

## Vote, vote, vote for Clement Attlee?

Now that the dust is settling on the close-run general election of May 2010, we can expect a period of political jockeying where no single party has a stable parliamentary majority. It is interesting to look back 60 years to the successive elections of February 1950 and October 1951, when, rather as in 2010, a tired-looking Labour government faced a groundswell of demand for change. By 1950, the electorate had grown weary of the austerity, rationing and controls associated with 'socialism', and the Labour Party that had swept to power with an unassailable majority in the anti-Tory landslide of 1945 was returned 5 years later with a wafer-thin majority of 5 seats.

Prime Minister Clement Attlee had little alternative but to go to the country again in October 1951, when Winston Churchill's Conservatives won with a small but workable majority. By a not untypical quirk of the British first-past-the-post voting system, the Tories won 321 seats on 48 per cent of the total number of votes cast, while Labour, polling nearly a quarter of a million votes more, won only 295 seats on 48.8 per cent of the vote. The Liberals, in the absence of a slick Nick to woo the voters on television, won a mere 9 seats. Labour went into opposition, and remained there for 13 years.

Readers of this journal have another reason to pay attention to the elections of 1950, since they were of special, indeed unique, significance for the Jewish refugees from Hitler who had settled in Britain. For the great majority of the refugees, it was the first time



Clement Attlee

that they were able to vote in a British parliamentary election, and for most of the younger refugees it was their first experience of voting in *any* general election under a democratic system.

In Germany, all vestiges of democracy had been extinguished in 1933 by the Nazis and, in the same year, Chancellor

Dollfuss had put an end to parliamentary government in Austria and introduced his variant of the authoritarian, corporate state, the *Ständestaat*. Only Czechoslovakia held out as the lone outpost of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, until it, too, fell into Hitler's hands in 1938-39. So, those from Czechoslovakia apart, no Jewish refugee born after 1915 had been old enough to vote in a properly democratic election. The last German Jews to have had the experience of participating in a (more or less) free poll were those who had reached the age of 18 before the elections of March 1933, when the processes of multi-party electoral democracy still operated despite a ferocious Nazi campaign of intimidation against the Communist Party.

Very few refugees were entitled to vote in the British parliamentary elections of 1945, as most of them had not yet acquired British citizenship. And as the *AJR Information* began publication only in January 1946, some six months after those elections, there is no source to tell us how the refugees reacted to the shock result of the election that removed Winston Churchill from office and replaced him with Attlee. No doubt the refugees were as surprised as most of the British, perhaps more so as Churchill was, if possible, an even more popular figure among the refugees than among the British – he had, after all, been the incarnation of successful resistance to Nazism.

Unfamiliar though the refugees were with British

### AJR welcomes 'historic' appointment of Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues

Britain's Foreign Secretary has appointed Sir Andrew Burns as the first United Kingdom Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues.

Sir Andrew is a distinguished incumbent of the new post. A former High Commissioner to Canada, Consul-General in Hong Kong and Ambassador to Israel, he is also Chairman of the Council of Royal Holloway, University of London, and Chair of the Committee of University Chairs.

Sir Andrew will deal with outstanding international issues such as art and real estate restitution, the International Tracing Service at Bad Arolsen, and the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, which lacks both leadership and a government policy formulated in consultation with stakeholders.

Michael Newman, a Director of the AJR, and Anne Webber, Co-Chair of the Commission for Looted Art in Europe, said they had worked closely with the Government to achieve this historic appointment and very much looked forward to working with Sir Andrew on the range of post-Holocaust issues.

## VOTE, VOTE, VOTE FOR CLEMENT ATTLEE? *continued from page 1*

electoral practices, few of them would have shared the fears of an elderly Yugoslav lady who, aware of the fate that awaited overthrown political leaders in Eastern Europe, reportedly remarked: 'Poor Mr Churchill! I suppose that now he will be shot.' Most refugees would probably have had only a vague impression of Attlee, a man of few words who was not given to high-profile speeches and ringing political slogans. Churchill dismissed his apparently uncharismatic adversary with several choice phrases, calling him 'a sheep in sheep's clothing', 'a modest man, who has much to be modest about', and mocking his anonymous demeanour with the jibe 'An empty taxi arrived at 10 Downing Street, and when the door was opened, Attlee got out.'

Such barbs aside, the Attlee government proceeded fairly speedily with the naturalisation of the refugees from Hitler. By 1950, tens of thousands of them had taken British citizenship. Most of them had arrived before the outbreak of war and had by 1945 been resident in Britain for the 5 years required for a successful application for naturalisation – they had had little chance of leaving Britain during the war, of course, other than on service in the armed forces, and that also counted towards the required period of residence. The way lay open for the former refugees, or 'new British citizens', as the *AJR Information* sometimes called them, to participate in their first general election.

Recognising this to be a crucial step on the refugees' road to full and equal participation in British society, the *AJR Information* of February 1950 devoted its entire front page to the coming election. The leading article was captioned 'Rights and Duties', a title whose solemnity emphasised the significance of its subject. The journal was concerned that the refugees should demonstrate their willingness to participate in British public life by casting their votes, thus confirming their status as citizens fully engaged in the democratic system: 'In a totalitarian state the individual has no influence, but in a democratic state the vote of every citizen counts. The right to

vote is, therefore, at the same time a duty to share the responsibility for the fate of the country.' The election would seal the readmission of the refugees to the politics of the community in which they lived, after their disenfranchisement in 1933: 'February 23 thus symbolises the end of a long period during which we were barred from taking part in the political life of our environment.'

The *AJR* was scrupulously neutral in political matters: it refused to endorse any party or to offer any advice to its members on how to vote, beyond the obvious injunction to oppose any candidate who held anti-Semitic, fascist or pro-Nazi views. The journal took pleasure in underscoring the fact that, unlike the situation in Germany and Austria even before 1933, a Jew could vote for any of the three major British parties without any qualms of conscience, for none of them was anti-Semitic.

This had not been the case in Germany before 1933, when the parties of the non-Nazi right – principally the DNVP, the Nationalists who were the approximate equivalent of Britain's Conservatives – were overtly hostile to Jews. Jews were therefore forced to choose between the parties of the working-class left, the Social Democrats and Communists, which were large and powerful, but as parties of the industrial proletariat unattractive to middle-class Jews, and the moderate parties of the centre, principally the Democrats (DDP), who were impeccably liberal in their programme, but had by 1930 dwindled to a position of electoral insignificance (3.8 per cent of the vote).

The situation in Austria was no better.

The country was divided politically between the 'Reds', the Social Democrats, who stood to the left of their German sister party and took much of what would otherwise have been the Communist vote, and the 'Blacks', the Christian Social Party, which was avowedly anti-Semitic and had been the first modern political party to achieve electoral success on an anti-Jewish platform. Austria's many middle-class Jews and those who supported the moderate, democratic centre in politics had no major party to which to turn, for the third party in Austria, far from being liberal, was formed by the *Alldeutsche*, the Pan-Germans who wished for the unification of all ethnic Germans into one nation and were readily transformed into Austrian Nazis.

The *AJR Information* repeatedly emphasised that in Britain there was no question of a Jew feeling obliged to vote for or against any major party as a Jew, since none of them was objectionable to Jews. A Jew could vote for the party of his choice, just like any other British citizen. There was therefore no such thing in Britain as a 'Jewish vote', for Jews were divided across the spectrum of all the major parties. 'This healthy state of affairs,' stated the journal, 'is also mirrored in the fact that Jews are to be found amongst the candidates of all parties.' Indeed, the journal was fulsome in its praise of the British political system: 'Political maturity is one of the outstanding features of British public life. Party controversies are not as fierce as they are on the Continent, and sound compromise is often preferred to doctrinarianism.'

One Jewish refugee who missed out on the election was the actor Peter Illing. Born Peter Ihle, the son of a Turkish father, he had not been eligible to vote in Austria or Germany. But a few days before the election, he was offered a part in a New York stage production of Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, and departed for America. 'Bad luck for citizen Illing, good luck for the actor,' commented PEM, the *AJR Information's* cultural correspondent.

**Anthony Grenville**

**AJR Directors**  
Gordon Greenfield  
Michael Newman  
Carol Rossen

**AJR Heads of Department**  
Susie Kaufman Organiser, AJR Centre  
Sue Kurlander Social Services

**AJR Journal**  
Dr Anthony Grenville Consultant Editor  
Dr Howard Spier Executive Editor  
Andrea Goodmaker Secretarial/Advertisements

Views expressed in the *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

## In praise of ... old age

Many years ago, a humorous poem by an anonymous author circulated among Continental Britons. Its title was *Über das fröhliche Alter* (The Joys of Old Age) and it started and finished with the line 'Wer achtzig wird, ist selber schuld' (It's your own fault if you live to 80). I was then a youthful seventyish who still climbed mountains – well, perhaps they might be more truthfully described as hills – in the Swiss and Austrian Alps. Even at 80, I still managed the Höhenweg from Hofgastein to Bad Gastein (which may mean something to the Journal's Austrian readers) – a pretty steep two-and-a-half-hours' walk. Nowadays, I begin to flag after I've walked for just an hour.

Because, you see, a little while ago I celebrated (if that's the right word – but of course it is!) another 'round' birthday – no prizes for guessing which. I have to admit that my memory is letting me down at times: I forget, mislay and lose things, which sometimes turn up in the most unexpected places – and sometimes don't. And names escape me not infrequently and, on occasion, embarrassingly. Also, well, my hearing isn't as good as it used to be and small print presents a little problem. But who is complaining of those minor inconveniences? Think positive! Think of all the benefits that old age brings.

I won't even mention the Freedom Pass, which allows us to travel free on public transport anywhere in London and as far as Ealing in the west and Bromley in Kent, because youngsters of 60 share this privilege with us. But what about the generous heating allowance and the free TV licence? And, when I applied for a new passport last month, I discovered that it was free for the over-eighties! (They probably don't expect us to last the full ten years of a passport's validity.)

But let's forget about the financial rewards. It's people that count. And people are endlessly kind. You are everyone's 'love' and 'darling' and constantly admonished to 'Take care!' I never have to worry about getting a seat on a crowded bus or train because someone will always jump up for me. (If they don't, I stare them into submission.)

The other day, when I held out a £1 coin at my local market, the stallholder, pointing at a fast-receding figure, said 'That gentleman paid for you.' I stared after him and resolved to send a cheque to Cancer Research. Do I really look such a *nebbish* that perfect strangers feel moved to treat me to a bowl of fruit? Even more bizarrely, when I recently tendered a £10 note for an espresso at one of the coffee shop chains, the girl behind the counter said 'It's on the house, love.' I'll never know if she couldn't be bothered to find the change or just felt sorry for me. 'Can I help?' are the words I hear all the time, or people, wordlessly, when they see me struggling with a trolley or a suitcase, lift it up or down for me. This is particularly useful at airports when I wait for my luggage by the carousel. (Mind you, I always make a point of standing next to a burly young man.)

Old at 90? Rubbish! Far be it from me to compare myself to these two glitterati, but just look at George Weidenfeld and Doris Lessing, still active and creative at 90! (I did a quick check on the internet to make sure they're still around.) Why, life begins at 90! Oh, and I've just come back from my brother's centenary celebration in France. And he still plays bridge four times a week.

Sorry, you were saying? That damned hearing aid's gone dead again. You want me to read this? *What have I done with my glasses?*

Edith Argy

## 'A deplorable mistake': The *Dunera* 70 years on

This month marks the 70th anniversary of the sailing of the infamous troopship *Dunera*. On 11 July 1940, the *Dunera* left the port of Liverpool carrying 2,000 (mainly) Jewish internees to Australia, along with 251 Nazi POWs and 250 Italian Fascists. None knew their intended destination.

Less than 48 hours after leaving Liverpool, the ship took a direct hit from a German submarine U-56 off the coast of Ireland. 'We were aware of the dangers of U-boats,' recalls AJR member Peter Eden, 'but could only hope we were not attacked. Fortunately the torpedo failed to go off and we were able to continue the journey.'

The internees finally discovered that

they were bound for Australia and faced an arduous nine-week journey in desperately overcrowded conditions. They were confined below deck for 23½ hours a day with poor ventilation and inadequate sanitary arrangements.

Many of the internees were man-handled by the ship's crew. 'All the gangways were barbed wired,' comments AJR member Willy Field, 'so no one could escape. People were pushed around, some beaten up. We had our belongings confiscated and in some cases thrown into the sea. Neither daylight nor natural air ever reached the decks. We were treated like German prisoners, not refugees from Nazism.'

The *Dunera* finally docked in Australia on 6 September and the Jewish internees

## SPRING GROVE

### RETIREMENT HOME



214 Finchley Road  
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious

- Entertainment • Activities
- Stress Free Living
- 24 Hour Staffing Excellent Cuisine
- Full En-Suite Facilities

Call for more information or a personal tour

020 8446 2117

or 020 7794 4455

enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk

## NEWTONS

Long established  
Hampstead Solicitors

Personal and Prompt  
Legal Services

22 Fitzjohn's Avenue  
London NW3 5NB

Tel: 020 7435 5351

Fax: 020 7435 8881

ajnewton@newtonlaw.co.uk

 **JACKMAN · SILVERMAN**  
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

Telephone: 020 7209 5532  
robert@jackmansilverman.co.uk

were taken to two camps at Hay. Life in internment turned out to be productive. The internees formed their own university, football teams and cultural events and even printed camp money. After a year in internment around 400 internees volunteered for the British forces, returned to Liverpool on the *SS Stirling Castle*, then served in the Pioneer Corps before transferring to fighting units of the British army.

Eventually, the entire *Dunera* episode was acknowledged by Winston Churchill as 'a deplorable mistake'. The officers and other ranks involved in the mistreatment of the internees were court-martialled and severely reprimanded.

Helen Fry

# DAYS

**W**e arrived in England from Vienna on 17 July 1939, my mother and father and I. The days that follow hold no horror to make any one day stand out from another, no nostalgia to etch any one day into my mind.

There are the surprises of open fires and pineapple chunks in tins costing five and a half pennies. I have only seen one fresh, brown and yellow pineapple before, a present for a grandmother on a special occasion, a luxury I was not even given to taste. Once, when I begged for a pineapple in Vienna, my mother told me a story about a little girl in Africa who longs for an apple. Now we cannot afford a tin for five pence halfpenny.

We live in a house crowded with refugees in West Hampstead in London. It is safe, although I am afraid of the open fires that burn to keep us warm during our first English summer. We have all been 'guaranteed' by a generous family of English Jews. We must not be a burden on the state and we must all move on to America as soon as we can. The American quota system dominates our lives.

What is our number? Are all the papers in order? When will we go? In the meantime, there is the business of becoming domestic servants. But there are few jobs and prospective employers prefer married couples without a ten-year-old child.

The day war is declared, six weeks after we arrive, changes everything again. We cannot travel to America and there will be no more refugees from the continent of Europe. We have failed to open doors for two grandmothers, five aunts and uncles and many cousins. The separation is suddenly final. Eighteen months ago we listened to the radio when Schuschnigg announced the threat to our existence; here we listen to Chamberlain and anticipate the annihilation of our families. It is not a time to keep secrets from children: the anguish is shared.

Now servants are scarce and my parents have a choice of employment. They are hired as cook and butler in a manor house in Hertfordshire. My keep is their wage.

Days in the country and a new school. Children I cannot understand, who cannot understand me. 'This is a pencil,' says the teacher, but she doesn't show me where the lavatory is, and I wander



My mother and father, Lisa and Max Schnabl, 1942

around at playtime asking for the WC – as in the German alphabet. The other children think I'm funny; I won't wet myself; I won't cry. It hurts, but I make myself think of how much worse it was in Vienna. This is nothing. I find a lavatory in the end. And I have found a way of resisting pain that becomes a lifelong habit.

Days of growing to love a language. By the end of the second term I win a prize for English. The lady of the manor advises my mother not to let me sit the scholarship exam – 'It isn't worth it for people like you,' she says. She humiliates my parents but I fancy they are too dazed to notice or to care. The headmaster of the village school puts me in a room on my own and I sit the same scholarship papers at the same time as the official candidates. Mr Brue marks my papers himself and tells my parents to contact him when they are ready to send me to a grammar school. Later, when they are ready, he arranges a bursary for me.

Days of making tentative connections. There are some evacuees in the village and Joyce Vick, who is billeted with the vicar, becomes my best friend. We learn to ride bicycles. My father teaches me on the manor lawns, on an abandoned bike, while the family is away. Joyce and I cycle around country lanes. When I fall into a bed of nettles, I remember that it is easy to put up with pain and Joyce is impressed. We find a discarded tent in the vicarage and we camp out overnight in one of the fields of the manor. I am no longer an over-protected child; my parents have not enough time or peace of mind to supervise me.

The children of the manor are not my

friends. One day they take me ice skating on the pond. I'm pleased to be asked because I can skate well and skating is one of the things I miss. But I haven't skated for two years and I don't have my boots. They lend me rusty skates that have to be clamped on to my shoes. They are too loose. I cannot keep my balance on the ice and they laugh at me and say that I was boasting because I can't skate at all. There are four of them, all older than I am: Peter, Nancy, Bunny and John. I hate them.

The days in the manor are circumscribed by rules about what servants do and do not do. What servants eat, what servants wear, how servants serve. We are not afraid but we are diminished. My mother submits, but my honest father regularly cuts me a slice of the Harrods cake which is still delivered twice a week. It is either coffee or lemon and it is strictly not for the servants. These days end abruptly when my father is interned as an enemy alien and then released to join the British army in the Pioneer Corps. A labouring battalion for the less able and least desirable soldiers – the only option open to refugees.

My mother and I become camp followers. We go where my father is posted and we move when he moves. My mother can always find work as a cook. I don't go to school because we never stay anywhere long enough. Although these days seem endless to me, they are not: I only miss one term of education.

When my father is invalided out of the army, we happen to be in the Midlands, so that is where we settle. That is where I start my grammar school with Mr Brue's bursary. And that is where the days become years.

I am always the only Jew in the school. No fuss is made, but nothing is understood. Here the children do not know what I know. Perhaps their parents don't know either. I try to forget it myself. I don't want to be different; I want my parents to be ordinary. I am ashamed because we live in a half-furnished house without pictures, without curtains – the black-out blinds suffice – and without a companion set, an ornamental set of tools to clean the hearth. I yearn for this companion set until my parents capitulate and buy one. It isn't made of brass, it falls over all the time and it doesn't satisfy my longing.

*continued opposite*

## The grandmothers

I had two grandmothers – but then most people do. As a child, I knew them both. Grandma Grete lived a few streets away from my childhood home, in northern Bohemia. She lived in a large and grand house where my grandpa practised as a GP. She was small, about 5ft tall, rather austere, always dressed in black and took her task of organising her husband and servants very seriously. It was plain to see she had to justify and maintain her position as the wife and daughter of one of the leading families in the sophisticated and assimilated German-speaking Jewish community in which we lived. On high days and holidays her three daughters, their husbands and grandchildren were summoned for lunch or dinner. White damask table cloths, monogrammed napkins together with the best silver, china and delicate Bohemian glass were set for the meal. We grandchildren had to be on our best behaviour, instructed after the meal to go to the kitchen and thank the cook and maids for a lovely meal, leaving a small gift from each family.

My grandma Rosa, who lived in a dingy flat in Budapest, was a different kettle of goulash. She was tall, about 5ft 9ins, well built and very gentle. She spoke German to my mother and me in that rather sing-song Hungarian

### DAYS *continued*

My parents have no friends, there are no relations, there are no other Jews where we live. My father cannot practise law in England; he will remain a managing clerk in lawyers' offices. My mother will go on working with food. But to begin with they are both lost in war work. Literature fills their leisure hours. We do not fit in with my idea of an English family. I become a rebellious and troublesome 14-year-old.

The days are smoother as I get older. As I develop again an interest in my origins, in my religion, in my culture. But then the worst days come. The end of the war brings the final news. There are few survivors. Not my grandmothers, not the five uncles and aunts or the cousins. My mother bellows her grief by the cooker, where she is standing when the letter is delivered from the Red Cross. In all the days after, she only ever goes through the motions of living. My father does better. He goes on playing chess. He is a survivor.

**Hedi Argent Schnabl**



Grandmother Grete, circa 1938

accent, interspersed with odd words of Hungarian which, after 70 years, still remain with me. Widowed in 1900 and left with three step-sons and my father and his younger sister, she survived poverty on handouts from the Jewish community and her equally impoverished family. To add to her troubles, my aunt, Joli, developed MS in her teens. In 1908 my father left Budapest to find work in northern Bohemia and sent money from his



Grandmother Rosa, circa 1936

meagre earnings. In the 1920s he and a friend started a manufacturing business and became affluent. He then paid for the majority of her living expenses, including the wages of a country girl, to help nurse my aunt, who by this time was wheelchair-bound.

Despite grandma Rosa's problems

she was warm and always cheerful, demonstrative and so happy to see her son and family on their annual visit to Budapest. I remember our visits to the zoo, to Gundels restaurant for lunch and other places of interest she would take me. In 1940 my aunt died but the girl from the country stayed with grandma. In 1944 the Germans came and immediately instigated the deportations. Jolan, the loyal and simple devout Catholic girl, took my grandmother back to her small village on the Hungarian plain. There grandma was merged with the peasants from whom in many ways she didn't differ. A few months after the Russians liberated Hungary from the Nazis, grandma died a natural death. In this post-war chaos, miles from anywhere, there was no means of contacting a rabbi or a Jewish community. So she was laid to rest in the small, peaceful village churchyard where she had lived out her last months. They put a small wooden plaque on her grave with her name, birth and death dates.

In 1956 Jolan escaped from another oppression in Hungary – Communism. Through the Red Cross she traced my father, who sponsored her to come to England. She brought with her grandma's wedding ring and a photo of her grave. Some 55 years after her death, my wife Gerry and I visited the still small village in the middle of nowhere. Grandma's grave couldn't be found: the wooden plaque had rotted away. However, nearby was a small gravestone with the very Jewish-sounding name of a man who had died a year after my grandmother. It had no Christian symbols but it did have a tree of life engraved on it. So in the church yard I said Kaddish for grandma Rosa and the possible Jew, together with my thanks to the 'Righteous Gentiles' of Jaszszentlaszlo.

As for grandma Grete, my aunts, uncles and most other relatives, they were transported one September 1942 in cattle trucks for three days from Czechoslovakia to Poland and, within hours of arrival, were gassed and burnt. She (and they) have no grave, Christian, Jewish or otherwise, where I could say Kaddish. Only memories remain of a dignified, cultured Victorian lady. Yet both my grandmothers – so very different in life – are together remembered by a rose growing in that peaceful garden, cared for by the righteous gentiles of Beth Shalom, where on occasions I say a quiet prayer for both my grandmothers and my other relatives.

**Bob Norton**



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right  
to shorten correspondence  
submitted for publication

### BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Sir – I read Anthony Grenville's excellent article 'Anglo-Saxon attitudes' (April) regarding a piece in *The Independent on Sunday* by Sir Oliver Miles, who 'seems to have been voicing the typical concerns of a Foreign Office Arabist'.

The matter was furthered by an article in *The Independent* by Richard Ingrams, 'who broadened it out to cast doubt on the impartiality and reliability of Jews in political matters generally, by implying that Jews have an overriding loyalty to Israel'.

This type of propaganda is rightfully refuted in your journal and elsewhere but, on second thoughts, I feel Dr Grenville's article would have been even more effective had it ended with a recommendation to obtain a copy of an easily and quickly read short book, *Beyond the Call of Duty – British Diplomats and Other Britons Who Helped Jews Escape from Nazi Tyranny*. All is not as 'black' as may appear – there are cited in this book, by Sir Martin Gilbert, so many heroes of the British Foreign Office and other British officials, specifically named, who, at considerable risk to themselves (and sometimes also to their families), saved many thousands of Jewish lives.

Furthermore, a mention of the wall plaque erected to honour these British diplomats and other named British officials, and of government ministers and officials who assisted in having this plaque erected, would not be amiss in one of Dr Grenville's excellent articles (see short mention on the last page, page 60, of Sir Martin's book). In this connection, the Duke of Edinburgh's short speech at Yad Vashem, where his mother is honoured as a Righteous Gentile, should be known widely and is well worth quoting.

Doubtless there are many of today's British Foreign Office diplomats and officials who, if they knew about and were proud of what their named predecessors had done during the Second World War, would themselves do likewise today. However, we must all do our utmost to prevent a second happening!

*Sydney Jacobs, Jerusalem*

### ELEANOR RATHBONE: A FOOTNOTE

Sir – As a footnote to Anthony Grenville's fine tribute to Eleanor Rathbone (June), it is perhaps worth recalling that in 1938

she wrote a book entitled *War Can Be Averted*. It was a powerful plea in support of 'collective security' as the way to deter the aggressors. Alas, the aim was not achieved. The book was published by Victor Gollancz in the series Left Book Club Topical Book.

*Professor E. H. Sondheimer, London N6*

### A DAUGHTER OF HER CENTURY

Sir – It was a delightful surprise to read in your June issue Martha Blend's review of my book *A Daughter of Her Century* (Clucket Press, [www.tattybogle.com](http://www.tattybogle.com)). Even the quotations show she read it with interest and sympathy and I would like to thank her for it.

As you know, I am 86 (honestly, it's not my fault – it happened when I was occupied with other things!) and began to write after my retirement from psychology 20 years ago. I had some short stories published in *Cosmopolitan* and *London Magazine*, both magazines which I have alas outlived.

The book you reviewed had been sent to a number of publishers, some of whom refused it out of hand ('No Holocaust books please – we're inundated!') without reading it. Many refusals came wrapped in high praise: The book, they said, was good but there was no market for it.

They were wrong. The 650 copies produced by friends of mine are almost sold out. People told each other about it and wanted copies for their friends. Yours is the only review printed. The sequel is almost finished: It is about the first years in England, where I got married and where my jobs varied from skivying in a boarding school to lecturing at Leicester University. It would be nice to see it incorporated in the book but it is not terribly important – I cherish the thought that you and others have enjoyed it.

*Vera Forster, Gosport, Hampshire*

### 'THE MOUND'

Sir – Just before the introduction to 'Emmerdale' on ITV there is displayed a fleeting shot of a beautiful old house, The Mound, at the lower end of Long Crendon, Bucks. This fleeting glance at the old house brings back to me nostalgic memories of my youth.

My two brothers and I came to England from Berlin via the Hook of Holland to Harwich, where we were temporarily

housed in a holiday camp. From there couples from all over the country came and selected children they wished to foster. My eldest brother was already 15 and therefore old enough to start work – but that's another story.

My brother Hans and I were selected by three families in Long Crendon and fostered by them and the headmaster of Lord William's School in Thame. Professor Gomme and Mrs Gomme who owned The Mound had us to stay with them every summer holiday from school.

I shall be forever grateful for the love, care and attention we received, not only from the three families but also from the headmaster of the school, and for the wonderful start they gave us in the absence of our parents, who died in a concentration camp in December 1942.

*Ernst G. Aris,*

*Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands*

### MAKING CONTACT

Sir – The northern-based AJR social workers have learned that four members of the AJR living in the north of the country are survivors of a 'death march' who were liberated and then billeted in Kaunitz, a small village in Westphalia, Germany. It may be possible for them to meet. If readers in other parts of the country had this experience and would like to make contact, please do. You can reach me on 0161 368 5088, at [barbara@ajr.org.uk](mailto:barbara@ajr.org.uk) or at PO Box 295, Hyde, Cheshire.

*Barbara Dresner Dorrity,*

*AJR Northern Region Social Worker*

### MORE SUCH HOLIDAYS PLEASE!

Sir – While on a week's holiday with the AJR in Bournemouth on 9-16 May, we had a chance to meet new people and renew old friendships. We stayed at the Hotel Royale, the atmosphere was pleasant, the weather was kind to us (perhaps slightly on the coolish side), but there was no rain so that nothing disturbed our leisurely activities.

Carol arranged some outings and was very attentive to our requests. The hotel was very good and the food was excellent. The informal meetings after dinner in the lounge were pleasant and some of us spoke about our life experiences, which were of interest to all of us. After all, our history has a common theme and some of us were reminded of our own past. All was well organised and Carol's experience contributed to the success of the holiday. Hopefully, we will have similar holidays in the future.

*Felix Winkler, Edgware, Middx*

Sir – We again had a pleasant holiday in Bournemouth and I believe all of us enjoyed it. The weather was good – sunshine every day. The hotel was excellent, food very good and plentiful, and all the staff very helpful, kind and always smiling.

Again, as usual, our AJR ladies kept an eye on us and helped wherever and whenever they could.

There was a little difference in our programme. Carol had a brilliant idea and, one evening as we sat together, we had a personal introduction programme, each saying a few words about ourselves: 'My name is ... I was born in ... I fled from Hitler to ... Nobody objected to talking about their escape to Britain or to other countries to save their life and, as we know, true life is usually much more exciting and moving than fiction.

I knew several people in our group from earlier holidays, but now I found out more – it helped our relationships and respect for each other.

Thank you all for taking part so willingly and thank you, Carol, for the excellent idea.  
*Hana Nermut, Harrow*

#### MANCHESTER REFUGEE CLUB

Sir – I refer to the recent letter by Lisa Wolfe (Steinberg) about the Refugee Club opened in 1941 by Rabbi Dr Papo, minister of the Didsbury Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. The club came to an end when Dr Papo emigrated to Rhodesia.

Rabbi Dr Papo is my late father. I was born in Salisbury (now Harare, Zimbabwe) in 1945. If any readers who knew my late father wish to get in touch with me, could they kindly do so via the Journal.

*Mike Papo, Isleworth, Middx*

#### HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND REFUGEES

Sir – I cannot let the letter from Martha Blend (June) pass without challenging it. While I regret that she was saddened by the 'mean-minded distinction' made by Anita Lasker Wallfisch and Kitty Hart-Moxon between camp survivors and child refugees, unless Martha Blend has personal experience of life in a concentration camp, she frankly cannot compare one situation with an entirely different one and I believe her letter was offensive to your previous correspondents, who are known, brave survivors.

In my case, my late father was a survivor of Dachau concentration camp, whereas my mother and I were refugees from Berlin, arriving by plane at Croydon Airport in August 1939.

Jews survived the Holocaust in many ways. But those who survived the concentration camps are the only Holocaust survivors.

*Gordon G. Spencer, London N12*

Sir – Hans Weinmann's definition (May) is authoritative and ought to close this aspect of the debate. Indeed, one can isolate the distinguishing features to universalise it to apply to all survivors. The criteria are 'target group for extermination', 'living in occupied or controlled lands' (of the aggressor), and an opening and closing

(if appropriate) date.

'A refugee' has a statutory definition. S/he is a person unable to seek the protection of his/her country of birth or nationality 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' (1951 Refugee Convention). In Britain, s/he remains a refugee while on limited leave to remain, for reason of having sought refugee status.

Once the right to remain becomes unconditional, the refugee is – broadly – indistinguishable from any other member of the public.

Because of our experience, we in particular ought strongly to resist anything that brings us near the habit of many European countries of speaking of second- or third-generation refugees (or for that matter 'immigrants'), or even our using the lazy way of describing someone by their apparent ethnicity (e.g. African, Jew, Ethiopian). It opens the door to prejudice and hence to discrimination. Let us instead rejoice in the unpronounceable surnames we share with our fellow citizens.

*Francis Deutsch, Saffron Walden*

#### ARMY INTERROGATORS

Sir – Ossi Findling (May) believes wartime interrogators are a dying breed. Not so! I am certain that quite a number are still around in addition to him and me.

My rank was 'S/Sgt. 20yrs old. Function: Interrogator, Interpreter General Assistant to Police, Fire Brigade, Courts'. Sadly, I also had to find Russian prisoners and forced labourers in Germany and hand them over to Russian officers. I learned years later that the returnees were eliminated.

*Michael Sherwood, Bushey, Herts*

#### SAYING KADDISH

Sir – Dr Basil Lee (June) is absolutely correct that the Kaddish was not originally a prayer for the dead but is, in fact, a repeated assertion of faith in God. It was originally designed as a 'punctuation mark' to be said by the *sheliach tsibbur* (prayer leader) to separate sections of the liturgy; the so-called *chatsi-kaddish* (half-Kaddish, strictly speaking a misnomer since it contains the essential part and the other versions have additions) was a 'comma' and the *kaddish titkabal* a 'full stop' after each public prayer service. The latter is somewhat obscured by the custom that arose about 900 years ago to say *Aleinu* after it.

Basil Lee then asks '[W]hy is it reserved exclusively for male members of the congregation?'

Originally, a son would act as *sheliach tsibbur* on weekdays for the year (actually 11 months) after his father's passing and on the *yahrzeit*. Since women do not generally participate on weekdays, they are exempt from any obligation to engage in public worship and cannot therefore,

should they be present, take on this role.

The same would apply to a son under the age of *bar mitzvah* but, since hopefully he would eventually be able to do so, the saying of Kaddish was instituted as an alternative. In a large congregation, there may be more than one mourner yet only one could act as *sheliach tsibbur*, so the custom was extended that all mourners would say Kaddish.

I wrote an article containing further material on this topic entitled 'The Orphan Kaddish', which is reprinted in my book *A Time to Speak* (Devora Publishing, 2010, sales@i2ipublishing.co.uk).

*Martin D. Stern, Salford*

#### STOLPERSTEIN IN VIENNA

Sir – Like Mr Vulkan (in a recent issue of the journal), I made contact with Stones of Remembrance in Vienna with a view to paying for commemorative stones outside my grandparents' former home in Vienna's 2nd district. I was told that their location did not fit in with the circuit of stones they were arranging and that they wanted to put the stones outside a place nearby – but not their home. I thought this was pointless and declined to participate.

Incidentally, your letter-writer Laura Selo referred to the song to Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* as *Ida*. I know it as *Freida*. My late father would sing it every time he played that symphony. It certainly brought back memories.

*Peter Simpson, Jerusalem*

#### UNEXPECTED OUTCOME

Sir – A recent letter in the Berlin magazine *Aktuell* mentions that Jewish telephone subscribers in the 1939-40 directory for Oranienburg had separate entries. This enabled a set of students now to identify Jews in order to supply *Stolpersteine*. It is a case of a scheme to discriminate against Jews having an unexpected beneficial outcome.

It reminds me of the distribution in my primary school in Berlin in around 1935 of blank family-tree forms for pupils to ask their parents to fill in all details of ancestors going back to great-grandparents. One of these details was *Bekanntnis* (religion), in order to discover if any ancestor was Jewish. My father had to do a lot of research to fill this in and its beneficial outcome was that we now have a complete family tree. Having made copies, of course, we gave it to the Jewish Museum in Berlin, which is exactly the kind of artefact they want. I would encourage any reader who has similar articles to donate them speedily.

*Rudi Leavor, Bradford*

#### YIDDISH THEATRE IN VIENNA

Sir – I have only recently joined the AJR having only just discovered its existence and its value to us remaining few. The

*continued on page 16*

# ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

**D**raw, Antonio! Draw and don't waste time! A typical art teacher's admonition to a lazy student, you might think. Well, the teacher was Michaelangelo, the year 1522, and the concept of drawing was relatively new to the Italian Renaissance. Its development forms the basis of a collaborative exhibition by the **British Museum** and the **Uffizi Gallery, Fra Angelico to Leonardo: Italian Renaissance Drawings**, which runs at the British Museum until the end of this month and proves how taking pencil to paper laid the foundations of the High Renaissance.



Andrea del Verrocchio's *Head of a Woman*, 1475

Among 100 drawings made between 1400 and 1510 are sketches by **Botticelli, Carpaccio, Michaelangelo, Bellini and Raphael**, shown alongside reproductive details of their famous works. And sometimes the sketches display more energy and creativity than the finished painting.

In Florence and Venice, drawing offered artists a mathematical, but also more naturalistic perspective, even while they remained attached to depicting classical Roman sculptural drapery. Drawing evolved through trade. Paper was invented by the Chinese and arrived in Europe via Arab trading routes in 1400. The earliest known preparatory drawing for a surviving panel painting is by a Gothic master, **Lorenzo Monaco**, made in about 1407 as part of an altarpiece. Also

of interest is **Fra Angelico's** depiction of King David plucking a psaltery.

From 1430 onwards Florence flourished as a cultural centre for the Medici and their kinsmen. Leonardo da Vinci studied here in the workshop of **Verrocchio**, whose own sensuous female faces were often finished by Leonardo. His 1473 work is the earliest landscape drawing in European art and the first documented by the great Renaissance artist.

Harmoniously, the **Wallace Collection's** exhibition **Beauty and Power** (to 25 July) features Italian and French Renaissance and Baroque bronzes from architect **Peter Marino's** collection. The perfect musculature of these often quite small figures, with the light cleverly angled to show the proportions of their bodies, is breathtaking. Many are sculpted in combative pose in order to emphasise this perfection.

**Quilts 1700–2010** at the **V&A** (to 4 July) offers a fascinating social, political and military history of this essentially cottage industry. A first for the V&A, it covers a panoply of historical and contemporary events, showing the way artists would literally weave and patch their own lives into their bedcovers or wall hangings, using old receipts, ledger books and shopping lists as templates. These were handed down through the generations, often using recycled materials. More than anything, this is art as memory. Men, too, were encouraged to get involved as part of the Temperance Society's attempts to keep them out of the taverns. As Britain's mercantile role boomed in the nineteenth century, printed cottons flooded the market and many were used as fragments for quilting, often celebrating military victories and coronations. Particularly moving is a quilt-in-progress by an inmate of Wandsworth Prison, who describes the serenity the work offered him. The National Gallery of Australia has loaned what is probably the most poignant of all: the Rajah quilt, made in 1841 by women transportees to Tasmania, work zealously encouraged by Reformist women.

## Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street (off New Bond Street)  
Tel: 020 7629 7578 Fax: 020 7491 2139

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING  
AND SCULPTURE

## REVIEWS

### Positive outcomes

**GERMAN SCHOOLBOY, BRITISH COMMANDO: CHURCHILL'S SECRET SOLDIER**

by Helen Fry

*The History Press*  
([www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk)), 2010,  
186 pp., £18.99 hardback

**JEWISH REFUGEES IN SWITZERLAND DURING THE HOLOCAUST: A MEMOIR OF CHILDHOOD AND HISTORY**

by Frieda Johles Forman

*Vallentine Mitchell*  
([www.vmbooks.com](http://www.vmbooks.com)), 2009, 144 pp.,  
£14.99 paperback

**H**elen Fry's book *The King's Most Loyal Enemy Aliens* covered the story of 10,000 German and Austrian soldiers who fought in the British forces against Nazism. Here, she describes the remarkable experiences of one of these soldiers, Colin Anson, previously Claus Ascher, born in Berlin in 1922. The book effectively uses long sections in Colin Anson's own words to complement the author's text. While reading the book, I was pleasantly surprised to see a BBC TV interview with the sprightly Mr Anson.

Born to a Jewish father and a Protestant mother, Colin Anson grew up in pleasant, middle-class surroundings. When the Nazis came to power he was initially not seriously affected, apart from having to sit at the back of the class. This situation changed dramatically in 1937 when his father, overheard making anti-Nazi comments in a café, was sent to Dachau, where he was murdered.

His mother decided to send him to England on a Kindertransport. After the fall of France, Claus avoided internment with other 'enemy aliens', joining the Pioneer Corps in a special unit set up for 'foreign' soldiers. Though doing useful work in helping to clear bomb damage, he wanted to be more active and he joined the Commandos, at this point changing his name to Colin Anson.

Colin's active war experiences were mainly in the Mediterranean area, including the invasion of Sicily, during which he was seriously wounded. On recovery, he was involved in liaison with Tito's partisans in Yugoslavia, in the invasion of Albania and in the liberation of Corfu.

Towards the end of the war, Colin's expertise was used in dealing with the large number of German POWs and interrogating those who may have committed atrocities. Remarkably, he retained a professional attitude and did not show any hatred to them. After the war he was sent to Germany, where he was reunited with his mother. He searched Gestapo records

*continued opposite*

to find out who had betrayed his father. Surprisingly, he decided to take no action against this man.

Although the book is primarily concerned with Colin's experiences, it also describes the lives of many of his comrades, some of whom gave their lives in fighting the Nazis.

In August 1946, Staff Sergeant Anson was demobbed after receiving excellent army references. Even more important, he was at last able to become a full British citizen! He married Alice Gross, who had also been a fellow 'loyal enemy alien', serving in the WAAF both in the UK and Egypt. After initial difficulties, he followed a successful career, and in his free time developed a deep interest in gliders. In September 2007, he was one of five veterans who spoke at a reunion of 250 ex-refugee soldiers in the Imperial War Museum.

This fascinating book deserves to go into a second edition, but could benefit with some editorial checking.

In contrast to Colin Anson, Frieda Johles was a baby when she and her parents left Vienna in 1939, escaping first to Belgium then France. Her book is in part an autobiography of a small child growing up in strange surroundings and in part the story of Jewish refugee life in wartime Switzerland. The Swiss government at that time had little to be proud of with regard to refugees – least of all with asking the Germans to place a red 'J' in Jews' passports so frontier guards could differentiate between welcome tourists and unwelcome refugees.

Frieda's earliest memories are those of a four-year-old in Lyons and the sudden change in April 1942 when the Nazis took over. She vividly describes the adventures and dangers in September that year when Jews began to be rounded up by the French police. Her family decided to try to escape to Switzerland by crossing the border illegally with the aid of *passeurs*. They eventually succeeded. Clearly, her memories of that time and later were reinforced by talking to her parents as an adult and by a recent return journey to Switzerland, where she carried out extensive research.

In describing her own life, first in Geneva and then in a refugee camp in Morgins (the Alpine *shtet!*!), Frieda recognises that, however difficult it sometimes was, she was far more fortunate than the children left behind. Her father was sent to a work camp and she was separated from her mother in a children's dormitory. But there was a full Jewish life and the Swiss Jewish community and many other organisations and individuals helped to make life as normal as possible. There are many well written, often amusing, anecdotes about her life in school, her friends and her relationship with her parents and other refugees. The family's problems did not end with the coming of peace – it was December 1946 before they effectively ceased to be refugees and were able to sail to America.

Throughout the book, the author draws on information in Swiss and Jewish archives to complement her own experiences with

those of the wider refugee community. There was considerable sympathy and assistance from many Swiss people, but this also caused concern as some of the sympathy included the attempted conversion of children.

Several chapters begin with timelines, relating local events to those in the rest of the world. The book thus effectively combines a moving autobiography with an interesting factual history. There are many photographs and, most importantly, full references to sources of information about this relatively little-known aspect of Jewish refugee life. Both of these highly different books reflect the upheaval in the lives of ordinary young people but conclude in very positive outcomes, which unfortunately cannot be said about the great majority of Hitler's victims.

George Vulkan

## An inspirational way through

### PERSON OF NO NATIONALITY

by Ruth Barnett

London: David Paul

([www.davidpaulbooks.com](http://www.davidpaulbooks.com)), 2010,  
296 pp., £9.99 paperback

This was a fascinating read. First, I know Ruth Barnett (née Michaelis) as the 'midwife' of the Second Generation Network, a nationwide organisation formed after conferences she helped to organise in London in the mid-1990s. This resulted from her work with the Raphael Centre, a counselling service for the Jewish community in London of which she is Life Director.

Second, I've seen her speak (in Manchester) of her experiences as a four-year-old Kindertransport refugee from Germany, alongside a Bosnian survivor of persecution in his country. I found her committed both to dialogue between those who have suffered persecution and to educating the public about these matters.

The book is mostly written in a fairly simple way, sometimes as if the child Ruth(chen) is speaking. Its latter part comprises stories about animals she worked with when a youngster in the UK. Some of these stories made me laugh out loud and would be lovely bedtime stories for children – maybe that is what they are meant as?

However, my reading of the book is also that it explains, when it can, how families communicate or not at times of stress and how vital the search for identity can be. Animals play their part in this story, as Ruth is fortunate enough to be able to relate to them and derive support from their unconditional ability to seem to understand when one is upset. And not take sides.

Ruth Barnett describes vividly her experiences of a variety of forms of family life, urban and rural. Some of these were loving and fulfilling; others ranged from cruelty to a lack of consideration of how a child might feel when its life is turned upside down. Had Ruth not been such an outgoing, even audacious person, she

might not have emerged from her refugee experiences as the integrated person she is – sensitive, generous and able to hear many differing, or conflicting, points of view.

One of the hardest challenges is to find a way to understand why your parent appears to neglect you as a child. Ruth has sought to understand this process, how it has affected her and those around her, and to support others through her knowledge, training and skills.

Typically, she has included a statement by her beloved and loyal brother Martin, who recently passed away. His view of events differs from hers and she acknowledges that. It's a shame we can't read her parents' view as well.

AJR readers from all backgrounds can find this book a helpful means of unravelling some of their family conflicts while enjoying its often light touch and humorous comments. That does not, of course, mean we cannot all learn from it. As an AJR social worker and the child of a Kindertransportee, I am constantly learning. As someone to whom the challenges of inter-generational communication and search for identity have become a great interest, I thank Ruth for her valuable contribution and congratulate her on finding her own inspirational way through.

Barbara Dresner Dorrity

## A nasty bedtime story

### A JEW MUST DIE

by Jacques Chessex

Bitter Lemon Press

([books@bitterlemonpress.com](mailto:books@bitterlemonpress.com)), 2010,  
92 pp., £6.99

This novella is based on true events in the Swiss town of Payerne in April 1942. Although Switzerland was neutral during the war, there were Nazi sympathisers, many of whom were active anti-Semites hoping for a German victory when their country could become part of Hitler's Third Reich.

The local Nazi leader is Fernand Ischi, who with his henchmen plans to provide a birthday present for the Führer – the murder of a local Jewish businessman. Arthur Bloch, a local cattle dealer and the chosen victim, is lured from the market to a side street to look at the possible purchase of a cow. While haggling over the price, he is brutally murdered by Ischi's accomplices and his body dismembered and dumped in the local lake. His body is soon found, as are his clothes, and the perpetrators are all sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

It is all written in crisp, lucid prose, with a full description of all the horrors. The local population take little notice of the events: does it really matter that a Jew has been murdered? But the author's message is that it definitely *does* matter – this is not the way a civilised society behaves. A gripping but nasty little bedtime story.

Paul Samet

## The Centralverein collection: A window into the Jewish struggle in Germany between the wars

In 1893 the Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (henceforth Centralverein) was founded in Berlin in response to increased anti-Semitism in the German empire and in order to create a forum for German Jews. For 45 years this institution created an archive of Jewish cultural life and documented the growth of anti-Semitism. In 1938 the Gestapo dissolved the Centralverein and all the archival material was confiscated.

At the end of World War Two the collection was appropriated by the Red Army and was for many years considered lost. Following the demise of Communism, it turned out that a major part of the collection had survived in the Osoby Military Archive in Moscow.

In 1996 the entire extant collection was microfilmed for the Archive of the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem. In 2005, due to the focus of the Wiener Library in London on research into anti-Semitism and the important role Alfred Wiener had played within the organisation itself (he was a member of the senior management and a journalist on the *CV-Zeitung*), a copy of the Centralverein collection was acquired by the Wiener Library. While coverage of the early years is thin, 155 microfilm reels containing hundreds of thousands of pages are now accessible at the Wiener Library.

One of the major conflicts with which the Centralverein was particularly concerned in the 1920s was the rift between Zionists and 'nationalist'

German Jews. Whereas the Zionists tried to convince German Jews to settle in Palestine, the 'nationalist' German Jews encouraged the Jews of Germany to 'act more German'. As a result of this policy, some obscure, extraordinary material was generated, such as a collection of correspondence from German/nationalist/anti-democratic Jews keen to demonstrate their support for, and involvement in, the notorious Kapp Putsch.

By contrast, the Zionists provided German Jews with training in crafts and farming to prepare them for life in Palestine. Plans were developed for settlement in the land of Israel and detailed reports were written about the political situation in the Middle East. The archive also contains reports and correspondence about plays and public lectures promoting Zionist ideas, which provoked unrest among the non-Zionists. The Centralverein itself was concerned to create a formula to keep the two extremes together and frequently adopted the self-definition 'Jews who agree with settlement in Palestine but disagree with Zionism'.

The most important conflict which preoccupied the Centralverein in the early 1930s was the threat posed by the Nazi regime. The roots of the anti-Semitic developments, however, can be found already in the 1920s and are well documented in the Centralverein collection.

For example, during the period of inflation in Germany (1922-23), money

was used for anti-Semitic propaganda, blaming Jews for the inflation and misery by stamping slogans on almost worthless banknotes.

Another aspect of anti-Semitism in Germany's daily life concerned hotels in resorts which sought to exclude Jews. Reports show that this discrimination was often disguised, comprising subtle messages such as the use of Germanic-sounding names for hotels or indirect remarks like 'Only Christian guests will be admitted.' Only in some cases did resorts openly take pride in the fact that they had been 'cleansed of Jews'. The Centralverein responded with the creation of a list of anti-Semitic hotels in order to monitor the development of such customs. In addition, much original material such as brochures was included in the Centralverein collection and these offer a graphic record of the extent of anti-Semitic infiltration in everyday German life.

This vast collection is a rich, barely exploited resource documenting Jewish life and anti-Semitism during the Weimar and Nazi eras. The inclusion of new file descriptions on the Wiener Library's online database to hitherto uncatalogued material will open up to the public further contemporary documentation on this period. The catalogue can be accessed at <http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/collections/documents/collection/collectionitem.aspx?oltemID=12636>

**Johann Nicolai,  
Wiener Library**

## QUO VADIS?

It was Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed 'You can fool some of the people all the time.' The general election demonstrated this syndrome. Large numbers of voters were duped by debates, the promises and the appearance of the leaders. There was no mention of the expenses scandal or of the failings of government in virtually all facets of its responsibilities. The BBC did not permit the relevant discussions or any questions from the audience. This was British democracy at work!

The insincerity, the scrambling for power and the opportunists' undignified oscillations between opposing factions

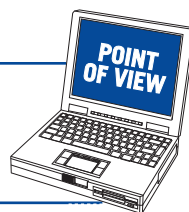
failed to repulse voters. One-third of the electors did not want to divulge their voting intentions, thus confounding the pollsters. Those who are unforgivable must be the feeble-minded voters giving their trust to the unscrupulous candidates who had the audacity even to show their faces, having raided the coffers provided by the taxpayers. They all bear the responsibility for the British disaster.

We witnessed the dire spectacle of a marriage, not made in heaven but between diametrically opposed ideologies. It was a shot-gun wedding, resulting in an accommodation of

brothers-in-law. We ask ourselves: How long can this unholy alliance last? It is only a matter of time before coalition becomes collision. Meanwhile, the discredited opposition, having rid itself of its leader, is fielding two Jewish brothers for the job. Surely a gift to the anti-Semites. If both should fail, the other Ed would ensure that Labour is 'all Balls'. That party lost because they voted to fight in Iraq, having been deliberately misled about 'weapons of mass destruction'.

This writer repeatedly warned that WMDs referred to the battlefield and

*continued opposite*



## Not the Israel I knew

As the late Lionel Bart wrote, 'Fings ain't what they used to be.' I was an ardent fan of Israel. I regarded all those Jews who put their names to advertisements criticising Israel as traitors. My father was a Zionist. He was born in Vienna, fled to this country when the Nazis came to power, gave me a book on Theodore Herzl for my barmitzvah, and celebrated the formation of the state of Israel with more passion than I had ever seen him celebrate anything. He didn't admit it openly to me but I guess he backed the Irgun and the Stern Gang as much as he supported the Haganah. I am not sure how aghast he was at the bombing of the King David Hotel or even the hanging of the two British sergeants. As far as he was concerned, Ernest Bevin was a venomous anti-Semite and he hated him.

I was brought up in this kind of atmosphere and came to believe that Israel was my homeland and that it could do no wrong. At Oxford University, I joined the Israel Club, which I much preferred to the Jewish Society. Israel was there to see – where was this God in which we were supposed to believe? If there was one, why did he allow 6 million of us to die in the Holocaust? I liked Herzl's Zionism. It was secular and not religious.

My parents usually took their holidays in Israel – in Herzliya, which they loved. There were no anti-Semites there! They were with their own people. They felt they belonged – a feeling they never had in England, particularly in Banbury,

where my father, a doctor, had his surgery and where we were the only Jews.

My wife and I first visited Israel in 1981. She had relatives in the wine-growing area of Zichron Yaakov. There were no restrictions then. We visited Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa – you name it, we were there. We saw Bethlehem, went to the Golan Heights, crossed the Allenby Bridge, toured the West Bank, and visited just about every part of this exciting new state.

We never felt threatened – except in one place, Mea Shearim. We had nothing in common with the Haredim living there. But look at what has happened since then. Twenty per cent of the Israeli population is now made up of Haredim, and Jerusalem has almost become a suburb of Mea Shearim! The reason? The Haredim are encouraged to produce a child every year! Ironically, the men don't have to do military service because it is considered that learning the Torah is more important than defending their country. Indeed, some, like Neturei Karta, do not believe that the State of Israel should exist at all!

The Haredim, generally, are not Zionists. They do not think that the Jews should have a homeland until the Messiah has come. Yet they now have as much say, if not more, than any other group in Israel. Why? Because of the ridiculous form of proportional representation practised there, which gives the religious groups unfair power. Any party that is elected – or, as in the case of Likud and Benjamin Netanyahu, unelected – needs them to help form a

coalition. The 1,200 homes to be built in East Jerusalem, over which 'Bibi' fell out with President Obama and, particularly, Vice President Biden, are for the use of the Haredim. Bibi had to sacrifice his relationship with the United States for the sake of the ultra-Orthodox because if he didn't back them, they wouldn't back him, and he wouldn't remain prime minister.

Bibi has another dangerous ally – Avigdor Lieberman of the Yisrael Beitenu party. This group is made up of immigrants from the former Soviet Union and, though it is now the third largest party in the Knesset, it, like the Haredim, has nothing in common with the Zionism of Herzl. Their members do not believe in any form of compromise: shoot first, ask questions later, seems to be their motto. Perhaps this explains Israel's action in Gaza in reply to the Gaza rockets last year, and their reaction this year to the Turkish flotilla.

The irony, of course, is that Tzipi Livni of the Kadima party should be prime minister. She won the majority of the electoral votes but refused to form a coalition with extremists like Yisrael Beitenu or the religious parties, Shas, Agudat Israel and the National Religious Party. (In any case, the first two would prefer to abide by Halachic rather than secular law.)

My poor father must be turning in his grave when he sees what has become of Israel. I am sure the country's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, must be sickened too. I used to have a sticker on the rear of my car saying 'I support Israel.' Now, I try desperately hard to avoid talking about Israel to any of my gentile friends. I have run out of excuses. My love affair, for the time being, is over. This is not the Israel I knew.

**Peter Phillips**

### QUO VADIS continued

not to the warring countries. A letter to *The Times* proclaimed: 'There is a greater chance to find men on Mars than WMDs in Iraq!' It was never published. How was Saddam going to deploy them on this country or America in 45 minutes? Nobody asked this question in the House or at the recent hearing! Recognition of the facts would have averted the war and all its terrible consequences. Schoolboys would have cribbed this, except for the one-third who can't read or write.

The Greeks staged their magnificent Olympics, spending all their money and being duly sent to Hades by the angry gods. We have spent all our money,

passed the Greeks on their way down, and haven't even held our Olympics yet! Where will all the money come from for this most illustrious show of all? Perhaps we should sell the gold medals we haven't got yet. We were told that 'There is no money', as it was all squandered in an unprecedented manner by the previous government. Moreover, the country is even fervently bidding for the football games to be held in 18 years' time! If all the MPs and Peers who cheated the public had stood down, Parliament would be an empty shell. If we permit them, the newly elected members will act in the same way as their predecessors. They are

already clamouring for their expenses! None must be allowed – whether for second homes or toilet seats.

Anyone who trusts the Establishment is prone to suffer from chronic disillusion and severe learning difficulties. It is as well that we will not be witnessing the catastrophe that will dwarf the present calamity. The new generations that support the transformation from a decent society into an unfathomable monstrosity in an unsustainable multicultural environment will come to regret the monster they helped create. It is time we asked ourselves 'Quo vadis?' Whither goest thou?

**Fred Stern**

# INSIDE the AJR

## NORTHERN SECOND GENERATION GATHERING

Sunday 19 September 2010,  
10.30 am-4.00 pm  
in Manchester

Members of Third Generation welcome

For further details, please contact  
Barbara Dresner Dorrity on  
0161 368 5088 or at  
barbara@ajr.org.uk

### **Cleve Road Life and loves of a concert pianist**

Author Helen Fry spoke about her book *Music and Men* on the concert pianist Harriet Cohen, who had a passionate love affair with Arnold Bax as well as with other prominent composers, authors, politicians and businessmen. Helen's co-author James Hamilton explained the background to their latest novel, *Moonlight over Denmark*, the sequel to *Goodnight Vienna*.

David Lang

### **Café Imperial A small band of merrie men**

A small band of our merrie men met, including a new recruit, who, apart from having been in the Pioneer Corps, was sent on the *Ettrick* to Quebec and interned in Camp L. The approaching 70th anniversary of the *Dunera's* leaving the UK was mentioned.

Hazel Beiny

### **Ealing: Escape from Leipzig**

Renée Tyack gave a moving account of *They Called Her Cassandra*, the book she has written about her parents' dramatic escape from Leipzig.

Esther Rinkoff

Next meeting: 6 July. Helen Fry, 'Music and Men: The Life and Loves of Harriet Cohen'

### **Iford 'Is This Great Art?'**

Myra Sampson gave us an illustrated lecture on 'Abstract Expressionism: Is This Great Art?' Myra is an ardent enthusiast of Jackson Pollock, Rothko, Kandinsky and others, but quite a few of us were left wondering whether this was indeed great art.

Meta Roseneil

Next meeting: 7 July. Fred Rosner, 'Max Reinhardt and his Contemporaries'

### **Glasgow Freedom in the West**

Lev Atlas, currently working for Scottish Opera, was born in the former Soviet Union (FSU) and emigrated to the USA before settling in Glasgow. He talked about his life in the FSU and the freedom

he experienced when he came to the West. He also played a number of beautiful pieces on the violin to an enthusiastic audience.

Agnes Isaacs

### **Pinner 'Silk, Lace and Black Tights ... Life at the Bar'**

Eminent QC Tony Dinkin explained the customs and traditions of the legal profession and how these have arisen over the centuries.

Paul Samet

Next meeting: 1 July. Edna Fernandez, 'The Jews of Kerala'

### **Kingston CF Third birthday celebration**

We met in Susan Zisman's lovely garden (and home) to celebrate our third anniversary. We enjoyed the warm spring sunshine and delicious cakes.

Edith Jayne

### **HGS Sixth anniversary**

We celebrated our sixth anniversary in fine form with our guest speaker Ben Helfgott, who explained the situation in wartime Poland and enlightened us with his views on how not all Poles were anti-Semitic.

Hazel Beiny

Next meeting: 12 July. New venue: Hammerson House. Helen Fry, 'Music and Men: The Life and Loves of Harriet Cohen'

### **Essex Hat maker Dee Chaplin**



Miriam Stein, Otto Deutsch

Dee Chaplin recounted her happy childhood in the Westcliff community and how, through various careers, treading the boards, appearing at the London Palladium, and working as a sales person for Tefal, she finally settled on millinery. She talked us through the complicated mechanics of the finished product, often made from banana leaves!

Esther Rinkoff

Next meeting: 13 July Annual Lunch. Temple Fortune and Hendon invited. Other members please call Susan Harrod at Head Office if you would like to attend

### **Welwyn Garden City Monica's hospitality**

We again enjoyed Monica's hospitality and meeting friends. Visitors from Watford gave us details of a special Musical Soirée.

Alfred Simms

## REGIONAL GET-TOGETHER

15 July 2010

at  
Alyth Gardens Synagogue,  
London NW11

All-day event including lunch  
and refreshments

Speaker: Jonathan Margolis,  
Journalist and Author

For further details, please  
contact Susan Harrod  
at Head Office  
on 020 8385 3078

### **Wembley A lovely afternoon**

Despite medical appointments and holidays a small number of members spent a lovely afternoon together. A new member was welcomed and everyone enjoyed the conversation and cakes.

Myrna Glass

Next meeting: 14 July. Social Get-together

### **Temple Fortune Background to the credit crunch**

Roger Beales, from the Bank of England, told us about the background to the credit crunch and gave us his thoughts on how the economic situation would develop following the recent general election. He also gave us a brief history of the Bank.

David Lang

Next meeting: 13 July. Invite to join Essex Group for Annual Lunch

### **Hull Remembering D-Day**

Meeting on 6 June, the anniversary of D-Day, we remembered the day as well as the war years. Recently it was announced that Hull had suffered over 80 raids, making it one of the most bombed cities in the country. We who lived through those dark days remember D-Day with gratitude.

Rose Abrahamson

Next meeting: 10 October

### **Brighton and Hove Sarid From Brighton Stone to Brighton**

Historian Mark Perry Nash, a descendant of the architect John Nash, who designed and built the Royal Pavilion in Brighton at the request of the Prince Regent, told us how the use of the Pavilion to entertain royal guests and the belief in the health properties of sea water led to turning the fishing village of Brighton Stone into the bustling city of Brighton.

Ceska Abrahams

Next meeting: 19 July. Gerald Curzon, 'Jews and the Mind'

### **North London 'Dealing with Satan'**

Prof Ladislaus Löb, author of the book 'Dealing with Satan', told us the highly controversial story of Rezsö Kastner's dealings with Eichmann over the rescue of a number of Hungarian Jews.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: 22 July. Dr Anthony Grenville, Consultant Editor, AJR Journal

**Book Club set up in Glasgow**

A meeting was held at the home of AJR Co-ordinator Agnes Isaac with a view to setting up a book club. Following Agnes's excellent preparatory work and given the enthusiasm of the participants, it was decided to set up a Book Club, which will meet every 8 weeks.

*Halina Moss*

**Next meeting: 5 August. At home of Marion Camrass**

**Glasgow victory celebration**

Members joined in celebrating the defeat of Nazi Germany at the Café Cossachok, which annually hosts the Russian Day of Victory. Violinist Lev Atlas, accompanied on the accordion by George Gajjic, delighted us with his virtuoso playing of Russian melodies, followed by nostalgic songs by the magnificent young baritone Aleksey Gusev.

*Halina Moss*

**ALSO MEETING THIS MONTH**

**Bromley CF 5 July. Social Get-together**

**Cardiff 19 July. Lunch and speaker, tba**

**Radlett 21 July. David Barnett, 'London's First Hotels'**

**Bristol/Bath 29 July. Lunch and speaker: Tashia Scott, 'Refugee Nurses'**

**AJR GROUP CONTACTS**

**Bradford Continental Friends**  
Lilly and Albert Waxman 01274 581189

**Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)**  
Fausta Shelton 01273 734 648

**Bristol/Bath**  
Kitty Balint-Kurti 0117 973 1150

**Cambridge**  
Anne Bender 01223 276 999

**Cardiff**  
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

**Cleve Road, AJR Centre**  
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

**Dundee**  
Agnes Isaacs 0755 1968 593

**East Midlands (Nottingham)**  
Bob Norton 01159 212 494

**Edgware**  
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3077

**Edinburgh**  
Françoise Robertson 0131 337 3406

**Essex (Westcliff)**  
Larry Lisner 01702 300812

**Glasgow**  
Claire Singerman 0141 649 4620

**Harrogate**  
Inge Little 01423 886254

**Hendon**  
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3070

**Hertfordshire**  
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3070

**HGS**  
Gerda Torrence 020 8883 9425

**Hull**  
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

**Iford**  
Meta Rosenell 020 8505 0063

**Leeds HSFA**  
Trude Silman 0113 2251628

**Liverpool**  
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

**Manchester**  
Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091

**Newcastle**  
Walter Knoblauch 0191 2855339

**VISIT TO GREYS COURT**

Newly opened National Trust Property in Oxfordshire

**Thursday 15 July, 2010**

Preceded by lunch at country cottage of one of our members

Pick-up 10.00 am at Belsize Square Synagogue or 10.30 am at Toys R Us at Brent Cross  
Returning at about 5.00 pm

£15 to cover admission, transport and lunch (£8 for NT members – please bring your cards)

**Further details from Dorothy White, tel 020 8445 6388**

**Biennial Kindertransport Conference, 2010**

The Kindertransport Association will be hosting its Biennial Conference in Arlington, Virginia, USA, on 15-17 October 2010 at the Crowne Plaza Washington National Airport Hotel

The event is expected to draw hundreds of members from throughout the USA  
First, second and third generations welcome

Please contact Programme Co-ordinator Margaret Goldberger on tel 001 516 938 6084 or at [infokindertransport.org](http://infokindertransport.org) for further information

**Norfolk (Norwich)**  
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

**North London**  
Jenny Zundel 020 8882 4033

**Oxford**  
Susie Bates 01235 526 702

**Pinner (HA Postal District)**  
Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833

**Radlett**  
Esther Rinkoff 020 8385 3077

**Sheffield**  
Steve Mendelsson 0114 2630666

**South London**  
Lore Robinson 020 8670 7926

**South West Midlands (Worcester area)**  
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3070

**Surrey**  
Edmée Barta 01372 727 412

**Temple Fortune**  
Esther Rinkoff 020 8385 3077

**Weald of Kent**  
Max and Jane Dickson  
01892 541026

**Wembley**  
Laura Levy 020 8904 5527

**Wessex (Bournemouth)**  
Mark Goldfinger 01202 552 434

**West Midlands (Birmingham)**  
Fred Austin 01384 252310

**Paul Balint AJR Centre**  
15 Cleve Road, London NW6  
Tel: 020 7328 0208

**KT-AJR**

Kindertransport special interest group

**Monday 5 July 2010**  
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

**Deena Kestenbaum**  
'The Psychological Effect on the Kinder'

**KINDLY NOTE THAT LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT 1.00 PM ON MONDAYS**

**Reservations required**  
Please telephone 020 7328 0208

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday  
9.30 am – 3.30 pm

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CENTRE IS CLOSED ON TUESDAYS**

**July Afternoon Entertainment**

Thur	1	Simon Gilbert
Mon	5	KT Lunch – Kards & Games Klub
Tue	6	CLOSED
Wed	7	Geoffrey Strum
Thur	8	Mike Mirandi
Mon	12	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	13	CLOSED
Wed	14	Nat Paris
Thur	15	David Peace
Mon	19	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	20	CLOSED
Wed	21	Mark Rosen
Thur	22	Douglas Poster
Mon	26	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	27	CLOSED
Wed	28	Jen Gould
Thur	29	Michael Heaton

**Hazel Beiny, Southern Groups Co-ordinator**  
020 8385 3070

**Myrna Glass, London South and Midlands Groups Co-ordinator**  
020 8385 3077

**Susanne Green, Northern Groups Co-ordinator**  
0151 291 5734

**Susan Harrod, Groups' Administrator**  
020 8385 3070

**Agnes Isaacs, Scotland and Newcastle Co-ordinator**  
0755 1968 593

**Esther Rinkoff, Southern Region Co-ordinator**  
020 8385 3077

**KT-AJR (Kindertransport)**  
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

**Child Survivors Association-AJR**  
Henri Obstfeld 020 8954 5298

## SEARCH NOTICES

**Bohndorff (Bodendorff), Heinz von** Born 13 May 1902 in Elberfeld. Was a scientist who in 1932 in Berlin, Koloniestrasse made 0.0008 g pure gold from mercury. Escaped via Hamburg in 1934-35 but had addresses in Berlin until 1943. Any info please to Helmut Eikermann (aka Jan Eik), Berlin, at janeik@online.de

**Cohen, Erich/Eric B.** My father, Stephen Kates (Werner Katz), is looking for his friend, who came with him to England via Kindertransport from Holland. Erich was probably born in 1928 and lived about 4 years in Manchester with my father, who now lives in Philadelphia. Please write to batywarshowsky@comcast.net

I am looking for **Ernest Finch** (real name?), last known location Neustadt Holstein, Germany, 1945-46. Ernest saved 2 women, Rozi Nemet and Sylvia Nemet, near Plon or Eutin, Germany. Injured on 5 May 1945. Please contact Rozi's daughter Esther Goodman at columbo1@cox.net

**Klipp, Joseph, Scheindel, Lotte, Max** Parents and brother of my mother, Laura Klipp, who left Vienna in December 1938 by Kindertransport. They were deported from Vienna on 5 March 1941. Any info about them, please contact Alan Mew, Montreal, at almew200@videotron.ca

**Koerpel, Wolfgang Karl** I am searching for relatives of my grandfather, later Robert Allan Kennedy. He fled from Poland to England, arriving May 1939. His parents, Martin and Margarthe (maiden name Raatz), were last known to be in Berlin in 1920 when my grandfather was born. Any info please to nicole.kennedy.ccsu@gmail.com

**Kurz, Marietta** Born Vienna 1927, came to England on Kindertransport, worked as photographic technician in physics dept of Bristol University around 1945-48. Naturalised 1948. Any info please to U of Bristol archivist Brian Pollard at b.r.pollard@bristol.ac.uk

**Meyerhof, Hartwig** Born Kassel 1903, arrived UK 1933, lived Belsize Avenue, died Amersham 1961. Cousin of Kurt Wertheim (Ken Wilson) of Germany then Highgate. Friend of Illa and Fritz Walter, 81 Fitzjohns Avenue, Hampstead. Please contact Hartwig's daughter, Caroline Williams, at williamsdjuk@tiscali.co.uk or tel 0792 322 6640

**North Rhine-Westphalia Kindertransporters 1938-39** The Jawne Learning Centre in Cologne wishes to contact Kindertransportees from Cologne, Düsseldorf, Dortmund and elsewhere in today's North Rhine-Westphalia for a research and exhibition project. One focus will be the Kindertransport organised by Dr Erich Klibanisky, headmaster of Jawne school. Please write to Lern- und Gedenkort Jawne, c/o Dr Ursula Reuter, Rothehausstr. 5-7, D 50823 Koeln or email u.reuter@netcologne.de

**Refugee women** I am a historian searching for refugee women who worked or trained in Britain as nurses in 1933-48. Any info please to Tashia Scott at tscott@brookes.ac.uk or at stsctt1@yahoo.co.uk

**Refugees from Hitler in Northern Ireland/Millisle Refugee Farm** I am a student researching the story of German-speaking refugees, in particular Kindertransportees, in Northern Ireland. Any info please to Martti Steinke, Belfast tel (0044) 773 279 9559 or at marttisteinke@gmail.com

## FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Birth

Congratulations to Michael and Alex Newman on the birth of their son Jack.

### Death

**Wolff, Herbert** Born 19 March 1931 Frankfurt, died peacefully 3 May 2010. Mourned by wife Doris, sons Richard, Jo, Dave and Ben, and all family and friends.

## ADVERTISEMENT RATES

### FAMILY EVENTS

First 15 words free of charge, £2.00 per 5 words thereafter

### CLASSIFIED, SEARCH NOTICES

£2.00 per 5 words

### BOX NUMBERS £3.00 extra

### DISPLAY ADVERTS

Per single column inch 65mm £12.00

**COPY DATE 5 weeks prior to publication**

## European Association of Jewish Survivors to meet in London

This year's Annual Conference of the European Association of Jewish Survivors (EUAS) is being organised by the Child Survivors Association-AJR.

It will take place from 13 to 16 August at Roehampton University, overlooking Richmond Park.

Further details can be found on the EUAS website [www.eu-as.org](http://www.eu-as.org)

Anyone interested should contact CSA-AJR secretary Henri Obstfeld on 020 8954 5298.

## SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household electrical work

**PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518**  
**Mobile: 0795 614 8566**

## FIRST FLOOR RETIREMENT FLAT FOR SALE IN KENTON

First floor retirement flat with lift. Warden-assisted. Entryphone system. 1 fitted bedroom, lounge/dining room, fitted kitchen, modern bathroom/WC

Electric economy heating, residents' lounge, laundry room and games room

### Communal gardens

New 99-year lease - In excellent condition. Near shops, synagogues, buses and trains

Asking price £139,000

Please call Carol on 01923 857 822 or 0794 7694 844

## GOLDERS GREEN Part-Time Helper Required

Elderly, alert, good-humoured lady requires kind

### Part-Time Live-In Help

To include making breakfast and evening meal, some light housework and local shopping

Own comfortable room & bathroom & all food provided in well-located garden flat  
Weekends free

**Call Michael on 07971 436 968**

## PillarCare

Quality support and care at home

- Hourly Care from 1 hour - 24 hours
- Live-In/Night Duty/Sleepover Care
- Convalescent and Personal Health Care
- Compassionate and Affordable Service
- Professional, Qualified, Kind Care Staff
- Registered with the CSCI and UKHCA

Call us on Freephone 0800 028 4645

Studio 1 Utopia Village  
7 Chalcot Road, NW1 8LH

## Colvin Home Care

Care through quality and professionalism

Celebrating our 25th Anniversary  
25 years of experience in providing the highest standards of care in the comfort of your own home



**1 hour to 24 hours care**

Registered through the National Care Standard Commission

Call our 24 hour tel **020 7794 9323**

[www.colvin-nursing.co.uk](http://www.colvin-nursing.co.uk)

## WANTED TO BUY German and English Books

Bookdealer, AJR member, welcomes invitations to view and purchase valuable books.

**Robert Hornung**  
10 Mount View, Ealing,  
London W5 1PR  
Email: [hornungbooks@aol.com](mailto:hornungbooks@aol.com)  
Tel: 020 8998 0546



## OBITUARIES

### Hugh Peter Sinclair (Hans Peter Siegel), 27 February 1921–27 April 2010

**H**ans Peter Siegel was born in Munich in 1921 the son of Michael Siegel, a prominent lawyer, and his wife Mathilde. Their comfortable, middle-class, German-Jewish life was disrupted by the Nazis' rise to power in the 1930s.



In March 1939 Peter travelled to London, leaving behind his parents and younger sister. (All were able to escape Germany eventually, his sister via the Kindertransport to England and his parents to Peru.)

On arrival in England, Peter held a number of jobs with the Jewish Refugees Committee until, in July 1940, he was able to join the British Army Pioneer Corps. In 1943 he joined the Royal Tank Regiment, changed his name to Hugh Peter Sinclair, and spent the next three years in India.

His army career ended after the Second World War and in August 1946

he returned to England to begin civilian life. In June 1947, he met his future wife, Susan Emily Oppenheimer, at the Linguist Club, but, shortly after they met, Peter contracted polio and was in hospital for seven months, followed by an extended

period of rehabilitation.

After his convalescence, Peter was able to start work again and in 1951 he began working for the Hochschild Organisation, a non-ferrous metal trading company, with which he had a long and successful career, rising to the positions of chairman and managing director, until his retirement in December 1984.

Peter and Susan were married on 9 March 1949 and, over the next 57 years (until Susan's death in September 2006), they had a happy and successful marriage with two children and four grandchildren.

After his retirement, Peter contributed

his organisational skills to the board of his local Citizens Advice Bureau and was a founder member of the Harrow branch of the University of the Third Age, serving on their board and running their website until just before his death.

In the later years of his life, Peter became deeply involved with the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies, in particular the creation of an online database of Jewish cemeteries in Germany.

Peter overcame many hardships during his life, including the Nazis, emigration as a refugee, polio, a heart attack in his fifties and the loss of his wife, to live a full and active life up to the very end. He died peacefully at Northwick Park Hospital following a brief illness caused by intestinal collapse.

He is survived by his sister (Bea), children (Monica and Jonathan), and grandchildren (Amy, Helen, James and Olivia).

**Monica Sinclair**

### Frank Kelley, 7 November 1919–21 April 2010

**F**rank Kelley was born Franz König on 7 November 1919 in Innsbruck. His father was Otto König, a writer and journalist; his mother, née Alice Fischer, left the family soon after giving birth to a second child, Brita. Otto moved to Vienna, where he joined the editorial staff of the *Neues Wiener Journal*, a small-format daily founded by Jakob Lippowitz.

Franz and Brita spent the next years in the children's home of a Vienna convent and then with an aunt before rejoining their father. Sadly, he died when Franz was 12. Their mother, returning to take charge of the children, put them in the care of an uncle and left for Ireland.

However, when Hitler marched into Vienna, she was instrumental in getting Franz and Brita to England. Franz worked on farms until the war broke out, when he joined the army. With 88 Company, Pioneer Corps, he was stationed in France in 1940, cleared bomb debris in London during the Blitz, and

did forestry work in Monmouthshire and other labouring jobs in Wales.

In 1943 he joined Churchill's Special Operations Executive (SOE), where he became Frank Kelley. As his group's radio operator, he parachuted into enemy territory, maintaining contact with the home base throughout the mission, which was completed successfully. After stints as an interpreter in Hamburg and Berlin and as an investigator with British War Crimes in Bad Oeynhausen, he was discharged in 1948, having reached the rank of captain.

Under a government-sponsored scheme for war volunteers, Frank took Spanish, Russian, Italian and German at the University of London. Army stability and SOE glory gone, he went through a



variety of jobs in his search for a new life – translator for Linguaphone in London, welder with the Olsen Shipping Line in Oslo, then English teacher in Zurich. Finally, aged 35, he became stationmaster with Belair Airlines in Basel.

A few years later he married Rosmarie, who gave him love, a home and stability. He blossomed. His innate sense of humour came to the fore and he made many friends at his job and in Orselina, where he and Rosmarie finally settled down.

When Frank reached 90, his hip trouble became increasingly painful and he decided on an operation. It was successful. His spirits were high – but his heart was not strong enough. At 5.00 am on 21 April 2010, he died in the arms of his wife.

He is mourned by her and his many friends, especially the very few of his SOE comrades who are still alive.

**Eric Sanders**



## LETTER FROM ISRAEL



### 'You'll Never Walk Alone'

The audience in the auditorium listened intently as the head of one of the departments of the Music Academy gave an erudite analysis, with illustrations at the piano, of aspects of Mendelssohn's 'Songs Without Words', which we were to hear later in the programme. Professor Assaf Zohar, a rotund figure whose lectures are always lively and fascinating, had just apologised for being unable to play the piano with his usual dexterity as he was still recovering from an injury to his hand – the worst thing that can happen to a musician. To my unprofessional ear, however, his demonstrations sounded as impeccable as ever.

The information elicited a sympathetic intake of breath from the audience, consisting of a cross-section of Jerusalem's music-loving public. Just at that point, the unmistakable tones of Rossini's 'William Tell Overture' reverberated through the auditorium. All heads turned in our direction as the lady sitting two seats away from me turned bright red and scabbled frantically in her bag to find and silence the offender.

It took an unconscionably long time

until the phone was found, and the righteous indignation of the audience soon turned to laughter as Professor Zohar expertly played the chords on the piano, then converted them into a version that Mendelssohn might have composed. Luckily for the lady concerned, the phone had not gone off during the actual concert, as that is enough to make any concert-goer's hackles rise, and good humour could just as easily have turned into murderous intentions.

In the interval, when the subject was mentioned in passing, I tried to soothe the phone-owner's guilt-ruffled feathers by saying that it could have happened to anyone, and that I myself had forgotten to turn my phone off (though had done so hastily after the person concerned had turned hers off). This gave the lady sitting between us, whom I didn't know from Eve, the opportunity to sound off about her abhorrence of mobile phones, and decision not to possess one, despite pressure from her family.

While there is no disputing the fact that the mobile phone has its uses, and there is no substitute for being able to make contact when one has missed a bus or plane or is stuck in a traffic jam

and will be late for an appointment, the love affair between the average Israeli and his/her mobile phone is something beyond rational explanation.

'You'll Never Walk Alone' could be the slogan of the phone companies, as wherever one looks one seems to see people walking along the street, talking animatedly – generally with sweeping hand movements – as they do so.

Recent research has sounded the alarm regarding health hazards associated with mobile phone use but, as far as I can see, nobody seems to be taking much notice. In the supermarket, I see (and hear) men receiving instructions from their womenfolk at home or at work as they scan the fruit and vegetables, and on buses one can catch snatches of intriguing conversations. In Israel, one has the added advantage of being able to exercise one's knowledge of various languages, although so far Amharic remains a closed book to me, even when peppered with the occasional word in Hebrew. And of course in restaurants and cafes, the mobile phone chatter is incessant and loud.

It is only inside the Israel Museum, where I volunteer as a Host, directing people to the exhibits they wish to see (and most of which are currently closed, awaiting the grand re-opening in July), that I am privileged to politely remind visitors that talking on mobile phones is forbidden.

**Dorothea Shefer-Vanson**

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *continued from page 7*

recent letter from Ruth Schneider hit a chord.

My late uncle Josef Friman was apparently a well-known actor in pre-war Vienna and either he had some immunity or he was too famous to be exterminated by the Nazis. It was he who was instrumental in arranging the escape of all our families (at least 15 of us) to Europe. However, no one would speak of what or how it happened. It may just be that he worked at the Yiddish theatre in the Stephanie and Ruth's parents might have known him or of him.

By the way, I revisited Vienna about 10 years ago with my partner and we found it loathsome and still very anti-Semitic. Plus ça change ....

*Peter Gildener, Penzance*

### 'WHERE WERE YOU ON D-DAY?'

Sir – With regard to your recent article on this subject, on 6 June 1944 I was one of 60 paratroops dropped in the mountains south of Rome in 'Operation Hasty'. As my war report said: 'A force of paratroops was to be dropped behind the front of the German 44th Infantry and 4th Mountains Divisions to operate on their main line of retreat – Highway 82 – with the object of preventing the enemy of carrying out demolitions designed to hamper the advance of the 2nd New Zealand Division.' The broad idea was for us to shoot up as much enemy transport on Highway 82 as possible and so hasten the enemy retreat.

During daylight we used to hole up in the mountains, some of them over 2,000m, and at night came down on to

the road to lay our ambushes. In the event, we only managed to do this once because the Germans sent a whole brigade to find and destroy us.

Thankfully we eluded them – we had split up into small groups – and, although we only partly achieved our object, we succeeded in drawing off several thousand German troops from their front for a whole week.

Incidentally, Rome was liberated on 6 June.

*Peter Block, London SE24*

### EVEN-HANDED

Sir – Just to say (again?) with how much attention I always read the Journal, although it can also generate some sadness. I appreciate how even-handed the publication is. Keep it up!

*Werner Conn, Lytham St Annes*