney and Ann. After Elles's death, Hennie married Edward Young. Edward Young's first wife was Jeanne Sliom [died 4 October 1947 aged 50 years, buried in Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, daughter of Rev Sliom of Pretoria]. Hennie's mother and two brothers Max and Bernard also came to live in the Pietersburg area.



Mrs Ed Young 1930 on the Pietersburg Ambulance Fund Committee. Her singing at recitals contributed towards the purchase of an ambulance.



Mare Street with Empire Bioscope second building on the right [photos courtesy of Pietersburg Museum]



Elles Tager [courtesy of Norah Tager]



Elles and Hode Tager [courtesy of Norah Tager]



Leon Levy, Mrs Goldman, Samuel Rakusin, Francis Rakusin, Norah Tager, Solly Tager, Hennie Tager, Mr Goldman
[courtesy of Norah Tager]



Zway family wedding [courtesy of Norah Tager]
Back row: Zway, unknown, Zway, Zway, unknown, unknown, Elles Tager
Middle row: Anna Tager next to the bridegroom.



Benedict Harris [courtesy of Ann Kirkpatrick]

Benedict Harris [born in 1931 in Kalkbank] is a businessman who claims to have a white Jewish father and a black mother³⁶⁶. He believes his father was Bernard Hirshowitz who had a store at Kalkbank. Hirshowitz was supposed to have had an affair with Chief Kgosi Mmakuru Moloto's daughter Sarinah Moloto, resulting in Benedict. Hirschowitz then left for Johannesburg without acknowledging the child. As Benedict was coloured [mixed race], he was not allowed to attend neither the white nor the black school in the area and therefore had no education. He worked until he could afford a donkey cart and then until he had a *bakkie*. He was so proud of what he had achieved that he wanted to meet his father and show him what he had done. A worker in the shop went with him to meet his father in his office in Johannesburg. When he told Mr Hirschowitz that he was his son, he became very upset and threw them out. Hirschowitz also has a son called Arthur. At a Tager family function both Arthur and Benedict attended but neither knew the other³⁶⁷. Bernard Hirschowitz committed suicide.

Charles Edward Schlesinger owned the Zoutpansberg Hotel, the first hotel in Louis Trichardt. In 1912, together with other freemasons, he submitted a petition to London for the formation of a new lodge in Louis Trichardt. He was a charter master of the Lion of the North Lodge when it was created in 1913 and was appointed master twice more. He was such a keen mason that he would either cycle or go by horse and cart all the way to Pietersburg from Louis Trichardt for meetings. Several other Jews were members of the Lion of the North Lodge and some were masters of the lodge, including Mr W Cohen [1915-16], Mr J Hirschon [1925], Dr S Kirk-Cohen [1931], Mr S Zway [1938], Mr C Brenner [1949], Mr M Gelfand [1951], Mr S Brenner [1959], Mr M Brenner [1961]³⁶⁸.

The Davids family owned the Louis Trichardt Hotel and the Grand Hotel as well as a bottlestore. They had two children, Zelda [Babsie] and Sonny. Jock Field worked as a barman at the Louis Trichardt Hotel. The Davids sold the hotels to Mr and Mrs Marcusa, who was Mrs Davids's sister. The Marcusa's children were Myra and Marjorie. Meyer [Mike] Gelfand [born 12 July 1913] came to Louis Trichardt at the age of 21 years and married Zelda Davids. He worked for Mr Davids in his bottlestore, which he subsequently bought and only sold again in 1987. Mike Gelfand served in World War II. He died on 20 August 1990, aged 77, and the pallbearers at his funeral in Louis Trichardt included members of the Masons, Rotary and the MOTHS [Member of the Tin Hats]. Zelda left for Johannesburg in 1997.

Cliff Grossberg came to Louis Trichardt in 1957. He married Etta Mendelsohn, daughter of Solomon and Rachel, sister of Gerald Mendelsohn of Pietersburg [married to Rita Abramowitz, daughter Amanda]. Their son, Shaun, celebrated his Barmitzvah on 14 October 1972 in Louis Trichardt. He had been taught by Mrs Klaff in Louis Trichardt, but Rev Belitzky taught him the *trop* [tune]. Mrs Grossberg was a country member of the Pietersburg synagogue, but resigned in 1974 as she was upset with the committee³⁶⁹. Messina Supply Stores [Prop Ltd] was transferred to Sam Solsky in 1931³⁷⁰. Jannik and Minna Gershater owned Gershater Bros [GB Cash Store]. They had a daughter, Bell.



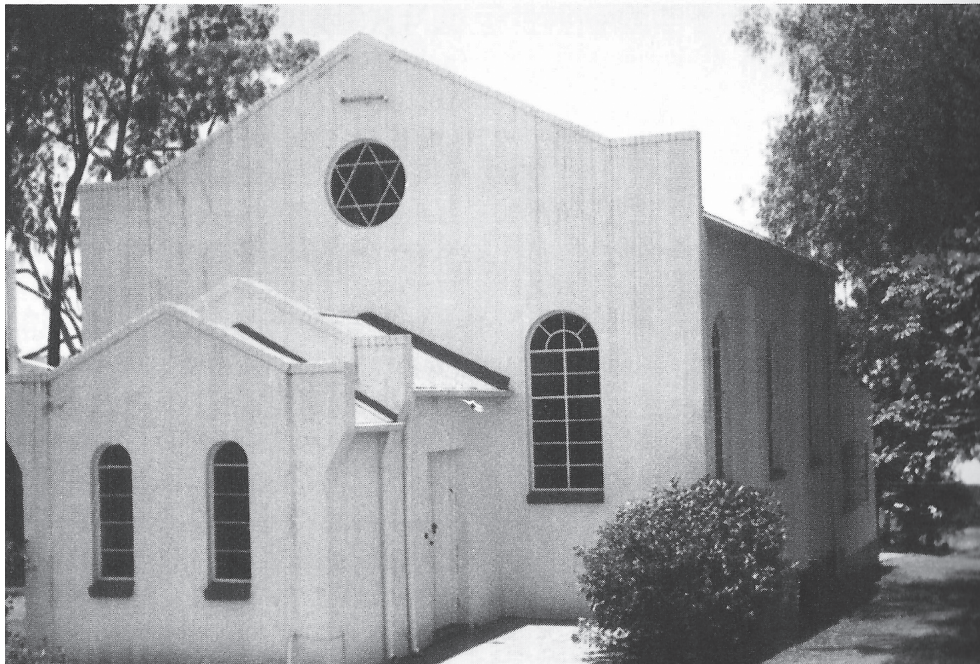
Etta Grossberg, Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, Shaun Grossberg [courtesy of Rabbi Silberhaft]

J Hirschson was a Jewish town councillor³⁷¹ who became mayor of Louis Trichardt in 1939. Other Jewish town councillors included Dr S Kirk-Cohen [died 1973 - his name was originally Cohen and was changed after he married Lenae Kirk, a non-Jewess] and Mr S Zway. Mr Phillip Cohen also lived in Louis Trichardt and was a brother of Dr S Kirk-Cohen and Netta [15 February 1903, buried 15 January 1982 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery, married Max Marcus [buried 9 May 1973 in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery; children Jose and Marcia]. Philip Cohen died on 23 April 1975 and was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery. Alexander Hyams arrived in Louis Trichardt shortly after the Second Anglo-Boer War. After a few years, he moved to Pietersburg where he was a fishmonger and provision merchant in Mare Street. A non-Jew Mr P A C Weideman, who had just been released from jail for stealing poultry, stood outside Mr Hyams store and without provocation shouted: "I'll show theJew what I'll do". He then proceeded to kick the shop's window in. He was arrested and found guilty of malicious damage to property³⁷². Hyams was buried in the Louis Trichardt cemetery³⁷³. Today, there is no record of his burial as the grave is unmarked and the municipal records were burned in a fire.

The Jews of Louis Trichardt did not experience anti-Semitism. On 16 September 1943, a rumour surfaced that the Mountain Inn hotel in Louis Trichardt, had instituted a policy of a quota with regard to Jewish guests or that it excluded them altogether. Mr Moss Cohen, secretary of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation, replied to an enquiry from the South African Jewish Board of Deputies that this was the first time he had heard of it. He believed that the owner had a policy of discouraging commercial travelers. He had made enquiries and had found that nothing bore out the allegation³⁷⁴.

The Zoutpansberg Hebrew Congregation (ZHC) had been formed by 1897 and included Pietersburg and Louis Trichardt and surrounding areas. Around 1912, Pietersburg formed its own congregation

and Louis Trichardt retained the Zoutpansberg Hebrew Congregation name. The ZHC was affiliated to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies from 1912³⁷⁵. There was no formal Zionist Society in Louis Trichardt, but individuals belonged to the Zoutpansberg Zionist Society in Pietersburg. In 1930, the first *Simchat Torah* service was held in Louis Trichardt, as well as a ball³⁷⁶. On 20 October 1970 the Pietersburg Zionist Society was invited to cater an Israeli evening for the local Dendron Boere Unie. The function was attended by the Israeli Consul General Yitzhak Unna.



Louis Trichardt synagogue [courtesy Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft]

Aron Berman lived in Louis Trichardt before 1920. He ceded land to the ZHC in his will in 1933. The synagogue was built on this land in 1938 on the corner of Krogh and Devenish Streets and a bachelor flat was built for the minister at the back of the building, but was never used for this purpose. The first service in the synagogue was on *Rosh Hashanah* of that year. High Holy Festivals had been held in the Masonic Hall prior to this. Sachne Himmelhoch had acquired a *Sefer Torah*, which was kept in his house in a specially made ark. This was transported to the Masonic Hall when needed. This ark later became a storage cupboard for books³⁷⁷. A grand ball in aid of the Louis Trichardt synagogue buildings was held at the Louis Trichardt Hotel in November 1932.

Rev and Mrs Joseph Gabriel Katz came to the Mara district where they opened a furniture shop. He was the first minister, *shochet* and teacher in Louis Trichardt in the early 1930s until 1938. He died on 20 September 1938 aged 70 and was buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery. Rev Katz performed *shechita* and provided kosher meat for the Jews of Louis Trichardt. He also taught the children *cheder*, first without payment and then in his official capacity³⁷⁸. Mr and Mrs Katz had a son and a daughter. Their son, Russell Katz, started Russell's Furniture in 1943 with Mr N Levin. The Russell Group became a public company in 1964. Rev Kuppelsohn was the successor to Rev Katz in 1938³⁷⁹. In September 1940 Louis Trichardt asked the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation if the assistant teacher could spend the

weekend with them and they would pay half his salary and arrange his transport. A sub-committee was appointed with Louis Trichardt to discuss the matter but the arrangement was found to be unsuitable.

The revival of the community was due to the single-handed efforts of Chaim Brenner [born 1888 and died 15 September 1972, buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery], who arrived in Louis Trichardt in 1930. After the last minister left, Chaim conducted the services for many years until his death in 1972. Thereafter his sons Stanley and Maish maintained the synagogue. As there was no organized community in Louis Trichardt, a letter was written to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies advising that correspondence should be addressed to Mr Chaim Brenner³⁸⁰. According to an article in the *South African Jewish Times* requited by David Saks in the *South African Jewish Report*, Chief Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz visited the defunct community of Louis Trichardt in 1960 and there he learned about Chaim's 'piety and devotion to religious scholarship'³⁸¹.

The Brenner family tree has been presented in the Haenertsberg chapter. Chaim and his wife Zina Moross [born 1899 buried in the Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery on 20 September 1982 aged 83] had five children – Arnold, Stanley, Maurice [Maish], Riva and Channah. Maurice [Maish] married Isabel and their children were Gabby and Hayley. Stanley married Gillian and they had five children - Shelley, Fran, Larry, Josh and Tracy. They continued to live in Louis Trichardt. Arnold married Ethel and left Louis Trichardt in 1948 and moved to Warmbaths. Chaim was a miller and he and his sons built Brenner Mills into a large business with branches in Warmbaths and Pienaar's River. In 1987 Brenner Mills became a public company. The Brennens were amongst the last Jews in Louis Trichardt. They moved to Pretoria in 1975 but continued to commute to their businesses in Louis Trichardt. Zina Brenner moved to Pretoria then Johannesburg. Mr and Mrs Morris Evans came to Louis Trichardt in 1998, working for Brenner Mills and later for Delta Motors. Jonathan Palte also worked for Brenner Mills.



Brenner Mills [courtesy of Beth Hatefutsoth]

Over the years various efforts were made to share a minister's services with the surrounding towns. Rev J I Levine, the minister in Pietersburg took upon himself the task of establishing contact with the Jews in the neighbouring towns of Potgietersrus, Tzaneen, Louis Trichardt and Messina. As a result he established a regional ministry for the whole of the Northern Transvaal, with Pietersburg as the centre. Chief Rabbi L I Rabinowitz was so impressed by Rev Levine's example that he also implemented it in Potchefstroom and Windhoek when these two towns requested the services of a minister. Rabbi Rabinowitz made it a condition that the minister's duties would include Fochville and Ventersdorp in the former case and the whole region in the latter case. Successive Pietersburg ministers continued to carry out Rev Levine's example of ministering to the neighbouring Jewish communities.

During the 1940s, the South African Jewish Board of Deputies [SAJBD] encouraged the formation of regional committees. The purpose was to strengthen ties between the various Jewish communities as well as with the SAJBD. As a result, a regional conference was held in Pietersburg on 8 June 1947 under the auspices of the SAJBD. Mr Moss Cohen was the chairman. Although Messina sent representatives, overall attendance was poor and the conference was not considered a success³⁸². At a meeting held on 19 October 1952, it was decided that a junior minister would be employed in Pietersburg, who would also act as a regional minister for Messina, Louis Trichardt and Potgietersrus³⁸³. A suggestion was made that £45 would be provided by Pietersburg, £20 by Messina and £15 by Potgietersrus. As Louis Trichardt had no children to attend Hebrew classes, they would not contribute. This scheme fell through due to the difficulty in travelling on the poor roads in bad weather.

Rev Mannschein, Scherer and Wolfson, successive Pietersburg ministers, visited Louis Trichardt in the 1950s and 1960s to perform *schechita* and to teach the children *cheder* lessons. In 1955, Rabbi Newman, the Country Communities Rabbi, gave the following report when he visited Louis Trichardt: Chaim Brenner's family was the only one to keep a kosher home in Louis Trichardt despite the many hardships involved in obtaining kosher products. Chaim Brenner asked Rabbi Newman if the services of a *shochet* traveling to Messina could also be used by the Louis Trichardt community. The small number of residents still organized a *minyan* on the High Festivals by importing friends and relatives from other congregations and the services were conducted by Chaim. The synagogue was in good condition, with a brick wall having just been built around the property, but the flat adjacent to the synagogue, built for the use of the last minister, remained vacant³⁸⁴.

In 1960, Chief Rabbi Professor Louis Rabinowitz reported³⁸⁵ that he had inspected Mrs Brenner's kitchen and he declared that "there was nothing that would not pass the most rigid test of *kashrut*". He was honoured to have a meal in their house. The Country Communities Rabbi, Rabbi Dushinsky, reported after his pastoral tour in August 1964 that Louis Trichardt was maintaining its synagogue and held services for the High Festivals without any assistance from outside sources. They obtained kosher meat from Pietersburg. There was only one Jewish child, aged four years, living in Louis Trichardt at that time. In the 1960s, Rabbi E J Dushinsky again advocated a regional ministry with Pietersburg as its centre. Rabbi Dushinsky asked Rev Scherer to do a pastoral visit to eight towns in March 1966.

In the 1970s it was discovered that Rev Belitsky, the minister in Pietersburg had been teaching *cheder*

in Louis Trichardt to Jewish children from Louis Trichardt and Messina, without the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation committee's knowledge. The president of the PHC contacted the Louis Trichardt families involved and they subsequently became country members of the Pietersburg congregation. Their *cheder* fees covered Rev Belitsky's travelling expenses.

In 1972, Leon Klaff, brother of Jack Klaff of Messina and his wife Sarah, an Israeli, arrived in Louis Trichardt. Their children are Louise, Aviva, Nathan and Karmit. They moved to Israel in 1985 and came back to Louis Trichardt in 1993, but eventually returned to Israel. Sarah Klaff taught the children *cheder* using the SAJBD's Mother-Teacher Scheme. In 1974, the SAJBD arranged to bring children from Messina to Louis Trichardt on a Sunday to be taught by Rev Belitzky of Pietersburg. When this proved to be impractical, some of the children went to boarding school in Pietersburg and others to King David School in Johannesburg³⁸⁶.

By 1971 Jews living in Louis Trichardt included: Stanley and Gillian Brenner, Maish and Isabel Brenner, Chaim and Zena Brenner, Leon and Sara Klaff, Cliff and Etta Grossberg, Mike and Zelda Gelfand, Lena Serman, Dr S Kirk-Cohen.

After Chaim Brenner's passing in 1972, the community no longer had a leader and ceased to function. The SAJBD made renewed efforts to bring the defunct synagogue under its trusteeship according to a trusteeship constitution. Rabbi Engel was asked to initiate negotiations with the few remaining residents to sign such a trusteeship contract. Mrs Gillian Brenner agreed that the time had come for the few remaining members to sign the SAJBD's trusteeship constitution³⁸⁷. In 1976, Rabbi Engel reported that although the cemetery was in good condition, the grass had grown high around the *shul* as it was not being used. He suggested to Stanley Brenner that he remove the *Sifrei Torah*. Mrs Grossberg felt that the *shul* should be sold. Rabbi Engel suggested to the SAJBD that the Brennens be invited to their offices to discuss the signing of the trusteeship constitution. He said that Maish Brenner told him that it had been their father Chaim's wish that the *shul* should remain in the town as long as there was still one Jew left but had replied that his father had not meant 'one' literally. The *shul* was full of dust. Rabbi Engel felt that the *Sifrei Torah* should be used elsewhere and the chairs should go to another congregation. By 1980 there were only nine Jews in Louis Trichardt and two in Bandelierkop³⁸⁸.

The two *Sifrei Torah*, one of which belonged to the Brenner family, were donated by them to the Pretoria Hebrew Congregation in 1980³⁸⁹. The Brenner family eventually decided in 1998 to sell the synagogue to the Old Mutual Insurance Company for R480 000. An agreement was reached between the SAJBD and the Brenner family that the capital would be invested in the name of the Zoutpansberg Hebrew Congregation and the interest would be donated to charities of their choice³⁹⁰. The Brenner family would continue to control the trust until the last male Brenner either left South Africa or died. Thereafter, the SAJBD would control the trust. However, instead, the Brennens decided to donate the remaining trust money to charities of their choice, which included the Johannesburg *Chevrach Kadisha*. The Brenner family now looks after the cemetery and a palisade fence has been erected around the cemetery. The cemetery is locked and it is not easily accessible.



Brenner Mills [www.brennermills.co.za]



Ronnie Kasrils and Isla Brito [courtesy of Charlotte Wiener]

The Mangondi Water Wise Organic Food Production Project is a partnership between the South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, the Jewish National Fund, ABSA and the 600 residents of Mangondi village in Venda. The JNF raised money for agriculture, education and water for the women of Thohoyandou and Israel's use of drip irrigation was used. The Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Ronnie Kasrils, Mrs Ann Harris [wife of the late Chief Rabbi Harris], the Israeli Ambassador Uri Oren, Isla Britto, national director Jewish National Fund, and members of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation attended the opening ceremony on 14 September 1999 at Mangondi Village. Unfortunately, the project failed due to devastating floods that destroyed the infrastructure.

2] MESSINA [MUSINA]

In 1901, a prospector named John Pasco Grenfell visited the site of an ancient mine, previously worked by the Musina tribe and found a rich source of copper. After the Second Anglo-Boer War, he secured a 'Discoverer's Certificate' for the first claims pegged in the Messina area. In 1905 the Messina [Transvaal] Development Company Limited was established to mine the area. A road was built through the Zoutpansberg in 1908 to the rich copper mines of Messina and instead of taking five days by Zeederberg coach or 14 days by ox-wagon from Pietersburg, the journey only took two days. The railway line reached Bandelierkop in 1911, Louis Trichardt in 1912 and Messina in 1914. The village of Messina expanded as the mines grew and it became the residential and trading center for the workers. In 1915 a health committee was formed to manage the town and on 1 December 1968 Messina became a municipality³⁹¹. Messina is 90 kilometers north of Louis Trichardt and 25 Kilometers south of Beit Bridge and the border with Zimbabwe.

Amongst the first Jews living in the Messina area were Mr and Mrs George Sacks, whose son was born there in 1913. Other Jewish residents living in the Messina area before 1920 include J N Bernstein, S and J Hosiasohn, M Koenigsfest, Mr and Mrs Harry Malk, M Manelowitz, A Plotkin, S Rabinowitz, T B Reiss, C Sacks, M Sneider, M Yatt. By 1926 more Jews arrived including Charles Blumberg, Jack Carpell, Solomon Kassar, Isie Lewis, Isaac and Julius Lissoos, G H and Mrs Lurie, H S Michel, A Morris, Shmuel and Mera Musiker³⁹². Jacob Liebson came from Latvia in 1924 to join his uncle Mr J Mikin³⁹³. Mr M Pearl owned Limpopo Fresh Meat Supply in 1922. In 1930 the partnership between Andries Cornelis v Niekerk and Jack Sacks for Central Meat Supply on the farm Messina was dissolved so that only Sacks ran the business. Myer Jaffit returned to Johannesburg after four years in Messina³⁹⁴. Ben Lefkowitz was the winner of the Levine tennis cup. Mrs W Levine was the secretary of the Catholic Society, so presumably she was not Jewish although Wilfred Levine [born 2 April 1890, died 16 February 1945] was buried in the Messina Jewish cemetery. Miss Florence Taback taught at the Messina School until the end of 1929. B Lopatie was the honorary vice-president of the Messina Rugby Club. He donated the footballer's cup called the Denice Cup after his daughter³⁹⁵. Mr and Mrs F Arenstein were shopkeepers in 1935. Mr and Mrs M Back, Mr and Mrs A Baron, Jack Carpell, Mr and Mrs A T Daniel, Mr G B Endlin, Abraham Genn, Mrs Hersch and son Abie, S and J Hosiasohn, Mr C Hurwitz [secretary of the Messina Hebrew Congregation in 1943], Ben and Abe Lefkowitz, Mr and Mrs Julius Lissoos, Ben and Somia Lopatie and their children Denise and David, Isie R Markusoff, A Plotkin, S Rabinowitz, A H Robins sent

greetings to the SAJBD³⁹⁶. Mr G Shapiro owned the Harper Mine Store, about six kilometers outside Messina, and the Limpopo Butchery in 1945³⁹⁷.

When Dr Mossinsohn, the director of the Gymnasia in Herzlia, Israel, visited Messina in June 1930, Mr Lopatie went to fetch him from Fort Victoria. Messrs Barney Herman³⁹⁸ and Herman Menaschewitz visited Messina at the same time to give their support on behalf of the Pietersburg Zionists³⁹⁹. In 1930, a Batchelor Girl's Dance was attended by Miss F Taback, Miss Orkin, Messrs S Milstein, J Ginsburg, J Sacks, B Lefkowitz, J Orkin and H Silverman⁴⁰⁰.

Sam Silverman, married to Janie, came to Messina in 1924. Their children were Harriet, Dorothy, Theresa and Michael. Sam owned Messina Stores, a general dealer and butchery with Harry Malk. Whilst on a visit to Johannesburg, Sam Silverman's store, which was next-door to the newly built Messina Hotel, burnt down as there were no fire-fighting appliances and the wind changed⁴⁰¹. Sam brought out his two brothers, Harry and Meyer Silverman. He also brought out his cousin Zelik Katzerginsky, from Vilnius in 1928⁴⁰². Harry Silverman left for Pretoria and went into the hotel business, but Sam helped Meyer set up a concession store in Messina. Meyer Silverman was married to Sonia and their children were Helen, Ghita and Joyce. Mr M Silverman wrote to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation in 1938 requesting a job for Miss Silverman, who had arrived from overseas as a lady teacher and permission was granted⁴⁰³.

Sam Silverman also brought out Solomon Steingold, his brother-in-law, from Riga in 1926. Solomon brought his wife Chana [nee Silverman] and family out two years later. Their children were Joseph, Willy, Daisy and Bennie. Bennie Steingold was born in Messina in 1930. Solomon Steingold also brought out his nephew, Joseph Steingold, from Lithuania at the tender age of 13 years and he worked for him in the business.

Bennie Steingold remembers that although they had no formal Jewish education, on hot nights they would sit under the grapevine and their father would tell stories about Judaism, thus instilling a strong feeling of Jewishness in his children. The family was 'traditional religious' and there were always Jewish books in the house. Solomon Steingold's oldest brother was an Orthodox Rabbi in Riga. Solomon was also a staunch Zionist and when the State of Israel was proclaimed, he bought land there and visited Israel. Bennie Steingold went to live in Israel in 1977. According to him, in the 1920s they had just enough Jews in Messina for the ten men needed for a *minyan* on the High Festivals. They made sure they had ten "when needed at the right places in the service". Usually, Rabbi Slomowitz was brought from Johannesburg to conduct the services⁴⁰⁴.

Jewish schoolchildren were often subjected to incidents of anti-Semitism. In the 1920s, Bennie Steingold was the only Jewish boy his age going to school in Messina and had to suffer the taunts of the Afrikaans boys calling him 'Joodjie, Joodjie' [Jewboy, Jewboy] and throwing stones at him. He took to going a different route to school every day to avoid them. Another Jewish schoolboy from Louis Trichardt was a boarder at Capricorn High School in Pietersburg but decided to move to King David School in Johannesburg when the local boys called him 'the Jew-boy who cheats everyone'.

The school in Messina only went up to standard eight, so Bennie left Messina in 1939 in order to complete his schooling. Later, the Steingolds decided they did not want their daughter to go to boarding school, so the family moved to Johannesburg. However, Solomon Steingold stayed on in Messina for another ten years, travelling to Johannesburg to join his family for the High Festivals. He owned a concession store and a mineral water factory, the only one north of Louis Trichardt and it supplied the whole area up to Beit Bridge. Bennie says that the Blacks and the Jews had a good relationship and when the family came home at night from the mine's open-air movie theatre, the night shift always used to greet them in a friendly fashion. The black customers used to give the shopkeepers nicknames and Solomon Steingold's was 'Baas maglas' as he used to wear glasses. He owned the first motorcar in Messina and it had the number plate TAR 1.

In 1939 the teachers at the Messina school were openly anti-Semitic so the Jews of Messina formed a vigilante committee and were advised by the SAJBD at several meetings on how to counter the threat. Although the Jewish community did not mix with the local mine managers, they had good relations with the local Afrikaners. There were only a few minor incidents of anti-Semitism in Messina from the Afrikaans community. Marlene Flax tells of the *Dominee* came into Limpopo Stores one day and saw her at the till. He facetiously told her 'you can play the Jewish piano well'. She answered him quickly that he should come and she'd give him lessons.



Limpopo Stores [courtesy of Flax family]

On another occasion, the magistrate of Messina phoned Abe Flax and asked him to come to the police station to see someone there as 'he's one of yours'. Abe went to the magistrate's court and found a black man from the Lemba tribe. This black tribe lived in the Messina area and claimed to be a lost tribe of Israel. Although they practiced certain rituals similar to the Jews, it is not certain if they were originally Jews who had traveled southwards down Africa. Many of them have since intermarried with other tribes.

Dr Michael F Hammer studies the genetics of human populations through the male or Y chromosome. In 1997, he found that certain DNA changes were more common amongst Jewish *Kohenim* than laymen. David B Goldstein at Oxford University joined the project and discovered that 9% of the Lemba men carried the Cohen genetic signature. Because this Cohen genetic signature is rare or absent in all non-Jewish populations, the findings support the Lemba claim of Jewish ancestry. There are 70 to 80 thousand Lemba people spread from Zimbabwe to Cape Town, Mozambique and Mali⁴⁰⁵. Prof Tudor Parfit wrote that a group of Jewish traders left 'Lemba' east of the Dead Sea in Judea 2500 years ago and settled in Yemen, then later crossed the ocean to Africa. They were known for their gold, copper and iron ore mining skills and trade. They intermarried with the local black tribes, but did not eat pork or something that died on its own. They used a knife to bleed an animal⁴⁰⁶. Professor Trevor Jenkins at the University of Witwatersrand published in the American journal of Human Genetics [1996] linking the Lemba with Semitic ancestors, but they could not say whether they were Jews or Arabs. Jenkins suggests that the Lemba's dietary practices could be of Islamic origin, but modified by Jews they came into contact with in the Louis Trichardt district⁴⁰⁷. The Lemba are trying to be recognized as Jews.

Jack Freedman was asked to manage the Messina hotel from 1930 to 1939 by his cousin Ben Lopatie. His wife was Gertie. He volunteered in World War II and became a commissioned officer. As he did not agree with the politics of the government, he resigned but later re-enlisted in the permanent force in 1948. When he did leave the army he went into the liquor business in Pretoria. Harold [Harry] Freedman worked as a bookkeeper in the Messina Hotel from 1929 to 1935, as well as in the gents department of Limpopo Trading Store. Harry's wife Helen was from Pretoria and their son John Freedman went to school in Messina. John played rugby for Northern Transvaal. He also played cricket and golf and enjoyed hunting and fishing⁴⁰⁸.

One of the earliest Jewish families living in Messina was the Flax family. Their name was mentioned as early settlers in the standard one history books used in the Messina school⁴⁰⁹. Abe first owned an ostrich farm in Oudtshoorn. When the market for feathers declined, he started selling ostrich skins. Whilst on a visit to the Northern Transvaal to sell the skins he saw that the business Limpopo Trading Store was for sale and he bought it from Mr Lissos and Mr Orkin in 1924.

Abe then persuaded his brother Harry Flax to come to Messina from Bloemfontein. Harry and Helen Flax arrived in Messina in 1938. They had two children Marlene and Ivan. Ivan Flax married Rona Nohr and lived in Messina and their children are Clive, Karen and Gary. Their daughter married Mark Chazen, son of Lynette and Abe Chazen. Marlene married Luzik Woolfson and their children are Allen and Linda. Harry Flax became a town councillor and was an almoner for the Freemasons. He was also the chairman of the Jewish community. They moved to Johannesburg in 1981.

Abe Flax met his future wife, Bucky, in Johannesburg whilst playing tennis at her mother's house. They married in Johannesburg in 1943. Abe and Bucky's children are Merle Proos and Derick [married Reeve Berman]. Abe was a keen bowler. Bucky Flax was the secretary for Girl Guides of which Merle Flax was a member.

Abe and Harry Flax's sister Bea married Dr Joseph Cooper, and they also lived in Messina. Their daughter is Maxine [Laznitsky]. Abe, Harry and Bea were the children of Mendel [Max] and Gertie Flax, who came from Gamke where he was a smous.



Abe and Bucky Flax [courtesy of Merle Proos]



Harry and Helen Flax [courtesy of Marlene Woolfson]

When a tornado destroyed the black section of Limpopo Trading Store, another store was built behind the existing store. The blacks called it Mphulo Store [the man with the long nose] after Harry Flax. Abe Flax's nickname was 'very cheap' as it was his favourite expression. Solly Starkowitz was a Jewish sales representative from the Pietersburg sweet factory who used to come to Messina to sell them 'penny off-cuts' for the young children.

Although Messina was the northernmost town in South Africa and far removed from the Jewish centres, the Jewish families who lived there tried to hold on to their traditional Jewish values. Because there was no *cheder*, the Flaxes tried to teach their children the basic laws of Judaism. They would light *Shabbat* candles, keep separate meat and milk dishes and fast on *Yom Kippur*. Some of the Jewish families in Messina sourced their kosher meat through Pietersburg as an account from the Pretoria Butchery for Mr Flax of the Limpopo Trading Store and Mr Len of Harper Mine Store was sent to the Pietersburg Congregation⁴¹⁰. On *Pesach*, the Limpopo Trading Store stocked *matzah*, but the families had to make a trip to Johannesburg to buy other *Pesach* goods. The Flax's moved to Israel. Abe Flax was re-interred in Israel as the family promised him they would do so. The Coopers moved to Australia.

The Messina Hebrew Congregation was formed in 1930. They employed a minister for two years but as the "experience with the last minister was so shocking", they told Dr Abt in 1949, they did not want another one⁴¹¹. The largest number of Jews in the Messina area was in the 1940s, when 65 Jewish souls were recorded. This number dropped to 36 in 1943 and then to 30 in 1953. By 1960 there were only 20, by 1980 there were 17 and sadly only Jack and Dina Klaff remain in Messina⁴¹².

Ground was given by the municipality to the community in the 1950s to build a synagogue near the Limpopo Trading Store. However, the small number of Jewish families [seven or eight at any one time] did not warrant the building of a synagogue. Instead the community rented the Masonic Hall for use on the High Holy Days. Later, the services were held in Abe and Bucky Flax's playroom. As there were not enough men to make the ten for a *minyan*, it was arranged that students from the *Yeshiva* College School in Johannesburg would help make up the numbers. Amongst these were the *Bnei Akiva* leaders Tony Crystal and Arnie Altschuler. Sometimes, Rabbi Dr Newman also used to come. A *Sefer Torah* was brought from Johannesburg for the Messina community to use⁴¹³.

In 1947 a regional conference of the northern Transvaal was held in Pietersburg attended by a large delegation from Messina. In the following years there were many attempts to include Messina in various regional schemes for regional ministers but these were never sustainable. Chief Rabbi L I Rabinowitz visited Messina on 16 March 1950. There were eight Jewish families living there at that time. He arranged for a man who was a *shochet* and an assistant teacher to pay weekly visits every Wednesday to Messina. The man taught the children for one hour and two lay leaders agreed to help teach the children during the week. Messina paid him £15 per month and the SAJBD Country Communities paid 25 shillings for his train fare. Rev J I Levine also agreed to travel to Messina from Pietersburg once every two months.

All the Country Communities Rabbis included Messina on their pastoral visits and tried to help them obtain ministers or Hebrew teachers. The Country Communities Rabbi, Rabbi J Newman visited Messina as part of his pastoral duties in 1955. He reported that he conducted Sabbath services in the home of Mr and Mrs Flax and spent Saturday morning with a dozen children. The community met that night at the home of the Cooper family to discuss the feasibility of obtaining the services of a minister from Pietersburg for the nine families in Messina. Rabbi Newman reported that the Pietersburg community was willing to allow Rev I L Mannschein to travel to Messina once a week to teach the children and for *shechita*. A taxi could bring him for £10 per trip. As the SAJBD was already paying £25 per month to Messina, they only had to pay £35 per month to make the scheme workable⁴¹⁴. The Messina congregation did not favour the idea. As Rev Mannschein only visited once a week to teach the children, it was possible his services might be needed on that day in Pietersburg, resulting in his inability to travel to Messina. They considered the taxi to be too expensive and there was always the chance that the roads might be impassable due to their deterioration in the rainy season. They preferred instead to employ a full-time minister, if the SAJBD would help them financially. The congregation suggested that the property given to the community for a synagogue would instead be utilized to build a hall and a minister's house. They were afraid if they did not build on the property, they may lose their rights to it.

In 1961, the Messina community requested financial assistance from the SAJBD to enable them to engage an officiant for the High Festivals. They were subsidized with the sum of R133.26 including the train fare for the officiant⁴¹⁵. Rabbi Duschinsky visited Messina in 1964. He reported that the High Festival services were held at the home of Mr Flax that year. Kosher meat was obtained from Pietersburg. There were two children under the age of eight at that time. Rabbi Engel used to visit Messina every year on *Shavuoth* and tell the children the story of Ruth and some remembered the story from the last telling. Mrs Elsa Roth of Beit Bridge taught Hebrew to the children from 1974 to 1984, but when the Roths left the area the *cheder* ceased to exist and children were sent to boarding school in other towns.

After Rabbi Engel retired, Rabbi Zaiden used to visit Messina. When the South African Defence Force established a base in Messina, Jewish volunteers helped make up numbers for a *minyan*. In 1970, a Jewish group of 65 soldiers from the Transvaal Scottish were hosted by the Flax family for *Rosh Hashanah*. Most of them had finished their studies and were reservists doing their army duty. They presented the Flaxes with a clock to show their gratitude for hosting them⁴¹⁶.

The first Jew to be buried in the old Messina cemetery was Wilfred Levine [born 2 April 1890] who was buried on 16 February 1945. Others buried there were Samuel Blechman on 16 June 1952 aged 53 and Friedrich Sigmund Brüll [born 18 June 1892 in Lichtenfels, Bavaria] on 30 September 1957. Dr Brüll did not practice Judaism but before he died he asked to be buried as a Jew. Bucky Flax remembers that Abe Flax drove the coffin on the shop truck to the cemetery. The first Jew to be buried in the new Messina Jewish cemetery was Raphael Hyman Berman [born 12 May 1901] on 8 January 1968. His wife was Katie. When Wally Levy and Harold Levin came as members of the Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha* to Messina, they found that they were unable to bury Raphael Berman in the old Jewish cemetery as they had hit bedrock and were unable to dig a grave. As they were not accompanied by a minister, they did not know how to consecrate the ground in the new cemetery for a Jewish burial. Harold decided to improvise and perambulated the grave three times reciting his own prayer "In the name of God I hereby consecrate this piece of ground as a final resting place for departed souls, amen" and they then deemed the ground consecrated. At a later date, a minister travelled from Pietersburg to consecrate the cemetery properly. Also buried in the new Messina cemetery are Phyllis Klaff on 12 August 1975, Gus Klaff on 4 August 1987 and Gordon Sefor [born 9 April 1920] on 11 December 1995. The Hebrew writing on Gordon Sefor's tombstone was inscribed upside down.



Gordon Sefor's tombstone with the Hebrew writing upside down [courtesy of Rabbi Silberhaft]

Descendants of Unknown Sefor

1	Unknown Sefor	
..... 2	Pearl Sefor	
	+Aaron Barney Chazen	1917 -
..... 3	Colin Chazen	
	+Karen Weinstein	
..... 4	Jessica Chazen	
..... 4	Adam Chazen	
..... 3	Alan Chazen	
	+Lee	
..... 4	Dyllon Chazen	
..... 4	Bailey Chazen	
..... 4	Kirby Chazen	
..... 3	Deborah [Debbie] Chazen	
	+Brian Ecksteen	
..... 4	Terry Ecksteen	
..... 4	Marc Ecksteen	
..... 2	Gordon Sefor	
	+Gertie	
..... 2	Toby Sefor	
	+Louis Michelow	
..... 3	Joyce Michelow	
	+Israel Lowenstein	
..... 3	Haidee Michelow	
..... 3	Hugh Michelow	
..... 2	Phyllis Sefor	
	+Gus Klaff	
..... 3	Jack Klaff	
	+Dina	
..... 4	Shona Klaff	
..... 4	Larry Klaff	
..... 4	Cindy Klaff	
..... 4	Kevin Klaff	
..... 3	Ann Klaff	
..... 3	Leon Klaff	
	+Sarah	
..... 4	Louise Klaff	
..... 4	Aviva Klaff	
..... 4	Nathan Klaff	
..... 4	Karmit Klaff	

Several of the Messina families were related. Gustav [Gus] Klaff, an attorney, came to Messina in 1937. He was a town councillor for many years and was chairman of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in 1965. He married Phyllis Sefor [died 1975], a sister of Gordon Sefor, Toby Michelow and Pearl Chazen. Their children were Jack, Ann and Leon. Jack Klaff, an attorney, was mayor of Messina for seven terms during the period 1977 - 1995. Jack, his brother Leon and his sister went to high school in Pretoria. Jack was a member of the Voortrekkers⁴¹⁷, perhaps the only Jew to belong to the Afrikaner group. Jack helped provide housing for the employees of the De Beers Company in Messina. In 1991 the Far North branch of the Institute of Estate Agents selected him as Property Baron of the Year⁴¹⁸. Jack and Dina's children are Shona, Larry, Cindy and Kevin. Jack and Dina are the only Jews left in Messina. Their children went to King David School and they keep kosher.



Gus and Phyllis Klaff [courtesy of Beth Hatefutsoth]

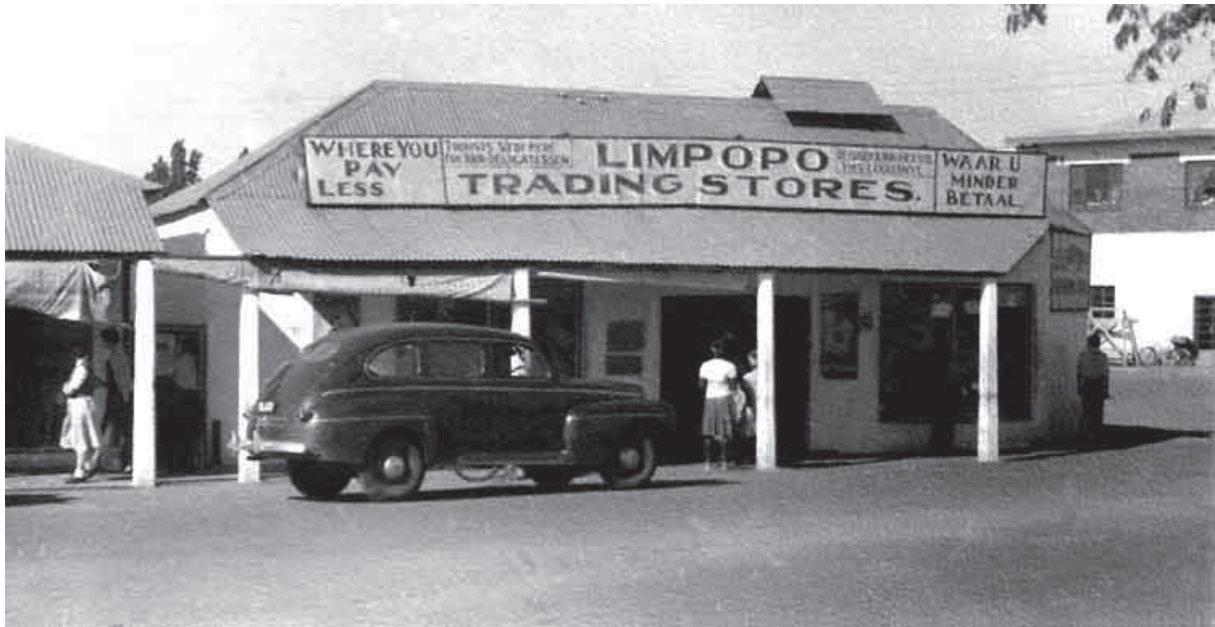


Jack Klaff [courtesy of Beth Hatefutsoth]

Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft and Jack Klaff under the Klaff Street sign in Messina named after Gus Klaff [courtesy of Rabbi Silberhaft]

Gordon Sefor, married to Gertie, was the twin brother of Pearl Chazen and brother to Toby Michelow and Phyllis Klaff, all of whom lived in Messina. Toby Sefor married Louis Michelow and their children were Joyce [married Israel Lowenstein in Pietersburg on 7 February 1960], Haidee and Hugh. They left Messina in 1975. Pearl Sefor married Barney Chazen and their children were Colin, Alan and Deborah. They left Messina in 1976. Barney Chazen fought as a corporal and was wounded in World War II. Barney Chazen's brother, Natie Chazen married Muriel Lederman and their children were Lionel, Roy, Arlene and Jo-anne. Barney and Natie Chazen were first cousins to Leslie Chazen, the father of the authoress of this book. The Chazen and Michelow families owned a general dealers store in Messina. Their shop was called Musiker Store as they bought the shop from Shmuel and Mera Musiker, who

came from Kupishok, Lithuania. The Musiker's children were Bessie, Dina, Jack, Efraim and Eddie. Efraim Musiker fought in World War II and drowned whilst his boat was leaving Alexandria. Musiker Store had the monopoly for selling school uniforms. However, when the franchise fell due, Limpopo Trading Store also began to sell uniforms. This upset the Chazen and Michelow families and caused a rift between them and the Flaxes⁴¹⁹.



Limpopo Trading stores [www.messina.co.za]

The Messina Jewish community members were keen Zionists and contributed to various Zionist appeals as early as 1919. The Messina Zionist Society was formed in 1934 after a visit by Mr Harry Levin on behalf of the *Keren Hayesod Appeal*. A Young Israel Society existed in Messina in 1927. The Messina Jewish Women's Society was in existence in 1946 with Mrs B Flax as chairman and Mrs P Klaff as secretary. The Messina Jewish Women's Ladies' Sewing Circle was active in 1939⁴²⁰. The Messina Women's Zionist Society was active in 1954. Delegates from Messina attended the 24th conference of the South African Zionist Federation in Johannesburg.

Bucky Flax kept a Blue Box in her home and collected money for Israel in it. She won a free trip to Israel in the annual Blue Box draw. Bucky⁴²¹ says that one day a man traveling down Africa told her of harsh conditions further north in Africa. She believed that South Africa would also follow this trend and so she decided that her family must go on *aliyah* to Israel as 'it is the only place for the Jewish people'.

Abe and Rose Len had four children Aaron, Bernie, Melanie and Melvin. Rose had an accident when a wheel fell off a truck on an overhead bridge and went through her car's windscreen and she sustained brain damage. Bernie Len married Geraldine de Vries, a non-Jewess. Philip and Norma Len had two children, Michael and Sandra [she was killed in an accident at age 18]. Mrs Hilda Sacks ran the bakery. Her son-in-law Norman Sandler became the principal of King David School in Johannesburg. Issy Schwarz had a small child that died from a scorpion bite. The nanny had put his hat on his head not

realizing there was a scorpion in it. Issy never recovered from the loss⁴²². Hymie and Sonia Kronik and their son-in-law Alan Nestadt, ran the Messina Café. They had two children Nettie and Rebecca. One member of the community was involved in illicit gold buying. One day the police raided his house but he managed to evade them by hiding the gold in his baby's nappy.

Several Jews were also living at Beit Bridge on the border with Rhodesia. These included Phil and Kate Berman at Beit Bridge Hotel. She was not Jewish and they had no children. Raymond and Elsa Roth family also lived at Beit Bridge before moving to Bulawayo.

On 26 September 1987, the Messina Hebrew Congregation celebrated their golden anniversary with a *ma'ariv* service on *Shabbat Shuva*, followed by a *melave malka* at 6 Wilson Avenue. Although an invitation was sent to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation, none of their members attended. The last *minyan* was held in 1987. Jack and Dina Klaff became country members of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation in 1987.

Several Israeli families came to South Africa in the 1990s to help the South African Air Force at the airbase in Louis Trichardt. Because they wanted their children to go to school in Pietersburg and to be part of a viable Jewish community, the families lived in Pietersburg and the husbands commuted to Louis Trichardt. These families helped swell the numbers of members as they participated in all the Jewish functions in Pietersburg.

Before the Messina congregation closed down, the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation made enquiries as to what would happen to its assets. Julian Meyer claimed to have information that Jack Klaff was expecting to obtain transfer of the Messina Synagogue property to the Messina municipality at the amount of R100 000, which amount would then be donated to the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation. The chairman, Mr L Levy, contacted Mr Klaff, who suggested that three members of the Pietersburg congregation should visit him in this connection. However in June the visit to Messina was postponed as it was thought that Messina appeared to be growing and a better price could possibly be obtained at a later date.

Mr Jack Klaff negotiated in the name of the Messina Hebrew Congregation with the Messina municipality about the property where the *shul* was to have been built. The municipality alleged that the property was donated to the Messina Hebrew Congregation, but as no *shul* was ever built on this property, they reserved the right to reclaim the property without payment. In the end, Jack Klaff was allowed to sell the property and the money has been distributed to various charities.

On 14 January 2011, Jewish graves were amongst a large number of graves that were violated in both Messina cemeteries, with headstones being pushed over. Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, the Country Communities Rabbi, dealt with the matter. Since then a fence has been erected around the two Jewish cemeteries and the tombstones have been laid flat.

In February 2009, the Messina Hebrew Congregation donated a *Sefer Torah* to the Rehabilitation Centre

of the Sheba Medical Centre in Israel. The donation was arranged by Dorron Kline, director of Telfed's Project Development and Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, the South African country communities Rabbi. A *Hachnasat Torah* ceremony was attended by the Klaff, Flax and Woolfson families from Messina.



Hachnasat Torah ceremony at Sheba Medical Centre [courtesy of Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft]
Left to right: Ronald Proos, Jack Klaff, Luzik Woolfson, Dina Klaff, Alan Woolfson, Marlene Woolfson, Merle Proos, Sarah Klaff, Leon Klaff



CONCLUSION

There are very few Jews left in Limpopo. The synagogues in Pietersburg and Louis Trichardt have been sold. The ground granted for synagogues in other towns, but not utilized, have been returned to the various municipalities or sold. There are no more *minyans* on the *Sabbath* or on the Holy Days. The cemeteries, however, are well looked after by Rabbi Silberhaft, the country communities Rabbi and the few remaining Jews of Pietersburg, Louis Trichardt, Messina and Potgietersrus. To prevent vandalism, the headstones have been laid flat on the graves and concrete picket fences have been put around some of the cemeteries. The exception is the Louis Trichardt cemetery, where the Brenner family has put a metal palisade fence around it and their gardener has a key. The Potgietersrus cemetery will have a concrete fence erected soon.

Unlike other communities, the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation was far-sighted and established the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation Trust that is administered by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and ex-members of the community. Stipulations were made as to the distribution of the interest on the money. Ex-members in need were looked after first and the remainder went to maintain the cemetery and to specific Jewish charities.

The contents of the Pietersburg synagogue, which included the *bimah*, chairs, pulpits, benches, clock, holocaust menorah and one *Sefer Torah* were packed up by Dennis Wiener and transferred to the new Mevaseret Zion Synagogue in Tel Mond in Israel in 2003. After a delay of a few years, until enough money had been collected, the Mevaseret Zion Synagogue was opened in 2013. A wall in the entrance of the synagogue features the foundation stones and plaques from the Pietersburg Synagogue, as well as a timeline of the history of the congregation. Two *Sifrei Torah* were also donated to the *Shivtei Yisrael* Synagogue in Raanana, Israel.

In 2015, the Mevaseret Zion congregation had enough money to replace the uncomfortable seats with exact replicas, although sumptuously padded. The old seats were donated to the Kaplan Yeshiva in Safed, where they were enthusiastically received. The Pietersburg Trust also donated money to buy *shtanders* for the *yeshiva* students to put their books on when they learned. Dennis Wiener bought the holocaust menorah that his father, Morris Wiener, had built from the Tel Mond synagogue and donated it to the *Yeshiva*. Co-incidentally, it was pointed out by Rabbi Kaplan, the *Rosh Yeshiva*, that plaques on the wall of the Yeshiva acknowledge that the Brenner family and Solly Colman from Pietersburg had donated money to this very same *yeshiva* in the 1950s.



Pietersburg Synagogue in Pietersburg, South Africa



Pietersburg Synagogue relocated to Tel Mond, Israel

WALLY LEVY HALL
 הולל וואלי לעב
 opened by
 Chief Rabbi CYRIL HARRIS
 on
 5th March 1995
 5 מרץ 1995

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THE JEWISH MONUMENT
ERECTED BY THE
NORTHERN BRANCH OF THE
JEWISH EX-SERVICE LEAGUE

TO THE MEMORY
OF
SAMUEL TAGER.
EPHRAIM KALMAN MUSIKER.
ALEC EGNAL.
SAM COHEN.
WHO MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE
IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR
1939-1945.

ERECTED BY THEIR COMPANIES THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL
BRANCH OF THE JEWISH EX-SERVICE LEAGUE

JACOB LEVINE
MEMORIAL HALL

FOUNDATION STONE
LAID BY
W. COHEN Esq.
THE 13TH DAY OF SIVAN 5661
THE 19TH DAY OF JUNE 1901

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Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, Harold Starkowitz, Ruby Gollach, Dennis Wiener, Charlotte Wiener, Tzvi and Beulah Lipman at the opening of the Mevasseret Zion Synagogue.



Merle Proos, Marlene Woolfson, Leon Klaff, Avram Belitzky, Sarah Klaff, Shoshanah Belitzky at the opening of the Mevasseret Zion Synagogue



Seats from the Pietersburg synagogue in the Kaplan Yeshivah in Safed with a plaque explaining the origin of the seats



Sefer Torah presented to the Mevaseret Zion synagogue in Tel Mond, Israel



Sifrei Torah presented to Shivtei Yisrael Synagogue carried by Solly Starkowitz and Dennis Wiener

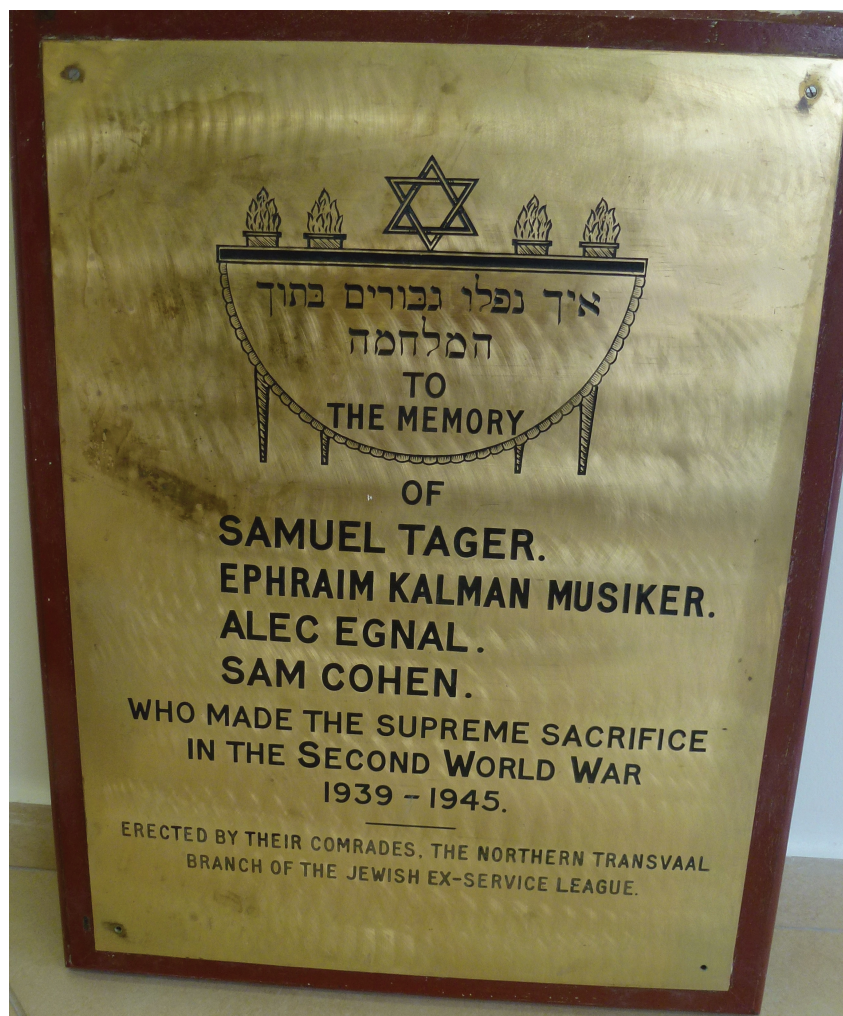


**MEMBERS OF THE JEWISH FAITH
OF PIETERSBURG AND DISTRICT
WHO SERVED IN WORLD WAR II
1939 - 1945**

JOE BRENNER
RUBY BRENNER
MOURICE ELLISON
WILLIE FRANKEL
CECIL GIFTER
MOURICE HIRSCHMANN
NATHAN HERMAN
ABE HOFSTEIN
SOLLY ISRAELSOHN
LAZAR ISRAELSOHN
JOSEPH JEDWOOD
MANNIE KAPLAN
BARNEY KRIKST
LOUIS KATZ
SOLLY LEVY
WALTER LEVY
JACK LEVIN
HAROLD LEVIN
LEON LEVIN
REV J.I. LEVINE
HAROLD MARCUS
RUDOLF PLAUT
RHODA PALTE
SAMUEL REUBENSON
LEO SALOMON
BENNIE SKOK
BENNIE SACKS
GERALD SUSSE
ISSIE TAGER
JOSEPH TAGER
MORRIS WIENER
VALERY CONLEY

ERECTED BY THE
PIETERSBURG HEBREW CONGREGATION

Plaque representing Jews from the northern Transvaal who fought in World War II



Plaques from the Pietersburg congregation



Messina New Jewish cemetery [courtesy of Rabbi M Silberhaft]



Louis Trichardt Jewish cemetery [courtesy of Dennis Wiener]



Potgietersrus Jewish cemetery [courtesy of Rabbi M Silberhaft]



Pietersburg Jewish cemetery [courtesy of Rabbi M Silberhaft]

GLOSSARY

<i>Aliyah</i>	Hebrew for 'going up'. Someone who is called to recite the blessings over the reading of the <i>Torah</i> in the synagogue. Also refers to emigrating to Israel
<i>Arbeitsdienst</i>	German for 'labour front'
<i>Aron Kodesh</i>	Hebrew for 'Holy Ark'. Cupboard containing the <i>Sefer Torah</i> in the synagogue
<i>Barmitzvah</i>	Hebrew for 'son of commandment'. Ceremony when a boy turns 13 and assumes the religious responsibilities of an adult.
<i>Batmitzvah</i>	'Daughter of commandment'. A girl is considered an adult woman at 12 and has to keep the commandments. In modern times a ceremony is arranged for girls to celebrate her religious 'coming of age'.
<i>Beth Din</i>	Jewish ecclesiastical court
<i>Bnei Akiva</i>	Hebrew for 'sons of Akiva'. Jewish youth movement stressing religious observance and Zionism
<i>Boer</i>	Farmer – historically refers to descendants of Dutch and Huguenot colonists who inhabited the interior of South Africa from the 18 th century
<i>Brith Milah</i>	'Bris'. Hebrew for 'covenant of circumcision'. Removal of foreskin of an eight day old boy or of a male proselyte, goes back to G-d's covenant with Abraham [Genesis 17:11-12]
<i>Cheder</i>	Hebrew for 'room'. Elementary Hebrew school originating in Eastern Europe. Hebrew classes, usually in the afternoon, for Jewish children.
<i>Chevrah Kadisha</i>	Aramaic for 'holy fellowship'. Jewish burial society which undertakes the purification and dressing of a corpse before burial. The society arranges all the other matters related to burial, such as the digging of the grave, conducting the funeral, maintenance of the cemetery
<i>Courlander</i>	Someone who lives in Courland, Latvia.
<i>Dominee</i>	A minister in an Afrikaans church.
<i>Eretz Israel</i>	The land of Israel. This is also the Hebrew equivalent for Palestine, particularly during the period of the British Mandate
<i>Generaal</i>	General
<i>Habonim</i>	Hebrew for 'builders'. Jewish Zionist youth movement
<i>Hachnasat Torah</i>	Ceremony to welcome a new Torah into the synagogue
<i>Haganah</i>	Underground military organization in Palestine from 1920 to 1948
<i>Israel United Appeal [IUA]</i>	Campaign conducted every two years by Jews throughout South Africa. It channels its funds to Keren Hayesod, the central fundraising body for the Jewish Agency for Israel. In recent years this campaign has joined with the UCF campaign
<i>Kaddish</i>	Aramaic for 'holy'. Aramaic prayer recited by mourners following the death of a relative or on a <i>yahrzeit</i> . A minyan is necessary
<i>Kashrut</i>	Jewish dietary laws
<i>Keren Hayesod</i>	Foundation Fund of World Zionist Organisation

<i>Kiddush</i>	Hebrew for 'sanctification'. Prayer said over wine drunk on Shabbat and festivals
<i>Kohen</i>	Hebrew for 'priest'
<i>Kol Nidrei</i>	Aramaic for 'all vows'. Proclamation of the annulment of Jewish vows chanted on Yom Kippur eve.
<i>Kommandant</i>	Colonel
<i>Kosher</i>	Hebrew for 'fit'. Permitted to be eaten according to Jewish dietary laws. If it is not kosher, it is treif
<i>Laager</i>	An encampment defended by a circle of wagons, with branches of trees closing the gaps between wagons
<i>Landdrost</i>	Magistrate
<i>Luach</i>	Calendar
<i>Ma'ariv</i>	Hebrew for 'bringing of evening'. The evening prayer.
<i>Machzor</i>	Prayer book used on festivals
<i>Maftir & Haftarah</i>	Hebrew for 'concluder'. The concluding reading from a Sefer Torah on Shabbat and festivals.
<i>Magen David</i>	Hebrew for 'shield of David'. A six-pointed star commonly called a 'Star of David'
<i>Magen David Adom</i>	Jewish Red Cross. Uses a red Magen David as its symbol
<i>Matzos</i>	Unleavened bread
<i>Meshulochim</i>	Collector of donations
<i>Minyan</i>	Quorum of ten adult males required for conducting religious services
<i>Mohel</i>	Person who performs circumcision in which he removes the foreskin of Jewish baby boys
<i>Mutie</i>	Medicine
<i>Nagmaal</i>	Holy communion
<i>Pesach</i>	Festival of Passover
<i>Rebbe</i>	Teacher
<i>Rondavel</i>	From Afrikaans word 'rondawel'. Round or oval hut
<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	Hebrew for 'head of the year'. Festival of the Jewish New Year
<i>Sefer Torah</i>	pl= Sifrei Torah. The scroll of the law written on parchment, containing the five books of the Pentateuch
<i>Shabbat</i>	Sabbath. From sunset Friday night until sunset Saturday night
<i>Shabbat Shuva</i>	The Sabbath between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
<i>Shavuoth</i>	Hebrew for 'Pentacost'. Festival celebrated seven weeks after the second day of Pesach
<i>Shechita</i>	Hebrew for 'slaughter'. Method of killing of animals and birds for meat to be kosher
<i>Shivah</i>	Period of mourning

<i>Shochet</i>	Person qualified to perform shechita or ritual slaughter
<i>Shtander</i>	Stand
<i>Shul</i>	Yiddish for 'school'. Synagogue. Originally applied to place used for both prayer and study
<i>Simchat Torah</i>	Hebrew for 'rejoicing of the Torah'. The ceremonials associated with the conclusion of the annual Torah reading
<i>Smous</i>	Pedlar, hawker, trader
<i>Sondebok</i>	Scapegoat
<i>Tahara House</i>	House where bodies are prepared for burial
<i>Talmud</i>	Hebrew for 'study'. Oral Law. Ancient laws and traditions. Extensive encyclopaedic work recording Rabbinic discussions of sections of the Mishnah, the major Jewish collection of the Oral Law, includes extensive commentary by successive generations of Rabbinic scholars
<i>Talmud Torah</i>	School to study Torah. A more formal name for cheder
<i>Torah</i>	Pentateuch [in the narrowest sense]
<i>Treif</i>	Hebrew for 'torn'. Non kosher food
<i>Trekker</i>	Dutch-speaking sheep and cattle farmers who moved into the interior of the Cape from the end of the 17th century
<i>Uitlander</i>	Name used by Transvaal Afrikaners to describe 'foreigners' to the Transvaal in the late 19th century, usually British subjects who arrived after the discovery of gold
<i>United Communal Fund [UCF]</i>	Founded in 1949 to establish a combined appeal for a number of Jewish organizations in South Africa. Recently it has combined with the IUA campaign
<i>Veld</i>	Wide open rural landscape
<i>Veld-kornet</i>	Lieutenant acting as magistrate and tax collector
<i>Volksraad</i>	House of Assembly of the Boer Republics
<i>Voortrekker</i>	Boers who took part in the Great Trek
<i>Yahrtzeit</i>	Yiddish for 'anniversary'. Anniversary of the death of a close relative, usually a parent, commemorated each year
<i>Yeshiva</i>	Talmudic college
<i>Yiddishe Hartz</i>	Jewish heart
<i>Yom Kippur</i>	Day of Atonement. Holiest day in the Jewish calendar

(Endnotes)

- 1 NOTES:
Limpopo or Lemphopho River means River of the Waterfall.
- 2 Bulpin, T V. *Lost Trails of the Transvaal*. Thomas Nelson and Sons [Africa] [Pty] Ltd: Johannesburg, 1965, p. 431.
- 3 Zoutpansberg Review 27 January 1931, p.6.
- 4 *Ibid.* 10 February 1931, p.6.
- 5 *Ibid.* 14 March 1930, p.2.
- 6 Herrman, Louis. *A History of the Jews in South Africa from the earliest times to 1895*. South African Edition. South African Jewish Board of Deputies, 1935, p. 272.
- 7 Marcus Rosenberg was buried in the Pietersburg Jewish cemetery on 17 July 1931 aged 72 years.
- 8 Interview with Marlene Bethlehem in Raanana in 2015.
- 9 Wiener, Charlotte. *The History of the Pietersburg [Polokwane] Jewish Community*. University of South Africa, 2006.
- 10 Cartwright, A P and Cowan, N. *The Old Transvaal 1834-1899*. Purnell and Sons SA Pty Ltd: Cape Town, 1978.
- 11 This was the name given to the Dutch-speaking sheep and cattle farmers, who moved into the interior of the Cape from the end of the 17th century. The Great Trek was a migration by *Afrikaners* from the Cape Colony in 1836 and 1837, mainly out of protest against the British Government's interference in their lives, which they were not prepared to tolerate. By the end of the 1850s they had established a Boer Republic between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers and one north of the Vaal River, both of which were recognized by the British. Brits, Jacob P. *The Penguin Concise Dictionary of Historical and Political Terms*. Penguin Group: London, 1995, pp. 101 and 255.
- 12 Changuion, Louis. *Pietersburg: Die eerste eeu 1886-1986*. V & R Printers Pty Ltd: Pretoria 1986, p 7.
- 13 *Centenary Album Potgietersrus 1854-1954*. Compiled by A J Combrink: Die Morester Drukkery: 1954 p. 17.
- 14 The name was abbreviated in 1902 to Potgietersrus. *Centenary Album Potgietersrus, op.cit.* p. 18.
- 15 Bulpin, T.V. *The Golden Republic. The Story of the SA Republic from its Foundation until 1883*. Citadel Press: Cape Town, *n.d.* p. 114.
- 16 *Ibid.* p. 131.
- 17 The final 't' was dropped from the name in 1939.
- 18 A local magistrate during the rule of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape. Although the office was abolished in British areas of South Africa in 1832, it survived in the Independent Boer Republics. Brits, *op. cit.* p. 136.
- 19 Changuion 1986, *op. cit.* p. 17.
- 20 Cartwright and Cowan, *op. cit.* p. 20.
- 21 *Northern Review* September 1973, p. 6.
- 22 According to the constitution of the new Transvaal Republic, the 'Burgher Rights' [citizen rights] of the burghers or farmers were set out. Every burgher who had trekked into the area before 1852 was entitled to two farms of approximately 3000 morgen [2.2 acres]. Those who came later were entitled to one farm for which they had to pay ten shillings per annum. This incentive encouraged occupation of the land.
- 23 An Afrikaans word used for an encampment defended by a circle of wagons, with branches of trees closing gaps between the wagons. Brits, *op. cit.* p. 135.
- 24 Changuion 1986, *op. cit.* p. 15.
- 25 Gold was discovered later at Pilgrim's Rest in the Transvaal Drakensberg Mountains [present-day Mpumalanga] in September 1873. London-based financier David Benjamin founded the Transvaal Gold Mining Exploration and Land Company in 1883 which did not allow private individuals to own land in the area, and hence no permanent buildings were erected. The gold rush did not last long and the town was mostly abandoned.
- 26 Bulpin, T V. *The Transvaal*. Galvin and Sales Pty Ltd: Cape Town, 1975, p. 132.
- 27 *Zoutpansberg Review* 24 September 1953, p. 2.

- 28 Also called the Transvaal War of Independence 1880-1881. Brits, *op. cit.* p. 254.
- 29 Changuion, 1986, *op.cit.* p. 21.
- 30 *Ibid.* p. 30.
- 31 Van Asten, F G. *Die Geskiedenis van Pietersburg 1867-1899*. MA University of Pretoria, 1954.
- 32 Upsala was another name for Opsaal or Opzadel and it was used by the trekkers before the 1860s where they saddled up and remounted at this crossing of the Sterkloop and Sandrivier streams and it appeared as such on European maps in the 1880s. It was later renamed Sterkloop for the strong-running stream that crossed the area. It was also called Polokwane [safe resting place] by the Blacks long before the whites arrived in the area, Changuion, 1986, *op. cit.* p. 31.
- 33 *The Standard and Diggers' News* 25 October 1892. Notebook A-Political p. 8 Editorial on 'Joubert and the Jews'.
- 34 Changuion, 1986, *op. cit.* p. 239.
- 35 *Ibid.* p. 35.
- 36 Van den Berg, D F. *Naboomspruit 75 in 1985*. Naboomspruit Town Council: 1985, p. 15.
- 37 Changuion, 1986, *op cit*, p. 35.
- 38 *Ibid*, p. 240.
- 39 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives Nylstroom residents file.
- 40 South African National Archives R3908/91. The Government secretary wrote to the *landdrost* in 1891 referring to a letter written by A Lichtenstein complaining about the poor condition of the road [Buffelsberg] between Pietersburg and Klein Letaba in the Lowveld. Lichtenstein requested that the road be fixed as he transported goods from his store in Pietersburg to the Lowveld.
- 41 *Zoutpansberg Review* 23 May 1947, p. 11.
- 42 Munnik, the Hon G G: *Munnik: Memoirs of Senator The Hon G G Munnik*. Maskew Miller: Cape Town, 1916.
- 43 Interview with Rhoda Palte, Israel on 23 July 2001.
- 44 Speech given by Dora Manaschewitz after Lena Herman died.
- 45 Cartwright and Cowan, *op. cit.* p. 44.
- 46 *Zoutpansberg Review* 24 September 1924, p. 12.
- 47 Munnik, the Hon G G., *op. cit.*
- 48 Changuion, 1986, *op. cit.* p. 37.
- 49 Zeederberg, Harry. *Veld Express*. Howard Timmins: Cape Town, 1971, p. 107.
- 50 Reported by J J Wolf in POW Anglo-Boer War List by Eric Rosenthal. South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 51 Interview with Melvin Salamon, a descendant of the Hirschmann family in Israel 2001.
- 52 *South African National Archives*, Ref CJC1488.
- 53 *Ibid.* Ref CJC 1603 Volume 318 and Source KG Ref CR9635/99.
- 54 Interview with Richelle Hirschmann, a descendent of the Hirschmann family in Israel 2001.
- 55 *South African National Archives*, Ref CJC1752 Volume 327.
- 56 Wiener, Charlotte, *op cit.* pp. 14-16.
- 57 *South African National Archives* Source CJC Ref CJC 1912 and 1913 Volume 337.
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 *Ibid.*
- 60 Zeederberg, *op cit*, p. 61.
- 61 *Nylstroom 1866-1966*. Nylstroom Town Council. Dagbreek [H & G], Johannesburg, 1966, p. 26.
- 62 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 63 *Jewish Life in South African Country Communitie: Vol. 1*, researched by South African Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth. South African Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth: Johannesburg 2002, p.141.
- 64 Interview with Martha Lev Zion in Israel in 2001.
- 65 Mr A Sadowsky married Hester Vermaak of Rita. *Zoutpansberg Review* 1929.

- 66 Interview with Riva Morris. Also a letter from Arthur [Aron] Falkenstein in Toronto, Canada who believes that his grandfather was Aaron Sadowsky Morrison and his mother was Aaron's daughter Dorothy.
- 67 Interview with Leo Lipschitz.
- 68 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op cit*, p. 141.
- 69 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 70 Nylstroom 1866-1966, *op cit*, p. 45.
- 71 Interview with his grandson Dr Michael Morris on 25 April 2002.
- 72 *Ibid*.
- 73 Nylstroom 1866-1966, *op cit*. p. 26.
- 74 *Ibid*. p. 43.
- 75 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op cit*, p. 140.
- 76 Nylstroom 1866-1966, *op cit*, p. 45.
- 77 *Ibid*. p. 107.
- 78 Article in the Tribune.
- 79 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op cit*, p. 141.
- 80 *Ibid*. p. 142.
- 81 Van den Berg, D F, *op cit*, p. 29.
- 82 *Ibid*, p. 83.
- 83 *Ibid*, p. 84.
- 84 *Ibid*, p. 98.
- 85 *Ibid*, p.171.
- 86 *Ibid*, p. 101.
- 87 Mrs Scholl is probably the same woman as Mrs Skoll.
- 88 Van den Berg, D F, *op cit*, p. 160.
- 89 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 90 Interview with Alf Levi in Israel in 2003.
- 91 Changuion, 1986, *op. cit.* p. 147.
- 92 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 93 Van den Berg, D.F., *op. cit.* p. 116.
- 94 *Ibid*, p.75.
- 95 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op cit*, p. 138.
- 96 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives: Rabbi Engel's report 1977.
- 97 *Sunday Times* 2 September 2001.
- 98 Interview with Gwen Heimann [nee Whyte].
- 99 South African Board of Deputies Archives.
- 100 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op cit*, p. 162.
- 101 *Ibid*. p. 163.
- 102 *Ibid*. p. 160
- 103 In later years, it was known as the Potgietersrus and Districts Hebrew Congregation. *Ibid*. p.157.
- 104 Memorandum sent to Potgietersrus Town Council June 1976.
- 105 Potgietersrus Congregation correspondence 6 February 1976.
- 106 *Ibid*, 3 March 1976.
- 107 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op cit*. p. 158.
- 108 *Ibid*. p. 157.
- 109 Wiener, Charlotte, *op cit*, p 57.
- 110 Saks, David Y. "Jews on Commando". In: *Jewish Affairs* Spring 1999. South African Jewish Board of Deputies, 1999, p. 25.
- 111 Van Gelderen, R. "Memories of a Boer War Veteran". In: *Jewish Affairs* May 1943. South African Jewish

- Board of Deputies, 1943, p. 11.
- 112 http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/dart_ra.htm
- 113 Wiener, Charlotte, *op.cit.* p. 251.
- 114 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 115 Interview with Wally Levy in Pietersburg in 2001.
- 116 Interview with Estelle Joffe in Israel in 2001.
- 117 Correspondence with a friend of Levy Lipschitz's grandson.
- 118 Susser, Gideon [Gerald], *My Memoirs*, Tel Aviv University Press, October 2003, p.19.
- 119 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 120 Interview with daughter Mary Shapiro.
- 121 *Ibid.*
- 122 *Zoutpansberg Review* 25 April 1930.
- 123 The British High Commissioner to Palestine 1920-1925.
- 124 *Zoutpansberg Review* 21 February 1930, p 10.
- 125 Taped family history by Alec Dusheiko in possession of his son Prof Geoff Dusheiko, London.
- 126 Susser, Gideon [Gerald], *op. cit.* p.17.
- 127 *Review* 14 September 1979, p.20.
- 128 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives: country communities Rabbi's report: Rabbi Engel's report, 1977.
- 129 Interview with Wally Levy 1995.
- 130 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 131 *Zoutpansberg Review* 14 March 1930, p. 4.
- 132 *Ibid*, 23 May 1930, p. 10.
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- 134 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
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- 138 Interview with Estelle Joffe in Israel in 2001.
- 139 *Ibid.*
- 140 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
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- 143 Interview with Gerald Susser in Israel in 2001.
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- 148 Interview with Issy Lotz in Israel in 2001.
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- 157 *Jewish Herald*, 3 January 1967.
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- 159 *Ibid*, 2 February 1972.
- 160 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities, *op. cit.* p. 100.
- 161 *Ibid*, p. 90.
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- 163 Polokwane means 'the protected place'. T V Bulkin. *Lost Trails of the Transvaal*. Thomas Nelson and Sons [Africa] [Pty] Ltd. 1965, p. 250.
- 164 *Zoutpansberg Review*, 17 October 1930, p. 2.
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- 167 *Zoutpansberg Review* 10 February 1931, p. 3.
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- 171 Wiener, Charlotte, *op. cit.* p. 241.
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- 174 Interview with Arthur Goldreich in Israel 26 July 2001.
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- 176 Correspondence with Martha Lev-Zion 19 January 2010.
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- 180 A member of the British Royal family.
- 181 Wiener, Charlotte, *op cit*, p. 38.
- 182 Interview with Hazel Dakers, Pietersburg, 2001.
- 183 Due to the itinerant nature of some travelers as well as the vast empty spaces in the Transvaal, it is quite probable that several Jews died in remote areas far from any Jewish cemetery and were buried where they died. No record of their deaths or their burial places would have been made.
- 184 .Interview with Hazel Dakers, Pietersburg, 2001.
- 185 Wongtschowski, B E H. *op cit*, p. 32.
- 186 De Zoutpansberg Wachter 28 September 1900 quoted in Changuion, 1986, *op cit* p. 103.
- 187 *Zoutpansberg Review* 24 July 1931.
- 188 Changuion, 1986, *op cit*, p. 103.
- 189 *Zoutpansberg Review* 4 November 1918.
- 190 *Ibid*, 27 February 1920.
- 191 *Karell News*: Karell's African Dream Vacations. Karell's Travels: Florida, USA.
- 192 Interview with Heather Donde 2001.
- 193 Interview with Wally Levy, Pietersburg 2001.
- 194 *Zoutpansberg Review*, 25 November 1930, p. 3.
- 195 Interview with Harold Levin, a member of the Pietersburg *Chevrah Kadisha*.
- 196 Klein, Harry. *Valley of the Mists*. Howard Timmins: Cape Town, 1972.

- 197 *Ibid*, p. 168.
- 198 *Zoutpansberg Review* 31 January 1929.
- 199 His tombstone inscription reads that he died at the age of 56 years in 1922.
- 200 South African National Archives reference R6457/95.
- 201 Kurlanders [Courlanders] came from Kurland [Courland] in Latvia, one of the Baltic Governates of the Russian Empire.
- 202 Interview with Richelle Hirschmann in Israel 7 June 2001.
- 203 *Zoutpansberg Review* 23 August 1923.
- 204 Wongschowski, B E H, *op cit*, p. 17.
- 205 *Ibid*. p. 38.
- 206 Interview with Melvin Salamon, a descendant of the Hirschmann family in Israel 2001.
- 207 Interview with Richelle Hirschmann, a descendent of the Hirschmann family in Israel 2001.
- 208 Because of the restrictions imposed on Jews by the Tzar's 'temporary regulations' and in order to avoid conscription, many Jews left Russia illegally. They, therefore, did not have Russian passports. The British used this loophole in the law to prevent them having to pay compensation to the Jews from Russia. Wiener, *op cit*, p. 54-55.
- 209 *Zoutpansberg Review* 23 August 1929.
- 210 Interview with Richelle Hirschmann 2001.
- 211 *Zionist Record* 9 October 1942.
- 212 Interview with Richelle Hirschmann in Israel 2001.
- 213 South African National Archives reference CJC1603.
- 214 *Zoutpansberg Review* 25 September 1934.
- 215 Correspondence in possession of Richelle Hirschmann in Israel.
- 216 Interview with Joy Mervis [nee Palte] on 16 November 2001 in Johannesburg.
- 217 The Boers adopted the tactics of guerilla warfare. The British armies retaliated by employing a scorched earth policy between 1900 and 1902. Many inhabitants of the country districts were put into concentration camps and tens of thousands were forced into the cities. The residents of the northern Transvaal were first sent to the concentration camp in Irene, Pretoria before it was decided to open a concentration camp in Pietersburg in May 1901.
- 218 Wongschowski, B E H, *op cit*, p. 19.
- 219 *Zoutpansberg Review*, April 1931. According to Mr Wally Levy, they walked around the grave seven times.
- 220 *Ibid*, 2 June 1961.
- 221 *Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities Volume III*, researched by South African Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth. South African Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth: Johannesburg 2007, p. 130.
- 222 Interview with Melvin Salamon.
- 223 Correspondence between Lionel Stein and Dennis Wiener 26 February 2003.
- 224 Correspondence with Andrew Colman 11 January 2010, cousin of Palte family.
- 225 Interview with Joy Mervis [nee Palte] in Johannesburg on 8 April 2003.
- 226 Sydenham Shul magazine, *Pesach* 2016, *A Rabbi Ronnie Greenwald Pesach story from a South African perspective* by Lionel Stein.
- 227 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives
- 228 Interview with Mrs Joy Mervis [nee Palte] in Johannesburg on 8 April 2003.
- 229 *South African Jewish Times* 16 March 1984.
- 230 Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation correspondence sent by the Hon secretary G M Susser to the members concerning the erection of plaques 23 June 1962.
- 231 Correspondence in possession of Richelle Hirschmann in Israel.
- 232 Samuel 'Chummie' Hirschmann became an executive member of the South African Zionist Federation. He was one of the three originators of El Al Airlines, which started off as a private company called Universal Airways. He was also appointed the honorary representative of El Al for Africa in 1951. He was

- a cub reporter on the *Zionist Record* newspaper and later became an honorary chairman of its board of directors. He entered the insurance world and wrote a book called '*Sales by the Million*'. He died at the age of 44 in 1961. Bernstein, Edgar. "Chummie Hirschmann: South African and Jew". In: *Jewish Affairs* August 1961. South African Jewish Board of Deputies, 1961, p. 49.
- 233 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives file Q1B, p. 86.
- 234 *Zoutpansberg Review* 11 November 1930.
- 235 Interview with Hilton Israelsohn [Ellison]. Yehuda Benjamin Israelsohn's tombstone is still visible in the Talsen cemetery.
- 236 Interview with Mr Wally Levy, Pietersburg 2001.
- 237 Saks, David. *Boerejode Jews in the Boer Armed Forces 1899-1902*. Charlie Fine Printers. January 2010, p.18.
- 238 *Jewish Affairs* August 2000, p.17.
- 239 Interview with Hilton Ellison, son of Julius Israelsohn 2015. Late in life, when living in Johannesburg, Bertha Israelsohn was informed by the South African Police that her name and address had been found on a list held by some criminals and that she should be cautious. Her family, after having moved to England, decided to change their obviously Jewish name, which could easily be identified by anyone with mal intent. They changed their surname to Ellison as they knew there were already family members with that name.
- 240 Wongtschowski, B E H, *op cit*, p. 20.
- 241 McKechnie, A E, *op cit*, p.233.
- 242 South African National Archives.
- 243 Reported by Chaim's daughter Karon Shear. Chaim and Avram's parents were Pincus and Rivka Reichman. The boys were born in Turow.
- 244 Death Notice of Moses Miller 26-6-1940 states 'Adopted over 40 years ago.'
- 245 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives [Dennis Edwards 1922]
- 246 *Zoutpansberg Review* 7 February 1932.
- 247 *The Unlikely Forester: a Memoir*. Jacana Media, 2006, p.18.
- 248 *Zoutpansberg Review* 20 December 1932.
- 249 Marriage certificate 16 June 1923.
- 250 Interview with Mr Wally Levy, Pietersburg 2001.
- 251 Interview with Hilton Ellison.
- 252 Permit granted by the French Consul in Johannesburg on 27 April 1903 for Keile Malke Eichholz and two children to travel; in possession of Levy family.
- 253 Interview with Mr Wally Levy in Pietersburg 2001. Ben Levy was the son of Wolf Levy [buried 25 June 1910 in Boksborg] and grandson of Ben Levy. Wolf married Rebecca Ginsberg [buried 29 March 1920 in Boksborg].
- 254 Saukenai in Lithuanian.
- 255 *Zoutpansberg Review* 6 December 1929, p. 7.
- 256 Interview with Wally Levy.
- 257 *Zoutpansberg Review* 17 January 1930, p. 4.
- 258 Interview with Ernie Brenner 2000.
- 259 *Ibid*.
- 260 Interview with Johnny Brenner
- 261 *Zoutpansberg Review* 25 July 1930, p. 6.
- 262 Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation correspondence 2 June 1950.
- 263 *SA Jewish Times* 25 June 1948, p. 8.
- 264 Wongtschowski, B E H, *op cit*, p. 176.
- 265 Bulpin, T V. 1975, *op cit*.
- 266 *Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities: Volume 1, op cit*, p. 51.
- 267 Interview with Wally Levy in Pietersburg 2001.

268 *Zoutpansberg Review* 14 February 1929.

269 Interview with Doris Ossip, Johannesburg in 2001.

270 Family tree composed by Paul Cheifitz.

271 *Zoutpansberg Review* 27 December 1929.

272 Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 52.

273 Pietersburg Synagogue committee correspondence February 1969.

274 Interview with Fay Fink [nee Kahan] and Max Kahan in Haifa, Israel 2001.

275 *Zoutpansberg Review* 17 July 1931.

276 *Ibid.* 1931.

277 Interview with Esther Milner May 2013.

278 Interview with Mr Raymond Katzman in Pietersburg in 2001.

279 South African Jewish Board of Deputies country communities Rabbi's report: Archives 46. Rabbi Newman's report, 1955.

280 Interview with Fay Kahan in Haifa, Israel in 2001.

281 South African Jewish Board of Deputies file SA p721.

282 *Zoutpansberg Review* 1930.

283 Interview with Mr David Tankel in Pietersburg in 2001.

284 Pietersburg Marriage Register

285 *Tzaneen-75 1919-1994*. Edited by Changuion, Louis. Letaba Printers: Tzaneen, 1994, p. 35.

286 *Zoutpansberg Review* 24 September 1952, p. 12.

287 Cartwright, A P. *By the Waters of the Letaba*. Purnell and Sons Pty Ltd: Cape Town, 1974.

288 *Zionist Record* 17 October 1952. Repeated in Wiener, Charlotte, *op cit*. p. 65.

289 *Tzaneen-75 1919-1994, op cit*, p. 12.

290 Sir Lionel Phillips was one of the main shareholders in the firm Hermann Eckstein and Company as well as the president of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines. He was a leader of the 'Reform' movement and was arrested for being involved in the Jameson Raid.

291 *Rand Daily Mail* 29 August 1911.

292 Herman Manaschewitz was born in Lithuania on 15 September 1881 and came to South Africa at the age of nine. He qualified as a land surveyor in 1901 and married Dora Gordon of Ladysmith in 1906 and they had three children -Daphne [married Abe Lipshitz of Nylstroom, later principal of King David School Johannesburg, Laura [married Moss Cohen, mayor of Pietersburg] and Sybil [married Solly Shapiro]. In 1914 he came to Ladysmith then Pietersburg. In 1937 he laid out Pietersburg's first industrial area Extensions 1, 2 and 3. He also surveyed Louis Trichardt and the Kruger National Park. He hosted Chaim Weizman, the future President of Israel, when he visited South Africa in 1931. Herman died in Johannesburg on 12 April 1973.

293 *Tzaneen-75 1919-1994, op. cit* p. 25.

294 *Ibid.* p. 100.

295 *Ibid.* p. 100.

296 *Ibid.*, p. 174.

297 Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities Volume 1, *op cit*. p. 68.

298 *Tzaneen-75 1919-1994, op. cit*, p 104.

299 *Ibid.* p. 103.

300 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

301 Cartwright 1974 *op cit*, p. 97.

302 *Tzaneen-75 1919-1994 op cit*, p. 103.

303 Interview with Esther Milner in Israel 2002.

304 *Zoutpansberg Review* 7 March 1930, p. 4.

305 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives, Anglo-Boer War File.

306 *Tzaneen-75 1919-1994, op. cit.* p. 20.

- 307 Cartwright 1974 *op.cit.* p. 100.
- 308 Tzaneen-75 1919-1994, *op.cit.* p. 166.
- 309 Cartwright 1974, *op cit*, p. 156.
- 310 *Ibid.*
- 311 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives [Tzaneen].
- 312 *Zoutpansberg Review* 29 August 1930, p. 4.
- 313 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives [Dennis Edwards-Doringboom 1922]
- 314 *Zoutpansberg Review* 25 August 1931.
- 315 *Ibid.* 10 May 1932.
- 316 Interview with Wally Levy.
- 317 Klein, Harry, *op cit*, p. 299.
- 318 *South African Jewish Year Book* 1959/60. Edited by Leon Feldberg. Fieldhill Publishing House Ltd: Johannesburg, 1960, pp. 45-46.
- 319 Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit.* p. 69
- 320 Afrikaner National-Socialist organisation established in 1938 inspired by the revival of Afrikaner Nationalism in commemoration of the Great Trek.
- 321 Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation correspondence Moss Cohen 26 February 1936.
- 322 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives: Mr Dwolatsky Report 1939.
- 323 Interview with Doris Ossip 2001.
- 324 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives 46 Country Communities Rabbi's report: Rabbi Newman 1955.
- 325 Cartwright, A. P. *Phalaborwa: Mining City of the Future*. Purnell and Sons Pty Ltd: Cape Town, 1972, p. 18.
- 326 *Ibid.* p. 58.
- 327 Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 66.
- 328 Cartwright 1974, *op. cit.* p.160.
- 329 Bulpin, T V. 1975, *op cit.*
- 330 Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 125.
- 331 Paper read before the Jewish Historical Society of England on 13 June 1922 and appeared in Volume X of the Society's Transactions.
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- 334 Interview with his niece Hannah Levy in Johannesburg on 23 January 2003.
- 335 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 336 Interview with Hannah Levy in Johannesburg on January 2003.
- 337 South African National Archives reference 162/1887.
- 338 *Ibid.* Depot TAB Source SS Ref R290/89.
- 339 His tombstone reads 74 but Hannah Levy [nee Cohen] insists he died at 72.
- 340 Correspondence with Hannah Levy 2014.
- 341 *Zoutpansberg Review* December 1929.
- 342 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 343 A pocketed belt for holding ammunition.
- 344 Saks, David Y. "Three Boere-Jode on Commando". In: *Jewish Affairs* Summer 1996. South African Jewish Board of Deputies, 1996, p. 40.
- 345 Jewish Life in the South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 131.
- 346 Kaye, Helga. *The Tycoon & The President The Life and Times of Alois Hugo Nellmapius 1847-1893*. MacMillan South Africa [Publishers] Pty Ltd, Johannesburg. 1978, p. 42.

347 On his application for naturalization on 27 September 1904, Sachne Simon Himmelhoch lists his parents
as Jankel and Ralie. He signed the declaration with his mark of three circles.

348 South African National Archives source KG reference 9635/99.

349 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 126

350 South African National Archives reference CJC1603.

351 According to Martha Lev Zion, Hyman's daughter Phyllis told her that they actually had nine children and
adopted two others.

352 Martha Lev Zion says that Minna and Leib's children were sending their money back to Minna in Latvia
so she and maybe Leib went back to Latvia.

353 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 126.

354 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives sajc files p. 297, file SA p. 393.

355 Interview with Ivor Reubensohn Johannesburg March 2015.

356 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.

357 *Ibid.* [Immigration records].

358 *Zoutpansberg Review* 28 July 1931.

359 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives [file SA p.73]

360 Interview with Maish Brenner.

361 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 168.

362 *Zoutpansberg Review* 19 June 1931, p. 3.

363 *Ibid.* 6 December 1929.

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365 Jeanne Young's tombstone shows she was born Sliom.

366 Kirkpatrick, Ann. *Knowledge Is Power. The Story of Ben Harris*. Review Printers 2010, p.8.

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371 *Ibid*, August 1930.

372 *Ibid*, 20 June 1930.

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376 *Zionist Record* 1930-32.

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378 *Ibid*, p. 129.

379 Interview with Maish Brenner.

380 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives correspondence 14 October 1948.

381 South African Jewish Report 16-23 August 2002, p. 6.

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383 *Ibid.* file F 8 October 1952, 23 January 1953 and file A 23 May 1957.

384 *Ibid*, 46: Country communities Rabbi's reports: Rabbi Dr J Newman 20-29 June 1955 Northern Transvaal
tour.

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- 390 *Ibid.* Rabbi M Silberhaft: Louis Trichardt.
- 391 Bulpin, T V 1975, *op cit*.
- 392 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 393 Immigration records.
- 394 *Zoutpansberg Review* December 1929.
- 395 *Ibid*, February 1930.
- 396 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives.
- 397 *Ibid*.
- 398 Barney Herman arrived in Pietersburg in 1887 and was president of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation for 34 years. He was originally a hotel keeper and then became a farmer. His children were J N Herman and Mrs E Smidsman.
- 399 *Zoutpansberg Review* June 1930.
- 400 *Ibid*, 11 April 1930, p.8.
- 401 *Ibid*, 12 January 1932.
- 402 Immigration records.
- 403 Minutes of the Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation 21 March 1938.
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- 405 *The Jewish Tribune. Exploring the Last Jews of Africa*. Canada: 13 April 2000, p.7.
- 406 Parfitt, Tudor. *Journey to the Vanished City: the search for a lost tribe of Israel*. Hodder and Stoughton, 1992.
- 407 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 127.
- 408 Interview with John Freedman 31 July 2001.
- 409 Interview with Mrs Bucky Flax in Israel in 2001.
- 410 Pietersburg Hebrew Congregation correspondence 18 November 1958.
- 411 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Dr Abt Report 8 July 1949. The minister's name is unclear, possibly "Slom..o..vnah". This could be a reference to Rabbi Slomowitz who was brought from Johannesburg to conduct services.
- 412 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 136.
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- 414 South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives 46: country communities Rabbis reports: Rabbi Dr Newman 1955.
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- 416 Interview with Flax family in Israel in 2001.
- 417 An Afrikaner youth movement founded in South Africa in 1931. It was an Afrikaans-language alternative to the English-speaking Boy Scout movement. They took the name from the Voortrekkers [pioneers] – white Afrikaner farmers [Boers], who emigrated in the 1830s and 1840s from the British Cape Colony to the areas north of the Orange River.
- 418 Jewish Life in South African Country Communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 135.
- 419 Interview with Flax family in Israel in 2001.
- 420 Jewish Life in South African country communities: Volume 1, *op cit*, p. 136.
- 421 Interview with Mrs Bucky Flax in Israel in 2001.
- 422 *Ibid*.

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