

# AJR Information

Volume XLV No. 1  
January 1990

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Don't miss . . .

Back to the future  
p. 3

Sir Sigmund  
Sternberg visits  
Day Centre p. 8

AJR Residential  
Care Appeal –  
How to  
contribute . . .  
p. 9

£4m needed to extend the Homes

## AJR residential care appeal

Help us to meet the challenge

The AJR together with CBF Residential Care and Housing Association have risen to the challenge of the 1990s and beyond with the preparation of a five year plan for extending and refurbishing the homes, whose history now goes back more than thirty years. The plan provides for:

- ★ 21 new sheltered accommodation units
- ★ 13 new rooms with toilet facilities
- ★ 102 rooms to be provided with toilet facilities
- ★ 15 rooms to offer nursing facilities

The AJR through its AJR Charitable Trust has undertaken responsibility for mounting the appeal to raise the funds for this project. Moreover, in order to permit an immediate start on the implementation of the plan the Trust has underwritten the first £500 000 of the cost. Thus work has already started on the first phase.

### Higher expectations

Our homes offer sheltered accommodation, residential care and full nursing care for about 250 people, a considerable number, but not enough to meet current needs. They have been shining examples of their kind, comparing favourably with others around the country. But higher standards are now expected, which means that new rooms must be built with private toilets and showers, and these facilities must be added to existing rooms.



AJR Head Office, Hannah Karminski House.

Residents are now older at the time of admission and average age in the homes has risen to 85. Consequently they are physically, and sometimes mentally, weaker than before. These changing circumstances call for a greater degree of care, more and better qualified staff, and more sophisticated and expensive equipment.

### Your chance to play a part

We cannot ignore these factors if we wish to maintain the homes in accordance with today's standards and provide residents with the level of care and comfort they and their families expect and are entitled to expect.

The result is obvious: the existing premises cannot cope, costs increase whilst funds are lacking – we must appeal to the community. We must unite in opening our hearts – and our pockets – to ensure that care for the elderly among us shall continue, now and well into the next century. Charity has been a great and wonderful Jewish tradition throughout the generations. Everyone of us will surely wish to demonstrate its maintenance in our time by generously supporting this appeal.

Details of ways of making your contribution will be found on page 9. A form for the purpose is enclosed – use it now. □

## Shylock in a black wig

On 26 January 1814 an actor of small parts at the Drury Lane Theatre was given his first big chance. In the fashion of those days, the company held only one complete rehearsal. It cannot have been a full dress rehearsal, for the actors and stage manager were aghast when, a few minutes before the curtain rose, Edmund Kean put on a black wig and a black beard to play Shylock.

He was breaking with a tradition which went back to Richard Burbage. Actors always played Shylock in a red wig and red beard. The tradition had its roots in centuries of Christian art. Judas was always represented as a redhead. An ordinary Jew, such as one might meet, would of course have black or brown hair. But the Jew as false friend, the Jew as betrayer, the Jew as menace could only be red-headed.

Kean's audience was startled; then, suddenly, enthusiastic. 'I felt I had them with me', he said afterwards.

One of the dramatic critics present was William Hazlitt. Next morning his paper carried his glowing report of Kean's genius. But he questioned whether the actor had not given too much lightness and variety to what should have been a sombre portrayal of a man with one idea.

A year later, Hazlitt very handsomely admitted his mistake. 'When we first went to see Mr. Kean in Shylock, we expected to see, what we had been used to see, a decrepit old man, bent with age and ugly with mental deformity, grinning with deadly malice, with the venom of his heart congealed in the expression of his countenance, sullen, morose, gloomy, inflexible, brooding over one idea, that of his hatred, and fixed on one unalterable purpose, that of his revenge. We were disappointed, because we had taken our idea from other actors, not from the play . . . That he has but one idea, is not true; he has more ideas than any other person in the piece; and if he is intense and inveterate in the pursuit of his purpose, he shows the utmost elasticity, vigour and presence of mind, in the means of attaining it. But so rooted was our habitual impression of the part from seeing it caricatured in the representation, that it was only from a careful perusal of the play itself that we saw our error . . .'

Earlier in this essay, which is part of his book *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, Hazlitt writes of Shylock:

'He seems the depository of the vengeance of his race; and though the long habit of brooding over daily insults and injuries has crusted over his temper with inveterate misanthropy, and hardened him against the contempt of mankind, this adds but little to the triumphant pretensions of his enemies. There is a strong, quick and deep sense of justice mixed up with the gall and bitterness of his resentment. The constant apprehension of being burnt alive, plundered, banished, reviled and trampled on, might be supposed to sour the most forbearing nature . . .'

A critic even more famous than Hazlitt bore witness to the transformation Kean brought about in the attitude of his audience. Heinrich Heine wrote:

'When I saw this play in Drury Lane, there stood behind me in the box a beautiful pale British girl, who, at the end of the fourth act, wept copiously and several times cried out *The poor man is wronged!* This was a face of the noblest Grecian outline; the eyes were big and black. I have never been able to forget

them, those big black eyes that wept for Shylock.'

Heine does not say that the actor was Kean. But Heine was in London in 1827, and that was the year when Kean made a triumphant comeback, playing all his big roles at Drury Lane, after a tour of America. It can only have been Kean's performance that inspired Heine to his denunciation of Christian society as depicted by Shakespeare, and of Jessica's treachery in becoming a part of it.

While Kean was moving these great men to look at Shakespeare with new eyes, while he was blazing the trail followed afterwards by Henry Irving and Laurence Olivier, what went on in his own mind? He read the ecstatic notices, the morning after his first great triumph, and did not (so far as we know) say: 'I have revived Shakespearian scholarship'. Or: 'I have struck a blow for racial equality'. He is recorded only as having told his wife that she should ride in her own carriage, and that their son should go to Eton.

Few actors can theorise about their own performances. The late George Devine, when he was artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre, said in my hearing 'When you direct a play, you take the leading actor to the pub and you talk to him. You try to explain the meaning of the play, and why you want to do it. And after an hour of that he says: "Yes, but should I wear a dark wig or a blond one?" And you think: *Oh, actors!* But then you have to remember that he hasn't got any instrument to work with, except his own body. So it's natural that he should be obsessed with it'.

Edmund Kean, short and insignificant in appearance off the stage, considered half mad by his fellow actors, slighted by his employers, haunted by the memory of a child who had died (as he thought) because of his poverty, could probably not have put into words what he was doing, the first time he stepped on to the stage as Shylock. He used the actor's immemorial, instinctive language. He put on a black wig.

□ *Alison Macleod*



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## Back to the future

There can be no doubt in anybody's mind that 1989 was a red letter date in history. It deserves to rank alongside 1933, the effective start of World War Two, and 1945, which ended it. At all three junctures Germany stood centre stage. In 1933 it turned into a lethal lunatic asylum, in 1945 it splintered into the ramparts of the Cold War, and in 1989 the splinters almost cohered again, virtually ending the Cold War.

Back in 1933 the world's Jews had numbered 18 million, most of them in Eastern Europe. By 1945 we were reduced to 12 million, with few left in the old Askenazi heartlands. This sort of thing had happened once before: in 1492, another red letter date in history. 1492 saw the Jews expelled from Spain (and subsequently Portugal) where, as in Germany four centuries later, they had signally enriched the economy and culture. In consequence of expelling their Jewish and Moorish minorities the Iberian countries stagnated and declined (a development Professor Trevor-Roper memorably demonstrated in a televised lecture series several years ago).

Stagnation and decline certainly did not overtake virtually Jew-free postwar Germany; in fact the very opposite happened. Today Germany is poised to assume economic superpower status, with its wealth exerting a magnetic pull on the DDR. The prospect of a reunified Germany appals many people. Conor Cruse O'Brien has conjured up the spectre of a Fourth Reich in *The Times*, and Jewish spokesmen – religious as well as lay – have likewise expressed deep misgivings about a resurgent 80 million-strong country dominating Europe.

On the other hand Jewish journalists prominent in the national press – *The Times*' Bernard Levin, and *The Guardian*'s Hella Pick – totally discount fears of today's Germans returning to the bad old ways of their fathers. Their sanguine tones have been echoed in, of all places, the *Jewish Chronicle*. Writing in the J.C. in mid-November Chaim Bermant not only saw tomorrow's Germany being peacefully absorbed into Europe, but also envisaged it casting a powerful spell over our own progeny.

'Jews from every part of the EC, including Britain and France, and not a few from countries outside it, like Russia and Israel,

will flock to Germany. I imagine that the Jewish community in Germany, which since the war has always thought of itself as transitory, and which now only numbers around 25,000, will within one or two generations revert to its original size.'

Can we, with our intimate – and painfully acquired – knowledge of German-Jewish relations subscribe to Bermant's vision of half a million Jews dwelling between the Rhine and the Oder by the mid-21st century? Or do we think that the *cherem* which the rabbis pronounced on Spain (which banned Jews from ever returning there) should apply to Germany? Put pen to paper and formulate your opinions on this controversial, and far from academic, topic. Our letter column awaits your response! □

## Do we remember our friends?

It was a lovely, warm day of early summer 1945 in Namur, Belgium. I had just arrived from Riga via Germany with a trainload of repatriated Belgians who had been pressganged into work for the Third Reich. The authorities did not quite know what to do with me at first as I was neither a 'repatriate' nor a Belgian. I was told to wait outside. To sit on the stone steps in the sunshine was no hardship and I knew I was among friends. That comfortable feeling, together with the sunshine, lulled me to sleep. I woke up when I felt a gentle hand on my shoulder. I looked up into the smiling face of a man in a rather strange dress. It was the Abbé André, the priest of the Eglise St. Jean Baptiste and the local expert when it came to homeless Jewish children and what to do with them. He took me home to the vicarage where I had the company of some forty more boys in a similar situation. He and a group of his parishioners had kept them hidden in his house, which was right next to the *Kommandantur*.

A Spanish woman was caught by the curfew in the early days of the war. She found herself near the Vicar's house and rang the bell. He put her up. He wondered aloud at the next parish council meeting how many more people might be in similar need. Mindful of the German

and Stateless Jews being hunted all over Belgium, they founded a group: *Notre Dame de Sion, Oeuvre d'Assistance aux Israélites*. It was an 'overground' network. The escape route ran from the vicarage over lofts and roofs of surrounding houses. Yet it was not needed. The people in the know, and there must have been many in the neighbourhood, kept the secret. Yes, there were conversions among the children. It was made attractive, I assume. I cannot say much about that since I was not there very long and had little French. (The younger children no longer spoke any German.) But it is reasonable to assume that people who are sufficiently imbued with their religion to follow its precepts at the risk of their own lives are likely to extend this concern to the saving of souls.

The blue-and-white Jewish flag flew outside the vicarage, alongside the Vatican colours. The Vicar, whose brother had died in a concentration camp, wore a star of David on his *soutane*. Abbé André himself died some years ago.

To-day there is a commemorative plaque on the new building which has replaced the old vicarage on the same site, 40 Place de L'Ange, Namur. (The angel refers to a statue in the square.)

There had been talk about erecting a statue of the Vicar in a park in the town centre, but the last time I was in Namur, four years ago, nothing had been done. It might be an idea to set up a holiday fund for poor children from the parish, through the Council of Christians and Jews.

A recent article which appeared in *The Independent* about Raoul Wallenberg, the rescuer of Budapest's Jews, stated that 'Israel did little to honour him'. What about Abbé André?

□ Ezra Jurman

## Calling ex-Mannheimers

In preparation for a reunion, which is to be held in mid-June 1990, Mannheim-born Jewish refugees are asked to send in autobiographical material at the earliest opportunity. Mailing address: Robert B. Kahn, 2694 Haverstraw Avenue, Dayton Ohio 45414, U.S.A. □

## Censure

The Catholic University Nijmegen (Holland) has notified Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland, that because of his role in the Auschwitz convent controversy they do not now want him to give a scheduled lecture on the situation of the Church. □

## Where school was home

I taught at Stroatley Rough School, Haslemere, which was established in 1934 as a haven for refugee children from Hitler's Europe.

Its day-to-day life showed a spirit of true community that I have never experienced before or since.

In spite of lack of resources and a curriculum in which there was no science of any kind, pupils admitted to the academic course were enabled to get qualifications; even more importantly, the whole community soaked up a concern for true and lasting values and a devotion to music, art and literature. Everyone was expected to work for the common good, even visitors, who contributed whatever they could from giving song recitals to advising on the overworked drains. Pupils and teachers worked as equals doing the washing up, picking bilberries and edible toadstools in the surrounding heath and painting the premises on 'work-days'. The older pupils helped the younger ones and a real balance was achieved between the development of the individual and the good of the school as a microcosm of society.

I left in December 1939, just before the saddest time when the staff had to help some of the pupils through the double trauma of being persecuted as Jews in Germany and as Germans in Britain, while gradually many of them came to realise that they might never see their parents again.

Four of the five German teachers who formed the backbone of the school are now dead; the fifth, Lore Astfalck, now 89, who mothered the younger children and guided the older ones, returned to Germany after the war where she has worked ever since for deprived and underprivileged children, including those from ethnic minorities and the displaced.

Only one tribute to the school has been published. In 1971 two of the former pupils, Hans and Herta Loeser, who now live in the USA, privately brought out a book, 'Letters from Former Stroatley Roughians'. Those who contributed were at the school between 1937 and 1942 and predominantly of German-Jewish or Austrian-Jewish backgrounds. The letters reflect the intrinsic achievements of Stroatley Rough. They show the school as a bridge between two cultures which helped the pupils to work through their traumatic experiences and emerge to struggle for higher education and

eventually, often after a long, hard road, to get into useful and worthwhile professions and occupations.

It is still heartwarming to look back over fifty years to a community in which the words, 'school' and 'home' really did become synonymous.

□ Margaret K. Faulkner

## The hole in Europe's heart

'Wandering round Central Europe I have been struck by the extraordinary evidence of the Jewish past in so many towns and villages. Yet almost nowhere is it recorded. Each local tourist map shows the Catholic and Orthodox and Lutheran churches, yet no mention is ever made of the synagogue.

Why are Central Europe's governments so reluctant to acknowledge the presence in their societies of communities that once played such a significant role?

And why do they still find it too painful or too controversial to record what happened to them?

In Kosice, in eastern Slovakia, there is a wonderful museum recording the lost fauna of the Carpathians. Would it have been too much to refurbish the great synagogue there to remind schoolchildren of their city's heritage?

And what of world Jewry? Is it the strength of the Zionist movement that causes so much money to be channelled to Israel, when a small trickle in the direction of Central Europe might cause some of these ancient memorials to community life to be revived and remembered?

In Krakow and Prague there is some sign that individual Americans take an interest. Elsewhere the surviving examples of a once flourishing community will soon have disappeared.'

(Richard Gott, *The Guardian*, 18.9.1989) □

## New Polish P.M.

The newly appointed Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who as an M.P. had refused to condemn Israel during the Six-Day War, has described the Holocaust as 'a tragedy and sacrifice which defies any comparison'.

(Significantly, when Mazowiecki first expressed pro-Jewish views in the 1950s, rumour alleged that he has himself descended from converted Jews.) □

## Spandau memorial

On 3 November 1989, a solemn act of remembrance took place in Berlin-Spandau near the site of the synagogue which was destroyed, as so many others, during *Kristallnacht* 1938. As my father, Dr. A. Loewenstamm, was its last rabbi, and, as such, forced to witness the event, I was invited to be present at the consecration of a commemorative monument. The design, the work of two local architects, is intended to represent the broken house of God. It has been placed by the banks of the Havel River, just across the way from where the synagogue once stood. There, a business block is being erected; but a tastefully executed plaque fashioned in stainless steel will be put up. It has been produced by a local artist and depicts the tower of the destroyed synagogue framed by a *magen david*.

The Mayor of Spandau officiated at the dedication ceremony. He spoke movingly of the evil deeds which were committed virtually on the doorsteps of our neighbours who treated Jews as outcasts. One of the artists spoke briefly, and a member of the Berlin Jewish community read an address by Dr. Galinski, the head of the community, who was unfortunately unable to attend. Cantor Nachama intoned the *el mole rachamim* and said *kaddish*. The wreaths were laid on behalf of the two churches, the Jewish Community and the Trade Unions.

No Jews are left in Spandau. Perhaps the synagogue memorial will serve to remind future generations of their fate. In any case, it is encouraging that some Germans at least, and particularly younger ones, do not brush aside the past, but are anxious to know from us what happened in those days. This helps to overcome the reservations one inevitably has about going back to Germany as a visitor.

□ Erica Reid

## Munich showcase

The Jewish Museum at Munich — an institution established earlier this year on private initiative — is currently mounting a Raoul Wallenberg exhibition. Themes of exhibitions to be staged during the coming months are 'Everyday Life in Jerusalem', 'The Shtetl in contemporary Bukovina and Moldavia' and 'The Book of Esther'. □

Television Reviews by John Rossall

## Can black deeds – like hair – go grey?

'It' will not go to sleep. 'It' resembles what psychologists call the repressed material in the soul of Man. 'It' is the Holocaust – which keeps surfacing in every form of discourse whereby people communicate with each other.

Twice in late autumn television focusing on the problem of unpunished mass annihilation questioned the morality of those who are still pursuing old men after forty-five years or more.

On BBC 1 Terry Wogan reminded Simon Wiesenthal of his age. It was a study in contrasts: Wogan the perfect media professional sympathetic to his 'quarry', but forced by the nature of the interview to seek out weakness in the other's case. Despite his fractured English, Wiesenthal held his own.

To Wogan's 'You are an old man and you pursue old men'. Wiesenthal replied 'I pursue young criminals who have become old. These trials have an educational value for future criminals'.

And so it went on. Forgiveness, the alleged Christian virtue, came into the debate. The challenge was accepted. One can forgive on one's own behalf, said Wiesenthal, but not on behalf of millions of victims who have been rendered mute. He had harrowing tales to tell of obstruction from countries playing host to fugitive Nazis, foremost among them Syria, which 'cannot find' Alois Brunner (although he can be phoned quite easily).

On ITV Brian Redhead questioned Lord Jakobovits about vengeance and forgiveness. The Chief Rabbi gave the exegetic reply, 'Vengefulness is a Biblical offence' – adding 'Another offence is to allow such mass murderers to escape punishment for their crimes'. The Jews, he said, expected to receive historic justice from Parliament in the matter of unresolved war crime accusations; its verdict (whatever it might be) would be accepted. □

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## Urbane guerrilla – kid-gloved interviewer

There he sat, a genial type, with stubble on his cheeks and *keffiyah* atop his brow, smiling and at his ease . . . Yasser Arafat being interviewed in Tunisia. Yet another Haman; yet another enemy of the Jews. And still, this normally Caliban-like character came over as a charming father figure striving for nothing but justice for the Palestinian people. So powerfully was this image conveyed in the BBC 2 programme of 13 November that even the prejudiced, the immunised, viewer must at times have succumbed to it despite the tell-tale military uniform (visible) and the ever-present gun in his holster (invisible on this occasion, but acknowledged by him).

Well might Arafat have been satisfied with the interview for Ludovic Kennedy gave him the softest and easiest ride imaginable. Unbelievable when one thinks of the severity with which the tele-inquisitors pressure even the British

Prime Minister (not to speak of Israeli personalities). Every reply of Arafat's was accepted; no statement was queried. The questions themselves seemed tailored for his view of the Middle East and the world. One supposes that only on those terms did he agree to be interviewed at all.

What emerged from this? Why, Arafat had always been for peace. He had always stepped in to save the odd hijacked plane or ship; he had always forsworn violence; it is but a foible of the Americans to make him keep on repeating that he does not dispute Israel's right to exist. At the same time he, curiously, boasted that he had been in the forefront of all the wars against Israel. The interviewer let it go, as he did the statement that the internecine struggle among the hard men of the Arab cause was a *form of democracy*. In fact, democracy was a favourite word with 'Mr. Chairman' as he was deferentially addressed throughout.

Mr. Chairman revealed himself as a ready smiler, turning even his occasional difficulty with the English language to advantage. Asked about the Mao suit uniform he always affects, he smiled, 'I don't like to change my clothes'. To be interpreted that this apparel is his trade mark. About the grey brush ever around his cheeks he said smilingly that he hadn't the time to shave, fifteen minutes each day was too much. At sixty he is still unmarried . . . he tried, but never found, Miss Right. There was one 'fraught' question: Was it true that he was a millionaire? He smiled, 'A little millionaire'. He had been a contractor and made money. He takes nothing from the PLO, he says; on the contrary, he gives to it. He likes to watch videos; he finds it hard to confirm the death sentence on 'traitors'; he has a lively temperament; he indulges in tea with honey; he loved fast cars until he had three narrow escapes, always on the road from Damascus (could this location be significant?); he was born in Jerusalem, but brought up in Egypt.

He conveyed what he had meant to convey: one can do business with me; I am the best bet you have got. He says he represents six million people, and he is sure that Israel will negotiate. 'Nobody can hide the sun with his finger', he proverbialised, adding 'Our State is no more than a stone's throw away' – a nasty one, that, being a subliminal reference to the stone throwers of the *intifada*. □

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## Sister Grütters and the Theresienstadt Children's Opera

In 1939, the Czech-Jewish composer Hans Krása won a music competition with a children's opera called *Brundibár*. In the same year, Czechoslovakia was overrun by German troops and Prague came under Nazi occupation. The work could not be given a public performance. But in 1941 the conductor Raphael Schächter took up rehearsals of it with children of the Prague Jewish orphanage. Then he and many of the children were arrested and sent to Theresienstadt. Of those who remained, a number continued to study the piece, and two performances were given at the orphanage under the baton of Rudolf Freudenfeld, the son of the orphanage director. A three-piece orchestra provided the instrumental backing. In 1943 the orphanage was shut down and all the children, along with the Freudenfelds, were deported to Theresienstadt. They took with them the piano score of Krása's opera.

In the ghetto, Freudenfeld continued to practise it. He was encouraged by the Nazi authorities because at that time Theresienstadt had to be prepared for a visit of inspection by a delegation of the International Red Cross. In 1944 the ghetto became the theme and location of the monstrous propaganda film *'Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt'* ('The Führer gives the Jews a town'), and this infamous window-dressing exercise, designed to impress foreign public opinion, included a filmed staging of *Brundibár* with a children's chorus of forty, ten solo voices and an orchestra of ten instrumentalists, for whom Krása had written an entirely new arrangement of the original score.

In all, 55 performances of the opera were given in Theresienstadt before most of the cast, the composer and 88,000 of the inmates were transported to Auschwitz and death.

Forty years later, a Benedictine nun, Sister Maria Veronika Grütters, rediscovered the opera. She arranged the piano score for the school orchestra of St. Ursula Gymnasium in Freiburg im Breisgau and wrote a libretto in German. In July 1985 a cast of 75 schoolchildren performed her version of the work in Freiburg. Then she took it to Israel where she and her 'company' gave performances

in Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Kibbutz Givat Chayim in the coastal plain. On each occasion, the Theresienstadt hymn was sung by a survivor of the ghetto before curtain rise.

In 1988 the Christopherus Verlag, Freiburg, brought out a recording\* of *Brundibár* which is reviewed below.

### Brundibár

A Record Review by R. O. Leavor

The circumstances of the opera's first performance in Theresienstadt inevitably lend this recording a special character and it can only be listened to with considerable emotion. Any entertainment in those conditions would have been difficult; but to attempt an opera, the most demanding of all the art forms, with only three instruments, must have required quite extraordinary courage and dedication. Added to that, a major part of the first act concerns the activities of vendors of milk, bakery products and ice-cream. Each vendor offers his wares by

repeating the words *Milch, Brötchen* and *Speiseeis*, which must have been horribly tantalising to the residents. Later the free flight of a bird and peaceful sleep watched over by the friendly animals are described in detail. The contrast between the total happening of the opera and the plight of the prisoners could not be more complete.

The plot itself is fairly straightforward. Two children set out to earn some money in order to buy milk for their ailing mother by singing in the street. Their small voices cannot be heard above the hubbub of other attractions, the main one of which is the street organ of *Brundibár*, who turns out to be antagonistic to the children. Some speaking animals at first mock the children, but after lulling them to sleep, give them good advice.

The music is relatively light-weight. The vocal lines are fairly simple, enabling child performers to sing a recognisable melody. Sophistication, as so often in opera, comes in the orchestra where, truth to tell, Richard Strauss, Mahler and Weil show themselves to be the composer's mentors. Even so an individual style is discernible. The rhythm is usually in 4/4 time, escapes into 12/8 occasionally, but returns to the safety of the four square, like Wagner or Sullivan. Clever setting of the words disguise the threatening monotony of this. The harmony is basically simple, but unexpectedly — and this is the essence of all music — presents a turn or twist or fine modulation. Counterpoint appears only once, and is so effective that one wishes the composer had used it more often.

The recorded setting by Sister Grütters creates a charming atmosphere, especially in the purely orchestral sections, and displays real artistry. No praise can be high enough for her for having made this recording of the composition, no doubt with only modest resources but certainly with great love. □

\* Available on L.P. only from Herder Buchhandlung, Kaiser Joseph Strasse 180, 7800 Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Price, inc. p. & p. DM24.

### Book of remembrance

The Berlin Borough of Zehlendorf is compiling a *Gedenkbuch* to contain the names of all former residents whom the Nazis murdered or drove into exile. Brief biographical details should be sent to Ingolf Wernicke, Dernburgstr. 37, 1000 Berlin 19, Germany. □

### CLUB 1943

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Meetings on Mondays at 8 p.m.  
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#### 1990

8 Jan. Uwe Westphal: Die Rolle der Reklame im Dritten Reich

15 Jan. Helen L. Krag, Universität Kopenhagen: liest aus den  
Erinnerungen ihrer Großmutter: 'Man hat nicht gebraucht  
keine Reisegesellschaft'

22 Jan. PEN-Lesebühne: Sonderveranstaltung mit dem Autor  
Erich Wolfgang Skwara, La Mesa, Kalifornien/USA

29 Jan. Ada Crown, B.A. (Hons): In the Footsteps of the  
Sanhedrin

5 Feb. Walter Lewis: Salman Rushdie: 'Satanic Verses'

12 Feb. Hans Seelig: Frédéric Chopin: A Musical  
Revolutionary (with tapes)

19 Feb. Angela Hobart, M.A.: The Portrait and Concept of the  
Individual in Classical India and South-East Asia (with  
slides)

26 Feb. PEN-Lesebühne: Sonderveranstaltung über den  
Autor Hubertus Prinz zu Löwenstein (1906-1884)

5 March. Kurt Pflüger: Die Literatur der Alten Ägypter

12 March. Angela Cox: The Life and Work of Thomas  
Gainsborough (1727-1788) (with slides)

19 March. Gerald Tichauer: Hannah Arendt: The Greatest  
American Philosopher of this Century

26 March. PEN-Lesebühne: Sonderveranstaltung mit dem  
Autor Richard Exner, Santa Barbara, Kalifornien/USA

2 April. Sylvia Simsova, M.Phil.: Who Reads What and Why?

9 April. Peter Seglow, M.A.: Travels in Malaysia and  
Indonesia (with slides)

## Letters to the Editor



### A CRITICAL LOOK AT STEPHEN BROOK

Sir - I would like to revert to your review of Stephen Brook's *The Club - The Jews of Modern Britain* (June 1989).

In his book Mr. Brook states that the fragmentation of Anglo-Jewry has been intensified by Belsize Square's decision 'to wave good-bye to the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues'. This, in my view, is an over-statement, as well as an inelegant way of putting it. The author obviously does not realize how much debate and heart-searching went into this decision.

In 1939, the newly-formed community was small and in need of funds, and had to lean on someone. The Liberals were willing to accommodate it by not interfering with its type of service. The Hon. Lily Montagu, one of the founders of the English Liberal movement and a lay minister in the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, helped in a practical way. She became first chairman of what was then the New Liberal Jewish Association. Incidentally, in the event no financial help was needed.

It is true that the congregation's founders came mostly from the German *Liberale* communities 'which were closer to Reform than Liberal'. To be sure, there was a Reform movement in Germany, but it had little in common with the *Liberale* movement which was far more Conservative.

Mr. Brook writes of the 'old guard' and 'dragons' of Belsize Square who, by implication, impede progress. Maybe 40 years ago a case could have been made out in this regard, but certainly not in recent times. It was the 'old guard' who managed to infuse younger blood onto the Board and, incidentally, engaged young men as rabbi and cantor.

Mr Brook speaks of the Cantor's splendid voice but goes on to say that the choir sounds larger than the congregation, packed with billowy sopranos and hefty basses. In fact there is a choir of six or eight on Friday evening and usually a congregation of 100 or more. On Shabbat, the choir functions only occasionally. Is it wrong that the services are melodious and attract worshippers, including those of non-refugee background?

One last point: I am perplexed by the title of Brook's book. One can hardly imagine anything more fractious than Anglo-Jewry, in contrast to America. I suppose Mr. Brook means to infer that others look upon us as a 'Club', which we decidedly are not.

Wykeham Road  
London NW4

Walter Strauss

### SAME TOWN, DIFFERENT VIEW

Sir - It is hard to fathom what makes Mrs. Lilli Engelhard think (October issue) that her home-town Leipzig 'resisted Nazism probably more than most German cities'. Leipzig is also my home town, and I was, in fact, temporarily, her classmate in the excellent local Jewish school. Alas, from early 1930 until late 1933 I went in succession to the non-Jewish *Nicolai Gymnasium* and the *Leibnizschule* where, throughout my attendance, I experienced the most vile antisemitism from masters and boys, with some of the latter singing *When Jewish blood spurts from the knife*. Although Mrs. Engelhard asks for more space for 'a little Jewish humour' there is none of this to be found in the remainder of her second article in the same issue, or in her earlier letter (July issue). What ties refugees like us together is past suffering and not 'lighthearted reminiscences'. Our aim must be to ensure that what happened to us will not happen again to other Jews.

Oakhurst Drive

G. D. Wassermann

Newcastle upon Tyne

### GENEALOGY

Sir - John Dunston ended the interesting account of his family history research by recommending 'genealogical gardening' as a pastime. Readers wishing to take this up may like to know of a useful book on the subject: *Finding Our Fathers, A Guidebook to Jewish Genealogy (Random House)*. The author is Dan Rottenberg, an American journalist. It is highly readable and contains a wealth of helpful information for anyone setting out on the quest of tracing their family roots.

By the way, I greatly enjoy AJR

Information.

Mortimer Place  
London NW6

M. Hellman

### GERMAN REUNIFICATION

Sir - I agree with your leading article that it would be profoundly shortsighted if we viewed German reunification as only of peripheral concern to us. The recent electoral success of the extreme right-wing Republican Party, led by an ex-SS man, makes such concern obvious. I also agree with your statement that the principles of democracy and of self-determination of nations make it impossible to deny the German people what they obviously desire.

However, a solution to the problem is at hand. The EC wants monetary integration with the ultimate goal of a United Europe. A Germany which is completely integrated into such a federation will present much less of a danger than a Europe consisting of completely sovereign nation states. The political case for a monetary union is therefore overwhelming.

I believe that we should use our influence as citizens to pursue, with all vigour, closer integration into the EC as the best safeguard against a resurgence of dictatorships.

Roy Gardens  
Ilford

Peter Prager

### MAHLER

Sir - Your interesting article on Mahler mentions his conversion to Catholicism as having taken place at St. Michael's Church, Hamburg.

May I point out that St. Michael's is a Lutheran church - fondly referred to by Hamburgers as *der Michel*, the town's popular symbol.

Southway

London N.20.

Yvonne Allweiss

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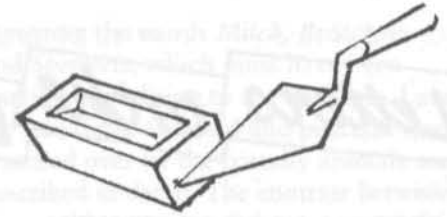
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## The AJR at Work



### Sir Sigmund Sternberg visits Paul Balint AJR Day Centre



Sir Sigmund lunching with Day Centre members.

Sir Sigmund is among the most public-spirited of public men. Founder of the Sternberg Centre for the Study of Judaism, he also chairs the Executive of the World Council of Christians and Jews, and the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Economics and Finance. He does lots more besides: the list of his various public functions takes up a quarter of a column in *Who's Who*.

On 31 October Sir Sigmund visited the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, and was shown round by the Chairman, Mr. Theo Marx, and other members of the AJR executive. He saw the range of activities that normally take place in Cleve Road on Tuesdays mornings. Having sampled the work produced by the art class – while

chatting to the 'artists' – Sir Sigmund went, as it were, behind the scenes into the kitchen. Here, as elsewhere in the building, he showed himself impressed by the quality of the equipment, the spaciousness and the user-friendly lay-out.

Being a busy man, Sir Sigmund could only stay for the first course of lunch – which he enjoyed. He also demonstrably enjoyed the visit. The very positive impression he formed of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre as such could be gleaned from his parting remark 'I only wish my 91-year old mother could attend a place like this where people get stimulated, instead of dozing in an armchair most of the day in her residential nursing home'. □

#### OUR DAY CENTRE NEEDS SPECIALIST VOLUNTEERS:

1. A hairdresser. Are you free between 10 am and 12 noon any day?
  2. A keep fit teacher for Tuesdays 11–11.30 am.
  3. Drivers to collect and take people to and from the Day Centre.
- Offers of help gratefully received by Sylvia Matus on 328 0208.

Volunteers urgently needed to befriend new residents in the Homes in the Bishops Avenue. This will involve getting to know the applicant before the move and helping them settle into their new surroundings.

For more information please contact Laura Howe, AJR Volunteers Co-Ordinator on 483-2536

### The drop-in advice centre

The AJR Drop-in Advice Centre has been operating for five months and reports that, after a slow start, it is now very busy indeed.

As many as six or seven people are seen at the weekly two-hour sessions at the Day Centre on Tuesdays. Cases there tend to be shorter and less complicated. On Thursdays at Adamson Road, we get fewer but more complex cases. A large proportion of the problems raised are connected with German restitution or social security pensions. Other cases in which assistance has been given are claims for Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit, and problems with rent arrears.

The Advice Centre staff, particularly Aggie Alexander, have negotiated with landlords about leases and with Social Services about help for our clients. In fact, the varied nature of the problems brought to them are too numerous to list.

WE are pleased to be able to offer an additional service from now on: the availability of a Solicitor who can come to the Day Centre by appointment to help with Wills and other legal matters, for a very reasonable fee. Should you wish to avail yourself of this service please contact Aggie Alexander on 483 2536 to arrange an appointment. □

#### AJR CLUB

15 Cleve Road  
London, NW6

#### SOCIALS

on  
SUNDAY, TUESDAY & THURSDAY  
afternoons between 2 and 6

Come and join us at the Club, talk to members, play scrabble, chess or cards, and have tea and light suppers at nominal charges. Guests are welcome.

We have concerts or talks one Sunday a month and video films on two others. On Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2, Club members may attend the Day Centre entertainment.

You will enjoy the warm and friendly atmosphere and soon feel at home at the Club. The annual membership fee is only £4.

Sunday, 14th January, 3 pm

Gerard Tichauer

50 MINUTES

OF YOUR FAVOURITE TUNES

Sunday, 11th February, 3 pm

Otto Deutsch

WHEN I WAS A CHILD REFUGEE

Admission: 50p (incl. tea)

## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road  
London NW6 3RL  
Tel. 01 328 0208

*Morning Activities* – Bridge, kalookie, scrabble, chess, etc., keep fit, discussion group, choir (Mondays), art class (Tuesdays and Thursdays).

*Afternoon entertainment –*

## JANUARY

- Monday 8 Magic-Made-To-Measure – presented by Alfred Gabriel  
Tuesday 9 A Talk by The London Fire Brigade  
Wednesday 10 Sing-A-Long with Us – Hans Freund  
Thursday 11 Piano Recital – Classical Music by Stephen Baron  
Monday 15 Musical Entertainment by Manya Jurman and Ruth Kollner  
Tuesday 16 Two Voices & A Piano – Helen Mignano accompanied by Barbara Jacobson  
Wednesday 17 Band of The Metropolitan Police  
Thursday 18 A Song for Everyone – Sung to you by Jack Harris and Lily Goldstein, accompanied by Happy Branston  
Monday 22 A Talk by The London Fire Brigade  
Tuesday 23 Cello & Piano Duo – Robert Max and Zoë Solomon  
Wednesday 24 The Rainbow Entertainers – Musical Entertainment by Myra Waller  
Thursday 25 Piano & Violin Duo – Steve Norbert  
Monday 29 Play It Again Jules – Musical Entertainment by Jules Rubin & Allison Sharpe  
Tuesday 30 A Pot-Pourri of Songs – brought to you by Jack Harris & Helena Guest, with Happy Branston at the piano  
Wednesday 31 A Collection of Songs & Arias – James Pocha accompanied by Bob Goldsmith

## FEBRUARY

- Thursday 1 The Dulcet Tones – A Variety Show by Betty Thrower & Anna Partridge  
Monday 5 Some Enchanted Evening – Musical Entertainment by David Jedwab  
Tuesday 6 Music for all – Hans Freund & Guest Artists  
Wednesday 7 A Talk by The London Fire Brigade  
Thursday 8 Hedi Fisher International Match-Maker – A Talk & Video about her job  
Monday 12 Recital – Linda Sherratt (Soprano) accompanied by Leon Conrad (Piano)  
Tuesday 13 An afternoon of Magic – Godfrey & Joyce van Leer  
Wednesday 14 Homage to St. Valentine – Ian Bradford (Flute) & Carol Kohn (Piano)  
Thursday 15 A Talk by The London Fire Brigade

## Volunteers' meetings

On 2 September and 26 October groups of AJR volunteers who visit people in their own homes gathered at Hannah Karminski House. Mrs. Diana Neslen, social worker at St. Pancras Hospital, who specialises in the care of the mentally infirm, spoke to each of the groups and led the subsequent discussions.

Mrs. Neslen spoke about mental illness in the elderly, pointing out that such frailty is a long continuum. A point can be reached where a person can no longer care for him/herself effectively. Then there may be so much distress that there is no motive for getting up in the morning, or dressing. Some types of mental illness in the elderly can be helped; where there is severe dementia (Alzheimer's disease) there is no cure but some measure of rehabilitation may be possible.

Mrs. Neslen emphasised that visitors should be aware that some elderly people can become very confused and distressed when physically ill, when there is an infection, for example. In such cases it is important to call a doctor. Sometimes elderly people will take to their beds when distressed, will not eat or go to the toilet and refuse to communicate. People most affected are those who have suffered mental illness before in their lives. Dementia is progressive and begins with slight forgetfulness. Loss of short-term memory may be the first sign. Events of past years may be remembered but not the name of the person who visited yesterday. Hallucinations may be due to loss of sight. Loss of hearing and the subsequent social isolation may lead to noises in the ear and feelings of persecution.

Volunteers wanted to know how they could help and what action to take. Acceptance of the feelings of loss, just being there, doing small jobs together like making a cup of tea or going for short walks; sharing memories or music were all suggested as being very important. Mrs. Neslen felt it is better to understand and bear with the sense of loss rather than try to cheer up a person. This can be very hard for the visitor, especially as some people visited can feel resentful of the health and energy of the visitor. Yet a volunteer from outside can probably accept the situation more easily than a member of the family.

Visitors spoke of the emotional rewards and sense of satisfaction which can come from the relationships with the people they visit. □

AJR  
RESIDENTIAL CARE  
APPEAL

## How to contribute

It is hoped that all AJR Members and Friends and readers of this journal will contribute to the major appeal for the extension of the old age homes and the work of the AJR, which is announced on the front page.

Enclosed with this issue is a buff form, which explains various methods of supporting the appeal, and we ask donors to use it to forward their contributions.

The simplest way of making a donation is to send a cheque to the AJR Charitable Trust, but, as explained on the form, donations by means of a deed of covenant are particularly advantageous in that the Trustees can recover from the Inland Revenue the tax paid by the donor on the income out of which the donation was paid. This increases the value of donations by not less than one-third without extra cost to the donor. While covenants must be entered into for a period of not less than four years (or the lifetime of the donor, whichever is the shorter) the donor has the option of spreading his donation over four years or making one lump sum payment, which enables the Trust to earn interest on the money during the period before it becomes due for payment under the terms of the covenant.

All this, the various forms of covenants and additional advantages to higher rate taxpayers are fully explained in the form herewith.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss a donation for a special purpose within the appeal please contact:

Mrs. Lydia Lassman  
Secretary to the Trustees  
AJR Charitable Trust  
Hannah Karminski House  
9 Adamson Road  
London NW3 3HX  
Telephone: 01 483 2536 □

CAMPS  
INTERNMENT – P.O.W. –  
FORCED LABOUR – KZ

I wish to buy cards, envelopes and folded post-marked letters from all camps of both world wars. Please send, registered mail, stating price, to:

14 Rosslyn Hill, London NW3  
PETER C. RICKENBACK

## Twentieth Birthday of Eleanor Rathbone House

**E**leanor Rathbone House – 54 sheltered flatlets for refugees from Nazi oppression within one highrise block – had been officially opened, by Sir Henry d'Avigdor-Goldsmid, M.P. and Chairman of the Jewish Trust Corporation, on 7 December 1969. A gathering on 26 November commemorated the twentieth anniversary of that event. Opening the proceedings Mr. Werner Mattes, Chairman of the CBF Residential Care and Housing Association, welcomed the platform party which included the Chairman of the AJR, Mr. C. T. Marx, and the Mayor of Haringey, Councillor Frederick Knight. He then greeted as special guests of honour a number of those present who twenty years earlier had been involved in the planning and establishment of Eleanor Rathbone House. These included Dr. Charles Kapralik, General Secretary of the Jewish Trust Corporation at the time, Dr. Werner Rosenstock, former General Secretary of the AJR, and Mr. Walter Marmorek, F.R.I.B.A., the building's architect. In addition he paid tribute to present and former house committee members, Ruth Anderman, Katia Gould and Eva Trent, as well as to the Warden and Deputy Warden.

The main address was given by Mr. Ludwig Spiro, former chairman of the Housing Association and for many years Treasurer of the AJR. After recalling the contribution of Mr. Alfred Dresel, the then chairman of AJR, to the establishment of the House, he dwelt on Eleanor Rathbone's life and unstinting work on behalf of refugees. 'In 1940 she visited every internment camp to raise the spirit of internees, assuring them she would fight their case in Parliament. On 10 July, while a major air battle was fought over Southern England, she forced a debate on internment policy in the House of Commons which, within a few weeks, changed the political climate and removed the stigma of 'enemy alien' status. Soon the bulk of Nazi victims were freed'. Mr. Spiro ended with an expression of confidence that both the CBF Residential Care and Housing Association and the AJR will receive the support necessary to meet the growing demand for shelter and care required over the next ten to twenty years.

Then it was the turn of Mrs. Laura

Sachs, speaking on behalf of the tenants – just as her late husband had done at the opening ceremony in 1969. After quoting some interesting statistics – a hundred tenants had gone through Eleanor Rathbone House in the course of its existence; seventeen (i.e. a full third!) of the original intake are still in residence – Mrs. Sachs enumerated the advantages of sheltered flatlets. They foster, she said, a sense of independence through tenants' possession of their own frontdoor keys, alongside a feeling of security: the flick of a switch can summon help. Mrs. Sachs ended by lauding the facilities available at Eleanor Rathbone House, notably the beautiful gardens and the bus that conveys residents to Brent Cross for weekly shopping trips.

The speeches over, proceedings concluded on a note of conviviality, helped along by the pouring of libations and ingestion of canapés. □

### Can we have some more, please?

Just returned from a week-end excursion to Bournemouth, arranged for us by the AJR Day Centre, I cannot let this experience pass without expressing my deep appreciation and thanks for the pleasure it has brought to all participants.

A very helpful and friendly hotel staff did everything to make us feel at home. The meals were excellent. Even the weather gods spoil us. A very efficient driver took us, in addition to the enjoyable ride there and back, for two highly appreciated excursions. But who carried the responsibility for the successful outcome of this undertaking?

Our dear Sylvia and Renée, having dealt with all the tiresome preparations, looked after approx. 50 people of varied physical abilities. Their individually applied devotion to everyone cannot be too highly praised. The sincerity and warmth of their personality produced an atmosphere of happiness which made this weekend something special.

In my expressions of thanks I do not want to miss dear Rhona, who gave her loving attention wherever needed. GOD bless you all. – And may I be greedy? Can we have some more, please?

*Hilda Dutch, Willesden Lane, NW2*

## Solitary Witness

Jüdische Friedhöfe in Berlin, Henschel Verlag – Berlin, DDR, 1988

'Jewish cemeteries, sometimes only individual tombstones, are frequently the only witness of the Jewish life in our country, a life which has now gone'. The first sentence of the introduction sets the tone and framework of this volume. It covers a number of aspects: Jewish burial customs, starting with Abraham, Hebrew expressions and inscriptions, social history as exemplified by individuals, and architectural styles of tombstones and memorials.

The contributions of Jews to the cultural and artistic development of Berlin is stressed and reported with much detail. That the panegyric to the Imperial flag, 'proudly flies the flag, black – white – red' was written by a Jewish Berliner, Robert Linderer, is faithfully reported on page 101! Famous names like Lewandowski, Liebermann, Zunz and Geiger abound in the book, which is well illustrated in black and white. The text bears witness to the care and understanding with which the subject has been treated. The grave of Kurt Tucholsky's parents is shown, his satirical poem about plot P is printed in full, the reaction to it at the time is mentioned.

The Lothringer Strasse, where one of the cemeteries is located is now renamed. It is the Herbert Baum Strasse now, named thus in memory of a Jewish member of a resistance group executed by the Nazis.

The book deals with memorials. It is in itself an eloquent memorial to a colourful, exciting era as well as its tragic end.

### Kurt Tucholsky's PLOT P

It's where I've often been myself  
The mourning sigh to heaven:

There you will go,

There I will go,

Comes our turn to leave.

You love, you travel, you're happy too,

Plot U,

It waiteth in absentia

Plot A.

Your grave can wait, with time on its side,

Three meters long,

One meter wide.

You see some three four foreign cities,

A naked woman, very pretty,

A score more years the snow you see

And then □

## A notable birthday

### Robert Kempner at 90

Dr. Robert Max Wasily Kempner, who recently celebrated his 90th birthday, is one of the outstanding figures of the German-Jewish refugee generation.

Older by one year than the twentieth century, he has personally experienced both its triumphs and its tribulations, its greatness and its disappointment. Just old enough to see military service in the First World War, he became a distinguished member of the legal profession of two countries: his native Germany and the America of his adoption. It was he who saw the menace of the Nazi creed from the very beginning and who, well before January 1933, demanded that the Party be banned and its leader tried for perjury and high treason and expelled from Germany as an undesirable alien. He failed, and suffered for it. But he had the last word when, at Nuremberg, he helped to prepare the cases against several of the accused and when, later on, as chief prosecutor in the so-called *Wilhelmstrassenprozess*, he obtained the conviction of a number of officials of the Third Reich standing trial for their part in the Final Solution.

Robert Kempner was born in Freiburg im Breisgau on October 17, 1899. He studied jurisprudence and political science and began his legal career in Berlin. In due course he entered the Prussian civil service and held senior appointments as a state prosecutor and a member of the judiciary. Soon after the Nazis came to power, as he had predicted they would unless stopped in time, he was dismissed, arrested and held by the Gestapo, then forced to emigrate. He lived first in Italy, then in France, and, just before the outbreak of the war, went to the United States. At the end of hostilities he was appointed to the staff of Robert H. Jackson, the chief US prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials, whose close adviser he became, and who relied upon his legal ability, his skill in conducting cross-examinations and his detailed background knowledge (he had, after all, himself been an official of the Prussian Interior Ministry) throughout the proceedings. He returned to private practice in the States and West Germany, with particular expertise in international criminal law and restitution matters. Over the years he has published several books, some of which are based on his professional experience, others on academic research which he has carried out. The Federal Republic has

honoured him with high awards. We, too, salute him as a man of passion and purpose in the pursuit of justice on our behalf. □ D.L.M.

### Margarete Buber-Neumann

With the death of Margarete Buber-Neumann an outstanding personality, who made signal contributions to political life and literature in the age of totalitarianism, has passed from the scene. Born at Potsdam in 1901 she married Rafael, the son of Martin Buber, at Heidelberg after the Great War. After their divorce she married the Communist Reichstag deputy Heinz Neumann. Fleeing the Nazis in 1933 the couple worked for the Comintern in Spain before settling in Moscow. He was executed in the course of Stalin's purges and she disappeared in the gulag. In 1940 she was one of a hundred German Trotzkyites 'repatriated' – i.e. handed over to the Gestapo – by the KGB. Months of Gestapo interrogation were followed by imprisonment at Ravensbrück, where Margaret befriended Milena Jesenska – 'Kafka's Mistress'. The two women vowed to write a joint book about concentration camp life after liberation. Milena, alas, did not survive and it was left to Margaret Buber-Neumann to undertake the project single-handed after the war.

She also wrote an account of her own experiences as a prisoner of Stalin and Hitler and a study of the Comintern. Margarete Buber-Neumann has an assured place in literature alongside Solzhenitsyn and Primo Levi – 'that small select band of writers whose grim muse was the concentration camp'. □

### After-images

Any Jew visiting Poland does so with very mixed feelings. For me a trip to Auschwitz was offset by a subsequent positive experience. At the Zakopane annual folklore festival I discovered the Israeli flag among those of the participant countries. At the first performance I attended, a Polish group was followed by a Scottish one, and both received a lot of applause. The last troupe to perform on that day were the *Gvanim* from Rishon-le-Zion (with two professional choreographers and 35 men and women amateur dancers). Their performance was scheduled to last 45 minutes of singing and dancing, and consisted of quickly changing scenes presented in a great variety of very attractive costumes.

One scene began with a woman in white festive dress setting the Friday evening table and lighting the candles. After dancing girls in white dresses, a group of Chassidim appeared in traditional attire, *stremel* hats, *tallesim*, in black suits with *tsitsit* hanging out. At first, they prayed, all facing east with vigorous body movements as usual in their prayers, quicker and quicker, ending in an ecstatic Chassidic dance, accompanied by appropriate music from the band. It must have seemed rather strange to the audience of Poles of various ages, in the huge festival tent packed with about 1500 people.

One scene had men in Arab-type desert dress perform a sort of dervish dance. In between the dancing, modern songs like *Jerusalem the Golden* and *Hallelujah* (which must have been well known to many in the audience from the International Songs Awards they secured) received enormous applause with general clapping to the beat. The Polish presenters were not able to bring the performance to an end as the audience kept on shouting 'IS-RA-EL', and the group had to give several encores.

When I met members of the group accompanied by some Polish festival organizers and interpreters at their hotel, the atmosphere was so friendly that they could have been friends for years. Shlomo Carlebach had an equally enthusiastic reception when he performed in Krakow!

It was difficult to comprehend that these events took place in a country with the history of Poland – so near to the most tragic centres of mass murder – and in the very middle of the present dispute. □ E. M. Bier

#### WHO IS WHO IN THE AJR OFFICE

Administratrix	Lydia Lassman
Editor, AJR	Richard
Information	Grunberger
Assistant to	
Administratrix	Carol Rossen
Sheltered	
Accommodation	Katia Gould
Head of Homes	
Department	Ruth Finestone
Head of Social Services	Samuel Wolf
Welfare Rights Advisor	Agnes
	Alexander
Day Centre Organiser	Sylvia Matus
Volunteers Co-ordinator	Laura Howe
Membership/Reception	Nora Gittins/ Wendi Wilson

## Art Notes



In April 1987 the Sternberg Centre staged an exhibition of paintings of the Hebrew alphabet by Joe Rose BEM. These paintings have now been beautifully reproduced in book form in 'The Hebrew Alphabet' with illustrative essays by Rabbi Jacob Pressman and make a most attractive volume (Triton Publishing Company, Inglewood, California).

There are two interesting exhibitions at the Camden Arts Centre. The first is drawings by Dennis Creffield of all twenty-six medieval cathedrals in England (until 28 January). Kitaj has described these drawings as 'the best things of their kind since Mondrian's church facades'. Also at the Camden Arts Centre until the same date is an exhibition *Jouwert*, carnival interpreted through print, a group exhibition produced by Paddington Printshop.

One of the main attractions of the 1990 art season is the Frans Hals exhibition at the Royal Academy (until 3 April). Most people know the famous 'Laughing Cavalier' in the Wallace Collection which unfortunately cannot be shown at this exhibition, but there is a wealth of other work, some 66 paintings in all. A number of important works will be coming to London for the first time from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam and the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem.

The Leo Baeck Institute Year Book XXXIV (1989) contains an important and highly readable essay by Justin Howes and Pauline Paucker on German Jews and the Graphic Arts. The essay is profusely illustrated and shows examples of works by Struck, Th. Th. Heine, Budko, Steiner-Prag, Liebermann, Lilien, Meidner, Steinhardt, Lasker-Schüler, Prier, Wolpe, etc. Continuing with the graphic arts, the Society of Wood Engravers will be holding its annual exhibition at St. John's, Smith Square (until 2 February) and from there will move to Oxford, Cirencester and Leominster, returning to Alba Fine Art, Kew (26 June–7 July). Duncan Campbell Fine Art is also holding a wood engraving exhibition (until 27 January), including works by Claire Leighton (who died just recently), Gertrude Hermes and Monica Poole.

The beautifully equipped Hill Gallery, 28 Rossllyn Hill, London NW3, recently

exhibited bronze sculptures by Gila J. Stein, née Jacobovits, a well-known Israeli artist whose work has been widely shown in Israel and overseas. The Hill Gallery is also showing 'The Railwoods Collection', furniture handcrafted from old hardwood railway sleepers.

Abstract Expressionism is one of the many terms used to describe particular schools of painting. Arshile Gorky (1904–48) was one of the founders of this particular school. He had a great influence on the generation of American painters who came to prominence as the New York School in the 1950s. An exhibition of his work is at the Whitechapel Art Gallery (19 January–25 March), the first major presentation of this artist's work in Europe for 25 years.

The municipality of Hamburg is to be congratulated on having converted the *Deichtorhallen*, built as a flower market on the site of the former Berlin Station, into a fine exhibition complex. The first exhibition in this new centre was entitled *Einleuchten* and opened last November. It featured the work of about fifty artists from Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium and the U.S.A. Exhibitions planned for 1990 include 'Contemporary Painting from the Saatchi Collection', 'Art Kites. Pictures from the Sky', 'The World of the Etruscans' and 'Phototriennale' (in the Spring of 1991).

Henry Grant became a professional photographer at the end of the war, using a German miniature camera bought from a refugee in 1939. He and his wife Rose, a professional journalist, became a freelance team and amassed a huge archive of pictures. In 1986 the Museum of London purchased some 75 000 photographs from him and have now mounted an exhibition 'A Better World Tomorrow?' (until 25 February), using some of the best and most evocative images in the collection.

Peter Peri (1899–1967) was born in Budapest, but left Hungary in 1920 and settled in Germany, where he exhibited with Schwitters and Moholy-Nagy in the Sturm Gruppe. In 1933 he was forced to emigrate, and settled in London where he worked as an etcher and modeller of small figures in concrete. An exhibition of his work, including two remarkable series of etchings, was recently held at Gill Drey Gallery, Chenil Galleries, 181 Kings Road, London SW3, where examples of his work may still be seen.

□ Alice Schwab

## SB's Column

*Vienna, city of Musicals.* The 'City of my Dreams' still dreams of the old operetta days. Whilst there were five operetta-playing theatres in pre-war days, and three of them tried to maintain the tradition in the Fifties, operetta performances are now limited to the *Volksoper*, even there the repertoire includes *My Fair Lady* and *Kiss me Kate*. Musicals have taken over, and their successes are nothing less than sensational: *Cats* running for the 6th year at the 'Ronacher', *Phantom of the Opera* at the Theater an der Wien, and *Les Misérables* at the Raimundtheater. However, the *Volksoper* still caters for nostalgia, and works by Lehar, Kalman, Johann Strauss and Oskar Straus continue to attract large (often foreign) audiences.

*Hans Moser.* 25 years after the death of this unique comedian a richly illustrated book, *Hans Moser – der Nachlass* has been issued by publishers Kremayer & Scherianu; it is an accompaniment to an exhibition at the Vienna Palais Palfy until early February. Exhibits will include posters, photos, contracts and diaries, as well as extracts from his most successful films. Texts for these first-time publications are by the Austrian writer Georg Markus who wrote and edited a comprehensive book about Karl Farkas some years ago.

*News from London's National Theatre.* Plans revealed by the National include a revival of *Bent*, a play about the persecution of Homosexuals by the Nazi regime in Germany. This work, by American author Martin Sherman (called *Rosa Winkel* in the German translation) had a try-out at London's Royal Court theatre in 1979. The Sondheim musical *Sunday In The Park With George* is scheduled to have its London premiere in March this year.

*Birthdays.* A great disease of the Twenties, Blandine Ebinger, allegedly the inspiration for many of Friedrich Hollaender's songs, celebrated her 90th birthday in Berlin. Legendary film star Katharine Hepburn, who has 4 Oscars to her credit, and is often commended because of her great professional achievements, is 80 years old. Bernhard Wicki, prominent German actor equally at home in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, partner over the years of Curd Jürgens, Helmut Qualtinger and Klaus Maria Brandauer, had his 70th birthday. □

## German Jew or Jewish German?

Julius Bab *LEBEN UND TOD DES DEUTSCHEN JUDENTUMS*

Argon Verlag, Berlin 1988

People whose fondest ideals are shattered by external events sometimes build up a dream-world in which reality is adapted to prop up their illusions. Such may have been the case of Julius Bab, who, earlier this century, achieved acclaim in Berlin as a drama critic and social historian. He was a liberal, deeply rooted in the traditions of Goethe and Lessing. His mystical love of Germany never faltered despite Nazi persecution and the pains of emigration.

Though Bab never denied his origins, Jewishness played no significant part in his mental outlook until he was forced to face the grim realities of the Third Reich. To his credit he then turned his talents to sustaining the spirit of the declining and demoralized Jewish community. From 1933 he was a leading figure in the *Jüdische Kulturbund* where his Germanic outlook still persisted and became the focus of a divergence of ideas. He wanted to use the *Kulturbund* as a vehicle for preserving German culture among the attenuated community, whereas others saw it as an opportunity to awaken and strengthen Jewish beliefs and traditions.

In his interpretation of German-Jewish history Bab is at pains to stress the deep linkage between German Jews and non-Jewish Germans. He finds a prime example of this linkage in Yiddish, retained as *lingua franca* by the vast Jewish population that emigrated from Germany to Poland in the 14th century. He stresses the linkage, but fails to analyse the feelings of the migrants who left because of constant persecution. Was Yiddish just a convenient form of communication or was it some more subtle love-hate relationship, as Bab suggests? By analogy, Ladino, derived

from medieval Spanish, persisted among the Jews expelled from Spain around 1500. Are we then to assume some special affinity between the inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula and the Jews who once dwelled there?

The golden age for German Jews, according to Bab, was 1875, the period of liberalism. Jews were still excluded from many professions and offices, but Bab thinks that the proletariat could not have been antisemitic since they owed so much of their intellectual awareness to the Jews, Marx and Lassalle!

Bab has produced an original and well-documented work in which he stresses the great contribution that the Jews made to German and, indeed, universal culture. In describing the bestial Nazi excesses Bab points out that the Nazis were not only intent on expunging Jewry but also the liberal ideology in Germany which the Jews had helped to create.

Much has been, and will continue to be, written about the achievements of Germany Jewry. The accuracy of the belief that those achievements resulted from a blending of the German and the Jewish spirit is something that only time and history can prove. □

### A refugee success story

Michael Arton *ONE DAY IN YORK The Story of Allan White and the Veterinarian Drug Company*. Hazelwood, 1989. £6.95

The hero of this story is a poor Jewish boy whose parents move from a small village in Poland to a working-class district of Berlin. There he is born in 1920. When he is only three years old his father dies and he is raised in

the Jewish orphanage in Pankow. He arrives penniless in this country just before the War. At a dance he meets another refugee from Germany, a young nurse whom he marries a few months later. It sounds like the beginning of a romantic novel; but it is, in fact, part of the biography of the author's father-in-law and it is written with affection and understanding.

Allan White (he changed his name after he had joined the Forces) saw active service in Italy with a Commando unit and then with the British Control Commission in Germany. He was demobbed in 1946 with the rank of Staff Sergeant. In civilian life he became a travelling salesman for a small pharmaceutical firm, while his wife Irene ran a kind of nursing home for elderly Jewish refugees in part of their house in Hendon. In the early fifties Allan started his own business making and selling chemical products for veterinary purposes. Some early disappointments caused him to rethink his approach and, in 1959, he registered a new company with himself as chairman and managing director.

Based as it was upon an entirely new marketing concept in the animal drugs industry, the business had to fight much built-in resistance to innovation. But eventually it was able to overcome these obstacles and to enjoy increasing commercial success. It became a public limited company in 1964 and its founder guided its fortunes for nearly twenty more years. When he died at the age of sixty-two he had, it is claimed, 'changed the whole face of veterinary wholesaling in this country for ever'.

This slim paperback is not a book which aspires to recognition on its literary merits; nor is it likely to command a large readership. Its importance for us lies in the fact that it tells in an engaging fashion the story of a refugee's life and of the way he repaid in full measure his debt to his adopted country.

□ David Maier

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**FAMILY EVENTS****Birthdays**

**Kaatz** Herta Kaatz will celebrate her 80th birthday on 27 January. 69 Delaware Mansions, Delaware Road, London W9 LJ2.

**Mervyn** Congratulations to our dear Vice Chairman Anita Mervyn on her 80th birthday. With grateful thanks for her devoted work for the aims of the Marie Schmolka Group. Aliska Bierer, Chairman.

**Deaths**

**Lehmann** Henry Lehmann, born in Cologne in 1910, died peacefully in his home on 27 October, after a short illness. He will be sadly missed and dearly remembered by his wife Lore, his sons Peter and Alan, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, family and friends.

**Mohr** On 26 November, peacefully, Rudolph Jacob Mohr, beloved husband of Charlotte (Lotte), father of Diana (da Costa) and Nicholas, father-in-law of Anthony and Sara and grandfather of Marcus and Edward.

**Norman-Nattenheimer** Peter Max Norman-Nattenheimer of 61 Green Acres, London N3, passed away, Dearly loved, missed and remembered by his family and many friends.

**Rosenduft** Gus (Gustl) Rosenduft passed away suddenly on 9 November. Loved and sadly missed and mourned by his wife Ilse. Devoted father of Esther, father-in-law of Peter, adored grandfather of Tara and Keri. He will always be remembered and never be forgotten by other relatives and numerous friends. Shalom. Ilse.

**Seligmann** Dr. Erwin Seligmann died peacefully at home on 3 December 1989. Sadly missed by his daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**Shelton** Edith Shelton (formerly Gross), born in Vienna, widow of Henry Shelton, died peacefully on 17 November 1989 in London aged 90, after a long illness. Fondly remembered by her children and their spouses, and eight great-

grandchildren. Alice Anson, 22 Elm Avenue, Watford, Herts WD1 4BE.

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**Kohn/Gold** Shmuel Hirsh (Hermann) Kohn/Gold, son of Gittel Kohn and Menasche (Gold?) of Czerninplatz, Vienna, sought by Dr. Netta Kohn Dor-Shav, c/o Dept. of Psychology, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan 52900, Israel.

**Pekarek** Marlies Pekarek, born 1920, last known address Thurnergasse 25, Vienna XV, emigrated to London 1938. Would anyone knowing her whereabouts contact Hedi Gruber Hnizdo, Bad Säckingenstrasse 2/29, Purkersdorf 3002, Austria, Tel. 43-2231/3712.

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## Goethe is innocent, OK?

One of the many 'facts of life' with which all German-speaking refugees from Nazi oppression (except the very young and those determined to return) had come to terms sooner or later was the question of what 'to do' with their cultural past – in particular the German language and its literature, with which they had grown up and which had inevitably attached itself to them.

Not only was this an occasional embarrassment in wartime (none too serious in most cases) and a potential encumbrance on the way to integration into a different way of life (not, in the event, quite as much of a burden as all that) – the problem was psychological, an attempt to recover cognitive consonance after the humiliating experience of being expelled not only physically from the soil, but also from the spiritual home. It was a desire to reject in turn that which had rejected oneself. This did not mean merely a natural revulsion against the junk art of the Third Reich, the propaganda-laden perversions of the spoken and written word, the mindless artefacts and sinister edifices. The mental process of deliberate elimination from the conscious encompassed also the untainted, 'guiltless' German *Klassiker*.

This state of mind outlasted the early days and the war years. For a good few it became a perpetual syndrome, an entrenched personal attitude to all things German, resulting in a mental boycott which, although more difficult to maintain, was just as real as the refusal to buy German goods. In a few extreme cases it went so far as a refusal to claim any restitution payments from the new German State since all things German were, in a real sense, untouchable. 'We turned our backs upon a country', observed the poet Paul Mühsam in his reminiscences, 'to which it had become shameful, not honourable to belong; and in this we were in good company, for the whole civilised world had decided to draw a line between itself and what had become an alienated country'. And Marion Berghahn, in her survey of 'Continental

Britons', found that 'mistrust, dislike, hatred – a whole range of negative associations with Germany characterised the predominant attitudes' in both the first and the second of the refugee generations. And the popular arranger of AJR Day Centre entertainments, Hans Freund, has more than once received objections from individual members of his audiences to the inclusion in his repertoire of such old (and plainly 'innocent') favourites as the *Wiegenlied* of Brahms, *Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust* and Schiller's 'Ode to Joy'.

But not all Jewish refugees harboured these feelings at any time, and many who did have shed them by now. Old volumes have been dusted off and put back on the bookshelf. The modern classics, writers like, say, Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass, have been picked up on continental holidays and read in the original. Hans Freund's trips down Memory Lane have pleased more listeners than they have offended – and he has letters to prove it. And Mühsam again: 'I would most definitely not renounce my own mother tongue, the language spoken by my forebears, my beloved German language – for no better reason that it has been abused by unworthy persons.'

And yet . . .

□ David Maier

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About ourselves . . .

## The new look



The March of Time and Type: 1946 and 1989.

In their appearance journals and newspapers, like other man-made products, material or intellectual, reflect both the mood and the technical achievements of the time of their creation. If they are to be successful and survive for long periods they must continually adapt in keeping with changing tastes and opinions.

With this issue, *AJR Information* enters upon the fortysixth year of uninterrupted monthly publication, a record achieved by few journals of its kind. During these years numerous gradual changes, perhaps imperceptible to many of our readers, were made from time to time. We have now decided upon a more drastic change affecting the appearance of each page. The new look will have little effect on the character of *AJR Information*, and our tradition of giving wide coverage to subjects of interest to our members will be maintained. Reports on our manifold activities in the care of the elderly, and otherwise, will endeavour to give clearer indication of the greatly extended services we offer to our members, indeed the community generally. These effectively address the needs of this century's last decade, so vastly different from those obtaining even in the recent past, let alone those which led to our foundation.

### New typeface

First we considered the text type. Our alphabet has only twenty-six letters, but they can be designed and presented in many different ways. A prerequisite is that the printed word be

easily legible and its character suitable for the purpose of the intended communication. Since 1955 *AJR Information* has used a typeface known as 'Times New Roman', originally designed for *The Times* newspaper some sixty years ago, since when it has become one of the most popular and widely used typefaces. We felt that something a little lighter and giving the appearance of more space would suit the eyes of our readers. Accordingly, we selected a typeface called 'Sabon', and this has been used in all articles in this issue.

'Sabon' was designed by Jan Tschichold, one of the most distinguished and influential typographers of this century. His life history has some relevance to our own background, though this did not influence our choice. Born at Leipzig in 1902 he developed early an interest in typography. At the time of Hitler's advent to power he held a teaching post at the Munich College of Printing, but fell foul of the Nazis for so-called *Kultur Bolschewismus*. After a short stay in prison he found refuge in Switzerland where he was later naturalized. After the war he worked for three years at Allen Lane, playing a major part in the design of Penguin books. Returning to Switzerland in 1949 he was succeeded at Allen Lane by Hans Schmoller, a Jewish refugee from Berlin. The influence of these two typographers on the success of Penguin books during a period of thirty years is beyond exaggeration. Tschichold continued to live in Switzerland where he died in 1974. Excellence was the hallmark of all his work, but his 'Sabon' typeface, introduced in 1967, is widely considered to represent the pinnacle of his typographical achievements.

### New front page

While for many the new text type will be the most obvious feature of the changes introduced in this issue, the new masthead on the front page will surely not escape the attention of even those least observant of printing minutiae. The word 'Information' is set in the slanted characters of the 'Sabon' type, usually called italics. The initials 'AJR' are 'Gill Bold' capitals, replacing the 'Grotesque' letters familiar to our members from their longtime use. This representation has already made its debut in the new *AJR* brochure, sent out with our November 1989 issue. It will in future be seen on our letterheads and other printed matter, and thus become our organisation's logo or trade mark.

The headings of, and subheadings within, the articles are variations of the Gill types used on our new *AJR* logo. They are available in a wide variety of weights and sizes, which, when used imaginatively, will help to lend interest to the pages of our journal. These block letters, known in the printing trade as sanserifs, were created by Eric Gill in the 1920s. Well known as a sculptor (some of his work can be seen on the side of the BBC building in Portland Place) he was equally eminent as a letter cutter and designer of typefaces. The elegance of this attractive series of letters is felt by many to render them superior to several similar designs of the same period, which, based entirely on the application of pure geometry, had come mainly from Germany.

We have introduced another significant change in that the text is no longer 'justified', that is to say, the lines are not of uniform length. This avoids the splitting of words, which often makes for awkward reading. Other features of the new layout are the inclusion on the front page of directions to other important articles in each issue and the provision for an illustration. Altogether, it is intended to use illustrations more extensively throughout the journal.

### The first editor

Widely read in many countries, *AJR Information* is one of the success stories of our activities in which we take great pride. It is appropriate that, having drawn attention to the important changes now introduced, we should close with a tribute to its first editor, Dr. Werner Rosenstock. Not only was he one of the Association's founders, but also for many years general secretary, later director, and is still with us as an honorary member. During his long stewardship the journal bore the stamp of his personality through his wide knowledge of, and involvement in, Jewish affairs in Germany before the war and the fate of refugees since. It is the standards he laid down and maintained that we seek to emulate and, if possible, to improve.

□ C.T.M.