

A wealth of memoirs

The number of memoirs and autobiographies by former refugees from Hitler published over the past two decades is rapidly approaching a flood. Partly the result of a natural tendency for people who have reached a certain age to commit their memories to print, this also reflects the huge interest in the Holocaust that has developed in recent years. In this field, women outnumber men – in part for simple reasons of longevity. Women refugees lost the status, security and settled lifestyle that they had enjoyed in their native lands. However, the experience of forced emigration and the demands of building new lives in Britain sometimes brought about a reversal of roles between husbands and wives, as the latter had perforce to take on tasks and responsibilities that had in Germany or Austria fallen to the lot of their menfolk.

Two recently published autobiographies are by female refugees notable for their highly distinguished careers. Though these books could easily fall into the familiar category of the ‘refugee success story’, they do not shy away from the trauma of forced emigration or from the difficulties that beset young refugee women starting out on careers in post-war Britain. The first of these remarkable women is Dame Stephanie (Steve) Shirley, born Vera Stephanie Buchthal in Dortmund in 1933, who came to Britain on a Kindertransport in 1939. She became a highly successful and pioneering entrepreneur, setting up her own company in the early days of information technology, but then proceeding to divest herself of much of her wealth, as one of Britain’s leading philanthropists; it is a rare business magnate whose pride in being listed in the Sunday Times Rich List is exceeded by her pleasure at dropping out of it as a result of charitable donations.

Dame Stephanie’s changes of name reflect two of the principal challenges that confronted her. The first was that of the refugee from Nazism who has to adapt

to a new country; this she met in 1951, on taking British citizenship, when she changed her surname from Buchthal to Brook and started using her middle name as her first name. She thereby committed herself ‘to making a success of my life as Stephanie Brook, Englishwoman’ (Shirley



Dame Stephanie Shirley

is her surname by marriage). But her transition to Britishness was by no means unproblematic. In the absence of their parents, whose relationship had broken down, she and her elder sister Renate were brought up in the rural West Midlands by a British family, the Smiths. Her mother took a job in distant Shropshire and her father returned to Germany alone after the War. Whereas Renate never felt settled in Britain, Stephanie flourished: she developed a love of mathematics at school and moved easily into the world of IT in the dawning computer era.

The second challenge was the brute sexism that dogged her career. This led her to sign her letters ‘Steve Shirley’, in the belief that it would enable her to promote her company free from the stereotype of female inferiority that infected the business world. The litany of sexist slurs and inequities she encountered is long and, for men, shaming. When in the 1960s Dame Stephanie had the idea of creating a business by utilising

the skills of women who were homebound by family responsibilities but could work part-time as computer programmers, the Inland Revenue concluded, with truly magnificent idiocy, that one of them must be earning her income by running a brothel from her home.

The book relates how Dame Stephanie’s entrepreneurial drive led her to found her company, Freelance Programmers, whose launch on the Stock Exchange as FI Group in 1996 made her a multi-millionaire. What makes this impressive achievement even more remarkable is that she was throughout struggling to care for a severely autistic son, a harrowing experience that at one stage drove her to a nervous breakdown; her son died in 1998, aged 35. Projects connected with autism rank high among the beneficiaries of her charity. Her autobiography, *Let IT Go*, published by Andrews UK in 2012, is the record of a life full of ambition, vision and generosity, qualities that one may perhaps attribute, at least in part, to the German-Jewish values she inherited.

Lisl Klein’s autobiography, *Nobody Said It Would Be Easy*, was published by the Book Guild in 2012. It follows the author’s life from her early childhood in Karlsbad in the German-speaking Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia, where she was born in 1928, to her arrival in Britain in November 1938, her years as a penniless and alienated refugee child often separated from her parents, and on to her distinguished career pioneering the practical application of social science in the workplace. Klein, at ten, was older than Stephanie Shirley when she left the country of her birth and she found it correspondingly more difficult to adapt to the abrupt change in her circumstances. She too was unable to live with her parents and, unlike Dame Stephanie, experienced a bewildering and mostly unhappy series of temporary ‘billets’. She also felt keenly the separation from her relatives left behind:

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the figure of her cousin and childhood companion Peter, who died at Auschwitz aged 15, haunts her memory.

Although Klein passed successfully from grammar school to university, she had difficulty as a young adult in finding her place in British post-war society. Her father had died during the War, while her mother struggled with poverty and mental instability. Klein had inherited her values from her admired aunt Fanni, a prominent Social Democrat. Those values influenced the spirit of the work that she later undertook, attempting to measure the impact of new technologies on the employees who had to work with them and to optimise that impact, reasoning that any enterprise that took its workforce into account when it introduced technological changes could only benefit thereby. Her 'life-long love affair with industry' began during her first, humble jobs in small firms in the early 1950s. She developed a fascination with diagnosing the organisational structures and deficiencies of enterprises, which led to a distinguished career devoted to improving the productivity of firms like Esso (ExxonMobil). She worked for 19 years at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, then founded her own Bayswater Institute in 1990.

In Britain, the social culture of the Social Democratic refugees from the Sudetenland was restricted to a very small circle. As Jews and as Social Democrats, Klein's family had been a minority among the German-speaking population of the Sudetenland, most of which went over to the Nazis with enthusiasm. But these ethnic Germans themselves formed only a minority among a Czech majority; when they were expelled en masse after the war, the entire German-speaking culture of the Sudetenland was erased. But by then the Holocaust had also created an unbridgeable gulf between Germans and Jews. These tensions and conflicts of identity echo through Klein's memoirs. Only when she unexpectedly acquired the Richmond Park Hotel in Karlsbad in the 1990s, as part of the belated process of restitution by the Czech government, was she able to re-establish a fruitful connection with her native town.

In complete contrast to these two autobiographies stands the diary of Sophie Roth, written during the War and published in 2012 by the Theodor

Kramer Gesellschaft in Vienna as *Für mein Schurlikind: Tagebuch 1940-1944*. Edited with exemplary devotion by the historian Evelyn Adunka, the diary was written under the crushing impact of the death of Sophie Roth's younger son Richard Georg, known as Schurli, who had arrived in Britain with his parents in late August 1939 already terminally ill with cancer; he died on 18 October 1939, a few days short of his eleventh birthday. Sophie Roth, née Landau, had been born in Vienna in 1901 and married Norbert Roth in 1921. The couple also had an elder son, Erwin (later Edwin), born in 1924.

Sophie Roth began her diary on 26 August 1940, the first anniversary of the family's last full day in Vienna, and the subsequent daily entries recall milestones in the last weeks of her younger son's short life: their departure from Vienna, the journey across Germany and Holland, their admission to Britain, and their arrival in Manchester. The grief of a bereaved mother structures the diary as she recalls each day what she and Schurli had been doing a year ago, until she reaches the anniversary of his death, followed by what would have been his twelfth birthday. The diary thus becomes a means of expressing, and perhaps to some extent softening, the pain of her loss; even so, that pain comes across with almost unbearable intensity. The entries are punctuated by repeated air raids, while Roth's sense of loneliness is greatly accentuated by the absence of her husband and elder son, interned as 'enemy aliens', which left her to fend alone in her time of greatest need. This is a deeply moving document, which sets the individual tragedy of a family against the broader background of the sufferings and hardships of war and emigration.

Anthony Grenville

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KRISTALLNACHT 75TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

AJR

**Wednesday 6 November 2013,
2 pm at Imperial War Museum
North, Manchester**

**Guest Speaker: David Cesarani,
Research Professor of History,
Royal Holloway College, University
of London, and a leading historian
on the Holocaust**

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the service – for catering purposes, please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

AJR

**Thursday 7 November 2013,
2 pm at Belsize Square
Synagogue**

**Guest Speaker: Carl Davis,
the world-famous conductor and
composer who has written a new work
entitled *The Last Train to Tomorrow***

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the service – for catering purposes, please contact Karin Pereira on 020 8385 3070 or at karin@ajr.org.uk

**LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AJR**

Saturday 9 November 2013, 6.30 pm

**Service of Remembrance and
Commemoration**

Please contact Joanne Caplan on 020 7432 1283 or at rabbispa@ljs.org

ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING Annual Meeting of the Association of Jewish Refugees

**Tuesday 5 November 2013
at 11.00 am at the AJR Paul
Balint Centre, Belsize Square
Synagogue, London NW3 4HX**

**If you would like to attend,
please reserve a place by
calling Head Office on
020 8385 3070**

**Lunch, if required,
£7 – must be ordered and
paid for in advance
(please telephone
020 7431 2744)**

As we near the end of our first year as the newly constituted charitable organisation, the meeting will be an informal opportunity for the Directors (Trustees) and Executive to report on our activities and plans and respond to your questions about the services we provide.

A friend of mine always thought of herself as the world's worst navigator – until she suffered *my* navigation. No one, but no one, beats me.

To say that I have no sense of direction is the understatement of the century – the 20th since the 21st is still too young to comprise the full extent of my ineptitude in that area. I have been known, to the amusement of my friends, to get lost on my way from the ladies to our table in a restaurant.

The trouble is that I can't tell right from left. Even if I tell myself sternly that, since I have been turning right and then left to get to a certain place I would have to turn left and then right on leaving it, I still find myself walking in the wrong direction on my way out.

I've been to a friend's place in a private road in Primrose Hill dozens of times and still have trouble finding her house. Admittedly, the numbering there is a bit confusing but still! After my visit she always takes me to my bus stop to make quite sure I don't end up in Buxtehude (the back of beyond), as we would have said in Vienna.

In my driving days I was alright – well, fairly alright – on a route with which I was thoroughly familiar, but if – God forbid – there was a diversion, I just felt like stopping the car and bursting into tears. Fortunately this didn't happen very often and, when I had passengers, they usually kept their cool and pointed me in the right direction.

Geography has never been my strong suit. I am forever grateful to our primary school teacher who told us always to think of 'wo' (where) when we consulted a map: this would remind us that Westen (west) was on the left and Osten (east) on the right. And since Edinburgh is up north and London down south, I know where to

Where am I?

find those cardinal points. I also know that trains from Paddington head west because they go to the West Country and those from Victoria south because they go to the South Coast. The rest is ignorance.

I still remember that terrible geography lesson at school - I must have been 13 at the time and in the 4th form of the Gymnasium – when Dr Ahammer, who taught us history and geography and was also our form master, asked me to point out a mountain range on the map of Turkey in front of me. After giving it some thought, I said 'The Dardanelles'. This reduced him to temporary speechlessness but caused much merriment among my classmates. When Dr A had recovered he asked a girl to fetch a boy, a second-former, from his class, with the attendant master's permission. Needless to say, the bright little boy not only knew all there was to know about the Dardanelles but could reel off all the mountains in Turkey, which is more than I can do to this day. The Dardanelles, apparently, are a strait. I'm still a bit hazy as to the exact function of a strait. Who needs straits, anyhow?

I've never been able to live that one down. Decades later, in the South of France, my friend Renée reminded me, laughingly, of my *faux pas*. In fact, so hilarious did she find it that she even related it to her husband. But he, bless his heart, thought it easy to mistake the Dardanelles for mountains.

Well, I still think the Dardanelles *should* be mountains. They *sound* like mountains, like the Dolomites, and *they* are – *aren't* they?

Edith Argy



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80 people had a wonderful day, enjoying lunch and concert with our guest artistes.

Copenhagen revisited

I recently spent ten days in Copenhagen along with my wife Jacqueline. I lived there before and during the War and have been back several times to see the family and spend holidays there. This time, apart from the 'must sees', we were particularly interested in Jewish Copenhagen and, before we left, we got in touch with the Progressive community. They have been going for about five years, holding their Shabbat evening and morning services in a Unitarian church in the town centre. This is not far from the harbour, where 70 years ago my father and I lay in the hold of a fishing boat waiting to be ferried to the safety of neutral Sweden as German officers patrolled nearby.

We were about 20 worshippers at the Friday night service. This was led by a young lay leader, a female Jewish-American former opera singer who had visited Copenhagen some time before, heard of the group, and they have been together ever since. After the service a number of us went for a meal at a nearby restaurant. This is a monthly event. We learned that Rabbi Julia Neuberger had come over to speak to the group some time ago, that Rabbi Charles Middleburgh of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue visits two or three times a year, and that a lady at our table in the restaurant had a daughter who is a rabbi in a north-west London Progressive synagogue. The congregation had recently been granted the right to conduct burials and marriages.



The author with current receptionist Christopher Beck Jensen in the Hellerup Park Hotel, where he himself worked as a receptionist during the War. Christopher's grandfather worked for the Resistance and was imprisoned by the Germans for a time

Saturday morning we spent at the Orthodox Synagogue, where Rabbi Bent Lexner initiated three *b'nei mitzvot* – one boy and two girls. This beautiful synagogue was built in the 1830s. It suffered an arson attack in the early 1930s and a neo-Nazi bomb in 1979 but was not greatly damaged. In 1933 King Christian X and Queen Alexandrine attended a thanksgiving service on the synagogue's 100th anniversary and the royal family has attended services there on several occasions.

The Jewish Museum, which due to tourism is also open on Saturdays, is small and was designed by Daniel Libeskind, who also designed the Jewish Museum in Berlin. It has an unusual sloping floor and depicts the history of the Jews in Denmark.

We also wanted to visit the Resistance Museum. Unfortunately all we could see was a blackened ruin as it had recently suffered an arson attack and had been completely gutted. Neo-Nazis are again suspected as there was a debate in the country as to whether to add the other side of the picture - that of Danish Nazis who collaborated with the Germans.

The year 2013 is one of several anniversaries, one of which, this October, is the 70th anniversary of the rescue of the Jews of Denmark.

What made the German occupiers wait three and a half years to introduce measures against the Jews, resulting in a full-scale raid on Jewish homes and other locations where Jews might be found?

Since the outbreak of the War I had been working as a receptionist in a suburban hotel in Copenhagen. In the early hours of 9 April 1940 I was awakened by the almighty roar of aircraft overhead – a colleague told me Denmark had been invaded by Germany. Having fled Nazi Germany only a couple of years before, I became increasingly fearful for my and my family's safety but my fears were soon calmed: in a hastily convened meeting with the king, the government, realising armed resistance would be futile, accepted the Germans' surrender terms, which were not at all onerous.

Germany had no quarrel with the Danes but, being at war with England, it needed control of the Danish (and Norwegian) west coast – as long as the Danish government could guarantee unhindered movement of troops and armaments, Germany would not interfere in Denmark's internal affairs. This meant king, government, parliament, army, police and judiciary retained their positions, governed by the Danish constitution, which, among other things, guaranteed freedom of religion. Thus we Jews could follow our daily lives as before.

The Germans in control, familiar with the feelings of the Danes, were aware that any interference in the Jews' affairs would provoke unrest among the population, something they wished to avoid.

Thus, at the beginning of the occupation, life in Denmark went on as if nothing had changed. But gradually there developed an anti-German feeling among the population which resulted in acts of sabotage in factories working for the Germans and in the derailment of German trains by the Resistance.

Increasingly the Danish government had to walk a tightrope between not offending the Danish popular mood and assuring the Germans they were able to keep in check any unfriendly actions. However, after a very serious act of sabotage, the Germans made particularly draconian demands to the government to deal with the matter. The government, conscious that agreeing to these demands would alienate them in the eyes of the people, rejected them. The Germans' reply was 'If you can't control the situation, then we will!' On 29 August 1943 the Danish government resigned, the army was confined to barracks, and the occupying forces took over the running of the country.

Several high-ranking politicians and others, Chief Rabbi Max Friediger among them, were arrested and taken to Germany and a curfew imposed: everyone had to be indoors after dark. The abrogation of rule by the Danish constitution had now opened the door to making Denmark *judenrein*. It had taken a long time before the Germans dared to take measures against the Jews.

Not everybody in the German establishment in Copenhagen was sympathetic to this action: the army wanted to have nothing to do with it so that the Gestapo, who would be in charge of the operation, had to request additional personnel from Berlin.

Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz, an attaché in the German embassy, opposed the action against the Jews. Head of the naval section in the embassy, he had been given the date on which the ships would arrive to deport the Jews to Theresienstadt. He quickly went to the leader of the Social Democratic Party, who immediately informed the head of the Jewish community that what it had believed impossible – an action against the Jews – was now imminent. Through Duckwitz's action some 7,000 Jews – over 95 per cent of the Danish Jewish population – were saved. In 1971 Yad Vashem named him Righteous among the Nations.

Everybody had to be warned immediately not to stay in their own homes. The warning was given by Rabbi Marcus Melchior in the Great Synagogue on the eve of the Jewish New Year in 1943.

When in the middle of the night of

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HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO RAYLEIGH?



Well, have you? Do you know where it is? Have you ever heard of a place called Rayleigh?

I expect there are some people reading this who can answer yes to these questions, but the majority of those to whom I have mentioned it were as ignorant as I was. It was with some surprise that I was asked to go to Rayleigh to speak at a Holocaust memorial event. I found that Rayleigh was a small village in Essex just outside Westcliff and Southend, which I do know. On arrival at the Mill Arts and Events Centre, where the event was to take place, I was told that before we were to start there would be a short service at the Holocaust Memorial. What – a Holocaust Memorial right here in

Rayleigh? Yes, just outside the hall.

I put my coat on (it was January after all) and followed the crowd to a memorial standing in a small flowerbed just outside the building. To my amazement, I saw three steel plates 120 mm (47 inches) high, 40 cm (16 inches) wide and 1 cm (0.4 inches) thick embedded behind each other in concrete about 30 cm (12 inches) apart mounted on a marble plinth with two wooden beams passing through them. Each had a 30 cm (12 inches) diameter hole in it. The first plate had nothing in the hole; the second had a triangle in it with the apex pointing down; the third had another triangle with the apex pointing up.

A plaque mounted on the concrete reads 'In Memory of Victims of Persecution'. A second plaque, next to the Memorial, contains the artist's comments on his work:

The stone plinth represents a solid foundation upon which society rests.

The 3-finish concrete slab reflects the ability of man to repair what has been damaged, but also reminds us that we can destroy the perfect finish.

The 3 steel posts in alternative finishes represent the technological progress of man and reflect the diverse and varied state of development throughout the world.

The rough sawn and smooth posts running through the structure, while reflecting the ability of man to turn raw materials into finished objects, also demonstrate the unity of our man-made and -shaped society by organic living materials.

The Star of David is only viewed in full when standing directly in front of the memorial. This is a reminder of the Holocaust. The fragmentation of this iconic symbol when viewed

from any other angle reflects the separation and fragmentation caused by persecution.

The horizontal elements of the concrete slab and its relationship with the constancy of the plinth is to remind and encourage us that from the solid basis of society many developments can shape and reshape society, but not always for the good.

The vertical steel plates reflect a straight line upwards, a symbol of seeking a higher power, regardless of faith or religion.

The planting around the memorial is to remind us that the living world has the ability to grow in even the most barren places and is usually the first visible step to reconciliation following conflict and persecution.

The structure is orientated on an East-West axis, reflecting the rising and setting of the sun. Being able to view the structure from each key compass point reminds us that we all have different perceptions and views on life, depending on our positions and faiths.

Mark O'Neill, Architect

It may be entitled 'A Memorial to Victims of Persecution' and so not specifically or exclusively for the Holocaust. But for me, it is the most moving Holocaust memorial I have seen in Europe. It certainly beats the small memorial stone in Hyde Park - which is so placed that most visitors never see it. So, with great respect to its residents, why is it in Rayleigh? How many people get to see it? I have no answers to these questions.

Harry Bibring

↩ Copenhagen revisited *continued*

3 October I had to answer a call on the night bell of my hotel, I wondered who might be out there, disregarding the curfew. Opening the door, I found myself confronting a Gestapo man, accompanied by a Danish Nazi who had volunteered as a police assistant. They wanted to know whether any Jewish guests were staying in the hotel and whether I knew that, for the Germans, Jews were defined not only by their religion but also by the ethnic origin of their parents and grandparents. I replied that I had heard of this Aryan concept and, although I knew that a couple of Jewish families had checked in during the day, there were none there now. We exchanged a few more words and they left. I went up to my room, pondering what to do next. The rest of the night I heard trucks pulling up and

leaving every few minutes. I wondered which of them might be for me.

In the morning I heard that an open space next to the hotel had been used as an assembly point for those Jews who had been unlucky and been caught. I left the hotel in the morning, having been offered a place in which to sleep by a lady working in a confectionery shop adjacent to the hotel. I managed to get in touch with my family and heard they were all well.

The headlines of the following morning's papers ran 'Now that the Jews have been eliminated from the public life of the country there is no longer any need to keep the Danish army interned.' The army officially refused to accept its freedom at the cost of the Jews but they were now free to go and the king, as head of the army, resumed residence in the royal palace in Copenhagen.

The Resistance had been busy too. Temporary shelter and hiding places

were found for thousands of people and transport was organised to get us to the safety of neutral Sweden. The Swedish government had expressed willingness to accept anyone who could come and within a few weeks the vast majority of us were in Sweden. Within days my father and I boarded a shipping vessel and, after a wait of several hours, the skipper found an opportune moment to run us across the water to Sweden, where we were most heartily welcomed.

There is a *midrash* which says that the Creator sometimes creates the cure before He creates the disease. In one of the wars between Denmark and Sweden in the 17th century, Denmark lost what has been southern Sweden ever since. Had Denmark not lost those lands to Sweden, the Jews of Denmark would have had no place to flee to. *Gam su l'tovah* – this too is for the best.

Walter Goddard



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

CORRECTIONS

Sir – Dare I correct the mighty Anthony Grenville? He has obviously not been going to the theatre very much recently. Terence Rattigan's reputation has indeed 'recovered from his fall in critical esteem 60 years ago'. In the last couple of years I have seen *The Browning Version*, *Cause Célèbre*, *Flare Path*, *After the Dance* and *The Winslow Boy*, all in the West End or at the National or the Old Vic and all to great critical acclaim. I missed *The Deep Blue Sea*, which was also revived. Tony should look at the theatre guides more often! What's more, may I assure him that *The Norman Conquests* trilogy by Alan Ayckbourn is hilarious and he shouldn't have given up after the first play!

It is with far less trepidation that I correct Leslie Baruch Brent. He attacks Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's 'Letter from Israel' on the grounds that it is 'hugely biased'. Yet he cannot see that *The Guardian* and its sister newspaper *The Observer* are hugely biased against Israel. Both these newspapers are in favour of a trade boycott with Israel and are against Israel's even taking part in international sports events. What punishments has Mr Brent's beloved newspaper ever suggested should be meted out to Hamas or Hezbollah?

As for the BBC's fairness – all I will say to him are two words: Orla Guerin!

Blinkering yourself with *The Guardian* and reading the tabloids at the hairdresser's is not good for you, Mr Brent. You may be a scientist and you may think you are objective, but you are clearly not. Try reading *The Times* or *The Daily Telegraph* for a pleasant change!

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts

'ANTI-ISRAELI BIAS'

Sir – We are contemporaries: he left on the first Kindertransport from Berlin as a 13-year-old; I was 14 when I left on the first Kindertransport from Vienna a week later. In subsequent years, each of us gained a PhD from University College London, in the 1950s each of us held a lectureship there (he in Zoology, I in Physiology), and in 1990 both of us became Professors Emeriti at the end of our formal academic careers.

So, whenever the *AJR Journal* carries a letter over the signature of Leslie Baruch Brent, I metaphorically raise my hat to my most eminent quasi-*Doppelgänger* and read what he has to say. Usually I find myself at odds with his point of view and sometimes I am pained by it. But of course I respect his right to express his opinion and hitherto I have not felt impelled to react. However, Professor Brent's latest letter is not just an opinion piece. Rather, it inveighs against Dorothea Shefer-Vanson for having written a 'myopic, ill-informed and hugely biased article'. As I invariably enjoy Dorothea's 'Letter from Israel', I hastened to re-read that surprisingly offending piece.

Like my fellow scientist, I try 'to view our sad world as objectively as possible'. But, in my eyes, Leslie's allegations do not stand up. For one thing, Dorothea's letter was in the main a report of a lecture given by Dr Alan Mendoza under the title 'Understanding Delegitimation: The War Against Israel in Contemporary Britain'. So Professor Brent would have more properly tilted his verbal lance against Dr Mendoza. Besides, Ms Shefer-Vanson expressed her own opinion in the mildest possible terms, viz 'The version of Israel that is portrayed by the media in England tends to be skewed, probably because of the British predilection for supporting the "underdog", in this case the Palestinians'; and '[T]he situation is not a straightforward black-and-white one, with the good guys on one side and the bad guys on the other'. Hardly stuff that deserves the brickbats handed out to her, I think!

I do not presume that I can influence the outlook of anyone who relies on *The Guardian* for news about Israel. As an ardent Zionist, blessed with a goodly clutch of great-grandchildren in Israel, I would surely be regarded as a compromised character were I to try. But just in case Leslie Baruch Brent and any who shares his opinion are unaware of the site, may I respectfully draw attention to *Honest Reporting*, the non-aligned watchdog that monitors the news for bias, inaccuracies or other breaches of journalistic standards in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Professor Otto Hutter, Bournemouth

FATEFUL JOURNEY

Sir – The major celebration of the Kindertransport is over, with publicity to a motley collection of celebrities, some of whom weren't even born when we entered on our fateful journey.

On coming to Britain, most of us became *de facto* orphans in a strange country with a foreign language and I have the feeling we were never fully accepted by the English Jewish community – otherwise why the Association of Jewish Refugees, a refugee synagogue in Belsize Park, and separate welfare organisations?

Naturalisation was not automatic on joining the Forces and, I believe, a very important person mooted the idea of sending us all back when the War was over.

How different in the USA, where refugees past and present are welcomed and integrated into the community and are accepted as Americans!

I will shortly be going to Germany, where I have been invited to speak to schoolchildren, not for the first time. The young people of that country need to hear from somebody who was an eyewitness to the Kristallnacht pogrom. Most of us are now in our 80s or 90s so there is not much time left for them to listen to and learn from somebody who was there at the time.

Ernest G. Kolman, Greenford, Middx

NOT AMUSED

Sir – Ruth David's report on the Kindertransport Reunion event sounded at times like an amusing ego-trip – meeting the German Ambassador's wife waiting for the loo and not forgetting the Bundesverdienstkreuz awarded to her. Finally, having to hide behind her son (unsuccessfully) as Prince Charles came towards her and seized her hand.

I am, however, not amused by her endorsement of the inane remark that the Kinder 'had done more for Britain than any other immigrant group ever in the UK.'

I am still meeting with our rapidly dwindling group of War veterans and it would never occur to us to evaluate our efforts and denigrate those of other sections of the refugee community.

Peter H. Wayne, London W11

'WE MUST SAVE THE CHILDREN!'

Sir – I am continuing to research for a book on non-Jewish responses to the Kindertransport refugee crisis in the UK. A few AJR members did get in touch with me about their non-Jewish foster parents and their stories are truly inspiring.

I would like to urge others to tell me about their experiences – good and bad – with English families, schools or hostels. Many of them were 'quiet heroes' and I would like to piece their stories together and, if possible, contact relatives

(perhaps siblings) of those non-Jews who heeded Greta Burkill's cry 'We must save the children!' Please contact me at mike.levy82@gmail.com

Mike Levy,
Keystage Arts and Heritage, Cambridge

KINDERTRANSPORT LEADERS

Sir – Recent issues of your *AJR Journal* have understandably been devoted to the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport. However, I didn't see a single word about the young Jewish men and women who led these transports but were allowed to do so as long as they returned. I knew a young Austrian woman in London in 1939 whose brother led some of these transports. However, he always had to return home to Vienna for the Nazis threatened to kill his family if he failed to return. I wonder if any study has been made of what happened to some of these brave young Jews.

Dr T. Scarlett Epstein OBE, Hove, Sussex

NO ALTERNATIVE

Sir – In your October issue Michael Sherwood is 'curious as to the motivation of individuals in returning to Germany after the 39-45 war.' There is a very simple answer – they had nowhere else to go.

A dear cousin of mine, Gusti Jassy, turned back on her way to the station to join a Kindertransport as she didn't want to leave her widowed mother alone in Berlin. When life in Berlin became too dangerous they went into hiding and were able to survive until 1944, when they were denounced and sent to Ravensbrück.

My cousin managed to keep my aunt alive and, after the War, in a DP camp, met and married a fellow survivor, Alex Neumark, together with whom she was eventually repatriated to Berlin. Not wishing to remain in Germany longer than necessary, as soon as they were able to obtain the necessary travel documents, they left for Paris, where Alex had a sister who had survived the War. They lived with her for six months but were unable to obtain a *permis de séjour* and thus neither work nor food coupons. They therefore had no alternative but to return to Berlin and live among the people who had murdered their families – like my own father – until they both passed away at an early age. As they say in Hebrew: 'ein breirah' – no alternative.

Betty Bloom, London NW3

IN THE COUNTRY'S BEST INTEREST

Sir – I sincerely hope the AJR has publicised its solidarity with the Miliband brothers as with all victims of anti-Semitism, racism, and sexism, whether coming from the *Daily Mail* or any other source.

I have particularly strong feelings because my career was very similar to Ralph's. Sometime in 1944 a lady came

from the Home Office to tell me I was entitled to become a UK citizen under the ORM (Orphan, Refugee Minor) scheme. A few months later I duly swore allegiance to 'King George VI, his heirs and successors according to the law'. A few days after that I was worrying over what I could do for Britain to thank it. Halfway up Blackheath Road I had a 'Damascus' moment. Of course, I should join the Labour Party – then a socialist democratic organisation – enabling me to work towards improving the lot of the mass of the population by striving towards equality of esteem in education, the nationalisation of the key sectors of British industry, providing decent free health care, etc!

For the same reason, but emotionally re-charged because I had become a father, I was active in the Direct Action Committee, the Committee of 100 and CND when it was founded. Ten or more convictions are battle honours. It was a pleasure to see the quality of life of the broad mass improving till 1979, since when it has been a struggle to preserve those gains.

I am sure my history is typical of very many in the AJR, just as there are some who no doubt share the *Mail's* view that we are undermining the Great in Great Britain. Never let it be said that the bulk of the active left acted other than in the country's best interest as we saw and see it.

With regard to Michael Sherwood's letter, among those who returned almost immediately after the War were loyal Communists carrying out party orders. I heard from a London-born 'second-generation' woman now living in Vienna that her obedient Communist parents were ordered by the party to return to Vienna in 1945-46. They suffered considerable hardship there. I also recollect reading of a US Communist being ordered to return – and returning – to East Germany at about the same time.

Francis Deutsch, Saffron Walden

THANK YOU, AJR AND JFS

Sir – We would like to thank Jonathan Rose at the AJR as well as the JFS for enabling us finally to learn how to access the internet. I am 87 and my wife 83.

Jack, the student who came to help us, was an excellent teacher who showed great patience and skill.

Avram and Vera Schaufeld,
Wembley Park, Middx

A GOOD HOME FOR GERMAN-LANGUAGE BOOKS?

Sir – In asking survivors and refugees from Germany who want to donate books to the Wiener Library and the University of London to arrange for volunteers to transport books there, these institutions are putting too great a burden on the

potential donors, all of whom are elderly. Many of us do not have family or friends available to act as deliverymen. If we cannot find someone to help us, the alternative is to carry heavy books on public transportation, or to drive to London, where parking is at a premium, if it is available.

We are prepared to give away these books for nothing. Many of them are rare, out of print and valuable. These institutions are getting something they want, something that is often not available elsewhere. And they are getting it for free. It should not be beyond their ability to find volunteers to transport these books.

The Wiener Library and London University are unfortunately not alone in their cavalier attitude to donors of German books. Several years ago I offered a rare five-volume 1927 set of *Jüdische Enzyklopädie*, total weight over 15 kilos, to the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex. They indicated they would be pleased to accept the books and would 'make arrangements'. I am still waiting for someone to come and get them.

Eve R. Kugler, London N3

REMEMBERING THE REFUGEES FROM HUNGARY

Sir – Reading the comprehensive article by Anthony Grenville about the changes in 1956, it occurs to me that many of us escaped to England in 1956 thanks to the uprising in Hungary in that year. Whereas we cannot compete with the numbers or importance of the Kinder, maybe we merit a mention too. A change that is not mentioned is the one that was brought about by the putting down of the uprising by the Russians, i.e. the waking up of some of the fellow travellers in the West. Yves Montand and Simone Signoret come to mind.

Janos Fisher, Bushey Heath, Herts

'THE TABLECLOTH'

Sir – I was pleased to see in your October issue a letter by Marian McNulty mentioning my poem 'The Tablecloth', which she heard on Mark Tully's Radio 4 programme and liked.

If she is interested, she could get my *New and Collected Poems*, where this poem is published on page 44. Originally, it appeared in *Family Arrivals*, which is now out of print. I didn't know the poem was used in Mark Tully's programme but am pleased it found a good response.

Lotte Kramer, Peterborough

Sir – Marian McNulty asked for the source of a poem by Lotte Kramer which had been read on Radio 4 and which she believed was called 'A Tablecloth Unravelling'.

The poem is actually called 'The

continued on page 16 ➔

ART NOTES

GLORIA TESSLER

Slashed paintings, desecrated stained glass, statues torn from their pillars – these are the monumental affronts to art that **Tate Britain** features in **Art under Attack: Histories of British Iconoclasm** (until 5 January 2014).

Examples of 500 years of violence against art from the Reformation to the postmodern Chapman brothers also include the iconoclasm of the Suffragettes, who took meat cleavers to Pre-Raphaelite paintings to emphasise that votes for women were more important than celebrating their beauty. Their targets were the *Rokeby*



Allen Jones Chair (1969) Medium acrylic paint on glass fibre and resin with Perspex and leather, 775 x 571 x 991 mm

Venus by **Velasquez** and works by **Edward Burne-Jones** and **John Singer Sargent**.

It is certainly not the most visual or appetizing exhibition. The images are disturbing, but historically valid. As curator Tabitha Barber points out, the destruction of Christian art at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII was not a motiveless, wanton attack but an enforcement of the Second Commandment forbidding graven images. The new Protestants were concerned that beautiful religious images created in past centuries would be worshipped in their own right – and so destroyed them.

This theme runs through this part of the exhibition. Could admiring a supreme work of religious art turn to worship in itself?

These early Reformists thought so but their zealous rampage through Catholic monasteries did not entirely succeed. Although some 90 per cent of medieval sculpture was destroyed, some relics were sometimes salvaged and restored and are on show here.

The Statue of the Dead Christ (c 1500-1520) was found broken but essentially whole as recently as 1954 in the Mercers' Hall beneath its chapel floor and is on loan to the Tate for the first time.

Such state-sponsored violence targeted sculptures from the Great Screen of Winchester Cathedral, illuminated books from the British Library, and broken glass from Christ Church Oxford – actually stamped on by Canon Henry Wilkinson. Some medieval stained glass panels, c 1180, were taken from Canterbury Cathedral's windows and are shown beside **Thomas Johnson's** mid-17th-century painting illustrating the Puritans at work. Even the last prayer written by Charles I, pleading for divine forgiveness for his killers, was scrawled through by Portuguese inquisitors who seized it from a ship which entered Portuguese waters. (Certainly less forgiving was his son, Charles II, who tracked down and brutally killed those guilty of his regicide.) A 19th-century response came in staunch monarchist **Frederick Duleep Singh's** upside-down portrait of Oliver Cromwell.

More recently, violence against public art became political. We can see fragments of the statue of William III and Nelson's Pillar, both bombed in Dublin after the Irish troubles in 1928 and 1936. With state monuments a traditional target of political unrest, it is surprising that there are no photographs of our own most powerful contemporary image – the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad.

Some iconoclasts are motivated by personal or aesthetic rage and some are convinced that defacing art, even in the Chapman brothers' reproductions, is an act of renewal. Feminists even attacked Allen Jones's sexy *Chair* – a nonchalant near-nude in high-heeled boots and black gloves in a yoga position strapped to the seat of a chair.

Annely Juda Fine Art

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

REVIEWS

EXHIBITION

Berlin exhibition on German-Jewish engineers, inventors and photographers

ORENSTEIN & LOEWE: 20 DEUTSCH-JÜDISCHE INGENIEURE, ERFINDER UND FOTOGRAFEN 1933-1945

(20 German-Jewish Engineers, Inventors and Photographers, 1933–1945) Special Exhibition, to 31 March 2014

at *Deutsches Technikmuseum (German Technical Museum), Berlin*

Before 1933 it was largely irrelevant whether a German engineer, inventor, photographer or industrialist was a practising Jew or had any Jewish ancestry. This changed dramatically when Hitler took power in January 1933. Soon Jewish civil servants throughout Germany were being sacked, Jewish photographers and journalists boycotted, and Jewish inventors and industrialists driven into exile or murdered. By the time of 'Kristallnacht' anti-Semitism had become the order of the day, making no exception for the many Jews working in the fields covered by the Deutsches Technikmuseum (DTM) such as inventors and engineers. The 'aryanisation' of economic life deprived them of the means of earning a living and stripped them of their rights. Anyone who was able emigrated.

The DTM previously acquired considerable renown through its permanent exhibition 'Rail Transport', which addressed the involvement of German railways in the murder of the European Jews. Already in 1988 the first worldwide display of a typical boxcar was among the exhibited objects.

In connection with the Berlin City Council's 2013 theme *Zerstörte Vielfalt – Berlin in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus (Diversity Destroyed – Berlin during the Nazi Period)*, the DTM is holding a special exhibition on 20 German-Jewish engineers, inventors and photographers whose life's work was destroyed under the swastika. The exhibition is very well documented, with each figure represented by at least one portrait, four photos and one object.

The exhibition uses texts, photographs and objects to tell the stories of these prominent personalities from Jewish families, all of whom lived in Berlin and whose lives and work are closely associated with the fields addressed by the DTM. The 20 are: radio manufacturer Manfred Aron, 1884-1967; chemist Heinrich Brinn, 1874-1943; pharmacist Arthur Eichengrün, 1867-1949; railway photographer Fritz Eschen, 1900-1964; torpedo expert Herbert von Klemperer,

continued opposite ➔



Alfred Orenstein,
1885-1969

1878-1951; railway director Paul Levy, 1876-1943; sugar factory owner Edmund von Lippmann, 1857-1940; radio pioneer Siegmund Loewe, 1885-1962; auto industrialist Arthur Müller, 1871-1935; di-

rector general of a locomotive and rolling stock factory Alfred Orenstein, 1885-1969; AEG Head of Social Policy Ernst Preuss, 1891-1966; photographer Henry Ries, 1917-2004; inventor and journalist Georg Rothgiesser, 1858-1943; aeroplane and automobile designer Edmund Rumpler, 1872-1940; photo-journalist Erich Salomon, 1886-1944; engineer Carl Schapira, 1879-1957; aeroplane designer Erich Schatzki, 1898-1991; steel furniture manufacturer Julius Seligsohn-Netter, 1885-1964; train ticket collector Georg Speyer, 1902-1971; railway central administrative director Ernst Spiro, 1873-1950.

Curator Dr Alfred Gottwaldt and a team of nine colleagues have produced an innovative exhibition. With the positioning

of the 20 German-Jewish personalities throughout the Museum, visitors are encouraged to learn more both about the special exhibition and the permanent exhibition and are elegantly led through the building as a whole. All texts are provided in German and English.

Due to strong public interest and the publishing of a biography of Reichsbahn director Ernst Spiro by Dr Gottwald, the exhibition has been extended from 31 December 2013 to 31 March 2014.

Stuart Wolfe

THEATRE

Gripping new approach to the Kindertransport

TRANSPORTS

written and directed by Jon Welch

Tristan Bates Theatre, London

cast: Juliet Welch and Anna Munden;

produced by Pipeline Theatre; design by Alan Munden

Transports is a gripping new approach to the Kindertransport. Very different to Diane Samuel's brilliant play *Kindertransport*, it is equally dramatic, thought-provoking and gripping theatre.

It was premiered earlier in Cornwall and staged in London from 16 to 21 September

at the Tristan Bates Theatre in Soho. The company, Pipelinetheatre.com, intends to find further venues for the play so this is well worth looking out for.

The play is set in the late 1970s with flashbacks to the 1930s-40s, the period that covers the Kindertransportees' coming to England and their struggles to acculturate. The story of a Kindertransportee is entwined with that of a teenager transported from home to home in the care system.

A pair of vertical railway tracks provides the backdrop of the stage and represents the parallel journeys of the two teenagers. These tracks are the main props. Atmosphere is created by sound tracks of train and railway noises and a station notice board that gives times and places.

The main actress, who plays both 15-year-old girls, is the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor who is projected on a screen at the end of the play reciting her poem. The other main actress plays the three adult roles. The final scene includes a child, about four years old, who represents redemption and hope for the future. Themes of separation, attachment, transportation between cultures, problems of fostering, the generation gap, bullying and judgemental narrow-mindedness are very powerfully portrayed.

Transports provides an evening of high quality theatre not to be missed.

Ruth Barnett

In 2008 my sister Ros, cousin Max Reinhardt and I decided to mark the 70th anniversary of the Kindertransport by creating a site-specific performance piece. And so *Suitcase* was born. Performed three times on 2 December 2008 at Liverpool Street Station, *Suitcase* proved a massive success. It was hugely over-subscribed and we are resurrecting it this year to mark the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport. But this time, we've gone Big, with a ten-station, Arts Council-funded tour, beginning in Glasgow on 12 November and travelling down the country to end at Liverpool Street Station in London on 2 December 2013.

Ros and I grew up with a close relationship to the Kindertransport as our mother, Jo Hacker, arrived with her two younger sisters on one of the first trains from Vienna in December 1938. We thought we understood what had happened - Britain had opened its doors to almost 10,000 children and in all probability saved those lives. But researching the history, talking to surviving 'Kinder' and thinking about the events made us realise that all was not quite as it seemed.

The line pedalled about the Kindertransport had always been one of gratitude to the British Government for allowing these children into the country

Suitcase

A story sadly relevant today

but the reality was that beyond giving grudging permission for the children to come to the UK, the Government did nothing. Not only did they demand a £50 bond - the equivalent of £2,000 today - for each child (almost £20,000,000 in total) but they provided no help for these vulnerable children, who had lost everything they knew.

I had always felt incredibly sad that the man who was my uncle was left behind in Vienna as he was only ten months old at the time my mother came on the Kindertransport and deemed too young to be allowed to travel. Along with my grandparents, Franziska and Koloman Hacker, he died in the Holocaust. But now I became angry - why would the British Government leave these people to die? Of course, in December 1938 it was possible to argue that no one could have imagined the genocide that was to follow - but the signs were absolutely there. One can rationalise the attitude of the majority of the British public who, coming out of a massive economic depression, feared the effect of large numbers of poor refugees.

But at least Britain did *something* - as opposed to the USA, whose position was that it was against God to take a child from its parents.

But what I can never accept is that large swathes of the Jewish population in this country opposed the arrival of their fellow Jews fleeing for their lives. In the myopic belief that these foreign-looking, foreign-acting Jews would threaten their position in British society, some British Jews turned their backs on these desperate individuals.

Today there are 15 million refugees in the world, 2 million of them created by the current conflict in Syria. Almost half of these refugees are under 18 years old. Every year in Britain 1,500 unaccompanied child refugees arrive seeking sanctuary. The story we tell in *Suitcase* of some of the 10,000 children who came to Britain 75 years ago is sadly relevant today. The tragedy is that in all those years we haven't found a way to protect these children and keep them together with their families in their home countries and in safety. Given our history, as Jews we have a greater responsibility than others to make that happen.

For full details of *Suitcase's* tour schedule, please go to www.suitcase1938.org or telephone 07551 050875.

Jane Merkin
Executive Producer, *Suitcase*

Albania's culture of rescue

The history of Albanian-Jewish relations goes back to Roman times. Not a single crime has been performed by Albanians in their country against Jews since the recording of the first Jewish settlement there.

In early 1930 there were in Albania an estimated 1,000 Jews. In 1945 the number was about 3,000. When the Nazis began to persecute Jews Albania's King Ahmet Zogu instructed all consular missions to grant a visa to any Jew who, irrespective of whether his or her passport had a red 'J' stamped on it, should be allowed to enter Albania for an indefinite period.

In 1938 Albania was the only country to offer asylum to any Jewish refugee without asking any questions. From 1937 to the end of the War a large number of Jews were sheltered in Albania, either remaining there or making their way onward to other safe countries. Albania is the only country in Europe in which no Jew's life was lost and no Jew handed over to the Nazis. Jewish refugees were sheltered by Albanians, who were simply pursuing their traditional code of honour. A total of 69 Albanians are remembered in the Righteous among the Nations in Jerusalem's Yad Vashem.

In order better to understand this miraculous conduct on the part of Albanians, it is necessary to invoke *besa*, the fundamental part of the *Kanun*, the ancient code of Albanian society: 'An Albanian's house belongs to God and a guest.' Every hour, day and night, a man must be ready to receive a guest with bread, salt and an open heart. To the delight of the Jewish refugees seeking shelter among Albanians – many of them Muslims – from the Nazis, 'guests' meant guests in the country as well as in the home.

In 1943 the Germans demanded that the Albanian authorities summon Jewish leaders in order that they present a list of Jews living in Albania. At that time, the country was ruled by Albanians who were forced to comply with the German orders. However, when the Albanian

Quisling government had signed the initial agreement with the German invaders, they had included the following provision: 'The Germans have no right to intervene in the internal affairs of Albania.' Rafael Jakoel, an Albanian Jew, was summoned to the Minister of the Interior, Xhafer Deva, who served the Germans. To Rafael's pleasant surprise, the Minister said he had called him only to tell him that the Jewish issue in the country was an internal one. 'We will never,' he said, 'hand over our Jews, either those who have always been here or those who took shelter in recent years.'

The Albanians have a rich, and sometimes tragic, history but in their long history of relations with neighbours, invaders, guests, sojourners, minorities – people in need – the story of how they saved 100 per cent of the Jews during the Holocaust is a jewel in their crown.

**His Excellency Mal Berisha
Albanian Ambassador to London**

This article is adapted from a speech made by Ambassador Berisha earlier in the year

ARTS AND EVENTS NOVEMBER DIARY

Mon 4 Ben Urwand (Harvard University): 'The Collaboration: Hollywood's Pact with Hitler'

Thu 21 and Wed 4 Dec Monica Bohm-Duchen: 'Art of the Holocaust: Creativity In Extremis'

All events at Wiener Library at 6.30 pm:
admission free but booking essential
tel 020 7636 7247

www.fishburnbooks.com

Jonathan Fishburn

buys and sells Jewish and Hebrew books, ephemera and items of Jewish interest.

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for more information**

UK Jewish Film Festival 30 October – 17 November 2013 'Refugees'

Q&A with one of the surviving refugees from Sweden and an introduction by the Swedish Ambassador to the UK.

Directed by Rachel Goslins, *Besa: The Promise* weaves Albania's heroism in the Second World War through the *vérité* journeys of two men, a renowned Jewish-American photographer and a Muslim-Albanian. The film will be introduced by the Albanian Ambassador to the UK.

In *My German Friend*, directed by Jeanine Meerapfel, the daughter of German-Jewish immigrants to Argentina befriends the son of a senior SS officer and together they become embroiled in the radical politics of late-1960s student life in Germany. The

Holocaust Memorial Book

The Liverpool AJR Group are reprinting the *Liverpool Holocaust Memorial Book* in time for distribution on Holocaust Memorial Day 2014. If any member would like to remember the name/s of family members who did not survive that tragic time can he/she please contact Susanne Green, AJR North West Groups Co-ordinator, on 0151 291 5734 or at susanne@ajr.org.uk

Birmingham & West Midlands Committee for World Jewish Relief 2013 Appeal Brunch

Sunday 10 November 2013
at Joseph Cotton Hall

Reception 12.30 pm; Brunch 1.00 pm

Guest Speaker: Dr Anthony Grenville,
Historian and Consultant Editor,
AJR Journal

'The Arrival and Settlement of the Jewish Refugees from Hitler in Britain'



Paula Wilcox and Janet Dibley star in a UK tour of Diane Samuels's award-winning play

KINDERTRANSPORT

during autumn 2013 and spring 2014.

Post-Show Discussions are planned and if Kinder and/or their descendants are interested in contributing to these discussions, the producers are keen to share your personal experiences.

Please contact Tracey Childs on 07778 984 365 or at tc@hallandchilds.com

For venues and further information, visit www.kindertransport.co.uk

The AJR is delighted once again to be supporting the UK Jewish Film Festival and will be the exclusive sponsor of the 'Refugees' strand of this year's Festival.

'Refugees' is built around five films, each of which will be followed by a panel discussion and a Q&A session or special event. As well as five events in London, there will be events in Manchester, Leeds and Glasgow. The 'Refugees' events include:

Orchestra of Exiles: directed by Josh Aronson, the film portrays the extraordinary story of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra and the heroic feats of its founder, Polish violinist Bronislaw Huberman.

Harbour of Hope, directed by Magnus Gertten, recounts the lives of two concentration camp survivors who found refuge in Sweden. The event features a

screenings in London and Manchester will include a Coffee & Bagel Brunch.

The screening of *From Cable Street to Brick Lane* features a Q&A with director Phil Maxwell and a panel discussion with participants in the film on the Jewish immigrant experience. Incorporating archival footage of the 1936 Battle of Cable Street, the film pays tribute to successive generations of immigrants and trade unionists in London's East End and their triumph over prejudice and intolerance.

Full details, including the dates and venues of the 'Refugees' films, together with all screenings in this year's Festival, are available at www.ukjewishfilm.org
Michael Newman

We'll see each other again soon - awoken memories or a dream?

There we sat, all of us bound together by one delicate thread. We were united by one experience, that of having come over on the Kindertransport. Of having been driven out of our country of birth, our only fault being that we were Jewish. As I sat looking around me listening to the voices which once must have sounded so different, so full of mischief, so young and hopeful, but were now nostalgic and wistful, I heard names 'From Dortmund, Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg' – names of cities, towns and hamlets. Some of these names were familiar.

I looked around and there sat an old man, his eyes wet with tears. I listened more intently, at first unable to decipher his words. I was perplexed. His voice had changed. It was no longer that of an old man but that of a child. It was

a plaintive voice. I listened, straining to catch what it was saying. He was now crying, uncontrollable tears streaming down his face, his voice belying his age. Now I could easily make out what he was saying: 'Schick mich nicht fort, Mutti. Ich werde immer artig sein.' (Don't send me away, Mummy. I promise I'll always be good.) The plea was repeated numerous times, the voice louder and louder, no longer a whisper.

I listened again. This time there was more than one voice – many more. They were repeating the same plea: 'Schick mich nicht fort, Mutti. Ich werde immer artig sein.' The voices echoed through the hall. Voices in unison. Pleading, weeping, promising. The voices of little children. I looked around to see where the voices came from. The hall was filled now not with old people but with tiny children

repeating time and time again 'Schick mich nicht fort.'

My ears throbbed, my eyes burned, my body trembled. Where was I? I was now in a station full of children. I listened to my voice. I too was screaming, crying 'Schick mich nicht fort, Mutti. Ich werde immer artig sein.' I could no longer breathe. I was drowning in the salty tears of the 10,000 sent away. Then I saw a figure before me. I recognised my mother. Her voice was soft, gentle, so restrained: 'Sei brav, mein Kind. Wir sehen uns bald wieder' (Be brave, my child. We'll see each other again soon).

I woke with a start. The dream haunted me for days. The words 'Wir sehen uns bald wieder' was a promise which could not be kept by so many. I was one of the lucky ones to see my mother again.

Ruth Schwiening

How Margot came to meet the Prince

Margot Barnes was one of 400 guests from around the world invited to meet Prince Charles at a reception at St James's Palace on Monday 24 June to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport, which carried thousands of Jewish children threatened by the Nazis in Central and Eastern Europe to safety in the UK.

'I belong to the Association of Jewish Refugees and, with lots of others, I put my name down to be considered for the Kindertransport Reunion. One day I was amazed to get an envelope with an invitation from Prince Charles at Clarence House.

'St James's Palace was very nice,' Margot said. 'There were three state rooms with big portraits on the walls. There were an awful lot of people there. One of the Prince's entourage looked after me and led him to me because I was sitting down. The Prince asked me if I knew anyone else there. I said "No". He was very nice to me but I was so nervous I forgot to curtsy. I still can't remember much that we talked about.'

Margot has a lot to be thankful for. She lived in Beuthen, a town in Upper Silesia in Germany, near the border with Poland. Just after Kristallnacht, in November 1938, Goebbels came to Beuthen and made a vicious anti-Semitic speech after which the synagogue was set alight and many Jews were forced to stand for hours in front of their synagogue until it was burnt to the ground. It had been built in 1869.

'I didn't look Jewish, and I was indoors near the synagogue with some other people when the arson took place. But later I saw the tablets at the front of the *shul* crash to the ground. My grandfather was taken away, though released after a couple of weeks.

'Until Kristallnacht I found Beuthen a pleasant place. We had no trouble there. I lived with my uncle, his wife and their two children. I also had a brother who lived in Berlin. All perished in the Holocaust though my brother was last seen in Auschwitz as late as January 1945. He was dead by the time the Russians arrived.

'I went back to Beuthen [now Poland] many years later. All signs of that beautiful synagogue had been obliterated and an ugly block of flats stood in its place.'

Margot explained how she got involved with the Kindertransport: 'I was 14 and had joined the Maccabees (sports club) in Beuthen. With my friend Irene, I put my name down to go to Palestine, England or Holland.

'One day my uncle turned up at school and took me out to join the exodus. I was the only girl with three boys who escaped from my town. First we went to Berlin, where I saw my brother for the last time and spent the night at the station. They took the local train to Holland and then on to England.

'I had a cabin to myself on the boat from Holland to Harwich. In England I was sent to a holiday camp at Dovercourt, which was closed for the winter. (It later became the fictitious Maplins holiday camp and the set for *Hi-de-Hi!*, a sitcom shown on the BBC from 1980 to 1988.)

'It was very cold in the camp. We were given a hot water bottle and slept four girls to a feather bed to keep warm. We were told that Jewish families in Southport would take ten girls, so I put my name down and ended up there,' Margot said.



'It was like a dream, I still keep looking at the picture of me and the Prince,' said Margot Barnes

'I stayed in Southport until the War began. When I was 16 I went to live in a hostel in Manchester but became fed up with the work there so I went to the army

recruiting centre and joined up. I stayed in the army for three years, between 1943 and 1946. I first worked on anti-aircraft guns at Hayling Island and Mitcham Junction.

'While working on the guns I got blown up. I was at the command post with an officer when a doodlebug hit it. I was knocked out.

'I met my husband when I became a driver in the army after the War was over. We were married on 21 March 1946. We had a son and a daughter. My son joined the police force. I became a traffic warden in the City of London.

'We went to live in Israel. We stayed for nine months but couldn't settle so we came back to England,' Margot said.

The above is adapted from an article which appeared in Tekiah!, the magazine of the South London Synagogue, Rosh Hashanah 2013 edition. It was written and based on an interview by Tony Goldman, who also took the photograph of Margot Barnes.



Dundee First Meeting

Our first meeting, in the synagogue hall, brought together people not only from Dundee but also from neighbouring towns. Introductions were made over a delicious brunch. Already there are other people coming forward to join our group.

Esther Finlay

Bromley CF Terrible Twins



How well our Terrible Twins, Lore Gordon (left) and Lore Robinson, born a few miles from each other near Cologne and coming over days apart on the Kindertransport, are bonding! Now we have discovered they are the same age! Thanks to Liane for hosting these get-togethers, without which the Terrible Twins would never have met.

Hazel Beiny

Ealing Jews and Jazz

Peter Sampson gave us an excellent presentation on the Jewish contribution to jazz. He described the key contributions of Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and other big band leaders in America, followed by the work of their UK counterparts such as Joe Loss and, more recently, Dave Brubeck and Ronnie Scott.

Leslie Sommer

Visit to Oshwal Centre

We joined several other groups on a very well organised trip to the Oshwal Centre, where we were shown around by the assistant minister. Then we visited the Dutch Nursery in Potters Bar, where we had the opportunity to look around before having an excellent vegetarian lunch. Finally, we had a talk on the Nursery's history and the plants they sell.

Edgar H. Ring

Bradford CF Experiences of a 'Hidden Child'

We enjoyed listening to member Bronia Veitch talking about her autobiography *A Beautiful Resistance*, which describes her experiences as a 'hidden child'. Much discussion followed by a delicious tea.

Wendy Bott

West Midlands (Birmingham) A Very Enjoyable Gathering

We gathered at Birmingham Jewish Community Care for a very enjoyable lunch, conversation and discussion of our future programme.

Philip Lesser

Pinner 'The Carnaby Street That Was'

Jack Lynes gave us some of the history of Carnaby Street as well as an understanding of his family's business that had long been established there. His anecdotes made the afternoon run all too quickly.

Robert Gellman

Leeds CF Favourite Music and a Wonderful Tea

Members brought along a favourite piece of music, explained their choice, and there were interesting stories to go with their selections. A wonderful afternoon tea, hosted by Barbara Cammerman, followed.

Wendy Bott

Brighton and Hove Sarid The Beautiful Songs of Irving Berlin

Janice Greenwood's talk, laced with the beautiful songs of Israel Isidore Beilin (Baline), alias Irving Berlin, contributed to an enjoyable morning. Born near Mogilyov in Russia, Irving Berlin came to the USA at the age of eight and became a self-taught musician and lyricist.

Ceska Abrahams

York CF Delightful Meeting

A delightful meeting at the home of Marc and Rosl Schatzberger, with an interesting discussion followed by Rosl's delicious home baking.

Wendy Bott

Edgware 'Singin' in the Rain'

'Singin' in the Rain' helped at a jolly birthday celebration for Harry Fleming's 90th. With entertainment from Lynne Bradley, who led us on a Hollywood sing-song, and - to top it all - a member from Edgware who had never been to the group before recognised Harry from Vienna 70 years ago.

Hazel Beiny

Café Imperial A New Member of the Team

A new member of the team, I found it such a pleasure to meet members of the group. I look forward to coming along again and getting to know these gentlemen better.

Kathryn Prevezer

Kingston upon Thames Fantastic Spread

A delightful sunny afternoon with tea in the gardens. The Queen's Garden Party cannot top Suzie Zisman's fantastic spread.

Hazel Beiny

Surrey Catching Up on News and Views

Edmee Barta once again hosted a lovely morning with coffee, cake and chat between old and new friends. Everyone enjoyed catching up on each other's news and views.

Susan Harrod

Glasgow CF A Real Family Atmosphere



Zara and Joe Cent and Agnes Isaacs at Glasgow Yom Tov Nosh

The AJR 'family' - 21 members with some First Generation members accompanied by their sons and daughters - turned out in force and tucked into a traditional Yom Tov meal. There was a real family atmosphere, which brought back memories of such gatherings from long ago. Judging by its popularity, I will add this meeting to our list of annual events.

Agnes Isaacs

Glasgow Book Club Good-natured, Slow Narrative

Meeting at the home of Anthea Berg, we discussed Alexander McCall Smith's novel *The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party*, with whose good-natured, slow narrative we were very content. Delicious tea and snacks courtesy of the hostess as usual.

Halina Moss

North West London A Lovely Lunch

We met for a lovely lunch, great company and lively conversation.

Margarete Weiss

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After 15 years at the AJR, Groups Co-ordinator Myrna Glass is to retire.

Her work at the AJR has been Myrna's third career. Following a career in teaching in primary schools for over 30 years, during which time she was both a Headteacher and a Deputy Head, she served as Head of the Youth and Education Department of the Jewish National Fund in Great Britain for seven and a half years.

Myrna began work at the AJR in November 1998 as the organisation's first Groups' Co-ordinator. At that time, there were six groups throughout the country, with only the Pinner group meeting monthly. South London met bi-monthly but the others only a few times a year. They were self-organising with very loose connections to the AJR. Today, there are more than 40 groups (mostly meeting monthly) – and six part-time Group Co-ordinators, together with an administrator, covering the length and breadth of the country. Now, in addition to individual group meetings, activities include joint group meetings, regional meetings, and outings to the cinema, theatre and other locations, not forgetting the annual 3-Day London Visit.

With her typical commitment,



AJR groups' pioneer Myrna Glass to retire

Myrna was keen to promote the regular publication in the *Journal* of reports on group activities. She feels strongly that members should know what the AJR is providing for them. In fact, these reports led to the establishment of some of the groups. In addition, from the very start Myrna encouraged the involvement of the Second, Third – and even Fourth – Generations in the AJR's activities: everyone is welcome to participate.

Myrna feels privileged to have been

involved in the development of this department – the 'face' of the AJR, as she describes it – and to have met 'all these very special people'. She is particularly happy that members have developed inter-group personal friendships – in some instances even ending in marriage – and feels she knows personally more members than most people involved in the organisation.

To the great fortune of AJR members, Myrna will not be stepping down entirely. She is to continue her involvement in the organisation as a part-time volunteer – and is awaiting instructions! She hopes to keep in touch with those members with whom she has been in phone contact in recent years and may actually have time to visit them once in a while!

Among other things, Myrna is planning to do more exercise, play the piano (something she hasn't done for years!), and try and find out more about her own family. She has a long list of things she still hopes to achieve. We wish her well for the future.

CONTACTS

- Hazel Beiny**
Southern Groups Co-ordinator
07966 887 434
hazel@ajr.org.uk
- Wendy Bott**
Yorkshire Groups Co-ordinator
07908 156 365
wendy@ajr.org.uk
- Myrna Glass**
London South and Midlands Groups Co-ordinator
07966 969 951
myrna@ajr.org.uk
- Susanne Green**
North West Groups Co-ordinator
0151 291 5734
susanne@ajr.org.uk
- Susan Harrod**
Groups' Administrator
020 8385 3070
susan@ajr.org.uk
- Agnes Isaacs**
Scotland and Newcastle Co-ordinator
07908 156 361
agnes@ajr.org.uk
- Esther Rinkoff**
Southern Region Co-ordinator
07966 631 778
esther@ajr.org.uk
- KT-AJR (Kindertransport)**
Andrea Goodmaker
020 8385 3070
andrea@ajr.org.uk
- Child Survivors Association-AJR**
Henri Obstfeld
020 8954 5298
H.obstfeld@talk21.com

NOVEMBER GROUP EVENTS

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Ealing | 5 November | Miriam Hallamy: 'Asylum Seekers' Social |
| Edinburgh CF | 6 November | 'Mitzvah Day Project' |
| Ilford | 6 November | Lady Aurelia Young: 'The Sculptor Oscar Nemon' |
| Pinner | 7 November | 'Kristallnacht' |
| Glasgow | 10 November | Harold Livingston's 90th Birthday Party |
| Café Imperial | 11 November | Joyce Sheard of Wheelpower |
| HGS | 11 November | Social/Lunch at home of Susan Zisman |
| Bromley | 12 November | Pre-Chanukah Quiz |
| Essex (Westcliff) | 12 November | <i>Suitcase</i> – at Glasgow Station |
| Glasgow | 12 November | Jewish Film Festival |
| Manchester | 12 November | At Bridge Club |
| Didsbury | 13 November | Social |
| Harrogate/York | 13 November | Nadia Valman: 'Going Back to the Jewish East End with Israel Zangwill' |
| St John's Wood | 13 November | 100th Birthday Party for Lorle Michaelis |
| Bradford | 14 November | Anthony Grenville, Consultant Editor, <i>AJR Journal</i> |
| Welwyn Garden City | 14 November | Chanukah Lunch |
| Newcastle | 17 November | Jenny Manson: 'Public Sector on the Brink' |
| Brighton-Sarid (Sussex) | 18 November | David Wass: 'The Story behind Shoplifting' |
| Bristol/Bath | 18 November | At home of Ruth and Werner Lachs |
| Prestwich/Whitefield | 18 November | Raymond Sturgess: 'The Dreyfus Scandal' |
| Edgware | 19 November | Theatre outing to <i>Suitcase</i> |
| Leeds | 19 November | At Beenstock Home |
| Broughton Park/ Crumpsall | 20 November | Sophie Clark: 'WJR: Mitzvah Day' |
| Radlett | 20 November | <i>Suitcase</i> – at Piccadilly Station, 1.00 pm |
| Manchester | 21 November | <i>Suitcase</i> – at Lime Street, 1.00 pm |
| Liverpool | 22 November | Chanukah Lunch |
| Glasgow | 24 November | Social |
| Nightingale | 25 November | David Peace, vocalist: 'A Musical Morning' |
| North West London | 25 November | Social |
| Cheshire | 26 November | Social get-together |
| Wembley | 27 November | Chanukah Party |
| Leeds | 28 November | Howard Lanning: 'Trials and Tribulations of Finding Locations' |
| North London | 28 November | |

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FAMILY ANOUNCEMENTS

Birth

Mazel tov to Eleanor and Tim Angel on the birth of their first grandchild Mathew, born 15.9.13. Also a big mazel tov to great-grandmother Anne Marx.

Death

Gertrude Evans (née Vandewart) died peacefully on 25 September, aged 93. She will be badly missed by her family and many friends.

BOOKS BOUGHT

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Activities November 2013

Lunch is served at 12.30 unless otherwise stated

Tuesday 5 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 11-12 Seated Exercises
- 12.30 **KT LUNCH AND MEMBERS' MEETING**

Thursday 7 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.30 Art Class
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 14.00 **KRISTALLNACHT SERVICE** followed by tea

Tuesday 12 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 10.30 Current Affairs Discussion Group with John Kay
- 11.30 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 **Entertainer – Geoff Strum**

Thursday 14 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation with Ruth
- 10.30 Book Club
- 13.45 **Mitzvah Day entertainment**

Tuesday 19 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 11.00 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 **Entertainer – Will Smith**

Thursday 21 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-13 Art Class
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 **Entertainer – Margaret Opdahl**

Tuesday 26 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 11.00 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 **Entertainer – Paul Coleman**

Thursday 28 November

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation with Ruth
- 10.30 Book Club
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 **AJR Chanukah Party with Ronnie Goldberg**

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OBITUARIES

Hannelore (Laura) Selo, born Berlin 23 November 1923, died London 17 September 2013

My mother-in-law, Hannelore, known as Laura, Selo, has died at the age of 89. She was one of the dwindling band of 669 Kindertransport children rescued from Prague by Sir Nicholas Winton and the British Committee for Refugees shortly before the Second World War. She wrote a book about her experiences, *Three Lives in Transit*, published in 1992, and was well known to readers of the *AJR Journal* as a prolific correspondent.

Laura was born on 23 November 1923, the eldest of three daughters in a prosperous, assimilated Berlin family. Her father, Karl Gumpel, was advertising director of a large German grocery chain who lost his job when the Nazis came to power. In 1935 he moved the family to Prague but Czechoslovakia was annexed by Germany in March 1939. Karl managed to escape to Poland and eventually to Britain, where he was reunited with his daughters, but his wife, Grete, and the three girls were trapped.

Laura, then aged 15, and her two sisters, Liselotte (Lilo) and Rosemarie (Romie), aged 13 and 12 respectively, were found places on one of the eight children's evacuation trains by their mother, leaving Prague for the UK on 1 June 1939. Grete was subsequently imprisoned by the Nazis and perished while being deported to Lodz in 1942.

It was difficult generally to place the Kindertransport children in Britain, let

alone keeping three sisters together. The girls' saviour was Emily Harder, a 54-year-old spinster who ran a tobacconist's and confectioner's shop in Archway, north London. She opened her small flat to the Gumpel sisters when they arrived and they stayed with her for some months until her death from tuberculosis.

The sisters were moved on to boarding schools and hostels and Laura eventually joined the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service, the women's branch of the British Army during the Second World War). After the War, she met another young German refugee, Walter Selo, whom she married in 1949. By then both knew that many relatives, including Walter's parents, had not survived. In 1951 their elder son, Louis, was born. Louis died in 2006. My husband, David, was born in 1956. Walter died in 1993.

Laura, who had not spoken English when she first arrived, acquired shorthand and typing skills in the Army and worked as a secretary for most of her working life, principally for the National Union of Teachers and the Transport and General Workers' Union. She had a great concern for welfare and social justice and was a prime mover in the campaign to establish screening for cervical cancer in the 1960s.

Laura was unaware of the role Sir Nicholas Winton had played in rescuing her and her sisters until 1988, when Esther Rantzen's

television programme picked up the story. Several reunions of former Winton children took place in the 1990s and early 2000s. Many, including Laura, attended the

100th birthday party given for Sir Nicholas at the Czech embassy in 2009.

In her 80s Laura learned to use the internet and enjoyed corresponding with friends and family around the world. Her sisters, who emigrated to the USA in the 1950s, both survive her. They had successful teaching careers in schools and higher education. Laura was a member of Belsize Square Synagogue and, although unable to attend services in recent years, appreciated the support she received from the congregation.

Laura will be greatly missed by her son David and me, as well as by her three grandchildren and her wider family in the UK and USA.

If you need further information, please contact Ruth Selo on 01273 325994 or 07946 318966 or at selodr@btinternet.com

Ruth Selo



Jeanette Zimmermann (née Zwickel), born Vienna 12 February 1920, died London 19 August 2013

On 23 May 1939 my mother Jeanette landed at Croydon Aerodrome on a flight from Vienna. She was 19 years old. All she had was a domestic work permit and a small piece of hand luggage.

Up to this point she had had a successful school career. She was particularly good at French and English as well as Hebrew and the Yiddish which was spoken at home. She was planning to go to university in Vienna.

She had seen her family home stolen by the Nazis and watched her neighbours take all the family's hand-carved furniture. She and her family had to avoid the Nazis and for a time they stayed with the nephew of the chief rabbi of Vienna. She managed to get papers for her flight to England but unfortunately her parents were unable to get out. Subsequently they were rounded up and sent off to Majdanek concentration camp, where they perished, as did the rest of her family.

Notwithstanding the appalling situation in which she found herself with the loss of her much loved family, Jeanette was now in London alone but she managed to get on

with life due to her tough character and the reality of her circumstances.

She started off as a nanny in Hampstead in north London. At this time, she met Klaus (her husband-to-be – he died with Alzheimer's disease in 1998) at one of the dances put on for emigres. Neither of them could dance. He was a political refugee, having been imprisoned by the Nazis for resistance activities.

Jeanette had a number of jobs such as painting buttons in a factory. However, she gained secretarial skills and subsequently had a varied career which included working for the Socialist Medical Association, in the news room at the BBC, and finally, before retirement, as a bilingual secretary at London University.

She took much interest in the family. She was always pleased to see everybody. Both granddaughters took exceptional interest in her and gave her a lot of help.

Although Jeanette was active and staunchly independent, her own health started to deteriorate. However, she was able to take a trip to Vienna through the AJR when she was 87, even though needing a wheelchair.

Although this was in some ways a harrowing experience for her, it was nevertheless enjoyable as she was accompanied by one of her granddaughters, who was able to look

after her, which was much appreciated. Some years previously she had been taken to visit Klaus's relatives in Berlin, which had also been a pleasure for her.

On account of her health her final two years were spent in Spring Lane Care Home, where she received excellent care. Following a fall in February, Jeanette became increasingly frail and died peacefully in the care home on 19 August. She is survived by her daughter Eva, grandchildren Katie and Zoe, and great-granddaughter Elowen. Jeanette was much loved and will be sorely missed.

Eva Trent





LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Take-Away: Getting the message out

I was sitting on the patio of Jerusalem's YMCA building enjoying a cup of coffee and a croissant one morning, waiting for my French class to begin, when someone with a friendly smile approached me and thrust a brochure into my hand. This was an advertisement for a play to be given that evening featuring Israeli and Palestinian actors. The play, written mainly by its participants, represented the culmination of two years' work on the project and purportedly tackled the issue of Palestinian-Israeli relations in a new way.

It seemed a worthy cause and, since we weren't busy that evening, my husband and I decided to attend. When we got to the YMCA we found a handful of people, all of them Israelis as far as we could make out, waiting outside the hall for the doors to open. This was done eventually, albeit somewhat belatedly, to the accompaniment of complaints by some of the people who had been standing there for a long time.

The YMCA auditorium has room for an audience of around 600 so it wasn't difficult

for the 30 or so people who had turned up to find good seats. The stage was already adorned with assorted plastic bottles, old newspapers and other debris, confirming what we could learn from our programme (in Hebrew, English and Arabic) – that the play was set in a rubbish dump. Two actors, a man and a woman, on separate sides of the stage, were busy forming little figures from the debris or wrapping bottles in plastic film, both concentrating in silence on what they were doing. The sound of traffic, rubbish collections, and helicopters overhead could be heard. At one stage, the couple began to speak to one another – he in Arabic, she in Hebrew – and they seemed to understand one another. So far, so very metaphorical.

A woman dressed in outrageously fashionable clothes then appeared on stage, her stance, actions and speech all serving as a caricature of the 'nasty Israeli'. After launching into an animated monologue (in Hebrew) about the real-estate potential of the site, she offers money to the man, which he apparently accepts. She disappears and the

two characters begin to quarrel, still each in their own language. In addition, at one point a grandmotherly figure appears and adds her contribution (in Arabic speech and song) to the dialogue. The Hebrew-speaking girl then gets into the rubbish bin that dominates the stage and proceeds to offer paper sandwiches and rat tail soup to the others – hence the play's title *Take-Away*.

Anyone who like myself doesn't fully understand both languages lost out on half of the dialogue, but at one point we were given to understand that the man and woman undress and make love offstage (as shadows behind a screen), then come back and quarrel some more. Finally, the two begin to fight physically. This was actually the best part of the play in theatrical terms, as it involved some beautiful balletic and athletic movements without the intrusive sound effects that constituted the backdrop to the first scene. At the end, however, the stage was left in a sorry state, with both sides dead or injured and rubbish strewn all over the place.

At this point, a young man with a guitar came along and sang a sad song in Hebrew and Arabic about the futility of a situation in which people are in conflict with one another instead of co-operating.

All very noble and true, we thought as we filed out – but also how naive and oversimplified. Still, it's important to try and get the message out into the world. It's a pity, though, that there were so few Palestinians in the audience.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *cont. from p.7*

Tablecloth' and the three verses deal with its unravelling. It is one of 60 memorable poems by Lotte Kramer based on her own life experiences in the book *Kindertransport, Before and After: Elegy and Celebration* (2007). It is edited, with an informative introduction, by Dr Sybil Oldfield. I was a guest on its publication day and have a signed copy. A copy can be obtained by sending £10 + £2.50 to the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, Arts B, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN (attention Diana Franklin).

Michael Spiro, London NW3

Sir – Regarding Marian McNulty's query about Lotte Kramer's poem 'The Tablecloth', this can be found in Lotte's *Selected and New Poems 1980-1997*, published by Rockingham Press. The book should be available through any good bookshop but is also available on Amazon.

John Buck, London N15

A UNIQUE SEDER DISH

Sir – I read with great interest Anthony Grenville's article about internment in Australia in a recent edition of the *Journal*.

My father, Paul Gruneberg, had been interned on the Isle of Man before being transported to Australia on the *Dunera*. The terrible treatment the internees received on board has been well documented. I believe that all the internees on this vessel were eventually compensated to some degree and I have

a letter from Major Layton (mentioned in Dr Grenville's article) offering the sum of £31.10.6d for my father's losses.

During his time in Tartura Camp 2, my father became the camp's cobbler – somewhat of a change as he had been in the textile business in Leipzig! During his time in Tartura, he became very friendly with another internee, Emil Frank, just as my mother and I had become friendly with his wife and children on the Isle of Man, where we had all been interned. Emil Frank, a teacher by profession, became the camp's carpenter and *chazan*. He led the services and on Passover took the *seder*, for which he made a dish. This he gave us when he made *aliya* to Israel with his wife to join his family there. We use this dish to this day. The younger grandchildren are intrigued about the story behind this *seder* dish, which must be unique.

Gerry Gruneberg, Borehamwood



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Published by The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR), a company limited by guarantee.

Registered office: Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

Registered in England and Wales with charity number: 1149882 and company number: 8220991

Telephone 020 8385 3070 Fax 020 8385 3080 e-mail editorial@ajr.org.uk

For the latest AJR news, including details of forthcoming events and information about our services, visit www.ajr.org.uk

Printed by FBprinters LLP, 26 St Albans Lane, London NW11 7QB Tel: 020 8458 3220 Email: info@fbprinters.com