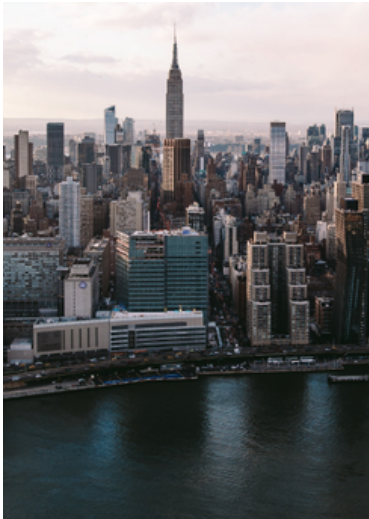




The US Witsie

August 2022

witsfund.org

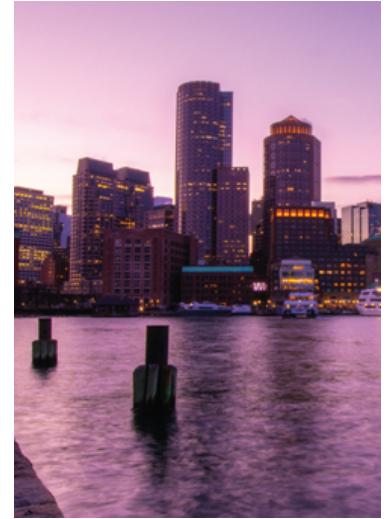


Don't miss out! East Coast Alumni Reunions

Celebrate the University's centenary with us!

Wits is proud of your achievements so this would be a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge your success, reminisce, update you on Wits news, answer questions, and meet fellow Witsies. We look forward to seeing you! Cocktails and refreshments will be served after the formal proceedings.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more info and to register.



WITS UNIVERSITY GREAT HALL GETS A FACELIFT

The Wits Great Hall is an iconic landmark that has seen thousands of graduates pass through its doors and this year, a century after coming into existence, the restored look is a reminder of the institution's academic success.

Read more [here](#). And don't forget to check out the timeline history of the University [here](#).



Did you know?

- The Wits site, known then as Milner Park, used to be a farmland, quarry and rubbish pit shortly before the Anglo-Boer War in the 1800s.
- Barrow Builders, founded in 1897, was responsible for the construction of the university. Architects Frank Emley and Frederick Williamson won the bid to design Central Block, now officially named Robert Sobukwe block which incorporates the Great Hall.
- Wits was home to about 1000 students when it first opened.
- On Christmas Eve in 1931, wooden structures forming part of the Great Hall burnt down, miraculously leaving its famous pillars unscathed.
- One of the most famous musicals performed in the Great Hall was a production called [King Kong](#). Former president Nelson Mandela (before he was president) and his then-wife Winnie were in the audience when the curtain lifted.

In Memoriam

**Louis (Leib) H Krut,
1928-2022:
an intellectual who lived
his life in service to others**



Leib Krut died peacefully June 19 2022 in Sarasota, Florida with his children Riva and Ansel by his side. He was at least 93 years old. One of the golden generation of prominent South African medical professionals of the 1960s to the 1980s, Leib made his mark in research and clinical practice in Johannesburg, St. Louis and internationally.

Leib was born in 1928 in Dusetos, Lithuania to Rivka Harmatz and Emmanuel Krut. He emigrated with his mother to Johannesburg in c.1930 to join his father. This act spared him the fate of several of his family, when the Nazis massacred all the Jews in Dusetos in 1941.

In Johannesburg, his family lived in very straitened circumstances. Rivka died of TB when Leib was nine. He and his brother Chaim were placed in the Johannesburg Jewish Orphanage for 5 years, which he often said were among the happiest years of his life, as he spent his time doing one of the things he loved most – learning.

Despite his considerable intellectual gifts, Leib was sent to vocational high school and trained as an automobile mechanic. While working as a motor mechanic, he attended night school for math, chemistry and biology, and – with a recommendation letter from trade union leader Solly Sachs - was accepted into medical school at the University of Cape Town.

It was at Habonim in Hermanus that he met Rhoda Robinson, a painter who became an art educator. They married in 1954. Three children followed: Riva (Wits BA Hons 1980), Ansel (Wits BFA 1983) and Margot (Wits PGrad Dip Ed 1986). Leib graduated as a medical doctor in 1952 and subsequently earned a research PhD. His first work after graduating was as a researcher for project funded by an American food company that was testing the benefits of Vitamin D supplements in food. He intervened to stop the project when he found that the temporary deprivation of Vitamin D caused rickets in the control population of street children.

The family moved to Johannesburg in 1970 and Leib became a physician at Baragwanath hospital in Soweto. "Bara" is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of the Witwatersrand, the largest hospital in Africa and at that time the only one serving the Black community in greater Johannesburg. He worked there for 20 years, including through the years of anti-Apartheid protests during which protestors would allow doctors through when they held up their stethoscopes.

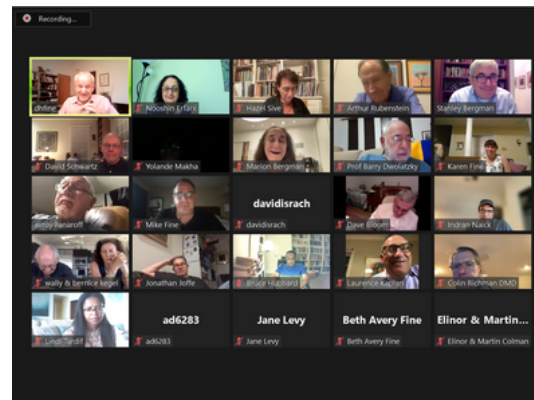
Leib was revered as a diagnostician and a teacher. Right up to the year of his death, his adult children and grandchildren in the UK, US, and South Africa would frequently hear him referred to by his scores of past medical students as "the gold standard of physicians".

His passion for research led him to spend decades looking into atherosclerosis and cholesterol-based heart disease. His findings showed that the pandemic of cholesterol was caused by modern-day food processing and then packaging. He argued that the promotion of statins for heart disease brought marginal improvements and its research basis is fundamentally flawed.

After the deaths from cancer of his first wife Rhoda and shortly thereafter their daughter Margot, he was granted a sabbatical in St. Louis, arranged by an ex-student from Baragwanath. There he met and married Esther Abramson, emigrated to the USA and took a teaching post at St Mary's Hospital in St Louis, Missouri.

He and Esther retired to Florida in the early 2000s where he lived until his passing in June 2022. His family asked that donations be made in his honor, via www.witsfund.org, to the University of Witwatersrand Fund, Inc.

DONATE NOW



MISSED OUT on the David Fine webinar? Don't worry, there's a recording!

As one of the attendees wrote: **"What an amazing scientist and innovator. His achievements and successes are beyond belief. An absolute credit to Wits for providing the foundation for building his future career"**. With gratitude to our wonderful speaker, Dr David Fine, and to Prof Hazel Sive and Mr Stanley Bergman for chairing and moderating the webinar on Thursday, we are happy to share with you [the recording of our July Wits Fund Indaba](#).