



Kindertransport

A special interest group of the

Association of Jewish Refugees

SERVING HOLOCAUST REFUGEES AND SURVIVORS NATIONWIDE

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**Previous issues may also be viewed at:
www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport.htm**

Dear Kinder and Friends



From the Editor's Desk

No sooner is one edition finished, when I worry about material for the next one. I need never worry, material comes in from a wide variety of sources as the contents of this edition show. Please keep the material flowing, nationally and internationally. Newsletter apart, Kindertransport is very much in the forefront in schools and elsewhere. It would be interesting to hear about your experiences in talking to the young and old. Thanks again Andrea, for your invaluable and patient help. I wish you all a happy Chanukah and don't forget the party on 6th December.

Bernd.

Dear Kinder

First and foremost I know we all feel a terrible sense of loss with the passing away of our fellow member of the Committee Sigi Faith. He was indeed a much respected and loved friend to us all. Bernd will be writing a fuller obituary for the next Newsletter. Meanwhile we send our condolences to Terry and her family.

I hope you all enjoyed the High Holidays and were able to spend a relaxing time during the summer months.

The monument at The Hook of Holland is still live but has not unfortunately had final approval from the Dutch authorities.

Meanwhile despite the winter approaching lets look forward to lighting the Chanukah candles and absorbing the warmth they generate in the comfort of our close families.

I wish all our 'Kinder' a safe and easy winter.



Holland to Liverpool

On 19th May 1940, the *Bodergraven*, an old steamship of the Dutch merchant fleet dropped anchor in Liverpool. Its cargo consisted of 80 children and some older passengers.

Shortly after Crystal Night my parents heard of transports for Jewish children going to Holland. My sister Elsbeth, brother Oscar and I were immediately registered for a place on the train that was to take us to a foreign land. A busy time was spent in making all preparations including the necessary passports and papers.

First Elsbeth left and a week later Oscar, I and our parents travelled to Bielefeld to join the Kindertransport train. When we arrived there was already a long queue of children and parents at the barrier. Eventually the official arrived to open the barrier and shouted, "Children only, children only." Parents, despite their protests were unable to take their children to their seats on the train. In all the confusion, I heard the voice of my father shouting, "Come back, you haven't said goodbye to your mother." It was not possible to turn back because we were being driven forward with our heavy suitcases. On the platform were met by the organising ladies. They showed us to our seats and provided us food and drink; they also accompanied us to the Dutch border. Comforting homesick children was another of their tasks.

Approaching the German side of the Dutch border, a boy from Berlin, Rudi Moll, confessed he had no passport and therefore would be sent back. With the passport official approaching, we all stood up to hand in our documents for inspection. Rudi remained seated undetected. The same confession on the Dutch side of the border was met with a smile on the official's face.

Our stay of 16 months in Holland was fairly uneventful although we were moved from place to place. Finally we arrived at an orphanage in Gouda (famous for its cheese) where there were already some children from Germany. The Dutch housefather had little understanding of children who had just left their parents. Punishments were frequently handed out, including withholding mail from our parents. One day he announced an outbreak of diphtheria which led to Oscar and me being in an isolation hospital for four weeks. On release from hospital we went to another orphanage in Amsterdam.

By now WWII had broken out. On 10th May 1940 the German army stood at the door of Amsterdam. That same day, we were told to go up to our bedrooms, put on our best clothes and board coaches waiting for us.

Mrs Weismuller-Meyer (see an article about her in KT Souvenir Brochure of the 1998 Reunion – Ed.) The head of the Jewish Refugee Committee in Amsterdam, not a Jewish lady, was there to meet us and soon we were on our way to IJmuiden, the nearest seaport. On the way, the coaches stopped to take on other people. At the last stop only younger people were taken on board. The grandparents of my dear Friend Rabbi Harry Jacobi were left behind and ultimately perished in Sobibor.

At the port, Mrs Weismuller went from ship to ship to persuade the Captains to take us on board. The Captain of the *Bodergraven* agreed, but explained there was little food. Once on board, Mrs Weismuller bade us farewell. We looked upon her as a mother and begged her to come with. She explained that her husband was a banker in Amsterdam. After more pleading, she relented, but then had to leave the ship to phone him. As a token of her return, she left her hand bag; she never returned to claim it.

We set sail on 14th May and made ourselves as comfortable as [possible. Suddenly we were attacked by 2 enemy planes which fired at the ship. The crew fired back with rifles! Captain Regoort reported that no one was hurt; he allowed us to snuggle down in the cargo hold. That same evening, Holland surrendered to the German army. The Germans knew of our presence and we feared further attacks. In Germany, the daily newspapers wrote about the sinking of an old Dutch cargo boat off the coast of Holland! The next days were without further incidents. We now existed on ships biscuits and black tea; once the cook treated us to a basin of stewed meat.

On our way to Liverpool we were hit by a severe storm, force 8-10 and were tossed helplessly. After a 5 day journey we finally arrived in Liverpool and stayed for 2-3 nights in an old disused seamen's hotel. Neighbourhood crowds tried to get a glimpse of the 'celebrities' who had arrived from Holland. Three days later we were moved to the community centre in Wigan, used by the Scouts and Guides. The people of Wigan were kindness itself. They took us out for outings – one of which included a cricket match. (*Did you understand the strange game, Hans?– Ed*). The owner of the local cinema treated us to a matinee of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. On the way back we were given fish and chips wrapped in the Wigan Daily News.

We were given a farewell party as we were about to leave for Manchester. Among the goodies was a half-crown for each. Manchester became my home town for the next 8 years. I went to school, *Cheder* and Synagogue, started my first job and continued with my study of music. As the war was coming to an end, I was reunited with Elsbeth who had landed up in Auschwitz where she had brief reunion with our parents before they met their deaths in the gas chambers. Elsbeth had been liberated by the Russians.

In 1947, I became a British subject. In 1959 I married Elfrida who died in 2003. One day we had a visit from Mrs Weismuller on her way home from Yad Vashem after unveiling a tree and plaque in her name in the Avenue of the Righteous. I eventually went to see it and recited Kaddish on the spot.

Finally we settled in Brighton where we were welcomed with open arms.

Hans Levy

- Adapted from a talk given in the Brighton and Hove Progressive Synagogue to mark the 70th anniversary of arriving in Liverpool

Philately and Kindertransport

I am appealing for information about the Kindertransports from Danzig. I founded a Group in the UK in 2007 to study the philately of Danzig/Gdansk, and publish a modest quarterly journal 'The Danzig Philatelist'. Details can be found at www.Danzig.org

I have been moved by the two Kindertransport sculptures by Frank Meisler at Gdansk and Liverpool St stations. I learn also from the internet that there is another at Friedrichstraße Station in Berlin.

I would very much like to publish in my journal a short factual article about the Kindertransports from Danzig (as well as the wider context involving other places), illustrating amongst other things, the Meisler sculptures. My journal is of course a philatelic one and I do restrict it only to topics which can have some philatelic relevance. It strikes me however that there must surely somewhere be some envelopes or cards from Danzig to the children who came to England on the Kindertransports which could be used to illustrate the story, or indeed correspondence sent back to Danzig.

Does anyone have any access to relevant archive material or can suggest where I could gain such access? I am particularly interested to find out the dates of the Kindertransports from Danzig, the numbers of children who were sent on them, the route they took, and whether they all went to London, also whether any failed to get through. If anyone can provide relevant factual information or 300dpi scans or colour photocopies of any relevant philatelic material, kindly contact me at the following address:

- Giles du Boulay, 8 Malvern Road, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP20 1QF, UK or E-mail: giles.duboulay@btinternet.com

Many thanks for your help.

Giles du Boulay



Your editor wearing as a Trustee of JTS and Hospital Chaplain

KINDERTRANSPORT

- **AND JEWS' TEMPORARY SHELTER**

The Shelter was founded in 1885 In London's East End (Leman Street) to assist immigrants from Eastern Europe. It eventually moved to Mansell Street where it remained till the early 1970's. From odd conversations and occasional written material, it seems that the Shelter also housed on a temporary basis some arrivals on the Kindertransport. In one instance I was reliably told, a few youngsters came to the Shelter, which was full and they had to be put up in a workman's hostel some distance away. No doubt the records of the Shelter, now archived, have further details. The JTS still exists. It has no building but is a grant giving body or matters relating to housing, accommodation and the like, which is first processed through recognised agencies.

If any Kind had experiences of the JTS I would be glad to hear about it.

- AND THE ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL

On several occasions when visiting patients as the Jewish Trust Chaplain, I come across Kinder. It is an interesting experience, as KT comes up, usually quite incidentally, in the course of conversation or querying the accent. If the patient is willing, our chat continues for some time as we exchange experiences. Hopefully as I leave, there is a happier patient.

Kinder to the USA

Regarding "Kinder in the USA ?", September 2010 Newsletter, I do not wish to take anything away from The British Kindertransport that brought close to 10,000 Jewish children to Great Britain from continental Europe from 1938 to the start of World War II in September 1939. This achievement is properly a source of pride and satisfaction both to Great Britain and the Kindertransportees. Indeed, the word Kindertransport has come to refer to this specific group.

Though not well-known, there were however smaller organised groups of unaccompanied children, travelling together, who did come out of war-torn Europe to the United States, in addition to Jewish children who reached the U.S. individually. The great success of the British Kindertransport should not erase from the historical record these smaller groups of children who were also saved, whatever name is given to this successful effort.

Perhaps you and the readers of the Kindertransport Newsletter may be interested to hear of three such groups totalling approximately 200 children who arrived in the United States in 1941. They travelled from France to the United States in carefully organized groups, unaccompanied by parents or any adult relatives. The journeys were made possible through the superhuman efforts of the American Friends Service Committee [American Quakers] and the United States Committee for the Care of European Children, chaired by Marshall Field, of which Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was a concerned member. These organizations managed to secure quota numbers for a corporate visa for the children from the United States Department of State, for which no

legislation by the U.S. Congress was required. They received valuable assistance from the American Consul General in Marseilles.

Most of these children had been living in homes for Jewish children displaced by the war that were run by the long-established Jewish welfare organization, the OSE [*Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants*]. They were sent to France by their families, mostly from Austria and Germany but also from Poland in 1939 and 1940. Some children had been sent to the OSE by a German-Jewish orphanage.

The children were assembled in the Mediterranean port of Marseilles, and from there they travelled by train through Fascist Spain to Lisbon, the organisers having secured not only U.S. visas for them but also Spanish and Portuguese transit visas, permitting them to travel through these two countries. There were not enough seats on the train, so children slept in the aisles and in overhead baggage racks. Just before the trains reached the Spanish border, they made a brief, unscheduled stop in the village of Oloron. Parents of children who were held at the nearby concentration camp of Gurs had been brought to the station under police escort. During a reunion limited to just three minutes during which they were not permitted to get off the train, the children handed bread and sugar cubes they had saved from their rations to their loved ones through the windows of the train.

Three groups sailed from Lisbon to New York. Two travelled on the Portuguese ship *Mouzinho* in June and August 1941; a third sailed on the *Serpa Pinta* in September 1941. I was in the second group, which landed in New York on September 2, 1941. The youngest member was a girl of 7; the oldest was 15. Unofficially, it has always been referred to as the second transport.

On arrival in New York, all the children were housed in a former orphanage on 137th Street in Manhattan. Following health checks and completion of various legal requirements, the children were dispersed throughout the country to live with relatives, family friends or U.S. families who volunteered to foster them. Some boys for whom homes could not be found were placed in orphanages where they grew up. Like members of the British Kindertransport, members of our groups fought against the Nazis as members of the U.S. armed forces.

Whatever label is put on us, we were groups of European Jewish Kinder who were part of organized transports to New York in 1941, travelling on rare, valid American visas. We were only a small percentage of the Jewish children the OSE sheltered. We were the lucky ones. Many of those we left behind did not survive.

I have copies of 1941 letters and cables detailing the efforts and arrangements made for these transports, as well as a 1989 album prepared for a reunion of members of the first, second and third transports in Los Angeles.

Eve R. Kugler

After Note

The above article describes and American KT, organised by American organisations, who secured the essential visas for us from the US State Department and supervised our journey Americans looked after us subsequent to our journey. Yes, it was small, no more than 5% of the size of the British KT. Our groups were often referred to as Transports, not Kindertransports, but the emphasis remains that it was American organisations who were the moving force.

In a letter to Michael Newman of AJR, William Kaczynski wrote:

The book plan of *Fleeing from the Fuhrer* and the introduction chapter indicate what he is doing with his collection of envelopes/postcards from refugees from World War II. Reference the chapter regarding *People Who Made a Difference*, the very last thing that he is trying to obtain, hopefully, is a visa issued by the Japanese diplomat Sugihara in Lithuania for Jews to escape to Kobe in Japan and then onto Shanghai. He was one of the Righteous honoured at Yad Vashem. William Kaczynski would be willing to give any charity a substantial contribution.

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An email from Margaret Goldberger KTA of North America

This is to clarify the question of Kindertransports to the U.S. There were approximately 1,000 unaccompanied children who came to the United States between the early 1930's and into the 1940's. They were sponsored by individuals and some organizations, and were permitted to enter the country under the Quota system. In other words, the U.S. did not do what Great Britain did, and, in fact, a bill to allow 20,000 children into the U.S. outside of the quota system, never came out of committee - therefore was never considered by the U.S. Congress. There is an organization in the U.S. by the name of "One Thousand Children", whose membership consists of the children mentioned above.

A PICNIC 1938

It was Sunday and a perfect summer's day; so when my mother suggested a picnic in the country I was overjoyed. We packed the picnic basket with fruit and fresh lemon juice, sandwiches and cake.

When we arrived at the station it was packed with like-minded people waiting to go out of Vienna to enjoy a day in the country. My mother bought some papers and magazines and we boarded the train.

There were several people in our compartment, among them a rather stout lady with a big swastika on the lapel of her jacket. One look from my mother and I knew that on no account must I be drawn into conversation with the 'Nazi lady.' I buried my head in the children's magazine that mother had bought to keep me amused while she read the papers. Gradually the train emptied and, after what seemed like an endless journey, we at last got off at a small station. By then it was noon and very hot. I was thirsty and asked mother if I should have a drink. Mother said, "soon, but first we are going to look up an old family friend."

We walked through the sleepy village until we reached a rather dilapidated farmhouse. A strange looking man asked us into a very untidy kitchen *cum* living room. I sat in the corner and had some cool lemonade and helped myself to the sandwiches while my mother and the man talked earnestly. I noticed mother handing the man an envelope which he carefully locked away. After a while he said it was time for us to go. The three of us walked to the outskirts of the village until we reached a small wood. It was lovely and cool inside with the smell of pine trees and wild mushrooms.

We walked about twenty minutes in silence when the man stopped. He pointed to the edge of the wood and said, "I must leave you now; just stay near the edge of the wood and continue to walk for about fifteen minutes until you come to a clearing, there you will find a small path leading to a road which you have to cross. Good luck."

When we were alone, I looked at mother and suddenly felt afraid. "Now you must be a good girl and do exactly as I tell you," she said, "keep close to me and do not speak." I nodded my head and held tightly to my mother's hand.

After about fifteen minutes, we reached a clearing and in front of us was the field and the little path which the man had mentioned. There were lots of wild flowers and mother told me to pick some and stay low to the ground while we made our way down the path towards the main road. By the time we reached the road we were laden with wild flowers of every size and description. But once we reached the main road, mother started to walk very fast almost dragging me along because I could not keep up with her. By now I was very tired but dared not speak. We reached the other side of the road and there was a road sign written in a strange language. Mother stopped, took me in her arms; she was shaking from head to toe. "I think we have made it, darling," she sobbed, "I think we have made it."

Our 'picnic' was the illegal crossing from Nazi occupied Austria into Czechoslovakia – and freedom.

Gerda Swarmy



Judith and Judah

The word Chanukah is a good Hebrew feminine noun used several times in the Bible. By a form of 'poetic licence' one could refer the femininity to aspects of the festival which are often overlooked in favour of Judah the Maccabee. Women have a special in the story of Chanukah.

In the book of Maccabees we read of the evil Edict of Intolerance issued by Antiochus IV of Syria: Jews are prohibited from following their religion on the penalty of death. However, two brave women were brought to trial for circumcising their sons. Their horrific fate was to be paraded with their infants at their breasts and then thrown to their deaths from the ramparts of the town. This surely foreshadows the parading of 'guilty' Jews by the Nazis because of some breach of regulations. Death rather than forsaking Judaism is the stuff of martyrdom.

The second Book of Maccabees also records the story of the mother, usually identified as Hannah (though other names are found in Jewish writings) and her seven sons. Despite untold tortures none of the seven sons would eat pork as demanded by the king and were so cruelly killed. Before his death, the seventh son said, "We are ready to die rather than break the law of our fathers." The mother had encouraged her sons to remain faithful to their Jewish faith. After their death, she died, according to a tradition she threw herself off the roof. Again this is a story of martyrdom – a woman unafraid to die for her beliefs.

The third woman connected to Chanukah is Judith, according to Jewish tradition. Her story is found in detail in the Book of Judith (dated by many to Maccabean times) as found in the Apocrypha.¹ Her act of bravery was to kill Holofernes, an enemy of the Jewish people. Jewish tradition has it that she gave him dry cheese, he then drank much wine to quench his thirst so that he fell fast asleep. She took his sword and cut off his head. Apart from literature and art, Judith is recalled by the custom of having dairy food on Chanukah and women abstaining from work during the burning of the Chanukah lights; some women refrained from work on the 1st and 8th days in commemoration of her and the other brave women.

Yes, Women had an important role in showing strength and encouragement and encouragement in the fight for the survival of Judaism in 2nd century BCE. The saying goes "Behind every man is a good woman." In this instance, women gave religious and spiritual support to Judah the Maccabee and his brothers in their fight for the survival of Judaism. So as we light the eight lights, let us recall the martyred four women and the seven sons and what they stood for. Jews throughout the ages, and we today, have to continue the battle to preserve Judaism and everything that it stands for.

Bernd Koschland

The Bust by Oliver Bloom

On October 14th, among a small, select audience, Gordon Greenfield and I attended the presentation of a bust of Sir Nicholas Winton at the Jewish Museum. Oliver Bloom, the sculptor, said that as a friend of Sir Nicholas he came to do it more by chance than by original intention.

¹ The Books of Judith and Maccabees are found in the Apocrypha which contains Jewish writings not admitted into the Hebrew Bible

Mrs Ann Cowan, Chairman of the Friends of the Jewish Museum, opened the short proceedings. She said that the bust was most beautiful and especially evocative of Sir Nicholas. Unfortunately, approaching 102, was not able to attend due to health and also because his children had taken his car away much to his chagrin.

She then introduced Vera Schaufeld, one of the Winton Kinder, who expressed her delight at being present and thanked Sir Nicholas on behalf of the 669 Kinder he had rescued. To her, the bust expressed his humanity.

Oliver Bloom then spoke briefly about the concept of sculpting the bust.

As the third speaker, I referred to the totality of the Kindertransport, whoever the agents for rescue were.

Ann Cowan expressed her thanks to all and hoped the bust would be a constant reminder of the story of Sir Nicholas and the Kindertransport. In his praise, she referred to the rabbinic teaching as a person who saves one life, saves a whole world.

Refreshments followed and allowed people to mingle and speak with each other.

In summary, I was delighted to be present, replacing Sir Erich in his absence.

Bernd Koschland

SEARCHES



Where are you?

While trying to find information about Adelheit Klein on the Internet, I read about her in a KT Newsletter of some years ago. I met her through Leonore J Meyer who also worked for Anna Essinger. I would be happy to exchange information about Adelheit with whom I spent some adventurous days in Frankfurt (she lived nearby in Oberursel), Worms and Darmstadt.

Joel Sartorius isartor@verizon.net

I left Germany in 1939 on the Kindertransport and lived with Edith and Ronald Cornish, in Marple, near Manchester, for one year. My best friend from Germany, **URSULA MAYER**, was also sent to England. I visited her in England once during 1939. I have not been in touch with her since then and wonder if she is still alive. She was Jewish, was probably born in 1929, and was sent to England from Stuttgart, Germany. I would greatly appreciate any information.

Erica G. Kanter (maiden name: Hecht)

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Eva Hayman from New Zealand (left) and Nora Huppert (right) from Australia wrote articles for the last issue of the newsletter. Both are “Winton Kinder.” The picture below appeared in the Dominion Post (NZ) 15.2.10



OBITUARY

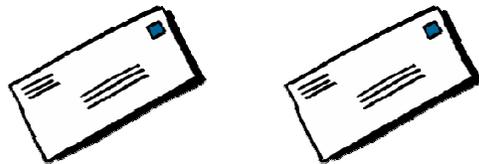
Sigi Faith

It is with deep regret that I report Sigi Faith died on 21st October. Sigi was a very active member of the Kindertransport organising Committee. His special strength was organising speakers for the KT Monday Luncheons.

His quiet and active mind and long association with the organisation will be sorely missed. A longer tribute will be published in the next Newsletter.

We extend to Terry and the family our deepest sympathies and condolences at the loss of a wonderful man who no doubt looked forward to the forthcoming diamond wedding. May his dear soul find peace and quietude under the shadows of the Divine wings.

Bernd Koschland



Dear Editor

Wifrid B. Israel

We know of the courageous and valiant rescuers of the 'Kindertransport' children but there has never been a mention of the person who was responsible for initiating the scheme and organizing the means of transport.

Wifrid B. Israel (1899 – 1943) was a British Jew whose chief pre WWII achievement was his role in the transfer of thousands of Jewish children to Britain which became known as the Kindertransport. Wilfred Israel, persuaded the Foreign Office to implement a plan to rescue Jewish children from Germany. Through Sir Stafford Cripps, Britain's Foreign Minister at the time, he organized ship transport for Jewish children escaping from Europe.

In 1943 he was on a mission to aid Jewish Refugees in Spain. He helped many to find passage to Palestine. On his return flight his plane was shot down over the Bay of Biscay by German Fighter planes.

The Wilfred Israel Museum in Kibbutz Hazorea a Museum of far eastern, near eastern and local archaeological finds is dedicated to his memory.

Ruth Tuckman

• **The following extract is based on Pogrom, 10 November 1938 by Lionel Kochan 1957 pp44-45**

On the morning of 8 November, when the Goebbel's press campaign first became obvious, Wilfried Israel, representing *Die Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden* (the representative body of all major Jewish organisations in Germany), called on Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, the British *Chargé d'affaires* in Berlin. He came to express grave apprehension that reprisals will be taken on Jews in Germany. Israel did not, it seems, at this time suggest any means whereby the anticipated reprisals (after the shooting of Vom Rath by Grynspan in Paris –ed) might be averted or at least alleviated.

(Despite an appeal by Dr Chaim Wetzmann to Lord Strang of the Foreign Office nothing happened in London or Berlin. Nothing revealed more clearly the extent of the isolation of German Jewry from the governments of the world.)

TO MY PARENTS

You gave me life	Such selfless love
And nurtured it with love;	When you did need me so.
You taught me right from wrong	My need was much the same,
Trust in the One above.	Though never given vice
For fifteen years I stayed	Adds sadness to my shame.
Within the family fold,	Could I have known
Then, sent away from you	Or felt what you went through
To England. I was told.	I could have tried to be
You gave me life anew	Much more in debt to you.
With greater pangs of pain,	For, I am here
Since you were well aware	And live my life so free
We'd never meet again.	Which you twice over gave
You made a choice	So generously to me.

So many years ago,

*Written by Liesel Munden
For the 1989 Kindertransport Reunion*