



# AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## Torn From Home

Later this month, the theme of this year's Holocaust Memorial Day will be 'Torn from Home'. This will speak to many Jewish refugees and their families. It seems an obvious subject for HMD but in many ways the reality is more complicated than we sometimes think.



The childhood home of the late Elie Wiesel, renowned author and winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace. Last August it was vandalised with antisemitic graffiti.

There is nothing simpler than the idea of home. We think of our home as a place of safety, comfort and security. We all remember the smells of favourite meals and polish, the sounds of birds in the garden. Objects, sometimes passed down through generations, which evoke such strong memories. When my parents died, the things I wanted to keep were a set of small coffee cups that they always used after dinner parties and a couple of ugly plates and coffee cups that my father had in a small room off his studio where he would make his first cup of coffee at around four a.m. when he got up to start work. There were two other objects. A menorah that my father was given which he took with him wherever he lived, and a tallit, given to him by a fellow Jewish refugee, which always had pride of place in every home he lived in

during the next fifty years. You may also have a list of quirky objects from home, perhaps not worth much financially, but hugely precious, things which you would not part with for anything. Part of the terrible pain of being a refugee is that you are torn from this place of safety and comfort, from so many familiar things.

The great Israeli writer, Aharon Appelfeld, was born in 1932 near Czernovitz in Bukovina. When he was nine, Appelfeld was driven from his home. His mother and grandmother were killed. He and his father were deported to a concentration camp in Ukraine and he was then separated from his father. He escaped and wandered for three years through forests and fields, hiding from the Germans, and then travelled

*Continued on page 2*

### VERY POIGNANT

Home - and the missing of it - is the focus of several articles in this month's issue, including a very thought provoking Letter from Israel.

Another key theme for this issue is the continued impact of the Holocaust on the children and grandchildren of descendants. A poignant article by Peter Bohm is followed by a list of support organisations, including the AJR, and the services they offer.

We hope you enjoy reading these and other articles and wish you all the best for 2019.

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## Torn from Home (cont.)

across Europe to Palestine where he settled. His final masterpiece, *The Man Who Never Stopped Sleeping* tells how a young Jewish refugee from east Europe is haunted by flashbacks of memory, imaginary conversations with his parents who wonder why he now has a new name, a new language and a new home.

Reading this novel and his memoir, *The Story of a Life*, you realise how complicated the idea of home is for Appelfeld. Sometimes, though, for others it was the home that moved. Appelfeld's childhood homes were in Bukovina, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. "Then it became a part of Rumania. And now it's a part of Russia." This was not unusual for east Europeans. The great filmmaker Emeric Pressburger (*The Red Shoes*, *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*) was born in Hungary in 1902. In 1920 his home town Temesvar became part of Romania and was called Timisoara. Pressburger's home was now in Romania. He never lived in Hungary again.

And sometimes, worse still, homes ceased to exist completely. One of the biggest differences between west and east European Jewish refugees was that for westerners there was the possibility of returning to their home city after the war, perhaps even living there again, whereas for *Ostjuden* there was nothing to return to. First, there was the Iron Curtain, and even if they went back to east Europe their home was probably destroyed. Perhaps their entire neighbourhood. My father never went back to Warsaw. There was nothing to return to. "For me," wrote another Polish refugee, "'home' was the people left behind." And if there were no people? My mother's home in Berlin was bombed and for many years there was just an empty space where her house had been. It was never rebuilt.

Sometimes the building was still there but it had been taken over by non-Jews. The Polish-Jewish filmmaker Mira Hamermesh described in her memoir, *The River of Angry Dogs*, how she returned to visit her parents' apartment in Lodz. Her parents had been killed by the Nazis. There were no people left behind but she was curious to see

her old apartment at least, "a large flat in a fashionable part of the city." She describes her visit:

"The door opened slightly, secured by a chain. An angry voice called out, 'What do you want?' ... I mumbled something to the effect that I had once lived here."

The door is slammed in her face. The woman launches into an angry tirade:

"'Who do they think they are? Turning up as if they had rights here.'"

For Primo Levi it was very different. After Auschwitz he returned to Turin, where his mother still lived in the same apartment where he had lived all his childhood and he stayed there for the rest of his life.

Levi was fortunate. Unlike many refugees he returned home. Hamermesh had to find a new home. But this too was never simple. Refugees didn't just move once, from one home to another. Many were constantly on the move. Pressburger moved from Romania to Prague to Stuttgart to Berlin to Paris to London, all in a few years. In his London home there was one sign of his Hungarian origins: a room where he kept his Hungarian salamis.

Refugees often have a mysterious clue which says something about their first home. In her biography of the German-Jewish designer Hans Schleger, his widow Pat describes how, "When Autumn came Hans would invariably put a couple of chestnuts in his overcoat pocket which became shinier and shinier through the winter." Many years later, long after he had died, she went to visit his childhood home in Gutow, in a part of Prussia which is now Poland. "The house was surrounded by parkland with a variety of trees, including horse chestnuts."

So where do refugees feel at home? Louise Kehoe had no doubt. Her father, the Jewish Russian architect, Berthold Lubetkin, had crossed Europe. But it was when he moved to a quiet valley in Oxfordshire, only then, "for the first time in his life my father felt truly at home." The question that haunts her memoir, *In This Dark House*, is how could he feel at home in the English countryside when his family were murdered at Auschwitz?

Others never felt at home. Stefan Zweig left Austria and then moved from London to New York to Brazil, where he committed suicide. He never felt at home in any of these places.

For some home was never a house. For Zweig home meant his extraordinary collection of books, drawings and manuscripts in his house in Salzburg. It meant belonging to European culture. That was his home. The historian EJ Hobsbawm was born in Alexandria. He spent his childhood in Vienna. When his parents died, he moved to Berlin. When Hitler came to power he left for London. Arguably, the Communist Party became his first real home. For others, their real home was their studio, study or lab.

Let me finish with a final story of home. Last summer, *Ha'aretz* published a photograph of Elie Wiesel's childhood home. It was covered with graffiti. Vandals, had scrawled on the house the words: "Pedophile. Jewish Nazi who is in hell with Hitler."

The house is in north-west Romania, far from Argentina where he wrote the first draft of *Night* and from Paris where he published the final version. A dark reminder of why so many had to leave their homes.

**David Herman**

## NEED COMPUTER HELP?

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

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

# HOW AJR REVEALED THE ATTLEE CONNECTION

Of all the moving tributes marking the recent 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport, perhaps the greatest number of media headlines resulted from the reunion of a former child refugee with the family of the late Prime Minister Clement Attlee. Here Dr. Bea Lewkowicz, Director of the AJR's Refugee Voices Testimony Archive, recounts how this came about.

I received an e-mail earlier this year from a lady called Jo Willer who had heard from the Wiener Library about our project to record video testimonies of Jewish refugees. She suggested we might interview her father, Paul Willer, who had come to Britain as a ten-year old refugee from Wurzburg. My cameraman and I drove to Mr Willer's cottage in Gloucestershire. He seemed pleased to meet us; we had a cup of tea together and he showed us his collection of beautiful clocks before we recorded his story.

I was surprised to learn that Paul, who had come to the UK on an endorsed visa from the British consul in Frankfurt, had been initially hosted by Clement Attlee, the then leader of the Labour party. Paul did not make a big deal out of it, simply explaining that after a few months with the Attlee family, he moved on to a boarding school in Northern Ireland and lost touch with them.



Paul Willer being interviewed by Bea Lewkowicz



Lord Attlee, Jo Roundell Greene, Paul Willer and John Bercow at the House of Lords

After the interview, I looked up 'Clement Attlee' and found no reference to the fact that he had hosted a Jewish refugee from Germany. I did discover that one of Attlee's grandsons is a Conservative peer in the House of Lords, Earl Attlee, and that a grand-daughter is a Lib Dem Councillor for South Somerset, Jo Roundell Greene.

A few months later I met Jo Willer for coffee and she gave me the memoir written by her grandmother Franziska Willer, a doctor and trained midwife. It vividly describes her escape from Germany and how her two boys were fostered by two families in Stanmore, one of them the Attlees.

That seeded the idea of bringing Paul together with Jo Roundell Greene and Earl Attlee for the 80th anniversary debate of the Kindertransport in Parliament. My AJR colleagues set the wheels in motion and a few weeks later I was privileged to wait in the lobby of the House of Lords, along with Jo Roundell Greene and Lord Attlee, for Paul Willer to arrive.

The first thing Paul said to Lord Attlee was "You look exactly like your grandfather!". Over an emotional tea in the House of Lords Jo Roundell Greene showed us photos of her mother and her siblings at the house in Stanmore, where Paul had lived. Paul fondly recalled his time there, especially how he communicated with Jo's mother in Latin, having not yet learned any English.

After tea we were greeted by the Speaker of the House, John Bercow, and the media. The story soon appeared on all major news channels, including overseas, and was even tweeted by the Labour Deputy Leader Tom Watson.

This encounter illustrates the enormous power of oral history. If Paul Willer had not told us his story, his time with the Attlee family might have remained hidden. While the press simplified the story, the nuanced story of Paul's life is publicly available in the Refugee Voices Testimony Archive. Even if other stories do not involve such well known figures as Clement Attlee, I hope that future researchers will find similar surprises in the stories we have recorded.

If you would like to watch excerpts of the interview with Paul Willer, please go to the film section of our newly created website, [www.refugeevoices.co.uk](http://www.refugeevoices.co.uk).

*From the Editor: The reunion between the Attlee and Willer families on 21 November immediately preceded a re-enactment of the 1938 Parliamentary debate that led to the Kindertransport. Thirteen current Parliamentarians took part in the re-enactment, which also included a speech by Lord Alf Dubs and a very moving one minute's silence at 7.33pm to mark the exact moment of the debate in 1938. The debate re-enactment was also facilitated and filmed by the AJR. The film is available to view via [www.ajr.org.uk](http://www.ajr.org.uk)*

# WELL SAID, DR HORNICK



Mindu Hornick in her Honorary Doctorate robes

AJR member **Mindu Hornick** was recently presented with an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Worcester for her contribution to Holocaust education. We are proud to share her acceptance speech.

It is with a profound sense of humility that I accept the honour you have chosen to bestow upon me. I know your choice transcends me. This both frightens and pleases me.

It frightens me because I wonder: Do I have the right to represent the multitudes who have perished? Do I have the right to accept this great honour on their behalf? I do not. That would be presumptuous. No one may speak for the dead; no one may interpret their mutilated dreams and visions.

It pleases me because I may say that this honour belongs to all the survivors and their children and, through us, to the Jewish people with

whose destiny I have always identified. It happened yesterday or eternities ago. I remember the bewilderment; I remember the anguish of parting from my mother and little brothers. It all happened so fast: the Ghetto, the deportation, the sealed cattle car, the fiery altar upon which the history of our people and the future of mankind were meant to be sacrificed. I remember asking myself: Can this be true? Is this the 20th century, not the Middle Ages? Who would allow such crimes to be committed? How could the world remain silent? What have they done with my future?

I tell myself I must try to keep the memory alive. I will fight those who would forget because if we forget we are guilty, we are accomplices. And then I tell myself how naïve I was to think that the world did not know and therefore remained silent. That is why I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere when human lives are endangered. When lives

are in jeopardy national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. When men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion or political views that place must at that moment become the centre of the universe.

Of course, since I am a Jew, profoundly rooted in my people's memory and traditions, my first response is to the Jewish fears, Jewish needs and Jewish cries. For I belong to a traumatised generation, one that experienced the abandonment and solitude of our people. But there are others as important to me. There are none who feel more for the plight of the victims and survivors of Bosnia, Cambodia, Ruanda and Darfur and what is happening today, than the Holocaust survivors. By sharing our painful experiences we are reminding people that the unbelievable happened to us and should never be allowed to happen again.

Thank you to Worcester University and the members of the Doctorate Committee for declaring on this singular occasion that our survival has meaning for mankind.

# A day for reflection

27 January will be a poignant day for all AJR members. Here we share three different poems recently submitted by AJR members, which are each inspired by their memories of, or thoughts about, the Holocaust.



## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

By Philip Shamplina

Holocaust Memorial Day

We stood in silence, nothing more to say  
Remembering what has happened in the past  
And the long shadow, which it cast

Gathered together with survivors  
Realising what divides us  
Hatred for others who are seen as different  
Destruction is their bent.

Not one person would they miss  
And not one trick did go amiss  
To the gas chambers and the hiss  
Crowded into cattle trucks  
Treated worse than animals and muck.

Today we remember those terrible days  
But has it changed? No – not in many ways  
Antisemitism still exists  
And light-hearted banter must not be dismissed

As a throwaway word, supposedly said in a joke  
Deep down, anger is what they spoke  
Is it ignorance or deep-rooted hate  
That they have been introduced to by their mates

But what is needed is education  
And to discuss the segregation  
We are all God's children so let's teach the  
next Generation  
And respect others who might not be of their nation

Let's learn from this,  
on this Holocaust Memorial Day  
That hate is not the correct way

## THE LAST TRAIN

By the late David E N Collins

*(Dedicated to Hilde Kress, who was David's mother-in-law)*

The morning has broken, with birds that sing.  
From the city there comes that awakening ring.  
The Vltava river flows under bridges bold.  
Architectural splendour built by men of old

This beautiful city now in history's page,  
Its turbulent record descends the Stone Age.  
And this is my home, with a child that I love.  
For here we were born, but clouds are looming above.

There now comes an echo of marching feet  
And children in fear, no longer play in the street.  
Pray God, hear my prayer for a miracle, please give  
Another country maybe, so my child there can live.

Parting brings with it sorrow, and even some pain.  
My little girl goes on the very last train.  
Oh what kind of people, or home will she go?  
Fear not, your little one is safe from the foe.

My friends and my relatives are no longer with me.  
We are carted away like some bits of debris,  
In a compound of bodies, having no will to live.  
While the young and the hungry through pockets do sieve.

The nights now are colder, as the snow gently falls.  
I feel very entombed by the fence and high walls.  
We are guarded by faces of evil and hate.  
Should they ask for my child, I shall tell them "too late".

I think of my little one, now happy and free  
And only wish from this Hell I could suddenly flee.  
I am given more strength, and my thoughts never wane.  
I see my child waving from that very last train.

## NORTHBOUND

By Claire Wills

Life changed with a jolt, the life she once knew  
gone. Replaced with unknown  
territory, unfamiliar foreign lands.  
She remembers the train, the mahogany chest,  
jewels, furs, and the family linen,  
her mother's cheery "We'll see you soon", babies crying,  
the manilla tag around her neck  
She remembers hope. Hope of reunion.

*Note from Editor: We are grateful to AJR members for submitting these poems and happy that on this rare occasion we have found space to use them.*

# Letters to the Editor

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

## REICHSPOGROMNACHT

I had the honour to be present at the recent '80 years on' event at Westminster Abbey.

For someone born in Germany, there was very little to be proud of during those two hours or so, but there is one small issue that I do feel should be brought to attention:

You (and Helen Drewery in her welcome) both referred to 9 November 1938 as the 'Reichskristallnacht'. Yet for some time now, concerned Germans have been at pains to use the term '**Reichspogromnacht**' instead, for two reasons:

- a) unlike 'Kristall' ('crystal') it does not imply a whitewash for the crimes committed at that date (by the way: the synagogue in my hometown Ludwigsburg was burnt down a day later - as local Nazis had been reluctant initially ...)
- b) 'Reichskristallnacht' was a term introduced by the Nazis to glorify their deed. When using this term it is almost like siding with the Nazi view of history ... ([www.dict.leo.org/german-english/](http://www.dict.leo.org/german-english/) translates 'Reichskristallnacht' with 'night of broken glass' - not good enough in my view: words matter).

*Martin Kunz, London W3*

## AUSTRIAN NURSES

I refer to the article by Jane Brooks regarding the above in your November issue.

I was one of those nurses and was interviewed by Jane which was most interesting and brought back so many memories. I was delighted that she even mentioned my name! I am only sorry that I am too far away and therefore unable to attend her lectures.

I am an avid reader of the AJR Journal and would like to thank you and her for printing this article about something

which is not so well known.

*Kitty Schafer, Toronto, Canada*

## BASQUE CHILDREN REMEMBERED



I am not myself Jewish but my old friend Wolfgang Finklestein was a refugee who arrived from Leipzig just before the war, aged 18. Known as Walter Finley, he lives in Bristol and is now blind, and when I visit I read the AJR Journal to him.

David Herman's article on the Kindertransport in the September issue mentioned that there is no British memorial to the Basque children. I enclose photographs to show that there is a small one on the side of Southampton Civic Centre, which comprises the library and the art gallery. Unfortunately it is on the northern side of the building so never sees the sun.  
*Sarah Chorley, Southampton*

## TASTES OF HOME

The article 'Tastes of Home' (December) brought back memories of 'Weinachten' at home in Olomouc (Olmütz) Czechoslovakia in the late 1930s.

I will always remember the smell of the dozen or so Striezels which had been laid around the warm stove to rise before going into the oven.

My mother was a great cook. How I miss her Gugelhupf, Krautkollachen, Pischingertorte and so many other delicacies.

Vanillienkipferln and numerous Kleinbaekereien were enticingly assembled on a flat platter for Chanukah and Weinachten.

I still have a series of hand written cards with numerous recipes which she left behind as part of her 'Kuchen Kultur'. If anyone is interested I am happy to share them.

*Peter Briess, London NW3 7UE*

David Herman asks "Who eats Zwetschkuchen now?"

Unfortunately Zwetschken (a variety of plum) aren't available in Kent, but Czars make an acceptable substitute.

A few years ago we were holidaying in the Swiss Alps and got caught in a storm. We made for the nearest refuge, a café, and on entering were greeted by a large and very welcome Zwetschkuchen.

*Annette Ray, Tunbridge Wells*

## SOMETHING MISSING IN BRNO?

With reference to recent coverage in the Journal, may I say a word in defence of the present-day population of Brno? They are almost entirely Czech, whereas what Erik Svarny calls the 'most fanatical and vicious of Hitler's followers' in the Sudetenland were almost exclusively German; they were known as the Sudeten Germans. They despised the local Czechs, who in turn hated them, especially after the Czech lands had been occupied by Nazi Germany and subjected to a brutal regime of oppression, of which the atrocity at Lidice was the most notorious example. As a result of the

Sudeten Germans' support for the Nazis, the post-war Czech government summarily expelled the entire German population, including that of Brno. There have effectively been no Germans in the area since.

I would not dispute that there was anti-Semitism in Czech cities like Brno, or Czechs who collaborated with the Nazis. But, by and large, the behaviour of the Czech population towards the Jews during the war compared favourably with that of most other east European states. I know of no instance where Czechs took advantage of the German invasion to beat Jews to death in the streets, as occurred in some places in the Baltic states, nor any instance where Czechs staged pogrom-like killings of Jews, as in Jedwabne in Poland during the war and in Kielce after it; nor did the Czechs have a Fascist puppet state like Slovakia, which paid the Nazis to deport its Jews. It is hardly fair to claim that any Holocaust memorial in Brno would inevitably be subject to desecration, given that 'the children of the fascists who made Brno such a hell-hole during WW2' no longer live there. I would counsel caution in visiting the sins of the (German) fathers on the (Czech) children and grandchildren.

*Anthony Grenville, London NW6*

### THE 50 AND 20 PENCE COINS

*AJR member Fred Stern used the occasion of the Kindertransport 80th anniversary event at St James' Palace to make this suggestion:*

The Royal Mint decided that the paper 10 shilling note should be superseded by a 50 pence coin, followed by a 20 pence coin, to be designed by Rolls-Royce, which was passed to me, as their submission of a square shape was rejected. My unique design of a seven sided coin is based on its two radii being struck from the same point, which gives it a constant diameter, enabling it to roll along an inclined guide to be counted. The shape of the coin is designated: the

7-sided equilateral – curve heptagon. It has been increasing in popularity throughout the past years and is copied by many countries, combined with their own currencies. The multitude of different designs on the obverse side has given rise to an ever growing number of collections.

Commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport on the 50 pence coin, with an appropriate design on the obverse side, would be a fitting appreciation of England's benevolence to the refugees from Nazi oppression.

*Fred Stern, C.Eng. M.I.Mech.E.*

### BACK IN TIME

A short story following on from "Czech Mates" (November 2018): It is 1937 in Berlin. I am not quite 9 years old. My father holds Czech citizenship (acquired in Vladivostok in 1920 after a journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway) and the farm where he was born, not far from Brno in Moravia, had been abandoned. Their horses had been requisitioned by the Austrian army in 1915 and without them farms couldn't plough, seed and harvest and the home front starved. Instead he went to Vienna, found it had been reduced from its former splendour to a backwater and went to Berlin in 1921. There he married my Berlin-Jewish mother who acquired Czech citizenship by marriage and thus I had Czech parents.

It was time to leave. Prague was our destination but not far enough and only I came out alive. In Berlin my father found an elderly Czech who gave me some lessons about horses, chickens and goats using a very old textbook, which did little for a townie like me. However I was not his only pupil as he also gave Czech lessons to the Berlin police. That puzzled us. But not for long. Only five months after the incorporation of the Sudetenland into the Reich the Germans occupied the western part of the Republic, called it a *Protectorat*, and stopped at the border with Slovakia. That part of the Republic

had declared its independence under the leadership of a Catholic fascist parish priest, one Jozef Tiso.

Riddle solved. Berlin police and Gestapo moved into the Pecek Palace, turning it from a bank into a feared interrogation prison. That was where their lessons of Czech were of use to them.

*Frank Bright, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk*

### ORIGINS OF ANTISEMITISM

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson (Letter from Israel, December) is deluding herself in hoping that persuasion and good sense may one day remove antisemitism which, of course, dates back to biblical times.

Antisemitism is a biological response, a rejection of minority difference. It will persist or regenerate wherever in the diaspora Jews are clearly identified and reside in defined groups, to which we are very prone.

Living in relatively non-Jewish South Manchester since 1939 we have never encountered a word of antisemitism, unlike the many Jews in northern districts who suffer daily assaults. Earlier, in Vienna's non-Jewish Hietzing we fortunately remained totally untroubled, even after the Anschluss and the Kristallnacht, while our family and friends in inner districts were exposed to violence, robbery and murder.

Living in Israel Dorothea has taken the most sensible escape and good luck to her.

*Dr Hans L Eirew, Manchester*

### WW1 MYSTERY

I was delighted to see my photo with the Mayor of Barnet in the December AJR Journal. However, I should like to point out that it was my research that located the exact site of the V/1500 crash in 1918. The Paul referred to in your article is my son, who took the photograph.

*David Lang, London*

# ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

The centenaries of two leading Austrian Modernists, both of whom died from Spanish flu in 1918, are celebrated in Klimt/Schiele, Drawings from Albertinas Museum, Vienna at the Royal Academy. The younger artist, Egon Schiele, 28 when he died, far outshines his 55 year old mentor, Gustav Klimt.

Schiele's vigorous, often tortuous work is always innovative, highly graphic in composition. Considered depraved by Emperor Franz Josef for its explicit eroticism, it is poignant, emotionally charged. Many drawings are self-portraits, but this is not the ego trip of a young man. These naked, twisted bodies are an allegory in which he is Everyman. His languid nudes, with their lean and limpid muscularity are vulnerable and appealing – he often points a finger at an eye, or closes it altogether. *Self-portrait with Eyelid Pulled Down* – in charcoal, watercolour and gouache is a typical Schiele observation: intensely introspective, disturbing us with questions. Schiele had at least two mirrors in his studio enabling him to explore the transient state by performing acrobatic experiments with his reflection. Sometimes the figure - sexual even when almost skeletal - is drawn in truncated form, lacking a limb or two to emphasise the erotic pose

His *Self-portrait with Headband*, again pointing to his eyelid; has something of a military quality, a call to arms like Kitchener's *Your Country Needs You* poster, but of course it is more subversive. His work can be sketchy, even smudgy, such as his embrace of two lovers with its Pierrot

and Columbine feel, but its circular composition suggests eternal love.

He tended to use very young girls as models and was once briefly imprisoned on unfounded charges of child abduction and immorality. He said it cleansed him, freeing him to develop as an artist. The model for *Black Haired Nude Girl*, in pencil and watercolour, is clearly pubescent, provocative, alluring, yet she arouses pathos. Many artists have painted sexually explicit subjects; but Schiele's acute sensitivity is what makes him so engaging.

Both Schiele and Klimt probably used prostitutes as models, at a time when the age of consent was 14.

Klimt was a successful painter of the interiors of Vienna's Ringstrasse buildings, and was celebrated by the art establishment. He also accepted commissions from the aristocracy and from the wealthy Jewish elite. His two studies for Frederike Maria Beer are gentle, if unmemorable. Klimt experimented with gouache techniques, sometimes mixing it while still wet, sometimes using it dry to discover the best way to create flesh tones. The technique lent his watercolours a special translucence. In 1887 Klimt founded a



Self Portrait by  
Egon Schiele

radical group of young artists called the Secession, in which he invited Schiele to participate in a 1908 exhibition showcasing Austria's radical finest.

Schiele became influenced by Klimt and began to emulate him. He was invited to take part in another Kunstschau including Van Gogh and Matisse. He and Klimt met regularly, visiting each other's studios, and establishing a symbiotic relationship. In the short time left to him after Klimt died, Schiele was acknowledged as his successor, and curated the Secession's 49th Exhibition. Wonderful as it is to see Schiele's drawings, it is sad that the RA could not be more generous with Klimt. His work, which is quite large, is mainly in private hands which may have caused difficulties.

Until 3 February 2019

## Annely Juda Fine Art

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

CONTEMPORARY  
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

# Anne

This essay was first published in **PRISM: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Holocaust Educators** in Spring 2016.

Its author Vanessa Waltz has served on the judging committee for the New England Holocaust Memorial's student essay contest in Boston. She earned an MA in English from Middlebury College in Vermont USA and completed her studies at Lincoln College, Oxford in 2010.

The woman turns to us, her hands pressed tightly together. "Welcome to the world of the Nazis." With those words, the elevator opens. Its passengers spill silently out of the car into dim, disorienting light.

Some years ago, I made a one day research trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC; I had wanted to visit the museum specifically, and the city generally, since 1993. That year, my mother pressed Anne Frank's diary into my nine-year-old hands with the same sweet urgency with which Anne records Edith Frank pressing a prayer book into her own. Since that year, I have been caught up in Anne's world. She, a self-described chatterbox and frolicsome little goat tugging at its tether, functions for me and, I suspect, for many young girls, as an adored older sister – even as I surpassed her in age a decade and a half ago.

Anne remains averse to studying algebra. She is, however, interested in mythology, royal families, and brooding in notebooks grandly referred to as diaries. Anne remains equally interested in strolling about

Anne Frank in 1942, writing in her new diary



her respective neighbourhood in a short summer dress with the ideal boy. She is secretly and not-so-secretly boy-mad and at inopportune times considered a terrible flirt and reader of romances. These last characterisations are noted for posterity in the contemplative appeal of the diary's final paragraphs.

To this day, when coming across a world history encyclopaedia or volume on display, I flip to the index, and look up "Frank, Anne– Holocaust–Concentration Camps" in that order. I absorb the pictures and accompanying text quietly, studiously. Each picture passes before my eyes and the text imprints itself on my brain – and then I close the work and continue on.

In the Washington museum, I stop in one of its corners. Only then, having spent the better part of an hour searching for her among the exhibits, do I stumble upon Anne. In an introductory photograph, Anne is tucked into this corner, near an exit, writing. She sits at a desk, head up and pen in hand. I see her in the museum's snapshots, and the past becomes present. I see five-year-old Anne outside her father Otto's office, importantly checking her wristwatch. A small cap covers the dark locks, which she would later grow out, and of which she would be so proud, as girlhood friend Lies remembers.

In one photograph, I see Anne, elder sister Margot, and Edith cluster together for a snapshot by Papa Frank prior to a day of shopping. In one more photograph, I see Anne, older, bent down on the neighbourhood square,

revealing knobby knees. Squinting, she greets the camera with a quick and ready smile. She crouches close to Lies, who stands to reach and brush hair shyly from her face. In a final museum photograph, I see Anne on her family's flat roof, paused, hat on lap, in spring sunshine.

Some time later, a train starts, wanders, and stops to deposit persons under that same spring sun. Dazed, disoriented, lolling tongues lusting for water, its passengers spill out of boxcars. Somewhere, prisoners in lines and in tears make their way en masse into a camp.

Soon enough, Anne will think of packing. At that moment, in the sun, she may well be thinking of curlers; a comb; her little cat; admirers. But she's not sorry. Memories mean more to her than dresses. Paused in that final museum photograph, Anne grins, bashfully.

On my bookshelf sits the Anthology of Holocaust Literature, a farewell gift from the museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies. Its bright orange cover nestles against Anne's diary on the one side and *The Scarlet Letter*, with its exhortation to "be true!" on the other. I recall absorbing Anne's pictures and accompanying text at the museum. Each picture passed before my eyes and the text imprinted itself on my brain – and then I exited the exhibit and carried on my way.

**Vanessa Waltz**

# Imre Kalman

Imre Kalman, (Koppstein) was born on 24 October 1882 in a small town in Hungary called Siofok, which is now a popular holiday location near Lake Balaton. His father was a reasonably successful merchant of wheat and rye. He was the only son in the family among several daughters.

One of his sisters, Vilma, took piano lessons and Imre usually listened from under the piano. His mother's family had many good musicians and rabbis in the family so Imre had music in his genes. The little town's theatre performed all the popular Viennese operettas by Millocker, Suppé, Zeller. Also in Siofok there was a small synagogue and a Jewish school. As usual the Jewish school was better than the others, and therefore many of the pupils were not Jewish.

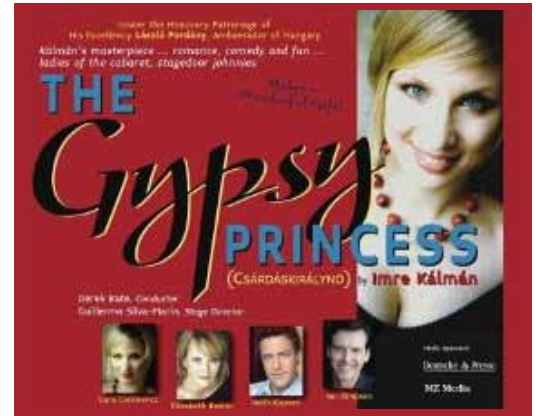
In 1891 the family was ruined financially, his father having naïvely taken on the risk for an organisation for the development of the town which was negligently managed. The family moved to the capital, to live with his mother's sister.

In a notable "gymnasium" (senior school) he studied Greek and German, besides the compulsory subjects. He gave lessons to younger pupils and thus managed to buy a second-hand piano. On that he practised day and night. Eventually, tragically because of an illness, he was forced to stop playing the piano. Defiantly, he said, he would then just compose.

He managed to get a grant to study at the famous Ferenc Liszt music academy. On the first day he made friends with later popular composers Szirmai and Jacoby. They made him sit down at the piano and play his own compositions. In



Imre Kalman, as featured on an Austrian postage stamp



Imre Kalman's 'The Gypsy Princess'

the background, evidently Bartok and Kodaly listened too.

He worked very hard; at night he helped by addressing envelopes and, during the day, teaching other students.

His family insisted on him studying law, but he never qualified. Simultaneously he studied at the music academy, but also managed to become a music critic on a popular newspaper. One of his friends was Ferenc Molnar and Bela Bartok was a frequent guest for lunch at the family home.

His first great success was an operetta; its title, loosely translated, is "The Tartars are Coming". It played in Budapest and Vienna of course, but was shown in Berlin, London and New York too. By now he had moved to Vienna and changed his name from Imre to Emmerich.

In 1912 his next big hit, "Der Zigeunerprimas", played with great success in New York with the popular Hungarian diva, Sari Fedak, (lover, wife of Ferenc Molnar).

No matter that the first performance of "The Czardasfürstin" was in the middle of the First World War, it travelled to America and Russia. He even had an offer to move to the States. It is said that this operetta was performed at least in one theatre in the world at any one time. Like most of his operettas it is full of hummable tunes, and influenced by Hungarian gypsy music.

Not all his work proved to be so popular. However "The Bajader", "Countess Maritza" and "Die

Zirkusprinzessin" more than made up for those.

In 1928 he met a young Russian actress and pursued her to marry him in spite of the 30 years difference in age. He insisted on a proper Jewish wedding, despite the fact that he was not a practising Jew. After the birth of their first child, he donated a substantial sum to the Budapest orphanage. Two more children followed. They lived in Vienna in a 30 bedroom house, meeting all the famous people, and Vera, his wife, enjoyed the limelight and the lavish life.

When Jews were no longer welcome in Austria, in 1940 they moved first to Paris, on the insistence of his wife. Later on, because he no longer felt safe in Europe, they emigrated to America. At first they enjoyed life, meeting many famous people, but eventually their income (or the lack of it) forced a change. His wife had many admirers. Though Kalman was a good husband he could not keep her and they divorced; then they re-married but this marriage was also not a success. Vera found life as a divorcee very unsatisfying and told the forgiving Kalman, when he asked her once more to marry him, "I will not marry you a third time".

In 1949 he had a heart attack and decided to return to Europe. His wife's wish was to live in Paris. Here he received the Légion d'Honneur. Later he had a stroke and in 1953 he passed away.

His funeral in Austria was arranged by the state and he is buried in Vienna, next to Beethoven, Brahms and Mozart. In his birthplace, Siofok, there is a museum dedicated to him.

# LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



## EAST, WEST, HOME'S BEST



Travelling on planes, trains, taxis, cars and even a bus on one occasion, not to mention a great deal of

walking, staying in New York, Las Vegas and San Diego in the USA, and Amsterdam in the Netherlands, and meeting up with friends and relatives in most of those places. All in the course of three weeks until we finally landed back in Israel a few days ago at the ungodly hour of 2.00 am, where we reached the conclusion to which the heading attests. Our wanderlust is assuaged for the moment.

The discomforts of overseas travel are many and varied (unfamiliar food, strange beds, foreign languages, cramped seating on planes, traffic jams, different manners and mores, not to mention expenses of various kinds), but the overall benefit of meeting up again with friends and relatives, gaining access to the wonders of museums and art galleries, taking in a Broadway play and a symphony concert in one of the world's finest concert halls, make all the discomfort worthwhile. After all, who can put a price on the renewal of ties of friendship and family, as well as our love of art and music?

But the comforts awaiting us at home were never far from our minds,

no matter how enjoyable the various experiences were, and that brought me to thinking of my parents and grandparents, who were forced to leave their homes and wander to unfamiliar lands or, worse still, face exile and deportation to concentration camps and death.

My grandfather who died in his bed at home in Hamburg in 1936 is now seen as 'the lucky one,' as my other three grandparents all died in tragic circumstances far from home. Looking at the situation in the world today, we see so many people exiled from their homes and forced to seek shelter on foreign shores. That word 'home' raises so many emotional echoes in my mind, and I'm convinced that thoughts of the parental home that was lost must have haunted many of those millions who sought refuge abroad, whether sent away as children on one of the Kindertransport trains or forced as adults to make their way to a sanctuary of any kind anywhere in the world. To the best of my knowledge, most of the Jewish refugees who were scattered all over the world as a result of the Nazi peril in Europe made the best of their situation, established families and contributed to society. Those who came to what was then British Mandatory Palestine helped to build the Jewish State, in an effort to ensure that there would always be a home for Jews suffering from persecution anywhere in the world.

And so, once again, an enjoyable trip abroad has brought me to think about the Holocaust and its repercussions that are still with us. It seems unimaginable

that after the persecutions that the Jews have suffered throughout the generations there are still those who would deny Israel's legitimacy, claiming that its existence has caused injustice to others. But when the pioneers first came to the country that had once been Jewish they did not seek to disenfranchise the local population but rather to live alongside it. When the fledgling State was attacked on all sides, it had no option but to fight for its life, setting off a chain reaction that resulted in the mutual exile of populations (Palestinian refugees and Jews in Arab countries). Nowadays no-one pays much attention to that concept, as the Palestinians have deliberately perpetuated their refugee status in order to use it as a weapon in the battle for hearts and minds, while Israel has endeavoured to assimilate and integrate its Jewish refugees.

So many expressions refer to home. Home is where the heart is. There's no place like home. Robert Browning's poem, *'Home Thoughts from Abroad.'* A pop song with that title by Clifford T. Ward, written in 1973. And many others with which I'm not familiar, and doubtless written in other languages.

I consider myself fortunate to have a home to return to whenever I go travelling. I thank providence that I can still indulge in the luxury of going to foreign lands and then return home. I hope that I will see in my lifetime a solution to all the problems of all the refugees, wherever they may be.

His lifetime spanned what we consider as the golden age of operetta. Just before WW1 there was a lot of optimism. After the outbreak of the war, operettas distracted people from the chaos of war and offered escapism. Each operetta offered many hummable tunes unlike today's musicals, which often offer one melody only.

The repertoire of other Hungarian

composers is much neglected. Huszka, Jacoby or Szirmai, for example, are not known outside Hungary.

Admittedly they do not come near Kalman or Lehar, but, in my opinion at least, their music is far superior to the majority of modern musicals. To be fair to Lehar, whom Hungarians claim as their own as he was born in Hungary, his list of successes is longer than Kalman's. The fact that Lehar had a Jewish wife was forgiven by

Hitler as Hitler's favourite operetta was *"The Merry Widow"*.

If you have had enough of listening to Kalman's music, you could go on YouTube and watch and listen to Lehar's *Meine Lippen*, sung by Anna Netrebko. It will make you forget, if only temporarily, about Brexit and Corbyn.

**Janos Fisher**

# BEING A DESCENDANT

BY PETER BOHM

In 1965, two incidents occurred which must have made a mark on me because they have resurfaced as I sit down to write this article. They both relate to one of my parents crying and, in each case, it was the first time that I had seen this.

The first occasion probably involved my dad, Markus, because it happened on 30 January. I know this, because it happened whilst we were watching Sir Winston Churchill's funeral on our black and white television. I didn't really understand why he was crying... but it made a deep impression. The other occasion involved a new arrival at our house – a stereogram. Such excitement! We could play records for the first time. I was 13. Many of my friends already had a record player, but this was something special. Soon after that, my mum's brother, my Uncle Werner and his wife, came to stay and brought my parents a present. It was an LP of Yehudi Menuhin playing the Beethoven violin concerto. I recall that we all sat in the lounge around the stereogram (as one did in those days!) and listened to the record. At some point, I became aware that my mum, Ruth (née Löwendorff), was crying. I don't recall what was said but my lasting impression is that it was somehow connected to her and Werner's parents, who were murdered in Auschwitz, and clearly the music triggered buried memories. I never did find out the detail.

Those two incidents occurred more than 50 years ago and came back to my mind when writing this article about my wife Monica's and my experiences of having

grown up as the children of German refugees. In particular, I was asked whether and how we thought the AJR might in the future have a role in honouring the heritage of our parents and whether any kind of support network or facilities might be required.

In truth, people rarely ask us about the effect that being the children of refugees from Nazi Germany has had on us. We know many people from the same background, but the subject doesn't often come up in conversation with them or our other friends. Yet, we are constantly aware, not only of our Jewishness, but also of our German (or in my case Austro-German) background. It's always somehow with us. I think, on a day to day level, Monica was probably more steeped in it, because she grew up at Belsize Square Synagogue, where nearly all the members at that time were refugees or survivors and their children. For both of us, German accents were the norm, even though we never quite understood why we were different to our school friends. In both our cases, there is still a certain tension between being aware of the horror of what happened and yet having a surprising affinity with German language and particularly culture.

On one plane, we feel that being a



Peter (right) and brother David in front of the memorial plaque for their paternal grandparents at Klosterneuberger Strasse 60, Vienna

member of the "second generation" hasn't caused us any particular problems and that, in fact, we have been rather lucky to have grown up as members of a rather special group. Many of these people came to this country in the most distressing circumstances; yet, to us, they are a special breed of heroes who not only remained positive in light of dreadful adversity, but have also had a major and hugely disproportionate effect on British society, making remarkable contributions in so many fields, such as the arts and sciences, education, politics, business and philanthropy. Rarely a week goes by, sadly, when there isn't at least one obituary in The Times about a German Jewish refugee who made a contribution to their adopted country. Interestingly, our parents' generation was very patriotic. My dad would stop people who walked out of



Peter's paternal grandparents - Manele and Gittel Böhm - murdered in Buchenwald and Maly Trostinec respectively



Peter's maternal grandparents - Max and Gertrud Löwendorff - murdered in Auschwitz

cinemas whilst the national anthem was being played. Monica's "Auntie" Ann and "Uncle" Hanns threw a party in 1986 at the Airport Hotel in Croydon, headlined "Thank you Britain" to mark the 50th anniversary of their coming to these shores.

Yet, on another level, I think that our background has had a very significant influence on our psyche. I don't just mean because of our consciousness of the above, but because six of our eight grandparents, one aunt and numerous other relatives, perished in camps or otherwise at the hands of the Nazis. Somewhere out there is this great void that these people inhabit – what might have been? What would it have been like to have grandparents? Why were my parents sometimes so sad? What was this mysterious "thing" that wasn't really talked about? Why was I always sent out of the Yizkor service and what was the service about? Why did Monica's dad change his name from Hans Löwy to John Lennard and what happened to the umlaut on Bohm? What was it like for my mum to come from Dortmund and be a domestic in Oldham and for my dad to come from Vienna to David Eder farm in Kent (a Zionist "Hachsharah" agricultural training farm) and end up working on a farm in Lancashire? What was that number tattooed on my "Auntie" Kay's arm?

What did it mean that my uncle was "hidden" in Holland during the war? Who were all these unfamiliar people my parents sometimes mentioned? How did Monica's dad always remain so positive despite the loss of his parents? How did he manage when he came from Berlin and what was

it like to join the Pioneer Corps and then become an officer in the Inns of Court Regiment of the British Army? Monica's mum, Marion (née Sternheim), did manage to leave Hamburg with her parents in 1938, but how did she seem to have seemingly only happy memories of her childhood in Germany? How did so many of these people make such successes of their lives with no parental guidance? How did they deal with the pain and feelings of guilt?

These and so many more questions are always there for us and we will never have all the answers. I suspect that our children will have more questions as the years pass. Although I feel I have now begun to gain some understanding of the reasons for the tears when Churchill died and when Yehudi Menuhin played, I don't believe we can really imagine what our parents and grandparents went through. We don't want what happened to be forgotten, but, like our parents did, we feel we must move on. We do, though, want the people who perished to be remembered, our children to know their history and others to learn the lessons of those terrible events.

So what future role might AJR play? I think this could be twofold. First, we cherish the memory of this unique group of people – those who escaped and those who perished. AJR is uniquely placed to preserve this and to help the next generation learn about and appreciate the richness of their heritage, including its language and culture and to foster links between people of the same background. Secondly, and closely linked to this

memory, is the continuing and vital need to educate people about what happened and to try our utmost to prevent developments of an antisemitic or racist nature. For this purpose, the need for education is paramount and, as the survivors disappear, this will have to be supported by the second and third generation, who shouldn't miss the opportunity to learn from them at first hand. We are impressed and gratified by the extent and depth of the initiatives, by Jews and others in this country and abroad, which seek to teach the lessons of what happened. The contribution of survivors and refugees to this has been truly astonishing. We have Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, Kristallnacht remembrance, Kindertransport remembrance, Stolpersteine (see my article in the October 2018 AJR Journal about the efforts of non-Jews in this regard), the recent service in Westminster Abbey...so many things.

We need to educate Jews first and then others. We should start with our own children, the "Third Generation". As one of our sons observed, it is ironic that many German Jews believed themselves to be fully integrated into their society at just the time when antisemitism took hold (and note today's warning signs). Even for our own children, these events are quite remote, yet they do have a special link and I am sure will want to maintain it. We also need to try to protect and guide the State of Israel and to explain to others the complexities of that subject. The task is immense. AJR, and others, will no doubt have a role in this and the challenge will be to adapt and adjust to this role.



Monica's paternal grandparents - Georg and Margarete Löwy - murdered in Auschwitz



Monica's maternal grandparents - Artur and Hannah Sternheim - passed away naturally in London in the 1960s

# Support for Descendants

As Peter Bohm's article on the preceding page so eloquently explains, children and grandchildren of refugees often experience a strong connection to the Holocaust in some way. For many it is simply a desire to honour and commemorate what their parent or grandparent went through, for some it has a more profound impact on their relationships with their elders or their own children, or even with their Jewish religion.

## 45 AID SOCIETY

The children and grandchildren of The Boys, the 732 orphaned child survivors of Nazi concentration camps brought in by the British government after the war, have their own special support group. They are the custodians of the remarkable testimonies and life stories, and keep them alive and relevant for future generations through educational activities, community events and fundraising.  
[www.45aid.org](http://www.45aid.org)

## ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF JEWISH REFUGEES (ACJR)

Established in 1986, the ACJR brings together Jewish people with a similar refugee heritage, offering a range of social, cultural and intellectual activities. Social events are run throughout the year, often in partnership with other organisations. Examples include a buffet supper hosted at a member's house on the third Saturday of every month, plus special events around some of the Jewish festivals, for example its annual

Seder night and Chanukah party. All the events take place in London, providing regular opportunities for people with similar backgrounds to meet and form strong friendships. All events and other news are promoted via the ACJR's monthly newsletter and the next event is a poetry afternoon on 13 January in Finchley. Membership of the ACJR costs £17.50 per year (or £10 for members living outside London) and it currently has approximately 50 active members.  
[www.acjr.org.uk](http://www.acjr.org.uk)  
Email [info@acjr.org.uk](mailto:info@acjr.org.uk) or call Anne on 07973 361673, or Anthony on 020 8201 7986

## SECOND GENERATION NETWORK

The Second Generation Network sprang out of the launch in 1996 of a new national monthly newsletter for children of Holocaust survivors and refugees, entitled Second Generation Voices. The Network still publishes Voices on a regular basis and also organises regular social events, mainly in London, although it has members across the UK and even abroad, and has a small number of regional groups. Informal discussion meetings take place on the second Tuesday of every other month on a particular theme. The Network also organises workshops, talks and lectures, film shows, visits, and partnership events with the Wiener Library, JW3, KTA, AJR and ACJR.

Membership of the Second Generation Network costs £20 for individuals or £25 for a family. The number of current active members was not disclosed.  
[www.secondgeneration.org.uk](http://www.secondgeneration.org.uk)  
Email [info@secondgeneration.org.uk](mailto:info@secondgeneration.org.uk) or call 020 7636 7247

## KITCHENER CAMP FAMILY

A new group was recently set up for relatives of the 4,000 men who were rescued in 1939 by the Central British Fund for German Jewry and brought to Sandwich in Kent to a former WW1 base known as Kitchener Camp. The new group is gathering together Kitchener camp documents, letters, photographs, and histories, and has also run a couple of social and networking events for family members.  
[www.kitchenercamp.co.uk](http://www.kitchenercamp.co.uk)

## THE ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH REFUGEES (AJR)

While the AJR's primary focus has always – and will always be – providing support for the generation that was directly impacted by Nazi oppression, in recent years we have attracted the attention of many descendants of Jewish refugees and Holocaust survivors. In fact, approaching one-third of our total membership (which hovers around the 2000 mark) identify as second generation and we also have a small but growing number of grandchildren of refugees among our members. Last year we held our first dedicated event for second generation members in Scotland and we will shortly be canvassing all our second and third generation members for their views on what other special events and activities they might like to see.

Annual membership of the AJR is £25, or £35 for those living outside the UK.  
[www.ajr.org](http://www.ajr.org)  
Email [info@ajr.org.uk](mailto:info@ajr.org.uk) or call Karin Pereira on 020 8385 3070.

## WORKSHOPS FOR DESCENDANTS

Children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and refugees may well be interested in attending one of the following workshops taking place at JW3:

**Third Generation:**  
*The Holocaust and Me*  
11.00am on Sunday 13 January  
Facilitated by David Polak

**Being Second Generation**  
11.00am on Sunday 3 March  
Facilitated by Gaby Glassman



Each workshop costs £9 and can be booked online at [www.jw3.org.uk](http://www.jw3.org.uk)

Both Gaby Glassman and David Polak are psychologists and psychotherapists whose special interest is the transgenerational effects of trauma, particularly in relation to the Holocaust. Gaby can be contacted directly on [gaby@glassman.com](mailto:gaby@glassman.com) / 020 8421 1609 and David on 07847 279246.

# 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

Andy Thomas discussed "Conspiracies": What is the real story behind the death of Princess Diana, or behind the assassination of President Kennedy, to mention but two. A lot of detail to absorb and to think about...  
*Henri Obstfeld*

## GLASGOW

We visited the newly-refurbished Charles Rennie Mackintosh Willow tearooms in Glasgow – an excellent opportunity for 1st and 2nd gen members to relax/chat over a cream tea and to visit the exhibition area and gift shop with multiple books evocative of the Mackintosh era.  
*Ruth Ramsay*

## EDINBURGH

12 members enjoyed a wonderful Chanukah lunch in the home of Maria. We heard the Chanukah story and learned about why we eat deep-fried foods and how to play with dreidels. We all agreed that this should be the first of many such lunches.  
*Vivien Anderson*

## NEWCASTLE

The Chanukah Lunch was held in Newcastle's Reform Synagogue hall, wonderfully catered by Brenda Dinsdale, the shul President. It was followed by the amazingly talented local magician, Glenn Ward.  
*Gwendoline Lamb*  
*(real name: Gittel Shayna Leibovitch)*

## KRISTALLNACHT IN GLASGOW

A large turnout of second generation members joined survivors for a special 80th anniversary commemoration of Kristallnacht at Giffnock Synagogue.

Scottish Jewish Archives Centre Director Harvey Kaplan spoke about the new Holocaust study centre which is being developed with AJR's support. Approximately 2500 Jewish people found safe haven in Scotland between 1930-1940.

Sidney Mayer, 13 at the time, came from

Landau on a Kindertransport and settled with the Goldwater family in Glasgow. He talked about his experiences. Another guest at the commemoration event, Helen Beanstock, turned out to be the widow of the Goldwaters' son.

Michael Tobias, Vice President of Jewish Gens, gave a presentation on researching families torn apart by the Holocaust to help descendants find out more about their family histories, and possibly even discover distant relatives.

Survivors lit candles in memory of the six million, as well as an extra candle for those who lost their lives in Pittsburgh. This was followed by the memorial prayer and by Eddie Binne and the Glasgow Jewish singers.  
*Agnes Isaacs*

## SHEFFIELD

Dr. Frada Wilenski, first woman President of Sheffield US, spoke of her family, life and career. She worked first as a GP and then in the area of Public Health in Derbyshire and Manchester. She also ran the shul kitchen, catering for a wide range of events, and treated our group to a delicious lunch she had prepared herself. She showed us a book of poems that she has published and a beautiful example of her hand-stitched patchwork.  
*Christine Hogg*

## JANUARY 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.

Ilford	2 January	Social get-together
Pinner	3 January	Helen Fry – Bugging the Nazis in WW2
Ealing	8 January	David Barnett – Joe Lyons' Tea Shops and Corner Houses
Harrogate/York	8 January	Social get-together
Bradford	10 January	Social get-together
Hull	14 January	Social get-together
Whitefield/Prestwich	15 January	Social get-together
Edgware	15 January	Deputy Mayor of Barnet – Caroline Stock
Radlett	16 January	Social get-together
Glasgow Book Club	17 January	Book Club meeting
Film Club	21 January	'Paperclips'
Cheshire	21 January	Social get-together
Book Club	30 January	<i>Encounters with Albion</i> . Book launch at 'Wet Fish cafe' with Tony Grenville
Muswell Hill	31 January	Social get-together
North London	31 January	Claude Vecht-Wolf: My Journey to become a Rabbi

## CONTACTS

**Susan Harrod**  
Events and Outreach Manager  
020 8385 3070 susan@ajr.org.uk

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

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

**Ros Hart**  
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator  
07966 969 951 roshart@ajr.org.uk

**Karen Diamond**  
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator  
07966 631 778  
karendiamond@ajr.org.uk

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

**Child Survivors' Association-AJR**  
Henri Obstfeld  
020 8954 5298 henri@ajr.org.uk

# REVIEWS



## THE MAGICIAN OF AUSCHWITZ

By Kathy Kacer

Second Story Press

ISBN 978-1-927583-46-3

This beautifully illustrated book is an excellent resource to begin discussing the Holocaust with young children. Published in 2014, it recounts the true story of young Werner Reich, incarcerated in Auschwitz. Werner, who was there without any family, was completely overwhelmed by the misery of the environment until he was befriended by a fellow bunk-mate, aged around 35.

This man was Herbert Levin and he was my mother's first cousin. Before the war he was a well-regarded magician performing in the best theatres in Berlin. His stage name Nivelli was created by reversing the letters in Levin and adding two more. He was incarcerated in Auschwitz with his wife and his seven year old son, Peter. He survived, they did not.

The book uses simple and descriptive language without directly referring to the gas chambers, something that might be hard for young children to understand or deal with. But it doesn't shy away from the hardships; the endless lines, having very little to eat, of moving rocks from one pile to another; of going to bed exhausted, frightened and starving. It vividly describes Werner's fear, hunger and loneliness and sense of utter hopelessness.

One night Werner was woken up by the sound of SS guards shouting to Levin, "Get down here!" He feared that his friend was being taken away, but instead Herr Levin was ordered to "Do your magic!" and given a pack of playing

cards. Apparently Herr Levin performed card tricks for the guards for hours on end, teaching Werner many of his tricks.

Werner and Mr Levin both survived Auschwitz. Werner, who married Eva Schiff and moved to America, also performed magic tricks. Nivelli also moved to the US and married another survivor called Lottie who became his onstage assistant.

Unlike *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, this is a true story. It should be used in every primary school and youth group teaching about the Holocaust, as well as by parents wishing to ensure their children are aware of this chapter in our history.  
*Lesley Urbach*

## CONTEMPORARY HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES: THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS CONTINUING RELEVANCE.

Routledge 2019

ISBN: 978-0-8153-6463-4

On 10 December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the UN General Assembly and this excellent book examines its continuing relevance. It is divided into six sections (reflecting the structure of the Declaration itself) – the first considers the foundation (i.e. basic) articles. The second and third consider articles in the UDHR relating to the individual. These cover subjects much more contemporary in nature than envisaged by the UDHR – such as LGBTI rights. The authors consider how these fit into the legal thinking behind the original UDHR. Another section on the relationship between religion and universalism includes a beautifully-written, erudite article by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. The penultimate section considers economic, social and cultural rights which were inserted into the UDHR but which many would sadly now regard as outside the ambit of a rights-based system of law. The final section is entirely devoted to a fine article by President Jimmy Carter on challenges for the human rights movement.

The book, whose editors include AJR chief executive Michael Newman, is the perfect response to the quip of the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, who looked at the rights-based system being

introduced in France after the revolution of 1789 and pronounced that rights were 'nonsense on stilts': if one person's absolute right to freedom of expression clashes with another's absolute right not to be offended by provocative or outrageous views then one of them can no longer be 'absolute'.

Bentham's logic held sway for 150 years but could not withstand the effect of the world learning about the true extent of the Holocaust. A legal system which allowed governments to act with impunity within their own territory was simply not fit for purpose. The impact in the last few tumultuous years of rising racism and negative attitudes to refugees means that accepted post-war norms are increasingly being questioned. That is why this book is so apposite. It reminds us of the basic values which the post-war consensus brought about and which large parts of the world now seem prepared to discard.

That consensus created an international legal system based on rights. It overcame Bentham's logical objection about clashing rights by setting up the prioritisation of rights based on the individual circumstances of each case. What one is left with is a series of thirty articles in the UDHR and this book considers those articles in detail. Most are analysed by professional human rights practitioners in various fields such as education, cultural development, religion and law.

This book will be of interest to those who wish to understand the legal cases underpinning the articles in the UDHR. But it should also be of great interest to a wider audience. To adapt the words of Abraham Lincoln, the UDHR shows us 'the better angels of our nature', the values to which we need to aspire. That could be merely a moral aspiration but the UDHR provides a legal frame which sets out rights to which we are entitled simply by being human.

*Andrew Levy*

## REWRITING HISTORY

e-book, free to download from

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

In 1945, as the news of organised mass

murder and gas chambers shocked the world, the far right's dream of a fascist future was left shattered in the ruins of Berlin. The first to deny the crimes of the Third Reich were the Nazis themselves, who sought to hide all trace of their attempted extermination of the Jews. Since that time, denial of the Holocaust has warped and shifted in numerous ways.

*Rewriting History* is a new book published by Hope not Hate and sponsored by AJR, which provides an accessible but comprehensive exploration of what denial is, and the various ways people have tried to revise the facts of the Holocaust.

Part of the necessity of this book is borne of the inevitable: As time passes, there are fewer people who can bear witness to the horrors of the Holocaust, meaning children, students, and the general public are vulnerable to the narratives being peddled by those who seek to diminish the unique place in history that the Holocaust holds, or even to claim that Jewish people

use the 'myth' of the Holocaust to gain unfair advantage. As such, this book provides an accessible outline for those unfamiliar with the fundamental tactics, traditions and narratives of Holocaust denial.

However, some of the changes that have prompted this book are sadly a product of our changing political climate. We face an environment where facts are being discredited by those hawking conspiracies for hateful agendas and where the internet and social media have drastically altered how we engage with the truth.

To meet these challenges, this book confronts the role of conspiratorial thinking in Holocaust denial as well as denial in the age of social media. Moreover, with antisemitism in resurgence across the political spectrum and denial remaining a global practice, this book addresses denial by the left and right, in the Middle East and North Africa, in Eastern Europe and, in an exploration that demonstrates some of

the complexities of modern denial, amongst some Muslims in the West.  
*Jo Briggs*

#### TRAVELLERS IN THE THIRD REICH

By Julia Boyd  
Elliot and Thompson Ltd.  
ISBN 978-1-78396-381-2

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in 20th century history. It contains fascinating, eye witness accounts of tourists, politicians, scholars, journalists and others who witnessed the rise of the Nazis in Germany.

Meticulously researched, this book is thought provoking, disturbing and sometimes even amusing. With an excellent index, notes and references, the book is a valuable addition to anything that has been written about that period.  
*Walter Wolff*

## 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.

#### GERMAN FOLK SONGS

Peter Block recalls the tunes to many folk songs from his youth in Herrlingen (Germany) but can't remember the words. Can anyone?  
*peterblock1922@hotmail.co.uk*

#### VINTAGE GERMAN FASHION

Dina Gold is looking for pre-war clothing made by the Jewish German fashion industry. She hopes to display them at the March launch event for a new book

written by the German journalist Uwe Westphal about the Nazis' destruction of the industry through Aryanisation, theft and discrimination.  
*dinagold@hotmail.com*

#### ANNE AND OLIVE

Sue Basker hopes to contact two girls who were sheltered by her parents in Washingborough, nr. Lincoln, in the late 1930s/early 1940s. One was called Anne Kowalski, who married Sherry Lewin and had two children, Benjamin and Rochelle. The other was called Olive, surname unknown.  
*s.basker@btinternet.com*

#### DR. SCHLESINGER KINDERTRANSPORT

Helen Pick accompanied Dr Schlesinger's kindertransport. Her granddaughter is planning a special commemoration on the 40th anniversary of her death and would love to hear from any Kinder who came on that transport.  
*chanijoseph@hotmail.co.uk*

#### KINDERTRANSPORT FROM POLAND

Bernard Kessler and his sister came on the last Kindertransport boat from Poland. He believes the Polish Refugee Committee arranged their visas to Britain and is keen to identify two gentlemen whose names sounded like Zeitlin

and Kaizer, plus two ladies who were photographed with them in Otwock near Warsaw.  
*Lenak1@netvision.net.il*

#### KINDERTRANSPORT OF 29 AUGUST 1939

Sir Erich Reich plans to convene a reunion of people who came on the same sailing as he did, docking in London on 29 August 1939.  
*reich@blueyonder.co.uk*

#### WALLINGTON, IFIELD & BECKENHAM REFUGEES

Douglas Denham St. Pinnock is hoping to trace any refugees who stayed with his family members Bowie (93 Woodcote Road, Wallington) or Drughorn (Ifield Hall, Sussex and 27 the Avenue, Beckenham) between 1933 – 1945.  
*ddp@owengate.co.uk*

## OBITUARY (Correction)

Walter Laqueur, whose obituary featured in December's issue of the AJR Journal, died on 30 September 2018 (not 18 September as stated).

## OBITUARIES

### Isadore (Tony) Garfield (formerly Garfinkel)

Born: 17 June 1926 Essen-Gladbeck  
Died: 24 September 2018 Hertfordshire

**My husband Tony came to the UK on one of the Kindertransports from Gdansk (to which he, his parents and his younger brother had been expelled because his father was Polish-born). Two older brothers had left Germany for the USA in 1936.**

In Britain Tony lived with distant relatives but was so unhappy and exploited by them that he 'escaped' by volunteering for the RAF, having been in the ATC for three years. However army recruits were desperately needed at that time and so he was sent instead to Singapore to join the Royal West Kents when the Japanese made their last attack. Only four men survived, Tony being one of them, and they were granted one month's leave in England. Tony tried to go to the family with whom he had previously stayed but they had no time for him because they were going out to lunch, it being 1pm, so told him to come back later. He went to the YMCA.

The four sailed back and landed in Singapore immediately after the atomic bombs were dropped. They were transferred



into the Devonshire Regiment and Tony was wounded in the arm. After being demobbed he had to go back to work for his distant relatives because jobs were hard to find, and at least he would have a roof over his head, but the treatment he received from them was indescribably dreadful.

Tony and I met and married in 1950 and he said that that was when life began for him. We had two sons but tragically, Malcolm, our firstborn, was killed in 2007; his widow, Renata and our two grandchildren, as well as the rest of our family, are very close. Paul, our second son, is a loving, dependable tower of strength.

Tony was a great sportsman: he played in the London Squash Leagues, tennis until he was well into his 80s and racquetball on his 90th birthday. He had great concern for others and he will be very sadly missed.

**Hilda Garfield**

### NINA COHEN

Born: 25 May 1934 Lublin, Poland  
Died: 11 November 2017 London

**With the outbreak of war Nina's father moved east to escape the pogrom but was imprisoned in a Russian labour camp from which he never returned.**

Nina and her mother survived by taking cover under a Catholic identity and moving around, in Poland and then in Eastern Europe, before arriving in France. At age eighteen, Nina lodged with a family in London to improve her English and ended up marrying Murray Cohen, the family's son. They were married for 63 years and had three children: Cydonie, Amanda and Anthony.

Murray was a lawyer by profession and early in their married life Nina drew a work opportunity to his attention that would involve mediating between couples in conflict; he declined the opportunity on the grounds that his job as a lawyer was to help couples part. "In that case" she replied "I had better see if there's anything I can do to help them stay together!"

She trained with the London Marriage Guidance Council, becoming a tutor there until moving to the Institute of Marital Studies (now called Tavistock Relationships). She quickly established herself at the core of the unit, eventually co-ordinating



its clinical services. Nina developed a database that the Institute used to draw a profile of couples using its services, and identified predictive factors in the take-up of couple psychotherapy. One of her enduring published legacies is the paper she wrote on cross-cultural marriages.

Tributes from her colleagues recalled a woman who was "enormously liked", "valued", "encouraging", "supportive", "shrewdly intelligent" and "kind".

A longer version of this appreciation was first published in *Couple and Family Psychoanalysis* 8 (1) 95-98 (2018) and is reproduced here by kind permission of the author, Christopher Clulow, the editor, Molly Ludlam, and the publisher Phoenix Publishing House.

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 **AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB**

Monday 18 February 2019 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

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**LUNCH**



on **Wednesday 13 February 2019**  
**at 12.30pm**  
**at Alyth Gardens Synagogue**

We are delighted to be joined by  
 the Architects involved in the new  
 UK Holocaust Memorial and  
 Learning Centre

Call Susan Harrod on  
 020 8385 3070 or email  
 susan@ajr.org.uk  
 £7.00 per person.  
 Booking is essential.

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 **AJR FILM CLUB**

**PAPERCLIPS**



on **Monday 21 January 2019**  
**at 12.30pm**  
**Sha'arei Tsedek North London Reform Synagogue, 120 Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone, N20 9EZ**

Lunch of Sandwiches, Bridge Rolls, 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 incl. lunch**  
**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL**

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 07966 969951 or email  
 roshart@ajr.org.uk

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# CELEBRATING MY STORY

During Chanukah AJR celebrated the publication of the first nine *My Story* books from within the London community.

Through *My Story* AJR produces life story books of Holocaust survivors and refugees. Volunteers interview clients using an audio device, and then transcribe and edit to produce a professional book illustrated with the client's own photographs and telling their life story in their own words.

At a special celebration event at the Jewish Museum *My Story* project co-ordinator



AJR member Margarete Stern with her *My Story* book and her friend Rachel (R) and her AJR volunteer Charlotte Balacz (L). Adam Soller Photography

Debra Barnes said, "The potential reach of these *My Story* books is massive. We are currently working on another 12 books and have more planned for the near future and will also publish these books on our website."

## Special fragments

These wonderful paper dresses were made by 16 year old Amy Chamberlain, the granddaughter of AJR member Maria Chamberlain.

Amy explains: "I was nine when my great grandma (Baba) died. I grew up knowing the stories of the Holocaust and of her escape, but only recently discovered the details, and how many millions weren't so lucky. I decided to dedicate my GCSE art project to her and her family, and their story.

"The theme was Fragments so I explored the idea of memory, and how lots of fragments of stories are passed on through generations, making up a slightly different picture each time.

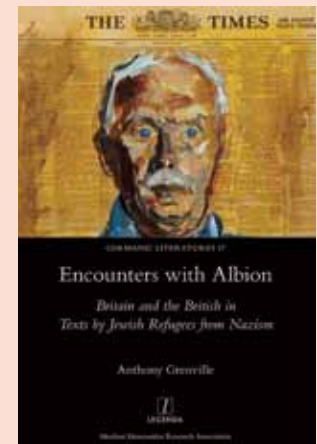
"Baba would always welcome us with a big smile and a hug, as well as vast



amounts of food, and she often bought me and my sister little dresses, which she took great joy in choosing. So I wanted my art project to express both the fragments that I remember, and the bigger story.

"One dress has a photo of me and Baba in 2006 on the front and a letter on the back from me and my sister as we would have written it in 2006. The second dress was made up of many photos of Baba, Maria (my grandma), and Arthur (Baba's husband). I sewed, in translucent fabric, little pockets around the hem of the dress with small 'valuables' in them, representing those sewn into the hems of children's dresses when going across borders during and after the war, as my Grandma had when the family came to the UK from communist Poland in 1958."

### A SPECIAL AJR EVENT



Author  
**Dr Anthony Grenville**

will discuss his new book:  
*'Encounters with Albion: Britain and the British in Texts by Jewish Refugees from Nazism'*

**Wednesday 30 January 2019**  
at The Wet Fish Café  
242 West End Lane, London NW6 1LG  
Starts promptly at 3.00pm – Ends at 4.30pm

Pre-booking essential as seating and access to the venue is limited.  
Please call Karen Diamond on 07966 631778 or email [karendiamond@ajr.org.uk](mailto:karendiamond@ajr.org.uk)

### AJR Holocaust Memorial Day



#### AJR'S ANNUAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE

Guest speakers will include  
**Dr Bea Lewcovicz** in conversation  
with **Kind Freddie Kotsen**

will take place on  
**TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2019 AT 2PM**

Followed by tea at  
**BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE**

To book your place please call the office on 020 8385 3070 and speak to Karin Pereira or email [karin@ajr.org.uk](mailto:karin@ajr.org.uk)

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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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