



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

SAVE THE DATE 23 JUNE 2013 KINDER REUNION



From the Editor's Desk

We are a bit late for Chanukah but its message does not disappear. This edition has an international flavour with items from Israel, Germany, USA and Canada, especially with letters and searches. A lengthy article appeared in the Jerusalem Post (12th October 2012) about the story and work of Erich, complete with a photo of him in his Knighthood receiving gear.

Bernd.

Dear Kinder

This is the time of the year where the days shorten the dark nights lengthen and the temperatures begin their downward spiral. However it is also a time to remind ourselves of the heroics of the Maccabees and light the candles to commemorate that wonderful miracle of light. I wish you all a very happy Chanukah which I am sure you will enjoy celebrating with your families

I am also delighted to announce a series of events that we are organising this year to mark the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport.

The central event will be the Kinder reunion on Sunday 23 June at the JFS and we will be shortly sending out invitations with details of the day, which will include contributions from Kinder, JFS pupils and guest speakers. We very much encourage the participation of the second

and third generations of Kinder. The reunion will also incorporate a new exhibition to be curated by the Wiener Library and which will be on display at the Library from May. Please see the notice below in connection with this exhibition.

The day after the reunion, on Monday 24 June, the Leo Baeck Institute London together with the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies will be holding a symposium at the German Historical Institute in London. The conference will focus on the experiences of Kinder after their arrival in Britain and will be a great opportunity for scholars and Kinder to exchange thoughts and ideas. As with the reunion it is hoped that younger generations will come along as well as Kinder from out of town and overseas who hope to come to JFS.

Later in the year, on Wednesday 20 November, we are organising, with the help of Lord (Alf) Dubs, a special Tea in the House of Parliament to mark the debate held there on 21 November 1938 which paved the way for the arrival of the Kindertransport.

To round off the year, World Jewish Relief, in conjunction with the AJR, will be organising a memorial service at Liverpool Street Station on Sunday 1 December, which recalls the arrival 75 years to the day of the first transport of children.

We look forward to welcoming Kinder and their families at these historic events as well as of course to the monthly Kinder lunches at the Belsize Square Synagogue.

Happy Chanukah.



Chairman

Kindertransport Exhibition

Can you help The Wiener Library?

Call for Memorabilia for an Exhibition on the Kindertransport

The Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide is one of the world's leading and most extensive archives on the Holocaust and Nazi era.

The Wiener Library is developing a new temporary exhibition to mark the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport and we are looking for original artefacts and materials to use in the exhibition.

If you or someone you know has materials related to the Kindertransport, we want to hear about it.

We are looking for original documents, photographs or artefacts that can be loaned to the Library for the duration of the exhibition run in Summer 2013.

Contact Katy Jackson at kjackson@wienerlibrary.co.uk or on 020 7636 7247 if you have materials you think may be of interest.

For more information about the Library and our current exhibitions, visit our website at www.wienerlibrary.co.uk. The Wiener Library is always interested in acquiring new material. If you do not have anything for this exhibition but have other documents, artefacts or books related to the Holocaust, please contact us.



Humanity and hope in the darkest hours - Remembering the Kindertransport

Original Berlin "Kinder" attend Embassy reception marking 73rd anniversary of the transport of Jewish children to Britain before the Second World War

On 31 August 2012, the British Embassy marked the 73th anniversary of the last transport of Jewish children to Britain before the Second World War in a rescue mission known as the "Kindertransport".

Nine of the original "Kinder" who later returned to Berlin attended a reception at the Embassy hosted by Deputy Head of Mission Andrew Noble. The guests were able to share their experiences with Markus Löning (Federal Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid) and Frank Mollen (Deputy Head of Mission for the Netherlands).

"It is important to keep alive the memory of how Jewish children were rescued from Germany by being sent to Britain. Unfortunately, many people today still have to experience the trauma of flight and exile. I pay tribute to the achievements of the survivors and their rescuers", said Andrew Noble.

The transport of Jewish children to Britain, which started in December 1938 and continued right up to the outbreak of war in 1939, saved the lives of around 10,000 children. They travelled by train to the Netherlands before taking the ferry from Hoek van Holland to Britain. The first Kindertransport reached the English port of Harwich on 2 December 1938 with a group of around 200 Jewish children from a Jewish orphanage in Berlin destroyed in the pogrom of 9 November 1938. The last children to be rescued by the Kindertransport left Germany on 1 September 1939, when German troops entered Poland. Memorial sculptures created by the German-British-Israeli artist [Frank Meisler](#) can today be found in Berlin (Friedrichstraße train station), Hoek van Hollland and London (Liverpool Street).

In the courtyard of the Embassy, Andrew Noble laid a bunch of white roses at the plaque of former vice-consul [Frank Foley](#), who risked his own life to help around 10,000 German Jews leave Germany for Britain and its former colonies between 1923 and 1939. As the conditions for Jews in Berlin worsened, Foley even allowed some, such as Leo Baeck, to take refuge in his house. The Holocaust Memorial Site Yad Vashem awarded Foley the title “Righteous Among the Nations” in 1999.

Following the reception in the Embassy, the “Kinder” joined Bundestag Vice President Petra Pau and the deputy heads of the British and Netherlands Embassies for a commemorative ceremony at the Berlin memorial to the Kindertransport organised by Lisa Bechner's initiative Kindertransport 1938-39. The poem “The Long Journey” by Christine Kahlau was read in three languages: by the actress Deborah Kaufmann, daughter of one of the “Kinder” (German), by Andrew Noble (English), and by Frank Mollen (Dutch).

In his [address](#) [PDF, opens in a new window], Andrew Noble said he was impressed by the determination of those affected, and by the sacrifice of all those involved in the rescue mission, which he described as a sign of hope at "a time of hatred towards other peoples". He called on all people to “fight the rise of anti-Semitism” and to pursue a “policy of inclusion” as the best means of combating exclusion and persecution today.

- This article appears by kind permission of the British Embassy in Berlin

Just over a year ago, the statue in Rotterdam was dedicated. With this in mind, the article below by Nathan Conn (grandson of Ruth Abraham) recalls the event. It was written shortly after the occasion but too late for the Chanukah edition 2011 and so was kept to recall the event a year later. Editor]

AN EXPERIENCE I WILL NEVER FORGET

In October 2011, a ceremony took place in the Hoek of Holland near Rotterdam, Holland. A statue was presented to the Kinder who left from here before the Second World War on the Kindertransport to save Jewish children from the Nazis, 10,000 children were saved this way including my Great Grandma Dudu.

The day started with the Kinder and some family being taken around Rotterdam to see all of its landmarks. They then went on to the Hoek of Holland where the children from a school in Rotterdam had painted pictures showing scenes of what they thought it would have been like for the Kinder. The pictures were drawn on the side of the railway platform where the Kinder got off the train when they arrived at the port to get on the boat to a new life. Some pictures showed boats with children crowded on and others showed kids getting on a boat with their cases all packed.

The ceremony had a number of speeches. These were by the Mayor of Rotterdam, Eric Reich who was the youngest Kind and Frank Meisler who created the statue, who is also a Kind. Each speech was interesting, but especially Sir Eric Reich's; in his speech he explained how he could not remember the whole experience, but what especially touched me was that he was so young when he left that he can't remember his family. I found this horrible; as many others and I could describe their family without thinking twice!!! He cannot even remember them!!!



Everyone then walked to the statue, which was by the dock. When we got there, the statue was covered with a blanket with pictures of items that the Kinder would have brought with them for their journey. The local schoolchildren gave each Kind a

white rose with a message or picture attached. The statue was then revealed. The statue showed five kids with suitcases by their feet, unhappy faces and looking scared. Also, there was a little boy reading the newspaper on the corner of the statue with the same look, and it was a statue of Eric Reich as a kid!!!

The experience was amazing and very moving!!! My Great-Grandma Judy Benton, or as we know her Dudu (seen below) was why I went. She is amazing, funny, brave, smart and keeps up with all the latest tech, for example Skype, Facebook, twitter... Her story is amazing and proud to share it with you. She lived in Meissen, East Germany. One day she came home from school to find the door of her first floor flat wide open. Her neighbour, ran over to and told her that the Nazis had taken her parents and were coming back for her!!! She then went into her flat, took some money and any important documents she could find such as birth certificate, parents marriage certificate and her passport. She then went to the station and caught a train to Dresden. From there she went to a synagogue where they gave her some milk and cookies, and told her of a train to Leipzig, about the Kindertransport and gave her some money. When she got to the station, it was packed with people. All the children had guarantors waiting for them in England, but Dudu did not. As Dudu was a teenager the parents asked her to look after their babies, children and children's belongings on the train. When the train then got to the Dutch border the SS came on the train. Dudu realizing she could not wear a Magen David necklace and ring threw them out the window as she thought she could buy new ones in England. They then arrived in a town in Holland called Utrecht and they all got out. Dutch people gave food and drink to all the kids and helped clean them. From there the train went to the boat, the Kindertransport. When they got to Liverpool St. in England everyone left the train and went with their guarantor. Dudu just stood there as there was no one there to collect her. Then a man from the refugee centre called Wobourn House came and gave Dudu some bus money, so that she could go to a hostel in the East End. When she got there, she found a woman selling apples who could speak Yiddish, so she asked where the hostel was. The apple woman told her daughter to take Dudu to the hostel. In the hostel, there were various people from different countries. After two weeks, the hostel sent Dudu to an agricultural college in the countryside and that is where she met my Great Grandpa, Opi.



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I met some amazing people in Holland with fantastic stories, including Otto, Henny and Elizabeth who are great people. I am lucky enough to be able to helping out at the Holocaust Center in Hendon for my Duke of Edinburgh award, where Dudu and lots of other Kinder go.

Nathan Conn

CHANUKAH CHEESE?

In our Jewish life we have customs and traditions, some of which are deeply imbedded and their non-observance would almost be on par with utter dereliction of our Faith. Could you imagine Rosh Hashanah without the apple and honey? Yom Tov would not be the same. Then there are other customs which are barely known and their observance or non-observance makes little difference. In the latter class I put cheese on Chanukah – no I am not mistaking the days for Shavuot with its cheese and blintzes. Latkes and doughnuts are better known traditions – oily foods linked to the miracle of the oil. But cheese – well my daughter asked me why? The answer is that Judith fed Holofernes, the enemy general, with cheese, he became thirsty, drank a lot of wine, fell asleep and she cut off his head. The Jews were saved. That is roughly the story and explains the medieval comment that there is a custom to have cheese on Chanukah to recall Judith's action.

This oversimplified account of events is not quite as the original has it in the Apocrypha, the collection of Jewish writings that were excluded from Tenach. The element of cheese is not found in the original, but be that as it may, it became part in later times, about 1000 years of later times.

The story however has a message: the bravery of our women through the ages, who put their own lives in danger.

Examples in the Bible are the midwives of Egypt (Exodus 1), Yael making Sisera sleepy with milk and killing him (Judges 4 and Esther – to name but a few. From the Chanukah period as related in the two Books of Maccabees (also in the Apocrypha) there are the women who defied the edict forbidding circumcision and as a result were executed. That was in the 2nd century BCE. Is this any different to some parts of the world today? Then there is the woman, usually called Hannah, and her seven sons who chose death rather than worship idols. And so on through the ages to our own times. Can one ever forget Hannah Senesh, so young and full of life, prepared to risk her own in trying to save Jews in Hungary during the last war; she was captured just after landing by parachute, tortured and met her death bravely, as reflected in her final poems. What of the heroines who died in fighting for the establishment of the State of Israel?

The Psalmist says (90:10) “*Seventy years is the span of our life, or given the strength eighty years....*” The Hebrew for cheese is *gevinah*, the numerical value of which is 70. Those heroines of yesteryear and those of our times who endangered their lives even unto death may not have lived to the Psalmists 70 years. The concept of cheese on Chanukah, whilst a custom, highlights in a homiletic way, the bravery of our Jewish women as seen through Judith.

The Talmud states that because of the righteous women Israel was redeemed from Egypt. How many times have we, as a people or as an individual, been saved from our own ‘Egypt?’ Happy Chanukah!

Bernd Koschland

Stolpersteine

Next year will see the laying of four Stolpersteine outside my erstwhile home in Bielefeld, Westphalia. They will be inscribed to my parents, Willi and Selma Katzenstein, my sister Marianne and myself. Unlike most Stolpersteine, they will not bear the inscription: “Deported on...” but, “Flucht nach England” (“Escaped to England”), which is now an accepted alternative. The fact that all four of us managed to find refuge in England was down to an amazing and unlikely coincidence which your readers may find of interest.

It should be remembered that, at that time, England was unwilling to accept any refugees unless they could prove that they would not be a burden on the state. Adults had to show evidence of the offer of paid employment and minors proof that somebody would be responsible for their schooling and keep. We were fortunate in having two British-born cousins living here who had managed to find a family willing to give a home to my sister but not to both of us and my family would never have left without me. I was just fourteen at that time.

One day, these two cousins were sitting in a cafe with a friend, telling her about their despair at not being able to help us through the lack of someone willing to take me on, when a lady from the next table came over and told them that she could not help overhearing their conversation and that she might be able to help. When she heard that my father was a lawyer, she became even more interested and told them that she was the daughter and widow of lawyers, was a magistrate and a governor of a Girls’ Grammar School in Portsmouth, where she lived. She was sure that this school would be happy to offer me a place, whilst she would be responsible for my keep and all other expenses.

My cousins were overjoyed, as was my family, and within a short time all arrangements had been made. On May 10th 1939, my sister and I joined a Kindertransport and were met at Liverpool St. Station by my cousins, one of whom took me directly down to Portsmouth to meet this remarkable lady. The next day, I started attending the school which, soon after, was evacuated to a manor in the countryside where I spent two blissfully happy years.

I feel certain that, without that fateful encounter, the inscription on the four Stolpersteine would have read very differently.

*Eve Roberts
Stolpersteine*

Speech in poetry to Kinder

Three years ago I attended a lecture at the Jewish Memorial to the Israelitische Töchter Schule in Hamburg, Germany. Sitting in the front row, I could not help but look at a large picture placed directly opposite of me. It showed a group of some seventy very young persons, most of them girls, descending the gangway of the boat that had brought them to Harwich, England, on the third Hamburg Kindertransport. A number of them had no doubt attended the very

school I was now visiting. For over an hour the young faces impressed themselves on me, and even followed me on the way home. There was something in them that I could not forget. So, after a couple of months, I went back, and took a second look. That was the moment I knew I had to turn the experience into poems - I wanted these strangers to speak to me, and I, also a perfect stranger, needed to speak to them. And we did.

We talked. Slowly, very slowly, the first poems came to light - later they began to almost stream forth. The collection was published this year by Schardt Verlag, Oldenburg, Germany, ISBN 978-3-89841-626-9 under the title "Die Unzen der Zeit." The picture is reprinted in the book.

In March I established contact with Esther Bauer, only child of Dr. Marie and Dr. Alberto Jonas, headmaster of the Israelitische Töughterschule, the only member of the family to survive Theresienstadt and Auschwitz. She lives in Yonkers, New York, but regularly travels to Germany. I am very happy to have spent a wonderful day with her near her old home in Hamburg Ependorf in September.

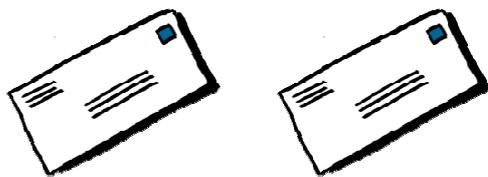
I am a retired Grammar School teacher, non-Jewish. Please visit my web-site at www.gerrit-pohl.de. It contains information on my books and a brief version of an interview I gave on the genesis of "Die Unzen der Zeit". The complete interview is shown on www.interview-lounge.tv.com.

I am writing this ahead of next year's 75th anniversary of the first Kindertransport

Gerit Pohl

- *Is there anyone out there who was on the third Kindertransport from Hamburg? If so, write in. Thanks in advance.*

Editor



A Letter from Arnold Schwartzman, USA

Dear Bernd,

I have just returned from a short visit to London and Cliftonville, where I received a phone call from Erika Klausner, an old friend and colleague from my days working in television broadcasting in London. Erika claims to be one of the youngest Kinder to be sent to the UK.

She said that she read about me in the the article you had written on Rowden Hall in the KT Newsletter. She then tracked me down through a mutual friend.

So I wish to thank you for reuniting us after almost 40 years!

Very best wishes,

Arnold

Dear Michael (Newman)

I wanted to keep in touch. I hope that you might be able to include this notice in the Kindertransport Newsletter. "Children's War Museum. Kindertransport Appeal." The museum is being created to present children's experience of war from Joan of Arc to the 21st century. I am hoping to contact Kindertransport survivors who could contribute audio interviews, memoirs, photographs or other digital material to an online exhibition about their experience. I should be most grateful for any items that you could allow me to include as this online presentation will help to develop interest in the museum.

Brian Devlin.

My address: 4 Manse Lane, Galashiels, Scottish Borders, TD1 1NB, telephone 01896 756402"

Hello,
Home for refugee boys in Brighton

I am hoping you can help me track down some information. I was born in Brighton. My father, who is now 91, had a good friend who was a Kindertransport child. I asked my father who brought these children to Brighton and he said that they were brought to England by the Brighton Shul. He added that the Shul bought a house for approximately 6 children and the Shul choir-master (who was from Cologne, Germany) and his wife looked after them. They stayed in the home until they were 14 years old.

When I commented on the generosity of the congregation, my dad said that the Shul had a very rich benefactor. I think he said that the benefactor was Australian. I would very much like to find out more information about how the Brighton Shul helped these children. Have there been any books written about this episode? Are there any resources available? In case you need the following information, my father's name is Robert Shapiro and his friend was Charles Voos. He also knew another refugee child with the first name Kurt.

Thanks you so much for any information you can give me regarding the Home for these boys.
Sincerely,

Jacqueline Mills, Calgary, Canada jrm@shawcable.com

Hi,
My Mum

I appreciate any efforts that could be made in this matter. I never actually knew how my Mum and my aunt made it to Britain just before the war. My grandfather was Jewish and I know my uncles were all sent to concentration camps though I only know for sure which camp in the case of one uncle but I digress. Mum had said she got to Britain through the underground and that she and my aunt were in the last batch to leave but her details were very limited due to her memory though she did remember travelling through Berlin and Holland. Until a relation showed me that documentary on the Kindertransport with Judy Dench about ten years ago, I had never even heard of the Kindertransport but felt it was a strong possibility that this was how she made it out. Knowing for sure would be wonderful if possible. I have her Danzig passport and it is stamped by H.M. Customs at Harwich on July 12, 1939. The name on the passport of my Mum is Inge Hirsch though her middle name is Margarete, the middle name is not on the passport. Her birthday is March 5, 1924. My aunt is Margot Hirsch and her birthday is May 18, 1925. The only other thing I know is that they ended up in Manchester and the people that took her (Mum) in were a Fred and Doris Holmes of Romiley, Cheshire. They are no longer alive but their grandchildren are still in touch with me and in every sense they are like my cousins. They don't

know for sure either if it was the Kindertransport

My sincere thanks to any help you could give. If it doesn't pan out then at least I'll know I tried and exhausted the available resources.

Mike Jones
rosarioj219@hotmail.com

Hi Bernd

First Rosh Hashana greetings for the coming New Year, may you enjoy good health and a prosperous New year.

I saw your Sept. newsletter and what struck me was to find Walter Steurman's letter about Sherrards. I typed a letter to him and sent it but it didn't go through. Walter is a Sherrard's boy like myself, he originally came from Vienna. I intend to phone him as there is a lot to talk about.

I recently found a web on internet about Sherrard's history but the period between Feb 1939 - June 1941 while the house was our hostel was omitted, either intentionally or simply due to ignorance

See the link (Hertfordshire Historic Houses Sherrards)

Mordechai Vered

Dear Bernd,

I have just returned from a short visit to London and Cliftonville, where I received a phone call from Erika Klausner, an old friend and colleague from my days working in television broadcasting in London. Erika claims to be one of the youngest Kinder to be sent to the UK. She said that she read about me in the the article you had written on Rowden Hall in the KT Newsletter. She then tracked me down through a mutual friend. So I wish to thank you for reuniting us after almost 40 years!

Arnold Schwartzman



Corrections

- Bromsgrove was a **Bachad** Hachsharah not Hanonim

SEARCHES



Where are you?

Dovercourt

A Sally Jaftars rang from Aberdeen (tel 01224 480326). Her grandmother came on the KT but died at 27. She is very interested in the subject and has done some research but would like some information on Dovercourt. Can you please put her in touch with somebody who could give her this information.

Thanks

*Rosemary Peters
AJR*

Kinder in Wales

My name is Sioned Samuel, and I am currently a history student at Exeter University. I am in my final year, and am currently researching into my dissertation topic. My chosen topic is 'The Kindertransport in Wales'. I am hoping to write about the experience of the Jewish Refugees, who came to Wales with the Kindertransport, and how they viewed Wales as a place- whether they had a good experience, or a bad one etc. I would love to interview anyone who is willing to share their experiences with me, and I would be ever so grateful for any help or information given about this particular topic. If there's any interest, you could contact me- 07779482197, or email: sioned.samuel@hotmail.co.uk. I look forward to hearing your experiences, and would relish the opportunity to interview particular individuals. Thank you.

Sioned Samuel

Whitley Bay Hostel

I don't know if you can help but my great grandfather David Summerfield set up a home in Whitley Bay for female refugees on the Kindertransport. I would dearly love to find a link into some of them although many may not now be in the UK. I would also like to ensure that this is recorded somewhere appropriate and know whether people are aware of it.

Does anyone know of any sources (name lists etc.) for the Kindertransporte from Hamburg to England, especially in 1939?

Juergen Gramenz, Halle, Germany juergen@gramenz.de

Kinder from Braunschweig (Brunswick)

Professor Michael Wettren is working on a research project between the Technische Universität Braunschweig and Gedenkstätte Schillerstrasse, Braunschweig in relation to Kinder saved by the Kindertransport 1938/39. Here has the names of three Kinder about which he would like further information and any other Kinder from Braunschweig. The three are:

Kurt Berger (aka Ken Berger) from Wolfenbüttel(d.o.b 13.2.1924) arrived in UK on a KT 5th January 1939
Curt Moritz Regensburger (d.o.b 1925) possibly arrived in March 1939
Hans Bernhard Schaye (aka Charles Maurice Regan) from Wolfenbüttel (d.o.b 15.10.1921)KT 8th August 1939
Please contact *Prof Wetter* on m.wetter@tu-braunschweig.de

An Invitation to participate in a video documentary

I am a university student, with a Master's degree in "Peace and Conflict Studies" and currently a Ph.D. student in "Political Science" at the University of Vienna. I would like to share with survivors my film documentary project, about those who escaped or survived the Holocaust, which, I hope, will contribute toward peace in our society.

I, one of the editors, composers, and producers of this documentary, live in Vienna, where I was born, and from where also my great-grandmother (namely, Mathilde Brosam) was taken away by the Nazis and deported and died in Theresienstadt. My great-aunt (Anna Brosam) was also murdered by the Nazis in Hartheim, a euthanasia killing facility.

For the documentary, I would like to interview personally those who escaped/survived the Holocaust, either in or near Vienna or via a hired camera person wherever. I am flexible and can accommodate according to any time schedule. For anyone willing to be interviewed, please contact me.

Nina Grubeck email: nina_grubeck@hotmail.com

Textiles

I am a textile artist who is working on a project based on Anna Freud's work with bereaved children for an Arts Council project called 'The Nature of Mending', run by Walford Mill in Dorset. The project will culminate in a 6 week exhibition at the gallery in Wimborne next August. For one of my pieces I'd like to make an installation of essential and emotive items the children may have taken with them on their journey in a small case. I would like the items to be made from facsimile prints of letters sent to the children and travel documentation they were required to carry. I wondered if you have any letters or documents in your collection that you would agree to me using for the project. I envisage the items made to be small children's clothing and keepsakes, stored in a small (found object) open case. These will be digitally printed onto paper and sheer cloth to give them a sculptural quality.

I have made some shoes which were part of an installation that investigated Fairy Tales, in this case 'The Red Shoes'. These have been made in the same way that I could use your documents as a printed surface that have been digitally manipulated. All documents would be digitally manipulated using photoshop, so individual names could be emphasised or removed at your discretion. I can only emphasise that if you felt able to help me, all material would be treated with dignity and respect.

Any help you are able to give would be greatly appreciated. I would be happy to visit you to photograph the items under supervision if you feel able to do so, or I could work from stock images that may already exist. More of my work can be viewed at lisa-earley.tumblr.com or you can contact me by email at lisaearley@btinternet.com or by phone on 01962 870927

- Click on <http://www.natureofmending.co.uk> for more information about the project
Lisa Earley

Help for dissertation:

I am a third year student studying at the University of Northampton and I'm looking for some Kinder to interview as part of my undergraduate dissertation. The research focus is not restricted to a particular geographical locality, so you could have been billeted anywhere in the country.

The interviews would take place between December 2012 and January 2013. I am willing to travel to meet up with people. If you are interested or would like some more information about this project please do not hesitate to email me – chadmcdonald@me.com. Any help that you could provide would be most appreciated.

Recently I took part in a guided tour of Bloomsbury with the emphasis on ‘foreign’ aspects as well as Jewish spots to remember. The end of the tour was a visit to the Wiener Library. As we walked on northern side of Russell Square, we passed a building whose golden lettered name was a little faded. It was Bloomsbury House. Little needs be said about its place in the story of Jewish refugees arriving in this country in the 1930’s and receiving help as required. No doubt many Kinder had direct or indirect dealings with the Refugee Children’s Movement, Ltd., whose secretary was that wonderful lady Ms Dorothy Hardisty.

BK

Sherrards House

Many thanks for the usual interesting newsletter which I find on the internet. The latest, September 2012, gave me a thrill; it had a letter from Walter Steuerman of Toronto, Canada, in which he mentions the hostel at Sherrards House. Sherrards is situated on the old Great North Road about one mile south of old Welwyn in Hertfordshire.

On 14/02/1939 I arrived at this beautiful place, a nine acre estate, together with Zwi Nir (Herman Feldman) z'l and Mark Stemmer z'l who fell during the battle for Jerusalem in 1948. We arrived that morning in the Port of London on board the S.S. Warszawa which sailed from the port in Gdynia, Poland (see my story in Newsletter dated April 2010 pages 8 to 10). After the builders finished renovating the house, additional boys, from various parts of Europe under Nazi rule, came who had been temporarily accommodated in empty sea-side camps.

The estate had beautiful gardens around the House, orchard, vegetable garden, a greenhouse, a fenced meadow and at the northern end there was a gatekeeper’s lodge next to a white gate leading to the Great North RD. There were cottages, stables and a coach house. It certainly was a paradise for us refugee boys to roam and play freely.

Well, I have very good memories of my first home in England!

Mordechai Vered, Israel

The “Exodus” and Kindertransport

I hope you will not mind my commenting on the resume published in the recent issue of KT News.

First of all Magda Goebbels - She was a member of the Quant clan who in turn were and still are, majority share-holders in the Bayerische Motorenwerke, today better known as BMW. The lady in question had a romantic liaison with a Poet by name of Chaim Arlosorov. She was alleged to have commenced conversion lessons and started to learn Ivrit. Arlosorov then made Alyah to Palestine with Magda intending to follow. Obviously she though better and married Goebbels instead became an ardent NAZI and finally murdered her six children before committing suicide in the Berlin bunker. There is a unconfirmed report the Arlosorov in 1937 made a trip to Berlin with the intention of meeting Magda Goebbels and asking her to intervene with the Nazi bosses to improve their treatment of the German Jewish population. It is probably not unreasonable to assume that the Kinder-transport ruling was the result of that meeting. Sadly Arlosorov was allegedly shot by Jewish fanatics after his return to Palestine.

Next the “Exodus”. I had the dubious privilege of being present in Hamburg on the return of the passengers on three “Liberty” ships. Not a pleasant experience. At the time the authorities had difficulties getting sufficient volunteers to clear the ships. Among those turned out to be a couple of Non-coms in the Intelligence Corps, Jews of German origin, whose behaviour towards the unfortunate returnees, particularly women and children, could easily be matched by members of the SS a few years earlier. The fact that these returnees were taken to camp not far from Luebeck and put under conditions equating a KZ left a bitter taste in my mouth.

Herbert Haberberg

Regarding "Operation Exodus" by Gordon Thomas, I was most interested to read that Magda Goebbels suggested letting the children go; one redeeming feature of that strange woman. To add to the wonderful saga of the Kindertransports, some years ago I came across the following:-

After the Munich Agreement had created a refugee crisis of people fleeing the Sudetenland, Stanley Baldwin made a radio appeal in December 1939 and set up The Earl Baldwin Fund to help. He said: "I ask you to come to the aid of victims not of flood, not of famine, but an explosion of Man's inhumanity to Man".

Bronia Snow

The eyes are on you!

Recently a noble Peer suggested that for pensioners to receive payment, they should volunteer. Little does he—I believe he is in his middle 50's – realise that pensioners form the bulk of volunteers. Many organisations could not function without them. The year 2012 is one in which volunteering is a main topic. So I thought a word about volunteering might not come amiss.

Volunteers are of various types. There is the one who answers the call, as in "Your country needs you." Your hand shoots up in committee to take on the task. Your motive? A boost for the ego? Not to be considered a weakling – while everyone else is in that category because they declined. You now feel superior! But...later you regret the decision: "IF only I had thought the matter over further...." Too late, because IF cannot undo anything.

The next type of volunteering is when the Chairman/person better than the Chair; chairs don't have eyes, they are for sitting on, as the Chair may need to have done to him or her!) looks you straight in the eye and then says "You are the right person for the job!" Flattery gets you and the answer is affirmative. You are then drowned with your especial qualities. ('I did not know I am that good' – in fact you are lying to yourself because you are hopeless at what you are supposed to do).

The third type of volunteer is 'being volunteered.' How does that work? You are out of the room momentarily and your name is put forward and accepted; now you are sunk. A similar situation would be that you are absent from the meeting, or someone has put your name forward by email or text – "Thanks, Bud, for your opinion of me!"

What is needed is strategy and tactics. First consider the Agenda before the meeting and look for dangerous spots. Then refer to your MOST SECRET DOCUMENT. This will list many excuses why you cannot volunteer. Your extended cruise (only planned in your mind that moment and may never happen). It could be a business trip (you are retired or not in business) Must help the wife/partner especially with shopping (she does not want you around when she shops and spends your hard-earned cash). Death in the family – connections with the Angel of Death well in advance regarding aunts, uncles, relatives and whoever, all of whom have died several times over already!

Tragedy! With the Chairman's steely eyes fixed on you, your strategy crumbles, your tactics are useless, because you only a nanosecond in which to answer. That answer can only be yes ("I'll do it willingly" – hm! you are a liar to yourself and a mug). Cheers all round. A "No" would have made you look weak and not really a fit person for the committee. Strangely you are the strong one, the others cheering you are the weaklings.

There is a fourth grade: the one who says 'yes' and does not carry out the task required.

A word of worldly advice: In the Army you are advised never to volunteer, because you never know what is in the mind of the sergeant.

- I became editor of the Newsletter because..... I'll let you guess from the above words. As to the right answer, my lips are sealed.

Views expressed in the Kindertransport Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Kindertransport Special Interest Group or of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

