

AJR journal

The Association of Jewish Refugees

The Home Office and the Kindertransport parents

For many of the children who came to Britain on Kindertransports in 1938-39, the most distressing and traumatic aspect of the experience was the loss of one or both parents who remained behind and died in the Holocaust. The AJR's archive of filmed interviews with former refugees, *Refugee Voices*, contains a number of profoundly moving accounts of the departure of such children from railway stations in Berlin, Vienna or Prague, where they bade their parents farewell for what would be the last time. In many cases, the pain of that separation remained with them for life.

Most academic studies of the Kindertransports have given little detailed consideration to the fate of the parents. Those critical of the British government sometimes include a section in which the Home Office, which was responsible for drawing up the regulations under which refugees from the Third Reich were admitted to Britain, is also held responsible for the fate of those parents who tried but failed to secure entry to this country. For example, Bill Williams, in *Jews and Other Foreigners*, his recently published study of refugees from Fascism in Manchester, cites a former Kindertransportee, Harry Jacobi, who considers the Home Office and its regulations responsible for the death of his parents.

There can be little doubt that the Home Office was reluctant to admit large numbers of refugees from the Third Reich, however desperate, without delay. In hindsight, it is easy to say that Britain could and should have acted more swiftly to save the lives of Jews under Nazi rule generally, and of the Kindertransport parents in particular. That said, a considered examination of the factors at play in the admission of Jews like the Kindertransport parents shows that simplistic and one-sided judgments on Home Office policy are misplaced.

The parents of the Kindertransport children were not excluded from entry to Britain: there was no regulation promulgated by the Home Office or any other government department that specifically denied entry to the parents

of Kindertransport children. They, like any other adult Jews, could apply for an entry visa to Britain. It was never easy for Jews fleeing Nazi persecution to gain entry to Britain but it was not impossible, as the numbers of parents who survived show. For many years, conventional wisdom had it that 90 per cent of the



Pupils coming out of Yawne School in Cologne, 1932

parents of Kindertransport children had died in the Holocaust. Only when the survey undertaken in 2007-08 by AJR/KT produced very different results was the figure of 90 per cent definitively discredited. That survey, *Making New Lives in Britain*, based on over 1,000 replies to a questionnaire sent out to former Kindertransportees, revealed that some 54 per cent of Kindertransport parents had died; about 60 per cent of the children had lost one parent, and about 40 per cent both. As the survey says, 'certainly bad enough, but not what was feared'. By far the largest contingent of those surviving parents consisted of those who came to Britain.

Even these figures need careful handling. Among the parents who were never to be seen again were a number who had already died before the departure of their children to Britain. This was the case with the father of Richard Grunberger, Editor-in-Chief of this journal from 1988 to 2005, and of the father of a close relative of mine, Colin Anson (Claus Ascher), the protagonist

of Helen Fry's study *German Schoolboy, British Commando* (2010), whose father was murdered in Dachau in 1937. It is also the case that some parents were not at immediate risk of extermination: Colin Anson's mother, a non-Jew, survived the war in Germany.

It is sometimes argued that Britain should have admitted the Kindertransport parents along with their children. But it is far from certain that the Nazis would have agreed to the immediate emigration of adults without the customary formalities or that British public opinion would have accepted adults as (relatively) readily as children. The admission of the parents would also have entailed the admission of other relatives dependent on them, especially children too young to travel alone to Britain. In a moving passage in his interview in the *Refugee Voices* collection, Fred Barschak, who came on a Kindertransport from Vienna, recalled how his parents decided against letting their younger son Kurt, aged two, accompany him; all three were later deported. A number of adult Jews who were looking after elderly relatives would also not have left without them. How could these extra people have been admitted to Britain without seriously encumbering the entire Kindertransport initiative?

It was not only the Home Office that insisted on the completion of bureaucratic procedures before Jews like the Kindertransport parents could emigrate from Germany to Britain. The Nazi authorities also created a host of bureaucratic requirements, a regular obstacle course of barriers to emigration that desperate Jews had to surmount before they were able to leave. Apart from an exit permit, a refugee had to have a certificate of good conduct (*Führungszeugnis*), a document certifying that all tax payments had been made (*steuerliche Unbedenklichkeitsbescheinigung*), and a certificate of good health, as well as the documents necessary for admission abroad. Jews had to queue for hours at Nazi offices, where they were subject to

The Home Office and the Kindertransport parents *continued*

the whims of hostile officials.

By 1938, the Nazis had also introduced measures, the *Reichsfluchtsteuer* and the *Judenvermögensabgabe*, that stripped Jews of their wealth. This pauperisation of the Jews had the predictable consequence that other countries, conscious of the potential charge on their exchequers, became even more reluctant to admit them as refugees. Though it was plainly Nazi policy to remove Jews from German society, the implementation of that policy before 1939 was beset by contradictions: the objective of forcing Jews to emigrate ran counter to the Nazis' desire to seize their victims' assets and the sheer malice with which they invested the procedures preceding emigration. The Nazis' own measures hindered the emigration of many Jews.

Furthermore, it was the outbreak of war, not British immigration regulations, that sealed the fate of the Kindertransport parents who remained behind. In 1938-39, Britain admitted refugees from Hitler at the rate of about 3,000 a month, over 50,000 in total during the last 18 months before September 1939. Though Home Office procedures slowed down the process of immigration and delayed the departure of Jews like the Kindertransport parents, they did not stop the emigration of Jews definitively. It was the war that did that – and no one familiar with the Chamberlain government's desperate efforts to avoid war with Germany can hold Britain responsible. Had war not broken out, there is no reason to suppose that Britain would not have continued to admit refugees at much the same rate; if Hitler had followed the advice of his generals, war might well have been delayed for another two years, doubling the number of Kindertransport parents saved.

In this instance, time was truly of the

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Views expressed in the *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

From January 2014, AJR members to meet at Sobell Centre

Following the closure of the AJR Centre last year, AJR members, who previously met at Belsize Square Synagogue on Tuesdays and Thursdays, will now meet at the Sobell Centre, which is based at Amélie House, 221 Golders Green Road, London NW11 9DQ.

The Sobell Centre, run by Jewish Care, offers a wide range of activities and

services and serves hot and cold, non-meat lunches. Ros Collin, who managed the AJR Centre, will be in attendance on Tuesdays and Thursdays to help with the transition to our new meeting place and we very much hope you will be able to join us. As we did when we met at Belsize Square Synagogue, we will be arranging transport for members who otherwise could not attend.

Kinder Lunches – new venue

The Kinder Lunches will now be held on the first Monday of each month at the Hendon Reform Synagogue, located at Danescroft Avenue, London NW4 2NA.

The first Kinder Lunch of the new year will take place on Monday 6 January.

For catering purposes, we will need to know in advance if you plan to attend, so please let Andrea Goodmaker know if you can come along by emailing her at andrea@ajr.org.uk or by calling 020 8385 3070.

Michael Newman

essence. Every scholar who has worked on the emigration of Jews from Germany will have encountered refugees one or more of whose relatives had secured entry visas for Britain but were prevented from leaving Germany by the outbreak of war. Gina Gerson, née Bauer, who left Vienna by train on 10 January 1939, aged 14, recounts in her interview for *Refugee Voices* how her half-sister obtained visas for their parents, who booked their flight to London for 6 September 1939; but war broke out on 3 September and they never arrived. It was Hitler's invasion of Poland that trapped these parents as it trapped the children on board the last 'Winton train' that was prevented by the outbreak of war from leaving the station in Prague, and the second contingent of children from the Yawne School in Cologne, who were due to follow the first trainload of their fellow pupils on the journey to safety.

It is instructive to compare the experiences of Jewish children like Gina Bauer who came to Britain unaccompanied on ordinary trains with those who came on Kindertransport trains. Regrettably, very little attention has been paid to the former group. Their parents, like those of the Kindertransportees, had some chance of reaching Britain though, given the shortage of time before September 1939, many were unable to do so. The Home Office may have been a secondary, delaying factor in their failure to reach safety but, as the case of Gina Bauer's parents shows, it was Hitler's war that was decisive. A considerable number of the parents of such children did, however, succeed in reaching Britain. An example is Colin Anson's wife, Alice Anson, née Gross. She left Vienna alone, as did her elder brother, and both

AJR HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE

'Journeys'

Tuesday 28 January 2013, 2.00 pm
at Belsize Square Synagogue,
51 Belsize Square, London NW3 4HX

Guest speaker: Allan Noel-Baker,
grandson of Philip Noel-Baker, the MP who
initiated the famous debate in Parliament of
21 November 1938 which paved the way for
the Kindertransport.

Rabbi Stuart Altshuler will lead the service,
during which AJR members will light memorial
candles and Kaddish will be recited.

Posters designed by the 16 finalists of the
International Poster competition entitled 'Keep
the Memory Alive', organised by the UN and
Yad Vashem together with the London Jewish
Cultural Centre, will be on display.

Please bring your children and grandchildren,
who will be very welcome.

Light refreshments will be provided
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Karin Pereira on 020 8385 3070
or at karin@ajr.org.uk**

were taken in by British families. Their parents followed on, their mother on a domestic service permit and their father on an entry visa secured through the generosity of a sponsor. Alice Anson kindly provided me with her account of her arrival in Britain, succinctly entitled 'I Was My Own Kindertransport!' – an invitation to historians to commence research into a hitherto neglected group of refugees.

Anthony Grenville

Sehnsucht - a yearning

My father was a quiet man and rarely spoke of the past. I knew he was forced out of Germany because he was Jewish although, I suppose, like many Jews he regarded himself first and foremost as a good German citizen. He had tried to fulfil his dreams. In 1929 he bought a piece of land in Silesia and built a house. He was a man who loved animals and farming. He worked hard, had a family and felt fulfilled.

In 1936 he had to sell his farm at a loss, not because he was a bad farmer but because the new laws forbade Jews to own land. Together with his family he moved to Austria, which at that time had not been annexed by Germany. Once again he worked hard, bought animals, planted trees and was happy. Then came Kristallnacht. In the middle of the night he was taken to Dachau concentration camp. He never spoke to me about that time. At the end of 1938 he was released on the proviso that he left the country. He was one of the lucky ones. Thanks to Frank Foley, passport control officer at the British embassy in Berlin, he managed to get a visa.

My father came to England and eventually met up with his family. He spoke to me about how grateful he

was to England. He told me life wasn't perfect but at least we were alive and he had been offered work, shelter and clothing. He had started a new life. He had been given a second chance and was determined to make the most of it. He wanted to give his children an education, which he did. He was so proud of his children.

Often he repeated his gratitude to England but then, to my surprise, he said 'But this is not my real home!' I was astonished. Never before had I heard such a comment from him. 'Of course it is, Dad. Here you are safe and with people you love and you are secure.' 'Yes,' he answered, 'But this isn't home!' 'Tell me about home,' I asked him.

He closed his eyes and it was as if he was transported to a country far away: 'Home is to me where the mountains are. Home is where the air is fresh, where the pastures are green and the wild flowers sway in the gentle breeze. Home is where I can hear the sound of the cow bells ringing in the distance, where the horses plough the fields, and in the winter the children ski down the snow-covered hills, laughing and shouting. Home is where I can eat *Apfelstrudel* and real bread. The *Apfelwein* tastes so good and the songs of the villagers who dance and celebrate the end of the harvest echo in my ears. Home is all these things and much more. Home is where my heart and soul are and where I will find peace.'

He opened his eyes and looked at me for a response. I asked him if he *wanted* to go home and, to my astonishment, he said this was his dearest wish but added 'Not yet. I'm not ready yet. I owe Britain so much and must repay my debt to a country which, without questioning, took a Jew in with his family and gave them a second chance of life. But one day I want to go home.' He was ready but the time wasn't ripe. He died before he could realise his dream.

Ruth Schwiening

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY TRUST

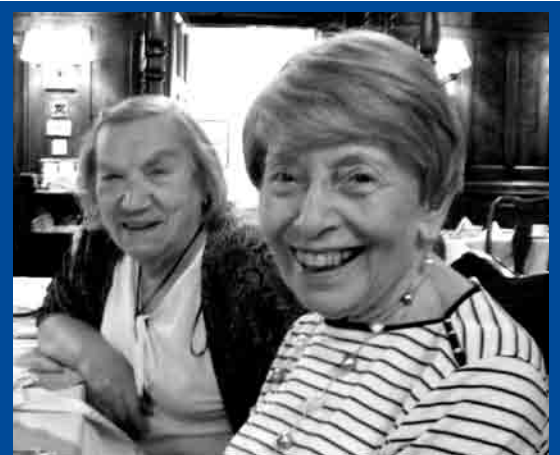
UK COMMEMORATIVE EVENT

27 January 2014

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is inviting refugees and survivors to attend the UK Commemorative Event, which will be held on Monday 27 January 2014 in central London.

To apply for tickets, please call 020 7785 7029 or email anna.miller@hmd.org.uk

Please note that tickets will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.



Gerda Rothberg and Ann Cohen were among a group of AJR members who enjoyed a week in October in a hotel on the shores of Lake Windermere

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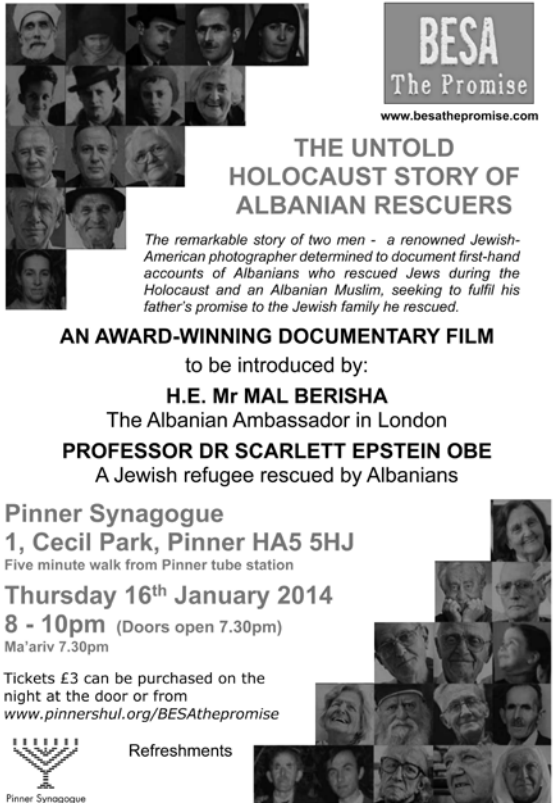
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Pinner Synagogue

Liesel Carter completes her journey

My mother, Liesel Carter, came to England in 1940. Her story is quite remarkable. She was born in August 1935 into a reasonably wealthy German-Jewish family in Hildesheim. Her father, David Meier, had fought in the German army in the First World War and had been decorated. They were an ordinary Jewish family.

In March 1937 David Meier was beaten up by Nazi thugs and died of his injuries. This was our information. Liesel never knew him and the family never spoke of what had happened. This is not the story of how she escaped from Germany alone at the age of four to come to England - although that is remarkable in itself. Nor is it about how lucky she was to escape the Nazis - one of six of the original 250 family members who survived extermination. This is about the completion of her journey and what we all have found out.

My mother came to England and made a good life for herself, marrying and having three children. She possesses only seven family photographs and none of the previous family wealth. She also has very little family history. What she does have is a photograph of her father and a picture of his grave - these are her only memories of him.

For many years, Liesel tried to locate her father's grave but without success. In 2012 a final attempt to find the grave was made - a last-ditch attempt for her, then 77, to visit and pay her respects.

Many letters and emails were sent. No replies. But a chance conversation with Lilian Black, Chair of the Leeds Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association, led to a successful result. The mayor's office in Hildesheim made contact and found the grave. Liesel was invited to visit Hildesheim as a guest of the mayor and to play a role in the Kristallnacht commemoration on 9 November. She travelled with me and my sister plus two of her granddaughters. We didn't know what we would find - to say my mother was nervous is an understatement!

On Thursday 8 November, Liesel was taken to the cemetery where her father is buried. His grave has been well maintained. She brought stones from her mother's grave in London which were placed on his grave; stones were taken from his plot to return to London and reunite her parents. She recited the *Yizkor* memorial prayer and a *Jahrzeit* candle was lit. The moment was emotional.



David Meier

While in Hildesheim we found out that David's story was not what we thought at all. He had been a proud man and something of a firebrand and had stood up to the Nazi changes with all his strength. He didn't see himself as merely Jewish - he was proudly German. In March 1937 he was set upon by four SA thugs. We believe he fought back. He ran into his bank, the manager of which sheltered him. It was suggested to him that as he was a Jew, he should leave the bank by the back door. 'I have been a good customer of this bank for many years. I am German and will leave by the front door,' he said and left. The thugs were waiting and the beating continued. He finally got away and went home.

Three days later he was summoned to a basement hearing at the local Gestapo office on a charge of affray. He disappeared. A few days later the family found out he had been taken to Buchenwald. He never returned. What happened? Nobody knows: speculation is that he refused to sign a confession and was beaten to death. The ultimate injustice was that he was cremated and that his widow had to pay to repatriate his ashes for burial. The exact date of his death is unknown, which is why the Hebrew date is not shown on his headstone.

We also discovered that of a Jewish population of over 10,000 in 1939 out of a total of approximately 72,000 only five Jewish people remained in Hildesheim post-1945. Today the city boasts a 'thriving' community of 100 Jews out of a population of over 103,000.

There is in Hildesheim, however, a strong student group called Beth Shalom. Their members are not Jewish but visit the cemetery every Wednesday and tend the graves. Also, the local

schools study the Holocaust as a lesson that it must never happen again. There is no hiding from history or responsibility here, their group leader, Matthais Reisner, told us.

Invited to meet the Beth Shalom group on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, we found some 125 students waiting to meet Liesel. Their annual commemoration told the story of David Meier and his death - the commemoration was memorable for them as well as us and they were enthusiastic to meet her. A prayer was said at David's graveside in tribute to this first victim. Liesel was asked to speak to the students and she thanked them for their dedication to maintaining the cemetery. She had worried that her father had been all alone, she said, and it comforted her to know that he had visitors every Wednesday.

We went on to a meeting with the mayor to discuss our findings. We had visited the street where Liesel was born and where the shop had been. Over 80 per cent of Hildesheim had been bombed and destroyed. Perhaps, fittingly, this part of the city was untouched. Landmarks had changed and she couldn't find her former home. She also had no memories and nothing felt 'familiar'. However, the mayor's office, armed with information from us, is now looking into this so we may yet get a final answer.

From there we moved to the formal commemoration service, which is held annually in the ruins of the synagogue. On Kristallnacht in 1938 the rabbi had been forced to open the synagogue but prevented from entering it. It was burned to the ground that night. As a memorial to the Holocaust victims, the outer boundary has been relaid and a large, carved stone cube showing images of historical Jewish persecution, Jewish history and the Holocaust placed in the centre.

At the event, the mayor gave a speech and then Liesel told her story. Again, some 200 people attended. Wreaths were laid and *Kaddish* was said for the persecuted victims. The commemoration event is supported by all faiths and there is no attempt to hide or justify what happened.

Did Liesel enjoy the visit to Hildesheim? Difficult to say. Everyone we met was very helpful, polite and friendly and we definitely got answers to the questions we had. However, the memories and fears are very close to the

A bridge between past and present

My mother was the owner of two cinemas in Vienna: the Johann Strauss Kino in the 4th District and the Admiral Kino in the 7th District. My father was the manager of both. I am going to mention only the latter cinema. My mother was dispossessed of the cinema in March 1938, shortly after the Anschluss. My father, who had refused to show Nazi propaganda films, had been arrested at the end of March 1938 and sent to Dachau and later to Buchenwald. My mother went to the Gestapo daily and fortunately my father was released in late May 1939 on condition that we left the country.

The Admiral Kino was 'aryanised' after my mother was dispossessed of it and shortly afterwards she was thrown out of her flat and forced to live with friends. In August 1939 my parents and I (aged two) left Vienna with domestic service permits. They had to leave their own parents, who had failed to apply for visas – a terrible choice.

After the war I recall visiting Vienna with my parents. A relative of my mother had claimed the return of the Admiral Kino on her behalf and it was finally returned to her in 1951. My parents had decided they couldn't bring up a child in Vienna and, having little money, sold the cinema a short time later.

My wife and I visited Vienna with our children when they were young and we have made a point of taking each of our grandchildren to Vienna as a pre-barmitzvah present as it is part of their heritage.

During the visits of our two older grandchildren, we took them to see the outside of the Admiral Kino and explained its significance to them. Prior to the next visit my wife persuaded me to telephone the cinema box office, when I was given the telephone number of the present owner, Michaela Englert. When I contacted her she showed great interest in the cinema's history and was anxious to meet me. Consequently, on our next visit to Vienna with our

granddaughter Rebecca, we met Mrs Englert and received a warm welcome. This was the first time since my childhood that I had been able to view the interior of the cinema.



A few months later the Admiral Kino was featured on Austrian television as one of the oldest surviving cinemas in private ownership. Mrs Englert had arranged for a television crew to come to London to interview me as the son of the former owner and I had my short period of fame on Austrian TV.

Since then we have made two further visits to Vienna with grandchildren, the most recent visit being in May last year. During this visit Mrs Englert invited me to participate in the celebrations commemorating 100 years since the opening of the cinema. I accepted this invitation and last October my son Mark and I paid a 48-hour visit to Vienna. On this occasion, I was the guest of honour.

The Viennese press featured the cinema and gave it welcome publicity and on the night of the celebrations TV cameras were present at the reception. Mrs Englert could not have been more charming and attentive. She had arranged for a cinema historian to give a history of the cinema. Speaking prior to the showing of the feature film, she filled in some dates for me, informing me when my mother became the owner. I also spoke to the invited audience and gave a resume of what had happened to my family. The fact that I was present represented an important step towards reconciliation.

The film chosen by Mrs Englert was the one that had been shown on the date of my birth: *The Lady of the Camellias*, featuring Greta Garbo and Robert Taylor.

After the film there was a further reception and we then went out for a celebratory meal with Mrs Englert, where I ate 'Powidel with Vanilla Sauce' for the first time since my youth.

A few days later my eldest daughter, who is a headmistress, received a query from the Austrian parent of one of her pupils who had picked up the story from the Austrian press. In fact, both my daughters had been to Vienna previously for the film *Double Exposure*, which was premiered at the Admiral Kino and in which I had a small part. My younger daughter, a journalist, had written an article for *The Times* which was on display at the cinema.

I do feel that Austria is finally getting to grips with its past. The younger generation is anxious to find out what happened and substantial progress in confronting this has been made. Certainly, Vienna, with its rich cultural and historical background, is a wonderful place to visit and there is always something new to see and experience there. The Admiral Kino is a bridge between past and present.

Henry Ebner

LIESEL CARTER COMPLETES HER JOURNEY *continued*

surface. Whilst we were visiting there was a demonstration in the market square. One protestor was holding a rolled-up flag coloured red, white and black. In an instant, my mother was a four-year-old frightened child again. Later, we found out that the demonstration was actually for a Kurdish dissident. However, the deep childhood memories emerged very strongly. My mother said she felt uneasy during her visit and has commented on feeling scared that 'they are coming to take me', even though nothing happened or was said that might have caused this feeling. Asked

how she felt to have come 'home' to Hildesheim, she replied 'I am glad to be here but this is not my home. My home is England and I will be glad to return to it.' Perhaps this is the measure of her story, but at least she has found some level of peace and completed her journey.

Postscript

Since our return to the UK, the mayor's office has confirmed that they have found the location of the butcher's shop and apartment where my mother lived. It was bombed to the ground during the war and new housing now sits on top of its location. It wasn't far from where my mother had walked.

Also, the mayor's office is considering installing a Stolperstein in her father's name as a further commemoration. Finally, Beth Shalom leader Matthais Reisner has told us they have petitioned the mayor's office to have a street in Hildesheim named after Liesel's father.

Janet Howley

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Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

PUTTING MORALITY FIRST

Sir – Jane Merkin's *'Suitcase: A story sadly relevant today'* in your November issue is indeed sad and relevant today.

In truth, its relevance has no time limit. She is not the first to have complained in the *AJR Journal* about the attitude of members of the Anglo-Jewish population before the war. Surely we are not trying to assume that when it comes to morality, the Jews are different from the rest of human society? Our tribe is represented in all strata of behaviour.

It is quite likely that large numbers of human beings are willing, even keen, to pursue the moral alternative but when, at the lowest level, survival is at stake, morality becomes irrelevant. Moving up the scale, the not unreasonable desire for more than is necessary begins to compete with moral behaviour. It's my guess that greed becomes dominant quite early on the upward scale of economic and social behaviour.

There is, luckily, a core of human beings at all levels who are strong enough to put morality first, whatever the cost. They keep our hopes open. Looking around, the world shows that today this core is well in the minority, even though, I believe, its proportional influence is greater than its size. Unfortunately, even so, it is not large enough to make any radical changes. The greedy and the violent seem to be sufficiently in charge to prevent morality from making a real difference. Even religion has not succeeded – if it was ever meant to – in achieving a moral society.

We must applaud Jane Merkin for not just protesting but for doing something positive about it. There are many charities and many charitable people who take remedial action but, when you add it all up, the sum total of their actions only touches the fringe.

Personally, I cannot see much point in just complaining, especially about what is long past. I have been an optimist all my life but it does not allow me to disregard reality.

Eric Sanders, London W12

'BLOWN AWAY'

Sir – I have just attended at Piccadilly Station in Manchester a performance of the wonderful play *Suitcase* (see review, page 9), which portrays the hard facts of the Kindertransport. I went with my mother, Ann Cohen, who is a *Kind*, and my husband. We didn't know what to expect but – to use the

vernacular – we were 'blown away'.

The concept was marvellous and the acting and direction excellent. There were about a dozen actors and actresses who initially played the parts of the *Kinder* leaving on their journey. On arrival at the station, we were all given a numbered ticket to wear and ushered in different groups to watch vignettes being performed at various locations in the station.

The scenes which involved waving goodbye and letters to and from the children and their parents caused many of the audience to shed a tear or two.

My mother having been a *Kind*, I am used to hearing the story, but nothing prepared me for the raw emotion evoked by this performance. We are privileged to have seen it and congratulate Ros and Jane Merkin on this amazing piece of social history.

Sue Lynn, Manchester

'WE MUST SAVE THE CHILDREN!'

Sir – I was seriously upset by Mike Levy's letter 'We must save the children!' in your November issue, in which he asked for information about non-Jews who helped children like me after Kristallnacht.

I should so much have liked to give the Brown family my official thanks. Instead, they received only my love and affection. He was R. R. Brown, retired Commissioner of Burma, part of the Indian Civil Service, and had a truly Christian spirit, shared by his wife and daughter. The latter was exactly my age. Without them I could not have borne what happened to my parents and much loved elder brother.

Of course, I am still in touch with my English family. R. R. Brown's son-in-law recently became a great-grandfather.

*Ruth Hingson (Inge Frank),
London NW3*

BY BOAT TO PALESTINE

Sir – With regard to the letter from Carmel Page and Sue Pearson (December), my uncle, a single young man, went from Ersekujvar (Nove Zamky) to Budapest, where he boarded the boat *Erzsebet* to make his life in Palestine.

The *Erzsebet* made several detours to Bratislava and Bulgaria, where more emigrants boarded, before making for Haifa.

It was hard for the *Erzsebet* to stop for refuelling as war had just broken out and

no countries wanted to refuel it. Finally it stopped at an island called Erekli near Turkey, where many boats were queuing. One of the managers helping on the dockside was Jewish and found out that one of the boats was carrying Jewish refugees; he arranged for this boat – the *Erzsebet* – to be refuelled ahead of the others. He also made sure that extra food was loaded on and promised to send updated telegrams to relatives of the refugees that all was well. It had been rumoured that bad things had happened to some of the refugees!

The *Erzsebet* finally docked in Haifa on Shabbat 23 September 1939, which also happened to be Yom Kippur, but the religious passengers, of whom my uncle was one, were allowed to stay on board until after the fast.

George Klein, London NW11

FOR THE RECORD

Sir – Writing during the 75th anniversary year of the Kindertransport, I'd like to put on record that, after serving as a volunteer at Dovercourt, I'm corresponding with Alice Jaspers of Aberdeen – a fourth-generation descendant of a Dovercourt *Kind*! All praise to you for keeping everyone in this worldwide family in touch for so long.

*David Hughes (aged 94),
Bishop's Castle, Shropshire*

TEACHING THE KINDERTRANSPORT

Sir – I would like to contact Kindertransport survivors and their families in Scotland and the North East who would be interested in visiting schools to tell students about their lives.

I am developing a children's war museum to explore historical events through children's voices and memories.

The Wiener Library has a Kindertransport display which can be hired and I would like to take it to our area. There is certainly an interest in Kindertransport history. I hope it will help students to gain a personal understanding of what the war meant to Jewish families in Europe and of the experience of the Jewish child refugees.

*Brian Devlin, Galashiels,
tel 01896 756 402,
email eildon@hotmail.co.uk*

KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE

Sir – I recently attended a very moving AJR service at Belsize Park Synagogue about Kristallnacht 75 years on. Some of the people in the congregation had lived through it. My grandfather was arrested on Kristallnacht and spent three months in Dachau concentration camp. He was only allowed out when my grandmother obtained a work permit to come to the UK. My mother came with her parents aged 13 in February 1939. She was unable to attend the service as she lives in south London.

It is good to keep the memory alive for people who did not live through it and for

people who are not Jewish.

David Shamash, London NW11

David Shamash is a member of the Association of Children of Jewish Refugees (Ed.).

PLANNING STOLPERSTEINE

Sir – Several members of my family in Vienna were murdered in the Holocaust. Through the Vienna Stones of Remembrance project, I am arranging to have stones laid next spring outside the home they shared as a family: see www.steinedererinnerung.net/

There are several projects throughout the occupied area. The stones are often called *Stolpersteine* – ‘stumble stones’ – and can be found on the internet for individual towns.

As I had never heard of *Stolpersteine* before a few months ago, probably few others in the UK know about this project. The thought that my family will not be forgotten gives me great pleasure. They will hopefully remind a nation of the tragedy born of prejudice that must never be repeated; furthermore, my living family will have somewhere they can go to pay their respects.

I would be happy to help (via the *Journal*) anyone who would like to have a stone laid for their family but does not know where to start.

Kay Sharpe, Folkestone

A WONDERFUL EVENT

Sir – Congratulations to the AJR for organising the wonderful event in the House of Lords re-dedicating the plaque which thanks Britain for rescuing the *Kinder*. Not only was it an experience to be invited into the hallowed halls of government and provided with an elegant seated tea, but it was also a pleasure to hear John Bercow, Betty Boothroyd, Alf Dubs and our own Erich Reich speak.

Ruth Barnett, London NW6

POIGNANT CEREMONY

Sir – I would like to thank the AJR for co-hosting the memorable ceremony at Liverpool Street Station on 1 December.

For me, it was very poignant as I was on the first Kindertransport, arriving in Harwich on 2 December 1938. And I was especially glad that the Chief Rabbi, whose speech was apt throughout, mentioned not only those who organised and permitted the transports but also the parents who let the children go, knowing – as they must have done by then – that the writing was on the wall. I was also very touched at having been asked to place one of the candles, which I managed to do for Berlin.

*Professor Leslie Baruch Brent,
London N19*

HORTHY STATUE IN CENTRAL BUDAPEST: WHAT WILL BE NEXT?

Sir – I read recently that a statue to Horthy, Hungary's controversial wartime leader and an ally of Hitler, has been erected in the centre of Budapest. As a survivor of the Horthy era, I feel outraged. In Prague, when rightists

marched carrying anti-Semitic slogans, the head of the Catholic Church protested. Nothing like this is happening in Hungary. Why? Because anti-Semitism has been prevalent in Hungarian society for many years. Today, as a result of political intrigue, all common sense and humanity have been sacrificed. What will be next?

Maria Dea Combley, Harrow, Middx

CHANCE ENCOUNTER

Sir – I don't really have a lot to go on: my memory of it all is extremely patchy. So what am I doing writing this? It must be the memory of that lively, little fair-haired girl, whose Christian name I can't recall, playing on the swings in St James's Park one sunny Sunday afternoon. It turned out that she was the daughter of the playwright John Osborne, mentioned in Anthony Grenville's recent article. Our young daughter Sarah found in her a little playmate. I also remember the two pleasant foreign nannies (French or Italian?) who were in charge of the little girl and whom my husband and I found interesting to talk to. They even all came to visit us one afternoon in our modest flat after our meeting in the park.

I couldn't help feeling sorry for that little girl although she couldn't have been treated better, but she did come across as the archetypal child of actors or professionals living their separate lives – father in England, mother in the States.

Now, 50-odd years later, I wonder what has become of the girl, what her name is, and if she remembers us.

Margarete Stern, London NW3

AUDIO RECORDINGS OF AUSTRIAN-JEWISH REFUGEES AVAILABLE

Sir – In 1993, when collecting language data for my PhD on German/English bilingualism, I made audio recordings of informal conversations with Austrian, predominantly Viennese, Jewish refugees living in London. The recordings were made available to the participants at the time but unfortunately many of the participants are no longer with us. When I came across the *Refugee Voices* project on the AJR website it occurred to me that relatives and/or friends of these people might want to have access to the recordings as a form of audio-memory.

The list of names I have is: Anschel, Gerti and Klaus; Arie, Edith; Bronstein, Dorit; Bukowitz, Stefan; Caraco, Mrs; Charap, Ellie; Collins, Lizzy; Dutch, Josi and Albert; Eichler, Udi; Fensterheim, Tom; Fischer, Wolfgang; Goldie, Mrs; Gottlieb, F. H.; Grunberger, Richard; Hogan, Sophie and Fritz; Holland, Evelyn; Hull, Lore; Lane, Alfred; Motesiczky, Marie-Luise; Rosenow, Lilly; Singer, Mrs; Sloane, Mrs; Stern, Renee.

*Dr Eva Duran Eppler,
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UNCLE BOX

Sir – My husband, whose family came from Berlin and Tilsit, had two uncles both of whom were known as Uncle Box. Their given names were Max and Julius. I asked my late father-in-law about it and he said it was an old joke he had forgotten. But where did the name Box come from? I have wondered for 50 years now. I wonder if any of your readers know the answer.

Susan Busse, Welwyn Garden City

HURTFUL AND UNJUSTIFIED COMMENTS

Sir – We write in response to two correspondents, Walter Wolff (October) and Peter Wayne (November), who took exception to an article by Ruth David which appeared in your September issue. This article was a personal view of the 75th-anniversary Kindertransport event in June. Ruth quoted, but is blamed for, a remark that was ‘let fall casually’ by someone else – ‘that we Kindertransportees ... were the group of immigrants that had done more for Britain than any other immigrant group ever in the UK.’ A bold and perhaps arguable claim, but to accuse her, as your correspondents did, of arrogance, having ‘grand illusions’, ego-tripping, boastfulness and denigrating non-*Kinder* sections of the community, is grossly unfair.

Neither of your correspondents knows Ruth as we have for close on 30 years. She is guilty of none of the above. She is the most modest, self-effacing, even self-denigrating, person one is likely to meet, who has for many years given an enormous amount of time talking to thousands of school students in Britain and Germany, as well as to countless adult audiences, about the Holocaust, how it affected her family and her own experience as a *Kind*. She is, of course, one of many who, for the sake of younger generations, have relived the painful past in this way and she would be the first to acknowledge the work of others, some of whom, like her, have deservedly been recognised and honoured by the German government for their tireless efforts. Your correspondents' comments were hurtful and quite unjustified.

*Kate and Tim Ottevanger,
Ashby Parva, Lutterworth, Leicestershire*

A CYNICAL MOVE

Sir – A propos the article ‘Austrian dentistry in the UK’ (December), there was another category. From 1941 onwards Austrian dentists were allowed to work in the relatively poorly paid school dental service – a cynical move! My father, a qualified *Zahnarzt*, applied for, and soon got, a job with Derbyshire County Council; his brother, in a similar position, found employment in Leicester. My father was appalled at the low standard of dentistry and worked hard to maintain his own high standard. His work was appreciated by patients and colleagues alike.

Stella Curzon, Ruislip, London

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ART NOTES

GLORIA TESSLER

He is funny, metaphysical and deeply searching: **Paul Klee – Making Visible** at **Tate Modern** (until 9 March) is as mysterious as a rainbow. His paintings, only 128 out of an output of 10,000, are scattered among 17 rooms full of explanation, but I found *his* words the most apt: 'A line comes into being – it goes for a walk, aimlessly, for the sake of the walk.' This may sound whimsical and childlike but his abstract blocks of colour dotted with trees, or his studies of fish which float and disintegrate into squares or pyramids, define



Paul Klee *Redgreen and Violet-Yellow Rhythms* 1920. Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Berggruen Klee Collection, 1984 (1984.315.19) Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Source: Art Resource/Scala Photo Archives

him. This is clever stuff, with the Swiss-born metaphysical surrealist suggesting cellular beginnings and endlessness. The works have fantastic names like *Redgreen and Violet-Yellow Rhythms* or *Static-Dynamic Gradation*. Any human forms that appear float like ghosts, almost extinguished by squares and oblongs.

Klee's fascination with colour intensified with his trip in April 1914 to Tunisia, where he drew inspiration from its religious places. Often he portrays a black sun and an arrow, a moon, yellow or blue which could represent an eye, human or fish. There are hints of war graves, clocks and crosses. After Germany's defeat in 1918 and the abdication of the

Kaiser, Klee was swept up in a revolutionary fervour, which was marked by stronger, more dynamic colours.

His work is less contained than Kandinsky's or Mondrian's but equally involved with the vocabulary of colour. For those who can't read him, he will resemble a difficult equation written on the school blackboard. But there are fiery, elemental stirrings behind the deceptively simple blocks of colour. He is like a scientist struggling with the meaning of life. To understand him, you must share his universal questioning, working through his metaphysical spaces in which the colour patterns are like a code to be broken. Hugo Ball remarked on his playfulness 'in an age of the colossus'.

In 1921 Klee joined Walter Gropius in the Bauhaus, where, with little teaching experience, he became one of the most popular masters. He developed an oil transfer technique, using a tracing needle over a sheet of painted paper. The device suited his cartoon-like drawings. But, as the economic crisis deepened, Bauhaus funding was halved. So, with Gropius, Kandinsky and others, he helped relocate the Bauhaus to Dessau.

Later, as war loomed again, his paintings of *Walpurgisnacht* referenced his interest in Goethe but, in his final year, 1939, suffering from scleroderma, he completed 1,253 paintings. Many of these last works are surprisingly joyful and optimistic. He lived to see 17 of his works snatched from state collections and used in the Nazi's 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in Munich, followed by a further 140.

There's still time to catch the **National Portrait Gallery's** current exhibition **Elizabeth I & Her People** (until 5 January). The focus is on the new, wealthy mercantile class rich enough to have their portraits painted: they are shown holding skulls, ensuring their earthly humility and thus a place in heaven – a kind of *memento mori*.

The growing merchant classes did not exclude women from their midst. One woman, a famous calligrapher, is strikingly portrayed in a high crowned hat and stiff grey ruff. Here is a country resolving its years of religious turbulence as literature and culture began to flourish with a growing middle class.

REVIEWS

A production not to be missed

KINDERTRANSPORT

by Diane Samuels

produced by Hall and Childs Ltd at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry

This is a seminal play that will have relevance for generations to come, given that its central theme is the mother-daughter relationship and managing the emotions involved when their separation is distorted by circumstances. Set in the period immediately before, during and after the Second World War, the play has become part of Holocaust literature. Yet we need to bear in mind that the issues it brings to life are inevitably accentuated in every war-torn arena and wherever atrocities against humanity confront parents with decisions that have far-reaching effects on subsequent generations.

The first production of *Kindertransport*, in 1993 by the Soho Theatre Company at the Cockpit Theatre in London, won two major awards. It followed two events of historic importance: the 50th-anniversary *Kindertransport* Reunion in 1989 and the requirement that the Holocaust be taught as part of the curriculum of all school students from September 1991. Consequently, the play had a wide reception not only among the general public but also in schools, where it is a recommended text for exam syllabuses.

I have now seen altogether seven productions of *Kindertransport*, one of them produced by a school in their local theatre. I never tire of the play and each production grips me in a different way. The play lends itself to the shocks and surprises being handled creatively by the director and the talents of the actors so that each production is unique. The current production is no exception. The pace of the action is amazingly fast and dramatic within a unique portable stage set that allows scene changes with virtually no movement of props. The sound track, with the moving clouds, changing from blue sky to foreboding dark clouds as the 'backcloth', provides an all-pervasive atmosphere. The evocative use of large quantities of shoes is also unique to this production.

Paul Lancaster is the most terrifying *Ratcatcher* I have seen. Evil emanates from him, complemented by the more subtle forms of ridicule and abuse in his appearance in his other roles and beautifully representing the failure of the male role when society has disintegrated into war and genocide. This is the outer setting in which the mother-daughter relationship is accentuated. Emma Deegan as the German mother and Janet Dibley as the grown-up daughter play their characters so convincingly and movingly that I had difficulty recognising them in the Q&A

continued opposite ➔

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session afterwards.

The foster mother, Lil, has, in my view, the most important role in the play. Fostering is very different to being a biological parent. Paula Wilcox plays Lil to perfection in changing between the middle-aged woman who meets little Eva off the Kindertransport to the elderly grandmother of Evelyn's daughter Faith. This is crucial in connecting the to-and-fro between the experiences of Eva and those of Evelyn and Faith to fit the pieces of the story together. Finally, the two younger characters, Eva and Faith, played by actresses developing their careers, Gabrielle Dempsey and Rosie Holden, are just as moving and convincing.

My one disappointment was that the Ratcatcher wasn't in evidence as the play came to an end, leaving the playgoer to work out for him/herself what happened to him. Was the evil banished? The lack of male responsibility resolved? The tenure of society restored?

The audience in Coventry on 25 October demonstrated their appreciation by a good half of the almost full house remaining afterwards for the Q&A session and coming up with very interesting comments and questions.

This is a production not to be missed. Here is a list of performances in 2014:
Bromley Churchill Theatre – one week from 22 Jan.

Derby Theatre – one week from 27 Jan.

Richmond Theatre – one week from 3 Feb.

Westcliff Palace Theatre – one week from 10 Feb.

Eastbourne Devonshire Park – one week from 24 Feb.

Malvern Festival Theatre – one week from 10 March

Manchester Opera House – one week from 25 March

Guildford Yvonne Arnaud Theatre – one week from 31 March

Ruth Barnett

A unique theatrical event

SUITCASE

at Liverpool Street Station, London, 2 December 2013

It took me a little while to find an appropriate name for this unique production. It is pure theatre but it is not a play. The best I can come up with is 'theatrical event'.

Devised and directed by Ros Merkin and initially produced on the 70th anniversary of the first Kindertransport train arriving on 2 December 1938 at London's Liverpool Street Station, the material is based on interviews conducted by Ros in the autumn of 2008 with survivors who arrived at that station during 1938-39. This was formed into scenes acted out in different locations in the station itself. In 2008 the cast consisted of drama students at Liverpool John Moores University, but for this year's revival accomplished actors were engaged.

Initially the audience assembled

around the bronze statue by Frank Meisler on the station forecourt, now named 'Hope Square'. There cast and musicians entertained, dressed in 1938 mode and performing songs and dances of the era. Gradually the theme developed into the story that was about to be related. This was magnificently carried out by the entire cast, led by Jackie Jones in the role of 'Mrs Hilton, Refugee Children's Movement Organiser'. The audience, wearing coloured labels with numbers on them, was then divided into six groups of around 30-35 'children' and conducted into three locations on both of the two-floor station concourses.

In each of these locations, the children's experiences were enacted in vignettes. There was one hilarious scene of a couple who were there to collect their foster child but outraged that they 'got a girl instead of the boy they ordered', with a breath-taking performance by Daniel Hayes as a Mr Garbutt from Yorkshire, supported by his wife, played by Gemma Banks. This scene was balanced by one in which Charlotte Allmand as Hani and Ross McCall (a drama student in the original production in 2008) as her brother Kurt portrayed two children who were to be separated from each other by their respective foster parents – a scene which brought each audience to tears. There was 'Stephan from Prague' (Zoot Lynam), who couldn't understand that bread could be white as given to him by his new foster sister, Anne Wilson (Becky Barry), and elsewhere we found 'Edith, an Englishwomen' (Kitty Martin) sitting in a corner sipping tea while reading *The Times* and disgusted by the idea of bringing more Jews into the country and 'taking our jobs'. Another very realistic performance was given by Tom Hosker in the role of a cockney railway porter who was just going off duty when the train arrived but decided he 'couldn't go home and leave all these children who had just come.' This brought into play elements of the politics of the time, including trade

union attitudes and speeches by Fascist leader Oswald Mosley.

It was interesting to observe the faces of bewildered commuters in the station going about their business and seeing these groups standing around actors giving a performance. But their curiosity was anticipated by producer Jane Merkin, who dedicated the production to the memory of her late mother, Johanna Merkin, who, as Johanna Hacker, arrived in this country on a Kindertransport from Vienna in 1938. Each group was accompanied by a person who had literature which explained what was going on.

The six groups returned to the station forecourt, where stories were told of different experiences in later life in England. It ended with more music and dancing and finally – it being Chanukah – doughnuts.

I cannot praise too highly the organisation of it all. Obviously the six groups saw the scenes in a different order but they never clashed and arrived at Hope Square at almost exactly the same time.

Normally a reviewer would state at this point where and when you can go and see this production. Sadly that is not possible. The three performances in the morning, lunchtime and evening of 2 December marked the end of a short tour, which comprised three performances on one day in each of nine provincial railway stations between 12 and 29 November. All I can do is tell you to look out for a possible second revival on the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport on 2 December 2018 – one never knows!

Harry Bibring

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

DR KULKA'S BOX

When in the 1980s Paul Minton's mother gave him a box she had bought at an auction in Telford, the teenage postcard collector was thrilled. In an instant he acquired nearly 1,000 postcards as well as letters sent from home and abroad, along with photographs, dating from 1910 to 1974, all of which had belonged to a Dr Dorothea (aka Dora) Kulka. He ascertained that she was a Jewish refugee from Vienna and that there was an apparent connection with the University of Birmingham but he could find out little else about her and ultimately the box was consigned to the attic.

Fast forward to 2013, when the now Dr Minton was re-presented with the box by his mother, prompting him to try again to discover something about Dr

Kulka. His 'googling' quickly produced results and he found himself reading about Dora in some articles I had written about the refugee committee of the British Federation of University Women (BFUW). The small voluntary committee was set up in 1933 following Hitler's accession to power in Germany specifically to assist a trickle of women academics, Jews and non-Jews, who wanted to leave the country. By early 1938 they were deluged with requests for help from all over Europe, including an application from Dr Kulka.

From the minutes of the BFUW we know that Dora was born on 19 May 1899 in Silesia, Austria, and by 1938 was a highly qualified bacteriologist and fermentation chemist with 14 years' ex-

continued overleaf

 DR KULKA'S BOX *cont. from p.9*

perience and an excellent CV, but that she lost her job when the Institute of Microbiology was liquidated by the Nazis on 1 May. Soon after, she applied to the BFUW for help and, once they had decided she was an eligible candidate, they arranged for her to be interviewed by their Quaker contact in Vienna. Her formal visa application was dealt with by the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning and Dora arrived in Britain on 24 September 1938. The BFUW took over responsibility for her hospitality, financial support and search for employment but, to comply with her entry restrictions, Dora had to work as an unpaid research assistant at the Brewery School in Birmingham for about a year. Visas were intermittently renewed and grants from the BFUW kept her going. In 1942 she was well enough settled financially to repay them. They certainly had not expected to be reimbursed but Dora was clearly a woman of integrity who wanted to do the right thing. The fact that the BFUW had also, quite exception-

ally, helped her parents to get to Britain after they were made stateless was a further testament to the humanity of the refugee committee. Dora's father Viktor died in 1941 and her mother Martha (née Strakosch) in January 1946. She also had two younger sisters, Helen and Hedwig, both of whom, at some point, married and settled in Florida.

Dora's work went well and in 1942 she and two co-workers at the Hope Brewery in Sheffield were named on a brewing-related patent. Following her naturalisation in August 1947, her career took her to Birmingham and the British School of Malting and Brewing under Professor Hopkins, with whom she co-wrote research papers.

Many academic publications followed, as well as a successful career as a lecturer, and this is where Dr Minton's other breakthrough continues the story. His 'googling' put him in touch with a number of people, including Dr Brian Wood and Professor Keith Cooksey, who

were students of Dora at Birmingham University in the 1950s. They remembered her with great affection as an inspiring microbiologist and lecturer whom they called 'Auntie' and who never quite mastered the English language.

Dora never married but gathered a wide circle of friends in Birmingham, although it remains uncertain whether she became part of the local refugee community. What is certain from one of the very few postcards that has been deciphered is that she was planning a holiday in Austria in the summer of 1949 – one wonders what her feelings were on going back to her home country.

Dora retired in 1964 and died at home in Kings Norton, Birmingham, on 29 January 1983. Among the beneficiaries in her will was the BFUW, a tribute to the help they had given her. With a box full of archival material relating to her life still to be translated, who knows what else will be revealed?

Susan Cohen

Anglo-Jewry vs Continental Jewry: time heals

In November's *AJR Journal*, Ernest G. Kolman wrote about his coming to Britain from Germany: 'we were never fully accepted by the English Jewish community'. I have to agree.

There seems to have been very little love lost between Anglo-Jewry and Continental Jewry until long after the war. Other than their religion – and, in many aspects, even this was different as far as services and observance were concerned – English Jews and Continental Jews had almost nothing in common and they didn't take to each other gladly.

To start with, in the First World War they fought on different sides. My English-born father-in-law found it offensive that my Austrian-born father showed him a silver beaker which had been presented to him by his Austrian regiment: 'He should hide it, not show it off!', he maintained. 'He was the enemy.'

Then, naturally, there was the problem of language. My father-in-law didn't have a foreign accent. My father had a Viennese one. Communication was sometimes stilted and often uneasy and hesitant. Worst of all, the two men were on a totally different social plane. My father-in-law was reasonably comfortable money-wise. He had a successful babywear business in the West End – though it hadn't always been thus. He had built his way out of the East End. His family had come to England when fleeing the Cossacks at the end of the 19th century. They were poor and uneducated. To them, understandably, earning good money was paramount. My father was a medical practitioner in Vienna, a respected doctor. He had no money when he came here but to him *Bildung* was paramount: 'There is nothing more important than a good education,'

he maintained. 'Money will follow.'

The two men didn't understand each other. They spoke only because they had to – for my sake and that of my future wife. Neither really approved of our marriage. My father-in-law thought that, as a student recently down from Oxford, I was poor, jobless, not his kind, and wrong for his daughter. My father thought I was marrying into a family that was beneath ours intellectually. (How wrong they were – we've been married now for 55 years!)

My story is typical of the lack of understanding between English Jews and Continental Jews. The former, though they had not integrated into England as the German Jews had into Germany, felt the Continental Jews were foreigners and – just as bad – not *real* Jews. The latter spoke with foreign accents and some had this strange idea that their synagogues should be *Liberal*! The foreign aspect, they believed, would cause more anti-Semitism and the Liberal aspect didn't fit into their own traditional orthodoxy. Worse, they had no money and would be a drain on the country.

Anglo-Jewry, when escaping the Cossacks, had settled in London's poor East End. The Continental Jews, escaping the Nazis, settled in London's Hampstead, a very middle-class area. 'Penniless snobs,' thought Anglo-Jewry. Though Anglo-Jewry had not integrated they did stick to their own areas, most were strictly kosher, they had hardly any non-Jewish friends, and they worked round the clock to make money so they could eventually move to smarter parts of London. The Continental Jews, feeling themselves unwanted by Anglo-Jewry, also kept themselves to themselves, living

in Hampstead, opening a synagogue there (Belsize Park), frequenting the same cafés, the Cosmo and Dorice in particular, and creating the AJR.

Of course, the other big difference between English Jews and Continental Jews was their thinking on *Bildung* and culture. To the English Jews, money was omnipotent. To the Continental Jews, the arts were of almost equal importance. Their love for the Amadeus Quartet is an example of this, as were 'Grand Hotel' and the Richard Tauber programme on the BBC. These programmes re-awakened for them memories of their homelands. Even when it came to more popular music, Anglo-Jewry loved Ivor Novello, while Continental Jewry preferred Sigmund Romberg. To the Continental Jews, the arts were part of their daily life. To Anglo-Jews, the arts were a luxury.

Was Anglo-Jewry welcoming to Continental Jewry? No. Was Continental Jewry arrogant towards Anglo-Jewry? Yes.

However, the so-called animosity happened many years ago. It's all over. Now, at last, we are all British Jews, living together in comparative harmony. Time heals.

Peter Phillips

ARTS AND EVENTS JANUARY DIARY

Fri 10 Dr Joanna Beata Michlic 'Bringing the Dark to Light: Holocaust Memory in Post-Communist Europe' Wiener Library, 1.00–2.00 pm. Admission free but booking essential, tel 020 7636 7247.

Plaque unveiled in honour of Paralympics founder Ludwig Guttman

The AJR and Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust have unveiled a commemorative plaque in honour of Sir Ludwig Guttman at Stoke Mandeville Hospital's National Spinal Injuries Centre.

Sir Ludwig, widely known as the founder of the Paralympics, fled Nazi Germany for the UK in 1939. His escape was made possible by the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (later Council for Assisting Refugee Academics, CARA), which found posts for a large number of refugee academics and scientists, mostly Jewish, who had been dismissed from their posts by the Nazis. Sir Ludwig also served on the AJR's board for over 25 years.

Present at the unveiling were representatives of the AJR, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, CARA and the Poppa Guttman Trust as well as members of the Guttman family.

Speaking at the ceremony, AJR Trustee Frank Harding said that Sir Ludwig's 'work and legacy have been rightly celebrated and have had an enormous impact on the lives of many hundreds of individuals in the United Kingdom, on British society, and on many thousands of athletes across the world.' Sally Loring, Assistant Chief Operating Officer of Buckinghamshire NHS Healthcare Trust, declared that 'We are tremendously proud of Professor Guttman's work at the Hospital, both establishing our National Spinal



Representatives of the AJR, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, CARA, the Poppa Guttman Trust as well as members of the Guttman family were present at the unveiling ceremony

Injuries Centre and his unique approach to rehabilitation, which led to the creation of the Paralympic movement.' Hannah Peters reflected on her grandfather's legacy and the success of last summer's Paralympic Games.

The Poppa Guttman Trust has commissioned a statue to the memory of Sir Ludwig which stands close to the plaque outside the National Spinal Injuries Centre.



Ursula and John Trafford, whose wedding reception was held at The Cosmo in 1957, Marion Manheimer, the daughter of the former owners, and AJR Trustee Frank Harding

Plaque for Cosmo restaurant

The AJR has unveiled a special commemorative plaque in memory of the Cosmo Restaurant, a well-known meeting place for Jewish émigrés from Nazi oppression, at INDIA Per Se, its former site on Finchley Road near Swiss Cottage.

The Cosmo was a popular meeting place for many of the German and Austrian Jewish refugees who settled in the Swiss Cottage/Belsize Square area of north-west London.



(from left) Israeli Ambassador Daniel Taub, Rabbi Julia Neuberger, Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg

In memory of Eleanor Rathbone, Robert Smallbones and Arthur Dowden

At a ceremony at Hoop Lane Cemetery in north-west London two plaques were unveiled, in memory of Eleanor Rathbone MP, the great parliamentary champion of the refugees from Hitler in Britain, and of Robert Smallbones, British Consul General in Frankfurt/Main, and Arthur Dowden, his deputy, whose efforts saved the lives of many thousands of Jews in the period before September 1939.

At a service in the prayer hall, John Curtis, Chair of Hoop Lane Cemetery, welcomed those present, after which Dr Susan Cohen, author of a book on Eleanor Rathbone, paid tribute to her, and Rabbis Julia Neuberger and Jonathan Wittenberg spoke in tribute to Robert Smallbones and Arthur Dowden. Rabbi Israel Elia then said Kaddish in memory of the six million victims of the Shoah.

After the service, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon John Bercow MP, gave an address at the Cemetery wall to mark the dedication of the plaques.

Among those present were AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman, His Excellency the Israeli Ambassador, Lord Levy, Lord Janner of the Holocaust Educational Trust and representatives of World Jewish Relief.

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Glasgow Chanukah Lunch – Enjoying Festive Delights

Some 45 First and Second Generation members enjoyed the festive delights of latkes and doughnuts. Entertainment was provided by Klein Klezmer from Edinburgh and several people participated in traditional dancing.

Anthea Berg

Café Imperial Armistice Day Birthday

A fitting Armistice Day to celebrate the forthcoming 90th birthday of Harold Livingstone! Harold invited all the regulars, while his daughter, Jacqui Cowley, jetted in from New York for the occasion.

Hazel Beiny

Ealing 'Secret Territory'

Miriam Halahmy gave a fascinating talk about her book 'Secret Territory', which deals with a young Jewish girl's visits to Israel in 1975 at a time of trouble.

Leslie Sommer

Sheffield CF Jews of South Africa

Hilary Mendelsson discussed the history of Jews in South Africa as well as her own experience of growing up there. A most interesting afternoon.

Wendy Bott

Wembley New Group Organiser Welcomed

Following a splendid Chanukah tea, we welcomed Kathryn Prevezer as our new group organiser and discussed plans for future meetings.

Avram and Vera Schaufeld

Iford Insight into WJR

Lesley Urbach and Anna Sheinman from World Jewish Relief gave us insight into their organisation. WJR began in 1933 as the Central British Fund for German Jewry and helped many refugees as they fled the Nazis. Today it still assists many people in need, helping fund employment and providing teaching aid around the world.

Meta Roseneil

Pinner My Father the Sculptor

Lady Aurelia Young showed us a remarkable collection of sculptures created by her father, Oscar Nemon, of subjects including royalty, politicians (including Winston Churchill) and other famous people – even reluctant sitter Sigmund Freud.

Walter Weg

Bromley CF Animated Discussion

Meeting in Liane Segal's delightful flat, we had an animated discussion on such subjects as relations between survivors and Second Generation children, circumcision, and the

controversy around Hannah Arendt's book on the Eichmann trial.

Peter Block

HGS A Further Visit to Stoke Mandeville?

Wheelpower's Joyce Sheard and her husband John joined us. A further visit to Stoke Mandeville was suggested following the success of our earlier visit. Lovely that we had Anne Marx with us – she had met Ludwig Guttman.

Hazel Beiny

Essex (Westcliff) Memories of Kristallnacht

Our Chairman, Otto Deutsch, gave a talk on his experience of Kristallnacht in Vienna and happier earlier times. Other members too related their experiences during WWII.

Larry Lisner

Newcastle Enchanting Selection of Arias and Songs

We sat down to a delicious Chanukah lunch followed by a raffle. Soprano Victoria Atkinson enchanted everyone with a selection of arias and songs by, among others, Puccini, Debussy, Mozart and Schubert.

Agnes Isaacs

St John's Wood The Old Jewish East End

A very interesting talk by university lecturer Nadia Valman about Israel Zangwill's book *Children of the Ghetto*. We were all spellbound and wish we could hear her again on this subject.

Avram Schaufeld

Bradford CF 100th Birthday Party

We celebrated Lorle Michaelis's 100th birthday with a party – her second that week – at the home of Ralph Black.

Wendy Bott

Birmingham (West Midlands) Calls on an MP's Time

Dudley MP Ian Austin, the son of Margaret and Fred Austin, enthusiastic supporters of our group meetings, told us something of the various calls on an MP's time, both in Westminster and in the constituency.

Philip Lesser

Yorkshire Chanukah Party



Pictured here with the Brodetsky School Choir's Yuval Peters and Louis Casper, Lorle Michaelis celebrates her 100th birthday

Leeds, Bradford, Hull and Sheffield members enjoyed a Chanukah Party at which they were entertained by the Brodetsky School Choir and a violin and cello recital by Leeds College of Music graduates. In between performances everyone tucked into a Betty's-of-Harrogate-style afternoon tea!

Wendy Bott

Welwyn GC A Period Previously Little Documented

There was a very good turnout for Anthony Grenville's talk about his book and his research into the period 1933-70, on which little documentation was previously available. We were not disappointed. The talk touched us all.

Leonora Koos

Bristol/Bath Pivotal Meeting

A full house for our meeting, Myrna's very last hosting! Our speaker having been forced to cancel, Myrna got us to ad lib on the theme 'A pivotal meeting that changed the course of my life'. We received some gems and hearts were truly touched.

Hazel Rank Broadley

Brighton & Hove Sarid A Civil Service Career

Leslie Sommer spoke about his career at the Home Office. He joined the Civil Service after graduating from Oxford and worked in the Fire Service, Passport Office, Immigration and Coroners.

Ceska Abrahams

Glasgow Chaos and Confusion of the Kindertransport

At a production of *Suitcase* at Glasgow Central Station, the chaos and confusion of children arriving on the Kindertransport were reproduced as groups of members and local schoolchildren were guided around the station.

Anthea Berg

Edgware The Dreyfus Affair

We listened carefully to Raymond Sturgess's talk about Alfred Dreyfus, in which he mentioned many details which are not so well known.

Felix Winkler

Manchester A Delightful Production

Manchester and Liverpool group members enjoyed a visit to the Lowry Theatre to see *Fiddler on the Roof* – a delightful production full of nostalgia with wonderful songs.

Susanne Green

Radlett 'Story of Survival' Project

World Jewish Relief's Pam Amdurar spoke about the 'Story of Survival' project. WJR is collecting family stories to make them available to everybody and provide the possibility of finding family members.

Dora Kohler

North West London Pre-Chanukah Lunch and Discussion

We had a lovely pre-Chanukah lunch followed by a general discussion and Hazel and Esther told us about the programme for 2014.

David Lang

Kingston Beginnings of the Wiener Library

Joining us for the usual delicious tea at the home of Susan Zisman, AJR Trustee Anthony Spiro spoke of the beginnings of the Wiener Library and the work it does. A delightful afternoon.

Hazel Beiny

North London Film Location Problems

A most interesting morning, with guest speaker Howard Lanning talking about 'The Trials and Tribulations of Film Location'. His

talk was supported by scenes from various films made by his family.

Herbert Haberberg

Glasgow Side of a Conflict Rarely Acknowledged

Larry Rich, of the Emek Medical Center, told us stories of interactions between Israelis and Arabs involving compassion – a side of the conflict which is rarely acknowledged.

Halina Moss

Suitcase in the North West

Twenty AJR members, including seven Kinder, went to see *Suitcase* at Manchester's Piccadilly Station. The next day ten Merseyside AJR members, including two Kinder, saw it at Liverpool's Lime Street Station.

'*Suitcase* was very moving and portrayed the Kindertransport journey to England with accuracy and sensitivity' – Margot Showman

'*Suitcase*, a very beautiful and thoughtfully written play, was performed in separate sketches in different parts of the station. These sketches were very true to the time of the Kindertransport. I was very moved by the whole performance' – Sonja Sternberg

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Death

Joseph George Strauss, 1919-2013, of Wimbledon and Cambridge passed away after a short illness. He is greatly missed by his children Leonie, Julian and Daniel and their spouses Tony, Virginia and Anne; seven grandchildren; niece Jacqueline and her husband Walter; and nephews Michael and Antony.



Rebecka Scherer (Manchester) and Harvey Ottman (Leeds) met up again after 75 years at an AJR visit to the Manchester Jewish Museum. Both had lived in the small Jewish community of Gladbeck. Rebecka remembers Harvey as a very bright boy at *cheder*!

JANUARY GROUP EVENTS

Pinner	2 Jan	Margery Cohen: 'An Indian Childhood'
Hull	5 Jan	Sara Mack: Calligraphy
Ealing	7 Jan	Winter Warmer – Social Get-together
St John's Wood	8 Jan	Tracy Childs and Andrew Hall, Producer and Director of <i>Kindertransport</i> the play Discussion
Glasgow Book Club	9 Jan	David Barnett: 'All-England Champion Daniel Mendoza'
Essex (Westcliff)	14 Jan	At Bridge Club Social
Didsbury	15 Jan	Alf Keiles: Jazz Programme
Edinburgh CF	15 Jan	Winter Warmer – Social Get-together
Radlett	15 Jan	At home of Louise Elliott
Brighton-Sarid (Sussex)	20 Jan	Tracy Childs and Andrew Hall, Producer and Director of <i>Kindertransport</i> the play
Prestwich/Whitefield	20 Jan	Prof Paul Weindling: Holocaust Memorial Lecture
Edgware	21 Jan	Laura Levy: "'L'" – Jewish Life in the 13th Century'
Northern Groups	21 Jan	Joint HMD event at Museum of Liverpool
Wembley	22 Jan	Social
Liverpool	26 Jan	Social Get-together
Sheffield	26 Jan	Civic HMD event at Liverpool Town Hall
Surrey	26 Jan	National HMD
Liverpool	27 Jan	Social
Sheffield	27 Jan	Ruth Berman: Extend Exercises – get fit while sitting down
Bradford	28 Jan	Colin Davey: 'From the West End to the City – a Lawyers Life'
North West London	28 Jan	
North London	30 Jan	

Eric Sanders made honorary member of Austrian Society for Exile Studies

AJR member Eric Sanders, 94, has been made an honorary member of the Österreichische Gesellschaft für Exilforschung (Austrian Society for Exile Studies).

The ceremony took place at the British Embassy in Vienna in December.

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H.obstfeld@talk21.com

A MORNING AT THE MOVIES

Wednesday 29 January 2014
10.30 am for 11.00 am (prompt) start



The must-see film of the year

We are delighted to be able to offer seats at £5. The cinema is opposite Belsize Park Tube Station on the Northern Line.

To book your seat, please contact Susan Harrod at susan@ajr.org.uk or on 020 8385 3070.

Kristallnacht Commemorated

Belsize Square Synagogue

An exceptionally large number of people attended the AJR's annual Kristallnacht service, which was held at Belsize Square Synagogue in the presence of, among others, the Mayor of Camden, Councillor Heather Johnson; representatives of the German and Austrian Embassies; and representatives of Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, a German volunteer organisation founded to confront the legacy of the Nazi regime.

Introducing proceedings, AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman paid tribute to Colin Livingston, who had passed away several weeks earlier. Colin had been, among his many other roles, Chairman of the Advisory Committee which oversees the distribution of



Carl Davis CBE performs excerpt from *The Last Train to Tomorrow* with members of Akiva School choir

grants allocated to the AJR by the Claims Conference to those of the organisation's members in greatest need.

AJR member Ernst Fraenkel OBE, who was born in Breslau in 1923 and arrived

in the UK on a Kindertransport, gave a brief testimony of his recollections of Kristallnacht.

Guest speaker Carl Davis CBE, the internationally acclaimed conductor and composer, spoke about his new composition, *The Last Train to Tomorrow*, which is based on the Kindertransport. The London performance followed premieres in Prague and Manchester. Carl performed an excerpt from his composition with children from the choir of Akiva School.

The service was led by Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, whose grandfather, Dr Georg Salzberger, was the Rabbi at the Westend Synagogue in Frankfurt-am-Main, the interior of which was destroyed on Kristallnacht.

Imperial War Museum North

AJR North-West Groups once again commemorated Kristallnacht at the Imperial War Museum North (IWMN). Over 80 members attended, including from Aberystwyth, Nelson, Clitheroe, North and South Manchester, Cheshire and Liverpool.

Chaired by AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman, the meeting was most eloquently addressed by the

distinguished historian Professor David Cesarani, who revealed that in recent years much hitherto hidden detail about Kristallnacht had come to light and that even the Nazi hierarchy had been taken aback by the unspeakable deeds of SA Stormtroopers and their followers.

Ernest Hirsch told us about his own and his family's experiences on

9 November 1938.

The commemoration ended with the Memorial Prayer recited by Chazan Michael Isdale and Kaddish led by Reverend Gabriel Brodie.

Our sincere thanks go once again to the IWMN for hosting the meeting and to Susanne Green for the first-class arrangements.

Werner Lachs

Glasgow Garnethill Synagogue

The event took place at the Garnethill Synagogue in the presence of some 150 guests, including the President of the Jewish Representative Council, Paul Morron, and Heather Boyce of the Anne Frank Trust.

Following an introduction by Agnes Isaacs, the principal speaker, Henry Wuga MBE, spoke about how he had

come to Glasgow on the Kindertransport from Nuremberg; here he had met his wife, Ingrid, who arrived from Dortmund. Both had started their lives here in hostels for young refugees. Henry and Ingrid are keen and experienced skiers and each year they spend time rehabilitating young war invalids, British and Israeli, by teaching them

how to ski. Henry's example illustrated the positive contribution of the Jewish refugees in Britain.

The event was brought to a conclusion by the lighting of six candles performed by members of the Second and Third Generations.

Agnes Isaacs

Westminster Abbey

My wife and I had the surreal experience of attending a Kristallnacht commemoration at an interdenominational service in Westminster Abbey in the religious heart of the Church of England.

We joined the vast throng of people, mostly Jewish, in a three-to-four-abreast line around the Abbey, ushered by gently smiling, officially uniformed Church attendants.

It was my first visit to this vast Cathedral and, as I walked through the hallowed space, I was struck by the significance of this event: the tacit admission, as it were, by the Gentile world, of the evil perpetrated on the Jew in just one – and the latest – of its

manifestations.

In her formal address Rabbi Julia Neuberger delivered from the pulpit in essence a eulogy for the consular officials in Germany in the 1930s who helped with visas, following which we heard testimonies of three survivors, Lilian Levy, John Izbicki and Victor Greenberg.

Hymns were sung accompanied by impressive choirs and singers, Kaddish and prayers were intoned, heads were bowed. But it was the spirit of the event that was so significant for me: I see it as an acknowledgment by the nation that gave me refuge of the monstrous evil signified and presaged by Kristallnacht.

Emil Landes

BBC shows special programme on Kindertransport

The BBC News channel and BBC World will be broadcasting a special programme on the Kindertransport on

Saturday 28 December

with repeats on Sunday 29 December.

The film will be an extended version of the piece that was broadcast on *Newsnight* on Monday 24 June on the events the AJR organised to mark the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport.

Please visit

www.ajr.org.uk/index.cfm/section.frontpage/article.1032

for further information about the events.

OBITUARIES

Anna (Anka) Bergman, born Trebechovice (now Czech Republic) 20 April 1917, died Cambridge 17 July 2013

The experiences of Anka Bergman as a young mother during the Holocaust were highlighted in the 2011 BBC documentary *The Baby Born in a Concentration Camp*.

Anka grew up in a middle-class Czech family, the daughter of Stanislav and Ida Kauder, and studied law in Prague. There she met Bernd Nathan, an architect who had fled Hamburg in 1933. They married in 1940. Anka had been forced to train as a milliner after the closure of Czech universities following the German invasion in 1939.

In 1941 Anka and Bernd were sent to the Terezin ghetto, where she worked in a provisions store, enabling her to support the 15 members of her extended family who were eventually deported to the ghetto.

In Terezin, Anka became pregnant. Their son, Jiri, died of pneumonia aged only two months in April 1944, a tragedy which would ironically save Anka's life. Bernd was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in September 1944. Anka never saw him again; she later learned that he was shot in the 1945 death march. Bernd died never knowing that Anka was carrying another child, conceived shortly before his deportation. Desperate to be reunited with her husband, Anka volunteered for a transport to Auschwitz. She arrived at the camp in October 1944 – had Jiri survived, mother and son would have been sent straight to the gas chambers.

Anka was selected for slave labour in a factory producing V-1 flying bombs near Dresden, where her pregnancy, if detected, could have led to her murder. When the factory



was evacuated in April 1945, the prisoners travelled in open coal trucks without food for three weeks whilst the Nazis decided where to send them.

The transport arrived at Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria on 29 April. Anka recognised the camp's name and the shock triggered her labour. Her daughter Eva was born on a cart outside the camp one day after

Mauthausen's gas chambers had been destroyed. Anka managed to nurture her child until the Americans entered the camp a few days later.

Apart from her son, Anka lost her husband, parents, two sisters, and many members of her wider family in the Holocaust.

Returning to Prague after liberation, she met Karel Bergman, a Czech Jew who had served in the RAF during the war; they married in 1948. Alarmed by the rise of Communism, the family emigrated to Cardiff later that year. Karel passed away in 1983. Anka remained in Wales until 2010, when she moved to Cambridge to be close to Eva.

Despite all she had suffered Anka was always optimistic. She was a woman of extraordinary intelligence, warmth and vivacity.

Anka's story became more widely known after she recorded her testimony for the Shoah Foundation in 1997, and particularly after Eva began speaking in schools on behalf of the Holocaust Educational Trust. Anka is survived by Eva, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

The Holocaust Educational Trust

The above is adapted from an obituary which appeared in The Jewish Chronicle on 25 October 2013.

Evelyn Judith Cibula, born Breslau 13 April 1927, died Berkhamsted 23 September 2013

Evelyn Cibula was born in Breslau on 13 April 1927. Her parents were Sidney Wolfe and Hans Elbogen.

Evelyn moved to London from Germany with her family in 1935. She was educated in London and went to London University. Her passion was buildings and the materials used, on which subject she published many books. She worked for the Building Research Institute. This interest took her to interview Alec Cibula, who worked at the Institute for Non-Ferrous Metals. The two formed a friendship and Alec invited her to the theatre, turning their friendship to love. They married and moved to Hampstead and Oxford, Alec's university town. Later, they moved to Bucks Hill, Hertfordshire.

Evelyn's passions were her garden, cooking,



and growing fruit, vegetables and flowers. She managed to cook wonderful food in a tiny kitchen using produce from their garden, which was opened to the public in the summer for charity.

Evelyn visited her mother, who had moved to Osmond House in north-west London, and worked as a volunteer for Jewish Care for many years, retiring only 13 years ago. She then had to care for her husband as he had a series of strokes leaving him disabled. Although diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, she continued to care for him until his death three months prior to her own. Evelyn died in St Francis Hospice, Berkhamsted, on 23 September 2013. The world is a sadder place without them.

Adrienne Harris

Search... NOTICES

I would be grateful for any information on my great-grandfather **Alexander Feldberg**, b. Butow in 1850. Please contact Naomi Silverton at naomihil@ozemail.co.au

My uncle **Menachim Yehuda/Jehuda Galas (also known as Moniek Galus)**, b. Lodz 1919, was last reported alive in Celle, Germany, July 1945. Any info pls to Deborah Long at debbietheteacher@gmail.com

My great-grandmother **Beatrice (Dolly) Hyman** is said to have used her many languages and cooking ability to make Port Erin, Isle of Man, internees feel at home. Any info pls to Gabby Benson at gabriellabenson@hotmail.co.uk

My grandparents **Ludwig and Selma (Hayek) Lederer** moved to Vienna from Slovakia. They had two children: **Walter** (b. 25/1/1911) and **Olga** (older, dob unknown). They left for America (Oakland, Calif.) in 1939, sponsored by Ludwig's brother Hugo. Any info please to Evelyn Lederer Hernball at yourevieness@gmail.com

Herta Oschinski (b. 1901?) arrived in England from Berlin in June 1939 as domestic worker at home of Stanley Thorne, connected with Quaker school in Saffron Walden. Herta's daughter **Lore** arrived in England in August 1939 aged 15 and was interned in Rushen Camp, Port Erin, until April 1941, when she joined her mother in Saffron Walden. Any info pls to Francis Deutsch at francis.deutsch@ntlworld.com

I would like to make contact with any relatives of **Hildegard Rosenfelder** (née Dannenberg?), who lived at Alba Gardens, London NW11. Her husband was Robert Rosenfelder. In 1966 she posted info at Yad Vashem about two cousins, Kurt and Ernst Hecht, who lived in Gelnhausen. Any info pls to Bettina Baeumlner (née Hecht) at mail@chantrell1.plus.com

For article on Jewish glider pilots at Battle of Arnhem I am searching for info on the family of **Ernest Simeon**, who was killed in that battle, and his late brother. Pls contact Martin Sugarman (AJEX Museum Archives) at martin.sugarman@yahoo.co.uk

Students from Rostock are seeking info on **Heinz Wagner**, b. 25/7/1923 in Anklam. He went to England by Kindertransport (?), moved to Palestine 1945. Any info pls to Petra Klawitter at sekretariat@rsg-roev.de

Current occupants of **The White House, Great Chesterford**, wish to hear from anyone who stayed here when it was a hostel. Pls contact Mark.Gamble@sunrisebrokers.com

Anna Wilensky was born 27/8/1882 in Linz, emigrated to England Nov 1939, lived in Malvern Link, where she died 1973. Her daughter Edith, b. 24/3/1905 in Linz, was a gifted dancer; died Malvern Link 1976. Any info pls to Astrid Frauendienst at a.frauendienst@eduhi.at

Have you any info on the fate of the **Zwickau Jewish community**? My brother and I were born there but managed to flee to Prague before the deportations in 1938. The rest of my family were deported in October 1938. My grandfather, Baruch Leib Biron, father of 6 children, was rabbi of the community. Pls contact Ruth Rogoff (née Biron) at ruthrogoff@talktalk.net



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

The Book of Books

As everyone knows, the Bible has been translated into almost every language under the sun, is the world's bestselling book, and has had a profound influence on the development of mankind since its inception.

The title of the current exhibition at Jerusalem's Bible Lands Museum, which is situated opposite the Israel Museum, is the same as the title of this column. The exhibition traces the history of the Bible in its various translations and versions through the 2,000 years of its existence.

Inevitably, the exhibition begins with examples of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found in and around the Qumran caves and date from the period of the Second Temple. They contain the texts of all the books of the Old Testament apart from *The Book of Esther* as well as texts elucidating the beliefs and rules of the sect that lived in the region. Among the various messianic sects that proliferated in the Land of Israel during Roman rule was one that developed into Christianity, accepting the Bible but regarding the writings of the prophets as referring to Jesus. Its adherents proceeded to add their own corpus of texts, which became known as the New Testament.

According to legend, during the Second Temple period the king of Egypt, Ptolemy II, sponsored the translation of the Bible into Greek and this became known as the *Septuagint*,

purportedly produced in 72 days by 72 rabbis who miraculously all produced the same translation.

The earliest New Testament manuscripts date from the first half of the second century CE, three or four generations after the crucifixion of Jesus. They were written in Greek though it is thought that some may have been written originally in Hebrew and Aramaic.

The exhibition contains many beautiful illuminated manuscripts, among them psalters, prayer books and holy books from pre-medieval and medieval Europe. Scribes in monasteries copied and illuminated Biblical and holy texts, while Jewish scribes were engaged primarily in copying out the Torah for use in synagogues.

Documents from the *Cairo Geniza* are also on display. The discovery of the *Geniza* in the 19th century brought to light a treasure trove of around 300,000 documents that had accumulated over almost 1,000 years, shedding light on the religious and secular lives of the Jews and their neighbours.

Also on display are copies of the New Testament from Ethiopia written in the Ge'ez language and dating to the 4th and 6th centuries CE, alongside a Yemenite Old Testament written in the 15th and 16th centuries, with exquisite calligraphy and delicate designs, and Bibles written in Syriac, Armenian and, of course, all the European languages.

The invention of printing brought about a radical change in the approach to and availability of the Bible, and a page taken from the original Gutenberg Bible in Latin and printed in Mainz, Germany, in the 1450s can also be seen.

The exhibition also contains Jewish medieval commentaries on the Bible, among them those of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, David Kimhi, Nahmanides and Gersonides. Another vitrine contains several Polyglot Bibles, produced in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries and containing Bibles printed in at least four languages - Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic and Latin - though one printed in London contains an additional five languages - Syriac, Samaritan, Ge'ez, Arabic and Persian.

In the 16th century Martin Luther translated the Old and New Testaments into vernacular German (examples are on display), thus making the texts accessible to a much wider segment of the population.

The English translation, initiated by King James and published in 1611, was translated by groups of scholars at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and at Westminster Abbey in London. Its rolling cadences and poetic phrases still resonate throughout the English-speaking world and innumerable terms and expressions have become an integral part of the English language.

The exhibition also contains the versions known as the 'He' and 'She' bibles because of the two different ways a verse from the Book of Ruth was translated into English. Only in the 13th century was the Bible divided into chapters, by the Archbishop of Canterbury; in 1448 Rabbi Isaac Nathan divided the Old Testament into verses; and this was done in the 1550s by Robert Stephanus Estienne, though the two sets of divisions differed, being based on different considerations.

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

PHILIPPINES DISASTER

Sir - At the time of writing, a tragedy involving millions of people has happened - the greatest tornado ever to strike the Philippines. Britain, which originally sent an aeroplane to ascertain the magnitude of the catastrophe, is now sending an aircraft carrier, which will take a week to get to the opposite side of the globe. Whatever food and water it carries will take days to get to the people affected by the disaster. By that time, none of them will be alive any more if they depend on Britain. Even aeroplanes, taking 15 hours non-stop, would have been of greater help. Were they sent to the unaffected nearby islands and countries to pick up food and water, that would have shown enterprise.

We could have sent builders and engineers, emergency power plants and many other items. But, in common with other

countries, the bureaucracy, inertia, hesitation, indecision and unpreparedness, considering the meteorological warnings of many days beforehand, highlight the inability of international aid provision in a disaster situation on such an immense scale. As always, the immediate request for money from the population comes as no surprise. All the money in the world could not buy a glass

of water to still a thirsty throat! But food provided immediately by stores in the unaffected islands and, moreover, from nearby countries, could have saved millions of the stricken population.

It should be obvious that all the monies collected will never save one life by the time it takes to provide even one bite of bread. Money collected, if it were ever to provide help, would take a long time to get to the providers, who would be the only ones to gain from the disaster.

Practical help is needed on the spot by the unfortunate people, who stand without a roof over their heads, knee deep in water, having to bear the tremendous floods, getting hungrier and thirstier by the hour, seeing no hope on the horizon, hidden by the destruction of their mangled homes. Their future is in the hands of the Almighty.

F. E. Stern, Wembley, Middx



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