



Jewish Refugees and the Commonwealth

This year's Commonwealth Games, hosted by Birmingham, started on 28 July and will continue until 8 August. Originally known as the British Empire Games, they were first held in 1930, and have taken place every four years since then, except for 1942 and 1946.



Birmingham, of course, became home to a number of Jewish refugees and was home to a Birmingham Jewish Refugee Club, set up by Mrs. Johanna Selig-Simmons (for more information see Zoe Josephs' study, *Survivors: Jewish Refugees in Birmingham 1933-1945*, 1988). But what about the Commonwealth? Did Commonwealth countries help or obstruct Jewish refugees in the 1930s and '40s?

The Commonwealth had only just been formed when the Nazis came to power. It was originally created as the British Commonwealth of Nations at the 1926 Imperial Conference (attended by the leaders of Australia, Canada, India, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland, New Zealand and South Africa). Britain and the Dominions

agreed that they were all equal members of a community within the British Empire and that the United Kingdom did not rule over them.

The relationship between the Commonwealth and Jewish refugees in the 1930s and during the war was a complicated one. A number of refugees managed to find sanctuary all across the world. A few stories can stand for many more.

Edith Ludowyk was a Hungarian Jewish psychotherapist and communist. In 1938 when Admiral Horthy's fascist regime passed its first Anti-Jewish Law, she managed to get to Ceylon, then a British Crown Colony, with her third husband, who died in 1940.

Continued on page 2

A SUNNY SUMMER

Travel is definitely on our agenda this August, as it may be for several of our readers. We feature eloquent and often moving reports of heritage trips to Frankfurt, Poland and Vienna, as well as articles focusing on closer to what is now our home.

If you fancy taking a trip yourself, why not join one of the AJR trips to Bath, Harwich or Waddesdon Manor? Look out for the notices within this Journal.

Wherever you are going this August, or even if you are staying home, please enjoy the magazine and stay well, safe and – given the recent hot weather – hydrated!

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Please note that the views expressed throughout this publication are not necessarily the views of the AJR.

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Social Services Nicole Valens
Education & Heritage Alex Maws
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Editor Jo Briggs
Editorial Assistant Lilian Levy
Contributing Editor David Herman

Jewish Refugees and the Commonwealth (cont.)

She later married a professor of English from Ceylon and they came to England in 1956 where they spent the rest of their lives.

Karl Popper, the famous philosopher of science, was born in Vienna, spent some time in England in the mid-1930s and in March 1937 moved to New Zealand where he remained for almost nine years and wrote perhaps his most famous work, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945), before settling in England after the war.

Tom Stoppard was born Tomáš Straußler in Czechoslovakia. In March 1939 his parents escaped to Singapore (then still part of the British Empire and only joined the Commonwealth in 1965) with their infant sons, Petr and Tomas. Only in 1993 did Stoppard learn of his Jewish origins and that his four grandparents and three aunts died in death camps. His father died in the Japanese invasion of Singapore. His mother and the boys fled to India and settled in England after the war.

Ulrich Boschwitz, author of *The Passenger*, one of the surprise literary hits of the last decade, was born in Berlin in 1915, left Germany in the mid-1930s and eventually came to England in 1939. He was interned in 1940 and then sent to Australia on the *Dunera*. He was allowed to return to Britain but his ship was sunk by a German torpedo on 29 October 1942. All 362 passengers died.

All these stories are a mix of good fortune and tragedy. Unfortunately, this reflects the larger experience of Jewish refugees trying to find sanctuary in the Commonwealth and the British Empire after 1933.

In her excellent book, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933-1948* (2000), Louise London gives a damning account of the failure of the British government but also of the Dominions to help Jewish refugees. Already in the summer of 1933, a British civil servant approached the Canadian government about settling Jewish doctors in remote areas of Canada. 'When this failed,' writes London, 'he explored possibilities with the other dominions, but was met there too by the reaffirmation of strict immigration regulations.' He tried again in July with help from the Dominions Secretary and Simon Marks, from Marks & Spencer. 'In reply,' writes London, 'New Zealand and South

Africa merely reaffirmed their restrictive immigration policies... Australia and Canada did not reply at all. Eventually the Dominions Office decided to let the matter drop.'

The reasons given for inaction varied. There was concern about taking in refugees at a time of acute economic depression, when jobs were short. Officials were concerned that taking in Jewish refugees might cause antisemitism. But other explanations are more troubling. The governor-general of New Zealand also feared that 'immigrants from Germany might be at heart, if not openly Communists, and spread revolutionary propaganda...' The Australian Department of the Interior claimed that Jews as a class were not desirable because they did not assimilate.

The figures make grim reading. South Africa took in between six and seven thousand Jewish refugees in the 1930s. Canada took in fewer than 5000 between 1933 and 1945. Australia took some 10,000 refugees from Nazism. It is worth noting that Canada took 'several thousand Sudeten refugees' but 'very few' of these were Jews. In total, the British dominions took in around 20,000 Jewish refugees during the Nazi years, about a quarter of the number admitted to Britain according to Louise London's essay in *Second Chance* (1991).

Worst of all was the Evian Conference (1938). It was one of the most shameful episodes in the story of how western democracies responded to the refugee crisis in central Europe in the 1930s. It was, in the words of the French historian Raphael Delpard, 'The Conference of Shame'. Evian, writes Paul R. Bartrop in his recent book, *The Evian Conference of 1938 and the Jewish Refugee Crisis* (2018) 'was redolent of infamy in the years to come.'

Among the countries that took part were the British Dominions – Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. South Africa was invited but did not attend. From the outset, Australia and Canada were reluctant to take in Jewish refugees. The Australian Prime Minister J.A. Lyons announced that the Australian representative would make clear that 'no special facilities can be granted for the admission of groups of Jewish migrants whether from Germany or Austria' and that any admissions should not be 'detrimental to Australian workers.' Ireland's Permanent Delegate to the League of Nations said 'it is obvious that we can make no real contribution to the resettlement of refugees.'

In particular, he said, Ireland was closed to professional people.

The British delegates ensured that the British colonial empire would be 'out of bounds as a topic for discussion and was quite deliberately barely raised', writes Bartrop. Churchill favoured settlement in some colony such as British Guiana but Neville Chamberlain was sceptical. Opening up an underdeveloped tropical country was, he said, 'a long and very expensive business.' The settlement of 250,000 Jews in British Guiana had been proposed, but Chamberlain argued 'it was quite clear that under the most favourable conditions the settlement of anything like this number must take a very long time.' Louise London ends this section of her book with one short sentence: 'The discussion ended with no resolution.'

Only two countries at Evian agreed to take any Jews: Bolivia and the Dominican Republic. Only the delegate from Colombia spoke of humanitarian principles. Other countries, including Britain and the Dominions, offered expressions of sympathy but almost no practical assistance.

Stoppard, Popper and Ludowyk were fortunate. They all survived. Boschwitz and Stoppard's father didn't. They were victims of terrible misfortune, not of callous indifference from Britain and the Dominions. Many more, however, including many relatives of Stoppard and Popper, were victims of national self-interest, bureaucratic indifference and antisemitism.

David Herman

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TOUR BACK IN TIME



The AJR Next Generations walking tour of 'Finchleystrasse' on Sunday 19 June was like taking a stroll back in time.

We visited the site of the original AJR offices at Fairfax Mansions, the Dorice and Cosmo restaurants (with many

reminiscing about going to eat there with their parents), and the CandleLight Club, where we learned that one of our tour group was the son of Robert Ehrenstein, who had been the manager of the Club!

We passed the Otto Schiff House, the Freud Museum and Stella Mann dance academy, among other sites. After our

walk, we enjoyed dinner at the Camden Arts Centre. It was a great evening (despite the rain) and we hope to plan more walking tours soon.

With thanks to our excellent tour guide, Rachel Kolsky

Debra Barnes

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

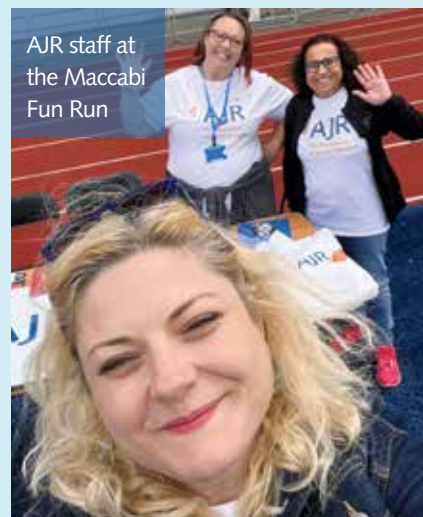
This year's Volunteer Thank You in London was special for a number of reasons. After two years of holding the celebration online, it felt good to be able to meet again in person.

The venue was Westminster Synagogue, and guests were invited to a tour of the Czech Scrolls before the main event.



The evening was dedicated to the memory of our dear colleague, Head of Volunteer Services, Carol Hart MBE. The theme was poetry and an anthology of poems by members of AJR's poetry group entitled *Ask me again in November*, was given to guests.

Guest speaker Aviva Dautch recited some of her own poetry, and AJR members also had the opportunity to recite poems to the guests. As one of our poets, Joan Pollock mentioned, "It was a great evening



AJR staff at the Maccabi Fun Run

in Rutland Gardens. Everything was absolutely perfect. The scrolls talk was fab; I feel a poem coming on!"

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Dutch Stumbling Stones

The political events of the 1920s and '30s, leading up to WW2, were the catalyst for a huge movement of people who foresaw disaster for themselves if they stayed put. Most Jews who didn't make it to Britain, America or the Far East were doomed.

This was the case with our member David Rothenberg's maternal grandmother, Kaethe Hannes Glaser (1890-1943), who moved to Holland from Breslau (now Wroclaw in Poland) on her husband's death from cancer in 1936. Her two teenage sons had already been sent to an American family and their older sister had reached England with husband and baby daughter. But Kaethe was caught in Leiden, a beautiful university town teeming with bicycles and canals. She was sent back to Germany and gassed on arrival at Auschwitz (19 November 1943).

On Wednesday 15 June this year David was present for the placing of a Stolperstein in the pavement abutting the low garden wall of the last house she stayed in before being deported. She was not the only victim picked up from that address. Two plaques were placed, with municipal workers on hand, at 1 Mezenstraat.

Our 25-strong group visited several similar places, led by local volunteer Barbera Bikker. Then we gathered in a university hall to hear from Barbera about her work in this field for 30 years. She does this on behalf of the Dutch institution *Herdenking Jodenvervolging* (Remembering Persecution of Jews).

"I am pleased there is now some form of memorial for my grandmother," David said. Incidentally, he was born in London on 10 May 1940, the day that Germany invaded Holland. His parents had got out in time.

Ruth Rothenberg

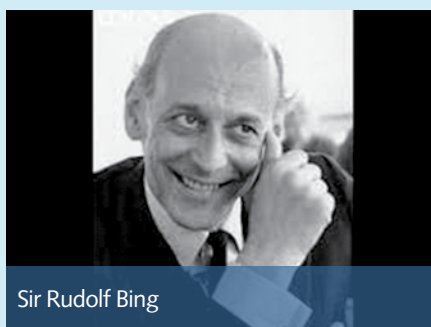


Ruth and David Rothenberg in Leiden, Holland

EDINBURGH @ 75

Seventy-five years after the Austrian impresario and Jewish refugee Sir Rudolf Bing co-founded the Edinburgh International Festival, the 2022 Festival is celebrating the profound contribution to arts and culture given by the movement of people across the globe.

Born in 1902 in Vienna, Sir Rudolf studied music and art history at the University of Vienna before relocating to Berlin in 1927. Forced to flee from the Nazis, Bing began his UK career at Glyndebourne before co-founding the Edinburgh Festival. He resigned to go to the Metropolitan Opera in New York, a post he held for 22 years.



Sir Rudolf Bing

This year's special *Refuge* season includes contemporary theatre, dance, visual art, film and conversation, all exploring themes of refugeehood, migration, identity and inclusion. The intention is to encourage festival goers to consider what it means to be international in today's world.

Events with particular appeal to AJR members include a concert by the Philharmonia Chamber Players which honours Hans Gál, another Jewish refugee, and the inaugural Rudolf Bing Memorial



Lecture, presented in association with the Edinburgh Jewish Cultural Centre. AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman will also be speaking at a special Interfaith Service at Edinburgh's St Giles Cathedral on Sunday 7 August.

The full Festival programme, including details of the *Refuge* season, can be downloaded from www.eif.co.uk

LETTER FROM ISRAEL BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM AGAIN



When the Nazi criminal, Adolf Eichmann, was put on trial in Jerusalem in 1961 I was nearing the end of my time at

a high school for girls in London. There was a fairly strong Jewish contingent, but the overwhelming majority of pupils were Christian. In fact, several of the girls in my class stated that it was their ambition to go to Africa as missionaries, though whether they actually did so I never found out.

So, as well as trying to keep up with schoolwork and the impending A-level exams, I found myself suddenly confronted with a subject with which I had only a passing acquaintance. My parents had arrived in England as refugees from Germany just before the war, and they – and we, their children – devoted considerable energy to becoming as English as possible, learning to ‘fit in’ and be ‘just like everyone else.’ The subject of the Holocaust was never discussed in our household, although we children were aware of the losses our family had suffered (we had no grandparents).

I know now that for me becoming just like everyone else was mission impossible in England at that time, though I believe

that the country as a whole is far more tolerant and accepting of others than it was then. And so the impact on me of the widespread publicity and coverage given to the Eichmann trial was little short of traumatic. Suddenly the Holocaust and all its horrors were brought to light and laid out in front of me in the newspapers as well as on the TV screen.

All these thoughts were brought back to the surface of my mind by the TV broadcast last night of the first of three programmes presenting the tape recordings made in 1960 by a Nazi sympathiser, a Dutch journalist called Sasser, who was living in Buenos Aires and was friendly with Eichmann there. He interviewed Eichmann over the course of several sessions, and so we hear Eichmann declaring how proud he was of his contribution to achieving the ‘final solution’ of the ‘Jewish problem’ by sending six million of them to their deaths. Eichmann had been responsible for organising the trains that crisscrossed Europe, collecting and transporting the masses of individuals in inhuman conditions to work as slave labourers and to be gassed in the concentration camps.

At his trial in Jerusalem Eichmann claimed to have been ignorant of the fate of the Jews, that he had been a lowly clerk, someone who had simply done his job. After hearing the tape recordings of his voice it is clear that he was no mere cypher. He was imbued with the Nazi ideology of the purity of the Aryan race and the threat of its contamination by alien blood, i.e. Jews. This incorporated

a burning hatred of anything and everything Jewish – men, women and children, literature, music, art, society, religion and the very air they breathed.

I have a faint recollection of one of our teachers at school bringing the subject of the trial up in class and asking for our views about it. Some girls were incensed at the idea of the ‘poor chap’ being kidnapped from his home and family and made to stand trial in a foreign country. Most of us Jewish girls thought it only fitting that someone who had played such a pivotal role in so many murders should pay the price for it. When Eichmann was finally executed and his ashes scattered over the sea some of us recoiled at this ‘barbaric’ treatment, but no one on any side seemed to be very distressed, and of course, those were times when our attention was focused more on Elvis Presley, Tommy Steele and similar teenage idols.

But hearing Eichmann extolling his achievements in his own voice must inevitably shut the mouths of those who claim that the Holocaust never happened.

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Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication and respectfully points out that the views expressed in the letters published are not necessarily the views of the AJR.

DEPRESSING POLITICS

The Americans can't even manage their own country, as the world can see; it isn't any better anywhere else though. The whole world is in a cleft stick. Democracy was a byword once. Now, if your opponent doesn't agree with you, just divest yourself of him by shooting him. It's the present fashion.

Now that Boris Johnson has reluctantly thrown in the towel, the fight for his replacement is taking shape as I write. One cannot be blamed for thinking that he is still allowed to have his say.

With some exceptions, whoever will be chosen, would need to extricate this country from the remnants of Brexit, to have any say whatsoever in Europe. The financial implications have not been considered seriously yet, assuming that this will ever happen. It would depend largely on the goodwill of Europe.

There are no prizes for the correct answer!
Fred Stern, Wembley, Middx.

IN FAVOUR OF STOLPERSTEINE

Eva Amann's article (July) reminded me of, in 2015, being invited to speak at a commemorative meeting in Veendam, in the Netherlands, followed by the unveiling of Stolpersteine in front of the houses in Veendam and Wildervank from where Jews were deported during the Holocaust.

My grandparents, Marcus and Anna Bendik had a cattle farm in Veendam, but they and their three children had retired to Apeldoorn before the outbreak of war. However my grandfather's brother and sister-in-law, Philippus Bendik and Mereltje Bendik Levie, had stayed in Veendam running the kosher butcher shop. The house with the attached shop they had lived in still exists, although the shop is no longer used. I had come to Veendam to honour my family and unveil Stolpersteine for my great uncle and great aunt and, when it was my turn to unveil their memorial plaques, I discovered that they had perished in Auschwitz on 10 February 1943, the actual day I was born.

The Nazis thought that they could get rid of all the Jews, but a baby (me) thwarted their efforts. ("Le Roy est mort, vive le Roy").
Hanneke Dye Bendik, Hebden, North Yorkshire

NIT-PICKING

In June David Herman wrote: "The focus..... has been on German – speaking refugees – from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia...." Apart from the dubious inclusion of Czechoslovakia as primarily German-speaking, Prague is then listed among the "largely ignored" cultural centres, though lower down it is then listed among the acclaimed! I realise I am "nit-picking" but it at least indicates that I do read the Journal and am not yet quite gaga!

I live in the Old Town (formerly Jewish) of Prague. I was one of the 669 children saved by the Winton 1939 rescue mission and spent most of my life moving round the world. It has quite often been pointed out by Czech refugees how apt the words from the national anthem – "Kde domov muj" (Where is my home) – are in relation to their peripatetic lives. Thus I suppose it is not surprising that I tried to find some roots for my final retirement in Prague, barely half-a-mile from where I was born. Who in Czechoslovakia in 1939 would have thought that in 2022 we would be concerned with finding homes for Ukrainian refugees?
Tom Schrecker, Prague

David Herman replies:

I am grateful to Mr. Schrecker for taking the time to write. He raises important questions (not 'nit-picking' at all!). I didn't say that Czech refugees were 'primarily German-speaking'. I referred to 'German-speaking refugees ... from Czechoslovakia' (e.g. Max Brod and the Ehrenberg family). My point about 'Great cultural centres like Budapest, Prague and Warsaw' being 'largely ignored' was that they have been marginal in 'much of the historical research', especially back in the 1980s and 1990s. A lot of this is now changing and there has been some fascinating work done on Prague and Budapest, in particular, in recent years.

LOOKING FOR?

PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN GENTLEMAN

Do you recognise this gentleman? His portrait was found, several years ago, dumped outside a house in Edgware that was being cleared and Rikki Borston is hoping to re-unite him with his family or, failing that, at least have a name to remember and honour him by. He would have been 80 in 2007.
rikkiab@hotmail.co.uk



RUTH MONK

Dr. Zev Munk seeks information about Ruth Monk, born 1920 in Lodz, Poland. Mother Rywka (née Hendeles), father Moszek (Moshe) Monk, brother Avraham (Abram) Monk. Deported from Lodz to Auschwitz in 1944. May have survived. Possibly came to England in 1947.
zevmunk@gmail.com

2nd & 3rd GEN RESEARCH

Nick Lewis is a Trainee Clinical Psychologist researching a new way of studying intergenerational processes through drawing family trees. He is looking for 2nd and 3rd generation survivors to participate in his thesis research project. If you are interested in taking part/would like to know more information, please contact Nick Lewis at:
T7242011@tees.ac.uk

AUSCHWITZ WOMEN'S ORCHESTRA

Award-winning British author Anne Sebba is writing a factual book about the all-women's orchestra of Auschwitz 1943-44 and would like to speak to anyone who has memories of hearing the orchestra play or other relevant information.
anne@annesebba.com

BRITAIN'S ANTI-JEWISH RIOTS: 75 YEARS ON

"[A] mob moved towards [...] the old Jewish quarter. They found stones and brickbats, and flung them at shop windows and private houses, at synagogues and club rooms. A Jewish wedding was being celebrated at the Assembly Hall; some thousands surrounded the entrance yelling threats and abuse at those inside and besieging the building until one in the morning. [...] All premises belonging to Jews for the length of a mile down the street had gaping windows and the pavements were littered with glass."

The iconography is familiar, the time and place less so: this was not the Ku'damm in 1938 but Cheetham Hill Road in 1947, as described by Walter Lever, a young academic at the University of Manchester. *The Manchester Guardian* reported violence at locations across the city, and in neighbouring Salford, where "Cries of 'We ought to do what Hitler did' were occasionally heard."

In Liverpool, the situation was even worse, with *The Guardian* reporting burning of businesses, looting and "surging and fighting crowds [...] the crash of breaking windows was heard every other minute."

These shocking scenes in the North West were just the most prominent manifestations of a wave of anti-Jewish violence which swept the UK over the bank holiday weekend at the beginning of August 1947, 75 years ago this month. Intimidation and vandalism – including desecration of cemeteries and pro-Nazi graffiti – occurred in towns and cities across the country from Glasgow to Plymouth.

The ostensible trigger for this wave of destruction was the killing of two sergeants from the British Army

Intelligence Corps in Palestine by the Irgun. Although the incident was condemned by Jewish leaders in both the UK and Palestine, lurid press coverage – especially in the *Daily Express*, which printed a large photograph of the corpses on its front page – helped to inflame the public mood.



On 3 August 1947 a racist mob, several hundred strong, rampaged through the Cheetham Hill area of Manchester.

That conflict in the Middle East is followed by violence against Jews in Britain is sadly something we are all familiar with today. Even so, there is something especially shocking about the nationwide riots of 1947 because of the light they shine on the unsettling presence of antisemitism in 1940s Britain. As an editorial in *The Manchester Guardian* put it, "We must be desperately careful to see that we do not let ourselves be infected with the poison of the disease we had thought to eradicate."

Some of the antisemitic tropes at play are all too clear – holding all Jews collectively responsible for the actions of individuals or groups, accusing Jews of having more loyalty to each other than to the countries in which they lived.

There is strong evidence that such forms of antisemitism *increased* in response to the Holocaust, with a well-documented spike after news of it fully reached the UK in late 1942. This is not to say that the British public was unsympathetic towards the victims. However, as a Ministry of Information intelligence report on public opinion explained in early January 1943, while the murders were "regarded with horror [...] as a result of the publicity, people are more conscious of the Jews they do not like here".

The Conservative MP Victor Cazalet, one of the leading campaigners on behalf of Jewish refugees, was even blunter in May 1943. "When Jews are massacred in tens of thousands in Europe, it ceases to become news, but when half a dozen Jews are implicated in a black market transaction that is almost headline news."

The existence of widespread antisemitism in Britain during and immediately after the Holocaust makes us uncomfortable and that may be one reason why the event soon faded from public memory amidst the many other challenges facing Britain in the late 1940s.

It is only in recent years that this memory has begun to revive, with occasional newspaper articles building on the earlier work of scholars. Even so, the riots still remain largely unknown. As their 75th anniversary passes, we should take some time to remember the days when broken glass littered the streets of our cities, a reminder that no society is immune from the poison of antisemitism.

Martin Winstone
Senior Historical Advisor
Holocaust Educational Trust

ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

Two women, two powerful artists each in her own way, a revolutionary. Althea McNish, who died in 2020 aged 96, injected the hot magic of her Caribbean world into the torpor of post-war Britain during the Windrush era. And Paula Rego, who died this year aged 87, brought anger and truth to the silent suffering of women. This column pays tribute to both.

In its retrospective of **Althea McNish – Colour is Mine** the **William Morris Gallery** celebrates a painter and fabrics designer who used daring, tropical colours and explored the jazzy rhythms of her Trinidadian world.

In an introduction to the exhibition booklet, Professor Catherine Harper, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Creative Arts, UK describes her visually stunning works as “impactful now – revolutionary then, proclaiming the demise of a colonial canon where ‘exotic, decorative arts were enjoyed only as ‘other’. The era of Black Lives Matter is the time for McNish’s vibrant vision to be centre stage,” she adds.

McNish and her mother came to Britain two years after the *SS Windrush* landed at Tilbury Docks. In some ways she was fortunate. As the Festival of Britain launched



© GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
Trinidad. Furnishing fabric designed for Heal's, 1961

in 1951 new creative thinking reflected a desire to push away the darkness of the war years. McNish soon caught the vibe of the new buildings with contemporary open plan design and large windows, joining a stream of young designers keen to grasp the modern *zeitgeist*. But in her exceptional way she brought vibrant colours, flowers, boldness and an explosive aesthetic to a country which had never been exposed to them before. The boldness of her colours represents a never fully reconciled longing for the home she returned to many times over the years. She described herself as “a citizen of the world. My ancestry is Carib. I take my inspiration from nature and from man’s art and artefacts.”

McNish was a woman of great humour and passion. I never heard her complain about racism. She was bigger than that. She would have laughed it off. Yet she was certainly a role model for other black women artists who followed in her wake. A rare figure in the canon of postmodern design and textiles, she did not see herself as a radical in the political sense. She frequently collaborated with her husband, the gifted jewellery designer John Weiss on British Rail projects, and developed synthetic fabric designs for ICI.

The exhibition presents her earliest textile designs, including her famous *Golden Harvest*, manufactured by Hull Traders from 1959 to the late 1970s. It also features *Marina*, her first design for Liberty in 1957, a subdued vertical leafy pattern, subtle by contrast to her later experiments with colour. Liberty prints suggest dainty, miniscule florals, but in her hands they were transformed by the almost musical colours of her imagination. Her experiments with technology, which allowed her artistic

Althea McNish in the 1970s.



CREDIT: BILL PATTERSON. COURTESY: N15 ARCHIVE

freedom to develop scale, multilayering and texturing are also shown, including mono-printing and lightboxes.

In 1966 she was invited to create a Bachelor Girls Room for the Ideal Home Exhibition. This room has been reimagined and invites us to consider what it means to be single in 21st Century London. This small, but creative exhibition is well worth seeing. [At the William Morris Gallery until September 11.](#)

Although Paula Rego’s work was a world away from that of Althea McNish, she was also a revolutionary artist who more than anyone else defined the heavy burdens borne by women of her era. In graphic and visceral paintings, some abstract, she dealt with previously taboo subjects like abortion and the voiceless suffering of women. She prettified nothing. Her 1998 triptych exposing sordid backstreet abortionists was inspired by post-revolution Portuguese chickening out of voting for the abortion referendum. Such echoes have a terrible resonance in American politics of today.

Rego grew up in a Portugal under the thumb of the dictator Salazar, and used fairy tales, dolls – ugly and mutant – and sturdy visualisation to project the voicelessness of women, but also their stolid earthiness, their incipient power.

Her husband, the artist Victor Willing, developed MS in 1966 and she poignantly illustrated the endless work of dressing and undressing him and looking after every physical need. Is it love? Is it duty? Or just resentment? You could argue each way but there’s no question that the graphic purity of her line, the muscularity of her subjects, proved the power of women no matter their circumstances.

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**CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

A MEMORABLE TRIP TO FRANKFURT

On 8 June my brother and I flew to Frankfurt, writes AJR Trustee Danny Kalman. We had been invited as guests of the City because our father Henry (formerly Hans) had been born there; he was lucky to escape on the Kindertransport together with his younger brother Eric (Erich) in April 1939.

At Liverpool Street station they had been met by a relative who had acted as their sponsor (guaranteeing £50 for both of them). Fortunately their parents also escaped to England in July 1939, just a few weeks before the war started.

Since the 1980s the city of Frankfurt has been inviting people who were born in Frankfurt. They subsequently extended the invitation to their children (second generation). Frankfurt is now the only German city that continues to invite (at its own expense) second generation 'Frankfurters'.

In preparation for the visit my brother and I received many e-mails requesting information about our family and we were sent a detailed itinerary for our visit. This confirmed that all costs would be covered by the City of Frankfurt, including local travel and visits to museums. We were allocated a researcher who would identify all available records of the Kalman family (formerly spelt Kallmann).

Our group comprised 42 people from the US, Argentina, Israel, Sweden, France and the UK. My brother and I were the only ones from the UK. Many of the others were accompanied by their spouses and in a few cases by their children. However my brother and I decided that we would like to experience this momentous week together (it was the first time we had spent a week together since we were children in Sheffield).

At the hotel we met the participants on the programme for the first time. We were each invited to share our family histories:

The Kalman brothers on Frankfurt's new Kindertransport memorial (Danny is on the right).



so many amazing stories! Each had a family member who had escaped from Frankfurt, albeit in many and varied ways and at different times.

A lot of thought went into the itinerary –

- a bus/walking tour of the historic centre
- a visit to the renovated Jewish Museum
- an invitation to a Friday night and Shabbat service at the beautiful Westend synagogue
- a traditional Friday night dinner and Shabbat lunch at Sohar's kosher restaurant
- a visit to Frankfurt's Jewish school (called Philanthropin) which our father attended for several years, as did his younger brother. It was closed by the Nazis in 1938 and reopened in 1968, primarily as a Jewish school
- a visit to the remaining Jewish cemeteries where many of the participants' families are buried
- a reception in the historic Town Hall, hosted by local dignitaries, with music, speeches, drinks and dinner.

Our researcher, Doris, took us to the apartment block in which our family stayed between 1936-1939. We decided to ring the bell of one of the apartments and, to our delight, a young couple answered. They kindly invited us in, speaking excellent English, and were genuinely excited to hear that our family had lived there (I had substantiating documents to show them). The woman is a history teacher who teaches the period covering the Holocaust and invited us to

her school to share our story with her pupils.

Another striking memory was visiting the new Kindertransport memorial near the main railway station. It is a children's roundabout but, as a symbol of what it represents, it hardly moves. A crowd gathered as I told our father's story. It was a very emotional experience.

We also visited a school where around 25 students (aged 16-18) had been working on a history project. I spoke for 45 minutes about our family, followed by a lively Q&A session. We also had the opportunity to ask them questions about their families. (It was interesting to note that about half of them had parents who were not born in Germany).

My brother and I have decided to arrange a *Stolperstein* outside the property where our family lived and we hope to return to Frankfurt in 2023 for the ceremony.

Visiting Frankfurt was an important and positive experience for both of us and has given us a far deeper understanding of our father's early life. We sincerely appreciate how the City of Frankfurt invites the next generations to visit the birth city of their family members and to get a sense of the lives they led there. We would like to thank the organisers, the researchers, and the City of Frankfurt for their wonderful and genuine support in making our memorable trip a reality. We are already looking forward to our next visit.

PHOTOS © LAURA HEINSCHINK HBF

AJR
Chairman
Mike Karp
presented the
President of
Austria with
some of our
My Story
books



No upsurge in Covid cases, heatwave or flight chaos was going to mar the success of our second-generation week-long heritage tour of Vienna at the end of June, writes AJR's Next Generations Manager, Debra Barnes. We were guests of the Jewish Welcome Service Vienna (JWS), which has invited refugees, survivors and their families back to Austria for over 40 years.

Tuesday

A reception at the majestic Hofburg Palace hosted by the Federal President of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen, was one of the highlights. In his welcome, the President said, "I am particularly pleased that you are here today. It shows that, despite everything, you have or are looking for a connection to today's Austria." That connection could have been our parents' place of birth, the grandparents' home or synagogue where they married (although most were destroyed in the November pogroms of 1938), the station where our parents left on the Kindertransport as young children, or the courtyard where relatives were held before being deported to the concentration camps. It is also applying for Austrian citizenship, which many of our group had already done.

Most of us were moved to tears to find

relatives' names among the list of 65,000 murdered Austrian Jews on the new Shoah Wall of Names, an imposing memorial unveiled in November 2021. Many of our members, eager to tell their family stories, were interviewed by film crews and journalists at the wall, while others, such as Eric Cohen who speaks to students at home in and around Liverpool, were happy to answer questions from visiting school children.

Susan Burns, whose father escaped from Vienna in 1939, brought her grandmother's diary to the Shoah Wall of Names. Susan said, "It was my dream and wish to take my grandmother's diary, which she started at 16 until she was taken away with the rest of her family, to hold up against her name at the memorial wall, and thanks to AJR and JWS, I did so."

Wednesday

Our city tour took us to the Aspang Railway Station Memorial in the Leon Zelman Park (Zelman was the founder of the JWS). Aspang was the point of departure for the deportation transports and members of our group realised their relatives had been on the same transport to the camps, which they found to be of some comfort. The railway station was demolished in 1977, replaced by two concrete tracks leading to a sombre dark box symbolising death and oblivion.

Next stop was the Kindertransport statue at Westbahnhof, a bronze of a young boy sitting on his suitcase in the middle of the concourse of this busy railway station, while commuters rush past without even noticing him. Four members of our tour were descendants of Kinder and particularly touched by this memorial. Later we visited

Six days



the 'Museum for the Child' Kindertransport exhibition, run by our guide, Milli Segal, which features exhibits of AJR members Bertha Leverton, Else Shamash, Eva Lorimer and Vera Schaufeld. As we waited for our minibus to arrive after this visit, Ruth Ramsay was shocked to realise we were standing outside her mother's kindergarten!

Thursday

As the heatwave peaked at a sweltering 32c we decided to split our walking tour into two manageable sections. We set off early for the historical centre with our guide, Walter Juraschek explaining the significance behind monuments such as The Wedding Fountain, the only statue with a Jewish image not destroyed by the Nazis, depicting a Kohen Gadol marrying Mary and Joseph. We passed through Judengasse on our way to the Holocaust memorial in Judenplatz. Designed by Brit Rachel Whiteread, the monument represents an introverted, non-accessible library, the countless editions of the same book stand for the 65,000 victims and their life stories. Once Walter explained the symbolism, the memorial suddenly appeared powerful and impactful.

Although there wasn't much respite from the overwhelming heat once evening fell, we nonetheless met at Karmeliter Market (reminiscent of Tel Aviv) to tour the 2nd District, Leopoldstadt. Today, it's where you find kosher restaurants and Chabad, and many brass memorial stones (not called Stolpersteine in Austria) and other signs of remembrance of the Jewish history pre-Anschluss (when the Nazis marched in on 13 March 1938). At the Turkish Temple and the Leopoldstadt Temple, Walter pointed out light symbols in the form of an

in Vienna



President addressing the AJR guests

intertwined Star of David which mark the former sites of synagogues destroyed in the November 1938 Pogrom (the Austrians do not consider the word Kristallnacht strong enough). Catharine Withers discovered memorial stones for four relatives outside the Leopoldstadt Temple and many knew their grandparents had married there. Shortly after, we succumbed to the heat and decamped to the vegan ice-cream shop opposite Hotel Stefanie, which dates back to 1600 and is where we were staying.

Friday

Tour participants had requested information in advance from the Jewish archive and likewise for those wishing to find family graves in the Jewish cemetery on Friday morning. As twilight approached we made our way to the Stadttempel, the only synagogue which survived the November pogrom due to being behind a façade of houses. The stunning interior more than makes up for the plain exterior: designed by theatre-architect Josef Kornhäusel, its domed ceiling is sky blue with a galaxy of stars and a golden sunburst. We were warmly welcomed by the community for the Shabbat service followed by dinner at the community centre. And it rained! At last, we got a break from the heatwave.

Saturday

With no official itinerary on Saturday we were free to discover some of the cultural delights of this incredible city. I wanted to see the outstanding art collection and beautiful gardens of the Belvedere Palace. I took the scenic route through the Stadtpark, past the golden statue of Strauss and watched the open-air Viennese Waltz class taking place. The art did not disappoint. Renoir, Schiele,



AJR Group at Jewish Museum Vienna

Van Gogh, Monet... they're all there, but to stand in front of Klimt's *The Kiss*, after walking through a city full of a million mugs, scarves, fridge magnets, tote bags et al with the same image, was a treat.

Sunday

Alas, our trip was coming to an end, but not before a private tour of the Jewish Museum by their Education Director, Hannah Landsmann. Our group was particularly interested in the digital board showing reconstructions of the 25 Viennese synagogues destroyed in 1938, and Theodore Herzl's bicycle, of course. In the evening we enjoyed our last schnitzel and strudel at a typical Austrian winery.

As AJR Next Generations Manager it was my pleasure to accompany this trip. My particular highlight was AJR Chair Mike Karp presenting the President of Austria with copies of *My Story* books, the testimony project I have been honoured to run and which made me think of my sorely-missed manager, Carol Hart, the force behind *My Story*. It was an emotional week but being in a group with other second generation and able to share this incredible experience with those from similar backgrounds enhanced the whole trip. I hope it will be the first of many such heritage trips for our members and want to thank Susanne Traunek, Secretary General of the Jewish Welcome Service, and her colleagues for welcoming us to Vienna.

From the participants

Rita Hockman: "Names and numbers have suddenly become real people. Being on this trip has been enlightening and revealing. I didn't expect it to be so."

Catharine Withers: "Despite the different details in our family stories there are so many parallels of which I was previously unaware. Our shared Viennese heritage was an unexpected comfort, despite its heinous past. I'm struggling to forgive but I will never forget."

Sidney Baginsky: "We thoroughly enjoyed our week in Vienna and thank AJR, the Jewish Welcome Service and all who contributed to the event. The visit to hear the President speak at the Hofburg Palace was very much appreciated."

Michael Brandman: "The Wall and the President's reception were indeed memorable but what stands out for us is meeting the lovely other members of the group and hearing their own experiences."

Sue Smeding: "I've been made to feel special on this trip. That my family story matters. The fact that the President spent an hour with us speaks more than words."

Ruth Ramsay: "How lucky were we to be a part of this unique event – all sharing a common bond and blending together. The memories of what we shared will remain forever, replacing the feeling of being alone in our personal history. It certainly brought some closure for me."

I was amazed and surprised by the amount of information the different organisations had prepared for us. However, the knowledge gained by visiting the Wall and Graves in Vienna, combined with seeing the community positively thriving, weighs heavily, as a reminder of what was lost."

A PASSION FOR QUAKER INTERV

I have been a Quaker since 2015. Quakerism is a religion where faith and values are manifested in a long history of humanitarian interventions.

I was brought up in Muswell Hill by my parents, grandmother and aunty who were overtly pro-Jewish. I am a war baby with a lifelong interest in WW2 and specifically the Jewish persecution and those who provided help. One day in the 1950's, sometime after my grandmother bought a TV for the Coronation, I distinctly remember my first shocking sight of a Concentration Camp. I remember my aunty whispering to my mother, "*Should we let David watch this?*" and my mother's reply, "*He needs to know.*" It did not last long but it was uniquely awful. I cannot remember conversations afterwards except a tearful numbed silence. This horror resulted in me avoiding future TV programmes about the Holocaust until I was an adult. Despite mixing with Jewish friends at school, I cannot remember a single word spoken about the Holocaust. A recent contact with a Jewish classmate has confirmed there was a complete silence about the subject at the time.

Since becoming a Quaker I have delved into the Quaker and Jewish connections during the Nazi era. As an AJR subscriber and Friend, on Monday 16 May, Ros Hart, AJR Organiser invited me to attend the Muswell Hill Members' Group meeting. An unforgettable experience. I was particularly moved by members' reflections on the support of Quakers.

Quakerism or to use its formal name, the Religious Society of Friends, was founded during the 1640s and 1650s by George Fox, the son of a weaver. As a young man, George left home on a personal pilgrimage to find a more spiritual experience than he found in church; worship did not need to take place in a church building or with a vicar, sermon, rituals, and bible readings. In 1650 he was imprisoned for the first of many times for blasphemy.

But a growing number of his followers spread his beliefs and values. In 1652 he met Margaret Fell. She was married to Thomas Fell, a barrister and Puritan, who became a judge and Member of Parliament. After Thomas Fell's death, Margaret married George and became a formidable advocate of Quakerism. Like George, she was frequently imprisoned and has been called the "Mother" of Quakers. Sarah Fell, one of her many daughters and George's stepdaughter, was an expert in Hebrew. In 1680 there were an amazing 60,000 Quakers. After the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, Margaret personally petitioned Charles to remove the punitive restrictions on Quakers but the harshness increased. Quakers kept records of the persecution and George Fox wrote that there were seldom less than one thousand imprisoned, with a total of 13,562, plus 152 deported and 338 deaths. It triggered emigration to America until, after 29 years, the Tolerance Act was passed in 1689.

Quaker Timeline

1661 – Quaker declaration to Charles II by Margaret Fell when she explains, "*We utterly deny all wars and strife and fighting with weapons.*"

1693 – William Penn proposes a European Union in Europe to help end constant conflicts.

1803 – Quaker Elizabeth Fry's first visit to Newgate Prison triggers her concern for the welfare of prisoners and results in a revolution in thinking about prison reform.

1807 – The Slave Trade Act makes slavery illegal in Britain, which Quakers had strongly campaigned for for many years.

1830s to 1860s – The Underground Railroad is developed in secret in America to help slaves escape from southern states, with large Quaker support.

1845 – 1852 (and beyond) – The Irish Famine. Quakers provide extensive food relief, agriculture and work opportunities in Ireland.

1852 – Quakers send a peace delegation to Czar Nicholas II to mediate over Crimea War.

1870 – Quakers set up a Friends War Victims Relief Committee.

1914 – The Friends Ambulance Unit is founded as an alternative to military service.

1916 – 1918 – British Conscription starts. Many Quakers are conscientious objectors and serve long prison sentences. Some became stretcher bearers or medical orderlies, or work in farming or mining.

1920s – Mass starvation in Russia with limited Quaker relief allowed in certain areas.

1936 – 1939 – Spanish Civil War; Quakers provide relief and, in 1937, 4000 Basque children evacuated to Britain.

1920s – 1930s – Nazi antisemitism. Quakers are quick to identify antisemitism and initially support Jews with jobs in Britain.

1938 – 1939 – Quakers work closely with Jewish leaders and others to set up the Kindertransports.

2016 + Quakers support refugees including regular food/medicine/clothing to Calais Camp.

The Nazi Persecution and Quakers

"*You cannot just sit on your hands and pray*" is a long-held view to gee up Quakers to act. After WW1 British Quakers set up centres in Berlin, Nuremberg, Frankfurt, Cologne and Dresden, plus a centre in Vienna where the incredible Bertha Bracey was based. Bertha was bilingual and quickly grasped the horror of the Nazi propaganda against Jews.

In 1933 she wrote, "*Antisemitism is a terrible canker which has been spreading poison for decades in many Central European countries. It came to a head when Germany dropped back into the*

ENTION

cruelty of the Middle Ages against Jews. Words are not adequate to tell of the anguish of my Jewish friends."

In November 1938, Sir Samuel Hoare, Home Secretary and Quaker led a Parliamentary debate with passionate support from Quaker Philip Noel Baker and numerous MPs who agreed that the Home Office should waive visas so that child refugees (mainly Jewish) could be brought to Britain if funding from Jewish organisations and others was provided, and all the organisation was by the voluntary sector. *Note. The complete debate included reticent comments about Jewish adults unless jobs were provided etc., and even the idea of sending some to African countries!*

After Kristallnacht, Bertha visited Berlin to assess the situation and, suitably distressed, rushed back to London to help form the Movement for the Care of Children from Germany. Across Britain 400 Quaker Meeting Houses mobilised. December 13, 1938, a Birmingham Committee was created to coordinate relief for Jewish refugees.

The first 200 Kindertransport children arrived at Harwich on December 2, 1938. The last arrived in May 1940, as Dutch troops surrendered to the German army. A remarkable Dutch woman, Truus Wijsmuller persuaded the captain of the Bodegraven to take 40 Jews, mainly children, which despite being machine-gunned by German planes managed to escape to Liverpool.

By January 1939, the Birmingham Committee was offering the use of Allendale Cottage by William and Emeline Cadbury to accommodate 6 Jewish refugee children prior to finding more permanent housing, and an advice bureau was set up.

Another hostel provided by the Cadbury family had 8 or 9 young children. A Czech hostel provided 28 Czech, German and



Quaker Meeting by John Perkin, 2009



Austrian adults in agriculture.

But Quakers were frustrated by the Government's red tape and in July 1939 a group of Friends approached local MPs to "*Urge more vigorous action by Government in aid of refugees*". By the end of 1939, it was estimated that between 1018 and 1028 refugees, of whom 200 were children, were in Birmingham.

In Germany the constant restrictions on Jews included travelling on public transport. Quakers tried to fill the gap. They positioned themselves outside stations to receive Jewish children, to avoid painful farewells which would result in police intervention. Quakers, with others, volunteered to escort children on the trains to the Hook of Holland to offer a caring adult to the children. In London, Quakers met the children at Liverpool Street Station, organised refreshments and passed them into the care of foster parents and arranged accommodation for children who were not met.

In 1945, Bertha enabled RAF transport planes to collect 300 Jewish boy survivors from Theresienstadt to fly with her to the Windermere Reception Centre. Her energy was remarkable.

I would like to end with a quotation from Mike Levy's new book *GET THE CHILDREN OUT*, on mainly unknown heroes who helped Jews escape.

"The Kindertransport, then, was a massive logistical operation involving a raft of highly talented, frenetically energised, humanitarians who recognised the perilous danger into which the Jews of Europe had been plunged. In an age before the internet, astonishingly good communications were kept up between London, Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam and elsewhere. Telephone lines buzzing, telegrams constantly toing and froing, visitors from Berlin to London arriving daily – Kindertransport was, if nothing else, an awe-inspiring triumph of communication and international communication. But it needed to be."

Postscript

In 1942 Bertha Bracey was awarded the OBE for services to refugees. In 1947 British and American Quakers were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work with refugees. In 1999, a rose was dedicated to Bertha at the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre. In 2010 Prime Minister Gordon Brown created 20 medals for Heroes of the Holocaust and presented a posthumous medal to Bertha's daughter. In 2011, Yad Vashem included the Society of Friends in the Righteous Amongst the Nations for enabling 27,000 Jews to flee Nazi Europe.

David Dobson

The living must march on

AJR's Karen Markham writes:
I was honoured to be selected as a "survivor companion" to Agnes Kaposi on the 2022 March of the Living, postponed from 2020. Agnes originates from Hungary, making her story somewhat different from those of other survivors on the trip.

After landing in Warsaw we went straight to the Warsaw Jewish Cemetery where many tombstones of interest were discussed with our group of youth movement participants. The cemetery opened in 1806 and contains over 250,000 graves, including a memorial of stones for the 200,000 Jewish people left in mass graves. After the war the local Communist authority planned a road directly through the middle of the cemetery, but the plans were never carried out. In the 1990s the neglected cemetery started to be renovated for the first time since the 1930s – the cemetery remains open and conducts 20-30 funerals each year.

We then walked around the 1.3 square miles of the Warsaw ghetto, where nearly half a million Jewish Polish people were imprisoned, most of whom were deported to concentration camps from 1942 onwards. Little of the original walls and buildings remain.

After an exhausting day we were privileged to witness the Righteous Among the Nations award ceremony for the Węgrzynowski family as part of the inauguration of the annual March of the Living. The ceremony was attended by relatives of the Ostro, Węgrzynowski and Trzeciakowski families as well as the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, and the Israeli Ambassador to Poland.

We heard how friends Józef Węgrzynowski and Witold Trzeciakowski provided Max Ostro with food and shelter for several months after he jumped from a moving train bound for the Treblinka death camp.

Between November 1944 and January 1945 Ostro hid in an unmarked grave as the Germans searched for him, surviving on food delivered at great personal risk by Josef Węgrzynowski: the punishment for Poles caught hiding or helping Jews was death. After the war, Ostro brought his family's jewellery business to the UK, where he went on to have a large family.

Leaving Warsaw, Agnes and I joined a bus carrying leaders from Methodist, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and other faiths, plus ex-Yorkshire cricketer Azeem Rafiq and four MPs: Miriam Cates, Peter Gibson, Steve McCabe and Christian Wakeford. Our first stop was Lublin, a town once full of Polish Jews. In the 1930s the community built an enormous Yeshiva which somehow survived the war although the community itself was wiped out. The building became a hotel which religious students frequented to study and pray, and which has been made exclusively available to Ukrainian refugees since February. Through our educator Richard Verber, who studied Russian at university, we heard from some of these refugees about their two week journeys to safety, and how they don't want to be a burden on the Poles and long to return home. They are educating their children online and get regular updates from family members that remain in Ukraine.

From Lublin we travelled to Markowa, a large town where Jews and Poles lived happily together for many generations and where some 200,000 Poles helped to hide their Jewish neighbours, despite the risk of execution. 6000 of their righteous have been acknowledged by Yad Vashem. In 2016 a local museum opened honouring Józef and Wiktoria Ulma and their six children, who were all murdered by German police on 24 March 1944, along with the eight Jews they had been sheltering. Some of Markowa's non-Jews were so scared by this incident that they took their Jewish neighbours to a field and killed them. This highlights how the Polish people lived in fear of the German regime, tragically impacting on a community that had previously lived in perfect harmony.

We then found ourselves in the Buczyzna Forest of Zyblitowska Gora. Here we learned the heinous way that 6,000 Jews and

gentiles, men, women and 800 children were murdered and buried, whether dead or alive. Standing amongst the mass graves it was beyond my understanding to comprehend how human beings can perpetrate such atrocious crimes.

Having arrived in Krakow emotionally exhausted, we prepared for the visit to Auschwitz and Birkenau the following day. Agnes and the other survivors in the UK delegation remained in the hotel for media interviews while I joined a group visit.

My initial reaction to Birkenau was the sheer vastness of the site, spanning a distance I could not even see beyond, surrounded with barbed wire, wooden watch towers and barracks, some intact, others in ruins. I saw where people arrived and the buildings where they were processed – they were shaved, clothes removed, tattooed and deloused. We were able to view and understand the remains of the third gas chamber and crematorium, whilst many of the other gas chamber sites had been destroyed. Personally I found the museum set up at Auschwitz clinical and unengaging but it was better received by visitors with little prior knowledge of the Holocaust.

That evening, the start of Yom Ha'Shoah, the 300-strong UK delegation came together for its own moving ceremony, led by the seven survivors who had joined the trip and Rosie Harris of Habonim Dror UK, representing the Youth Movements; Nikita Ved, representing the Interfaith Bus, Rabbi Joseph Dweck, Senior Rabbi of the UK's Spanish and Portuguese Sephardi Community, and Shai Abramson, Chief Cantor of the IDF.

Our final day began with a visit to the Krakow ghetto and the central town square, where a monument of chairs represent a waiting room. From here to Auschwitz where all countries gathered for the International March – even more poignant given it was the first for three years. The 3.2km March from Auschwitz to Birkenau is a tribute to all the victims of the Holocaust, and thousands of people of all faiths and backgrounds take part.





Whilst the March itself replicates the infamous 'death marches', those completing this journey nowadays can rejoice at the survival of some and the continuation of the Jewish people. Personally I found the singing and international camaraderie incredibly moving. I hope that survivors and next generations will continue to make this

journey to share their testimonies - please encourage your descendants to take part. The March of the Living is a celebration of life and future, whilst also remembering tragedy, and I send my personal thanks to Agnes for her company, energy and intellect.

www.marchoftheliving.org.uk

YELLOW STAR - RED STAR

Hungarian-born Agnes Kaposi, who Karen accompanied on the March, survived the Debrecen ghetto and labour camps in Austria. A distinguished engineer, she worked as a researcher and consultant, pioneering computer aided design and systems engineering. In 1992 she became just the third woman to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering.

Her engineer's eye for detail is reflected in her remarkable memoir, published in 2020 under the title *Yellow Star - Red Star*. It tells how the Holocaust killed many of her family, together with half a million

Hungarian Jews, but a series of miracles and coincidences allowed her to survive. Agnes worked as a child labourer in the agricultural and armament camps of Austria and was liberated by a rampaging Soviet army. She struggled through post-war hardship to re-enter Hungarian society, only to be caught up for a decade in the vice of Stalinism. In 1956 a bloody revolution offered the opportunity to escape to Britain, a country of freedom and tolerance, where she started a family and built her engineering career.

The story is written with compassion and optimism, without self-pity. The tone is light, and there is plenty of irony, even humour. The reviewer Frances Beckett describes it as "the most vivid, informative and chilling Holocaust account I have read."

Yellow Star - Red Star is widely available and signed copies can be ordered via www.agneskaposi.com



Trip to Bath



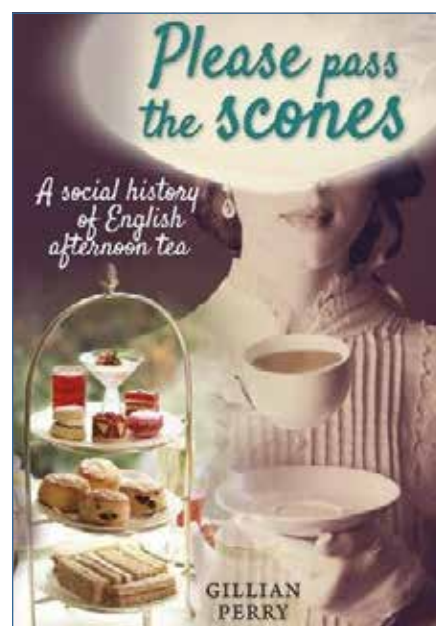
Sunday 4 September –
Wednesday 7 September

A four day itinerary covering all of Bath's main attractions, with B&B accommodation at the Francis Hotel and all meals included.

This will be an active trip, with lots of walking, and participants will need to make their own travel arrangements to/from Bath.

Places available on a first come, first served basis

Contact Ros Hart on
RosHart@ajr.org.uk
for full information



Join us for an Afternoon Tea & Talk
THURSDAY 25 AUGUST
at 2.30pm

Contact Susan Harrod on
susan@ajr.org.uk

REVIEWS

HOMELANDS: THE HISTORY OF A FRIENDSHIP

Chitra Ramaswamy
Canongate

Friendships sometimes blossom in unlikely ways and this book tells the story of a Holocaust refugee and the rapport he developed with a journalist whose family also came from overseas. Born in 1924, Henry Wuga grew up in Nuremberg where his father had a stationery business; his mother was from Heilbronn where she sent her son to visit his grandmother for summer holidays. Author Chitra Ramaswamy was born in London, the daughter of Indian immigrants. Despite their very different backgrounds they had a surprising amount in common.

After his Barmitzva Heinz – later known as Henry – was dismayed when forced to leave school to learn a trade as life became increasingly difficult under Nazi rule. He trained in the kosher kitchens of the Hotel Tannhäuser, in the spa town of Baden-Baden, nearly 200 miles away. The profession was to prove invaluable and he went on to found the biggest Jewish catering company in Glasgow.

But the day before Kristallnacht he returned home to his parents, despite strong protests from his employer. After Kristallnacht he saw the devastation wrought on the Jewish community, including his next-door neighbour being beaten up and a piano sent flying out of the window. The fact that he returned to Nuremberg proved to be extremely fortuitous as, during the orgy of destruction, the Jewish men in Baden-Baden were sent to Dachau; Henry said he would have been amongst them.

Fortunately, through his cousin Grete, a guarantor was found and he was sent to England on a Kindertransport. He described the train journey from Germany as “horrendous”, with smaller children crying for their parents but the mood lifted crossing the border. Even for Henry the trip was the first time he had seen the sea. He was sent to Glasgow and all went well at first but unfortunately this soon changed. Despite being only 16,

his correspondence with uncles in Brussels and Paris, in a bid to get in touch with his parents, led to suspicions that he was a spy. Whilst classed as a dangerous enemy alien “category A”, he was interned in six camps, sometimes in deplorable conditions.

After being freed he resumed life in wartime Glasgow where he encountered Ingrid, who had arrived a few months after him from Dortmund, also on a Kindertransport. They met at “the house on the hill”, a melting pot for refugees in Sauchiehall Street, and were married for more than 75 years.

Chitra interviewed the couple for refugee week in 2011 and the friendship deepened over more than a decade. The Wugas became her adopted grandparents and she got to know their daughters, Hilary and Gillian. Henry meanwhile worked for Holocaust education both at home and abroad until lockdown.

The author is to be congratulated on her extensive research, including working from original correspondence, and she includes a long bibliography. It is quite amazing how she managed to do this as a parent of two small children! The original research from the national archives and detail about Henry’s mother’s survival in wartime Germany is very interesting and Chitra ties up all the ends. It is fascinating how she has captured Henry’s quite precise and drily witty speech. Photographs put everything into context.

Janet Weston

A VILLAGE IN THE THIRD REICH

Julia Boyd & Angelika Patel
Elliott & Thompson

Obersdorf is a beautiful village high up in the Bavarian Alps, a place where for hundreds of years people lived simple lives while history was made elsewhere. Yet even here, in the southernmost tip of Germany, National Socialism sought to control not only peoples’ lives but also their minds.

Drawing on archival material, letters, interviews and memoirs, *A Village in the Third Reich* is an extraordinary, intimate portrait of Germany under Hitler, of the descent into totalitarianism and of the tragedies that befell all those touched by Nazism. In its pages we meet foresters, priests, farmers, innkeepers and a group

of nuns. There are Nazi officials, veterans and party members; village councillors, mountaineers, socialists, slave labourers, schoolchildren, tourists and aristocrats. We meet the Jews who survived – and those who did not, the Nazi mayor who tried to shield those persecuted by the regime and a blind boy whose life was judged not worth living.

This fascinating account follows Julia Boyd’s bestseller *Travellers in the Third Reich*, an extraordinary history of the rise of the Nazis, based on first-hand accounts, drawing together a multitude of voices and stories including students, politicians, musicians, artists, diplomats, schoolchildren, scholars, communists, fascists, tourists and celebrities like Charles Lindbergh and Samuel Becket.

These are accidental witnesses to history. Disturbing, absurd, moving, ranging from the trivial to the tragic. The accounts give a fresh insight into the complexities of the Third Reich, its paradoxes and its ultimate destruction.

Both books are meticulously researched with illustrations, maps, notes and references. Angelika Patel comes from a family who lived in Oberstdorf and still lives there. *Walter Wolff (with acknowledgement to the publishers)*

ENDPAPERS

Alexander Wolff
Grove Press, 2021

Alexander Wolff, a successful American sports journalist for more than thirty years, had reached that stage in life: like so many other descendants of refugees, he wanted to learn more about where he came from, more than he’d picked up from the family in his youth. He realised that trawling genealogical and other websites while sitting at his computer wasn’t going to be enough.

As he turned sixty, Alexander decided to quit his job, abandon his Vermont farmhouse, and move with his family to Berlin’s bohemian Kreuzberg district for a year. That would enable him to consult German archives, and ‘doorstep’ distant relatives and others who might have fresh information in the form of letters and diaries. *Endpapers* is the engrossing result.

Alexander's paternal grandfather, Kurt Wolff, had been a famous German Jewish avant-garde publisher in the Weimar years, bringing out 'degenerates' such as Franz Kafka and Joseph Roth, no less. Kurt had fled from Berlin forty-eight hours after the Reichstag fire in 1933, leaving behind his first wife, Elisabeth, their son Niko and their daughter Maria. After sojourns in Italy and France, Kurt and his second wife Helen ended up in New York, having crossed the Pyrenees from occupied France to reach Lisbon. They started publishing books again, bringing out the English-language translations of Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum* and Boris Pasternak's *Dr Zhivago*. Homesick for European culture and uncomfortable in American society, where he was forced out of his own firm, Kurt 'fled' once again; this time he found refuge in Switzerland in 1960. A lorry crushed him to death in 1963, as he was on his way to the German 'Literaturarchiv,' near Stuttgart. Niko was six years old.

That all seemed straight-forward enough. What was so puzzling was that, while his grandfather was boarding the boat to America, his father Niko, despite his Jewish ancestry, was active in Operation Barbarossa, Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Niko, who had joined the Hitler Youth before the war, ended up fighting on the Western front, where the Americans captured him during the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes. After they let him sail to the US, he in August 1948 married a 'WASP' with slave-owner ancestors.

A taciturn Niko hadn't told their son Alexander, born a decade later, too much about his Wehrmacht service. How much did Niko know about the death camps? Did he take part in atrocities against the Russians, Poles and Ukrainians? And there seemed to be other skeletons in the family cupboard. Through his grandmother Elisabeth, Alexander was linked to the mighty Germany pharmaceutical business, Merck. What were they up to during the war? And what about those stories of doctors who administered Merck drugs to stimulate, or sedate, Hitler?

Endpapers is much more than a fluidly written narrative. Alexander Wolff constantly reflects, asking himself questions about his family and the past. He also shows great concern for recent incidents in the US.

What would Kurt and Niko have made of the white supremacist riots in Charlottesville in 2017, and the storming of the US Capitol in 2021? Alexander Wolff believes the US could learn a lot from the way Germany has gradually managed to come to terms with its most sombre years.

Martin Mauthner

**WITHOUT A HOME –
KINDERTRANSPORTS FROM VIENNA**
Edited by Sabine Apostolo, on behalf of the Jewish Museum Vienna

Britain initially wanted families to foster Kindertransport refugees in their own homes – temporarily, until the government could despatch them elsewhere. France, which took only a few hundred children, had a different approach. From the start, it selected only those who, it believed, would remain there. And, on arrival, they were not to live singly in private homes, but communally.

That is how 130 of them, aged between nine and fifteen, arrived in convoys in March and April 1939 at the twelfth-century Château de la Guette, forty kilometres from Paris, a 'hunting lodge' owned by the philanthropic Edouard and Germaine de Rothschild. The baroness had set up an assistance committee, after the November 1938 pogrom, to rescue German and Austrian children from the Nazis. One of the young inmates was Paul Peter Porges, from Vienna, who became a famous cartoonist in the US. He wrote enthusiastically, 'I am finally in the castle of Baroness Rothschild, which was prepared specially for us. It's wonderful here.' While there, Porges drew a cover page for a 'Constitution of the Children's Republic,' a document in French and German which declared that: 'We are a small state, should we not also be able to govern ourselves like a nation?' Inspired by France's political institutions, the children set up a two-house parliament, with ministers for internal affairs, finance, hygiene, sport, and even the French language. A bank director issued 'Francs-Guettes,' banknotes decorated with the Star of David.

Behind this initiative was Ernst Jablonski, recruited by the baroness to take charge of the children's education. Born in Berlin in 1913, he had fled to France in 1933.

He went on to join the French Résistance during the war, adopting the name 'Ernest Jouhy.' He returned to Germany in 1951 and became a university professor in Frankfurt.

Porges' cover page is reproduced in *Without a Home*, published to accompany a recent exhibition at Vienna's Jewish Museum (visited by Prince Charles in 2018). The AJR is among the individuals and organisations thanked for providing material. In English and German, this publication gives valuable insights into the work of Vienna's Israelitische Kultusgemeinde – the agency that still represents practising Jews – in organising the evacuation of the endangered children. The chapters on Kindertransport cover not only Britain but also the United States, Norway and Sweden, and the Netherlands. Chapters on individuals include the twins Ilse and Helga Aichinger: the former survived in Vienna and became a well-known writer; the Kindertransport brought Helga to Britain.

The museum's director, Danielle Spera, writes in her introduction: 'The children of the Kindertransport lost the chance to experience childhood in their home country. They had to sacrifice a lot to survive and to escape the Nazi regime.'



Kinder are invited by
**The Harwich Kindertransport
Memorial and Learning Trust**
to the unveiling of the *Safe Haven*
statue on the Harwich Quayside

**THURSDAY 1 SEPTEMBER
AT 3PM**

*This location is close to the spot where
many Kinder first set foot on British soil.*

Places are limited due to space around
the statue. AJR hope to arrange some
form of transport dependent upon
numbers and area of travel.

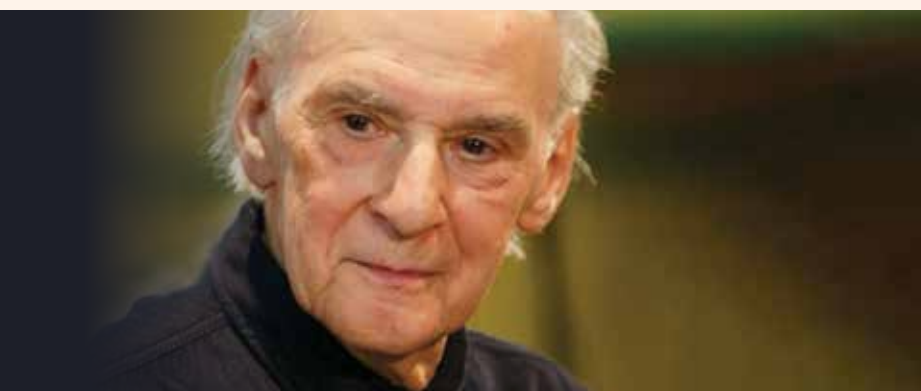
**If you are interested in attending
please contact Susan Harrod on
susan@ajr.org.uk
by 10 August 2022.**

OBITUARIES

JOSEPH HOROVITZ

Born: 26 May 1920, Vienna

Died: 9 February 2022, London



(This is an edited version of the obituary written by David Herman which originally appeared in the Jewish Chronicle)

Distinguished composer, who brought together British musical traditions with the Classical and Jewish European cultural background he and his family brought to Britain from Vienna.

Joseph Horovitz once said, 'I am a Viennese-born composer, a Jew by religion and I want to be thought of as a British composer.'

He was part of that extraordinary generation of refugee composers that included Hans Gál, Berthold Goldschmidt and Franz Reizenstein. A prolific composer of orchestral, wind and chamber music, Horovitz was known to a wider audience for his famous children's choral work, *Captain Noah and His Floating Zoo* (1970) and popular TV themes such as *Rumpole of the Bailey* and *Lillie*.

'He is a composer of remarkable versatility, graceful wit and an enviable ability to communicate,' wrote *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 'With the death of Joseph Horovitz, an important link with music making in pre-War Europe disappears,' said Howard Friend, Managing Editor, Novello, for more than twenty years.

Horovitz was the son of art publisher Béla Horovitz (1898-1955), the co-founder in 1923, with Ludwig Goldscheider, of Phaidon Verlag, and his wife, Lotte, née Beller (1905-2003). Joseph and his sisters grew up in a cultured home. Their parents were deeply religious and were involved in Viennese music and fine arts. One sister, Elly Miller (1928-2020), later became an art publisher, the other, Hannah Horovitz (1936-2010), became a classical music promoter.

In 1938 the Horovitz family left Vienna two days after the *Anschluss* and escaped to London after an extraordinary journey across Europe. 'It's indelible,' he said more

than half a century later. 'You cannot have the experience of being ejected from your home without remaining intensely uneasy.'

'England,' he said in an interview, 'was a fantasy of peace, of safety, of wonderful life, polite people.' He acknowledged that this was an outsider's view of Englishness but perhaps it helped prepare him for working with such masters of English comedy as Michael Flanders and Gerard Hoffnung.

Horovitz studied Music and Modern Languages at New College, Oxford. He went on to study composition with Gordon Jacob at The Royal College of Music, and then in 1949 went on to study with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. She 'hoovered my music of redundant notes,' he said later.

He conducted open-air ballet and concerts for the 1951 Festival of Britain and in 1956 he joined the music staff of Glyndebourne Opera. In the same year he married the journalist, Anna Landau. They had two daughters and were married for more than sixty-five years.

In 1958 the humourist Gerard Hoffnung commissioned *Metamorphoses on a Bedtime Theme*, a set of variations that parodied the television commercial 'Sleep Sweeter, Bournvita' in the style of Bach, Mozart, Verdi, Schoenberg and Stravinsky. From 1961 Horovitz taught Composition at the Royal College of Music for almost sixty years.

In 1969 Horovitz was commissioned by Phaidon Press to honour the 60th birthday of Ernst Gombrich. His String Quartet No. 5 was first performed by the Amadeus Quartet. Horovitz, Gombrich and three members of the Amadeus Quartet were all

from Vienna. The work takes the listener from melodies of pre-war Vienna, which the composer, dedicatee and performers would have known, to a version of the *Horst Wessel Lied*. The composer once said that if all his works were thrown in a river, this was the one he would retrieve.

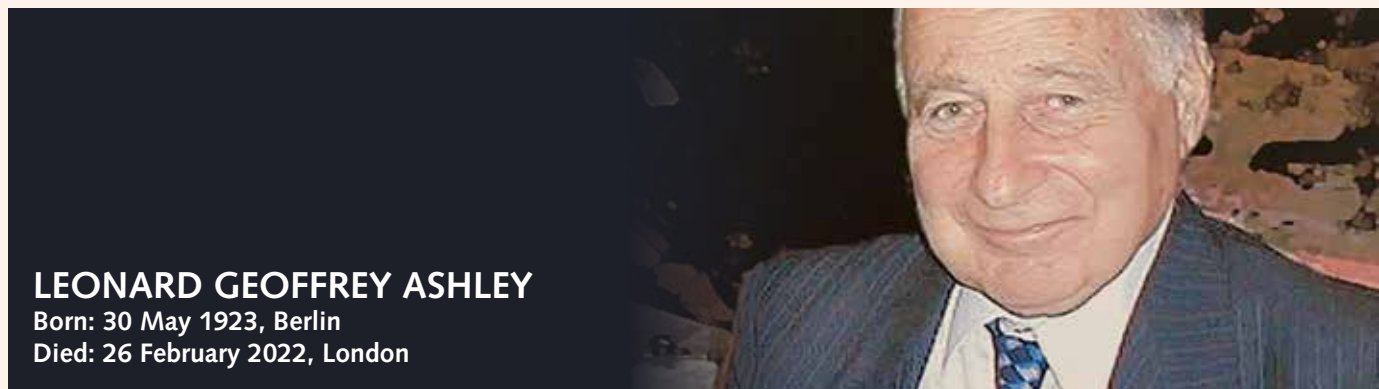
A year later he composed a very different work, *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo* (with libretto by Michael Flanders). In 1977 his *Jubilee Toy Symphony* was performed, with Peggy Ashcroft playing maracas, Fenella Fielding on police whistle and Yehudi Menuhin beating the toy drum.

Acclaim and honours poured in. In 1981 Horovitz was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal College of Music. In 1995 The City of Vienna awarded him the Gold Order of Merit. He was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of New College, Oxford in 2019 and in 2021 his Harpsichord Concerto was performed at the BBC Proms.

Joseph Horovitz died at the age of 95. He is survived by his wife, Anna, and their two daughters, Isabel and Sally, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was the last surviving member of the extraordinary Horovitz family who came from Vienna after the *Anschluss* and did so much to enrich British culture.

When asked which of his compositions he'd like to be remembered for he said, 'a small chunk of *Captain Noah*, my little *Rumpole* theme, the second movement of my clarinet sonatina. If people find three minutes of a piece of music of mine they would like to hear again, that's a wonderful thing.'

David Herman



LEONARD GEOFFREY ASHLEY

Born: 30 May 1923, Berlin
 Died: 26 February 2022, London

Born Leonhard Günther Auerbach, Len was the youngest child of lawyer Jakob and actress Elsa. Photos suggest a sweet-natured boy with a cheeky sense of humour – and that’s basically how he remained for his nearly 99 years.

Although from a family of generations of rabbis, Len was brought up in a secular German Jewish household. His childhood was interrupted by the rise of Adolf Hitler. He recalled seeing the burning of the Reichstag from his home and the brownshirts on the street on the Night of the Long Knives. Worried, his parents sent Len aged 12, to England, alone, speaking almost no English. He was later followed by his older brother and sister and eventually his parents, who miraculously survived the war in hiding in the Netherlands. Many other relatives, including his cousin Willy, died in the Holocaust.

Len never bemoaned what life threw at him, even though he often had cause to, losing tragically early his brother Michael, his first wife Alice, his eldest son Anthony and daughter-in-law Jane. Instead, Len throughout his life would respond phlegmatically with quiet determination and a will to live as long as he could and make the most of life.

Within six months of starting at Caterham School in Surrey, he was near the top of his class in English. In 1940, aged just 16 he was interned for nearly a year as an enemy alien – first on the Isle of Man and then in Canada. However, his headmaster’s appeals

received a positive response from Winston Churchill himself and Len returned to school to tell his friends about his adventures. He remained grateful throughout his life to Caterham School and to his adopted country; he was very proud to be British.

Perhaps because, as a child refugee, he had benefited from tolerance himself, he quietly espoused principles of tolerance, openness and humanity. It’s no coincidence both his surviving children, Cathy and David have served as trustees for the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. Len enjoyed a successful career as an accountant working long hours and retiring at 80. When establishing himself as self-employed, he had set up his office by chance in Tottenham, which is how he became a devoted Spurs fan.

Len’s even greater fortune was meeting Barbara at a Hyphen event, a social club for Jewish refugees, where Len and Barbara made many treasured friends. Barbara became the love and the rock of Len’s life for nearly 60 years of marriage, as well as his carer and companion in his later years.

The family they forged became the centre of his life. Their Stanmore home

was always filled with love, kindness, acceptance, laughter and invariably the news. He was immensely proud of his family and took great pleasure in his grandchildren and the love and admiration was mutual.

Len is survived by his wife Barbara, his cousin Frank Auerbach, his children David and Cathy, his grandchildren Eleanor, Michael, Reaxmey and Amy and his niece Rosalind and her son Henry.

Cathy Ashley

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ZOOMS AHEAD

Details of all meetings and the links to join will appear in the e-newsletter each Monday.

Monday 1 August @ 10.30am	Get Fit where you sit https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439	MEETING ID: 8524 688 9439
Tuesday 2 August @ 2pm	Bob Sinfield – PETER SELLERS AT SEA – the hilarious and disastrous story of what happened when the great comic actor tried making a pirate movie on the high(ish) seas off Cyprus in 1973. https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87210591751	Meeting ID 8721 059 1751
Wednesday 3 August @2pm	Christina Hilsenrath – The History of the Jews of Bath https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89231291974	Meeting ID: 8923 129 1974
Thursday 4 August @4pm	A Hungarian Afternoon https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88541073897	Meeting ID: 885 4107 3897
Monday 8 August @10.30am	Get Fit where you sit https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439	MEETING ID: 8524 688 9439
Wednesday 10 August @2pm	David Barnett – Bernhard Weiss, the Jewish police chief of Berlin who fought the Nazis https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86232891785	Meeting ID 8623 289 1785
Monday 15 August @10.30am	Get Fit where you sit https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439	MEETING ID: 8524 688 9439
Monday 15 August @ 4pm	Mark Lewis – The World of Art Deco https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/84318568564	Meeting ID: 843 1856 8564
Wednesday 17 August @ 2pm	AJR Book Club Discussion (no speaker) – <i>Standard Deviation</i> by Katherine Heiny https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81967267423	Meeting ID: 8196 726 7423
Monday 22 August @10.30am	Get Fit where you sit https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439	MEETING ID: 8524 688 9439
Monday 22 August @ 4pm	Arnold Black – The Commonwealth Games https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/84115164615	Meeting ID: 841 1516 4615
Wednesday 24 August @2pm	Simon Burne – My experience of hosting a family from Ukraine https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89051135208	Meeting ID 8905 113 5208
Tuesday 30 August @2pm	Michael Kushner – Life and Times of Winston Churchill Part one (The things you may not have known) 1874–1939.. https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86062771061	Meeting ID: 8606 277 1061
Wednesday 31 August @2pm	Herbie Goldberg – The life and music of Hungarian Joseph Joachim https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/82631566551	Meeting ID 8263 156 6551



IN PERSON EVENTS

DATE	IN PERSON MEETING	TIME / CO-ORDINATOR
Monday 1 August	Kensington @ 2pm	Ros Hart
Tuesday 2 August	Hendon @ 10.30am	Karen Diamond
Wednesday 3 August	Glasgow Outing	Agnes Isaacs
Sunday 7 August	Interfaith event – Edinburgh	Agnes Isaacs
Monday 8 August	Edinburgh	Agnes Isaacs
Tuesday 9 August	Edgware @ 10.30am	Ros Hart
Tuesday 9 August	Birmingham @ 12 noon	Karen Diamond
Thursday 11 August	Bushey @ 11am	Karen Diamond
Tuesday 16 August	Radlett @ 10.30am	Karen Diamond
Thursday 18 August	Bournemouth – Lunchtime outing	Ros Hart
Thursday 18 August	Glasgow Book Club	Agnes Isaacs
Monday 22 August	Hampstead @ 2pm	Ros Hart
Thursday 25 August	Glasgow – 1st Generation Lunch @ 12pm	Agnes Isaacs
Tuesday 30 August	Ealing @ 10.30am	Ros Hart
Wednesday 31 August	Glasgow – 2nd Generation Outing	Agnes Isaacs

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

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