

The case of Gerhart Hauptmann

How are the mighty fallen! How swiftly does literary fame fade! Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946), born in Obersalzbrunn in Silesia (now Szczawno-Zdroj in Poland), was not so long ago regarded as one of the immortals of modern German literature. The student edition of his first published work, the short story *Bahnwärter Thiel* (*Lineman Thiel*) (1888), that I used at Oxford in the 1960s described him as one of the four great figures in German literature to emerge between 1890 and the Second World War, alongside Thomas Mann, Rilke and Stefan George. Yet now he is ever less known or read.

Hauptmann won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1912, and during the Weimar Republic became something of an official figurehead for the literary world. His sixtieth birthday in 1922 was the occasion for official celebrations across Germany, he was considered a possible candidate for the office of president of Germany, and in 1932 he was invited to New York, where he gave an address on the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's death, an indication of the capacity in which he represented German literature. Yet in 1933 Hauptmann stayed in Germany and, at least outwardly, made his peace with the Nazi regime. The steep decline in his standing can be traced partly to this political compromising of his status, partly to changes in literary tastes and in the evaluation of 'great' writers.

Hauptmann shot to prominence when his first drama, *Vor Sonnenaufgang* (*Before Dawn*), was performed at Otto Brahm's Freie Bühne in Berlin on 20 October 1889. The play, a study of hereditary degeneracy through alcoholism in a family of Silesian peasants made rich by the industrial exploitation of the coal beneath their land, has been studied by generations of first-year students as a classic Naturalist drama, exemplifying that movement's unflinchingly realistic depiction of everyday life and its belief that environment and heredity are the determining factors in human life. Similarly, *Bahnwärter Thiel*, with its portrayal of the life of a railway worker in

the Silesian forest, has long been a staple of courses introducing A-level students to the German *Novelle* of the nineteenth century.

Hauptmann's most famous play, *Die Weber* (*The Weavers*), a dramatisation of the uprising of the Silesian weavers in 1844 against their appalling living and working conditions, again demonstrates his strong sympathy with the oppressed and downtrodden, especially the working-class victims of industrial capitalism. Hauptmann had friends who were close to



Gerhart Hauptmann, 1862-1946

the working-class movement, represented in Germany by the Social Democratic Party, which had been illegal until 1890. But when *Die Weber* came under attack from the establishment for its open championing of the workers against their oppressors, Hauptmann gave ground, claiming that it was not a socialist play born of radical political convictions, but rather a social drama intended to arouse sympathy for its characters.

In the 1890s, Hauptmann moved away from Naturalism towards Neo-Romanticism and Symbolism: his moving account of the death of a young working-class girl, *Hanneles Himmelfahrt* (*The Ascension of Little Hannele*) (1893), skilfully blends realistic elements with

a dream fantasy. The influence of the great European realists, Zola and Ibsen, is always apparent in Hauptmann's better plays, whether in those dealing with the fate of humble, inarticulate proletarians, like *Fuhrmann Henschel* (*Drayman Henschel*) (1898) and *Rose Bernd* (1903), or in those that address the moral problems facing bourgeois society, like *Einsame Menschen* (*Lonely People*) (1891). His best comedies, from *Der Biberpelz* (*The Beaver Coat*) (1893) to the later tragi-comedy *Die Ratten* (*The Rats*) (1911), remain deeply rooted in the realistic tradition. But his naturalistic dramas, which had appeared revolutionary in the 1890s, soon came to look old-fashioned when compared to the experimental theatre of the Expressionists two decades later.

Well before 1933, Hauptmann had ceased to present more than the outward façade of a great man of letters. Thomas Mann mischievously caricatured him in *The Magic Mountain* (1924) as Mynheer Peeperkorn, a figure with the impressive appearance of a powerful personality whose utterances, however, remain banal and fragmentary. Arguably, it was this lack of a solid core of character and principle that led Hauptmann to stay in Germany after 1933, expressing public approval of the Nazi regime and becoming a member of the Reichstheaterkammer, the organisation set up by Goebbels in which were grouped those who were permitted to work in the theatre. Defenders of Hauptmann, on the other hand, point to the fact that in 1933 he was over 70 and was deeply attached to his home in Agnetendorf (Jagniatkow).

More significantly, he remained loyal to his Jewish friends, especially Max Pinkus, director of a textile factory in the Silesian town of Neustadt and a noted bibliophile and patron of the arts; Hauptmann spoke at Pinkus's funeral in 1934, though the municipality of Neustadt had forbidden its citizens to attend. In his ambiguous attitude to Nazism, Hauptmann may be compared to figures like the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler (and to a lesser extent the

continued overleaf ➔

Gerhart Hauptmann cont. from p1

composer Richard Strauss), who stayed in Germany after 1933, allowed his name to be used for propaganda purposes by the regime, yet sought, where possible, to alleviate the impact of Nazi measures on individual Jews.

The post-war debate about Hauptmann's behaviour under Nazism can be reconstructed, with a high degree of literary and political sophistication, from the columns of *AJR Information* – a tribute to the cultural quality of the journal. In the late 1940s and the 1950s, a series of very well informed articles on the subject highlighted Hauptmann's close association with Jews before 1933. He was published by the most famous of German-Jewish publishers, the legendary Samuel Fischer; he was a friend of Walther Rathenau, the Jewish industrialist who became foreign minister of Germany and was assassinated by right-wing fanatics in 1922; and his secretary for many years was Elisabeth Jungmann, who was born in Oppeln (Opole) in Silesia and who in emigration was to marry the Anglo-Jewish writer Sir Max Beerbohm. Elisabeth Jungmann's sister was the historian Eva G. Reichmann, wife of Hans Reichmann, chairman of the AJR from 1954 to 1963.

The first expert article on Hauptmann, by Alfons Rosenberg, appeared in February 1948 and discussed the fragment *Die Finsternisse (Darknesses)* (1937), inspired by Hauptmann's attendance at Max Pinkus's funeral and broadcast by the BBC's German-language service in December 1947. This article's approach to Hauptmann was even-handed. Its very subject highlighted Hauptmann's sympathy for the plight of the Jews under Nazism, but Rosenberg also expressed his disappointment that the dramatist, an 'institution' for earlier generations and a figure who 'seemed to stand for everything liberal and humanitarian in his country', had failed to follow Thomas Mann in his anti-Nazi crusade and had 'made his peace with Germany's new masters' after 1933.

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In January 1955, however, an article on the great theatre critic Alfred Kerr referred to Hauptmann in less flattering terms. The author, Otto Zarek, reminded readers that in his wartime broadcasts to Germany for the BBC, Kerr had attacked Hauptmann as a fellow traveller of the Nazis; though Hauptmann had been a longstanding friend of Kerr's, the critic had felt constrained to castigate his erstwhile 'literary companion' 'for his lack of *Zivilcourage* (moral courage) and cowardly submissiveness'. It was probably this attack, which contained the nub of the case against Hauptmann, that provoked a lengthy and passionate defence of the playwright by a contributor from Israel, Jerushalmi.

Having already published in June 1953 a formidably erudite article on 'Jews in the works of Gerhart Hauptmann', Jerushalmi returned to the attack in October 1955 with a scholarly polemic designed to refute the charge that Hauptmann had 'left his Jewish friends to their fate' and 'declared his allegiance to the Third Reich'. He cited Hauptmann's lifelong opposition to right-wing forces in Germany, his support for his Jewish friends after 1933 (especially his obituary for Samuel Fischer that appeared in the *Neue Rundschau* of 15 October 1934) and the many cases where his works and stated opinions clashed with the ideology and practice of Nazism. But Jerushalmi's defence of the 'inner emigration', those writers opposed to Nazism who chose to stay in Germany after 1933, carries little conviction today.

The defence of Hauptmann provoked a swift response. Writing from Melbourne in February 1956, Fritz Friedlander wondered acidly whether Jerushalmi 'expects us to forget and to forgive Hauptmann's public statements that "he wholeheartedly backed the Führer's policy", that "Hitler is the greatest German since Luther", and that "my meeting with Hitler was

Michael Newman appointed AJR Chief Executive

The AJR is delighted to announce the appointment of Michael Newman as its Chief Executive, a promotion from his current position as Co-Director.

Now with overall responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the AJR, Michael will work with the AJR Trustees and Directors to devise the strategy and future planning of the organisation.

Michael will continue in his role as the AJR's public relations manager as well as overseeing the work of its social services and outreach programme. Alongside these responsibilities, he will represent the AJR nationally and internationally and offer specialist advice and assistance with regard to the pursuit of restitution and compensation claims.

In making the appointment, AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman said: 'Michael has demonstrated over many years his commitment and loyalty to the AJR as well as the leadership qualities that greatly impressed the AJR Trustees. We wish him all the very best for the future.'

the climax and the reward of my life?" In December 1959, the distinguished refugee writer Richard Friedenthal, author of a celebrated biography of Goethe, quoted in full from Hauptmann's obituary of Samuel Fischer, pointing out the element of 'careful obeisance to the powers of the moment' in sections that Jerushalmi had chosen to omit. In December 1967, R.W. (presumably Robert Weltsch) described how Hauptmann had taken part in a meeting of German writers and intellectuals in Italy in 1933, but had 'instinctively' dissociated himself from any connection with the Jews assembled there. A last, sad indication of flawed greatness.

Anthony Grenville

A parachute for Sir Nicholas



Sir Nicholas Winton celebrated his 103rd birthday by inviting friends and former 'Winton children' to his home. Here his daughter Barbara and grandson Laurence unroll a parachute sent to him (no doubt because of his love of flying) by the children of a Czech elementary school which bears his name. The children had embellished it with drawings and their names.

REUNITED AFTER 75 YEARS

My father, Alfred Stern, grew up in the market town of Montabaur near Koblenz. His family were well established, having lived in the area for many generations.

As the tide of anti-Semitism grew, a few members of his family used their contacts and left Germany. My grandfather, Willi Stern, had four siblings, two of whom headed for the United States of America. Sadly, my grandfather and two brothers remained and were all murdered in the Holocaust.

My father was sent out of Germany in March 1939 thanks to his mother's sister, who had come to England and had through friends managed to secure a place for him on the Kindertransport.

Those were challenging times indeed: arriving in a foreign country as a child, not speaking English, having no money and being treated at first as an 'enemy alien'. Fortunately my father was given a home by his father's cousin, Ernest Stern, who had left Berlin in 1933 and established a new home in

(originally Heinrich Tepper), whose death in Denver, Colorado, was deeply mourned by his wife Gretel née Stern and sister-in-law Edith Kern née Stern. These two ladies, whose years of birth I had researched, were by my reckoning well into their 90s. The announcement by the Intermountain Jewish News mentioned his children's names and the name of the rabbi who officiated. Through the internet I was quickly able to contact the rabbi, who very kindly sent me contact details.

Late one evening I plucked up the courage and called Gretel's eldest daughter, Judy. She was out, but her husband, on hearing my story, trustingly furnished me with Judy's email address. This indeed turned out to be the family of my great-uncle Gustav Stern, who had lived just two doors from my father and grandparents in Bahnhofstrasse, Montabaur.

At the end of April, Monica and I travelled first to Dallas, where we met my second cousin, Dr Richard Tannen, and his wife, children and their spouses. Richard

Then and now



Circa 1930 in Montabaur: far left is Gretel Stern; far right is Gerald's father, Alfred Stern; to Alfred's left is Edith Stern



April 2012 in Denver: (from left) Gretel Trent (née Stern), Gerald Stern, Edith Kern (née Stern)

London's Hampstead Garden Suburb.

In those days it was tough for everyone. No less so for those adults fleeing to the US. The Nazis ensured that Jews who left Germany were stripped of all assets. So those arriving in the US, having run the gauntlet of immigration, quickly had to find a way of earning a living and re-establishing a home in this new country. The world was still a big place, telephone calls were expensive and letters took time to write and quite a while to travel the Atlantic. So after the war my father found he had lost contact with most of the uncles and aunts who had fled to America. They were each rebuilding their shattered lives and there was no internet!

As I grew up, it was clear that my father, an only child, had lost most of his immediate family in the Holocaust and my sister and I felt a void as we had no cousins, uncles or aunts.

More recently, having time, I was drawn to research the family and I began to piece things together. Last July while googling the names of my father's cousins Gretel and Edith Stern, whom he had known as a child, I suddenly found an announcement for James Henry Trent

was the only child of Gretel and Edith's older sister, Hilde Tannen (her husband adapted the name from Tannchen) née Stern, who had passed away in 1996.

Then on to Denver, where around 75 years after they had left Germany, we met my father's two first cousins, Gretel (93 years old) and her older sister Edith (97 years old), together with Gretel's older daughter Judy with husband, and younger daughter Deborah, my second cousins.

I felt a real connection as I sat and listened to these two magnificent ladies recall their childhood in the town of Montabaur. They spoke about their uncle and aunt, Willi and Betty, my grandparents, with affection and recalled happy times before life under the Nazis became untenable.

The world has truly become a much smaller place and I am grateful that I made this discovery of such close family while these amazing ladies were still around and able to share their memories with me. I was also delighted to meet such lovely second cousins.

Gerald Stern

A version of this article appeared in the North East Jewish Recorder, Newcastle.

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Travelling Light and the origins of early Yiddish cinema

As part of a 'platform event' chaired by Sir Christopher Frayling, I was recently asked to give a short talk at the National Theatre to accompany their recent production of *Travelling Light* by Nicholas Wright. This new play is referred to in the National's publicity as a 'funny and fascinating tribute to the Eastern European immigrants who became major players in Hollywood's golden age'. For me, it presented a welcome opportunity to place the fictitious events of the play within the real historical and cultural context of the period.

Set in a remote *shtetl* located in Eastern Europe around 1900, the play tells the story of a young photographer who becomes a pioneering film-maker. It stars Antony Sher as Jacob Bindel, a successful timber merchant turned movie producer. Alone among the cast, Sher's energetic, scene-stealing performance and heavily accented delivery reminds us that all the characters in the play would be speaking Yiddish, that richly expressive language common to the Pale of Settlement. As a uniquely functional language, it had developed over hundreds of years as the everyday counterpart to Hebrew, the language reserved for the synagogue and the Torah and the most serious religious studies and discourse. Most important of all was the development of Yiddish, during the late 19th century and up through the early years of the 20th century, as a written language of note for the very first time.

A first major turning point can be observed during the late 1870s, when a number of leading Jewish writers who had previously published their stories in Hebrew or Russian began writing their latest works in Yiddish – Mendele Mokher Seforim, I. L. Peretz and, especially, Sholem Aleichem (pen name of Solomon Rabinovich), many of whose stories were set in the fictitious *shtetl* of Kasrilevka. Here the milieu was so vividly brought to life that the stories naturally lent themselves to being adapted into plays and films. He himself also wrote many plays and adapted his own stories for the stage, the most famous of all being *Tevye der Milkhiker* (*Tevye the Milkman*) and its later, musical incarnation as *Fiddler on the Roof*. Thus, Michael

Billington, reviewing *Travelling Light* in the *Guardian*, refers to the Antony Sher character as 'the ebullient Jacob, a self-consciously wise peasant who seems to have stepped out of a [Sholem] Aleichem story.'

It so happens that the growth of a highly respected new Yiddish literature coincided almost exactly with the years of mass migration from the Pale of Settlement, mainly to the USA but also, in smaller numbers, to the East End of London. The film-maker character in the play also joins the exodus from the *shtetl* to America and will end up in Hollywood.

In fact, there was only one Jewish producer among the early pioneers of the cinema, a somewhat neglected figure named Siegmund Lubin. Born in Germany to Polish immigrant parents – his original name was Siegmund Lubszynski – he himself emigrated to the USA in 1876. And his early film-making activities, with family and friends, in Philadelphia, beginning in the late 1890s, most closely match the type of home-grown filming depicted in *Travelling Light*. (Popularly known as 'Pop' Lubin, a slightly eccentric character and early model for the archetypal, Hollywood Jewish mogul of later years, he spoke with a thick German accent and was not generally known to be Jewish. Unfortunately, most of his early films have been lost.)

In contrast to Lubin, all the other, better-known Jewish movie moguls were relatively late starters. Having arrived in the USA during the late 19th century as teenagers or even younger, with their families, before the very beginnings of the cinema, they generally started out as salesmen or businessmen. And when they first entered the movie

industry in the early 1900s it was as owners of early store-front venues, then nickelodeons and chains of small movie theatres or as film distributors.

They only ventured into film production for the first time during the 1910s, in the east, especially in and around New York, before moving to Hollywood. And virtually all of them had come from Eastern Europe: Adolph Zukor and Shmuel Gelbfisz (Samuel Goldwyn) from Poland as teenagers, Louis B. (Lazar) Mayer from Russia and William Fox (Wilhelm Fried) from Hungary as children, with their parents. Only Carl Laemmle, the founder of Universal Studios, came from Germany (born in Laupheim).

During the 1910s the cinema was growing rapidly all over the world. Thus, the first Yiddish films date from around 1911-14; they were shot in Poland or Russia and most often derived from the best-known plays and stories. (Adaptations of the plays of Jacob Gordin, who had himself emigrated from Russia to the USA, and the stories of Sholem Aleichem were especially popular.) They were produced by and starred members of the many theatre troupes which had sprung up in Eastern



Pioneering Jewish movie mogul Siegmund Lubin



Solomon Mikhoels (in bowler hat) starred in *Jewish Luck* (1925)

Europe during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (Unfortunately, only a few fragments of these early films survive today.)

The legacy of Yiddish cinema which we can best appreciate today really begins in the mid- and late-1920s, a remarkable, international group of feature films which preserve the performances of many of the leading Jewish actors of the era. These include Molly Picon and Jacob Kalich in *Ost und*

West, filmed in Austria in 1923, Ida and Esther Rokhl Kaminska in the Polish production of *The Vow* in 1924, and two productions making use of *shtetl* locations in Ukraine. Adapted from the popular Mendel and Motl stories of Sholem Aleichem, *Jewish Luck* (*Yidishe Glikn*) in 1925 starred Solomon Mikhoels as Menakhem Mendel, with intertitles by Isaac Babel, followed by *Motl Payse the Cantor's Son* in 1928. (It is no coincidence that the film-maker character in *Travelling Light* is named Motl Mendel.) And there were even a



Lili Liliana, the young bride menaced by the figure of death in *The Dybbuk*



The *shtetl* setting of *Das Alte Gesetz* starring Henny Porten and Ernst Deutsch

few notable German-Jewish productions during the 1920s, including *Der Golem* (1920) and *Das Alte Gesetz* (*The Ancient Law*), a first feature film from the German-Jewish director E. A. Dupont starring Henny Porten and partly filmed in a *shtetl*.

However, it is only with the coming of sound that the Yiddish-language cinema truly comes of age. A wide range of Yiddish talkies of variable quality, mainly comedies and sentimental dramas, was filmed during the 1930s, mainly in the USA and Poland. Many were filmed in actual *shtetl* locations or reconstructed East European farms and village settings in and around



Molly Picon was the *Yidl Mitn Fidl* in 1936

New York (in New Jersey or on Long Island). Taken together, they represent a kind of culmination of half-a-century of Yiddish culture and language preserved on film for us to view today – the portrait of a world which was destroyed by the Nazis and the terrible events of the Second World War.

In fact, the golden age of Yiddish cinema lasted only about three-and-a-half years – from mid-1936 to late-1939 – when the life of the *shtetl* in particular was most vividly brought to life on the screen in such films as Edgar G. Ulmer's *Green Fields* (*Grune Felder*), adapted from the play of Peretz Hirschbein, and *Di Klyatshe*



Maurice Schwartz, director and star of *Tevye*, filming on Long Island in the summer of 1939

(1939), based on the stories of Mendele Mokher Seforim along with Maurice Schwartz's production of *Tevye*. In Poland, the success of Joseph Green's *Yidl Mitn Fidl* (1936) starring Molly Picon was followed by *The Vow* (*Tkies Kaf*) and *The Dybbuk* in 1937 based on the play by Solomon Anski.

As Jacob says to Motl towards the end of *Travelling Light*, 'I will die and you will die, but our movies live for always. If in one hundred years, this village be only mud once more, and peoples who live in it dead and gone

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Joel Finler

Joel Finler is a film historian with a
special interest in US and Jewish cinema.
He is the author of, among other books,
the award-winning *The Hollywood Story*
(1989).



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication.*

FROM BACON TO GRENVILLE

Sir – I am glad (but hardly surprised) to notice that my admiration for Anthony Grenville's lead pieces in the Journal is universally shared by your readers. The essays are, of course, splendidly informed things – models of their kind: if they were (or are) to be included in a collection, it would, I suppose, have to bear some such title as 'The Rise of the Essay from Bacon to Grenville'. I can't offhand think of a work which captures an historical moment or biographical overview so graphically and viscerally as Dr Grenville's captures these. If I were still active in my profession, I would pounce on them as required reading assignments.

I assume that nine-tenths of your readers are Brits. I myself happen to be a Yank by adoption but, like most of your devotees, I am a German Jew, born in Fuerth in Bayern, vintage 1925. (By a most amusing coincidence, one of the Journal's indefatigable correspondents, Mrs Margarete Stern, and I dated in kindergarten some 80 years ago – we've not seen each other since.)

My family and I came to the States, via Montreux and Port-au-Prince, in 1940. After a brief stint in the army, I studied and commenced to teach English and Comp Lit at Cornell, Stanford and Harvard; from 1963 until 2003 I taught more or less continuously at Cornell. For the past five years or so my wife and I have halved the year between our digs in Ithaca (New York) and a mediaeval pile near Toulouse.

*Professor Edgar Rosenberg,
Lacroix-Falgarde, France*

Sir – Once again, wonderful reading Anthony Grenville's AJR essay(s). I just ordered two Erich Heller books – should have been more clearly on my radar screen. And his comments on the misuse of the Holocaust could be reprinted in the States as well.

Tom Freudenheim, New York

A FARMHOUSE NEAR TRING

Sir – The front-page article by Anthony Grenville in your May issue, 'Lotte Kramer's collected poems', interested me very much as I once briefly shared a dormitory with her. It's a small world, as they say!

It's the last paragraph in the article which I found so intriguing. It was during the London Blitz that my parents felt it advisable for us to find somewhere out of London – but not too far out of London – to stay. So my father phoned Fritz Valk, the actor, mentioned in your journal not so long ago, for advice. He suggested Mrs Fyleman, with whose family he was very friendly.

So one afternoon in the autumn of 1940 we were driven to some small hamlet near Tring called Cow Roast after the local pub. It was a rambling house, more like a farmhouse, with a pig in the backyard etc. My parents were shown to a bedroom on the ground floor and I was shown to a dormitory in the basement as far as I remember, which I was to share with a small group of Jewish refugee girls from Mainz in Germany and their middle-aged teacher. And a typical schoolmistress she was! The group came across as well treated but unpaid slaves who had to work as farm hands and domestics in return for their board and lodging. The girls were a little older than I, who was only 15.

I doubt if I knew their names and I don't remember their faces, but a few things have stayed clearly in my mind. My parents and I weren't happy there and we soon found ourselves alternative accommodation a few doors away and eventually moved to some hotel opposite Tring Station, again on the recommendation of Fritz Valk, whose mother had also become a resident there. To our great surprise, Sophie Cahn, the teacher, felt disappointed at my leaving together with my parents, suggesting that it would be 'good for me' to join her group rather than continue with my schooling!! We found this rather mind-boggling, to put it mildly.

Some years ago I actually did get in touch with Lotte Kramer and exchanged letters with her but the matter rested there.

(Mrs) Margarete Stern, London NW3

Sir – I was particularly interested to read of Lotte Kramer's Rhine poems as I had just been reading *The Conquest of Nature* by David Blackburn. This deals with the Germans, landscape and water – specifically the first section, on the

taming of the Rhine. To read Blackburn is to want to read Lotte Kramer and, I should think, vice versa.

As for Mary Essinger's letter on Dickens and Fagin: we didn't have to wait for 20th-century hindsight for severe criticism of this anti-Semitic presentation. At least one Jewish acquaintance (I think a Mrs Davies) wrote a complaining letter to Dickens. He replied with a rather awkward explanation but, more positively, included in *Our Mutual Friend* a conspicuously virtuous Jew, Mr Riah – who, moreover, is forced to do the dirty work of the odious gentile Flegdely.

George Schlesinger, Durham

'STAMP COLLECTING FOR GROWN-UPS'

Sir – With reference to the recent article by Anthony Grenville, I dare say that I am not the only collector at my age (96) who must have a massive amount of stamps which have been collected over the years. One in particular includes a commemoration with reference to Stephenson. If I am not mistaken, he originally introduced the use of postage stamps, but I may be wrong.

Fred Jonas, Macclesfield, Cheshire

'NAZI-OCCUPIED AUSTRIA'

Sir – A recent obituary in the Journal refers to 'Nazi-occupied Austria'. I have never seen a reference to 'Nazi-occupied Germany' since Hitler only got into power by chicanery.

Austria was not invaded by force: the German army and the SA and SS were welcomed with open arms. After all, their leader, Adolf Hitler, was an Austrian.

Thomas Tait, London SW15

GUT SKABY HACHSHARA

Sir – Whilst researching my mother's family – she came to England aged nine as a 'Kind', the only member of her family to survive – I recently discovered that my uncle, Ernst Freudenthal, spent some time in 1939-40 at Gut Skaby *hachshara*. The only information I have been able to glean from the internet is that it was located to the west of Fürstenwalde, not far from Neuendorf. If any readers are able to tell me anything about this *hachshara*, I would be immensely grateful.

By coincidence, I saw the reference to Gut Winkel in Vivien Harris's recent piece the day after I learned Ernst went to Gut Skaby. I too am unable to say why he was there; Ernst had grown up in Laisa, a village near Marburg, then from 1935-1940, as a teenager, he seems to have moved each year, to Coburg, then Düsseldorf, afterwards Frankfurt, before going to Gut Skaby and then Marburg, from where he was deported in 1942.

*(Mrs) Gina Burgess Winning,
Woldingham, Surrey*

'AT HOME IN ISRAEL'

Sir – I worry about Rubin Katz. I do not understand why he does not believe that Jews can assimilate. I worry even more that he thinks that we will always remain foreigners in England. In my case, I came to England aged 3. I was educated here, I do not have a foreign accent, and I consider England my homeland. I may have been born in Vienna, but so what? Except that I like Austrian food, and enjoy Mozart and Strauss, I have nothing in common with the Austrians. It is there that I would feel foreign.

Where Rubin is right is that I abhor faith schools, but I do not only hate Jewish faith schools. I am equally against all 'religion'-based schools: Christian, Muslim – the lot. We are British. Let our children and grandchildren go to British schools, not complicated by religion. (By the way, I do not disapprove of independent schools – if you have the money to pay their fees, great!)

As for Rubin telling me what I should think about Tzipi Livni, what arrogance! I don't give a damn that her father was high-up in the Irgun because it is probable that without the Irgun and Stern gangs Israel would not have been created. Also, why should she have agreed to become Netanyahu's number 2 when she, in fact, won the election, not Netanyahu! He should have agreed to become her foreign minister, thus keeping the 'frummers' and Lieberman out.

Rubin, it is always nice to have you disagreeing with me but, please, in future do get your facts right!

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts

Sir – The Israeli Habima Theatre recently performed *The Merchant of Venice* at the Globe Theatre. As readers will recall, Palestinians and their sympathisers demonstrated outside the theatre and did their level best to interrupt the performance inside.

Entry to the theatre reminded one of security at airports. There are many other theatre groups performing this season. Among them are theatres from countries of such paragons of freedom of expression, democracy and equality as Russia, China, Belarus, and the non-existing state of Palestine. None of them needed the extra security precautions. We are indeed the chosen people!

Janos Fisher, Bushey Heath

Sir – Thank you for informing me that my subscription to the magazine is expiring. I will not be renewing my subscription and it's not a question of the money.

Although over the years I have very much enjoyed reading the stories of refugees, I am uncomfortable with comments about Israel. I feel that the politics of the State of Israel – or rather the government – have no place in a magazine about Jew-

ish refugees. I'm not referring to people's individual experiences but to a few of the pro-Israel editorials by Anthony Grenville, for example. In a magazine for Jewish refugees from the Third Reich, I feel that Israel has no place.

Assuming that mine is a minority position and that other readers enjoy reading about Israel, perhaps a critique of the government of Israel would make interesting reading.

I have seen the effects of the occupation of Palestine, now in its 44th year, on both Israel and Palestine. Both communities suffer from poverty and violence as a result of the militarisation of the area. The 20 per cent of the Israeli population who are Arabs do not have the same rights as other Israelis. With jails full of Palestinians arrested on 'security' warrants and without any charges, how can we talk about Israel as a democracy?

There are wonderful aspects of life in Israel and, as I say, I don't think it should be talked about in the AJR magazine. However, if it is to be talked about, let's discuss some of the above issues.

Meanwhile, I thank you so much for the past issues of the *AJR Journal*, which my mother, a refugee, also enjoyed.

Rose Marie Whalley, Montreal, Canada

Sir – I have just been reading a book that has affected me deeply: *I Shall Not Hate*, by the Palestinian medical doctor Izzeldin Abuelaish (£8.99).

The author describes his life in Gaza, where he grew up and lived with his family, mostly exposed to the dangers

AJR and German-Jewish Studies Centre to hold September seminar

The AJR is joining forces with the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University to hold a series of lectures, discussions and interviews at the London Jewish Cultural Centre on 12-13 September.

The two-day seminar will highlight the cultural legacy of the Jewish German and Austrian refugees who fled Nazism and celebrate their remarkable contribution to life in Britain.

Further details will appear in the August and September editions of the *AJR Journal* and on the AJR website.

coming from their Israeli neighbours. This is what Elie Wiesel said of the book: 'This story is a necessary lesson against hatred and revenge.'

The *Jewish Chronicle* said: 'Humbling, courageous and important ... This heart-rending book has the power to change the Middle East with its love, humility and extraordinary strength of character.'

Inge Trott, Cheam, Surrey

Getting in the mood: Diamond Jubilee celebration at the AJR Paul Balint Centre



ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee is celebrated in the **National Portrait Gallery's** touring exhibition **The Queen: Art and Image** (until 21 October 2012), combining the nation's best-loved portraits with some of the most bizarre. Elizabeth II survived that blip in public emotion after Diana died, when a resentful public considered her just too British to share their feelings, and now recession-hit Britain has moved swiftly into Jubilee celebration mood. The portraits range from the high art of **Pietro Annigoni**, whose full-length 1950s and 1969 paintings are shown together for the first time, to offerings by **Andy Warhol** – who has done an Elizabeth Taylor on her – and even **Gilbert and George**, who have had a go with a pair of Coronation crosses made up of miniature portraits.

Annigoni's earlier profile portrait of her in black queenly robes and regalia suggests the seriousness of the girl-queen. Elizabeth, barely three years on the throne, had already adopted the full trappings of majesty. The artist was inspired by the Queen's recollection of how as a child she liked to look out of the window to see people and traffic passing. The tender young trees in the background emphasise the youthful isolation of someone bred for power, yet still delicate and vulnerable. This painting in tempera, oil and ink on paper on canvas is a throwback to the Italian Renaissance, which had long fascinated the artist. In his companion portrait, her dignity, austerity and isolation seem complete.

Chris Levine's *Lightness of Being*, showing the Queen in ermine, crown and pearls and with her eyes closed, is derived

from one of over 10,000 individual images created by Levine with holographer Rob Munday in their work *Equanimity*.

Dorothy Wilding's 1952 photograph of the glamorous young queen in a black evening gown reminds us of the beauty she was.

The contemporary royal view is more relaxed, featuring family and public events. And then there is that bleak moment showing her staring at the floral tributes to Diana. **Thomas Struth's** recent portrait of the Queen and Duke at Windsor Castle combines formality with that warm feel of a couple who have grown old together.

Many art lovers are inspired by the sunsets and seascapes of our great British Impressionist **Turner**, but do we consider who inspired *him*? The **National Gallery's Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude** reveals as his mentor the late 18th-century art-



Lightness of Being by Chris Levine, 2007, print on lightbox, 1400 x 900 mm, courtesy of Mr Kevin P. Burke and the Burke Children Private Collection

ist Claude, whose well defined figures, usually from Greek myth, are dwarfed by landscape. Turner, who shared Claude's fascination with light, created more organic canvasses, his figures equally merging into the landscape. Claude's colours though are sharper – the blue water, ships, the white surf around the oars.

It is interesting to watch Turner experiment with the blending of light and landscape. But he had to reconcile Claude's pastoral French scenes with the English Channel, the climate differences, the sun and milky clouds. Claude's favourite Italian sites along the rivers Tiber and Tivoli inspired Turner's views of the Thames Valley and the industrialisation of the landscape. But his subtle, evanescent sunrises are the picture by which we know him best.

The Inspiration of Decadence Dodo Rediscovered: Berlin-London (1907-1998) opens at the **Ben Uri Gallery** on 22 June (to 9 September 2012). This is the major part of the exhibition **Dodo (1907-1998) – Ein Leben in Bildern**, which was staged at the Kunstbibliothek Staatliche Museen in Berlin earlier this year and reviewed in the April issue of the Journal.

REVIEWS

Brave men and women

HEROES OF THE HOLOCAUST: ORDINARY BRITONS WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
by Lyn Smith

Ebury Press 2012, hardback 272 pp.
ISBN 9780091940676

To paraphrase the English philosopher Edmund Burke, 'For evil to succeed it is only necessary for good people to do nothing.' Unfortunately, during the war the majority of the population in occupied Europe just stood by doing nothing and evil in its worst form almost succeeded. That it did not fully do so is due to brave people who risked, and sometimes gave, their lives to rescue Jews. This book covers the actions of 27 British people, mostly caught up in Europe as the Nazis advanced but also including those such as Frank Foley and Nicholas Winton who, just before the war, devoted their energies to successfully rescuing large numbers of Jewish children from Germany and Czechoslovakia respectively.

The first part of the book describes the rise of Nazism and the increasing threat to Jews even in pre-war Europe. One of those who recognised the threat at an early stage was a Quaker, Bertha Bracey, who not only helped many individual Jews to escape but was also one of the most effective and devoted workers in Bloomsbury House, the base of the Central British Fund for Jewish Refugees and of similar organisations. Incidentally, practically every Jewish refugee in Britain must at some time have had contact with Bloomsbury House and it is sad that, as far as I know, its story has not so far been told. Other rescuers were the sisters Louise and Ida Cook, who were great opera lovers and frequent visitors to Germany to attend opera performances. When they became aware of the danger to Jews, these visits became a cover for smuggling Jews, especially those concerned with the arts, to safety.

The main part of the book is divided into separate chapters covering the Channel Islands, France, Holland, Greece and Hungary. Each has an informative historical section describing the increasing effect of the Nazi occupation both on the general population and, more particularly, on the Jews.

In the case of the Channel Islands, the behaviour of the authorities and most of the population brings little credit to them, as many co-operated with the occupiers or just stood by. Fortunately,

there were brave individuals who risked their lives to save Russian slave labourers, escaped soldiers, and the few Jews who were there.

In a short review it is not possible to describe the stories of all the brave men and women mentioned in the book. The names of some of those involved have become well known since the war but, in most cases, only few people will have heard of them. As a British citizen in an enemy-occupied country, each of the rescuers would in any case have been in a difficult situation, either interned as enemy aliens or under surveillance. Each story is different but all have in common the need for courage, as anyone discovered helping Jews to escape or offering them hiding faced deportation, and probable death if caught.

An interesting aspect of the individual stories is that the author not only describes the actual wartime events, but in each case also describes the pre-war lives of those mentioned. There are also short sections covering the post-war careers of the survivors.

This is probably a book for dipping into, rather than reading straight through, as each of the accounts stands alone and well deserves being given consideration by itself.

The book is printed on Greenpeace approved paper, which is to be commended and does not in any way affect the clarity and legibility of the text. A minor criticism is that it does affect the quality of some of the photos.

George Vulkan

Exhibition

From humble photos to powerful images

'TRACES'

Austrian Cultural Forum, London

Reality is not simply there, it does not simply exist: it must be sought out and won Paul Celan, 1958

The discovery of two small family photographs in an old suitcase that had belonged to her great-uncle Hugo Hecker was the event that sparked photographer Julia Winckler's project to witness, seek out and preserve the story of Hugo's family, most of whom had perished in the Holocaust.

Winckler's quest became a remarkable story in itself – involving multiple photographic explorations, journeys to Cracow and Auschwitz, and research into historical records. Her scrupulous methods of visual and imaginative enquiry have brought the loss and absence of these lives into a new presence, and in this extraordinary exhibition Winckler's

story and the traces of Hugo Hecker's family are woven together into the most compelling visual poetry.

Robert Lowell said that 'A poem is an event ... not the record of an event.' This show is an event because it enables the viewer to re-realise loss and discovery, absence and presence. Winckler meticulously re-photographed each of the individuals from the original photos, in order to respect and resuscitate their identities. The resulting images are monumental in their realism and in their abstraction. The closer you approach them, the more they disappear, anew, into memory.

Winckler's work sings with love and art, and a delicacy and care that are rare and moving. She truly brings back to life some essence that had vanished. There is once again presence in the absence – in these haunting faces, their eyes dark and sunken, their expressions so recognisably and universally human. The appearance of these people, their disappearance – both are present, and somehow miraculously reintegrated. Several days after I saw the show, I was still waking each morning with the faces clearly in my mind.

The show is curated with great attention to detail, consistent with the entire project. I appreciated the fact that the images were not captioned. It made me use my eyes properly, relating one image to another rather than to a string of words.

How bold to tackle a theme as well documented as the disappearances of the Holocaust and how creative to approach it like this – making the private public, the individual universal, transforming the most humble photographs into images so utterly powerful.

Clare Best

Clare Best is a poet, writer and university teacher of Creative Writing. This is a version of a review that appeared on the online blog of The London Magazine.

Yearning, loss and hope – themes of a moving novel

THE LIST

by **Martin Fletcher**

New York: St Martin's Press/Thomas Dunne Books, 2011, hardcover 352 pp.

As the daughter of a German-Jewish refugee from the Nazis, I was surprised to have enjoyed reading this book, and at many levels and with varying emotions. Whilst the title is not very inviting, and barely does justice to the content, Martin Fletcher manages fairly quickly to invite the

reader to share with his characters, a young Jewish refugee couple from Austria, their manifold experiences of living in north-west London at the end of the Second World War. He names the couple after his parents – Georg and Edith – and locates the story where they were living at the time of the events he wishes to explore – Swiss Cottage/ Hampstead.

Another reason for my enjoyment is that I lived in this area over 20 years later, and when I was at the age of the couple whose lives are being explored. I am very familiar with all the landmarks the author describes, especially the Cosmo and Dorice restaurants. The story took on an authenticity, and it was pleasing that the author memorialised the area as one that hosted so many refugees so well.

The device Fletcher uses is a kind of diary, with dates for each chapter, opening with VE Day and the couple celebrating in Trafalgar Square the end of the war in Europe. The story unfolds over the subsequent seven months to the end of 1945, with the interweaving of events pertaining to several of the characters in Palestine in parallel with those in the rooming house near Finchley Road. While this enables a denouement that seems somewhat forced, it also enables Fletcher to provide an intriguing insight into the British politics, racism and, especially, anti-Semitism of the time. I particularly liked the way he interweaves the rising fascism in the politics of Hampstead with the broader politics of the British role in Palestine.

The heart of the novel, however, are the experiences of the young couple with Edith's pregnancy whilst they also hope upon hope to see again lost relatives, her father especially, and the welcome arrival of a close young cousin fresh from Auschwitz. Edith more than Georg is the emotional focus, and it is this balancing of feelings that becomes the centre of the novel. The 'list' is what Georg has – the names of all his and Edith's relatives in Europe – and he checks them off as he learns the fate of each of them.

Yearning, loss and hope are the themes of this moving novel. Fletcher succeeds in bringing to life again all these feelings that our parents, grandparents and others must have had and how those feelings live on in the birth of the post-war generation. His keen eye for detail and for the emotional rhythms of the time provides both a contemporary and a relevant account for today.

Miriam E. David

'At the heart of what we will continue to do is provide an umbrella for members,' Chairman tells AGM

Addressing the Annual General Meeting of the AJR at the AJR Centre's new home at Belsize Square Synagogue, Chairman Andrew Kaufman reminded members that they were gathered at the organisation's 'spiritual home' – the Centre had convened there 18 months before the opening of 15 Cleve Road in September 1987.

Andrew paid tribute to two individuals without whom there would not have been an AJR Centre: Paul Balint, whose charitable trust had enabled the organisation to purchase the Cleve Road property, and Ludwig Spiro, who had devised and carried through the project but had sadly passed away last year.

Andrew pointed out that in addition to the 'intimate and cosy setting' the Centre provided for 'great lunches and conversation and Kaffee und Kuchen', there were now, among other activities, an art appreciation class, a discussion group, a book club, and computer lessons.

Currently, the AJR, which had last year celebrated its 70th anniversary with a number of events, culminating in a moving Chanukah party at the residence of the German Ambassador, ran an 'amazing' outreach programme: it was holding numerous activities and events, including outings to the theatre and stately homes as well as regional get-togethers, and had a 'staggering'

44 groups dotted around the country.

Given the AJR's ageing membership, the area of its social workers' duties that had increased most in recent years were the assessments and applications for assistance from programmes supported by the Claims Conference. 'As the largest and only nationwide organisation working exclusively with Holocaust refugees,' Andrew said, 'we administer the entire grant process of funds from the Claims Conference, which last year amounted to £2.1m and delivered critical social, welfare and care services to hundreds of our members and victims of Nazi oppression.' For this 'tremendous achievement', he paid tribute to new Finance Director David Kaye and Head of Social Services Sue Kurlander and their respective teams.

The Chairman stressed that 'at the heart of what we will continue to do is provide an umbrella for you, our members': while many members could maintain their independence, sadly some no longer could. To continue to provide this life-changing assistance, he requested that members consider remembering the AJR in their wills.

Andrew described the *AJR Journal*, which, he said, had had for more than 66 years the critical responsibility of keeping members abreast of the organisation's activities and reporting on issues of interest to our community,

as 'our mouthpiece, agent provocateur, monthly history lesson and current affairs chronicler all rolled into one'.

In conclusion, Andrew thanked all staff and volunteers for their dedicated work.

AJR Treasurer and Vice-Chairman David Rothenberg reiterated Andrew's reference to the Claims Conference, which, he added, emphasised Homecare as the most important task of the funds allotted to us. It was good news that the German Government had recently agreed a new Homecare schedule for the forthcoming three years.

He too stressed that the AJR's resources were insufficient. The organisation's finances were 'in reasonable order', but it should be remembered that no fundraising was carried out – while he greatly regretted the passing of each and every member, the AJR remained heavily dependent on legacies.

Noting that the Claims Conference's regulations had led to a sharply increased paperwork load for social workers, David remarked that the AJR's Finance Director, David Kaye, had 'revolutionised' this process.

Members of the Management Committee who were standing for re-election were re-elected unanimously.

Child Survivors' book sells out

We Remember, an anthology of memoirs based on the experiences of 30 members of the Child Survivors' Association of Great Britain (a special interest group of the AJR) which was launched at the Wiener Library in February this year, has been so successful that a second edition has already been printed.

Each chapter, written by a different child survivor in their own words, provides insight into one family's experience during this terrible period in recent history. Coming from different nationalities, cultural, educational and social backgrounds, as well as families who practised a variety of religious observance, including those who barely identified themselves as Jews, their voices are all individual. All aged around



16 and under at the end of the war, even down to a baby born in Mauthausen concentration camp in April 1945, possibly the only thing they have in common is that they had at least one Jewish grandparent and for this were condemned to death.

The book covers children in hiding, children in ghettos, children on the run, even children in concentration camps. Geographically it spans The Netherlands and Belgium in the west to Kazakhstan and Siberia in the east.

We Remember (ISBN 978-1848767-874) can be ordered direct through the AJR/Child Survivors' website or through all good bookshops.

Joan Salter

RENYA, THE COBBLER'S DAUGHTER

The AJR was grateful to receive a cheque for £350, representing the proceeds from the production of *Renya, the Cobbler's Daughter* at Kenton Synagogue in commemoration of Yom HaShoah. Special thanks go to Robert Brody and Dudley Cohen, and to Michael Shocket for proposing the initiative and arranging the performance, which was presented by the Lorenz Ensemble.

Michael Newman

PAUL LEDERMAN

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Vienna unveiling

The Vienna Stones of Remembrance Association (Verein Steine der Erinnerung) invited me to take part in late April in the unveiling of a memorial stone to my mother, one of two unveilings in the Inner City district. The first ceremony was for Sofie Schlesinger, two of her daughters and their spouses; tribute was paid by her granddaughter, Elfie Kazarov, who as a teenager spent the war years with her mother hidden by sympathetic Viennese.

I was to speak with regard to my mother's memorial but, 48 hours before the event, on receiving the Verein's nicely designed brochure, I learned that the reason my mother had remained in the family home until her deportation was that it was part of a Jewish collection point housing her, three named and 30 unknown men and women, and two children. Almost all of them shared my mother's fate: deportation on 9 April 1942 to Izbica, where death awaited them.

Elisabeth Ben David-Hindler, the

Verein's secretary, having spoken about the impressive work done by the Verein, the largest of its kind in Austria, introduced



my family, who had come to support me.

After thanking the district, the Verein and the landlord, I improvised on the unknown, spoke about my mother and then turned to the present:

Yes, we know about the anti-Semitism in the first and third largest political party in Hungary – just 150 kilometers down the motorway from here. But in Europe today again asylum seekers are being sent back across the Mediterranean in damaged boats because of their race; children are being sent

to specially poor and bad schools because of their race; women are forcibly sterilised because of their race; families are only allotted flats unfit for human habitation because of their race.

Therefore I am proud to be here and hope that these stones will warn passers-by that today's racist curse can tomorrow be a beating-up and can lead to mass murder the week after next.

So let us do the dedication together. Please take your neighbour's hand and can we say together 'Niemals wieder/never again.'

Both the Verein and we were delighted that some ten residents came out of the block to join us. The present occupiers of our flat invited us to come and visit, and the several video and camera operators simply joined in. We were pressingly invited to a formal tea two days later. There we met several more elderly occupants and compared recollections on the Portier who kept children in order, and shared recollections of our primary school, which I attended pre-war and which the eldest resident attended immediately post-war. The warmth and kindness we encountered were striking.

Finally, the Verein asked me to conduct a 'living witness' session with a number of 13-14-year-olds in a co-operative middle school. This was a Q&A session about not knowing the language, making friends, losing friends, and feelings of separation. Until, that is, it was time for 'Last question please' – when a cheeky-looking boy asked 'How did you meet your wife?'

Francis Deutsch

Limmud in Berlin

At Limmud in Warwick last December, I picked up an eye-catching Berlin Limmud.de promotion card. I decided to go and offer a presentation: 'From a Berlin-born Kindertransport Kind'. It was also an excuse to spend time with some good friends in Berlin, who took me to a museum and a river trip on the Spree.

I learned that this was the fifth Limmud.de and that the previous four had been at a conference centre outside Berlin in beautiful grounds. After attending three huge Limmudim in Nottingham and the 2000+ Limmud in Warwick, this Berlin Limmud, with 500 participants, was a delight. The programme wasn't overloaded and the atmosphere in the Jüdische Hochschule was congenial with outside spaces for enjoying the sunshine. The lunch and supper breaks were two hours of no scheduled sessions and a variety of excellent food. With the coffee lounge open from 10 am to 10 pm, there was time and opportunity for leisurely networking, which, for me, is a very important ingredient. I met and talked with many more people than at any British Limmud. The programme was suitably varied and of high quality and there was a separate 'Bambini programme': Limmud is not Limmud without families, children running around enjoying life and singing.

The conference opened with a packed plenary session exploring *Erinnerungskultur* – where we are with the memory of the Holocaust today. There was simultaneous translation between

German, English and Russian to facilitate a lively Q&A session. The only other plenary I attended was with Dieter Graumann, the current leader of the Jewish community of Germany. Whenever I ask a question that includes Sinti and Roma victims, they are forgotten in the answer and this time was no exception, although Herr Graumann told me afterwards that he has a good connection with the Heidelberg Sinti and Roma Cultural Centre. He was one of the few speakers to speak in German clearly enough for me to understand every word. I even suggested to the organisers that it might be helpful to issue guidelines to all presenters about voice projection and speaking slowly and clearly.

As always, there were many sessions I would like to have attended but, of those in which I participated, three impressed me particularly: 'Rabbis for Human Rights in Israel' by Arik Ascherman; 'Radical Judaism' by Nathan Lopes Cardozo; and 'Holocaust Distortion and Germany's New President, Herr Gauck' by Efraim Zuroff. Ascherman recounted some moving experiences of rebuilding Palestinian homes after they had been needlessly bulldozed by the IDF, and I noted in his literature that our own Rabbi Danny Rich leads the British Friends of Rabbis for Human Rights. Cardozo was a huge draw with a spell-binding technique of 'serious humour'. Zuroff presented an alarming picture of deviously calculated 'moral equivalence' being developed in East European countries – aiming to equate

the Nazi genocide with Russian mass murder 'masterminded by Communist Jews' so as to claim the Jews were as much perpetrators as victims! As an East Berliner, Herr Gauck had been a signatory of a document agreeing with this theme.

I was not allowed to show the Israeli-made film 'Wilfrid Israel, the Rescuer from Berlin' as it was due to be premiered in Berlin on 3 June, but the flyers generated considerable interest in my own story. As Germany has some strict rules about films, I was allowed to show only five minutes of another film I had brought to show in my second session: 'Porrajmos: The Forgotten Nazi Genocide against the Sinti and Roma'. This evoked much interest in the currently intensified persecution of Roma and Travellers in Europe.

The one real problem for me was that the venue was on five floors. I imagine the teachers must be super-fit! But it meant a lot to me to have attended and contributed to a Jewish event in the city of my birth. My thanks for the hard work, cheerful helpfulness and initiative of the organising team that made it happen.

Ruth Barnett

INSIDE the AJR

Pleasures of belonging to the AJR

Among the pleasures of belonging to the AJR are the annual get-togethers. We meet, renew friendships, make new ones, and exchange views. Such a meeting took place in the communal hall in Edinburgh Synagogue. The get-together is an opportunity for members from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle, as well as outer lying areas, to meet up. Following addresses by Co-Director Michael Newman, Head of Social Services Sue Kurlander and Head of Volunteer Services Carol Hart, we joined discussion groups. After lunch, we listened to Hilary Rifkind explain the work of SCoJeC (the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities) and J. David Simons on his novels *The Credit Draper* and *The Liberation of Celia Khan*. As usual, the event was superbly organised by Agnes Isaacs.

Halina Moss

Bath/Bristol Desert Island Poems

Punctuated *Desert Island Discs*-style by poems he had written, Trevor Bedeman told us about his family, his career, his travels in Europe to research his family tree, and his current work in risk assessment.

Myrna Glass

Ealing AJR Update

Michael Newman gave us an update on the AJR and set out his vision for the future. He gave us details on how the AJR delivers its social and welfare services, its involvement in Holocaust education and refugee testimony, and its programme of activities.

Leslie Sommer

Sheffield CF 'Jewish Self-Help and Gentile Rescuers in Western Europe'
Professor Bob Moore's well rehearsed address gave rise to a lively Q&A session

Angels: 'A Really Worthwhile Visit'

We were totally astounded by this visit yet saw only a small part of Angels' vast collection of costumes, accessories and special effects (we particularly liked the foot warmers!). The range covered all historical periods and all countries: the 6.5 million items occupied in excess of 5 miles of racking. Our excellent guide Mark Rhodes explained how a dedicated staff of 100 worked with designers of stage, screen and TV to source, make, alter and fit the garments. A really worthwhile visit!

Hanne R. Freedman

which lasted well beyond the planned time – supported by Rachel Hunter's usual delicious refreshments.

Steve Mendelsson

Ilford Mid East Update

Daniel Bacall from the Israeli Embassy told us that, sadly, the peace process was at a standstill and that, due to the recent tumultuous events in the surrounding area, Israel's problems had intensified. However, Apple's arrival in Israel indicated the esteem in which the country is held in this field.

Meta Roseneil

'RECIPES REMEMBERED' Jubilee Celebration Lunch

The proceeds of the sale of the little book of pre-war European recipes entitled 'Recipes Remembered' funded this Union Jack-bedecked Jubilee celebration lunch organised by Susanne Green at the Marjorie and Arnold Ziff Community Centre, Leeds. It was attended by 36 AJR members from Leeds, Harrogate, York, Bradford, Shipley, Sheffield and Hull. Many of them had contributed recipes to the book and some of them spoke of their recipes, a few of which had been utilised to great effect in the preparation of dishes on offer.

The publication of the book had been funded by a legacy from the late Annie Perrez, an ardent member of Leeds AJR, whose daughter Felicia Fern's attendance was much appreciated, as was that of Pippa Landey, an AJR volunteer who collated and designed the book. Susanne also thanked Barbara Cammerman, a Second-Generation AJR volunteer who helped in the organisation of the day. Appreciation was expressed for the efficient and courteous way in which the meal was served.

A few copies of the book 'Oma Goodness – Austrian Magic in an English Kitchen', published in aid of Jessie's Fund, were displayed and were quickly sold. A reporter from *The Jewish Telegraph* took photographs and conducted a number of interviews.

To conclude, there was a sing-song of popular songs from the post-WW2 period, led by the undersigned with the accordion brought to England from Vienna by a 'Generation 0' refugee in 1939.

Marc Schatzberger

Pinner Preventing Shoplifting

David Wass, a retired senior police officer, told us how shoplifting is carried out and how to prevent it. Most shops have discreet security tags on their goods to prevent the goods being removed illegally. A very informative talk.

Paul Samet

Glasgow CF Afternoon Tea at the Lake

Our outing to James Hamilton Heritage Park in Stewartfield, East Kilbride was a wonderful afternoon spent socialising with friends, followed by a gentle stroll around the lake and a spot of sunbathing – most welcome after a long blustery wet winter.

Agnes Isaacs

Essex (Westcliff) Insider Knowledge

Lord Gold of Westcliff was due to attend the opening of Parliament the next day

OUTING TO REGENTS PARK OPEN AIR THEATRE

RAGTIME THE MUSICAL

Wednesday 15 August 2012
at 2.15 pm (finishes 5.00 pm)



book by Terrence McNally
music by Stephen Flaherty
lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
based on the novel Ragtime
by E. L. Doctorow

Tragic, poignant and ultimately triumphant, Ragtime is a modern classic. Set at the turn of the 20th century, this powerful musical unites three families separated by race and destiny. The timeless contradictions of wealth and poverty, freedom and prejudice, hope and despair, make this a theatre experience not to be missed.

If, due to bad weather, the performance cannot be completed, tickets will be exchanged for an alternative performance. If you are unable to make the alternative date arranged by the AJR, there is no time limit on exchanging your tickets so long as you keep your original tickets. No refunds will be given.

£18.00 per person

For further details, please contact
Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070
or at susan@ajr.org.uk

and we were regaled with the story of his endeavours to track down a suitable robe. Highly entertaining with insider knowledge of former clients such as Lord Sugar and Roman Abramovich.

Esther Rinkoff

Cafe Imperial Good Shot!

Our meeting being held on VE Day and Peter Wayne's 92nd birthday, Geoffrey Perry opened a bottle of champagne. But the cork flew into Peter's coffee cup and soaked us all. 'Good shot!', we exclaimed. Given that Geoffrey is known to have shot Lord Haw-Haw, we expected nothing less.

Hazel Beiny

Edinburgh CF The Perfect Hostess

Our topic 'Tales of the Unexpected' produced some hairy tales, proving you never know what's going to happen next. A light-hearted afternoon at the home of Francoise Robertson, who never fails to be the perfect hostess. Plus we had a special visitor: Dorothea Brander's daughter Allison.

Agnes Isaacs

St Johns Wood Jewish Trades in Regency London

David Barnett gave us interesting insight into Jewish trades in Regency London, many products including diamonds, sugar and vanilla. Poorer Jews were hawkers who went round the streets dealing in second-hand clothing.

David Lang

JULY GROUP MEETINGS

Ealing	3 July	Discussion Group – items that have a sentimental meaning
Glasgow CF	4 July	Outing to Falkirk Wheel
Ilford	4 July	David Wass: 'Shoplifting and How to Prevent It'
Nottingham	4 July	Social Get-together at home of Schwienings
Edinburgh CF	5 July	Meeting at home of Francoise Robertson
Pinner	5 July	Screening of <i>Double Exposure</i> with director Bea Lewkowicz
Cardiff	9 July	Screening of <i>Watermarks</i>
HGS	9 July	Sharon Barron: 'The Work of the Turgu Mures Trust'
Essex (Westcliff)	10 July	Shirley Jaffe: Poetry Readings
St John's Wood	11 July	Maurice Collins: 'Antiques Roadshow'
Brighton & Hove Sarid	16 July	Rabbi Charles Wallach
Edgware	17 July	Marilyn Greene: 'The Jewish Art Collection at the V&A'
Radlett	19 July	Anthony Grenville, Consultant Editor, <i>AJR Journal</i>
Welwyn GC	19 July	Joyce Sheard of WheelPower
Birmingham	22 July	Garden Party
Wembley	25 July	Social Get-together
North London	26 July	tba
Hendon	30 July	Joyce Sheard of WheelPower
Temple Fortune	31 July	Miriam Halahmy: 'A Place of Safety for Asylum Seekers'

DAY TRIP TO BRIGHTON

Thursday 9 August

**Trip to Ralli Hall
Lunch and Social Club**

Three-course kosher meal
(salt beef and latkes)

Drive/walk along the sea/beach

**Depart AJR Head Office at Stanmore
at 9.30 am, back around 6.00 pm**

£10.00 per person

For further details, please call
Lorna Moss on 020 8385 3070

This trip is subsidised by a kind donor

HGS 'Jewish Mother, Nazi Father'

Angela Schluter gave us a harrowing account of her mother's story, including how Angela was born in a Nazi hospital in Germany during the war. Her talk had us spell-bound.
Hazel Beiny

Edgware Career of a Photo-journalist

Fleet Street photo-journalist Dennis Hart spoke about his career in a fluent and most interesting way, recounting how he met people from the theatre and film world. We listened carefully even if to some of us such a lifestyle was alien.
Felix Winkler

Harrogate/York

Our meeting was mainly concerned with discussing the play *Karen's Way* (see review in June issue of Journal) and the Leeds symposium on music in Terezin (reviewed in April issue of Journal). The highlight of the latter for us was a 60-minute unscripted

speech by former Terezin, Belsen and Auschwitz inmate Zdenka Fantlová. Since one of our members who was present was also a former inmate, and another member's mother, a musician, was a Terezin prisoner prior to being deported to Auschwitz, the discussion had special relevance.
Marc Schatzberger

West Midlands (Birmingham) The Story of Eva Erben

David Lawson explained the difficulties of both translating and publishing the memoirs of the Czech girl Eva Erben. We could identify only too well with the young girl being drawn into the black hole of Terezin, then Auschwitz, then a death march, which she somehow survived.
Ruth Shire

Radlett An Even Gloomier View of the Financial Crisis

Tim Pike of the Bank of England spoke to us for the second time about the financial crisis. Last year he was gloomy, this year much more so. But Tim is an incisive and very clear speaker and his talk was extremely interesting.
Fritz Starer

Liverpool

Meeting at the home of Naomi Brown, we watched the very good DVD film *Stealing Klimt*, which stimulated a lively discussion and memories of old and present-day Vienna. We also had an excellent buffet lunch and a 'surprise' talk by Israeli visitor David Magen on educational trips to Israel. In addition we heard that the Liverpool Holocaust Memorial Book and DVD had been reprinted due to popular demand.
Eric Cohen

Meals-on-Wheels

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Tuesday 3 July 2012

William Kaczynski
'Fleeing from the Führer'

**PLEASE NOTE THAT LUNCH
WILL BE SERVED AT 12.30 PM**

Reservations required
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JULY ACTIVITIES

*The Computer Club will be taken by
Lisa Gehrlein on Tuesday mornings*

Tue 3	Computer Club Exercise with Jackie
Thur 5	French Conversation Book Club Exercise with Rosalie
Tue 10	Computer Club Exercise with Jackie
Thur 12	Exercise with Rosalie
Tue 17	Computer Club Exercise with Jackie
Thur 19	Exercise with Rosalie
Tue 24	Computer Club Exercise with Jackie
Thur 26	Art Club Exercise with Rosalie
Tue 31	Computer Club Exercise with Jackie

*All activities begin at 10.30 am. Admission is £7
to include lunch from 12.30 pm, or £2 for activity
alone. There is a nominal charge of £3 for a carer
accompanying a member for the day, including lunch.*

JULY ENTERTAINMENT

Tue 3	KT LUNCH
Thur 5	Lynda Stryan
Tue 10	Margaret Opdahl
Thur 12	Mike Marandi
Tue 17	Paul Toshner
Thur 19	Mick Ryan
Tue 24	William Smith
Thur 26	Paul Coleman
Tue 31	Ronnie Goldberg

Welwyn GC Shoplifting and Other Forms of Stealing

David Wass, a former Met police officer and security manager, spoke about shoplifting and other forms of stealing. He used props to show the length to which some people will go to steal such things as clothing and jewellery.
Myrna Glass

continued on page 16 ➔

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birth

We are pleased to announce the safe arrival of a great-grandson, Raphael Jonathan, on 11 June 2012 for longstanding AJR member Ann Munk – David and Jane Munk.

Forthcoming Marriages

Congratulations to Gaby and David Glassman, Andrea and Philip Goodmaker and Lorna and Peter Moss on the engagements of their sons.

Marriage

Congratulations to Diana and Donald Franklin on the marriage of their daughter.

Diamond Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to Lillian and Henry Werth, who are celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 6 July 2012.

Deaths

Newton, Ilse Ursula Margaret (née Caspari), born in Berlin on 10 October 1914, died on 21 May 2012 aged 97. She was much loved and will be deeply missed by son Anthony, daughter Irene, daughter-in-law Irene, son-in-law Lev and grandchildren Sophie and Alexander.

Stein, Lore Dr, born Berlin 1923, died at Clara Nehab House, London NW11 on 4 June 2012 aged 89. She was the daughter of the late Luise and Dr Ernst Rachwalsky, the widow of Gerard Stein, FRCS, and loving mother and grandmother to Margaret Levin, Robert and David Stein and their children.

CLASSIFIED

Lady in **Hendon** would like bridge players to play at her house. Please tel 020 8202 8617.

Dr Anthony Grenville's book *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain, 1933-1970* has been reprinted. For copies (paperback), write to Anthony Grenville at the AJR, enclosing cheque for £22.50 (incl. postage and packing) made out to the author.



ADVERTISEMENT RATES

FAMILY EVENTS

First 15 words free of charge,
£2.00 per 5 words thereafter

CLASSIFIED, SEARCH NOTICES

£2.00 per 5 words

BOX NUMBERS £3.00 extra

DISPLAY ADVERTS

Per single column inch 65mm £12.00

COPY DATE 5 weeks prior to publication

AJR CELEBRATION LUNCH

Sunday 9 September 2012



12 noon to 4.30 pm
at the Hilton Hotel, Watford



Further details will appear in our August issue



Following the *overwhelming* success of the Jubilee Street Party
AJR Day Centre is holding an

INDOOR OLYMPIC GAMES STREET PARTY

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OBITUARIES

Willy Field, 17 August 1920 – 12 May 2012

Willy Field (Hirschfeld) was born in Bonn in 1920, one of four children including his twin sister Thea. He had a very happy childhood, with many close family members.

His life was turned upside down when, following Kristallnacht and at the age of 18, he was arrested by the Gestapo and interned in Dachau. He suffered many terrible months there, but his immense strength of character and bravery helped him to survive the ordeal. He was one of the fortunate few to get out of Germany just before the war when he obtained a visa for England. Sadly, apart from Thea, no other immediate family member survived. But he kept their memory alive by often recounting his happy childhood memories.

Willy arrived in England with just a few shillings to his name. But, at the outbreak of the war, he was arrested as an 'enemy

alien' and transported to Australia aboard the infamous *Dunera*. Even in those circumstances, his positive personality came to the fore.

Over a year later, Willy, with many other internees, returned to the UK to join the British army. Only someone of his personality and drive would have taken this challenge and so quickly won the confidence and friendship of his fellow British soldiers. He became a tank driver and was the only survivor of his crew when his tank was hit by an enemy shell. Despite his injuries, he ended the war driving his new tank at the Victory Parade in Berlin in front of Churchill.

Willy always looked for the positive: even on the *Dunera*, his year in a camp in Australia and his time in the British army,



lifelong friendships were formed. In fact, the year in Australia shaped many events in his life – perhaps most importantly, a fellow internee introduced him to his future wife, Judy. They were married in 1949 and had a wonderful life together for over 63 years. At the same time, Willy embarked on developing his successful mail order watch and jewellery business, opening six shops in Holborn, Croydon and Cardiff.

Shortly after he was married, his sons David and Anthony were born and the family he had lost in Germany started to begin again. He was also introduced to the fourth love of his life (or maybe his first!) – his beloved Arsenal. He had a season ticket with the club for over 60 years and loved nothing better than an afternoon surrounded by family, sitting in the West Stand at Highbury. A couple of years ago, Arsenal manager Arsène Wenger wrote him a personal letter thanking him for his support.

Nothing gave Willy more pleasure than being with his sons David and Anthony, daughters-in-law Marilyn and Lilianne, and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He often said that it was his greatest triumph to have survived his many ordeals and to be surrounded by such a large and close family.

Many have paid tribute to the work Willy did in Holocaust education over the last 20 years. Remarkably, he bore no grudge and returned to Germany regularly to educate schoolchildren in Bonn. During this time, he made many great friends. His motto was 'One can forgive but never forget.'

He did similar work in the UK, speaking in Jewish schools and educating young people. His extraordinary life was recently documented by Helen Fry in the book *From Dachau to D-Day*.

Willy's legacy lives on in his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Everyone who met and knew him was instantly struck by his charm, warmth, humour and generous nature. He will be sorely missed.

Johanna Metzger-Lichtenstern, 8 April 1916 – 22 March 2012

Hanni Lichtenstern was blessed with a superb voice, which would surely have led to a mainstream singing career in a more peaceful era. But her partnership with her husband, Paul, in Jewish concerts provided enjoyment to highly appreciative audiences.

Hanni never knew she had a special gift for singing until a teacher at her kindergarten training course sent her to a professional singer for lessons. The youngest of three girls, she came from a modest background. Her Polish-born father ran a tobacco shop in Berlin, her mother was a seamstress. The family was Orthodox, influenced especially by her Latvian-born maternal grandmother.

Having left school in 1933, she spent a year in Denmark, preparing for kibbutz life. But this did not appeal and she returned to Berlin for a course under the pioneering educator Nelly Wolffheim. The course included musical training, which brought to light Hanni's incredible voice. She was introduced to the celebrated Jewish baritone Wilhelm Guttman, who taught her without charge.

She made her debut as a mezzo-soprano at a concert for the Jewish *Winterhilfe* relief campaign. She switched to soprano when she took her first major part, the title role of von Suppé's operetta *The Beautiful Galatea*. The piano accompaniment was provided by Vienna-born Paul Lichtenstern; they were engaged a few months later, in 1938.

Hanni and her family managed to leave Germany. She came to England on a domestic permit in July 1939, followed by Paul. They married the following March – only to be soon interned on the Isle of Man. There she became friendly with Dora Diamant, the last lover of Franz Kafka, who taught her

Yiddish songs.

The Lichtensterns, released in 1941, went to London. Bombed out, they moved to Hanni's grandparents in Bangor, then to Manchester, where Paul worked in a factory making army buckets, then back to London, where their son was born. They shared a flat with the late Rabbi Kokotek and his family in Porchester Terrace; the flat belonged to the sister of the Hon Lily Montagu, a co-founder of Liberal Judaism. Hanni again took singing lessons, this time from Sabine Kalter, another top Jewish singer forced out of Germany but able to end her career at Covent Garden in 1935-39.

Paul restarted his career as organist in Progressive synagogues and accompanied his wife at concerts arranged by organisations such as the Zionist Federation. In 1951 she sang at the Whitehall Theatre, the Rudolf Steiner Hall and the West End Great Synagogue. She also sang at the Ben Uri Arts Society and the Wigmore Hall and at events around the country and abroad.

When the war ended, Hanni taught at the religion school of the New Liberal Jewish Congregation, Belsize Square. At the urging of Charlotte Salzberger, wife of the synagogue's first rabbi, she created the children's choir. The choir was recorded by the BBC in 1964. She conducted it for 38 years.

She also founded an adult women's choir, Kol Rinah, formed from members of Pioneer Women (now Na'amat). The choir performed at annual services commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and Hanni sang



solo at the 1977 memorial service, performing Yiddish songs.

She stopped giving concerts in the 1980s when her husband and professional partner retired. But she kept her sharp mind active with teaching, studying and entertaining at old-age homes. She sang at Nightingale House but Otto Schiff House was closest to her heart, especially after Paul's death in 1990.

An ardent theatre-goer and gardener, Hanni stayed independent in her own home, though looked after by a carer in her final years. She is survived by her son, David, and his wife, Sita, two granddaughters, and two great-grandchildren.

Ruth Rothenberg



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson



My mother's recipes

It was only after our father died, almost ten years ago, that my sisters and I could begin to tackle the daunting task of going through all the books, papers and sundry objects that he and our mother had managed to accumulate in their roughly 20 years of life in Israel (after leaving Germany for England 40 years earlier). It marked the start of a year in which the three of us met at least once a week in the evenings after work, to spend a few hours sorting through the things in their flat and deciding how to dispose of them. In retrospect, I find that it fulfilled a dual purpose: helping us to clear out the flat and aiding us in coming to terms with the finality of our loss.

Among the items we came across were our mother's recipe books. These had been familiar objects in the kitchen ever since our childhood, first in our homes in London (Kilburn and Kingsbury) and later in their Jerusalem home. I for one had never looked inside the two small exercise books and, upon glancing through them, encountered a neat array of recipes, under several headings, in our mother's calligraphic handwriting. When

it came to deciphering them, however, we encountered the dual problem of the German language, of which we had only a limited understanding, and the nature of the handwriting, which was Gothic. There was no question of getting rid of those precious items, but what were we to do with them?

Our mother, who had attended cookery school in Berlin in the early 1930s, had been a superb cook, with baking as her special expertise. Her *challot* and rolls were renowned throughout the family as well as our parents' circle of friends, and we were eager to ensure that those precious recipes should not be lost to future generations. Our children also pressed us to make them available to them. This was easier said than done, however, and initially the books had to be set aside until the clearing up and sale of the flat was completed.

Thus it was that about one year later, together with one of my sisters (the other one lived further away and could not join us on a regular basis), I began weekly visits to a friend who was fluent in German and could decipher the Gothic

script. The three of us would sit around her computer, the friend would read out the German, the three of us would discuss what the words might mean, and with nimble fingers my sister would type the German into the computer while I hovered in the background, aiding and abetting. These sessions would last for a few hours each time, punctuated by coffee and cake, until eventually we would have to stop, our eyes and brains unable to take any more.

Eventually my friend moved away, fortunately only after the books had been deciphered. Then the work of translating the recipes began, first into English and then into Hebrew. This was also a major task and involved a great deal of checking of quantities, conversion of weights from pounds to grams, and so on. My sister and I spent many hours on that project, which over time became almost a regular weekly meeting once we had both retired from our regular jobs. The coffee and cake continued to flow, of course.

Finally, a few months ago, we felt it was ready. We had the book printed, adding an informative introduction as well as sundry family photographs. The resulting volume has been distributed to all her descendants as well as to friends and relatives. It seems to us to constitute a fitting memorial to our mother's personality and life.

INSIDE THE AJR *continued from page 13*

Manchester A Wonderful Story

Browsing among old books, David Berkley found a *Poesie Album* and discovered it was of Jewish origin. He traced its origins to a 90-year-old lady in Beer Sheva who had escaped from Nazi Germany and lived in England in her youth. He presented the book to her in person and described to us his emotional meeting with the book's owner. A wonderful story.

Werner Lachs

Glasgow Literary Meeting

Meeting at Erna Grace's home, we discussed Edmund De Waal's *The Hare with Amber Eyes*, following which we exchanged our own memories of times past, followed by a sumptuous present-day tea. Our next meeting will be devoted to a novel by local Jewish author David J. Simons: *The Credit Draper*.

Halina Moss

Brighton & Hove Sarid A Remarkable Story

David Lawson told the story of Holocaust survivor Eva Erben and the difficulties he had encountered in publishing her book *Escape Story*. Eva, born in Decin, Czechoslovakia, now lives in Israel. We were privileged to hear this remarkable story.

Ceska Abrahams

Temple Fortune A Special Coffee House

Otto Deutsch told us about a coffee house in Vienna that had been special to him and his family. The family being poor, the weekend was best for Otto, when they had chicken soup and meat on Friday night, attended synagogue on *shabbos* morning, and went to the coffee house on *shabbos* afternoon. Sadly Otto's parents and sister perished in the Holocaust. The best meeting we have ever had.

David Lang

Wembley From Land's End to John O'Groats

Helena Reid from the AJR's Social Services Department told us about the various services she and her colleagues provide. Social workers pay visits from Land's End to John O'Groats seeing members whenever needed, Helena said.

Myrna Glass

Hull

I showed off my new computer skills and gave a slide show of the AJR trip to London, which had been most interesting and very well organised. Most of the afternoon we discussed future events, i.e. the 'Recipes Remembered' Jubilee celebration in Leeds. We had a lively discussion on the 'Thank You UK' theme of the annual AJR Northern Groups get-together in Manchester and, of course, the proposed annual holiday in St Annes.

Veronika Keczkcs