



## WIZO speaker brings the Zionist dream to life

WIZO launched its SA Biennial Campaign on 14 May with a heartwarming address by Adeno Danny Abebe – who, through his own eyes as an 8-year-old child, described his family's incredible 800km journey on foot from a small village in Ethiopia to Sudan, and ultimately to Israel.

The audience of over 200 community members were mesmerised by this soft-spoken, humble man, who is today an acclaimed journalist in the Israeli media, currently working in South Africa as Habonim Olami and World Zionist Organisation Shaliach.



A musical tribute was performed by Tali Scher, Saskia Todes and Gila Schulman, accompanied by Ivor Joffe.



Suzanne Luck, Ed Castle, Moonyeen Castle, Shelley Friedman, Li Boiskin, Jojo Mallel and Adrienne Judes

Adrienne Judes, Chairman of BZA WIZO Cape Town, thanked the sponsors of the evening: The Eliot & Myra Osrin Trust; The George Elkin Trust; and Benny Rabinowitz, as well as WIZO's benefactor, Sheila Samson, and patrons and donors for helping to make the evening the great success that it was.

"As an organisation working tirelessly to uplift women and children in Israel and in South Africa with our wheelchair project, BZA WIZO has played an invaluable role for 117 years in the miracle that is Israel today — which is 47 years before the declaration of the State of Israel 70 years ago to the day," said Judes.

The biennial campaign is WIZO SA's foremost fundraising event in the community, as well as a



Hazel Levin, Julie Berman, Danny Abebe and Suzanne Ackerman-Berman



Liz Campbell, Louisa Nhonho Xabela, Danny Abebe and Vuyokazi Matu

fantastic opportunity to strengthen the bond between Israel and world Jewry.

Moonyeen Castle, President of WIZO SA added: "With your help, we can continue to educate, empower change lives, and contribute to the wellbeing of disadvantaged women and children in the State of Israel.

"We thank all who have already pledged their donation to our campaign, and look forward to the support of every member of the community to ensure the continuation of the important work we do."



Barbara Flax, Donné Querido, Li Boiskin, Moonyeen Castle, Myra Osrin, Shelley Friedman, Miriam Lichterman, Adrienne Judes, Suzanne Luck, Danny Abebe, Anna Berkowitz, Felicity Isserow, Linda Saban, Barbara Sandler and Gill Raphael with Melanie Uranovsky and Tamar Lazarus.

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## Building of 'Lost Shtetl Museum' begins in Lithuania

By Tali Feinberg

Ex-South African educator Eli Rabinowitz, who now lives in Perth, attended the ceremony and spoke on behalf of the Litvak Diaspora, especially South African Jews: "Many Litvaks migrated to South Africa, aptly named, the 'goldene medina'. Jewish life in the small South African country towns often mirrored the Litvak shtetl. We often heard stories from 'der heim', describing the rich Jewish cultural life throughout Lithuania, which had existed over many centuries," said Rabinowitz in his speech.

"Those Litvaks who left Lithuania before the Holocaust were indeed lucky – more than 95% of the Lithuanian Jews were murdered in the Holocaust, a greater percentage than any other country. In the future, when we visit this museum, we will be able to access the past with a better understanding of history. We

will view the collection of objects and artifacts, giving us an insight into how our ancestors lived their cultural, religious, work and home lives. We will learn about their values from their daily lives and from the items they kept and used," he added.

"The museum will showcase the richness and the importance of Litvak shtetl life of years gone by. It will also reflect on the Jewish world that was destroyed by the Holocaust. The museum will educate Lithuanians and visitors to Lithuania and so provide an opportunity to learn from our history and strive for a better world."

Speaking to the Jewish Report from Lithuania, Rabinowitz said he thinks the museum is being built now as politicians and historians have realised that this past is being lost to history. He emphasises that the location is important: "Our

Litvak heritage stems from the shtetls in this geographical region in Lithuania — not the bigger cities of Vilnius or Kaunas."

At the ceremony, "it was moving to hear different politicians and diplomats talk about the importance of Jewish memory in Lithuania and to rebuild this in the form of a museum. My



Eli Rabinowitz with Sergey Kanovich (Seduva Jewish Memorial Fund) in the background. Photo: Eli Rabinowitz

speech came across strongly as I represent the voice of Litvaks around the world."

Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė said the laying of the cornerstone "heralds the reconstruction of an important part of Lithuanian history closely interlinked with the history of Lithuania's large Jewish community and its tragic fate. The Lost Shtetl Museum will bring



Eli Rabinowitz with ambassadors to Lithuania of Finland, the UK and the USA. Photo: Eli Rabinowitz

back from oblivion the names and faces of many families, friends and neighbours, as well as their customs and traditions."

Said Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius: "This unique museum will capture not only the memory of the Šeduva but also the Jewish communities of Lithuania as a whole."



An architect's drawing of the new Lost Shtetl Museum. The large pitched roofs take their form from vernacular architecture. Photo: <http://www.arklm.fi/projects/culture/the-lost-shtetl/>



The ceremony in Šeduva, Lithuania. Photo: Eli Rabinowitz