

Don't miss...

What's the difference? p3

Revisiting childhood places p14

Love story p16

## Ghastly ghosts

The two recent beatifications – that of Pius IX by the Vatican and Nicholas II's by the Orthodox Church – give considerable cause for alarm. The Pope halfway to canonisation literally called the Jews 'dogs' and forced Rome's Jewry back into the ghetto. He also authorised the kidnap of a Jewish boy, secretly baptised by a housemaid, whom his parents never saw again.

The last of the Romanovs governed half the world's Jews. Under his autocratic rule they not only endured the worst discrimination in Europe but also repeatedly fell defenceless victims to government-inspired mob fury.

If these two are near saints, what are sinners like? □

## Not an ordinary Joe

Thoughts on the nomination of a Jew for US Vice-President

For close on two millennia the notion of a Jew set in authority over Christians was virtually inconceivable – as much a figment of the imagination as Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Then, well over a century ago, a crucial change occurred:

Benjamin Disraeli, a convert who gloried in his Jewish ancestry, became Prime Minister of Great Britain. At around the same time Adolphe Crémieux headed the French Justice Ministry, while Edward Lasker and Ludwig Bamberger helped signally to liberalise the German Constitution. Despite their importance, the two last-named remained opposition figures. In Berlin, Munich and Vienna Jewish access to government posts only became possible – and then briefly – after the collapse of the ruling dynasties. In

Berlin, Walter Rathenau's tenure as Foreign Minister ended with his assassination – as did Kurt Eisner's premiership of Bavaria – while there was macabre symbolism in the fact that Victor Adler, co-founder of the Austrian Republic, died on the very day of its proclamation.

Contemporaneously, Clemenceau dismissed his Finance Minister Kotz, quipping that he was the only Jew in France who couldn't count. In Britain Clemenceau's counterpart, Lloyd George, had two Jews, Herbert Samuel and Edwin Montagu (the one pro-, the other anti- the Balfour Declaration), in his Liberal-led cabinet. The Tories, meanwhile, produced a would-be successor to Disraeli in the person of Leslie Hore-Belisha, but whereas the former is still remembered as the architect of 'One Nation Conservatism', the latter's only bequest to posterity was a traffic beacon bearing his name. In the very week of the Balfour Declaration, the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia, thus opening the doors of the Kremlin to a number of lapsed Jews: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Yagoda and Kaganovitch. These were 'bloody Jews' in the literal sense of the word, who justified the widespread intra-Jewish apprehension that the spectacular elevation of individuals

might endanger the mass of their co-religionists. Not that all Bolshevik Jews were ogres. Honourable exceptions were the polyglot Karl Radek, and the pro-Western Foreign Commissar Litvinov, whose sacking by Stalin was a prelude to the Second World War.

In postwar Britain Emanuel Shinwell was a major player in Attlee's reforming Labour administration; later Keith Joseph became a guru figure to a new generation of Thatcherite Tories. In America, meanwhile, a sea change was taking place. Nixon's Republicans, formerly the party of WASP isolationists, placed the control of US foreign policy in the hands of foreign-born Jew Henry Kissinger. Now we witness the spectacle of the Democratic contender Al Gore choosing Joe Lieberman as his running mate for the White House. It



Senator Joe Lieberman

would be naïve to view this simply as a symbolic liberal gesture. There was sound political calculation behind Gore's choice. Lieberman was the first Democratic Congressman to break ranks and censure Clinton over the Monica Lewinsky affair. America, it should be remembered, is the only Western country with a majority of church-goers in the population. Lieberman's observance of the Sabbath will appeal to the so-called moral majority, especially Baptist Fundamentalists who literally take the Bible to be the word of God.

But there is an even more important consideration. In America the Jews were once among the 'poor huddled masses yearning to be free', a ready target of prejudice and WASP ostracism. In other words they are a former out-group well on the way to becoming an in-group. Both the socially excluded, such as Afro-Americans and Hispanics, and the included i.e. Protestant Whites, can therefore view the Jews as having something in common with themselves. Antisemites have always charged pushy Jews with adopting protective mimicry. How paradoxical, therefore, that Joe Lieberman, who nails his Jewish colours to the mast, should be within reach of the pinnacle of power in the world's most powerful country □

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## Tracing Holocaust assets on the Internet

The Internet can now help heirs of Holocaust victims seeking to recover assets confiscated from their families. The *Living Heirs Project* is a not-for-profit organisation formed to help heirs of Holocaust victims recover family assets confiscated by the Third Reich. The website [www.LivingHeirs.com](http://www.LivingHeirs.com) guides the user through the three steps necessary to progress any claim: identifying ancestors with documented assets, documenting and valuing the assets and, finally, documenting one's entitlement as heir.

Click on 'Step 1' to search against a specific country. At present, Austrian, German and Italian archival materials are available. Others are being developed. Having identified the name of a relative or friend, a photocopy of the original documentation can be requested at a cost of between \$10-\$50 to cover photocopying and postage. Copies can be ordered and paid for on line and will be dispatched immediately. The second step will depend on which country is being searched. In the case of Austria, write directly to Austria – a sample letter tells you exactly what to write. This process takes about ten weeks and costs \$15-\$25. The alternative fast track option can only be requested on line, costs about \$50 and the information arrives in two weeks.

If any AJR member or friend does not have internet access, or would like help in accessing this information, please contact me on 020 7431 2610 or E mail: [secgentrust@compuserve.com](mailto:secgentrust@compuserve.com)

□ Katherine Klingner

## Profile

### Alice and Colin Anson

The *Cosmo* restaurant in Swiss Cottage, once a favourite meeting place for continental refugees, was where the respective life stories of Alice and Colin Anson first became intertwined.

Alice Anson, née Gross, was born in Vienna to secular Jewish parents. When she left Vienna in September 1938, aged 14, she became the "tenth child" of a non-Jewish family in Coulsdon who were business contacts of her Austrian grandfather and uncle. Her parents managed to leave Vienna in early 1939 – again through business contacts – and she rejoined them in London.

Colin Anson, born Claus Ascher in Berlin in 1922, was the child of a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother and grew up in Frankfurt/Main. It was only in 1934 that the young Claus learnt of his Jewish roots when, as Nazi antisemitism grew, his father became increasingly outspoken about his Jewish identity. As a result, his marketing consultancy declined and Claus had to leave the fee-paying *Gymnasium* and became apprenticed to a Jewish concern later 'aryanised'. In 1937 Claus' father was arrested after being publicly outspoken against the Nazi regime; he was sent to Dachau where he died within six weeks. Whilst his mother spent the war years in Germany, Colin was able to escape to England in February 1939 with the assistance of the Quakers. Here, he spent almost two years in the church-run Farm Training Colony in Wallingford where his already adequate English was improved by mingling exclusively with British boys. He joined the Pioneer Corps in December 1940 and, after transferring to the Commandos, saw his first action in the Sicilian landings in July 1943.

Meanwhile, having arrived in England, Alice immediately entered the world of work, joining Debenham & Freebody as an apprentice dressmaker ("right at the bottom of the pile") where she worked on and off until 1942, latterly doing war work making uniforms. In 1943 she enlisted and chose to learn photography

which enabled her to engage in interesting work such as identifying targets in enemy territory from aerial photographs. Having spent the war years in England, she was posted with the WAAF to Egypt in 1946 where she found the food intriguing and exotic (she once ate far more dates than was good for her!) In Ismailiya, her photographic duties included the funerals of army personnel. She returned to England's

extremely cold winter at the end of 1946. In the next few years, she continued with photography (one or two of her photos appeared in the *Tatler* and she even got to Number 10 where she had tea with Mrs Attlee).

Colin's immediate postwar years were

spent with the Control Commission as an interpreter and translator in Hoechst and, later, Berlin. One important motivation was the hope that, by being in Hoechst, he would be able to locate his mother. (He not only found her but was later able to bring her to England.) He obtained his release from the Army in August 1946 and on his return to England, initially worked in the travel industry and then in a small engineering company. Having married Alice in 1951, he was able to offer his sales and other work experience to his father-in-law for whose company he happily worked until retirement in 1987.

Alice also kept very busy, not least once the three children were all at school. She took over a laundrette and discovered her strength lay in dealing with people. That ability led to the first of many years of charitable work; *Gingerbread* and running holiday centres for single-parent families were followed by twenty years working with a local Women's Refuge. She now devotes herself to working for the Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre in Hertfordshire and the ORT charity shop in Finchley.

Colin's great love is vintage gliders. He still flies solo and is currently President of the London Gliding Club. Together, Alice and Colin travel all over Europe following international gliding events.

□ Marion Koebner



Alice and Colin Anson

## What's the difference ...?

### ... between France and England

In France it was the Romans who first brought civilisation to the country and left a profound imprint on its language. The second major civilising force was the Church. It built lofty cathedrals, fostered learning, provided welfare services and slaughtered Christians of a different hue. In the fifteenth century Frenchmen venerated a village maid who 'heard voices' and defeated the national enemy. In the seventeenth they still remembered the Black Prince and hated *les rosbifs*. In the eighteenth they cut off their own king's head. In the nineteenth they built up an empire. In the mid-twentieth the government faced a revolt of Poujadist shopkeepers who physically threatened tax inspectors.

In England it was the Romans who first brought civilisation to the country and left a substantial imprint on its language. The second major civilising force was the Church. It built lofty cathedrals, fostered learning, provoked welfare services and slaughtered Christians of a different hue. In the sixteenth century Englishmen venerated a Virgin Queen who, possessing 'the feeble body of a woman and the heart of a king', defeated the national enemy. In the seventeenth century they cut off their own king's head. In the eighteenth they heartily despised France for its combination of 'popery and wooden shoes'. In the nineteenth Britain built up an empire. At the start of the twenty-first the government faced a revolt by Poujadist hauliers and farmers who physically threatened oil tanker drivers.

*Vive la difference!*

### ... between Iran and Israel

In present-day Iran the political process operates within a constitutional strait-jacket designed by the 'Imam' Ayatollah Khomeini. This gives the 'supreme guide' - a position at present held by Ayatollah Khomeini - the power of veto over decisions taken by the popularly elected President Khatami.

The hobbling of Israel's political process by clerical obscurantists is not actually written into the constitution - but encouraged by its commitment to proportional representation. Sephardi former Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef's pivotal position in the kaleidoscopically changing power structure gives him a licence to imperil the lives of secularist

spokesmen and peace activists by dubbing them 'Amaleks'. When he defamed Holocaust victims as 'sinners in a previous incarnation' his command of eighteen Knesset seats essential to coalition-building overrode the outrage all politicians - whether in or out of government - must have felt.

### ... between Wessies and Ossies

In 1945, with half of Germany in ruins, imposing a Versailles-style punitive peace on her would have been a labour of supererogation. Then, as if in keeping with its disconsolate debris-littered landscape, the very country split in two. However the Bonn Republic, benefiting from Western aid and Cold War amnesia about Nazi crimes, speedily turned itself into an economic *Wunderland*.

Meanwhile the misnamed German Democratic Republic, its economy stymied by Soviet dismantling and central planning, endured miserable living standards. Deprived of any but the most basic foodstuffs and consumer goods, new housing, foreign travel and security from denunciation, 18 million East Germans enacted vicarious atonement for the wartime crimes of all their compatriots.

Today the jackboot's on the other foot. With a steadily rising tally of dark-skinned murder victims to their credit, young Ossies are apparently readier to repeat those crimes than their Wessie counterparts.

### ... between Hero and Villain

In 1933 the Reichstag Fire Trial took place in Leipzig in an atmosphere of Nazi triumphalism and terror. In the dock the Bulgarian Communist Georgi Dimitrov stood up to Goering's bullying tactics to such good effect that he secured an acquittal. (His fearless conduct also inspired the quip 'The only man left in Germany is a Bulgarian'.)

In 1935, now Moscow-resident, Dimitrov was appointed head of the Communist International. One day during a session of the Comintern Executive he suddenly addressed the veteran Hungarian Communist leader Bela Kun as 'citizen' instead of the customary 'comrade'. It was no *lapsus linguae*. The meeting over, Kun was arrested as he left the room. This incident set in train the purge of hundreds of foreign Communists who had sought Russian shelter from their Fascist persecutors at home.

□ Richard Grunberger

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## Reviews

## The memorial debate

James E. Young, *AT MEMORY'S EDGE. AFTER-IMAGES OF THE HOLOCAUST IN CONTEMPORARY ART AND ARCHITECTURE*, Yale University Press, 2000.

This is a definitive work on the complex issue of Holocaust memory, representation and memorialisation. Focusing on the postwar generation of artists and architects who have grappled with the problem of how to represent the Nazi genocide, the book examines in detail the work of ten leading artists.

Always mindful of the paradox of how to represent absence through forms of artistic presence, Young highlights some remarkable work in different countries. Perhaps one of his most interesting and insightful conclusions is that it is not necessarily the end result that matters. It is the process, and discussions leading up to it, that most tellingly reflect a nation's relationship with history, memory and the present.

The book begins with a detailed analysis of the work of three American artists, including Art Spiegelman and Shimon Attie. Spiegelman, the son of survivors, and a cartoonist by profession, recovers the story of what happened to his father through a comic (or what he calls 'commix') strip called *Maus*. For Spiegelman, the unshowable Holocaust is depicted through the use of animals as humans. It is neither comical nor disrespectful – indeed it follows an ancient Jewish tradition of representing people as animals. Attie's work is quite simple, yet deeply disturbing. Between 1991 and 1996, working mainly in Berlin, he projected large-scale original photographs of Jewish Germans on to the houses and buildings where they had once lived and worked. His aim was to expose the gulf between what had happened in the past and how it gets remembered in the present.

Throughout, the reader is drawn into the challenges faced by artists of how and what to remember. Nowhere is this more complicated than in Germany, a country trying to remember its victims through a void of its own creation. A response to this by some artists has been through 'counter-memory'. Two German artists, Horst Hoheisel and Jochen Gerz, have produced some of the most interesting

examples of this. Reluctant to erect yet more edifices that commemorate the destruction of a people, they have constructed a number of monuments that are both absent and present at the same time. Viewers are thus forced to do the memory-work themselves, not pass on the responsibility to the monument. Hoheisel, for example, was asked to reconstruct a fountain – originally funded by a Jewish entrepreneur in Kassel – that had been destroyed by the Nazis. He rebuilt the fountain on its original spot, but then sank the fountain deep below the ground. In this way, the visitor is forced to remember, simultaneously, something which is there and not there.

Jochen Gerz has designed some equally provocative counter-monuments. In Hamburg, he constructed a forty foot high, three foot square pillar called *Harburg's Monument against Fascism*, which invited people to add their names and graffiti. As more and more names were added, the construction was gradually lowered into the ground until it vanished with its last sinking. "The vanishing monument flouted all memorial conventions – its aim was not to console but to provoke, not to remain fixed but to change, not to be everlasting but to disappear, not to be ignored but to demand interaction, not to remain pristine but to invite its own violation, not to accept graciously the burden of memory, but throw it back at the town's feet." Gerz's work, perhaps more than that of any other postwar generation artist, has most profoundly influenced and challenged the memorial debate.

Young devotes the final two chapters of this absorbing book to the Daniel Libeskind Jewish Museum in Berlin, and the competition in Berlin to design a national Holocaust Memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe. The details of the design and implementation of Libeskind's genius building make compelling reading – particularly, if like me, you have had the privilege of experiencing it before its Summer 2000 closure. Libeskind has deliberately created a building that is *unheimlich* (translated by him as 'uncanny'), in a city "that has voided itself of Jews, making them alien strangers in a land they had considered 'home'." As the reader is drawn into some of the details behind the construction of the building, it becomes increasingly remarkable that it should exist.

Equally engaging is Young's description of the machinations of the Holocaust Memorial competition over the last decade. As the only foreigner and Jew invited to sit on the final panel, Young details a fraction of some of the agonising discussions that sometimes threatened to paralyse part of Germany's political system. Even though the final decision appears to have been reached last summer, the reader is left wondering if anything will *really* happen.

And this, in many ways, takes us to the heart of the book, and indeed the whole commemoration process itself. The memorial, be it visible or lying just beneath our feet under the surface, is the metaphor leading us to Europe's murdered Jews. How we live with that in the present, and how we engage with the past, is up to each one of us as individuals. Words, speeches and ultimately, of course, memorials, are not enough. But we have to keep on trying.

□ Katherine Klinger

## All in a lifetime

David Zagier, *BOTCHKI*, Peter Halban, 2000, £17.99.

This is a colourful saga, begun before World War II by a young man and completed by him as a nonagenarian. It is written in beautiful English by an author weaned on Yiddish and scriptural Hebrew. The book differs from so many of the genre which view the past – after surviving often terrible experiences – in a nostalgic light. In this work affection for the shtetl of Botchki is mixed with criticism, sometimes bitter realism. Even Zagier's parents and siblings do not escape his often jaundiced eye.

But what a long lifetime his has been: from cheder pupil to a student at a grammar school-cum-yeshiva to journalism in South Africa, France, the US, Great Britain and Switzerland! Later he was a soldier, and in turn – remarkably – a CIA operative and a McCarthy suspect, finishing up as a Swiss resident. Zagier's training for this life was apt in a way – for his hometown Botchki came consecutively under Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, German, Soviet and Polish sovereignty.

In Czarist times the family lived in grinding poverty and adhered to the religious

fundamentalism of the *Midnagdim*. The teaching of their rabbis was more rationalistic and less mystical than that of their Chassidic contemporaries. Their physical neighbours were Catholic, and Greek-Orthodox – cheek-by-jowl but miles apart through superstition and ethnic differences. Botchki's Jewish men, apart from the (more or less) learned luminaries, were rough and ready. Quite a few were horse traders, more accurately horse thieves, in which pursuit they often cooperated with the gentile "bad boys". The author's father was an irate man who did not dote on his son; he beat him often and hard. The near-saintly mother tried to keep the family fed – often with no more than potatoes – and on an even keel under the pressure of the father's fanatical piety. With her help, David absconded to the big city, higher education and a measure of secularism, though he never abandoned his Jewishness.

Not that life in Botchki was always grim. There is, for instance, a delicious description of the Friday night ceremony – even for the poor – starting with the shout resounding through the streets: "Jews into the bath." All this is presented in a style which makes the reader share the tears and the laughter with which those stubborn human beings struggled to maintain themselves in a grim world.

□ John Rossall

## Telling tales

Saul Reichlin, *NOW YOU'RE TALKING*, New End Theatre.

**I**f I were a rich man, Make me a match, Is this the little girl I carried? Everyone in the world, it seems, knows Tevye the milkman, his prayers, his pains and his pleasures from *Fiddler on the Roof*. But how many people know the Shalom Aleichem tale behind that almost sardonic desire to be a rich man? Saul Reichlin's one-hander at the New End Theatre, *Shalom Aleichem – Now You're Talking*, brings the stories of the great humorist-sage to life and demonstrates the comic sadness that lies behind the *oys* and *abbs* of the Jewish ghetto in the days when violent antisemitism was the unseen companion to poverty. Today we laugh at the tales; perhaps we also fail to recognise in *Shalom Aleichem* the Jewish answer to Dylan Thomas.

Saul, who has been invited to take the show to Manchester by the Lubavitch, and later to Miami and Montreal, believes

that the guts of European Jewish civilisation are as vital today in our contemporary, affluent times as they were in the days when chickens clucked around Jewish villages. It is young audiences, he says, who are so quick to recognize their own family members in the traits of the East European ghetto, Jews who form such a bedrock of our history. In his presentation of Aleichem's extracts, we have Rothschild as well as Queen Vashti, black bread and onions, rabbinic disputes, lokshen pudding, grotesque characters, superstition, potent



Saul Reichlin

dreams, aching poverty and all the bitter-sweet humour that underpins what we simplify as Jewish sentimentality.

In his passion to keep it all alive, Reichlin has created some powerful moments of intimate theatre. His resonant voice, now ranting, now conniving, now admonitory, now caressing, conjures up an image of another place in another time that is somehow always with us. His expressive eyes and outstretched arms give the show a touch of burlesque and parody, and the innate repetitiveness of the material make it sometimes almost too intense. In fact, the work might benefit if the actor were to step out of character occasionally and deliver a personal narrative. For all that, Reichlin demonstrates that he is not only a vivid teller of tales, with a real sense of story, but someone with a very human mission to keep the essence of Jewish character positively alive and kicking. He sums it up in his own words: "Only circumstances change; people don't. I want to let people feel rewarded for being Jewish."

□ Gloria Tessler

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## Letters to the Editor

### A PFEFFERKORN RANT

Sir – In his book *The Holocaust Industry*, Professor Finkelstein makes allegations which need verification, or exposure as false. The most serious one is that German firms have had demands from 135,000 Jewish survivors of concentration and slave labour camps. Is this true? In 1946, President Truman asked Britain for 100,000 visas for Palestine to empty Displaced Persons camps. That figure has always been accepted by all Jewish organisations. If we consider the terrible state of health of these survivors, it is reasonable to assume that only about a fifth to a quarter, i.e. about 20,000, are still alive. If 135,000 are still living, there must have been more than half a million – a gift to the Holocaust deniers who allege that the figure of six million is exaggerated.

Finkelstein's book has been widely publicised throughout the world and even *The Economist* gave it a one-page friendly review. These, and other, allegations in the book need thorough investigation and your vitriolic review is no help.

Ilford, Essex

Peter Prager

### HAS ART GOT HEART

Sir – May I add some information to your recent article (*September 2000*). Richard Strauss' Jewish daughter-in-law Alice had two sons whom Strauss loved very much. He got official protection for them from the Nazis. The two families lived together in the same house in Garmisch Partenkirchen during the war.

My late husband was a relative of Alice and contact was renewed after the war.

London NW3

Edith Singer-Rueff

Sir – The skeletons in our cupboards or Monicas in our trousers are a common legacy of humanity from which only the critics in your September and earlier issues seem to claim exemption. We nevertheless also try to achieve something that others may find useful or pleasant. It would be a nice surprise to note in your columns an equitable balance between objective appreciation of achievement and castigation of frailty or folly.

London SE21

Max Meyer

### BEYOND HIS KEN

Sir – The matter of the forcibly removed golliwog resulting in the loss of 300 jobs (*July/August 2000*) is surely a case of *boni soit qui mal y pense extraordinaire* if you pardon my Norman French. My daughters, when small, had golliwog dolls which conditioned them to love, accept and play with people of another hue. Before the advent of grotesque Cindys and expensive china dolls with bottle blond hair who could open their invariably light-blue Aryan eyes when tilted, we had rag dolls. These, though less perfect replicas of the human face, also mimicked the Dirndl and not the Jewish variety of children. These, and not the golliwogs, were racial stereotypes.

I am sure that if German and Austrian children had played with golliwogs and Middle-Eastern looking dolls in their formative years, rather than with those which mirrored their parents' Germanic racial aspirations, they would have developed into more tolerant beings.

What I object to is the deliberate falsification of images by Renaissance artists who showed the Virgin, child and the Apostles as white without a trace of Semitic features – which they must have had. Had they been honest and shown them with an appropriate *ponim*, then those who prayed to such graven images would have equated their saints with their true Semitic background and would have viewed their Jewish neighbours not as strangers but as familiar figures.

It is as a Jew that I accuse Ken Livingstone of unadulterated racism. As far as his stance against golliwogs is concerned, I would say unto Ken that only he who is without sin should cast the first stone and why is it that he sees the mote in everybody else's eye and not the beam that is in his own eye. He ought to understand that.

Ipswich, Suffolk

Frank Bright

### RAF CZECH PERSONNEL

Sir – I am one of the Jewish former flying personnel of 311 Czechoslovak Bomber Squadron (*September letters*). Jewish men never remotely reached half in numbers of 311 flying personnel. In fact Jewish participation in operational

flying during 1940/1941 was negligible and only reached respectable numbers from 1943 onwards. Your correspondent's reference to the Czech Government's decision to reward Czechoslovak participants in the 1939-1945 war effort is shamefully offensive and false. The Czech Defence Ministry is regularly fulfilling its obligations according to the law. The payments, graduated according to length of service, in many instances far exceed £1,500.

I have no connection with the Czech Government or Ministry but am anxious to see the truth prevail.

Cobham, Surrey

Arnost Polak, Lt. Col. ret'd  
Czech Air Forces

### ARISTOCRAT'S DESPAIR

Sir – The review of *Diary of a Man in Despair* failed to acknowledge and celebrate the heroic courage and literal self-sacrifice of the aristocrat Reck-Malleczewen who over a period of years knowingly risked his life in order to bear witness and record the cancerous evil pervading the Nazi state – and who was ultimately murdered for his pains before the war's end.

He believed in the virtues of an old German aristocratic tradition and condemned absolutely Bismarck and Prussian dominance and militarism. He certainly believed that the rule of an aristocratic elite steeped in civilised values was better than that of the 'masses', an attitude which in our generation we find at least debatable. However, he condemned unreservedly those aristocrats who betrayed their traditions by siding with the Nazis.

Let us therefore honour a man who, coming from an outmoded tradition, knowingly sacrificed his life in order to bear witness to the truth and resist evil.

London W5

Bernard Baruch

### GERMAN PENSION

Sir – With reference to F. Goldberg's remarks (*September letters*), it is the good £ and the bad Euro which causes the 18% or so shortfall in our pensions, i.e. the exchange rate. I have contacted our local MP, Sir Teddy Taylor, about this and can reproduce his Notice of Motion of 5 June 2000 No 107-790 in the House of Commons:

*That this House, while appreciating the fact that the German Government continues to pay pensions to Holocaust survivors notes with concern that the*

pensions have been reduced by 18½% because of the decline in the value of the Euro; is aware that the uncertainties of the financial markets could result in further adjustments, considers that this is an unfair burden and worry for Holocaust survivors; and believes that there is a strong case for such pensions to be paid to UK residents and to other residents in other nations in their national currencies.

Maybe other pensioners should approach their MPs, as there is strength in numbers.

Name and address supplied

### OVERSIMPLIFICATION

Sir – Quite apart from Mr Garfinkel's statement that "virtually every Jew is a refugee if one traces the family back far enough" (*August letters*) is not above dispute, surely the members of our Association are mainly of German and Central European origin who came here in the 1930s and thus a section of the Jewish community in this country. Let us keep our Association as it is.

London W14

Frank Tutnauer

### KINDERTRANSPORT

Sir – In response to your article about Diane Samuels (*September issue*), a number of us in the USA have had our stories published. My book *Kindertransport* was published by Henry Holt & Co in 1992. It won an award as 'Best book for young adults' by the American Library Association and has been nominated for several other awards. It has been translated into German and Dutch. Though written for children, my book – to paraphrase Ms Samuels – "works for people from the age of nine to ninety". I myself visit many schools and other venues where I talk about these "unrecorded experiences."

Florida, USA

Olga Drucker

#### Thank You Britain Annual Lecture

**The Lord Chancellor  
LORD IRVINE OF LAIRG**

**22 November at 5.30pm**

The British Academy  
10 Carlton House Terrace, London  
SW1Y 5AH

To obtain tickets contact  
Rosemary Lambeth as above  
or Tel: 020 7969 5264

E-mail: r.lambeth@britac.ac.uk

Please quote AJR Information

## NORIKO OGAWA TO PERFORM WITH THE LONDON CONCERTINO

Following the success of last year's AJR Annual Concert, held for the first time on the university campus of Imperial College, Kensington, this year's concert returns to Imperial College on the afternoon of Sunday 29th October. As it proved so popular with patrons and performers alike, a full cream tea will again be served in the university's refectory during the 45-minute interval.

The AJR has invited The London Concertino chamber orchestra under the baton of Richard Dickins to return this year. Their programme features a well-chosen selection including a Mendelssohn Symphony for Strings as well as compositions by Percy Grainger and Edvard Grieg.

The talented Noriko Ogawa is taking

up the challenge of playing Mozart's Piano Concerto No 14 in E flat major

K449, composed in Vienna in 1784 for another young woman, Barbara Ployer, daughter of a leading Salzburg music agent. The interpretations of our soloist, an international piano celebrity, are noted for their strength and power as well as their refinement and delicacy. While a national celebrity in her native Japan, Noriko Ogawa has forged an international career with an ever-increasing band of admirers in Britain. Performing regularly with the world's leading orchestras, the demand for her services in international concert halls

makes us doubly fortunate to hear her playing at the AJR concert.

□ RDC

**BOX OFFICE:** Seats may be booked at £12, £15 and £18 by writing to: The Concert Secretary, AJR Charitable Trust, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal, London NW3 6AL. Please enclose your cheque for the full amount and, if possible, a SAE. Enquiries: 020 7431 6161.



Noriko Ogawa, piano soloist at this year's AJR Concert

## Anne Frank Exhibition reaches Bethnal Green

The well-known story of Anne Frank – encapsulated in a new touring exhibition – is told at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. In a series of six 'pavilions', Anne's life story is related against the background of German history between 1918 and 1945, starting with the aftermath of the Versailles Treaty, the economic situation, the rise of Nazism and some of the events between 1933 and 1939 (notably the 1 April boycott and Kristallnacht). The story then shifts to Holland where the Frank family fled and went into hiding when Anne's older sister Margot received an official notification to report for work. The family was betrayed but not before they were helped, in hiding, by people who put their own lives at risk by so doing. Auschwitz and Bergen Belsen are dealt with as part of the fate of family members. The exhibits include highly

personal items such as identity cards, photographs and a Red Cross letter.

The exhibition, however, does not stop at 1945. In the words of Herbert Levy, who trains guides for the Anne Frank Educational Trust: "This exhibition is not about the past but about what we can learn from the past." It is thus fitting that the concluding panel is on the theme of racism and one of its victims, the teenager Stephen Lawrence, murdered in 1993 because of the colour of his skin.

Organised by the Anne Frank Educational Trust, the exhibition is at the Museum of Childhood until 29 October after which it continues on tour to Durham (November), Edinburgh (January 2001), Northampton (March 2001), Ely (May 2001) and other parts of the country. As school groups will be visiting in the mornings, an afternoon visit is recommended.

□ MK

# AJR Reports



AJR members and volunteers enjoying the London Eye

## Freewheeling

AJR members and volunteers from the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre were treated to an afternoon out on the London Eye. A coach collected the 38 strong group, but not before everyone had tucked in to a delicious three course lunch.

As the large wheel hove into view, some of the group wavered, but the tickets had been bought and paid for so there was no turning back!

Magnificent views, enhanced by the

perfect weather, made the outing well worthwhile. Many recalled the *Riesenrad* in Vienna's Prater, although there was general agreement that it was not as large as the Eye. The London Eye staff were very helpful, even stopping the wheel for the group to embark and disembark.

On returning to the Day Centre, the unanimous view was that, once again, Sylvia and Renée had arranged a most enjoyable afternoon.

The AJR plans to organise many more outings which will be publicised in *AJR Information*. □ Carol Rossen

## Pinner

Photographer and author of *My Secret Camera*, Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith, fascinated his audience when he spoke about the Leitz family – famous for the Leica camera – and their secret efforts to save many Jews during the Nazi era by arranging their emigration through contacts abroad at a time when expertise in the factory workforce was sorely needed. Not even her son Canute knew that Elsie Leitz supplied food and blankets to slave labourers, an act for which she was incarcerated. The surprise of the afternoon came when a member of the audience was found to have been at school with Canute! □ Walter Weg

The next meeting will be on Thursday 5 October. Anthony Goldsmith will share his "Recollections of an exporter." On Thursday 2 November, Sir Horace Phillips will speak about his experiences as a Jewish Ambassador.

## Leeds

The next meeting will be on Sunday 29 October. Dayan Refson will speak on "The Philosophy of remembering and mourning."

## Summer garden party

Residents of Balint, Leo Baeck and Osmond House, their relatives and friends enjoyed a delicious tea in a marquee in The Bishops Avenue grounds of the three Otto Schiff homes on the occasion of the first joint garden party. Over 200 guests also visited the stalls selling homemade cakes, plants and gifts and the raffle proved a big attraction. The fundraising event was not only financially but socially a great success. Proceeds go to improving amenities for residents of the three homes □



At the garden party: From left, Nida Bibal (care assistant), Ada Cormor (Leo Baeck resident) and her niece Sharon.

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### Brighton and Hove

You could have heard a pin drop as Madeline Joyce gave the second of her talks about her wartime survival in Vichy France. After working with the French Resistance for nearly two years, she was betrayed by a double agent and imprisoned in appalling conditions with other women who had fallen foul of wartime regulations. After four months she was tried for possessing false identity papers and sentenced to six months imprisonment by a judge who was a member of the Resistance. When the time of her release came, she was, instead, put on a transport to Auschwitz where she arrived in January 1944. No vote of thanks could do justice to her talk. □ Rudi Simmonds

The next meeting will be on Monday 30 October (changed from 23 October). Judy Ironside will speak about the Brighton & Hove Film Festival.

### Surrey

That Mecca of English gardening, Wisley, attracted a most appreciative group of Surrey AJR garden lovers who were rewarded by a wonderful display of



Surrey members at Wisley

flowers, shrubs, trees and even vegetables, all in perfect sunshine. The 'art form of the English', as it has been described, evoked a warm echo from all those who came. □ Robert Miller

The next meeting will be on Tuesday November 14, details to be announced.

## Fourth Great Season

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- \* Enlivening Discussion \*
- \* Meeting new friends \*

### AJR-KT LUNCHEON CLUB

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11.45am for 12.15pm

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**'The rabbinate as a second career'**

Reservations £7.50 for everyone!  
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### AJR ANNUAL VOLUNTEERS THANK YOU PARTY

5 NOVEMBER 2000

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### AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL  
between 10am and 12 noon on the  
following dates:

**Tuesday 3 October**  
**Thursday 19 October**  
**Tuesday 24 October**  
**Wednesday 1 November**

**AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognaal,  
London NW3 6AL**

*No appointment is necessary, but please bring  
along all relevant documents, such as  
Benefit Books, letters, bills, etc.*

## ... Viewpoint ...

### Grey matter

When faced with the dilemmas involved with funding my late father's unavoidable entry into a nursing home, having assumed responsibility for his welfare I had to accede to the local authority's request that I initiate the sale of his house in order to finance payment of the fees.

Both my parents had made substantial sacrifices to meet the mortgage payments and maintain a pleasant semi-detached house in an outer London suburb, which they bought new after marrying in 1930. Others, having similarly survived to an age of lost independence, whose life-style had in comparison been markedly more profligate, were rightly to receive equal consideration, but funded entirely by the local authority and the state. Was the ultimate reward for my parents' lifetime of hard work, frugality, rare treats and few holidays – either for them or their children – to be dissipated with no residual asset or benefit whatsoever accruing?

While the Government wrestles with attempts to avoid the budgetary implications of an honourable solution, is it not appropriate to ask why the retired

and elderly in our population did not set about making their political influence felt at an earlier stage? Retired people make up more than 20% of the electorate and because they are conscientious above average, probably cast a quarter of all votes in a general election!

You do not have to be an Einstein to appreciate their potential 'clout' as a well-defined interest group. The elderly are poorer than average, they rely on state pensions and other benefits more and regard the National Health Service as sacrosanct. It's hardly surprising that, compared to the rest, they prefer a government which taxes and spends.

Being thus reliant, they look to the Government as their saviour, though last year's derisory rise in the basic pension of 75p a week hardly endeared it to the elderly. The prospect of being forced to sell up the family home under duress only adds a further affront on the road to alienation. In the coming year's run-up to the general election there is yet time for the actively retired to establish more favourable priorities in the political firmament before they too become its prey.

□ *Ronald Channing*

## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6

Mon. & Weds. 9.30am-3.30pm. Tues. & Thurs. 9.30am-5.30pm. Suns. 2pm-6.30pm

### OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2000

Afternoon entertainment programme –

- Sun 1 DAY CENTRE CLOSED – ROSH  
HASHANA
- Mon 2 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tue 3 Shelley Weldon entertains
- Wed 4 Jack Davidoff entertains
- Thur 5 Nicola Smedley accompanied by  
Jan Cunningham, piano
- Sun 8 DAY CENTRE CLOSED – KOL  
NIDRE
- Mon 9 DAY CENTRE CLOSED – YOM  
KIPPUR
- Tues 10 Jenny Kossew entertains on  
accordion
- Wed 11 Katinka Seiner and Laszlo Easton  
(violin) accompanied by Peter  
Gellhorn (piano)
- Thur 12 Elaine Gee (guitar) entertains
- Sun 15 DAY CENTRE CLOSED –  
SUCCOTH
- Mon 16 KARD & GAMES KLUB

- Tues 17 Nikki Van Der Zyl accompanied  
by Sheila Games (piano)
- Wed 18 LUNCHEON CLUB
- Thur 19 The WIZO Ladies Choir
- Sun 20 DAY CENTRE CLOSED –  
SIMCHAT TORAH
- Mon 23 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tues 24 Antonia Kendall (soprano) with  
piano accompaniment
- Wed 25 THE BOLD BALLATIERS
- Thur 26 Elizabeth Ward (soprano) and Paul  
Webster (piano)
- Sun 29 DAY CENTRE CLOSED – Self Aid  
Concert
- Mon 30 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tues 31 Suzanna Marks (soprano) and  
Janet Beale (piano and accordion)

### NOVEMBER

- Wed 1 The Eddy Simmons Duo
- Thur 2 The Geoffrey Whitworth Duo
- Sun 5 DAY CENTRE CLOSED –  
Volunteers' Annual Party

**FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Births**

**Finestone.** Ruth and Eric are delighted to announce the birth of their 6<sup>th</sup> grandchild Harry Samuel, born 20 August to Tara and Peter. Mazeltov to Great Grandpa Frank Henderson.

**Deaths**

**Byk.** Peter Henry Julian Byk died on 11 July at home in Bromley, Kent. Sadly missed by his wife Eva and sons David, Andrew and Robert.

**Freund.** Gunter Freund, born in Breslau in 1916, died suddenly in Cheltenham on 21 August. A loving husband, father and grandfather, he will be sadly missed.

**Woltar.** Suzanne Woltar, born Aussig, Czechoslovakia. Died peacefully on 5 August aged 80. Always remembered by nephews and nieces Paul, Colin and Annette, Frances and Karen.

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**Day Centre**

**Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.** New clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans etc. Tuesday 24 October, 9.45-11.45am.

**Societies**

**Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners and Ex-Breslauers.** Please contact Peter Sinclair 020 8882 1638 for information.

**AJR GROUP CONTACTS**

Leeds HSFA:	Trude Silman 0113 225 1628
West Midlands: (Birmingham)	Edgar Glaser 0121 777 6537
North: (Manchester)	Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091
East Midlands (Nottingham)	Bob Norton 01159 212 494
Pinner: (HA Postal District)	Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833
S. London:	Ken Ambrose 020 8852 0262
Surrey:	Ernest Simon 01737 643 900
Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)	Fausta Shelton 01273 688 226
Wessex: (Bournemouth)	Ralph Dale 01202 762 270

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West Hampstead, NW6

Please make appointments with  
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Tel: 020 7328 0208

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2-23 November 2000

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**FORTHCOMING EVENTS OCTOBER 2000**

- Wed 4 **Sir Martin Gilbert:** Writing about the Holocaust, Imperial War Museum, 7.30pm.
- Mon 16 **Hans Seelig:** JS Bach & his Brandenburg concertos. Club 43, 7.45pm
- Wed 18 **Für Lohn und Würde:** Dr Helmut Bauer introduces his ½ hour film and discusses the issues raised. Wiener Library, 7pm.
- Thurs 19 **Lunchtime recital,** The Manor House, 1.15pm.
- Mon 23 **Jens Brüning,** journalist & writer: "Der erste Zug nach Berlin", eine bisher unveröffentlichte Novelle von Gabriele Tergit. (In German). Club 43, 7.45pm
- Wed 25 **Prof Mark Roseman:** Hidden resistance - The 'League for Socialist life', a Jewish girl & the Nazis Wiener Library, 6.30pm
- Until 27 **East of Eden.** Watercolours by Moish Sokal. Sternberg Centre. Mon-Thurs 10-5; Fri 10-2.
- Until 29 **Anne Frank Exhibition,** Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. 020 8980 2415 (closed Fridays)
- Until 29 **Taxi! Jewish Taxi Drivers & the London cab trade.** Jewish Museum, Finchley.
- Mon 30 **Gerald Holm:** F. Scott Fitzgerald. Club 43, 7.45pm.
- Heidemarie Petersen,** Univ of Leipzig: Jewish communal organisation in early modern Polish towns. Inst. of Jewish Studies, UCL, Gustave Tuck Theatre, Gower St. WC1. 6.30pm.
- 1 Nov-10 Dec **The Last Goodbye.** The rescue of children from Nazi Europe. Etz Chayim Gallery, Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue 01923 822592.
- Thurs 2 Nov **Prof Bernard Wasserstein:** The end of Jewish history? UCL. Gustave Tuck Theatre, Gower St, London WC1. 6.30 pm
- Lunchtime recital,** John Georgiou, Piano. The Manor House, 1.15 pm.
- Until 28 Jan 2001 **Keeping the Light.** Photographic exhibition on the Jews of Cochin. Jewish Museum, Camden Town.

**ORGANISATION CONTACTS**  
**Club '43,** Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig. Tel: 01442 254360  
**Imperial War Museum,** Lambeth Rd, London SE1. 020 7416 5320  
**Institute of Jewish Studies, UCL.** 020 7679 3520  
**Sternberg Centre for Judaism/ Jewish Museum, Finchley,** 80 East End Road, London N3 2SY. Tel: 020 8346 2288/ 8349 1143  
**The Jewish Museum, Camden Town,** 129-131 Albert Street, NW1 7BN. Tel: 020 7284 1997  
**The Manor House Society,** 80 East End Rd, London N3. 020 8349 5654  
**Wiener Library,** 4 Devonshire Street. London W1. Tel. 020 7636 7247

# Art Notes

**Jacqueline K Crofton's** figurative and nude studies in pastel and mixed media at London's **Albemarle Gallery** reflect her preoccupation with shape, movement, sensuality and the rhythm of the unexpected. In contrast to so many contemporary artists who, she says, "feel the need to shock and expose the very rawness of sexuality", she prefers to study the human body from the perspective of its natural frailty. But her undulating forms, emphasised by colourful drapes in a conscious nod to classicism, are undeniably erotic. They also emphasise female poignancy, mood, body language, posture, a certain formalism. The risk is that the frailty may overflow into tenderness, but Crofton's work is saved by the boldness of her shapes, and the almost Gauguinesque pose of the subjects who are nearly all caught in the thrall of arrested movement.

The excitement lies in their potential for sudden change; a sense that something is going to happen. The girl in *Bather*, for instance, turns around from the pool as though to someone who has asked her a question; we are on the verge of waiting for the answer. The most delicate work features the backs of nudes, favoured by the artist, "because there is always that possibility that they could turn around."

The romance of French Impressionism has clearly left its mark on Crofton's work in shape and tone; the soft blues, the potency of the ambers and ochres and – it has to be said – the sheer prettiness of most of the subject matter. But there is modernism, too; for example, the dreamy beauty in *Redhead Reclining*, the enwrapped couple in *Regrets* and the bold and coltish *Redhead from Above*, where the insouciance of the pale and leggy young girl poses a feminist challenge.

Nude paintings always carry the danger of narcissism: the pursuit of beauty for its own sake. As a portrait artist, Crofton, who has exhibited all around the world including at the Ben Uri, believes that everything is present in the human face. Her astounding portraits of tramps, travellers and rough sleepers, not shown in this exhibition, betray a depth of vision and a pursuit of truth without irony that testify better to her talents.



Jacqueline K Crofton: *Bather*

Money appears as the root of all evil at the **British Museum**. *Illegal Tender: Counterfeit Money Through the Ages*, explores the ultimate corruption of currency through forgery and all the technological resources used to combat the abuse. The exhibition continues until 7 January 2001. The Museum also celebrates two great Italian artists of the Renaissance: **Correggio** and **Parmigianino**, opening this month until next January, is a joint exhibition with New York's **Metropolitan Museum of Art**. Over 130 works from English and North American collections will include frescoes, life drawings and informal studies. At the same time, **Picasso's** linocuts from the late 1950s and early 1960s, reflecting the artist's obsession with classical antiquity, will go on display. Recalling the recent BBC2 showing of the film *Spartacus*, followed by documentaries on the Roman Gladiators, the British Museum is also mounting its own display, *Gladiators and Caesars: The Power of Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, which will compare the Roman entertainment industry with our own. On show will be chariot racing, gladiatorial sports and the political manipulation of the games by the Caesars. A major film programme will support the theme. The Museum's final contribution this month will be *Contemporary Japanese Ceramics from Saga*, which opens on October 20 and runs until 14 January 2001. *Telling Time* will consider how artists treat time from the static moment to the narrative painting. Artists include **Rembrandt**, **Degas** and **Munch**. □ Gloria Tessler

## SB's Column

**Irving Berlin**, one of the great names in musical entertainment went into well-deserved retirement fifty years ago. Born Israel Baline in Siberia in 1888, the youngest son of a cantor, he arrived in America with his family in 1894. He taught himself music and earned his first money by singing folk songs in Russian and Yiddish. Climbing the ladder of an unbelievably successful career, he changed his name to Irving Berlin and became the composer of more than eleven hundred songs; pieces like *Always*, *Alexander's Ragtime Band* and *It's a lovely day tomorrow* went around the world, and *White Christmas* is second only to *Silent Night* as a highlight of Christmas festivities everywhere. After the world successes of the musicals *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Call me Madam*, Irving Berlin went into retirement in the early fifties and spent his remaining years in the Catskill Mountains.

**Arthur Schnitzler's** works have become modern classics. His plays, written during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Schnitzler died in 1931), are performed on many German-speaking stages and (in translation) in many other countries. (London's theatrical sensation of 1998, *The Blue Room* with Nicole Kidman, was based on his *La Ronde* while Stanley Kubrick's last film *Eyes Wide Shut* drew inspiration from the author's *Traumnovelle*). Schnitzler's most enduring play, *Professor Bernhaldi*, which deals with covert and inherent antisemitism, is still in the repertoire of the Vienna Burgtheater.

**Birthdays.** Czech-born composer and conductor **Vilem Tausky** had his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Living in quiet retirement, he can look back on a successful career in this country, conducting many orchestras, as well as several operas at London's Sadlers Wells and later at the English National Opera. Austrian comedienne **Elfriede Ott** is 75; as a very popular actress she is still a member of Vienna's *Josefstadt* and giving recitals; for many years her texts were written by her partner, the late Hans Weigel.

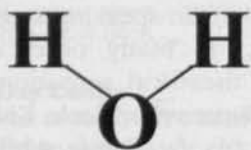
**Obituaries.** Austrian-born baritone **Otto Wiener**, whose sonorous voice and excellent stage presence made him a much sought-after Wagner singer, sang in Bayreuth, Vienna, Milan, Paris and London where his best-known role as Hans Sachs earned him universal acclaim. He retired in 1976 □

## Science Notebook

### With ice, please!

The transatlantic habit of adding ice to cool drinks has spread over here and is much appreciated in hot weather. But why do the ice cubes always rise to the top?

Ice, after all, is just frozen water. Most people know that the formula of water is  $H_2O$ , ie each molecule of water is made up of two atoms of hydrogen (H) combined with one atom of oxygen (O). This oxygen atom sits between the two hydrogen atoms forming an angle of just over  $104^\circ$ , as shown in the diagram. In ice the water molecules are fixed in positions such that the H atoms of each molecule are near the O atoms of neighbouring molecules. The resulting three-dimensional structure of ice is an open one and contains a lot of empty space. When the ice melts at  $0^\circ C$ , this rigid ice structure collapses. The water molecules in the cold liquid can then pack more closely together. As a result, the cold liquid becomes 9% more dense than the ice so the ice floats.



Liquid water attains its greatest density (exactly 1 kilogram per litre) at  $4^\circ C$ . Above  $4^\circ C$  its density falls because the water molecules move about with greater energy and need more 'elbow room'. The liquid therefore expands as the tempera-

ture rises. This has serious consequences as global warming continues. Unless carbon dioxide emissions (from burning oil, coal, and gas) are curbed, the average global temperature is likely to rise by  $2-3^\circ$  in the next century. According to the latest assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, this will produce a rise in sea level of some 12cm in 30 years and about 50 cm by 2100. Over half this rise will be due to thermal expansion of the oceans; melting glaciers would contribute most of the remainder. Since half the people in the world live in coastal zones, a few cms rise in ocean level (compounded by land subsidence) will be catastrophic for countries like The Netherlands, Bangladesh, and many low-lying island nations. Britain will not be immune. After 2030 the Thames Barrier will need to be enlarged to avoid London being flooded.

Almost all the world's frozen water is present in the enormously thick ice sheets sitting on Greenland (ca 10%) and on the Antarctic continent (ca 90%). In a warmer world the atmosphere will contain more water vapour, producing more snowfalls over these ice sheets to balance their melting. The Climate Change report estimates that net melting of the Greenland ice (observed in July) will be compensated by net deposition on the Antarctic ice. Let us hope these predictions are right. More ice, please, waiter!

□ Prof Michael Spiro

### SEARCH NOTICES

**Robert Friedlaender**, son of Max & Bella Friedlaender living in Twickenham in 1944. Served as a sergeant with British Armed Forces during WWII under the name Robert Lodge. Twice decorated for bravery. Parachuted into occupied France with the SAS in July 1944 to assist the Maquis. Buried in Moussey Churchyard, Vosges, France. Contact with any family members sought by historical researcher: Keith R. Turner, PO Box 4087, Hornchurch, Essex. RM11 2BP

**North Staffordshire Jews**. PhD researcher would welcome contact from Jews who came to North Staffs as refugees and then evacuees in 1930s/1940s, as refugees from Egypt in the late 1950s, or have ever lived in the area or who are able to provide relevant information. Contact J.P. Phillips, 140 Byrds Lane, Uttoxeter, Staffs ST14 7NB. E-mail: J.P.Phillips.Ac.@tinyworld.co.uk

**Samuel Grossman** and family arrived in New

Zealand in 1926 would like to hear from anyone who knew them. Contact Dan Romain: Tel. 01628 478840.

**Erna Riegelhaupt-Reagle**, born 9 April 1912 in Krakow, Poland, daughter of Malka and David Molkner. She and/or her children and grandchildren are being sought by her old friend's daughter. Write to Monika Zielinska, skr.pocz. 432, 30-960 Krakow, Poland.

**Huyton Internment Camp**. In connection with the acquisition of drawings and watercolours made during internment by Hugo Dachinger and Walter Nessler between 1939-1940, further information about the camp is sought in the form of photographs, drawings etc of the camp, or documentary material about life there. Please contact Julian Treuherz, Keeper of Art Galleries, Walker Art Gallery, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EL.

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## Riga ghetto monument

Sixty years after the first deportations, a cemetery and memorial site – designed by a Riga architect – are to be dedicated, in November 2001, to the memory of the more than 20,000 German and Austrian Jews deported to the Riga ghetto between 1941-1942, most of whom perished in the Forest of Bikernieki. The site is now protected by virtue of the German-Latvian Convention on War Graves.

At present, the neglected site has fifty-five mass graves and a memorial stone dating from Soviet times with the inscription 'Between 1941 and 1944 Fascist-German occupiers brutally murdered 46,500 peace-loving citizens in Bikernieki Forest.' There is no mention of the fact that the majority of the victims were Jews, and there is no memorial to many thousands of deportees who were shot, buried and burnt here whose fate was simply described as '*verschollen in Riga*'.

Situated in a forest on the eastern fringes of the Latvian capital, the mass graves will be retained, cleared and linked by a footpath (*Weg des Todes*) marked by steles carrying Jewish symbols leading to the central memorial site where a plaque will bear a memorial inscription.

Although the city of Riga began work on a memorial site in the 1990s, the project was shelved for lack of finance. In 1996, two separate projects were started: a private scheme to memorialise the deported Jews of Hamburg, Cologne and Bielefeld in the new Jewish cemetery with contributions from Bielefeld, Münster and Osnabrück; and, in Vienna (where the driving force was Erich Herzl), '*Initiative Riga*' consisting of families of the deportees and the *Schwarzes Kreuz*, with the Austrian President as patron, who have pressed for a worthy memorial in Bikernieki. In May this year, the *Deutsches Riga-Komitee* came into being, with representatives from Berlin, Bielefeld, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Hannover, Kassel, Cologne, Leipzig, Münster, Nuremberg, Osnabrück and Stuttgart.

After East European states recently signed the Convention on War Graves, the *Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge* has accepted joint responsibility for the planning of the Bikernieki cemetery and memorial site, a significant addition in view of the likely DM 750,000 costs involved. The German Government has allocated DM 275,000 towards the project.

□ MK

## Deportees' files uncovered in Vienna

Many thousands of files kept by Eichmann's 'Central Office of Jewish Emigration' relating to deported Austrian Jews have been uncovered in the *Finanzlandesdirektion* in Vienna according to the Austrian daily newspaper *Der Standard*. The files reveal information which – until now – has only been accessible through painstaking research by historians using the Archive of the Resistance. When told about the find, the Jewish Community's President, Ariel Musicant, expressed shock and disbelief and foresaw claims amounting to billions.

In a series of articles, the paper tells the stories of some of the personalities behind the mouldering files. Theodor Herzl's daughter Trude and her husband Richard Neumann were deported to Theresienstadt where they died in 1943. By the time of their deportation, their assets had been transferred to a blocked account. Trude's interest in the royalties from her father's publications was reduced to nothing.

Other examples show the consequences of the failure of the Austrian authorities to disclose the files: the prospect of a series of claims against the Austrian banks by the descendants of those whose assets were 'confiscated' by the Nazi authorities.

□ Francis Deutsch

## The so-called Guatemala transfer

As late as June 1944, a group of German Jews was permitted to emigrate from Germany via Denmark and Switzerland to their supposed final destination, Guatemala. They were probably the last legal Jewish escapees. The price of their lives was participation in a consortium which spent considerable sums of money to purchase a Guatemalan leather company from a German businessman who had to leave Guatemala because of his Nazi sympathies. The purchase was never realised and, to this day, the exact course of events is shrouded in mystery.

Wiener Library researcher Dr Klaus Leist is trying to shed light on this fraudulent business deal and on the final escape of

the 'consortium'. None of the participants are alive today. With minor exceptions, relevant documents in the possession of the Wiener Library, including reports and letters, were written after the war and none of the original documents has been preserved.

A grandson of Richard Frank, one member of the group, donated correspondence and thus stimulated the research. Other members of the group (with their last known place of residence) included Joseph & Helene Feiler (he died in Sweden in 1946, she went to New York), Hedwig Haberland (London), Adolf Laaser, Bruno & Elly May (Sweden), Dr & Mrs Rudolf Paderstein (Switzerland), Mathilde Plaut (Macclesfield), Erich Steinthal (Sweden), Toni Unger (died in Sweden in September 1944; members of the family lived in London, Oxford, and Paris); Elise Weinberg (Berlin) and Edvard Ruhmann (Stockholm).

Dr Leist would welcome contact from anyone who can provide further information. Please contact him at The Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH. Tel: 020 7636 7247. Email: lib@wl.u-net.com □

## 50 YEARS AGO

### GENERAL SMUTS

It may be a source of pride for Jews that one of the outstanding figures of our age, General Smuts, was a great friend of the Jewish people. His humanitarian outlook and his passion for justice made him a firm believer in the equality of races and nations and a fighter for minority groups. The re-establishment of the Jewish Commonwealth in Israel was always near to his heart. His last visit to Britain was devoted to this cause; he came over to pay homage to his friend President Dr Weizmann.

It was another Jewish friend of his, Lord Samuel, who delivered the official broadcast appreciation to the British public.

□ AJR Information October 1950

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## REVISITING CHILDHOOD PLACES

### Return to Kassel

Thinking that it would be my last chance to travel to Germany, I accepted an invitation from the City of Kassel, city of my birth, to attend the inauguration of the new synagogue, built to replace the one destroyed by the Nazis in 1938. I used the opportunity to visit all the places where I had lived as a child from Leer/Ostfriesland – where my father had been a teacher and cantor – via Goslar to Abterode, where I had attended a German school because there were too few Jewish pupils to keep the Jewish school open. I also visited Merzhausen where my father's family came from.

The highlight of the trip was Kassel; over a hundred of us, erstwhile Jewish residents, came mainly from the USA or Israel. I was one of six from the UK. We were received by the *Oberbürgermeister*, taken on coach outings, to concerts and on walks to the cemetery and generally received wonderful hospitality. For me, the most important friendship I made was with Esther Hass, the person chiefly responsible for the building of the new synagogue. Despite not originating from Kassel, her view that the previous synagogue was too small for the large influx of Jews from Russia, Poland and Turkey, led her to fundraising for a new synagogue.

There were two parts to the inaugu-



*The old Kassel synagogue (destroyed in 1938)*



*Model of new Kassel synagogue*

ration, the first on the Friday evening, with speeches and photographs and audience participation. On the Sunday there was a service which, due to lack of space, was open only to those born in Kassel.

I have never before been made to feel so welcome, particularly by people I have never met before. I would do it again tomorrow.

□ Henny Rednall

### Policemen are friendly

I lived with the Y family in a small town in Hertfordshire. It was the spring of 1940 and we had not yet felt the impact of the war. One Saturday there was an exodus from the town heralding a football match. Looking out of my bedroom window I noticed a policeman on duty outside the gate. I froze in fright: they had found me at last and were coming to get me. I was so transfixed that I didn't hear the bell for tea, even when it rang for the second time.

One of the daughters of the house, Jean, called me down for tea. At the second time of asking, I explained that I couldn't come down as "they've come to get me". Still in my room and watching

the gate, I was horrified to see Mrs Y walking to the gate and inviting the policeman inside. Jean came and dragged me downstairs. I was convinced I would be sent back to Germany.

Entering the lounge, I saw the policeman sitting comfortably having a cup of tea. "This is Ruth from Berlin," said Mrs Y. I could hardly believe it! The policeman got up, introduced himself and shook my trembling hand. He then declined a second cup of tea, said he had to get back on duty, thanked her for the tea and left.

What a sensible and thoughtful person Mrs Y was. She certainly taught me to trust the police in this country and not to be afraid of them in the future.

□ Ruth Jackson

### Wartime schooldays

At the age of 11, I came to England on a Children's transport at the end of May 1939. I went to Torquay Grammar School but I thought I was the only 'foreigner' there.

I had learnt just about enough English by then to communicate, but never having heard of Alfred and the burnt cakes nor read an English book – not even Peter Rabbit – I would not have stood much chance of passing an entrance test.

The introduction of Chaucer and Spenser played havoc with my still shaky spelling. As for arithmetic, I had been used to moving decimal points around, not trying to multiply and divide pounds, shillings and pence; as to weights and measures – what a confusing business.

I loved games and soon became netball captain. I was very proud of my school uniform and became a typical English schoolgirl. Together with the youngest daughter of the so-called 'auntie and uncle' with whom I lived, I used to walk the two miles or so to school through country lanes and fields. On one memorable occasion we had to dive into a ditch as an enemy plane flew low overhead.

We only remained in Torquay for a year as the war had not really got into its stride and Auntie was missing London. So we returned to their London home in September 1940 in time for the Blitz and slept every night in the air-raid shelter in the garden. I then joined South Hampstead High School for Girls which soon evacuated to Berkhamsted and a new and very enjoyable chapter of my life began.

I felt myself to have been enormously enriched by the English language which I had grown to love and appreciate. Our excellent English teacher introduced us to the wonderful works of, among many others, Milton, Shakespeare, Keats and Jane Austen which have been a source of joy and inspiration to me. I have also come to admire the English way of life, the tolerance, respect for other people, courtesy and kindness and the importance of fair play. And I learnt to queue and to say 'sorry' when someone stepped on my toe!

□ Bronia Z Snow

## Love story or Stalin was my Cyrano

As a youngster I superstitiously avoided walking on cracks in the pavement, but the number thirteen didn't fill me with dread. This had a variety of reasons. One was that I knew little about the untrustworthy thirteenth guest present at a legendary Passover meal in Roman-occupied Palestine. Another was that I had reached my fourteenth birthday relatively unscathed. Looking back on the preceding year I judged it quite good because, having started at an all-time low – i.e. my bar mitzvah – it subsequently had nowhere to go but up. The religious rite of passage had been such a dispiriting occasion that I still blushed in retrospect for months afterwards. In synagogue on Saturday morning I had come before the congregation as a warm-up man for the star performer. All I did was recite two brief blessings in a hoarse voice, whereas my fellow celebrant launched into a long excerpt from Holy Writ like a castrato cantor. His superiority over me extended to the swarm of relatives showering him with kisses – tokens of presents to come – as he descended from the prayer platform.

Even so, when my less numerous kin assembled for the festive reception on the Sunday, they did fill up the four sides of our extended dining table. (We didn't normally eat in the dining room, though I had slept there before graduating to the bedroom on my father's death.) The party started well, which consoled me somewhat.

### Conversation stopper

Then a thunderbolt hurtled down out of a clear blue sky. As conversation and laughter ricocheted all round the cutlery-gleaming table, some relative let drop the word 'goy', apparently unaware that a representative of that species – an ex-officer cadet married to my fashionable cousin Erna – sat opposite him. A scrotum-tightening hush fell on the gathering. Guests stared fixedly at their cream-cakes. I wanted to empty my bladder, but something pinned me to my chair. Then, slowly and haltingly, chatter bubbled up again. A little later the guests started going home and I was left free to garner my indifferent harvest of presents.

Lastly, I had as much reason to rejoice in the existence of the number thirteen as

medieval man had in that of zero (which had been unknown in antiquity). Something happened to me in Vienna's thirteenth district for which I have reason to be eternally grateful.

The Thirteenth was a desirable neighbourhood, though not uniformly so. At the centre of its most attractive section stood the Imperial summer residence Schönbrunn, which boasted an extensive park laid out in imitation of Versailles. As a fourteen-year old I spent a fateful day in that park, kicking up the gravel of paths where Habsburg princesses had once gambolled. About three hundred metres (as the crow flies) from the music room in whose rococo splendour Marie Antoinette had famously lifted the child prodigy Mozart off the piano stool to hug and kiss him, stood a southward-facing park bench. As I passed the bench on that sun-dappled path, accompanied, as always, by my buddy Harry, I noticed that it was occupied by two girls of roughly our own age. Having attended an all-boys' school, I was a stranger to refined techniques of courtship. Keen to impress the members of the fairer sex I near-blinded them by shining my hand-mirror in their faces. "Don't do that!" squealed Harry. "The skinny bint on the left knows me." "How is that?" I asked. "Her mother," confided Harry, "is a shopkeeper lady who sometimes gives my mum cast-offs for me and my sister."

### Change of tack

I had, meanwhile, become acutely aware of the other girl on the bench. Dark-eyed, with frizzy brunette hair framing a delectably round face, and as curvaceous as her companion was scrawny, she was the prettiest thing I had ever clapped eyes on. The realisation of her beauty induced a change of heart. Might trying to dazzle such an object of desire with a hand mirror not be the wrong way to go about things? Wouldn't it be more elegant to attempt dazzling her with words? The latter seemed an attractive alternative, but I was too inhibited to approach any closer to the bench and give tongue to the endearments swirling round in my brain. (The idea of asking our respective companions to effect an introduction was one I dismissed out of hand.)

Eventually, after some desultory kicking up of gravel, a way out of the impasse suggested itself to me. Harry and I walked on some fifty paces towards Schönbrunn palace – and then,

passing the girls' bench on our way back, I tossed a hand-written, lyrically worded, note into the delectable creature's lap. The effect of my romantically conceived and boldly executed gesture, I regret to say, was absolute zero. Nonetheless, the encounter had forged the first link in a chain of preordained events – preordained that is, if one accepts the notion of there being more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

### Serendipity

A week after this fortuitous first meeting without tangible sequel the Nazis declared Schönbrunn out of bounds for Jews. Several months later Harry smuggled himself across the Belgian border. By the end of the year I had washed up on the child-friendly shore of England. Here, after various misadventures, I found a snug berth with an East End garment worker's family in June 1939. Not long afterwards war broke out. The son of the house, three years my senior, whiled away the blackout evenings playing cards – a pastime beyond my means. At one such poker session, he heard that a Viennese refugee girl was staying with a fellow gambler's aunt, and, good fellow that he was, passed on this news to me. Naturally interested, I asked the card players to arrange a meeting between her and me. Imagine my amazement when she turned out to be none other than the heart-stopping beauty from the Schönbrunn park bench! Roxane – as I call her for reasons that will become apparent in due course – showed compassionate interest in me as a fellow refugee. However, she also gradually disabused me of any romantic illusions our near-miraculous reunion had bred in my overheated imagination. What ruled me out of amorous contention was – as I subsequently discovered – a pronounced dissimilarity to Hollywood screen idols. (Didn't she notice that I shared Clark Gable's ears?) And so our second encounter reached as unsatisfactory a conclusion as the brief first one had done.

□ Richard Grunberger

To be continued

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## Two centuries of family history

For many years, my cousin David (the family's genealogist) and I have wanted to search out our family's roots in Silesia and Posen, both part of Germany until the aftermath of World War II when they were ceded to Poland.

In May this year, armed with a map, a car hired in Berlin and a large dose of non-expectation, we set off east, stopping first in Seelow, twelve miles west of the German-Polish border in what was once the German Democratic Republic. Seelow had been home to forebears of grandmother Mirjam's family, Louis, Willi, Ruth and Joachim Reissner. A rather dismal town, its main purpose seemed to be to point travellers towards the Polish border. Acting on what proved to be excellent advice, we looked for the local church and then the priest. The reception was friendly and helpful and we followed Pfarrer Roland Kühne to what had been the local Jewish cemetery. Without him, we would have searched in vain: what we saw was a car park and an adjoining overgrown area of grass and bushes behind railings and with no access. Certainly there was no reference to the past (Jewish) purpose of this wilderness. Moving from the dead to the living, we went to visit an elderly bedridden lady who remembered our family; they had been next-door neighbours. Our visit awakened her pre-war reminiscences, some of which she shared with us.

### Four generations

Our next stop – across the Polish-German border – was Pniewy (Pinne), a small rural town and home to at least four generations of Lewins (our forefathers on grandmother Mirjam's side). Here, we found at least four churches but no knowledgeable priests.

Our second line of attack was to find elderly people who might remember what existed before a war which played havoc with European history and geography. Applying admittedly Western preconceptions, we headed for the ubiquitous town square (*rynek*) and were rewarded with the sight of a bench playing host to three old men busy gossiping and watching the world go by. Now Polish is an almost inaccessible language – unless of course it is your mother tongue – and we were certainly unversed in it. Between us, we had English, German and Hebrew. But not Polish. English was the least useful of our languages but we always offered it first so as not to be mistaken for Germans. But German got us the furthest, certainly when conversing with the older generation.



The former synagogue in Pniewy

### Synagogue to cinema

One of our three bench occupants remembered the Jewish cemetery and offered to accompany us there. But first he showed us the synagogue. Or rather the cinema; for that was now its role in life. That it had been the synagogue was

beyond doubt: the telltale stone tablets still nestled in the apex of the building. But who in Pniewy would notice them, let alone understand their significance? About two miles out of the town, we drove up a track and stopped, on the instruction of our Polish guide, at the foot of a grassy hill. This, he explained, had been the Jewish cemetery. Now it served as a local picnic site. As we came down the hill on the other side (with not a gravestone in sight on any part of the hill), there stood a house clearly occupied by a local family. The pillars gave away its secret: it had been the memorial hall attached to the cemetery. The washing was hanging out to dry, the dog barked and the children's toys lay abandoned. Now it is simply number 20 Jakubowo.

□ Marion Koebner

To be continued

## NEWSROUND

### Israel's bank scandal

Holocaust victims' dormant accounts in Israeli banks, and unclaimed property purchased by them during the Mandate period, have not been returned to their heirs. A Knesset committee of inquiry has been set up to investigate the fate of investments and property whose total value has yet to be determined.

### Auschwitz planning moves

The Polish government has reversed its decision to refuse permission for the development of a shopping centre close to the death camp. In the same week, the Oswiecim authorities have granted permission for a discotheque to open in a former tannery only a mile from the camp.

### German language conflict

The EU will adopt the new rules of German grammar and spelling introduced in schools in 1998, despite opposition to the rules in Germany. The decision was taken by officials amongst whom no Germans were numbered.

### Double standards

The Prague Jewish Cemetery (and other cultural sites) must charge the same entrance fees for locals as for foreign tourists. The EU delegation has made the abandonment of double pricing one of the conditions of Czech Republic membership.

### Germany's right wing

German federal and regional officials are considering banning the far-right NPD against a background of recent racist activity including a bomb explosion in central Düsseldorf injuring nine immigrants, among them six Jews. Meanwhile, Bavarian CSU leader Stoiber has called for more immigration controls and for Germans to have more children.

### Secular revolution

The Israeli cabinet has voted unanimously to abolish the Religious Affairs Ministry as part of Prime Minister Barak's plans to reduce the influence of the religious parties on key institutions. His proposals are unlikely to be realised for over a year.

### Unifying Chancellors

Controversial playwright Rolf Hochhuth has proposed the siting of a statue of Bismarck outside the Berlin Reichstag. Others prefer that statues of Willy Brandt or Helmut Kohl be placed there.

□ MK