



# KINDERTRANSPORT NEWSLETTER

*AJR Special Interest Section*

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

Dear Kinder and Friends,

Yomtov in Israel is always a wonderful time for me spent with my family and Kinder friends, during Succot. If our enemies think that the flow of visitors can be stemmed by their cowardly tactics I can assure you that is not the case. We had to take our time to land (circling above the airport as planes were coming in from all over the world. The processing time is quite fast and if you can perfect the art of travelling light and have your case in the plane, it's a doddle. Make sure to arrange a meeting place (like at information). The Kinder meeting in Netanya had, as their special guest, Frank Meisler. He and Inge send their best wishes. A few days after my return I and I am pleased to say our fellow Kind Elisabeth Rosenthal, flew to New York to take part in the USA KT meeting, held in New Jersey. We each first had two days in New York. I always feel so nostalgic when I think that most of the Kinder I meet there, go back to the 1989 Reunion in Harrow. It was very well organised and the KT2 (Second Generation) are a great help and fully involved. Kurt and Margaret Goldberger and many others who came over in 1989 have fond memories of England and send best wishes. Special highlights were a performance of one chapter of Anne Fox's book *My Heart in a Suitcase* and a wonderful pro-Israel dinner speaker. Mr Kaplan an Attorney at Law, made a deep impression on me. There was a Shabbat service (at 7 am) and though I did want a lay in, I could not miss this.

Of course numbers were diminished, but I am hopeful of attending the next one in two years time *Betochan* (faith) is needed. The convention ended at 2 pm Sunday and Elisabeth and I were invited to spend the afternoon with Siggi and Norma Silber (see his story in *I Came Alone*). It was a nice *abschied* and we were taken to the airport. Jetlag hit me on my return and I managed to get up in time to fly to Vienna two days later, just in time for the opening of the photographic exhibition of *Für Das Kind* by Patricia Ayre and Rosie Potter. They had photographed and beautifully framed the contents of Flor Kent's Kinder Suitcase and dignitaries from the Vienna Municipality opened the Exhibition (running a whole month) schools are invited and addressed by speakers. Hermann's turn is next, followed by Otto Deutsch two weeks later. All this is being organised by Milly Segal from the *Jüdische Kultusgemeinde Wien*. A mammoth task.

Many of us are busy giving talks in schools, taking part in films, videos. One new film, made recently by Sky TV will be showing several times at the end of January around Holocaust Memorial Day (please phone Sky TV **not me**) for details. They also did some filming at the Day Centre KT Lunch on the 13 November. Frank Meisler was our guest speaker and Erich Reich, was a very able substitute Chairman for Hermann (still in Israel then). I had never seen such a good attendance. Lisa Schäfer from Berlin was here also. She is our PR there. I have been asked to talk at the Jewish Museum in Berlin on 18 January. Holocaust week is due to be hosted by Newcastle-on-Tyne, and a contingent of AJR personnel and other groups will be participating. It will be a gruelling journey by coach and plane (in one day) for details phone Head Office 020 8385 3070.

Our Chanukah Party will be the lunch on 18 December. Booking has started and is expected to be heavy, so don't be disappointed. I am told that payment has to accompany booking. No payment at door.

If you have noticed by their **absence** any members who regularly attend functions, please let the AJR know (including myself) we are getting older and frailer and it is important to be there for each other. The odd chat on the phone to say "we missed you at the meeting" is important. Don't let it be out of sight out of mind. I do my fair share of calls and felt really bad when a regular Kind told me he and his wife had both been ill for quite a time, so did not attend. If you are ill, we want to know.

Now for a plea from me. Please, please, when you phone or write to me give your **full** name and telephone number. I know that I **should** know you when you say or write. Best wishes, John, Henny, Trudy, Fred etc. and no telephone number, especially when Yom-Tov or birthdays cards arrive and I can't phone back to say thanks. So I am taking this opportunity to wish all of you, my dear friends a good Chanukah. May we all see peace and prosperity in Israel a country so dear to our hearts.

SHALOM



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### What's in a Light?

A Chanukah poem (by EE Levinger) begins with:

*In the candles' rays I see  
Lovely pictures beckoning me....*

The pictures she sees in those lights are the heroes and heroines of the Chanukah story who fought for the survival of Judaism or died a martyr's death because of their beliefs.

Flickering flames are magical, for in them we see what we want to see; our imagination can run riot, because the sights we behold are personal to us. The *berachah* (blessing) for lighting states simply "to light the lights of Chanukah." However the Hebrew is *ner*, light, in the singular. This could be that the Talmud states that the basic duty was to light a single light each night – though we do not follow this. Alternatively the word *ner* is really used as a collective noun to mean "lights"

What do we see in those flames of the Chanukiah? We see not just the heroes and martyrs of Maccabean times, but those of our long and sometimes tragic history. We see the Jews fighting Rome leading to the destruction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple and later of the heroic Bar Kokhba Revolt. We see Massada, we see Rabbi Akiva and the other martyrs of that era. In the faint black smoke of the flickering flame, the eye can also behold the smoke of burning bodies, of bonfires of books, of burning Temples and Synagogues. We see further the tragic Jewish history over the many centuries, till the renewed Maccabean spirit arose in those fighting for the birth and existence of the State of Israel. We follow the view of Hillel to increase the lights daily, as if to say we look to the flames as a symbol of an increasing optimistic future.

Our duty is the action "to light" (*lehadlik*), to be active in working for that future, by ensuring the present is safe and secure. That "working for the future" is enshrined in the name Chanukah, which means "dedication," dedication in whatever area we are involved, and involved each person must be. A secure future for the Jewish people does not allow anyone to sit back, do nothing and leave it to others.

So far the general message of the flickering lights. But what of the personal message?

As one walks down many streets and sees any number of *Chanukiot* burning in the windows, it should bring the realisation that somehow we are united, though some differences do exist. When we see a window with several *Chanukiot*, it indicates "family," the keystone to our survival as Jews. As the individual lights up and looks at the lights, what does he, or she, reflect? What thoughts run through the mind? But then these are personal thoughts, retained in private. The expression on the face may be a clue, but that is all.

The poem concludes with:

*G-d of Israel, may I be  
A soldier worthy of them and Thee.*

A soldier, worthy of the Maccabean spirit, fired with zeal and with Divine help overcame the enemy. So likewise may we be fired with the same zeal and, with the help of the Almighty, march valiantly from a secure present to a secure future.

*Bernd Koschland*

A special thank you to Bernd Koschland for his input every time our festivals come round. His articles are always interesting and informative, showing us that our history is very close to our hearts and binds us all together. *Bertha*

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## SEARCH NOTICES

I am currently collecting research for the culmination of a book about the Kindertransport, particularly in England. I am looking for testimony from refugee's that lived in the Gwrych Castle. I would be happy to pay for a memoir type testimony. I am determined to keep the stories alive about the Holocaust and all the devastation that hatred caused. If you know of someone who could provide this testimony please let me know. Lori Greschler email [HiLevi@aol.com](mailto:HiLevi@aol.com).

Devon & Somerset – HYAMS – A son of Mr Hyams is anxious to make contact with fellow survivors of his father's contemporaries, many of whom were Kindertransport Refugees. Please email: [royhyams@hotmail.com](mailto:royhyams@hotmail.com)

Klaus Bregler, Tischbeinstr. 2, 69121 Heidelberg. Tel: 06221-8935275. email [Klaus.Bregler@t-online.de](mailto:Klaus.Bregler@t-online.de) former teacher at the *Odenwaldschule in Südhessschule* would be very interested to find former pupils. He tell us that all lists exist of all attendees from 1910 to the outbreak of war.

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POEMS WANTED of KT interest. Please contact Adrienne Behrendt, PO Box 2044, New Britain, CT 06052, USA. Tel: (860) 826-7678.

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## LETTERS

Sir - Thanks for including the material about Mrs Wijsmuller (spelling?) in the Kinder newsletter. However, the heading refers to another topic entirely: Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat credited with having saved the lives of some 6,000 Jews in Kaunas, the temporary wartime capital of Lithuania. There is now a wealth of information about him on the Internet. A documentary film "Conspiracy of Kindness", made by the (American) Public Broadcasting Service, has been screened in several European countries.

*Alan Gill, Australia*

Sir - Thank you for mentioning my cause on page 9 of your September - Autumn Newsletter.

The interest and response from all that has been published is amazing and I am grateful to each publication.

The response to date has just reached 100 naming 250 Jews helped or saved by Quakers. As there are no Quaker records this collection may end up being the only authentic record. If you think that it was all over sixty years ago, this is obviously only the tip of the iceberg. I am still keen on hearing from any one who had help from the Quakers. Please email [peter@kurer.co.uk](mailto:peter@kurer.co.uk).

*Peter Kurer*

Sir - How very touched I was to 'stumble upon' the wonderful statues outside Liverpool St. Station. I'd also like to feedback that others, random members of the general public, who were there for the 10 minutes or so that I was, had only positive comments - many took photos and chatted about the subject portrayed, as I stood at the site.

Something else really took my breath away - I felt this is the first time, at least that I have seen, that Jews have public recognition (as distinct people) in a positive way - although clearly depicted as victims, but righteous ones - within a non-Jewish country. (I know there is the Anne Frank House...but this statue shows the collective...as distinct from an individual). As a Jew, this had a profound effect on me, and it helped me understand myself more.

Thank you, and your organisation so much for providing this excellent and timely memorial.

*Miriam Selwyn*

Sir – I was happy to attend the Kinder Lunch on 13 November at the Day Centre and listen to Frank Meisler's talk.

On my journey home I visited Liverpool Street Station and was moved to notice a flower placed into the hands of the children.

*Lisa Schäfer  
Berlin*

Sir – You gave a lot of space in your journal honouring Mr Meisler and the sculpture now installed, not mentioning once, or even given credit to Flor Kent, whose idea it was to commemorate the arrival of the Kinder at Liverpool Street Station. I was one of them, and felt proud to be invited to the unveiling of the glass case. I had also donated precious items now at the Imperial War Museum. I still do not know the reason for removing Flor Kent's sculpture but I do know that other Kinder, now senior citizens are displeased.

*Marion Gross*

*Editors Note: We all liked the idea of the suitcase and it was a very great case with lots of contributed precious mementoes (which today are housed at the Imperial War Museum). Great tribute was paid to Flor Kent at the time whose idea and work the commemoration was. We were told that problems arose from light (sunshine) penetrating the glass, which resulted in the deterioration of some of the enclosed objects. For me personally the main fault was the absence of signage or any real explanation. The plaque on the wall was not close enough or gave any real indication of what the whole thing portrayed. Even on that remote plaque the important word **Jewish** was missing. I kept getting many phone calls to this effect blaming our KT organisation for its omission.*

*I tried many times to persuade the WJR to put at least some explanation onto the suitcase, but was told it was not possible or necessary. This time round we, The Committee, were consulted as to the wording and most will agree it is **clear**. Hopefully the lovely statue of the Little Girl will find a good and prominent place, (to be decided by WJR).*

*My own choice would be the Port of Harwich where we first arrived. In fact the KT plaque commemorating our sojourn at "Dovercourt" reception camp, erected there in 1989, is now to be seen at the Town Hall in Harwich, after the demolition of that camp a few years ago.*



*'Children of the Kindertransport', Hope Square, Liverpool Street Station*

Sir -You may know that as a K2 I had been searching everywhere for traces of information on the escape from Nazi invasion by the SS Bodegraven. My father, known as Gershon Kohn then, was aboard the Bodegraven as a medical officer with his cousin, and his cousin's parents. I wished to share what I learned with a largely unaware family.

After discovering the KTA several months ago and contacting a few of the officials, I was encouraged to add a message to the KTA newsletter, and I can see that your editors have entered it into the September, 2006 publication, and made other efforts to advance this families mission.

Now I write this note to extend the appreciation of our family to this kind initiative by the KTA. Already two wonderful other survivors have contacted me by email to acknowledge the inquiry and volunteer contact and support: Hans Levy and Rabbi Harry Jacobi. We have begun to share some meaningful facts and information that will now be used for family education, growth and development. The excerpts that followed in your newsletter that translated the Dutch version of Truus Wijsmuller-Meyer's account of the May, 1940 events that lead to the Bodegraven flight was truly a welcome addition to our knowledge, and also very much appreciated for its timeliness. Dr. Geoffrey Kent, as he is now called, now 93, will find this a source of much stimulation, conversation and connection. In this regard, I hope you will allow me to share this article, duly referenced, with others in the family where we have a private family web page with historical information.

*Paul Kent, son of Gershon Kohn (Dr. Geoffrey Kent)*  
[niclone@aol.com](mailto:niclone@aol.com)

Sir - I've been writing a book which has the Kindertransport as one of its themes (told from the point of view of an English girl who meets a Jewish refugee in this country, shortly before the Second World War in 1939), and have been in touch with Hermann Hirschberger via your office, who's told me some of his experiences and also checked some facts for me. The book, 'Shelter from the Storm', is being published by Simon and Schuster on 5 February 2007. The book is aimed at children of about 10 – 14, and I've tried to give a flavour of what life must have been like for a young refugee, set within the context of an exciting story – the last of my 'Swallowcliffe Hall' trilogy. (The website [www.swallowcliffehall.com](http://www.swallowcliffehall.com) tells you more about the series. I'll be updating the website when this last book is published, and hope to include some photographs of Kindertransport refugees.)

*Jennie Walters*

Sir - This is to inform you about a new book which has just been published in the US by RoseDogbooks Inc. of Pittsburgh PA. website [www.rosedogbooks.com/index](http://www.rosedogbooks.com/index). I believe this work would be of special interest to all American Jews, but especially those who were expelled from Europe by the Nazi government.

As a former Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany my sister, now living in the UK ( a member of AJR) and myself , the author, now resident in Brisbane Australia, came from Berlin to England in March 1939 on the Kindertransport. In September 2000, we were invited by the Berlin Senate and the Jewish communities to revisit the capital under the auspices of the German / Jewish Reconciliation Programme. Out of this unforgettable week in Berlin has developed a 215 page book with almost 100 illustrations, some dating from the prewar period. The book is published under the title "**Tears Are Not Enough**" - with the subtitle : "*The German / Jewish Reconciliation Program faces the truth about the Nazi Holocaust.* Please see the attachment for the leaflet which outlines the contents of the book. "**Tears Are Not Enough**" can be purchased from myself, the author at approx. \$US 32.75, the exact amount depending on the \$US / \$AUD exchange rate at time of purchase. Alternatively, the book may be purchased direct from the above publisher website at \$US 21.00 plus P.& H.

I would be most grateful, Mr. Goldberger, if you would kindly also pass this information onto any other Jewish organisation or department, such as a library or synagogue committee, who might be interested in this exiting new publication.

Tom Forres  
email: [tforres@optusnet.com.au](mailto:tforres@optusnet.com.au)

Sir – The first Stolpersteine in Austria were laid at a ceremony in Modling on 14 August 2006 to honour the memory of my grandparents Adolf and Rosa Kohn and my uncle, Norbert Kohn who were deported and murdered by the Nazis in the Holocaust.

Stolpersteine (stumbling stones) which are brass capped with an inscription were the idea of German artist Gunter Demnig and many have already been laid in Germany. My grandfather, who was Secretary of the Shul in Modling, lived with his family at Enzersdorferstrasse 44 and these three Stolpersteine were laid in the pavement outside his house so their names will not be forgotten by all who pass by.

In May 1939 as a very small child I had to leave Vienna for England and say goodbye to my grandparents and to my uncle, never to see them again. In 1962 I married David Lang and we had two sons who were both Barmitzvah and married at Golders Green Shul. Now we have three grandsons and the eldest, Jamie, was Barmitzvah in April 2006. So, in spite of the Nazi atrocities, this proves Hitler did not succeed in his evil intentions towards the Jewish people.

Charlotte Lang

*Stolpersteine (stumbling stones) laid at Modling, Austria in August 2006*



## CONGRATULATIONS

Benno and Helen Gocman on becoming great-grandparents and also to Benno on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday earlier this year.

Dorit Sim on her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday 8 December 2006.

Charlotte Lang and family on the occasion of their eldest grandson Jamie's barmitzvah earlier this year.

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### **Keep the Memory Alive Donate your Papers to the Leo Baeck Institute**

What you went through is an important part of history. Please consider leaving your documents pertaining to your experience during, before and after the time of your rescue to the Archives of the Leo Baeck Institute. Other interested places are The Wiener Library and German/Jewish Studies Department at Sussex University.

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## OBITUARIES

### **Paul Cohn, copied from the JC Born Hamburg, 8 January 1924 Died London 20 April 2006, aged 82.**

A pioneering mathematician, probing new aspects of algebra, Professor Paul Cohn overcame a lack of secondary education after reaching England on a Kindertransport in Spring 1939.

Considered too old for school at 15, he worked on a chicken farm, then as a fitter in a factory. His parents were deported to Riga and shot in 1941.

Studying on his own, he impressed the Jewish Refugee Committee, which recommended him to try for a Cambridge scholarship in mathematics.

Catching up on his missed education by correspondence course, including Latin from scratch, he won an exhibition to Trinity College in 1944. After gaining his degree and PhD and teaching in France at Nancy University for a year, he lectured at Manchester University from 1952-62.

He came to London University as a reader at Queen Mary College in 1962, was professor of mathematics at Bedford College in 1967, and at University College, London, from 1984 until retiring in 1989. He won prestigious posts and prizes and became an FRS in 1980.

As an honorary research fellow at UCL, he continued writing papers and books, which were translated into several languages. His worldwide visiting professorships included the Haifa Technion, Bar-Ilan and the Hebrew University. His highly original ground-breaking work took algebra beyond its linear dimension into the realm of rings and skew fields.

A member of Hampstead Garden Synagogue, he traced his ancestry back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

He is survived by his wife, Deirdre née Sharon, two daughters, Juliet and Yael, and five grandchildren.

**Alfred Terry** died June 2006. Our condolences to his wife and family. Alfred often wrote to us enclosing pictures of them all, he was so proud.