

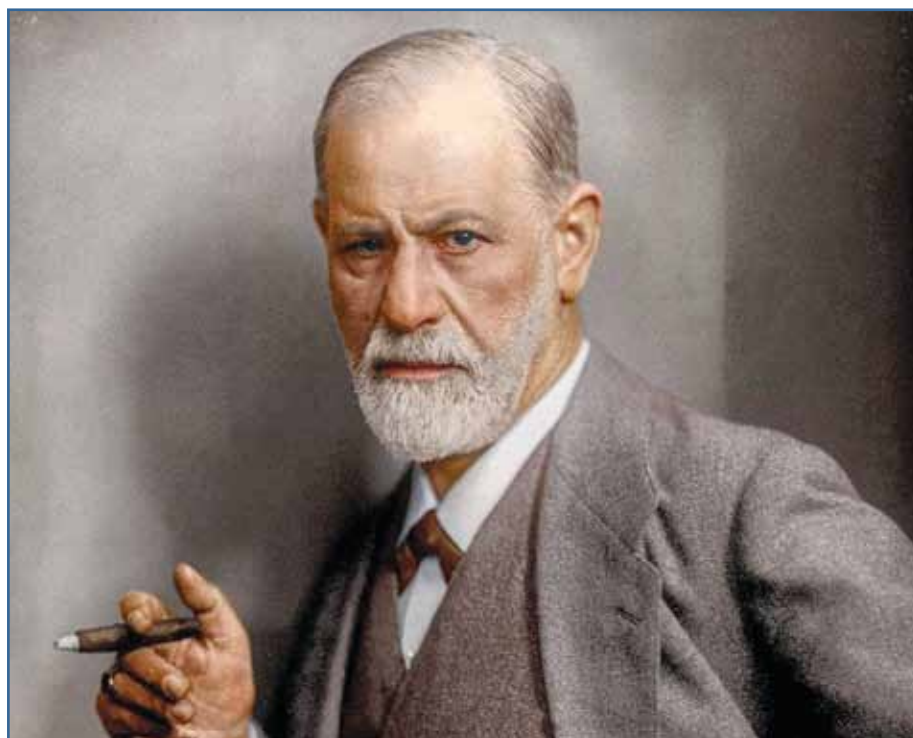


# AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## Freud in Exile

On 6 June 1938, exactly eighty years ago, Sigmund Freud, with his wife, Martha, and daughter, Anna, arrived in London. He was the most famous refugee from post-Anschluss Vienna and was lucky to get out. His escape was the result of intense diplomatic activity. The American Consul in Vienna, the US State Department and the American Ambassador in Berlin were all involved. While waiting for the crucial visas that would enable him to leave Vienna, Freud wrote to his son Ernst in London, expressing his wish “to die in freedom.” His wish was granted, though three sisters were later to die in the camps.



Sigmund Freud

Freud was not the first leading psychoanalyst to seek refuge in London but his arrival was a hugely symbolic moment. It symbolised the flight of psychoanalysis, driven from Nazi-dominated central Europe. It also confirmed that Britain and America were places of freedom and relative sanctuary for two generations of European Jews.

Freud’s flight stood for two other significant moments in 20<sup>th</sup> century culture. First, he was one of the great Jewish refugee thinkers driven from German-speaking Europe in the 1930s. Psychoanalysis, which had emerged first in Vienna in the 1890s and 1900s and then in Budapest and Berlin, was *Continued on page 2*

### REACHING HEARTS & MINDS

Summer is truly here and the Royal Wedding has not been the only thing to touch our hearts. Lots of meaningful events and activities are covered in this issue, including a very evocative report about the recent March of the Living, written by one of the AJR’s own staff.

Meanwhile the AJR’s letters bag has been full to bursting. Many people directly responded to other letters and articles that appeared in recent issues of our Journal. We welcome all feedback and have tried to reflect our members’ wide-ranging opinions within these pages.

Please join us in sending a hearty mazeltov to the new Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

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## Freud in Exile (cont.)

one of the great cultural revolutions of the time, a crucial part of Modernism, which influenced poets, writers and filmmakers as much as psychologists and philosophers. "They were young and easily freudened," wrote James Joyce, whose daughter was diagnosed as schizophrenic by Carl Jung. Virginia Woolf's publishing house, The Hogarth Press, published Freud's works in English. We cannot read *Hamlet*, look at a painting by Dali or watch a film by Hitchcock without thinking of Freud and psychoanalysis. When Freud was forced to leave Vienna soon after the Anschluss it said something about the clash between Fascism and modern, liberal culture.

Secondly, Freud's arrival in London symbolised a larger shift within psychoanalysis itself, from German-speaking Vienna to the English-speaking world. Freud knew this was happening. In March 1939 he wrote to his colleague (and later biographer) Ernest Jones, "The events of the past years have brought it about that London has become the main site and centre of the psychoanalytic movement." By then he had already made his home in Maresfield Gardens in Hampstead, where he was visited by Dali, HG Wells, Stefan Zweig and the young Isaiah Berlin among others. He was even interviewed by the BBC. Psychoanalysis now had to make its home in London and in America. The irony is that the great psychoanalytic exodus did not destroy psychoanalysis. It accelerated its worldwide dissemination, to Britain and America, but also South Africa and Buenos Aires (which now has more psychoanalysts per capita than any other city in the world).

It wasn't just Freud who came to England. The translation of 24 volumes of Freud's works into English (the so-called *Standard Edition*) was also hugely important. It didn't just confirm that English was the new language of psychoanalysis. It changed the meaning of many of its key concepts. Its language was more Greek and Latin (id, ego, superego, cathexis) than German (Ich, Es, Uber-Ich), and more medical and scientific than Freud's original. This translation had already started in the 1920s, before Freud arrived, but publication didn't begin until the 1950s. The crucial point, however,

was that the language of psychoanalysis after the war was English not German just as Freud's home was in London not Vienna.

We shouldn't just speak of Britain's gain, however. The psychoanalytic exodus was part of a huge loss for German-speaking Europe. In 1933 about 2,000 psychiatrists were living in Germany alone. By the beginning of the Second World War, about 600, one-third, had emigrated, including the vast majority of psychoanalysts. Very few analysts remained in Austria or Germany. Most were Jewish, many on the Left (though Freud himself was a lifelong liberal). There was only one non-Jew in the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society in 1938 and he left later.

In other words, a whole generation of leading psychoanalytic thinkers, in addition to Freud, left Austria and Germany. A roll call of the psychoanalytic refugees who came to Britain and America would include the founders of ego psychology (Anna Freud, Heinz Hartmann, Rudolph Loewenstein, Ernst Kris); two important theorists of narcissism (Heinz Kohut who went to Chicago and Otto Kernberg who went to New York); Melanie Klein and Anna Freud revolutionised child analysis in London; leading Kleinians including Herbert Rosenfeld and Hanna Segal also came to London, changing the centre of gravity away from Freud's early ideas; Fritz Perls developed Gestalt therapy in South Africa; Erik Erikson left Frankfurt, Margaret Mahler left Berlin and Erich Fromm left Heidelberg.

These analysts didn't just contribute their own ideas. They trained new generations of leading analysts on both sides of the Atlantic and introduced psychoanalysis into the larger culture. Think of Portnoy's analyst in Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*. He speaks in a thick German accent. Bruno Bettelheim had a cameo appearance in Woody Allen's *Zelig*. In recent years, with characters like Frasier and the analyst in *The Sopranos*, psychoanalysts speak with an American accent.

After the war there was a rich synthesis between young British and American analysts and German-speaking refugees, between Jews and gentiles, those trained in Vienna and Berlin and medical doctors

and psychiatrists trained in hospitals in Britain, such as DW Winnicott, Charles Rycroft and John Bowlby, who all originally studied medicine and went on to develop hugely original ideas about attachment theory and mothering. Refugee analysts brought their ideas but it wasn't just one way. The new culture of psychoanalysis in Britain had a central European accent, but it was also very British, as much Darwin as Freud, much less about sexual and death drives and more about mothering and infants.

The gain to the English-speaking world was incalculable. The loss to central Europe was devastating. Almost none of the psychoanalytic refugees returned to their homeland. The Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society was refounded in 1946 but only with four full members.

It wasn't just a loss to psychoanalysis in central Europe. Analysts like Bruno Bettelheim (*The Empty Fortress, The Uses of Enchantment*), Wilhelm Reich (*The Sexual Revolution*) and Erich Fromm (*Fear of Freedom, The Sane Society*) had a considerable influence on thinking in America in a number of areas, from understanding fairy stories and thinking about concentration camp victims to larger questions about society, sexuality and human destructiveness. Psychoanalytic ideas fed into some of the thinking of the Frankfurt School, influenced Sartre and de Beauvoir; and Jacques Lacan, a French psychoanalyst trained by Rudolph Loewenstein in Paris in the 1930s before Loewenstein fled to New York in 1942, became one of the key figures of French post-structuralism in the 1960s and '70s.

When Freud came to Britain eighty years ago he brought the excitement of central European ideas and an important new way of thinking about the mind and what makes us who we are. At 82, already desperately ill with cancer, he was not going to add significantly to his legacy. However, through a generation of refugee analysts his ideas changed the way we think. But psychoanalysis was also changed. Britain and psychoanalysis were both enriched. It was a classic story of the impact of European Jews on British life and culture. The great loser from this exodus, however, was German-speaking central Europe.

**David Herman**

## A GREAT FRIEND



Yiwei Wang is a second-year BSc Psychology student at UCL. In February 2017 she became a volunteer befriender for the AJR, regularly visiting Helga Littman in Wembley. This extract is taken from an interview she recently gave to her students' union:

*"I'm really interested in German history and WW2 – especially the Holocaust and what happened to Jewish people. My client is in her 80s and we talk about many different things, like she remembers things in Germany, or about living in London. She once let her house to some Japanese people, so she actually knows a lot about Asian culture, and asks me about differences between Japanese and Chinese culture. At UCL you mainly deal with younger people but she has a lot more to talk about because of the experiences she's had in life. So I can really talk to her about everything."*

## Data protection

As you might have heard on the news, on 25 May the UK introduced a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) law to help protect privacy.

Like many organisations, the AJR has conducted an extensive data protection programme and revised some of our processes to ensure that all our members' data is safe and used appropriately. Our Head of HR Karen Markham is the official Data Privacy Officer for AJR and can answer any questions about how we look after your information.

# Buchenwald Reflections

AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman recently addressed guests at the annual memorial for Jewish prisoners at Buchenwald, which this year marked the 73rd anniversary of the camp's liberation. These are his reflections.



Michael Newman speaking at Buchenwald

As if the degradation and inhumanity of being forced to labour in a quarry for 12 hours a day with meagre rations, having already endured a two-hour roll call, were not enough, at the return from being used as a slave, prisoners at Buchenwald had to tend to a flower and vegetable garden sited alongside each of the barracks. This additional work was supposedly in the prisoners' 'free time' but punishments were meted out where the greenery looked unkempt.

The Kommandant at Buchenwald, Karl-Otto Koch, was so determined to make his camp distinctive that, rather than use the same sign above the entrance gate as at other places of persecution, *Arbeit Macht Frei* (Work makes you free), he commissioned a group to come up with an alternative. The result: *Jedem Das Seine* – "to each his own" or "to each what he deserves" – spoke to the deep psychological damage the Nazis sought to cause alongside the physical brutality.

It was these conditions that my great grandfather, Meyer Geppert, endured for 18 months from October 1939. His death, aged 55, in April 1941, is recorded as heart failure and lung tuberculosis but this could have been a euphemism. Prisoners reporting to the infirmary were often given lethal injections or simply shot. Prior to persecution he had been a textile merchant.

As well as surviving for 18 months as a slave labourer, he also came through the tuberculosis epidemic that was rife at the time of his arrival in the barrack where he was initially housed.

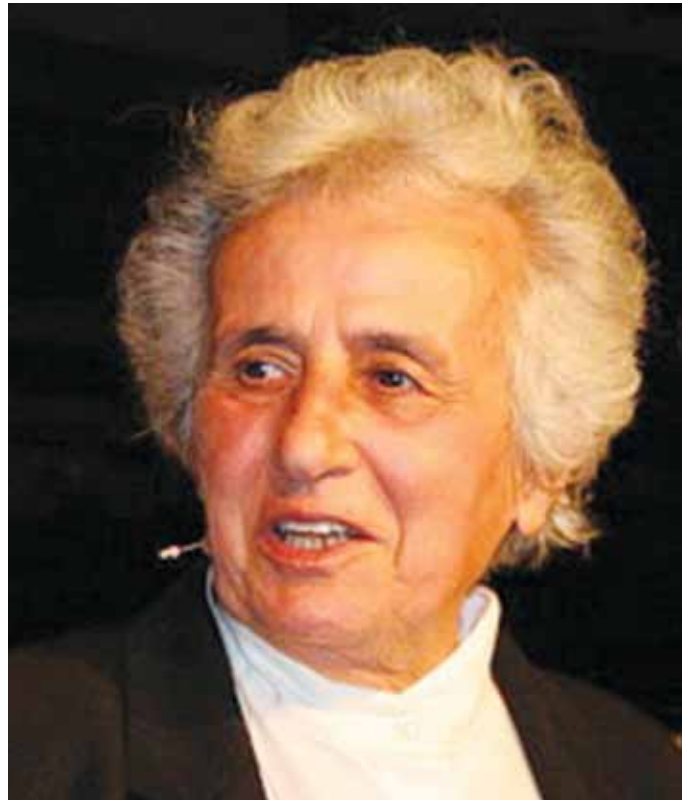
The functioning of a well-run operation was uppermost in Nazi priorities. Following his death, his possessions, together with the modest balance of Reichsmarks from his prisoner money, were returned, with great efficiency in the middle of the war, to my great grandmother in Cologne. And it is in Cologne, on the pavement outside where they lived, that our family has arranged for Stolpersteine. Pedestrians encounter these memorials throughout the city; we saw plaques for a three year old boy deported to Auschwitz and a 90 year old lady taken to Theresienstadt.

To be invited to speak about him at Buchenwald, to say his name there and walk around the perimeter of the very barrack where he 'lived'; to be able to say Kaddish outside the Jewish block and take the walk from his barrack to the infirmary to replicate his final journey, were a great comfort to me, my father and my sister, with whom I shared this journey – and one which we are already passing on to the next generation.

Michael Newman

# Cellist hits the right note in the Reichstag

Anita Lasker Wallfisch, a cellist in the Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz and a survivor of Bergen-Belsen, addressed the German parliament on the 73rd anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. She felt it particularly apposite to have been invited to do so this year as the right-wing AfD party was present for the first time, and she took the opportunity to make a strong plea for tolerance and inclusivity.



In the presence of Wolfgang Schäuble (Bundestag President), Chancellor Angela Merkel, parliamentarians and dignitaries, she congratulated Germany on its exemplary response to the modern refugee crisis. After the depths of degradation reached during the National Socialist era, Anita said the German nation had undergone a decades-long process of self re-education and rehabilitation. Her speech to the Bundestag, which received a standing ovation, can be seen on the internet in its original German or in an English translation.

There were three Lasker girls of whom Anita (born 1925) was the youngest. They were a cultured Jewish family from Breslau and musical instruction began at an early age; Anita loved her cello lessons with Leo Rostal and was already an extremely competent player by the age of 14, when war broke out. Only Marianne, the oldest sister, was able to flee Germany. The parents were deported and murdered while Anita and her middle sister, Renate, were sent first to prison and then separately to Auschwitz where they were reunited by the merest chance.

The fact that Anita played the cello saved the girls' lives: the 'Orchestra' was a mockery in those surroundings but the instrumentalists lived in marginally better conditions than other inmates. As the

war neared its end the two sisters were summarily transported to Belsen - where they remained in the Displaced Persons Camp after April 1945 with no home to go to any more.

Anita has written a powerful book entitled *Inherit the Truth, 1939-1945*. In addition to her wartime experiences she tells of finally arriving in England, resuming her cello studies and becoming a founder member of the ECO, the English Chamber Orchestra. She also met up again with Peter Wallfisch (a highly gifted pianist) whom she had known from schooldays in Breslau. They married in 1952 and had two children: Raphael Wallfisch (cellist) and Maya Jacobs-Wallfisch (consultant psychotherapist).

Having sworn never to set foot on German soil again Anita finally did return, in the 1980s, because the ECO was invited to play in Celle and Soltau (near Belsen). It was then, while speaking to a German, that she had her 'light bulb' moment of realising that one cannot hold people responsible for what their parents or grandparents did. Anita and other ECO members visited the site of Bergen-Belsen which contained only one wooden construction and a few explanatory notices, all in German. A sign from the local Council announced that they intended to build a memorial and

were looking for survivors to give them more information about the camp. It was a decisive moment for Anita: she made the contact, gave the organisers help and information and consequently the commemoration site is now a dignified, worthy memorial.

The liberation of Belsen had been filmed by Alfred Hitchcock under the title "A Painful Reminder". It was without sound so Anita, together with Rabbi Hugo Gryn and Leon Greenman (both sole Belsen survivors) added a commentary. Anita still travels frequently to Germany to address school children and large organisations. She also spent a week at the Spielberg Foundation in LA where she was filmed giving answers to 1,000 pre-set questions. This will be turned into a hologram so that in centuries to come new generations posing these or similar questions can 'see' a survivor answering them. (Anita's verdict on this is succinct: "Just bizarre").

With undiminished energy Anita promotes her message of peaceful co-existence and of learning lessons from the past. The AJR wishes her continuing strength in this important work and congratulates her on the recognition she has received from the Bundestag.

**Lilian Levy**

# LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY MIRRY REICH



## A DAY WORTH CELEBRATING



It all depends on where you place yourself politically. There are those who wholeheartedly celebrate the day

of reunification and see it as nothing less than miraculous that on 7 June 1967, one day into the Six-Day War, Israeli forces captured the old city of Jerusalem which resulted in the reunification of Jerusalem as part of Israel. The anniversary of this date is known as Yom Yerushalayim or Jerusalem Day which finally, after the lengthy *galut* (forced exile), resulted in Jerusalem being able to return to her former splendour. King David wrote before the times of the first temple "*Ke'ir shechubra lah yachdav*" — "Built-up Jerusalem is like a city that was joined together" (Psalms 122:3).

The following year, in 1968, the government proclaimed a new holiday – Jerusalem Day – and in 1998 the Knesset passed the Jerusalem Day Law, making the day a national holiday. However it has never yet taken on as a total national holiday like Independence Day. In contrast to Yom Hashoah, Yom Yerushalayim is optional.

I'm personally happy to be among the nationalists and patriots who wholeheartedly celebrate Yom Yerushalayim. The main event is the "flag dance" when thousands of youngsters, whole schools and families travel to Jerusalem to create a scene of an enormous sea of flags. In the shuls there are recitations of the Hallel prayer for praise, parties with Jerusalem themes, singing of songs of Jerusalem, special meals, and lectures on Jerusalem.

In my home town, Kedumim, there are performances and celebrations and an atmosphere of excitement for being privileged to be in this era. The flags are out in the streets and on the houses and cars, all adding to the general holiday feeling.

The Ethiopian community also commemorate Jerusalem Day – not by dancing with flags but with memorial services for the over 4000 Ethiopians who perished on the way to Jerusalem. They call Israel Jerusalem. Sadness is mixed with joy, as is often the case here in Israel.

So it's a national holiday for the "knitted kippot" and the Ethiopian community, an optional holiday for many others, a minor holiday to mention or ignore or to be even embarrassed by the emotion and the enthusiasm of the "knitted kippot".

So vividly different are the various reactions to Jerusalem Day! Maybe it's because it's difficult to accept that miracles truly happen in our time?

Jerusalem has been our capital city for many decades. President Trump recognises this so has decided to move the US Embassy there, and other countries are now following his example. But many other countries in the world and many organisations who are not renowned supporters of Israel are sour faced about the reunification of Jerusalem, and would like the city to be divided again, with the Palestinians able to claim the eastern side as their capital. This viewpoint is part of the "Two state solution" that for the last 25 years has been talked about endlessly and has become a bit passé. So, most of the world are not so happy to see Israelis celebrate the unification of Jerusalem. There are also a minority percentage of Israelis (some of whom happen to be in control of the mainstream media) who agree with this and this is probably why most people in the diaspora don't hear so much about Jerusalem Day.

In the meantime, I'm proud to be among the "nationalists". Maybe it's because I'm a second generation "Kind" and I have come to the conclusion that it is the answer to "never again".

## KLEINMAN ON J-TV



J-TV recently went to Nottingham University to interview the incomparable Leslie Kleinman about his experiences during the war and how he dealt with his psychological trauma. The interview is available on YouTube.

## SET DESIGNER IN NEWCASTLE

The North East England and Scotland meeting held in Gosforth was attended by 15 first and second generation members. It was good to see three new second generation members attending for the first time.

The guest speaker was Mike Ireland of BBC Scotland. He started his career in the '80s buying props for the drama series "Lost Tribes", followed by the Maelstrom drama series for BBC 1 shot in Norway, "Tutti Frutti" a

multi-Bafta award winner, "Dreaming" and many more. His latest project focuses on the Influenza ward at Walter Reed Hospital during the Spanish 'flu pandemic of 1918-19.

Mike's presentation was followed by many questions and afternoon tea. We all enjoyed the event and look forward to more meetings; thank you, Agnes, for a very interesting afternoon.  
*Judith Fodors*

# Letters to the Editor

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

## PUBLISHING READERS' LETTERS

I was at first pleased to see that you published my recent letter (which you headed HMD REMIT) in the May edition, but subsequently disappointed at the way it was abbreviated.

Naturally, I bow to the discretion of the Editor, and I do note that the reason given for abbreviations is the "very high volume of letters received...." It is laudable that the level of interest in the Journal seems to be reflected in the volume of correspondence. However, I note that certain correspondents feature with extreme regularity on the Letters page.

Would it not be fairer to allow letters from your more prolific correspondents to give way sometimes, so that letters from those of us who write only occasionally can be included in their entirety? A whole chunk of my letter was excluded, whilst I feel that what was included did not wholly "retain the sense of the original correspondence."

*Barbara Dean, Birmingham*

**NOTE FROM EDITOR: We are delighted that the size of our letters bag has doubled over the past 12 months. We always try to include as many as possible, and in deference to Mrs Dean are this month giving precedence to the less prolific writers. Apologies to any regular contributors who may be disappointed – please keep writing!**

## FEAR AND CONSEQUENCES

Hungary's right-wing government and their leader, Victor Orban, have been re-elected with a large majority. Their campaign was dominated by masterfully manipulating fear of Muslim immigration to Hungary and of a take-over by George Soros. Consequently many genuinely good people – including several of my friends – voted for Orban.

I am a member of the UK Labour Party and Momentum and have not seen any antisemitism in either. But I experience genuine and increasing fear among Jewish people who believe the accusation of antisemitism in the Labour Party/ Momentum and who fear for their safety. Weaponising antisemitism for political gains (and increasing fear among the Jewish

community) is an insult to the six million who died because of real antisemitism.

*Agnes Kory, London, NW3*

## SUSSEX FOR ARCHIVES

Further to your important article 'Want to record your story or donate your archives?' (April), I would like to add the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex to the list of 'organisations to consider donating your archives to'.

The Centre – which contains diaries, letters, photographs, oral testimony, survival narratives and other biographical sources recording the history of Jewish families from the Enlightenment to the late 20th century - houses material in 'The Keep', a centre of excellence for the conservation and preservation of archives, used extensively by students of German-Jewish history and school groups.

Some of the holdings can be seen at [www.sussex.ac.uk/affiliates/gjfa/](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/affiliates/gjfa/) and donations to the archive are welcomed.

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## BOYS v. GIRLS

Henri Obstfeld's analysis of the number of boys versus girls in the Kindertransports and the Child Survivors Association is interesting. However with the Kinder there may have been a bias towards girls, as they were considered easier to re-home in the UK than boys. As for the CSA, the discrepancy could be down to the fact that women are more likely to join this type of group than men. The impression I had at the reunion of the Belgian child survivors a few years ago was that it was a much more gender-balanced group. Rather than the birth rate, this reflects the unique way children were hidden in Belgium as well as networks that were formed in the early post-war years.

As for "The Boys" (the majority of whom WERE boys), the numbers of this group relative to the total number of children who died – 1.5 million - are too small to draw any real conclusions.

Interpreting statistics requires more depth than just comparing numbers. Correlation and causation are not the same thing.

*Joan Salter, London, N10*

## PLASTIC WRAPPERS

I am dismayed that the AJR is continuing to use plastic wrappers when sending the journal to members. It is totally unnecessary, given the appalling damage plastics are causing to our environment and the fact that either paper envelopes or degradable plastic can be easily substituted.

*Mrs S. Dell, London NW11*

**NOTE FROM EDITOR: Our mailing house bulk-bought a considerable stock of plastic wrappers some time ago. Rather than dumping these, which would not help the environment, we are using them up with the aim of introducing a more ecological option as quickly as possible.**

## LETTERS FROM ISRAEL

One of the first contributions I always turn to when your excellent journal arrives is 'Letter from Israel'. It is like a breath of fresh air when most of the news coming from Israel nowadays can drive one to despair. Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's article in the April issue, describing a kindergarten where Jewish and Arab children play together and where their parents can meet on equal terms, shows there is still hope for the future.

Israel has been central to my life even before it first became a state and I was justifiably proud of its achievements. Sadly the present government has betrayed the ideals of the founding fathers and those who fought and died for the country. This has been reflected in the loss of support from Israel's former friends in Europe and even more worryingly from many Jews. Mirry Reich in her letter (May 2018) refers to President Trump as being pro-Israel and pro-Jewish – if we have to rely on him, we really have problems!

I came to England as a child to escape Nazi racist persecution, and many of my family became victims of the Shoah. Because of this I hate racism in all its forms and pray that one day in the future the people of Israel

and Palestine will be friends and neighbours in peace and security. The kindergarten described by Dorothea and similar projects, such as co-operation between Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians on revitalising the River Jordan for the benefit of all, are small steps towards this ideal.  
*George Vulkan, Harrow*

**George Vulkan was not the only person to take issue with Mirry Reich's letter in the May issue. Frank Land** from Totnes in Devon wrote "Mirry Reich complains that the writer of the Letter from Israel has nothing better to write about than the attempt to foster understanding between Jew and Arab in Israel by bringing together children from both groups in a common classroom. Personally I think little is more important for the future of Israel than fostering that understanding." **Peter Philips** agrees, writing "Wouldn't it be lovely if the world destroyed these barriers between religions and we all lived in harmony? Ms. Reich, I am sorry but you are verging on racism."

Similar comments came from **Anthony Hallgarten QC**, who felt Ms Reich's letter was one of which "a racist troll would have been proud", and **George Donath**, who wrote: "I can only admire the kindergarten operator and the parents, both Jews and Arabs, who bring up their children from a very early age together to show that the two tribes of semites can live in peace. And if the odd Sabra does marry an Arab I shall accept it, as I have accepted my daughter marrying a non-Jew. The alternative cannot but attract the label of apartheid. Others are as good as we are and deserve being treasured as our own."

Meanwhile **Mike Joseph** from Wales wrote: "Your readers will form their own views on Mirry Reich's praise of Trump and her distaste for Jewish-Arab relations. But one factual error should be corrected. Mirry Reich states her address as "Israel". In fact, Ms Reich lives on land that Israel has been "holding ... in belligerent occupation" since 1967. (Source: Proceedings of the Israeli Supreme Court sitting as the High Court of Justice, June 30 2004.) In other words, in occupied Palestine."

**NOTE FROM EDITOR: In the spirit of free speech and to give our regular correspondent, Dorothea Shefer-Vanson, a little break we offered the aforementioned Mirry Reich the opportunity to write her own 'Letter from Israel' this month. See page 5.**

**WHITEWASHING THE HOLOCAUST?**  
 Peter Phillips (April) questions school examiners' choice of *The Final Days* as a text for students?

The White Rose Movement – the subject of the book – comprised a few extremely brave students who defied Munich's Nazis by dropping anti-Nazi leaflets in their university, knowing they would inevitably be severely punished. The Scholl brother and sister who led the movement were eventually guillotined.

I believe that the examiners were trying to illustrate that, despite the overwhelming support for the Nazi regime, there were just a few incorruptible souls who tried their utmost to retain decency.  
*Gordon Spencer, Barnet, Herts*

**SADLY MISINFORMED**  
 Reading about Poland (April) reminded me of a friendly young Polish lad who worked in our block of flats several decades ago. While redecorating our sitting-room he spotted a box of matzos. "They are what Jews make with the blood of Christian children," he said quite cheerily. "Everyone in Poland says so." It was an eye-opener for me.

The picture by Josef Herman on the April front cover is hauntingly impressive.  
*Margarete Stern, London, NW3*

**THE POWER OF WORDS**  
 In the last few years the media, TV et al, including the AJR Journal, have all, as if acting on instructions from On High, described everything German as Nazi. No longer do we hear or read of the actions of the German Army, Navy or Luftwaffe, or the activities of the SS, as German. They are all referred to as Nazi.

It is as if everything previously German, has now been white-washed, and re-invented as Nazi. Apparently, Germany and the Germans as we knew them, did not exist, pre Mrs Merkel.  
*Peter Collins, Pinner, Middx.*

**OTHER SNIPPETS**  
**Janos Fisher** wonders where should the younger Jews flee from the increasing antisemitism? He concludes "...the obvious choice is Israel, though it might not be that easy to settle down there because of the language, the climate and our age." **Robert Avery** believes that "A Labour government with Jeremy Corbyn as PM will not cause any problems for Jews", recalling Oswald Mosely and his British Union of Fascists in the 1930s, who never won a seat in Parliament. **Fred Stern** is alarmed that "for the first time ever, murders in London have exceeded those of New York so far this year." Finally **Victor Ross** recommends "a compelling essay by the polymath George Steiner on the origins of antisemitism ("Errata", Weidenfeld 1997) in which "...Steiner argues that the Jew has given the world a bad conscience." Victor Ross asks "To the blood libel, shall we have to add the conscience libel?"

**FANCY A CRUISE?**  
 Carol Rossen is planning a cruise for AJR members in October/November for 11 or 12 nights and destinations include Portugal, Spain, Gibraltar and the Canary Islands. Departure from Southampton with coach travel included.  
**Contact karenmarkham@ajr.org.uk or 020 8385 3070 for more info.**

**ERRATUM**  
 Our obituary of Kurt Wilhelm Weinberg in the May issue omitted to state that he was born in Werther on 23 July 1924 and died in London on 9 January 2018. A wrong year of birth was also given for Frank Meisler, who was born in 1925.

# ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler



Claude Monet, *The Beach at Trouville*, 1870



*La Grande Boucherie*, Fred Uhlman

Perhaps the title **Monet & Architecture at the National Gallery** is misleading because the artist's impressions of London Bridge, Le Havre, the bridge at Argenteuil, the Palazzo Dario in Venice and the ancient Rouen Cathedral, are his pure vision of light on water, the blend of soft ochre sunsets and blue skies, and the submerging of everything – streets and people – into a near mystical snowscape.

Monet's transition from realist landscape painter to Impressionist and to the very verge of abstraction, still evokes the sense of a nature artist, someone who may have toyed with the industrialisation of cities, but finally returned to his true impulse: to paint what he felt within his pastoral scenes. Monet is totally inside his work.

In *The Church at Vétheuil* (1878) and *The Customs Officer's Cottage Varengeville*, you can almost sense Van Gogh breathing down his neck, and there are looming presences in *The Cour d'Albane* (1892), which foreshadow Frank Auerbach or Leon Kossoff. In his very French way Monet evokes the English grandiosity of Turner; the sun almost drops into the sea. In London Monet follows the sun from his hotel window and paints its majestic hourly changes. In *The Rue Montorgeuil, Paris: The Feast Day of 30 June*, he is at his most vibrant, portraying the tricolour floating from windows and the people cheering below.

**Until July 29**

**The Making of an Englishman, Fred Uhlman's retrospective at Hampstead's Burgh House**, tours to Newcastle's **Hatton**

**Gallery** from June 30 – August 11. One can only hope it will receive more space and better lighting there. The show was so dark and cramped that it did no justice to this important artist's work.

The exhibition covers his work from 1928 - 1971 and demonstrates his unusually broad scope, as he felt his way from his internment drawings on the Isle of Man, evoking the torture of captivity and the Church's role in the rise of German antisemitism, to his early Mediterranean works, like the quirky and very French *La Grande Boucherie*, painted during his Paris exile, in which chatting customers are dwarfed by bloody carcasses; his vibrant African scenes, the bleak splendour of his Welsh mountains, or the solemn houses of Hampstead, where he helped establish a refugee community and tried to become an Englishman.

Did he succeed? In his changing rhythms he was also a Frenchman, a Welshman and an African. Uhlman's work has the touch of everywhere. And his style, too, defies genre: is he a Primitive, an Expressionist, Symbolist, Surrealist or a combination of all four? For all his colourful naïvety, he can also

be stark, terrifying; a man who could paint nightmares. Masks, mountains, crucifixions, screaming, grieving women jump out at you in unexpectedly soft sketches. He can be grandiose and yet eloquent: in *City*, troops of marching soldiers in red uniforms and beefeaters are watched by crowds who are hardly there. If there is a recurring theme it is humanity dwarfed by nature, typified by *Welsh Slate Mines in Snow*, 1959, in which the awesome, snow-edged landscape obscures the minuscule person walking towards it. This recurring figure evokes the child which often appears in his art, inspired by his new-born daughter Caroline. He describes the child as "marching with sure, unfaltering steps through the valley of death and terror – totally undisturbed, untouchable and triumphant."

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# AT YOUR SERVICE: The AJR Trustees

According to [www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved), "Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do. They are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run." In this latest article in our 'At your service' series, which explains the work of the AJR, we look specifically at the role of the AJR Trustees.

The AJR has nine Trustees, drawn from a variety of backgrounds of commerce and professional qualifications. Collectively they are responsible for the charitable company's overall strategy, direction, financial policy, the disbursement of financial support, and for managing funds to benefit the membership.

Andrew Kaufman has chaired the Trustees for the past 20 years, overseeing some dramatic changes during his tenure. "The AJR has developed from a small north west London-based charity into a national organisation that has social workers all across the country and runs 43 regional and specialist groups. We've also become the UK's leading benefactor of Holocaust educational programmes and we now have a recognised voice within the wider Jewish community," he says.

Of course it's not just the AJR that has changed. Nowadays all charities are under tremendous scrutiny, with the



Oxfam abuse scandal just the latest in a long line of reputation-shredding stories to hit the headlines over the last few years. This means that every aspect of the AJR's activities has to be conducted in a completely open and transparent manner.

The nine AJR Trustees all carry out their roles on a purely voluntary basis, and although some have partly or even fully retired others still have their day jobs to do. Most of them also hold other community roles, which helps to provide different perspectives to their AJR responsibilities.

Each Trustee brings his or her own skills set to the table. Philippa Strauss and David Rothenberg, for example, both have very strong financial skills, while Frank Harding is a chartered accountant who has been involved with Holocaust commemoration for many years. Eleanor Angel has exceptional marketing and communication skills and Anthony Spiro has a long record of success in investor relations and financial communications. Trustees also represent the specific interests of particular member groups, for example Sir Eric Reich arrived in England via a Kindertransport, Joanna Milan was a child survivor, and Gaby Glassman has unrivalled insights into how being Second Generation can affect one's life.

These unique skills sets have facilitated the creation of specialist sub-committees whereby Trustees work hand-in-hand with the AJR executive to direct key aspects of

our operations. Philippa and David, for example, sit on the Finance Committee alongside Finance Director David Kaye and jointly ensure that all financial matters follow due diligence. Other sub-committees include institutional grant giving, Self Aid and the overall strategy of the AJR.

"A key part of our role is ensuring we have clear policies and competent staff in place," explains Andrew. "Then it's about allowing the executive staff the freedom to actually run the organisation and implement its various programmes which, I am proud to say, they all do very well."

Unlike many charities that need to concentrate on fund raising, the AJR is fortunate in having cash reserves. But this in itself creates additional scrutiny and need for transparency. Members have a right to expect that every penny is invested prudently, responsibility for which ultimately lies with the Trustees.

Although the AJR's constitution stipulates nine Trustees, there is the option to extend this number to bring in fresh ideas and skills. Any new Trustee would, of course, need to demonstrate the same core qualities that are so ably displayed by the existing Trustees: common sense, pragmatism, morality as well as being creative – a sense of humour also helps.

When asked how the role of Trustees might evolve in the future, Andrew believes that the needs of members will always come first. "Our main priority has always been to look after our members and make their lives more comfortable. This will never change," he emphatically states.

## [www.fishburnbooks.com](http://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.

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# Abortion in Ireland: *Another Perspective*

My first meeting – in the generally accepted meaning of the word – with my mother was 45 or so years after I was born.

As we got to know each other, I learnt about her childhood and teenage years in Austria. There was her first love affair. It was with Siegfried, a handsome Hitler Youth, cutting a dash with his blond locks, brown shirt and shiny black leather boots around town, the same town – as it happens – in which Adolf Hitler had spent his early years as he worried about his mother dying of cancer and saved up for the cheapest tickets for his favourite Wagner at the Linz Opera House. Later, there was her refugee journey to London as a 19-year-old in 1939. She had three Jewish grandparents.

I was told that not only was I the son of a Holocaust survivor, but also one who had survived her do-it-yourself abortion attempt. This permits me to join in the discussion by theologians and others generated by Ireland's upcoming referendum on a proposal to repeal the country's ban on abortion. Some in Ireland put abortion as a crime on a par with the Holocaust.

There can be no doubt that both crimes – my mother's attempted abortion pre-dated reform in England – took place, and that the identities of



David Kernek

the perpetrators are known. We all know who envisaged, planned and executed the Holocaust, and I know – because she told me – that my mother had a go at an abortion. I don't know why it failed; that was a question I left unasked. Perhaps she just didn't know how to do it properly.

Fräulein Kernek chose abortion, while the Holocaust was not simply the unintended consequence of a government programme of discrimination and persecution that had somehow got out of control and been taken over by a horde of psychotic gangsters, although some of them undoubtedly were.

One of the very best histories of the Third Reich is Mark Roseman's relatively short *The Villa, The Lake, The Meeting\**, an account of a 90-minute business-like gathering, at a small mansion in a Berlin suburb on January 20 1942 of 15 senior government bureaucrats, SS and party officials summoned by the then head of the German security police, Reinhard Heydrich. Minutes of the meeting, also attended by Adolf Eichmann, the principal administrator of history's best recorded genocide, were taken and stored. Found in the smoking ruins of Berlin, they became known as the Wannsee Protocol.

The purpose of the meeting was not to inaugurate the start of the Holocaust, since everybody sitting around the table knew it was already under way, but to impress on the people running the civilian ministries – especially those in charge of the railways – of the need to get on with it. After the meeting, Eichmann recalled during his trial in Jerusalem, cognac was served.

Greta Kernek got out of Austria in the



Greta Kernek in pre-war Linz, Austria

nick of time, but she wasn't problem-free. By the war's end, she was a young mother – and a penniless, stateless “enemy alien” – living with a toddler in the home of a man by whom she was employed as a housekeeper. One thing, as it were, led to another with the employer, and she fell pregnant again. He told her he didn't want another child – his child – in the house and, truth to tell, the last thing she wanted was another child. “I was,” she told me, “very tired, I didn't have a maternal instinct, and he could have kicked me out.” So she chose abortion followed, after it failed, by adoption. She lied to the adoption people, telling them the child's father – my father – was dead. He was, in fact, hiding in the kitchen.

As I'm not a theologian and – unlike many Austrians – not much of a philosopher, I steer well clear of the arguments around the significance of an unborn child, however many weeks since its conception. What I am clear about in my own mind is that there is not the slightest scintilla of equivalence between the hard, personal choice my mother made and the premeditated nature of industrially organised genocide.

**David Kernek**

*\*The Villa, The Lake, The Meeting,* Mark Roseman, Penguin Press, £9.99.

# ALWAYS REMEMBER

Over 5,000 people across the UK pledged to 'always remember' during this year's Yom Hashoah commemorations, when thousands of people also attended one of the dozens of local, regional and national events held on or around 11 April.

The AJR took part in the National Holocaust Commemoration in Hyde Park on 15 April, while AJR members were represented at the majority of regional events. One such example was Pinner, where over 350 visitors, including the Slovak Ambassador, the Chargés d'Affaires of the Austrian and German Embassies and other senior diplomats and dignitaries, were welcomed on 11 April to Pinner Synagogue to pay tribute to those who came to Britain 80 years ago on the Kindertransport.

Ann and Bob Kirk, who as children left Berlin and Hanover respectively, spoke movingly about their experiences of antisemitic harassment and the courage and selflessness of their parents in arranging their departure on this unique humanitarian programme. Each described with great poignancy their farewells to parents whom they were never to see again. Though life was difficult at first they eventually adapted and settled.

The Chargé d'Affaires of the German Embassy, Tania Freiin von Uslar-Gleichen, responded by acknowledging Germany's guilt for the Holocaust and its determination to confront current

antisemitism. She stated: 'Our aim is not to allow it to fester and remain'.

Chair of Pinner's Yom Hashoah committee and AJR Trustee Gaby Glassman concluded: 'Our event marked the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport, which enabled nearly 10,000 young lives to be saved. It is relevant today because once again we see children fleeing. In 1938-1939 support was organised, now there is antagonism and bureaucracy. We give thanks for the humanity then and question its absence now.'

Leslie Baruch Brent, who attended the Pinner event, wrote: "So many buttons were correctly pressed during the course of the evening. I was delighted to find that, among those whose major contribution has often been acknowledged – the Jewish community in Berlin, Wilfrid Israel, Lord Samuel, the Quakers and of course the British government which allowed the refugee children to enter the country without individual visas (on certain conditions) - the name of Anna Essinger surfaced. Upon being requested to fly a swastika in 1933 she moved her co-educational boarding school (Landschulheim) from Ulm in southern Germany to the North Downs of Kent.



REMEMBER  
TOGETHER  
**WE ARE  
ONE**

She then expanded her school to take in a sizeable number of Kindertransport children, myself included."

The AJR will honour Anna Essinger's contributions at a special ceremony in Kent on 25 June – see back page.

Meanwhile a new survey in the United States found critical gaps both in awareness of basic facts as well as detailed knowledge of the Holocaust. According to the Claims Conference-funded survey, a significant majority of American adults believe that fewer people care about the Holocaust today than they used to, and more than half of Americans believe that the Holocaust could happen again. There is a broad-based consensus that schools must be responsible for providing comprehensive Holocaust education. The full survey results can be seen at

[www.claimscon.org/study/](http://www.claimscon.org/study/).



Mayor of London Sadiq Khan talks with AJR member Judy Benton at the national commemoration event on 15 April



Six Kinder lit candles at the Pinner event on 11 April. From left to right: Bob Kirk, Eve Willman, Ann Kirk, Carry Sherman, Leslie Baruch Brent, Ernest Simon © Stephen Gee

# REVIEWS

## THE DAUGHTER WHO SOLD HER MOTHER:

A Biographical Memoir by

Irena Powell

AuthorHouse

ISBN 978 1 5049 4436 6

This incredible story of a Jewish woman bringing her baby daughter up in hiding in Nazi-occupied Poland is told in Irena Powell's fascinating memoir of her mother, Sara.

Born in Galicia, Sara Rubinstein led a turbulent life in several countries including Poland, the Soviet Union, Israel, Germany and the UK. Her odyssey takes us from place to place due to persecution and expediency. Unsurprisingly she found it difficult to put down roots.

Sara's religious family lived in a cramped house/drapery shop in the small town of Tartaków; unusually all the children were learned and Sara went to school in Krakow. She studied nursing in Warsaw in order to join a communist boyfriend in Spain but political events intervened and instead she married the young activist Romek Malter in 1940. Miraculously both survived the war.

She had a very narrow escape when a man was shot as she passed baby Irena over the fence to him in Rzeszów ghetto. She and Romek planned an escape abroad with others but the advance party was never seen again.

Sara struggled, living with her baby in various places under a Ukrainian assumed identity and constantly wary of people. When she saw her father in hiding in the village of Borek little Irena was not even allowed to know who he was. As war ended Sara had to share her room with six retreating Nazi soldiers who divided their rations with her.

Sara and Romek discovered the plight of their family members but they picked up the threads. A period of relative stability followed,

although their marriage was always stormy.

There are some lighter, moving touches such as Sara's immense pride in dressing her daughter. Then, ever restless, she emigrated to Israel to join siblings - buying a flat and working as a social worker - leaving her husband and daughter behind. Homesick, she returned to Poland before the 1968 political crisis following a fresh wave of Jewish persecution.

The couple both lost their jobs and Romek was expelled from the communist party. Paradoxically, having survived in wartime Poland, events forced them to flee for good, living in Frankfurt for nearly 30 years until he died. Meanwhile Irena settled in England and later the widowed Sara joined her, although she accused Irena of selling her mother by employing carers to help look after her.

Despite being more than 600 pages this book is surprisingly easy to read. It is Irena Powell's first non-academic publication but her grasp of the English writing style is perfect. Equally, her recollection of her mother's more continental speech rings particularly true and the flash-forwards work well.

*Janet Weston*

## VIENNA-LONDON. PASSAGE TO SAFETY

Emigré portraits in photographs and words

Edited by Marion Trestler

SYNEMA Publikation

ISBN 978 3 901644 73 3

This beautifully produced book contains superb photographs of 20 former Viennese citizens who were forced to build new lives in Britain after the advent of Hitler. Each portrait is accompanied by personal photos and a few autobiographical thoughts by its subject. Many of the faces will be familiar to AJR members and Marion Trestler has written a brief biography of each of them.

Marion Trestler was, for many years, the Austrian ambassador to London where she was able to get to know and value several of the refugees portrayed. The declared aim of her book is to bring past

memory into the present and future, through narration of individual and personal accounts. The project is intended as a record of unique personal stories before the Holocaust slips out of living memory and into a future without eye-witnesses.

*Kathy Cohen*

## FROM KRAKÓW TO BERKELEY

By Anna Rabkin

Vallentine Mitchell

ISBN 978 1 91038370 4

Subtitled 'An immigrant's search for identity and belonging', this is the autobiography of Anna Rabkin, a shy Polish girl born into a comfortable Jewish household in 1935. Forced to flee, Anna (born Haneczka Rose) was passed from pillar to post for years – including several of them in England, two at Bunce Court School – but eventually served 15 years as Auditor for the Californian city of Berkeley, spearheading numerous high profile reforms.

Some of the most moving stories in the book concern Anna's childhood in Kraków and England. Her desperate longing for her parents, who had simply disappeared, and her troubled search for identity (after her Polish guardian had her baptised in a Catholic church) are especially poignant. As she reflected much later, "Jewish, Catholic, Polish, British, American — who was I?"

She crossed the Atlantic at the age of 18 when a distant cousin in New York offered to adopt her. Sadly the same cousin passed away soon after, leaving her with only her intellectual snob of a husband. Having long been forced to suppress her feelings, Anna very gradually developed a sense of self-worth. She had a successful career as a travel agent, pioneering new routes and far-off destinations. Through her adoptive father Heinz she met Marty – an American-born businessman – and the couple decided to build a new life in the college town of Berkeley, California.

The turbulent 1960s drew Anna into politics, while trying to improve the local playground. Her talents quickly shone and in 1979 she was elected to local office, serving one of the most progressive –

and contentious – governments in US history. As a civic leader she tackled issues covering everything from refuse collection to the Free Speech Movement and sexual equality.

Parts one, two, and three (covering Poland, England, and New York) occupy two-thirds of the book while part four deals with Anna's time in California since 1962. As Anna herself writes, "survival is sweet revenge. I had not only survived the war, created a family and developed relationships with people of all backgrounds...I had overcome the fears and feelings of worthlessness that a hateful ideology had instilled in me. I had proved to myself that neither my gender, religious or immigrant background were insurmountable obstacles."

This is a very well written and life-affirming book which sheds light on US local politics as well as on deep-seated scars caused by the Holocaust. *Jo Briggs*

## BOOKS BY AJR MEMBERS

**Martin Mauthner** has written *Otto Abetz and His Paris Acolytes – French Writers who Flirted with Fascism, 1930-1945*. The book examines why Abetz – Hitler's wartime ambassador in Paris – and other cultural figures supported Nazi ideology despite having close Jewish family connections. **Michael Brown** has sent us *Moving on – My Journey Through Life* which is a touching account of his escape from Hanover on a Kindertransport, living in a foster home in Liverpool and coming to terms with the Nazi tragedy that befell so many of his relatives. His gratitude at having survived to rebuild his life shines throughout the book.

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# Creating connections

For older refugees life can at times feel isolated, especially for people with few or no family ties. The AJR and Belsize Square Synagogue have worked together to provide a refugee from Hungary with an increased sense of belonging and friendship. AJR member Vera Kovacs tells her story.

"For 56 years I lived in Belsize Park but I never knew about Belsize Square Synagogue until my friend from the Holocaust Survivor Centre suggested I join. I couldn't afford the money but it was very nice that together – the AJR and the synagogue – they took care of it. The first time I went to the shul a woman recognised my accent and asked, 'Are you Hungarian?' I enjoy the people, I love everybody; the Cantor, the Rabbi, I love them. I have a friend – they aren't there every Friday night but I see friends at the shul. I hate to be alone. I like to talk to people. Now my funeral arrangements are taken care of."

Vera attends synagogue services and festival lunches, as well as the AJR's annual Kristallnacht and Holocaust Memorial Day services. Additionally, a year ago the synagogue arranged for a volunteer (with school age children) whose mother was born in Hungary to meet Vera. They connected well and Vera says, "She's an angel. She comes every week. Her mother is very

nice, too, and invited me for Rosh Hashanah lunch."

Belsize Square Synagogue has a Community Care Co-ordinator, Eve Hersov, whose post is supported by the AJR. She says, "Synagogues in many respects are like a giant extended family. People come together to pray, sing, learn, eat, celebrate and sometimes squabble. We have a common bond in our background that fosters a sense of care and community, and where people try to look after one another. Many of our older refugee members are less motivated by religious faith or observance but everyone has a strong sense of shared identity and mutual respect for our survival and endurance. If there are AJR members who are not affiliated with a synagogue congregation but feel that they might benefit from a greater sense of communal life then I'd urge them to speak with the AJR and see if together they can find a shul to feel at home in."



Vera's volunteer, Sarah, visits on a regular basis

# 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.*

## BRISTOL

Colin Davey spoke on 'Deconstructing Denial: David Irving v. Deborah Lipstadt' followed by a lively Q&A. The well-attended meeting was sorry to have to say goodbye to Katherine.  
*Hazel Rank-Broadley*

## EALING

Jo Briggs, editor of the AJR Journal, gave a most interesting talk on her career in public relations and promotion of tourism in the UK. She then spoke about her work in redesigning/modernising the AJR Journal; members of the group put forward their views, and suggested items which might be included.  
*Leslie Sommer*

## EDINBURGH

Vivien Anderson, our hostess, spoke on Scandinavian jewellery; she showed us some fine examples, and traced its development from small beginnings in the 19th century. We were delighted to welcome a new 2nd generation member.  
*Eva Baer*

## ESSEX

Claude Vecht-Wolf gave us a brief summary of the many subjects he has to cover to become a Rabbi; high on the list is Kashrut, which is very complex. He is enthusiastic

and will certainly achieve his dream eventually. We wish him well.  
*Meta Roseneil*

## GLASGOW

Dr Maureen Seir, Director of Scottish Interfaith Council, spoke on the role of interfaith dialogue in a secular world. The talk and questions were interesting and varied, including details of her own background, living in the Scottish Islands and finding out that her husband's mother was Jewish and had come on a Kindertransport.  
*Ruth Ramsey*

## MUSWELL HILL

The Religions of London by Philippa Bernard was an illuminating historical account of various religions in London from before the Romans to the present day. She traced the journey from burnings at the stake to tolerance and eventual gradual acceptance of other faiths into public life.  
*Eva Stellman*

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**Child Survivors' Association-AJR**  
Henri Obstfeld  
020 8954 5298 [h.obstfeld@talk21.com](mailto:h.obstfeld@talk21.com)

## KINDERTRANSPORT LUNCH

More than 25 members came to hear Marion Trestler talk about her recent book *From Vienna to London*. It contains a selection of photographic portraits and biographical essays of Austrians who fled to the UK during the 1930s, many of whom arrived via the Kindertransports. Marion spoke at length about her research and her reasons for writing such

a book. She showed a short film from the contributors to the book talking about their journeys to the UK and their memories. There was a delicious lunch and the opportunity to socialise. All Kinder are welcome; the meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month.  
**Contact Susan Harrod on [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk) if you are interested to attend.**

## JUNE 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.

Ealing	5 June	Lynne Bradley: The music of West Side Story
Ilford	6 June	DVD – "Churchill's Secret Army"
Pinner	7 June	Brad Ashton: Scams and how to avoid them
Essex (Westcliff)	12 June	David Barnett: The Life of Edith Morley
Brighton	18 June	Gary Italiaander: The Story of Larry Adler
Edgware	19 June	Neil Taylor - Maccabi
Radlett	20 June	David Barnett: The Balfour Declaration
Prestwich	25 June	Social get-together
North West London	26 June	Helen Pankhurst: History of her famous Aunt Emily (Booking necessary)
Book Club	27 June	Social

# 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.

## **Marietta HILL (née Breitner)**

Prof. Lidia Maggioli is an Italian teacher and researcher reconstructing the tragic story of the Timan/Breitner family from Vienna. Parents Josef Timan and Salomea Breitner perished in the Holocaust. Daughter Marietta, born 5 September 1924 in Vienna, escaped to England and lived for a time in Uttoxeter. She married Donald Thomas Hill, lived in Birmingham and had two children, Gillian and Peter. [www.archiviomaggiolimazzoni.it](http://www.archiviomaggiolimazzoni.it)

## **Victor (Viktor) ROTH**

Victor Roth was on a Kindertransport from Austria to England; his son, Terry, would like to know if anyone remembers him. His number tag was '1019', travelling in July, 1939. He went to Leeds on 25 September, 1939 and was interned in Canada in 1940, where he spent the rest of his life. [terryrpw@colba.net](mailto:terryrpw@colba.net)

## **STOLEN HEIRLOOMS**

A Times of Israel article on stolen heirlooms can be found at: [www.timesofisrael.com/jewish-ghosts-linger-as-german-households-still-make-use-of-stolen-heirlooms/](http://www.timesofisrael.com/jewish-ghosts-linger-as-german-households-still-make-use-of-stolen-heirlooms/) Senta Herkle would love to find someone from the Kohn family. When you have read the article you will understand why.

Erna Kohn's sister, Klara, arrived in London before the outbreak of the war and in 1977 was resident at 25 West End Court, Priory Road, NW6. It is entirely possible that there are living relatives of Erna Kohn and her sister Klara Huebscher. Please contact Dina Gold: [dinagold@hotmail.com](mailto:dinagold@hotmail.com)



## **COSMO CABARET**

Do you have memories of The Cosmo Restaurant that once provided a safe haven on Finchley Road for many Jewish refugees and others? A new cabaret is being made about the café and they want to hear your stories. [pamela@pamelahoward.co.uk](mailto:pamela@pamelahoward.co.uk)

## **HARRY JACOBS**

Paul Minikes Alexander (born Leipzig 28 November 1937) lived with Harry Jacobs of the Times Furnishing Company for over two years after his arrival in England in July 1939. The pair kept in touch until after Paul's Barmitzvah in Leeds in 1950, and Paul would very much like to make contact with Harry's children and/or grandchildren. [paulalex99@gmail.com](mailto:paulalex99@gmail.com)

## **HANS and KURT MENASSE**

Biographer Agnes Meisinger is seeking any information or documents relating to Hans Menasse (born 5 March 1930), who escaped the Nazi regime with his brother Kurt (born 8 February 1923) on the Kindertransport of 20 December 1938, via the help of the Quakers, and

initially stayed at an orphanage at 39 Christchurch Avenue, London NW6. [agnes.meisinger@univie.ac.at](mailto:agnes.meisinger@univie.ac.at)

## **KINDERTRANSPORT CHILDREN FROM AUSTRIA**

Nik Pollinger has been commissioned by BBC News online to write an article about Austrian Kindertransport children and would be grateful to be contacted by former *Kinder* willing to be interviewed for this project. The article will explore the attitudes of such refugees to Austria over time, as well as that of their descendants. [npollinger@hotmail.com](mailto:npollinger@hotmail.com)

## **BP PORTRAIT AWARD**

Oliver Bedeman is a portrait painter already on show at the National Portrait Gallery. For a 2019 exhibition he is planning to paint people in the UK who came over on the Kindertransport and would love to hear from any AJR members who are willing to sit for a couple of hours. He would travel to them, and work around their schedule. [Oli\\_Bedeman@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Oli_Bedeman@hotmail.co.uk)

# March of the Living

In April Naomi Kaye, our Northern Memory Loss Volunteer Co-ordinator, represented the AJR on the international March of the Living, a pilgrimage through towns, camps and ghettos scarred by the Holocaust in Poland; the 275-strong UK delegation were part of 11,000 people who joined from all corners of the world. This is Naomi's account:

After landing in Lublin we took a short journey to the medieval castle near the old town district. It was here in 1334 that King Casimir III granted the Jews permission to settle on the outskirts of the city. Later on, King Sigismund I permitted Jews to settle near the castle. Hearing how the Jews had full autonomy, their own land to build on and shops to sell their goods, helped me understand why Poland was once known as *Paradisus Judaeorum*, (Paradise for the Jews). By the mid-16th century almost three quarters of the world's Jews lived in Poland.

But then reality struck. 90% of Polish Jewry perished in the Holocaust and our mission was to learn more about this devastating period of our history. Standing at the foot of Lublin castle, we learned that of approximately 42,000 Jews living in Lublin under 300 survived.

We were then taken to a Yeshiva, a short distance from the castle. Yeshivat Chachamei was built in 1930 and many of its students managed to escape to the Far East and set up a yeshiva in Shanghai. This left us with feelings of hope that in the darkest times, goodness lives on.

Next on our itinerary was Majdanek concentration camp, which played a massive role in eradicating many of the

Jewish people of Lublin and its surrounding areas. We made our way on foot to the gas chambers, the first one primitive and simple, intended to murder a dozen or two. In contrast the other gas chambers, at the rear of the camp, were intended to kill thousands with conveniently positioned crematoria that ensured all signs of each person were wiped off the earth.

We saw the zig-zag shaped pits which Jewish prisoners dug, supposedly as a trap for Russian soldiers on 3 November 1943. They were actually digging their own graves and 18,400 Jews were shot there in one day. You can read, watch and listen to historic accounts but seeing and touching it magnified the utter despair.

Our educator Clive Lawton pointed out the town surrounding the camp. He posed the question 'What would you do if you saw thousands of people being shot in the concentration camp from your kitchen window?' To answer this wasn't easy. "If you intervene, you and your family die. Everyone lived in fear," Clive explained. Soon after we heard a group of Israelis singing Hatikvah and we all joined in. In sorrow, defiance and hope, this poignant moment helped us all.

Next day we headed to Belzec death camp. I struggled to comprehend how 600,000 Jews, Poles and minorities were murdered at such a small site in nine short months. I couldn't help turning to the large oak trees that surrounded the small periphery. Only they know the true horror that unfolded here.

Onwards towards the town of Lancut, where we soaked up the yiddishkeit of the 16th century. Standing in the baroque style shul, built around 1726, we heard about the vibrant Jewish community in and around the streets where this Shul stood. The magnificent wall paintings throughout act as a testament to the thriving community that lived there almost 500 years ago.

Later we found ourselves in the Buczyna Forest of Zyblitowska Gora. Here we learned the heinous way that 6,000 Jews



UK delegates listening to first hand memories from Ivor Perl

and gentiles, men, women and 800 children were murdered and buried, whether dead or alive. Standing amongst the mass graves it was beyond my realm of understanding to comprehend how human beings can perpetrate such atrocious crimes. Under the stillness of the trees, we heard that of the SS officers chosen to carry out these odious acts, 5% had refused. This was even too barbaric for some Nazis.

On day three we visited Krakow. Then it was time to make the journey to Auschwitz.

This felt very clinical. Each infamous barrack had been turned into a museum with exhibits that portrayed its history. It felt like a film set, methodically laid out with endless glass cases, like a seemingly never-ending path through hell.

We spent the rest of the day 3km away in Birkenau. We were met with the infamous image of the railway tracks leading through the arched brick entrance. The sheer scale made me gasp in disbelief. It spanned a distance I could not even see beyond, surrounded with barbed wire, wooden watch towers and barracks, some intact, others in ruins. Survivor Ivor Perl, who had travelled with us throughout, shared his personal experience of arriving in Birkenau as a 12-year-old boy, in his innocence as a child excitedly watching the train tracks rush by through a small hole in the floor of the cattle carriage.

Ivor's ability to understand Yiddish was invaluable when a fellow Jew told the rest



Arriving at Birkenau

of the carriage that the children should pretend to be 16 years old. This saved him from the line of death. We heard how luck played a big part for Ivor during his time in Birkenau and how his brother saved him from death several times. We could also see the pain he felt in talking about these experiences, magnified by standing in the very place he last saw his parents and seven of his siblings who were murdered on arrival. It was truly a privilege to hear from a survivor amongst the camp ruins, one that the next generation won't have.

We recited kaddish inside one of the infamous wooden huts, where only 73 years ago nine bodies lay in each rickety bunk bed. It's really not that long ago. Monstrous crimes were committed against humanity, perpetrated by a nation of culture and intelligence. Why? There were no answers, just sheer devastation.

That evening we all came together for the Yom Ha'Shoah ceremony, held at the Galicia Museum in Krakow. Only a small piece of the Ghetto wall stands today, intentionally shaped to look like tombstones during the barbaric imprisoning of the Jews.

Our return to Birkenau the following day marked the end of our educational tour. We started the march alongside 11,000 people from around the world who had travelled with March of the Living International. From Belgium to Mexico and India to Argentina, young and old stood side by side on the site of Auschwitz 1 to start our 3km trek towards Birkenau.

The route was lined with local Polish residents waving and shouting 'Shalom' along the way and I was even handed a leaflet from a Korean, apologising for the Holocaust. It was a far cry from the experience prisoners had just seven decades ago.

We all gathered at the far end of the camp to watch the March of the Living ceremony in the hot sunshine. We heard from President of the State of Israel, Reuven Rivlin, and Polish President, Andrzej Duda, and Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, the former Chief Rabbi of Israel, a child survivor aged 8. All gave powerful speeches of remembrance. Edward Mosberg, Mauthausen camp survivor, stood on the stage alongside his granddaughter, both wearing concentration camp striped uniforms. We heard how his whole family perished and how he still has nightmares. He re-lived every moment as he spoke, showing anger and hatred such as I have rarely seen.

Poland impressed me with its hidden treasures of the past and legacy embedded in the respectful monuments as well as the museums that show the pain, suffering and loss of the Jewish people at the hands of Nazi-occupied Poland. President Rivlin summed it up in his speech at Birkenau, 'This land was a forge of the Jewish Soul and to our deep sorrow, also its largest Jewish graveyard.'

March of the Living is impressively organised. The UK delegation had seven buses, each one with its own educator and a survivor or refugee. I encourage anyone who insists on denying the Holocaust to take the same trip. It will leave a hole that cannot be filled. It will live with me for a long time to come.

**The March of the Living UK organisers are now working on the 2019 trip and the AJR has been asked to help find survivors or refugees who might be prepared to accompany the UK delegation. Please email Eli Scvhryer at [eli@marchoftheliving.org.uk](mailto:eli@marchoftheliving.org.uk) or call the AJR office on 020 8385 3070 and we can pass the message on for you.**

## **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.

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# OBITUARIES



Hanna & Peter Singer's wedding, 1955

## Hanna and Peter Singer

Hanna, born Halle 25 October 1928,  
died London 26 April 2018

Peter, born Nürnberg 10 September 1923,  
died London 6 October 2017

**AJR members Hanna and Peter Singer, died within six months of each other after 62 happy years together.**

Hanna Cohn came to England on a Kindertransport in July 1939, together with her twin brother Gerald. Their older sister Eva and their mother escaped to England too, but their father perished in Auschwitz.

Peter Singer was sent to England in 1936. Through the support of his headteacher at Farnham Grammar School and Lord Nathan of Churt, his dentist parents were able to join him.

Hanna and Peter met through the Hyphen, a social club for German and Austrian Jewish refugees, and married in 1955. Twin daughters Debbie and Helen were born in 1958.

Hanna studied English at Royal Holloway College. Through her career as an English teacher she inspired many young people, including some who had come to England as refugees themselves.

Peter worked for 30 years as a Purchasing Director of a small factory that supplied Marks and Spencers.

Hanna campaigned for comprehensive education, volunteered for Citizens Advice after her retirement and loved entertaining. Peter's passion was model aeroplanes. In his 70s he took flying lessons and flew solo at the age of 76.

Hanna and Peter delighted in their grandchildren Rachel and Daniel and were very loyal to their many friends. As they became older they continued to share an interest in other people and the world around them.

**Helen and Debbie Singer**



Miloš Forman on the *Amadeus* film set

## Miloš Forman

Born Czechoslovakia 18 February 1932

Died USA 13 April 2018

**Miloš Forman was a masterly filmmaker with a subversive touch who twice won the Oscar for Best Picture, namely: *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* and *Amadeus*.**

Forman's sympathy for the odd man out was always apparent, never more so than in these two films. He was a director, screenwriter, actor and professor who, until 1968, lived and worked in the former Czechoslovakia.

Forman believed himself to be the son of Anna and Rudolf Forman, both Protestant. During the Nazi occupation, as member of the anti-Nazi underground, Rudolf was arrested for distributing banned books and died under interrogation in the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp; Anna died in Auschwitz. Miloš was raised by relatives and subsequently discovered that his biological father was, in a fact, a Jewish architect, Otto Kohn, who survived the Holocaust in Ecuador and moved to New York in 1945.

Forman later studied screenwriting at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and went on to become an important component of the Czechoslovak New Wave. His 1967 film *The Firemen's Ball*, on the surface a naturalistic representation of an ill-fated social event in a provincial town, was seen by both film scholars and authorities in Czechoslovakia as a biting satire on Eastern European Communism. As a result, it was banned for many years in Forman's home country.

During the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 Forman was working in Paris, so did not return to Prague but left Europe for the United States. He later said that his greatest joy in making *Amadeus* was that he could film it in the country of his birth.

Forman liked to coax star performances out of lesser-known actors, which is magnificently manifested in Louise Fletcher's portrayal of the dictatorial Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, for which she won the Oscar for Best Actress.

Forman was also nominated for a Best Director Oscar for *The Silence of the Lambs* and *The People vs. Larry Flynt*. He won Golden Globe, Cannes, Berlinale, BAFTA, Cesar, David di Donatello, European Film Academy and Czech Lion awards.

He was a hearty bon vivant, at times also depressive. He took American citizenship in 1975, was married three times and leaves four sons.

**Kathy Cohen**

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## AJR FILM CLUB

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## LUNCH

Wednesday 13 June 2018

At Alyth Gardens Synagogue

12.30pm

We are delighted to be joined by

**Susy Richman**

Director of March of the Living



The March of the Living is an international, educational program that brings Jewish people from all over the world to Poland on Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, to march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the largest concentration camp complex built during World War II.

Call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070  
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# Events and Exhibitions

## ON BEING SECOND GENERATION

A facilitated workshop for children of survivors and refugees, to explore together how being Second Generation has affected their lives. It will be led by psychologist and psychotherapist Gaby Glassman, who is also an AJR Trustee.  
11.00am, Sunday 3 June, JW3

## THIRD GENERATION: THE HOLOCAUST AND ME

Grandchildren of survivors and refugees are invited to join a discussion group to explore the significance of the Holocaust in their own lives, their identities, their relationships with the world and their own sense of Jewishness? It will be facilitated by psychotherapist David Polak, himself a grandchild of survivors.  
11.00am, Sunday 10 June, JW3

## MY PARTNER IS SECOND GENERATION

The first ever workshop exclusively for those living with Second Generation of the Holocaust, to enable partners to be open about their own "unique" circumstances with others who may feel the same way.  
2.00pm, Sunday 14 June, JW3

**Tickets to these three events are £8 each and can be booked online at [www.jw3.org](http://www.jw3.org), or via [melissa@melissarosenbaum.com](mailto:melissa@melissarosenbaum.com).**

## ABOVE THE DROWNING SEA

In 1939 thousands of Jewish refugees secured visas to Shanghai thanks to the intervention of the Chinese consul in Vienna, Ho Feng Shan. As part of Refugee Week 2018 there will be a screening of a new French Canadian documentary film about this very special man who risked his own life and all he had to save others who were neither kin nor countrymen.  
8.45pm, Wednesday 20 June, BFI Southbank  
[www.whatson.bfi.org.uk](http://www.whatson.bfi.org.uk)

## ONE OF THE BOYS

To mark the anniversary of the 'Burning of the Books', Michael Freedland and Daniel Finkelstein will discuss Michael's new book on one of the Jewish Community's most remarkable and iconic figures, *Ben Helfgott – The Story of One of the Boys*.  
7.30pm, Wednesday 13 June, JW3  
**020 7433 8988 or online [www.jw3.org.uk](http://www.jw3.org.uk)**

## EMIGRÉ CULTURE

Hosted by the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies at the University of London, the British scholar and poet Jeremy Adler will speak on 'The Contribution of German-Jewish Emigrés to British Culture', followed by a reception.  
6pm, Thursday 14 June, Senate House, London WC1.  
[Jane.lewin@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Jane.lewin@sas.ac.uk)

## MY DEAR ONES

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg will talk about the process of discovering the old letters and documents which led him to write his latest book, *My Dear Ones*, setting the lives of five of his relatives in the context of the Final Solution. He will share extracts from the book and the impact of the contents of an old suitcase upon himself, and the wider family.  
3pm, Sunday 1 July, The Liberal Jewish Synagogue, London NW8  
[davidwirth@secondgeneration.org.uk](mailto:davidwirth@secondgeneration.org.uk)

## NEW AJR PLAQUE AT BUNCE COURT



On Monday 25 June 2018 the AJR will unveil a new plaque in honour and memory of Anna Essinger and her role in establishing Bunce Court as a boarding school for so many Jewish children.

The ceremony, which will take place at Bunce Court West near Faversham in Kent (ME13 0BU), will begin shortly after 1pm, with tea provided afterwards.

We are very grateful to Julia and George Miller, the current owners of Bunce Court for their hospitality and agreement to the Plaque.

**Please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk) if you would like to join us.**

## Outing to Eltham

The AJR is organising an outing on Thursday 19 July to Eltham Palace, a magnificent Art Deco Mansion, set in a medieval palace setting.

AJR members will enjoy a guided tour around the house, showing off the stunning interiors and furnishing that reflecting the high fashion of 1930s. We will also visit the medieval Great Hall, childhood home of Henry VIII,



before lunch in the cafeteria and time to look around the magnificent landscaped gardens.

**Please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)**

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