

# Helping busy youth connect without hassle

JOSHUA LEVI

IT IS becoming increasingly tougher for people to fit life – work, family, exercise, socialising, charity events and community activities – into a week.

So staff at the Shalom Institute are looking to a new idea they call “non-event engagement” – getting people involved in Jewish community activities, but from the comfort of their own home or workplace.

“We have been thinking about the idea of non-event engagement because we know that people are time-poor and there is an over-saturation of events, but we still want to stay engaged with people through their Jewish journey,” Shalom Institute director of youth Brandon Srot said.

Srot said non-event engagement is something that requires participation and engagement in an activity, but without physically attending an event.

Examples of non-event engagements include online surveys and Shabbat 3000, an event planned for later in the year when 3000 young adults in Sydney will light Shabbat candles in their homes.

While the young adults will be

participating in an event, they won't need to take time out of their own lives to stay engaged.

Srot said non-event engagement could be the way of the future, but was not a stand-alone concept.

“I think it is another tier of engagement but there is a need and a place for events,” he said. “I think in this modern day and age you need the inter-personal and inter-faith connection because it is essential to community development and it complements what is on offer for young adults.”

The first event is called “10Q” and will ask participants to answer 10 questions – encouraging them to think about the year that has passed and the year to come – between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

The answers will be stored, and on Rosh Hashanah next year will be emailed to participants to allow them to reflect on the year.

“This is a very personal thing that you can do on your iPhone on the way to work or at home because there is no formality around it,” Srot said. “It isn't time consuming but it is a way to stay connected.”

To register visit  
[www.doyou10q.com/sydney](http://www.doyou10q.com/sydney)

# The Jews behind Mandela

CHANTAL ABITBOL

SOUTH African Jewish leaders have remarked on an emerging trend where revisionists are seeking to rewrite history and belittle the role that many Jews played in the struggle against apartheid and the country's transition to democracy.

But a new book called *Jewish Memories of Mandela* is hoping to end all that.

Written by David Saks and co-published by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the Umoja Foundation, the 272-page coffee table book chronicles the impact and involvement of an array of South African Jewish individuals – from lawyers to community leaders, businessman and rabbis – in the life and career of Nelson Mandela. It also documents their role standing up against apartheid.

“It is often claimed that Jewish anti-apartheid activists were by and large Jews by birth only, without any affiliations to the Jewish [community] and indeed often quite hostile to it. *Jewish Memories of Mandela* shows this not to be the case,” Saks told *The AJN*.

Indeed, a great many important figures in Mandela's life were strongly identifying Jews, he said, and quite a few held senior leadership positions within the Jewish communal structure.



Nelson Mandela is a subject of a new book written by David Saks (right).

Photo: UN

Photo/John Isaac



Among those recognised is the late Arthur Goldreich, who was a founding member of Umkhonto we Sizwe and played a key role in hiding its members, including Mandela, at his Liliesleaf Farm home in Rivonia. He was later captured during a raid on the farm in June 1963, but managed to escape and flee to Israel.

Another story of a South African

Jew who stood up to apartheid is Michael Schneider, who grew up in the Western Cape and was forced to flee from the security police in 1964 because of his political activities.

“It is clear that a remarkably high proportion of Jewish South Africans have been constructively involved in the Mandela saga,” said Saks. “Those Jews who chose to go beyond their comfortable status as members of the privileged white minority caste and strive instead to do the right thing, often at great personal cost, can serve as an inspiration to current and future generations of Jews here and abroad.”

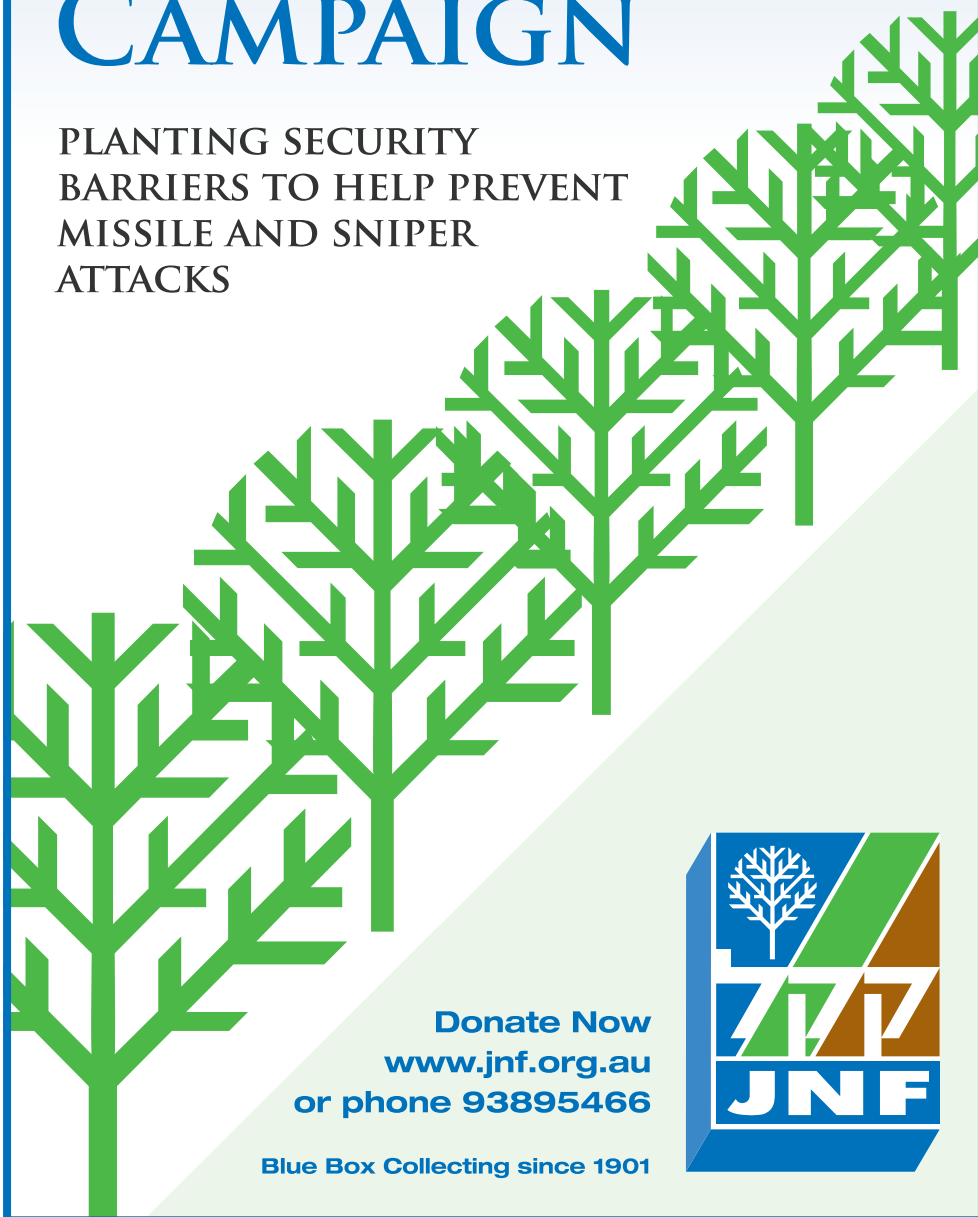
In particular, he believed the book would be of interest to many South Africans who have relocated and are now living in Australia.

“Many of the individuals featuring in the book will be known, and indeed often related to, South African Jewish expatriates in Australia,” he said. “Going beyond that, I believe that ex-South Africans in general retain strong emotional ties with their former community and country and will take a lot of pride in what South African Jews have contributed to one of the 20th century's most uplifting stories.”

*Jewish Memories of Mandela* can be ordered through the offices of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. Email: Shirley Beagle at [beagle@beyachad.co.za](mailto:beagle@beyachad.co.za).

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