

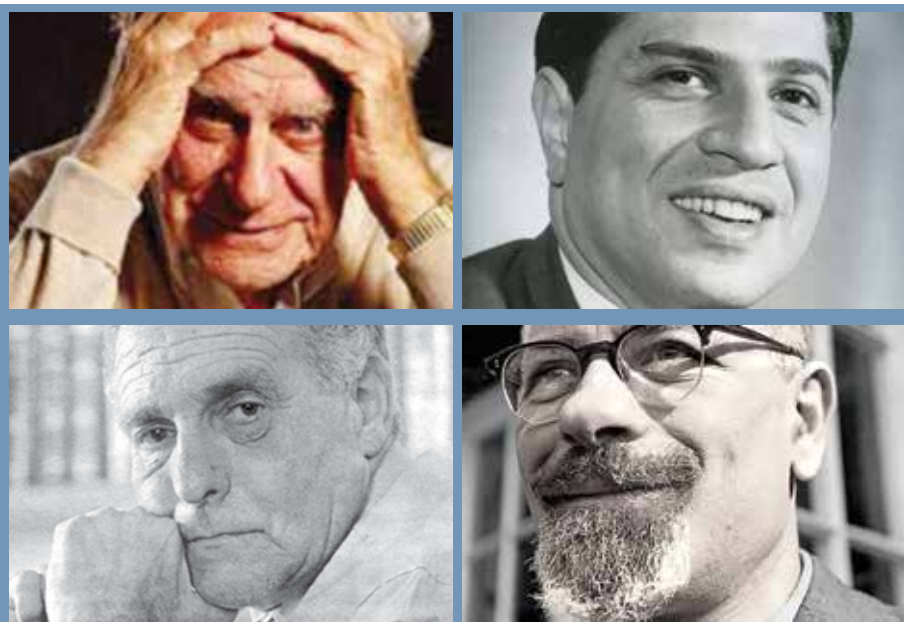


# AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## Some intellectual properties

This year marks the 75th anniversary of some important events in the careers of a dozen or so prominent Jewish refugee artists and intellectuals. Like so many Jewish refugees they covered an extraordinary range of interests and occupations.



Four intellectuals: Karl Popper, Ralph Miliband, Ernest Gellner and Isaac Deutscher

Lucie Rie was a potter, who had her first solo show in 1949; Walter and Eva Neurath founded Thames and Hudson in 1949; Hans Schmoller was a graphic designer, who joined Penguin in 1949 and over almost thirty years changed the look of Penguin Books for a generation; Francis Simon was a German-Jewish physicist who was appointed Professor of Thermodynamics at Oxford in 1949; and GR Elton was a Tudor historian who began a long career at Cambridge when he was appointed an assistant university lecturer in 1949 and revolutionised the study of the reign of Henry VIII.

But there was another cluster of Jewish refugee intellectuals whose careers changed dramatically in 1949, which tells a fascinating story about refugees, post-war politics and who were insiders and outsiders. Some became among the most famous figures in British postwar intellectual life.

In 1949 Isaac Deutscher published his biography of Stalin. It was the first of more than a dozen books he published in less than twenty years, between 1949 and his death in 1967. Perhaps the best-  
*Continued on page 2*

### HAPPY NEW YEAR

2024 begins with further commemorations for the 85th anniversary of the Kindertransport, including the release of *One Life* on 1 January, well worth a trip to the cinema.

This month also sees our annual HMD service, at 2pm on Monday 22 January at the Belsize Square Synagogue.

If you do not yet follow us on our social media, now is the time to, as we'll be posting lots of stories and information about upcoming activities.

We know that AJR members and friends around the world are shocked by the terrifying rise in antisemitic incidents in recent months. Here's hoping that 2024 heralds less unsettling times for us all.

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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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## Some intellectual properties (cont.)

known were his three books on Trotsky: *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879-1921* (1954), *The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky, 1921-1929* (1959) and *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929-1940* (1963). But he was also famous for essays like *Heretics and Renegades* and *The non-Jewish Jew*.

Deutscher became the most famous Marxist anti-Stalinist writer of his generation. He was born in southern Poland in 1907, the son of a printer, and was brought up in a Hasidic sect. He later said, 'I attended regularly a school only during 2 years of my life, at the age of 8-10 years.' He left Cracow for Warsaw, where he became a proofreader, a freelance journalist and a member of the Polish Communist Party. But in 1932 he was expelled from the Communist Party for his attacks on Stalin, later became a Trotskyist and a homeless Marxist. He came to London just before the war. His parents, his brother (Salek) and sister (Manya) were all killed at Auschwitz. He wrote mainly about Soviet affairs for *The Observer* and *The Economist* and for twenty years after the war became one of the most prominent writers in Britain about the Soviet Union, Stalin and Trotsky.

The Jewish refugee academics and intellectuals who came to Britain fell into two very different groups: the insiders and outsiders. Those who fitted in and were awarded prestigious professorships or major awards and those who didn't. Deutscher was a quintessential outsider. First, because of his religious background; second, because of his lifelong commitment to Communism; and third, because he was Polish. He is perhaps best known today for his bitter rivalry with Isaiah Berlin, a consummate insider. This rivalry later became the subject of David Caute's fascinating book, *Isaac & Isaiah: The Covert Punishment of a Cold War Heretic* (2013).

If Deutscher was an outsider, the philosopher Karl Popper was part insider, part outsider. He was an insider in that he was born and brought up in Vienna, he was professor of Logic and Scientific Method at the LSE from 1949-69, he was a passionate liberal during the Cold War and is still famous for his books, *The Logic*

*of Scientific Discovery* (1934, translated 1959), *The Poverty of Historicism* (1944, revised 1957) and his two-volume work on Plato, Marx and Hegel, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945). Unlike Deutscher, he received numerous awards: he was made a Fellow of the British Academy in 1958, Knighted in 1965, a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1976 and a Companion of Honour in 1982.

So in what sense was Popper an outsider? Essentially because of his temperament. He was difficult, one of the awkward squad, At the LSE it was joked that his best-known book should be renamed, *The Open Society by One of its Enemies*. He was famously threatened with a poker by Wittgenstein (a story superbly told by David Edmonds and John Eidinow in their book, *Wittgenstein's Poker* (2001)).

In 1949, when Popper was made a professor, another distinguished Jewish refugee came to teach at the LSE: Ralph Miliband. Miliband is now best-known as the father of Ed and David, one a former leader of the Labour Party, the other a former Foreign Secretary. Born in Brussels in 1924, Miliband was the son of two Polish Jews who had settled in Belgium. In an unpublished memoir, Miliband wrote, "The political climate in our house was generally and loosely left: it was unthinkable that a Jew, our sort of Jew, the artisan Jewish worker, self-employed, poor, Yiddish-speaking, unassimilated, non-religious, could be anything but socialistic." In May 1940 he and his father walked to Ostend and got on a boat to England. "Several relatives" were killed in the Holocaust. He served in the Royal Navy and fought at D-Day. In 1949 he became an Assistant Lecturer in Political Science at the LSE and lectured there until 1972, was a prominent figure on the British New Left and published prolifically.

Ernest Gellner was perhaps one of the most brilliant figures in post-war Britain.

Born in Paris in 1925 into a German-speaking Czech Jewish family he was brought up in Prague. According to one admirer, 'His account of modernity is rooted in his understanding of the Austro-Hungarian empire in its last years.' In 1939 he and his family came to Britain, he served in the army and studied PPE at Oxford, where he graduated in 1949. He later came to the LSE in 1951 and stayed there for more than thirty years, writing on philosophy, anthropology and nationalism.

These four intellectuals whose careers took off 75 years ago, tell us a great deal about the lives of refugees in postwar Britain. First, the context of the Cold War, which was so crucial during the 1940s and 1950s, of course, but then for years afterwards. Popper was a passionate critic of Marxism and a lifelong liberal; Deutscher was a Trotskyist, formed by the political debates in 1930s Warsaw; Miliband was also on the Left, formed by his Polish-Jewish working-class roots before the war.

Despite Deutscher's Hasidic roots, they were all what he famously called, non-Jewish Jews. They were secular, passionate about different kinds of philosophy and politics and curiously uninterested in writing about the Holocaust or Nazism. But they could hardly have been more different, in terms of their background, their thinking and their temperament. Above all, they all made an enormous contribution to British intellectual life in the decades after the war (though Deutscher died in 1967 many of his works were published posthumously). They brought a cosmopolitan energy, from Prague, Brussels, Cracow and Vienna to Britain. And this is perhaps what they had most in common with the other children of 1949, Lucy Rie the potter, Hans Schmoller the graphic designer and the publishers, Walter and Eva Neurath.

David Herman

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## BACK TO LIVERPOOL STREET



Kinder and their descendants gather at Liverpool Street Station on the 85th anniversary of the Kindertransport

On 3 December, 85 years since the first Kindertransport train arrived in the UK, the AJR and World Jewish Relief held a special Commemorative Service at Liverpool Street Station, the arrival point for many of the Kinder.

Over 150 guests, predominately Kinder and their families, were in attendance to honour all those involved in bringing the Kinder to safety. The service took place against the backdrop of the statue sculpted by Frank Meisler, himself a Kind from Danzig, and was led by the Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis. It featured a moving testimony from Alexandra Greensted, who travelled as an unaccompanied 7-year-old from Prague in the summer of 1939, and who said: *“It is deeply moving to be back at Liverpool Street Station 85-years since the Nazis tore my world apart and I was given the chance of a new life in Great Britain. Standing side by side with fellow Kindertransport refugees, I’m filled with*

*gratitude for the brave actions of many and the tens of thousands of lives that were saved and a great sadness for those we had to leave behind.”*

Michael Newman, AJR CEO, said: *“Today, we remember the bravery and heroism of the parents who sent their children to safety while their own futures remained uncertain and pay tribute to those children who made unimaginable journeys against the backdrop of oppression, displacement and war. Long may the Kinder have the energy and opportunity to share their important eye-witness accounts which bear witness to where antisemitism can lead.”*

Guests of honour included Lord Pickles – The UK Envoy for Post Holocaust Issues – and Ambassadors from Germany and Austria, plus representatives from the Czech, Polish, Swedish and Dutch embassies.



## THE AJR EMBRACES ONE LIFE

**This month sees the global release of a wonderful movie about the Kindertransport, starring Anthony Hopkins as an older Nicholas Winton reflecting on the heroic rescue of Jewish refugee children.**

On page 13 you can read an interview with the film’s director.

The AJR worked closely with Warner Bros during the final stages of production. In December we held a special premiere of the movie in London for AJR members, staff and friends, and we collaborated in the creation of a special exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery.

This month will also see the broadcast of an episode of the BBC’s *Antiques Roadshow* which was filmed in Swanage and celebrates the work of the hitherto lesser-feted Kindertransport hero, Trevor Chadwick.

The AJR generated a vast amount of other media coverage for the Kindertransport 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary, totalling at over 300 pieces across UK national, regional and international outlets. This included a double page spread in *The Sun*, featuring a wonderful interview with AJR member Ruth Jacobs, and photographs and articles in the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Independent* and the *Evening Standard*, among others.

## LEAVE TO LAND COMES TO SANDWICH

**This month the Wiener Holocaust Library’s fascinating mobile exhibition about the Kitchener Camp rescue, *Leave to Land*, starts a three-month tour of various venues in East Kent, including Canterbury Cathedral.**

The tour will begin at the Sandwich Guildhall Museum which will also hold a special event on Holocaust Memorial Day, part-funded by the AJR. The Bishop of Dover, Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, will formally launch the exhibition which is so much part of the area’s history.



### TOUR DATES

- Sandwich Guildhall – **12-28 January**
- Deal Library – **1-8 February**
- Ramsgate Library – **9-18 February**
- Canterbury Cathedral – **17 Feb – 1 March**
- Ramsgate Tunnels – **2-16 March**

# WALLACE DELIGHTS

It was so fascinating to explore London's *Wallace Collection*, part of an ongoing series of outings organised by the AJR.

We enjoyed a private tour of this fabulous collection with our guide Lynne's expert explanation about the history of the museum comprising so many beautiful artefacts, exquisite furniture and china. She also highlighted the significance of the magnificent paintings by world-famous artists including Fragonard's most well-known work *The Swing*.

In particular she spoke of the

renowned French influence, particularly the 18<sup>th</sup> century, including the roles of Madam de Pompadour and Marie Antoinette. Afterwards we enjoyed lunch in the courtyard café and a chance to talk to old friends before the day was rounded off by Suzanne's informal talk in the lecture theatre.

**Janet Weston**



The AJR group enjoys the sumptuous Wallace Collection

## SECOND GENERATION FRIENDSHIPS REKINDLED

Childhood friendships were re-kindled last summer at a garden party held in Hertfordshire.

Children whose parents had attended the Otto Hirsch chapter of B'nai B'rith Youth in the early 1950s came together to share stories, reminisce about the annual picnics we had attended and to celebrate the lives of our refugee parents.

The Otto Hirsch chapter was instrumental in providing a sense of community, belonging and identity for our parents. As single young adults who were German, Austrian, Czech, Polish, Dutch and French refugees, living in London, B'nai B'rith provided a place where young Jewish men and women could gather socially, celebrate their Jewish identity and adjust to life in Britain. These early friendships formed in the 1950s were rekindled in 1970 when Freddie Haas decided to trace alumni. The resulting reunion was a great success, strong relationships were re-kindled and the tradition of an annual picnic gathering was established. Remarkably this tradition has been maintained, with the 52<sup>nd</sup> reunion taking place in 2022 at the home of Beulah Appel, a first generation refugee.



The July 1970 BBY reunion, showing a mix of first and second generation



The BBY second generation gather in Hertfordshire in summer 2023

Unfortunately, Freddie Haas passed away in 2023, weeks after my own father sadly passed away, prompting me to bring together the second generation. I had found amongst my father's papers a list of the Otto Hirsch chapter Youth members from 1952 and set out to find some of the second generation I had lost touch with over the years. Juliet Hanfling, whose parents had hosted many reunions in their garden, kindly facilitated an introduction to other families.

Around 45 second generation attended the summer garden party, and I was delighted that Beulah Appel, who had helped Freddie organise the reunions was able to attend. Connections have now been made and through our WhatsApp group we are able to share old photos of our parents and memories from our childhood.

**Anthony Hellman**

# DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON'S LETTER FROM ISRAEL



## FAMILY IN RESERVES



A basic aspect of life in Israel is the requirement that every adult, whether male or female, must serve in the

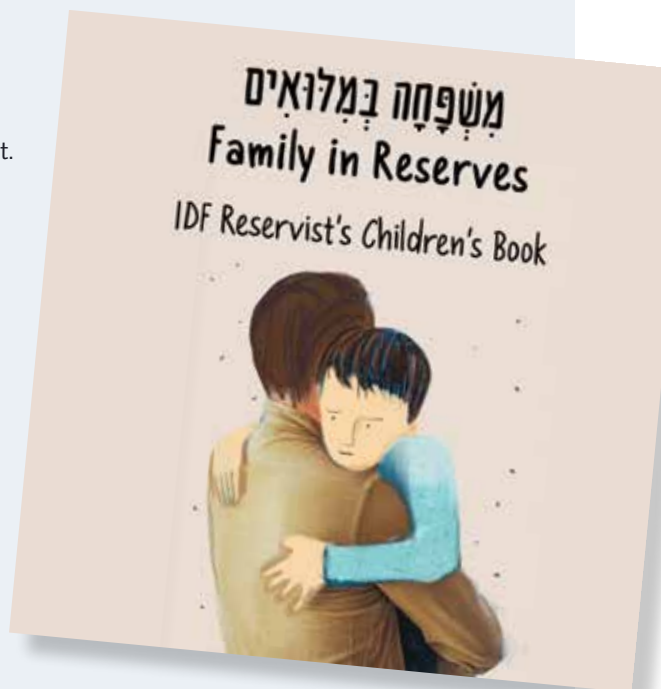
IDF for a few years upon reaching the age of eighteen. While serving in the military, soldiers are trained in one of the many areas in which the IDF engages, whether in a front-line combat unit or in one of the many support units. After being discharged, Israelis are required to be available for annual reserve duty, which usually amounts to two or three weeks of military service each year. This subject has become particularly pertinent in the last two months as many thousands of reservists have been called up, and their term of duty has extended far beyond the customary couple of weeks.

Most Israeli adults who have served in the military for two or three years continue to serve in the reserves until reaching the age at which most of them are no longer required or considered useful (usually around forty). For some individuals this constitutes a turning-point in their lives, while for others it is a blessed release. The period of reserve duty is used to refresh the individual's

knowledge of his or her sphere of activity and also to renew their acquaintance with friends and colleagues serving in the same unit.

When someone is called up to the reserves the rest of the family has to carry on regardless, trying to fill the gap that the individual has left, and hoping that in another week or two their loved one will return and normal family life will resume. In many cases it is the father of the family who is called up, and it is the mother and the children who must do their best to keep going. Sometimes it is the mother who is called up, and then the reverse is the case, with the father doing his best to undertake the tasks usually performed by the mother. In many cases the extended family, grandparents, uncles and aunts, for example, lend a hand in looking after the family and attending to the various tasks usually undertaken by the missing family member.

In many families the children are simply told, 'Dad (or Mum) is in the reserves,' and there is no further explanation of what is involved. The situation is taken for granted, and the children are expected to accept it as just another fact of life. But many young children have no idea what the concept of being in the reserves actually means.



So now one young mother, Talya Tomer, has decided that it's time to make it clear to children what it means when they are told 'Dad is in the reserves,' and has written a book explaining what happens. In order to make the situation clear she has involved another young mother, Daniella Koffler, to illustrate the text, and together they have launched a crowd-funding campaign on the IsraelGives project app (<https://my.israelgives.org/en/fundme/miluimbook>) in order to raise funds to enable them to publish the book, which is written in Hebrew and will be distributed gratis to children of parents who have been called up for reserve duty in the IDF.

## Farewell Myrna

**A large number of AJR members turned up for our recent Chanukah party in Glasgow when we said a fond farewell to an AJR stalwart: Myrna Bernard, who retired after 12 years' service as an AJR social worker.**



The AJR's Glasgow group at their Chanukah lunch, during which we presented a bouquet of flowers to Myrna, who is seated front centre

Myrna has been a compassionate advocate for our Glasgow members to whom she has been a devoted social worker and confidante. We will miss her charm, good humour

and collegiality. She leaves with our deepest thanks and appreciation and we wish her all the very best for a happy, healthy and well-deserved retirement.

# 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.

## EU PASSPORTS

Peter Phillips brings up an interesting issue, which resonates with me. I too was born in Vienna and fled with my parents in 1938. One of my sons with his four children took the opportunity to acquire EU passports after Brexit. My son did this simply for the purpose of freedom of travel, both for work and pleasure. This was a matter of expediency, not morality, although the irony of the situation did not escape me. Neither of my parents is with us of course, but I am sure they would have recognised that their suffering was finite and should not be allowed to affect the actions of future generations of our family. I feel the same way.

*Emil Landes, Highgate, London*

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## MICHAEL BROWN Z" L

Michael Brown, who was interviewed in the *AJR Journal* in May 2023, passed away on 10 September 2023 at the age of 93.

When he arrived from Germany in 1939, Michael lived with my grandparents, Jacob and Sara Raphael, in Liverpool. We always considered him as part of the family (and vice versa), so for me he was a sort of adopted uncle. At a party for his 80th birthday, Michael spoke movingly about how much members of the Raphael family had influenced his life.

After his retirement, Michael re-learned German, and travelled to Germany several times to speak to schoolchildren there about his experiences. He was concerned about refugee rights in general, and advocated the need for Britain to be open to children from Europe fleeing atrocities today. He published his memoirs in a book entitled *Moving On*. For his services to Holocaust education, he was awarded the British Empire Medal.

*Dov Raphael, Israel*

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## ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

Your anonymous correspondent (December) asks whether Martin Stern is serious in asking Jews to unite behind

Netanyahu. The answer must surely be yes. He remains Israel's Prime Minister and as such must be supported in his war aims. Any wavering can only recreate the disunity that, in my view, was a major factor behind the conflict. Our enemies thought that Israel was divided and weak and as such was wide open to their attack.

Your correspondent goes on to recommend the two-state solution as the only way for Israel to survive in peace according to most of the world. Unfortunately, as we have learned repeatedly, to most of the world Jewish lives don't matter. We are on our own. To put forward the two-state solution now is folly of the highest order. That position may be representative of a Guardian reader but while in the long term, when Palestinians have accepted the need to accept Israel, it may remain something to hope for, in the present situation, with Palestinians in Judea and Samaria as well as in Gaza applauding the Hamas attack, it would be suicidal for Israel to consider. Fortunately, Israelis of all political persuasions realise this.

Your correspondent recommends the views of Jonathan Freedland and others on this subject. More in line with the reality of our situation are the views of Douglas Murray, Howard Jacobson, and Melanie Phillips.

*Lionel Blumenthal, London NW11*

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While I am in despair at the recent Hamas attack I am also in despair at Israel's response. I am also quite surprised and saddened that your front page headline 'We Stand with Israel' did not condemn the disproportionate Israeli response, or give any quarter to the decades of oppression that preceded the Hamas attack. For too long the diaspora of which I and many of your readers are a member are assumed to be uncritical of Israel. In fact it is our duty to be critical as those who are not Jewish are simply branded antisemitic. I have watched over the years in dread that something like this would happen as a result of the building

of Ghetto-like walls between Israel and Gaza, and the apartheid policies which cause Palestinians within Israel to be branded second-class citizens. Above all I abjure the way in which Israel uses the memory of those who suffered in the Holocaust as justification of their policies. I feel this strongly. To use the experience of people like my mother (survivor of four concentration camps) and still with us at 99, as justification for unbending policies is a desecration of her suffering.

I do not stand with Israel if it means I must turn my back on the eternal suffering of those imprisoned in Gaza.

*Anthony Lipmann, Bridgewater, Somerset*

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Like most people, I was horrified by the outrageously cruel attacks by Hamas on defenceless Jewish people on 7 October. I do accept that Israel has a right to protect itself, but Israel's actions are seen by many as revenge, purely and solely.

However, I am equally outraged by the besieging of 2.2 million Palestinian civilians, over half of them children, in the Gaza Strip. Denying civilians access to water, food, fuel and medical care is an act of revenge worthy of the hundred years war. Both sides' actions I consider to be war crimes. I am similarly enraged that now approximately 15,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israel and their homes, livelihood and infrastructure have been destroyed; the majority of them are innocent men, women and children. This is continuing. Not only is it continuing in Gaza (temporary truces aside) atrocities are being committed regularly in the West Bank, whilst military and police look on.

Contrary to what many Israelis are saying, and while the army was clearly caught completely off guard by this invasion, this is not a "unilateral" or "unprovoked" attack. The dread Israelis are feeling right now, myself included, is a sliver of what Palestinians have been feeling daily under the decades-long military regime in the West Bank, and under the siege and

repeated assaults on Gaza. The responses we are hearing from many Israelis today — of people calling to “flatten Gaza”, that “these are savages, not people you can negotiate with”, “they are murdering whole families”, “there’s no room to talk with these people” — are exactly what has been heard from occupied Palestinians saying, countless times, about Israelis.

The AJR weekly Newsletters and monthly Journals are totally one-sided and do not mention the oppression and suppression that Israel has been subjecting Palestinians to over decades, nor expressing any sympathy or empathy for the deaths of mainly women and children in Gaza, their flattened buildings or the illegal Settler activity in the West Bank as well as cutting off the Gaza strip from food, water, medicines, communications, gas, oil, etc.

In the current edition, there is a long article condemning the British Media for apparently taking sides, by including coverage of Palestine and the Palestinians. I would say that even though both sides of the conflict are presented, the BBC and many British newspapers give Israel much more coverage than Palestine. I would argue that this article is yet another example of the kind of bias included in the AJR’s publications.

Fortunately, there are Jewish organisations that recognise the Palestinian plight. For example, the USA Jewish Voice for Peace, the largest ever Jewish protest in solidarity with Palestinians. There is also the UK Palestinian Support Campaign, which promotes ceasefire and a peaceful solution, a multi – and no-faith organisation that includes many Jewish members. There is also the ‘Jews for Justice for Palestinians’ (jffjp.com) who have made an enlightened statement on their website’s front page.

Finally, I believe that the AJR is doing good work for the survivors of Nazi Germany and their immediate dependents, but your focus, for me, is too

confined and totally one-sided.  
*Tony Callender, Diss, Norfolk*

**NOTE FROM EDITOR:** At the time of assembling and printing our November edition, we wanted to reflect the sentiment of our members. By coincidence there was a poignant members’ meeting shortly after the 7 October attacks which gave us the opportunity to show solidarity. We recognise that not every AJR member stands with Israel and hope that this Journal reflects their views. Please also note that our weekly e-news contains general information about events and upcoming activities for members, whereas comment is reserved for the Journal.

**THANK YOU AJR**

I’d like to let you know how happy and impressed I feel with the volunteers you sent me in Manchester. They are exceptionally wonderful people. Before I moved to Manchester from London I felt a bit worried that I may find myself somewhat cut off from the AJR; however, to my great surprise, I’m even cared for better here. The Journal, likewise arrives on time at my new address. So all that remains for me to add is a big thank you!  
*Margaret Stern, Manchester*

**HELP AJR CELEBRATE ITS 2<sup>nd</sup> BARMITZAH**

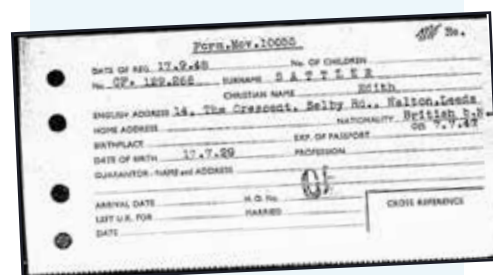
The AJR will be celebrating our 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday this summer and we would love to hear your memories of our events and activities over the years. Please send any personal recollections through to [editorial@ajr.org.uk](mailto:editorial@ajr.org.uk)

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**LOOKING FOR?** 🔍

**BEACON HOTEL**

Margaret Anderson is researching the Beacon Hotel near Tunbridge Wells, which provided a safe haven for Kindertransport children and Basque children fleeing the Spanish Civil War. She would welcome any information about the former hostel – which is now a hotel and restaurant – and / or the children who stayed there.  
[margaret.anderson.21@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:margaret.anderson.21@ucl.ac.uk)



**EDITH SATTLER**

AJR member Edith Roberts née Sattler is 94 and came from Vienna via Kindertransport. Now she and her family are trying to find out more about her origins and her journey as very little information was provided on her registration card.  
[mark@mcdonnellfamily.com](mailto:mark@mcdonnellfamily.com)

**PETER GILLIES/FRITZ OLLENDORF**

Dr. Bernhard Jungnitz is hoping to find information on Fritz Ollendorf, born 29 December 1912 in Neumarkt. He was a teacher in Schneidemühl before being imprisoned in Sachsenhausen at the end of 1938 but was able to emigrate to England in May 1939. He became a sergeant-interpreter in the British Army, returning as such to Münster in Westphalia in 1945. Between 1950-1959 he taught in Israel, then returned to London where he changed his name from Fritz Ollendorf to Peter Gillies. He married but had no children and he continued teaching until 1977. In December 1985 he was still living in his own flat in London and in 1988 he was part of a group of former Neumarkt residents who toured Silesia.  
[bernhard.jungnitz@web.de](mailto:bernhard.jungnitz@web.de)

# ART NOTES: by Alex Maws

## 'POLITICAL' OR JUST 'JEWISH'?

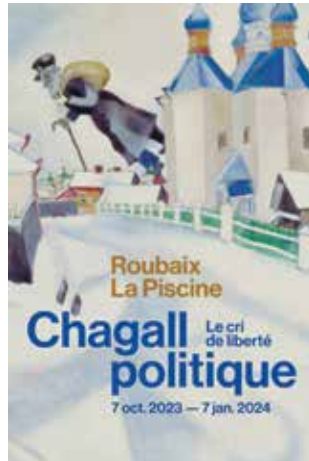
**Marc Chagall's adopted homeland of France hosts an exhibition that is more timely than its curators could have possibly predicted**

Advertisements dotted around the city centre of Lille for *Le Cri de Liberté: Chagall Politique* include at least one detail about the exhibition which cannot help but provoke a raised eyebrow – that its opening date at La Piscine Museum in nearby Roubaix was on 7 October 2023. Indeed, it is probably this inauspicious coincidence that lends credence to the exhibition's title. Were it possible to separate the exhibition from the current climate in which it is being shown, one could make the argument that a more fitting title would have been *Chagall Juif*, for it is the artist's Jewishness which takes centre stage across this truly impressive collection of 140 of his works. But in a post-7 October world, it seems that any public expressions of Yiddishkeit – even those which were created a century ago – are intrinsically political.

An early work, *The Blue House* (1917), sets the scene of Chagall's origins in Liozna, Russia (present day Belarus), depicting a modest wooden hut contrasting with the grandeur of the city of Vitebsk, seen in the distance. From the outset, the artist is comfortable centring his religious and ethnic outsider status, a noteworthy attribute in an age when 'otherness' was hardly seen as a virtue.

The ensuing years would see Chagall in a near constant state of exile. Though he relocated to Paris in 1923, he continued to produce works such as *Above Vitebsk*, *The Cattle Dealer*, *The Praying Jew* and *Green Violinist*, each of which suggest that the human stories that comprised shtetl life – archetypal wandering Jews, merchants, beggars and buskers – continued to inform his own sense of identity.

His Jewishness would eventually lead to Chagall's inclusion in the Nazi's infamous



Chagall's *The War* 1943

1937 exhibition of 'degenerate art'. And in 1941, finding himself at grave risk in Vichy France, he would flee to New York, thanks to the renowned rescue efforts of Varian Fry.

In 1943 the vocabulary did not yet exist to describe what would one day be known as the Shoah or Holocaust, so Chagall simply titles a striking painting from that year, *The War*. It's clear, however, that the part of the 'war' that weighed most heavily on the artist was that against his fellow Jews. In this piece, Chagall's trademark use of vibrant colours takes on a tragic effect, with a deep red used to depict blood in the street of a village – perhaps his own – whose residents are fleeing for their lives, leaving behind their dead. It's a scene which Chagall at that point could only use his imagination to conjure, though his imagery reminds us that sometimes art can transcend the limitations of language.

Chagall may be dismissed by some as overly sentimental. But for many Jews, he is *our* sentimentalist. He lived through, witnessed and indeed depicted most of the modern world's defining Jewish experiences. Notably, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chagall would become a passionate advocate for the State of Israel, and it is this era of his output that brought the most

contemporary political resonance to *Chagall Politique*.

At the time of my November visit I did not know of Roubaix's reputation as a hotbed of radical Islamism. Whether this reputation is warranted or not, I may have thought twice about visiting this particular exhibition at this particular time. As it happens, this potentially sensitive confluence of art, time and place did not keep visitors away. If I have any complaint with my visit to the otherwise fabulous La Piscine it is that it was overly crowded – actually, a pleasant surprise, all things considered. Perhaps this is a sign of some hope. If Chagall's works can help, in some small way, to counteract the wave of Jew-hatred that is overtaking much of the world – what a political victory that would be.

*Le Cri de Liberté: Chagall Politique* runs at La Piscine Roubaix until 7 January 2024, before transferring to Fundación MAPFRE in Madrid, Spain, where it will be shown from 2 February to 5 May 2024.

### Annely Juda Fine Art

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**CONTEMPORARY  
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

# Did she faint?

**Elana Broch, from Lawrenceville in New Jersey, has a long unanswered question about her grandmother....**

My father's adoptive father, Leo Broch, born in Brno, married my Cologne-based divorced grandmother in 1935 and adopted her two sons. Their Czech passports allowed them to leave Germany for Belgium in 1937 where they lived until May 1940 when they fled to France. Leo was arrested in Paris sometime between 10 May and 6 June 1940, ending up in a transit camp in the south of France. After a year of unsuccessful attempts to emigrate to South America he was deported to Auschwitz where he perished.

My grandmother, father, and uncle were evacuated on the *MS Apapa* from Port Vendres in the South of France on 20 June 1940, arriving in Liverpool on 7 July. I have no idea what, if anything, my grandmother knew about Leo's circumstances. Were they in contact? Did he encourage them to leave? Family lore is that my grandmother pretended to faint so that they could get on what was one of the last boats evacuating civilians.

## The Apapa Evacuation

I have spent hours researching their journey and this is the story of how social media connected me with not only another *Apapa* evacuee but also the descendants of the captain who brought my family to safety.

Following a post about another rescue ship, the *SS Meredith*, by the British historian Dan Snow, I was eventually connected with Sandra Robinson, who had shared that her

mother had travelled on the *Apapa*. Fast forward a few months and I was able to Zoom with both Sandra and her mum, while Sandra was visiting her in Belgium.

Sandra informed me that the *Apapa* was torpedoed six months after the evacuation of our parents. I started looking into this and found that the captain had actually survived the November 1940 torpedo attack, together with some of his children.

Thanks to *Ancestry.com*, I found a family tree that included Captain Davies and his family. I messaged the tree's owner, who told me he was working on the tree for a relative of the captain. He was very supportive and, through a little backchannel emailing, provided me with email addresses for the captain's descendants.

Fast forward again, and I was able to meet over Zoom with Welsh and English descendants of Captain Edward Vaughan Davies together with Miriam Mark, née Maria Majerfeld, who was evacuated on the *SS Apapa* alongside my father, grandmother, and uncle.

The Captain's grandson Peter Davies shared some fascinating anecdotes about his grandfather and showed us artefacts that he and other members of the family have collected. It was clear that the Captain and his family had endured many hardships and it was a sobering conversation.



While I may never find out if my grandmother fainted in order to get on the ship, I am holding out hope that someday, a photo or news article about the ship will emerge from the recesses of time. Personally, I feel that meeting the Captain's family was an incredibly satisfying experience in spite of it being on Zoom. I know I will make a great effort to meet them in person on my next trip to Liverpool from where the Maritime Archives are calling me.

## Captain Edward Vaughan Davies

Born in Pembrokeshire in 1882, Captain Davies was no stranger to danger. He was heavily honoured in both World Wars, staying in the Merchant Navy during the interwar years. Although in his late fifties when WW2 began, he continued to sail. He also defied orders, bringing 393 civilians on board.

According to the passenger manifest, there were the following counts of troops and officers: 215 Czech, 414 Polish, 16 French, 20 Belgian, and 393 civilians. Peter believed it was some of these troops who did not want the evacuees on board although the letter attached to the Passenger Manifest suggests that the Admiralty at Gibraltar had ordered the evacuation. Regardless of whether Captain Davies was disobeying orders or ignoring the request of his crew, we are grateful for his courage.

On 15 November, 1940, while on voyage from Lagos to Liverpool, *APAPA* was bombed and sunk by German FW 200 Condor aircraft, 200 miles west from Achill Head, County Mayo (Ireland). She was carrying 95 passengers and a crew of 158. 23 people lost their lives but not Captain Davies, who remained active in the SeaScouts and was named Admiral of the Port of Liverpool. He died shortly after the war ended on 7 September 1945. May his memory be a blessing.



## BACK TO BERLIN

**I was delighted to join the AJR group who met in Berlin recently to mark 85 years since the first Kindertransport – which had left Berlin at the beginning of December 1938 – bringing Jewish children to safety in Britain.**

The visit was organised by Lisa Sophie Bechner MBE, Chairperson of the Kindertransport Organisation Germany. We were accompanied by AJR chairman Mike Karp and AJR Trustees Danny Kalman and Miriam Kingsley, AJR staff Karen Diamond and Ros Hart who looked after us splendidly, and by Dr Bea Lewkowicz and Frank Battersby from the AJR Refugee Voices Archive.

Each participant in the visit had a direct Kindertransport connection, either as a former Kind themselves or as the child or grandchild of one of the Kinder. Many of us brought with us photographs of our parents and grandparents and excitedly shared their stories, captured on film and camera by Bea and Frank, who filmed our Berlin journey.

My father, then Hans Wassermann (later Harold Waterman), had travelled from Cologne to London in May 1938, by himself, aged nine. I had brought the only photograph I have of him with his parents – who did not survive the war – and some postcards they had sent to him in England before the outbreak of war in September 1939.

I had arrived in Berlin a day early to have enough time to visit the excellent Jewish Museum, designed by Daniel Libeskind. As the Director of Education at the Board of Deputies of British Jews, I was very impressed by their exhibition about Jewish life.

Our first visit as a group was to the offices



The AJR group in front of what remains of Berlin's Anhalter Bahnhof, behind which the new Exile museum will be built

of the new Exile Museum which will be built behind the former Anhalter Bahnhof, from which the very first Kindertransport left. There we heard about the plans for the new museum and had a delightful encounter with a group of trainee police officers, many of whom had never met a Jewish person before and came from refugee backgrounds themselves. Both sides learnt a great deal and we all wished that our time together had been longer.

The major event of the visit was a ceremony held at Frank Meisler's Kindertransport statue outside Friedrichstrasse Bahnhof. This very poignant statue – entitled *Trains to Life, Trains to Death* – depicts some children travelling one way – to their deaths – and others travelling to England – to new lives. Dignitaries including the President of the Bundestag, Bärbel Bas, the British Ambassador, Jill Gallard CMG, the Chairman of the AJR's Kindertransport Committee Danny Kalman and – star of the show – former Kind Ruth Schwiening addressed the freezing crowd.

On the second day, we visited the House

of the Wannsee Conference where the Final Solution was planned in January 1942. When the guide showed us a photograph to illustrate that Jewish shops were boycotted despite being owned by Jewish men who had fought for the Germans in the first world war, former Kind Kurt Marx BEM was able instantly to identify the particular shop in a street of Cologne. His own uncle had owned a butcher's shop just along the street and he remembered it well!

In the afternoon, we were given a gracious welcome, and a delicious tea, at the imposing British Embassy by Ambassador Jill Gallard CMG and her staff.

Our trip concluded with a visit to the Bundestag where we walked to the top of the dome to see a panorama of snowy Berlin.

It was an excellent trip – moving and informative – and a fine way to mark the 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Kindertransport. Our thanks to all who arranged it.

**Dawn Waterman**

# later

## DON'T FORGET TO THANK THE QUAKERS!

Many thanks to Manchester-based member Peter Kurer for reminding us that whenever the AJR mentions the Kindertransport, we should also mention the Quakers.

The Society of Friends, the Quakers, were concerned at what they saw going on in Germany. They went to the House of Commons to speak with the Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, who was himself a Quaker. Within one week he got a bill through the House of Commons that the UK would take Jewish children between the ages of 6 to 16.

The Quakers were also involved in two other methods of saving Jews: the British Government was very concerned about Jews coming to the UK and causing financial drain in this country. They got a bill through parliament that if someone in the UK gave the Government £50 in the name of a Jewish person, that person was almost certain to obtain a visa to get out of Nazi Europe. These 'guarantees' saved around 8,000 Jews.

In today's money £50 is more than £3,000. The Quakers provided guarantees for

Two British Quaker women pose with a group of young Kinder in Bristol



around 8,000 Jews, including NINE of my own family.

The third category for getting a visa out of Nazi Europe was if you were prepared to take an undesirable job, such as a maid, butler, cook, servant. The Quakers put large adverts in the then *Manchester Guardian* newspaper, seeking those who needed such people. They took the replies and sent copies to Austria and Germany and thereby saved 6,000 Jews – whilst the rest of the world did NOTHING.

The Quakers were the only non-Jewish organisation which undertook anything for the Jews of Nazi Europe, and I am

still waiting for an explanation. Jesus said "TREAT YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF". Why did the Christian world not obey Jesus but followed Hitler?

My thesis on the above was signed by five internationally famous historians and accepted, following nine months of their research by Yad Vashem in Israel.

Please assure me that in future whenever you mention KINDER or KINDERTRANSPORTS there will be one additional sentence: **THE QUAKERS WERE PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KINDERTANSPORT PROGRAMME WHICH SAVED NEARLY 10,000 JEWISH CHILDREN.**

## MEET THE KINDER

Senior AJR representatives are holding 1-2-1 meetings with various Kinder this year to coincide with the 85th anniversary of the Kindertransport.

### Henry Wuga

Henry was 15 when he came on the Kindertransport from Nuremburg. He remembers being given hot chocolate when the train crossed into Belgium, and eating red apples and white bread for the first time.

Arriving in the UK, he was taken in by a family in Glasgow. Evacuated to Perthshire, he was arrested for being in correspondence with his mother, and interned for 10 months on the Isle of Man.

He was reunited with his mother after the War, which she had spent in hiding, but he never again saw his father, who died of a heart attack in Germany.

In 1947 Henry married Ingrid, a fellow refugee, and set up his own kosher catering business in Glasgow. The couple had two daughters, both current AJR members.

For many years Henry and Ingrid – who died two years ago – gave talks together about the Holocaust to schools and other groups.



The AJR's Michael Newman and Danny Kalman visited Henry, 99, at home in October

# Using compensation claims to trace your family

**AJR member Helen Levy writes: I used to berate my kids for spending so much time online, concerned that they might talk to strangers. However my own trawling of the internet and signing up for various Facebook groups has born surprising fruit.**

I recently read a comment in a group chat saying that it was easy to request a copy of one's family's compensation records, ie any applications that had been made for compensation for losses during the Holocaust.

When I applied for German citizenship my application was delayed because of the paucity of records. My only surviving grandparent had died in the mid-1960s and my mother had died before him, at only 36. I therefore assumed there were no compensation records but as the instructions given on Facebook were simple – see below – I duly followed them, discovering to my surprise that two claims had been recorded, one by my grandfather and one by my mother.

I emailed the relevant office as instructed, and eventually the digital files arrived by email. There was no charge, although there may be if you want paper copies.

The documents are, of course, written in German which I don't understand as my parents refused to speak to me in anything but English. So I used Google Lens to translate them, which was very easy on my Android phone. In camera mode you select the little square on the left of the central button, and a translation option pops up. You then hold the camera up against whatever document you want to translate and the translation appears on the phone screen.

What really surprised me, and I send a word of caution here, is that both my mother's and my grandfather's compensation files contained letters written by them in support of their claims, both containing harrowing details of the harm they had suffered. My mother described how she was attacked in Berlin, both at school and outside, and the irrevocable losses she incurred by her education being stunted by her lack of English. My grandfather talked about being transported in a cattle waggon like 'mackerel' and the physical damage inflicted on his body by the guards.

Steps to take:

1. Email Dez 15 on [Dez15.BZK@brd.nrw.de](mailto:Dez15.BZK@brd.nrw.de) giving information on your family members such as full names, maiden names, dates of birth, and your relationship to them. I also included some information on what happened to my grandmother as I believed that any compensation claim would have been



for the loss of her as wife and mother. I gave dates where known. I did not write in German, but did apologise for not being able to do so.

2. I received a reply – in English – from Wolfgang Grimm of the Bezirksregierung Dusseldorf, giving me the relevant file numbers and where these are kept. In my case, this is in the compensation authority in Berlin. I was provided with an email address to contact.
3. I then emailed this address, giving all the names again, dates of birth, and the file numbers I had been given. I explained who had given me this information and requested copies of the files. I wrote in German, using Google Translate.

It took a little chasing as the service is clearly quite busy but about three months after my first email I received the documentation.

So far I have only applied for the files for my maternal, German side. I have not checked whether files also exist for my paternal, Austrian side.

I wish you all the best in securing your own family files.

# AN INSIGHT INTO *ONE LIFE*

To coincide with the global release of *One Life*, the Warner Bros movie about Nicholas Winton, the AJR's Alex Maws was given an exclusive interview with the movie's director, James Hawes. Here is an extract.

**ALEX** Can you tell us a little bit about the story that the film aims to tell?

**JAMES** It starts with a man who is in a comfortable position in London working as a Stockbroker. He has a distant family heritage that is Jewish and European, and he describes himself as European and socialist and agnostic, yet tremendously aware of the situation in Europe and the threats that might be building. He is invited by a friend to go to Prague and was appalled by what he saw. So this one man with no experience and at the time no resources sets about trying to do what he can.

**ALEX** It sounds like you've really immersed yourself in the background to this story?

**JAMES** I think that a filmmaker, when they are making a film based on real events in real life, has the duty to become a kind of temporary expert, and of course we were well advised by the Holocaust Educational Trust and other advisors, as well as the families of some of those involved.

**ALEX** Portraying the Holocaust can be fraught with all kinds of pitfalls, how did you achieve a balance between historical accuracy and popular entertainment?

**JAMES** The film flits between two time zones – the 1930s, when the children were rescued, and the 1980s when Nicky Winton was still experiencing some degree of grief and guilt about not having been able to do more. The conflict and the edge between those two narratives make it incredibly interesting. With the clip from the BBC *That's Life* programme

we knew we had an emotional narrative climax. The question was what comes before.

There has to be a balance between accuracy and dramatic interpretation by creating scenes that serve the overall truth, even if they are not exact to history in that moment. For example, there's a scene where a fictional German soldier is going through some visas and asks 'Why does England want all these Jews?'. In fact this quote came from the head of the Gestapo in Prague, who isn't featured in the film, but we felt it was important to reflect the sentiment and so justified in ascribing his line to another German character.

**ALEX** How did you go about creating 1938 Prague?

**JAMES** We filmed the railway station scenes on the very same platform from which many of the children would have departed. We walked across the same cobblestones past the same British Consulate across the same Charles Bridge, and we found a ruined factory that was very typical of those used in the 1930s for refugee camps.

**ALEX** Can you talk about the role of Nicky Winton's collaborators, his team? Winton himself always argued that they didn't get enough credit.

**JAMES** The film really works to correct that balance. We needed Nicky Winton at the centre, but we make a big deal about Martin Blake, Trevor Chadwick and especially Doreen Warriner. And we hear Nicky say on numerous occasions 'I was just one of them'.

**ALEX** I know that you extensively consulted Nicky Winton's family before making the film. Did you meet other families?

**JAMES** When we were filming on Willow Rd where the London operation was based, an elderly gentleman approached us. He introduced himself as Trevor Chadwick's son who had last seen his father, aged 7, and is now 92. He sat with me at the director's monitor for the rest of the day.



**ALEX** Is there a deeper message in the film about learning from the Holocaust, for example by introducing another Kindertransport to help understand the current refugee crisis?

**JAMES** Many of us get overwhelmed by what we see as the world's problems, saying I can't do anything about that, it's bigger than me. Nicky's approach was to say I don't know what I can do, but I'm going to do what I can do. Save one life, save the world. So if there's a deep seated story it's to say don't stop because you can't solve the whole problem.

**ALEX** To what extent do you see that there's educational potential in this film?

**JAMES** I didn't set out to make an educational film, but if a film tells a story that will grab the attention of students of any age and they go away from it wiser and informed about a piece of relatively recent human history that still has such echoes in our everyday life. Then I would be very proud of that.

**Alex's full interview with James Hawes can be heard in episode 11 of the AJR's *Kindertransport: Remembering and Rethinking* podcast series, available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and others.**

***One Life* is in cinemas from 1 January.**

# A GREAT YEAR OF FUNDING

**In 2023 AJR was once again the UK's largest dedicated funder of programmes and projects promoting Holocaust teaching, learning and remembrance.**

Although the over-riding priority of the AJR is to provide social, welfare and care services to Holocaust refugees and survivors, a portion of our annual budget is allocated towards supporting innovation in Holocaust educational work. This is because we, on behalf of our members, are committed to preserving the memory of those who perished and ensuring that history does not become distorted.

Last year the AJR was proud to financially support a range of educational projects, including:

**Wiener Holocaust Library – Grant: £75,000**

The AJR is pleased to continue our longstanding support of the Library as it embarks on a campaign focused on three core aims: strengthening its voice in the sector; active care for its precious collections; and increasing the reach and dissemination of powerful evidence held at the Library.

**Holocaust Centre North – Grant: £50,000**

Our grant is supporting HCN's *Class of '33* project, consisting of learning sessions to schools on site; an outreach programme for schools in remote areas of the North; training for every teacher qualifying at the University of Huddersfield; and regular Sunday openings for families.

**National Holocaust Centre Museum – Grant: £50,000**

We are continuing our support of *The Journey* outreach programme, which aims to engage with schools with high levels of deprivation and those in parts of the country currently under-served by Holocaust Education.

**Aberystwyth University and Jewish History Association of South Wales – Grant: £39,000 over two years**

The AJR originally helped these two organisations to form a partnership, which aims to produce up-to-date bilingual educational materials for use

in Welsh schools and accompanying teacher training sessions.

**Council of Christians and Jews – Grant: £10,000**

CCJ plans to take 15 senior Christian leaders on a study tour of Poland, visiting ghettos, deportation stations, and death camps and exploring Jewish life before, during and after WWII.

**Generation 2 Generation – Grant: £10,000**

G2G will expand their speaker programme, through which descendants of Holocaust survivors share their families' stories in schools. The initiative involves recruiting and training new speakers and expanding their reach to areas outside of London.

**Core & Co Foundation – Grant: £10,000**

180 students from six schools in Birmingham, Liverpool and London will engage in 10-week Holocaust education programme inspired by survivor testimony.

**Vision Schools Scotland – Grant: £16,657**

The AJR has supported the Vision Schools programme, run by the University of the West of Scotland, since its inception. We are pleased to now support the programme's expansion with a 10-day professional development course at Yad Vashem for teachers in participating schools.

**Sir Martin Gilbert Learning Centre – Grant: £8,000**

The Centre is developing resources for secondary school History teachers to enhance their teaching about Jewish migration at GCSE and A-level. AJR funding will allow these to include a lesser-known aspect, the Kitchener Camp.

**National Literacy Trust – Grant: £5,000**

The AJR has renewed its support of the Trust's activities which centre around original stories written by author Tom Palmer about the experiences of 'The Windermere Boys'.

**Yom Hashoah UK – Grant: £5,000**

The AJR continued its longstanding support for the delivery of the national Yom Hashoah event. This year the event was held at Jewish Care's Wohl Campus and live-streamed/viewed over 4,000 times.

**University of Sussex – Grant: £9,245**

University of Sussex was the first UK university to mark Holocaust Memorial Day and the AJR has supported their annual event since its inception. In 2023 it organised an extra series of workshops for teachers.

**Yom Hashoah Manchester – Grant: £4,000**

The AJR was pleased to renew our support for Manchester's Yom HaShoah commemoration, attended by over 1,000 people, extending the reach of this important event in our community's calendar to the north of England.

**The Amelia Scott – Grant: £3,650**

The AJR has renewed our support of the Amelia Scott, an arts centre in Tunbridge Wells, for a second year, following its successful delivery of HMD activities and educational programmes throughout the year focusing on the Kindertransport and its legacy.

**Latest Group CIC – Grant: £2,500**

Latest Group, which supports marginalised groups in socio-economically areas, created an exhibition in Brighton of books, artworks, digital images and a documentary on the life of Holocaust survivor and artist Arnold Daghani.

**Day of Welcome – Grant: £1,000**

A Day of Welcome is a day of solidarity and learning in schools that aims to build a culture of welcome and understanding for refugees and asylum seekers. The AJR supported the creation of classroom resources related to the Kindertransport and the UK Holocaust Map.

**Alex Maws**

# WALKING IN GRANNY'S FOOTSTEPS

Last summer AJR member Ruth Speirs and her siblings decided to retrace the route of their paternal grandmother's escape from Germany.

We had originally planned to visit Minsk to commemorate our grandmother on our mother's side, who perished after being deported there from Dusseldorf in 1941. Unfortunately Covid intervened, then Russia invaded Ukraine, making a visit to Belarus seem unwise.

Instead, inspired by the 2022 publication of the book *Living in Two Worlds* about our paternal grandparents, we decided to walk the route of our grandmother Else's escape in April 1944.

The book, translated into English by Deborah Langton from the German book *Leben In Zwei Welten*, tells the dramatic and moving story of our grandmother Dr Else Rosenfeld, her persecution under the Nazis, living underground and her eventual escape into Switzerland. It interweaves her story with that of her husband Siegfried Rosenfeld's very different experience in England.

Siegfried was a Social Democrat MP in the Prussian Parliament and civil servant in the Prussian ministry of Justice in Berlin. He was sacked shortly after Hitler came to power and was persuaded to leave Germany for England in 1939, taking our father Peter and aunt Hanna (who recently celebrated her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday – see December 2023 issue of the *AJR Journal*), on the understanding that Else would shortly be issued with a visa and able to follow them.

Despite repeated attempts, no visa for Else was forthcoming. Instead she was incarcerated in a ghetto in a convent in Berg-am-Lein, Munich, which was later researched by history teacher Erich Kasberger and his students. Their research has resulted in the installation of a stone monument to commemorate the ghetto, and in the 2010 publication *Leben In Zwei Welten*, co-authored by Erich Kasberger and Prof Marita Krauss.



Else and Siegfried Rosenfeld by the Starnberger See probably taken in 1933

You can read Else and Siegfried's stories in *Living in Two Worlds*



Listen to Else herself describing how she risked her life to cross the border

In May 2023 my sister, myself, my brother, and Marita and Erich walked the route my grandmother took when escaping over the German border into Switzerland.

She had been instructed to take the train from Singen to Beuren-am-Ried to meet the first of the three guides (people smugglers) who were to take her across the border at night.

That trainline no longer exists but we were able to find the old station building in Beuren-am-Ried and begin our walk there. The walk took us through the village, then over a hill and down into the next valley to Busslingen village.

Without Maria and Erich we would never have located the narrow grassy track which began behind a house in Busslingen, along which granny would have had to walk to evade prying eyes as she approached the Swiss border.

The track runs parallel with the river Biber. After being abandoned by the final guide she had no choice but to continue on alone – there was no going back.

How she managed in the pitch dark with only the sound of the distant river to guide her is incredible but the most extraordinary part is how she survived with only a broken ankle.

She fell somewhere near the top of an extremely steep, approximately 50m high hill, tumbling down over a wall straight into the Swiss customs house courtyard where she was rescued by a Swiss customs official.

We found it extremely difficult to descend the hill but, by grabbing on to each other and overhanging branches, we managed to slide and slither down to the bottom without falling.

Perhaps uniquely, the book *Living in Two Worlds* contains QR codes which enable the reader to listen to excerpts from the original recordings made with Else for the BBC. These were originally broadcast in April/May 1963 in 23 short episodes, under the title *An Old Lady Remembers*.

While on the walk, using a smartphone, we were able to listen to Else describing in her own words what it was like to make that dangerous escape to freedom. It was an emotional experience for us all.

Walking in Else's footsteps was both exhilarating and humbling and brought home the reality of her situation – you wouldn't embark on an undertaking like that unless you were absolutely desperate. By that time in 1944 she was.

# REVIEWS

## TIME'S ECHO: THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE HOLOCAUST, AND THE MUSIC OF REMEMBRANCE

By Jeremy Eichler  
Faber

Music reflects feelings but never more poignantly than in the work of composers explored in this new book which examines the influence and legacy they created especially surrounding Jewish culture and suffering. Eichler spotlights four towering composers, Dmitri Shostakovich, Benjamin Britten, Arnold Schoenberg and Richard Strauss. He shows how they lived through the Second World War and later transformed their experiences musically. In doing so they produced transcendent works that carry forward echoes of lost time.

Shostakovich had an affinity for Jewish music and incorporated its themes and distinctive melodic characteristics. The opening movement in his 13<sup>th</sup> symphony sets to music words by the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko. It transforms the horrific 1941 mass massacre by Nazis of 33,771 Jews at Babi Yar, near Kyiv, into a denunciation of antisemitism. Shostakovich bravely continued with his music in the face of Soviet torment and antagonism.

He became friends with British composer and pacifist Benjamin Britten who as a piano accompanist travelled with the violinist Yehudi Menuhin across "the saddest ruins of the Third Reich" starting at Belsen displaced persons camp. They performed music by Bach alongside the long-suppressed Mendelssohn whose famous Leipzig statue was destroyed in 1936. In the audience was cellist Anita Lasker who had also survived Auschwitz playing in an orchestra conducted by the late Alma Rosé, niece of Gustav Mahler and daughter of Arnold Rosé (originally Rosenblum). He led the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra for over half a century until he was dismissed in 1938 and forced to flee to the UK.

Lasker was impressed with Britten – composer of *War Requiem* – using words by the First World War poet

Wilfred Owen. It was premiered at the consecration of Coventry's new Cathedral constructed after the original medieval building was destroyed by devastating enemy bombs in November 1940. A soloist was the celebrated German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau – who had lost a disabled brother to Nazi eugenics policy – and was deeply moved.

Born in Leopoldstadt, Arnold Schoenberg became one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most influential composers and leader of the Second Viennese School. He was associated with the expressionist movement in German poetry and art as well as being an influential teacher. But his works were banned as degenerate by the Nazis and he escaped to the USA in 1933. After the war his *Survivor from Warsaw* was among the very first significant pieces to memorialise the attempted total extermination of European Jewry.

Richard Strauss's relationship with the Nazis was more ambiguous. In 1930 he branded Hitler as "a criminal" and "an ignoramus" yet later tried to ingratiate himself to the regime. Although he replaced the forcibly removed Jewish Bruno Walter on Berlin Philharmonic's podium and flattered officials, he never joined the party. He eventually had to resign as president of the Reich Music Chamber, but his efforts ensured his Jewish daughter-in-law Alice and her two children survived. But a visit he made to Terezin was not enough to save her grandmother and even now is shrouded by secrecy.

This is a very extensively researched, thoughtful and scholarly book knitting together an extremely diverse range of music mirroring events. It is illustrated by pictures of the people involved and of the places the author visited when writing the book.

Janet Weston

## TÜR AN TÜR By Ariel Magnus Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch

Belgrano is to Buenos Aires what Finchleystrasse is to London, or Washington Heights to New York, the writer Ariel Magnus tells us in his absorbing account of what his publishers

subtitle 'Nazis and Jews in Argentinian exile'.

Born in the Argentinian capital in 1975, Magnus lives in Berlin today. That becomes understandable, when you learn about his background. Like other German Jews fleeing the Nazis, his grandparents, arriving in the 1930s, had to choose: would they settle in Yiddish-speaking Once ('eleven' in Spanish), where 'los Rusos' from antisemitic czarist Russia and Eastern Europe had put down roots – or would they seek a sanctuary in German-speaking Belgrano?

Convinced that they were and would remain innately German, they had no hesitation in opting for the capital's posh northern *barrio*. For Belgrano already housed Germans who had immigrated in earlier decades and created a *Nueva Germania*, with its German shops, restaurants and theatres; its medical services, school and newspaper; and its clubs and associations covering sports, culture, business and religion. Locals began to speak 'Belgrano Deutsch: 'Ich muss das areglieren' – "I must sort it out'. A treacy tango *Under den Pinien von Argentinien* (bananas and cacti also feature, besides pine trees) became a 1930s hit tune on both sides of the Atlantic. The new arrivals, however, soon set up parallel organisations; they had learned that many earlier immigrants admired Hitler's ascendant Third Reich and were not over anxious to mix with them. Among Argentinians, too, there was hostility towards the Jews, partly because the Nazis were seen as a counterweight to North America's dominant position in the western hemisphere. Argentina was the only Latin American country to remain neutral, declaring war on Berlin as late as March 1945. A Nazi victory, it was believed, would help displace Brazil as the subcontinent's leader.

Fast-forward to the postwar years, and those who had now turned into 'Gaucho Jeckes' became sandwiched between the original settlers and a new wave of German immigrants. Many of them were Nazi criminals fleeing Allied retribution – among them, Adolf Eichmann. Thus it came about that  
*Continued on page 17*



MATINEE PERFORMANCE

## OPERATION MINCEMEAT

TUESDAY 12 MARCH 2024  
FORTUNE THEATRE, COVENT GARDEN



Operation Mincemeat is the fast-paced, hilarious and unbelievably true story of the twisted secret mission that won us WW2. The question is, how did a well-dressed corpse wrong-foot Hitler? This classic has now been made into a musical, showing at the Fortune Theatre, Covent Garden.

We have secured a limited number of discounted rate tickets for the matinee performance on Tuesday 12 March 2024

£30 per person.

[roshart@ajr.org.uk](mailto:roshart@ajr.org.uk)

## REVIEWS *continued*

*Continued from page 16*

Ariel's grandparents lived below a Frau Winkler, who, when she was in a good mood, opined that Hitler 'killed too few of you.' And antisemitism continued to thrive in Buenos Aires: in 1994 a car bomb (assumed to be the work of Islamic terrorists) destroyed the German-Jewish cultural centre and old-age home, leaving 85 dead.

With time, of course, most Jeckes assimilated as their ties to Germany weakened. But some continued to feel as German as Argentinian, and one of them is Ariel Magnus, educated in German at the Pestalozzi school – a bastion of opposition to Hitler during the war. He recalls his Oma Ella recounting how, while an Auschwitz inmate, she had sworn never to return to Germany, if she survived. She did survive, and she did revisit Germany – to see the three of her four grandchildren who had chosen to return to their *Heimat*.

*Martin Mauthner*



## MONET THE IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2024  
LONDON E1



Learn about the artist and his art through a unique storytelling light and sound experience

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## 2 DAY TRIP TO HAMPSHIRE Visiting Highclere Castle and Hambledon Vineyard

9 – 10 APRIL 2024



Highclere Castle is where Downton Abbey was filmed. It is a stunning, historic building and includes the extraordinary Egyptian Collection showing the tomb of Tutankhamun and many original artifacts.

Hambledon Vineyard is the oldest commercial winery in the UK. Our tour will include lunch and a wine tasting.

Overnight stay at Sandford Springs Hotel.

[karendiamond@ajr.org.uk](mailto:karendiamond@ajr.org.uk)



## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2024

MONDAY 22 JANUARY 2024  
BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

Watch it live at 2pm on  
[www.synagogue.org.uk/services/live/](http://www.synagogue.org.uk/services/live/)  
or join us in person by booking a place.

## PRE-SERVICE EVENT

12.30 – 13.30 pm

Dr Bea Lewkowicz, Director of the AJR Refugee Voices Archive, will be in conversation with Holocaust educator Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines MBE, who was rescued on a Nicholas Winton train from Prague in July 1939 and Professor Andrea Hammel, author of *The Kindertransport – What Really Happened*. The panel will explore the historical context of the Kindertransport rescue scheme and its representation in the current political landscape.

[susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)

## CHAOS CONQUEROR

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## CLAIMS NEWS

### AUSTRIAN EXTRAORDINARY ONE TIME GESTURE PAYMENT

The Claims Conference and the Austrian National Fund have sent letters and application forms to approximately 1,600 Austrian survivors informing them of a new compensation payment of 5,087 euros available to former Austrian Jews who were persecuted by the Nazis or fled to avoid persecution.

If you have not received a form and would like to apply please contact us.

### ROMANIAN SURVIVOR RELIEF PROGRAMME (RSRP)

This payment is available for having been persecuted as a Jew and having lived in one of the areas below sometime between 1937 and 1944.

- A Within the modern borders of Romania (including Transylvania)
- B Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia
- C Southern Dobruja
- D Transnistria

To be eligible your annual income must be below \$21,200 and your application must be received by 31 March 2024.

**AJR's contact for all Claims-related matters is Rosemary Peters, 020 8385 3088 or [rosemary@ajr.org.uk](mailto:rosemary@ajr.org.uk)**

## ON THE MAP!





London's Blue Badge Guides are now including sites associated with the Holocaust in some of their tours, thanks to embracing the AJR's

**[www.ukholocaustmap.org.uk](http://www.ukholocaustmap.org.uk)**

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**AJR** The Association  
of Jewish Refugees





IN MEMORY OF SIR ERICH REICH

**CHARITY WALK  
THROUGH THE EAST END**

Join Manna Meir Panim's guided 10km walk in conjunction with the Association of Jewish Refugees, through the historical Jewish East End of London.

Starting from the Kindertransport Memorial at Liverpool St Station

**17.3.2024 | 15:00-18:00**

THE TOUR WILL BE LED BY JOHN STEEL OF TOUR DE FORCE

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All proceeds to assist people in need in Israel



The AJR wishes a hearty mazeltov to Lotte Kramer, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday with different generations of her family

# OBITUARY

## Kitty COOPER (née Furstenberg)

Born: 17 December 1932, Berlin

Died: 27 November 2023, London



### Kitty Cooper, who recently died of a stroke, was born in east Berlin, the first child of working-class Jewish parents.

Walter, her father, had come out of the French foreign legion, and was struggling as a door-to-door salesman; Betty, her mother, worked as a dressmaker. Kitty was named after her paternal grandmother, Kreindla (or Katie); as there were so many 'Katies' already in the family – her mother chose the name Kitty from a Tolstoy novel she had been reading.

As the situation worsened in 1930s Germany, the family explored different options for leaving, but without success. Eventually, Kitty's father got out through the Kitchener Camp scheme, and was based there, on the outskirts of Sandwich, later joining the army as a welder. Kitty and her mother escaped weeks before war broke out. Many family members were far less fortunate and were deported and killed in the Holocaust. Others went to Palestine and America.

Shortly after Kitty's arrival in London, she and classmates were evacuated to Norfolk. Kitty's mother – afraid to tell her that she was going away for some time – had said it was a day trip. 'It was a terrible, terrible shock to me,' Kitty said, 'I was there for 18 months and cried every day.' The host family were stern, though kindly, but Kitty hardly spoke any English. Initially, she refused to learn, saying the others should learn German instead!

Kitty and her mother would follow Walter around the country, taking lodgings near his army billeting. In March 1945, Kitty's younger sister, Sandra was born. Despite the 12 years

age difference, she became a close friend and companion throughout Kitty's life.

Kitty went to school at Laura Place in Hackney. As a young adult, she worked at *Psychic News*, as well as at El Al. Later, she trained to be a social worker but never practised; joining her husband Charles Cooper as a film distributor.

Kitty met Charles at a philosophy evening class in the late 1950s. Shortly afterwards, Charles's first wife, Cecilia, died at just 44, leaving Charles with young twins – Adi and Sue – and elder daughter, Florence.

Kitty and Charles dated for several years. Kitty used to tell stories about Charles's difficulty in committing – how she moved to Edinburgh University in her frustration – but eventually they settled into a very temperate and loving relationship. A daughter, Davina, was born in 1965, and a son, Michael, in 1966. After marrying, Kitty worked at Contemporary Films, the company Charles had established, releasing international arthouse and independent films, and later running their cinemas – the Paris Pullman and Phoenix (in Oxford and East Finchley). This was a busy time – constantly viewing new films, negotiating with producers and

agents. Contemporary released films by leading filmmakers, including Werner Herzog, Satyajit Ray, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Jane Campion.

Charles died in 2001, having been cared for by Kitty for several years. It was a terrible loss and, while she never fully recovered, she continued to run the business until 2008. Once retired, she volunteered at Tate Britain and the Wiener Library, among other organisations.

Kitty was an avid reader, enjoying challenging, sometimes obscure, literary novels that she would then inflict on her book group. She also loved art history and was a talented amateur photographer. Throughout her life, Kitty remained intellectually interested and open-minded, ready to engage with new ideas, and uninterested in dogma. She was calm and compassionate, someone who listened well, caring about the lives of those around her and the struggles of those at a distance. Until the end, she kept up with international news on her phone, reading and worrying about global events deep into the night.

**Davina Cooper and Mick Cooper**

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## IN PERSON EVENTS

DATE	TIME	IN PERSON MEETING	CO-ORDINATOR
Thursday 4 January	2.00pm	Pinner – Quiz with Norma	Ros Hart
Monday 8 January	3.00pm	Finchley Quiz Time	Ros Hart
Tuesday 9 January	11.00am	Whetstone	Ros Hart
Tuesday 9 January	11.30am	Wembley	Karen Diamond
Thursday 11 January	11.30am	Central London	Karen Diamond
Tuesday 16 January	12.30pm	Norwich	Karen Diamond
Tuesday 16 January		Holocaust Lecture Glasgow	Agnes Isaacs
Thursday 18 January	10.30am	Ealing	Ros Hart
Thursday 18 January	2.00pm	Bushey	Karen Diamond
Monday 22 January		HMD service – see advert on p17	Susan Harrod
Thursday 25 January		Kindertransport Play	Agnes Issacs
Monday 29 January	2.00pm	Hampstead	Ros Hart
Tuesday 30 January	10.30am	Ilford/Wanstead	Karen Diamond
Wednesday 31 January	2.00pm	St Albans	Ros Hart
Wednesday 31 January	12.30pm	Edinburgh	Agnes Isaacs

### CO-ORDINATOR DETAILS

EVENTS AND OUTREACH  
MANAGER  
**Susan Harrod**  
[susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)  
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**Michal Mocton**  
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07966 886 535

## ZOOMS AHEAD

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

Monday 8 January @ 4pm	<b>If you or your family are from Belgium this is for you</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89656627115">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89656627115</a>	Meeting ID: 896 5662 7115
Wednesday 10 January @ 2pm	<b>Nick Dobson – Agatha Christie'</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86878352460">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86878352460</a>	Meeting ID: 868 7835 2460
Tuesday 16 January @ 2pm	<b>Michael Kushner – 'Operation Mincemeat'</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/82684391619">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/82684391619</a>	Meeting ID: 826 8439 1619
Wednesday 17 January @ 2pm	<b>AJR Book Discussion (no speaker) – Escape to Gwrych Castle: a Jewish refugee story by Andrew Hesketh</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89139978196">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89139978196</a>	Meeting ID: 891 3997 8196
Monday 29 January @ 4pm	<b>Micha Cooper – My Dearest Grandparents.....</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85314583679">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85314583679</a>	Meeting ID: 853 1458 3679
Tuesday 30 January @ 2pm	<b>Paul Stewart – The Roll with a Hole: the fascinating story of the bagel</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87039863430">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87039863430</a>	Meeting ID: 870 3986 3430
Wednesday 31 January @ 2pm	<b>Helen Fry – Women and Intelligence</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89933227562">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89933227562</a>	Meeting ID: 899 3322 7562

## KEEP FIT WITH AJR

All AJR members & friends are invited to take part in these online exercise and dance classes throughout the coming month.

Every Monday @ 10.30am <b>FROM 22 JANUARY</b>	<b>Get Fit where you Sit (seated exercise)</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439</a>	Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439
Every Tuesday @ 11.00am	<b>Shelley's Exercise class</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88466945622">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88466945622</a>	Meeting ID: 884 6694 5622
Every Wednesday @ 10.30am <b>FROM 24 JANUARY</b>	<b>Dance Yourself Fit with Jackie Turner</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86302485494">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86302485494</a>	Meeting ID: 8630 248 5494

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