



KINDERTRANSPORT NEWSLETTER

AJR Special Interest Section

**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**

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Editor: Bertha Leverton**

**Chairman:
Hermann Hirschberger**

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

Dear Kinder and Friends

It seems a long time since my return from Israel, though it was only the end of October. As usual, the Israeli group held their big yearly get together in Netanya during Sucoth, so I was able to participate. I travelled with Inge from Jerusalem and she sends all her friends best wishes. Most of their members live long distances away and make a great effort to attend. (We think getting to the Day Centre or the Survivors Centre is an effort). Talking of the Survivors Centre, don't forget our Chanukah party there 28 December 5.30.-8pm

For our monthly lunch you must phone the Day Centre a few days before. They really go out of their way to look after us. Last month 11 booked and 45 turned up. It's not fair to them. So please comply.

The 2 November was a very special day for me, meeting HM the Queen for my MBE investiture. It was a great honour to have the citation announced "for services to the Jewish people". She was most gracious and after I told her how grateful I and 10,000 others were for having been saved, she replied that she was very pleased our lives were saved. The day was rounded off with a party at the Survivors Centre and I'd like to put on record my grateful thanks to them on that wonderful day and also for letting us hold our Chanukah party there.

Also much appreciated were many cards, letters and phone calls of congratulations received from far and wide. After all, it was not only an honour for me, but for all of us and put truly on record the word Kindertransport.

Thank you Bernd Koshland for your article on the Yomin Tovim. It's great to have a "professional" among us, also my personal thanks to Alfred Jeckl (Colibri), who every year send us a large calendar (for the office) and desk and pocket diary for me.

The idea has recently been discussed in our Committee about planning, producing (and publishing) a definitive history of the Kindertransport. Time is not on our side for such a major work, which would have to be undertaken by a big name historian. We assume a considerable sum could be involved. If there are any among our members, able and willing to contribute financially to such a project, please contact Herman via Andrea at the office in confidence. For opinions on the subject please write a letter (for publication).

FÜR DAS KIND

Most of you will be aware that the Kindertransport Statue at Liverpool Street Station has been dismantled and that another monument to our past will be put up in its place. (Some time in the Spring is envisaged). The suitcase was a great idea and designed by Flor Kent. How happy we all were to take part in the inauguration, and donate our precious mementoes to be displayed therein. Sadly, it was found that the objects we gave deteriorated, and are now placed in the Imperial War Museum for safekeeping. The plinth still stands and will have a "Kindergroup" designed and cast by Frank Meisler, the foremost Israeli sculptor (himself a kind), erected in place of the suitcase. Some of you will have your own opinions, ideas and preferences on the subject. For me the biggest disappointment was the absence of signage, or a real explanation of the whole project. It was never dealt with during its display and the many thousands of people who saw it, (ate their food sitting on its plinth), had no idea what the whole thing was to represent. Whatever will be standing there, in its place, will have an explanation, so everyone will be aware of its meaning. It will also include the word Jewish.

It is amazing how often the phrase "Victims of Nazi oppression etc." is used as a substitute.

Forthcoming big event will be a supper quiz. Details in next Newsletter.

Enjoy Chanukah.

All best wishes, from Andrea too.

Kristallnacht

Wednesday, the 9th November was the 67th anniversary of the night of broken glass, the terrible pogrom throughout Germany and Austria, and the eve of the Holocaust. It was the day when the alarm bells rang in every Jewish home, that there was no future for Central European Jewry, and that their lives were in mortal danger. It was also the day which was to decide the fate of all who came to the UK with the Kindertransport, and more tragically, that 90% would never see their parents again after their journey here. Quite a day, would you not agree. I remember it well.

And yet, at a commemoration service, kindly organised by the AJR for its members at the Day Centre, there were merely a handful, perhaps 15 who attended. What does this imply? Are there too many remembrance functions? Is the day not important to us? There is Holocaust Memorial Day in January and Yom Hashoah at the end of Nissan (May in 06). Is it all too much? Do we suffer from Holocaust fatigue? But is it not essential to keep the horrid memory of the day alive? And a warning for the future? Or an educational necessity? If we do not care, nobody else will. Think about it.

For the record, Rabbi Mariner came to us to conduct the ceremony. He introduced a first class DVD presentation of six famous synagogues, burnt to the ground on 9/10 November 1938. It is a fabulous computer virtual reconstruction of the most beautiful

Beit Knesseth in Germany at the time and a miracle of technology which shows in detail and in colour, the great architecture and appointment and holiness of lost heritage. If I can get hold of the DVD, I will show it to you. Thank you Rabbi Mariner and also the Day Centre and staff who provided a very nice tea.

HH

LETTERS

Dear Bertha – I was one of the privileged kinder to receive an invitation to Clarence House, I found the visit very interesting and I must say both Prince Charles and the Duchess displayed great sympathy on hearing our various stories.

I was very interested to read “The short story of the Kindertransport”, but was rather disappointed that there was no mention of Rabbi Dr Solomon Schonfeld who did so much to bring to this country myself plus many other kinder from all parts of Europe, especially from Vienna. I came to England in December 1938 with one of Dr Schonfeld’s transports via Harwich and landed up at Manchester’s London Road Station where a very kind English Jewish lady picked me up and took me to her house. She had five daughters, no husband and in spite of this gave me a home for three and a half years. Life wasn’t easy, she spoke no German or Yiddish and I spoke no English, but we managed and it didn’t take me very long to master the English language to a point where I forgot my German. She and her daughters were very good and kind to me – I am still in touch with two daughters that are still alive.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since then and I am very grateful to the Almighty and to Dr Schonfeld for my survival. I married a Holocaust survivor and we were blessed with three wonderful children, a bunch of grandchildren and an even bigger bunch of great grandchildren all following our frum orthodox way of life.

Looking forward to your next Newsletter and a very happy and healthy new year to you and all the kinder.

Thea Rudzinski

Dear Bertha – I am grateful for the good work you do and was so pleased to hear of the MBE. A suitable reward for having got the KT memories, or us, going. Congratulations!

I liked the last newsletter and have just a word to add. Someone wrote about Christallnight. A night that most of us simply cannot forget. It is deeply imprinted. I had always called it that, though I think of it still as Kristallnacht. I go to Germany regularly and once, when I mentioned this word, I was gently taken to task. Apparently Germans do not like the word, it expresses something too elegant. They now prefer to use Pogromnacht and I agree this is actually more suitable. Perhaps we should use this instead? I wonder what you or others think?

I now belong to the American Association of the KT as well (I moved here 13 years ago but attended the first big meeting still in England) and was asked by our Chairman, as we all were, to say what we had done recently to tell people about the KTA.

I did readings throughout the year from my book *Child of our Time*. I have done this at the local university and in schools at Boone and Ames Iowa. I talked with a group of student actors who were going to do the Anne Frank play, including a

comparison with my own life. We were almost the same age and from a very similar background. I found the students remarkably receptive.

My visit to Germany in October this year was my 10th consecutive. Each time I do about 10 readings and discussions in schools. This year I did 6 readings in Hessen (to which I am officially invited). I also visited Weinheim, where I did 2 readings and another 2 in Düsseldorf, my husband's town. I was invited to the setting up of a memorial stone in Schwetzingen (Baden) on 22 October in memory of the Jews from there (Baden, the Pfalz and the Saarland) which marked the first mass deportation of Jews in October 1940. Hitler wanted to carry out this experiment (about 7000 victims) to see how the 'Volk' would take it. Apparently quite well. My own parents were deported that day with my younger siblings from Mannheim (the largest city in Baden) to Gurs (at the foot of the Pyrenees) and then to other concentration camps before they were finally sent to Auschwitz in August 1942. As I was the only eyewitness, though of course I did not live in Germany at the time but in England, I was asked to say a few words. I found that quite difficult. It was a very sombre evening. I know we had relatives in Schwetzingen but I could not recall their names. It was all overwhelming. The site on which the stone was placed with great dignity was where the synagogue had once been. Difficult to imagine it, as there was no sign left. It is impressive what Germans are now doing to remember those times.

All good wishes to you, and your readers.

*Ruth David
Ames*

"That was the Week that was"

Dear Bertha – 5 July was the very impressive reception with Prince Charles and Camilla at Clarence House. 6 July: London was awarded the 2012 Olympic Games. 7 July: the dreadful London bombings. 8 July: My very ill sister's 85th birthday in New York. 9 July: My sister died in the USA. 11 July: Flew to New York in time for the funeral. Rest of the week at the *shiva*; where I met very many people whom I did not know previously. After talking about the London bombings, I told them about meeting Prince Charles and Camilla a few days earlier.

The Americans were intrigued as they are interested in our royalty.

Laurence Lowenthal

Letter of thanks to Otto Deutsch - Many thanks for coming into the college recently and speaking to the students. Your description of your personal experiences during 1938 and later, when you returned to Austria after the war, was most moving.

Perhaps even more impressive was your commitment and determination to tell the younger generation about this terrible period of modern history.

The students certainly appreciated your speaking to them, and I am certain that this subject is now quite clear in their memories.

Thank you Otto – your dedication, time and efforts are much appreciated.

*Geoff Matheron
School of Business & Management Studies
Southend-on-Sea, Essex*

Dear Friend – You may have seen a public announcement about the future of the Shoah Foundation, but I am writing to you directly to share the good news.

Effective 1 January 2006, the Shoah Foundation will become part of the University of Southern California and will be known as the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. This move, which has been a long time in

the making, guarantees the perpetual preservation of our archive within a great university's program of research and education. My goal, from the beginning, has been to create a permanent home for your testimony so that a hundred or a thousand years from now your face and voice can still be seen and heard. Our arrangement with USC turns that hope into a reality.

In addition, all of our existing educational and access programs will move to USC. Doug Greenberg, who has led the Shoah Foundation these last five years, will be the first Executive Director of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute. Doug, the Board of the Foundation, and I have made both the preservation of the testimonies and their effective educational use our top priorities in the talks with USC that led to this agreement.

Needless to say, I will continue to work closely with Doug and with the staff of the Institute to carry on with our mission to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry – and the suffering they cause – through the educational use of the Foundation's visual history testimonies. All of us know that you have bequeathed to us a precious gift, whose wise use will build a better world for our children and our children's children. That knowledge will guide all that we do in the future, just as it has in the past.

This letter comes with my warmest wishes for a sweet year ahead. With love,
Steven Spielberg
California, USA

Dear Bertha – Let me wish you a healthy and contented New Year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for another interesting Newsletter.

Like you, I give a lot of thought to the extraordinary phenomenon that is the continuing hatred of the Jew. No matter how much we achieve, how great our contribution to mankind, how great our magnanimity to our persecutors, we are still disliked the world over. Wherever the Jew has settled, he has become a law-abiding citizen, grateful for his freedom and refuge and has contributed to the wellbeing of that country. Nobody seems to contrast our behaviour as refugees with the behaviour of the present-day asylum seeker who is dissatisfied with what he is given by the host country and even is prepared to go to the length of burning down his accommodation if he thinks it is not good enough.

There recently was a horrendous case of a father – Indian, I think, who arranged for his daughter's fiancé by whom she was expecting a baby to be brutally murdered, because he did not approve of the marriage. Whilst being shocked by such behaviour, people do not think themselves – the Jews do not behave like that!

Whilst following the service in Synagogue on Kol Nidre I was struck by the nobility of the words and the prayers and sentiments expressed, only wishing that non Jews could read them – would they then form a finer opinion of us? May be the fault is our own in that we are very private about our worship, unlike the Muslims, who are now in the very forefront of the nation's consciousness, as everyone is bending over backwards to appease them. Imagine if anyone dared to create a Muslim Shylock or Fagin! There would be an immediate Fatwah and all hell let loose. We just turn the other cheek; the tragedy is that the bad taste in the mouth that the word Jew evokes in many people, has affected a lot of our own people to the extent that they are ashamed to be Jews and many have deserted their religion. We are passive, whilst the Muslims are aggressive and they will gain the upper hand.

Enough of that, I could go on and on. You may be interested to read the two articles I have kept for a long time. The one from Mark Twain shows that there are some Gentiles who appreciate us.

Bronia Snow

Article

Mark Twain

Harper's Magazine, September 1897

About Jews

If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk.

His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and abstruse learning are very much out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvellous fight in this world in all ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself and be excused for it. The Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Persians rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour; then faded to dream stuff and passed away; the Greeks and the Romans followed and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished.

The Jew saw them all, survived them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew, all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?

Search Notices:

Prof. Ruth Ben-Ishai (née Horn) is looking for Lola Schiller (maiden name) who both lived at 3 Guenthergasse, Vienna before coming on the Kindertransport. Contact Andrea in the office.

Miriam Honig, née Marion Friedlander, is looking for Margot Scholinus, who came on the Kindertransport in December and then in December '48 went to Australia. Contact Andrea in the office.

Sometime around June 1939 Philip Herz, 9 years old, committed suicide. About a year or two before, his little-older sister Elisabeth was sent as a refugee by her parents to England. In Germany, they lived in Pirmasens, V.d. Tann Srasse 18.

The father was probably an attorney, and his name was maybe Gustav Herz. The mother's name was maybe Emilie (Ella). The boy Philip had maybe another name: Georg. Can you please help me to find some information about the girl Elisabeth Herz, who lived in the UK during and after the war, and her family in Germany and the UK General (Res.) Aharon Beth-Halachmi President, Federmann Enterprises Industries and Technologies. Contact Andrea in the office.

GundR.Reuther@t-online.de or contact Andrea at the AJR office.

I'm searching for a girl, born in Frankfurt am Main in 1923. Her surname was "Fuld". She left Frankfurt with a "Kindertransport" on 21.6.1939. And she is to have reached England. What do you know about her and her further life? Is she still living? Did she marry and change her name? Are there any descendants? Her parents were Frieda and Otto Fuld. The mother was my father's cousin. I managed to find it out last week only. Many thanks for your help. Rosl Reuther.

The Jewish Museum in Vienna would like to put on a small exhibition on the Kindertransports. Would you be able to help them? Please contact Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien, Dr. Karl Albrecht Weinberger, 1010 Trattenhof 106. Tel: 0043 1535 04310.

Mr McCreedy of the BBC, who is making a programme about Refugees who were in the Kitchener (or other such camps in England) would like anyone whose parent or relative was there to please email Philip.McCreery@reeftv.com

INGE SADAN FROM ISRAEL

A very pleasant get-together took place in Bnei Brak at the home of Bella Leitner of 7 of the ex-Sunderland Hostel girls, where reminiscences were exchanged, interspersed with lovely refreshments. One of the 'girls', Judy Leibovitz, had come from New York for a wedding, and took the opportunity to participate in the mini-reunion. Another, Herta Erreich, née Laster, was phoned in her home in New Jersey, and each spoke to her, which she very much appreciated.

Another group, which meets regularly, is the "Natanya Gang", often joined by George and Yael Shefi, and Inge, from Jerusalem. Although we officially meet as a nation-wide group once a year, many Kinder meet in their local towns and keep in touch with each other.

THE LAST GOODBYE EXHIBITION
The Rescue of Jewish Children from Nazi Europe

Official onpening
Tuesday 17 January 2006, at 12 noon
Brent Cross Shopping Centre
Outside Monsoon on the Ground Floor

OBITUARIES

The ROK report on the late Franzi Groszman, the last surviving Kinderparent struck a particular note with me. Franzi was my aunt, and a very charming and talented aunt she was too. After my cousin Lore (Lore Segal, who also featured in the film *Into the Arms of Strangers*) was widowed early in life with two young children, Franzi looked after the grandchildren full-time while her daughter assured the family income by lecturing and writing novels and children's stories.

Mary Huttner and I had the occasion to go to New York recently, and to visit Lore in her home on Riverside Drive. Unfortunately we missed Franzi by days; she had passed away, quite naturally, of old age and her daughter had only just finished sitting *shiva* for her.

I remember Franzi from my earliest childhood. She was a bright, cheerful lady, carrying the many misfortunes she underwent with an ever-present sense of humour. She was a skilled pianist, an accomplishment she was able to make use of as a piano teacher when it was her turn to be the breadwinner. Readers of Lore's novel *Other People's Houses* will already know and love my Tante Franzi. Our memories of her, the book, and her part in the film assure her immortality.

Dr Frank Beck

Eddy Behrendt, founder of the USA Reunion of Kindertransport K.T.A., started up after attending the 50th anniversary reunion June 1989, organised by Bertha, and was held over 3 days at the Harrow Leisure Centre. About 200 Kinder came over from the USA and Canada to participate. His group never looked back, and many will remember him and mourn his passing.

For the past few years Kurt Goldberger has been the Groups Head (they call it President) under whose guidance, and with the help of a supportive committee, has taken the initial group to great prominence.

Those of you who attended our 60th Reunion at the Logan Hall in 1999 will remember our Kinder representative from Australia, Rev. Erich Kahn, who took part in the memorial service. Sadly he died recently and we wish Long Life to his family and close friends.

We are very sorry to report the passing of Martin Kuhn, after a long illness, on 14 December 2005, from Bamberg, who arrived on the Kindertransport 19 May 1939. Deeply mourned by his wife Doris and his two sons, Philip and Leon, family and many friends.

Helga Beer. Please refer to Death Announcement in the *AJR Journal*.

BOOK REVIEW

JOURNEY INTO THE PAST

Rose Gotley

In March 1939 Rosi and her mother Hila left Vienna for England, leaving behind grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. The bitter tears shed at that parting were never washed away. It was many years before they were reunited with Rosi's father, who had escaped to Shanghai, with help from a humane Nazi (a miracle). But Rose Gotley's very interesting book, (it's amazing how much family history it contains in just 118 pages) starts with her maternal grandmother in Czechoslovakia. The extended family listed so many names, I found it a bit difficult to keep track of them all as the story unfolded. As Rose admits, she filled gaps in the history with her own imagination, I wonder if a young bride, in those days, had really run off on her wedding day and was dragged protesting and shouting to the chuppah. Family life is described in great detail and I felt Rosi's great nostalgia recalling her orthodox upbringing. She tells of the trauma of ●●●coping as a child during the Nazi era, her sojourn in England, her school years, and relationships with her friends. In fact the stories of their lives seem to be vignettes (short stories not really relevant to her past. That journey to Czechoslovakia is undertaken later on to round the circle, trying to piece together her own family history. I think she has succeeded. This may be a small book, but to understand and absorb its contents fully, it must be read more than once. ISBN 0-543407-3-6, Published by MM Publishing.

Bertha Leverton

BOOK NEWS

Dorrith M Sim from Scotland, the author of the children's book *In my Pocket* tells us her publishers are reprinting her book. Congratulations. Email orders dorrithmsim@aol.com

I am reporting the opposite about my book *I Came Alone*. After its good run since 1990, I am (it is a private publication) not reprinting it as, to make it viable, one has to order 500 copies minimum. My last copies (H/B) will be for my own family. So treat yours as a collector's item for your children, and I thank you all for your support and encouragement over the years.

