



# AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## Kindertransport @ 80

On 2nd September Safe Passage is organising a National Day of Action calling on the British government to arrange safe passage for child refugees trying to come to Britain.



Kindertransport from Berlin, 20 June 1939

Three months later we will be commemorating the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Kindertransport*, the arrival of nearly 10,000 unaccompanied child refugees in Britain. These children included Lord Alfred Dubs, the artists Frank Auerbach and Eva Frankfurter, the critic SS Prawer and the historians JAS Grenville and Sidney Pollard.

The first transport arrived in Harwich on December 2, 1938, bringing about 200 children from a Jewish orphanage in Berlin. The last transport from Germany left in September 1939, just before war began. The last from the Netherlands left on May 14, 1940, the day the Dutch surrendered to Germany. Most of the transports went by train from Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and other major cities in central Europe. They travelled to ports in Belgium and Holland, from where the children sailed to Harwich.

The story of the *Kindertransport* has come to symbolise everything that is honourable about how Britain welcomed refugees and not surprisingly this feel-good version has been preferred to the more shameful aspects of British policy towards refugees fleeing persecution from central Europe.

It is part of a fascinating history of the Holocaust and memory. For years there was silence about the Holocaust and the *Kindertransport* was part of this early silence. The child refugees were not talked about. Their experience was largely ignored.

Then the floodgates opened in the 1960s and '70s, with Holocaust films such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959), *Judgment at Nuremberg* (1961) and *The Pawnbroker*  
*Continued on page 2*

## SHANA TOVA

We hope you will enjoy reading this September issue of the AJR Journal, which marks the end of a glorious hot summer and the start, we hope, of a wonderful Jewish new year.

Highlights in this issue include reports of visits to Uelzen, Minsk and Eltham Palace, an analysis of Jewish humour, and a tribute to the outgoing chairman of the Wiener Library.

We also carry reflective pieces on Bournemouth's Green Park hotel and on reclaiming the family silver, and a moving account of the recent Berlin to London bike ride from three generations.

The AJR wishes all our readers a sweet, healthy and peaceful new year.

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## Kindertransport @ 80 (cont.)

(1964); books such as Wiesel's *Night* (translated 1960), Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1962) and Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* (1965).

Then in the 1970s TV brought stories of the Holocaust to more mainstream audiences, with *The World at War* (1973) and the American drama series, *Holocaust* (1978). But the climax of this new awareness of the Holocaust came in the 1990s with Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993) and the American Holocaust museum in Washington DC (1993).

It is perhaps no coincidence that Diane Samuels's play, *Kindertransport*, was first performed in 1993, just when public interest in the Holocaust was at its height. Only a few years before, Bertha Leverton and Bea Green, themselves Kindertransport children, organised the Reunion of Kindertransport, a 50th-anniversary gathering of kindertransportees, in London in June 1989.

Over the last 30 years public awareness of the *Kindertransport* took off. The first documentary film was *My Knees Were Jumping: Remembering the Kindertransports*, which was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival in 1996 and released theatrically in 1998. *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* won the Academy Award in 2000 for best documentary feature. WG Sebald's masterpiece, *Austerlitz* (2001), tells the story of a *Kindertransport* boy brought up in a Welsh manse who later traces his origins to Prague and goes back there. Since then a memorial was erected at Liverpool Street Station in 2006 and there have been many more dramas, books and documentaries and this year a revival of Diane Samuels' play marked its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

It is not hard to see the appeal of the story of the *Kindertransport*. These are deeply moving stories of children separated from their parents, sent into the unknown, having to deal with terrible loss and the problems of assimilation. Not surprisingly many of the most famous stories of the Holocaust are about the experience of children: *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Night*, Kosinski's *Painted Bird*, Judith Kerr's memoir, *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*, and, more recently, *The Boy in Striped*

*Pyjamas*. The stories of the *Kindertransport* have the same appeal: terrible things happening to children.

After the long silence and then the outpouring of accounts of the *Kindertransport*, there has come a third kind of reckoning with the experience of these child refugees. Historians have started to tell a more complicated story.

Earlier this year, Tony Kushner published *Journeys from the Abyss: The Holocaust and Forced Migration from the 1880s to the Present*. In a chapter on child refugees, Kushner reminds us that the *Kindertransport* were not the only child refugees to come to Britain. During the First World War over 50,000 children came from Belgium, returning home after the war. Several hundred Serb children were also admitted and during the Spanish Civil War nearly 4,000 Basque children were allowed into Britain. The *Kindertransport* may be the best-known example of a humanitarian attempt to rescue children, but there were others, now largely forgotten.

Why do we remember some refugees and not others? As Kushner points out, there are memorials to the *Kindertransport* but not to Belgian and Basque children and those who rescued them. And why are we so much more interested in the 10,000 children who came on the *Kindertransport* than the 20,000 who came as domestic servants? It is a more complicated story than we realised.

Writing in *The Guardian* in 2015, the historian David Cesarani pointed out that, "the chief rabbi at that time, Joseph Hertz, fulminated against evacuating Jewish children from Nazi-controlled lands only to place them in the homes of Christians. [Nicholas] Winton arranged for at least 60 Jewish children, 10% of the total brought out of Prague, to be given into the care of the Barbican Mission, an organisation devoted to converting Jews to Christianity."



This summer many were appalled that child immigrants were separated from their parents as they tried to enter America. This was regarded as deeply inhumane. This was also the experience of the Jewish child refugees who came to Britain on the *Kindertransport*, forced to leave their homes and their families. And even when they arrived, writes Cesarani,

"Youngsters were torn from older siblings. Many went to homes where they were raised as Christians after the Jewish organisations, overwhelmed and cash-strapped, lost track of them. Some suffered exploitation and sexual abuse."

In his book, *Final Solution* (2016) Cesarani wrote, "Jewish children from Orthodox backgrounds frequently ended up with non-Jewish families who did not have a clue about their needs."

In *Flight from the Reich* (2009) by Deborah Dwork and Jan Van Pelt, they quote Anna Essinger, founder and director of Bunce Court School, "Thousands of children were saved, but these were necessarily hurried arrangements, and perhaps it was only natural that serious mistakes could not be avoided." Many lived with these "mistakes" all their lives. In his book, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War* (2012), Bernard Wasserstein wrote of letters between parents and refugee children, "Perhaps the most saddening aspect of these exchanges is the way in which, slowly but inexorably, the reader sees physical separation leading to mental and spiritual estrangement."

Above all, of course, the *Kindertransport* was a drop in the ocean. For all its humanity, writes Wasserstein, it "managed to evacuate only a fraction of the children endangered by Nazi persecution." France and America chose not to follow the British example.

We are increasingly aware of the parallels between today and the 1930s, comparing Jewish refugees with the many refugees risking their lives and their children's lives to escape the poverty and terrible violence of Central America, North Africa and the Middle East. As we try to make decisions about today's immigrants and refugees, we should reconsider the story of the *Kindertransport*. We shouldn't mythologise the past. We should face history in all its complexities.

David Herman

# Thank You Anthony

We at the AJR would like to pay tribute to the outgoing Chairman of the Wiener Library, who has been so instrumental in bringing our two organisations closer together.



Three generations of Spiros: Anthony and Ludwig at Simon's graduation at Cambridge in 2010

Anthony Spiro – who is also a trustee of the AJR – steps down this month after 15 years, during which he spear-headed the Library's move to Russell Square in 2011 and helped to reinforce its position as the world's oldest Holocaust archive and Britain's largest collection on the Nazi era. In addition to its permanent archives and ongoing research programmes, the Wiener Library mounts at least three temporary exhibitions a year, which have helped to treble the number of visitors to the building as well as increase use of its beautiful Reading Room.

Anthony's relationship with the Library was initially through his parents. In the early 1980s his mother Anna was the Library's first volunteer, while father Ludwig – the late Life President of the AJR – was a trustee. Anthony himself had a successful career as a communications director and consultant. In 2003 he was invited to become a trustee of the Wiener Library, taking over the chair shortly afterwards. He has worked closely alongside director Ben Barkow and other staff and trustees to raise the Library's profile and strengthen its relationships with the AJR and other key organisations involved in Holocaust memorialisation and education. The AJR was the largest

funder behind the purchase of the Library's new premises, regarding its custodial role essential in honouring AJR members and preserving the truth of their experiences for future generations.

The Wiener Library receives around 70 personal collections each year and Anthony and the team there are very grateful for any documents submitted by AJR members and other people connected with the Holocaust. As Anthony says, even a couple of seemingly innocuous postcards can turn out to be of great historical value.

Although he is stepping down from the chair, Anthony hopes to continue to be involved with the Library on a voluntary basis and will remain a trustee of the AJR. His is also a trustee of the Freud Museum and a member of the Independent Monitoring Board of Wandsworth Prison, as well as actively involved with the Prince's Trust.

We are grateful to have his continued and much valued input as an AJR trustee, and look forward to establishing a close relationship with his successor at the Wiener Library, Anthony Landes.

Jo Briggs

## NORTHERN GATHERING



Michael Newman and Lilian Black

AJR members from Leeds, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester and Bradford recently gathered together at Prestwich Hebrew Congregation for our annual Northern regional get-together. After coffee and lots of reconnecting with old friends and a welcome from our Chief Executive, Michael Newman, short speeches were given by the head of the Volunteers' department, Carol Hart and the head of the Social Work department, Sue Kurlander.

Sender Gross then introduced AJR members to a new innovation called 'Sparko', a device that connects to a TV to allow easy access to the 'outside world' via a remote control. It will be especially useful to members who cannot easily leave their homes. It allows the user, amongst many other things, to contact family by video call, watch personally selected films, send messages and even play Bridge!

After a delicious salmon lunch Lilian Black, Chair of the Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association in Leeds showed AJR members some preview images of the new 'state of the art' Holocaust Heritage and Learning Centre due to shortly open on the campus of Huddersfield University. Lilian explained how this excellent project has come to fruition and answered numerous questions from our members. All our guests then headed home in the sunshine, having enjoyed a really wonderful day.

Wendy Bott

*Note from Editor: Our October issue will carry a full report from this month's opening of Huddersfield's new Holocaust Heritage and Learning Centre.*

# Two incredible days

**In 2017, googling my mother's name led me down a path I could never have imagined. With the help of Debbie Cantor at World Jewish Relief and Elise Bath at the Wiener Library I have discovered so much I didn't know about my family.**

The internet introduced me to two people who were researching my mother's two brothers, uncles I never met; one of them a historian at the University of British Columbia, the other a lady in Hamburg whose grandmother had worked for my Uncle Hermann in Uelzen, the town from which my maternal family had originated.

In all my 79 years I had never really known where Uelzen was. Nevertheless, on 14th June this year my husband and I set out with our new German friend, Doris Benter, the 47 miles from Hamburg to Uelzen. We met Doris at the main Hamburg station, the same station from which my two sisters and brother had departed for England on a Kindertransport in 1939, and from which my mother and I, as a baby, had also left for London a few weeks later.

In Uelzen we were met by a local historian, Dietrich Banse. He was delighted to meet a surviving member of the Benjamin family for the first time. The Benjamins were a highly respected and well-known family in the area; indeed, they were the first Jewish family to reside there. My great-great-grandfather had bought a plot of land to be used as a Jewish cemetery and miraculously it has survived. The gravestones still stand, including those of several of my family, some nearly two hundred years old but still readable. I had never known these ancestors but it was still immensely emotional.

Later we visited Uelzen town hall, on the outer wall of which was a metal plaque recording both the names of local Jews who had perished in the Holocaust and those who had fled to freedom. Three names were those of my relatives, one of them murdered at Chelmo.

After lunch we stood outside the site of my grandfather and uncle's cleaning and dyeing business in Gudesstrasse, looking down at the Stolpersteine embedded in the pavement dedicated to their memory.

The following day was an emotional tour of Hamburg itself. We found our way to the Eppendorfer Krankenhaus, the hospital where I was born. A medical student showed us where my mother had entered the hospital, walking two and a half miles while heavily pregnant because Jews were forbidden to use public transport. My mother stayed four weeks, leaving my three siblings on their own – my father had been taken to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The Nazis forbade her to give me the name she wanted, Susi, but nonetheless I am always known by that name. The student took us to the hospital's museum which exhibited evidence of the terrible experiments that had been carried out on mentally and physically sick children during the Nazi era. He could not understand how his great grandparents' generation had acted as they did, leaving him with the guilt.



Susie Barnett beside the grave of one of her ancestors in Uelzen

A bus from the hospital took us to the park where my much older sister had hidden when she learned that my mother was pregnant with me. Through the park we walked to Charlottenstrasse where my parents had lived and where I spent the first eleven months of my life. It was from there that my father was arrested in 1938 and taken to concentration camp. Now it is the pleasantest of streets with nothing remaining of its pre-war architecture. Again, my emotions were something I cannot put into words.

In the afternoon, Doris again met us and took us to St Michaelis church, the clock tower of which my paternal grandmother would have known well because she lived nearby. We stopped for a drink in the nearby market square, unchanged from my grandmother's time. She would have walked across it almost daily. In 1942 she was deported to Poland and murdered.

These were two days of high emotion for me, a journey through my family's past. We encountered a number of younger Germans and I hid nothing of my family's experiences from them. Without exception they were sympathetic and shocked. One said that my story gave her goose pimples. Nowadays, Hamburg is a lovely city and its people most friendly and civilised. Hitler wanted me gone from Germany. He had his way in 1939, but in June 2018 I was back again!

**Susie Barnett (née Frankenberg)**



Stolpersteine in Uelzen for Susie Barnett's uncle's family

# Let there be laughter

Humour is an intrinsic part of Jewish life and Jewish identity. It helps us understand and express who we are, even in difficult times. This article has been kindly written for the AJR Journal by **Asaf Galay and Dr. Orit Shaham Gover**, curators of a special exhibition on *Jewish Humour around the World* that is currently on display at the **Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutsot**.

All around the world, Jews are famous for and have taken joy in their humour. The recent Pew survey found that 42% of American Jews believed that to be Jewish was to have a good sense of humour. Our exhibition explores why Jews take their jokes so seriously, the diversity and vitality of Jewish humour, and how many elements of Jewish joking have remained constant regardless of changes in place and language.

## How do we define Jewish humour?

*And Sara said, God has made laughter for me ... (Genesis: 21.6)*

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis and the subject of a recent lead article here in the AJR Journal, was fascinated by Jewish humour. A collector and lover of Jewish jokes, he believed they indicated a rare and healthy ability to laugh at ourselves. For Freud, Jewish humour was egalitarian and unsettling; it played with and upended our expectations, our stereotypes. For Freud, jokes revealed much about the joker but they were also a pleasure, a compensation for the difficulties of Jewish life. Following Freud, the exhibition portrays archetypes of Jewish laughter.

## When did Jewish humour begin?

If we use the broadest definition, that Jewish



PHOTO BY ELAD SARGIQ

humour is simply humour made by Jews, surely the first Jewish joke came with the first Jew? But perhaps it is more accurate to say that the first Jewish joke came with the first Jewish text. There is laughter in the Bible. The name of the patriarch Isaac is a pun on the laughter inspired by news that his aged mother would give birth. But scholars disagree as to whether there is much comedy in the Bible. For example, while some find the story of the prophet Balaam and his talking donkey funny, others argue that the sacred texts are no laughing matter.

The exhibition displays several items related to the early research in regards to Jewish laughter, such as the glasses of Sholem Aleichem and the booklet of Druyanov

## What we love to laugh about in Jewish humour?

*Yiddish is a language with a built-in humour. Where in other languages are the words to do [it] justice? Isaac Bashevis Singer*

Jewish humour reflects the diversity and length of our history. Humour is notoriously difficult to translate; it can crash on cultural and linguistic barriers. What we find funny depends on what time and society we live in, on what language we are speaking. Nonetheless, Jewish humour around the world has often revolved around certain common themes, for example Jews versus non-Jews, the Jewish mother, making fun of religion and from poverty to success. In fact Jewish comedy provides a fascinating, fun way to examine the changing position of Jewish communities.

## How do we exhibit humour?

The *Let there be Laughter* exhibition documents and applauds the genius of the Jewish laugh. It traces its

development from the roots of folklore to modern humour around the world, teasing out its implications from English, Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, German, French, Russian, Spanish and more.

The exhibition visually exemplifies the world's finest Jewish humour through joke books, comic strips, posters, personal objects that belonged to the greatest comedians, movies and art. The exhibit features an original film, "*The Standups*," with well-known Israeli comedians sharing childhood stories. It also includes a number of interactive exhibits that let visitors get hands-on with Jewish humour. A slot machine allows visitors to 'gamble' with stereotyped Jewish icons. Video clips show the various ways that Jewish references have seeped into the broader comedic culture, including the famous scene from "*The Big Lebowski*" in which Walter Sobchak grumbles about being "shomer f\*\*\*ing shabbos," and Mel Brooks portraying Moses in "*History of the World, Part I*".

However, it is "*Seinfeld*" who gets something of the royal treatment. The exhibit features an approximation of Jerry's living room, complete with a portrait of Kramer made famous in the 1992 episode "*The Letter*." Visitors can feast their eyes on a range of other paraphernalia from the 1990s megahit, including the original shirt worn by the Soup Nazi signed by Larry Thomas, the actor who played him.

***The Let there be Laughter exhibition runs until 2020. More information at [www.bh.org.il](http://www.bh.org.il)***

***Note from Editor: We'd love to hear your own thoughts about Jewish humour and how it is presented. Please email us at [editorial@ajr.org.uk](mailto:editorial@ajr.org.uk). We'll pass on any really good suggestions to Beit Hatfutsot.***

# Letters to the Editor

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

## AJR "2G"

I was very pleased to see in the July Journal the report of the AJR Scottish Second Generation members' outing to Loch Lomond. I am delighted to learn that AJR is now beginning to cater for the Second Generation specifically.

As an AJR Second Generation member and volunteer I have often wished that AJR would consider providing settings where Second Generation could meet socially. Many of us have attended workshops to air our feelings and experiences as children of survivors and refugees but social groups are a welcome development. It looks like Scotland AJR is showing the way forward. It would be good to know where other Second Generation social groups are based; selfishly I hope there is one in north London! If not, I would be willing to discuss with AJR how one could be set up. I would also be interested to know how the Second Generation fits into the AJR's long term strategy.

*Charlotte Balazs, Barnet, Herts*

**Note from editor: The AJR has for many years supported our 2G members, some with welfare support. The future needs and interests of the "2G" are under active consideration.**

## TRICKY TRANSLATION

Thank you to all the members who kindly responded to the request in our August letters page to translate the German pun "Wir sitzen jetzt am Mittelmeer und haben keine Mittel mehr".

Shoshanna Hoffman sent us a literal translation: "On the Mediterranean's bank we sit with nothing in the bank." Henry Glanz was slightly broader, with "Now we sit at the Mediterranean, but have no more assets" although admits that "...this of course does not give the meaning of the German phrase."

## HOLOCAUST DEFINITION

Regarding Ernest Kolman's comments about the use of the word 'Holocaust', I should like to say that no word can be

'owned' by anyone. Words are invented to enable us to communicate, and we need to make constant checks on whether we mean the same things by the words we use as those with whom we are communicating. I always get some interesting definitions of 'Holocaust' and 'Genocide' whenever I discuss them with school audiences.

*Ruth Barnett, London NW6*

## ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION

In response to the letter from Mendel Storz about the Evian Conference in your August issue, I should like to point out that a category of persons "deserving admission to, and support in, a foreign land" was first recognised in 1922 and an informal organisation was set up through the League of Nations. It coped with small numbers but failed when faced with thousands: Armenians, Spaniards and our own forebears. And it was not colour-blind (Abyssinians).

Post the Second World War the United Nations decided to define the category of those entitled to such assistance in the Geneva Convention 1951, Art. 1(2), as being those able to show that:

"Owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" and making it applicable to "All persons, regardless of gender, colour, religion". Thus, it declared it to be a human right to be kept safe from persecution because of race, etc. and Mr Storz would find it difficult to argue that there is not such a right, or that such a right should not exist. As with all disputed rights, entitlement requires a judicial or quasi-judicial decision. It is a matter of regret that in Britain a quasi-judicial approach was replaced with displayed hostility to asylum-seekers.

This view of refugees is shared by Matteo Salvini, the Italian Interior Minister and

by Donald Trump, amongst several other unmentionables.

*Francis Deutsch, Saffron Walden, Essex*

## SOMETHING MISSING IN BRNO...

It is a pity David Wirth did not contact the Jewish Community in Brno before going. They meet in a newly renovated centre with kosher restaurant and excellent modern library.

The community is thriving with regular services, conducted by a rabbi, and a kindergarten. The synagogue may look ordinary outside, but the interior has been beautifully restored with fabulous new ark curtains and Torah fabrics. At the cemetery a Jewish guide would have shown him the excellent small museum housed there and the prayer hall is magnificent.

A better guide could have shown him the impressive Art Deco buildings, once owned by Jews, in the centre of town. And the Tugendhat Villa is world famous. Do go again; there is much of Jewish interest to see in Brno.

*Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, Northwood*

## FAMILY REUNION



My niece, Natasha Kleeman, and I were delighted to see her article about our family reunion in the August AJR journal. We hope that AJR members enjoyed reading about the very special and emotional experience of reuniting our family who had not met all together since being dispersed around the world from Germany in the 1930s.

It was not actually the Kleeman family reunion, but the Goldstein-Isenberg reunion. After more than a year's searching and organising, we were thrilled



We hope AJR members will enjoy seeing this photo of our Chairman Andrew Kaufman, proudly displaying his MBE outside Buckingham Palace. Andrew and his wife Susie were both invited to his recent investiture at the Palace, which followed on from his nomination in the New Year Honours List for 2018.

that fifty descendants of my great-great-grandmother, Dorette Isenberg (1831-1923), were reunited in London in May.

If any AJR member is thinking of arranging an international family reunion, I would be happy to answer any questions about planning. I can be contacted on 020 8785 0323 or by email on [antra1@talktalk.net](mailto:antra1@talktalk.net)

*Ann Antrich, Surbiton, Surrey*

#### JACK AND MILLIE

To my mind, the BBC Radio 4 comedy series "Jack and Millie", which you mentioned in your August issue, trots out every stereotype and preconception about Jews that we have about each other and that others have about us. It will add fuel to the pro-Corbyn camp and anti-Semites in general. At least it should be funny...

*Shoshanah Hoffman, London, NW4*

#### ANTISEMITISM

I too attended the gathering in Parliament Square to protest antisemitism in the Labour Party. As a Holocaust survivor (hidden in France) I was horrified to witness the support for Jeremy Corbyn from a few of our fellow Jews, some of them die-hard Labour supporters come what may.

*Marcel Ladenheim, Surbiton, Surrey*

#### SINKING OF THE CAP ARCONA

Your August edition carried a very interesting report by Dr Mindu Hornick on her recent visit to Hamburg, which mentions the sinking of the Cap Arcona just days before the end of the war.

At the end of 2017 I wrote a short history of WW2 for a local High School (Northgate, Ipswich, Suffolk) which included information

about the sinking, by RAF Typhoons, of the "Cap Arcona", of the "Deutschland" and of the "Thielbeck" in the Bay of Lübeck, with thousands of prisoners locked in their respective holds drowning while their SS-guards were rescued.

I would be happy to share my report with any of your members, should you feel that this little known subject is worth pursuing by bringing it to their attention. Please let me know if this is of interest.

*Frank Bright, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk*

**Note from Editor: If you are interested in reading more about this subject please let us know.**

#### NO ANTISEMITISM

Peter Phillips, in your August issue, asks: "Who would you prefer to believe, Heinz Gruenewald or Deborah Lipstadt?"

I joined the Hammersmith Labour Party in 1946. I am still a member of the Labour Party, although not as active as I used to be. During my more active membership I was elected chairman of my constituency party during several years, ward chairman over many years and party education officer even more often.

Throughout these 72 years I have not experienced a single moment of antisemitism.

*Eric Sanders, London SW16*

#### EVIAN WELL COVERED

David Herman in his excellent and long overdue article on the Evian Conference wrote that Paul R Bartrop's book published recently is the first book devoted to this subject. May I respectfully draw his attention to Hans Habe's book 'The

Mission' first published in German in 1965 and subsequently in English in 1966. The book, although highly emotional, is deemed to be factual – Habe attended the conference as a journalist (He was also a Hungarian Jew).

*George Donath*

**David Herman replies: It is always a pleasure to receive such an interesting and positive e-mail. I didn't count Hans Habe's book 'The Mission' as a historical work because it is a novel and thus cannot be considered to be entirely factual.**



#### BROADS ENJOYMENT

Your July issue contained a report from the recent AJR holiday in the Norfolk Broads.

I felt it was a shame that the initial welcome dinner (three courses, with musical accompaniment held in the beautiful Georgian Assembly House) was not referenced in the report. I attended that event along with several other Norwich group members and enjoyed meeting the holiday makers.

*Claudia Pim, Norwich*

#### ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

A number of AJR members have recently written to us about the grey plastic envelopes that the AJR Journal arrives in. We would like to assure all readers that these envelopes are fully recyclable and are thus deemed to be no less environmentally friendly than biodegradable envelopes which need to go to landfill.

*Jo Briggs, Editor, AJR Journal*

# REVIEWS

## OPENING THE DRAWER. THE HIDDEN IDENTITIES OF POLISH JEWS

By Barry Cohen. Photographs by Witold Krassowski  
Valentine Mitchell, 2018  
ISBN-13: 978-1910383810

Barry Cohen has assembled 53 brief autobiographies from Polish Jews covering three generations. 'Those who survived the war, those who grew up under communism and the third generation that has emerged since 1989'. There is a full-page photo of almost every person interviewed, which helps you feel you are actually meeting them. What comes over most forcefully from these accounts is the sheer desperation to conceal their Jewish identities. Hanna Olszewska, born in the 1980s, noted that 'My father didn't want my mother to divulge the truth about my Jewish origins; he believed this information would destroy my life'.

The inevitable consequence of hidden identities is the shock of discovering the truth in adulthood; that you are not who you thought you were. Romuald Jakub Weksler-Waszkineł begins by stating: 'I was 35 years old, and a Catholic priest for twelve years, when I discovered I was a Jew', and that at a time when 'the Christian upbringing was fiercely anti-Jewish'. Furthermore, 'I had no idea about the Holocaust before 1968. We weren't taught about it in primary or secondary school, at the seminary or at university'. Danuta Celinska-Cedro, born in 1949, was taught at school 'that Auschwitz was a death camp for Poles'.

Hidden backgrounds inevitably included hidden surnames. Maciej Czarniecki, born in 1942, was fifty when he was told that 'my father's real name was Ashkenazy'. Janina Griebel, born in 1940, was 18 when she learned that her foster parents were not her real parents. Such situations produce difficult identity problems. Monika Rakusa, born in 1966, grapples with 'the tension that Jews in Poland experience regarding

whether to be a Polish Jew or a Jewish Pole, and the difficulty of integrating Polish and Jewish identities'. Hanna Olszewska notes that 'her identity has been evolving over the past fifteen years. At first I was a Pole with Jewish roots; then I became a Jewish Pole; and now I regard myself as a Polish Jew'.

Almost all the interviewees belong to Jewish organisations and a few of them note improvements in wider social attitudes. Yet the 2015 electoral victory of the Law and Justice party has served to fortify traditional negative images. Barry Cohen informs us that 'The changing atmosphere compelled a couple of interviewees to withdraw their participation in this book, citing their fears of going public'. Izabela Wojnarowicz, born in 1974, didn't hide her Jewish identity: 'Many bad things happened to me. On several occasions someone daubed a swastika on my house and wrote: *Juden raus*'.

These accounts from three generations of Polish Jews contain many moving and dramatic stories. I imagine that many readers will find it particularly powerful to read of the travails of their own generation and to ponder how they might have coped with the circumstances described.

*Michael Levin*

## BOOKS BY AJR MEMBERS

### THE HIDDEN GIRL

By Marika Henriques  
Shepherd-Walwyn Ltd  
ISBN 978-856835223

This very attractive hardback book records in words and images how its author was affected by having to go into hiding as a child and deny that she was Jewish.

Marika was born in Budapest in 1935 and was nine when she was separated from her family. Fascism was followed by communism after the war, but in 1956 she escaped Hungary, aged 21, coming to England. Here she became a Jungian psychotherapist and, in doing so, had to

personally undergo psychoanalysis. Drawings and poems poured out of her as part of the healing process and many of these are in the book, along with pictures of tapestries which she also made.

Although not great works of art, the pictures are very nice to flick through and offer insights into her feelings towards survival and to those who didn't survive. The essays and poems are well written and make very interesting and thought-provoking reading.

### A LOST INHERITANCE

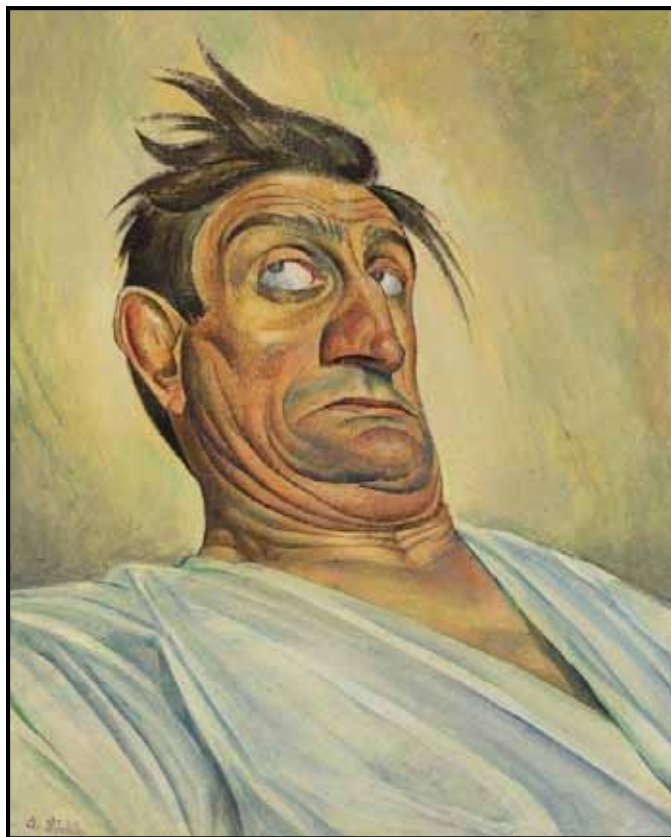
By John Buck  
Rochart  
ISBN 978-9558582-3-9

The artist Albert Schaefer-Ast was born in Wuppertal in 1980. In the mid-1930s he encountered opposition owing to his anti-fascist views and because his wife was Jewish. She and their daughter Susanne fled to Britain while Schaefer-Ast survived the war in Prerow, on the Baltic coast. After WW2 Schaefer-Ast was confined to East Germany and Susanne and her mother, Steffie, somehow managed to send him occasional food parcels despite food rationing in the UK.

During his lifetime Schaefer-Ast was famous for his humorous drawings, book and magazine illustrations and watercolour nature studies. Schaefer-Ast died in 1951 and his artworks were illegally expropriated by the government of the GDR. For more than 45 years the whereabouts of these artworks was unknown and his daughter Susanne died in 2002 without ever finding out what happened to them. In 2012 her husband, John Buck, discovered that many of Schaefer-Ast's works were being offered for sale by an art gallery in the former East Germany and managed to halt the illegal sale. He is the author of *A Lost Inheritance* and has now brought many of these delightful pictures together in this small book, together with the narrative explaining how they were misappropriated and then found.

# ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

It was a strange, unsettling period; the brief hiatus between two world wars, when Germany took the world into darkness. During the Weimar Republic anti-militarism and liberalisation driven by economic uncertainty inspired artists to project their sense of fantasy and the grotesque, using cabaret and circus metaphors. It was known as *Neue Sachlichkeit* – the New Objectivity. As Germany hovered between capitalism and socialism, unemployment spiralled. Speculators grew rich, then lost money and often committed suicide.



*The Acrobat Schulz* by Albert Birkle, 1921

**Tate Modern** is showing the art of the Weimar Republic in **Magic Realism**, a term invented in the early 1920s by German art historian Franz Roh. He saw two versions; classical artists observing everyday life, and the “verists”, who satirised realism to expose social inequality. We understand Magic Realism from Latin American writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez or Isabelle Allende, but there are historical parallels with Weimar artists whose raw imagery turned reality on its head.

These chroniclers of their time satirised social inequalities as the Republic veered towards



*Conversation Piece* by Rudolf Schlichter

National Socialism. The New Objectivity was rooted in Expressionism. There are no smiling faces in this show: some subjects appear as rigid automatons, some as neo-classical throwbacks, like **Sergius Pauser's** *Self Portrait with Mask*, referencing a Florentine Old Master holding a *memento mori*. Some are surreal, such as **Conrad Felixmüller's** *The Beggar of Prachatic* in which a vagrant, overcome by the trauma of war, lies on the pavement whose very cobbles seem to enclose him, merging his personal upheaval with that of society.

A mere 20 years separated the two world wars. As memoirs and literature revealed the extent of the deaths in the trenches, Weimar artists reflected their trauma, their rejection of pre-war idealism, and religious certainties. **Herbert Gurschner** distorts Christian imagery in his powerful paintings, *Triumph of Death*, *The Annunciation* and *Lazarus (The Workers)*. Others, while rejecting Christianity, were drawn to spiritual alternatives, such as Rudolf Steiner's mystical anthroposophy, or the Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore whose German lectures promoted a spiritual approach to Hinduism. But as the economy plummeted again during the Depression, the sense of betrayal of the war dead nourished National Socialism.

**Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, George Grosz, Jeanne Mammen, Rudolf Schlichter** and

others inverted beauty to present alternative truths. **George Grosz's** *Self Portrait with Model in the Studio* shows the artist's lascivious view of his naked model, as he leers cynically into his palette; in **Otto Dix's** *Lili, the Queen of the Air*, a blonde in glasses grins eerily beneath a clock, suggesting time as the enemy of youth. Jeanne Mammen's *At the Shooting Gallery* is a coldly female take on violence and city life. In *Anni, (Girl with a fan)* Beckmann makes the viewer complicit in a darker secret in the girl's liaison with an admirer. **Heinrich Maria Davringhausen's** *The Poet Daubler* and *The Gardener*, resemble cynical tycoons in bright red suits. There are graphic suicide drawings.

**Lea Grundig's** apocalyptic pen and ink *Into the Abyss* shows Holocaust victims entwined as in a Breughel inferno, and captures the terror this artist experienced during the Holocaust. The Weimar Republic ultimately failed because German right-wing forces subdued it. But artists caught the message.

## Annely Juda Fine Art

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

**CONTEMPORARY  
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

# LOOKING FOR?

The AJR regularly receives messages from members and others looking for people or 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.

## FROM VIENNA TO NORWICH

Maureen and Barry Leveton wish to hear from anyone who came (or is descended from someone who came) to Norwich from Vienna in spring, 1939. The transport was a private initiative by the Norwich Hebrew Congregation together with the Quakers of Norwich and was not part of the Kindertransport organisation. The information is required in connection with a proposed new Heritage Centre at Norwich Synagogue.  
*mleveton351@gmail.com*  
(or phone 01603 749706)

## WARTIME EVACUATION

Ross Montgomery is a children's author who is researching a book set during the Blitz and is keen to hear from any AJR members willing to talk about their experiences coming from Germany on the Kindertransport. He is particularly interested to speak to any Kinder who were evacuated to rural Britain or who lived around the London borough of Lambeth.  
*rossjamesmontgomery@googlemail.com*

## FAMILY JARECKI/LOEWENSTERN

In connection with the family of Max and Alice Löwenstern (née Jarecki), Richard Schoutissen of the Stichting Oorlogsslachtoffers seeks information

on Rosa Jarecki, née Levy (born Cologne 14.03.1867, died London 25.2.1941). She lived at 121 College Hill Road, Harrow; her remains were repatriated to the Jüdischer Friedhof Bocklemünd in Cologne.  
*info@oorlogsslachtoffers.nl*

## MAX HOCHNER

Beverly Starno is researching her father's first cousin from Czechoslovakia, Max Hochner. He survived the war in England and Beverly believes he married, divorced and went back to Czechoslovakia after the war. She would like, if possible, to find a child or grandchildren.  
*theromanbar@gmail.com*

## JULIUS NEUBERGER

Beata Tomczyk, a volunteer at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site who is involved in the project The Book of Remembrance for Former Prisoners of The Dachau Concentration Camp, is hoping to locate relatives of a teacher from Würzburg/Nürnberg named Julius Neuberger, born 5 October 1905 in Mühlfeld, died February 1945 in Kaufering. She believes his siblings Paula, Johanna (who became Johanna Sonnenschein) and Justin (who changed his name to John Jack Newton) all lived in the Manchester/Salford area.  
*asf2@gedaechtnisbuch.org*

## LEEDS HOSTEL

Rivy Gordon is researching the Jewish Refugee Hostel in Leeds which opened in 1938/39. Her great-uncle Solomon (Shlomo) Spira, who came from Czechoslovakia with his wife Lotte (Liba), before the war, was Superintendent there before he moved to the US in 1950  
*rivy1@hotmail.com*

## KINDER LUNCH



20 Kinder were delighted to welcome Lord Livingston to the monthly lunch. He spoke with great humour about his career, both in industry and politics.

After graduating with an economics degree from the University of Manchester at the age of 19, he trained as an accountant with Arthur Anderson where, on assignment, he became the first chief accountant of The Independent newspaper.

He was spotted by Sir Stanley Kalms and moved to the corporate development department of Dixons Group in 1991, before becoming the youngest FTSE 100 finance director at the age of 32. Under the CEO John Clare, Livingston became instrumental in creating PC World and the broadband provider Freeserve, before moving to British Telecom as their Chief Executive.

Lord Livingston also told us of his visit to Israel with David Cameron and his support of the Jewish community through sitting on the board of Jewish Care.

Members then asked Lord Livingston questions – most of which appeared to relate to their issues with British Telecom, their internet provider

*Judith Fodor*

Please note the AJR  
**ANNUAL LUNCH  
AND CONCERT**

will take place on  
**SUNDAY  
21 OCTOBER 2018**

**Please use  
booking form to book**

# My visit to Minsk



The Mayor of Cologne with Kurt Marx.

On Friday 29 June I attended the inauguration of the Holocaust Memorial in Minsk, Belarus.

The largest Nazi extermination camp in White Russia was here in Mali Trostenets from 1941 – 1943, when they retreated as the Soviets advanced. It is estimated that anywhere between 60,000 and 220,000 people were murdered here by the Germans. Before they left they tried to erase all proof of what had happened

Since that time the area of the camp has been hidden and neglected, it was difficult to see and find and has been used as a rubbish dump.

The IBB, a German educational and benevolent organisation from Dortmund, has been working in Minsk to foster friendly and closer association with Belarus. They have been instrumental in creating this memorial and remembrance park.

The German, Austrian and Belarus presidents were there for the inauguration and many international ambassadors attended.

All three presidents addressed the meeting, and their speeches were important: the German president spoke of the guilt they still feel for what happened, of the Jewish victims and many other innocent people who lost their lives in

Mali Trostenets. The Austrian president also talked about the thousands who lost their lives here.

Many journalists and TV crews from all over Europe attended and the event was reported all over the continent.

The reason for my being there was that my parents, other members of my family, my old headmaster, Dr Erich Klibanski, who was instrumental in bringing me to Britain with the Kindertransport together with another 130 pupils of his school 'Jawne ' in Cologne, were murdered there. He was unable to save himself or his wife and children.

For me it was a very important event; a few of the original members of the ghetto still live in Minsk. They called me a *Zeitzeuge*, a witness. There are not too many of the pre-war generation around anymore. As a memorial it is a place of remembrance and it was a kind of closure for me; it may become a place to visit and a place to remind people of what happened 75 years ago.

There were many feelings and impressions and it is difficult for me to put them to paper. What I do hope is that when this place of memorial becomes known it will be visited and will get the respect and honour it deserves after all these years.

**Kurt Marx**

[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.

Contact Jonathan on

020 8455 9139

or 07813 803 889

for more information

## WHY NOT TRY AJR'S MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE?

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

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

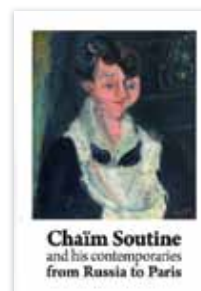
The cost is £7.00 for a three-course meal (soup, main course, desert) plus a £1 delivery fee.

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

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



## BOOK SALE



### Chaim Soutine and His Contemporaries: From Russia to Paris

48 pages, extensively referenced and illustrated, softback

RRP £30 – SALE PRICE £15 – FREE P&P

+ Special Offer – FREE COPY 80 pages Highlights from the Ben Uri Collection  
[alixs@benuri.org](mailto:alixs@benuri.org) | [www.benuri.org](http://www.benuri.org)

# Enjoying Eltham



Eltham Palace



Some of the AJR group learning all about the Great Hall at Eltham Palace

It was a long journey, but all the 30+ AJR members who took part in our July outing to Eltham Palace in South East London felt it was well worth the effort.

Once a huge palace built by King Edward IV and later occupied by a young Henry VIII, many kings and eminent personages passed through its ancient doors until its decline in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when much of the palace was ransacked by Parliamentary troops.

The building was purchased in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Stephen and Virginia Courtauld of the eponymous textiles dynasty who rebuilt it as a dazzlingly sophisticated 1930s semi-rural bolthole. They filled their new home with every mod con available at the time and were known for their hospitality,

constantly inviting famous literary and Government officials to share their luxury.

Approaching Eltham Palace one crosses the moat via a bridge built in 1396, with a Tudor parapet and 1930s coping. Next comes a grand turning circle below a vaguely Renaissance facade. Then one steps into a vast Modernist interior, topped with a dome and finished off with a vast, circular, abstract carpet.

The property is now owned by English Heritage who welcome over 100,000 visitors a year and who have added a visitor centre with tea rooms and a shop as well as a delightful playground frequented by local mums.

The AJR delegation was taken round in two groups, both led by expert guides. Members marvelled at the chic Art Deco interior of the new wings, so typical of the day. Highlights

include white furniture covers with black piping, speakers that filtered music from a concealed gramophone, the inbuilt vacuuming system, the underfloor heating, the guests' payphone, Stephen's masculine bedroom, across the landing from Virginia's suite with its semi-circular bed niche and ensuite bathroom with a gold mosaic apse and crystal balls.

The glamour of its early 20<sup>th</sup> century history does not detract from its staggering royal pedigree: monarchs have stayed here since Edward I visited the manor house built by a Bishop of Durham, of which some foundations still remain. The medieval Great Hall, originally modelled on Hampton Court and now lovingly restored, hints how Eltham was once one of the largest palaces in England.

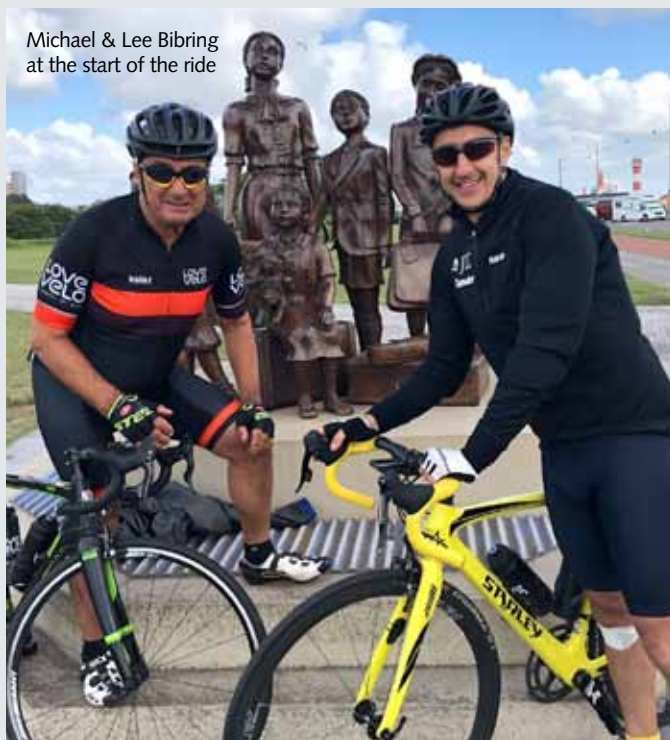
The Courtaulds left Eltham in 1944, driven out by the increasing frequency of bombing raids on London and the difficulty of getting staff. Ten incendiaries landed on the house itself, one of them smashing the end of the Great Hall. The palace then housed Army education units until English Heritage took over in the 1990s.

Guided tours over, the AJR group enjoyed a delicious lunch in the tea rooms and an hour to explore the house and gardens at their leisure before boarding the coach back to north London. The journey back was much quicker, marking the end of a super day out for all.

**Meta Roseneil & Jo Briggs**



# CYCLING TO HONOUR THE KINDERTRANSPORT



Michael & Lee Bibring at the start of the ride



Harry & Michael Bibring at the end of the WJR Bike Ride

I heard about the bike ride from Berlin to Liverpool Street Station in London to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport and just had to sign up straight away.

This wonderful initiative in 1938 by the forerunner of WJR and the British Government saved my father and his sister. Without it I wouldn't be here.

My son Lee and I felt the same. It was a simple decision for us. When we assembled early in the morning at Friedrichstrasse Station the emotion kicked in immediately. The rumbling of the trains leaving that morning transported us all back to those grim days when grieving parents saw their precious children leave. For many that was the last time they would see one another. How was that possible? How did they cope?

We stood by Frank Meisler's wonderful statue and chatted to two elderly Berliner Jews who were cleaning the statue and ridding it of litter and cigarette ends, as they did every week. So sad yet so poignant.

Under police escort we set off on the 600 mile journey. Long days in the saddle with huge headwinds throughout but a sense of belonging and friendship between the 40 plus riders, all of whom had their stories and reason for riding

My son Lee and I were cycling as a tribute to my dad and in memory of his sister but everyone had a reason and it was so humbling to hear the different stories. We crossed the very railway tracks that ferried these trains and their carriages full of children from the hatred in Europe to safety and a new life in England. We took photos of our bikes on those tracks and reflected on the terrible fate of those on the trains travelling east to the death camps. How could life have been so different?

When we crossed into Holland and paused at the border, I couldn't help reflecting on the thoughts that the children would have had all those years ago as friendly faces cheered and pushed sweets and toys through the carriage windows.

The feeling of safety and security as we assembled at the Meisler statue at the Hook of Holland and then some tears as we were welcomed by local dignitaries in a ceremony when we docked at Harwich. It was an emotional rollercoaster.

Shortly before we arrived at Liverpool St Station I swapped my bike for a tandem trike and Lee, my dad and I cycled in and crossed the line together. This was so emotional and a sense of closure perhaps.

The Kindertransport saved my dad and allowed him to build a life; without any parental guidance he made something special of his life and to this day, aged 92, speaks to schools from Aberdeen to Plymouth about his experiences. He was awarded the BEM for his services to Holocaust education and is a truly great man and an exceptional role model. My hero.

So yes, we did a long ride and yes, it was hard but compared to the sacrifices made by people like my dad, his sister and many others it was a piece of cake. It doesn't even deserve comparison with the parents of the kinder who so selflessly let their children embark on this journey

WJR's efforts to commemorate this historic event are to be applauded and the money raised will help refugees throughout the world. It was a privilege to be part of this.

**Michael Bibring**

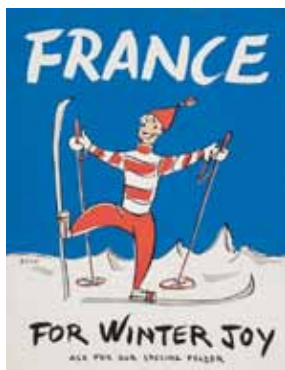
# Around the AJR

*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.*

## PINNER

Alexia Kirk, an archivist at the V&A Museum, talked about the Jewish émigrés who came to the UK “in time” and contributed so much to art and design. Some illustrations brought back memories because we recognised the artwork from “way back when”.

Henri Obstfeld



A vintage travel poster designed in 1953 by Dorritt Debb, one of the Jewish émigré artists discussed in the Pinner meeting.

## HARROGATE/YORK 'CONTINENTAL FRIENDS'.

We met for our annual summer evening at Sweet Basil Chinese restaurant for a meal enhanced by good conversation, the joy of audio books, news of children and grandchildren. It was wonderful to hear that life stories are being told on film, in a book and by spoken testimony. Holidays were discussed and travel highlights included Lake Garda, a river cruise on the Seine and the AJR tour of Norfolk.

The meal concluded with candles and ‘Happy Birthday’ for those 82 and 92 years young. It was a most enjoyable gathering.

Cathy McHutchon

## NEWCASTLE

1st and 2nd Gen Newcastle AJR met for an informal gathering at the elegant Vermont hotel in Newcastle. About thirty people enjoyed tea and scones. Family news, photos, events past and future were discussed and all present join me in thanking Agnes for organising this event.

Judith Fodor



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### Child Survivors' Association-AJR

Henri Obstfeld  
020 8954 5298 h.obstfeld@talk21.com

## SEPTEMBER 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.

Glasgow	2 September	Yom Tov Nosh lunch
Cardiff	3 September	Social get-together
Ealing	4 September	David Barnett – on Edith Morley
Ilford	5 September	Speaker: Neil Taylor, Maccabi GB
Pinner	6 September	Pam Fox – The Jews of Golders Green
Glasgow	12 September	Theatre outing to 'An Officer and a Gentleman'
Bromley CF	13 September	Social get-together at Lianne Segal
Oxford	13 September	Social get-together
Sheffield	16 September	Social get-together
Harrogate/York	17 September	Social get-together
Glasgow Book Club	20 September	Social get-together
Book Club	26 September	Social get-together
Liverpool	27 September	Geoff Woodcock – Musical Presentation
Newcastle	27 September	Outing to Beth Shalom

# Glory days at the Green Park

Many AJR members will have fond memories of The Green Park hotel in Bournemouth, which was built on the precepts of tradition, religion, family and food. Here Ushi Derman remembers its heyday.

It all began with two families, the Richmans and the Marriotts. Like many other Jews from Eastern Europe, they fled from Russia and Poland in the late 19th century and settled in the East End of London. The young Ruby Marriott and Sarah Richman fell in love and married. Ruby did not wish to become a tailor like his father, but was very ambitious and sought a more “British” occupation.

His business opportunity came from a most unexpected quarter, namely from Bournemouth, a popular and beautiful resort on the South coast. Ruby noticed an old building for sale at the top of the eastern cliff, overlooking the sea. With some help from friends and family he managed to raise the requisite sum and, after thorough renovation, his plan was to establish a trendy new hotel in Art Deco style. The hotel was inaugurated in 1943, at the height of the preparations for the invasion of Normandy. Thousands of allied soldiers flooded the small resort town, among them many Jewish soldiers, who were surprised one day to receive an invitation to a Passover Seder in the splendid, kosher, newly-named “Green Park” hotel.

This was the first of dozens of Sedarim,



Green Park Hotel in its heyday

Hanukkah celebrations and stylish Purim costume parties held in the Green Park for over 40 years, during which the hotel became a vibrant Jewish centre never before seen in England.

It was a family-run hotel, managed by the Marriotts and the Richmans. Ruby Marriott used to give a warm personal welcome to his guests at the entrance. At reception guests would be attended to by Ray Richman, who was in charge of reservations and payments. The main financier was Judy Richman, and the chief caterer was Hannah Richman. Ruby's sisters-in-law worked in the hotel for 40 years, until it closed; however, the chief operator and the grand matriarch was Bubbe Richman – quite a stocky woman, a heavy smoker, a living reminder of the old Jewish world – who would curse out loud in Yiddish and cheat at cards.

Green Park was not a humble or simple place but a fine establishment, favoured by British Jewish high society. Many

distinguished guests stayed in Green Park, such as the business magnate Sir Isaac Wolfson; the bookmaker Cyril Stein; the founder of Tesco, Sir Jack Cohen; the president of Odeon, Oscar Deutsch; the legendary music manager, Brian Epstein and many others. The hotel had magnificent suites, elegant bathrooms, card rooms and dance floors and, of course, there were the wonderfully delicious, refined kosher meals: breakfast, elevenses, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner and late-night supper. To quote a TV commercial from the 1960s: “At the Green Park hotel all of your kosher needs will be fully met! We have separate facilities for milk and meat, our fish are all fully scaled and freshly caught in the North Atlantic, it's all fresh, and of course – no pork!”

During the 1970s the hotel began to decline. New concepts and fashions, as well as increasing globalisation, gradually began to impinge on the social fabric of the place. The generation gap widened, and holidays abroad became cheaper and more trendy.

Green Park was closed in the late 1980s. Bubbe Richman passed away, followed by Ruby Marriott. The unmarried sisters Judy and Hannah Richman now live together in an elegant house in Bournemouth, not far from a hideous apartment block – an ugly monument to the most famous Jewish hotel in England that used to stand there.

*Ushi Derman*



A promotional shot for the Green Park

# CLAIMING THE FAMILY SILVER

I came as Ruth Oppenheimer from Frankfurt with the Kindertransport in June 1939. My siblings also survived, the eldest – Ernst – after a spell in Buchenwald. Later he was in the US Army in the Battle of the Bulge, he died before he was 60. My parents were murdered in Auschwitz.

We abandoned good furniture, a piano, many books, paintings, china and glassware, none of which I can describe.

I heard one could claim for lost or stolen property. A phone number was given in Germany. I only remember our silverware because my great-grandfather Pappenheim had two daughters, my grandmother Feodora, and her sister Olga who died in an accident before the Nazis arrived. In their dowries Feodora and Olga each received silver cutlery for 12 people. Olga's has for ever disappeared. My mother, who was father's second wife, brought her lovely silver cutlery into her own second marriage.

In January 1939 the order came to give

in all our valuables. My mother handed everything in, afraid that if she did not she would have a fine, or prison or both. My aunt, alone and living in a city where others did not know what she had, did not hand hers in but gave it all to a friend in Ulm. After the war, little parcels began to arrive from Ulm and eventually all twelve samples of everything were there. My aunt cried and ever after called it "Das Rheingold" or the "Treasure of the Nibelungen"!

I inherited this, and shared it with my younger brother. My siblings survived the war in France and still live as French citizens.

Now to get back to the apparent right



of which I had read, to make claims on valuables. I felt it should be the silver on which I should claim, as I could show examples of my aunt's silver, hoping that I could make a case that was credible. I phoned and someone listened carefully and then said "Und die Quittung?" ("and the receipt?") I couldn't believe it. Would my great-grandfather Pappenheim have given his daughter Feodora a receipt? Would my mother, having received the silver after Oma's death, have had a receipt? When she gave it to the local police. I am willing to swear that she did not get a receipt!

Ruth David

## WRITING AGAINST FORGETTING

In June the editor of the AJR Journal, Jo Briggs, and the project manager for 'My Story', Debra Barnes, took part in a unique project to memorialise the 66,000 Austrian Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis.

Jo & Debra are both part of a small, independent book club which decided on Vienna for its annual trip. While planning the itinerary Jo realised that the date coincided with a local project entitled "Schreiben gegen das Vergessen", whereby a local artist was organising the writing of 66,000 names along the Prater Hauptallee, and filming it for posterity.

Along with other volunteers, Jo & Debra were each given a list of names, a template and chalk, and assigned

to a particular stretch of the pavement. The irony of being on one's hands and knees on a Viennese pavement did not go unnoticed, especially as the 2018 participants had the luxury of knee pads.

"We went to Vienna to learn more about its history and see for ourselves where so many of the AJR members came from," explains Jo. "Taking part in this project felt very significant, and we each thought hard about every name that we wrote, wondering what he or she was like and praying for their souls."

Debra said "As I was writing I thought about the family of AJR member George Vulkan, who we had just written about in his My Story life book, and who all sadly perished in the Holocaust."

Other activities undertaken by Jo, Debra and their book club that weekend included



Jo & Debra taking part in the writing project

guided tours of the Jewish Museum and the old Jewish districts, plus of course some mainstream tourist attractions, such as the magnificent Belvedere and Schönbrunn Palaces.

## AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB



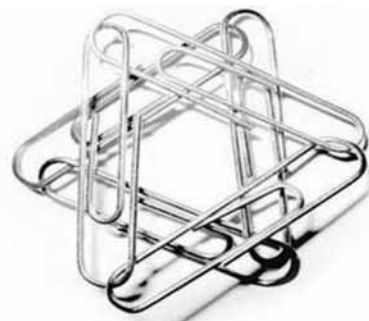
Monday 8 October 2018 at 1.00pm  
 at North Western Reform Synagogue,  
 Alyth Gardens, Temple Fortune, London NW11 7EN  
 Bridge, card games, backgammon, scrabble. You decide.  
 £7.00 per person, inc lunch



Booking is essential – when you book please let us know your choice of game.  
 Please either call Ros Hart on 07966 969951 or email roshart@ajr.org.uk

## AJR FILM CLUB

### PAPERCLIPS



on **MONDAY 17 September 2018**  
 at 12.30pm

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

**Paperclips** is a 2004 documentary film written and produced by Joe Fab, and directed by Elliot Berlin and Joe Fab, about the Paper Clips Project, in which a middle school class tries to collect 6 million paper clips to represent the 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis.

**£8.00 per person inc lunch**  
**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL**

Please either call Ros Hart on 07966 969951 or email roshart@ajr.org.uk

**JOSEPH PEREIRA**  
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[ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk)

# OBITUARIES

## MARTHA TAUSZ (née SECKL)

Born Wiener Neustadt 18 July 1920  
Died London 20 June 2018

My mother lived a long and fulfilled life after her arrival in England, just two days before Kristallnacht. Once here, she was fortunate enough to be able to arrange for her brother and two of her cousins to come to Britain on the Kindertransports.

She met my father, Gellert, in London and married him on the day Paris fell in 1940. I was born at the end of 1943 and my brother Thomas z.l" in February 1947.

My paternal grandparents also joined us in 1947 and our home became home to countless others in the family and also to friends who wanted a place to stay for a night or more. This 'open house' continued throughout my mother's life.

She joined my father's business, later on to travel with him to far flung places of the world and she also nurtured his 'career' in Synagogue matters: she was involved in the Youth club of the Synagogue, always ready to feed the hungry mouths of the club's members. When it came to the High Holyday Children's Services she was the 'prompt' – gently pushing a child forward towards the Bimah when they hadn't seen my father beckoning them. My parents were stalwarts in the organisation of these Children's Services, as were Thomas and his wife, Dilys.

My mother's warmth and affection won her many friends, most of whom she outlived.



Travelling extensively with my father and continuing to do so after his death in 1980, she also followed in his footsteps by giving illustrated talks of Jewish interest to many communities in London and to other groups. Through her encouragement I have now become a member of the AJR.

Her interest in others lasted throughout her life – the visit by Rabbi Rodney and Sue Mariner a few weeks before her death highlighted to me the many qualities of my mother I always knew – vivacious, fair, interested in everything – personal and current affairs – above all the kindness with which she treated everyone – charitable in word as well as deed. She was a wise woman whose motto was "if I don't learn something new every day I might as well be dead."

She totally supported her family; she loved and was proud of her grand children who will all miss her very much – Joanna and Jeremy, Hannah, Eleanor and Jared, and her great-grandchildren – Shula, Samson, Sebastian (my grandchildren) and Dilys' grandchildren, Samuel and Delphi (named after my mother's mother).

'She came alone but passed away leaving a tribe'  
May her memory be for a blessing to all who knew her.

Patricia J Tausz

## CLAUDE LANZMANN

Born Paris 27 November 1926  
Died Paris 28 June 2018

Claude Lanzmann, best known for his film Shoah, died in Paris aged 92. Born into a Jewish family, he was the eldest of three children of Paulette (née Grobermann) and Armand Lanzmann.

At 18 he joined the communist resistance during the occupation of France, fighting alongside his brother and father, and narrowly escaping the Gestapo. This wartime experience undeniably sowed the seeds for his work on *Shoah*.

After the war, Lanzmann was invited by Jean-Paul Sartre to contribute to the journal *Les Temps Modernes*. He, Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir joined France's intellectual left élite.



Lanzmann's journalistic work in Israel prompted him to make his first film *Pourquoi Israel* and triggered his preoccupation with the tragedy of European Jews during WW2. Indeed, it was at the 1973 New York Film Festival, where *Pourquoi Israel* was premiered, that the idea of making a film about this tragedy was conceived. Lanzmann's friend Alouf Hareven, director-general of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: 'There is no film about the Shoah, no film that takes in what happened in all its  
*Continued on page 19*

# LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



## LONDON IN JERUSALEM



British Mandatory rule of the region known at the time as Palestine but currently the State of Israel lasted only

thirty years, from 1917 (the conquest of the region by British forces and the granting of the mandate by the League of Nations) to 1948 (the declaration of independence by Israel). Although the region's history goes back several thousands of years, the effects of that brief interlude can be seen still today.

The exhibition 'London in Jerusalem', tracing just some of these effects, occupies part of the exhibition space in the ancient Jerusalem structure known as the Tower of David (the rest describes the conquest of Jerusalem and entry into the city by General Allenby). Some believe the site to be the burial place of King David although archaeological evidence dates the structure to a later period. It stands at the outer edge of Jerusalem's Old City, constituting part of the wall surrounding it and separating the old from the newer parts of the city.

The influence of British rule can be clearly seen today throughout these newer parts of Jerusalem, as the first Governor-General, Sir Ronald Storrs, ordered that any new building erected in Jerusalem had to be faced with

Jerusalem stone, thus preserving the architectural character of the city.

Under British rule Jerusalem flourished both physically and culturally, with the construction of important buildings, among them the YMCA building and the King David hotel, as well as the garden suburbs of Rechavia and Beit Hakerem. The period also saw an influx of new inhabitants, mainly from Europe but also from other parts of the Middle East, so that both the Arab and the Jewish populations grew. It goes without saying that in the 1930s Jews from Germany and other parts of Europe also made Jerusalem their home, although immigration by Jews became increasingly difficult with the restrictions imposed by the Mandatory authorities as they bowed to Arab pressure.

Nonetheless, alongside the surge in residential and public construction, social and cultural life in Jerusalem flourished. One wall of the exhibition is devoted to posters for concerts, recitals, plays, art exhibitions and dances open to the public. Alongside the growth in the population from former European countries, there was a general expansion of life in the cafés and restaurants of the city, and the exhibition contains a life-size reconstruction of an authentic Jerusalem café of the time, as well as of the famous Fink's bar, where a large number of journalists and others spent many happy hours.

One of the most outstanding legacies of British rule was the establishment of the broadcasting service, known at the time

as the Palestine Broadcasting Service (PBS). The broadcasts were in English, Hebrew and Arabic, and members of the three communities served on the programming board, although this did not preclude disputes over content and time slots. 'Jerusalem Calling,' as the station was known, played a significant role in fostering local culture, broadcasting news as well as live music, language lessons, radio plays, segments for children and youth and morning exercise programmes.

One intriguing display cabinet contains the delicate bone china tea service used by the King David hotel when VIPs came to stay. In addition, main roads were given English names, some of which have endured to this day. Thus, every Jerusalemite knows where King George street is located, though few remember that its continuation was once known as Princess Mary street. The exhibition notes point out that as well as turning Jerusalem into a financial and cultural centre, the British made it the administrative centre of the region, a status it had not enjoyed under Ottoman rule.

All in all, it is possible to look back at that brief period as one of relative peace and harmony between the different cultures, as a time of cultural blossoming and economic stability. It was also the period in which the leaders of the Yishuv, as the Jewish community was then known, were able to focus on creating the instruments of self-government and forging the path for the future State of Israel.

magnitude, no film that shows it from the viewpoint of the Jews.' In Lanzmann's autobiography *The Patagonian Hare* p.411, he describes how this exchange initiated the idea of the film *Shoah*. 'I had never thought about tackling the subject head on... but something powerful, even violent, inside me urged me to accept'.

Lanzmann's *Shoah* was a cinematic

milestone. Lanzmann refused to use archival footage, and relied on individual testimonies from survivors, witnesses and former SS officers from Chelmno, Treblinka and Auschwitz (recorded secretly), to paint the brutal reality of the Nazi genocide in a way that had hitherto not been seen. It revealed the methods and ruthlessness that enabled the Nazis to murder most of European Jewry.

*Shoah* also shows the international scale of the 'Final Solution'. The importance of Lanzmann's film was best summarised by Simone de Beauvoir: 'It will enable generations of mankind to understand one of the most malign and enigmatic moments of history'.

**Gerta Vrbova and Danny Hilton**

# Events and Exhibitions

## MAJOR FOLEY STATUE

A statue to the late great Major Frank Foley, who helped so many AJR members and other refugees to escape to Britain, will be unveiled by his local MP in the afternoon.

18 September, Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge

[www.het.org.uk](http://www.het.org.uk)

## KT ON TV



ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen – the equivalent of BBC2 in Germany) will broadcast “Rettung der Zehntausend – Die Kindertransporte”, a German film containing interviews with six AJR members, with Dr. Anthony Grenville providing background commentary. 23 September at 10.30pm (GMT) [www.zdf.de](http://www.zdf.de)

## DIGGING FOR VICTORY

Historian Helen Fry will speak about the Kitchener Camp and the Pioneer Corps.

17 October at 6pm, Wiener Library

Tickets available only at [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

A direct link to the event is on the Kitchener website at [www.kitchenercamp.co.uk](http://www.kitchenercamp.co.uk)

## SAFE PASSAGE RECEPTION

Lord Alf Dubs and Barbara Winton invite everyone connected to the Kindertransport to the 80th anniversary commemoration event.

15 November at 3.00pm, Friends Meeting House, London

[kindertransport@safepassage.org.uk](mailto:kindertransport@safepassage.org.uk)

## JEWES FROM ARAB COUNTRIES

Lilian Morav will talk about the Organisations and Governments who helped Jewish refugees from Arab countries re-settle in Britain and France.

18 November at 7.30pm, Central Synagogue, London

[www.spiroark.org](http://www.spiroark.org)

## MEMORIAL CONCERT

Dame Esther Rantzen DBE will headline at the Wiener Library's concert to mark the 80th anniversaries of Kristallnacht and the Kindertransport.

22 November at 6.30pm, Liberal Jewish Synagogue, London

[www.wienerlibrary.co.uk](http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk)

## FREE HMD RESOURCES



Pupils taking part in one of the 2018 HMD events

This month, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust launch their free resources to support anyone who would like to organise an event around the next Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) on 27 January 2019.

The pack will be launched at a parliamentary reception on 12 September. This year's theme is Torn from Home.

The life stories of Holocaust survivor, Renee Bornstein, and survivor of the Cambodia genocide, Sokphal Din, will comprise this year's postcard project whereby students read life stories in class, write their own letter to these survivors and receive a reply via their school.

The postcard project was very successful for HMD 2018 with more than 45,000 postcards written to Renie Inow, who came to the UK on the Kindertransport, and Sedin Mustafic, who survived the genocide in Bosnia.

Last year, over 11,000 HMD events took place across the country in diverse locations including libraries, museums, cinemas and prisons.

Explore all HMDT's free resources by visiting [hmd.org.uk](http://hmd.org.uk)

## AJR COURSE AT CAMBRIDGE



*Britain and the Holocaust: the refugee crisis of the 1930s and 40s* is a new online course run by the University of Cambridge and sponsored by the AJR.

Promoted within the context of the current refugee crisis, the six-week course will focus on the flight of Jewish refugees from Nazism who came to Britain in the 1930s and 40s. It will examine the causes of the crisis and what Britain did and did not do to help. Topics will include the Kindertransport; refugee organisations and their work; the methods of helping Jewish adults reach the UK; case

studies of the arrival of both prominent and ordinary Jews to the UK; and the internment of Jews as 'enemy aliens' on the Isle of Man.

The entire course, which is being run by the University's Institute of Continuing Education, will be studied online, following a weekly schedule and offering a high degree of flexibility for students.

A Certificate of Participation will be awarded to participants who contribute constructively to weekly discussions and exercises/assignments.

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For the latest AJR news, including details of forthcoming events and information about our services, visit [www.ajr.org.uk](http://www.ajr.org.uk)

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