



# AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## “Where they burn books...”



The famous lines ‘Das war ein Vorspiel nur; dort wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen’ (‘That was merely a prelude; where they burn books, they end up by burning people’) come from *Almansor*, a little-known drama by the great German-Jewish poet and satirist Heinrich Heine (1797-1856). The lines have frequently been seen as foretelling how the burning of books under the National Socialist regime led to the incineration of human bodies in the Holocaust. The words are inscribed on a memorial plaque on the Bebelplatz (formerly Opernplatz) in Berlin, to commemorate the first burning of 20,000 books on 10 May 1933. Some 93 book burnings followed between May and October 1933, in 70 towns and cities across the Reich.

Heine’s drama – performed only once in Brunswick in 1823 - takes place around 1500 in southern Spain, against the background of brutal persecution of Muslims by the Spanish Inquisition, which sought to eradicate Islam (and Judaism) from the newly united Christian Kingdom of Spain. The original quotation is spoken in the play by a Muslim named Hassan,

a former servant of the family of the title figure Almansor. Almansor, recently returned to Granada from exile, expresses his horror (‘Mir starrt die Zunge im Munde’ – ‘I am rendered speechless...’) at the burning of the Koran, the most sacred of Islamic texts, on the orders of Ximenes de Cisneros, a Cardinal in the Catholic Church  
*Continued on page 2*

### SHANA TOVAH

The AJR trustees, staff and volunteers would like to wish all our members and readers a very Happy New Year to be filled with good health and happiness.

5778 promises to be an action packed year for the AJR. Our teams will be visiting hundreds of our members and organising dozens of regional meetings, events and outings throughout the year, including a five-day trip to Norfolk next Spring.

We are looking ahead to November 2018 which marks the 80th anniversary of the creation of the Kindertransport following the catastrophe of the Kristallnacht. Work has already begun to plan a special series of events to mark this significant milestone.

Our role as the leading benefactor of Holocaust educational and remembrance projects and programmes will also continue alongside our core mission to deliver our critical social and welfare services.

With best wishes for a sweet, peaceful and healthy Shana Tova.

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## “Where They Burn Books...” continued

and later Grand Inquisitor for Castile and León.

Hassan’s response to Almansor’s outrage was the famously prophetic lines quoted above. However the context to his remark is deeply ambiguous, since Hassan is himself an intolerant fanatic, far removed from the image of the wise, tolerant Muslim exemplified by the figure of Saladin in G E Lessing’s great drama of religious tolerance, *Nathan der Weise* (*Nathan the Wise*) (1779). Hassan, by contrast, glories in his memories of raiding parties that attacked Christian settlements and slaughtered their inhabitants. His faith never wavered, he boasts; the cries of his enemies in their death agonies and the church bells that rang out in mourning sounded in his ears ‘süß wie Wollust’ (‘sweet as voluptuousness’).

Heine is best known as one of Germany’s very greatest poets. His lyric poetry, like ‘Die Lore-Ley’ (1824), with its celebrated opening lines ‘Ich weiß nicht was soll es bedeuten, / Daß ich so traurig bin; / Ein Märchen aus [ur]alten Zeiten, / Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn’ is almost unique in that it can stand comparison with Goethe. [‘I know not if there is a reason/ Why I am so sad at heart./ A legend of bygone ages/ Haunts me and will not depart’, translation by A.Z. Forman.] Heine, a left-wing radical, was also a brilliant satirist, as demonstrated in his verse epics *Atta Troll* (1843) - the title figure is a dancing bear in chains - and *Deutschland ein Wintermärchen* (*Germany. A Winter’s Tale*) (1844). For the wit and sharpness of his satire, see the accompanying illustration of his poetic tribute to the German censors, translated – as if it needed it – into English:

The German Censors \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Idiots \_\_\_\_\_  
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Heine was also possessed of the gift of sharply prophetic foresight, especially when it came to predicting the deadly fruits of German nationalism. He did so from France, where he had sought exile in 1831, impatient of the dead hand of reactionary governments in Germany



Berlin book burning memorial

and of the restrictions imposed on him as a Jew, albeit converted. In his essay *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland* (*On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*) (1834), he warned of the dangers of a resurgence of that ‘furor teutonicus’, so feared by the ancient Romans, whose violence would eclipse anything that had come before. The essay predicts that the most dangerous consequences will develop from the tradition of thought known as *Naturphilosophie*, a current in the philosophical tradition of German idealism that came to the fore at the time of German Romanticism.

Heine foresaw the threat latent in the Romantics’ desire to cast off the restraints of reason in favour of such elemental forces as nationalism and kinship of blood. That would, he feared, conjure up the ancient demons of Germanic pantheism with its accompanying delight in violence and bloodshed, that ancestral bloodlust that Christianity, for all its faults, had largely held in check. But the prospect of the weakening of Christian values led Heine to a prophetic vision of a world in which the revolution that had taken place in German philosophy would be followed by a radical revolution in German politics. Heine’s words are worth quoting, if only in my translation: ‘Then the old stone gods will rise from the long-deserted rubble and shake the dust of a thousand years from their eyes, and Thor with his giant hammer will at last leap up and shatter the Gothic cathedrals.’ In Germany, the revolution in ideas had preceded the revolution in

politics, but the latter, when it arrived, would usher in an era of unprecedented savagery:

‘The thought precedes the action, as lightning precedes thunder. The German thunder is, admittedly, German and not very agile, and it comes rolling up rather slowly; but come it will, and when you hear it crash, as it has never crashed before in the history of the world, then you will know: the German thunder has at last reached its goal. At that sound, the eagles will fall dead from the skies, and the lions in the furthest deserts of Africa will put their tails between their legs and creep away into their regal dens. A drama will be played out in Germany in comparison with which the French Revolution will appear merely a harmless idyll.’

One of the opening scenes in that drama was the burning of the books. This formed part of the campaign to eliminate from German public life the freedoms associated with democracy, the liberal culture of the Weimar Republic, any independent political parties or public bodies and any ideologies or systems of beliefs and values not closely aligned with National Socialism (‘Gleichschaltung’). The ‘cleansing’ of German literature and culture was spearheaded by the Deutsche Studentenschaft, the German Student Union, increasingly infected by the nationalistic and anti-Semitic ideology of the extreme right. On 13 April 1933 it issued a twelve-point proclamation entitled ‘Wider den undeutschen Geist!’ (‘Against the un-German Spirit!’).

Couched in the characteristically archaic and inflated language employed by the Nazis, the placard demanded the purification of German language and literature. Claiming that 'Sprache und Schrifttum wurzeln im Volke' ('Language and literature are rooted in the people'), it adopted a racially based approach to the protection of 'deutsches Volkstum', the ethnic essence of the German Volk, against alien influences, the most dangerous of which was 'the Jew, and those in thrall to him'. German literature must be purged of the 'Jewish intellectualism' that had allegedly dominated the literary landscape of pre-1933 Germany, along with the 'liberal symptoms of decay associated with it'. Accordingly, when on 10 March 1933 the torchlight procession of marching students and university professors consigned the 'un-German' works to the flames, the nine categories into which those works fell were dominated by Jewish authors: Sigmund Freud, for the emphasis he placed on instinctual life, Theodor Wolff and Georg Bernhard for the 'racially alien' ['volksfremd'] elements in their journalism, or Alfred Kerr, the noted theatre critic, for his 'arrogant corruption' ['dünkelhafte Verhöhnung'] of the German language.

Jews also featured prominently among the ideological enemies of the Nazis, though they were sometimes paired with non-Jews: Karl Marx's works were burned, along with those of Karl Kautsky, for espousing the doctrine of class conflict, divisive of the alleged racial unity of the German 'Volksgemeinschaft', while the work of satirical writer Kurt Tucholsky was burned alongside Carl von Ossietzky for his attacks on German nationalism. One group of writers represented the 'decadent', liberal elements that had supposedly undermined the spirit of German national unity during the Weimar Republic: Heinrich Mann, Erich Kästner and Ernst Glaeser. But here the Nazis showed themselves less than systematic: whereas Heinrich Mann, like his brother Thomas, maintained a resolute opposition to Hitler in exile, Kästner (who actually witnessed the burning of the books in Berlin) remained in Germany, while Glaeser, a minor figure, made his peace with National Socialism after returning to Germany from Switzerland in 1939. None of these, of course, was Jewish.

**Anthony Grenville**

## EMOTIONAL RETURN FOR ZIGI



Zigi and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge at Stutthof

AJR member Zigi Shipper has been inundated with calls from media all over the world since he accompanied the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on their recent visit to Stutthof.

Zigi, who was born in 1930 in Łódź, Poland, has met lots of VIPs during his 25 years' involvement with the Holocaust Educational Trust. He says that the publicity provoked by the Royal visit was unprecedented.

"I was asked six weeks beforehand if I would go to Stutthof for a VIP visit, but wasn't told who I was going to meet," he told the AJR Journal. "Then we were given detailed briefings on protocol before the Cambridges arrived."

Protocol didn't seem to matter much to the Royal couple themselves however. Visibly moved to tears by their visit, they profusely thanked Zigi and his fellow survivor Manfred Goldberg for returning to the camp to share their memories with them. They even beckoned over family members of Zigi and Manfred who had been told by event organisers to stay behind the barrier.

"The Duke and Duchess were both so 'normal' and easy to talk to," said Zigi. "They treated Manfred and me like friends they had known for ages."

Writing in the camp's visitor book the Royal couple wrote: "This shattering visit has reminded us of the horrendous murder of six million Jews, drawn from across the whole of Europe, who died in the abominable Holocaust... All of us have an overwhelming responsibility to make sure that we learn the lessons and that the horror of what happened is never forgotten and never repeated."

This was the first visit back to Stutthof for Zigi, who spent months there in 1944 after two years in the Łódź ghetto. With the Soviets advancing, Zigi and the rest of his group were sent on a death march via the German naval town of Neustadt, from where they were liberated on 3 May 1945. Zigi spent three months in hospital due to malnutrition, before being sent to a Displaced Persons' camp. He finally arrived in the UK in 1947, where he married and had a family, and now lives in Hertfordshire.

# What History teaches us

History brings to life a world we would have inhabited had we been born in earlier times. The adage 'learning from history' has much to commend it.

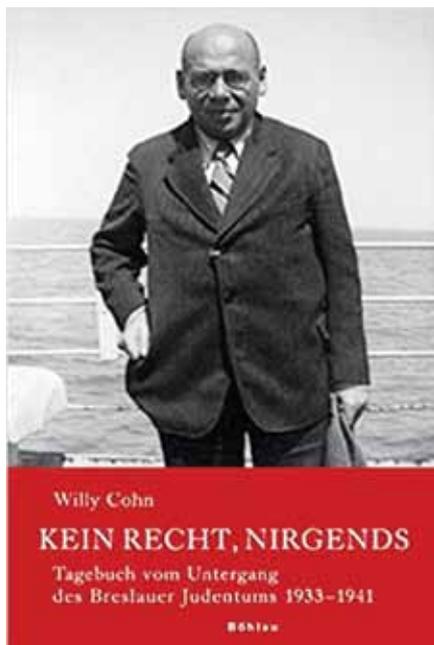
Sometimes the past comes to life more vividly, not so much through history books or newsreel films but through letters which can reveal much about the writers' feelings. Regrettably, nowadays letter-writing has been virtually replaced by email correspondence or texting – a loss to the historian as well as to the rest of us.

I was fortunate to inherit approximately 90 letters sent by my parents in Germany to my mother's brother in Oxford, England. The letters reveal much about my own and my sister's early upbringing from mid-1934 to 1939 and provide a picture of life for an ordinary Jewish family living in Germany during the earlier half of Nazi rule. My mother's anxieties grow and her health deteriorates with each letter and my father's efforts to find a country of refuge for his family become more desperate from November 1938 onwards.

These letters are the only chronicle I possess of my happy early life in Germany up to August 1939 when I emigrated, leaving behind my beloved parents who perished at the hands of the Nazis a few years later.

Alongside letters, the other main form of graphic record of the past are diaries. Examples include the posthumously-published diaries of two prominent residents of the German city of Breslau, Silesia (now no longer German but Polish and named Wrocław). Both authors were born in the 1880s and kept diaries in the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s.

One diarist, Willy Cohn, was a Jewish historian and secondary school teacher. He married twice and his two sons from his first marriage both emigrated during the 1930s, one to France, the other to Palestine. The second marriage



Willy Cohn's book

produced three daughters, the eldest also emigrating to Palestine.

Cohn kept a diary throughout his adult life and the war time entries were published under the title "*Kein Recht, nirgends. Tagebuch vom Untergang des Breslauer Judentums 1933-41*" (*No justice anywhere. Diary of the destruction of Breslau Jewry 1933-41*). It gives a first-hand account of how the persecution of German Jews by the Nazis gradually intensified and became ever more oppressive.

Although Willy Cohn had been awarded the Iron Cross in WW1, he could not escape the repressive racist laws. His diary describes the burning of the beautiful Breslau synagogue on Kristallnacht: "The dome of the new Synagogue has crumbled and the inside is completely gutted. New legal measures against the Jews are expected. The wish is for a relaxation of the emigration possibilities. Opportunities for Jews to live in Germany I believe are non-existent and there is no use wishing for them."

Cohn attempted tirelessly to emigrate with his family to Palestine but failed to obtain the required authorisation. After war broke out in September 1939,

he wrote "Terror over Europe. But that will come to an end eventually. The only question is – who will survive? I myself have lived my life, but the young children should still have a happy life in front of them."

On 17 November 1941 his final diary entry appeared. Four days later Cohn, with his wife and two daughters, as well as thousands of other Breslau Jews, were forcibly taken to an assembly camp from which they were transported by railway to Kowno in Lithuania and killed by machine guns fired by SS men and Lithuanian Nazi supporters.

Willy Cohn foresaw what would happen to him and found a way to rescue his diary. At least he fulfilled his final wish, of reporting the Jews' sufferings to the outside world.

The second Breslauer, Paul Peikert, was a priest born in 1884, who kept a diary describing the 14 weeks' encirclement of Breslau by the Russian army, from January to May, 1945. The fanatical Nazi Gauleiter, Karl Hanke, refused to surrender even when the situation was hopeless. Two thirds of the Breslau population - women, children and old people - was ruthlessly driven out of the city by the Nazis. They trudged through the deep snow, the majority collapsing from the bitter cold and exhaustion. On 17 February Breslau was completely surrounded by the Russians and the three month-long siege became known as Festung Breslau - Fortress Breslau.

Peikert describes the continuous bombardment from the ground and air attacks from the sky. The city lay in ruins when it finally capitulated to the Russians on 6 May, only two days before the end of the war.

In his final entry Peikert writes "May this diary and its reports show future generations what human beings living in our times had to endure and may God's merciful goodness keep them safe from similar disasters."

**Michael Brown**

# LETTER FROM ISRAEL BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



## DEAD SEA DELIGHTS



When my knees started giving me trouble on the stairs at home I told my husband we should take a break from

our active retirement and spend a few days at the Dead Sea. Being a strong believer in the efficacy of natural cures and the restorative powers of the super-salty water of the Dead Sea, I was convinced that a few days of soaking in the healing waters would do the trick.

We had to wait a couple of weeks until the room with a view at our hotel of preference was available, so by the time we got there my knee had recovered. Still, I thought, like chicken-soup for a corpse, a few days in the calming atmosphere of the lowest place on earth wouldn't do any harm, so we went anyway.

The weekend happened to coincide with one of those times when a Hamsin, a period of extreme heat, descends on the whole of Israel and very few people venture outside. At the Dead Sea it is almost always very hot, but the air-conditioning throughout the hotel kept us cool provided we stayed indoors. Some people still ventured outside to swim in the hotel's fresh-water pool, but luckily for me the salt-water treatment pool is indoors, so I could attend to my knees with impunity. Some brave souls even trekked to swim in the actual sea, but I was not among them.

The valley of the Dead Sea is a unique geological phenomenon. As well as being the lowest place on earth, according to Wikipedia it is "an endorheic lake located in the Jordan Rift Valley, a geographic feature formed by the Dead Sea Transform

(DST). This left lateral-moving transform fault lies along the tectonic plate boundary between the African Plate and the Arabian Plate." For me it constitutes a picturesque sheet of shining blue water wedged between the rocky hillsides on the Israeli side and the purple mountains in the distance on the Jordanian side. From our hotel room I managed to paint a few pictures of the magical scenery, which has the additional quality of engendering a sense of tranquillity. Its situation far below sea-level means that the atmospheric pressure in the region is very high, and its position also serves to screen out the potentially harmful ultra-violet rays of the sun. This, together with the luxurious atmosphere created by the hotel, certainly helps to induce a sense of well-being.

In addition, however, the Dead Sea itself is undergoing a process whereby the water, salt and the minerals it contains

are being used in the production of industrial materials for the manufacture of motor cars. In addition, evaporation and other climatic factors are constantly reducing its extent, endangering the future of the region as the waters retreat and sink-holes appear in the surrounding land. Plans have been mooted in the past to create a channel from either the Mediterranean or the Red Sea to augment the water in the Dead Sea, but to date nothing has actually been done.

We can only hope that in the not-too-distant future someone in a position of power will act responsibly and do something about implementing at least one of the plans to save the Dead Sea.

## CONFERENCE

**Emigration from Nazi-Occupied Europe to British Overseas Territories after 1933**  
**Triennial International Conference of the Research Centre for German & Austrian Exile Studies**  
**13-15 September 2017, Senate House, University of London, Malet St., London WC1E 7HU**

This conference, supported by the AJR, is the first ever held to cover the emigration of refugees from Nazi Europe to the full range of territories then under British control. That includes Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as Palestine, Shanghai and other lesser-known destinations, from Singapore to Kenya and Mauritius to Northern Rhodesia. The conference features 25 speakers from countries across the world. The conference organisers are Anthony Grenville and Jana Buresova (London) and Swen Steinberg (Dresden).

**For the full programme and for registration, by 25 August, go to [www.sas.ac.uk/events/event/6784](http://www.sas.ac.uk/events/event/6784), or contact Jane Lewin on 020 7862 8833**



## LUNCH

**Wednesday 13 September 2017**  
**At Alyth Gardens Synagogue**  
**12.30pm**

**We are delighted to be joined by**  
**Rabbi Geoff Shisler**

Rabbi Shisler retired in 2014 as Rabbi of the New West End Synagogue in London, UK, where he occupied the pulpit from 2000. Prior to that he was Rabbi to the Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation, on the south coast of England for seven years, and before that he served the Kenton Synagogue as Chazan/Minister for twenty years.



Rabbi Shisler commenced his career as Cantor of the famous New Synagogue, Egerton Road, Stamford Hill London N.16 where among his predecessors were the illustrious Jacob Goldstein and Ephrayim Rosenberg.

Geoffrey Shisler is an Associate member of The Inner Magic Circle with Silver Star. The only Rabbi in the society.

**Booking is essential for catering purposes.**  
**£7.00 per person**

**For details please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)**

# Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication.

## FRAMPTON CONTINUED

The letter from Kitty Freund in your May issue made fascinating reading. Reverend Samuel Frampton started life with the surname of Friedeberg. The name change resulted from understandable anti-German sentiment in WW1. He married Miriam, one of the daughters of the Reverend George Joseph Emanuel, Chief Minister at Singers Hill Synagogue, Birmingham from 1867 to 1911.

Another of Rev Emanuel's daughters, Lily, also married into the Jewish clergy and a son, Arthur Emanuel, holds the genealogical record for my family, even capping Kitty Freund (so far!) by dying in 1978 aged almost 106. Another son, Prof. Joseph Emanuel, became the first head of Cardiological Medicine in the University of Birmingham and his son, the late Richard Emanuel, became a leading heart specialist at the Middlesex Hospital in London.

On a much sadder theme, Rev and Mrs. Frampton's granddaughter, her husband and their son were all tragically murdered in Sheffield in 1983 after a family wedding.  
*(Dr) Anthony Joseph, Smethwick*

## PLAQUE FOR EISLER

Firstly, may I say how much I appreciate reading your excellent Journal – so informative, cultured, civilised and thought-provoking.

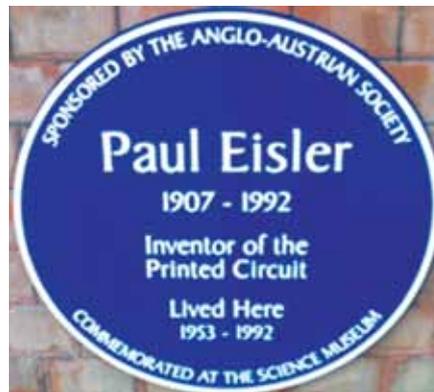
My wife inherited a book *The Technology of Printed Circuits* by Paul Eisler, published in 1959 and dedicated to my wife's uncle. Eisler was an inventor and pioneer in several areas of technology and electronics. Born in Austria in 1907, he came to England in 1936. He was able to help several members of his family escape Austria but was subject to internment by the British as an enemy alien after the onset of World War II. In his 1959 book he accurately foresaw a future of printed circuit boards in widespread use, along with increasing miniaturisation,

automation and computerisation.

Paul Eisler died in 1992, and, according to the AJR Journal of November 2014, a memorial plaque was put up on his former residence somewhere in London. I am keen to learn where exactly the plaque is, and who sponsored it?

*Jeremy Antrich*

**NOTE FROM EDITOR: We have consulted all the relevant archives and the plaque for Paul Eisler was put up by the Anglo-Austrian Society and is in Exeter Road, Cricklewood.**



## LIGHTS ... CAMERA ... ACTION!!!

One of the moguls mentioned in your July article "How Hitler Helped Hollywood" was Carl Laemmle, a cousin of mine. Very early in the 1930s Carl recognised the threat that Hitler posed. In a quiet, unassuming way, Carl performed many humanitarian deeds, personally granting perhaps 300 \$1m affidavits to help fellow Jews to gain the necessary emigration and immigration clearances. One of these affidavits was given to my aunt. In the 1930s such a sum was beyond telephone numbers! But Carl also successfully persuaded other Jewish media moguls to assist with his rescue efforts.

Many of those whom Carl helped to escape Nazi Germany were not his relatives but were often declared as such in order to expedite the necessary clearances. It was said that in Hollywood two languages were spoken: German and English! It is in that

context that we should understand the quote contained in your article: "Carl Laemmle has a very large faemmle".  
*Ernie Hunter*

## MIXED FEELINGS ON AUSTRIA

Dr Grenville's recent article on Austria was a readable and interesting review until one reached the last four chapters. These detracted from the meaning of the article by facts and figures that did nothing to add value. As a result of reading those last four paragraphs should I change my perception that I live in a GREAT Britain that accepted my parents and me in our hour of need? Should I campaign against Brexit? Should I pack up and leave?  
*Mike Saunders,*  
*'Babe in Arms' refugee, SE London*

I always enjoy Anthony Grenville's articles, which are so well written. I too hail from Vienna, coming to England with my mother on 20 December 1939. I have been back many times to show my children and grandchildren where I was born and to show off the lovely city of Vienna. But to this day I have very mixed feelings about the people of Vienna and suspect there is still an undertone of antisemitism.  
*Freddy Berdach*

Dr Grenville appears to believe the UK should remain in the EU to preserve peace in Europe. He may be correct about the role the EU has played but this does not mean that Britain's withdrawal would weaken the EU position as we want to co-operate fully in both military and security spheres. NATO too will continue to be crucial.

Lost in the current arguments about the single market, immigration and the customs union is the fact that the EU grand plan is for a united states of Europe. Most of us do not have the stomach for this. Nor are we content to pay the price of membership, both in terms of monetary contributions

and the social changes and pressures of uncontrolled immigration. Britain's current position as a partially detached EU member cannot last and if we do not leave now it is very likely that in future we will become a fully-fledged member. And just as voters were never asked in 1972 whether we wanted to join the EU, the next step will be taken by stealth.

Outside the EU Britain can thrive in the long term. To continue to be linked to a bloated and dysfunctional bloc is not in our interests.

*Janet Clarke & Anthony Portner, Surrey*

### FOR LETTING US GO

Anita Grosz' moving article about the new memorial in Prague has moved me to write about my own mother, Beila Gittel Schütz, who was born in 1902 in Korzcina (Poland). Her own mother having died during the 1916 flu epidemic, she was left at a very young age to look after her father and two-year old twin sister and brother. The family left Poland for Berlin soon after WW1 and in 1924 she married my father, Josef Schütz, also from Poland. They had three daughters: Ruth, Betty and Bronia.

On 28 October 1938 my beloved father was one of 19,000 Jews arrested by the Gestapo and deported to the Polish border town of Zbaszyn. He perished in Bergen-Belsen in January 1945.

My mother, together with my older sister Ruth who was 13 at the time, made several attempts to get us onto a Kindertransport. Unable to obtain the necessary permits for Ruth and myself, then 9 years old, and at my sister's prompting, she put us on a train with a Kindertransport leaving for Belgium, without the necessary documents, or a foster family to receive us. Thanks to the benevolence of a Belgian border guard we were allowed into Belgium without entry permits.

In August 1939, just weeks before the outbreak of WWII, my mother managed to obtain an English work permit as a domestic servant. On her way to England, together with my little four-year old sister Bronia, she spent two days with us in our children's home near Brussels. Imagine her utter

distress when, on the point of their departure for London, she was told by the ladies of the Refugee Committee in charge of our hostel, that she could not take Bronia with her to England, as they would both be sent back by the Immigration authorities.

Arriving in London with the 10 Marks she was allowed to take out of Germany and knowing no English, she immediately contacted the Home Office to try to get permission to bring us to England, but was informed we were not a priority, as we were safe in Belgium.

My mother survived the war on her own in London, not knowing the fate of her husband and three children. She never remarried and did not enjoy good health. Having spent the last two years of her life on my sister's Kibbutz, she died in Israel in her 81st year and is buried in the Kibbutz cemetery. On her grave, facing the Golan hills, we have placed a memorial stone in memory of my father who has no known grave.

It was her supreme courage in letting us go that saved our lives, an act of self-sacrifice I shall never forget.

*Betty Bloom (Schütz)*

### THANKS HOWARD

It was with sadness that I read of the resignation of AJR Editor, Howard Spier. A gracious man, I wish him well in his retirement. AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman wrote that Howard's specialism was the Letter Pages. I hope I helped him keep the letters rolling in, and to fill those pages with plenty of discussion points. The first letter I contributed was about 15 years ago, when Howard took over as Editor. I cannot remember what it was about but it was provocative. Howard loved the letter. It caused him to receive many letters on the subject, most disagreeing vehemently with me. Howard thought we had hit a winning formula. I provoke, he gets lots of mail attacking me. Luckily I am fairly thick-skinned and we continued in this way until Howard's departure.

Once, when I sat next to Gaby Glassman at an AJR function, she admitted that, seeing my name next to hers, she nearly asked to be moved! Fortunately, by the end of the tea she

realised that I wasn't as nasty as my image and, indeed, we got on very well.

To new Editor, Jo Briggs, I should like to say "Good luck. You have a very difficult act to follow."

*Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.*

As the former proof reader of the Journal and its predecessors for nearly 27 years, until the change of editorship in late 2016, I still take a keen interest in it. May I thus add my voice to those who have commented on a legibility problem in the redesigned magazine. A particular example of this occurred in the August issue on page 11 with its mottled blue background. Overall I preferred the journal in its previous, more sedate version! Nevertheless, long may it continue.

I would also like to pay tribute to Howard Spier. It was a pleasure to work with him all those years during my monthly stints. We had our occasional differences of opinion but these were always amicably resolved, usually in his favour!

*Gerta Regensburger*

## BEREAVEMENTS

**Edith Argy, born Vienna 1919, died London 2017. A citizen of the world, much loved and mourned by Marianne and Serge and by her close friends.**

**Leonore Samuel nee Buchsbaum, passed away on 21 July 2017, aged 93. Wonderful, remarkable and courageous, she is loved and missed by all who knew her.**

## SEPTEMBER SERENADE

This year's AJR Annual Lunch is taking place on Sunday 10 September at the Holiday Inn in Elstree. Three very talented singers will be accompanied by a pianist, entertaining the guests during what promises to be a wonderful networking event.

# ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

Rarely seen portrait drawings by old masters are on show, some for the first time in decades at the National Portrait Gallery in **The Encounter: Drawings from Leonardo to Rembrandt**. These chalk sketches often seem produced in a hurry to achieve immediate rapport between artist and subject. Many are so light sensitive that they are rarely displayed, and are described as “hidden treasures of Britain’s finest collections.” All reflect a moment captured by an artist of a friend, a pupil or a stranger in the street - like **Carlo Dolci’s** portrait of his shoemaker, a cynical old man with Semitic features. Fifteen drawings have been loaned from the Queen’s Collection, including eight by the 16th Century artist **Hans Holbein the Younger**.

The back story is the artist’s sketchbook, kept in studios where apprentice artists learned to draw by copying from the Master. Studies of faces, male and female, animals and motifs were re-used in larger compositions. For instance, the workshop of **Hans Holbein the Elder** contained a model book of head studies, and an inscription suggests that his sons Hans and Ambrosius may have had to copy them.

One of the loveliest and purest images in this show is the younger Holbein’s *Woman Wearing a White Headdress*. The lady’s perfect oval features are accentuated by a cylindrical hat, and a very different portrait by the same artist,



**Man Wearing a Black Cap** by Hans Holbein the Younger c.1535 Royal Collection Trust © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2017

*Man Wearing a Black Cap* portrays the sitter with a full black beard and a rather elaborate coat offsetting a quiet, benign expression. Holbein’s portrait of *John More* is posed reflectively in a similar flat cap and the same ornate, heavy jacket, but he is looking down with a withdrawn expression, reading a book. Another Holbein portrait of a *Woman Wearing a White Headdress* has a ghostly subtlety, with the features emerging strongly from the understated dress. *Young Woman in a French Hood* is suggestive of Anne Boleyn.

Some 100 years later, something tougher emerges. The faint drawing of *Old Woman Wearing a Ruff and Cap* attributed to **Jacob Jordaens**, has a worldly disdain on her features, contrasted by the Puckish charm of **Daniel Dummetier’s** *Young Man with a Beard*. *A Middle Aged Man with Curly Hair*, attributed to **Lagneau** is more fully described, and his pugnacious features, formed into a redoubtable glare suggests someone you wouldn’t care to meet in a dark 17th-century night alley.

So there is beauty and burliness here – all the fun of the fair if you imagine these



**Woman Wearing a White Headdress** by Hans Holbein the Younger c.1532-43 Royal Collection Trust © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2017

great artists setting up stall and touting for business. **Leonhard Beck’s** *Young Man Wearing a Black Cap*, conveys a character looking down with poetic intensity, while *Young girl looking to her right*, attributed to **Leendert van der Cooghen** has surprisingly womanly features as she sits back trying to make sense of the world unfolding before her.

**Leonardo da Vinci’s** *Study of a Male Nude*, painted in 1504, and **Rembrandt’s** *Studies of Male Heads* and *Three Sketches of a Woman with a Child* are looser examples, perhaps less interesting than the drawings which fully reveal the sitter.

The exhibition continues until **22 October**.

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**CONTEMPORARY  
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# AT YOUR SERVICE: AJR Volunteers

Each year over 350 people kindly give up some of their free time to help AJR members. Drawn from all backgrounds and age groups, the AJR volunteers are a wonderful bunch of people that we couldn't do without.

Want help with your computer? Need someone to chat to? Or have you a relative suffering from dementia who could do with extra support? Whatever the request there is probably an AJR volunteer who can help.

The team is headed up by Carol Hart, who joined the AJR 15 years ago. Naomi Kaye and Jennifer Eisenberg look after the volunteers supporting clients with dementia in the north and south of England respectively, Claude Vecht-Wolf has specific responsibility for computer support, Debra Barnes co-ordinates the My Voice project in London with Hila Kaye co-ordinating in Manchester and Leeds, Fran Horwich is the Northern volunteer co-ordinator, and Ros Collin runs the Telephone Friends service. In Scotland there is Agnes Isaacs who, alongside her work for the AJR's Outreach team, now spends two days a week co-ordinating volunteers in Scotland. Administration for the team is provided by an intern from the ARSP.

Collectively, they oversee an extended team of 350+ volunteers providing on the ground assistance for AJR members across Britain. Assistance comes in different ways – some AJR members just want someone to play cards or board games with, others like to go for a walk or be taken to the supermarket, or need helping sorting out old photos or keeping filing up to date.

Sadly, an increasing number of AJR members now suffer from some form of dementia. AJR started its 'Dementia Befriending' service in 2013 and it is now an important part of the volunteer team's work.

The majority of client referrals come via AJR's social workers but the team also



Naomi Kaye with AJR member Ralph Black, who is visited weekly by volunteer Angela Szczepaniuk

receives requests from individual members as well as children and grandchildren of AJR members seeking more support for their loved ones.

The crucial thing is matching clients with the right volunteer. As Carol Hart explains, "We can't just pick the next name off the list. We think very carefully about the personalities involved and the exact type of support the AJR member needs. It's a bit like Match.com except we don't rely on computers, it's about real people."

For this reason, the volunteers are very carefully recruited and closely supported in their roles.

"Our rigorous application and induction process gives us a good feel for every volunteer's particular qualities and skills," explains Carol. "Someone from the team accompanies every volunteer on their first visit to a client, and conducts a telephone debrief after the second visit. Thereafter we touch base at least every six weeks and also run an annual evaluation study."

Carol is proud that in the 2016 volunteers' survey, conducted by the Jewish Volunteering Network on the AJR's behalf, 100% of respondents felt their efforts were welcomed and appreciated while nine out of ten agreed the volunteers' programme was well organised. Similar positive feedback is received from clients.

As for the volunteers' own motivations, one comment in the JVN survey said it all: "It gives me great pleasure in helping all the AJR members who have suffered so much and are so giving. My life is enriched by meeting the families I visit."

## FROM OUR CO-ORDINATOR

I began working as the Northern Dementia Befriending Co-ordinator in May 2015. Since then I have been on a journey both literally – travelling over the Pennines regularly – and emotionally, meeting wonderful characters and helping to ease the pain that dementia brings to our clients and their families.

My clients are not just located in the predictable Jewish suburbs of Leeds and Manchester. One particular client was well off the beaten track but we found a Malaysian student who was willing to catch a train, bus, then walk the rest of the way to spend quality time with him every week.

Another client, this time in Manchester, struggles with both motor and cognitive functions and conversation is non-existent. But he had been very musical, and by the end of our first visit he was singing to the music brought along by our volunteer. The client has since moved into a care home and our volunteer still visits him there even though it's a fair walk.

A Sheffield client is visited by a lady who shows a great deal of empathy to the turmoil that dementia can bring. On some visits the client is animated and eager to walk around her house showing off her works of art. On days when she feels more introvert the volunteer will sit and read her poems, taking some of the strain off the husband as primary carer.

Each client experiences their past in a different way and each client reacts differently to dementia. They are all individuals with individual needs just as every volunteer offers something unique. When the right match is made the volunteer's kindness and commitment serves to enlighten and relieve our client of their anxiety, even for just a moment.

**Naomi Kaye**

# REVIEWS

## **THERESIENSTADT 1941-1945; The Face of a Coerced Community** by H.G.Adler

(Cambridge University Press, 2017)

This monumental monograph, to which no book review can hope to do justice, comprises 850+ pages and constitutes a scientific analysis of the concentration camp that was located in what was known by the Germans as the Protectorate and today is the Czech Republic. First published in German in 1955, with a revised edition in 1960, the long-awaited English version just been made available.

The author was a poet, novelist, and scholar who was incarcerated in Theresienstadt from 1942 to 1944. His book is generally devoid of personal reminiscences, instead undertaking an exhaustive and objective study of the making and maintenance of the camp, focusing systematically on its history, sociology, and psychology. Within these categories there are subdivisions into deportations to and from Theresienstadt, administration, population, housing, nutrition, labour, economy, legal and health conditions, to name but a few. Each section, chapter, and category is accompanied by extensive statistical data, original source-material, personal accounts, and documentary evidence.

The cover illustration shows a prisoner wearing a cook's uniform giving out food in the ghetto courtyard to a newly-arrived transport of Dutch Jews. This seems strange at first, considering the general insufficiency of food in the camp, but it fits into the façade of normality that the Germans created, to mask the violence, intimidation, and warped regulations that governed the inmates' lives.

Adler traces the history of the camp from its initial inception by Himmler and Heydrich as 'a city peopled by Jews' to a place of imprisonment for thousands of individuals brought primarily from the Protectorate and the Reich. Many of those sent there were considered to be privileged

because of their service in the German army in WWI or special social or intellectual status.

Adler describes the horrors experienced during the initial transport, arrival and processing at the camp, likening the experience to birth - a passage from one state of being to another, generally accompanied by crying. He describes the mental anguish and process of debilitation experienced by new arrivals, and by elderly persons in particular, many of whom rapidly descended into dementia and/or hysteria, or a form of apathy that soon led to death.

Accommodation and sanitary conditions in the camp were substandard in the extreme, disease and vermin of all kinds were rife, and privacy and hygiene were simply out of the question. According to Adler, certain Jews who were appointed 'room elders' or 'camp elders' exploited their positions for personal gain and comfort. Welfare and medical departments were set up, supposedly to care for the prisoners, but the paucity of equipment and medicines meant little could be done. Work of one kind or another was required of all prisoners, and the threat of being transported to an unknown destination in the east (usually Auschwitz) was ever-present.

In one of the last chapters Adler describes the vibrant cultural and artistic life that prevailed in the camp, perceiving it as escape from grim reality. Most of the camp's leading artists, musicians, actors, and writers were deported to Auschwitz and murdered as the end of the war approached. This was also the fate of many of the 'camp elders' who had previously benefitted from preferential treatment by the SS. The overall impression is of depravity and misery, an inevitable adjunct of the general situation in the camp.

In addition to an index, the book also includes a chronological summary of the salient events on a day-by-day basis, as well 200 pages detailing sources and literature. Special credit should go to Belinda Cooper, whose translation from the original German reads fluently and well. As an account of an abominable episode in human history, this book constitutes a milestone of objective

dedication to recording every aspect of this 'experiment in evil.'

*Dorothea Shefer-Vanson*

## **FROZEN MUD AND RED RIBBONS** By Avital Baruch, Edition Noëma, ISBN: 978-3-8382-0998-2

The subtitle of this book is 'A Romanian Jewish Girl's Survival through the Holocaust in Transnistria and its rippling effect on the second generation'. So I already had a pretty good idea of what the book was about when I met the author at the AJR Edgware Group event in July.

Avital Baruch was born in 1957 in Haifa to two Romanian refugees. Her mother - Sophica - was one of 150,000 Jews deported from Northern Romania to eastern Ukraine during WWII. After surviving extreme cold, typhus, starvation and other incredible hardships, but watching her father and sister perish, she arrived in Israel with her mother in 1950. She was given a new Hebrew name, Shulamit, and assigned to a kibbutz in Northern Galilee. She met and fell in love with a distant cousin Hermann, now known as Tzvi, and the couple set up home in a tiny village outside Haifa where Avital and her younger brother Uri were born.

Sophica/Shulamit was a very responsible mother, always keeping her children well fed and beautifully presented, but she was emotionally reserved and never talked openly about her experiences during the Holocaust. When Avital was in her fifties she came across a family secret which prompted her to start asking questions. Six years of painstaking research later, this book was published.

The book combines the chronological story of Avital's mother's family, interspersed with Avital's own personal anecdotes. There are lots of names and countless details, which I personally found quite complicated to follow, especially as the book is very tightly set. But the family tree and maps are very useful, as is a chapter at the end setting out the historical background to the stories.

During her presentation to AJR's Edgware group, the author spoke of her desire to make the book historically accurate as well as a compelling personal tale. She has certainly achieved this. I asked her how her mother – who had been so resistant to talk – had reacted to the book. Apparently Sophica/Shulamit has proudly shown the book to several people, making Avital confident that she is pleased that her story is out, even if she doesn't overtly say so.

Until recently, Romania outwardly denied involvement in the Holocaust. But this summer the Claims Conference announced they have at last secured compensation for people deported from Northern Romania. Reading Avital's account of some of these people's experiences leaves one with no question about the validity of such claims.

*Jo Briggs*

#### LETTERS FROM LONY

Letters from Lony was an unusual and poignant item in the largely classical programme of the 25th Proms at St Jude's Music and Literary Festival, held at the end of June in the heart of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

The "Suburb", as it is known locally, was home to a number of German refugees who worked hard to re-establish the comfortable homes of their youth. They were particularly clustered in the "newer" part, to the north east, built in the 1930s. Among this post-war generation of home owners is Peter Lobbenberg, a successful chartered accountant.

When his mother, Annemarie, died in 1971 and he cleared her home, he came across a pile of letters and postcards from the grandmother in Amsterdam he knew about but had never met. Although sent to her daughter, they directly addressed him, a baby born nine days after the outbreak of the Second World War.

They were letters from a situation of growing menace and then crisis as Germany invaded Holland in May 1940, then uncertainty in ever-deteriorating circumstances. Finally, in winter 1943-44, came news of a move to Westerbork, the holding camp for Dutch Jews, and informing of yet another move to Theresienstadt, which was not presented as a concentration camp. The tone is one of keeping a brave face, giving any good news, with as few complaints as possible, bar dental visits, and requests for shoes and a nice dress.

Lony (Leonie) Rabi-Fraenkel, a widow since 1925, left her native Berlin some 10 or 12 years later, in her late 50s, to settle in Amsterdam. She had already run a cafe in Berlin and now set one up in Amsterdam to attract fellow-refugees. She hoped to move on to Brazil, where she had applied for a visa.

Her younger daughter Annemarie reached England with her husband, Hans Lobbenberg, whom she married in 1934. With the blitz on London, the Lobbenbergs moved their corsetry factory to Shrewsbury. Silhouette, originally a German firm, became one of the most successful British corsetry companies in the second half of the 20th century.

But for grandmother Lony, it was her new-born grandson who provided a focus amidst the perils of war-torn life. As in so many cases, Peter had to do his own research to find out more about his grandmother. His mother had never spoken about the painful past.

The idea of transmuting these letters, apparently banal but full of love and longing, into musical form came from his longstanding friendship with composer and conductor Ronald Corp, music director of Highgate Choral Society. The choir numbers Peter's wife, Naomi, among its singers.

Translated and abridged, they were sung by mezzo soprano Sarah Pring to a highly appreciative audience, with a nice balance between the conversational aspect and underlying worry. Since the text was written in the programme and lighting was uniform in the church venue, there was no problem following the words. Drama was added by the repeated use of a lullaby, particularly after Lony's last letter giving her future Theresienstadt address.

As Sarah Pring repeated this haunting lullaby, the musicians stopped, and she walked through the audience in the dark and out of the hall. It was a spine-chilling moment. The well-deserved applause somehow felt wrong. Silence would have been more appropriate.

*Ruth Rothenberg*

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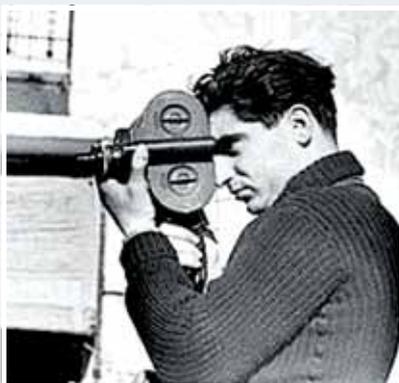
# The Best Photojournalist of our Time



Robert Capa D-Day (*Time's* 100 most influential photos of all time)

Robert Capa (real name: Endre Friedmann) was born in Budapest in 1913. At age 18 he was arrested as a result of his resistance to the fascist Horthy regime and fled Hungary to Berlin. There he started writing articles and, with the use of his new 35 mm camera, developed his unique photographic style.

From Berlin he moved to Paris where he met the love of his life, Gerda Pohrylles, who became his agent. As selling photos under Friedmann's real name was difficult they reinvented him as a famous American photographer, called Robert



Robert Capa on assignment in Spain, by Gerda Taro

Capa, and he became very successful. (Capa, pronounced 'tsapa', means shark in Hungarian. It was his nickname in school.)

An important part of his career was his assignment to the Spanish Civil War and it was there that he took his most famous photograph: a Loyalist soldier, hit by a bullet, falling backwards, his outstretched arm still clutching his rifle.

He taught Gerda (now calling herself Gerda Taro) to take pictures and years later she was recognised in her own right. The greatest tragedy of Capa's life was the accidental death of Gerda during the war. She was just 26. He never recovered from this and could never form another long-term relationship. It left a dark shadow over his hedonistic, life-loving image.

Now living in London he became a sought-after photographer, working for *Collier* and *Life* magazines, from whom he received an urgent call to join the American troops on D-Day. Braving machine gun fire, he waded ashore on Omaha beach. An iconic photograph shows a soldier half submerged, with the photo rather hazy, because of a mishap in the laboratory in London. The soldier was tracked down after the war. He said a sergeant and a photographer saved his life.

A notable assignment after the war was a book on Russia, with text by John

Steinbeck, and he also covered the War of Independence in Israel.

In 1948, together with Henri Cartier-Bresson, David Seymour (another Jewish refugee) and George Roger, he founded the photographers' cooperative, Magnum, which is still very influential.

He led a playboy lifestyle. The inscription inside his helmet read, "Property of Robert Capa, war correspondent and lover." Among his many conquests was Ingrid Bergman, who famously asked him to marry her. Capa gently refused, saying he found it impossible to settle down.

Organising a party for Ernest Hemingway and Hemingway's mistress, the English beauty Pinky, he proceeded to buy a fish bowl, a box of champagne, some brandy and peaches. On the way home Hemingway crashed his car.

In 1954 Capa was asked to cover the French-Indochina war. He was accompanying the French troops, travelling in one of their jeeps. Not heeding their warnings, he jumped off to take photos, stepped on a mine and died.

His photographs are not sensationalist; they are sympathetic to their subjects, always portraying the human cost of war. As he said, he was a war photographer who hated wars. He appears usually with a cheeky grin and a cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth.

The definitive biography of Capa is by Richard Whelan and the best-known book written by Capa, is *Slightly out of Focus*. Also worth reading is Alex Kershaw's *Blood and Champagne*.

## The Mexican Suitcase

A few years ago, hundreds of Capa's negatives were found in a loft in Mexico. Taken in the Spanish Civil War, there is some dispute as to how many were taken by him and how many by Taro.

**Janos Fisher**  
*Bushey Heath*

# Beyond the personal

How the International Tracing Service is helping one particular person to trace his routes and find the Jewish Community of Jászberény.



Magda, Marika and Ági – aged 4, 9 and 12 – were all gassed in Auschwitz in July 1944

In 1957, at the age of three, Tomas Kertész left Hungary with his parents for Sweden. The Kertész family came from Jászberény, a small market town east of Budapest, which had a population of about 500 Jews. In 1942, a camp was established in the town from where young Jewish men were deported for forced labour in the Ukraine and other destinations. After the German occupation, the Jews of Jászberény were confined to a ghetto, from where they were sent to Monor and then deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in July.

In 1997 Tomas Kertész – now a librarian at Stockholm University – began systematically collecting information about the fates of the Jews of Jászberény – starting with his own relatives. Three of his half-sisters were murdered in

Auschwitz-Birkenau. Many others on both his mother's and father's side of the family also did not survive.

He has now interviewed nearly 100 people around the world with connections to his family's hometown. He has collected 1,000 photographs, 40 objects and numerous newspaper articles documenting Jewish life in pre-war Jászberény. Yet one of the most crucial archives for his research has been the International Tracing Service (ITS) digital archive, held in copy at the Wiener Library in London.

The ITS archive, still located in its original paper form in Bad Arolsen, Germany, contains 30 million documents on the fates of over 17 million people. It was gathered in the immediate post-war period to facilitate the search for missing people. The collection steadily increased in size as the Allies opened camps and other sites of persecution, gathering documentary evidence of persecution of the Jews and others. The documents were then re-purposed and used for tracing to help victims find their lost loved ones.

The ITS collection is accessible in Bad Arolsen and the US, Israel, Poland, France, Belgium, and Luxembourg, but the Wiener Library is the only point of access in the UK.

Kertész discovered that at the end of the war there were about 100 Jews left in Jászberény, but the community gradually dwindled. His aim is to publish a website in Swedish, Hungarian and English, hosted by Stockholm University, with a map of Jászberény where virtual visitors can enter Jewish houses and shops, the synagogue and the cemetery with a memorial to those who perished.

Wiener Library staff have special expertise in helping researchers like Kertész navigate the ITS digital archive, which is vast and complex. Many of Kertész's findings were reached by tracing individual names of former Jászberény residents. "Tomas's project is a reflection of years of commitment not only to recovering his own family's history, but also that of the community in which they lived" notes Dr Christine Schmidt, Deputy Director and Head of Research. 'His work shows how ambitious family research can have a much greater impact beyond the personal.'

If you have relatives or any connections to Jászberény or would like to know more about his project, please contact Tomas Kertész at [Tomas.Kerteszt@sub.su.se](mailto:Tomas.Kerteszt@sub.su.se). To conduct research in the ITS digital archive at the Wiener Library, please visit [wienerlibrary.co.uk/ITS](http://wienerlibrary.co.uk/ITS) or contact Christine Schmidt ([cschmidt@wienerlibrary.co.uk](mailto:cschmidt@wienerlibrary.co.uk).)



Tomas Kertész

# Around the AJR

## NORTHERN REGIONAL



After a warm welcome by Michael Newman, AJR Chief Executive, members from Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, York and Bradford heard from Carol Hart, Head of the Volunteers Department and Sue Kurlander, Head of Social Services.

The meeting then split into three discussion groups and after lunch we were delighted to be joined by Gillian Merron, Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews since 2014. She spoke interestingly about her career path in politics and the work of the Board of Deputies in fighting antisemitism and representing the Jewish community in the UK.

We thank Wendy Bott, Northern Outreach co-ordinator, and all the staff who worked so hard for this event.

*Peter Kurer*

## KINDERTRANSPORT LUNCH



AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman with Mark Regev

Over 40 Kindertransport members enjoyed a delicious lunch followed by a talk by His Excellency Mark Regev, Israeli Ambassador to the UK. Introduced by AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman, the Ambassador spoke of the strong empathy he feels for the Kinder and his own recent visit to Germany to trace his father's roots.

There was much talk about how to find a solution to peace in Israel and whether it is indeed possible. Questions from the audience ranged from Donald Trump's input in the peace negotiations to the education and brainwashing of Palestinian children against Israel.

We are very grateful to His Excellency for taking time out of his busy schedule, between a meeting with the Jordanian Ambassador and the Indian Jewish Association, to speak to the Kinder.

*Susan Harrod*

## BOOK CLUB: JOSEPH'S BOOKSHOP

We were treated to iced coffee or tea and cake, a gift from the owner in memory of his mother. The next book for discussion will be *Judas* by Amos Oz. Do join us, even if you have not read it.

*Margarete Weiss*

## BOOK CLUB – GLASGOW: "ONE NIGHT ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS"

We discussed this book by Veronica Henry. By coincidence one of our number had just been on the Orient Express so we had oral and visual aids to help with the discussion.

*Halina Moss*

## BROMLEY: WISDOM

We enjoyed watching "Churchill's German Army", which features the fascinating stories of several handsome young refugees who joined the British army and are now very wise, older men.

*Lore Robinson*

## EALING: A LITERARY CRUISE UP THE THAMES

Nick Dobson and Vincent Daniels treated us to pictures and songs associated with the Thames. These included works by Kipling, Oscar Wilde, TS Eliot, Kenneth Graham and others.

*Leslie Sommer*

## WHITECHAPEL GALLERY AND LUNCH AT RINKOFF'S BAKERY: WHITECHAPEL GALLERY

This former library, erected in 1901, has been modernised and now houses many interesting works of well-known contemporary artists. Less than a mile away is the Rinkoff Bakery, established in 1911 and still owned by the same family in its fourth generation (we met the grandson). What a choice of breads were on offer!

*Meta Roseneil*

## GLASGOW: BARBECUE

There was a large turnout of first and second generation for a lovely BBQ lunch, prepared in Anthea's beautiful garden. The weather and the conversation were both excellent.

*Ruth Ramsay*

## ILFORD: FRANK SINATRA

Nigel Colman gave us a run-through of Sinatra's life story – his ups and downs, passions, feuds – accompanied by many of his iconic songs.

*Meta Roseneil*

## FRINGE BENEFITS

One of the highlights of last month's Edinburgh Fringe was the International Shalom Festival. Its founder Nigel Goodridge enthralled the AJR Edinburgh group by telling us how it came about.

In 2014 anti-Israel protestors prevented Israeli theatre group performing during the Fringe. Nigel was so incensed that he visited Israel to find out for himself whether any of the demonstrators' claims were justified and what attempts at co-existence between cultures and religions were being made.

Fuelled by the positive things he saw, he founded the Friends of Israel in Scotland and then the International Shalom Festival. It featured an exhibition, talks, films, a gala night and eight performances of the Incubator Theatre play which had been shut down in 2014.

Nigel - a retired teacher and an active Christian - took early retirement to immerse himself in and promote Israeli culture and coexistence within Israel.

*Vivien Andersen*

**KENSINGTON: GARDEN PARTY**

Interesting conversation covered wide-ranging topics when we enjoyed the hospitality of Judith and David De Haas in their out-of-this-world garden. The company, weather and venue could not have been improved upon.  
*Walter Goddard*

**NORTH LONDON: THE "NAPOLEON OF CRIME"**

David Barnett gave us an erudite and enlightening biography of Adam Worth, who carried out daring and profitable raids internationally. He went from rags to riches – and back to rags, ending in a pauper's grave in Highgate cemetery.  
*Rabbi Harry Jacobi*

**N W LONDON: SHERLOCK HOLMES – A TALK BY NICK DOBSON**

Nick Dobson spoke on The Extraordinary Story of Sherlock Holmes illustrated with projected pictures. We learned many cheerful facts about Holmes, although he was only a figment of Arthur Conan

Doyle's imagination. However, he did not write the famous saying "Elementary, my dear Watson" in this form  
*David Lang*

**PINNER: PORTUGUESE DIPLOMAT ARISTIDE DE SOUSA MENDES**

Based in France in 1939/40, Mendes issued up to 10,000 exit visas to help Jews escape to Portugal. Diane Barnett told how he was sacked by his government and only recognised after his death. He is honoured in Yad Vashem.  
*Robert Gellman*

**THEATRE OUTING – REGENTS PARK: A TALE OF TWO CITIES**

It was good to return to Regent's Park Open Air Theatre for Matthew Dunster's new adaptation of Charles

Dickens' classic. Despite the lovely atmosphere and setting, the play was not to everybody's taste, as scenes from London and the French Revolution in Paris were woven into more contemporary refugee issues. There were some clever vignettes in the first half and the actors gave an upbeat performance throughout.  
*Janet Weston*

**WESSEX: NEW FOREST OUTING**

Our outing to Rhinefield House included the breath-taking 'Alhambra' room, based on Granada's Alhambra palace. It has a circle of jewel-like Magen Davids on its lofty ceiling. Despite bad weather it was a most enjoyable outing.  
*Suzy Ellis*

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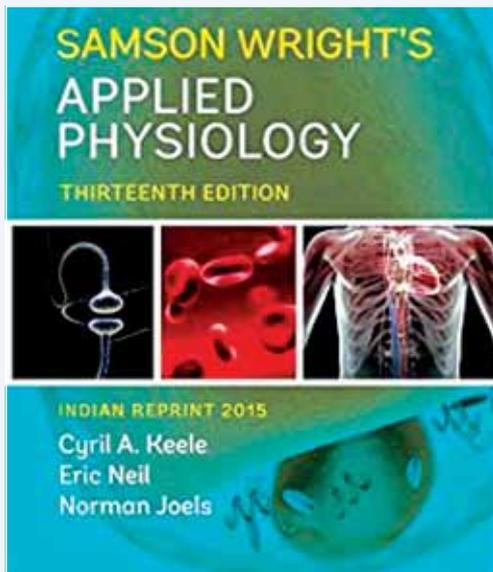
**Child Survivors' Association-AJR**  
Henri Obstfeld  
020 8954 5298 h.obstfeld@talk21.com

# SEPTEMBER GROUP EVENTS

As the exact timings of these events are often subject to last minute changes we do not include them in the AJR Journal and suggest you contact the relevant regional contact for full details.

Prestwich	4 September	Social get-together
Ealing	5 September	Dr Pam Fox – History of the Jews of Golders Green
Ilford	6 September	David Harris – History of JFS
Pinner	7 September	Rob Nothman has worked for over 30 years for the BBC as a broadcaster and producer. In "Making the News" he will explain how a BBC news bulletin is put together.
Wessex	7 September	The Sturgeon Queen
Birmingham	10 September	Annual Garden Party
Cardiff	11 September	Harvey Bratt of UJIA
Essex (Westcliff)	12 September	Michael Newman – Update on the AJR
Glasgow	6 September	Yom Tov nosh get-together
Kingston & Surrey	13 September	Dr Pam Fox talking about her book – the Jews of Golders Green
Brighton	18 September	Charlotte Balazs and Tony Balazs - Dining at The Cosmo and The Dorice.
Edgware	19 September	David Harris – A short history of JFS
Bradford	19 September	Social
Radlett	20 September	Dr Pam Fox – History of the Jews of Golders Green
NW London	25 September	Paul Lang-The Life of a Professional Photographer
Book Club	27 September	Social get-together
Glasgow Book Club	28 September	Social and discussion
Muswell Hill	28 September	David Barnett – Adam Worth: Victorian Jewish Master Criminal
North London	28 September	Margaret Passmore from FCO
Cardiff	11 September	Harvey Bratt from UJIA
Edinburgh	7 September	Afternoon with Artist Miriam Vickers
Newcastle	10 September	Social get-together

# WHERE THERE WAS WRONG THERE WAS WRIGHT



When the Nazis came to power, Jews studying medicine were not allowed to complete their training. Qualified Jewish doctors were suspended from their jobs in state hospitals and could only treat Jewish patients. Samson Wright, the son of Jewish refugees from Pinsk, helped several doctors continue their careers here.

Born in 1899, Samson Wright was brought up in the East End of London. He obtained a scholarship to the Middlesex Hospital Medical School and, at just 31, became Professor of Physiology. His seminal textbook *Applied Physiology* is now in its 13th edition. Postgraduates came from all over the world to study under him.

Samson Wright was very proud of his Jewish roots and was keen to assist Jewish academics fleeing from the Nazis. While there was no established and legislated antisemitism in the UK, it was still very difficult for Jews to gain entry to medical school. Once qualified, obtaining a house job – the vital stepping-stone for a senior career in medicine – was nearly impossible. As a consequence most Jewish consultants took posts outside London and in the minor specialities, such as radiology and dermatology.

Jewish refugee doctors coming from Europe also faced hostility from the medical

profession and the regulatory bodies, being opposed by the British Medical Association, the Royal Colleges and the Medical Practitioners' Union.

Samson Wright helped several Jewish refugee doctors by finding them employment and assisting with their studies. One example was Italo Calma, who had qualified as a doctor in Milan and came to England in 1939. Samson Wright employed him to work with his research team, initially unpaid and subsequently as a lecturer. When Italy entered the war in 1940, Calma was interned on the Isle of Man but later released to act as an interpreter in the BBC Italian Service. After the war, Calma moved to Liverpool where he worked for many years as a medical physiologist and lecturer at Liverpool University. He was still an active member of the AJR when he passed away in 2012.

Alfred J Schweitzer graduated in medicine in Cologne in 1932 and initially worked in Bad Nauheim. Forbidden from practising medicine in Germany, he came to England in 1935. Wright offered him a job in his laboratory, secured his funding and with the help of CARA<sup>1</sup> encouraged him to obtain British medical qualifications. But in 1939 his work permit was revoked and in August 1940, he was interned as an Alien.

Samson Wright intervened on his behalf, writing to the Home Office Aliens Department and threatening to write to the Chancellor of London University. Schweitzer was released within three months and in

1947 was naturalised as a British citizen, becoming a reader of physiology at University College. Sadly, he died in 1952 after a mountaineering accident in the French Alps.

Despite Wright's best efforts, Calma and Schweitzer were still classed as 'outsiders' who had to work beyond mainstream medicine and devote themselves to research. But their research was of inestimable value to the United Kingdom and to medicine in general. E. Bülbring, W. Feldberg, L. Guttman, B. Katz, H. Krebs and H. Lehman were six other refugee doctors from Germany who with Samson Wright's help devoted themselves to research. Three of them obtained the Nobel Prize and five became members of the Royal Society.

Samson Wright was an excellent teacher, and a fine research worker. He not only directly helped numerous Jewish refugees, he persuaded other departments to employ them. He was vice-president of the Board of Deputies and an enthusiastic Zionist, becoming president of the Jewish National Fund. Unfortunately, at the peak of his powers, the death of his wife and his own ill health precluded him from developing and expanding this work and obtaining honour and recognition outside the medical profession.

Shortly after he passed away in 1956, the *British Medical Journal* published an obituary. In this one of his mentees wrote "He was always approachable and not only gave words of reassurance but on many occasions practical and material assistance. I wish to express in the name of the former refugee doctors our feeling of unforgettable indebtedness to Professor Samson Wright."

## John Silver

*ACKNOWLEDGEMENT I am grateful to Professor Otto Hutter and the late Samson Wright's daughters, Sandra Wright and Barbara Lewis for helping me with my research.*

<sup>1</sup> Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (now known as Council for At-Risk Academics) was established in 1933 in response to the persecution of academics across Europe by Fascist regimes. Amongst the 1,500 academics assisted in the early years, 18 went on to win Nobel Prizes.

# LOOKING FOR?

The AJR regularly receives messages from our members and others looking for people or for help in particular subjects. Here are some of the most recent requests – please get in touch directly with the person concerned if you can help.

## MARIANNE WOLF

Rev. Rod Sanders, the son of Elisabeth Sanders, née Quick, has photographs of his mother with a Jewish refugee child who her family took in for a while sometime in the mid-1930s, in their village in Suffolk. His mother remembers her name as being Marianne Wolf (or possibly Wolff) and would love to trace her.

[rod.sanders@sky.com](mailto:rod.sanders@sky.com)

## EX-SERVICEMEN

Harry Stevens, ex Navy (RNVR), is interested in re-introducing regular get-togethers for AJR members who served during World War II (apparently a group used to meet regularly for lunch in Golders Green, but this sadly fizzled out). He suggests meeting over afternoon coffee or early evening drinks anywhere in the North West or West London areas, when different members could share stories of their war-time careers.

[VGreen@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:VGreen@dsl.pipex.com)

## HILDEGARD WALDMANN

Professor Steven Robins at the University of Stellenbosch would be most grateful to any AJR members who might be able to assist with a query about his relative, Hildegard Waldmann, née Urbanski, who lived in Manchester in the 1940s and 1950s, after escaping from Berlin. The family is very keen to know if any of her descendants are still living in Manchester.

[robins@netactive.co.za](mailto:robins@netactive.co.za)

## GERDA WHO?

Anne John is trying to discover what became of a teenage girl named Gerda who came from Danzig and was befriended by her parents late 1938 or early 1939 in the south of France. Anne – whose father, Edward Clinton Smith, was then Managing Director of Perrier Natural Mineral Water - has fond memories of Gerda teaching her German and supervising her piano practice. She travelled with the family on holiday on the Isle of Wight and remained in England when they returned to France. (they themselves immigrated here a year later).

[apcjohn@waitrose.com](mailto:apcjohn@waitrose.com)

## CARA FELLOWS

Martin Thornton from the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA) is planning a series of events for people whose grandparent or parent was helped by the Academic Assistance Council (AAC), the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL) or the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics. These are all previous names of Cara and, if you fall into this category, he would love to invite you to one of the planned events. You may also be able to trace your family history through the Cara archive collections at the Bodleian Library.

[thornton@cara.ngo](mailto:thornton@cara.ngo)

## BUNCE COURT PUPILS

Barbara Meter is a filmmaker who is currently researching a documentary on the children's home Bunce Court in Kent founded by Anna Essinger in 1933 and closed in 1948. Barbara is looking for former pupils and/or their children who would be willing to be interviewed for the film. She has personal ties with Bunce Court, and visited it with her mother just before it closed.

[bmeter@xs4all.nl](mailto:bmeter@xs4all.nl)

If you would like to place a search notice in a future issue of the AJR Journal, please email [editorial@ajr.org.uk](mailto:editorial@ajr.org.uk) including the words **SEARCH REQUEST** in the title of your email.

## ENDING THE SILENCE OVER RAPE

AJR member Ruth Barnett recently represented Holocaust refugees at a symposium in Berlin entitled 'Rape is a Weapon of War: Ending the Silence, Empowering the Survivors'. The high profile event, which included a speech of support by Angela Merkel, addressed the inhuman practice of rape as a weapon of war, sadly as virulent today as it was in World War II.

The United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC) included Rape as a War Crime in the prosecution of WWII perpetrators but the Commission was closed down in 1949. Since then it seems there has been widespread regression to accepting rape as 'unavoidable in war' – 'boys will be boys' after all.

The conference claimed that sexual violence can be eradicated if there is the will to do so. Keynote speaker Bianca Jagger gave a vivid account of the Mass Rape of Bosnian Muslims by the Serbs, involving over 600,000 women. Some were raped 100 or more times, as a strategy of terror and ethnic cleansing.

Everyone left profoundly moved and committed to further raising awareness and initiating action towards the prevention of rape as well as healing and empowering its survivors. Rape during conflict should be recognised as an International War Crime just as it was in 1945-49.



Ruth Barnett (centre) taking part in one of the panel discussions, along with Bosnian Muslim Nusreta Sivac, Yazidi and ISIS survivors Salwa Rasho, Chairwoman of the Women's Group of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group Karin Maag MP, Author Freya Klier

# OBITUARIES

## Rezika Fruhman

Born Budapest 4 June 1922, died Manchester 21 April 2017

Rezika Fruhman was one of the best-known Jewish caterers in the UK. She came here from Poland and went on to head The Holme Caterers in Prestwich, for over 40 years. We print below an extract from her grandson's eulogy.

"When Grandma was born in Budapest in 1922, soon afterwards moving to Krakow, it was impossible to imagine how much the world would change by the time of her passing and, even more so, the rollercoaster of Jewish history in her formative years. At the time of her birth, Jewish life in Central and Eastern Europe was the largest in the world and relatively stable.

"She lost her father at the age of 11 and was then moved from a comfortable life in Krakow to Manchester in 1939. She lived through the war knowing that something grave was happening to her friends and family left behind, without the ability to do anything about it.

"1945 she met and married Samuel Ryba, giving birth to my dad two years later, before tragedy struck and Sam was murdered by a train bomb in 1949 near Barcelona having been visiting on business. She carried on their newly formed business singlehandedly until she remarried my grandpa Mark in 1954 and together they built an incredible business, home and family. In recent years it was not uncommon that four generations would be freely interacting around her, which she loved.

"In 2002 I visited her childhood city of Krakow. Grandma said to call her from my hotel in the Kazimierz district so she could direct me by foot to her childhood home. For 15 minutes her memories of the streets came back to life as she explained the shuls and the schools and the shops that had existed on each street corner. I could feel a sense of joy from grandma that she was sharing the memories with me. I felt she was passing on what had been lost, her incredibly strong Jewish identity and that at least through my experiences it would continue to be remembered.



"I have recently started working alongside the AJR. One of the team who is working on the My Voice project, which catalogues the life of survivors and refugees, has shown me two independent extracts, both saying the same thing and something I was not aware of. Both people approached Grandma in her office in the Holmes, about to make a wedding for their respective daughters, and reported: 'Mrs. Fruhman said we could pay back when we were able to, and we did, every penny. This way, we could make the wedding for our daughter'.

"These incidents show me how other people, unprompted, in a book about their own lives, related to my Grandma and her natural instinct to understand a situation: attributes which we hope will live long in all of us when we remember her".

**Matti Fruhman**

## Margaret Bergmann Lambert

Born Laupheim 12 April 1914, Died New York 25 July 2017

Margaret Bergmann Lambert was a world-class high jumper best known for her non-participation in the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Bergmann was born in Laupheim, the daughter of Edwin and Paula Stern Bergmann. In 1930 she joined Ulmer FV 1894, winning her first title in high jumping in 1931. After the Nazis' accession to power she was expelled from the club and her parents sent her here to England where in 1934 she won the British Championships high jump.

The German government wanted her to return to Germany to help portray the nation as a liberal-minded, tolerant country. Members of her family, who had stayed behind, were threatened

with reprisals if she did not return. She complied and returned to Germany, to prepare for the 1936 Olympic Games. On 30 June 1936, one month prior to the opening ceremony, she tied the German record by jumping 1.60 metres. Two weeks' later she was told by German sports authorities that she was being removed from the national team for under-performance. She was not replaced; instead, Germany fielded only two high jumpers: one of whom was later revealed to be a man raised as a girl. Bergmann's accomplishment was stricken from the record books some weeks later.

In 1937, Bergmann emigrated to the US, settling in New York where she won the US women's high jump and shot put championships, and in 1938 she again won the high jump. Her sports career ended after the outbreak of WWII.



In 1942, she received United States citizenship. She married Bruno Lambert, a physician, and they had two sons. Both Margaret and Bruno reached the ripe old age of 103.

Late in life, Lambert received some of the recognition denied to her in 1936. In 1996, she agreed to attend the Summer Olympics in Atlanta as a guest of the German Olympic committee. "I decided that I could not blame this generation for what their fathers and grandfathers did," she told *The New York Times*.

**Jo Briggs**

## JEWISH MUSEUM VISIT AND TALK ON JFS

OUTING  
THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER 2017



Please join us for a visit to the Jewish Museum, based in Camden

As well as the opportunity to visit the various Galleries and Exhibitions at the Museum, we will then have a talk by David Harris, former Deputy Head teacher of JFS, about the history of JFS, together with various artefacts from the school. This may be of particular interest to those of you who have had children, grandchildren or even great-grandchildren who were pupils.

After the talk we will have lunch at the Museum.

For details please speak to Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)

## Books Bought

MODERN AND OLD

Eric Levene

020 8364 3554 / 07855387574  
[ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk)

## WHY NOT TRY AJR'S MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE?

The AJR offers a kosher Meals on Wheels service delivered to your door once a week.

The meals are freshly cooked every week by Kosher to Go. They are then frozen prior to delivery.

The cost is £7.00 for a three-course meal (soup, main course, desert) plus a £1 delivery fee.

Our aim is to bring good food to your door without the worry of shopping or cooking.

For further details, please call AJR Head Office on 020 8385 3070.



## AJR FILM CLUB

Our next film showing will be at Sha'arei Tzedek North London Reform Synagogue, 120 Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone N20 9EZ

on **Monday 9 October 2017**  
**at 12.30pm**

Lunch of smoked salmon bagels, Danish pastries and tea or coffee will be served first.

## DENIAL

When university professor Deborah E. Lipstadt includes World War II historian David Irving in a book about Holocaust deniers, Irving accuses her of libel and sparks a legal battle for historical truth. With the burden of proof placed on the accused, Lipstadt and her legal team fight to prove the essential truth that the Holocaust occurred. Based on the book "History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier."

**£8.00 per person**

**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL**

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)

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*Impeccable references provided*



## 10-DAY VISIT TO ISRAEL NOVEMBER 2017

The AJR is considering organising a 10-day trip to Israel in early November this year.

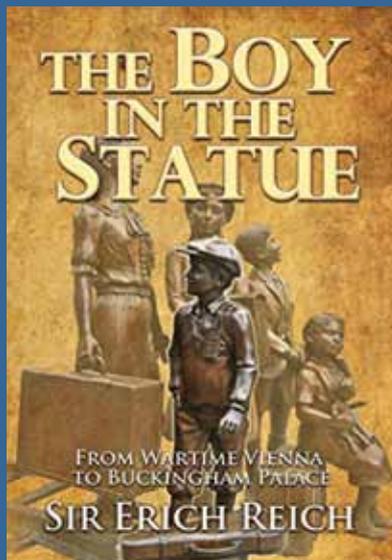
The cost of the visit is not yet decided.

Carol Rossen will be accompanying the trip.

If you would like to join the trip, please contact Lorna Moss on 020 8385 3070 or at [lorna@ajr.org.uk](mailto:lorna@ajr.org.uk) as soon as possible.

## TOUR DE FORCE

World Jewish Relief has organised a one-off walking tour of North West London on Sunday 3 September. It is designed to provide a unique glimpse into the lives and contributions of Jewish refugees in the 1930s towards shaping the landscape of North West London and indeed the whole of British society.



AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman will be speaking on 12 September at the Wiener Library at the launch of *The Boy in the Statue*, the autobiography of Sir Erich Reich.

## MEMORIES OF BERLIN

On the evening of 26 October JW3 will host a very special concert in aid of the National Holocaust Centre and Museum in Nottinghamshire.

The internationally-acclaimed singer Max Raabe will take the audience back to the Berlin of the 1920s and early '30s. A city on the edge, an exhilarating place of unbridled artistic experimentation. A city that only a few years later would be changed forever with the rise of Nazism.

Accompanied by pianist Christoph Israel, Max will perform songs by Jewish composers, evoking the satire and bite of Berlin's cabaret



and counterbalanced by poignant expressions of love and longing.

Tickets for this event are available from [memoriesofberlin.eventbrite.co.uk](http://memoriesofberlin.eventbrite.co.uk)

## BREATHE DEEPLY MY SON

Breathe Deeply my Son is a new documentary produced by Ilana Metzger about the life of her Father, Henry Wermuth, during WW2. Henry is a Holocaust survivor who tried to assassinate Hitler after breaking out of a Nazi camp, and the film re-traces part of his harrowing journey.

The film will be premiered at JW3 on Wednesday 8 November and will be followed by a Q&A with Ilana, Henry and the directors.



## COPING WELL UP NORTH

AJR Chief Executive, Michael Newman, together with our Head of Volunteers Carol Hart and Head of Social Services Sue Kurlander, all attended a recent gathering of AJR members in Scotland and Newcastle.

The meeting included three discussion groups whose topics were:

- 1) What is the best for us - Brexit or independence or both?
- 2) Has Antisemitism become fashionable?
- 3) The way forward.

I joined group 3 and we spoke about education for 2nd and 3rd generation as well as for schools. We also discussed the current and future work of the AJR in Scotland. My wife was in group 1 where the discussion was very lively with strong diverse feelings. In group 2 participants said they personally feel safer but agreed that education for non-Jews on Jewish life and customs was important.

Our keynote speaker, Jonathan Arkush,

President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, spoke after lunch on *Our Community Under Pressure – Can We Cope?* His tales of meetings with politicians and religious leaders were extremely interesting, covering Israel, antisemitism, the recent terrorism outbreaks in England and how to educate the nation in general about British Jews and their way of life.

**Joe Cent**

Published by The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR), a company limited by guarantee.

**Registered office: Winston House, 2 Dollis Park, Finchley, London N3 1HF**

Registered in England and Wales with charity number: 1149882 and company number: 8220991

**Telephone 020 8385 3070 e-mail [editorial@ajr.org.uk](mailto:editorial@ajr.org.uk)**

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Printed by FBprinters, Unit 5, St Albans House, St Albans Lane, London NW11 7QB Tel: 020 8458 3220 Email: [info@fbprinters.com](mailto:info@fbprinters.com)