

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Bridging the Bosphorus

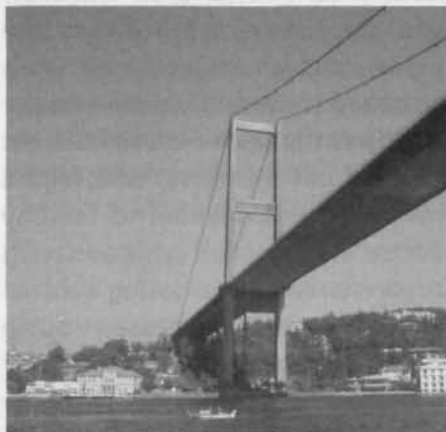
Readers who attended Austrian schools before the Anschluss will not have been surprised that Chancellor Schüssel was one of the EU leaders most vehemently opposed to Turkish membership of the organisation. Austria's national myth casts Vienna in the role of a fortress of Christianity which the Turks besieged in both 1529 and 1683.

The protracted warfare between the Cross and the Crescent left its mark in the Austrian racial memory. In folk speech 'cacophony' is called a *Heidenlärm* (noise made by heathens) and the expletive *Kruzitürken* has religious roots (not unlike 'blimey') relating to the Crusades in this instance.

What the Austrian myth about having been a bulwark of European civilisation against a heathen onslaught leaves out of account is that, at the time, the Turkish Sultans were far more tolerant of non-Muslims than the Habsburg emperors were of non-Catholics. Under the Double Eagle Protestants suffered wholesale expulsion and, except for a handful of government contractors, Jews eked out a miserable existence. (Interestingly, when Jews expelled from Spain eventually reached Vienna, their congregation was called the *Türkentempel* - due to the fact that their first country of asylum had been Turkey.)

Not that Austria remained totally untouched by the Enlightenment. Mozart wrote a Turkish march and peopled *Il Seraglio* with humanly believable characters. Gradually religion declined as a driving force in interstate relations, and was replaced by nationalism. The nationalism of the Balkan peoples, Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians undermined Turkish power in Europe and, during the Great War, the Arab revolt produced a corresponding effect in Asia.

The shock of defeat was the beginning of the recovery for the country long derided as the 'sick man of Europe'. Kemal Pasha abolished the Sultanate, separated religion



The Bosphorus Strait

and the state, and introduced Western reforms into relations between the sexes, the dress code and the alphabet.

Since his death in 1938 Westernising trends have continued in Turkey, but there have also been counter-currents of Islamic revivalism, especially in the countryside. The country has also been debilitated by the Ankara government's policy of pressuring the large Kurdish minority into assimilation.

This, plus Turkey's relative economic backwardness and poverty exacerbated by a soaring birth rate, has prompted scepticism among some EU member states about the desirability of Turkish membership. Those who favour Turkey's admission take a more global - not to say geopolitical - perspective.

They see Kemal Ataturk's Westernising reforms as a foundation on which a more ambitious transformation of far wider application could be based. Turkey could become the first Islamic country which of its own volition adopted the full panoply of Western instructions: parliamentary democracy, an independent judiciary, press freedom and human rights. It has already moved significantly Westwards in one particular direction: relations between the sexes. Turkey, like Indonesia and Pakistan, has had women at the very head of government, demonstrating that it is a misconception to see the exceptionally

patriarchal Arab societies as typical of the Muslim world as a whole.

Since a closer integration with Europe is bound to raise living standards in Turkey other Muslim countries would feel challenged to 'do better'. However, the most important lesson they would derive from the Turkish example is that a state can retain its Islamic religious identity while adopting Western values.

Schüssel, Chirac and Schröder are not totally wrong when they point to the risk posed to the cohesion of Europe by the accession of close to 100 million poor non-Christian non-Europeans. However, on balance this is a risk worth taking.

The world can only become a better place if the number of democracies in it increases, and eventually neutralises the influence of the dictatorships and theocracies. After the end of the Second World War a few West European countries took a gamble on a closer union with Germany - yesterday's enemy - and the gamble paid off. Sixty years on from the liberation of Auschwitz and the destruction of Dresden, Germany is one of the most stable democracies.

Elsewhere, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction. Russia under Putin is less free than it was in Yeltsin's day - though ongoing developments in Ukraine may yet provide a corrective to that retrograde tendency. The prospects for democracy in most Third World countries are anything but favourable.

Given this backdrop, the locking of Turkey into the European system would be a huge building block in the construction of a democratic edifice bridging Europe and Asia. It is a risky enterprise - but who would gainsay its potential for future good? The game is certainly worth the candle. Turkey is no longer the country of corruption and brutality conveyed in the film *Midnight Express* (if it ever was); it is a state embarked on the boulder-strewn path to democracy and deserves to be helped along the way.

A tale of Jewish Delilahs

Richard Grunberger

I was only moderately surprised at the news (*Jewish Chronicle*, 10 December) that Kimberley Quinn is Jewish. My blasé attitude does not stem from a suspicion that many Jewish women are *femmes fatales*, but rather from pride in the fact that their allure can bring down governments - or, at least, home secretaries.

It was ever thus! If you don't believe me, a reading of the *Megillah Esther* at the upcoming festival of Purim should cure your scepticism.

A crowned monarch who, within living memory, fell under the sway of a Jewish charmer was Carol of Romania. He made Madame Lupescu his mistress at the same time as his subjects grew increasingly antisemitic. Small wonder that he lost his crown in 1940.

During the previous decade Austria's Catholic Chancellor Schuschnigg, widowed in a Nazi-engineered car accident, paid court to the half-Jewish sculptress Anna Mahler - only to be turned down by the great composer's daughter.

A more bizarre story involved the second most powerful man in 1940s Russia, Premier Vyacheslav Molotov, and his Jewish wife Polina, Commissar of the Perfumery Industry. Polina greeted the newly appointed Israeli ambassador to Moscow, Golda Meir, in Yiddish - a transgression that earned her six years in the *Gulag*. However, after Stalin's death, the Molotovs were re-united again, and lived happily ever after.

A romance across the Judeo-Christian divide which almost provoked a constitutional crisis was, of course, President Clinton's dalliance with the White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

This is a show that will run and run. In a year or two the spotlight will switch to France, where the Young Pretender Sarkozy stands poised to snatch the crown from the grizzled head of President Chirac. And who do you think is Madame Sarkozy - a Jewess of course!

Emotional farewell as Day Centre organiser Sylvia Matus retires

Sylvia Matus, organiser of AJR's Paul Balint Day Centre, retired at the end of January after 29 years service to the AJR.

At a crowded, emotional farewell lunch, AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman paid tribute to 'the tremendous efforts made by Sylvia on behalf of the AJR. We will miss her energy, enthusiasm and commitment - as will our members, who regard her as the embodiment of the Day Centre.' He described Sylvia as having administered 'tender loving care' to members. Her successor, Susie Kaufman, who has worked so closely with Sylvia for 18 years, perhaps even more tearful than Sylvia herself, spoke of her colleague's 'labour of love'. Bertha Leverton expressed deep gratitude on behalf of Kindertransport members.

Sylvia joined the AJR in 1976 as a volunteer, later becoming an assistant in the home help department finding paid helpers for members. When the Day Centre opened in 1987, Sylvia, with her gentle and sympathetic approach to people, seemed the obvious choice to lead it.

Sylvia held overall responsibility for the daily running of the Day Centre, including the entertainment programme and, with Susie as Catering Manager, the production of over 20,000 kosher meals a year for members at the Centre as well as



Passing the baton: Sylvia Matus, right, with her successor, Susie Kaufman

takeaway and meals-on-wheels.

In addition, Sylvia initiated weekends away for AJR members. In response to the success of this scheme, week-long holidays now take place twice a year in resorts such as Bournemouth and Eastbourne.

Sylvia cultivated a family atmosphere at the Day Centre. Members, volunteers and staff - all were part of her extended family. She never failed to put her own interests firmly behind those of others.

Sylvia's immediate plans are clear. She and her husband Howard are going on a South American cruise, following which she is planning to begin a course at the University of the Third Age. To say Sylvia will be missed by her family at the Day Centre she has done so much to shape, seems trite.

Howard Spier

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Ukraine, a Jewish heartland

Richard Grunberger

The current focus on Ukraine in newspaper headlines ought to jog our memory. This country, wedged between Poland and Russia - its very name means borderland - has long been a habitat of Jews. To actually call it a country may be a bit of a misnomer because its ranking in the world, and its exact borders, have often been matters of fierce dispute. For instance, Lviv, the current capital of Western Ukraine, bore the Polish name Lwów until 1939 and the Austrian designation Lemberg before 1918. Just as confusingly, Czernowitz, the easternmost outpost of Austro-Hungary which briefly belonged to Romania, now finds itself inside Ukraine.

These violent shakes of the kaleidoscope started around 1650 when the Cossack hetman Bogdan Chmelnytsky severed Eastern Ukraine from Poland and attached it to Russia, killing the bulk of the region's Jews in the process. When Poland went into terminal decline over a century later, the territory was carved up between the Romanovs and the Habsburgs, and a greater part of the world's Jews became subjects of Tsarist misrule. As their situation worsened, the active section of the Jewish population reacted in three different ways - mass migration, revolutionary activity, or strengthening Jewish national consciousness (in other words, Zionism).

Zionism as a force on the world stage is usually perceived to have been launched by Herzl in 1896 - but it had its precursors in the Ukrainian port city of Odessa. Leo Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation*, a work arguing the need for a Jewish national home, received powerful reinforcement from the similarly Odessa-based Hebraists Ahad Ha'am and Bialik and inspired the Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion), whose *aliyah* to Palestine raised the active Jewish population there to 25,000 by 1914.

Odessa Jewry was a teeming womb of talent. Pride of place probably belongs to

the violinists Jasha Haifetz, Misha Elman and David and Igor Oistrakh, but there was also the 'Constructivist' painter El Lisitsky and the writer Isaac Babel.

Babel ventured into uncharted territory. During the post-1917 Russian Civil War he rode with the Cossacks - talk about a culture clash! - and his tales of the Moldavanka district of Odessa chronicle the activities of the Jewish gangster Benya Krik.

Babel also had a delicious gift of irony. At a congress of Russian writers in the mid-1930s, he complained that because the Soviet system had removed all the reasons for human unhappiness - such as poverty, insecurity, frustration - writers had little to get their teeth into. Such levity was not to be countenanced for long and by 1939 he had disappeared into the *Gulag*, never to return.

The disturbed aftermath of the Great War saw a short-lived independent Ukrainian state established in Kiev, whose head, Simon Petliura, was a *pogromshchik* in the Chmelnytsky mould. By 1922, however, Ukraine had been integrated into the USSR, and local Jewry enjoyed the (mixed) blessings of Soviet rule.

Then came the Second World War and Nazi occupation, during which the Ukrainians, further alienated by Stalin's forcible collectivisation and consequent famine, collaborated with the Germans in carrying out anti-Jewish massacres. The most notorious such atrocity occurred at Babi Yar in 1941 and has been commemorated in a Yevtushenko poem and a Shostakovich symphony.

The Ukrainians are among the European nations with the worst record of inhumanity towards their Jewish fellow citizens. One only hopes that the current crisis will so fortify the democratic antibodies in the national consciousness that they will in future no longer succumb to the virus of Jew-hatred.

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Frank Foley - the paper trail

Ruth Rothenberg

Back in Germany, on 7 May 1933 Foley wrote an eight-page memorandum detailing the disastrous consequences of Hitler's racial laws, which deliberately prevented Jews from earning a living. At the same time, he noted police indifference to Nazi vandalism against Jewish property and the blocking tactics used to prevent Jews from taking their money out on emigration.

'Since the beginning of 1935', he wrote, 'a recrudescence of antisemitism has become evident and it is becoming increasingly apparent that the Party has not departed from its original intentions and that its ultimate aim remains the disappearance of the Jews from Germany or, failing that, their relegation to a position of powerlessness and inferiority in Germany.'

Attached to this memorandum, which was forwarded to London on 10 May, is an observation from a senior Foreign Office official, M. J. Creswell: 'Not only the status of the Jew but the whole political outlook of present day Germany is pure mediaeval.'

Other embassy officials also reported to London on unprovoked assaults, the fact that 'Jews have been hunted down like rats in their homes', and the breakdown of domestic life, when a non-Jewish partner felt the only way out was through divorce.

This affected the embassy when a British national was involved. A British-born woman married to a German Jew would try to obtain a divorce in order to reclaim British nationality and go to Britain with her children, hoping that her ex-husband 'in some miraculous way might be able to rejoin her'.

The Berlin consular report of 8 June 1938, describing such cases, concludes:

The anguish and misery thus imported into Jewish households by means of legislation and the activities of the police, secret and public, have evoked much public sympathy during the past month, and expressions of regret and disgust at the action, or inaction, of the Government have been heard in many quarters.

Meanwhile, in Britain the pressure was on to keep refugees out, as desperate queues increased on the Continent. In January 1938 the Director of Passport



British agent Frank Foley

Control reported that passport staff in Vienna had been increased from 4 to 25, and in Berlin from 8 to 22, while Hungary and Czechoslovakia also needed more staff. The statistical update was attached to a letter, dated 3 January 1938, addressed to Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The letter was written by Sir Hugh Sinclair, chief of the SIS, Frank Foley's true boss. He wanted Foley to get on with his real work of providing information - spying - not to get bogged down with actual passport work.

Sinclair's 'Most Secret' letter - due for release by the National Archives in 2005 - reads:

I am getting extremely concerned about the present situation in regard to the admission of aliens into this country.

At present it seems that for an unlimited period an unlimited number of aliens are to be admitted. The result of this is that the Passport Control Officers abroad are simply snowed under with the work entailed in granting many thousands of visas, in addition to those which continue to be authorised in the ordinary way by the Home Office at the rate of some two hundred a day ...

I shall be glad if the strongest possible representations may be made to the Home Office with a view to limiting the number of such people to be admitted to this country.

Sinclair reiterated his view in writing a year later.

The Anschluss was effected in March 1938. The Cabinet met at Downing Street on 13 March to discuss the expected influx of Austrian Jewish refugees. The minutes note that the Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, 'felt great reluctance in putting another obstacle in the way of these unfortunate people. A curious story

had reached him [from MI5], suggesting that the Germans were anxious to inundate this country with Jews, with a view to creating a Jewish problem in the United Kingdom.'

The outcome was to put in charge of the Austrian refugee question ministers who would adopt 'as humane an attitude as possible' while 'avoiding the creation of a Jewish problem in this country'.

The glaringly obvious answer to enforced Jewish emigration from Germany was Palestine. German Jewish preparation for this destination was meticulous. Hitler put no bars in its way. But British policy, constrained by opposition from Arabs and from the Muslims of undivided India, blocked any large-scale immigration.

The real 'Palestine problem' is not raised by Foley. In January 1936 he simply noted that economic prospects were good - Jews could be absorbed - but that permits issued by the government of Palestine were going down.

When the Cabinet discussed the crisis on 22 November 1938, nearly two weeks after Kristallnacht, the Secretary of State for the Dominions and Colonies, Malcolm MacDonald, was minuted as saying that 'the Palestine position had been difficult enough before the latest persecution of the Jews had started ... If the matter was looked at simply from the point of view of the present economic absorptive capacity of Palestine, it was clear that large numbers of Jewish immigrants could be admitted to the country ... The matter, however, was not one which could be considered simply in its economic aspect.'

The number of British refugee visas issued across Europe from the beginning of May 1938 to the beginning of April 1939 was officially estimated at around 85,000, with over half in Germany. The number issued by Frank Foley between 1933 and 1939 is unofficially - but realistically - estimated at 10,000.

Foley died in May 1958, aged 73. He was honoured by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Gentile in August 1999.

The first part of this article appeared in the January issue of AJR Journal.

Remembering My Father in Berlin

Marion Charles

Armistice Day, 14 November, the Jewish Cemetery, Weissensee, Berlin. My father, Georg Czarlinski, is one of 395 Jewish soldiers out of the 100,000 German Jews who fought for their Fatherland in the First World War - buried in the Field of Honour. 12,000 Jewish soldiers died for Germany. Although seriously wounded, my father died of natural causes in a Berlin hospital - partly as a result of his wounds, but primarily of grief after he and my mother were compelled to send me, aged 11, and my sister, Ingelore, aged 16, to England on the Kindertransport.

Now I am in Berlin to attend a ceremony that has taken place for the past eight years honouring the Jewish soldiers who died or were wounded fighting for Germany. This year, the focal point of the event will be the presentation of a book newly published by the Centre Judaicum (in conjunction with the Military Archives Institute), *Bis Der Krieg Uns Lehrt, Was Frieden Bedeutet* (Till War Teaches Us the Meaning of Peace). The book contains a section featuring my father and excerpts from the newspaper *A War Chronicle*.

I stand by the grave of the dead, with Rebecca Michael and Debra Kasler, my nieces. A wreath is being laid by the Berlin Commandant, Brigadier General Victor von Wilken, in memory of the Jews who died for Germany. A soloist trumpeter is playing 'Ich Hatt' Einen Kammeraden'.

After that, the head of the Jewish community, Albert Mayer, presents the book to the general in the

adjoining Memorial Hall.

During the luncheon, later, I am having a conversation with the Brigadier General and the Chief of the Berlin Police. The Police Chief tells me how interested he is in the lives of the First World War Jewish soldiers because his father was responsible for training so many of them. He tells me how impressed he was by their patriotism and love of Germany. Listening to him, I remember a patriotic poem my father wrote which is reprinted in the book. It makes me feel most uncomfortable, particularly as he calls England 'The enemy which has to be defeated'. Little did he know then that his daughters' lives would one day be saved thanks to the English.

Wonderful memories

My mother kept my father's *War Chronicle* throughout all the years until her death in 1978. She kept it throughout the Second World War, when she lived underground and was hidden by German friends. My mother brought my father's chronicles - now bound into a book - with her when she came to England in 1947 and I presented it to the Centre Judaicum.

In the book there is a photograph of my parents, my sister and me on the lawn of our home in Dahlem. The date is 3 July 1939. Ingelore and I are smiling. My parents look sad. The next morning, my father took us to the station and put us on the train to England. It was the last time we ever saw him. He died in Berlin on 2 January 1941 and was buried a few weeks later in the Field of Honour.



Marion Charles reading presented book

When he died, my mother was by his bedside. After his death, she was left alone in Berlin. Neither of them was able to flee Germany owing to the fact that my father was 80 per cent war-wounded - which meant that no country would grant him a visa.

As I stood by his grave, with the grandchildren he never knew, I pondered the many ironies of his life and death. Here I was in Berlin being treated as an equal by other Germans - not hounded by German officials but being befriended by them. For a moment, I had an intimation of the life I might have lived had Hitler never come to power.

Then I remembered my father, standing hour after hour at foreign consulate after foreign consulate, trying to flee Germany, yet being rejected, simply because of the war wound he had incurred fighting for Germany.

But I know he would not have wanted me to be bitter. Instead, I treasure the wonderful memories I still retain of those first 11 years of my life with him and my mother. And I thank God that he didn't die in Theriesenstadt, like his parents did, and that he is buried here - in Berlin, in the Field of Honour.

I was alone - but had never left

I have lived on the Isle of Wight for 25 years, believing myself to be the only Jewish person living on the island.

After my release from internment on the Isle of Man, I became a student nurse in a Newcastle hospital. There I fell in love with [and later married] a naval officer whose ships had been torpedoed. He was not a Jew. Throughout our married life our homes were in various places in England. Fearing rejection, I isolated myself from the Jewish community.

Four years ago my husband, Peter, died, since when I have lived alone. My two

sons, their wives and children live on the mainland.

I [recently] saw in our local newspaper an article which read: 'Jewish festival marked for first time in 50 years' - speaking of a Jewish community on the Isle of Wight! It was to be a Chanukah festival. The telephone number of Louis Lawrence, described as 'a member of the Island Jewish community', was given.

When as a teenager I packed my small suitcase to leave Leipzig, my father packed for me a menorah, which I have cherished since 1939 when saying

goodbye to my dearest parents, never to see them again.

Louis Lawrence and all the other Jewish people I met at the party - please accept my heartfelt thanks for a beautiful gathering of 26 or more Jewish guests celebrating Chanukah!

There were children being invited to light the Chanukah candles. Hebrew prayers were said (oh, how I remember these). We sang many songs, all of which I knew. I was Jewish again, regaining my roots. I was no longer alone - I had never left.

Ruth E. A. Lansley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

FORGOTTEN VETERANS

Sir - Francis Steiner writes (December 2004) that while in Prussia Jews could not become officers before the First World War, there was certainly no such ban in the pre-war Bavarian army. This led me to do some research on the internet. My research shows that in 1910 there was just one Jewish officer in the entire German army, and he was indeed in the Bavarian army. I have not been able to ascertain his name. In 1910 there were 23 officers in the German army who were recent converts from Judaism.

The Jewish officer who recommended Hitler for the Iron Cross First Class in August 1918 was Hugo Gutmann. He had joined the Bavarian army in 1902 and was an NCO; was in the reserves after 1904; was called up on the outbreak of war; and did not become an officer (a lieutenant) until 1915. He escaped to Belgium in 1939 and in 1940 went from there to the United States, where he changed his name to Henry G. Grant. The historian Werner Maser says that Hitler personally saw to it that he was paid a pension right up to the end of the war; but in November 1941 he described Gutmann who, like Hitler, had the Iron Cross First Class, as 'an unparalleled cowardly person' whose decoration was 'revolting and a disgrace'.

*Ralph Blumenau
London W11*

Sir - My father, Siegmund Weltlinger, was arrested on Kristallnacht and taken to Sachsenhausen, but released after only five weeks because he had served in the First World War! Incidentally, both my parents survived in Berlin through being hidden by six non-Jewish friends, at the risk of their own lives. So, as you can see, the sacrifice of German Jewish soldiers

was taken into consideration after the Nazis gained power!

*Henry Walton
Sale, Cheshire*

Sir - As regards the officer corps of the pre-1914 Prussian army, I have always understood from my family that in the 1870s we supplied six Jewish officers. My grandfather was described in his marriage certificate as 'Bankier Georg Schreiber, Sekonde-Leutnant der Reserve im 2. Schles. Husaren-Regiment Nr. 6, israelitisch, wohnhaft in Breslau'. Any exclusion of Jews from commissions in the regular Prussian army clearly did not apply to the reserve.

*Alfred Simms
Harpenden*

KINDERTRANSPORT

Sir - Your January issue contains a letter from Iris Guske in response to the profile Howard Spier wrote of me (September issue). She is right to point out that my parents' permitting me to return to England was part of a complex emotional situation that has taken me most of my life to come to terms with. However, at the time, I did experience it as 'a battle won' compared with all the previous changes of home and country. Howard Spier could not be expected to grasp the whole emotional weave from one short interview and I am grateful to him for his profile of me, which has stimulated much more interest than I had anticipated.

Intriguingly, Iris's letter resonated with Andrew Herskovits's review of Diane Samuels's play *Kindertransport*, directed by Melanie Frost in Oxford. Many Kinder may have understood rationally the enormous sacrifice their parents made in sending them to safety. At an emotional level, the

experience was very different: inevitable elements of feelings of rejection, abandonment and betrayal created inner contradictions that made for huge problems in resuming a relationship with parents after the war. Kinder and their parents were by then in different worlds not only culturally but also emotionally.

*Ruth Barnett
London NW6*

Sir - Although a Kindertransportee myself, I have only just seen the memorial outside Liverpool Street Station and was appalled at its condition and siting.

*Erna Angus
London W1*

BELGIUM

Sir - Richard Grunberger's interesting article in the August issue seems to me to have a rather glaring omission. Surely some honourable mention should have been made of the one country, where, so far as I can judge, a greater proportion of Jews survived than in any other German-occupied territory (with the possible exception of Denmark): Belgium.

The fact that the Belgians, having suffered an earlier German occupation in living memory, were possibly more experienced in knowing how to cope with it may have played a part.

When I was posted to HQI Corps (Field) in Brussels early in 1945, I found a thriving Jewish community. It included a cousin of my mother and two family friends. All three elderly ladies had previously been resident in Germany and had 'escaped' to Belgium before the war. They were aided by Belgian friends and neighbours, as evidently were countless others.

*John D Phillip
Barnet, Herts*

FRANCE

Sir - I would like to reply to Freddie Knoller (December issue). General de Gaulle never pretended that he had won the war 'single-handed'. To say that most of the French people were

with the Nazis is an outrage. My division suffered 4,000 killed and 6,550 wounded. It seems Mr Knoller has never heard of the Battle of Bir Hakim, which allowed General Montgomery to re-form the 8th Army. Monty was able to regroup his forces! There was not one city in France without a resistance movement.

*Rolf Weinberg
Sidcup*

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Sir - I refer to Robert Miller's letter (November issue). His ignorance of immediate postwar events in Czechoslovakia is quite extraordinary. I shudder to think what the origin of his sources is. The Czechoslovak authorities never expelled any of the few returning Czech Jews who had survived the German concentration camps, for the reason that they spoke German. On the contrary, up to the Communist putsch in 1948, the Czechoslovak authorities were helpful and sympathetic to returnees who had proper claims to the restitution of Nazi-confiscated property.

*Arnost Polak, Lt.Col. ret.
Cobham*

AUSTRIA

Sir - As well as paying the final instalment of the restitution from the General Fund by the Austrian Government, the City of Vienna has made a further gesture of reconciliation by sponsoring a week's visit to the city with hotel and flight paid for, on behalf of former Jewish Viennese citizens. It is gratifying to see such a gesture by people in authority who probably had not been born when those citizens had been forced to flee their homes. As one of the former Kindertransportees who has been fortunate in being selected for the next such visit, on 13 March 2005, I would be interested in contacting others on this visit. My telephone number is 020 8770 9807, my email address kessler4900@yahoo.co.uk.

Alfred Kessler

BRICKBAT

Sir - In his article 'A change from *The*

Sound of Music' (December issue) Richard Grunberger implies that Paula Wessely may have been a Nazi sympathiser, and therefore antisemitic. I don't accept this. My first cousin, Professor Otto Durer (born Otto Demant), a Jew who was in hiding throughout the war in Amsterdam, produced nearly all her films after the war, until her death. Would she have wanted to work with him if she had felt any guilt about her part in the vile and violent anti-Jewish movement in Vienna? Indeed, Otto brought her and her husband Attila Hörbiger to visit us when I was living with my parents in Banbury. I found them both charming, and they even participated in one of our Shabbat services. Richard, you're a good writer, but unbelievably biased. Talk about Orla Guerin!

*Peter Phillips
Loudwater, Herts*

BOUQUETS

Sir - I think your articles and comments are witty, well-expressed, in excellent English, and with a wonderful sense of humour. I am full of admiration and look forward to reading all future copies of the Journal.

*Zemira Hassett
Loughborough*

Sir - Please keep your very welcome monthly edition coming regularly for our enjoyment.

*Frank Reichmann
North Leigh, Oxon*

LIFE CERTIFICATES

Sir - I refer to Michael Newman's note on this subject in the December issue of the Journal. For many years now my Certificate of Life form has been signed by the Electoral Registration Officer in York (with York City Council's nice official stamp on it) and this has always been accepted without demur by the *Pensionsversicherungsanstalt* in Vienna. I pointed this out at a meeting some years ago. The service has always been free of charge.

*Stefan Ruff
York*

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Faces in the Crowd is an enticing title for **Whitechapel Gallery's** current exhibition. It implies the kind of broad brush-stroke that sweeps through post-Impressionism to Modernism, and is a brave and imaginative attempt to see man from his outer perimeters. Sometimes, it is the crowd rather than the face which offers the defining opportunity to express change.

In his poem whose title inspired the exhibition, Ezra Pound described the faces he saw on the Paris Metro in 1913 as 'petals on a wet, black bough'. In fact, the only face that stands out for me is **Christian Schad's** somnolent flapper girl, a tight-lipped brunette with a red hibiscus flower.



Maika 1929 by Christian Schad.
Oil on canvas. Private Collection.
© VG-Bildkunst, Bonn

There are two magnificent paintings in which the face is subsumed by the crowd. One is **Andreas Gursky's** stunning *May Day*, in which a mass of golden hands raised up in the darkness demonstrates the communication between people through one event. The other is **Manet's** *Masked Ball* - ominous, close up with its ubiquitous black top hats, court jester and glimpse of a white leg in a red boot. It certainly brings an eerily cultish feel to the party.

David Bomberg's *Ghetto Theatre*, painted in 1926, similarly focuses on thematic colour: the black hats and red suits seen in the upper gallery contrast with the duller attire worn below, as though Bomberg is commenting on a Jewish isolationism - self-imposed or otherwise. From theatre to other types of exhibitionism, there are ringside boxers showing off their brute musculature, primitive masks, and sleeping girls, such as **Edvard Munch's** *The Day After*, an erotic painting in which the girl has fallen asleep dressed in her chemise and boots. **Umberto Boccioni's** 1910 work *The City Rises* is a mass of semi-abstract movement which, in its way, epitomises the exhibition's context of the evolution of the modern city.

Marcel Duchamp - he of the famed latrine - offers a rectangular photograph of two seated men mirrored as four. It states the intention, equally mirrored in much of the work, that all is not what it seems. In fact, quoting Baudelaire's spectacle of thousands of floating existences, the whole show made me feel a sense, not of communication but isolation. The fear instilled into people by war, for example, is memorably captured in **Henri Cartier-Bresson's** disturbing photos of a transit camp in Germany in 1945; the returnees from the Eastern Front liberated by the Soviet Army; or most chillingly, a young Belgian woman being identified as a Gestapo informer as she tries to hide from the crowd. In similar vein, there are Reich propaganda posters typifying the totalitarian art of its time, while the deathly etchings of **Kathe Kollwitz** identify the victims' pain.

Humour comes through **George Segal's** dry cleaning shop installation and a pair of polyester resin life-size twins perched on swings above eye-level by **Juan Minoz**. The whole is punctuated by the mournful, repetitive strains of a bassoon accompanying an animated sketch installation by **William Kentridge**. All human life, it seems, is here.

RG's INTERFACE

Postwar Austria under the microscope In January the Austrian Cultural Institute showed the entire Axel Corti trilogy of films entitled *Where to and Back* scripted by Georg Troller. It also screened Carol Reed's *The Third Man* with a script by Graham Greene.

Meanwhile, the New End Theatre staged the cabaret-type show *Tonight Lola Blau* with music and lyrics by Georg Kreisler (and programme notes by RG).

Mythical martyr The Turkish director Galip Lyitanio has made a biopic of a German-Jewish Communist heroine under the title *Resa Benario - a Life for the Revolution*. Resa was born in Munich in 1908 the daughter of a socialist lawyer. In 1928 she liberated a political prisoner from Moabit jail and fled with him to Moscow. In 1933 the Comintern sent her to Brazil to prepare a left-wing uprising, which was bloodily suppressed. Extradited to Germany, she was gassed at Ravensbrück.

Birthday Lauren Bacall has turned 80. A cousin of the Israeli politician Shimon Peres, she was born in the Bronx and discovered by Howard Hawkes. In her first film, *To Have and Have Not*, she was cast opposite Humphrey Bogart, whom she married. The couple resisted McCarthyism in Hollywood and at one point Bacall was sacked by Warner Brothers for refusing to appear in a film with the right-winger Ronald Reagan.

Obituaries The Israeli author Moshe Shamir has died, aged 83. He achieved fame with his account of Kibbutz pioneers but later moved to the right, resigning from the Likud Party in protest at Begin's return of Sinai to Egypt.

The Austrian-born film actor Willy Eichberger has died in Hollywood aged 93. He first attracted attention in the film version of Arthur Schnitzler's *Liebelei*, directed by Max Ophuls. Being Jewish, both their names were omitted from the credits when the film was shown in Germany in the mid-thirties. Eichberger subsequently appeared in British and American films under the name Carl Esmond.

Labour of love

REFLECTIONS: BUNCE COURT

edited and published by Hans Meyer, 2004, £17 post-publication incl. postage and packaging, 122 pp.

This privately published book has its genesis in a Bunce Court school reunion which took place in the garden of Hans Meyer, one of the few surviving teachers, 18 months ago. Following the reunion, Hans Meyer invited as many former pupils as he was able to locate to write a short article on what Bunce Court meant to them, 'warts and all'. This book is the result of his labour of love and it provides a fascinating historical record of a small group of former refugees and a few English people who were fortunate enough to find shelter and an education in Anna Essinger's avant-garde co-educational boarding school.

The book has a lengthy and lucidly written introduction and a brief appreciation of Anna Essinger, the headmistress, by Eric Bourne. Some 70 people contributed their memories, and the text - some of it a direct copy of the handwritten articles, letters or even cartoons - is interlaced with old photographs of buildings and people. One particularly striking one is of the bell that was rung at critical moments of the day. The cover has an attractive painting of the main building on the North Downs of Kent, executed by a former pupil when she was in the school in the late 30s or early 40s.

Contributors come from 12 countries, with the majority from the UK and the USA. One encounters relatively few 'warts', although there are a few criticisms. One concerns the virtual absence of sex education. In general, some 60 to 70 years later, people are extremely grateful to the school and recount happy memories; there seems to be an extraordinarily strong bond between them even now.

It is perhaps invidious to single out particular contributions, but undoubtedly the most famous of the ex-pupils is the painter Frank Auerbach. He concludes his handwritten eulogy by writing 'I cannot imagine a better home', and these sentiments are echoed by many. Samuel Oliner had arrived in Bunce Court in 1945; he was one of a dozen or so boys who survived

REVIEWS

the war in Poland, hidden or in camps. He became Professor of Sociology at Humboldt State University, California and heads an institute which conducts research on altruism, heroism and forgiveness! One set of reminiscences comes from Hans Meyer's son Joseph, who was born in the school (his mother was Hannah Goldschmidt) in 1938. He writes: 'However, for the rest of my life I have retained a modicum of tolerance, of rebelliousness and of a care for children who, as were my school fellows at Bunce Court, so much less fortunate than I.' He has now retired as a paediatrician.

Finally, Hans Meyer himself has written, at the insistence of some of his former pupils. He concludes: 'We knew of Bunce Court's precarious situation, we knew that it could not and probably needed not to exist for longer than its efforts required. But as long as there were children to whose wellbeing and thus their future we could make a modest contribution, we hoped to stay on. Their trust and affection was the school's greatest gift to us.'

Copies of this book can be obtained from Hans Meyer, Greet Cottage, Doddington, Kent ME9 ONT.

Leslie Baruch Brent

Confronting a trauma

A TALE OF LOVE AND DARKNESS

by Amos Oz

translated by Nicholas de Lange, Chatto & Windus, £17.99

'Nowhere in the world wants me. Nobody in the world wants me... That's the only reason I'm here. That's the only reason I'm carrying a gun so they won't kick me out of here the way they've kicked me out of everywhere else.'

These words of Ephraim Avineri, founder member of Kibbutz Hulda and a mentor of the teenage Amos Oz, encapsulate the predicament confronting immigrants to Palestine/Israel in the pre-state period and the early years of statehood. Many,

like Oz's parents and grandparents, had been caught up in the Zionist fervour infusing the towns and villages of Eastern Europe but were reluctant to leave the Europe they loved for the distant 'Asiatic' homeland that offered them refuge until the ground 'burned under their feet'.

Oz's parents, Fania Mussman and Arie Klausner, deracinated immigrants who met at the Hebrew University in the late 1930s, were, like many of their contemporaries, victims of this 'unhappy love affair with Europe'. And in this haunting tale of his childhood and adolescence, masterfully reconstructed like a novel, Israel's leading writer confronts the trauma he experienced at the age of twelve-and-a-half when, as he puts it, his mother 'chose to end her life'.

In a 'low-ceilinged ground floor flat' in Jerusalem stuffed full of books, the seeds of the future writer were sown. Here the erudite, loquacious and pedantic Arie, frustrated in his ambition to pursue an academic career, and the dreamy, subdued and insightful Fania, enmeshed in the gothic fantasies with which she regales her young son, play out the disastrous marital liaison they entered with the best of intentions. This claustrophobic environment pervades Oz's depiction of Jerusalem as a dim outpost, remote from the world out there, 'over the hills and far away', a Jerusalem he abandons in the wake of the tragedy and his father's remarriage a year later.

Not only does the teenage Amos embrace kibbutz life; he changes his family name from Klausner to Oz, a decision that, he claims, 'killed' his father. A family of eminent Revisionists, supporters of Jabotinsky and Begin, the Klausners were in thrall to the distinguished head of the clan, Arie's uncle, Professor Joseph Klausner. Oz recalls with humour the rivalry

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**CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE**

between 'Uncle Joseph' and his neighbour across the road, the future Nobel laureate 'Mr SY Agnon'.

With consummate skill, Oz merges personal history with the momentous events of the 1940s. The vote at the United Nations partitioning Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state and the resulting siege of Jerusalem are particularly vividly recreated. Also striking are Oz's recollections of rival political giants: Begin, his one-time hero, whose speech at a political rally turns 12-year-old Amos away from Revisionism, and Ben-Gurion, who invites the young kibbutznik, who had dared challenge a newspaper article he had written, to a personal meeting. A special highlight of Oz's childhood, despite its less than auspicious ending, is a visit with friends of his parents to the opulent villa of a wealthy Arab family.

But the constant, pervasive undercurrent to this *Bildungsroman*, a superb literary achievement, is Fania's tragic fate, which Oz treats with great sensitivity and courage.

Emma Klein

Park bench dreamers

BREAD & BUTTER

by C.P. Taylor

directed by Mark Rosenblatt

Tricycle Theatre, London

Two working class Jews living in Glasgow's Gorbals slum in 1931 dream together on a park bench. Alec, a presser in a clothing factory, played by Michael Wilson, is content to feed the pigeons, but his best friend Morris, then a 'student' and later an insurance man, played by Gerry Lepkowski, favours a revolution. *Bread & Butter* is the hilarious and heartbreaking story of their eccentric friendship. Mixing talk of war and women with salmon sandwiches, the two men search for a little happiness among the rubble of the twentieth century.

With the play beginning in 1931 and spanning four decades of British life, the passage of time is demarcated by reference to the prime minister currently in office, so the audience is led from Ramsey McDonald, through Neville Chamberlain and Clement Atlee, to Harold Macmillan, finishing

with Harold Wilson. The pace of the narrative and continuous dialogue and passion from the cast ensured wrapt attention from a full house despite the rather long two hours and twenty minutes on stage.

The play's author, C. P. Taylor, who was born into an immigrant Jewish family in Glasgow in 1929, originally premiered his play in 1966, and in all wrote more than 70 plays before his untimely death in 1981 at the age of 52. *Bread & Butter* is one of several which continue to be produced and appreciated.

Ronald Channing

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Letter from Israel

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Coming back to Israel after a trip abroad almost always produces mixed feelings. Suddenly one realises how hot, dry and dusty the country still is, despite the valiant efforts of the authorities and the various settlement organisations, whether pre- or post-state, to plant trees and shrubs, sow crops and generally 'make the desert bloom'.

Of course, there is no point comparing Israel with the countries of temperate Europe, where all is green and fertile. And the contrast with North America is even starker. The vastness, wealth and abundance of that part of the world is so striking as to put it in a category of its own.

But each time I visit the USA I cannot help having a mental image of the Jews of Germany who were refused refuge by any Western country, despite the immense territories available to the USA, Canada and Australia, to name but a few. That helped to produce what became known as the Final Solution, wherein most of the Jews of Europe were systematically murdered.

And so, whenever I come back to this poor, arid land my heart swells. After all, it does have a strange beauty of its own. Yes, it's imperfect. Yes, many of us are not happy with the government. Come to think of it, about 50 per cent of Americans aren't too pleased with theirs. And probably the same will apply to England's population at the next election. That's what happens in democracies. The point is that one always has the right to protest, demonstrate and/or vote at the next election.

The idea here is, of course, that Israel is 'a poor thing but our own'. Here we can feel at home. Here we can defend ourselves and give our brethren refuge. And that is something we cannot always be sure of anywhere else.

A wise and kindly man, now in his 90th year, Arie Handler remains reticent about recounting his courageous rescue of children from Hitler's Germany. He was born in 1915 in Brno, where his father was a serving Austrian army officer. The family owned a large metal recovery business in Halberstadt, but moved to help establish an orthodox community in Magdeburg. Though Arie's early education was at a Catholic school, in 1929 his parents sent him to a *yeshiva* in Frankfurt, where he also attended the famous Lessing Gymnasium with the expectation of becoming a lawyer.

By 1932 Arie, though only 17, was convinced that Jews unable to emigrate would be 'done away with', so he left school and, with other youth leaders, travelled to Crakow and Warsaw to warn of the coming danger. As a leader of the religious Zionist youth movements in Germany, *B'nai Akiva* and *Bachad*, he was from then on engaged non-stop in rescuing children, sending them to training farms in Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, France and England.

From 1933 to 1938 the Nazis encouraged Jews to leave Germany. The Gestapo did not stamp his passport with a 'J' as he was permitted to go in and out of Germany. 'We could have saved at least two-thirds of German Jewry if Western countries would have provided visas', he says. He was sent to Palestine in 1935, the first of many visits to increase the absorption of religious immigrants, working with Dr Joseph Burg (later an Israeli government minister) in Germany. During a short visit to Austria, Arie is convinced that he came face-to-face with Adolf Eichmann on the train.

In November 1938 Henrietta Szold, head of Youth Aliyah, requested Arie to create places for religious children in Palestine. While he was there, a coded cable from Dr Burg implored him not to return to Germany as he faced arrest there. Instead, armed with a letter from Henrietta Szold to Chaim Weizmann and Chief Rabbi Hertz, he went to London. From an office in Woburn House Arie continued the rescue and *hachsharah*, the vocational and

PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Arie Handler Dedicated to the rescue of Jewish children



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

agricultural training of young people for kibbutz life, working with such notables as Rebecca Sieff, Lola Hahn Warburg and Mrs Neville Laski.

Eager that Kindertransport children and young adults should retain their Jewish cultural identities, he fought to find Jewish homes and *hachsharah* centres, but the Jewish-German Refugee Committee in Bloomsbury House saw its prime responsibility as rescue. Non-Jewish friends too were generous, such as the Cadbury family, who gave Avoncroft Agricultural College, in Bromsgrove, and Lord Balfour, who donated the use of Whittingehame College in Scotland. 'Anything to save a life has to be a good thing', says Arie, but Anglo-Jewry 'could have done more to help'.

At the end of the war he established contact with Jews in Eastern Europe and the USSR. In the DP camps he offered help and training to survivors desiring to reach Palestine, including those embarking on the *Exodus*. Among the DPs in Theresienstadt and other camps were hundreds of Jewish girls, mostly from Poland and Hungary. The Swedish

government was prepared to accept 1,500 of them, so Arie was sent from London to organise their absorption. Against his strong opposition, Stockholm's Jewish community agreed that they be sent to Lapland! Many married and settled, others sadly committed suicide, but the majority reached the Jewish Agency and obtained certificates to go to Palestine. Later in 1945 he returned to Palestine as Director of the World Religious Labour Movement in Europe and Treasurer of *Hapoel Mizrachi*, continuing to develop *aliyah*.

On 14 May 1948 Arie was present in the Tel Aviv Museum at the declaration of the State of Israel and may well be the sole survivor of that historic assembly. He was sent on many clandestine missions for the Jewish Agency to organise the rescue of North African Jews. Eventually, Prime Minister Sharett convinced him of the need to establish an Israeli insurance company in London: Migdal. Though he remained in banking in England, he retained his many friends and close family in Israel and regularly commutes between London and an apartment near the Knesset. In 1972 he accompanied the late Lord Fisher to Ethiopia to evaluate the plight of the ancient Jewish community of the Falashas, who eventually settled in Israel.

He believes it is imperative that Israel be built as a 'light unto the nations', and cannot be just another nation-state. Even Zionists and Jews did not always know how to defend Israel's interests. 'Once our enemies wanted to kill us', he says, but now Israel's universities, hospitals, hi-tech industries and businesses make him an optimist. It is the *spirit* of Israel that is all-important.

Arie has never really retired from active communal leadership, continues to edit the *Jewish Review*, the voice of religious Zionism, and remains in demand as a speaker and adviser. He - as did his wife Henny too until recently - leaves his St Johns Wood cottage every weekday at 6.30 am and at 8 am on Sundays to go swimming just as they did in the Elbe in Magdeburg all those years ago!

INSIDE the AJR

South-West Midlands chinwag

We were once again entertained royally by Ruth and Allan Jackson in Pershore, with all members also making a small contribution of goodies. Having had a good 'chinwag' and learned a bit more about each other, we inspected, and admired, Ruth's newly published book *Memories of a Childhood* (see review in December issue of *AJR Journal*). *Ruth Price*

Essex Chanukah celebration

We were invited to celebrate Chanukah by joining the community party provided by the Ladies' Guild of Southend and Westcliff Hebrew congregation. Over 120 people from organisations attached to the community enjoyed the afternoon, which consisted of musical entertainment followed by a delicious tea and candle-lighting. To complete the afternoon, everyone was given a Chanukah gift. *Myrna Glass*

Next meeting: Tuesday 8 February, 11.00 am. Essex group's third birthday party

Ilford party and quiz

A most enjoyable party and quiz were arranged for us with a great deal of thought and care by the AJR's Myrna and Karen. As well as prizes we were all given a Chanukah present and the party atmosphere was further enhanced by the provision of seasonal goodies. Many, many thanks from all of us. *Susie Shipman*

Next meeting: Wednesday 2 February, 10.30 am. Richard Grunberger, *AJR Journal* Editor-in-Chief, 'Speaking Memory'

Joint pre-Chanukah party in Bradford

Susanne Green organised a delightful and very well attended Chanukah party at the Mornington Hall of the Bradford Hebrew Congregation Synagogue. Members came from Hull, Harrogate, Leeds, Batley, Elland and, of course, Bradford and Shipley, to be treated to most enjoyable entertainment provided by the Freylach Spielers together with Hymie Cohen. As

many members had never had the opportunity to light a Chanukah candle, Rudi Leavor conducted a special Chanukah service. Finally, delicious refreshments were served, concluding a very successful function. *A. A. Waxman*

Next meeting: Monday 21 February

Liverpool harmony

We held a most enjoyable pre-Chanukah party. Those attending were entertained by The Fynettes - Tamara and Leslie from the Second Generation - who sang a selection of melodies from well-known musicals as well as other songs. Their harmonisation and accompanying dance steps were delightful. The entertainment was followed by appropriate refreshments, including doughnuts. *Gerald Jayson*

Traditional party in Pinner

Over 50 members gathered for this enjoyable event. We were well entertained by Vivienne Keiles with a mixture of East End Yiddish-Cockney, Scottish Gaelic, South American, English, and Spanish-Jewish songs, ably accompanied by Ian Watson on the accordion. We then indulged in more of the traditional Chanukah activities of lighting candles, singing, eating and talking. A good time was had by all. *Paul Samet*

Next meeting: Thursday 3 February, 2 pm. Graphologist Allan Conway, 'Just when you thought it was safe to sign your name'

Old and new friends at

Newcastle post-Chanukah social

We had a most enjoyable 'Post-Chanukah Social' in the Lionel Jacobsen House. Musical entertainment was organised by the accomplished pianist Agi Albert, who accompanied Margaret Borthwick in works by Fauré and Bozza. We then heard a recital of works by Gershwin and Jerome Kern. A delectable spread of refreshments provided a much appreciated element of a very pleasant get-together of old and new friends. Susanne Green spoke briefly about plans for future meetings. *Kurt Schapira*

Seasonal delicacies in Brighton and Hove Sarid

Myrna Glass talked about the historical background of Chanukah, of which many

details were not so well known. We were regaled with delicious seasonal delicacies. Members contributed some of their personal experiences of Chanukah. *Rudi Simmonds*

Next meeting: Monday 21 February

High-style catering in North London

Our Chanukah party was catered - as we have almost come to expect - in high style by Helen and Leo Horn, complete with doughnuts and latkes. Not exactly the diet a doctor would recommend, but most enjoyable nevertheless. Many thanks, the Horns. This was followed by members talking about their memories of Chanukah past. It is really most interesting to hear people reliving their past experiences. *Herbert Haberberg*

Next meeting: Thursday 24 February. Israel update

Cambridge talk on Anglo-Jewish history

We greatly appreciated a talk by Susannah Alexander, Education Officer at the Jewish Museum. Having outlined her role at the Museum, where she is particularly concerned with teaching young children, she gave us an excellent talk on 'The History of the Jews in England'. Her address ranged over Jewish history in this country from 1066 to the present, giving a fascinating insight into the role and status of succeeding Jewish communities, often affected by adverse conditions and the influx of new groups escaping persecution. *Keith Lawson*

Next meeting: Thursday 17 February. Danka Binks tells her story

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Kent Tuesday 1 February. Bertha Leverton, 'Aspects of the Kindertransport'

North London Thursday 10 February. Visit to Disraeli Exhibition at Jewish Museum

Norfolk Tuesday 15 February. Lunchtime get-together

Ilford Tuesday 15 February. Disraeli Exhibition

Pinner Wednesday 16 February. Disraeli Exhibition

Nottingham Tuesday 22 February. Lunchtime get-together

Tsunami: AJR members' response

Corey Simon

Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) is a Jewish obligation to our community and to the world, Jews and non-Jews alike. Asia and those affected by the tsunami disaster are in need of urgent help. One way to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day is to donate to tsunami victims facing displacement, the horror of rebuilding their lives, the loss of loved ones and separation from their family.

The AJR is collecting monetary donations to aid the survival of victims of the tragedy. If you would like to contribute to the relief effort, please send your donations to the AJR (reference *Tsunami Disaster*).

The AJR is also working with World

Jewish Aid as part of the UK Jewish community's response to the humanitarian needs, as well as long-term development programmes, of victims. Donations to World Jewish Aid can be made by telephone on 020 7691 1771 and further information is available on their website: www.worldjewishaid.org.uk

For updates on how to contribute to the tsunami disaster recovery process, read *AJR Journal* and check our website: www.ajr.org.uk

Corey Simon, a student in *Psychology and International Development* at *Clark University in Worcester, MA, USA*, is working at the AJR as part of her internship.

HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

Sun 10 July 2005 - Sun 17 July 2005

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Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

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DAY CENTRE CLOSED ON TUESDAYS

Would members please note that, as from 1 February 2005, the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre will be closed on Tuesdays

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Wednesday 16 FEBRUARY 2005

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KT-AJR Kindertransport special interest group

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD

Monday 7 FEBRUARY 2005

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Michael Newman

Director, Central Office for
Holocaust Claims & AJR's

Head of Media and Public Relations

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9.30 am - 3.30 pm,

Sunday 2 pm - 5.30 pm

February Afternoon Entertainment:

Tue 1 CLOSED

Wed 2 Kentertainers

Thur 3 Katinka Seiner

Sun 6 CLOSED

Mon 7 KT LUNCH - Kards &
Games Klub

Tue 8 CLOSED

Wed 9 Jack Davidoff

Thur 10 Simon Gilbert

Sun 13 CLOSED

Mon 14 Kards & Games Klub

Tue 15 CLOSED

Wed 16 LUNCHEON CLUB

Thur 17 Mike Marandi

Sun 20 DAY CENTRE OPEN

Mon 21 Kards & Games Klub

Tue 22 CLOSED

Wed 23 Nicola Smedley

Thur 24 Margaret Opdahl

Sun 27 CLOSED

Mon 28 Kards & Games Klub

Editorials and articles published, and opinions expressed, in *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birth

Alweiss/Rosenkovitch. On Sunday 26 December 2004 at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in London to Lilian and Noam, a daughter, Anna Lotte, a sister for Julia and Ben.

Birthday

Nathan. Regi. Mazeltov on your 90th birthday. With love from your daughters Frances and Jackie, sons-in-law Edward and Warren, and grandchildren Debbie, Nicky, Moshe Hadassah and Nicola.

Deaths

Fuss. Grete Fuss passed away on 28 December 2004, sadly missed by her daughter Diana.

Michaelis. Hedda Irene, dearly loved aunt and friend to many, died 16 December. Private cremation.

Salomonson. Walter Salomonson, born in Nordhorn, passed away peacefully on 26 December 2004 in his 101st year, deeply mourned by his wife Paula, relatives and friends in the USA, Israel, Holland, England and many other countries.

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Audio-typists required
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Contact Dr Anthony Grenville at
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CARA

Were you involved with the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning between 1951 and 2004? CARA (Council for Assisting Refugee Academics) is keen to trace SPSL Committee Members and Refugee Academics, their spouses and children who may be interested in taking part in an exciting new Oral History Project for a Museum of London exhibition.

For more information please contact the CARA FIELDWORKER on 0207 021 0880, CARA London Southbank University, Technopark 90, London Rd SE1 6LN
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Obituary

Shimon Wincelberg

Shimon Wincelberg, a script writer who pioneered the portrayal of Orthodox Judaism in US television drama, has died at the age of 80. Having arrived in the USA as a refugee from the German city of Kiel in 1938, Wincelberg introduced Jewish themes into some of the most popular shows on television. Over a hundred of his scripts were dramatised, in *Gunsmoke*, *Star Trek*, *Dynasty*, *Paper Chase* and others.

Having served in the infantry in the Second World War, Wincelberg scored his first success on Broadway with *Kataki*, a play about an American and a Japanese soldier isolated on a remote island. Later screenplays also included *A Cat in the Ghetto* and *King of the Schnorrers*. His short stories and reviews were published in leading US and British magazines. Wincelberg was a four-time winner of the Writers' Guild of America awards and was also honoured by the Mystery Writers of America, the British Council and the Edinburgh Festival.

Arts and Events Diary February 2005

To Thurs 17 March 'Art Behind Barbed Wire'. Exhibition of works by refugees in internment camps during Second World War. Artists include Hugo Dachinger, Walter Nessler and Fritz Rosen. London Jewish Cultural Centre

Mon 31 January Dr Anthony Grenville talks about his forthcoming book on Jewish refugees from Hitler in Britain, 'Aliens' and After. Club 43

To Sat 5 Feb Diane Samuels's play *Kindertransport*. Ilkley Playhouse, tel 01943 609539, 7.30 pm

Sun 6 Seminar: Internees Behind Barbed Wire in Britain. Historians, art critics, film-makers and refugees discuss internment and policies that led to it. London Jewish Cultural Centre, 2.00 to 5.00 pm

Mon 7 Dr Rudolf Muhs, 'Between Nazism and Resistance: German Protestant Pastors in London during the Third Reich'. Club 43

Tues 8 European Voices: An Evening with Author Wladimir Kaminer (Russian

Disco). At Goethe Institute, German Cultural Centre, 50 Princes Gate, Exhibition Road, London SW7, 7 pm. Organised by London Jewish Cultural Centre

Mon 14 Dr Gwen Williams, "Shadows" in 19th-Century English Literature'. Club 43

Tues 15 Rehearsed Reading: 'Goys and Gals', a new play by Penelope Solomon, directed by Julia Pascal. Soho Theatre, 21 Dean Street, London W1. Tel Spiro Ark on 020 7723 9991

Thurs 17 Professor Leonard Dinnerstein, 'Is There a New Antisemitism in the United States?' London Jewish Cultural Centre, 7.30 pm

Mon 21 Rhoda Atkin MA, 'History and Memory: Remembering the Lodz Ghetto (October 1939 - January 1945)'. Club 43

Tues 22 Dr Tobias Brinkmann (University of Southampton), 'Community in Transit: Jewish Migrants from East Central Europe in Berlin after the First World War'. Parkes Institute, University of Southampton, 5.30 pm, Room 1163, Avenue Campus tel 023 8059 2261

Tues 22 BAFTA winner Carl Davis discusses his career composing music for silent film, particularly Charlie Chaplin's films since 1980. London Jewish Cultural Centre, 7.30 pm

Wed 23 Professor John Röhl (University of Sussex), 'The Kaiser and the Jews'. Centre for German-Jewish Studies lecture at Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. Tel 020 7580 3493 or email info@leobaeck.co.uk

Wed 23 Dr Nils Roemer (Southampton), 'German Cities - Jewish Memories: The Story of Worms'. Institute of Jewish Studies, UCL, Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, 6.45 pm (from 6.00 pm reception in Haldane Room) tel 020 7679 3520

Mon 28 Prof Michael Alpert, 'An Earlier Kindertransport: The Basque Children of 1937'. Club 43

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club 43 Belsize Square Synagogue. Meetings 7.45 pm. Contact Hans Seelig tel 01442 254360

London Jewish Cultural Centre, Kings College, Kidderpore Avenue, London NW3, tel 020 7431 0345

Wiener Library 4 Devonshire Street, London W1 tel 020 7636 7247

Central Office for Holocaust Claims Michael Newman

Hungarian 'Gold Train' lawsuit

At the end of last year, the US government announced its intention to settle the lawsuit dubbed 'Gold Train' filed by a group of Hungarian Holocaust survivors.

The judge presiding over the case being heard in a Florida court ordered that the precise terms of the settlement now be decided, and they will be announced at a hearing at the end of February 2005. Plaintiffs have demanded up to \$10,000 each for as many as 30,000 Hungarian Jews and their survivors.

The dispute centres on the alleged looting of valuables by American soldiers during the Second World War. Some 24 boxcars filled with \$200 million worth of art, gold, silver, furs and household goods stolen by the Nazis were confiscated by the United States army. American troops intercepted the train in May 1945 and moved its contents to a warehouse near Salzburg.

Additional Swiss bank accounts

Further to the notice in last December's *Journal*, an additional list of names of owners of Swiss bank accounts has been published on two designated websites: www.crt-ii.org and www.swissbankclaims.com.

Signing of Austrian life certificates

The AJR continues to be available to notarise the *Lebensbescheinigungen* (life certificates) of Austrian pensioners. Please note that an item of official identification, such as a passport or driving licence, must be presented for this purpose.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL, by fax to 020 8385 3075, or by email to michael@ajr.org.uk. Assistance can be provided strictly by appointment at the Holocaust Survivors Centre in Hendon, north London. For an appointment, please ring 020 8385 3074.

Television follows Ludwig Spiro's return to Isle of Man

Ronald Channing

After an interval of 65 years, Ludwig Spiro, now a sprightly 92-year-old, a former internee and supervisor of Onchan internment camp on the Isle of Man, returned to the island with the author and television personality David Baddiel. They were exploring the common experiences of Ludwig and Baddiel's grandfather, Ernst Fabian, who had also been interned as a German-Jewish refugee at the beginning of the Second World War. Ludwig confided that accepting the repeated invitations of the production company and the BBC to take part in the programme had been a difficult decision.

David Baddiel was exploring the genealogical history of his own family for a programme in the fascinating television series *Who Do You Think You Are?* Baddiel senior, who owned a brick-making factory in Königsberg before the war - the site of which David Baddiel rediscovered in the programme - had found refuge in Swansea, before facing internment.

Settled comfortably in the bay window of a seafront hotel, Ludwig was

recorded responding to David's questions about the conditions under which he and David's grandfather Ernst had been arrested, transported to and lived on the island in 1940-41. Ludwig recalled having to report to Kingsbury police station and being pelted with eggs as the internees walked through Liverpool, regarded as despised Germans.

Both Ludwig and Ernst had been classified as category 'B', which suggested the possession of professional, academic or other intellectual qualifications. This led to the eight or nine camps' legendary 'universities' in which world authorities lectured on their special subjects and renowned musicians gave recitals.

The following day Ludwig was filmed while accompanying David on a beachside walk. Several hours of unique recollections from a contemporary witness were edited down to a precious few minutes, but Ludwig Spiro's fully recorded memoir is to be made available to scholars and researchers.

Poland trip 2004: the experience of a lifetime

It is amazing what you can learn, see and do in a week, but on the JFS trip to Poland I discovered this.

We finally arrived at this famous camp [Auschwitz] and got to see the train tracks where hundreds of thousands of people were brought in for what was to be an inevitable death. This site was once again huge and very powerful, to try and imagine numbers and what a horrible life those must have had being there. But this day was special as we met a survivor with his daughter returning to Poland for the first time. His stories brought tears to some and a smile to others to know that there were survivors to tell the tale.

Shabbat was for me an incredible day as I have never observed it properly. Everything we did was enjoyable. We went to synagogue, had discussions, sang and danced. In the evening we had our leaving ceremony, which was

incredible. We sat in a candle-lit room in the synagogue and each person got a chance to express their thoughts about the trip, which was amazing to hear as everyone had something different to say. But overall the general consensus was that this trip was moving, powerful, emotional, and a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

All in all, I would advise any student to go on this trip if possible. It is simply a one-off trip which you can't get in museums or by watching videos. The group you go away with is incredible and the sites you get to see are just breathtaking. There is no experience quite like this!

JFS received a grant from the AJR towards the participation of JFS students in the annual Poland educational visit. These are excerpts from an article written by a child who took part in that visit.

Newsround

New legislation on Jewish immigration to Germany

Under legislation effective from the beginning of this year, those wishing to emigrate to Germany as Jews need to be semi-fluent in German, not dependent on welfare and not over the age of 45, and will have to apply to one of Germany's Jewish communities for a certificate stating that they would be accepted as a member should they emigrate to Germany. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, Germany's Jewish population has risen to over 100,000 with the arrival of Jews from the former Soviet Union. The legislation is prompted partly by budgetary demands and, apparently, by the fear that the expanding Jewish community could ignite antisemitism in Germany.

New light on Jewish refugee GIs

The Second World War exploits of the 'Ritchie Boys', a US army unit made up mainly of young Jewish refugees from Germany, have been recorded for the first time in a 90-minute documentary by German filmmaker Christian Bauer. The Ritchie Boys served on and behind the frontlines as, among other things, interrogators, psychological warriors, and authors of anti-Nazi leaflets and broadcasts

Yad Vashem database assembled

Yad Vashem has assembled and made available on the internet the world's largest and most comprehensive database of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Three million names, together with all available biographical details and photographs, are accessible at www.yadvashem.org.

'WW2 People's War' project

The BBC website is running a project which will be a way of honouring the efforts made by members of the armed forces who fought for Britain during the Second World War. This is an online project to submit the stories and accounts of British soldiers as well as those who endured the war at home. Details are available at www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2/.

Anniversary of Herzl's death marked

The New York consuls-general of Austria, Hungary and Switzerland joined their Israeli counterpart at a ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the death of Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism.