

Jewish refugees who died in Mauritius

On December 26 1940, a total of 1 580 Jewish refugee men, women and children arrived in Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius. These Jewish refugees from Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany had hoped to find sanctuary from

nazi Europe in Palestine but, instead, after their arrival they found themselves declared illegal immigrants by the British. They were exiled to Mauritius from Palestine and interned for over four years.

During this interment altogether 127 people died from malaria, typhoid, chronic dysentery and other tropical diseases. They were laid to rest in a small and separate section of St Martin's Christian Cemetery.

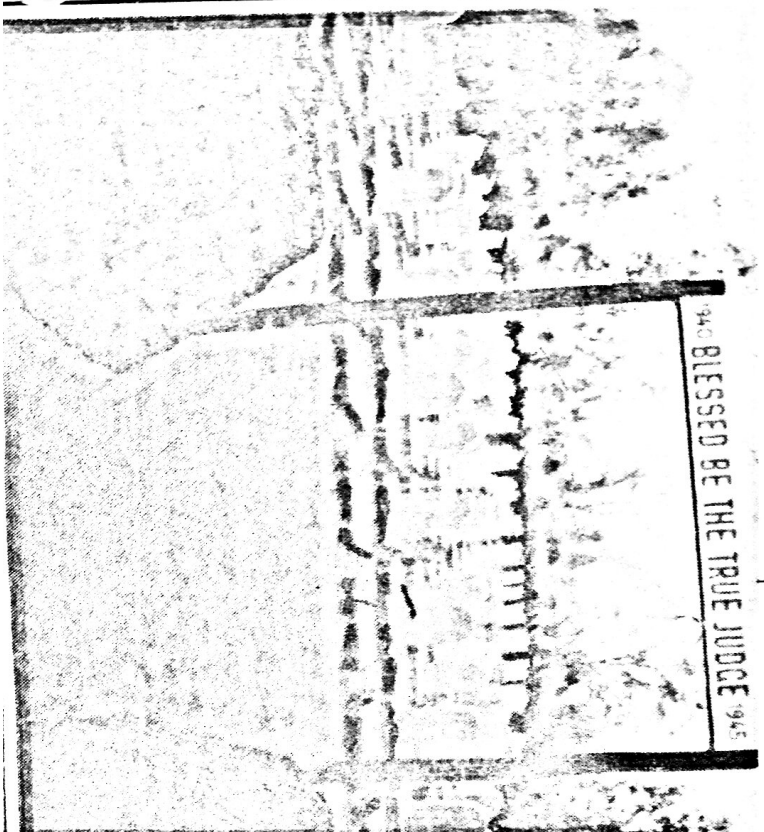
Today, Mr Isaac Birger is the only Jew on Mauritius. He, with the help of one of his employees, Mr Bertrand Adam, ensures that the Cemetery is cared for.

As there was no organised Jewish community on Mauritius to look after the cemetery after the surviving refugees departed for Haifa in 1945, the Government of Mauritius handed it over by Deed of Grant to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies in November 1946.

South African visitors to Mauritius are invited to visit St Martin's Jewish Cemetery and pay their respects to those who lost their lives during exile on an island so far from home.

The Cemetery can be found between the towns of St Martin and Bambous, alongside a narrow, winding road, bordered by sugar cane fields. And if you have anything special to report, please get in touch with the South African Jewish Board of Deputies or the South African Jewish Appeal, P.O. Box 1180, Johannesburg.

St Martin's Jewish Cemetery, Mauritius.



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