

AJR *Information*

Volume LIII No. 5

May 1998

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

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by casuistry**
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Net values

The Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles estimates that there are 850 websites on the Internet (the international computer network) propagating racial hatred and even disseminating information on home bomb-making. (See page 7).

Rather than the medium – which already has 40 million subscribers – it is the providers of these insidious messages who should be challenged and prosecuted, prevented from claiming the protection of liberal democracies. Their activities violate basic human rights and historic truths, abuse the privileges of free speech and scholarship, and threaten to repeat the violence of Buenos Aires and Oklahoma bombings and Tokyo subway gas attacks □

Reflections on the Jewish state's heroic past and clouded present

Israel at fifty

The birth of Israel fifty years ago was not only the culmination of Jewish history – it replicated many features of our contradiction-haunted past. Diaspora Jewry had been both a target for perennial aggression and incredibly strong – as proved by its survival through centuries of persecution. It had been vilified as less than human by many of its neighbours, while often being culturally superior to them. It had appeared homogeneous to the outside world at the same time as it was deeply riven by internal dissent, and so forth.

1948 represents a multiple landmark. For one, the new-born Jewish state was heir to the greatest tragedy in history – a tragedy exceeding in scale the Irish potato famine, the Armenian massacres and even the African slave trade. For another, it faced instant assault by the neighbouring Arab states intent upon smothering the infant at birth. Despite fearful odds Israel won the War of Independence and thereby began the process of dismantling the age-old perception of Jews as a race of lily-livered Fagins.

In the intervening fifty years Israel has enabled every diaspora Jew to hold his head up high, even while it intermittently made our hearts ache over the recurrence of war and terror. In that half century Israel has grown seven-fold in population – a feat of immigrant absorption without precedent in history. And the crowning glory of it all: despite wars and emergencies compounded by the tensions of a cultural melting pot inside a political pressure cooker, the country has remained a democracy.

But democracy requires a disposition towards give-and-take and an awareness that national cohesion outweighs party politics – virtues increasingly absent from the mindset of Israeli policy makers.

This is not all that surprising in a country where an impassioned minority believe laws drawn up by a merely human legislature possess less validity than rabbinical injunctions.

Nor must the historical experience of different components of Israeli society be left out of account. Those traumatised by their European past discern

the lineaments of Hitler in the visage of Nasser or any other Mid-Eastern dictator.

Immigrants from Arab countries bring with them an unfamiliarity with democratic practices, while (the comparatively more recent) Russian arrivals experience culture shock when confronted by Western freedoms and *laissez faire*. Such groups are readier to follow a policy offering 'us-against-them' certainties in preference to a doveish gamble on the goodwill of former enemies like Arafat.

Thus the peace process so hopefully inaugurated at Oslo is currently in the doldrums, and it would be extremely rash to hazard a guess about its future. In consequence one is tempted to raise only two cheers on this golden anniversary. If, however, one looks back at the fragility of the Jewish state at birth and compares it to its current regional power status and prosperity such reservations fall away. Besides, Israel can no more be identified with Netanyahu than the Britain of today can be with the thrice elected Mrs Thatcher □

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES

will be held at
15 Cleve Road, NW6
at 3pm on

SUNDAY 21st JUNE 1998

AGENDA:

**Annual Report for 1997
Hon. Treasurer's Report
Discussion
Election of Committee of Management**

Guest Speaker:

**Her Honour, Judge Dawn Freedman
'A View from the Bench'**

*All questions for the Chair should be
submitted by 5th June to the Director at:
1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal, London NW3 6AL*

Profile

From Rostock to
rusticity

Marianne Elsley hails from Rostock (Mecklenburg) where her parents held down prestigious jobs – the father as a county court judge, the mother as a children's doctor. Born into the professional middleclass, she enjoyed a comfortable childhood and spent long summer holidays at the Baltic resort of Warnemünde.

After 1933 her cosy world began to fall apart. The first intimation of this was the refusal of all her classmates to occupy the desk adjacent to hers. Her father was dismissed from his post and in 1936 the family moved to Berlin. Here Marianne attended a Jewish school and in November 1938 watched the Fasanenstrasse synagogue burn.

Two months later, aged fifteen, she said goodbye to her parents forever and travelled to England on a Kindertransport. However, she had a cousin studying over here, and – what mattered more in the short term – the Quakers took an interest in her.



Marianne Elsley

A Quaker lady welcomed Marianne at Waterloo, took her home and enrolled her in a school at which her own daughter was a teacher. Within half a year the school evacuated to Street, Somerset, where the Quaker shoe manufacturer Clark offered them hospitality. It was in a wing of the Clarks' spacious house that Marianne both lived and attended lessons for the next two and a half years.

In 1941, having acquired an English accent and with a school certificate under her belt, Marianne went into nursing. (After the initial training she would like to have ascended the career ladder, but found that the London teaching hospitals

disbarred foreigners).

She nursed first in Salisbury, and then became a theatre sister in Southampton. After the war she met her husband, who taught English at public schools. They had a daughter (who now teaches English at an American university) and a son.

Since public schools are largely residential, teachers are often housemasters – and so it came about that Marianne, the one-time nurse and sister, ended her working life as a matron (though of a school, and not a hospital).

To this quintessentially English occupation she has since added others. Living in retirement in Oxfordshire, she has written a gardening column for a community paper, participated in a craft group as well as a writers' circle and has presided over the local Women's Institute.

She is also a busy public speaker on the topic of her own experiences, hopeful of notching up a hundred appearances on the county lecture circuit by next year. Last but not least, Marianne is an author of (hitherto unpublished) short stories, though she has managed to publish two books of reminiscences. The latter don't exactly walk off the shelves at Blackwell's in Oxford, but sell briskly wherever she speaks.

□ RG

Zion's Pandora's box

Professor Bernard Wasserstein of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew Studies presented a sympathetic review of Israel's 'revisionist historians' in a lecture entitled 'Opening Israel's Black Box – towards an uncensored history of Zionism', for the '45 Aid Society in London.

He prefaced his analysis by speaking of today's Israel being "widely regarded as a country on the brink of disaster" in which the élan of early statehood had been replaced by malaise and despair. A founding generation of historians, who maintained the traditionally heroic view of Israel's struggles to hold on to its territory and statehood, were being superseded by a generation of historians born after 1948 who had gained significant access to British, then Israeli, archival evidence for the first time. These provided evidence with which to challenge the traditional narrative and even made it "untenable".

Wasserstein quoted from Benny Morris's

The Refugee Problem, published in 1987, which examined in detail causes of the Palestinian Arab exodus in 1948 during Israel's War of Independence. Morris, previously with the Jerusalem Post and then professor at Ben-Gurion University, used journalistic techniques of perseverance and painstaking research and opened local archives. While presenting a picture of "chaos and confusion", Morris concluded that psychological warfare, atrocities committed by both sides, local initiatives in defiance of government orders, and the destruction of Arab villages (which posed a threat to lines of communication) had all contributed to the exodus. Accusations that the 'new historians' were undermining the legitimacy of the state, allied to "wilful collective amnesia", according to Wasserstein, led to Morris' excommunication by the Israel establishment.

Wasserstein looked at a military study of the comparative strengths of forces in the 1948 war, Dr Amitsur Ilan's *The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Arms Race*. While Israel had not one tank in its armoury, in-

creased supplies of artillery ammunition made a considerable difference to the outcome of battles in the later stages of the war.

Sadat's visit to Israel in 1977 and the Intifada of 1987, were precursors of the Oslo Accords of 1993 which were a fundamental break with the past, sometimes called 'post Zionism'. Israeli scholars were now read and discussed by Palestinian Arab scholars. Wasserstein foresaw a "gradual convergence of two national historical analyses" in which historians sought to find common ground. The old truth that self-understanding was the first and indisputable step to mutual understanding had to be discovered anew, according to Wasserstein.

Several former fighters in the War of Independence attending the lecture took issue with these views. Arie Handler, who witnessed Ben-Gurion's declaration of the state being swiftly followed by the Egyptian bombing of Tel Aviv, emphasised that it was "not a time for kid gloves".

□ Ronald Channing

A confession marred by casuistry

Though it is the offspring of Judaism, Christianity set up in lethal opposition to the older faith from the very start. The gospel writers literally demonised the Jews, calling them god-killers – deicides – and children of the devil (John 8: 43-45).

After an initial period of persecution Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, but the assumption of power in no way diminished its Judeophobia. Theologians of the eminence of St Augustine categorised the Jews as 'deadly to Christians', while the Bible translator St Jerome – revered subject of hundreds of religious paintings – dubbed them 'Judaic serpents'.

Church Fathers, both Western – St Ambrose of Milan – and Eastern – St John Chrysostom of Constantinople – echoed such sentiments.

Despite this accumulation of Church-ordained hatred the first Christian millennium proved less lethal to the Jews than the second. The Crusades, which Pope Urban II initiated around 1100 AD, engendered massacres all along the Rhine and in the Holy Land. Thereafter the Church enforced the separation of the Jews from the host population by restrictions on occupation, a distinctive dress code and the establishment of ghettos.

Clerical bigots fabricated allegations of unconscionable Jewish crimes such as ritual child murder and the 'desecration of the host' (the stabbing of consecrated wafers, i.e. the body of Christ). The coping stone of this whole psychopathic construct was the Spanish Inquisition whose principal targets were crypto-Jews, or *Marranos*. The driving force behind the Inquisition was Queen Isabella. Her labours in making Spain *judenrein* – admittedly through expulsion and not mass murder – earned her the soubriquet 'Isabella the Catholic'.

At this point lack of space forces me to curtail the church's catalogue of sins and fast-forward to the 1940s.

No one who calls himself a human being could possibly shrug off the culpability of many Catholics – from Pope Pius XII downwards – in the Holocaust.

Nor did the revelation of its horrors produce a Church-wide change of heart. The Bishop of Kielce refrained from stopping the 1946 pogrom, the Tyrolean cult of the 'ritually murdered' Anderl von Rinn

continued, the Vatican-based Bishop Hudal spirited Nazi mass murderers away to S America, and the war criminal Touvier received sanctuary in French monasteries.

The first Pope who took steps to reverse the church's 2000-year old anti-Jewish tradition was John XXIII. He convened Vatican II which absolved Jews of the guilt of deicide, but his pontificate, alas, lasted only five years.

Now John Paul II has issued an important statement on the Holocaust. This is a further step in the right direction – which, however, falls lamentably short of what is required. The declaration distinguishes Nazi *racial* antisemitism from *religious* anti-Judaism 'of which Christians have been guilty'.

The distinction is a mealy-mouthed evasion of the issue. During the Shoah the genocidal Slovak state was headed by a priest, and the even more bloodstained Ustasha regime enjoyed the full backing of the Croat hierarchy.

The Vatican declaration also continues to present Pius XII as beyond reproach, yet in the 1940s a single word from him could have saved a hundred Jewish lives.

Of course, a church wedded to the concept of the Apostolic Succession has difficulty in stripping a Pope of the aura of infallibility – but the issue of Pius the Twelfth's culpable silence will not be laid to rest till the Vatican comes clean.

In the meantime we must console ourselves with the old adage about half a loaf being better than none. I would have written 'quarter loaf', but for the news report that Rome has decided to abandon plans for the canonisation of the aforementioned Queen Isabella the Catholic.

□ Richard Grunberger

50 YEARS AGO

LEO BAECK 75

Dr Baeck's position is unique. Like every outstanding personality, he is deeply rooted in the Community whose destiny shaped his way of thought and in whose destiny he was to play such a decisive part.

Perhaps it was only from German Jewry that a man like Leo Baeck could arise; being a non-Zionist and taking a positive attitude to the Palestine idea, he was respected by Zionists and non-Zionists alike. He shared the fate of his fellow Jews in Theresienstadt, and it is perhaps the finest compensation for his self-sacrifice in those dark days that he may now enjoy a full life in health, surrounded by his family and devoted to new tasks □

AJR Information, May 1948

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Reviews

Kindertotenlied

Benjamin Wilkomirski, *FRAGMENTS*, Picador, 1997, £5.99.

Germany may drop its plan to build a Holocaust memorial in Berlin because of disputes over the form it should take.

The proposal so far favoured is an assemblage of featureless slabs. This has a sort of gruesome aptness. While Nazi fanatics and louts were murdering little Benjamin's father before his eyes, quiet, conscientious men were working out how many trains a day could run to Maidanek. How could they have done that, unless they thought of living people as featureless slabs?

"According to the logic of the plan, and the orderly rules they devised to carry it out, we should have been dead," Wilkomirski writes. "But we're alive. We're the living contradiction to logic and order".

All our memories of early childhood come back to us in fragments; hence the title of this book. But Wilkomirski's fragments are "shards of memory with hard knife-sharp edges, which still cut flesh if touched today". Any image from this book would make a better Holocaust memorial than the slabs.

There's the image of the child's first entry into Maidanek, when a guard lashed him across the face with a whip. There's the image of the protective older boy, sharing out the treasures he had stolen – potato peelings and a cabbage leaf.

There's the image of the pile of dead, naked women, strangely stirring, strangely alive, because of the rats eating them. The child, watching, thinks they are giving birth to rats.

Years later this image came back to haunt him, when his wife was giving birth to their first son. But for all its horror, that page brings the reader a moment of consolation. Not only did this child survive the camps, and survive the Swiss foster-parents who told him the camps hadn't happened; he grew up to become a husband and a father.

For this, perhaps, we have to thank a woman whose image would look strange on a memorial to the Holocaust. Among so many Germans obeying orders, there was a woman guard who disobeyed orders, if only once in her life. She took the child for a long, dangerous walk across

the camp, though checkpoints and barriers, to see his dying mother. The mother did not speak, nor did the child. But she gave him her one treasure – a hoarded piece of bread.

If it had not been for this encounter, the child would have had no recollection of his mother. He was so very small at the time of his father's murder that he remembered nothing about family life. When the older children talked about their mothers, he did not even know what a mother was.

He came out of the camps distrusting adults, hardly daring to open his mouth, stealing and hiding food even when there was plenty, screaming in terror at the sight of a central heating furnace and imagining a ski-lift was a device for mass murder.

But, because of the German woman's good action, he did know that mothers loved their children and gave them bread.

□ Alison Macleod

One man's war

Peter Masters, *STRIKING BACK, A Jewish Commando's war against the Nazis, Presidio Press, California*. (UK Distributors: Greenhill Books) £16.99.

Peter Masters is the adopted name of Vienna-born Peter Arany, who owes his life to his Aunt Ida. A milliner, she obtained a job in London's Oxford Street, and arranged for Peter and other relatives to come to the UK.

As soon as he had turned 18 Peter applied to join the Pioneer Corps, the only part of the British Army aliens were allowed to join.

Immediately on arriving at a Pioneer company Peter began his efforts to transfer to a fighting unit. This took him until 1943 when the Commandos came looking for native German speakers to perform hazardous duties. The Jewish refugees of 3 Troop, 10 Commando, all spoke fluent German and they were to provide valuable service, both as front line interrogators and intelligence operatives, and as clandestine raiders behind Nazi lines. Because of the high risks involved they all assumed new identities. They took on English surnames, and

were given entirely new backgrounds complete with family origins, schools and other proof of Britishness; even their dog tags were stamped Church of England.

Training completed, they were amongst the first troops to go ashore in the Allied assault on Normandy. From there they went on to fight in the Low Countries, and ultimately Germany.

Postwar Peter Masters emigrated to the USA and had a career in TV production and graphic design. Recently he sold the film rights to this book for nearly \$1 million.

□ John M Lewis

Not the full Stoppard

Tom Stoppard, *THE INVENTION OF LOVE*, The Royal National Theatre

One doesn't necessarily expect Jewish-born playwrights to tackle Jewish themes. Molnar did not, while Schnitzler did. Among our contemporaries many – Wesker, Mamet, Arthur Miller – articulate Jewish concerns, whereas Pinter does not (though he makes up for it by vitriolic anti-Zionism).

Another playwright whose work betrays nary a glimmer of ancestral awareness is Tom Stoppard. Not that Britain's greatest theatrical wit since Wilde and Coward plays down his mid-European roots: he has adapted Schnitzler, Molnar and even Nestroy.

He has also written most movingly about persecuted Soviet dissidents (*Professional Foul*, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*). That the playwright can tug at heartstrings was furthermore demonstrated in *Arcadia*, where a strong emotional charge builds up under a veneer of bantering wit.

Would that the same could be said of *The Invention of Love*. Here the wit often appears laboured – 'I abhor *homosexual*, the word is half Greek, half Latin', 'The future perfect is an oxymoron' – while the emotional charge barely lights a 40-watt bulb. I was not made to care about the unrequited love A E Housman felt for a fellow undergraduate in 1880s Oxford. Housman sublimated his frustration by composing poetry; more importantly he devoted decades of his life to the purging of classical texts of errors and mis-

Reviews (continued)

readings perpetrated by medieval scribes. It was in the nature of Greek civilisation that those texts – by the likes of Homer and Plato – contained beguiling evocations of same-sex love (as, for instance, between Achilles and Patroclus).

The fact that Housman's *Shropshire Lad* appeared around the same time as 'the love that dare not speak its name' – to quote Lord Alfred Douglas – became a universal talking point, affords Stoppard the opportunity of letting the play culminate in a monologue by Oscar Wilde.

Interspersed in Wilde's Niagara of words is his hubristic claim to have been a mouldbreaking pioneer of modernity in the theatre, in aesthetic sensibility, in taste and fashion, even in journalism.

As the final curtain descended amid effusive applause I asked myself two questions: a) Where are the Emperor's clothes?, and b) Has Stoppard decided to clamber aboard the Oscar Wilde bandwagon, which is up and running long before the Jubilee Line extension?

□ RG

Culture clash

George Rattner, OF BLESSED MEMORY,
King's Head Theatre, Islington.

Aaron Greenwald is a New York Hasidic Jew attired in the sect's customary uniform of black garb and wide-brimmed black hat. He engages in prayer and study of the Torah and Talmud at the feet of his Rebbe at every opportunity.

To make a living Aaron runs his old-style paint supply business from a dingy shop in Brooklyn's Williamsburg district with his assistant Jesse who hails from the Puerto Rican immigrant community. An honest hardworking boy, with this job Jesse has distanced himself from the district's endemic drug trade, a major source of income for his contemporaries.

Into this small enclosed world arrives the newest protection racketeer on the block, Jesse's former boss, complete with sexy long-legged gangster's moll, who threatens Aaron with eviction if he cannot act as a drug import front. The dilemma in which this places Aaron, on the one hand imbued with the high moral principles of Judaism, while on the other having to protect his livelihood, is the

crux of playwright George Rattner's fast-moving real-life drama.

The excellent George Layton as Greenwald is burdened with Jewry's need for survival in a harsh secular world, yet beset even more by the anti-Zionist tirades of a Satmar sect neighbour played with conviction by Lawrence Werber. Mario Kalli's frighteningly brutal gang boss is held in check by Anthony Donovan's laconic cop while Owen Oakeshott as Jesse foolishly falls for tart-with-a-heart Michelle Gomez. Director Gordon Greenberg projects a microcosm of life from the Head's pocket handkerchief stage.

Sad to relate, the King's Head Theatre is under threat of closure for lack of funding. Snug in the back room of a pub for a quarter of a century, the brainchild of American Dan Crawford, it has done well for Jewish plays and authors. Perhaps it's time for the Jewish community to repay this debt.

□ Ronald Channing

'Lebensraum', a new play by Israel Horovitz, runs from 21 April till 24 May at the King's Head Theatre.

'It is no dream'

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the modern State of Israel, the Jewish Museum at Raymond Burton House, Albert Street, Camden Town, is mounting an exhibition which explores Britain's role in the creation of the State, the British Mandate, the Balfour Declaration and Israel's ongoing special relationship with British Jewry.

The exhibition's narrative, lucidly and comprehensively recounted by Prof. David Cesarani, Director of the Wiener Library, chronicles the rise of the Zionist movement in Britain and its impact on Anglo-Jewry, highlights women's organisations such as WIZO and youth movements such as Habonim, and shows early British pioneers and members of fighting forces such as the Zion Mule Corps, the Jewish Brigade and Machal.

Using the words of Herzl, the exhibition entitled *"If you will it, it is no dream", Britain, Zionism & British Jews* was opened by the Israeli Ambassador, Dror Zeigerman.

□ RDC

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Letters to the Editor



ANSCHLUSS

Sir – May I applaud your editorial on Austria (March issue).

Your piece entitled 'Naustalgia' reminded me of the time, at 7a.m. on 13th March when my father and I left Vienna and were driven to the Czech frontier. The frightening drive was accentuated by thousands of Austrians waving their swastika flags in the expectation that Hitler would arrive on that day.

I still like Vienna and am very worried by the real thoughts behind the façade, which is the voting strength of Mr Haider.

Limpsfield Common
Surrey

Peter Frankel

NAUSTALGIA

Sir – In your case it equals *Austrodium*. 'Tis a pity you have not shed it in the sixty years you mention.

Shrublands
Norwich

Herbert Anderson

IGNORANCE THAT CRIES TO HIGH HEAVEN

Sir – While attending a course of lectures on Shakespeare plays – including *The Merchant of Venice* – I mentioned that Edward I had expelled the Jews in 1290 and that they were not admitted back until 1656 (a fact referred to in all the history books in the local library).

I was amazed to find that not a single student at this course knew anything at all about it. Even more astonishingly the lecturer, who had a doctorate in literature, didn't know, or *even believe me!*

On a visit to Bonn in the early '90s I found time and again that the postwar generation of Germans insists that their parents (namely my own generation – I was born 1910) knew nothing whatever about what was happening around us in the thirties...

No comment is needed.

Macclesfield
Cheshire

Marianne Walter

HEINE IN ENGLAND

Sir – The line 'I met murder on the way/ He had a mask like Castlereagh' is not – as you suggest – 'a quip' – but a description of the ruling classes. The

poem ends with the famous exhortation from Shelley to the oppressed 'Rise like Lions after slumber/In unvanquishable number...' I cannot help adding that some of your contributors – amazingly erudite as many of them are – might benefit from a read or re-read of this great poem. Perhaps we owe some of Britain's democracy to the fallen of the Peterloo massacre and their tattered banners.

A reader

HATE BEGETS HATE

Sir – I should like to point out that there are many passages in the Old Testament – Exodus 23, 4; Proverbs 24, 17 and 25, 21; and the great passage in Isaiah 19, 24 and 25 – which teach us to be kind to our enemies.

The Talmud says that the angels in heaven wept at the sight of the Egyptian army drowning in pursuit of Israel, and Jews on Seder night spill a drop of wine at the mention of each of the ten plagues as a reminder that we should not indulge in *schadenfreude* at the discomfiture of our enemies.

Jesus liked to exaggerate in order to press home a point but the sentiment was well noted in Judaism.

Sneath Avenue
London NW11

Eric Conrad

TAKEN TO TASK

Sir – As a Holocaust victim and sole survivor of my family, I have often been struck by the fact that we Jews are so firmly anchored to our tragic history, we forget about the bright promise of our future. I think your magazine must plead guilty in this respect.

The Bible assures us of the reality of this future – a time when all Israel will be in the land and when persecution will be no more.

I would direct readers to the following passages :- Jeremiah 31, v.27 onwards; Isaiah 60; Ezekiel 20, v.33 onwards.

Beckenham
Kent

Edith Jochim

RESTITUTION

Sir – Restitution seems to have become the flavour of the month. A number of governments have suddenly discovered –

or may be pushed into discovering – that they owe a duty to those by whose misfortune they profited.

There is one, however, and a friendly government at that, that has consistently refused to acknowledge the wrongdoing of its soldiers involved in this episode. I am referring to the Canadian government.

I was one of the two thousand plus internees sent to Canada on the 'Ettrick' who ended up in Camp 'L' in Quebec. On arrival all internees had their possessions i.e. watches, fountain pens, etc. – confiscated, so-called receipts were issued, mostly unsigned. To the best of my knowledge none of the owners ever saw the confiscated articles again.

After the war I made endeavours through the Canadian High Commission to recover the value of the items lost. I believe that the few who had signed receipts were eventually compensated but the Canadian Government has consistently refused to acknowledge their debt to the remainder.

I think the time is ripe for Ottawa to reconsider its attitude. If other AJR members are affected, and feel as I do they could perhaps make themselves known.

115 Golden Vale
Churchdown
Glos GL3 2LX

Herbert Layton

BETH SHALOM

Sir – What a brilliant idea of Mr & Mrs Dutch to nominate Stephen Smith for the next Royal Honours list.

I visited Beth Shalom last November with the AJR group, and was deeply impressed by the admirable work of the Smith family. It's not only a memorial and an exhibition, but a living conception of Good against Evil.

Harrow
Middx

Hana Nermut

CRI DU COEUR

Sir – Whether Inge Trott is halachically Jewish or a convert is of no interest to us and I wonder why she thinks it is. What does puzzle me is why she celebrates Christmas and has a tree. I wonder how many Christians or Muslims celebrate Pesach.

Come, Mrs Trott, if as you claim you feel Jewish, be Jewish and de-tree. Or is that a tree-mendous problem in leafy Cheam?

Bushey Heath
Herts

Barry Hyman

Ernest David

It is with regret that we say goodbye to Ernest David, our Director for the last four years. Ernest took up his post at a time when the sudden departure of his predecessor had lowered morale and he set about the task of revitalising the organisation with a will.

He enhanced and enlarged the role of Social Services to provide practical and emotional support to members in need, and encouraged the formation of regional AJR groups in South London, Pinner, Birmingham and Manchester. He advanced good working relationships with such bodies as World Jewish Relief, Jewish Care, Belsize Square Synagogue, the Board of Deputies, 45 Aid Society, Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners, Wiener Library and the Otto Schiff Housing Association. Equally significant has been his close collaboration with the Reunion of Kindertransport (RoK), from whose ranks our next intake of (first generation) members must come. He also liaised closely with the Second Generation movement so as to tap into a future

source of membership.

Ernest energetically pushed pension claims and set up a service, in conjunction with Jewish Care and World Jewish Relief, for a German lawyer to help with compensation claims. He found a volunteer in this country to help, thereby saving the AJR a considerable outlay.

He negotiated the mechanism whereby AJR became a member of the Claims Conference, whom he briefed on changes required to Article 2 Fund and from whom he obtained grants which greatly reduced AJR's own expenditure on Day Centre projects.

Ernest reduced the organisation's running costs by changing wasteful resourcing practices and introduced budgets and transparent management accounts. He made a positive input at editorial meetings of *AJR Information*. He arranged extra-mural events including concerts, film shows, lectures and visits to Beth Shalom and introduced Bridge evenings at the Day Centre.

Ernest has been a hands-on Director who has made a contribution in every sphere of AJR activity □

Hatred on the Internet

The Internet, the fast-expanding international computerised information exchange which already serves 40 million subscribers, is being used by neo-Nazis.

US citizen Larry Lauck has been distributing hate-mail in Germany and elsewhere in Europe for the last 20 years. Only as a result of an incautious visit to Denmark was he extradited to Germany, prosecuted and imprisoned. Ahmed Rahmi – a Moroccan whose CV includes trying to assassinate King Hassan – used a state grant in Sweden to publish hate literature in Arabic before being stopped. His 'Radio Islam' on the Internet provides a nascent umbrella organisation under which like-minded groups can shelter and enrol recruits.

Incredibly, in 1991 racist extremist Larry Harris obtained bubonic plague spores by mail order, but was arrested only this year for trying to obtain the even more deadly anthrax! George Birdy, a Canadian, acts with similar impunity as US-based bigots do under the protection of the first

amendment's freedom of speech clause. In France earlier this year, the Charlemagne Hammerskin Skinheads were found to have drawn up a hit list of prominent French Jews.

The Simon Wiesenthal Centre's response, begun two years ago, was to launch their own Internet 'website' containing a comprehensive on-line data base and resources for teachers, students, researchers and historians seeking reliable and easy-to-access information on the Holocaust.

At present some 850 sites propagating hatred have been identified. By the end of the century – just two years away – there could be anything up to a billion Internet users! Given that a website can be published for a very limited financial outlay, and given that this unregulated and uncensored forum for information and ideas provides racists with the opportunity to market their ideas within the main culture, the threat is unlikely to diminish.

□ Ronald Channing

This is a summary of a lecture given by Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, Los Angeles.

Election of Committee of Management

The following members will be proposed for election or re-election to the Committee at the AGM on Sunday 21 June 1998

Mr A.C. Kaufman, Chairman
Mr W.D. Rothenberg, Vice-Chairman & Treasurer

Mrs E.S. Angel, Secretary
Mr P. Dannenberg, Trustee

*Mr C.W. Dunston, Trustee

*Mr M. Durst, Trustee

*Mrs J. Field

Mrs D. Franklin

Mrs G.R. Glassman

Mrs J. Kessler

Mrs S. Landau

*Mr H.E. Levy

*Committee members retiring by rotation and being proposed for re-election.

Anyone wishing to propose any other member for election as Hon. Officer, Trustee, or Committee member must submit to the Director, AJR, such a proposal signed by ten members qualified to vote at the meeting and with the signed agreement of the person being proposed **no later than Thursday 14 May 1998**



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Cantor: Rev Lawrence H. Fine

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Saturday mornings at 10 am
Religion school: Sundays at 10 am to 1 pm

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Annual Report 1997

Membership

Although 269 members died or let their membership lapse, 196 new members joined, leaving a total of 3401 members on December 31, 1997. New members are those who have just learned of AJR's existence, those who have been referred to Social Services, and those who want help with pension or other claims on Germany, Austria, Switzerland.

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

A number of innovations were introduced during the year in order to provide services and facilities at Cleve Road to a broader range of AJR members.

The Luncheon Club, which meets on the third Wednesday of the month, features a buffet lunch, followed by a stimulating speaker and a discussion. This programme has become so popular that there is a waiting list for every meeting.

This was the case, too, for the bridge evenings named in memory of the late Madeleine Brook, which took place in May and November.

In addition to chiropody and optometric services, dentistry and physiotherapy have been introduced. Clothes sales take place regularly.

A further innovation was the hire of a mini-bus once a week to transport up to 15 members to and from Cleve Road.

The regular events of 2nd Seder night, Open Day in July, and two Bournemouth holiday weeks were fully booked, but other outings attracted less support.

A sub-committee was formed to develop a strategy for the future of the Day Centre, in the light of rising costs and falling attendances.

The Day Centre had 240 members who, with guests at special activities, generated 11300 attendances, 5% down on 1996. This nevertheless created a heavy workload for manager Sylvia Matus and her full and part time staff of 11 plus 60 volunteers.

Catering

Nearly 23,000 meals were prepared by Head Chef Jeff Heywood and his staff of three, under the management of Susie Kaufman.

In addition to the meals provided to members at the Day Centre and those delivered to their homes as meals-on-wheels, and take-away meals, the team also catered for the special events mentioned above and the AGM, Tea Dance and a number of events for volunteers.

A new ventilation system was installed in the kitchen to make working conditions more tolerable. This was partially funded by the Claims Conference.

Volunteers

AJR's Volunteers' Co-Ordinator, Debbie Picker, organised regular befrienders' support group meetings and training days, covering subjects such as Bereavement and Loss, Care in the Community, Welfare Benefits and emotional issues affecting refugees. The first Induction Training Day for new volunteers was well attended.

Talks were given to the Jews Free School and other organisations and an AJR stall was set up at the Israel Expo at Wembley Conference Centre and Limmud 1997.

Social events for volunteers included theatre outings and the presentation of certificates of appreciation during National Volunteers Week by Camden Councillor, Barry Peskin.

Irene White arranged a successful tea party for blind or partially sighted AJR members, catered by the Day Centre team.

36 new volunteers were recruited and 24 existing volunteers were matched with other members. Over 170 volunteers continue to enable the AJR to provide a wide range of services to assist our community. We thank them for their devotion and help.

Social Services

In early 1997, Agi Alexander relinquished her role as Head of Social Services to enable her to work part-time and to concentrate on Welfare Rights. Her place was taken by Marcia Goodman.

Between May and December, the team dealt with 163 new referrals and help is now offered to 384 clients, 11% of AJR's membership, throughout the UK.

All new referrals receive an initial assessment to determine their needs which may be for emotional or financial support, pensions advice, help in finding carers, cleaners or shoppers, meals-on-wheels, Day Centre attendance, hospital visiting, advice and help on wills, powers of attorney or other legal problems, for which we have the services of a volunteer lawyer.

Because of their life experience, our members have more acute emotional needs than the general population and there is much loneliness and isolation due to the fragmentation of families.

Social workers receive regular support from their manager on a one to one basis, and at team meetings and training sessions.

Close links have been established with OSHA, Jewish Care and Belsize Square Synagogue, and with Local Authority Social Workers.

Pensions and Compensation

Working in conjunction with a German lawyer, AJR volunteer Hilde Ambrose interviewed a number of claimants who had applied for ill health pensions from Germany in the 1950/60's and whose application had been refused or only a small pension awarded. Such claims can

now, in certain circumstances be re-opened. As yet there have been no positive results, but some success is anticipated.

The Swiss government and banks established a humanitarian fund for needy victims of Nazi persecution. AJR with Jewish Care, WJR and the 45 Aid Society developed an application procedure. The British and American governments meeting at the conference on "Nazi Gold" announced the establishment of a fund for needy victims of Nazi persecution. By the end of 1997 there were still no details of the distribution for ex-Austrian Jews of the funds realised by the Mauerbach auction.

Sheltered Accommodation

Improvements to the AJR's eight sheltered flats at 15 Cleve Road, which were first occupied ten years ago, included new carpets (financed through a charitable donation) and secondary glazing (partly financed by the Claims Conference).

Most of the tenants made good use of the in-house Day Centre facilities and meals.

Katia Gould continued to handle tenancy applications for sheltered accommodation both for the AJR and the Otto Schiff Housing Association. Studio flats at Eleanor Rathbone House in Highgate, were regularly available while there was a growing waiting list for one-bedroom flats at Otto Schiff House in the preferred NW3 area.

Welfare Benefits

As Welfare Rights adviser, Agi Alexander claimed Attendance Allowance for all eligible clients, some of whose applications had previously been rejected, thereby requiring appeals. All 17 cases undertaken were successful.

Agi also continued with the 'open advice' sessions at the Day Centre. These sessions take place on a different day each week as advertised in AJR Information. The sessions are attended, not only by members who are at the Day Centre on the particular day, but also by other members who find it convenient to go there for advice.

Many local Authority Housing and Council Tax Benefit departments misunderstood the rules regarding payments to people in receipt of German and Austrian pensions and support from charities. A request was made to the social security minister to clarify the regulations for local Authorities. He did this and AJR members now benefit from the proper interpretation of the rules.

Self Aid

The number of Self Aid clients has been growing with self referrals, and referrals from other organisations and agencies. By the end of the year we were assisting 97 people both with regular monthly grants and one off payments for special purposes.

For the first time, all out of town clients have been visited in their homes, bringing comfort to many members who had previously felt isolated and remote from the Association. It is planned to visit all Self Aid clients at least once a year.

Agreement was reached to take on an additional 80 Self Aid clients from the Jewish Refugees Committee (WJR).

We acknowledge gratefully the support of the B'nai Brith Leo Baeck (London) Trust Fund, which however ceased in October.

The Annual Concert in the Queen Elizabeth Hall featuring Melvyn Tan and the New Mozart Ensemble, raised £8,175 for Self Aid.

AJR Information

Our correspondence columns have continued to provide a sounding board for readers, with letters to the Editor sometimes taking up as many as two pages of an issue.

AJR Information has managed to cover a wide range of topics – from the problems of the Middle East to the benign apartheid between Anglo-Jews and refugees; from alleged scandals in the Vienna Kultusgemeinde to misunderstanding between the 'First' and 'Second' Generation, and from the European Union debate to the nationwide mourning of Princess Diana.

Amidst all this we have not neglected our mid-European roots, vide the articles on Anna Seghers and Heine in England. Several readers have suggested that we focus more on developments in contemporary Germany and its Jewish communities – a topic to which we hope to give more coverage in future.

Richard Grunberger's editorship and his own articles constantly receive accolades from many readers. The Editorial Committee, whose contributions are greatly appreciated, now includes two members of the second generation.

AJR Outside NW London

Both Manchester and South London groups continued to organise a regular programme of meetings, while South London also set up a Schmooze Group for members to meet informally every two months, to chat and do whatever they wish to do. A new group was established in Pinner to cater for people who wished to meet locally.

A volunteer has been asked to try to get AJR groups established, through local volunteers, in Putney, Bournemouth and other areas where there are sizeable concentrations of refugees and survivors.

OSHA

The AJR and The Otto Schiff Housing Association continued to work very closely together in the interests of the many members of the AJR in the OSHA residential homes. This co-operation was reflected in particular in the attendance by

OSHA residents at the Day Centre, the close working relationship of the social services departments and the fact that two of the Trustees of the AJR Charitable Trust are members of the Council of OSHA.

Events

A visit to Beth Shalom was organised in June which attracted over 100 people. The demand was such that a waiting list was started for a repeat visit in 1998.

On a lighter tone, a visit to the House of Lords proved both instructive and popular.

Staff and Volunteers

It was announced that Ernest David, Director since 1994, would be replaced in 1998 by a younger person.

At Head Office, Marcia Goodman, joined from Jewish Care to become Head of Social Services and a new receptionist was recruited. At the Day Centre two part-time drivers joined the staff. At year end, AJR employed 24 staff full time and part time and we are lucky to have had the services of 170 volunteers performing a wide range of essential duties.

The Hon. Officers, Management Committee and members join in acknowledging the good work of both staff and volunteers in improving the already high quality of service to our community.

The Management Committee

The committee with its two new members, Diana Franklin and Gaby Glassman, met five times, providing support and guidance to the Director.

The Year in Retrospect

The year has seen a consolidation of activities related to our ground-work in the last few years, establishing the concept of the AJR as the extended family of members, many of whom have no other family, or none in the UK.

This has resulted in a greater and more in-depth emphasis on all aspects of social and welfare work; an attempt to provide services and attention to out of London members; the representation of the needs of members on national and international bodies; and the introduction of events of interest to people from a common background.

The challenge has been, and will be, to compensate for the loss of older members – those who fled to the UK as adults – by the accretion of younger members of our community – those who came as children – as well as the second generation who grew up in the shadow of their parents' experiences.

The success of the AJR's role in future depends on its skill and imagination in adapting to service a broader range of needs and interests.

Ernest David
Director

Andrew Kaufman
Chairman

Finance Report

AJR Charitable Trust

1997 has been an eventful year. Our receipts from legacies have fallen dramatically. As a result of changes in the law relating to charity accounting, we have restated the figures for 1996 so that the figures for the two years are comparable. The amendment has reduced the original figures for 1996 by £2,909. Our welfare expenditure through Self-Aid has increased substantially, and is expected to increase further as we have taken responsibility for about 75 individuals who were previously helped by World Jewish Relief. Although WJR continue to give some help towards these costs, the burden on our funds will be noticeable. We are also finding an increasing number of new cases who are not receiving the help they need from social services provided by the state and local authorities. Our thanks are due to the tireless efforts of our own social workers in this field.

We have committed ourselves to making a substantial contribution of £850,000 to OSHA to help them rebuild Osmond House to fit it for modern conditions.

Paul Balint Day Centre

Our costs are slightly increased here, whilst sadly the numbers attending continue to fall. There is an increase in the numbers taking advantage of our meals-on-wheels, which are supplied out of the excellent catering facilities of the Day Centre.

Association of Jewish Refugees

The financial position of the AJR itself is satisfactory, although we have what may be a costly rent review in progress at Hampstead Gate.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31st December 1997

Income:	1997	1996
Membership/Donations and Legacies	193,634	173,563
Grant from Self Aid	5,000	5,000
	<u>198,634</u>	<u>178,563</u>
Less:		
Overhead Expenses	26,354	28,823
Salary Costs	77,500	72,728
AJR Information	26,023	25,184
Administration/Depreciation	12,509	12,691
	<u>142,386</u>	<u>139,426</u>
Surplus:	<u>56,248</u>	<u>39,137</u>

Summary of Balance Sheet at 31st December 1997

	1997	1996
Fixed Assets		
(less depreciation)	14,472	17,217
Current Assets	191,251	118,391
Less: Current Liabilities	(25,359)	(12,944)
	<u>180,364</u>	<u>122,664</u>

(Continued overleaf)

Financial Report continued

Represented by:

General Fund	111,000	71,863
Net surplus for year	56,248	39,137
Staff Retirement Fund	13,116	11,664
	<u>180,364</u>	<u>122,664</u>

David Rothenberg, Hon. Treasurer

9 April 1998

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST
PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRESummary figures for the year ended
31st December 1997

Income:	1997	1996
Takings - Day Centre and meals-on-wheels	81,094	81,006
Donations received	3,455	9,244
	<u>84,549</u>	<u>90,250</u>
Less outgoings:		
Premises expenditure (net)	31,728	31,375
Salaries	91,500	86,031
Catering costs	167,867	161,268
Sundry expenses	20,649	19,600
	<u>311,744</u>	<u>298,274</u>
Deficit Funded from Charitable Trust	<u>227,195</u>	<u>208,024</u>

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST -
Summary Income and Expenditure
Account

Year ended 31st December 1997

	1997	1996
Income:		
Covenants/donations	53,527	33,751
Investment income (including portfolio gains)	389,664	371,315
Sheltered housing	21,473	21,131
	<u>464,664</u>	<u>426,197</u>
Legacies	202,332	644,742
	<u>666,996</u>	<u>1,070,939</u>
Less outgoings:		
Day Centre	227,195	210,368
Self Aid	80,000	35,000
Otto Schiff Housing Association	-	50,000
Other organisations	23,588	16,034
Administration/Depreciation	276,407	242,934
	<u>£607,190</u>	<u>£554,336</u>

The AJR at Work

SOUTH LONDON AJR
Whither Anglo-Jewry?

South London AJR's guest speaker, Berlin-born Rabbi Dr John Rayner, a Kindertransportee, studied at Cambridge, was guided by Lily Montagu and later appointed Senior Rabbi at St. John's Wood Liberal Synagogue. A lecturer at Leo Baeck College and author, whose latest book is entitled *An Understanding of Judaism*, he remains an influential figure within the ULPS.

Rabbi Rayner tackled his chosen subject head on: 'Is there a future for Anglo-Jewry?' In the last 50 years the UK's Jewish population had shrunk to 300,000 and European Jewish communities had similarly declined. Among the causes discussed by Rabbi Rayner were Zionism and emigration to Israel; marriage out of the faith; assimilation and lack of synagogue affiliation; late marriage and a low birthrate; and the exclusivity practised by some of the orthodox. Orthodox life preserved custom and practice, including

having large families, but brought with it a significant degree of isolation. In contrast, Rabbi Rayner supported the attractions of diversity and pluralism.

Jewish education, especially post-Barmitzvah education, was largely non-existent. The yeshivah might be good for Talmud scholars, but did little for an appreciation of Jewish history. Likewise, Bible education was poor.

While external pressures on ghetto Jewry were enough to keep Jews within the fold, in contemporary society it was easy *not* to be a Jew. Most British Jews supported modernity with which, he claimed, progressive Judaism had come to terms. To survive the Jewish people had to be strong. One could be a good Jew in the diaspora and, if we believed, we should endure.

□ Ruth Leggett

South London AJR's next meeting on Thursday 21st May, at Prentis Road Synagogue, Streatham, at 2pm, considers 'The European Union - Asset or Liability?'

AJR MIDLANDS GROUP
Staying young

Jaqualine Herron, the daughter of a member, gave a fascinating and informative talk on the advantages to be gained from achieving a feeling of wellbeing as we grow older, to a well-attended meeting of the Midlands group.

Her account of the history and modern practice of the holistic approach to good health held everyone enthralled. Conventional medicine, she said, treated symptoms and effected cures. However, people could take some responsibility for their own wellbeing by following a few simple rules, such as a correct posture

and a healthy diet, even learning to breathe more deeply.

Jaqualine also touched on the efficacy of massage, aroma therapy and reflexology, and recommended Yoga which could be taken up at any age. She answered the many questions put by a most enthusiastic audience and could have continued well beyond the time allotted.

During tea, Ann Shearer recounted her experiences in seeking to obtain the help of a carer and discussed the availability of financial assistance from Birmingham's Social Services.

□ Sonja Shindler

AJR Midlands Group's next meeting - Sunday 7th June, guest speaker Herbert Layton.

AJR Annual Visit to
Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre

Laxton, Nottinghamshire

Sunday 14th June 1998

Speaker: Stephen Smith, Founder & Director Beth Shalom

£15 per person including coach fare and vegetarian buffet lunch

Coach leaves Finchley Road, behind Waitrose, at 8.30am and Stanmore at 8.45am
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Please send cheque, booking requirements and SAE to AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, Froggnal, London NW3 6AL

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South London AJR
require lifts to StreathamPlease phone Lotte May 0181 850 2081
or Ken Ambrose 0181 852 0262
if you could help

AJR centenarian

AJR member Dr Hedi Kay celebrated her 100th birthday in fine style at her Primrose Hill residential home with cards and flowers, a birthday cake and a telegram from the Queen – while being entertained with songs from bygone years.

Viennese-born Dr Kay, whose looks belie her years, arrived in England just three weeks before the outbreak of war. With a doctorate in chemistry from Vienna, Dr Kay worked in research at St Bartholomew's and the Royal London Hospital and is delighted to hear from former colleagues when they send her postcards from the conferences they attend. AJR volunteer Rita Kahn always enjoys her visits to see Dr Kay.

□ RDC

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Thursday	7 May
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Wednesday	27 May
Thursday	4 June

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No appointment is necessary, but please bring
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... Viewpoint ...

An ideal home

A top Bavaria's Obersalzberg sits Hitler's Eagles' Nest retreat, an ethereal mountain chalet set at 6,000 feet high above a sea of clouds, the epicentre of an evil empire which subjugated most of Europe. It was the visible tip of an iceberg complex of fortifications and underground bunkers, an SS barracks and a hotel for Nazi officers, constructed at enormous expense in the 1930s after evicting the locals. Hitler spent half his time loafing there with his favourites, Speer, Borman and Goering, each having their own chalet as, of course, did his mistress Eva Braun.

It was here that Hitler informed Chancellor Schuschnigg of the extinction of Austria and – a year later – President Hacha of the demise of (rump) Czechoslovakia. The hapless Hacha had been kept waiting while the Fuehrer watched *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*. That film showing how a relatively small force maintained British control over the Indian sub-continent, gave Hitler the fateful idea that Germany could hold down the whole of Europe.

There could be few other sites imbued with more significance for European

history. American bombers did their best to level the place, but enough of it survived its former occupant's decease for them to use it as a recreation centre for American servicemen in Europe. At the end of the Cold War there was little justification for an upkeep bill running into millions of dollars, so in 1995 the Americans handed it back to the Bavarian authorities as reluctant recipients.

If ever there was a hot potato this was one. To give them their due, the Bavarians tried hard to have it both ways: to create a documentation centre illustrating the mountain's (infamous) history on the one hand, and to cater for the tourist trade on the other.

Not surprisingly this outraged both Jewish organisations and, equally importantly, local groups. The latter, much to their credit, favour the Obersalzberg being made into a Holocaust memorial. Presently, there the matter stands.

Some 300,000 people visited the place annually in its rundown state; quite a few must have been neo-Nazis who would have liked to preserve the site as a location for communing with the Fuehrer's shade. □ *Ronald Channing*

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6

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Afternoon entertainment programme –

MAY/JUNE 1998

Sun	3	The Hounslow Community Opera	Tue	19	Suzanna Marks, soprano & Janet Beale, piano & accordion
Mon	4	CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY	Wed	20	Day Centre Open – Luncheon Club
Wed	5	Nikki van der Zyl & Daphne Lewis, piano	Thur	21	Lawrence Estrey, piano
Wed	6	Deborah Fink, soprano with piano	Sun	24	Day Centre Open – No entertainment
Thur	7	Katja Hipp, soprano & Geoffrey Whitworth, piano	Mon	25	CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY
Sun	10	Day Centre Open – No entertainment	Tue	26	The Sunshine Singers
Mon	11	Amanda Palmer, opera	Wed	27	Marek Dabrowski, piano & Carmen Lasok, soprano
Tue	12	Anita Elias sings	Thur	28	Geoffrey Strum & Helen Blake
Wed	13	Lucy White, violin & Juliet Davey, piano	Sun	31	CLOSED – SHAVUOT
Thur	14	Trinity College of Music	Mon	1	CLOSED – SHAVUOT
Sun	17	Day Centre Open – No entertainment	Tue	2	Gina Fergione, soprano and Angus Cunningham, piano
Mon	18	Helen Blake entertains	Wed	3	Dorothy Sayers, accordion & piano
			Thur	4	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton, violin & piano

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Cooper. Alfred Cooper (né Cohen. Hamburg) passed away 9.3.98. He came to England in 1939 on Kindertransport, then joined the British army, after internment in Australia. Dear Alfred will be sadly missed by his wife Ruth, son Peter, daughter Yvonne and family.

Pagel. Betty Pagel, born 31.1.1906, died 4.2.1998 peacefully in her sleep after long suffering. Mourned by Lotta Hester, Kurt and Leslie Pagel.

Stein. Susan Stein, born 1913 died 25 March 1998. Susan was born in Vienna and came to the UK in 1938. She married Stephen Stein from Czechoslovakia, had two sons and spent most of her life in Golders Green.

Wolff. Mrs E A Wolff passed away after a short illness on 23 February 1998, aged 98.

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Societies

Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners. Please contact Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638 for information.

AJR GROUP CONTACTS

S. London: Ken Ambrose
0181 852 0262
Midlands: Edgar Glazer
0121 777 6537
North: Werner Lachs
0161 773 4091
Leeds HSFA: Heinz Skyte
0113 268 5739

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Art Notes

The first major exhibition of sculpture by **Anish Kapoor** is on view at the Hayward Gallery until June 14. Since his early sculptures of the 1980s using intensely coloured pigment, Kapoor has created distinctive works in stone, marble, stainless steel and plastic. His most recent sculptures in stone, weighing up to eight tons each, are on show, along with translucent alabaster pieces and works in stainless steel. An extraordinary body of work by a dedicated artist.

The flourishing art scene in London's East End is reflected in the **Whitechapel Open**, an exhibition of some 100 paintings, photographs, film, video and installation, shown both at the Whitechapel Art Gallery and at other local venues. In addition, 1000 artists have opened their studios to the public. Details: 0171-522 7878. Until May 31.



Life of St Nicholas, 1570s, Russian State Library, Moscow.

The development of Russian painting from the 15th to the 17th century is illustrated in a beautifully displayed exhibition **The Art of Holy Russia** at the Royal Academy until June 14. Fifty rarely exhibited icons, lent by some of the most famous museums in Moscow, form the centre-piece of the exhibition. Many of them are powerful, dramatic images which, while paying tribute to Byzantine forms, are uniquely Russian in spirit. The sixteen illuminated manuscripts also on show, reveal the influence of Renaissance concepts.

Artists – Messengers of Peace, an innovative exhibition mounted by the Ben

Uri Art Society at 126 Albert Street, Camden Town, until May 8, comprises works of art by Jewish and Arab artists created on first day cover envelopes commemorating the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan.

Throughout May the National Gallery is celebrating the centenary of the birth of **Henry Moore** by installing an intimate exhibition of the Gallery's paintings that Moore particularly admired, as well as a group of his small bronze maquettes.

Berlin – The City in its Time, an exhibition until May 2 at the Goethe-Institut of some 80 photographs by Gerhard Ullman of Berlin from the years 1968-1997, focuses on the connections between past and present. Finally, **Lily Freeman** exhibits her "Happy Paintings" at Burgh House, Hampstead, until May 10.

□ *Barry Fealdman*

SB's Column

A **Ima Mahler's Diaries**, published for the first time by S Fischer Verlag, deal with the years of her youth around 1900. Much has been written about that very extrovert lady who married Gustav Mahler, Walter Gropius and Franz Werfel. With Werfel she escaped from Nazi-occupied France to the USA, where he predeceased her by many years.

Berlin. The former, and future, German capital still maintains three Opera Houses which perform throughout the year (except in mid-summer). The Deutsche Oper has a very varied programme; this March it devoted one entire evening to a '50 Years Israel' celebration.

Fritz Spielmann, a cabaret entertainer popular in 30s Vienna, escaped to New York, where he continued his career at venues like 'Wiener Fiaker' and Hermann Leopoldi's 'Alt Wien' café in Manhattan. Spielmann composed well over 900 songs, many for MGM musicals, starring, among others, Doris Day, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and Judy Garland. He died in 1997 and was recently commemorated on two gala evenings at the Vienna Funkhaus.

Award. The highest award by the French Academy of Music was bestowed on Charles Trenet, whose rendering of *La Mer* and *La vie en rose* made him a national institution.

Birthday. 80th birthday honours for Astrid Varnay, Swedish-born American soprano, specialising in Wagner parts. At the Met she took over the roles of

Brünhilde and Sieglinde (the latter within a week) in the Forties. She also made regular guest appearances at Covent Garden, where she last sang in 1968.

Obituary. Soprano Leonie Rysanek has died, aged 71. After a brilliant career spanning more than 45 years she made her farewell appearance in 1996. Rysanek received high praise for widening public interest in Wagner and Richard Strauss □

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Cooking with Gretel Beer



Tomato Ring

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Take:
 3 teaspoons (½oz, 15g) powdered gelatine (kosher)
 18 fl oz (500 ml) tomato juice
 juice of ½ lemon
 salt and pepper
 pinch of sugar
 pinch celery salt (if using tomato juice only)
 paprika
 watercress for garnish

Put the gelatine in a cup and slake it with about six teaspoons warm water, then stand the cup in a bowl of hot water and stir until the gelatine has dissolved completely. It should be quite clear and rather syrupy. Heat the tomato juice gently with all the seasonings to just below boiling point. Remove from heat and stir in the dissolved gelatine. Continue stirring until well blended.

Rinse a ring mould in cold water and pour in the tomato juice. Allow to cool and then put the mould into the refrigerator until the jelly has set completely. Turn out on to a pretty serving dish – it looks particularly good on a large glass plate – and garnish with watercress □

Top chef

The Otto Schiff Housing Association's Bernard Carter, right, Head Chef at Heinrich Stahl House in Hampstead, cooked a winning menu for Chief Executive Tony Shepherd, centre, and Eli Spokoini, Managing Director of competition sponsors Select Hotel Services. Eight of Otto Schiff's chefs each prepared a kosher three-course meal within a £10 budget.

□ RDC



End of an era

The Cosmo Restaurant added Vienna schnitzel, apple strudel and an old-fashioned central European style to London's Finchley Road since before the Second World War, satisfying expatriates' yearnings for continental cuisine while providing a warm social venue for German-speaking Jewish refugees.

Alas, a dwindling clientèle and the burgeoning of ethnic restaurants serving dishes from more exotic parts of the world has brought the Cosmo's closure. Even the wistful notice on the restaurant's barred doors sadly proclaims 'the end of an era'.

□ RDC

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 Make sure it is a *boiling* fowl you're
 buying),
 And I can guarantee you'll soon feel well.

□ Mary Huttner

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Leoni Hall	Grete Lissauer	Grete Sobel	

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

– MAY 1998

- Ongoing: Surviving the Holocaust with the Russian Jewish Partisans:** Story of Jack Kagan, Jewish Museum, Finchley (until September) Sun-Thurs, £2
- Britain, Zionism & British Jews:** Jewish Museum, Camden Town (until 21 June) Sun-Thurs, 10am-4pm, £3
- Lebensraum, a new play by Israel Horovitz:** Kings Head Theatre till 24 May. Booking 0171 226 1916
- Tue 5 **British Pacifist's Rescue of a German Jew:** Nick Tucker. Sussex University, 5.15pm
- Tue 5 **Jewish Emancipation in Britain & its Legacy:** Dr David Feldman. University College, Gower Street, WC1, 6.30pm
- Thur 7 **Life & Works of Marc Chagall:** Mitch Wax, Pinner AJR, Pinner Synagogue, 2pm
- Thur 7 **Lunchtime Recital:** Gary Arbuthnot, flute, & Rebecca Woolcock, piano. Sternberg Centre, £2, 1.15pm
- Sun 10 **Memories of the Warsaw Ghetto:** Middlesex University, The Burroughs, NW4, 4pm, £5. Spiro Institute
- Mon 11 **Herr Arno Reinfrank** liest aus neuen Büchern und Manuskripten. Club 43, 8pm
- Mon 11 **Prof Ernest Frerichs:** Interdependence of Jewish & Christian Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. University College, Gower

- Street, WC1, 6pm
- Tue 12 **Internment Mail from Refugees in WWII:** William Kaczynsky. Sussex University, 5.15pm
- Sun 17 **The Dilemmas of Return:** Film & Symposium. Alicia Douer. Middlesex University, The Burroughs, NW4, 8pm. Spiro Institute
- Mon 18 **AGM Club 43,** 8pm
- Tue 19 **Body & Death in German Romanticism:** Nick Saul. Sussex University, 5.15pm
- Thur 21 **Lunchtime Recital:** Horatia Raphael, piano. Sternberg Centre, £2, 1.15pm
- Thur 25 **Richard Balfé MEP:** European Union, Asset or Liability? South London AJR, Prentis Road Synagogue, 2pm
- Tue 26 **Territoriality & Temporality in the Crusades and Contemporary Northern Ireland:** Tim Jackson. Sussex University, 5.15pm
- June**
- Tue 2 **The Holocaust in History, Memory & Education:** Stephen Smith (Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre). Sussex University, 5.15pm

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club '43, at Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig 01442 254 360

Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 129/131 Albert Street, NW1 7NB. Tel: 0171 284 1997, and at Sternberg Centre

Sternberg Centre for Judaism/ Jewish Museum, Finchley, 80 East End Road, N3 2SY. Tel: 0181 346 2288

University of Sussex Centre for German-Jewish Studies. Diana Franklin 0181 381 4721 or 01273 678 771

SEARCH NOTICES

Henryk (Rico) Herman lived (and studied) at **Dr Levy's children's home, Michendorf**, prior to expulsion to Zbaszyn in October 1938. Arrived in UK January 1939 and lived at 11 Fitzjohns Avenue, NW3, before joining the RAF. His son Peter Herman, 43 Fairfield Drive, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1JQ, is seeking information on his late father's life and Dr Levy's children's home.

Karl Kaufmann married Emma Hoffman in Westfalen c.1909. Daughter born 29 June 1911; son 4 August 1915. Leading member of Wattenscheid synagogue; possessed a 1689 document about the town's Jews. Others with the surnames: Feilmann, Möllerich, Goldscheider, emigrated from Germany between 1936 and 1940. Families being sought by relatives Enrique Kahn & Daniela Feilmann, Vidal 2257 7° 'A', (1428), Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Peter Strauss, born in Nürnberg c. 1926, later a pupil at Stoatly Rough School in Haslemere, Surrey, assumed still to be living in England, is being sought by Dr Hannelore Noack who has discovered his letters to his late mother Finni (Frieda) of Pirckheimer Strasse 61, Nürnberg, who perished in the Holocaust. Please write to her at Stemberg 36, 33106 Paderborn-Wewer, Germany.

Helen Bolderson, née Karger, originally from Berlin, then Norrice Lea, London. Please phone A. Smullen 0181 202 8764 or K. Turner 01763 838 345, re: reunion class 1941-48 Henrietta Barnett School on May 16th.

German/Austrian Jewish families in 1930s. Researcher into inter-family disputes seeking reasons advanced for leaving or, more especially, staying put. Please write in confidence to 'Disputes about Flight', Box 1244, AJR.

Kaufman. The son of the late Anita Kaufman is sought by a family friend, Mrs Nina Hofman, re 1943 painting by Philipp Kaufman. Please contact at Casa Torre 13/ F, 6900 Lugano, Switzerland. Tel & Fax: +41 (0)91 970 21 80.

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NEWSROUND

Priebke sentenced

Former SS captain Erich Priebke and fellow Nazi Karl Hass were sentenced to life imprisonment at an appeal hearing in Rome for participating in the 1944 Ardeatine caves massacre of 335 men and boys, most of whom were Jews. Priebke was extradited from Argentina in 1994.

Schönberg's return to Vienna

The Arnold Schönberg Centre was opened in Vienna, on the 60th anniversary of the Anschluss, in the presence of his three children. Austrian President Viktor Klima apologised for the country's persecution of its Jewish citizens in the 1930s.

Poland's living history

The vibrant 1,000 year history of Polish Jewry will be documented in a museum to be established in Warsaw. Europe's largest Jewish community, 3.5 million in 1939, was almost totally destroyed by the German invaders during World War II.

Polish citizenship on offer

Thirty years after a campaign of intimidation by Poland's Communist régime in March 1968, President Aleksander Kwasniewski has offered 20,000 Jewish emigrés the return of their citizenship.

Off the record

A recorded version of extracts from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* on compact disc, though intended as a satire, has been withdrawn from sale in Germany. *Mein Kampf* is not available in Germany's bookshops.

Sternberg honoured

Hungarian-born Sir Sigmund Sternberg has received the Templeton Prize in recognition of his services to inter-faith dialogue. He has chaired the International Council of Christians and Jews, championed London's memorial to Swedish diplomat and saviour of the Jews, Raoul Wallenberg, and, more recently, founded the Three Faiths Forum.

Return of Holocaust assets

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, announced the return of an initial £2 million to Holocaust victims whose British bank accounts were treated as enemy property and confiscated by the Government. An independent arbiter is to oversee the disbursement of the funds.

□ RDC

The Anschluss viewed sixty years on

The Anschluss was a highly dramatic, but not unexpected, event. Its antecedents go back to the rise of nationalism around 1848, when the concept that political frontiers should coincide with ethnic boundaries was born. This very simple and straightforward principle had worked in Western and Northern Europe, but in Eastern and Southern Europe it was more complicated to define people's national identities. Language of daily use was set up as a criterion, but the Czech and Slovak censuses held in 1910 and in 1921, for example, show considerable discrepancies. People gave the answers they thought it was safe to give.

When the North German Confederation was set up, it didn't fit the concept of a linguistically homogenous nation at all: there were Poles in Prussia, Danes in Schleswig-Holstein, and many others. In the Habsburg Empire, this was even more the case. Should Germany include all areas in which German was being spoken? Or should countries where German was not the only language, be excluded? The 1866 war which brought about the predominance of the North German Confederation over the Habsburg Empire gave birth to the Anschluss question.

After World War I, many small nations split off from the Habsburg Empire. What was left over became Austria. Cut off from economic resources, this small country with its huge, once imperial capital to maintain, negotiated how to deal with the new situation. For many the answer was to unite with Germany.

When Hitler came to power, the Anschluss question became critical, polarising the political landscape of Austria. The left considered it still possible, but not with the Nazis. The right favoured it more than ever. If one was in favour, one had to be a Nazi. If one wasn't, one could be either a social democrat or a monarchist.

The partial overlap between Nazi ideas and Austrian non-Nazi ideas made Hitler seem preferable. Anti-parliamentarism, anti-Communism and antisemitism were widespread within civil society. The climax of this overlap was in 1938, when Schuschnigg called for a referendum, asking whether Austrians were in favour of a German Austria. In addition to the 'exter-

nal' Anschluss implemented by Hitler's bullying of Schuschnigg, there was also an 'internal' Anschluss which emerged from the national discourse within Austria. Many Austrians saw themselves as "the better Germans". Hence Schuschnigg's justification for his surrender to Hitler was that he wanted no shedding of German blood. Confronted with the disease of Nazism the Austrians had an acute immune deficiency problem.

These days, however, despite the Waldheim affair and the persistence of antisemitism in Austria the 'internal' Anschluss is dying, while the 'external' Anschluss is dead already. The Anschluss Question is closed □

Marion Hamm's report on Professor Pulzer's lecture at the Imperial War Museum.

Restitution or distribution

Yad Vashem Committee Chairman Ben Helfgott proved a fount of knowledge for a packed audience at AJR's Northern Group in Manchester. He recalled that the Claims Conference, set up in 1951 by the German Government, resulted from the efforts of Dr Nahum Goldman, President of the World Jewish Congress, against a degree of Israeli opposition to accepting 'tainted money'.

The work is continued by the World Jewish Restitution Organisation, established by the Claims Conference. Its main objective is to use newly available funds to help destitute and needy Holocaust survivors who, in the main, are found in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics.

Commenting on Swiss gold, looted property and funds 'peppered away' by the Nazis in neutral countries, Ben Helfgott believed their value, and expectations of restitution from them, to be much exaggerated. There were tremendous problems in identifying and confirming the holders of the listed accounts which had already been published, and whatever was available would amount to relatively small sums when divided among the many deserving cases. He referred to Switzerland's Humanitarian Fund, set up with contributions from their banks. At the recent London Conference, the young in particular wished to get to the truth and by-pass bureaucracy and procrastination.

□ Werner Lachs