

PRESS RELEASE

CHOL – Community History On-Line

Preserving the footprint of Southern African Jewish life online

www.chol.website



CHOL – Community History On-Line is an organisation set up in 2020, under the auspices of the Kaplan Centre at UCT and the South African Jewish Museum – bringing together all those working on creating an online presence, as well as those interested in imbibing the **history of Jewish Communities in Southern Africa**.

The South African Jewish story has a special character. Within a century from the 1880s this predominantly Litvak community grew, flourished and then diminished. The internet has provided unprecedented facilities for connecting people now living across the world and preserving their stories. CHOL has created a website, where from one location, you can find links to many aspects of South African Jewish community history. CHOL has already listed **nearly 50 communities** with some form of online presence, the most comprehensive being Kimberley and Zimbabwe/Zambia and the latest additions being the small towns of Stellenbosch, Ceres, Darling, Clocolan and Roodepoort.

There are sections on the CHOL website for family sagas and monographs of individuals. Already there are 33 posted on the **'Memoirs' page**, ranging from 3-pages to 300-pages. They cover individual lives and also Jewish life in the 1920 to 1950s in places like Uppington, District Six, Malmesbury, Johannesburg and Pietersburg as well as the activities of South African Jews in the Second World War.

International Seminars and Story Reading Sessions

CHOL is not just a website; it is a living throbbing and growing forum of interested people around the world. CHOL organises regular international seminars as well as story reading sessions (which are all recorded and posted on the website on the 'Presentations' page).

Share Your Stories A special section is devoted to 'Share Your Stories' where South African Jews, now living all over the world, share their creative writing. This is an inspired idea of Gail Loon Lustig, a retired doctor who grew up in Bellville where her father was a GP and spent her career as a family doctor in Tel Aviv. She has already attracted 34 writers and CHOL has uploaded over a hundred original stories. Stories fill such an important gap between history and biography giving a really true picture, not only of facts, but that is also charged with emotion. You can read them all on the 'Stories' page and also hear some read aloud by their authors.

The next Share Your Stories zoom session is on **10 March** at 8.00pm South African time.

The next Presentations: The making of *Legends and Legacies*

This year's Pre-Pesach CHOL international presentations will feature filmmakers **Mark Wade** and **Alan Swerdlow**, who in three sessions, will take us through the making of their groundbreaking film series *Legends and Legacies*. These films expertly cover all aspects of Jewish history, business, social and cultural life in South Africa. The three Zoom sessions are free of charge and will take place on **Thursdays 21 and 28 March, and 4 April** (the middle one, at 12.00noon and the other two at 7.00pm South African time.)

Register your interest to receive the zoom links for stories and presentations, by emailing info@chol.website.

Previous CHOL presentations, such as the recent ones on South African Jews in Music are recorded and posted online on the CHOL website: www.chol.website where you can also read about the Communities, the Memoirs, relevant Journal articles, Newsletters and Stories.

People can contact CHOL and also ask to be put on the mailing list for Newsletters, by emailing info@chol.website and please check out the website: www.chol.website.

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Checkout the CHOL website: www.chol.website which now has on it:

- 111 original stories
 - 47 communities - also resources and journal articles etc
 - 33 Memoirs
 - 25 Video presentations
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