



Kindertransport

A special interest group of the

Association of Jewish Refugees

SERVING HOLOCAUST REFUGEES AND SURVIVORS NATIONWIDE

AJR

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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

This edition of the Newsletter has proved to be a bumper edition, with items from five different countries plus the UK of course. Please let your items come in, the more the merrier, even if some are held over to the following edition. You will read of a couple of bits of news, Erich being knighted and KT being nominated for a volunteer award. Wielding the editor's pen, I wish you all Shanah Tovah and Chag Samech.

Bernd.

Dear Fellow Kinder - The past few weeks have been rather hectic and very unusual. On the 21st May I and my close family found ourselves within the walls of Buckingham Palace. There were 120 citizens receiving honors only 2 of whom were designated with 'Knighthoods' Nicholas Hytner the director of the National Theatre and myself both Jewish. Despite rehearsing the kneeling process I managed to get it slightly wrong when in front of Prince Charles who promptly whispered " I'm glad at least one of us knows what to do" I was surprised that he also remembered me from our 70th Anniversary Celebrations in 2008 commenting " I'm so glad the 'Kindertransport' has received such recognition" So as I have said on several occasions the honor I received was in fact for all of us and we should together take pride in this achievement. The High Holidays are nearly with us so let me take this opportunity and wish you Chag Sameach and Shanah Tovah. May the coming year treat us all with good health, goodwill and much happiness.

Erich Reich

Dear Kinder - I wish you all a Shanah Tovah and a year of health and happiness. It is always good to hear from you.

Beatha



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Jewish Refugees

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10 June 2010

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to write to wish you all a very Happy New Year filled with good health and happiness.

Along with my fellow AJR Trustees I am thrilled that the Kinder continue to be such active and dynamic members of the AJR. In recent years the story of the Kindertransport has rightly attracted enormous attention and you have all played a vital role to educate wider society about one of the most poignant episodes of the Holocaust and the Second World War.

The story of the Kindertransport is also uniquely British and an initiative that this country can look back on with great pride. Like numerous other Jewish refugees who settled in Britain, Kinder played a pivotal role in post-war British society and have made an enormous contribution to their adopted homeland.

The Knighthood bestowed on Sir Erich Reich earlier this year symbolises perfectly the relationship between the refugees and Britain. It is one of the highest public accolades achieved by a Kind and a fitting recognition of his invaluable work.

My colleagues and I are of course aware of the great work many of you do by visiting schools and talking about your experiences to pupils, who are the same age now as you were when you came to Britain. These talks have a profound impact on future generations who have the benefit of hearing first-hand accounts of life in Nazi-occupied Europe.

I am also delighted to congratulate the Kindertransport planning committee, chaired by Sir Erich, on receiving the runner up award for Team of the Year at the inaugural Jewish Volunteer Network's volunteering event in June. This award recognises excellence in the Jewish charity sector as well as the energetic and dedicated work of the Kinder.

We look forward to sharing many happy occasions in the future.

With my very best wishes for a sweet and healthy New Year,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Kaufman'.

Andrew Kaufman
Chairman

www.ajr.org.uk

HON. PRESIDENT:
LUDWIG SPIRO

ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES
IN GREAT BRITAIN. REGISTERED UNDER
THE FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT 1896 TO 1927

Kids to Kinder!

We kinder met up with some 30 or so teenagers at the home of Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, of the New North London Synagogue, who had organised the meeting. He felt that in a past meeting with Kinder it was just with adults. Now was the time to meet with teenagers, to hear our stories and ask questions in an informal setting, sitting round tables laden with goodies (needed to be polished off for Pesach!). As we told our stories, we invited questions and discussion. Time flew on this vital event, vital because the story of Kinder and Kindertransport must not be forgotten, in an age where many refugees have found a haven in the United Kingdom. Hopefully we indicated that the past could not be undone, but that as we progressed through life into our seventies and eighties, many Kinder had contributed to the welfare of this and other countries. Erich, Eve, Rolf and Lucy, Hermann and I were the Kinder who participated in this extremely valuable and useful hour and a half.

Erich, Eve, Rolf and Lucy, Hermann and Bernd

New Year Traffic

“Stuck in Traffic!” This is a common cry. Is it true? Is it a cover-up and an excuse? When that phrase is used, only the individual really knows what it is supposed to convey to the recipient. Is the reason because two cars are in front at the traffic lights at red, or is it a 2 mile tailback on the motorway or simply a secret code-word for some other ‘activity’ not to be revealed?

At this time of the year we are on a very busy spiritual highway. Do we apply the above excuses? Or, do we drive on with positive intent? The sadness of the month of Av gave way to the growing solemnity of the month of Ellul, the final month of the Jewish year, a vital A road artery leading to the big, main highway. It is a busy road, with Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot; but are we moving on it at a pace that is gathering speed to enable us to reach all the destinations lying ahead of us? Or, are we ‘stuck in the traffic’ and using this as an excuse not to drive on, because we find it all too much. There is all that shul attendance business, that vast amount of *davening*, the fasting and all the Sukkot preparations. Do we need help from one of the roadside organisations? Do we abandon the vehicle or do we strive to drive on regardless of hindrances?

Let’s put on the sat-nav to help us. The first road sign is 1st Ellul when we start to recite Psalm 27 (in which we ask not to be delivered from the hands of our enemies, i.e. our sins) and hear the awakening sounds of the Shofar to start taking a good look at ourselves, at our personal ‘instrument panel.’ The commencement of daily Selichot (Penitential prayers) should help us in our task to travel onwards on the road of spirituality and link smoothly (hopefully) into the spirituality of Rosh Hashanah. Three key words of the High Holyday prayers, *Teshuvah*, *Tefillah* *Tzedakah*, should give impetus to us on our journey, *Teshuvah* ‘repentance’ means self-examination to help us to return earnestly to the true way of life as required of us as Jews, *Tefillah* is prayer which links us with God, *Tzedakah* is not just cheque-book Judaism but

'caritas' meaning love in Latin (the origin of the word 'charity'), and help to all and thus bringing us nearer to our fellows.

This threefold message is strengthened on Yom Kippur by fasting and prayer. Separated from our daily needs, we can concentrate on looking at ourselves truthfully to enable us to strengthen our bonds with God and our fellows. With our admission of *chatati*, 'I have sinned', and the ring of *salachti* 'I, God, have forgiven,' we can turn to the joy of Sukkot, 'the Season of our Rejoicing', with the Lulav, the Sukkah and the concluding joyful celebration of Simchat Torah.

Yes, it is a long and busy highway on which we must now move. At Simchat Torah we have only reached the end of one section of our journey. The road of Jewish life goes on to the next year and the next, and the next....hopefully in good health and happiness.

I wish you all and your families *Shanah Tovah* and *Chag Sameach*. "May You, O Lord, spread Your Tabernacle of peace upon us, upon Medinat Israel and all humanity."

Bernd Koschland

SOLOMON SCHONFELD, *A Purpose in Life*, Derek Taylor, Valentine Mitchell 2009

In the last few years three books have appeared on Rabbi Schonfeld who died in 1985. For those that knew him, as I did, few could forget his greatness, as a saviour of souls in both the physical and spiritual sense.

Derek Taylor admits he did not really know him, but yet has managed to bring out a vivid portrait of Rabbi Dr Schonfeld. As the Rabbi of a North London Congregation, the Adath Yisroel, he found time for a variety of activities in addition. These are carefully documented by the author. In the field of Jewish education, about which he wrote, he blazed the trail of primary and secondary Jewish schools. The Hasmonean High School is an ongoing memorial to his work. I attended it when it first started. Before and after he risked his life to save children, families Rabbis and teachers. As Taylor points out, many owe their life to him. During the war he worked tirelessly for the religious safety of evacuees.

As I read the book, especially from the beginning of the war and onwards, I could empathise with him as I lived through again some of the experiences described. In 1946-7 he founded Yeshivah College, which provided half day religious studies and half day secular ones; this is the basis of several 6th Forms in Jewish day schools. Regrettably the college folded in 1948. I found the book enthralling and would recommend it highly.

MIK



Part of the Statue at Liverpool Street

Akiva School at Liverpool Street

Akiva School has a successful integrated curriculum which combines the children's Jewish learning with their secular subjects. The curriculum in Y6 is a particularly impressive example of integration. It starts with Britain in World War 2, then moves to pre-war and the Holocaust in the Jewish communities affected and finally to the creation and history of the State of Israel. The year culminates in a 10 day visit to Israel.

In the past two years the Holocaust section of the curriculum has been considerably developed by the class teacher, Liz Papier, Headteacher Susy Stone (a Fellow of the Imperial War Museum in Holocaust Education) and Akiva parent Judith Vandervelde (Holocaust Educator at the Jewish Museum).

The focus of the children's learning is The Kindertransport. They start by gaining an understanding of what life was like for Jewish children in pre-war Europe, and how it was both similar to and different from their own. They learn about how life changed and then about the journeys that the children took, focusing on the Kinder, but also understanding that many were not so fortunate.

The children visit the Kindertransport statue at Liverpool Street Station, where they role play the experience of the children depicted and listen to poetry, letters etc. This year they also visited the Houses of Parliament to see the plaque commemorating the Kindertransport and spent a fascinating hour with Lord Janner. This year too we added "The Journey", the Kindertransport exhibition at the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre to the project.

Survivor testimony is an essential part of the learning. Bernd Koschland spoke to the children both this year and last. This year they also heard Ziggy Shipper and Blanche Benedick. They were invited to sing at the JCC Holocaust Memorial Day event, where they also heard Freddie Knoller and Jack Kagan on their very different experiences.

We at Akiva are in no doubt about the value of this learning for children of this age. Their responses show us that it makes a vital contribution to their development as proud and responsible British Jews, aware of the dangers of racism and prejudice and determined to play their part in educating for a better world.

Susy Stone , Head Teacher

Eva Hayman -News from New Zealand

Eva lived in Celakovice, in what was Czechoslovakia, with her parents and younger sister. She came to England and went to a very English girls boarding school (Sandecotes, a Church of England school), which together with Sir Nicholas Winton saved her life. At the age of 15 she partly understood what was happening. The fear for her parents never left her; they of course perished. On leaving school she went into nursing, hoping to contribute to the war effort. A year later she married a doctor and went to New Zealand in 1957 with two children. Her daughter Joanna married a Dutchman and lives with two children in Auckland, as does Eva. Her son and his partner live in Denmark. She has been divorced for 30 years. At the age of nearly, 50 she went to University and gained a BA and MA (with Honours). Some 17 years later she had a book published, *By the Moon and the Stars* (Random House, NZ), which describes the feelings and emotions of a 15 year old rather than events and is based on her diaries written during the war in Czech. The title was her mother's parting words, 'We send love by the moon and the stars'; her father's past words to her were to be a guardian and parent to her sister younger by four years.

In February 2010, "the former Consul for the Czech Republic, Vera Egermayer, arranged for the film *The Power of Good* to be shown in Wellington and invited those who owed their lives to Sir Nicholas Winton to participate. Only two of us [i.e. Eva and Bob Fantel from Wellington], who live in New Zealand [and attended], were on the Kindertransport." Nora Huppert from Sydney, also a Winton Child, came over to New Zealand for the occasion. A number of second and third generation joined in, including Eva's daughter, as well as guests from other countries. The event honoured a "great man to whom we shall be forever more than grateful. "

- *The last paragraph is based on Eva's letter to the Dominion Post, NZ*

BK

IN DEEPEST SLOVAKIA

To the best of my knowledge I was born in April 1933 in Negrovic, a small place in Eastern Slovakia, which had a small Jewish community. Because of events, I was separated from my parents and family a month before my sixth birthday.

In 1938 we moved to a totally isolated area near the Hungarian border; I have never really been able to find out why we went there. It was all farmland and we lived in a tiny little home, the size of a two car garage, without electricity or indoor plumbing. It was most likely used before as a storage hut, which the farmer allowed us to use or rent. My Dad worked at a bakery in what had to be a nearby village because he had to walk to work as we had no means of transport. My Mom was always at home taking care of the house and us, including my brother a year older than me. I can only imagine the shock it must have been for our parents when this simple lifestyle was disrupted.

Like many other Jewish families, we abandoned our home and fled, because our parents must have felt the sudden threat and danger of approaching war and what happened on this particular day in our lives. Dad was at work, as I don't see him in the 'picture,' when we were paid a sudden visit by a couple of uniformed men. The conversation between them and Mom was in Czech or Hungarian, which we could not understand as we only spoke Yiddish. Even as a child I could tell it wasn't a social visit. In contrast, these military men had smiles all over their faces while aggressively searching our home. Obviously they were enjoying it and as they went they left the house in a mess. When Dad came home and heard what had happened, he must have felt that we were threatened; the following morning we hurriedly loaded a few belongings onto a horse and cart, probably provided by the farmer, and left behind the only real home I had as a child.

The next thing I remember is that we were in a multilevel building with other families who had also fled their homes and surrounded by Slovakian guards. Here we were being held by the authorities until they decided where to relocate us. It was here that we were separated from our parents to be taken on the Kindertransport to England.

This dramatic event of leaving our parents behind is still crystal clear in my head. For my parents it was extremely emotional. I will never forget the last image I have of them, especially of my Mom who was crying so hysterically and asking us over and over again, "Are you sure you want to go?" I remember feeling very frustrated at seeing our parents so upset; we were just too young to understand and we had no idea that we would never see them again. After we left, our parents were relocated to a Jewish ghetto in Slovakia. Near the end of the war they were transported to a concentration camp and like many others did not survive.

In England we were placed in a boy's home, where I grew up and spent 10 years in what I considered an institution. Shortly after the creation of the State of Israel, as passionate young Zionists, we emigrated as youthful pioneers to the new State. We were placed in a Kibbutz in the Negev, where the smell of smoke was still in the air from the recent War of Independence. This was the most exciting period of my life. It was hard but extremely rewarding to have the privilege of personally participating in the creation and building of Israel. After two years on the kibbutz, I signed up for military service and volunteered for the airborne unit. Again training was hard but I am still proud of my service. Ten years later I went to the USA to meet newly discovered relatives; in England my brother and I grew up feeling alone and not knowing if we had any relatives. It was not easy to leave my brother as we were very close and I had frequent dreams of guilt because I left him. In America I met my wonderful wife. We have been married 48 years and have three children and five grandchildren.

My brother and I attended the reunion of Kindertransport in London in 1989 and 2008 when we finally learned of our rescuer, Sir Nicholas Winton. I appear briefly in the documentary made about him.

Dave Lux (formerly Isadore Pincasovitch)

1939-2009 - A TIME WARP

Was it morning, midday or....? A small black suitcase packed; the date 2nd February 1939. I picture myself being taken by the hand, as a then three year old, from our family home, the 'Rote Villa', in Reichenbach (now Dzierzoniow), I imagine, by chauffeur via Breslau (now Wroclaw) to the railway station in Berlin. The pictures in my head have been 'moulded' by films I have seen, for I cannot remember the day or indeed what feelings were going through my poor mother's head or that of her housemaid companion, - yes, it was a large household befitting a wealthy industrial, three-generation deep family on my father' side.

Now jump to 6th October 2009. My husband, George, and I travel to Poland and meet up with a dedicated, delightful Polish/Israeli couple (2nd generation) living in my hometown of Reichenbach. In 2004 they founded 'Boteinu Chai' (Our house lives on) to bring back to life and open one of the three synagogues left standing in Lower Silesia after Kristallnacht, all for future generations and tourists.

This wonderful couple had obtained keys to our family villa. I stood in awe, 'little me a 3 year-old' now 70 plus years on, gazing up at the magnificent four storey villa. Clean, bright-red bricks, stand proud in green pastures, embraced by totally rust-free wrought-iron railings --- indeed breathtaking. On entering the huge front door and ascending the wide carved balustrade staircase to the first and second floors, I face the most beautiful stained-glass window (some 8 foot high) inscribed 1939. Thick wooden doors, parquet flooring, central heating, high moulded ceilings - could this villa really have been built so opulently in 1896, 6 generations ago? It still stands in all its glory after surviving the Nazi years of WW2 and the changing borders. The town's museum is now housed in it.

How different things could have been. Do I live in the same world? Now stretched to the limit, I weep to think that the first coloured mechanical weaving business my great-grandparents had built up, originally from a modest outworker's business, maybe could have given us a less stressful life.

I will always remember how lucky I have been. My parents survived. I as a three year-old had the amazing fortune to be met in Southampton by my uncle and wonderful grandmother (Regina Kantorowicz) as I came off the *SS Washington*; they had both emigrated in 1933. My father who managed the family company, Cohn Gebrüder, had not wanted to leave. Until recently, all the factory buildings were still in good shape; now only the huge administrative block stands in its staunch glory with the firm's leaded initials CG proudly displayed high up on the gables at both ends.

Ursula Ader (née Kantorowicz later by deed poll to Kanter)

Nora Martha Huppert (née Benjamin), Sydney

Nora was born in Berlin of a German father, a socialist journalist and activist, and a Russian mother, whose family had fled the Czarist pogroms and settled

in Kovno (Kaunas), Lithuania. When her father was arrested in 1933 by Hitler's henchmen, the family escaped to Kovno. Like many European Jewish families they were refugees, who tried to find sanctuary wherever they could. Finally, after some months, the family ended in Czechoslovakia after a summer in the South of France, where Nora attended the local school.

Hitler's occupation of Austria and the annexation of the Sudetenland made life difficult. Desperate parents were doing anything and everything possible to leave the country, or at least, to send their children abroad to anyone who would take them. Thanks to (Sir, then Mr) Nicholas Winton, Nora, aged 10, arrived in England by plane with about 20 children including a baby. Her last view of her family was her mother with her younger brother, Fredi, waving at the airport on a cold March morning. 24 hours later German troops marched into Prague. Her father had sought refuge in the Lithuanian Embassy and therefore did not see her off; later he arrived in England.

Nora was taken in by Mr and Mrs McNair, a Congregationalist farming family with four children of their own. Initially they had contacted the Quakers to put them in touch with Nora's parents. Nora lived with them for eight years. Their guardianship ended when Nora was 18. By then she had already moved to a hostel for older refugee children in Holland Park, London. Whilst there she completed her training in fashion design, pattern cutting and dressmaking. She went to work in a leading London fashion house for one shilling per hour and a 45 hour week.

In 1951 she married Peter Huppert, who had been on the *HMT Dunera*. When the Berlin Wall went up, they decided to move from England as far away as possible together with their children. Their atlas showed Tasmania as the furthest place and they eventually moved there. On this beautiful scenic island, no larger than Wales, they had good friends among the local shops and fruit growers. Peter's job was as a consultant psychiatrist with the Health Department. Nora became an active member of the Tasmanian Women's Association. Their children were happily settled, though missing the liveliness of a city. Peter's contract was for three years and they decided to move again. He readily found a job in Sydney, where they were welcomed by the European Jewish migrants who gave them much help and advice.

Life changed a little after being widowed in 1987. She met a new partner, a much travelled New Zealander. They went to Prague on a visit and there met the NZ Honorary Diplomat, Vera Egermayer, through whom Nora learned for the first time about her rescuer, Nicholas Winton. She met him eventually at the premier showing of *The Power of Good in England*. More recently, this film was premiered in Wellington, NZ, where she met Eva Hayman and other Winton families and their children.

Nora qualified as a Marriage and Family Counsellor. She has written on her experiences as a Kind. For decades she was closely involved in the B'nai B'rith outreach programme Courage to Care which promotes tolerance and harmony within the broad Australian family of communities.

I quote Nora's words as she remembered them from meeting with Nicholas Winton: "It is not enough in today's world to merely lead an exemplary life and do no wrong. It is incumbent on one to actively take responsibility and care for the less privileged and disadvantaged and those in need."

(This article is based on material sent by Nora)

MEMORIAL IN MILLISLE

I'm from the small seaside village of Millisle in Co. Down in Northern Ireland. On polling day (6/5/10) I was voting in our local primary school "Millisle Primary School". The children have done lots of work over the years about Kindertransport and as part of this work the school commissioned a "Memorial Garden". This was the first time I had seen it and as I have always been interested in Kindertransport I thought I would photograph it and send the photos to your organisation.

Graham Mccoubrey



HERSTMONCEUX

In the Chanukah 2009 edition I referred to passing through a village, Watling Hill, near Hertmonvceux and later discovered a Kind had lived there for 46 years. I was rung recently and the mystery was solved; the Kind is Geoffrey (Max) Dickson and now lives in Tunbridge Wells with his second wife. He was originally from Deutschkrone, now Pila in Poland. He has been to all reunions, including the one in Israel. It was from the Israel reunion booklet that I picked out the village. He organises a Kindertransport meeting in Tunbridge Wells and about 12 – 15 attend. Unfortunately age has taken its toll and the group has grown smaller.

BK

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DIARY DATES

**Tuesday 5 October 2010 – Visit to the Jewish Museum 2.30.
Admission £4.50. Assemble there. Please let Andrea at Head Office
know if you are coming 020 8385 3070.**

**Tuesday 30 November 2010 – Unveiling of Statue at Hook of
Holland – Details to follow when available.**



Kinder in the USA?

Gentlemen

Please be advised that the Kindertransport did not end in 1939. The Kindertransport continued to the USA until 1941. Approximately 1000 Kindertransport children came directly to the USA.

I am one of those. Do not forget us.

Henry Rosenthal (arrived in the US Aug '41)

This letter seems to be designed as a correction to my article (and those of others in the AJR Journal), I'd like to say that it is historically quite inaccurate.

No doubt a considerable number of Kindertransport children went on to the USA, but they did so on an individual basis, not as an organised group. The US Congress would never pass any legislation comparable to the British Kindertransport initiative: the Wagner-Rogers Bill, which aimed to do so, died in the House. There was nothing that can be called a Kindertransport to the USA. The British Kindertransport ended in 1939.

Anthony Grenville (Editor AJR Journal)

Married life, Lavi in 1949.

Dear Bernd

My memory is again reminding me of days gone by. On Rosh Chodesh Nisan, 61 years ago, shortly after settling (*hityashvut*) at Lavi in the Lower Galilee on a hill off the road leading from Golani Junction to Tiberias, Ruth and I were married, the first wedding at the kibbutz (see Inge Sadan's book *No longer a Stranger*, page 136). After our honeymoon we returned to Lavi, a day or two before Pesach. All the *chaverim* (members of the kibbutz) had already moved to the huts and tents in the new Kibbutz from the temporary camp in Sedjera (Ilania). However, for us there was no more accommodation. Therefore we were told to stay in Sedjera overnight, do *bedikat chametz* and *biur chametz* (searching and burning of chametz) in the morning. We could have breakfast but of course all the plates, cooking utensils and cutlery had been *kashered* for Pesach and taken over to the kibbutz. There was, however, still food around and so we took an empty sardine tin, lit a kerosene stove and fried our morning eggs in the oil. We then burned the chametz and went to the kibbutz. That evening, Seder Night, because there was no accommodation for us, we were given a Sten gun each and told to do guard duty that night. In the morning when the *chaverim* had got up and gone for davening (praying), we, feeling tired and cold, could go to sleep in the warm beds vacated!

Shanah Tovah and Chag Samech

Mordechai Vered - Holon,
Israel

(This letter just missed the last edition of the Newsletter)

Refugee or Survivor: may be both?

Dear Rev. Koschland

Greetings from Chicago, USA Congratulations to Sir Erich Reich. I came to England on 11th November 1938 (not as a Kind), from Berlin, and was lucky enough to have been accepted as Nursing Student at the Miller General Hospital, Greenwich - very much a "Refugee" like some other friends, who followed. This stayed with us through the war. As far as I know, the word "survivor" did not exist until the world learned about the horrors in the East. I remember sitting at Lyon's Teahouse discussing that question – "Are we refugees?" Later it seemed, that no matter wherever you were able to escape to start a new life, but had lost members of your family to deportation , death, torture, you are a survivor .

Best wishes,

Alice Fink (Redlich)

(I included this edited version of a letter as it is interesting in light of articles in the AJR Journal – Editor)

Freda Kaorobotkin, Los Angeles. (Author of *Throw Your Feet Over Your Shoulders*)

After living with three different gentile families for the first few years of the War, I was fortunate in 1943 to land in the village of Shefford, Beds., where Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld's Jewish Secondary School had been evacuated. I expect most *Kinder* have heard about Shefford and know something about the amazing feat Rabbi Schonfeld and his staff accomplished in running a Jewish day school in the British countryside surrounded by gentiles who had, until the school's arrival, never seen a Jew before.

Those last two years of the War are especially memorable for me because, for the first time since leaving Vienna on the Kindertransport in December 1938, I was happy. I was, for the first time in a Jewish school, taught by Jewish teachers, and surrounded by Jewish children, most of them refugees like myself. For the first time since I could remember, I was in a totally Jewish environment and, most important, for the first time in my young life, I was not experiencing any anti-Semitism.

I learnt to read and speak Hebrew, to navigate the *Siddur*, and soaked up the Bible stories and commentaries that were drilled in to us on a daily basis. What a joyous revelation it was for me, after having attended church for several years and gone to sleep with The Lord's Prayer on my lips (somehow jumbled up with the few words of the *Shema* I still remembered from home), to find myself in this environment.

At this time of the year, as we approach the Days of Awe, my mind always goes back to Shefford and how we observed Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in 1944 when the fate of our dear parents was still unknown. It is impossible to find the words to describe the emotions with which we boys and girls prayed on that last Yom Kippur in Shefford; all of us had the names of our parents on our lips and their memories in our hearts. I wish I could have bottled the fervour with which we prayed for I have never been able to replicate it since. Through our tears we uttered the words: "... Who shall live and who shall die, who by fire and who by water, who in his allotted time and who before his allotted time...." By the time we came to the passage, "Hear our voices, O Lord, and answer us with mercy and compassion", the prayer hall was thick and heavy with our prayers and tears. For me, the daughter of an Orthodox rabbi, the prayers were especially poignant for I vaguely remembered my father, his *talit* shrouding his head, as he swayed to and fro in silent, earnest, and totally absorbed prayer.

This year, and as I do every year, I pray for the souls of our departed relatives and those of our *Kinder* who are no longer with us. I pray that our children and grandchildren, and theirs, will always recognize that their lives were made possible by the sacrifice of our parents, their ancestors; that they will always live lives of Jewish dignity and Jewish integrity; and that they will always remain true to our homeland, the State of Israel, which is perhaps facing the biggest peril of its existence.

I wish all of my fellow *Kinder*, and all my Jewish brethren, a *Chativah v'Chatimah Tova* and a very healthy New Year.

SEARCHES



Where are you?

- **Elieser Freifeld** from Leipzig came to Margate July 1939 and then evacuated to Chase Terrace, Staffordshire. His son requests information about him. Please contact him at bs173565@skynet.be
- **Nora Benjamin** (now Huppert & living in Sydney, Australia) would like to hear from any one of 20 Kinder who left Prague on 14th March 1939 in an aeroplane and landed at Croydon airport on the same day. Nora would also like to hear from any Kinder who were students and studying at a hostel (possibly) in Holland Park, London, W11. The warden in charge was an Englishwoman, Mrs Kinset; Mrs Rosa Perlmutter was the housekeeper. I shared an attic room for some time with Inge Rosenzweig from 1945-1948. I attended Barret Street Trade School, behind Selfridges, Oxford Street. Contact: norahup@bigpond.com
- **North Rhine-Westfalia Kindertransports 1938-39**
The Jawne Learning Centre in Cologne seeks contact with Kindertransportees from Cologne, Düsseldorf, Dortmund and elsewhere in today's North Rhine-Westfalia for a research and exhibition project. One focus will be the Kindertransport organised by Dr Erich Klibansky, headmaster of Jawne school. Please write to Lern- und Gedenkort Jawne, c/o Dr Ursula Reuter, Rothehausstr. 5-7, D 50823 Koeln or email u.reuter@netcologne.de
- I am trying to find 2nd generation of Kindertransport parents who would like to join the present KT committee now to continue the work of keeping it going for the future. We meet about once a month in the head office of the AJR Please contact andrea@ajr.org.uk

Ruth Abraham

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.