



Phillip and Dorothy Grossman Move to Israel

Phillip and Dorothy Grossman, ages 95 and 93 respectively, are probably the oldest married couple ever to immigrate to Israel.

The couple from Baltimore, Maryland, who have been together for 71 years, were greeted at the airport by their family and immediately taken to their new home in Jerusalem.

“We love Israel and we are very excited about our *aliyah*,” said Dorothy Grossman. “We are also extremely happy that we can live close to all our family in Israel.”

The Grossmans might be the oldest married couple to move to Israel together, but neither of them come near breaking the record for the single oldest person to make *aliyah*. That distinction likely goes to two immigrants from the former Soviet Union, who are said to have arrived in Israel at the age of 111 during the 1990s. Belle Goldstein, the oldest *oleh* from North America, moved to Israel in 1998 at the age of 102. She passed away in 2001, three months shy of her 106th birthday.

As for the youngest Jewish immigrant to arrive in Israel, that title probably goes to eight children – five boys and three girls – who were born on planes during Operation Solomon, the dramatic airlift in 1991, which brought thousands of Ethiopian Jews to Israel.

Source: Jerusalem Post: Oldest couple to make aliyah arrives in Israel By GIL SHEFLER, 02/14/2012



Israeli Surgeons Prepare To Operate On Rescued Haitian Child

Woodley Elysee wears an Israeli soldier's beret and salutes as he takes part in a ceremony welcoming the Israeli Defense Forces' aid mission back from earthquake-stricken Haiti, on January 28, 2010 at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv.

The six-year-old Haitian boy, whose family survived the recent earthquake, was born with fatal multiple heart defects and currently has a life expectancy of about four more years. He was brought back to Israel by the aid mission and the Israeli humanitarian organization Save A Child's Heart for life-saving open heart surgery.

Woodley arrived to Israel amid a flurry of publicity. Although scheduled and ticketed to arrive at Save A Child's Heart, an enormous earthquake struck Haiti, stranding him and his aunt Judy who was due to accompany him for the much needed surgery. Thanks to the heroic Israeli Medical Team who contributed so much to saving lives in Haiti, Woodley and his aunt were found and flown back to Israel.

On February 3, 2010 Woodley underwent a diagnostic Catheterization paving the way for surgery. On February 16, 2010 Woodley underwent complete surgical repair through the capable hands of Dr Lior Sasson and his team. After recovering in hospital he returned to the SACH House to his friends enjoying his newfound energy by immersing himself in many activities and being best friends to all the children and visitors. He looks forward to finally going to school. On March 27, 2010 a smiling and confident Woodley together with Aunt Judy boarded a plane and returned home to Haiti.

Save a Child's Heart is an international humanitarian project providing life-saving heart surgery and follow-up care for children from dozens of developing countries, regardless of their race, religion, or financial situation. SACH offers all of its varied services at Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, Israel.

Source: Save a Child's Heart, Photo by Getty Images



Israelis Celebrate after the Arrival of Gilad Shalit at the Northern Village of Mitzpe Hila October 18, 2011.

Early on Sunday morning, 25 June 2006, the IDF soldier was captured by Palestinian militants who ambushed an Israeli army post on the Israeli side of the southern Gaza Strip border after crossing through an underground tunnel near the Kerem Shalom border. During the morning attack, two Palestinian militants and two IDF soldiers were killed and three others wounded, aside from Shalit, who, reportedly, suffered a broken left hand and a light shoulder wound after his tank was hit with a Rocket propelled grenade (RPG).

Five years and four months after Shalit was captured by Palestinian militants in southern Israel, the deal was reached between Israel and Hamas to release Shalit in exchange for 1,027 Palestinian and Israeli Arab prisoners. The deal was brokered by German and Egyptian mediators. Its first phase was executed on 18 October, with Israel releasing 450 Palestinian prisoners and Hamas transferring Shalit to Cairo.



Israeli Soldiers Weep with Jewish Settler as Gaza Synagogue is Dismantled

On the morning of August 15, 2005, tens of thousands of soldiers descended on the Gaza Strip – without their weapons. Less than two years earlier, then-prime minister Ariel Sharon had presented his Gaza Disengagement Plan (then known as the Separation Plan), ending once and for all what had been considered a permanent Israeli military and civilian presence deep inside the Gaza Strip.

For weeks and months, massive cleavages had developed in Israeli society. Settlers and ideological sympathisers covered the country in orange ribbons, t-shirts and banners reading “Jews don't expel Jews.” Public calls were made for IDF soldiers to refuse orders to carry out the evacuation. Fears spread by word of mouth and through the media that violence would break out between security forces and settlers who refused to be evacuated.

In the weeks leading up to the evacuation, IDF and police forces took part in massive training operations preparing them for the sensitive and emotional operation in which they were asked to forcefully evacuate Jews from their homes. IDF soldiers were sent into the Gaza settlement communities slated for evacuation to help families pack their belongings into shipping containers.

On August 15, 2005, soldiers and police officers began the task of forcibly evicting those settlers and activists remaining in Neve Dekalim where clashes broke out between residents and right-wing activists and security forces. The more violent scenes of the Disengagement saw settlers barricading themselves on rooftops, throwing paint and acid on police officers attempting to evacuate them. But for the most part, the famous images of violent clashes were relatively isolated. Even more powerful images of pain-struck and emotional soldiers carrying away crying settlers were imprinted on the collective Israeli memory.

Source: Jerusalem Post: This Week in History: Gaza Disengagement begins, by MICHAEL OMER-MAN 08/19/2011



Israeli Mother Protects her Children as Sirens in Be'er Sheva Wail

Since March 9, 2012, more than 300 rockets, mortars and missiles have been fired into southern Israel from the Gaza Strip, a response to the killing of Zohair al-Qaisi, secretary-general of the Palestinian Popular Resistance Committee, who the army said was planning a major terrorist attack on Israel.

But unlike during the decade of attacks that preceded these hostilities, in which 8,000 rockets induced terror and resulted in 31 fatalities in southern Israel, there was a far lower mortality rate as 78% of the rockets threatening population centers were successfully intercepted by the new Iron Dome air defense system. However, there was a great deal of property damage caused by the rockets, including a 120-millimeter mortar shell that landed inches from a kindergarten shortly before six in the morning - two hours before children were to arrive.

More than 200,000 students in Israel's southern cities (including Be'er Sheva, Ashdod, Kiryat Gat, Ashkelon, Gan Yavne and Sderot) were unable to attend school during the intense period of the attacks. Residents in the south were forced to run and duck for cover as they heard sirens indicating incoming rockets. According to the Home Front Command, residents must be able to relocate to a shelter or a safe-room within 60 seconds.