



AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Youthful Travels in Europe



How Austria promoted itself in the 1950s

Anthony Grenville writes: "My generation, born at the very end of the Second World War, grew up into the post-war world that offered, among much else, opportunities for international travel on a previously unprecedented scale..."

My parents had come to Britain from Vienna in 1938; for all their mixed feelings about the Austrians, we were in the van of the waves of British tourists who began to visit Europe in the 1950s. I look back on my childhood holidays in Austria with great fondness, but also with

some regret, as I remember what it was like to be a British – or at least British-born – boy in Europe in the 1950s and 60s. I first visited Austria in 1951, when we flew to Innsbruck (then a somewhat adventurous introduction to air travel).

Continued on page 2

EXTRA COMPENSATION

Congratulations to the Claims Conference which has achieved a further increase in funds for the Homecare programme as part of bigger budget for in-home services during their latest round of negotiations with the German government.

They secured landmark compensation for survivors of the 1941 Iasi pogrom and those incarcerated in "death trains" and also succeeded in widening the eligibility for Shoah survivors who lived in hiding, down from six months to four months.

As ever, the AJR is able to help qualifying members with assessment and appropriate claims.

Other news in this issue includes an introduction to our Outreach Team and our new Editorial Team. We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

New editorial team.....	3
My story: Fred Taylor	4
Letter from Israel.....	5
Letters to the Editor	6-7
Art Notes	8
At your service: Outreach Team.....	9
Reviews.....	10
Short story: A mixed blessing.....	11
A screenwriter of note.....	12
Looking for	13
Prague Kindertransport Memorial.....	14
Trial in Baden-Baden	15
In conversation: Rudi Leavor.....	16
Around the AJR.....	18
News.....	20

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Youthful Travels in Europe continued...

I was, I remember, proud to be a British boy abroad, where I felt myself to be the object of both curiosity and admiration. In Austria, I wore *Lederhosen* – a sight of which I hope no photographic record survives – and mixed with the local boys, who were surprised and flattered that ‘ein englischer Bub’ should play with them. For we British were the proud representatives of a victorious nation that had stood up to and defeated Hitler; as late as 1974, when I attended a course held by the Goethe Institute at the University of Göttingen, I heard Britain referred to as a ‘Siegermacht’ (‘victor nation’), though now with some head-shaking at its dismal economic record. In the 1950s and 60s, the British still felt themselves to enjoy a special status among the peoples of Europe, and were indeed regarded as such – as acquaintances of mine experienced when they visited Arnhem and were overwhelmed with hospitality simply because of their association with the British troops who had fought there in September 1944.

In later years I also came to know Brussels well. The British are reluctant to name streets and other public places after figures from recent history; one can hardly imagine a British airport like Heathrow or Gatwick being named, like their French counterpart at Roissy, after General de Gaulle. So I was gratified to observe the tributes that the Belgian capital paid to the British who had kept the flame of freedom alive in the dark days after summer 1940 and whose forces had liberated the city from the Germans. On 3 September 1944, units of the Welsh Guards of Field Marshal Montgomery’s Second Army were the first to enter Brussels. The British troops were treated to an ecstatic welcome, as described by Frank Clarke of the Guards Armoured Brigade in a letter to his sister Vera (‘V’):

On and on we drove towards Brussels, the excitement getting more intense every hour. The people were getting frantic! The route was a blaze of colour and my arm fair ached with waving to the excited crowds. At times it was almost impossible to move through the seething masses, for they climbed on to the trucks kissing us and crying.



Young Tony Grenville

These people had been four years beneath the Nazi yoke, suffering, unhappy and now they were free. The Allies had fulfilled their promise. Liberation was theirs.

And then we entered the suburbs of the capital! Our Brigade was the first formation to go in. Well V, I don’t know how to describe it. It is almost impossible for I can never put into words the reception that greeted us. To put it mildly, it was stupendously terrific. The city went raving mad. Bands, screams, singing, crying, all these sounds rent the air.

It was the proudest moment of my life. We had brought freedom and happiness to these good people. As we progressed further in the crowds began to get out of hand for they climbed into the trucks, on the tops kissing and hugging everyone. The vehicles were absolutely covered with flags and streamers. It was the most amazing sight! [...]

Vera, I shall never, never forget Brussels. It was the most exciting moment of my life. A moment I shall always remember. Our Division had made history. I shall never forget Sunday the 3rd September 1944.

To this day, Brussels sports a Maréchal Montgomery Square (Maarschalk Montgomeryplein in Flemish), with an underground station of the Brussels metro named simply ‘Montgomery’. There

is also an Avenue Winston Churchill, likewise with an underground station in his name; at the Rond-Point Churchill stands a bronze statue, erected in honour of his memory in 1967. What memorials, I wonder, would Brussels erect to our present politicians, especially after its very name has been used almost as a term of abuse by the more casually xenophobic elements of the British right-wing press? A Ruelle Boris Johnson perhaps, or an Impasse Theresa May? Probably not even an Égout Brexit, though that would reflect pretty accurately the Belgian view of the post-referendum antics on the British political scene.

Britain’s position in the world has of course changed enormously since the early 1950s. When I started visiting Austria, the southern provinces of Kärnten and Steiermark, plus Osttirol, still formed the British zone of occupation, while a few years earlier only the presence of the British Eighth Army had prevented the Yugoslav forces of Marshall Tito from seizing the city of Trieste from Italy. Britain, as an occupying power, was a signatory to the Staatsvertrag, the Austrian Independence Treaty of 15 May 1955, which re-established Austria as a sovereign state. It is sad to think that Britain outside the European Union will have less influence in Central Europe than powers like Italy, Poland or even Spain, let alone France and Germany.

The reasons behind Britain’s diminished role in Europe in the decades since 1945 are to be found not only in its loss of empire, which deprived it of its status as a world power. At least as important was its economic decline, which caused it to be regarded by the late 1970s as the ‘sick man of Europe’. To this day, British productivity, the key to economic prosperity, lags sadly behind that of its European counterparts. While Eurosceptics deride the French practice of working a thirty-five hour week, it is worth reflecting that by British standards French workers can afford to do so. Even before the financial crash of 2008, British levels of productivity (output per hour) were some 20% below those in France, meaning that a French worker could knock off on Thursday evening secure in the knowledge that s/he had produced what a British worker would labour to produce all week. Since the financial crisis, British productivity has barely improved at all.

For British travellers to Europe, this long-standing decline in British competitiveness and prosperity, relative to our European neighbours, has been reflected in the constant depreciation of the pound sterling and the consequent increase in the price of foreign travel. When I started travelling to Austria, the pound was worth 72 Austrian Schillings. By the time the Schilling was superseded by the Euro, a pound bought less than 20 Schillings, having lost three quarters of its value. Had the pound merely maintained its value against the Schilling, a family holiday priced at £5,000 in 1999 would have cost only £1,250.

The pound was devalued in dollar terms in 1949, from \$4 to \$2.80; it was devalued again, to \$2.40, in 1967, fell further when Britain was forced out of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992, and again in 2008, and most recently following the referendum of 2016, when it stood at less than \$1.30. Relative to the Deutschmark and its successor, the Euro, the decline has been even more marked. When I first travelled through Germany to Austria, one pound bought about 11 Deutschmarks. By 1992, that had fallen to about DM 2.50: the pound had lost some three quarters of its purchasing power against the Deutschmark. Had the pound kept its parity with the Mark/Euro, a BMW priced at £30,000 would cost £7,500. Impoverishment by devaluation.

It is little wonder that German tourists get to the sunbeds first – what European resort would give first preference to British tourists with their shrinking pounds? Far gone are the days when the British visitor lorded it in desirable destinations from Florence to the French Riviera. Nowadays, the Promenade des Anglais in Nice might well be renamed the Promenade sans Anglais, since so few of them can afford to holiday there. Devaluation is a measure to correct an overvalued currency, not a substitute for remedying the underlying failings of a struggling economy. Germany has never devalued its currency since the introduction of the Deutschmark in 1948; when its economy lost competitiveness in the early years of this century, a left-wing government of Social Democrats and Greens brought in the Hartz reforms, which, painful though they were, helped restore the German economy.”

Anthony Grenville

NEW EDITORIAL TEAM



Jo Briggs and Tony Grenville, the new AJR Editorial Team

It is with mixed emotions that we announce the retirement as Editor of the AJR Journal of Howard Spier after more than 15 years of first-class service.

Throughout his tenure, Howard ensured that our much loved and respected mouthpiece delivered its great mix of articles, reviews and summaries of AJR activities, services and events. Howard's specialism though was the letters page, expertly finding the right mix to provoke discussion whilst capturing and reflecting our heritage and culture.

Like others who were fortunate enough to work with Howard, I will treasure our many political, philosophical and historical conversations – always laced with a good dose of cynicism. I especially miss our chats about cricket this summer as Howard, a Yorkshireman and keen follower of the sport, was always happy to discuss the latest matches.

Tragically, Howard suffered a bereavement last December that led to a period of absence, and while he initially intended to return to work, it now transpires that he is unable to do so.

By coincidence, the first edition Howard worked on was published in October 2001 when his predecessor, Richard Grunberger,

reviewed the work of the AJR and global affairs of the preceding decade. As well as featuring a picture of Richard's own predecessor, Werner Rosenstock, in the opening lines of his article Richard referred to a disunited Europe, something which seems eternally topical, and he also made reference to the AJR Journal having recently been rebranded and renamed from AJR Information.

Ironically, shortly before his departure Howard and I discussed the rebranding of the Journal and I am sure he would be proud of the new look and feel that Jo Briggs has overseen. And so, as one door closes, another opens. I am delighted to share that, having stepped in as a stop-gap during Howard's absence, Jo has now agreed to succeed Howard as the Editor of the AJR Journal, only the sixth person (and the first woman) to do so in its illustrious 71 year history! I am sure you will join me in wishing her much luck in her not-so-new role and, as she continues to develop our admired publication, working in partnership with our Consultant Editor Anthony Grenville.

Howard greatly appreciates that members and colleagues continue to think of him, and we all wish him well for the future.

Michael Newman

ROMA MEMORIAL DAY

On 2 August there will be an event at the Holocaust Memorial in Hyde Park to remember the Roma Holocaust. Please take a silent moment to think of the 500,000+ Roma murdered in

the Holocaust and the pain of the surviving Roma/Traveller/Gypsy community, and if you would like more information please contact phien6@googlemail.com.

MY STORY: Fred Taylor

"I was born on the 14th September 1931, in Danzig and named Fred Paul Loewenthal. My earliest memories are of my mother, my sister Gerda and brother Eital, and other younger children. My family lived in a one-roomed flat, where we cooked, slept, and did everything. We were very poor.

I have two stark memories from my early childhood. The first is of playing on the canal banks with Eital and seeing a body floating in the canal. The other is of the Gestapo entering the flat above us, and shooting the woman who lived there and her dog, leaving the bodies lying on the floor.

On 3rd May 1939 my life changed completely. I was the youngest child on the first Kindertransport from Danzig, sailing from the Hook of Holland to Harwich; then travelling, via London's Liverpool Street Station, to Preston, Lancashire, where I was fostered by a Christadelphian family. Gerda, who also came on the Kindertransport, was fostered by my foster father's brother. Eital and my other siblings stayed with our mother.

I later found out that, although my mother requested that I be raised Jewish, my foster parents refused to allow this. They abused me emotionally and physically throughout my childhood and adolescence. I was also bullied at school (for being 'German' and for being 'thick' as I struggled to understand and speak English). At the end of the war my foster parents told me my family had all gone, saying they had all been killed in the Holocaust.

Upon leaving school, I trained as a chef and had jobs in hotels. I met Ruth in Carnforth and we married in 1955. In 1965 we moved down to Dorset. We lived on a caravan site for over 30 years, until my wife died of cancer in 1997. I then moved back to Carnforth.

In 2006 I had an unexpected phone call from a woman in the USA, saying that I had a large family still living in Israel, Europe and America. I discovered she was my niece Nava, my brother Eital's



Fred Taylor, pictured a few years ago on the stairwell to the flat in Danzig where he was born and lived until being taken on the Kindertransport

daughter, and that she had been trying for some years to trace me.

From Nava's research and with documentation from the Jewish Refugees Committee she explained that somehow my family had survived the war, and emigrated to Israel (then Palestine) in 1945. My birth mother had made several attempts through the JRC during the 1940s and early 1950s to contact me. On her behalf, they had sent letters, a rabbi and even the police to my foster parents. I found out my foster parents had known that my mother was alive and trying to find me, even when they told me that my whole family were dead. They told my mother through the JRC that I was in the British army and didn't want any contact with her. They also told the police they had no idea where I was (although I was living with them at the time this enquiry was made!).

There are no words that can go near to describing the shock and distress I felt when I found out all of this. I can only begin to imagine how heartbreaking it must have been for my mother to hear that I had no wish to be reunited with her; and it is heartbreaking for me to realise that she spent the rest of her life believing that her son wanted nothing to do with her. If I had known she was alive, I could have written to her and could have been reunited with her and my family.

I had never searched for my family, as there was no reason to disbelieve my foster parents telling me that my family had been killed by the Nazis. Being the sole survivor was the tragic reality for thousands upon thousands – even millions – of people all over Europe at the end of the Second World War; and whole families being wiped out with no survivors was the reality for many more.

I have great sadness and bitterness about the cruelty of my foster parents' lies and silences, which meant that I was never reunited with my mother, although she lived until 1974, or with my brother Eital, who had also died before Nava found me.

I have great joy in the discovery of my 'new-old' family: sisters, nieces and nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews in Israel; and my niece Nava in the USA and her family."

©Fred Paul Loewenthal
(known as Fred Taylor)

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LETTER FROM ISRAEL BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



AN EVENING WITH THE AUTHOR OF 'WOMAN IN GOLD'



When I heard that Anne-Marie O'Connor would be speaking at the Tower of David Museum in a dialogue with

fellow-author Ora Ahimeir I jumped at the opportunity to see and hear the author of the monumental book 'Woman in Gold' in person. As readers of this journal are doubtless aware, the book relates the saga of Maria Altman's battle to reclaim the painting by Gustav Klimt of her aunt, Adele Bloch-Bauer, which was expropriated from the family in Vienna by the Nazis and since then retained by the Austrians.

The evening began with a brief personal account by Anne-Marie O'Connor, who has been living in Jerusalem for the last four years, of the almost accidental way she came to write her book. In her work as a journalist she became interested in the character and history of Maria Altman who, like her, was living in California. One thing led to another, and she ended up travelling all over California

to interview other Austrian refugees, gradually building up a picture of what became of the families and individuals who once formed part of Austria's intellectual, professional and social elite. As the material she was collecting assumed ever-greater proportions, O'Connor realized that she would not be able to compress it into one or two articles, and so the book, to which she ended up devoting five years of her life, came into being.

The dialogue between the two writers (Ora Ahimeir published her first novel, 'Bride,' in 2012 and is currently working on another), took the form of questions addressed by each to the other. The two women were located on a dias at one end of the large room in the ancient building, with a table between their two chairs. When O'Connor was asked how, as an Irish woman living in the US, she had come to interest herself in that very Jewish subject, she replied that as a journalist in America she was used to investigating all kinds of topics and interviewing diverse people. She added that having had a Jewish step-mother from an early age, she had read a great deal of Jewish-oriented literature.

When it was time for questions from the audience someone asked O'Connor what it felt like to have become a bestselling author. In her reply the author explained that she was glad to be able to share that story with so many people, and that she was particularly delighted that the book

had done well in Israel, where so many of the people who had undergone similar experiences lived. She noted that the whole episode of encountering the former Viennese residents had been a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience which had enriched her spiritually and given her the opportunity to write about a variety of subjects.

O'Connor also stated that the success of her book had triggered several cases in which refugees and Holocaust survivors claimed restitution of sequestered property, and that in many instances these had been successful. The book had opened up hearts and minds to what had become of the property and possessions of survivors, and the groundswell of public opinion had played a major role in obtaining justice for a large number of individuals.

As the evening concluded, Ora Ahimeir told the audience that Zuckerkand, the name of a family which is mentioned several times in O'Connor's book, was the maiden name of her late mother. There had been two branches of the family, one wealthy and educated living in Vienna and one poor and orthodox living in Poland. There had been very little contact between the two branches before the war, but both ended up in the same concentration camp, where they met their deaths together. I foresee another fascinating book about to be written.

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Letters to the Editor

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

BETTER OFF IN BIBERACH

I read with interest the article about the Channel Islands by Anthony Grenville.

As you can read in Henry Joshua's memoirs <http://aura-inc.com/memoirs/Thankyouchannelislanders.html>, a train left Bergen-Belsen on 20 January 1945 and some of those on it finished up in Biberach, together with prisoners of war from the Channel Islands.

On the train were about 250 people with mainly South American passports. They included Miriam Wiener and her mother and sister. Miriam was the mother of Daniel Finkelstein and Tamara Isaacs. They also included six members of my family. The majority disembarked in St. Gallen, Switzerland, and were then expelled from Switzerland to Philippeville in Algeria.

However the original agreement only covered around 200 people, so others were taken off the train in Bavaria. My cousins Mary and Herbert Philipp and his future wife Ilse made it to Algeria. Others, including my three Floersheim cousins (including Michael, aged 8) were taken off the train and finished up with the Channel islanders in Biberach. In fact they probably did better than those who were on the train into Switzerland.

According to Henry Joshua's memoirs, they even had a proper Pesach with matzo covers and got back to Holland sometime in the summer of 1945.

Alan Philipp, London

STILL MORE CONTRAST

I am sure Frank Bright speaks for many of us older members, who eagerly look forward to the monthly AJR Journal. The new format does, however, make it very difficult to read, both on account of you having changed the colour of your typeface and background, and the reduction in font size.

if you do feel that overall appearance is more important than legibility, can you perhaps consider a parallel digital version

which could go out by e-mail to the likes of Frank Bright and me who look forward to reading it from cover to cover every month.

Heinz Vogel, Canterbury.

NOTE FROM EDITOR: A digital version of this and all past AJR Journals is available on our website (www.ajr.org.uk/pdfjournals). In partnership with Jewish Care we also produce an audio version of selected highlights, which can be posted out to members on a memory stick. Please contact Carol Hart on carol.hart@ajr.org.uk or 020 8385 3083.

LET'S CONGRATULATE STEVE

You rightly congratulated Rudi Leavor for his recognition in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Also to be congratulated is Dame Stephanie Shirley who was recognised as a Companion of Honour.

Dame 'Steve', as she is best known, arrived on the Kindertransport from Vienna. She was a pioneer in the computer industry, founding the Freelance Programmer Company, which became one of the premier software companies in the UK. Subsequently she became a major philanthropist.

She has donated most of her wealth (from the internal sale to the company staff and later the flotation of FI Group) to charity. Her late son Giles (1963–1998) was autistic and she became an early member of the National Autistic Society and has instigated and funded research in this field.

Professor Frank Land

NOTE FROM EDITOR: On page 17 we congratulate all the people connected with the AJR who were honoured by the Queen this June.

AUSTRIAN PROCESSES

Thank you for your recent articles on reclaiming German nationality.

I was born in 1952 in Manchester to parents who had fled Vienna and

who lost many family members in the Holocaust. I studied chemistry and pursued a career in BP and its successor companies in speciality chemicals, retiring a few years ago as MD of IMCD UK and now live in Surbiton.

A family friend whose parents came from Berlin recently obtained a German passport under the unique, free, dual nationality-allowing arrangements of post-war Germany. I have copies of my parents' Third Reich passports and thought I might try first to obtain a new German passport for myself from the German Embassy and in the event of failure, then an Austrian one from the Austrian Embassy.

I was quickly advised that Germany returned citizenship to Austrians after the war and was referred to the Austrian Embassy. There the story is tougher: no special status for children of victims of the Nazis but a "normal" process of document perusal via their Austrian Head Office for candidates like me, qualified through the patrilineal line. There is an estimated two year waiting time and a fee of £100 for document perusal. Numerous old documents are needed and relevant English documents need to be authenticated with an Apostille. But no financial or document-obtaining assistance is available from the London Embassy of Austria.

Thus I am beginning to think that a higher profile approach, maybe via AJR to the Austrian Ambassador, regarding the insensitivity of this situation is required.

I doubt that many English nationals, even Austrian-minded, even in today's Brexit circumstances, would embark on this process for a range of reasons. Interestingly my eldest brother thinks that my late parents would not approve of my application but I'm not so sure.

David Prager, Surrey

PADDINGTON CREATOR'S LEGACY

How very sad to learn of the death of the creator of the iconic Paddington

Bear. Author Michael Bond drew inspiration from Jewish children arriving at Reading Station with labels round their necks clutching battered suitcases just before the outbreak of war. He also remembered newsreel of refugees pushing prams containing all their belongings after Hitler had invaded a new country.

Indeed in a *Daily Telegraph* interview Bond said antiques dealer Mr Gruber was based on his first agent, a German Jew who escaped to England with just a suitcase and very little money. So aspects of this heritage became absorbed into mainstream British literature as Paddington became a world-famous and ubiquitous figure.

I was given a copy of *A Bear Called Paddington* by my refugee father and became a great fan long before the stories became nearly as famous as today. Indeed as a primary school pupil I once met Michael Bond at a book fair in Woking near the village where I lived. The night before I'd rushed out to buy an autograph book but this was more than our local store could manage. Instead I hastily coloured in pages of a plain notebook but Mr Bond – who seemed a very quiet, modest and unassuming man – searched through the leaves until he found an unadorned one I had missed and signed that!
Janet Weston, Westerham

REAL VALUES

I am replying to the letter written by Peter Simpson in your July edition. He pours scorn on "British values" because the British "turn the other cheek". Is that a bad thing to do? Does our philosophy always have to be "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"? Is that not, as often as not, dangerous? He knocks "EU values" too, implying that all the EU does to combat Muslim (note "Muslim" not "Islamic") terrorism is to light a candle.

Neither British nor EU values, he maintains, equate to Jewish values and therefore our Jewish religious ideology should rank above all others. Sorry, Mr. Simpson, I disagree. I see you live in Jerusalem. I would undoubtedly feel what you feel if I lived in Israel – or I might prefer Israeli values – but living in the UK makes my loyalty to Great Britain

paramount. The British saved my life when I had to flee Vienna. My country is more important to me than anything, including my religion.

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.

AND NOW FOR SOME MUSIC

Thank you for the most interesting article by Joel Finler about the contribution made by Jewish immigrants to Hollywood (*Lights...Camera...Action!!!* July 2017).

By coincidence, I am currently organising a recital by the internationally acclaimed singer Max Raabe. In *Memories of Berlin* he will perform songs by many of the Jewish composers who ultimately made their name in Hollywood, evoking the satirical bite of Berlin's cabaret, counterbalanced by poignant expressions of love and longing.

The recital takes place at JW3 on 26 October, with all proceeds going to The National Holocaust Centre and Museum in Nottinghamshire. Should any of the AJR readers be interested, tickets are available from

memoriesofberlin.eventbrite.co.uk

Anthony Gafson, London

HERZOG HOSPITAL

I want to take a moment to thank you for publishing Dorothea Shefer's excellent article on Herzog Hospital in your Journal. We are already getting nice feedback from some of our active people in the UK upon seeing the article. It also of course helps publicise the work of Herzog throughout the British Jewish community. Over one third of our patients are Holocaust Survivors. So it was very fitting that your journal featured our work.

Stephen Schwartz,

International Director, Herzog Hospital

THE ELBOW

A year ago one of my grandsons, Josh, a trainee lawyer, announced that he is being seconded to Vienna for six months. I was excited to hear this, since Vienna is the city of my birth, having fled with my parents in 1938. I was six years old, and we were lucky. But that is another story.

As it happens, Josh's other grandfather was also born in Vienna, so Fate had

seen fit to place Josh in the birth city of both his grandfathers. It was also the city of origin of my wife's family. So it was not long before a weekend visit for our family was planned to explore our erstwhile respective homes in Leopoldstadt and Otterkring.

As I was the only one of our party who had recall, however tenuous, of a life in the city, it was with a bittersweet emotion that we stood in the space that had been our apartment, now a furniture showroom. As we stood there, I showed them where my father's surgery had been (he was a dentist), and where our living quarters had been. And as I did so, I showed them my left elbow.

"Can you see a scar?" "Yes!" they cried. "We are standing in the kitchen where the cooker was, and the flame that burned my elbow."

Dr Emil Landes, Highgate

**GUIDED TOUR
OF HOOP LANE
JEWISH CEMETRY
BY RACHEL KOSKY
BLUE BADGE GUIDE**

Thursday 17th August 2017
Those of you who heard Rachel give a tour of the National Gallery will know how knowledgeable and informative her tours are.

This guided tour highlights the history of the Hoop Lane cemeteries in Golders Green. Opened in 1897 for both the Reform and Sephardi Jewish communities there is an array of fascinating personalities for whom this is their final resting place.

They include those of religious leaders such as Hugo Gryn and Albert Friedlander, actor Sydney Tafler, philanthropist and youth leader Sir Basil Henriques, writer Jack Rosenthal, the parents of Maurice and Charles Saatchi and agony aunt, Marjorie Proops.

The tour will start at 1.30pm and following on afterwards we will go to a local restaurant and have tea and cake and the chance to speak to Rachel in more detail.

We will provide transport between the Cemetery and the restaurant.

For details please speak to Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

Alberto Giacometti's stick men always seem to be in a hurry – but never get anywhere. A tiny woman in a glass box walking backwards and forwards suggests the endless cycle of life, a cycle of which we are, perhaps, all unaware. It is the journey, not the arrival.



Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition

Tate Modern presents Britain's first major retrospective of the Swiss-born sculptor for 20 years in 250 works, including rarely seen plasters, drawings and early work. The solidity and impregnability of his paintings and sculpture transcend the fragility of their design. He stands with towering Modernist-Surrealists of the 20th Century, Matisse, Picasso and Degas. His paintings also have a gripping stillness. Many portrait sculptures have been squashed into an almost two-dimensional shape, in contravention of sculptural tradition. As a result he has revealed their intrinsic, sinister core.

Think of Francis Bacon's *Popes* – that terrifying vista of the papal personage about to shake off the trappings of God and destiny and reveal a screaming child within. Within both artists' visions you can see the subject holding back the shackles binding him or her to the formality of their role in society, longing helplessly to break out.

But this self-containment reveals another meaning, most evident in his bronze *Walking Man 1* whose shadow engulfs and out-distances him. Is the shadow the man's true self?

Giacometti left Switzerland for Paris in the 1920s, and returned in 1941, settling

in Geneva until the end of the Second World War. It was the war and its sense of alienation which led him to explore that sense of personal isolation in the striding, elongated figures for which he is best known. The existential despair of the immediate post-war period generated such masterpieces as *Man Pointing* (1947), *Falling Man* (1950), *Diego Seated* (1948) and *Caroline in a Red Dress* (1964-5). Giacometti was close to his family, his brother Diego who was responsible for much of his casting, and his wife Annette and mistress Caroline. These and other relationships closely influenced his work.

This year's **Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition** looks to young people and diversity. It all glares out at you – the beautiful, the boring and the bizarre – from glass bottles on a rusty bike, to sculptures made of porcupine feathers or found objects, including a beaded Amy Winehouse and a paedophile's dream of a tattooed nymphet. Works by unknowns are chosen to appear alongside Academicians such as **Gilbert and George**, **Antony Gormley** and **Wolfgang Tillmans**. And there is a proclamatory neon piece by **Tracy Emin**, shouting out her ability to love.

With many ideas blowing in the wind, the show opens in the Annenberg

Courtyard with **Yinka Shonibare's** 6 metre high colourful *Wind Sculpture V!* a three-dimensional static fabric. Inside are all the usual political gestures, some clear, others nuanced.

Hassan Hajjaj's *Henna Bikers* are colourfully dressed Arab women concealed behind full face covering and framed by tins. I loved **Suzanne Moxhay's** *Postern*, a rough door opening squalidly into a deserted house, for its mystery.

But for me, the ultimate work was *WESTERN UNION: Small Boats*, a multi-screen film by **Isaac Julien**, which interweaves the opulence of Italian architecture with the poverty and loneliness of migrants reaching the coast on flimsy boats. Although made in 2007, its political message for today could not be stronger.

Annely Juda Fine Art

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

**CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

AT YOUR SERVICE: Outreach Team

43 different groups holding 300+ events each year, collectively attended by over 1500 different AJR members. These are just some of the statistics proudly quoted by the AJR's Outreach Department.

The team is headed by Susan Harrod and consists of five co-ordinators each responsible for different regions of Britain. Co-ordinators work an average of three days per week, between them providing full-time cover for the department.

Susan, who joined the AJR 13 years' ago, explains how the department's function has expanded over the years. "When I first started there were just two co-ordinators and 12 regional groups. Now we have three times the number of staff delivering almost four times the number of groups and events," she says.

Each group has its own characteristics. Some exist just for social events, while others always have expert speakers. Some meet every month in local shuls or community halls, while others meet less frequently in different members' homes. Some have only a handful of members while others regularly draw large crowds.

The newest group is Muswell Hill, catering for AJR members between Highgate and Crouch End. Co-ordinator Eva is delighted that it has already attracted eight "new" AJR members.

A huge amount of effort goes to keeping events interesting. Co-ordinators meet bi-monthly to share ideas and Susan opens her inbox most Monday mornings. to find suggestions prompted by the weekend newspapers.

"We are constantly looking for new things to do, while being mindful that some of our older members are less physically able," she explains. "So every activity or outing needs very careful planning."

For the recent four-day trip to Liverpool for example, Susan, Kathryn Prevezer – a qualified London Green Badge Guide – and Wendy Bott, who covers

the Liverpool area, road-tested the entire itinerary before they advertised the trip.

"We made sure we knew exactly how long it took to get from A to B, and if there were any accessibility issues at each venue," explains Kathryn. "We even mapped out all the toilets, as well of course as where the coach could park and how long it took to get everyone in and out."

The team prides itself on its thoroughness. Two AJR Social Workers accompany the AJR members and the Outreach team co-ordinators on each residential trip, and the AJR team meets each morning of the trip to go through the day's itinerary in detail and resolve any potential issues. And the same attention to detail is applied to regional events and meetings, including to pre- and post-travel.

"No AJR Member should have to miss an event simply because they can't get there," says Susan. "So we have a travel budget specifically for this purpose."

The events also allow co-ordinators to help members with individual issues. "Most of our members are very proud and wouldn't dream of phoning to ask for help," says our longest-serving co-ordinator, Esther Rinkoff. "But while chatting in a relaxed environment, a member might mention a health or financial problem. We can then point them in the direction of other AJR colleagues who are experts in that particular field."

Recent years have seen increasing numbers of 2nd Generation and even 3rd Generation survivors and refugees attending events. The generation mix makes for lively discussions and helps younger generations to feel connected to their roots, particularly after their own parents or grandparents have passed on.

"For some members, especially those in the regions, our events are the only opportunities to mix with other people from a shared background," agree the co-ordinators. "Even members who don't want to talk about their or their families' Holocaust experiences seem to benefit from the unspoken bond that exists."

MEET THE TEAM



Susan Harrod

Lead Outreach Co-ordinator – joined AJR 13 years ago having previously worked in a large synagogue office.



Esther Rinkoff

Southern Outreach Co-ordinator – co-ordinates groups in the South of

England – previously worked for Kith & Kids, a charity for families of children with learning disabilities.



Kathryn Prevezer

Southern Outreach Co-ordinator – co-ordinates Groups in the South of

England – is a qualified London Green Badge Walking Guide as well.



Eva Stellman

Southern Outreach Co-ordinator – co-ordinates Groups in the South of

England. Also works assisting students sitting University Exams who may require help with writing answers or other assistance.



Wendy Bott

Northern Outreach Co-ordinator – co-ordinates the Groups in

Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and surrounding areas. Wendy was previously a teacher.



Agnes Isaacs

Scotland and Newcastle Outreach Co-ordinator – is 2nd generation

and started out by volunteering and helping at Groups. Agnes is also Volunteer Co-ordinator for Scotland.

Contacts for all the Outreach Team can be found on page 19.

REVIEWS

ARK OF CIVILIZATION

Refugee Scholars and Oxford University, 1930 – 1945

Edited by Sally Crawford, Katharina Ulmschneider and Jaś Elsner

Oxford University Press 2017,
ISBN 978-0-19-968755-8

When Hitler came to power distinguished Jewish academics were soon forced to leave a country which had been at the forefront of arts and humanities in Europe. Germany's loss quickly became Oxford's gain. The university provided sanctuary or an "ark" for the scholars who also fled from countries such as Austria, Czechoslovakia and Italy as they were affected by Nazism.

Backgrounds varied and ages ranged from school age to near retirement but they brought with them a new breadth of knowledge and vision to what, in some ways, was quite an insular community. It was a constant struggle to find enough funding, and some struggled to cope with the language whilst others became more English than the English. Oxford was for many a temporary stop before finding places in other universities and countries. After the war a number even returned to Germany.

A common theme running through the book is internment. Many refugees, after escaping one tyranny, found themselves incarcerated on the Isle of Man as "enemy aliens" when war broke out. Here an intellectual and musical community thrived and an interesting chapter is devoted to their lives during this period, with the spotlight on Hutchinson Camp and the "Camp University".

Sections of the book sections focus on archaeology and philology, history, art and music, philosophy and theology, and publishing. Chapters are written by different contemporary academics including the AJR Journal's Consultant Editor Dr Anthony Grenville, bringing expertise on their own subjects. A towering figure to emerge is the German-born archaeologist Paul

Jacobsthal. Maurice Bowra, later the university's vice chancellor, described him as "perhaps the most lively and the most fascinating" of the refugee scholars.

Prehistoric expert Professor Jacobsthal was dismissed by the Nazis on racial grounds. He settled in Oxford, reinventing himself as an eminent Celtic archaeologist and making a lasting impact on European cultural identity.

For the war the Slade School of Art relocated from London to cramped conditions at the Ashmolean Museum. Among the new students was the young German refugee Milein Cosman who later became an illustrator and painter. Several of her drawings are reproduced, as are those by Ernst Eisenmayer who apprenticed as a toolmaker at a local ironworks and produced illustrations of co-workers.

German speaking émigrés also made their mark on publishing and the art publishers Phaidon – founded in Vienna – moved to Oxford together with co-founder Béla Horovitz. He was eventually responsible for publishing *The Story of Art* written by fellow refugee Ernst Gombrich. It sold more than six million copies and became one of the most famous and popular books on art ever written.

Janet Weston

WHEN IT'S OVER by Barbara Ridley

Due to be published 26 September by She Writes Press, ISBN: 978-1-63152-296-3

This is a novel but it is based closely on memoirs written by the author's parents and their friends. It tells the story of Lena, a young Czech Jewish girl whose German political refugee boyfriend persuades her to

leave Prague, first for Paris and then for England, as the Nazis strengthen their hold over Eastern Europe.

They spend their first few months in a cottage in Kent under the patronage of a local aristocrat. Despite having little money, they are comfortable and secure, but Lena cannot help worrying about the family she left in Czechoslovakia, especially as rumours circulate about the Nazis' treatment of the Jews. She discovers that her father (with whom she had an uneasy relationship at the best of times) and her younger brother have joined the Czech Army and are now based in England. But her mother and little sister had been left behind.

Britain joins the war and the locals become increasingly mistrustful of foreigners. Otto and Lena marry to save Otto from being deported, but are told they must go to London. There they sit out the war, Lena working in the Food Office and Otto in a munitions factory. Their relationship deteriorates dramatically as fatigue with the war effort and Lena's fears for her family set in.

This is a lively and compelling book which highlights many of the logistical and bureaucratic issues faced by refugees arriving in Britain, as well as the hardships of everyday life during WWII. It also focuses on the worry and guilt that was naturally felt regarding their families left behind. On the positive side is the massive camaraderie that exists between fellow refugees, as well as the kindness shown by many – but sadly not all – of the British public.

Jo Briggs



AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB



Please join us at our Card and Games Club

Monday 7 August 2017 at 1.00pm

at North Western Reform Synagogue,

Alyth Gardens, Temple Fortune, London NW11 7EN

Open to all levels Bridge players – come and join us

We also offer card games, backgammon, scrabble. You decide.

Games are dependent on numbers being sufficient – the more the merrier

A sandwich lunch will be served upon arrival with tea, coffee and Danish pastries.

£7.00 per person

Booking is essential – when you book please let us know your choice of game.

Please either call Esther Rinkoff on 07966 631 778 or email esther@ajr.org.uk

SHORT STORY: A Mixed Blessing

"Dad, where did you have your Barmitzvah?", our eleven year old asked his father. We had been discussing his forthcoming 'coming of age'.

"You don't have to have one, you know", we had impressed upon him. We were traditional Jews who belonged to a liberal synagogue where Bar – and Bat – mitzvahs were definitely optional. But Paul, having a mixed bag of friends, had opted to do it. "One has a party – and gets presents!" he told us unashamedly, having been to several of his friends' celebrations.

"That's no reason", I had told him virtuously, but was almost relieved when he insisted he wanted to go ahead. I felt that my late parents would have been pleased. Mr Rosenwasser, a member of our Synagogue, was one of the teachers for Barmitzvah boys and a good friend to boot. Felix hesitated for what seemed to be rather a long time. He drew on his pipe. Paul wondered whether he'd heard him. "So, Dad," Paul repeated. "Where did you have your Barmitzvah?"

I looked expectantly at my husband as well. I was sure he must have told me, but I couldn't remember. Felix cleared his throat. "I didn't have one".

Paul seemed a bit taken aback but persisted. "Was it because of the war? Didn't boys have Barmitzvahs then?"

"I was supposed to have one, like my other friends. Even though we had had to change schools. I was supposed to go to Palestine but that arrangement fell through so I just didn't go to school at all until my mother could find somewhere else."

I could see from my son's face that he wondered what it was like not to have to go to school. Wonderful, he supposed.

"My mother hired a tutor who came in to give me maths and English lessons, in case that would be useful if we got away. Oh and yes, my Hebrew teacher".

"You had a *Hebrew* teacher?" my daughter exclaimed, wide eyed.

"Oh yes,"

"What was he like, your Hebrew teacher?" asked Paul. Felix's lip curled even more.

"Well, how was he, Dad?"

Felix took a deep breath. My sweet, gentle husband's voice turned into that of an angry child. "Rabbi Chelmoswitch was the nastiest, most horrible man you could imagine. *I hated him!*"

My children and I could hardly believe what we heard. Paul took his father's hand in his and said fearfully, "Did he *hit* you Dad?"

Felix pulled himself together. "No, Spatz, but he had long, bony fingers and he dug them into you and he spat at you when he was talking and he had absolutely foul breath. And everyone knew he hated children! I dreaded his lessons every week. I only went through with them for my grandparents and for my poor mother who had to work so hard to pay for them."

"So where was your Barmitzvah then?" Paul said, trying to get his father out of his reverie and back to his first question.

"I'll tell you," Felix said in a resigned tone of voice. "I left home one morning

a few weeks before I was due to have it at the Synagogue where I also went for my lessons. I was dreading seeing the Rabbi again, wondering how on earth I could get out of it. There was a lot of noise and shouting on the streets, but not too many people, other than Brown shirts.

"There was a smell of smoke in the air and I slowed down when I saw one of our neighbours hurrying the other way. 'What's happening, Frau Mussil?' I asked her, more to while away the time to my lesson than anything else. Frau Mussil grabbed me by the shoulder as she said "Oh, haven't you heard, Felix? The Synagogue was set on fire and burnt down in the night! You'd better go back to your mother quickly; you don't want to be caught out in the street!"

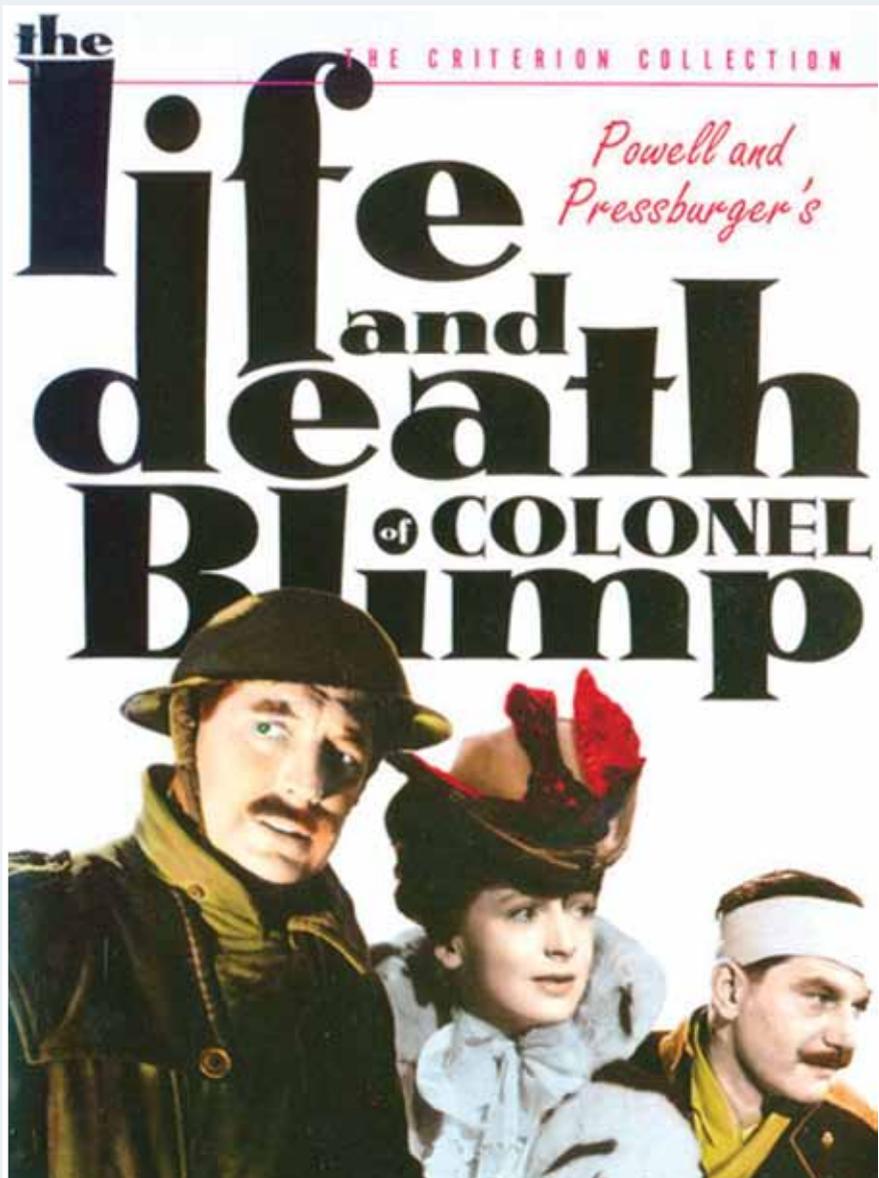
I turned back and hurried home, meeting my mother, who had come out to look for me, on the doorstep. Shaking with nerves, she clutched me to her, murmuring "Oh Felix, Felix, thank God you're safe!" Smiling hugely I said jubilantly, "Oh, don't worry, Mutti, I'm fine, but did you hear the news? The Synagogue burnt down! I won't have to have any more Hebrew lessons!"

"And that was the first and only time my Mother slapped me".

"That was the end of my Hebrew lessons. My family were far too busy and anxious to try to get us all out of the country. Barmitzvahs were no longer important. But finally I was the only one who escaped, on a Kindertransport. And I never saw any of them again."

Mary Brainin Huttner

A Screenwriter of Note



Emmerich Imre Pressburger was born in 1902 in Miskolc, Hungary. He attended a boarding school in Temesvar (now Timisoara, in Romania). The town, like the whole of Transylvania at that time, belonged to Hungary. He continued his studies in Prague and Stuttgart.

His first job was as a journalist in Hungary and later in Germany. He emigrated to France and in 1935 to England. Like so many other refugees from Hungary, he approached Alexander Korda, who

had a soft spot for refugees from the home country, and started to work for him as a scriptwriter.

Meeting Michael Powell proved to be the start of a long and mostly very successful partnership. Under the name of The Archers they produced a long list of notable films. Powell directed the films, with Pressburger being the scriptwriter and peacemaker when problems with staff or moneymen arose. Powell was not easy to work with, so they always worked in separate rooms. Actors and collaborators were often upset by Powell so the charm and tact of Emmerich was needed to overcome the injured egos. Emmerich, short, well-dressed and well-spoken, never lacked female company, but

later in his life he admitted he should have married a girl whom he left behind at home. They corresponded until his death.

The Archers used many prominent actors such as David Niven, Anton Walbrook, Laurence Olivier, Valerie Hobson, Deborah Kerr, etc. Virtually all their films stood the test of time, testified by two retrospective seasons at the National Film Theatre. It would take too long to list all their films, so a short list must suffice. *A Matter of Life and Death*, with David Niven, is still regularly shown on television; *Canterbury Tale*, supporting Anglo-American friendship; *49th Parallel*, showing that not all Germans are inhuman; *The Life and death of Colonel Blimp*, a tribute to Britishness; *The Red Shoes*, *The Tales of Hoffman*, and one of their last ones, *Oh..Rosalinda!!*, based on the operetta by Strauss, *Die Fledermaus*, in Technicolour.

In 1957 the partnership was dissolved. Pressburger continued to work, but nothing stood out. However his friendship with Powell lasted to the end.

In his old age he became melancholic and withdrawn. He lived alone in a small "shoemaker's" cottage, rent free in the countryside. He was a gourmet and an excellent cook. Through the love of Hungarian food, he was friends with Arthur Koestler and George Mikes.

He died alone in 1988 and is buried in the churchyard of Our Lady of Grace, in Aspall, Suffolk. His grave is marked by a Star of David.

His grandson from his second marriage, Kevin McDonald, became a notable film director and producer. His films included *One Day in September* about the massacre of Israeli athletes in Munich. I would highly recommend his biography of his grandfather *Emeric Pressburger: Life and Death of a Screenwriter*. It is informative, interesting and most importantly, his love and admiration for his grandfather shines throughout.

Janos Fisher, Bushey Heath

LOOKING FOR?

The AJR regularly receives messages from our members and others looking for people or for help in particular subjects. Here are some of the most recent requests – please get in touch directly with the person concerned if you can help.

FRENCH KIDS & JEWISH SCOUTS

Helen Fraiss is currently researching the stories of hidden French children during WW2 and their journeys from Paris to Switzerland. She is also interested in the role of the Jewish Scouts including Marcel Marceau and the Jewish Resistance.

helen@makor.co.uk

WHICH GEORGE?

Richard Strimber is looking for any information about the exact whereabouts of a pub in London called The George where his late mother, Lilo Strimber née Liselotte Gesztesi, worked during WWII. Apparently it had meeting rooms which were used by many Jewish people, including several Haganah members and the late David Ben Gurion.

richard@strimber.com

BLACH FAMILY

Friederike Fechner is hoping to contact any descendants of Julius and Felix Blach, who ran a leatherware shop in Stralsund between 1880 and 1938. He is particularly keen to find Dr Rudolf Blach and his sister Cornelia Prager, née Blach, born in the 1920s, offspring of Paul Samuel Blach and Hedwig Blach née Wertheim, who came to England c.1939. She also wants to find Peter Hans Gerd Blach born 24.2.1944, son of Carl and Lisbeth Blach née Krohn, and his sister Ingeborg.

friederike.fechner@t-online.de

SILVERSMITH

Yvonne Levite Heurtier is looking for other descendants of Salomon Wetzler, silversmith in Bamberg, Germany, and his wife Pauline née Klein. Their daughter Brandina Wertzlar Hainemann was Yvonne's grandmother.

jeanclaude.heurtier@sfr.fr

JAKOB GOTTLIEB

Max Majer Gottlieb is looking for information on the fate of his father, Jakob Chaim Gottlieb, who according to the British Red Cross, came as a refugee to England in 1946. Jakob was born in 1892 in a small Polish town in the region Lwow (now Ukraine) and became a lumber merchant, supplying Russian hospitals with heating wood. The Russians permitted him to stay in Poland when they deported his wife Hadasa and their two young sons (including Max, then three years old) to Russia. They lost contact in 1941 and Max is keen to establish how Jakob managed to escape and what happened to him after he arrived in England. The Red Cross have been unable to find a death certificate or any record of his leaving England.

maxgot@aol.com

If you would like to place a search notice in a future issue of the AJR Journal, please email editorial@ajr.org.uk including the words **SEARCH REQUEST** in the title of your email.

SEPTEMBER SERENADE

This year's AJR Annual Lunch is taking place on Sunday 10 September at the Holiday Inn in Elstree. Three very talented singers will be accompanied by a pianist, entertaining the guests during what promises to be a wonderful networking event.

To book call 020 8385 3070, email Carol@ajr.org.uk, or simply fill in and return the booking form inserted in this Journal.

AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON

This November will mark 100 years since the Balfour Declaration, a short letter from the then Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, expressing British government support for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

The campaign was led by Chaim Weizmann, who came to Britain from Belarus and who was also one of the founders of the Central British Fund for German Jewry (CBF), now called World Jewish Relief, the British Jewish community's humanitarian agency.

Established in 1933 shortly after Adolf Hitler came to power, CBF raised vast amounts of money from the British Jewish community to fund the rescue of some 65,000 refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe, including thousands of children on the Kindertransport and 732 orphan survivors known as "The Boys".

CBF, via its Jewish Refugees Committee, continued to provide support to the Jewish refugees once in the UK. For decades the paper records which chronicled their coming to the UK sat gathering dust.

Recently, World Jewish Relief, with the support of the AJR, the Otto Schiff Housing Association, and another anonymous funder, finished the digitisation of these records to enable people to be reunited with their family records at the touch of a button.

In our September issue we will carry a longer article on the records. In the meantime World Jewish Relief continues to offer people free access to their family records. Please visit www.worldjewishrelief.org/archives or call **020 8736 1256**.

For the parents who let their children go...

By Anita H. Grosz, daughter of Hanus J. Grosz from Brno

On Saturday 27 May I was honoured to represent my family and the KTA at the unveiling of the Final Farewell Memorial at Prague Central Station. This is the first memorial to the parents who had the courage to let their children go to lands and people unknown, and is dedicated to parents of all the Kindertransporters from Czechoslovakia, Germany and Austria, as well as other parents who are forced to send their children away unaccompanied, due to conflict or unbearable conditions.

The event began with a reception exclusively for Kinder and their friends and families, plus a few VIPs. The media were restricted to the unveiling areas, which was an immense benefit, allowing people to mingle and express themselves without concern of intrusion.

I went alone to the event, wondering how it would be. To my relief, I met many second generation, some also without their parent. There were around 120 Kinder-related people and only around 10 Kinder who were able to come, from as far as USA, UK, Israel and Canada, as well

as the Czech Republic. A memorial book was signed by all participants and visitors.

The concept of the memorial began about six years ago when, according to Hugo Marom (Meisl) from Tel Aviv, while visiting Sir Nicholas Winton in England he suggested a memorial to the parents. Winton's reply was "and not before time." Marom then met with Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines, Zuzana Maresova and Asaf Auerbach in Prague, and a concept was developed.

A design competition was held but none of the 22 entries fully answered the brief. It was at that point that Zuzana (who remembered her parents waving good-bye) and Milena (who left with her three-year-old sister) thought up the idea of a green railway door with the window depicting the children's and parents' hands saying goodbye and commissioned a British artist Stuart Mason to draw up a sketch.

Milena and Zuzana raised around £90,000 to cover the project. Donations came from Czech politicians and businessmen, as well as from the KTA. Donations also came from Britain, including the Year 6 class of one Catholic primary school, who raised £500.

The Slovak Ambassador in London recommended Slovak artists and engineers to fashion the memorial. The engraved glass window used hand



Daniel & Ben Robinson attended the memorial unveiling with their grandmother Lia Lesser. Lia came on the Kindertransport and never saw her parents again. Her grandsons told the AJR: "This was a very memorable occasion and we were very proud to be there with our grandma".

impressions of the great-grandchildren of Milena and Zuzana and of their own hands – representing the parents and the children.

At the ceremony Milena & Zuzana conducted the unveiling, standing behind a podium flanked by several ambassadors, the Prague Mayor, contributors and other dignitaries. Alternating between English and Czech, they delivered a moving explanation of the project and its significance to all the Kinder, not just Czech Kinder, as well as to parents who have to make an agonizing choice about their children in times of conflict. The poem 'Farewell Memorial' by Eva Paddock was recited and all the guests received a miniature statue of the memorial as a keepsake.

The event was memorable in so many ways, and invaluable for my generation. One brother and sister had only just learned of their mother's Kindertransport experience, so really appreciated discovering more details. Another second generation gentleman expressed befuddlement at having been sent to boarding school after his mother's experience. It was clear we have much to share with one another, and do not have to feel so alone with our past.

As Milena and Zuzana said in their closing remarks: "Our final wish is that this memorial is not just a symbol of a sad farewell but perhaps of a happy meeting."



Zuzana Maresova (L) and Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines speaking at the ceremony



Prague Central Station, where the memorial will be installed

SHINING A LIGHT IN DARK PLACES

It has taken a long time, far too long, but on 23 June this year a significant event occurred. The former chairman of the Jewish community of Baden-Baden faced a trial at the County Court (Landgericht). The trial was a breakthrough and something to be welcomed by anyone who has at heart the future development and well-being of Jewish life in Germany.



Baden-Baden Landgericht

According to press reports the chairman was charged with 17 counts of fraud or similar – the German terms are not wholly equivalent but 'Untreue' here means he used money for purposes other than for what it was intended. The charge sheet also included falsifying certificates and receipts and some loose handling of contracts issued by the community. The trial followed a lengthy period of investigation into what happened with these contracts, during which it appeared that the chairman had approved various bills and receipts for work that was not, in fact, carried out.

As Jews we should feel jointly ashamed that such a thing could happen. But the breakthrough is that this is just one case amongst many, which maybe will lead to further trials and a much-needed clean-up. There are many other cases within the Jewish community and outside where certain individuals abuse positions of trust and privilege. Typically these individuals fill their Boards with persons who will do as they are told and not ask difficult questions about financial reports or the contracts for rebuilding, repairing, restoring, maintaining buildings, cemeteries and other institutions.

In Germany many religious institutions

have the status of a 'Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechtes' (legally-constituted entities), some are 'gemeinnützige Vereine' (charitable institutions), both being forms of legal status that allow certain privileges and tax breaks. This creates loopholes that are open to abuse, as accountability is difficult to investigate and enforce. With Jewish institutions the situation can be even more sensitive. Officials and even politicians are wary of being accused of antisemitism if they demand to know what has happened with taxpayers' money that has been funnelled to Jewish institutions.

I am not just a working rabbi; I have also sat on several Boards. As such, I personally have been an unwilling witness to some remarkable instances where, for example, money was budgeted every year for specific repairs, but the repairs were never carried out; or where a community claimed falsely to have "around a thousand" members and demanded money per head – but refused to provide the funding authority with a list, on the grounds that "We know what happens when Germans get lists of Jews". I have been offered bribes to stamp certificates, and I have experienced that my signature was falsified by a communal leader when I refused to comply, despite a juicy bank-note placed between the sheets of paper. I have spoken to city

representatives who have shrugged their shoulders and said "We know, or at least we suspect, but there is nothing we can do."

The breakthrough in this case is that the defendant's defence lawyer had continually pleaded that this was an 'innerkirchliche Belange', an internal religious matter which, by implication, everyone else – especially non-Jews – should keep their noses out of. Until now his argument had been allowed to win; now, AT LAST a Prosecutor has successfully challenged this assertion.

There are accusations of how a cemetery was very expensively NOT restored and yet the chairman acquired a new car – all rumours, of course, without foundation, but now things have come into court. Judaism has a lot to say about the duties of responsible communal leadership; let us not forget that the *Asseret haDibrot* include not just a command against theft but also one against misusing God's name to justify whatever it is one is doing.

Rabbi Dr. Walter Rothschild

Note from Editor: As this issue of the AJR Journal went to press it appeared that this particular case had been suspended, and that the accused has now paid 20,000 euros to charitable causes.

IN CONVERSATION: Rudi Leavor

One of the many Jewish people to be honoured in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List was Dr Rudolf (Rudi) Leavor, who received a British Empire Medal for services to the Jewish community and interfaith relations in Bradford. Here he talks to our editor Jo Briggs about his life and work in the community.

"I spent the first ten years of my life in Berlin, where my father ran a prosperous dental practice. We were fully integrated into German society; my father had been a doctor in the First World War and won the Iron Cross. But things started to get difficult for Jews, and following a mercifully short arrest by the Gestapo in 1936, my parents decided to emigrate. Who knows what would have happened to our family if they hadn't?

"Settling in Bradford was completely by chance. On arrival in London my father applied to the Dental Board for a permit to practice dentistry. Told he could go anywhere except London or Manchester, he asked the clerk for advice. The clerk closed his eyes and randomly stuck a pin in a map of Britain, which turned out to land on Bradford.

"As the textile capital of England, Bradford had a large Jewish community in the late 19th century. The community had declined substantially in the early 20th century, but an influx of Holocaust refugees brought it a renewed lease of life.

"My parents paid for me to attend Bradford Grammar School, after which I studied dentistry at Leeds University. I met and married a fellow German-Jewish refugee, Marianne, who sadly passed away two years ago. We had four wonderful children and were proud to give them a good start in life, with an excellent education. All four of them went to university and ended up with very good jobs.

"My involvement in the local Jewish and wider community evolved

very naturally. Bradford is hugely multicultural and one inevitably meets and mingles with people from all types of backgrounds. I am proud to count a member of the local Council of Mosques and senior members of the local Christian clergy among my close friends.

"To promote racial harmony we try to integrate other cultures with Judaism whenever possible. Many of my friends have become a 'Friend' of Bradford Reform Synagogue (of which I have been chairman for many years), paying £5 a month for the privilege.

"Last Mitzvah Day we decided to organise a tea for 45 asylum seekers. It went really well and was selected as the best interfaith event in the National Mitzvah Day scheme on that day. The judges said they were impressed to see the Jewish and Muslim communities coming together to reach out to asylum seekers and refugees in their community, representing the spirit of interfaith and the power of social action to encourage cohesion. A cup of tea is a simple thing, but in such circumstances can mean a lot.

"I work very closely with our local MP Naz Shah, who was of course famously suspended from the Labour Party in 2014 for suggesting Israelis be relocated to the US. She came to my house in tears and I was one of the first people she rang when she was reinstated. She has since become a good friend and also introduced me to Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, which has been very helpful.



Rudi Leavor with his first great grand-daughter Isabelle Sladin

"I may be 91, but I've got no intention of slowing down. I go to Berlin each year to talk to students at the Jewish Museum about the Holocaust. For the last few years I have sung *El Male Rachamim* at each of the different Holocaust Memorial Day events organised in Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and Halifax. The organisers of the four events have to work closely together to avoid a clash, although this year my son Jonathan had to drive me quickly from Halifax to Huddersfield to make sure I could get to the second event on time.

"My parents and my parents-in-law all belonged to the AJR and I used to enjoy reading the AJR Magazine, as it used to be called. After they passed I took out my own membership and subscription and I'm delighted to see that the quality of the Journal is as high as ever.

"I also do a lot of work with the Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association, based in Leeds. Their chair, Lilian Black, is working with the University of Huddersfield to create a permanent Holocaust Heritage and Learning Centre in the heart of West Yorkshire. I think this will be a fantastic legacy for us all."

Thank Heaven for Music

This is an abridged version of a talk Rudi Leavor gave after Evensong in Bradford Cathedral on 29 January 2017.

In 1936, following my father's brief arrest, our family decided to emigrate. We leaned out of the window as our train departed from Berlin, a sea of white handkerchiefs waving us goodbye. Our close friends the Radziejewskis stood at the very end of the platform so that they would be the last ones we would see.

This was the beginning of a roller-coaster of emotions lasting 48 hours – escape to freedom but departing from relatives and friends we were unlikely to see again. We overnights in Hamburg and then took another train journey to Bremerhaven, during which my father was taken away and interrogated. Exhausted, we eventually made our way onto a cruise liner bound for America via Southampton, where we were to disembark.

Now I have to tell you that my father was an excellent pianist and we often played duets. Our favourite piece was *'Dornröschens Brautfahrt'* (Cinderella's Bridal Procession) by Max Rhode. We played it endlessly and knew it by heart.

With trepidation we entered the ship's dining room, only to find a live band playing "our tune". It was as if we had come out of the darkness and entered Paradise. The next morning my father led us to the stern of the ship where he dramatically flung the keys of our now vacant Berlin flat, swearing never to set foot in Germany again.

Our friends the Radziejewskis were not so lucky. With the exception of their son Hans, the family ended up being deported on a cattle train to a forest on the outskirts of Riga, where they were machine gunned next to a trench already full of corpses. Hans was also eventually caught but miraculously survived several years at Auschwitz.

My aunt lived in Dresden, where her father-in-law was the Chief Rabbi. In 1933 the Nazis made this revered Rabbi scrub the pavement in front of his Synagogue. The family emigrated to Palestine, and their hatred of Dresden rubbed off on my family. Rightly or wrongly, the name of the town became a dirty word for us.

Last year I attended a concert by the Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra in Leeds. As the glorious music swelled, tears welled up in my eyes and the curse of 85 years lifted. For me, Dresden was rehabilitated.

Honours All Round

The AJR is delighted that the 2017 Queen's Birthday Honours list includes many names with ties to our Organisation. We especially congratulate the following:

Cathy Ashley has been appointed OBE for services to Holocaust commemoration and awareness. She completed two terms as chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

Natasha Kaplinsky, who has presented TV news programmes for 15 years, has been appointed OBE for her services to Holocaust commemoration. She has interviewed 112 Holocaust survivors and concentration camp liberators as part of a commemoration project for the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

A British Empire Medal (BEM) been awarded to **Iby Knill**, a 93-year-old Auschwitz survivor, for her services to Holocaust education and interfaith cohesion.

Also awarded a BEM for Holocaust education and interfaith cohesion is **Sabina Miller**, a survivor of the Warsaw ghetto. She arrived in Britain after the war having lost her parents in the Holocaust.

Trevor Pears, who was knighted, heads The Pears Foundation, a charitable body which funds projects involving Holocaust education and antisemitism awareness, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, the Darfur crisis and the Britain Israel Research and Academic Exchange Partnership.

Dame 'Steve' (Stephanie) Shirley was awarded Member of the Order of the Companions of Honour (CH) for services to the IT industry and philanthropy. At the age of five she arrived in Britain on a Kindertransport with her nine-year-old sister.

Lord Nick Stern of Brentford, the son of Jewish refugees, has been appointed a Companion of Honour for services to economics, international relations and tackling climate change. He is professor of economics and government at the London School of Economics, and chair of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment. He is also president of the British Academy.

Around the AJR

BRIGHTON & HOVE: "MY JOURNEY INTO RABBINICAL STUDIES"

Claude Vecht-Wolf, computer guru at the AJR, spoke of his Rabbinical studies which began with Joseph Caro's 'Shulchan Aruch'. His interesting talk ended with a lively discussion.

Ceska Abrahams

EDGWARE: THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF GOLDERS GREEN

The historian and author Dr Pamela Fox gave an interesting and informative talk with a number of humorous anecdotes about the people and places of Golders Green.

Fred Kalb

ILFORD: THE STURGEON QUEEN

This film tells of four generations selling deli in New York's Lower East Side. A real slice of Jewish history.

Meta Roseneil

LEEDS: FRANK MEISLER, SCULPTOR

It was standing room only when Ian Vellins spoke about this German-born Israeli architect-turned-sculptor, creator of the Kindertransport sculpture at Liverpool St. Station.

Pippa Landey

MUSWELL HILL: "EVERYTHING IS A PRESENT" – ALICE HERZ-SOMMER

This film celebrates the life of the distinguished Prague-born Jewish pianist who survived Theresienstadt and lived to be 110. She remained positive and generous all her life and music was her passion; she practiced daily almost to the day she died.

Eva Stellman

NORTH LONDON: THE WINTON TRAIN AND OTHER JOURNEYS

Peter Hedderley spoke about the extraordinary courage of parents who placed their children on a train after Kristallnacht, not knowing whether they would ever see them again.

Gordon Spencer

NORTH LONDON (2): UNITED JEWISH ISRAEL APPEAL (UJIA)

Harvey Bratt spoke with passion and commitment about the work of this charity

which involves 16-25 year-olds in their Israeli heritage as well as giving support to impoverished Jewish and non-Jewish communities in the Galil.

Hanne R. Freedman

NOTTINGHAM: SOCIAL GET-TOGETHER

We chatted and enjoyed each other's company over a delicious lunch at the home of Ruth and Jurgen Schwiening. It was suggested that it would be good to see second generation at our future gatherings.

Heather Hoskin

RADLETT: UNITED JEWISH ISRAEL APPEAL (UJIA)

Harvey Bratt told that funds (frequently raised by legacy) are used to develop some of Israel's more deprived areas. A much more favourable picture of Arab-Jewish relations emerged than that which is usually portrayed.

Fritz Starer

HARROGATE & YORK: "SWEET BASIL"

Ten of us again met at this restaurant in Kirk Hammerton and had a most enjoyable meal and fellowship. We were provided with a

round table so we could easily to chat to everyone.

Edith Jayne

SCOTLAND & NEWCASTLE: AJR REGIONAL GATHERING

3 discussion groups debated topical issues and after lunch Jonathan Arkush, President of the Board of Deputies, spoke on "Our community under pressure – can we cope?"

Joe Cent

KINDERTRANSPORT GROUP: DANIEL SNOWMAN

The social and cultural historian spoke about his book "The Hitler Emigres: The Cultural impact on Britain of Refugees from Nazism".

These were not all Jewish but all had a profound impact on their adoptive country.

David Lang

AJR CARDS & GAMES CLUB: LUNCH MEETING

After a lovely lunch on a beautiful day we spent the afternoon playing Bridge and Rummikub. Other games are also available so let us know what you would like to play.

David Lang

AUGUST GROUP EVENTS

As the exact timings of these events are often subject to last minute changes we do not include them in the AJR Journal and suggest you contact the relevant regional contact for full details.

Norwich	1 August	Talk by Peter Beschorner about his half-brother and their discovery of their father's history.
Ilford	2 August	General knowledge and celebrity quiz
Glasgow	2 August	West End Friends Social
Pinner	3 August	Annual garden party
Cambridge	10 August	David Kanarek: Film and talk on Refuseniks – Prisoners of Conscience
Harrogate	14 August	Social get-together
Edgware	15 August	Paul Lang – My Life as a Professional Photographer
Newcastle	15 August	Afternoon at The Biscuit Factory Art Gallery
Radlett	16 August	Charlotte and Tony Balazs – Dining at the Cosmo and the Dorice
Didsbury	16 August	Social get-together
Glasgow Book Club	17 August	Meeting
Brighton	21 August	Godfrey Gould – the history of the Jews of Brighton
Marlow	22 August	Lunch at Maidenhead Shul
Book Club	23 August	Meeting
Welwyn Garden City	24 August	Annual lunch
N.W.London	29 August	Henry Cohn – The Jews of Jamaica
Wembley	30 August	Social get-together
Muswell Hill	31 August	Louise Heilbron – One of the first woman Rabbis in England: Rabbi Jackie Tabick
North London	31 August	Annual lunch, with Lynne Bradley entertaining

Books Bought

MODERN AND OLD

Eric Levene

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WHY NOT TRY AJR'S MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE?

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

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

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

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

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



LUNCH

Wednesday 9th August 2017
At Alyth Gardens Synagogue
12.30pm

Please join us for lunch and socialising. As a change from having a speaker we will be having a social get-together and an opportunity for everyone to catch up with each other's news and views.

For details please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

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AJR FILM CLUB

Our next film showing will be at Sha'arei Tzedek North London Reform Synagogue, 120 Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone N20 9EZ

on **Monday 14 August 2017**
at 12.30pm

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

THE BUTLER

(2 hours – will finish at 3.15pm)

After leaving the South as a young man and finding employment at an elite hotel in Washington DC Cecil Gaines (Forest Whitaker) gets the opportunity of a lifetime when he is hired as a butler at the White House. Over three decades, he has a front-row seat to history and the inner workings of the Oval Office, but his commitment to his "First Family" leads to tension at home, alienating his wife (Oprah Winfrey) and causing conflict with his anti-establishment son.

£7.00 per person

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

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Child Survivors' Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld
020 8954 5298 h.obstfeld@talk21.com

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10-DAY VISIT TO ISRAEL NOVEMBER 2017

The AJR is considering organising a 10-day trip to Israel in early November this year. The cost of the visit is not yet decided. Carol Rossen will be accompanying the trip.

If you would like to join the trip, please contact Lorna Moss on 020 8385 3070 or at lorna@ajr.org.uk as soon as possible.

OTTO SCHIFF MEMORIAL PLAQUE UNVEILED



Michael Newman and Rafi Cooper, Director of Communications at World Jewish Relief, alongside the new plaque

On 4 July the AJR, Wiener Library and World Jewish Relief jointly unveiled a special plaque to honour Otto Schiff CBE at his former Hampstead home.

Otto Schiff lived and then worked at 14 Netherhall Gardens from the early 1920s, administering the emigration of tens of thousands of Jewish people from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia before the Holocaust.

Born in Frankfurt in 1875, he emigrated to London in 1896 at the age of 21, becoming a partner in the merchant banking firm Bourke, Schiff & Co. Known for his philanthropy, he set up the Jewish Refugees Committee in 1933 and worked tirelessly alongside the British Home Office to house and financially support the thousands of Jewish refugees seeking asylum.

After his death in 1952, Otto Schiff bequeathed his mansion as a Trust and care home for victims and refugees of Nazi persecution. 14 Netherhall Gardens was subsequently named Otto Schiff House and operated as an independent care home until it was incorporated into Jewish Care in 2010 and later relocated to Golders Green.

A boutique developer has now restored Otto Schiff House to its original purpose of residency, transforming it into seven luxury apartments and constructing a neighbouring new-build development on the property's vast grounds.

At the plaque unveiling ceremony AJR Chief Executive, Michael Newman, said: "Otto Schiff and the home he founded are synonymous with the Jewish refugees who fled Nazi oppression; the plaque dedicated to his memory will stand in perpetuity in celebration of his visionary humanitarian work."

ENJOYING EASTBOURNE

On 11 June a group of AJR Members went on a week's holiday to the Lansdowne Hotel in Eastbourne. Once again the weather was very kind to us, as were the hotel staff and management. We had several first timers but it was not long before the whole group were chatting together. New friends were made and old friendships rekindled.

In the evenings there was some form of entertainment; music, quiz, bingo, plus bridge or other card games. Most days the group did their own thing, whether it was shopping, bus trips or walking along the beautiful sea front or just relaxing in or around the hotel.



One afternoon a coach took us to Ringmer Parish Hall where a fantastic afternoon tea was served by the ladies of the WI. Another evening a few went to the band stand to see The Jersey Boys show – great.

All this could not happen without the help and organisation of Carol Rossen, Lorna Moss and Florina Harapcea so a big thank you to them. And here's looking forward to July 2018 when we will be returning to Eastbourne.

A WINTER'S TALE

From time to time the AJR office receives memoirs self-published by our members. We always appreciate getting them but don't often find time to review them thoroughly.

But Fred Winter's life story caught our eye. Fred Winterburger (as he was then) came on the Kindertransport in June 1939, aged nine. He arrived at Liverpool Street 'unclaimed' and stayed in a hostel in Cricklewood before being evacuated to Bedford. His last communication with his parents was in May 1943.

Fred's story is not unusual for an AJR member but his drive and zest for life comes through on every page. Determined

to be an accountant, he pulled every string available, creating opportunities where often none seemed possible. He built a highly successful practice, has had a long and very happy marriage, and currently has three children and seven grandchildren.

As he himself concludes: "I am fortunate in that I have known both harsh poverty and financial success. I've also seen both sides of man: the evil side that deprived me of my parents and the incredible loving and generous side that rescued me from danger in Germany and cared for me in England. Since becoming a family man, I have known nothing but love: it's something I hold dear and treasure. I consider myself to be lucky, a very lucky man indeed."

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For the latest AJR news, including details of forthcoming events and information about our services, visit www.ajr.org.uk

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