



AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Fifty



John Stride and Edward Petheridge as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in the 1967 production

Born as Tomáš Straussler on 3 July 1937, Sir Tom Stoppard left Czechoslovakia as a child refugee, fleeing imminent Nazi occupation. He settled with his family in Britain after the war, in 1946, having spent the previous three years in a boarding school in the Indian Himalayas. After being educated at schools in Nottingham and Yorkshire, Stoppard became a journalist, a drama critic and then, in 1960, a playwright.

One of the theatrical events of the 1960s was the 1967 production of Stoppard's breakthrough play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, by the National Theatre Company at the Old Vic Theatre in London. The play starred John Stride and Edward Petherbridge in the two leading roles. Graham Crowden gave a consummately rascally performance as the Player, the leader of the troupe of travelling actors who, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, perform the play-within-a-play *The Murder of Gonzago*; this forms part of Hamlet's

attempts to determine whether his uncle, the King, is guilty of the murder of Hamlet's father, whose throne (and wife) he has appropriated. The fiftieth anniversary production, also at the Old Vic, stars Daniel Radcliffe and Joshua McGuire.

Stoppard's inspiration was making Rosencrantz and Guildenstern – two attendant lords at the court of Shakespeare's Denmark – central to the drama. The two hapless courtiers, *Continued on page 2*

A YEAR OF MILESTONES

A 75th anniversary, an office move and Brexit. Just some of the events that marked a momentous year for the AJR.

Despite the upheaval, the range of programmes and services delivered by AJR staff and volunteers has increased significantly. We were also responsible for managing and distributing record amounts of funding, which paid for – among other things – almost 400,000 hours of homeware and hundreds of individual grants.

We played a leading role in many national initiatives and commemorations throughout the year, and supported dozens of regional events and activities each month.

Read our annual report and accounts on pages 9-13.

Tribute to Ricci Horenstein	4
Letter from Israel.....	5
Letters to the Editor	6 – 7
Art Notes	8
AJR Annual Report.....	9 – 12
Treasurer's & Finance Report.....	12 – 13
Reviews.....	14 – 15
Around the AJR.....	16 – 17
Looking For.....	18
Obituaries	19
News.....	20

AJR Team

Chief Executive Michael Newman
Finance Director David Kaye

Heads of Department

HR & Administration Karen Markham
Social Services Sue Kurlander
Community & Volunteer Services Carol Hart

AJR Journal

Consultant Editor Dr Anthony Grenville
Acting Editor Jo Briggs
Secretarial/Advertisements Karin Pereira

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Fifty continued...

archetypal bit-part players, thus take centre stage, while the complex plot of Shakespeare's play whirls incomprehensibly around them. It is at times hilariously funny, a demonstration of verbal fireworks that Stoppard has never quite been able to equal since.

Generations of students who have toiled over the thankless task of analysing Hamlet's mental condition will enjoy Stoppard's take on the vexed question of Hamlet's madness. For example, starting from Hamlet's enigmatic comments on his own condition, 'I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw', Stoppard proceeds to fashion the following exquisite paradox:

Rosencrantz: 'Hamlet is not himself, outside or in. We have to glean what afflicts him.'

Guildenstern: 'He doesn't give much away.'

Player: 'Who does, nowadays?'

Guildenstern: 'He's – melancholy.'

Player: 'Melancholy?'

Rosencrantz: 'Mad.'

Player: 'How is he mad?'

Rosencrantz: 'Ah. (To Guil) How is he mad?'

Guildenstern: 'More morose than mad, perhaps.'

Player: 'Melancholy.'

Guildenstern: 'Moody.'

Rosencrantz: 'He has moods.'

Player: 'Of moroseness?'

Guildenstern: 'Madness. And yet.'

Rosencrantz: 'Quite.'

Guildenstern: 'For instance.'

Rosencrantz: 'He talks to himself, which might be madness.'

Guildenstern: 'If he didn't talk sense, which he does.'

Ros: 'Which suggests the opposite.'

Player: 'Of what?'

Guildenstern: 'I think I have it. A man talking sense to himself is no madder than a man talking nonsense not to himself.'

Rosencrantz: 'Or just as mad.'

Guildenstern: 'Or just as mad.'

Rosencrantz: 'And he does both.'

Guildenstern: 'So there you are.'

Rosencrantz: 'Stark raving sane.'

The play's action, such as it is, consists of the two lords' bewildered involvement in the plot of Hamlet. From time to time, Shakespeare's characters erupt



Sir Tom Stoppard

unpredictably onto the stage, speaking their original lines, which, bereft of all context, make no sense to the baffled pair. Stoppard was plainly following on from the plays of Samuel Beckett, whose *Waiting for Godot* – which also presents two characters on an almost bare stage searching for some meaning in existence – had first been staged in London at the Arts Theatre in 1955 under Peter Hall's direction. It introduced Britain to the theatre of the absurd, in which human existence is stripped down to its essentials and shown to be devoid of all logic.

There is, however, one major difference between Beckett's and Stoppard's plays: whereas the audience of *Waiting for Godot* is as much at a loss as the two main characters when it comes to making sense of the proceedings, the audience of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* is at an advantage, since it knows – or should know – the twists and turns of the plot of Hamlet.



The original 1967 poster

It can therefore watch the proceedings from a considerably more comfortable vantage point of superiority over the unfortunate courtiers.

From the very start of the play, Stoppard makes it plain that the laws of rationality that normally govern human life have been suspended. When Rosencrantz and Guildenstern first appear, they are wagering on the toss of coins which land heads up ninety-two times in succession. The more intellectually inclined Guildenstern, betting on tails, attempts to confront this manifestation in philosophical terms, only to be defeated by the persistence of irrationality:

Guildenstern (Flips a coin.): The law of averages, if I have got this right, means that if six monkeys were thrown up in the air for long enough they would land on their tails about as often as they would land on their –

Rosencrantz: Heads (He picks up the coin.)

The two courtiers cannot orientate themselves in their situation, remembering only very dimly that they have been summoned by messenger to appear at court. As they are none too confident of recalling even their own names and past, their attempts to make sense of the plot of *Hamlet* fail comprehensively:

Rosencrantz: To sum up: your father, whom you love, dies, you are his heir, you come back to find that hardly was the corpse cold before his younger brother popped onto his throne and into his sheets, thereby offending both legal and natural practice. Now why exactly are you behaving in this extraordinary manner?

Guildenstern: I can't imagine!

At Elsinore, they first encounter the faintly sinister Player and his troupe, before Hamlet, Ophelia and the court of Denmark march unheralded onstage, injecting the action of Shakespeare's high tragedy into the two lords' otherwise mundane existence. The King instructs them to 'glean ... whether aught to us unknown afflicts him [Hamlet]', an order that the two, having no idea who Hamlet is or how he has been behaving, cannot comply with. Instead, the players stage *The Murder of Gonzago*; this greatly upsets the guilty king and leads to his decision to send Hamlet to England, accompanied by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who, unknown to them, are bearing the order for Hamlet's execution.

The third and final act of the play finds them on board the ship to England, and Stoppard extracts some melancholy humour from the topic of England:

Guildestern: What a shambles! We're just not getting anywhere.

Rosencrantz (mournfully): Not even England. I don't believe in it anyway.

Guildestern: What?

Rosencrantz: England.

Guildestern: Just a conspiracy of cartographers, you mean?

Or:

Rosencrantz: Are we all right for England?

Player: You look all right to me. I don't think they're very particular in England.

Hamlet, however, is abducted by pirates, leaving Rosencrantz and Guildestern to continue on their way to England and ultimately, to death. The troupe of players, who have fled onto the same ship to escape the King's wrath, reappear and form a menacing circle around the two protagonists. Guildestern, attempting to convince an imaginary King of England that they are bona fide emissaries from Denmark, opens the King's letter, only to read the instructions for his and Rosencrantz's immediate execution. The players proceed to act out the carnage that

occurs in the final scenes of Shakespeare's play, before Rosencrantz and Guildenstern make their final exit.

In contrast to the high-octane slaughter of *Hamlet*, the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are notably low-key, marking little more than the absence of somebody who had formerly been present. As they slip into the enveloping darkness, Rosencrantz accepts his fate with a mixture of resignation and indignation, before disappearing:

Rosencrantz: That's it, then, is it? The sun's going down. Or the earth's coming up, as the fashionable theory has it. Not that it makes any difference. What was it all about? When did it begin?

Guildestern, the intellectual, finding himself alone on stage, utters his final lines: Well, we'll know better next time. Now you see me, now you – (*And disappears*)

The theme of mortality, at the heart of the play, is neatly rounded off by the closing exchanges from *Hamlet*, in which an ambassador from England arrives to tell the King, now dead, that 'his commandment is fulfilled, / that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead'.

Anthony Grenville

AJR COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE TO HONOUR SIR RUDOLF BING THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL SUNDAY 27th AUGUST 2017



Following on from the dedication of a commemorative plaque at Glyndebourne last summer, AJR hopes to unveil a further special commemorative plaque in honour of Sir Rudolf Bing at the Edinburgh Festival on Sunday 27th August. After his role at Glyndebourne, Sir Rudolf went up to Scotland where he was instrumental in the set up and running of the Edinburgh Festival.

Following the unveiling, AJR members are invited to attend a performance at Usher Hall, to mark Sir Rudolf's contribution. This 70th anniversary celebration concert will be a mixture of music, archive film and filmed interviews, with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Martyn Brabbins, and will include two pieces of music played at the first Festival in 1947.

Tickets are priced at £47.00 each. AJR will provide transport from the Glasgow area.

Tickets for the concert are limited; however the unveiling of the plaque is open to the public.

For more info/tickets: susan@ajr.org.uk
Tel: 020 8385 3078

GIANT TEAR NEEDS BACKING

Six Million Plus is an exciting new project to create a Holocaust memorial sculpture and Educational Centre at the University of Huddersfield.

The Educational Centre will work with schools on issues including the Holocaust, Genocide, Nazism and Persecution. The memorial sculpture will be covered with six million buttons and take the form of a giant tear drop. It is designed by Leeds artist Antonia Stowe, who has already created a travelling exhibition of buttons at venues ranging from Brent Cross to Ripon Cathedral.



The organisers are looking to raise £1 million towards the project, preferably through one major funder. See more details on www.6millionplus.org or contact Nigel Grizzard at ngrizzard@aol.com or 07798 855 494.

WHY NOT TRY AJR'S MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE?

The AJR offers a kosher Meals on Wheels service delivered to your door once a week.

The meals are freshly cooked every week by Kosher to Go. They are then frozen prior to delivery.

The cost is £7.00 for a three-course meal (soup, main course, desert) plus a £1 delivery fee.

Our aim is to bring good food to your door without the worry of shopping or cooking.

For further details, please call AJR Head Office on 020 8385 3070.

IN APPRECIATION OF RICCI

“Ricci’s memory will live long among AJR colleagues and volunteers. We enjoyed her star turns at several of our annual volunteers’ gatherings and she enriched the discussion at many social and cultural events. We are also grateful for her foresight and generosity in bequeathing a gift that helps the AJR to further deliver our services.”

Michael Newman
Chief Executive, AJR



A moving Concert in Memory of Ricci Horenstein (1924-2015) attracted a capacity audience to Burgh House, Hampstead on 30 March 2017. The programme, in support of Marie Curie Charity, traced Ricci’s tastes in Chopin, Brahms, and Schubert, with Israeli works dedicated to her in the 1950s, and a poignant Gershwin song to close.

Ricci Horenstein was a glamorous grand dame of the piano, a much loved teacher, writer and film-maker, whose colourful personality impressed in its mix of continental culture, Israeli-Jewish chutzpah, and inimitable piquant humour and joie de vivre. Throughout her multi-faceted, much-travelled career, Ricci held a firm belief in music as a power for creative self-renewal and self-realisation.

Ricci Horenstein was born Renée Haas in Vienna on 15 December 1924, the daughter of Oswald Haas and Anna Kohen Haas, and attended the Sperrlygymnasium in Vienna from 1936-1938. A family trip to Romania saved them from the Austrian Anschluss and she continued schooling at the

German-French Lyceum in Bucharest. In 1941 she underwent a harrowing journey, on foot, trucks, trains and ships, to British Mandate Palestine, settling with her parents in Tel-Aviv. Ricci studied at the Hess School and Tel-Aviv Conservatoire of Music and married Dr Siegfried Seidner, a fellow Viennese émigré musician who had been oboist for the Vienna opera as well as a medical doctor. One of his patients was Bronislaw Huberman, who invited Seidner to join the newly formed Palestine Orchestra in 1936. It saved Seidner’s life. Ricci and Dr Seidner had a daughter, Yehudit, who later moved to the UK, where she still lives.

Between 1946 and 1950 Ricci was a private student of the illustrious Leo Kestenberg, Artistic Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. During those exciting times, Ricci regularly gave recitals and broadcasts, and was introduced to leading Israeli pioneer generation composers whose works she premiered, performed and broadcast.

Following divorce from Dr Seidner, she married the baritone Lipa Horenstein, and the couple settled in South Africa. Soon after, Ricci turned to film making, studying from 1961 at the London School of Film Technique, where she made two documentaries, then in 1964 setting up Productions Costa del Sol in Spain.

Her most successful film was a travel documentary about Malaga, in May 1965, which was nominated at Cannes. Ricci’s interest in film eventually came to fruition in a 4-part television series ‘The Amateur Pianist’.

Meanwhile, Ricci separated from Lipa and settled in North-West London in 1965 where her performing career relaunched, with concerts with her piano and wind ensemble, Riccordell. During the 1970s Riccordell gave many classical and popular performances.

Ricci continued to forge close friendships with artists, writers, pianists and composers who dedicated works to her. From the 1980s her Belsize Park studio attracted students of all ages and backgrounds, and appreciative testimonials highlight the power of her holistic approach to piano tuition.

In her final years Ricci found warmth and friendship though the AJR and her local synagogue in South Hampstead. One of the last happy occasions was Ricci’s 90th birthday party in her elegant garden flat in Belsize Park Gardens, with pupils past and present, friends and colleagues performing for the celebration.

Several of those performers gathered again for her Memorial Concert, joined by Ricci’s daughter Yehudit Morell and grand-daughter Leora who each sang eloquent Hebrew songs. Amongst the performers were Julian Jacobson and Mariko Brown, and Ricci’s former pupils Thomas Kaerchner, Diederick Potgeiter and Anousheh Bromfeld, who performed piano works by Chopin, Brahms and Schubert; I played two works from Ricci’s Israeli manuscript collection. Gershwin’s ‘Our love is here to stay’, sung by the baritone Robert Haberman, formed a poignant conclusion.

Ricci’s signed music manuscripts have been donated, thanks to the AJR, to the National Library of Israel, for the enrichment of all.

Malcolm Miller © 2017

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



MATHEMATICIAN TO KING HEROD'S MASON



The intriguing title of the lecture given by Frankie Snyder to our group of English-speaking women brought

out a large number of members despite the pouring rain (which usually keeps Israelis at home).

Originally from the USA, where she graduated in mathematics, Ms. Snyder has been working for the last few years on the Israel Antiquities Authority endeavour known as the Temple Mount Sifting Project, whereby archaeologists have been analysing the debris dumped by the Waqf authorities when they removed hundreds of tons of earth from the Temple Mount in order to construct a subterranean mosque.

Among the many priceless items

that have come to light during the sifting process (coins, seals, tools, etc.) are stone fragments, many of which have been identified as part of the tiled floor of the Second Temple built by Herod in the first century B.C.E. Ms. Snyder's mathematical background has enabled her to piece together what is essentially a giant puzzle, with geometric patterns based on triangles and rectangular forms that combine to form squares, using contrasting colours that are aesthetically pleasing.

This technique, known as opus sectile (cut work), employed the Roman foot of 11.6 inches as its basic measurement, and each tile was cut with great precision to fit within the square that surrounded it and sit snugly alongside the adjacent tiles. These kinds of floors were popular throughout the Roman world, and were considered superior to mosaic floors.

In his historical record, Jewish Antiquities, Josephus wrote that the courtyard of Herod's Temple "was paved from end to end with variegated paving of all manner of stones." The patterns on the tiles that Ms. Snyder and her associates have managed to

piece together produce an effect that is as beautiful as it is impressive, undoubtedly adding to the majestic effect created by the Temple's ornate architecture.

Equally fascinating is the lecturer's own life story. Ms. Snyder was brought up as a Catholic, and only at a relatively late age did she realise that her mother and grandmother had Jewish roots. The Catholic religion emphasises prayer and attendance at services, while actual reading of the Bible, both Old and New Testament, is discouraged. Ms. Snyder's curiosity led her to delve into those texts, however, and she eventually decided that she wanted to know more about the history of the Jewish people. Her objective was to make contact with a Jewish community but she was unable to do so as her husband's work took her to locations such as Guam, Alaska and South Dakota, where there was virtually no Jewish community. It was only after moving to Boston in the USA that she was able to connect with a synagogue, whereupon she discovered that she was in fact defined as a Jew and did not even need to undergo conversion.

SURVIVOR'S HANDBAGS GO ON SHOW



For any AJR members living in or visiting New York, a new exhibition at the Museum of Art and Design is an absolute must. It celebrates the life and work of celebrity handbag designer Judith Leiber, born Judit Peto in 1921 into a middle class Budapest family.

When war began Judit interrupted her studies in London to help her family at home. She started work in a handbag factory which was closed in 1944. Judith and her immediate family gained temporary refuge in a Swiss protected house before being forced to move to the Budapest ghetto. One of the ways they survived was by sneaking out to cut meat off the dead, frozen horses lying on the street.

Soon after the end of the war Judit started making handbags herself. In 1945 she met Gerson Leiber, a soldier and left with him to America. Her reputation as

an outstanding designer of distinctive bags was sealed in 1953 when Mamie Eisenhower carried a Judith Leiber handbag to the inaugural ball. Since then countless celebrities – including Hillary Clinton, Barbara Bush and Sex and the City's Carrie Bradshaw – have been seen with her creations, which are often made from exotic leathers or fabrics or covered in semi-precious stones.

Judith, now 96, and Gerson recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. The exhibition 'Judith Leiber: Creating a New York Story' will be on display until August. More info at www.madmuseum.org

Letters to the Editor

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

LOVE FOR LIVERPOOL AND LEO

Sir – I have just enjoyed hearing the latest AJR number. I always enjoy the issue but I think the March edition is particularly interesting.

I note you are arranging a visit to Liverpool which is where I was born in 1913 (I am now 104).

My grandfather came to England around 1886. He was en route to America but probably ran out of funds so remained in Liverpool, as did many others.

Life for my mother's family centred around the Liverpool Hebrew School as well as the old Shul which was nearby. My mother and relations were all born in Liverpool and attended this school.

My mother was married at Princes Road Synagogue. I have memories of attending Services where the Reverend Framplon was the minister for 25 years.

Regarding your description of the late Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck in the March issue, I am a member of the Leo Baeck Lodge of the B'nai B'rith. I remember meeting this remarkable man at Upper Berkeley Street Synagogue shortly after WWII.

Kitty Freund

(widow of the late Dr. Hans Freund)

BIG DIFFERENCE – THEN AND NOW

Sir – I refer to the leading article in April's Journal. The refugee children and refugees in general of the 1930s to 1946 era were the result of centuries of religious and later racial hatred by Gentiles against their Semitic Jewish neighbours. This hatred was whipped up into a political tool by a fanatical dictator and ultimately led to the 'Final Solution', resulting in desperate attempts to emigrate.

The present day migrant and refugee crisis is not one of racial origin or persecution. The problem today is Islamic internal turmoil, partially being politicised and partially by financial migrants drawn to Europe for a better life. Those that come

rarely try to assimilate to a Western culture. In view of the fact their Arab Muslim neighbours like Saudi Arabia, The Emirates, Iran and others have made no attempt to take in their Muslim brothers (children or adults) in spite of the fact they have immense wealth and land. I have to ask the question "why should Europe take on the responsibility and possible terrorist danger of admitting these migrants?"

Bob Norton, Nottingham

BOMBING THE RAILWAYS

Sir – As a railway historian I should like to respond to Frank Bright's letter in the April issue. One hears again and again that 'the Allies should have bombed the railway lines to Auschwitz' or some variant on this theme. I was not there at the time so can only say – No, they probably could NOT have done this, or at least, not effectively.

Yes, in the latter stages of war it was possible to bomb the industrial complex of Monowitz, but the fact is that Auschwitz (Oswiecim) is a junction with railway lines going in four directions – to Katowice, to Krakow Plaszow, to Trzebinia on the main line to Krakow or westwards into Bohemia. Unless one cut off all four lines, simultaneously, the trains would have got through. The area is mostly flat with some river bridges but nothing that could be dramatically destroyed – for example, a big viaduct or tunnel – that would have blocked the line for more than a few hours.

The USAAF bombers of the 8th Air Force could plaster areas, but even the RAF's famous 617 ('Dambuster') Squadron with its Tallboy and other bombs and high-precision bomb-aiming needed several attempts to destroy a viaduct at Bielefeld.

For some periods of the war it was possible for bombers to fly from Britain, drop their bombs then continue to Italy to land and refuel – but not to turn round and get back to Britain. The distances were simply too great. Fighter escorts were impossible at such long ranges. After late 1944, some air bases in conquered territory could be used – but it was winter and Auschwitz was liberated by the end of January 1945. There

are numerous aerial photos of Germany after air raids and one can see hundreds of craters in the middle of fields, a total waste of resources and (often) lives. The losses of USAAF 8th Air Force bombers and crews were appallingly heavy (www.taphilo.com/history/8thaf/8aflosses.shtml).

The Mosquito Mk VI had a range of 1,120 miles – of course that includes getting back again! Let us not forget, there were other camps much further west, much closer and more accessible – Belsen, Dachau, Buchenwald – than the camps located far to the east. None of these had railway access lines that could be easily cut.

In the circumstances one can understand that destroying weapon production facilities, mining the Danube to disrupt fuel supplies, hunting and destroying V2 rocket launch sites were much more vital military priorities.

So – my conclusion – hindsight is always good. But there are so many other factors to take into account. Had Hitler not fatally delayed the Me262 jet fighter programme, the formations of Allied bombers would have been totally cut to pieces. The end of WWII was a much more closely-fought and risk-laden undertaking than is often presented – do not forget that plans were being drawn up to drop the first atom bomb, not in Japan but on Berlin, and the Allies were seriously expecting years of resistance and sabotage from the defeated Germans. We should be simply grateful that the war ended with an Allied victory, even though the post-war period, the disruptions, the cooling and then Cold War followed.

Rabbi Dr. Walter Rothschild

WHAT IS MODERN?

Sir – I will admit that the letter posted by Simone Simon and Danielle and Danny Feuer in your April Journal issue is well thought out but methinks the family "doth protest too much". Also, there are a couple of holes in its logic that need filling. By living within the Jewish bubble the strongest ideology influencing them has to be their religion. Nationality takes

second best and therefore it must follow that British values cannot be as important to them as their own Jewish culture. They cannot comprehend the British way of life as well as they do the Jewish one.

Many of the Orthodox members of the United synagogues have started calling themselves "Modern Orthodox". Would someone please explain how the word "modern" is used in this context?

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.

ESSINGER TRIAL

Sir – I am always glad to receive the AJR journal and know there will be both interest and even new information for me. I was particularly intrigued by the tale about Anne Essinger's Sekretair (April 2017) as I taught a boy, Charles Essinger, several decades ago at an excellent boys' grammar school in Leicester. He was brilliant and I believe went on to one of the Oxbridge colleges, I do not remember which. I heard that he had produced several books. I met the parents at parents' evening and realised that Charles E's father had indeed come from Swabia, as the name indicates. I came to know the mother, Mary E., (an English woman) after she was widowed and she seemed truly interested in her husband's background and told me that Anna Essinger was either a sister or a cousin of his.

Thank you for your good work. I like the new format with colour, it is very successful I think.

Ruth L. David

CYNICAL, TOI?

Sir – Referring to David Wirth's Opinion Piece 'The Sound of Silence' in your April issue, without the views expressed in paragraphs 4 through 8, the article would have been a truly thought provoking piece. For me, the cynicism (even bitterness?) of those paragraphs added nothing to the deeper feelings expressed in the rest of the piece, rather it detracted from the real message.

Mike Saunders

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NIGHTMARE

Sir – In March it was exactly 75 years since the first transport of Jews from Slovakia to Auschwitz. An independent republic with Catholic priest Josef Tiso as president,

Slovakia adopted the Nazi laws against the Jews in 1938. Jews were robbed of all their valuables and prevented from carrying on with their employment or business enterprises. With no income they were seen as a financial burden, so the Slovak government paid 500 German marks for every Jew deported, ignorant that they were sending them to an almost certain death.

On 25 March 1942 the first consignment consisted of 999 women aged 16 to 30. My two cousins aged 18 and 20 were supposed to join this transport, but our family decided instead to send them to relatives in Hungary. My parents and I soon followed my two cousins to Budapest, where we lived until spring 1944.

Gerta Vrbova

LET'S RECYCLE

Sir – With the launch of the new version of the journal, it would be a good opportunity to change the awful plastic cover to paper envelopes which can be recycled. How about it???

Ben Lachmann, London NW11

NOTE FROM EDITOR: Thanks for this suggestion, we are looking into this.

KITCHENER CAMP REUNION

Sir – Thank you for publishing my search notice in your April issue, I received several replies. We are now organising an event on Sunday 16 July in Sandwich for families of people who started their lives in England in the Kitchener Camp. The event will include the chance to view the Sandwich archives (and share your own documents) and a special tour around the town. Please email sn.kitchenercamp@gmail.com if you would like to attend.

Stephen Nelken

NEW HOME FOR THE LILYWHITES

Sir – As Tottenham Hotspurs near the end of what looks set to be its most successful season for 50+ years, it seems fitting that it is also its last in the current stadium.

Thanks to its popularity among Russian refugees, the mighty Spurs have long been associated with Jewish support. In the 1930s a third of fans at a typical home game were Jewish, many of them travelling to White Hart Lane on the 'Shabbat-compliant' electric tram from the East End. How ironic then that the stadium was chosen by the FA as the

venue for the 1935 England v Germany match, when the England team politely gave Nazi salutes to their opponents and the Nazi swastika fluttered above White Hart Lane, until one brave supporter (who was subsequently fined) tore it down.

Gary B, Stanmore

www.fishburnbooks.com
Jonathan Fishburn
 buys and sells Jewish and Hebrew books, ephemera and items of Jewish interest.
 He is a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association.
Contact Jonathan on
020 8455 9139
or 07813 803 889
for more information

Psychoanalytic
Psychotherapist UKCP
Registered and BACP (Accred)
 I offer a safe and confidential setting where you can talk about your thoughts and feelings and things that are worrying you such as depression, anxiety, bereavement, anger, relationships.
Rebecca Aharon tel 07904 115 795
email rebeccaaharon@gmail.com

PillarCare
Quality support and care at home

- Hourly Care from 4 hours – 24 hours
- Live-In/Night Duty/Sleepover Care
- Convalescent and Personal Health Care
- Compassionate and Affordable Service
- Professional, Qualified, Kind Care Staff
- Registered with the CQC and UKHCA

Call us on Freephone 0800 028 4645
PILLARCARE
 THE BUSINESS CENTRE - 36 GLOUCESTER AVENUE - LONDON NW1 7BB
 PHONE: 020 7482 2188 - FAX: 020 7900 2308
www.pillarcare.co.uk

SPRING GROVE
London's Most Luxurious
RETIREMENT HOME
 214 Finchley Road
 London NW3

- Entertainment
- Activities
- Stress Free Living
- 24 House Staffing Excellent Cuisine
- Full En-Suite Facilities

Call for more information or a personal tour
020 8446 2117
or 020 7794 4455
enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk

ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

While the Royal Academy celebrates the Russian Revolution in its main galleries (see our March issue), the Sackler Wing features **America after the Fall: Painting in the 1930s**.

Both concern massive historical upheaval, and have a strange synchronicity. Russia's collective farms led to broken dreams and impoverishment. America's Depression led to mass migration from the country to the towns, destroying the Great American Dream in the wake of the Wall Street Crash. In both the USSR and the US, artists depict the machine that impoverishes humanity, and look back with nostalgia to a rural idyll.



Grant Wood's American Gothic



Thomas Hart Benton's Cotton Pickers

Probably the most famous painting to emerge in 1930s America is Grant Wood's **American Gothic**. Against a church or Gothic homestead, a dour-faced couple, he brandishing a pitchfork, glare into an uncertain future. They are facing the

depletion of prairie life and family unity, so movingly expounded in John Steinbeck's novels. One million farmers fled the once fertile prairies of Oklahoma, which became the Dust Bowl as the cities filled with European migrants fleeing fascism. Several paintings portray the brashness and isolation of city life as in Edward Hopper's **New York Movie** with its lonely usherette. Wood's **Death on Ridge Road** foretells an accident between two cars and an oncoming red truck, while the warning symbolism of a pylon recurs in the shadow of a cross.

Many artists record the growing industrialisation which brought even less hope, epitomised by the smoking chimney of Charles Sheeler's **Ford Factory** – a painting devoid of human beings, referencing the thousands laid off work. There are uglier manifestations: Joe Jones' horrific lynching scene, **American Justice**, and Thomas Hart Benton's starving black cotton pickers. A dystopian vision of humanity at the crossroads is expressed in Georgia O'Keefe's **Skull with Calico Roses** and Philip Guston's **Bombardment** with its deathly imagery or Alice Neal's portrait of a union organiser gripping a newspaper headlining strikes in the coal and gas industries. Abstract Expressionism glimmers on the horizon with Jackson Pollack's violent **Untitled**, or Peter Blume's darkly cynical **Eternal City**, as it was easier to express artistic doubt this way than arouse national suspicion against communists.

Violence is evident even in garish paintings of American urban life, like Philip Evergood's **Dance Marathon** and Paul Cadmus' **The Fleet's In** with its drunken sailors and raucous girls. With President Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930s US properties doubled and the government became the largest employer and investor in the country. But the American Dream was not working. Alexandre Hogue's **Mother Earth Laid Bare** reveals the rural barrenness in the form of a nude woman in a shifting sand dune.

The exhibition offers a raw and cynical view of American disorientation.



Scotland Regional

Monday 5th June 2017
in Edinburgh

We are delighted to be joined over lunch by
Jonathan Arkush
President of The Board of Deputies of British Jews
as our Keynote Speaker
His talk is entitled
**Our community under pressure
– can we cope?**

Jonathan is a Barrister specialising in property, probate and commercial law. He was elected Senior Vice President of the Board of Deputies in May 2009 and chaired the Board's Defence Division until 2015. His responsibilities included defending the community against anti-Semitism, discrimination and any threat to Jewish faith and practice in the United Kingdom, and to forging deeper understanding between British Jews and other faiths. He was elected as President of the Board on 17 May 2015.



We will also be joined by
Michael Newman CEO of AJR
Transport will be provided from Glasgow and surrounding area

For further details contact
agnes@ajr.org.uk
07908 156 361

Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street
(off New Bond Street)
Tel: 020 7629 7578
Fax: 020 7491 2139

**CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

Paul Sample's **Church Supper** shows sanctimonious women serving dinner to their menfolk, who leer instead at a blonde interloper. It contrasts with another painting showing the austerity of a Thanksgiving Dinner. John Steuart Curry's **Hogs Killing a Snake**, could be read as a bitter invocation of the biblical serpent during the Depression. Until June 4.

Ben Uri's two exhibitions of German refugee artists will be reviewed in our June issue.

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY EVENTS

We were delighted to organise a series of events to mark our 75th anniversary last year culminating in a two day seminar at JW3 that explored the rich heritage, culture and traditions of the Jewish refugees and their remarkable contribution to Britain. We were grateful to members who shared their fascinating life histories and to colleagues from across the Jewish community and beyond who gave unique insights on a spectrum of subjects ranging from Jewish life in pre-war Europe to the future of Holocaust education as well as the thoughts of the second and third generations.

It was my great pleasure to announce the installation of a special plaque in honour of former AJR Chairman Hans Reichmann and his wife Eva at a reception at the Wiener Library last summer to commemorate the founding of the AJR in July 1941. Among our guests, we were deeply honoured to welcome His Excellency Dr Peter Ammon, the German Ambassador.

It also gave us great pleasure to unveil an AJR plaque in honour of Sir Rudolf Bing at Glyndebourne last August when members from across the country enjoyed a performance of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and dinner at one of Glyndebourne's famous restaurants. We are excited to be planning a second plaque for Sir Rudolf, as part of the 70th anniversary celebrations for the Edinburgh International Festival, this coming August.

We were equally thrilled to unveil an AJR plaque to mark the contribution of the industrialist Lord (Frank) Schon at the house in Whitehaven, Cumbria, where he and his family lived.

As part of our Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration, we were grateful to broadcaster and newsreader Edward Stourton, who interviewed AJR member Joan Salter about her experiences as a child fleeing Nazi-occupied France over the Pyrenees to Spain, as included in his book *Cruel*

Crossing. Our thanks too went to Sir Eric Pickles, the UK Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues, for sharing his thoughts and to the Jewish Community Secondary School choir for their performance. As ever, our gratitude went to Rabbi Stuart Altshuler for officiating and to the Belsize Square Synagogue for their hospitality.

Our annual concert and lunch once again provided a glimpse into the past and the world that our members and their families came from. As always, we were beautifully entertained by Glenys Groves and her colleagues from the Royal Opera, who performed an ensemble entitled *Gold and Silver Celebration* featuring music by Schubert, Strauss and Lehar.

Thanks to the great efforts of Peter Hedderly and the people of Harwich, some 25 Kinder were able to participate in a poignant commemoration last July of the 77th anniversary of the Kindertransport and to mark the date of the last transport brought to Britain by Sir Nicholas Winton.

World events also impacted our work. In the wake of Brexit, we received – and continue to receive – a steady flow of enquiries from people exploring the possibility of restoring German citizenship, in accordance with Article 116 of the German Basic Law.

A group of members greatly enjoyed a fabulous five-day trip to Yorkshire with outings to some iconic places across the county, including York Minster, The Chocolate Experience, Brontë Parsonage, Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, Harewood House, Harlow Carr Gardens, Bettys and The Thackray Medical Museum.

Our thanks too went to Edwina Currie, who was the guest speaker at our Kristallnacht commemoration in Liverpool when congregants also heard from Lauren Klyne, who gave an account of her grandmother, Ruth Edwards', recollections of Kristallnacht. We were grateful too to Chazan Edward Marks for leading the service.

We also marked our 75th anniversary

by relocating our Head Office from Stanmore, where we had enjoyed 13 happy years, to Finchley Central, to the northern end of the Finchleystrasse! The new office is of similar size and layout to Stanmore but with more of an open-plan feel. Please do drop in on us if you are in the area.

UMBRELLA GROUP FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The AJR continued to act as the lead agency of the Umbrella Group managing the welfare programmes of the Claims Conference, support that was further supplemented by Six Point Foundation.

Following successful negotiations with the German Government significantly more funding for Homecare was achieved, and although the administrative burden became more onerous, grants made from Claims Conference funding increased by £1m to more than £4m.

Some £3.5m was paid to individual beneficiaries to support their care and other urgent essential needs, including funding 377,000 hours of homecare.

This grant activity was further supplemented by SPF which contributed a further £463,000 to members of the Umbrella Group agencies. Altogether, we managed £4.5m of grants of which some £739,000 was paid to AJR members. While the Claims Conference continues generously to provide support for our social work and volunteer activities, for which we are most grateful, we also wish to express our deep gratitude to SPF for the transformative role they played in enhancing the lives of many of our members.

AJR SELF-AID

Further, it gave us great pleasure to award above inflation increases totalling £598,000 to those members with the greatest need through the AJR's Self-Aid programme. We aim to make their lives more comfortable in *Continued on page 10*

2016 Annual Report continued...

the years ahead.

SOCIAL AND WELFARE SERVICES

As a result of increasing our complement of social workers and strengthening our administrative support, we were able to contact and support new members throughout the country.

Many AJR members benefitted from individual grants and were provided with specialised computers through the SPF Connect programme with members now able to request music, books and films as well as being able to view interesting internet resources such as many JW3 events and Belsize Square Synagogue services. Members were also able to use Skype to the amazement of their grand-children and great-grand-children!

Critically, we continued to provide Homecare support to enable first generation members to help them remain in their own homes and lead independent lives, and continued to offer advice and support in decision-making regarding sheltered housing and residential care. Support was also provided for relatives and also to our second generation members.

We also worked with community organisations to meet members' needs and develop relationships with Jewish organisations that are not London-based. Although assessments and applications now require a much greater level of detail, as well as the involvement of medical and care professionals, and local authorities, we continued to make life-changing interventions to improve members' welfare.

As in previous years, colleagues from the social work department supported members on holidays to Eastbourne for a week and as part of the trip to Yorkshire.

VOLUNTEERS

The reach and impact of the volunteer department has continued to grow

during the past year. Our newest project, *My Voice*, which tells the stories of our members through the production of individual life story books to be kept as treasured memories, started as a pilot in Manchester in conjunction with the FED and is now being offered to our members in London and Leeds.

We are delighted that the team behind the project was named as Volunteer Team of the Year at the sixth Jewish Telegraph and Jewish Volunteering Network Manchester Jewish Community Award ceremony.

The telephone befriender project has also grown significantly and we more than doubled the number of volunteers who make regular contact with our members.

We continue to arrange for volunteers to befriend our members throughout the country; in some instances these visits offer companionship and an opportunity for our members to talk about current affairs or sport, or their families, while other volunteers offer more practical support giving computer and iPad lessons.

We are also able to place volunteers with members suffering with memory loss and dementia. Having recently appointed a volunteer coordinator in Scotland, these projects are now also available to our members north of the border.

SOBELL

Over three years have passed since our AJR Centre members joined the Jewish Care family at the Sobell Centre in Golders Green, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, joining the original members who transferred to Sobell when we closed our facility at Belsize Square Synagogue.

Our members socialise, play Rummikub and Bridge, join in the exercise classes and numerous other activities offered at Sobell, including the wonderful art and pottery room. The hairdressing salon and manicurist are added bonuses.

Sadly, during the year we have lost some of our regulars who played an active part in the life of AJR at Cleve Road and Belsize Square clubs. They are sorely missed but remembered with great fondness.

COMMUNITY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

We participated on a series of communal bodies and initiatives, including playing a leading role in the organisation of the national Yom HaShoah commemoration at Allianz Park which more than 4,000 guests attended. We also participate on the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's collaborative.

Our Chief Executive, Michael Newman, chaired the Communications Working Group of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) as a member of the UK delegation.

REGIONAL GROUPS, OUTINGS AND HOLIDAYS

Our Northern Regional Get-together took place at Stenecourt Synagogue in Manchester. Discussion groups in the morning and a beautiful catered lunch were followed by a presentation on the SPF Connect project. To round off the day, members were treated to a harpist's performance and tea.

In Scotland, we partnered with Giffnock Synagogue and the Glasgow Jewish Archives to invite Barbara Winton to address members, who also heard from Holocaust survivor Ben Helfgott as part of the Yom Hashoah commemoration. Edward Green, former jeweller to the Queen, gave a most fascinating presentation.

Members in Scotland also visited the National Holocaust Centre and the home of golf at St. Andrews as well as at the magnificent Dumfries House. Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, was the keynote speaker at the annual Scotland Get-together.

In the South we started two new groups, a film club and an AJR card and games club, proving popular with members with a regular growing attendance at both groups.

It gave us great pleasure to arrange cultural outings throughout the year, including a chance to meet Mona Golabek, writer and performer of *The Pianist of Willesden Lane*, and a visit to St Albans for a tour of the Cathedral followed by a lunch and tour of the Synagogue.

Ahead of the Brexit referendum, we were grateful to Barnet MP, Mike Freer, for participating in a debate at Alyth Synagogue with Sir Bernard Lewis, the former Mayor of Birmingham. Alyth also kindly hosted our London regional groups' Chanukah party.

We also organised outings to Kenwood House, Hitchin Lavender Farm and to the National Portrait Gallery to see an exhibition on Jewish artists. One group visited Regent's Park Open Air Theatre to see a production of Jesus Christ Superstar. Members also had the opportunity to fly a Spitfire simulator at the British Airways Aviation Museum.

A group of our members enjoyed a very sunny week in Eastbourne with entertainment, trips to the theatre and outings to local places of interest.

AJR JOURNAL

The AJR Journal, which celebrated its 70th anniversary last January, reflected many of the major changes in the wider world during a particularly eventful year. Articles touching on the implications of Brexit for refugees from other EU member states, or the similarities between the modern refugee crisis and Nazi Europe, for example, appeared prominently alongside our regular features of refugees' stories, letters, and our regional reports.

We continued to publish fascinating articles from our Consultant Editor Anthony Grenville each month, covering topics as diverse as Bob Dylan and politically motivated murders. These appeared alongside monthly contributions from our arts correspondent Gloria Tessler and our Jerusalem correspondent Dorothea Shefer-Vanson. Almost 40 different books were reviewed, and more than 40 obituaries of some of our late members were published.

There have also been major changes internally. In November our long-standing editor Howard Spier commenced a period of protracted leave due to personal reasons. While Howard continues to be in our thoughts, we recruited an acting editor, Jo Briggs, to pick up the reins. Working in close partnership with Anthony Grenville, our printers and some of our volunteers, she is managing to retain

the essence of the Journal established by Howard and his predecessors, while also introducing a more contemporary look and feel to this vitally important communication channel, in line with the AJR's new corporate identity.

KINDERTRANSPORT

We continued our excellent monthly Kindertransport lunches at Alyth Synagogue when we were delighted to welcome, among other speakers, His Excellency The Austrian Ambassador, Dr Martin Eichinger, Dame Esther Rantzen, who spoke about her role as the founder of Childline and Silverline, and Jonathan Arkush, the President of Board of Deputies on the issues facing our community.

It is a source of great pride that, among other members, Kindertransport Chairman and my fellow AJR trustee, Sir Erich Reich, advocates for the plight of refugee children fleeing persecution today. One of his letters to former Prime Minister David Cameron was quoted at Prime Minister's Questions.

CHILD SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION

We supported many of our child survivor members with their applications for the historic one-time compensation payment administered by the Claims Conference and financed by the German Government, which also resulted in finding new members.

The Child Survivor Association social events continued with gatherings in each other's homes and all members receiving the bi-monthly newsletter, which keeps members abreast of events. The experiences of child survivors are now recognised as an integral part of Holocaust education with many members engaged as speakers in schools. The CSA also remains a member of the European Association of Survivors.

Having sold over 7,000 copies, the CSA book, WE REMEMBER, an anthology of 30 of our members' experiences during the Holocaust, went into its fourth reprint reflecting the high demand, particularly within secondary schools.

GRANTS AND HOLOCAUST MEMORIALISATION

With thanks to Dr Bea Lewkowicz, we greatly expanded our Refugee Voices

testimony collection, which will have increased to 225 interviews at completion. Thought has already been given to presenting and profiling the archive in an interactive website.

It gave us great pleasure to support the establishment of a PhD Scholarship in the name of former AJR member Clemens Nathan, at the University of Sussex, and again be supporters of the Holocaust Memorial Day programmes organised by the Finchley Reform and Northwood Synagogues.

We also sponsored the Holocaust Memorial Day events at the Universities of Sussex and Glasgow and were a prominent supporter of the national Yom HaShoah commemoration in London.

We were also delighted to renew our support to Belsize Square Synagogue for their welfare and outreach officer.

MEMBERSHIP

To our ongoing pleasure we continued to enrol the first generation with 39 former refugees becoming AJR members last year. An additional 56 new members came from the second generation.

At the end of last year, our total membership stood at 2,041, including 551 second generation.

On 1 January this year, our database showed 590 members aged 90 or over and a further 27 who have reached their century but not yet declared!

As ever, please do share with your friends and family the great benefits of AJR membership and we look forward to welcoming more joiners this year.

PERSONNEL

We said a fond farewell to popular social worker Michael Flannery who ended his contract with us last December to return to his native Australia.

We welcomed Ros Hart to augment the administrative support in the social work department, an appointment that will help cover Christine Jones' reduction in hours. We were delighted
Continued on page 12

2016 Annual Report continued...

to promote Rebecca Webb to senior administrator.

Eva Stelman joined the Outreach team in January and has been welcomed by members for her enthusiasm and kindness. We were also happy to welcome Jennifer Aizenberg to the Volunteers team in May, to work with volunteers who befriend clients with dementia.

Samantha Cohen resigned from her position in the accounts team at the end of last year with Josephine Dayan appointed on an interim basis until a permanent replacement can be found.

THANKS

Delivering our life-enhancing support and our unique services is a pleasure and a privilege but cannot happen without the dedication and professionalism of our wonderful staff to whom I, and my fellow trustees, owe a debt of gratitude.

My thanks go in particular to our senior managers, ably led by our Chief Executive Michael Newman, but also to my fellow trustees whose counsel and guidance, and skills and knowledge, create the best possible shape to steer our great organisation.

Marking our jubilee is a timely juncture to reflect on our great achievements, not just this past year, but in the course of our history.

It is also a suitable point to recall that we are first and foremost an association – a membership organisation – founded by refugees for refugees, and it is you, our members, who drive us in our work.

My colleagues and I greatly look forward to seeing you, hearing from you, and supporting you in the years to come.

Andrew Kaufman
Chairman

2016 TREASURER'S REPORT

Our financial picture at the end of 2016 reflects the growth during the year in social work activity resulting from more generous funding made available to welfare programmes and to our wider educational initiatives.

Much of the core financial support we provide has been funded by Claims Conference programmes financed by the German Government and by Six Point Foundation [SPF]. In both cases the AJR not only administers the grants of those organisations towards its own members but also for those of the other charitable organisation of the Umbrella Group which the AJR leads.

Last year was particularly active as the German Government increased its support by about a third whilst SPF activity accelerated in anticipation of the closure of that organisation. While not all of that activity is reflected in our accounts, which do not reflect funding from these sources to other agencies and their clients, members should be aware that the overall funding managed and distributed in this regard increased by about £1m, an increase of 25%.

Our own accounts reflect a £223k increase in funding from the Claims Conference and SPF and we remain very grateful for their generosity and very appreciative of the work they do on behalf of all survivors and refugees.

These developments necessitated additional social work and administrative resource to manage the changes, including meeting the increasing financial safeguarding standards required by the Claims Conference.

The relocation of our head office to Finchley following the expiry of our lease in Stanmore along with the inevitable moving costs and legal and professional fees resulted in expenditure in 2016 which we do not expect to repeat in the foreseeable future.

During this past year we also witnessed a solid improvement in our financial performance measured in sterling, much of it reflecting the fall in the value of the pound following the Brexit vote. This has enabled us to further improve the delivery of services to members as well as support educational initiatives. We have also agreed to offer help to those who previously might have looked to SPF for assistance, subject always to their meeting our own criteria for Self-Aid.

Legacies provide a vital funding source to enable our critical services to be maintained and enhanced

Once again inflation-beating increases were given to our most needy members – recipients of Self-Aid – while our social work establishment was further increased and our Refugee Voices

testimony archive was enlarged. We also piloted the "Holocaust Generations" project. Our grant activity to other organisations increased from 2015 but remained below historical run rates. We anticipate that during 2017 our significant commitments to organisations whose work we have pledged to support will crystallise.

It is once again my great privilege to express my gratitude to our former members whose legacies in 2016 supported the organisation by more than £700,000, and respectfully encourage our members to remember that legacies provide a vital funding source to enable our critical services to be maintained and enhanced in the way that we have been able to achieve in recent years.

As always, I offer my thanks to the finance team for their continued dedication in relation not only to our own administration but also in carrying out the increasingly complex administrative requirements of the programmes we manage.

David Rothenberg
Treasurer

AND FINANCE REPORT

The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR)
Summary Income and Expenditure Accounts
Year ended 31st December 2016 (unaudited)

Income:	2016		2015	
	£	£	£	£
Claims Conference, Six Point & Other Grants	1,308,478		1,085,134	
Subscriptions/Donations	68,982		76,328	
Investment income	705,168		657,074	
Other Income	4,016		5,114	
		2,086,644		1,823,650
Legacies		800,573		708,704
Total Income		2,887,217		2,532,354
Less outgoings:				
Self Aid, Homecare and Emergency Grants	1,336,025		1,357,527	
Social Services and other member services	1,090,403		997,640	
AJR Journal	112,937		116,407	
Other organisations	61,443		41,830	
Internal Educational Initiatives	86,359		11,993	
Relocation	23,595		0	
Administration/Depreciation	1,129,523		973,845	
		3,840,285		3,499,242
Net operating deficit for the year		-953,068		-966,888
Surplus/-Deficiency on realised and unrealised investments		2,591,397		-777,284
Net movement in funds		1,638,329		-1,744,172

The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR)
Summary Balance Sheet
Year ended 31st December 2016 (unaudited)

	2016		2015	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets and Investments	24,548,503		21,903,844	
Current assets	4,774,414		6,102,951	
Current liabilities	1,011,162		1,333,369	
Net Current Assets		3,763,252		4,769,582
Net Assets		28,311,755		26,673,426
Reserves brought forward		26,673,426		28,417,597
Net movement in funds for the year		1,638,329		-1,744,171
Reserves Carried Forward		28,311,755		26,673,426



WHY NOT CONVERT
YOUR OLD CINE
FILMS
AND PUT THEM
ON DVDS
FREE OF CHARGE?

Contact Alf Buechler at
alf@buechler.org or tel 020 8554 5635



JACKMAN ■
SILVERMAN

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

Telephone: 020 7209 5532
robert@jackmansilverman.co.uk



**Eastbourne
Lansdowne Hotel**

**Sunday 11 June to
Sunday 18 June 2017**

Come and join us for a week
Make new friends and meet up
with old friends

**£425pp for twin/double
£450 for single room**

Sea View rooms an additional £15 per room per night

Carol Rossen will be among those
accompanying the trip

Space is limited so book early

**For further details,
please telephone Lorna Moss
on 020 8385 3070**



**10-DAY VISIT TO ISRAEL
NOVEMBER 2017**

The AJR is considering organising a
10-day trip to Israel in early November this year.
The cost of the visit is not yet decided.

Carol Rossen will be accompanying the trip.

If you would like to join the trip,
please contact Lorna Moss
on 020 8385 3070 or at
lorna@ajr.org.uk as soon as possible.

REVIEWS

EXILE & GENDER 1

by Margaret M. Dunlop

Edited by Charmian Brinson
and Andrea Hammel

The German TV channel ZDF recently showed "Landgericht", the two-piece adaptation of an award-winning novel by Ursula Krechel that follows the fate of a German-Jewish judge and his family through the National Socialist 1930s, exile and the young Bundesrepublik. Krechel based the family's experience of exile on Ruth Barnett's autobiography "Person of No Nationality". Barnett is among the small number of émigrés who, in writing their life's story, pass the knowledge on to younger generations. How the experience of exile is reflected depends on a number of factors, among them the gender of the author. The recently-published volume 17 of the "Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies", edited by Charmian Brinson and Andrea Hammel and entitled "Exile and Gender I", focuses on this so far neglected aspect as expressed in literature and the press.

The book throws light on many different aspects of gendered authorship. It looks, for example, at two of the few newspapers aimed at German-speaking women refugees in England during WWII, allowing a unique glimpse into the reality of their everyday lives. The short-lived "Österreicherin im Haushalt" (Veronika Zwerger, pp. 220-236) provided advice for the Austrian refugee domestic on matters ranging from legal questions to recipes for basic British dishes and kept its readers up to date with news from their homeland. The Communist-influenced newspaper "Frau in Arbeit" (Charmian Brinson, pp. 237-247) aimed to be the point of contact, support and entertainment for all German-speaking women refugees, promoting the struggle for women's equality.

Sometimes the extraordinary experience of exile offers the chance to break with gender stereotypes. In his 2009 novel "Exil der frechen Frauen" Robert Cohen fictionalises three very different stories

of women who all adopt a brazenness and outspokenness generally not associated with women, defying societal restraints to overcome the status quo (Hiltrud Arens, pp. 146-160). Children's literature, so far neglected especially when written by women, also offers insight into how gender and age can influence the experience of exile and its depiction. When, as in Lisa Tetzner's "Children's Odyssey", an adventure story unusually centres on a girl, genre-typical stereotypes are broken and expected gender roles subverted: the gang of children, left alone, succeeds in negotiating categories of gender, class and ethnicity anew (Wiebke von Bernstorff, pp. 207-219).

The influence of gender on exile life writing is especially palpable in cases of married couples of writers where shared experiences lead to remarkably divergent texts that can be directly compared. In their novels "Als wär's ein Stück von mir" (1966) and "Farm in den grünen Bergen" (1949) Carl and Alice Zuckmayer both reflect on the harsh years on a remote farm in Vermont (Birgit Maier-Katkin, pp. 60-75). Gender lines get blurred in the private sphere of life on the farm. While Carl is motivated by the long-established male role of providing for his family, he also displays a romantic love of animals and nature, usually seen as a female trait. Alice, by contrast, does not particularly like animals but is willing to work with them and takes a rational and scholarly approach to farming, normally perceived as a male feature.

For Elias and Veza Canetti exile in England also turned traditional gender roles on their head (Rosa Marta Gómez Pata, pp. 76-87, Ester Saletta, pp. 88-104). Veza, a respected author in the 1930s, vanished from the public's perception. Concerned for her husband's work and wellbeing, she became the couple's breadwinner in exile, taking on translations and living a secluded life in the house of Father Milburn in Chesham Bois which she fictionalises unsentimentally in the short story "Toogoods oder das Licht", revealing her criticism of the lack of equality of men and women that runs through her oeuvre. Veza's sacrifices enabled Elias to concentrate on his writing, always done in German, finding inspiration in a busy social life and an Austrian mistress. His path to recognition was interrupted by emigration but eventually culminated in the bestowal

of the Nobel Prize in 1981. Although sharing the fate of exile, the careers of two authors could hardly have been more different.

As promised by the editors, this volume goes a long way towards correcting the "gender distortion" of early exile studies. However, more work is needed and the upcoming publication "Exile and Gender II" will take a closer look at politics, education and the arts.

Ines Schlenker

KASZTNER'S CRIME

by Paul Bogdanor

Rezso (Rudolf) Kasztner was a leading member of The Zionist Defence Committee during the final and worst months of the Hungarian Holocaust.

He rescued thousands of Hungarian Jews, but was accused, after the war in Israel, of favouring the rich and betraying the poor. By the time the Israeli Supreme Court reversed the verdict in Kasztner's favour he had been assassinated by right-wing fanatics. Long controversy followed, with one side insisting he was a hero, the other he was a villain.

In the last few years Kasztner and his committee's efforts have been officially recognised and his papers accepted into Yad Vashem so it seemed appropriate that a balanced, impartial review be produced of the events in those terrible months.

It could be hoped that Paul Bogdanor's book would provide such an overview. Unfortunately Mr Bogdanor has missed that opportunity by producing a totally partisan and biased work. The book claims to be a history, but fails to provide a balanced picture of the prevailing conditions at the time, or the characters or the pressures facing them. Instead it becomes a diatribe against not only Kasztner but also against members of the committee in general and the head of the Hungarian Zionist Federation, Otto Komoly, in particular.

It is perhaps fortunate that Mr Bogdanor manages to find a sinister, indeed evil, interpretation of each and every of Kasztner's actions (either ignoring or

glossing over courageous rescue action) and in this way loses any possible claim to providing an impartial overview, but also all credibility.

By making Kasztner an ogre, Mr Bogdanor rekindles a bitter and barren argument, which if not accepted as settled by all sides, has at least become dormant. Mr Bogdanor might do well to accept that, apart from being totally misguided, his reigniting such differences of opinion is the last thing the Jewish, but especially, the Israeli community needs.

George Donath

THE VOYAGE; A Holocaust Novel by Roberta Kagan

The voyage of the liner MS St. Louis from Germany with some 900 Jews on board is well-documented. In May 1939 the vessel set sail for Cuba, where the passengers had been promised refuge. The ship's captain, Gustav Schroeder, faithfully discharged his responsibility for the welfare and safety of the passengers.

Roberta Kagan has woven the stories of several imaginary passengers into a novel which attempts to bring to life the experience of that voyage, the interactions between passengers and crew, and above all the concern for the passengers displayed by Captain Schroeder (who was eventually recognized as one of the Righteous Among Nations at Yad Vashem). In those days of the Third Reich, it took a man of exceptional character and courage to insist that while on board 'his' ship, Jews were to be treated with all the civility, courtesy and consideration afforded to any Gentile passenger.

Most of the passengers had obtained visas allowing them to disembark in Cuba, but were prevented from doing so by a sudden upsurge of anti-Semitic feeling in that country, stirred up by Nazi propaganda. This led the Cuban government to revoke those visas, whereupon the captain and various Jewish organizations endeavored to find an alternative haven for the Jewish passengers. Ms. Kagan describes these events through the eyes and emotions of her fictitious characters. Undoubtedly, much of what she has written has a very sound basis in fact.

Although attempts to persuade the American and Canadian governments to permit the entry of the Jews failed, Captain Schroeder refused to return to Nazi Germany, where the fate of the passengers was clearly imprisonment and death. Eventually several European countries (England, France, Belgium, the Netherlands) agreed to take a certain number of passengers, but the invasion of many of those countries by Hitler only a few months later instantly put those refugees in renewed danger. Only half of the six hundred Jews who returned to Europe survived.

The novel describes the heroic attempts to build a new life by two young couples, one that is able to leave the boat in Cuba due to the self-sacrifice of another passenger, and one that returns to Europe to eke out an existence while evading capture by the Germans. Alex, a concentration camp survivor, and Anna disembark in Havana, and are eventually able to move to America. Life is not easy for them there, as Alex joins the US army and is sent to fight in Europe, where he is wounded in the battle for Normandy, but ultimately reunited with Anna. The other young couple – Viktor, the Gentile crew-member, and Elke, the beautiful, Aryan-looking Jewess – return to Europe, where Viktor obtains false papers for Elke and she assumes the identity of a good Catholic.

The book begins and ends with the real or imagined gathering of survivors of that voyage and their descendants in modern-day America, which is apparently an annual event. The son of one of the couples meets the wife (now a widow) of the other couple, thereby closing the circle of suffering and separation which has characterized so many survivors of that terrible time.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

UNDERSTANDING & TEACHING HOLOCAUST EDUCATION by Paul Cowan & Henry Maitles

As a lay person, I was intrigued to see how something as seismic and complex as the Holocaust can be structured into a topic for school children.

The book begins by justifying school-

based Holocaust Education, and then looks at what young people can learn about and from the Holocaust to increase their understanding of contemporary citizenship. The following chapters look at very important issues such as how to define antisemitism, the importance of language, and different shapes and forms for Holocaust remembrance, memory and commemoration.

One chapter I found particularly fascinating was 'Pedagogy' which looks at how to deal with the many controversial issues surrounding the Holocaust. For example, it offers strategies for responding to antisemitic sentiment from students, especially in culturally diverse classrooms (depending on the mix, it recommends focusing on human rights issues, celebrating modern day cultural diversity and/or recognising Muslim rescuers of Jews in North Africa). It also advises teachers to highlight the Yad Vashem's list of 'Women of Valour' as role models for young women, and to use the Nazis' murder intent towards gay people to encourage tolerance and equality.

There is one chapter devoted towards primary schools, and another looking at different classroom teaching approaches. It stresses the need for teachers to be judicious in using Holocaust fiction in their teaching, advising them also to incorporate survivor and eye-witness testimonies. It highlights the huge opportunities for students to view online testimony, especially as the era in which there will be no one with a living memory of the Holocaust is fast approaching. It also advocates the use of role-play and simulation strategies, providing these are used with caution, forethought and reflection. Finally it looks at the powerful lessons that can be learned from visiting Auschwitz or other sites associated with the Holocaust, but questions whether school groups should be more diverse in terms of ethnicity, ability, social disadvantage and even subject specialisms.

All in all a fascinating read – even if one is not preparing a Holocaust lesson plan.

Jo Briggs

Around the AJR

BOOK CLUB: OPPOSITES ATTRACT

A visit to the Book Club always has the promise of a pleasant afternoon. We read *The Marriage of Opposites* by Alice Hoffman which we all enjoyed.

Jill Pivnik and Rhoda Robinson

BRADFORD: CAFÉ OUTING

We met at the wonderful Café in the Opera at Salts Mill, Saltaire, where we talked nonstop for nearly three hours.

Wendy Bott

CHILD REFUGEES THEN AND NOW

Our guest at the Kindertransport Lunch was Laura Griffiths from Safe Passage UK, the charity supported by Lord Dubs to help child refugees trying to reach their families in the UK. Laura told us about her work in the Calais camps, where some stories had happy endings. Some former Kinder voiced strong opinions on the current situation compared to their own stories. This event was covered by a film crew working on survivors' stories for Yom HaShoah.

Susan Harrod

BRIGHTON: JEWISH NONAGENARIANS

Lawrence Collins spoke about inspirational Jewish nonagenarians (who make up 1.6% of the Jewish community) including a dental surgeon drafted to Singapore in WW2, a survivor of Auschwitz and a consultant geriatrician who (for the purposes of longevity) recommends "choose your parents carefully".

Shirley Huberman

BRISTOL: REFUGEES TODAY

We liaised with Bristol Refugee Support and invited refugees to join us for lunch and discussion. Central themes were "leaving" and "arriving". We heard from Atil, a Kurd who came to the UK over 20 years ago and also from Irene who came from Uganda just one year ago.

Hazel Rank-Broadley

CARDS & GAMES CLUB

After a lovely lunch we adjourned to the cards

and games tables for a fun afternoon.

David Lang

CHESHIRE: LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION

We met at the home of Ernie & Vivienne Hunter. We discussed what attributes are needed to be a good leader. Newcomer Laura was welcomed.

Wendy Bott

DIDSBURY: GOOD CONVERSATION

The subject was Where would you live, given the choice? Suggestions ranged from the Pennines to Vancouver.

Wendy Bott

EALING: NOW WE KNOW WHO DID IT

Nick Dobson spoke on the life and work of Agatha Christie and on her main characters, Hercule Poirot and Jane Marple.

Leslie Sommer

EAST MIDLANDS: WARM WELCOME

Our first meeting of 2017 was well attended, and we welcomed Esther Rinkoff from the AJR and Kathryn, our AJR social worker. We also wished one of our members a happy 94th birthday.

Bob Norton

EDGWARE: TREASON IN HIGH PLACES

Philippa Bernard spoke on Roderigo Lopez, physician to Queen Elizabeth I. He was a Portuguese Jew converted to Christianity, accused of poisoning the Queen at a time when Jews were not allowed to live in Britain. He was convicted of high treason and hanged, drawn and quartered in 1594.

Sylvia Ring

ESSEX: MEMORIES OF EAST END

Ronnie Schwartz, born in Hackney in 1932, spoke about the East End and working in Petticoat Lane for 30 years. He told us that Mile End is so called because it is a mile from the City of London. He knew the Krays (whose mother was Jewish).

Larry Lisner

FILM CLUB: ELEPHANT HUNT

We saw "Hunting Elephants", a charming, hilarious and also moving Israeli comedy about a bank robbery carried out by a group of retirement home residents.

Eva Stellman

GLASGOW BOOK CLUB: "40 RULES OF LOVE"

This book was not everyone's cup of tea so we had a lively discussion. Our next book will be *The Proposal* by Tasmina Perry.

Agnes Isaacs

GLASGOW CF: POLITICS IN SCOTLAND



Jackson Carlaw MSP, Deputy Leader of the Conservatives in Scotland spoke about his involvement in support of Israel at the Scottish Parliament, the implications of Brexit for

Scotland and the prospect of a second Scottish independence referendum.

Agnes Isaacs

OUTING TO 2 WILLOW ROAD

Colin Davey, a volunteer London Guide, escorted us round this amazing modernist house (now part of the National Trust) built in 1939 by the Hungarian émigré architect Erno Goldfinger. The many windows have outstanding views onto Hampstead Heath. Rooms can be extended as required; all the built-in furniture is compact, with space-saving pivoting drawers in Erno's desk.

Meta Roseneil

GLASGOW: A GREAT DAY OUT

We travelled through the Clyde Valley for a wonderful day at Garrion Bridges Antiques and Garden Centre where we enjoyed the huge displays of fashions, leathers, crafts, ceramics, jewellery, plants and antiques.

Ruth Ramsey

HARROGATE: MANX TALES

At the lovely home of Inge we met her daughter, Ruth, who told us about life on the Isle of Man, its inhabitants and its indigenous animals...specifically, the Manx cat.

Wendy Bott

ILFORD: A SLICE OF JEWISH HISTORY

Kathryn Prevezer and Colin Davey spoke about Jewish Soho. There were once three synagogues, now none remain (the last one in Dean Street was converted to a theatre). There were many Jewish shopkeepers and even a Jewish-owned pub.

Meta Roseneil

LEEDS: LIFE IN A RUSSIAN SHTETL

Ruth Bell, curator of the "Russian shtetl" built some years ago by Leeds Jewish Heritage Centre, spoke about the 'village'. We were able to wander round it, accompanied by the

sound of livestock, and could enter the various buildings including a Shul.

Barbara Cammerman

LEEDS, LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER GROUPS MEETING

After a delicious lunch we enjoyed watching "Woman in Gold" and thanks are due to Ernie Hunter for providing all the equipment needed.

Wendy Bott

MUSWELL HILL: INAUGURAL MEETING

Over tea and Hamantaschen a new AJR group was born. Thirteen people met at the Muswell Hill Synagogue and spoke briefly about how they had become AJR members. We look forward to stimulating monthly programmes.

Patricia J. Tausz

N.W.LONDON: TWO SPEAKERS

Claude Vecht-Wolf, the AJR information technology expert, spoke about his work as well as his current training to be a Rabbi. Also, Sacha talked about her dissertation on Austrian and German Jewish refugees in London for her Master's Degree at UCL.

David Lang

NORWICH: TRAUMA OF 2ND GEN

Clinical psychologist Andrew Sluckin spoke on "The Trauma of the Holocaust on the 2nd Generation" (of which the speaker is one). The sense of loss and grieving for murdered grandparents was transmitted via their parents and had great impact.

Frank Bright

OXFORD: LUNCH AND DISCUSSION

Our newest member told us about himself and three members showed us a treasured possession, each item being part of a much larger story.

Kathryn Prevezer

PINNER: TREASURED MEMENTOES

Fellow-members each brought along an item or interest for discussion. They varied from paintings and a powder compact made in Lodz to children's books produced during the war by the parents of a hidden child.

Henri Obstfeld

RADLETT: JEWISH NONAGENARIANS

Lawrence Collins interviewed members of the Jewish community aged 90+, many of whom had achieved some distinction and all with fascinating memories.

Fritz Starer

MAY GROUP EVENTS

As the exact timings of these events are often subject to last minute changes we do not include them in the AJR Journal and suggest you contact the relevant regional contact for full details.

Book Club	3 May	Discussion and Tea
Birmingham	3 May	Lunch – Sturgeon Queen Film
Bradford	9 May	Social get-together
Brighton	15 May	Harvey Bratt UJIA
Cardiff	15 May	Colin Davey – Stories of the Law
Cheshire	8 May	Social get-together
Didsbury	17 May	Social get-together
Ealing	2 May 6 June	Frances Long – The history of Opera David Barnett – The Story of Joseph Nathan
Edgware	16 May	Dr David Barnett – 'E Moses & Son, the most famous Jewish business in Victorian Britain'
Edinburgh	18 May	Social get-together
Essex (Westcliff)	9 May	Michael Newman, CEO of AJR
Glasgow Book Club	11 May	Social get-together
Harrogate	11 May	Social get-together
Ilford	3 May	Nick Dobson – An Underground Guide to Historical London
Ilford	7 June	Film – The Sturgeon Queen
Kensington	2 May	Social get-together
Muswell Hill	18 May	Social get-together
Newcastle	14 May	Social get-together
North London	18 May	Kathryn Prevezer and Colin Davey – A Virtual Tour of Jewish Soho
Pinner	4 May 8 June	Myleen Goodman – Fight and Flight – A story of two women painters during the French Revolution Diana Barnett – the Portuguese Consul De Sousa Mendes who saved so many Jews.
Prestwich	15 May	Social get-together
Radlett	17 May	Tim Pike – Bank of England update

CONTACTS

Susan Harrod
Lead Outreach & Events Co-ordinator
020 8385 3070 susan@ajr.org.uk

Wendy Bott
Northern Outreach Co-ordinator
07908 156 365 wendy@ajr.org.uk

Agnes Isaacs
Northern Outreach Co-ordinator
07908 156 361 agnes@ajr.org.uk

Kathryn Prevezer
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator
07966 969 951 kathryn@ajr.org.uk

Esther Rinkoff
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator
07966 631 778 esther@ajr.org.uk

Eva Stelman
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator
07904 489 515 eva@ajr.org.uk

KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Susan Harrod
020 8385 3070 susan@ajr.org.uk

Child Survivors' Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld
020 8954 5298 h.obstfeld@talk21.com

LOOKING FOR?

The AJR regularly receives messages from our members and others looking for people or for help in particular subjects. Here are some of the most recent requests – please get in touch directly with the person concerned if you can help.

'Secret Agents' needed!

Wall to Wall Media is seeking men and women (18+) to take part in a BBC2 Living History programme on secret agents during WWII. Participants who would like to challenge their mental, physical and practical aptitude would 'train' as 1940s secret agents. This is not an acting job. secretagent@walltowall.co.uk

Marcel Lorber

Musicologist Joseph Toltz wishes to find the estate of the composer Marcel Lorber in order to obtain permission to arrange his music for a festival of Jewish music and theatre to be held in August in Sydney, Australia. Any information to: joseph.toltz@sydney.edu.au

Stolpersteine

Information sought on Daniel Samuel Goldstein and his mother, Frieda Goldstein, in order to lay Stolpersteine for them in Berlin. The mother perished in Chelmno, the son came to the UK in 1939. francior@gvsu.edu

Singer, Leopold

Researchers from Austria seek information about Dr Leopold Singer (petrochemist), born Vienna 31 July 1869, died June 1942 in London. Leopold Singer and his wife Jenny, née Beck (1877-1941), are assumed to have left Austria in March 1939 for the UK. Christian Klösch (christian.kloesch@tmw.at) and Regina Zödl (regina.zödl@wu.ac.at)

Getting to Lisbon

In May 1941 Oliver Marshall's grandparents were given permission to leave Germany for the USA. He knows that they travelled from Frankfurt to Lisbon, where they boarded the

SS Nyassa for New York, but is keen to learn by what means they travelled across Europe. He would like to hear from people who could share their experiences (or those of their family members) of this route at about this time.

oliverdmarshall@gmail.com

Faces to Names



David Harris hopes someone is able to help put faces to names in this much-published 1942 photograph of a section of 249 Company, Pioneer Corps. He has the original copy (his father, Willi Reissner, is in the back row, on the far left) which everyone has

signed on the reverse but in no particular order.

daviv30@virginmedia.com

Freeman or Friedmann

David Rothenberg would be grateful for any information regarding Fela Klugman nee Friedmann or Susannah Friedmann, the daughters of Berthold Freeman

[Friedmann] and Regina nee Sheinberger, or Senta Freeman [Friedmann] nee Ehrmann.

davirut@googlemail.com

If you would like to place a search in a future issue of the AJR Journal, please email editorial@ajr.org.uk including the words **SEARCH REQUEST** in the title of your email.

CLASSIFIED JOSEPH PEREIRA (ex-AJR caretaker over 22 years) is now available for DIY repairs and general maintenance. No job too small, very reasonable rates. Please telephone 07966 887 485.

Books Bought
MODERN AND OLD
Eric Levene
020 8364 3554 / 07855387574
ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk
I also purchase ephemera

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS
Rewires and all household electrical work
PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518
Mobile: 0795 614 8566

 **AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB**
Please join us at our new Card and Games Club
Monday 8 May 2017 at 1.00pm
at North Western Reform Synagogue,
Alyth Gardens, Temple Fortune, London NW11 7EN
Open to all levels Bridge players – come and join us
We also offer card games, backgammon, scrabble. You decide.
Games are dependent on numbers being sufficient – the more the merrier
A sandwich lunch will be served upon arrival with tea, coffee and Danish pastries.
£7.00 per person
Booking is essential – when you book please let us know your choice of game.
Please either call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk



OBITUARY

Mayer Hersh

31 August 1926 – 8 October 2016



In the last 30 years of his life Mayer Hersh became one of the foremost UK-based witnesses to the Holocaust. That he had lived to tell his story at all was little short of miraculous.

Hersh, whose family name was originally Herszkowicz, was born in Sieradz, near Łódź, in central Poland. His father, Isaac, who was a tailor, mother Riwka (nee Szczukowska), four siblings, and his entire extended family were all murdered in the Holocaust. Only Mayer and his elder brother, Jakob, survived, taken from Sieradz in 1940 to be slave labourers.

The brothers were separated and Mayer, who was 13 at the outbreak of WWII, was taken from camp to camp. In May 1943 he found himself in Auschwitz. A few months later, he met Jakob in the camp and advised him to ask for a transfer to the coalmines in Silesia – advice that probably saved Jakob's life, although the job was desperately hard.

Mayer did not leave Auschwitz until November 1944, when he was taken to Stutthof, then to Stuttgart, and then to Gotha, where he worked in an underground bunker loading ammunition on to trucks. The day before the allies arrived, the workers began a forced march to Buchenwald, the last part of it through the mountains. "Anyone who stopped got a single bullet through the head," said Hersh. "They didn't waste a bullet. For the first time, I had lost all hope. I was in total despair, but the man next to me, a complete stranger, said: 'You can't give

up now, the war is virtually finished.' That made me carry on."

After liberation, Hersh came to Britain with a Jewish refugee group and lived initially in the Lake District, where 300 young survivors of the camps were taken to recuperate. "For the first time in five years we were treated with dignity and respect," he said, "and this by local people who didn't really know who we were."

Jakob, meanwhile, went initially to the US and then settled in Israel. The brothers remained close, and Mayer was a frequent visitor to Israel until Jakob's death in 2003.

Mayer had grown up in a Yiddish-speaking household, and also spoke Polish and German, but now had to learn English. He picked it up quickly, settled in Manchester, trained as a tailor and built a successful bespoke business.

He was active on behalf of Jewish causes – looking after survivors and collecting money for the new state of Israel – and in 1965 married Judith Cooklin, whom he had met at a Jewish social club in the city, and who survives him. Like many Holocaust survivors, in the 1950s and 60s he said little publicly of his experiences in the war. But from the 70s on, especially once he had retired, Hersh became an increasingly significant voice in Holocaust education.

He toured schools – sometimes up to three a week – giving talks on his experiences, and his friend David Arnold, who helped plan the visits, believes he addressed 100,000 schoolchildren. Many corresponded with him after his visits, and some became lifelong friends.

As a survivor of nine camps, Hersh was much in demand to verify archival material and record his testimony, most notably in 1997 for the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation. In 2003 Hersh cooperated with the author Colin Rushton on a book called 'Beyond

the Gates of Hell'.

Hersh was awarded an MBE in 2013, but was even prouder of the honorary doctorate he received in 2012 from Edge Hill University in Ormskirk, Lancashire, where for many years he had advised trainee teachers on how to discuss the Holocaust with young people.

Bearing witness – not with anger but with compassion – had become his vocation. "In spite of what he had been through," said Rabbi Jonathan Guttentag at Hersh's funeral, "he was not bitter or negative – he was positive and faith-filled; he was wise, he was inspirational ... By constantly sharing his story, he was upholding the memory and the dignity of his family, his friends, his community and his people."

I met Hersh in 2005 for an article to mark the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. "In 1944," he told me, "I was daydreaming – when I had a chance to daydream – that maybe I'll get through and survive, knowing by that time that not many people would. I thought how wonderful it would be if I do survive, how people will put me on a pedestal. You know how the childish mind works. Well, I am on a pedestal, I am given certain honours, you come to interview me. To me, this is a fulfilment.

"But why is it a fulfilment? Because I'm talking about my family, whose lives were extinguished and whose voices were obliterated. The perpetrators also wanted the memory of these people to be obliterated, and that's something I don't want to happen. I want their memory to be preserved for eternity."

Stephen Moss

This obituary is reprinted with grateful thanks to The Guardian, who first published it on 17 October 2016.

LAST TRAIN TO ARRIVE IN MAIDENHEAD

Members of Maidenhead Synagogue will be staging a production of Carl Davis OBE's *Last Train to Tomorrow* on 17, 18 & 20 May. The piano accompanist will be Carl himself – who lives in Windsor – while John Dunston, the child of refugees, will conduct.

Admission by ticket only. Contact Barbara Grossman on 01628 541017 or email projects.maidenheadsynagogue@gmail.com

SECOND GENERATION NETWORK

The Second Generation Network has two interesting events coming up at JW3. On 14 May the psychologist and psychotherapist Gaby Glassman will lead a workshop for the children of Holocaust survivors and refugees, exploring how their own lives have been affected. A similar session for Third Generation (grandchildren) will be held on 11 June and facilitated by David Polak. <https://www.jw3.org.uk/event/second-generation-their-past-our-future>.

NEW EDUCATIONAL GRANTS ADVISOR



Alex Maws, previously Head of Education at the Holocaust Educational Trust, has joined the AJR in-house team to develop a strategy for our institutional grant giving in the field of Holocaust memorialisation.

Alex said “The field of Holocaust education and memorialisation is at a critical juncture. It’s so important right now to support innovation to ensure that this topic remains relevant for future generations, and the AJR is in a unique position to take a leading role. I am honoured to have been asked to help the AJR move in this direction.”

THANKS MIKE!

The AJR would like to wish a long and happy retirement to Mike Levine, MD of FBprinters LLP, who have been printing our monthly Journal since

October 1994. We are delighted that Mike’s assistant Celeste Flugel is taking over the helm, to continue to deliver the high quality publication that Mike has helped us create for the past 23 years.

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

Registered office: Winston House, 2 Dollis Park, Finchley, London N3 1HF

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

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

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

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