



AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Twelve rewarding years



Dr Anthony Grenville (right) with AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman and social anthropologist Dr Bea Lewkowicz at the launch of the AJR's groundbreaking audio-visual Holocaust testimony archive, Refugee Voices, in June 2009.

It is now some twenty years since I first set foot in the old AJR offices in Hampstead Gate, Fognal. Those offices, like the three other premises that the AJR had occupied since its foundation in 1941, were very close to Finchley Road, which runs like an artery through the principal areas of settlement of the Jewish refugees from Nazism in north-west London.

The AJR office, too, retained its links to the community of its origin; it was still staffed in considerable measure by first-generation refugees, like the journal's much-admired Editor, Richard Grunberger, a Kindertransportee from Vienna who had become a distinguished writer and historian in Britain. Refugees of the second generation, like our Chairman, Andrew Kaufman, and our Treasurer, David Rothenberg, had only recently assumed the leading positions on the AJR's Committee of Management, as it was then called, and the Board of Trustees of the AJR Charitable Trust. First-generation figures from the heroic era

of the AJR's past, like Ludwig Spiro and Theo Marx, still made their presence felt.

Until then, I had been a career academic with a degree in Modern Languages and a doctorate from Oxford, and some 25 years' experience as a lecturer in German at the Universities of Reading and Bristol, specialising in twentieth-century German literature. I had recently come to London on promotion – or rather, come back to London, as I had been brought up in Temple Fortune, north of Golders Green, opposite the Hampstead Garden Suburb. But when I saw a complete set of the
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GREAT HONOURS

It was very good to see a dozen AJR members, including our own chairman, featured in the New Year's Honours list. Full details on page 5.

This issue also includes insights about our Self-Aid fund (p15) and an interesting profile of Manfred Goldberg (p10), who took part in nine of the UK's many different Holocaust Memorial Day events last month

Sadly this is also the last lead article by our retiring Consultant Editor Anthony Grenville. Please enjoy it, with the assurance that great editorial is still to come.

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Twelve rewarding years cont.

issues of the old AJR Information – the predecessor of this journal – lying sadly gathering dust on some shelves in the AJR offices, my career took a decisive turn.

Although I had been trained as a literary scholar, not a historian, I resolved to research the journal's past issues, which dated back to 1946; for the next several years, I mined the treasure trove of information that they contained about the history and culture of the Jewish refugees from Nazism who had found refuge in Britain. I was, after all, born into that community, so I felt that I had a head start over any historian of British descent. Not only did I speak German fluently; I also understood the special cultural discourse that the refugees had evolved during their transition from German or Austrian society to British society. I knew how 'Emigranto' worked, what a 'Lebensbestätigung' was, as well as what 'stayed behind and perished' meant.

I had been systematically acquiring a fund of knowledge about the social history of the Jewish refugees in Britain for nearly ten years when, in early 2005, Richard Grunberger died. I had no journalistic experience whatsoever, but I could not bear the thought of *AJR Journal* losing its special status, its trademark reputation for intellectual substance and for depth and breadth of cultural coverage. So, despite my academic's propensity for long, wordy sentences, superfluous displays of erudition and intricate arguments about points of detail, I decided to try my luck as Consultant Editor and write the journal's front-page articles. At Oxford, I had been taught to value concision, clarity of expression and elegance of style, qualities regrettably rare in academic writing these days. But I found that they stood me in good stead when I came to write my articles. I enjoyed the challenge of communicating my ideas and opinions to our readers in a form that they, in turn, would enjoy reading. Over twelve years, I have never missed a single month's leading article; I have written nearly 150 articles, amounting to not far short of a quarter of a million words.

In 2006, the journal had been in existence for exactly sixty years; for most of that

time its front page had been in the hands of two great figures in the history of the AJR: Werner Rosenstock (1946-82) and Richard Grunberger (1988-2005), with Cäsar Aronsfeld stepping in for three years in the 1980s. So taking on the role of the 'voice of the AJR' was at first a daunting task. I was helped in it by the support and cooperation I received from my co-editor, Howard Spier, and his successor, Jo Briggs, who has all my very best wishes for her future success in her job. Writing an article of 1,500 words per month is, in my experience, a doddle compared to the labour involved in putting the contents of the journal together in one attractive and coherent package, as she so skilfully does. I am also grateful for the freedom that the management of the AJR, and Michael Newman in particular, have given me; every month, I have been free to write on any subject of my choice and to express my views without any fear of control, let alone censorship.

I never had a plan for my articles. Relying on my familiarity with the refugee community, I simply tried to think what people from a similar cultural background to that of my parents and their friends would have enjoyed reading, and set about writing it up. Every month, something of interest seemed to crop up, often triggered by some recent development or event, or by an anniversary, or a new book to review, but

often just in response to a momentary inspiration. The task of writing has been made immensely easier by the generous words of praise that I have received from readers, in letters and emails as well as in person. I would like to thank everyone who has commented on my articles – including my critics, whom I mostly found helpful – to me personally or to other members of AJR staff across the country. With the reassuring knowledge that I was hitting the right wavelength, it is only a small exaggeration to say that my articles wrote themselves. Writing them was mostly a pleasure, even when I was laid up in early 2015, following an operation for cancer of the parotid (saliva) gland.

That said, I do not feel that I was altogether a 'natural' to write the monthly front-page article for the journal of an organisation like the AJR. For I am in many respects an extreme case of assimilation and anglicisation. By the time I was born, my parents (who had been in London since 1938) had evidently decided to integrate as fully as possible into British society, which meant abandoning almost entirely the Jewish identity, lifestyle and practices with which they had grown up in Vienna; admittedly, starting from the highly assimilated social culture of Vienna's Ninth District, that was not so great a step to take. But it did mean that I was given the un-Austrian, un-Jewish names Anthony Brian James, with the surname Grenville

DEBATE OF THE MONTH



According to Charlotte Knobloch, the former head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany and current president of the Munich Jewish community, modern-day antisemitism is spreading rapidly

in Germany. Should British Jews be applying for German passports when this is happening?

Email editorial@ajr.org.uk with your thoughts.

added, once my father had changed the family name from Grünfeld on taking British nationality. I received a classically British education: I won a scholarship to Harrow School, then went on to Christ Church, Oxford, ('The House', in Oxford parlance), a path that afforded me a remarkable entrée into the British upper-middle class, given that my parents had only been in this country for twenty years when I was accepted at Winston Churchill's old school.

It was at Harrow that I took the turn towards German literature and culture. I refused to study Greek for my O-Levels, as was then expected of scholars, and opted for German instead. Of course, I had a head start over my classmates; I had heard German spoken all my life and had spent time in a German-speaking environment, as my parents liked to spend our summer holidays amidst the mountains and lakes of Austria. But I was never much interested in the German language, far preferring to study German literature, alongside French, and to read about the history of Central Europe. That was enough to see me through my studies at Oxford. Once I had decided to make my career in academic life, I acquired over the years a considerable fund of expertise in modern German culture and history, on which I have been able to draw for my articles for AJR Journal. But I grew up with scant knowledge of Judaism; some readers may have expected more specifically Jewish content, which I have not felt able to provide.

My work at the AJR has been profoundly rewarding. Besides the satisfaction of a job well done, it has taken my academic standing to a new level. I have written three books and numerous scholarly articles about the Jewish refugees from Hitler in Britain, spoken at any number of conferences and other events, and been elected Chair of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies at the Institute of Modern Languages Research, University of London. I also sit on the executive committee of the Gesellschaft für Exilforschung (Society for Exile Studies), the leading academic body in its field in Germany. So I take a satisfied leave of my position as Consultant Editor, with thanks to my readers and my colleagues and the promise of future contributions to the journal.

Anthony Grenville

A life interrupted

THE LONDON GAZETTE, 21 NOVEMBER, 1947

LIST of ALIENS to whom Certificates of Naturalization have been granted by the Secretary of State, and whose Oaths of Allegiance have been registered in the Home Office during the month of

Landes, Emil. Child of Landes, Wilhelm. Landes, Wilhelm; Austria; Dental Mechanic; 13, Linthorpe Road, London, N. 16. 8 October, 1947.

My father was a dentist in Vienna when the Nazis marched in, in March 1938. I was not quite six years old.

Neither my father nor my mother spoke of the horror of the months between that cataclysmic event and our escape six months later in September 1938.

And to my eternal regret I never asked.

All I gleaned of that terrible time is from residual family documents. My father was able to procure tourist visas to Australia via Southampton at a time when it was still Eichmann's policy to allow, even to encourage, Jews with appropriate documentation to leave Austria.

I don't remember much, but I do remember the trauma of the departure and goodbyes at the West Bahnhof, and before that, the days and nights of marching jackboots and swastikas, and the all pervading, enveloping fear. I remember the long train journey through terrifying border controls to Düsseldorf airport and looking up to the enormous engines of the Dakota



Dr Wilhelm Landes in his dental surgery around 1962

about to fly us to Croydon airport. To this day, I cannot bear the thought of missing a train or a flight.

Being destitute except for some dental gold and bits of jewellery, which my father smuggled out, and his dental qualification unrecognised by the British authorities, we ended up in the Shelter in the East End of London, supported by the Jewish Refugees Committee. The reason for that? Apparently I came down with whooping cough and was medically certified unfit to continue our journey to Australia. I suspect that this suited my father, as I doubt he wanted to undertake the six to eight week voyage. And so it was a series of medical certificates that enabled us to remain in the UK, together with the thousands of Jewish refugees until war broke out in September 1939, when of course there was no question of resuming our journey.

My father was interned instead as an enemy alien in Huyton.

Then, in 1957, the son tutored the father to pass the newly set up dental statutory exam to enable him to be registered once more to join his son as a practitioner of his beloved dental profession.

Emil Landes

Postscript: In May 2017 a new 'Special Care Dentistry Center' was opened at Tel Aviv University School of Dental Medicine, to provide essential and often complex dental treatment for some of Israel's most vulnerable populations. One of the sponsors of the new centre was the Alpha Omega International Dental Fraternity, who dedicated their donation in honour of Emil and Suzy Landes in recognition of their many years of service to Alpha Omega and on Emil's retirement as a Trustee.

Spot the Ironies

Here we feature two thought provoking reports from AJR members who have recently attended Stolpersteine ceremonies on behalf of their families.

TWO DAYS IN GERMANY

I visited Germany as a result of having been traced by Thomas Friedlaender via the International Red Cross. He is the 'great nephew' of my uncle Jossel, who was married to my mother's sister Eva. Both perished in Auschwitz in 1943.

We first visited the site of Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, where my father was transported after Kristallnacht. He never talked about it and the reasons became very obvious.

The camp was built in 1936 with 6,000 prisoners in about 50 huts. In 1938 the Small Camp was built, 15 huts each housing 400 prisoners. With sleeping room for 190, side by side on the floor, others had to stand around outside. Use of toilets was only allowed mornings and evenings after roll call or, occasionally, during the midday breaks. In the rush to use them, the sick or weak were trampled upon, whilst the SS staged regular

acts of torment on others. Only 30 minutes was allowed from waking up, washing and receiving rations, to attending roll-call.

My father was released after eight weeks in these inhumane conditions. He had entered through the gates with the familiar words '*Arbeit Macht Frei*'. At least he managed to exit them, to England and freedom.

The following day was in Fuerstenwalde, near Berlin, to attend the laying of three extra Stolpersteine outside the shop where my family had lived. There already were ones for my grandparents and my mother, who were deported to the Warsaw Ghetto. The ceremony attracted local media and I took the opportunity to recite Kaddish for my family.

Following the ceremony we attended a reception after which the local Mayor, Gabi Moser, and curator of the museum, Guido Strohfeld, took us to the 'old', rebuilt, part of town. We also visited the museum where I was presented with a copy of the registry document of my parents' marriage.



Harry Hurst with the family Stolpersteine

The visit was emotional and unforgettable, but it left me with one nagging question – WHY?

Harry Hurst

GERMANY THEN AND NOW

On 6 December 2017 a Stolperstein was laid into the pavement outside the birthplace of my great uncle Semmy Goldschmidt in Stolzenau by the artist Guenter Demnig.

The good people of Stolzenau have now placed three tablets to remember my ancestors who perished in the Holocaust. The ceremonies are very moving, involving civic dignitaries, local residents and schoolchildren, in a determined effort to rebuild history for future generations and revive the memory of their one time Jewish neighbours who were brutally murdered.

On the very same day, I received a copy of an article written by Barbara Kay in The National Post newspaper in Canada. The article tells a far grimmer story of the treatment of a 13 year old Jewish boy who today lives with his parents in Berlin.

The boy attended a public school that was committed to diversity and anti-racism. Its population is about 80% Muslim, 15% ethnic German with a sprinkling of Kurdish and African children. The Jewish boy had harmonious relations with all his classmates until one day the teacher, in an ethics class, asked the students if they were familiar with any houses of worship. Rapidly the answers came - church, mosque, church, mosque until the one boy uttered "synagogue". The teacher asked him if he was Jewish and he said yes. From that moment on he was treated like a leper by his classmates. He was met with obscenities, beaten daily and his attendance at school became impossible. His parents protested to the school authorities but, other than sympathetic platitudes, nothing was done. The boy has now left this school because the parents were disgusted at the indifference shown by school administrators.

There is a tragic irony in these two events - on the one hand, whilst decent German folk are determined to atone for the past, it



Stolperstein for Semmy Goldschmidt

seems that some members of the immigrant community are returning to the antisemitic acts of the past. It would appear that, when immigrants display atrocious behaviour, the German authorities do nothing because they do not now want to be labelled racists. I fear that this does not bode well for the future of Jews living in Germany

Emeritus Professor Michael Street, Edgware

HONOURS CONGRATULATIONS

The AJR is delighted that our Chairman, Andrew Kaufman received an MBE for services to Holocaust education in the New Year's Honours list.

Andrew, 71, has been at the forefront in the development of the AJR's charitable institutional grant-making such that the AJR is now proud to be the biggest benefactor of Holocaust education and remembrance programmes and projects working with the leading specialists in the UK.

Alongside his backing for awards to partner organisations, Andrew has been a leading advocate of the creation and development of the AJR's ground-breaking Refugee Voices testimony archive, a collection of 225 transcribed interviews with refugees and survivors that have been recorded for study and posterity.

Andrew has also overseen the transformation of the AJR into the organisation it proudly is today, extending and delivering its social welfare and care services, and activities throughout the country, so members in remote and isolated areas can be equally supported.

Above all, Andrew takes a strong personal interest in the lives of the AJR's members, ensuring the organisation is in the best possible shape to help those in need whilst also intervening to speak out on issues that are close to the AJR's work and the interests of the former refugees.

Andrew, who studied law at St John's College, Oxford, has been a solicitor for nearly 50 years, including almost 40 years as a partner, specialising in representing companies from Germany, Austria and Switzerland investing in the UK. He is now a Consultant at Fladgate LLP.

Leading the congratulations are two fellow AJR trustees, Eleanor Angel

and David Rothenberg, who said: "We are thrilled and excited for Andrew who deserves our huge thanks and many congratulations on his richly-deserved nomination in recognition of his years of tireless service and dedication to the culture and welfare of the Refugee community."

Andrew said: "As the son of two refugees who fled Nazi oppression and rebuilt their lives in Britain, I feel hugely honoured and enormously proud to have been nominated and to accept this wonderful award, which I shall deeply treasure, on behalf of everyone at the AJR."

We are also delighted that eleven AJR members were recognised in the New Year's Honours list. The list is below and, whilst it is impossible to do full credit to all of them, we would particularly like to mention the Rev. Bernd Koschland for his tremendous contribution to the AJR's Kindertransport Special Interest Group - including editing the KT Newsletter - and Harry Bibring for his work with the Austrian Emergency Fund committee.

- Rev. Bernd Koschland MBE**
- Mrs. Hannah Lewis MBE**
- Mrs. Joan Salter MBE**
- Dr. Martin Stern MBE**
- Mr. Harry Bibring BEM**
- Mr. Lesley Kleinman BEM**
- Mr. Chaim Olmer BEM**
- Mr. Josef Perl BEM**
- Mr. Harry Spiro BEM**
- Mrs. Janine Webber BEM**
- Mrs. Freda Wineman BEM**

Finally, congratulations are also due to Rudi Leavor (below) who was presented with his BEM in December by the Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire.



Andrew Kaufman MBE

HONORARY DOCTORATE



Dorothy Fleming receiving doctorate

Congratulations to AJR member Dorothy Fleming, who recently received an honorary doctorate from Sheffield Hallam University. This was in recognition of her many years working in Holocaust education.

Letters to the Editor

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

THE EU AND NATIONALISM

Eric Sanders (Letters, December) sees the European Union as an organisation that might protect us from the “narrow nationalism” that, of course, we all deplore. If that is one of its purposes, it is clearly not doing very well, as can be seen from both the recent presidential election in France, in which the Front Nationale took more than 30% of the vote, and the success of the AfD, now the third largest party in Germany’s Bundestag. That is not all: Austria’s far-right party was within spitting distance of winning the presidency in 2016, and right-wing parties espousing “narrow nationalism” have grown in Eastern Europe and Greece.

It could be argued that the way in which the EU operates – just ask the Greeks – and its Utopian federalism have fuelled narrow nationalism, and played a part in Britain’s Brexit vote.

David Kernek, Bath

A LOYAL READER

I have read the AJR paper for more than 70 years, since the ‘forties and always enjoy the paper with all its news etc.

Alice Fink

INTERMENT

In his as usual thoroughly researched leading article in December’s issue of the Journal, Anthony Grenville writes: “The detention of boys of sixteen parted abruptly from their families or arrested at their schools....”

It was not just boys, however, but also girls. The oldest of the three Mittwoch sisters, all of them pupils at the Henrietta Barnett School, was one of those sent to the Isle of Man in 1940. I know this because the youngest, Anita, was in my year at the school. Their father, Eugen, was an Egyptologist of renown. I recall how many a German Jew would spend hours in one of London’s parks for fear of being arrested and sent away. Many of my classmates arrived at school in tears when their fathers were sent away. Churchill was certainly the right man in the right place

at the right time, but not even he was infallible.

Margarete Stern

THANK YOU DR GRENVILLE

This month’s postbag contained several letters in response to Dr Anthony Grenville’s retirement. With inadequate space to reproduce them all in full, here are a few highlights:

My daughter & I have read so much about him in every monthly issue of the AJR Journal, we feel he is almost a friend! We shall miss his excellent articles which were most enjoyable and informative, and his insight & sense of history. I would like to wish him “.... Sag beim Abschied leise SERVUS ...” - an affectionate Viennese way of saying “Adieu”.

Kitty Schafer & Sue Walsh, Toronto, Canada.

Dr Grenville’s inspirational articles were always lively, interesting and informative. He has made a unique contribution to the stature of the AJR Journal and will be very much missed.

Freddy Berdach

I should like to take this opportunity of wishing Dr Grenville a very happy and healthy retirement and thank him for all the excellent articles that he has written over the years. I have found them well researched, thought provoking, interesting and, occasionally, constructively provocative.

D. P. de Haas

WHO KNEW WHAT?

One of the great tragedies of the Holocaust is that, in the first months of 1945, when the higher officials of the Nazi regime knew that the war was lost, energy and manpower were still expended on running trains to the East, when both should have been used to further their war effort instead of persecuting Jews (January 2018).

Rudi Leavor BEM, Bradford

A TRAIN CALLED ANNE FRANK

(December debate of the month)

What made anyone think that a German train should have the honour to be named after Anne Frank?

Anne Frank and I were both born in Frankfurt within weeks of each other. We each had a granny in the city, and came from similar middle class, educated homes. Her family thought early of emigrating. So did mine but the local Bürgermeister of my village in the Odenwald was a strict Nazi who wanted my father’s factory and delayed our emigration papers. My parents never got out, though all their children did: the eldest to the USA after a spell in Buchenwald, the next to South America; my older sister and I to England, with the Kindertransport, although not together; I had to go alone, which terrified me at just 10 when I arrived in Northumberland. She eventually got out but we met only twice during that long war. My younger siblings, Michael and Feodora, were hidden separately in France. My parents, Moritz and Margarete Oppenheimer, were killed at Auschwitz in August 1942. Would I want such a train to be called after me? Or after them? Certainly not. I cannot imagine that anyone in Anne’s extended family would feel a sense of pride.

Ruth David

I am delighted the Bundesbahn has decided to name a train for Anne Frank, but have one proviso: I should like to see them attach sizeable plaques to the train explaining who she was, what she did and what happened to her.

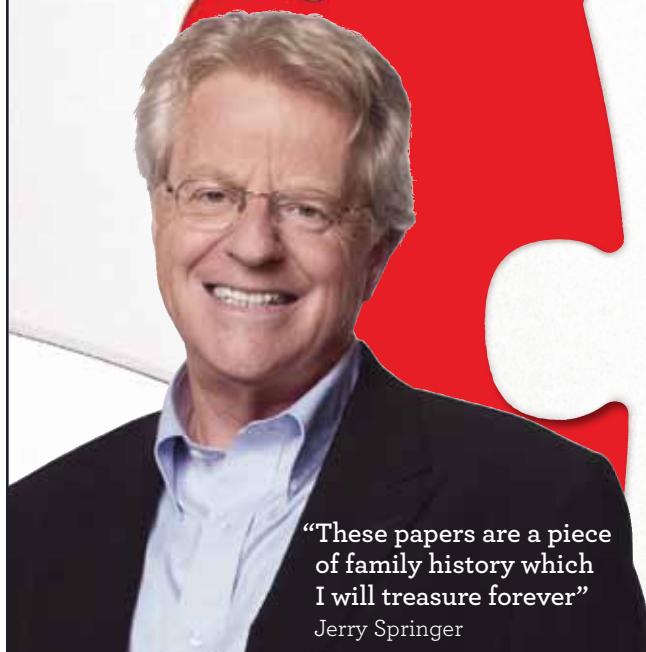
We do want the event, and the Holocaust, to be remembered as widely and as long as possible.

George Donath

SENTENCE FOR OSCAR GROENING

(January debate of the month)

Whilst, I agree, it is possible for the German Court to believe that the 96 year old former SS guard Oskar Groening is fit enough to serve a four year prison sentence, I feel that there were other prison guards who



“These papers are a piece of family history which I will treasure forever”
Jerry Springer

Piece together your family history

In the 1930s and 40s, World Jewish Relief rescued tens of thousands of people from the Nazis. We have the digitised family records of those we helped. Now we want to give them back to you, for free.

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www.worldjewishrelief.org/archives
020 8736 1250

deserve this sentence much more than Groening, due to their crimes in Auschwitz - whereas Groening, as his title implies, was the “bookkeeper of AUSCHWITZ”.
Gordon Spencer

My thoughts are that he was part of the machinery, but a very small cog, and now we are clutching at straws to mete out punishment to anybody who was involved in those horrible places. The big participants are dead or got away a long time ago. Justice will never be able to be meted out to those who perpetrated those terrible deeds and I, as one of the youngest survivors, just value the life that I have lived.
Jackie Young

Oskar was in Auschwitz. I was in Auschwitz. Oskar took what little was left of our possessions. He did not empty a canister of Cyclon B into the hatch of a gas chamber, but he dealt with loot, and to rob Jews as well as to kill them was Nazi policy which Oskar connived with. To worry about his, probably last, 4 years in prison, is the judgment of the court. To me his age is irrelevant, crime does not diminish with the passage of time and neither with the age of the guilty party. He will be well looked

after. Better than I was in that and other places.
Frank Bright

LOSS & SURVIVAL

I was very interested to read about Fiszal Lisner, from Zdunska Wola, and the dreadful fate of his siblings and father who remained there (January). My father was born in Breslau but his father, Max Kroll, originated from Zdunska Wola, and I believe returned there, or was returned there, during the war. He did not survive the war, and we have never been able to find out what happened to him. Reading about the destruction of the town’s inhabitants may possibly explain that.

Thank you for your wonderful work in publishing individual stories like this which are all so amazing and unique.
Anna Ferris

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

Never before in the history of the Jewish people has this quotation by Primo Levi been more appropriate than now. Since Israel was established in 1948, Jerusalem was freed and became its de facto capital after 3000 years. Due to the expected

opposition by many countries, Tel Aviv was initially accepted to be shared with Christians and Muslims as a compromise.

In his inauguration speech Donald Trump announced the American embassy would be moved to Jerusalem, raising universal objections in concert. Considering that the Christian era is some 2000 years old, whilst the Muslim era is just over six centuries old and not mentioned in the Quran, the Jewish case is undoubtedly the strongest. The whole world, bar the United States, objected to this fait accompli, claiming that it contravened the law. But there is no such law, other than the law of war. Having been invaded by its neighbouring countries several times, without any objections raised, Israel fought to defend itself, by capturing strategic territories.

The UK itself has in the past initiated wars against almost 90% of the world and occupied one quarter of the Earth’s surface, killing hundreds of thousands. Yet it condemned Israel for just ensuring its survival, an action enshrined by law.

Every country decides on the location of its capital. The people of Israel declared that: Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.
Fred Stern

ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

There's still time to see the French Impressionists at Tate Britain. Artists such as Monet, Tissot, Pissarro and others, who fled to Britain to escape the Franco-Prussian War tell their stories through The EY Exhibition; Impressionists in London, French Artists in Exile (1870-1904) which describes the impact of London on these artists' work.

And they revealed sharp differences between London and the café society of Paris; London parks, for instance, seemed freer than the formal French gardens these artists were used to. Pissarro's *Kew Green* 1892 is an example, or his stately *Charing Cross Bridge*, where cloud and water blend into the same substance. Monet's *Houses of Parliament* bathed in blue light offers a romantic view of the capital. Alfred Sisley's regatta scenes and James Tissot's vivid *Ball on Shipboard* or *London Visitors* clearly show how British society captured the imagination of the Impressionists at the time.

Mentoring and patronage had a key role in their development. Monet was mentored by Charles-François Daubigny and the influential art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, who first met Monet and Pissarro in London, bought over 5,000

Impressionist works over his lifetime which, in Monet's own words, saved them from starving. In fact it was this traumatic period of French history that forged contacts between the artists of both countries, leading to the Entente Cordiale. *Until May 7, 2018*

How do you feel about salt as alchemy? If you missed the spectacular Dead Sea salt crystal sculptures by Israeli multi-award winning artist **Sigalit Landau** at London's **Marlborough Gallery** in 2016, some of her photographed works over the last 15 years will soon appear in a new book, *Sigalit Landau: Salt Years*.

Sigalit's work is inspired by the environment of the Dead Sea, which she considers equally the most alive and most dead place on earth. She experimented



Sigalit Landau *The Salt Dress*

with the natural process of salt crystallisation, exclusive to the Dead Sea. The book, due for publication within the next two months, will include additional work, such as behind the scenes photos, personal working notes and essays. Her work contains strong Israeli, Yiddish and biblical traditions. What caught the popular imagination was *Salt Bride*, inspired by S. Ansky's 1916 play *Dybbuk*, in which a young Hasidic woman becomes possessed by the spirit of her dead lover. Sigalit took a black wedding dress, a replica of the one worn by Israeli actress Hanna Ravina, who played the bride in a 1920s production, and immersed it in the Dead Sea for two years. It emerged crystalline and mysterious, a symbol of the saline water's supernatural force, bewitching the black fabric into the new appearance of a white wedding gown

She also immersed a guitar and a ballerina dress, a homage to her putative career as a ballet dancer when she was accepted by the Royal Ballet, but chose art instead. *Four Mothers*, alluding to the matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, was part of a larger exhibition devised for Berlin and installed last year at the Beersheva's Negev Museum of Art.



Ball on Shipboard by James Tissot

Annely Juda Fine Art

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**CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

A 'British' actor in Germany, a German actor in Britain



Broadcasting *Letters without Signature* at Bush House, the Overseas Service of the BBC, 1967 (Josef Stein 2nd from right)

Recently a very interesting book entitled "Foreign Parts" by Richard Dove arrived in the AJR office. It concerns German and Austrian actors who were able to continue their careers in Britain before, during and after WW2. We will be publishing a full review of the book in a future edition of this Journal.

Amongst those actors who were less fortunate was Josef Stein who, at the beginning of WW1, was a 23 year-old rising stage actor in Berlin but the outbreak of war put an abrupt hold on his aspirations. Although born in Germany, from 1900 to 1903 he, his parents and his siblings had lived in London. In 1914, now long back in the country of his birth, he and his brother were sent to Ruhleben (a wartime internment camp for British nationals) as the years they had spent in England rendered them 'suspect' to the German authorities.

There was nothing to occupy the internees but Josef Stein used his time well, staging and acting in plays. A photo exists of a very professional-looking production of *Alt Heidelberg* by Wilhelm Mayer-Förster (later turned into the musical *The Student Prince*) in which

he took the main part of Karl-Heinrich: 34 actors are pictured, all men, of whom three played the female parts (in somewhat unbecoming dresses).

After release from internment Stein was able to resume his professional career, playing major classical roles all over Germany (Schiller's *Wallensteins Tod*, *Piccolomini*, *Kabale und Liebe*, *Don Carlos*, Grillparzer's *Weh dem, der lügt*) but, with the advent of Hitler, parts for Jewish actors ceased. For a time he was still permitted to work in German-speaking enclaves in Latvia and Lithuania but within a few months these, too, became forbidden to Jews. In 1938 he and his wife (the soprano Johanna Storbeck) emigrated to London. Here he was not subject to the immigration difficulties encountered by other Jews fleeing Hitler because he had been interned by the Germans in WW1 and was therefore considered to have "suffered in Britain's cause".

However, stage and film work for a 47 year-old actor with a strong German accent was extremely limited and Josef Stein fell on very hard times. He undertook whatever menial jobs he could find (steam-presser at a dry cleaner's, door-to-door salesman) until the outbreak of WW2, when word spread amongst émigré actors that the BBC needed German-speakers for propaganda broadcasts to Germany. Richard Crossman MP (a fluent German-speaker himself) was instrumental in

ensuring that several famous names of the former German stage and screen became broadcasters with the BBC German Service. For Josef Stein this turned into regular work, for which he was paid 10/6d (half a guinea) per broadcast. He was very gratified to learn, post-war, that his voice had been widely recognised by German listeners and that it had been a source of comfort and strength to many.

With the advent of the Cold War, the BBC German Service resumed propaganda broadcasts, this time to communist East Germany, so Stein and his colleagues again had regular employment. *Briefe ohne Unterschrift* (*Letters without Signature*) featured every Friday from 1947 until 1974 and consisted of actors reading out letters, sent by genuine correspondents from East Germany at some considerable danger to themselves. One such letter, from a school student, was intercepted by the Stasi and the young man was removed from school, prohibited from taking his Abitur exam, and given a one-year prison sentence.

Josef Stein belonged to that sizeable group of actors whose promising careers were cut short by the rise of Hitler. Many were unable to flee, and perished in the Holocaust. Of those who managed to reach Britain or the USA many found it impossible to continue working in any meaningful way. After the war, film or stage-work they were offered consisted largely of parts as Nazi officers in British war films and plays. Stein, for instance, played the German commandant in *Stalag 17* in London's West End and had small roles in the films *The Third Man* and *The Life & Times of Colonel Blimp*. It is ironic to see how many German-Jewish actors played Nazi roles in Britain in the 1940s and '50s or how often they were cast as 'zany continental professors'. Former budding careers came to nought, as did so much else on the once-thriving European-Jewish intellectual scene.

Lilian Levy

The powe

If you are reading this article the chances are that you attended one or more of the Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 events last month. One AJR member who attended probably more than most is Manfred Goldberg, whose January diary involved speaking at nine different HMD events around London, including the Mayor of London's Holocaust Memorial Ceremony at City Hall on 22 January and the AJR's own commemoration event at Belsize Square on 24 January.

Manfred Goldberg was nine years old and living in Kassel in central Germany when war broke out. Both his parents were Polish and his father, Baruch, was one of the first to be arrested by the Gestapo. His only option was to leave Germany but Poland refused to re-admit him. He was lucky enough to secure a British visa and the Germans gave him 24 hours to leave the country. He arrived in England in August, 1939. The rest of the family had planned to

follow but with Germany now at war this became impossible.

In December 1941 Manfred, his mother, Rosa, and younger brother, Hermann, were deported to the Riga ghetto, and from there to the Precu labour camp in August 1943. Hermann was too young to work so was allowed to stay in the camp with three other children during the day, while the rest of the inmates laboured at nearby railway lines. That October the labourers returned to camp one day to find all four children had been taken away in a truck by SS officers. Their fate remains a mystery to this day.

Manfred and Rosa spent a year at Precu before being transferred via Stutthof to Stolp, where the busy railway lines required constant repair from persistent Allied bombings. It was at Stolp where the then 14 year old Manfred first met Zigi Shipper, who was to be his lifelong friend. But more of that later.

At the end of 1944 the work unit was sent back to Stutthof, where they stayed until being marched out on 26 April 1945. Of the 5000 prisoners who embarked on that march, fewer than 1700 were still alive after seven days. It was at that point that the marching column encountered a group of tanks coming in the opposite

direction. Manfred recalls seeing a Nazi soldier being held at gunpoint and slowly realising that Germany had been defeated. Trucks of British soldiers soon arrived to hand out food to the starving prisoners (sadly it fatally proved to be too rich for several of them) and to direct them to the newly-vacated German army quarters in the port of Neustadt. Like many of their fellow inmates, Rosa and Manfred were both suffering from typhus. After spending time separately in a nearby hospital, they were sent to convalesce in the countryside at Lensterhof.

Meanwhile Baruch had experienced hardships of a different kind. Shortly after arriving in England in August 1939 he was interned at the Kitchener camp in Kent. Finally given permission to support the British war effort, he joined the Pioneer Corps in 1940 and was rescued from Dunkirk. Discharged on medical grounds, he eventually found work with a Jewish building firm that allowed him to keep Shabbat. He had logged details of his family with the new Jewish refugees' office in London and, having feared the worst, was overjoyed when a 'match' was made approximately three months after liberation. In September 1946 Baruch at last secured permission for Rosa and Manfred to join him in London. As soon as the 'enemy alien' restrictions on him were lifted



Manfred & Shary Goldberg and their four sons



Manfred Goldberg & Zigi Shipper when they first met

r of words

he started up his own modest property business.

Manfred, now aged 16, took a crash course in English at Avigdor School, in Stamford Hill. He was a fast learner and his parents were determined he should continue his education. They scraped together enough money to pay for a private tutorial college in Great Russell Street, where he matriculated in five subjects. Not wanting to burden his parents further financially, he took a number of menial jobs before finding a natural aptitude for the then-evolving electronics industry. He put himself through college, achieving a degree in Electrical Engineering from Northampton Polytechnic, which was affiliated to London University. Seeking independence from what he describes as his "typical Jewish mother", he accepted a job with the Ferranti electronics firm in Manchester. Jobs in London, Harlow and Enfield followed over the next eight years, with Manfred gradually climbing up the career ladder.

Sadly Rosa, whose heart had clearly been weakened by her years in the camps, passed away in 1961, aged just 56. Naturally distraught, Baruch persuaded Manfred to help him with the business, which ultimately resulted in Manfred giving up his career in electronics and taking over the company. Along the way he has enjoyed the unfailing support of his beautiful wife Shary, who was introduced to him by family friends in 1959. The date of their marriage turned out to be just ten weeks after Rosa died. Manfred & Shary have four sons and their second son, Zvi, has now taken over the family business.

Until 15 years ago Manfred found it virtually impossible to speak to anyone about his wartime experiences, but with the rise of Holocaust deniers and antisemitism, he became convinced that it was important for survivors to speak out to ensure that younger generations hear first-hand accounts of what really happened during that dreadful period. Dredging long-buried memories from the recesses of his mind was initially very traumatic for him, but over time he has become inured by the knowledge that he is helping to prevent any possible future recreation of the "living



Manfred & Shary Goldberg with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge at Stutthof last July

hell" that he personally experienced.

During the past 10 years Manfred has spoken at dozens of events in the UK and Israel, often on behalf of the Holocaust Educational Trust. It was the HET who arranged for him and his lifelong friend Zigi to return for the first time to Stutthof last July, as part of the high profile visit made by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Manfred admits that he agonised over the decision to join the Royal visit, having personally vowed never to set foot in Germany again. His change of heart was based on the guaranteed global attention which he felt would be beneficial to the wider Jewish cause. The visit has been covered extensively by the world's media, and in this Journal; suffice it to say that Manfred found it a truly memorable experience for many, many reasons.

In just a few weeks' time Manfred will return to Germany once more, for the laying of four stolpersteine in Kassel for himself, his parents and his brother. This time he will be accompanied by all four of his sons and some of his grandchildren. Although personally he feels ambiguous about the Kassel authorities' reparation gesture, he hopes that these memorials

may help his future descendants to feel connected with their heritage, while even passing strangers may be prompted to think about the background to the stones.

When asked what he most wants the wider audience to learn from his experiences, Manfred is very clear. First he feels it is important that they fully understand the unique horror of the Holocaust, distinct in enormity and in policy from any other genocide. Secondly he wants to convey the terrible dangers of silence in the face of injustice, echoing the sentiments of Martin Niemöller in "*First they came ...*"

Of the many talks and presentations that Manfred has given over the past decade, one stands out in particular. A group of school children failed to ask a single question after his testimonial, making him fear that he had failed to engage them. A few weeks later he received a package of over 30 individual letters from the children, thanking him for telling his story and sharing their own reflections and hopes. Far from stunning them into silence, it seemed that his words had somehow had the power to unlock aspirations for a better and more tolerant society.

Jo Briggs

REVIEWS

EXILE AND GENDER II: POLITICS, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS (YEARBOOK OF THE RESEARCH CENTRE FOR GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN EXILE)

by Charmian Brinson (Author), Jana Barbora Buresova (Author), Andrea Hammel (Author)

Publisher: Brill | Rodopi ISBN-10: 9004343512

i2i Publishing, Manchester 2017 ASIN – B074DW4SYV

The latest issue of this seminal yearbook continues the exploration of the importance of gender, in flight from oppression and survival in a foreign country. This new collection of essays takes in a wide range of women's activities and strategies in exile, looking at politics, education and the arts.

A leitmotif is the pivotal role networks played in alleviating women's handicaps of exile and gender. Felicitas M. Starr-Egger (p. 96-113), for example, examines a group of female refugee academics who struggled to find teaching posts in the UK. Like their male colleagues they came up against high unemployment and xenophobia. Yet the women faced the added disadvantage of competing in the male-dominated British universities. Their academic success relied upon the support of male mentors of high academic calibre. The patchy career of the art historian Alma Wittlin, analysed by Hadwig Kraeutler (p. 184-204), is a case in point.

The women exile photographers John March investigates (p. 128-142) also relied on old networks. As their profession had no language barriers and their skills were easily transferable, they more easily found new outlets for their work. Their collective impact on the visual culture in Great Britain, for example photojournalism, can still be felt today.

The contribution of exiled female gardeners and garden architects must equally not be underestimated (Ulrike

Krippner and Iris Meder, p. 205-217). Left with few opportunities in a male-dominated sector, they successfully ran horticultural schools, nurseries or design practices, thus helping to establish European trends in garden architecture and horticulture in their country of exile.

Domestic service offered a chance to a new life in safety to almost 20,000 female refugees, although the sudden loss of status often made it a difficult experience. Whether or not it suited their interest, experience or training, falling back on their traditional role enabled them to earn a living and, in many cases, support their well-educated, well-known husbands who were reluctant to take on menial jobs.

Irene Messinger (p. 81-95) explores another way of escaping from the Nazi regime: marriages of convenience. Their numbers are certainly underestimated. The need for secrecy, perhaps caused by feelings of shame or fears of blackmail, meant that such arrangements often went unnoticed. Marriages of convenience were usually set up by utilising pre-existing networks. The radical Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampfbund, for instance, arranged for five of its female members to marry into British exile, thus enabling them to continue fighting the Nazi regime. A more well-known example is the writer Erika Mann who, on the mediation of her brother Klaus and his friend Christopher Isherwood, married the homosexual poet W. H. Auden. Since homosexuality was a criminal offence in the UK, the arrangement also benefited her husband.

While over the years the exile experience of many "prominent" figures has been retraced in depth, the life stories of more "ordinary" people is often hard to find or incomplete. Data regarding women in Irish exile, for example, is so sparse that the phenomenon is hardly acknowledged (Gisela Holfter, p. 218-230). The need for yet more research in this area therefore emerges as a second leitmotif of this volume, which makes an invaluable contribution to research, shedding light on many aspects of exile and gender neglected so far.

Ines Schlenker

THE TATTOOIST OF AUSCHWITZ

By Heather Morris

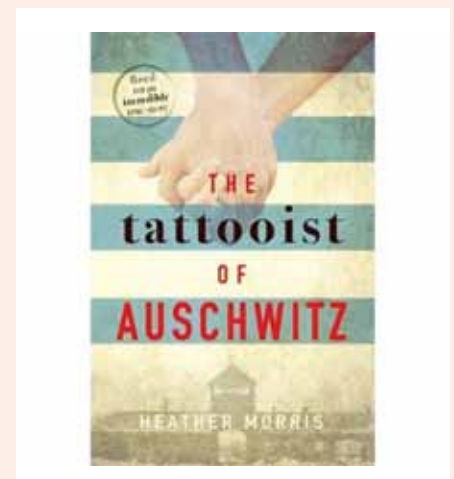
Zaffre, ISBN-10: 1785763644

It may seem strange to start a review about a Holocaust book with the words 'I couldn't put it down', but I challenge anybody to walk away from this true life account of the extraordinary survival of Lale Sokolov.

The book starts with Lale's journey by cattle train from Slovakia to Auschwitz in April 1942, his escape from the grip of typhus and his encounter with the camp tetrovierer, who selected him as his assistant. Despite his massive reservations about defiling and inflicting pain on his fellow inmates, Lale was determined to do whatever he must to survive. Over the next three years he overcame numerous almost unimaginable challenges, spurred on throughout by his devotion to fellow Slovak Gita Furman, with whom he fell instantly in love while tattooing her on her arrival at Birkenau in July 1942.

Lale and Gita communicated and even met surreptitiously whenever they could, although often weeks would go by without even a glance. Meanwhile Lale's privileged position and indomitable chutzpah allowed him to secure food, medicines and other provisions that kept the two of them and many of their friends and acquaintances alive.

In June 1944 Lale was imprisoned and tortured in the Auschwitz penal unit for three weeks. No one was expected to survive or be released from that unit. Amazingly, he was allowed to return to the camp and his position as tattooist, surviving another bitterly cold



winter against all odds. The following January Gita was sent on a death march, along with thousands of other women prisoners. As her friends dropped one by one, she found herself among a small group of Polish non-Jews who invited her to join them in making a run for it. After hiding out for several days they got themselves to Krakow, from where Gita found a lift to Bratislava.

Meanwhile Lale was transferred to Mauthausen. His fluent German language skills, which helped save his life so many times while in Auschwitz, came in equally handy in Austria. An SS guard arranged a further transfer to Saurer Werke in Vienna from where, on 23 April 1945, Lale finally managed to break free. Unfortunately he was found by Russian soldiers who had made themselves at home in a wonderful chalet and coerced him into 'pimping' for them with the local girls. He escaped as soon as he could, walking for hours until finding a train station that was not crawling with Russian soldiers. The one train in the station was heading for Bratislava.

With no idea whether Gita was still alive, let alone where she might be, Lale embarked on what for two weeks' seemed like a fruitless search. Then the two of them literally met in the street. They were married in October 1945 and eventually settled in Melbourne. Gita died in October 2003, Lale three years' later.

Heather Morris is a native New Zealander who was introduced to Lale in 2003, shortly after Gita's death. Their friendship grew and Lale entrusted the innermost details of his life during the Holocaust to her. She originally wrote Lale's story as a screenplay, before reshaping it into her debut novel, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. It is utterly compelling.

Jo Briggs

BURNT HISTORIES

By Carry Gorney

© Ragged Clown Publishing, 2017 (no ISBN available)

Price £ 7.50: available from carrygorney@gmail.com

Can an artist portray the emotions aroused by the memories of the Holocaust, or is this a subject beyond



the scope of artistic expression? Carry Gorney's book "Burnt Histories" evokes a powerful response, with half-seen and ghost-like memories, through the unlikely medium of embroidery and sewing.

She recalls her family's history prior to WW1, when "My granny sat stitching a world of delicate lace, linen and crochet", all the while seething that, because she was a girl, she was not allowed to attend medical school and become a doctor, like her brother.

Some of the exquisite lace and embroidery, as well as old family photographs, found their way to England when the grandmother and her sisters fled Germany in the 1930s. Carry Gorney has printed a number of these photographs onto torn, distressed paper and overlaid them with gelli-prints of the one-hundred year old pieces of lace; then she has added gold, coloured inks and paints.

The illustrations in "Burnt Histories" beautifully portray the faces which she remembers "but can no longer quite see. Ghosts' faces coming out of printing. Colours are faded, the outlines blurred".

Some works make use of found materials such as old newspapers and recycled waste items. A picture entitled "Small Girl" includes partially burnt, pre-war German newspapers encircling a ghost-like, half-seen child aged about three.

The pictures are profoundly evocative and moving. They formed part of the

Ancestry Exhibition at Lauderdale House in Highgate, north London, and it is to be hoped that they will be seen more widely throughout the UK. In the meantime, this book is an excellent introduction to the work of this original artist.

Kathy Cohen

PATHFINDER OF GREAT MUSICIANS

By Edith Stargardt-Wolff

translated from German by Dr Edmund Sallis

Page Publishing Inc. New York 2017

ISBN 978-1-63568-935-8

This is an entertaining personal account of the Berlin Konzert direktor Hermann Wolff (1880 to 1935) written by his daughter, from memories and diaries of her parents. It recounts the founding of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1884 and describes the musical life of that period. There are interesting stories about the composers Brahms, Liszt, Strauss and Mahler, the conductors of that era such as von Bülow, Nikisch, Furtwängler and also soloists Paderewski, Rubinstein, Menuhin and many others .

Michael Levin

Have you read any books recently which you think are worthy of a review in these pages? If so please email our editorial team on editorial@ajr.org.uk

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Around the AJR

Most of these reports are summaries of much longer reviews which, due to lack of space, we are unable to include in their entirety. If you would like further information on the actual event please contact either the author or the AJR regional co-ordinator.

BRIGHTON & HOVE: EUROPEAN TRAVELS

Godfrey Gould, a big fan of cruising, described his travels to many European countries in 2017. We also had to say goodbye to 'Sarid' Esther, whom we will truly miss.
Ceska Abrahams

ESSEX: SAVOY PLAYERS

Nick Dobson and singers from the Savoy Players entertained us with songs from Gilbert & Sullivan and other period pieces: given in memory of Gertie Finkeltaub who sadly passed away in 2016.
Meta Roseneil

GLASGOW: CHANCE TO DANCE

43 people came for our Chanukah lunch. There was a wonderful atmosphere, superb food, great entertainment - and some people even took to the dance floor.
Agnes Isaacs

NEWCASTLE: ANNUAL LUNCH

32 members enjoyed the annual Chanukah Lunch catered by Brenda Dinsdale, an Honorary Life President of Newcastle Reform Synagogue. After the candle-lighting, entertainment was provided by David Biermann. A great time was had by all.
Sylvia Rowlands

NORFOLK: POWER TO INVOKE?

We discussed the Holocaust memorial to be installed in the Victoria Tower Gardens and wondered whether, in years to come, it will have the power to invoke in youngsters the full extent of the horrors of the 20th century.
Frank Bright

Pinner @ 20



Pinner AJR celebrated its 20th birthday in December with a special Chanukah party. It started with Pinner Synagogue's Rabbi Bergson joining us, with his guitar, to light the candles and to sing a couple of songs. Then Michael Newman spoke about the AJR and the work done by the recently retired Esther Rinkoff. Next came our excellent entertainer, Bronwen Stephens, who sang a medley from some of the great musical shows. Our band of regular volunteers, led by Vera Gellman, had the day off as the food was brought in by a caterer and served by a trio of waitresses. All in all, the group and its guests had a splendid afternoon.
Robert Gellman

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FEBRUARY GROUP EVENTS

All AJR members are welcome at any of these events; you do not have to be affiliated to that particular group. 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.

Pinner	1 February	Rabbi Leah Muehstein. "My father was a wandering Aramean"
Ealing	6 February	Joint event with Northwood & Pinner Liberal Shul for Holocaust Memorial Day
Bradford	6 February	Social get-together
Ilford	7 February	David Barnett – "The Balfour Declaration"
Cambridge	8 February	Colin Davey – "Deconstructing the Holocaust"
Glasgow Book Club	8 February	Social and discussion
Glasgow	11 February	An afternoon with Nigel Goodrich
Essex/Westcliff	13 February	Charlotte and Tony Balazs – "The Dorice in Finchley Rd"
Brighton	19 February	Harif film – "Forgotten Refugees of Africa and the Middle East"
Cheshire	19 February	Social get-together
Edgware	20 February	Philippa Bernard: "The History of Religion in London"
Radlett	21 February	Desert Island Discs
Muswell Hill	22 February	Les Spitz: "Around the World with my Camera"
North London	22 February	David Barnett – "The Balfour Declaration"
North West London	27 February	David Barnett – "Life of Prof. Edith Morley, OBE, champion of Jewish refugees"
Book Club	28 February	Social get-together

AT YOUR SERVICE: Self-Aid

A very important part of the AJR's Social Services' work is helping AJR members who need financial assistance and are unable to get it from the Claims Conference.

Self-Aid was originally a separate charity established to support those members with limited means who are in need. Today, the fund is used to provide a monthly allowance to supplement ongoing living costs for those on low incomes and with limited assets. It also makes one-off emergency payments such as the cost of a replacement boiler or fridge-freezer, central heating annual services, spectacles, hearing aids and clothing etc.

Sue Kurlander, AJR's Head of Social Services, outlines the process: "Our social workers alert us if one of their clients appears to be suffering financially. With the client's agreement, we then conduct a comprehensive assessment of their personal and financial circumstances to see where help is most needed. If we decide a grant of some sort is merited, we put a recommendation forward. If the amount is less than £1,000 we can normally approve it very quickly, while larger amounts require review and

consideration by the AJR Self-Aid committee comprised of AJR Trustees."

The AJR has thorough procedures in place to ensure any monies granted are properly spent. Pro-forma invoices and/or receipts are required for all purchases, and quotations from reputable companies need to be presented for any planned work, such as household maintenance. Christine Jones, a dedicated administrator in the AJR's Social Services team, manages the applications. With hundreds of separate grant applications going through the system each year, it is absolutely essential to ensure that all the correct paperwork is in place.

The Social Services team regularly liaises with other Jewish social welfare agencies, including those who manage the Claims Conference money. This ensures that all additional options and possibilities to support people are considered alongside drawing on the AJR's reserves.

"Before we can consider funding request for items such as Zimmer frames, stair lifts or perching stools, we need to know that the client has already contacted their GP and that the local authority have conducted an occupational therapy assessment," explains Sue. "The client usually is an existing AJR member, probably already known by our social workers but we also welcome requests



Sue Kurlander

from potential members."

Applications for funds from first and second generation AJR members arrive throughout the year. Clients receiving Self-aid monthly allowance usually receive an additional heating allowance in winter and extra money to ensure they can enjoy the main Jewish festivals throughout the year .

Client confidentiality is of the utmost importance and the AJR will never share details of its clients or any monies granted without the client's express permission.

"Many AJR members have retired and are only receiving a very small pension. Others are unable to work because of ill health, or are living on a very small income," says Sue. "Most of our members have experienced severe hardship in the past, so it's a pleasure to be able to make their lives a little easier."

STORIES FROM WILLESDEN LANE N.W.6

The Pianist of Willesden Lane was performed in London in February 2016 to great acclaim.

Now the AJR is proud to support **Stories from Willesden Lane**, an exciting new project delivered by the Holocaust Educational Trust in partnership with Hold on to your Music. In 2018, which marks the 80th anniversary of the arrival of the first Kindertransport, the project will work with students across London, giving them the opportunity to learn about the Kindertransports through the story of one girl, Lisa Jura.

Teachers will guide their students through Lisa's story, using bespoke educational resources to ensure that students learn about the rich Jewish culture that existed before the war, understand what the Kindertransport was and consider British responses to Nazi oppression. All students taking part in the project will receive a free copy of *The Children from Willesden Lane*, a book based on Lisa's story.

Through AJR's support, thousands of young people will also hear the first-hand testimony of a Kindertransport refugee, and all participating students will receive

a free ticket to the live performance of *The Children from Willesden Lane*, performed by Lisa's daughter, Mona Golabek.

As we mark the 80th anniversary of the first Kindertransport, we are delighted to be supporting this project for London schools. It will culminate in participating schools and students coordinating their own commemorative displays which mark this significant anniversary.

We hope that Lisa's refusal to give up on her dream of becoming a concert pianist will inspire young people across London.

LETTER FROM ISRAEL BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



RECOLLECTING THE UNKNOWN PAST



Viewing the joint German-French film 'Frantz,' gave me the eerie feeling of going back in time and meeting the

grandparents I never knew.

The film is set in Europe in 1919, first in a provincial German town and then in France. In the aftermath of the Great War, people try to move on and continue with their lives. But there is hardly anyone in Europe that has not been affected by the war. We encounter a young woman putting flowers on the grave of her dead fiancé, Frantz, and then returning to Frantz's parents' house, where she now lives.

The film makes it abundantly clear that

the seeds of nationalism and patriotic fervour are still dormant in Germany as well as in France and the shadow of what we know is to come hangs heavily over the events in the film. But it was the interior of the bourgeois German home, and the sympathetic older characters that made me realise suddenly that I was looking at my own history. I know that in both my father's and my mother's families, albeit in different parts of Germany, life was comfortable and things seemed set to remain so for the years ahead.

The home we see in the film is replete with Biedermeyer furniture, the meal is served on good china and eaten with fine silver cutlery. The mother sits in the evening and does her embroidery, while the father is engrossed in his books. They address one another in a restrained and civilised tone, and although devastated by the death of their son, do their best to put on a brave face.

A cousin recently sent me a photo of our grandfather in the uniform of the German army, having participated in that war as a correspondent or recorder. Silesia, the part

of Germany where he and his family lived then, now belongs to Poland. All the German inhabitants of the region were expelled after WW2, all the towns and villages were renamed in Polish and not a word of German is to be heard there any more. I dread to think what would happen if something similar were to happen vis-à-vis the Palestinians in Israel.

My other grandfather, who was from Hamburg, also served in the German army in WW1. So the history of my family is inextricably bound up with that of Germany, and the film gave me an opportunity to catch a glimpse - albeit vicariously - of their lives.

For those who lived there in the period after WW1, before Hitler and the Nazis brought death and destruction to countless millions, none of what was to come could have been imagined. Sitting in the audience, I could feel only anguish at what lay ahead and gratitude to the film-makers for letting me see what may well have been the life that my forebears once led.

MAZEL TOV LANGS

Congratulations to AJR members Charlotte and David Lang who celebrated a unique joint simcha in December, at Barnet Shul. David, having turned 83 in November, celebrated his second Bar Mitzvah, and Charlotte, never having done so previously, celebrated her Bat Mitzvah.



AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB



Please join us at our Card and Games Club

Monday 12th February 2018 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

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accompanying the trip

Space is limited so book early

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



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.

SCHWARZ – LINZER OFFSPRING

Laura Bracci is an Italian teacher and Holocaust researcher working with a team which is seeking the three children of Karl Schwarz and Margarethe Linzer. The couple reached Milan in July, 1939 but without their underage children; it is possible that these were sent to England by *Kindertransport*.
prof.laurabracci@gmail.com.

NORTHERN IRELAND APPLICANTS

Noel Russell is a writer researching Jewish applicants to Northern Ireland from 1938 onwards, particularly from Vienna. He would like to contact relatives both of those who were admitted and those who were refused under a Northern Ireland government

scheme called the New Industries (Development) Act, 1937.
noel.russell05@gmail.com

KT COMING TO HORNCHURCH

To mark the 80th anniversary of the *Kindertransport*, the Queen's Theatre Hornchurch is reaching out to people in Essex and East London who experienced the *Kindertransport* or know of someone who had a connection with the rescue mission. Their stories might be incorporated into a special production of Diane Samuels' extraordinary and haunting play, *Kindertransport*, written 25 years ago, which runs in Hornchurch from 8 – 24 March, plays at Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg from 27 – 31 March and then embarks on a UK tour to Ipswich, Richmond and Manchester.

To share your story call Rachel on 01708 462376 or email
rachel@queens-theatre.co.uk

To book tickets visit
www.queens-theatre.co.uk

LESSONS OF THE PAST

Lessons of the Past is seeking Holocaust survivors and camp liberators who would kindly be interested in sharing

their stories. The interviews would be filmed for educational purposes. Lessons of the Past is dedicated to Holocaust remembrance and education. More information can be found at Facebook.
[com/LessonsPast](https://www.facebook.com/LessonsPast)
Lessonsofthepast@gmail.com

SCHULEIN FAMILY

Jean-Claude Heurtier is looking for information about his great grandmother Amalie Hainemann née Schulein, who was born in 1948 in Thalmassing in Germany and married Louis Hainemann. The Schulein family were known for the beer Löwenbräu.
jeanclaude.heurtier@sfr.fr

GODALMING LOOK FAMILIAR?

Jeremy Antrich would like to know if anyone recognises any of these children who appeared in Godalming County Grammar School's production of *Julius Caesar*. Jeremy – who taught later at the school – believes that some of the young actors were evacuees, refugees, or *kindertransport* children, maybe housed at Stoatley Rough (Haslemere) – or further away at the Bachad Hostel (Rowledge, near Farnham) or even Weir Courtney (Lingfield).
antrj1@talktalk.net



Godalming County Grammar School's production of *Julius Caesar* in the 1930s or 1940s

OBITUARIES

Geraldine Frank

Born Vienna 15 November 1923, Died London 30 November 2017.

Geraldine came to the UK aged 14 in 1938, with her uncle and aunt. She already spoke good English but never lost her Austrian accent. She was sent to a boarding school in north London, with fees paid by the refugee council to study housework.

After school she got a job as a housemaid in a large country house with a refugee friend. She left there to study nursing in Leeds, where her refugee maternal grandmother lived.

Her parents emigrated to Israel just before WWII, and wanted their only child to join them after the war. By that time Geraldine had made her life here, running

a ward at Hammersmith Hospital during the Blitz.

After she left nursing she worked as a medical secretary while taking singing lessons. She became a very successful 'accent coach' for the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music, Glyndebourne, Covent Garden Opera House, the BBC Singers and many choirs and soloists. She taught until the age of 89, obtaining a 1st class degree in Social Science in 1978 and appointed Honorary Associate of the Royal College of Music in 2000.

Geraldine was very modest about her achievements and friendships with, among others, Sir Simon Rattle, Dame Janet Baker and David Hockney; she also taught several famous singers including Placido Domingo. Her command of language and political experience were legendary.



Geraldine never married or had children but loved babies and young people. She was a lifelong socialist, always interested in others and very good company.

In 2016 Geraldine was interviewed by her successor at the Royal College of Music, Norbert Meyn, for a series on people who made a significant contribution to musical life in the UK (available on YouTube).

Geraldine's achievements were remarkable considering that she came here as a very young refugee, with minimal family support. She will be greatly missed by many and fondly remembered by all the singers she coached.

Nina Vieira

Professor Heinz Wolff

Born 29 April 1928 Berlin, Died 15 December 2017

The following obituary is taken from a profile of Heinz, written for the AJR Journal by Marion Koebner, in August 2001.

Heinz Wolff arrived in Britain when he was 10. Born in Berlin, the only child of a "typically middleclass and highly assimilated family", he led a comfortable life in the family home on the Kurfürstendamm. From the age of four, he 'did' chemistry with his father on Sunday afternoons, thanks to a schoolboy laboratory built up by his father, who had once yearned to be a chemist. Had it not been for the mother's illness and death in October 1938, the entire family would have emigrated earlier but, as it was, they arrived in Gravesend, just as the first air raid sirens were sounding. The family settled in northwest London where Heinz's aunt helped to bring him up until he was 15.

After leaving school, Heinz got a job at the Radcliffe Infirmary where he invented a machine to count blood cells. He worked there for three years "absorbing electronics and engineering osmotically" and never took up the university place he had been offered at St. Catherine's College, Oxford. Despite lacking formal qualifications he got a job with the Medical Research Council (MRC) and moved to Penarth, near Cardiff, where he met his future wife, Joan. When the MRC suggested it was time he got a degree, he read physiology and physics at University College, London, working for the MRC during the long vacations and graduating with a first.

Interested in working in the human physiology field, he coined a new description for himself as a 'bio-engineer', i.e. someone who straddles the biological and engineering sciences. In 1983 he left the MRC and founded the Institute for Bioengineering at Brunel University; on his retirement he became



Emeritus Professor of Bioengineering.

Prof. Wolff became familiar to many from television series such as the Great Egg Race and Great Experiments Which Changed the World. A pet project of his involved a kit that could be installed in the home of any elderly person to detect hazards; as his conviction was that in the 21st century the community would have to take greater responsibility for looking after its elderly. He believed that innovation should focus on the way in which society organises itself.

His wife predeceased him in 2014; he is survived by his sons Anthony and Laurence.



AJR FILM CLUB

Our next film showing will be at Sha'arei Tsedek North London Reform Synagogue, 120 Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone N20 9EZ on **Monday 12th March 2018 at 12.30pm**

Lunch of smoked salmon bagels, Danish pastries and tea or coffee will be served first.

HIDDEN FIGURES



Three female African-American mathematicians (Taraji P. Henson, Octavia L. Spencer, and Janelle Monae) provide crucial calculations for NASA's space race against the Soviets, all while dealing with the racist and sexist assumptions of their white co-workers. Kevin Costner, Kirsten Dunst, and Jim Parsons co-star in this adaptation of the book of the same name by Margot Lee Shetterly. Directed by Theodore Melfi.

£8.00 per person

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

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LUNCH

Wednesday 7th March 2018
At New North London Synagogue
12.30pm

We are delighted that we will be joined by **Mona Golabek** who wrote the play



The Pianist of Willesden Lane

The Pianist of Willesden Lane, telling the story of Mona's mother Lisa Jura's survival and the strength her music brought her throughout her traumatic youth.

Mona is currently working with The Holocaust Education Trust on a project with school children. In this regard we will be joined by pupils from Akiva School.

Call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

All places must be booked beforehand due to security.

£7.00 per person

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NEW BUNCE PLAQUE



Later this Spring the AJR will be installing a plaque for Anna Essinger on the outside of the front of Bunce Court, the school that she famously founded in Kent.

If you are a former pupil of, or are connected in some way to, Bunce Court and would like to be invited to the unveiling ceremony please contact rosemary@ajr.org.uk or call 020 8385 3088.

FRENCH LIBRARY TOURS

The Wiener Library has introduced French language tours for the growing number of French Jews who come to London. The tours will take place on Thursdays and anyone interested should contact Chloe Turner on cturner@wienerlibrary.co.uk

FROM BACH TO LEHRER

A concert is being held at 3pm on Sunday 25 February at Finchley Progressive Synagogue to honour the life of David Jacobi and launch a new scholarship fund to assist talented musicians from disadvantaged backgrounds. David – the son of long-standing AJR member Rabbi Harry Jacobi – was a research scientist with a huge passion for music. He passed away in December 2016. More information from 07957 182 998 or davidmemorialfund@gmail.com.

AJR on film



A still from the film, of Eva Behar being visited by volunteer Suzie Miller. The film also features AJR social worker Maxine Weber visiting members Judy Benton and Alf Kieles.

The AJR has just produced its first ever promotional film.

The three-minute film features AJR social workers visiting some of our members. Against a background of evocative piano music, members and social workers alike describe how they value the relationship. One elderly gentleman still living at home says that

“... I couldn't be here without the AJR.”

The film made its debut at the recent Jewish Film Festival ahead of the screening of a documentary film about Wilfred Israel that we sponsored. You can see it at www.goo.gl/5zMFxG – feel free to leave comments and share with your friends and family, and on social media.

TASTES OF THE PAST

On Tuesday 27 February Charlotte and Tony Balazs will talk to the Second Generation Network about their family's connections with the restaurants, The Cosmo and The Dorice, what it meant to them as members of the Second Generation to grow up with part of their family's pasts re-created here in London and the importance of food in our cultural heritage. There will also be a chance to sample some of the types of delicious cake that were served there, to share your own memories of these restaurants and foods from another world. Please also feel free to bring along your own favourite family recipes.

The event, which is being held at the Wiener Library at 6.15pm, is open to First, Second and Third Generations. Places are free – to register please email naomigoodman@secondgeneration.org.uk

NEED COMPUTER HELP?

Have you received a computer or iPad/tablet recently? Or do you sometimes have difficulty using your mobile phone?

AJR offers a bespoke programme where a technically savvy volunteer can visit you on a weekly or fortnightly basis and help you enjoy your technology more! If you would like to find out more, please call Claude, our Computer Help Programme Coordinator on 020 8385 3096 or 07966 969244.

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

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Printed by FBprinters, Unit 5, St Albans House, St Albans Lane, London NW11 7QB Tel: 020 8458 3220 Email: info@fbprinters.com