



# Kindertransport Newsletter

A special interest group of the Association of Jewish Refugees

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Contact: Andrea Goodmaker at AJR,  
Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore,  
Middlesex HA7 4RL  
Tel : 44 (0) 20 8385 3070  
Fax : 44 (0) 20 8385 3080  
e-mail: [andrea@ajr.org.uk](mailto:andrea@ajr.org.uk)

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Editor: Bertha Leverton  
Tel/An.Ph./Fax: 44 (0) 20 8952 4280  
(NOT SHABBAT)  
Chairman:  
Hermann Hirschberger  
Tel: 44 (0) 20 8427 6754  
(NOT SHABBAT)

Previous issues may also be viewed at: [www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport.htm](http://www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport.htm)

Dear Kinder and Friends,

I hope I'll remember all the things I want to tell you about. Three months is a long time since the last Newsletter went out. I'll start with some personal good news. Two new great-grandchildren, a boy in Switzerland, and a girl here in the UK.

I had a wonderful Yom-Tov with my family in Israel. Inge sends you all her best wishes. She is joining a three-day walking group in aid of Alzheimers research and hopes for some Kinder funding towards it. More details about this further on. I spent a whole day with the KT group in Natanya and told them what we did during last year and plans for 2008. I believe several hope to come over to join us for the Reunion (PG) so please, anyone able to host someone, let me know. I am hoping my children and Inge will come and stay with me. I am happy to tell you that nearly 500 people have already shown their interest to participate. Our photographic exhibition will also be on view. I am hoping that Paula Hill who lives in Israel, and did her PhD on researching the KT and found these pictures in various libraries, will be with us and explain their origin.

The AJR have kindly agreed to offer help and assistance, though as in all previous get-togethers we have always more than broken even. Remember in 1989 we endowed a bed in the Great Ormond Street Hospital in the name of RoK. It would be wonderful to be able to do it this time, say in Shaare Zedek in Jerusalem.

We must have *betochen* (faith) to celebrate our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A good friend years ago used to tell me, when being asked to pop over for a coffee and chat and saying I was busy with chores: 'Come on'. So *yung kommer nimmer zam*, (so young we'll never meet again) so lets all make that special effort, making her words our motto.

Another important point. When our programme will be given to every attendee, it will list all names, former names, towns of origin and telephone numbers. Our reason is for people to be able to get in touch with each other. Anyone not wishing to be listed should state so in writing when they make their firm booking and we will respect their wishes.

Now to tell you about an invitation we had via Lisa Schaefer who, very kindly, has been for several years spreading knowledge about Kindertransport in schools, in the media,

etc. in Germany about us. Via her, myself, Hermann together with Eva, Otto, and Judy spent an interesting few days in Berlin. Also present were Frank Meisler and his wife. Our first call was at the wonderful restored and newly consecrated synagogue in Rykesstrasse, where a concert was in progress. It is magnificent (similar to the restored one in Budapest, though to my mind, it is more of a showpiece than a house of earnest prayer). The audience was mainly German non-Jewish, Russian immigrants and visitors. It was truly impressive, but so sad to think of the worshipers of 70 years ago murdered. I can't help feeling like that wherever I see a restored synagogue in Germany.

We had a surprising arrival, all thanks to Lisa. A contingent of German police-officers was handing each of us a long stemmed rose, led by high ranking Commissar Selowski (whose father was Jewish). He has an amazing knowledge of the city's history and architecture displayed by a commentary during a boat trip on the Spree. We were driven from the station in a police car to our hotel, and had a car at our disposal. One day when an arranged school talk was cancelled we opted to be taken to the Wannsee House where the infamous conference took place. The grand rooms complete with table, chairs and names are preserved, used for school education purposes. A teacher was just giving a lecture and we could not help participating, and I feel sure that this added a lot to the pupils' and the teacher's knowledge. An Israeli couple, just visiting, said they too learned a lot. For me that day was the most important memory of our visit to Berlin.

My thanks to Judy Benton who spent several days in the office to send out the reminder batch of the 70<sup>th</sup> Reunion invitations. As they come in it shows how necessary the second mail out was. I know it's very early and we only asked your intention, not to do the actual booking with payment, the fact that so many are interested is great. It shows we are still active, with it, and able to function as a group, and that is very special. This also goes for the Israeli and USA Kinder. I don't think that anywhere in the world you will find a bunch of oldies so young at heart.

One important point. During the next year when we start to compile the brochure we would like to include pages of names, former names, and other details of Kinder, unable to come, but wishing to be listed. I take it that anyone who filled out a form, but not able to attend, would like to be mentioned. If not, write to us and we will take your name off (a disclaimer). May I remind everyone (including our committee members) to send in their forms as the inclusions into a comprehensive brochure will otherwise have our details missing. Anyone bringing guests must give their full names and telephone numbers and state any relationship, for security lists to be checked by staff. In the next Newsletter we hope to be able to give a better picture of activities/prices etc. We will also, as on previous occasions, have headings of sorry I can't be with you. On your behalf our grateful thanks to all those who will work very hard for a whole year to make the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary the prestigious event we envisage it to be.

Those of you willing and able to place and pay for adverts/good wishes/family announcements etc. kindly send them to me with a financial donation made payable to AJR Charitable Trust (soon please) as we will have to get started on our brochure. If you have any special messages you want to have printed, please include them.

Many thanks to Bernd for his Chanukah article, and enjoy the latkes.

Thank you to Ilse Camis for your kind thought of sending us a \$ cheque, which owing to us not having a dollar account, we cannot bank, as the charges would be very high. This is the reason why any Kinder from abroad attending the Reunion next year, will have to pay in English currency.

It has also been brought to our attention that the KTA biannual conference will be held in Orlando, Florida not in California the first weekend of November 2008, as previously shown in the Newsletter! Thank you for the many cards and letters I receive

personally. If there is a telephone number I always phone my thanks, so please do include it. Having no email it is the only way I can get in touch. Greetings to our members in Australia and Japan.

Hermann and Andrea join me in sending you good wishes for a Happy Chanukah.

Bertha

## LIGHTS OF COURAGE

Lights and *dreidels*, *latkes* and doughnuts, parties and mock battles - all these form part of Chanukah. But is that all what Chanukah is about? That same question is an old one and features in the Talmud, in just two words: *Mai Chanukah* (What is Chanukah)? Strangely, this question is asked after a discussion about the lights of the Festival which seems the wrong way round. First should be the “Why” and then the celebration. As I shall show later the lights have a special unusual significance. The answer to *Mai Chanukah* is that of the miracle in finding oil for the candelabrum of the Temple, once the Maccabees had regained it from the idolatrous Greeks and rededicated it.

There is no mention of all the major historical circumstances as found in Maccabees, books 1 and 2, and also in the later work of Josephus all recorded in great detail. What brought about the whole situation? Many Jews had turned to Hellenism, the Greek way of life. The Edict of Intolerance of Antiochus IV of Syria forbade the basic tenets of Judaism to try and make his empire worship but one religion. Then came the revolt of Mattathias and the battles of Judah the Maccabee and his brothers. Various suggestions for the omission of the full story have been made. R. Moses ben Nachman (Ramban, 13<sup>th</sup> century) states that as the Maccabees and Hasmoneans were priests, they could not become kings, a title that later Hasmoneans took upon themselves. Hence the brevity of the story in the Talmud, as a token of protest to the Maccabees and Hasmoneans.

History is the story of humanity, but it depends very much on the interpretation of the facts that make up that story, of how one sets about interpreting them. Take the Shoah; all kinds of interpretations and explanations have been given, even to the extent of denying that it ever took place. Thus, in Talmudic historical outlook, the real story of Chanukah was interpreted as a *nes*, as a miracle, to indicate the Divine involvement in human affairs.

Our Jewish history has been one of many downs and ups, of persecution and of freedom. Should we just ignore the downs and only recall the ups, or just the downs and not the ups? In the case of the story of Chanukah, there was the

miracle, but then miracles, as has been said by Rabbis in the past, must be appended to human activity. The miracle of Chanukah would not just have happened without the bravery of the Maccabean brothers, all of whom either died fighting or were assassinated. In his final battle, Judah died fighting bravely against overwhelming odds. Other martyrs, such as Hannah with her seven sons and the mothers who would have their sons circumcised despite the Edict of Intolerance forbidding it on the pain of death. The miracle of the oil depended on human courage in fighting against the odds; the lights of the *chanukiah* somehow recall the souls of these brave martyrs who fought for the survival of Judaism.

The lights of the numerous *Chanukiot* in Israel likewise show the influence of Maccabean courage in fighting for the foundation and maintenance of the State. It is this meaning of courage, which has sustained us Jews over the centuries, that makes these lights holy-*Hanerot Hallalu kodesh hem ...*- they are the lights of courage and a means of remembering the courage of those before us which allow us to live as Jews. The lights representing heroism and survival precede in the Talmud the brief story of Chanukah. May the message of the lights never leave us.

*Happy Chanukah!*

*Bernd Koschland*

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## REVIEWS

### FORGOTTEN VOICES OF THE HOLOCAUST

by Lyn Smith

*London: Ebury Press, Random House, 351pp., £19.99*

Lyn Smith began recording testimonies in 1978, working as a freelance interviewer for the Imperial War Museum. There are now almost 800 Holocaust-related recordings in the Imperial War Museum Sound Archive. For her book *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust*, she has selected portions of more than 100 voices to tell the story of the Holocaust. They include refugees, Kindertransport members, camp survivors, hidden children, partisans; relatives of men, women and children murdered by the Nazis; aid workers; troops who liberated the camps; and ordinary citizens of Germany and other countries overrun by the Nazis.

The result is a powerful and important book. These testimonies are as compelling as any photos or films. In a dozen chapters beginning with 1933-1936, followed by the Search for Refuge; Persecutions, the Expansion of the Third Reich, the Ghettos, Resistance, the Camps and Liberation, and an epilogue, the history of the Holocaust is told in the voices of the people who were there, and who survived.

Each chapter contains a brief introduction from Ms Smith, and then we hear the voices of the Holocaust. In precise and often harrowing detail, the contributors tell what happened to them and their families, how they felt and coped as refugees, or camp inmates, and the difficulties and the terrible grief of coping with loss. The many voices are perhaps more effective than any individual testimony. Importantly, these voices give a more complete picture of, for

example, the death march in the winter of 1945 than any single account of that terrible experience read alone.

Since these recordings were begun in 1978 and many were made later, on the whole, most of the reports are from individuals who were children or young adults at the time. Reading about the separation of families, and about the horrors of ghetto and camp existence, and hearing from people who saw their parents, sisters or brothers murdered in front of them is heart-breaking. But all this must be told, and the courage it took for these witnesses to share what they have witnessed and experienced cannot be underestimated.

In “Aftermath”, the final chapter, we also hear the voices of post-war refugees to Britain, including “The boys”, who were taken to Windemere. The Aftermath shows that the reactions varied greatly. For example, some had positive experiences with foster-parents, while others left as soon as possible. Most young people fortunate enough to have surviving parents with whom they were reunited after years of separation, found unexpected difficulties. Having become British, they were not able to relate to their parents, because they seemed to have nothing in common; “There they were but they were strangers,” recalled one German-Jewish refugee. In any event, talk was difficult for many children who, after a number of years living in Britain, had forgotten their native German or Czech.

In an Epilogue, the men and women reflect on the difficulty of speaking about their experiences and the marks it left on their lives. Listen to a Czech survivor: “When my son had his Bar Mitzvah and his wedding, there was no family whatsoever there is just this hole thinking of the families we all lost, it can never be put right.”

Readers of this Journal will be familiar with all, or at least much, of the testimony given in this book. Indeed, they will find that they know a number of people who are the voices of this volume, and may even know some of their history. I certainly found this to be so. That in no way lessens the impact of what they recount. The book should be required reading for people who have trouble grasping our history.

Moreover, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when Kinder and survivors worry that in the not too distant future there will be no one left who actually lived through these horrific years to provide first-hand accounts about what happened during the Nazi era, when they fear that the Holocaust will fade into history, *Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust* is a book that that will help future generations remember.

### **...AND THEN THE MUSIC STOPPED PLAYING**

by Ken Ward

*FELIXSTOWE, SUFFOLK, BRAISWICK, 201 PP, 201 PP.*

Kinder continue to write their memoirs.. One book is . . . *And then the Music Stopped Playing* by KEN WARD, who came on the Kindertransport nine days before war broke out in September 1939. In Britain he was classified as friendly enemy alien, and took a job until he reached the age of 18, when he joined the forces. He landed on the beaches of Normandy and changed his name from Karl Wurzburger to Ken Ward. He was advised to do this because if he was captured by the Nazis, it would be dangerous to have a Jewish name. The bulk of the book deals with his drive from the beaches of Normandy to Hamburg in a Sherman

**tank and his work as a wireless operator and his work for the occupation forces in Germany after VE Day.**

**He writes that England became his country of choice and his home because England saved his life after the Germans “killed my parents and brother and took my school life and home away from me...and then the music stopped playing.”**

**ALI GROSSMAN also came to England on the Kindertransport and is now living in Rechovot, Israel. He has written a series of essays about his life and about members of his family who perished. These have not been published.**

*Eve R Kugler*

### **NEWS FROM ISRAEL**

Towards the end of November a Sponsored 2-3 days Hike is being organised in the Ramon Crater area of Israel (in the Negev) to raise funds for amenities in the newly established Alzheimers patients facility in Jerusalem. Inge Sadan (Bertha's sister) is one of the intrepid hikers - probably the oldest participant - and hopes to realize her target of one thousand dollars. Since Alzheimers can hit anyone at any time, it is an extremely important project.

If any Kind would like to support her Walk, she would really appreciate it. Every little bit helps, and is even tax-deductable! Contributions can be sent (mentioning their sponsorship of Inge) to Friends of Melabev - Walkathon, P.O.Box 3235 Jerusalem, Israel 91031, Israel.

(email: melabev-org@bezeqint)

Needless to say, it's also a noble way to celebrate a special occasion for someone who has everything and really doesn't want any more superfluous presents. Inge will reply with her thanks to each donor, and will also give a detailed account of the hike, corns, blisters and all, in the next Newsletter.

Andrea, with many thanks, and I am looking forward to the next Newsletter.

It may interest you - and Bertha - to know that they are read not only by Kinder. In reply to my write-up in the last number, about escape to Yugoslavia, someone who was not a Kind but was sent the info contacted me.

He has written a book about the Josef Schleich story, and about a large group of children who escaped to Switzerland via Yugoslavia and eventually to Israel. It's a big subject - much more so than Schindler's List.

*Inge Sadan  
Israel*

P.S. There is an internet site which people can turn to for accommodation in London - probably budget or more luxurious. It is: [www.travelodge.com.uk](http://www.travelodge.com.uk)

Some friends of mine book regularly through this, and are very happy with it.

### **My holocaust experiences - before and after presented during the memorial service, erev tisha b'av 5767 by Regina Presser**

I was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1921 and my dear sister Ann four years later. Our parents were of Polish-Jewish origin, they had escaped pogroms and started in Vienna with very little. On my first day at school, 1927. The girl sitting next to me got up and

announced: "please teacher, I am not going to sit next to a Jewess!" I got up quietly and went to sit elsewhere.

Some Christians thought Jews have horns, they indulged in the blood libel. Some were trying to convert us, believing this would stand them in good stead in the after-life. All this caused me to study my Jewish religion, to strengthen my belief and to watch my parent's Zionist work. I loved *cheder* and going to the Yiddish theatre, joined Jewish youth clubs, and learned *ivrit*.

My dear father died when I was 16 years old and the Holocaust started about a year later. Suddenly there were these hordes of men in Nazi uniforms, heavily armed, swastikas on armbands and flags everywhere, marches, singing of Hitler songs.

I did not know if I should be thankful that my father did not live to experience the fate of many who were suddenly interned, sent to hard labour camps, killed. Jewish children were expelled from school, my non-Jewish friends were not allowed to speak to me. I was always scared. Nazis searched our flat for hidden people. The caretaker took bribes in return for good references, thus preventing our deportation.

When I went to mother's millinery saloon I saw a synagogue on fire. Seeing Nazis coming along the road I locked the shop door behind me. A Nazi tried it, I was lucky he did not see me.

When I visited friends who were ready to emigrate a Nazi burst in. Being nearest to the stairs I grabbed their documents and rushed up-stairs. He saw me, yelled for me to come down and go home.

On the way I saw Jews scrubbing the streets; their supervisor came to me, looked, grinned and went off. Perhaps I did not look particularly Jewish at first sight having blue eyes and light-brown hair; this may have saved me on this and other occasions.

Having been granted my passport I went to ask for my exit visa. The Nazi official got on the phone and asked if he should grant it or arrest me. I was trembling with fear. Eventually he stamped my passport with the visa. The biggest shock awaited me when I arrived at home. Mother said it was a Jewish law that if a younger sibling wants to marry before an elder one, the elder's permission has to be asked: in case you do not see each other again, will you give Ann permission to marry first. Of course I did. But the shocking possibility of not seeing my beloved sister again had not occurred to me - it was worse than anything!!! Laws against Jews became stricter. We had to hand in deeds for our block of Flats, bank books, jewellery, anything of value. They gave a few items back to us as keep-sakes.

Jewish women had to add Sarah to their given names, men had to add Israel. Shops, restaurants etc displayed notices such as "Jews not wanted;" our grocer took a great risk by allowing us to buy essentials from the back-door.

I was above Kindertransport age so the only option for escape was to take on domestic work in England. Thus I found myself working for a Methodist family of six who tried to convert me - unsuccessfully of course.

Jewish and non-Jewish people in Birmingham were generally kind and understanding. The prominent Quaker family, the Cadburys, rescued several, some regrettably joined the Quakers out of gratitude. We tried to talk of our experiences and of what was going on abroad in order to help get others out and because we needed to talk it out of our system. But we were told to forget, not to speak of it!!! From my arrival in England until my mother and sister arrived six months later I was ill physically and psychosomatically. There were several large vibrant Jewish

communities in Birmingham, three synagogues and a very active Zionist movement; I integrated quickly and took an active part. Mother with sister and I left domestic work for war work, replacing men who had joined the forces. We were classed as friendly aliens. I had security clearance to work in a laboratory which came under the - then - ministry of aircraft production, the local air-raid warden added my name to his list of reserves and I did voluntary work in a forces canteen.

When Bertha Leverton started Reunion meetings some 50 years later we had psychologists and psychiatrists swarming round us, saying we needed to talk of our experiences, it would do us good. We knew this at the time, and are still telling our stories!

I am deeply conscious of the fact that but for the war and Holocaust I would not have a successful career in the British aircraft industry, rising to chief metallurgist and chief chemist. I try to console myself by hoping that I did a tiny bit towards ending the atrocities - but a visiting scientist told me that due to my war work I am guilty of killing innocent German women and children. Am I? The search for missing relatives and friends continues.

In 1952 it was time for a home move. London beckoned with an advantageous career move. I had admired Birmingham's citizens - known affectionately as "brummies", Birmingham suffered many horrific air raids. I consider myself lucky to have survived. Some suffered much, more I regard myself as a holocaust escapee rather than survivor. No-one has succeeded in killing my love for life and living. My belief in Judaism and in the Jewish state are strengthened and unshakable. I am particularly fortunate to have witnessed the day when Israel declared itself a state. So I am asking you to join me in shouting at the top of our voices;

*Am yisrael chai !!!!!*

Ed. *Kol Hakavod*

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## LETTERS

Sir – The article headed Conclusion of George Ettinger's Story, in the last Newsletter carried the penultimate; sentence *we know that all the world leaders, with their hatred of the Jewish people are aiming to repeat the Holocaust against all of Israel.*

This is surely paranoiac rubbish which should not go unchallenged.

*Ernst Fraenkel OBE*

*London NW8*

Sir – I always look forward to receiving your Newsletter, as well as AJR's and from New York. I am appreciative of being able to be in close touch with my relatives and friends all over the world!

*Elfi Frohlich*

*Australia*

Sir - I am currently researching the history of Kindertransport children who were brought to Northumberland in 1939/40 and who found homes there with local farmers. In particular I am looking for details of the names and origin of the children, and names and addresses of the families who took them. My own family moved from Newcastle to the village of Cambo, Northumberland, as a precaution against an anticipated German invasion or bombardment of the area. In the war years my parents took in a number of refugee youngsters, who lived with us for varying periods of time before moving on, and put up guarantees for them. Two of them were reunited with

their parents - Gerta Gruen, whose story is included in Bertha Leverton's book, and Eugene/Jurgen Schoenfeld. We also knew the Placzek brothers, David and Josef, and it is their story I am trying to follow up.

The brothers left Prague on 30 June 1939 by train, in a group organised by the Czech Refugee Trust. David's number was 4352. After they arrived in Ipswich they were brought to Newcastle, then to Cambo Northumberland, where they were looked after initially by Sir Charles Trevelyan and his daughter Patricia. They were then lodged with local farmers. Their parents perished in Terezin. David returned to Prague after the war, and from there emigrated to Australia where he lives to this day. Josef emigrated to Israel where he took the name Jo Allon, became a pilot and founding member of the nascent Israeli Air Force, and was later the founder and director of the Israeli Pilots' Training School. In 1973 he was murdered, in Washington DC, by terrorists.

I have remained in touch with David, and with the children of Jo Allon in Israel. My aim is to write as complete an account as possible of this chapter of history, and deposit it in the appropriate archives - in Israel, England and the Czech republic. If anyone reading this has information about the Kindertransport children who found homes in Northumberland, or about the organisation that brought them there, I would very much like to hear from you. I live in Israel. Please contact me [manobla@netvision.net.il](mailto:manobla@netvision.net.il) tel 972-2 5342521.

*Ursula Sara Manobla (nee Towb)*

Sir – I would like to thank you for regularly sending me the AJR Journal and the Kindertransport Newsletter which I enjoy very much. You see, I am so far away here in Buenos Aires, know no other Kindertransport Kind around here, so that reading your magazines makes me feel as if "I belong a bit" although I can never participate in any of the outings or festivities you organize.

I was in England - Golders Green - for the 50th Anniversary with my brother, an event which was organized by Bertha Leverton, but have not been back to London since then. I see that there will be another meeting - 70th Anniversary - 23 November 2008, well, I am thinking about it.

I wish you all a HAPPY and PEACEFUL (5768) NEW YEAR and thank you once again for your kind gesture.

By the way, I have presented my book about the Kindertransport period, 1938/39 in England in a competition here in Buenos Aires. Should I win, I will let you know.

*Lisa Leist de Seiden*  
*E-mail: [lisaseiden@hotmail.com](mailto:lisaseiden@hotmail.com)*

*Dear Lisa – I remember you from our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Stay well and try your best to come. I hope your entry wins. Love Bertha*

P.S. Lisa deserves to be hosted if she comes, who will offer to do so?

Sir - I am always glad to receive both the AJR and the Kindertransport newsletter. They are always worth having and I am intrigued to know how you regularly manage to find something worthwhile to include. This cannot be easy with an aging readership!

I am sure I am now going to say the same that a number of others will have noticed but I was somewhat worried by the otherwise interesting 'conclusion of George Ettinger's story'. His almost final sentence claims: "We know that all the world leaders, with their hatred of the Jewish people, are aiming to repeat the Holocaust against all of Israel." Surely this is nonsensical and inappropriate. We may be worried, justifiably, about the future of Israel. But all the world leaders?? I do not know whether you can make some remark about this in the next issue?

*Ruth David*

Editor's Note: George Ettinger is certainly over the top. There are two issues, the perpetrators and bystanders who don't want to get involved. The latter was the case with most nations. France for instance even helped actively, supplying trains to deport its Jews. Switzerland guarded its borders to prevent entry, Denmark and Sweden did their best to help. England closed the borders of Palestine, yet allowed the Kinder in and did not object to richer Jews, who could open businesses to provide work. Hong Kong admitted many Jews and they were under Japanese rule. Even the German "Schindler" saved many.

No country likes "poor" refugees, and we were certainly poor. Today Israel admits refugees from "Dafur", how many newspapers, radio or TV report this?

**A message for Lisa Klein, Lotte Kramer and other Kinder authors. As mentioned, we intend to have a book/shop/table at the Reunion, where all Kinder authors will be able to display/sell their books. Please note only books about Kinder/Refugees should be brought.**

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### **Can you help?**

#### **Giving a Guarantee in Nazi times saved Jews!**

What obligations did those undertake, who gave a Guarantee to save a Jew?

There are still large gaps in the records of how many of us got out of Nazi Europe. At that time of unspeakable danger and problems everyone was busy striving to survive. Fortunately, due to our ancestors getting out of Nazi Europe, finding work, recovering after internment camps, bombing, or army service, very many of us are now here and alive to tell the tale.

To record those who saved us or helped us and what assistance they gave, fifty and more years later is not easy! If you are able to assist, so that any records we leave behind are more accurate please take this opportunity.

The Quakers, also known as the Society of Friends, burnt their records of the London Refugee Committee at a time when it was possible that Hitler could invade England. The Quakers did not want to risk leaving names and addresses of the Jews they had saved and helped, to fall into the wrong hands.

I am now trying to get information of what obligation any person undertook who guaranteed for a Jew to come out of Nazi Europe. Neville Chamberlain the then Prime Minister did not want to have people admitted into the UK who could then become a financial burden on the Country.

I am keen to discover what obligation the guarantors undertook. I need the answers to the following questions:-

1. How long was the guarantee period for which a guarantor was liable?
2. What did the Guarantee cover? Presumably shelter and food?
3. Those were times when there was no free education. Were guarantors responsible for paying for our education? Quakers gave my brother and I two free years at a Quaker boarding school, after which time my father could afford to pay the fees. Did giving a 'guarantee' oblige the guarantor to pay school fees?
4. As a child of ten I had a hernia operation, there was no National Health service in those days. Were guarantors responsible for our medical and dental care?

If those reading these columns have any information on this subject and what obligations those who saved us undertook, or can advise on where I can obtain further information on this subject, please contact me!

I believe that it is our obligation to record our history, especially when we owe our lives to others. This is of course a case of better late than never. If you can, please help.

*email: [peter@kurer.co.uk](mailto:peter@kurer.co.uk)  
Tel: 0161 428 5080*

## **OBITUARY**

**Spier Jack**, formerly Hans Spier was the last surviving member of the Cedar Boys resident in the UK. The group, 29 boys, two girls and their wardens, Hugo and Lilly Steinhardt, arrived in Waddesdon, Bucks, through the kind auspices of Lord Rothschild (Victor), James and Dorothy de Rothschild. They were accommodated in Waddesdon in a large house called The Cedars.

Jack, aged 11, bade a fond farewell to his parents at Frankfurt station on 15 March 1939. They became victims of the Holocaust and his hopes of being reunited with them were dashed. After a successful and generous life he leaves a large family and many friends by whom he will be greatly missed.

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## **SEARCH NOTICES**

If anyone has a contact address for Jonathan Spenser, possibly in Israel son of the late Tomi Spenser (né Thomas Sonnenschein) please contact Andrea Goodmaker at the AJR offices on telephone number 020 8385 3070 or email [andrea@ajr.org.uk](mailto:andrea@ajr.org.uk).

Information please on the whereabouts of **Peter Pokorny** who was at the Ramsgate Hostel, wanted by Harry Fleischmann now known as Fleming. Please call 020 8954 9911.

## Crown Jewels

Standing erect, new sap charging through veins,  
Blossoms erupt in spring of each branch,  
Proudly, heaven bound like a crown,  
Sparkling with diamonds.

Jewels outshining each other captivating the world.  
Preparing for a coronation at the appointed time,  
Lit like a candelabra for a festive occasion.

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## What is a grandparent?

(taken from papers written by a class of 6/8-year-olds)  
Published in the Israeli KT Newsletter.

A six year old was asked where his grandma lived. "Oh," he said, "She lives at the airport and when we want her we just go get her. Then when we're done having her visit, we take her back to the airport."



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Start, Biographies

*THE VERDERBERS OF COLOGNE*



Deutsche Fassung –



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## ***The family of Leo Verderber (13/5/1894–1935)***

In the German city Cologne (Köln, German transcription without vowel-mutation is Koeln) there lived a family Verderber up to 1938, belonging to the Jewish family branch.

The progenitor of this family was Leo Verderber; his Jewish given name was Jehuda Arie. He was born at 13/5/1894 in Wischnitz. This means presumably the Wiśnicz of today in Poland, situated about 80 kilometres in the north of Krakow (Kraków). Leo's origin lies in the dark, but in the region of Krakow and Tarnow there are indications to other Jewish families with the name Verderber.

But if his birth place is that Wischnitz (Wiśnice) in the district Tost-Gleiwitz in Upper Silesia, then there cannot be found a family named Verderber in the genealogical register of families for 1770–1800 (Source: *Genealogical Society of Utah, microfilm number 1573223*, see <http://www.familysearch.org>).

Leo Verderber became engaged to Genia Rosenzweig who was also called Gella, Getta, or Gette. Genia was born at 20/2/1890 in the Galician town Tarnow (Tarnów), situated about 80 kilometres in the East of Krakow (Kraków), today belonging to Poland. Wischnitz as well as Tarnow belonged to Austria-Hungary. When the First World War broke out in 1914 Leo fought in the Austrian army and achieved the rank as Feldwebel (sergeant). Meanwhile Genia's family left Eastern Europe and settled in Cologne.

After the end of the war in 1918 both married and remained in Cologne. The major part of Galicia became Polish, and so both get Polish citizens with Polish passports. The couple Verderber got four children:

**Netta Verderber, the only daughter, born on 11/6/1921. Date and place of death are unknown; presumably in Poland in 1943.**

**Israel Moses Verderber, called Isi, the oldest son, born on 11/8/1923. He passed away in Israel after long illness on 10/1/2007.**

**Theo Markus Verderber, Jewish given name Mordechai, born on 20/6/1928. He is living in Israel.**

**Adolf Verderber, Jewish given name Abraham or Avraham, born on 22/2/1930. He died at Limanow (Limanowa), about 50 kilometres in the south east of Krakow (Kraków) in Poland, in 1942 or 1943.**

In 1935 Leo Verderber died at an age of 42 years by an accident when the driver of his taxi fell asleep at the wheel. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Cologne.

In October 1938 Genia Verderber was expelled to Poland together with her youngest sons Theo and Adolf. They were brought by train with hundreds of other persons to the Polish border town Bentschen (Zbaszyń) upon Obra, about 70 kilometres in the West of Posen (Poznań). That should be the expulsion action as of 28/10/1938 which affected all Jews of Polish nationality living in Germany.

The living conditions in Bentschen were disastrous. In England meanwhile a refugee committee was established which tried to save Jewish children from the German sphere of influence. To at least save one of them, Genia permitted her ten years old son Theo to go to England with the first Kindertransport (children transport). She hoped to follow later with her youngest son.

Theo travelled aboard the Polish vessel "Warshawa" from Gdynia near Danzig (Gdańsk) passing Kiel through the North-Baltic-Sea-Channel to London, where he arrived at the harbour on 14/2/1939. A second Kindertransport arrived shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War. When the war started in September 1939, Theo lost postal contact with his mother who then lived with one of her sisters.

The oldest brother, Israel Moses, escaped to Palestine with the Zionistic Youth in August 1939 (presumably already on 31/7/1939). He was 16 years old.

His older sister Netta was preparing her emigration to Palestine at the Zionistic training camp Rüdnitz (German transcription without vowel-mutation is Ruednitz) near Bernau (in the Northeast of Berlin) when the whole group disappeared without trace, presumably in 1938. Netta arrived in Poland and could send 25 word letters to her brother Theo in England through the Swiss Red Cross during the war. Thus he knew that his mother joined her sisters in Tarnow. These letters stopped in 1943.

Following the the list of murdered persons at the memorial of Yad Vashem in Israel, Genia Verderber as well as her youngest son Adolf died in 1942 at Limanow (Limanowa) in Poland, about 50 kilometres in the Southeast of Krakow (Kraków). The family, however, assumes 1943 as the year of the death. The fate of the daughter Netta is unknown; she probably died in 1943.

Meanwhile in 1941 Theo had a very lonesome barmitzvah at the synagogue of Nottingham. In 1948 he reached Palestine on an immigrant ship filled to capacity. There he met his brother Israel Moses.

The name “Verderber” was hardly to pronounce for English people. So, Theo, his wife, and his brother Israel Moses decided to change their name to “Vered” which means “rose” in Hebrew.

Both brothers remained in Israel, married and got children. On 10.1.2007 Israel Moses Vered died after long illness at an age of 83 years.

In Cologne there is a memorial at the Löwenbrunnen (*lion's fountain*) since 1997, at that place where formerly were a synagogue and two Jewish schools: the Jawne (Yavneh), a reform high school, and the Morija (Moriah), a training school. Theo as well as Adolf Verderber visited the Morija school until they were deported. The memorial remembers to the 1.100 Jewish children of Cologne who were deported and murdered. Adolf Verderber is inscribed there. There is obviously no memorial for his mother and his sister in Cologne.

#### ***Alwine Pflanze, nee Verderber (17/3/1888–?)***

In Cologne, there also lived Alwine Pflanze, nee Verderber, born on 17/3/1888, until she was deported to Auschwitz (Oświęcim, Poland). There she was probably killed. She was declared to be dead. There is no more information about her; she was obviously member of the Jewish family branch and possibly a relative of Leo Verderber.

#### ***Sources***

The database of the victims at the *NS Documentation Centre (El-De-House), Cologne* contains Genia Verderber (with given name “Gella” and 1889 as the wrong year of birth), Adolf Verderber, and Alwine Pflanze, nee Verderber – but without details besides them to be declared death.

The arrival of Adolf Verderber at Bentschen is indicated by <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Zabiczyn/Zabiczyn.html>:

Adolf Verderber, born on 22/2/1930, father Leo Verderber, mother Gette Verderber, last residence Cologne, deported as pretended polish child to the polish border point Bentschen (Zbaszyń, 52°33' / 20°51') and arrived there without parents. Later fate unknown.

Indeed it is wrong that he arrived without parents. His mother and his older brother accompanied him. His brother Theo is also mentioned in this list, but with the given name “Theodor”.

About Netta Verderber's stay at the Zionist training camp at Rüdnitz near Bernau there is given advice at <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/>, but under the given name “Betti”.

*The list of deaths at Yad Vashem* finally proves that Genia Verderber (registered under the given name “Gella”) and Adolf Verderber (under the given name “Abram”) from “Keln” (which has to be replaced by “Köln” or “Koeln”) died at Limanow in 1942.

Theo Verderber (under the name Mordechai Vered of today) describes his lonesome barmitzvah in the *Kindertransport Newsletter of November 2004*.

But most of the information was given by the brothers *Israel Moses and Theo (Mordechai) Verderber (Vered)*. There is to thank them here with great pleasure.

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