

The Italian connection

This year saw the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy in 1861, which, along with the unification of Germany ten years later, transformed the map of Europe and the international political order of the Continent. The unification of Italy was closely intertwined with events in pre-unification Germany, especially the power struggle between the two principal German states, Austria and Prussia, and formed an important dimension to the history of German-speaking *Mitteleuropa* in the nineteenth century.

The historical connection between Germany and Italy reached back almost 1,000 years, to the founding of the Holy Roman Empire, usually dated to the coronation of Otto I as emperor in 962, which itself harked back to the coronation of the Frankish King Charlemagne as emperor in Rome in 800. Under the medieval Empire, German emperors ruled over both German and Italian territories, giving rise to such notable conflicts as that between the pope and the emperor and the competing parties of Guelphs and Ghibellines. Such famous events in German history as Emperor Henry IV's walk to Canossa (1077) to beg forgiveness of Pope Gregory VII, and such careers as that of Emperor Frederick II ('stupor mundi' – 'the wonder of the world'), were played out in Italy. Eventually, the dream of a transnational empire fell away and, in the early sixteenth century, the empire was renamed the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (das Heilige Römische Reich Deutscher Nation). It was dissolved in 1806.

The influence of Italy on German culture was never stronger than in the eighteenth century, when the art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann famously defined art in terms of his neoclassical ideal of 'edle Einfalt und stille Größe' ('noble simplicity and serene grandeur'). This formulation, deriving from Winckelmann's pioneering studies of Mediterranean, Greco-Roman art, gave rise to the widespread German



Count Cavour, 1810-61

perception of Italy as the land of beauty, symmetry and sunlit clarity, where the harmony in the proportions of works of art reflected the happy lifestyle of a people that, unlike its conflicted counterpart in the gloomy regions north of the Alps, lived in harmony with itself and with the natural world around it. The influence of Italian culture on German writers is evident in celebrated works like Goethe's *Italian Journey*, while the yearning for the Mediterranean ideal permeates the poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin.

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, however, Austrian power lay heavily across Italy. In 1706, Lombardy, in the form of the Duchy of Milan, had passed to the Austrian Habsburgs and, with the extinction of Venice as an independent power by Napoleon, the area of Venetia also came under Austrian rule. After 1815, Austria controlled these important territories in north-eastern Italy as the puppet Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. Italy, divided into numerous states, remained, in Austrian Chancellor Metternich's dismissive words, 'a geographical expression', its aspirations to national liberty and autonomy stymied by Habsburg power. In the small duchies of central Italy, and even in the Papal

State (based in Rome), Austrian influence also remained decisive. Freedom-loving Italians perceived it as ruthlessly, evilly tyrannical; the fate of Puccini's Tosca and her lover Cavaradossi, one recalls, turns in part on the outcome of the Battle of Marengo (1800) between the Austrians, natural allies of the wicked Scarpia, and the French under Napoleon.

The Italians and the Germans were the principal national groups in Western and Central Europe that did not have a unified, independent state of their own. The Germans lacked both the romantic appeal of such suppressed victim nationalities as the Poles or the Irish and the rallying force of charismatic leader figures, which the Italians undoubtedly possessed, in the persons of Giuseppe Mazzini, the ideologue of Italian independence, and Giuseppe Garibaldi, the revolutionary nationalist commander. Austrian efforts to preserve the status quo of 1815 in Italy and Austrian dominance over the peninsula were threatened by repeated insurrectionary attempts. In 1830, a year of turbulence following the revolution in France that overthrew the restored Bourbon monarchy, there were uprisings in Italy, which were quickly and brutally suppressed by the Austrians.

But nationalist agitation continued, fomented by such organisations as the conspiratorial Carbonari (coal-burners) and Mazzini's Young Italy. When a more serious wave of revolution spread across Europe in 1848, again sparked by a revolution in Paris, it found a ready response in Italy, where armed opposition to Austrian rule broke out in both Milan and Venice. In Milan, a popular insurrection succeeded in expelling the Austrian garrison and maintained itself for some four months, until it was subdued by the Austrians under Field Marshal Radetzky (immortalised by Johann Strauss's march). In Venice, the revolutionaries under Daniele Manin, the converted son of a Jewish father, seized

continued overleaf

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION *cont. from p1*

power and held out under siege in the city until the following year.

After 1848, the cause of Italian independence became increasingly entwined with the territorial ambitions of European powers and the dynastic ambitions of European ruling houses. These were to exercise a large measure of influence over the course of events that led to Italian unification and independence. The rising power within Italy was Piedmont, the area around Turin, known as the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, and ruled by the House of Savoy. In 1848, the King of Piedmont, Charles Albert, sought to take advantage of the weakness of the Austrians in Lombardy by declaring war on them; he was defeated by Radetzky at Custoza. When he renewed hostilities in 1849, he was again defeated at Novara and forced to abdicate in favour of his son, Victor Emmanuel II.

However, the consolidation of Austrian power proved temporary, for the revolution of 1848 in France had brought to power the adventurer Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, who ruled as Emperor Napoleon III. He decided to resume the struggle with Austria for power and influence in northern Italy that had been so successfully prosecuted by his uncle, the great Napoleon I. To this end, he enlisted the support of King Victor Emmanuel and his able prime minister, Camillo Cavour. In July 1858, Napoleon III and Cavour concluded the secret pact of Plombières, under whose terms France would support Piedmont in the event of an Austrian attack; Piedmont would acquire Lombardy and Venetia, in return for Nice and Savoy, which would be ceded to France.

The Austrians, characteristically, obliged by opening hostilities in 1859. They were defeated at the battles of Magenta and Solferino, and forced to conclude peace with the French at Villafranca. However, Napoleon reneged on his agreement with Cavour, and Piedmont acquired only Lombardy, while Venetia remained Austrian. The first stage of Italian unification had thus been achieved with the help of France, partial though that proved to be. But the democratic, radical-nationalist dimension of the Italian *Risorgimento*, embodied by Mazzini, had been severely compromised by the power-political machinations that surrounded the war of 1859.

In 1860, Garibaldi's forces attacked and overcame those of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which ruled Sicily and the south of

'Double Exposure: Jewish Refugees from Austria in Britain'

On Tuesday 14 June, the exhibition 'Double Exposure', which is based on interviews with former refugees from Austria in the AJR's *Refugee Voices* and *Continental Britons* collections, opened at the Austrian Cultural Forum in London. The exhibition, created by Dr Bea Lewkowicz, is accompanied by a film, also entitled 'Double Exposure'.

After the Director of the Austrian Cultural Forum, Dr Peter Mikl, had welcomed those present, the Austrian Ambassador, Dr Emil Brix, opened the exhibition and spoke eloquently of his high regard for the former refugees and of their place in Austrian culture. Professor Peter Pulzer of the University of Oxford spoke movingly of his own experience as a child refugee and of the distinctive culture that accompanied the Viennese refugees from Hitler. Dr Lewkowicz then spoke about

the *Austrian Refugee Voices* project and introduced the film 'Double Exposure'.

On Monday 20 June, the film was shown again at the Freud Museum.



Dr Peter Mikl and Dr Bea Lewkowicz

This was followed by a panel discussion involving four of the interviewees who appear in it: Otto Deutsch, Elly Miller, Peter Pulzer and Wolf Suschitzky; the discussion was chaired by Dr Anthony Grenville.

The event proved so popular that it overflowed the Freud Museum and had to be moved to the neighbouring Anna Freud Centre. Carol Seigel, Director of the Freud Museum, spoke to welcome the audience, who were evidently moved by the film and responded enthusiastically to the ensuing panel discussion. The exhibition and film can be viewed at the Austrian Cultural Forum until 2 September.

Anthony Grenville

Italy, with Naples as its capital. Victorious, Garibaldi handed southern Italy over to the king of Piedmont, opening the way for the proclamation of a united Italy. When the first parliament of a united Italy met in Turin in March 1861, it proclaimed Victor Emmanuel II king of Italy – Rome, the nominal capital, remained outside the new nation, as Napoleon III, bowing to Catholic sentiment in France, sent a garrison to maintain the independence of the Papal State. Indeed, when Garibaldi attempted to march on the city in 1862, he was defeated at Aspromonte by Italian government forces.

The final stages of Italian unification were achieved with the assistance of the state that proved to be the nemesis of Napoleon III's France: Prussia. When the Prussian prime minister, Otto von

Bismarck, engineered the confrontation with Austria that led to war between the two German states, he secured an alliance with Italy. In April 1866, Italy agreed to join Prussia if war against Austria was declared within three months, an alliance that effectively bound the allies to create grounds for aggression within that time. The Austro-Prussian war was decided in the latter's favour by the decisive battle of Sadowa (Königgrätz) on 3 July 1866. Though the Italians were defeated by the Austrians on land at Custoza and at sea at Lissa, they nevertheless emerged on the winning side and acquired Venetia.

When Prussia went on to defeat France in 1870, the fall of Napoleon III stripped the pope of French support, and Rome itself at last became part of Italy. But the unification of Italy in 1861, like that of Germany in 1871, though supported by popular enthusiasm, was less than democratic in its implementation. The manipulation of the plebiscite by which the south approved its accession to the northern kingdom in 1861, memorably portrayed in Giuseppe di Lampedusa's novel *The Leopard*, left a lasting rift between the two halves of the country. And when a later dictator, Mussolini, hitched Italy to Hitler's war chariot, he led the country to utter disaster.

Anthony Grenville

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

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THE AJR: 70 YEARS ON
Celebrating the Jewish Refugee Experience in Britain

The AJR celebrated its 70th anniversary in June with an impressive programme of events: panel discussions; lectures on German and Austrian history and culture in the 1930s; an audio-visual presentation; film screenings; and a concert of chamber music. The programme was co-ordinated with, and hosted by, the London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC).

Members of the First, Second and Third Generations provided varying perspectives in the panel debate 'The Legacy – Generations Speak Out' on the first evening of the programme. Joanna Millan, a board member of the AJR and the LJCC and a member of the

First Generation, stressed that until recent years many First Generation members had wanted to speak, but 'no one had wanted to hear.' Anne Karpf, a writer, sociologist and journalist and a member of the Second Generation, stressed the impressive legacy of the refugees in British life. 'How do we keep the memory alive and vivid as it passes into history?', she asked. AJR Director Michael Newman, the grandson of a refugee, argued that the wealth of material available on the Holocaust had both informed and empowered the Third Generation, who were fortunate to benefit from the survivors' interest in speaking about their experiences. Citing the contemporary interest in genealogy, he himself had researched his family's history.

In another lively panel discussion, held in a BBC 'Question Time' format, the



'The Legacy – Generations Speak Out': (from left) David Herman (chair), Joanna Millan, Anne Karpf, Michael Newman

PHOTO: JUDY TROTTER

participants were human rights activist Helen Bamber OBE, Austrian Ambassador Dr Emil Brix, historian Dr Helen Fry, LJCC Chief Executive Trudy Gold (chair), Lord Moser, Rabbi Rodney Mariner and German Deputy Ambassador Dr Eckhard Luebke. The panelists responded to questions on, among other issues, the current reception in this country of refugees and asylum-seekers. It was felt the refugees of the 1930s had integrated more successfully. There was unanimity that Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria were a 'remarkable success story', although certainly not a success story for all refugees. A question on financial reparations and restitution provoked a somewhat more contentious reaction, especially from the audience, some members of which expressed

disappointment with the response of the Austrian government.

Fascinating lectures were delivered on 'Weimar culture' (Patrick Bade); the German political background of the refugees (Trudy Gold); Austrian culture in 1918-38 (Patrick Bade); Sigmund's Freud's escape to Britain (Professor Stephen Frosh); the UK the refugees encountered in 1938-39 (William Tyler MBE); and growing up in Munich and the UK (Dr Edgar Feuchtwanger).

Dr Anthony Grenville spoke about his book *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain 1933-1970* and, with Dr Bea Lewkowicz, gave a presentation on the AJR's audio-visual project

'Refugee Voices'. Rabbi Dr Jonathan Wittenberg's theme was 'When and What do you Tell Your Children?' and Dr Martin Lovett OBE, a member of the world-famous Amadeus Quartet, was interviewed by David Herman.

The programme, directed by LJCC's Judy Trotter together with Trudy Gold, Kindertransport Chairman Sir Erich Reich and Michael Newman, was unanimously considered a great success and a fitting tribute to the 70 years' experience of the refugees in the UK.

Last AGM at Cleve Road
'a bittersweet occasion'

This year's AGM was a 'bittersweet occasion', said AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman. It was the last meeting of its kind to be held at Cleve Road – the AJR had taken the decision to sell the premises and relocate the AJR Centre to Belsize Square Synagogue as from January 2012.

This difficult decision had been taken with the continuity and future provision of services in mind, he said. It was a matter of deep sadness that members could no longer take full advantage of their dedicated setting: 'While in previous years our emphasis and guiding principal were to support people in their own homes, this does not now always prove practical.'

At the same time, Andrew noted, the AJR was this year celebrating its 70th anniversary and he drew attention to the fascinating programme of events organised in conjunction with the London Jewish Cultural Centre (see above).

David Rothenberg, AJR Treasurer and Vice-Chairman, also believed the AJR would be around for years to come. The organisation's resources would be increasingly channelled towards Holocaust education. However, it was essential to plan ahead for when Claims Conference support ceased and he appealed to members to consider leaving legacies to the AJR.

Chairman and Treasurer alike paid special tribute to Gordon Greenfield, one of the AJR's directors, who was retiring at the end of September after 17 years' service. We should give 'our sincerest thanks to Gordon,' Andrew said, 'for so expertly plotting our financial course and overseeing the entire process of the Claims Conference grants'.

Members of the Committee of Management retiring by rotation were re-elected unanimously.

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'Winter in Prague': The humanitarian mission of Doreen Warriner

When St Hugh's College, Oxford wrote an obituary of their student, Professor Doreen Warriner OBE, who died on 17 December 1972, they observed that 'For all her distinction and learning she remained modest and unaffected.'

Nowhere was this more so than where her humanitarian mission in Prague is concerned, for she was responsible for saving the lives of an untold number of men, women and children between October 1938 and April 1939. Even though she was awarded an OBE in 1942 in recognition of her refugee work, she remained silent about her life-saving exploits and achievements. Even today, her role as a refugee activist is largely unrecognised, and what is known owes much to the determination of her sister-in-law and some friends, who, following her death, worked hard to get her memoir published.

Doreen was prescient enough to write down her recollections of her six months in Prague very soon after her enforced departure from the Nazi-occupied city in April 1939, but it was not until 1972 that she seriously thought about writing a small book based on her factual account, which she called *Winter in Prague*. At the time, she was in contact with her friend and unofficial fellow refugee activist Robert Stopford, who, as Anthony Grenville recounted in his April 2011 article in this journal, had been sent out to the Czech capital as HM Treasury representative in late 1938 and was instrumental in facilitating the entire rescue operation. Stopford had been trying, unsuccessfully, to find a publisher for his own memoirs, which included the period he had spent in Czechoslovakia, and had sought Doreen's advice in helping him to tidy up his manuscript, especially where their collaborative efforts were concerned. Not only did Stopford fail to get anything published, but Doreen's sudden death from a stroke brought her publication plans to an abrupt end. It was not until spring 1984 that *Winter in Prague* saw the light of day, appearing as an article, with the addition of introductory notes, in *The Slavonic and East European Review*.

In her memoir, Doreen recalled her arrival in Prague and how unprepared she was for what lay ahead. Her vague intention was, she supposed, to 'organise soup kitchens' for the thousands of starving children, but it soon became clear that the people in most urgent need of help were the political refugees. Liaising with Mary Penman, a member of the Society of Friends, who were just about



Doreen Warriner

to embark on rescue work in the city, led to days filled with meeting innumerable people involved with saving lives. There were Sudeten German Social Democrat leaders, members of the British Legation, William Gillies, the British Labour Party International Secretary, and David Grenfell and George Hicks, both Labour MPs, as well as the Passport Control Officer. Within days she had been invited by Gillies and Grenfell to stay in Prague and look after the transport arrangements for the political refugees. Whilst she worked from the Party office at Sleszka 13, helped later by Hilde Patz and Alois Mollik, they left for England, hoping to obtain Lord Halifax's approval for the



(From left) Tessa Rowntree, Mary Penman, Jean Rowntree in Prague apartment rented by Mary Penman for the use of Friends' workers in 1938-March 1939, when refugee work became impossible from Prague

issue of visas. With safe passage secured for 250 Sudeten Social Democrats by 19 October, Doreen travelled backwards and forwards across Poland with her human cargo on a number of occasions and, though her first journey shook her to the core, she repeated it without any thought for the danger to her own life. To ease the burden on her, there were other couriers, including Tessa Rowntree and her cousin Jean, both members of the

Society of Friends, who travelled with at least one group.

By 9 November 1938, nearly all the 250 men had been rescued, but this was the tip of the iceberg, with around 100,000 refugees from the Sudetenland still on Czech territory. The conditions in which Doreen found some of the 10,000 or so Sudeten German refugees were appalling and, like Mary Penman, she began to provide some relief in the camps, using the £300 collected in London to buy blankets, medical requirements and other essential items.

By December 1938, Doreen had been drawn into the British Committee for Refugees from Czechoslovakia (BCRC), which represented the Labour Party, Lord Layton's *News Chronicle* Fund and the Friends. Not only was she entrusted with looking after Layton's fund, but he also invited her to act as the BCRC representative in Prague. His sister, Margaret Layton, was secretary. At that time, the BCRC's role was concerned with arranging hospitality for the male refugees who had already arrived in England, which left the women and children without any official help. This was a great source of concern to Doreen, who wrote of her gratification when 'immediately after Christmas, Martin Blake and his friend Nicky Winton came out and relieved my mind by taking over the emigration of the children.'

Margaret Layton was equally pleased with this arrangement and, following Winton's visit to her in London in late January, she wrote to Doreen saying 'I think he will be very useful to us here, getting the lists ready and keeping us up to date with what is going on in Prague.' From the BCRC office, Doreen continued to assist Trevor Chadwick, compiling lists of children. Consolidating the five existing committees for children and creating a 'Children's Section' within the BCRC, with Winton appointed as Honorary Secretary, gave him the authority he needed to undertake his humanitarian mission, which, on his return to England, involved the difficult task of finding sponsors and homes for the children. On 6 March 1939, by which time some transports of children had left, Doreen wrote to 'Dear Nicky' from Prague, congratulating him 'most sincerely in this great achievement, and [I] know what an effort it must have been.' By May 1939, Doreen and Chadwick had provided him with papers and photos of 5,000 children whose cases they had investigated.

Meanwhile, Doreen was overwhelmed by her main BCRC work and, at her

continued opposite

The 'Winton children': The roles of Trevor Chadwick and Bill Barazetti

I was happy to read Anthony Grenville's leader in the April issue, 'Doreen Warriner, Trevor Chadwick and the "Winton Children"'. However, I notice that there is still some confusion over dates and the respective roles of Trevor Chadwick and Bill Barazetti.

The German-speaking Sudetenland was annexed by Hitler on 1 October 1938. There was a great exodus of Jews and of political opponents of the Nazis shortly before. My father noted in a 'baby's diary' that we had been in Prague since the end of September.

There is a detailed chapter on Bill Barazetti in the latest book on the subject: William Chadwick's *The Rescue of the Prague Refugees, 1938/9* (see bibliography below). A great many statements about Barazetti in previous publications seem unsubstantiated and unverifiable. We do know that he worked for Doreen Warriner, who was helping Social Democrats and their families to emigrate. Barazetti was himself a political refugee. To begin with, Doreen Warriner was very enthusiastic about him, but later there appears to have been a falling out. In her contemporary account *Winter in Prague*, written on her return to England, there is not a single mention of him. She does, however, speak of the children's transports and what a mercy it was that 'Nicky' Winton and Trevor Chadwick had got these going.

Certainly, before Trevor Chadwick's arrival, Winton had hoped that Barazetti might take over the Prague end of the operation. There is a possibility that he, with Winton's help, organised an earlier children's transport to Sweden. But there seems to have been unease that a refugee should have been placed in charge of other refugees. Then, on 15 March 1939, the day the Germans took over the rest of

Czechoslovakia, Barazetti took refuge with the British Legation and left for England via Poland on 1 April.

With regard to Trevor Chadwick, I am in a particularly strong position to write about him as he persuaded his mother to guarantee for me. I spent the first few months in England with his family in Swanage (from 14 March to possibly late June/early July). During that time, he was still in Prague, although he did make one lightning visit home. He certainly was not there on my twelfth birthday in early June, judging by my own diary.

Dates are a little uncertain. The first mention of Chadwick by my father (in a 'baby diary' which my parents had kept in a desultory fashion from my birth until my departure for England) was on 18 February 1939. On 22 February I myself wrote a gushingly embroidered account of our meeting with him. I ought to add that Trevor Chadwick had been quite unfazed by our sudden and unexpected appearance at his hotel and seems to have accepted me at once. On the first occasion, there was only Chadwick, my father and I. On the second occasion, my mother too was present, as was Nicholas Winton. I do remember at once warming to Winton – and I know it was he, as my parents tried to remember his name afterwards: 'Winter?'

In Easter 1939 I received a letter from my cousin, aged 12, who was still in Prague: 'Unfortunately, I won't be coming to England. I don't have much prospect of going to England. I have registered in the Rubeshova [Rubesova Hotel] with Mr Chadwick but all the Jewish children in Prague are registered there. I hardly think I'll get my turn. If only I could get to England at least by summer. Your faithful friend and cousin, Suse.'

Gerda Mayer

'Winter in Prague' continued

a request, Margaret Dougan and Christine Maxwell were sent out in early March to assist her.

Another name which appears in the Society of Friends archives is that of a Miss Rogers. Following the German invasion in March 1939, Doreen and some of her co-workers were given an office within the safety of the British Legation in the Thun Palace on Thunovska.

One person whose name does not appear in her article is Bill Barazetti, even though she wrote to Margaret Layton in February 1939 saying how useful he was. He was undoubtedly a 'member of her secretariat', as Stopford described, and was among those given refuge in the Legation. The fact that the BCRC office

was next door to Stopford's room was a bonus: he gave her details of endangered people who could not obtain official permission to leave and turned a blind eye to her connection (and that of Miss Dougan and Miss Maxwell) with the illegal underground organisation which helped them escape. It was no wonder that Stopford pressed her to leave, for he knew the Gestapo were hot on her trail and would have arrested her within days had she not left on 22 April 1939.

This is only a part of Doreen's story and that of some of the other heroes and heroines of the Prague mission. Stopford was instrumental in recommending her for some official recognition for her work and she was made OBE in 1940. By then, she was doing useful war work within the

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Ministry of Economic Warfare in Britain and then Cairo, as well as working for the political intelligence department of the Foreign Office. In 1944-46 she was chief of the food supply department in the UNRRA mission to Yugoslavia and later worked for the International Labour Office in Geneva. She returned to her academic career in London in 1947 but, like so many humanitarian activists, including Nicholas Winton, she never spoke about her experiences.

Susan Cohen

Dr Susan Cohen is an Honorary Fellow of the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/Non-Jewish Relations at the University of Southampton and author of *Rescue the Perishing: Eleanor Rathbone and the Refugees* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2010).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

‘DON’T LET’S BE BEASTLY TO THE GERMANS!’

Sir – I have been mulling over Anthony Grenville’s postscript to my letter in the July issue. I disagree on every point.

I was, and still am, in full agreement with the Allied bombing campaign carried out on Germany up the end of the war. Regrettably, it was at a very high cost in Allied air crews. I never felt there was any diminution in our moral standard in that we fought a war started by the Germans. After all, we did not wantonly kill prisoners of war, nor did we set up work and extermination camps, nor did we put forced and slave labour in caves to assemble parts for V1 and V2 rockets, with the inventor of these weapons boasting they would soon kill 2 million Brits!

I became a member of HM Forces with the full intention of avenging the murder of my parents. Regrettably my wishes reached only partial fulfilment.

In the post-war era, I dealt quite successfully with many East and West German major enterprises, including the one in Pforzheim mentioned in my previous letter. When, on a visit in the 1960s, I was told of their wartime activities and I mentioned in passing that they most probably also processed my mother’s wedding ring, this was met with shocked silence. They claimed they didn’t know where the items they processed originated. Isn’t innocence bliss?

Herbert Haberberg, Barnet

Sir – I had never imagined Anthony Grenville to be an idealist. But obviously he is if he thinks we fought the war to show that our standards were superior to those of the Nazis. Neither I – nor, I suspect, thousands of others – fought in the war for such high moral concepts. I joined the fighting forces in 1943 partly from a sense of obligation to the country that had given us refuge – partly in order to put up two fingers to the chap with the Charlie Chaplin moustache, and partly because I wanted a final opportunity to put the boot in and share in the humiliation of a country which had so grievously lost its way. Of course, we didn’t know about the Holocaust at the time.

As for bombarding cities, we became much better at this than the Nazis ever did. And, while civilian casualties no doubt included many innocent children, let’s not forget that these were the men and

women who had given Hitler 99.9 per cent ‘Yes’ votes throughout the thirties – *mit gefangen, mit gehangen.*

Eric Bourne

Milldale, Alstonefield, Ashbourne

Sir – Our admirable editor, Anthony Grenville, can no doubt look after himself, but I rush to his defence all the same against Herbert Haberberg’s unwarranted and ill-conceived criticism. Grenville’s June leader ‘Bombs and ethics’ struck me as a balanced analysis of the morality of bombing cities, German or British.

So far as Dresden is concerned, most commentators agree that the war was virtually won when the city was destroyed. The only discernable benefit was that it allowed a group of Jews, including Viktor Klemperer and his wife, to escape their imminent deportation to an extermination camp. The (rather ungrammatical) phrase ‘Don’t let’s be beastly to the Germans!’ is, of course, Haberberg’s, not Grenville’s. To write that our editor should acquire ‘at least some of the salient facts before giving us the benefit of his moral claptrap’ is both arrogant and insulting. Indeed, it could be said that the boot is very much on the other foot.

Leslie Baruch Brent, Emeritus Professor, London N19

Sir – The gist of Herbert Haberberg’s July letter is that all Allied bombing was justified. He admits to knowing ‘little’ of Würzburg, where minor military installations and other targets were destroyed, but where, in separate raids, the historic Baroque city centre was also destroyed, with the loss of some 3,000 lives.

He might also bear in mind the example of Lübeck – the first of Bomber Harris’s city victims. It was chosen in February 1942 to test the new incendiary bombs. A city with many wooden buildings not too far away was required. Harris himself said that Lübeck was built ‘more like a fire-lighter than a town’, so it was chosen.

The raid created a firestorm and destroyed much of the inner city (now beautifully restored). It also brought down church spires and the old bells of the Marienkirche, which remain buried in the tiled floor as an impressive memorial. I first saw them in 1959 and never forgot them.

Politely, the Germans still officially say this raid was a response to the bombing of Coventry and London. Four local clergymen (three Catholic, one Lutheran)

were executed immediately for saying the raid was an act of God.

Yes, ‘the Germans started it’ – that is to say, the Germans under National Socialist command. Is it ‘moralistic claptrap’ to express regret that we had to emulate them? *Nicholas Jacobs, London NW5*

Sir – Anthony Grenville’s article makes stimulating reading. But hasn’t the time come to stop criticising the British government for its panic decision to intern foreign nationals? Danzig, the Sudetenland, the rest of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands – all these fell like proverbial ninepins. The treachery of Quisling in Norway and the outrageous behaviour of some Germans living in the Netherlands who, after being saved from malnutrition following the First World War sided with the invading Germans, added to the German neurosis.

My father, who suffered from gravely impaired vision, was interned on the Isle of Man (irrespective of a British-born wife who retained her nationality despite marriage). He never complained but regarded the episode as experience: ‘Ich grolle nicht’ (I bear no grudge) is also appropriate for refugees who found shelter in Australia with regard to the *Dunera* episode.

Martin Simons, London SW15

Sir – Anthony Grenville’s article brought back some childhood memories. I was in Vienna at the time the Allied forces attacked. We were sent there for slave labour after selection in Strashoff, Austria. We were bombed out three times from three ‘Lagers’. We were waiting eagerly for the Allied raids.

One incident I will never forget. I was working on the street in Vienna and the air raid signal was sounding. Everyone ran to the shelter, including our SS guard. Prisoners and slave labourers were forbidden to enter the shelter. Suddenly I was thrown to the ground and a large cloud of dust rose behind me. The building in which all those people, including our SS guard, were seeking shelter was a direct hit and no one came out alive. But I was alive and kicking, as were a number of Italian prisoners.

Marianne Laszlo, Edinburgh

Sir – My dear friend Herbert Haberberg wrote to you about the bombing of German cities. I fully agree with his first paragraph. May I just add that the RAF dropped leaflets in 1939-early 1940. This certainly did not deter the Germans!

After the attacks on London and other cities, all of us were delighted and supported the attacks by the RAF on Germany. I well remember Hitler’s speech at that time: ‘Wir werden ihre Städte ausradieren’, followed by Goebbels’s speech: ‘Wollt Ihr den totalen Krieg?’ and the faithful answer ‘Ja’.

However, Dr Grenville does not write ‘moralistic claptrap’. His writing is most reasoned and fair!

Germany asked for all it received and I had many friends in the RAF who did not return from taking the fight back to the ‘Fatherland’ (55,000 did not return).

And how about the V1 and V2 attacks? Were they aimed at military targets?

P. H. Sinclair, London N21

Sir – Dr Grenville writes excellent articles on subjects he is familiar with. However, when it comes to war in the air, he hasn’t a clue regarding the participants, strategies and planners.

Herbert Haberberg writes that Warsaw was the first city subjected to indiscriminate bombing. In that he is wrong: Guernica had that dubious honour during the Spanish Civil War courtesy of the German Condor Legion as a practice run for the planned forthcoming war.

Incidentally, the first aerial bombing of civil populations took place during the First World War, when Zeppelins and rigid metal planes bombed London and other cities causing casualties by the Kaiser’s air force flying from Belgium.

Dr Grenville is talking rubbish when he writes that we should have adhered to a superior standard in bombing German cities despite Kristallnacht, the deportations and the Holocaust.

When I saw Germany from the air at low level in 1945 and at ground level in 1946, the place was flat – which I considered some justice for my parents and 6 million others murdered by ‘ein Reich, ein Volk, ein Führer’.

Ernest G. Kolman, Greenford, Middx

Sir – May I add the ‘Jewish dimension’ to Würzburg and Pforzheim?

Würzburg and vicinity: 202 Jews were deported to Riga and death on 29 November 1941 and 955 Jews were deported to Krasnystaw and death on 28 April 1942;

Pforzheim: 186 Jews were deported to Gurs and eventual death on 22 October 1940.

Frank Bright, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk

Sir – Herbert Haberberg is arguably on stronger ground than Erwin Brecher in their contributions to your July issue, but both are damaged by descending from intelligent discussion to crude abuse.

I am a retired solicitor and admit that I studied only private, not public international law. Does this disadvantage disqualify me from objecting to descriptions of legal positions not as wrong in law but as ‘moralistic claptrap’, ‘tirades’ and a ‘puerile attitude’?

There are other aspects of Mr Brecher’s letter which are of interest but, when emotion and considerations of personal convenience have overwhelmed otherwise rational minds, the desirable alternative I

first mentioned may now not be available.

For myself, I can do no other than remain a lawyer at heart. Perhaps others should accept David Cameron’s advice: ‘Calm down, dear, calm down!’

Alan S. Kaye, Marlow, Bucks

RELOCATION OF AJR CENTRE

Sir – I note that the Paul Balint AJR Centre is to relocate to Belsize Square Synagogue. It is always helpful to analyse periodically the changing requirements of AJR members. However, it would be a pity if the Balint name disappeared with this move. Following the Shoah, the three Balint brothers (Paul, Andrew, George) made magnificent contributions to Jewish refugee and charitable organisations. The following quote is from Andrew Balint’s obituary (*AJR Information*, August 1998):

‘The three brothers built up a very successful business. In 1977 they established three Balint Charitable Trusts. These trusts have made many philanthropic donations, in the main associated with the Jewish community and with Israel. There is a Balint Jewish House in Budapest which acts as a centre for Jewish cultural life. There is a Balint Wing in Nightingale House and a Balint House on The Bishop’s Avenue, as well as the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead, all associated with the care of Elderly Jewish people. Charitable causes in Israel include colleges in Nazareth, Tel Aviv and the Shaare Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem. The Balint Trusts also support about 200 elderly Hungarian Jews in Hungary.’

Given the closure of OSHA and now the Cleve Road site, it would be fitting to perpetuate the Balints’ name in the new Centre.

Arthur Oppenheimer, Hove

Sir – It was with regret that I read in the July issue that the Paul Balint Centre at Cleve Road has been sold and is to relocate to Belsize Square Synagogue.

Members who are religiously observant will not go to Belsize Square because it is a Liberal synagogue. The Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks, called them destroyers of the faith. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, the staunch defender of Orthodoxy against the inroads of Reform in the 19th century, said of them: ‘They have permitted that which God has forbidden us.’

It is to be hoped that it is not too late to find a different venue for the Paul Balint Centre.

Walther Kohn, Edgware, Middx

AUSTRIA’S PAST

Sir – Martin Reichard, Press Attaché, Austrian Embassy, London, refers in your July issue to the part played by Austria in the Holocaust as ‘this troublesome period in its past.’

Does the word ‘troublesome’ have a much stronger connotation in German than in English? I would use ‘troublesome’ to describe a leaking tap!

(Ms) Ada C. Board, London W11

‘BECAUSE OF OUR SINS’

Sir – It appears that Betty Bloom (July, Letters) did not understand what I tried to convey in my letter in the June issue. Namely, that Tisha B’Av, which commemorates the destruction of the temples and our dispersal into exile, was a more tragic event than all the other persecutions being commemorated. This is because the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the persecutions in Eastern Europe and the Holocaust would not have taken place had we not been exiled from our land.

Henry Schragenheim, London N15

ELEANOR RATHBONE

Sir – Some time ago you published an article about Eleanor Rathbone, the originator of, and campaigner for, family allowances. She lived just long enough to see them enshrined in law, before her death on 2 January 1946. She was therefore immensely important in the social history of the 20th century.

As well as a campaigner for votes for women, she was herself an MP, and aunt and great-aunt of three other MPs. It would therefore be good to know where she was buried and to see that her memorial (if she has one) is looked after. But no one seems to know where she was buried.

Several reference books have repeated that she was buried in West Norwood Cemetery. However, at that cemetery, there is no entry for her name at, or just after, her death. Even her great-nephew, Tim Rathbone MP, was unable to attend her funeral and does not remember where it was. Can anyone help?

Nicholas Reed, Folkestone, Kent,

Founder-Chairman, Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, 1989-92

DOZENT LEDERER

Sir – My daughter, granddaughters and I were moved by the article and letter about my father, Dozent Lederer, in recent editions of the Journal. My father did indeed have to leave Austria after the annexation. He was appointed private pediatrician to the son and heir of the king of Iraq and moved to Baghdad. He contracted an incurable skin disease and died in 1941.

I also left Vienna in the days following the annexation and came to England. My mother, Elsa Lederer, Dozent Lederer’s wife, followed me in 1939. She died in 1965.

Maria Hull (née Lederer), Cirencester

A KIND HEADMASTER

Sir – I am grateful to Edith Argy for her article on how the strictness of her Latin master was mitigated by the kindness of her headmaster. Edith Argy wonders how Direktor Kroeger would have behaved had he survived until the rule of the Nazis in 1938. He might well have shown

continued on page 16

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

entitled *Aurora*. There is one **Auerbach** etching: *Jake*.

There's a touch of wit in **Peter Freeth's** aquatint *ShopTalk on Parnassus*, subtitled *Manet's Cat Meets Seurat's Dog*. There are a couple of nods to past masters, like *Max Ernst's Trampette* by **Midge Naylor**. **Anthony Green** RA is noticeable for his cut-out canvases; *Sunflowers on Margaret's Trestle Table* inevitably recalls van Gogh. Again, in his *Vase of Ceanothus*, Green develops his sense of humour: a woman is at one end of the table beneath a pyramid sky while a dog eats at the other. **Marion Mandeng's** *Window New York* offers a static array of beauty queens and **Melanie Comber's** nostalgic *Cartwheeler* shows a gravelly road disappearing into the distance.

Some artists opt for political themes. In **Oona Hassim's** *G20 Series*, you can really feel part of the Gaza demo. **Simon Leahy Clark** paints a library in which only books survive – everything else becomes detritus. But the hardest political edge is in



It is always risky to show articulate, contemporary works alongside established paintings. Here, compared to some of the soft-focus interior landscapes by the late **Ben Levene**, for instance, the first effect seems garish but, after a moment, you can see it works.

I picked out **Barbara Rae's** *Fishpool*, **Frederick Cuming's** moody *Crescent Moon and Sea* and **Allen Jones's** *Razzle Dazzle*, a girl in an orange dress, which had an electric charm. I liked **Cornelia Parker's** crushed silver dishes, and **Edmund de Waal**, now a celebrated novelist, has a display of very pale, miniature ceramics in a cabinet. **Paula Rego's** work is always exciting.

There's **Anthony Gormley**, but no **Damien Hirst**. **Tracey Emin** has six works – many just words on paper – and **Anish Kapoor** just one fibre-glass concavity. **Anselm Kiefer** also has one,

the sculpture room. **Simon Brundbret's** motorised silicone rubber *Dog in a Bin* is exactly that: a motorised black dog with his head stuck in a bin. Unfortunately, the motor conked out but, humour apart, this work's message flowed into the ugly politics of war. Other sculptures included a soldier lifting a dead comrade, a flowered window box with net curtains and a pointing gun, a metal harvest of a skull, a scythe and a cockroach by **Silvio Zivcovic**. Other artists conveyed in metal and bronze statuary the sad reflections of a contemporary age that has still not learned its lesson.

The Ben Uri Gallery has asked us to point out that it had no financial involvement in Bonhams' inaugural sale of Israeli art, as mentioned in the July Art Notes. The Gallery is keen to stress that it is careful never to be aligned with any commercial art organisation (Ed.).

REVIEWS

A 'miracle' of survival

REFUGE IN HELL:
HOW BERLIN'S JEWISH HOSPITAL
OUTLASTED THE NAZIS
by Daniel B. Silver

New York: Houghton Mifflin (obtainable from www.amazon.co.uk), 311pp. paperback, illustrated, £11.40 incl. p&p

This book tells a remarkable, little known story: how it was possible for the Jewish Hospital in Berlin to survive the war, with about 800 Jewish men, women and children still inside its walls, when the Red Army liberated the city. The author, an American lawyer who worked for the CIA, became aware of the story some 20 years before he found the time to do the research for writing the book, which was eventually published in 2003. It was a difficult, time-consuming task to trace the few people still alive who had been living or working at the hospital and to locate and peruse whatever documentary evidence was available (over 50 items are quoted in the bibliography).

The head of the hospital was Dr Walter Lustig (no relation of this writer), who not only had a medical degree but also a doctorate in philosophy and insisted on being called 'Dr. Dr'. He was apparently feared by members of his staff for his violent temper. He had had himself baptised as a young man, married a non-Jewish doctor and, according to several witnesses, had no connection whatsoever with the Jewish community. Despite this, he was of course considered a Jew by the Nazi authorities, and in 1933 was dismissed from his job with the Berlin police, where he had worked in the medical department. It was, however, there that he came to know individuals who later became prominent Nazis (among them Eichmann himself) and who knew him as a person who followed instructions rigidly and could be relied on to co-operate.

Lustig became head not only of the Jewish Hospital, where he was in charge both of the medical and the administrative side, but also of the rump organisation of the few Jews remaining in Germany, the *Reichsvereinigung*, a body closely supervised by the Gestapo. When the deportations began in 1941, Lustig was given the unenviable task of submitting lists to the Gestapo containing the names of staff to be included in the next transport.

Lustig was also known as a womaniser. People were careful to be on good terms with his current girlfriend – otherwise there was a risk of finding one's name

on the next deportation list.

In the author's view, there is no doubt that it was due to Lustig's 'good relations' with the Gestapo and the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* that the hospital was allowed to continue as the sole Jewish institution in Berlin other than the cemetery in Weissensee, despite Goebbels having claimed in 1943 that the city was *judenrein*. For a time the Nazis used it, ironically, for the treatment of sick deportees and, when they were relatively well, put them on the next transport.

Whether by design or coincidence, the hospital complex suffered no major damage during the intensive Allied air raids on the city and the inscription on the main gate, *Krankenhaus der jüdischen Gemeinde* (Hospital of the Jewish Community), was still legible in April 1945. By then, however, three of the seven buildings were no longer used for the purpose of the hospital. In 1942 the German army had expropriated several of the buildings for its own use as a *Lazarett* (military hospital) and in 1944 the Gestapo had fenced off a corner of the hospital grounds with buildings to be used as a *Sammellager* (collection camp for deportees) – it was then the only one remaining in Berlin as there were fewer Jews around who were available for deportation than in 1941-43. The last transport had left Berlin in March 1945 – days before the Soviets arrived.

The book describes in detail the *Fabrikaktion* (factory raid) of February 1943, when all Jews working as slave labourers in factories were arrested, and the *Frauenprotest* (women's protest) which followed it. Many of the non-Jewish wives of the arrested men and their half-Jewish children congregated in front of an assembly point and for several days demanded the release of their husbands and children. Eventually Goebbels agreed to their demands (temporarily, as it turned out): days earlier Berlin had been hit by a massive Allied air raid and he considered the timing of the Gestapo action inopportune. This was probably the only occasion during the Third Reich when a protest demonstration was not only allowed to continue for several days, but achieved its objective.

The *Fabrikaktion* had consequences for the hospital. In March Lustig was ordered to compile a list containing the names of half his medical and administrative staff, who were to be deported. He complied and the deportations took place, greatly reducing the effectiveness of the hospital.

It is interesting to read that two young nurses at the hospital risked arrest and deportation by venturing into the street without the compulsory yellow star, going to a hairdresser, using a tram and visiting not just an inconspicuous

restaurant but the Adlon Hotel, where top Nazis congregated. They – and other young hospital workers – risked their lives to savour a brief period of 'normal life'.

What became of Lustig at the end of the war is uncertain. Several witnesses saw him being escorted into a Red Army staff car by two Soviet officers, and he was not seen again afterwards. There is no record of a trial and, although many survivors and commentators have accused him of collaboration, the author believes that no impartial court would have convicted him of anything more serious than sexual misconduct and a vile temper.

The book is very well written and provides considerable insight into the prevailing atmosphere – not only at the hospital but in Berlin generally – and what life entailed for Jews living in the ever-present fear of deportation. The author does not shy away from mentioning that there was a small number of Jews acting as *Greifer* (who assisted the Gestapo in arresting Jews living underground), *Spitzel* (who denounced the latter), and *Ordner* (who helped round up and guard deportees). He cannot give an unequivocal answer to the question why the hospital survived, but lists several possible explanations. Finally, he repeats what several survivors claimed: it may have been a 'miracle'.

Fritz Lustig

Exhibition

Out of the shadows

EMMY UND WERNER SCHOLEM:
IM KAMPF ZWISCHEN UTOPIE UND
GEGENREVOLUTION (Emmy and
Werner Scholem: In the Struggle
between Utopia and Counter-
Revolution)

At Küchengartenpavillon, Am Lindener
Berge 44, Hanover

Emmy and Werner Scholem, the parents of my wife, Renee Goddard, were an upper-middle-class Jewish family in Berlin. Werner was the brother of Gershom Scholem, first Professor of Jewish Mysticism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

To quell his rebelliousness, Werner was sent to schools in Hanover, where he began his political career and married Emmy, a local, illegitimate, non-Jewish, working-class girl. In 1924 he became the leader of the Communist Party in the Reichstag. He opposed Stalin, was ejected from the Party, imprisoned after the burning of the Reichstag, and murdered in Buchenwald by an SS guard in 1940 at the age of 44. He was not a religious Jew, but his Jewishness

pervaded his life.

Emmy, an active socialist all her life, lived in London from 1934 to 1949. She returned to Hanover and ran a Jewish old-age home. In 1968, two years before her death, she converted to Judaism: she wanted to be buried in a Jewish cemetery.



Werner and Emmy Scholem

Unlike Gershom, Werner was not widely known or remembered, though Gershom dedicated to him his autobiographical book *Von Berlin nach Jerusalem*. The Stalinists couldn't quite delete him from history. Academic interest in him was kindled by Professor Michael Buckmiller of Hanover University – and it spread. Alexander Kluge, a German film-maker and broadcaster, made a programme 'Manche Tote Sind Nicht Tot' (Some No Longer Alive Are Not Dead). Now, a group of local history enthusiasts in Hanover-Linden, where Emmy and Werner lived and where Renee spent her early childhood from 1923 to 1934, mounted a public exhibition, with photographs, documents and letters and featuring Renee embodying life's continuity.

Renee was interviewed at length at the opening event of the exhibition by Professor Buckmiller and the last frame of the exhibition was devoted to her and her career in theatre, cinema and television.

We were received by the mayor of Hanover, who made clear to us his sympathetic attitude towards the exhibition.

The town surprised us by paying for our stay; the small pavilion in Linden which housed the exhibition was packed with people at the opening; and a film company filmed the opening and the Linden background, hoping to make a full-length documentary.

The exhibition, which came to an end in July, was a success with the public. The academics too, concerned with a publication, were satisfied. Emmy and Werner came out of the shadows. The Liberal Jewish community was invited but, regrettably, showed no interest.

Hanno Fry

Pankow: The last reunion?

Exactly ten years ago, the first reunion of men who had lived in the second Jewish Boys' Orphanage in Pankow (Berlin) before the war took place. It was organised by the newly formed Association of Friends and Supporters of the Orphanage, together with the Cajewitz Stiftung, whose director was responsible for the total renovation of the original building in the late 90s. The reunion was intended to celebrate the renewal of the building, which had survived the war and the Communist era, albeit in an appallingly dilapidated condition, and to bring together as many of the orphanage survivors as could be located.

Though externally, as of old, it had been converted for use as a public library and a primary school, the former synagogue (Betsaal) had been lovingly restored, to be used for public meetings, lectures, recitals, symposia and discussions. For the 20 former pupils, many accompanied by their wives, it was an emotionally highly charged occasion. One of the 20 was the daughter of the former director, Dr Kurt Crohn, who had lived in the orphanage as a young girl and, with her mother, had survived incarceration in the Theresienstadt ghetto. Her father had died in Auschwitz. One of the men had miraculously survived the war living 'underground' in Berlin. Three of us came from the UK, others from Israel, the USA, Canada, Argentina and Germany.

Since the first reunion, the number able to attend has gradually diminished. A firm bond of friendship has been established between our hosts, Jewish and non-Jewish, as well as between the former pupils. We have invariably been received with such generosity and love that many of us have had to revise our view of the modern Germany – a genuine healing process.

At this 10th anniversary reunion, the number of former pupils had shrunk to eight due to deaths and infirmity. However, our hosts had once again laid on a most attractive programme of activities, beginning with a festive evening in the Betsaal. The programme included a film recording the first and subsequent reunions; a talk by the publisher of *Der Tagesspiegel* on 'Berlin and its emigrants'; the inscription of the eight names into the Golden Book of Pankow Town Hall, a signal honour supervised by the mayor, who has spoken at most of the reunions; a discussion among the former pupils on 'What it means to be Jewish today' (see below); and a reading by Margot Friedlander from her moving autobiography *Versuche, dein Leben zu machen* – she had survived much of the war in Berlin living 'underground',

but was eventually picked up and sent to Theresienstadt. The programme was ornamented by Peggy Parnass, the celebrated political journalist, who, accompanied by a guitarist, sang a variety of songs by Jewish composers.

During our five-day stay in Berlin, we visited the school (Schule Eins) occupying part of the building and recently hugely enlarged by the renovation of the adjacent Speicher (warehouse), which used to belong to the Jewish Garbaty cigarette factory. Each of us was introduced to a different class, and the children were remarkably receptive to what we had to say about our lives in the orphanage. A trip on the River Spree and some of the lakes within the boundaries of Berlin gave us a superb view of the city and its green environs, and a visit to the Neue Museum,

A firm bond of friendship has been established between our hosts, Jewish and non-Jewish, as well as between the former pupils. We have invariably been received with such generosity and love that many of us have had to revise our view of the modern Germany – a genuine healing process.

recently ingeniously restored by the English architect David Chipperfield and housing a magnificent Egyptian collection (including the famous bust of Nefertiti), was much enjoyed.

Some of us also saw a brand-new film about the Weissensee cemetery, the largest cemetery in Europe, which, thanks to its opulent and somewhat wild vegetation and numerous trees, had enabled a number of Jews to survive the war. It is said that the Nazis didn't destroy it because they thought it was inhabited by threatening ghosts

Finally, we viewed a fascinating photographic exhibition, 'Tutaj, Here, Hier', by my Polish friend Zdzislaw Pacholski, who showed 40 greatly enlarged photographs of Koszalin, the town in which I was born, before it had become Polish in 1945, and its environs. Each picture had a legend, in Polish, English and German, each written by one of four people who were in some way associated with that town – a remarkable artistic as well as nostalgic declaration of solidarity.

Naturally there was much wining and dining and we had ample opportunities

to sample the famous white asparagus, then in season. A festive farewell dinner took place in the elegant flat of Professor and Mrs Albrecht (he manages to double up as Professor of Law at the University of Frankfurt as well as Director of the Cajewitz Stiftung), and there were many opportunities for congenial social intercourse between the visitors and their hosts. An altogether wonderful and unforgettable week!

'What it means to be Jewish today'
Returning to the discussion of 'What it means to be Jewish today', it is perhaps surprising that none of the eight thought of themselves as observant Jews, although three of them live in Israel. The discussion was chaired by Dr Hermann Simon, the Director of the Centrum Judaicum, the well-known archive and research centre. I had prepared my contribution in German and the English version is given below. I dare say that some readers of the Journal will strongly disagree with some of my views, but c'est la vie!

This is an interesting question, which is for me – a secular, agnostic Jew – not easy to answer. I was brought up until the age of 13 as a good Jewish boy who attended religious services in my home town near the Baltic Sea and had his Bar Mitzvah in 1938 in the very same room in which we are today! On my arrival in England on a Kindertransport shortly afterwards, I went to a boarding school which, though Jewish, was essentially non-religious, and so I gradually lost my religious affiliation. Largely, I think, because of the loss of my family in the Holocaust and the murder of six million European Jews, there came a time when I could no longer believe in a benevolent god. My agnosticism was further cemented on becoming a scientist: how could a biologist with a firm belief in evolution possibly take the Old Testament seriously?

I was therefore never involved with the Jewish community in England, let alone with membership of a synagogue, though many years later I joined the Association of Jewish Refugees. Although my closest friends were Jewish, I moved in essentially non-Jewish circles and (twice) married non-Jewish women. Indeed, although I never attempted to hide my German-Jewish background and my family and close friends knew of it, many fellow scientists expressed astonishment when I revealed my background publicly in 1989 by taking part in a BBC TV documentary entitled 'No Time to Say Goodbye'.

So why do I regard myself as a Jew (a question I discussed in my autobiography)?

continued opposite

Testament to a true survivor

The following is adapted from Michael Sankie's 'Memoir', as told to Helena Moss and dedicated to his late wife Edith. Helena Moss writes:

'Michael is a survivor in every way: escaping from German capture; smuggling food past German sentries into the ghetto; hiding in bunkers; enduring the atrocities in numerous concentration camps ... marching through the mountains in the freezing snow; escaping during an air raid while being transported to Belsen; being rescued by British soldiers while on the brink of death after being shot by a German patrol in the forest; and, finally, waking up in a hospital bed in Britain, where he had been transported by his rescuers. All this is testament to a true survivor.'

A few days later, I woke up in Birmingham. From Germany to wake up and be in England – I couldn't believe it! I didn't tell them I was Jewish. I was afraid. I told them I was a Pole, a Catholic. I spoke to them in Polish or German.

I had an operation on my leg. One day, a Jewish minister came to visit the Jewish soldiers. He spoke with an accent and the ward sister asked him where he was from. 'I come from Poland,' he replied. She asked him to speak to me.

The reverend visited me even though he didn't like Poles – he'd had to run away from them. He told me his name was Wolf Levy. I felt guilty: here was I a Jew and not admitting it! He asked if there was anything he could bring me. I told him I had Polish-Jewish friends and on certain holidays they had cheesecake. He came back a few days later with a big Jewish cheesecake. Then I started speaking to him in my mother tongue, Yiddish.

When he came next, he came with the entire synagogue! The chief rabbi of Birmingham, the *shamas* and the whole administration.

The chief rabbi visited me all the time after that. He said there were almost 7,000



Jews in the city. He told the ward sister they wanted to take me out of the hospital to show me there were Jewish people in the city and take me to a Jewish home. She said I couldn't leave the hospital as I had no papers: I was an alien. I told them angrily that if I'd been a Catholic they would have let me out but, since I was a Jew, they wouldn't. I asked to be moved to another hospital, where I could feel comfortable being Jewish. The chief rabbi said he would make the arrangements. The Home Office sent staff to investigate. After that, I was moved to another hospital, in Middlesex.

Here I started to recover. One day I had a visit from the Polish Red Cross. I asked them if there was a Polish hospital for the Polish army. They told me there was, in Scotland. So I travelled by train to Scotland with a Polish nurse in a private compartment. We arrived at night in Sanquhar, near Dumfries. I stayed in Elliot House until I was able to walk again.

A Polish friend I made in the nursing home took me to Glasgow for the weekend. There was a whole night of drinking – it was the end of the war. The next day I saw a synagogue near Crown Street. I started going to Glasgow alone. I wanted to leave the hospital but no patient or soldier was allowed to until they had a work permit or someone to look after them. One day, a Dr Isaacs, from the Jewish Board of Guardians, paid me a visit. He told they would help me find a job.

The Board of Guardians arranged for me to stay with a Mr Boxenbaum, one of the finest tailors in Glasgow. I went to work for him. Tailoring was in me. It suited me with my wounded leg. I couldn't do any other work. I felt I was too old to go back to school. I put my heart and soul into it.

He let me sleep in a recess in his kitchen and gave me food and £1.50 a week. I didn't like sleeping in the kitchen as I had to wait until they all went to bed before I could get undressed. Similarly, I had to get up early before they came into the kitchen. I worked all hours. I felt I was still a slave. I didn't have enough money. I couldn't take a girl out with £1.50 or go to a picture house or anything like that. I was 19. It was 1946. It took me a long time to get over my wounds.

From then on, I went to the Jewish Institute. Dancing every Saturday and Sunday night. I met so many Yiddish-speaking people. I met my wife, Edith, there, though we started dating after we met at a 21st party.

I knew I had a sister in America. I wrote to the Jewish paper there and found her. She could read Yiddish. In Poland, most women were educated. She was married to a butcher; her name was now Hilda Goldberg and she lived in New York. She wanted me to come to America but it took five years for my papers to come through, by which time I was established in Glasgow, learning my trade.

My sister would always write at the end of the letter: 'Michael, don't fall in love. Come single.' But I didn't listen to my sister – does anybody listen to their sister? So I fell in love and got married.

I have a scar. The number on my arm from Auschwitz is 126498. I don't know the day or month I arrived there. When I went to Israel, I was unable to find out the exact date on which I got to Auschwitz or Majdanek. One day, please G-d, I will find out.

Michael Sankie (Sankiewicz)

Nazi government. And yet we all do!

I believe, furthermore, that the so-called 'new anti-Semitism' is largely a response to the actions of successive Israeli governments towards the Palestinians. Unfortunately many people find it hard to distinguish between Jews in the Diaspora, Jews in Israel, and the policies of the Israeli government. It is nonetheless true that there are not a few Jews, both in Israel and in the Diaspora, who are strongly opposed to these policies, which, unfortunately, help to undermine the credibility of the state of Israel.

Leslie Baruch Brent

Pankow: The last reunion? continued

I don't believe there are genes that programme one's Jewishness, even though there are certain genes that are more common in some Jewish populations than in non-Jews. I think my experiences in Nazi Germany have much to do with it and – more importantly – the cruel fate of my family when they were murdered in the woods near Riga in October 1942. And, of course, the fate of my six million fellow Jews – how could I possibly ever turn my back on my Jewishness, even if I wanted to? That is why I have added my Jewish family name 'Baruch' to a name I

had to anglicise when in the British army during the Second World War.

There is one problem that troubles me greatly. Although I welcomed the formation of the state of Israel in 1947, I am a severe critic of the actions of successive Israeli governments towards the Palestinians. This too has helped to make me an outsider so far as the Jewish community is concerned. Yet, if we cannot criticise Israel – or indeed any other government, including my own – it would be utterly hypocritical to accuse the great majority of Germans of having passively accepted the actions of their

INSIDE the AJR

Book Club outing to St Pancras



Brief encounter: Gerald Hellman with ITV presenter Julie Etchingham

We met at the magnificently refurbished St Pancras Renaissance Hotel and, after a talk on the history of the hotel from its opening in the 1860s to its reopening this year, we had a tour of the new International Station. In Foyle's station bookshop, we were able to buy copies of *The English German Girl*, our next Book Club volume. The visit culminated in afternoon tea at the St Pancras Grand Champagne Bar.

Susie Barnett

Next meeting: 31 Aug. Discussion and tea

Ilford Middle East update

Daniel Bacall from the Israeli Embassy updated us on the Middle East conflict. Many questions by members were left unanswered – considering the unsolved problems of the area, that was to be expected.

Ivor Perl

Next meeting: 3 Aug. Ninth anniversary: Lynne Bradley entertains

Pinner A batty plot

Rob Lowe explained in splendid detail the batty plot of Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, illustrated with recordings by famous artistes. This operetta is due to be staged again with our speaker in the cast.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: 4 Aug. Annual Garden Party

Welwyn GC History of Pears soap

Andrea Cameron gave us a perfect presentation on the Cornish farmboy Andrew Pears, who preferred to be a hairdresser and in his spare time perfected a method for refining soap, and Thomas Barratt, 'the father of modern advertising'.

Alfred Simms

Next meeting: 2 Aug. 6th anniversary. Jane Rosenberg: musical entertainment

Norfolk Refreshing minds and bodies

The old guard of eight members refreshed their minds and bodies with the goodies Myrna had brought along, not forgetting the baked potatoes Eva had prepared in faraway Ormesby. Our guest, Michael Chandler, was in the process of writing a book on the Jews of Norfolk.

Frank Bright

Ealing: Das Fledermaus

Having become since his retirement a devotee of light opera both as performer and raconteur, Rob Lowe relayed in a marvellous way the story of Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, well backed up with musical extracts. A most enjoyable afternoon for our group in its inaugural meeting in Ealing's lovely synagogue.

Leslie Sommer

Next meeting: 2 Aug. Social Get-together

HGS The Bank of England

We had a first-hand, fascinating account of the workings of the Bank of England by Darren Welsted, a young man who has spent the last 25 years in the Bank's various departments.

Laszlo Roman

Next meeting: 8 Aug. Ronnie Green, 'From Finchley to Suez'

'Some Words from Home'



Ingrid and Henry Wuga

Over 200 people attended a reading of 'Some Words from Home', written and directed by Oliver Emanuel, at the Tron Theatre in Glasgow. The reading was based on interviews conducted by Oliver with KT survivors Henry and Ingrid Wuga.

A large turnout of AJR members was spellbound by performances by Gerry Mulligan and Alison Peebles, who played Henry and Ingrid. Later there was a panel discussion chaired by Edward Isaacs, President of Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, consisting of the playwright, Henry and Ingrid and Second Generation member Howard Singerman.

The event, funded and organised by the Scottish Refugee Council, was sponsored by the AJR, Glasgow Jewish Representative Council, the Scottish Council for Jewish Communities, and the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre.

Agnes Isaacs

Essex (Westcliff) 'Children of the Third Reich'

The Wiener Library's Howard Falksohn used contemporary illustrations to show how German children were exposed to anti-Semitic propaganda. Our group was joined by sixth-formers and a teacher from a local school.

Susie Barnett

Café Imperial's band of merry men

Our band of merry men discussed their misfortune of not having held on to the camp money from their internment in Australia: these *Dunera* boys would have

been wealthier men today as each note is now worth £9,000!

Hazel Beiny

Wessex visit to Mottisfont

We visited Mottisfont Abbey Garden, by the River Test in Hampshire. The trip from Bournemouth and the tea were arranged by Herta and Walter Kammerling. We saw the large National Trust gardens, including the house with its Whistler art gallery.

George Ettinger

Radlett A far from cheerful message

Tim Pike of the Bank of England gave his assessment of 'The Sovereign Debt Crisis and Government Spending Cuts'. His message was far from cheerful. Some of his material may seem controversial but it was all intensely interesting.

Fritz Starer

Next meeting: 17 Aug. Social Get-together

Wembley CF social Get-together

We gathered at our comfortable venue to hear details of forthcoming events. A lively discussion ensued about the care and cost of homes for the elderly.

Ruth Pearson

Next meeting: 10 Aug. Social Get-together

St Annes Again by Lisa Wolfe

Another holiday at St Annes on sea! After all these years there's little left to see, but we enjoy the company of those that are here, the friends we've known for many a year. We go for little walks along the prom or sit and talk of folks we've known, of olden times – we remember the war, when our men were away in places so far, when our children were still small – how we stuck together through it all and kept on smiling until we had won. It could only get better so we carried on to build up our lives; and though it was hard, we climbed step by step to reap the reward of a better job, a decent house in a nice spot, enabling us to give the children what we never got. Now old, we can sit back, recall the past without bitterness. We've accepted at last that our experiences have made us what we are; have given us strength, we've come so far. Thanks for minding us, Ruth and Susanne, we'll be here again next year provided we can make it. It's something to look forward to so here's to St Annes and all of you!

Cambridge The background to Alice in Wonderland

Mark Davies told us about his research into Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* stories and their association with the river around Oxford. He also showed us photos which vividly illustrated the scene where these memorable tales were written.

Keith Lawson

Next meeting: 11 Aug. Eva Clarke, 'My Mother's Story'

Brighton and Hove Sarid Countering campus anti-Semitism

Sam Barsam from the Board of Deputies discussed efforts to combat anti-Israel anti-Semitism on the campus and how

Israel, the only democratic country in the area, may have to deal with recognition by the UN of a Palestinian state.

Ceska Abrahams

Next meeting: 15 Aug. Shirley Huberman, 'The Boys'

A night to remember



Rev Ernest Levy OBE

Glasgow and Edinburgh members attended a wonderful concert in honour of late AJR member Rev Levy OBE at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. The 500-strong audience were enthralled by, among others, the Shabbaton Choir, Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld of Marble Arch Synagogue, the Calderwood Lodge Jewish Primary School choir, and Rabbi Danny Bergson of Newton Mearns Synagogue, who masterminded the event. Rev Ernest Levy and his wife Kathy, who are survived by daughter Judy and son Robert, regularly attended AJR events.

Agnes Isaacs

AJR GROUP CONTACTS

Bradford Continental Friends
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Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077
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Susanne Green 0151 291 5734
Manchester
Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091
Newcastle
Walter Knoblauch 0191 2855339

Kingston CF Sharing experiences

A small but intimate group shared experiences of life in the present as well as the past. Many thanks to Susan Zisman for not only making her usual delicious cakes but also for giving lifts to several members.

Jackie Cronheim

Next meeting: Details to follow

Edgware When we were young and pretty

Anthony Grenville presented us with part of the history we all experienced in one way or another. One thinks back with nostalgia to the days when we were young and pretty.

Felix Winkler

Next meeting: 16 Aug. Mark Davies of the Lewis Carroll Society

ALSO MEETING IN AUGUST

Kent 23 Aug. 8th anniversary: David Lawson, 'The Jews of Ostrava'

Nottingham 31 Aug. Lunchtime Get-together

West Midlands (Birmingham)

Down Radio Memory Lane

Are you sitting comfortably? Billy Cotton, Roy Plomley, Dick Barton, Radio Luxemburg and others as John Smith led us down Radio Memory Lane.

Esther Rinkoff

Oxford Basque and KT children

Natalia Benjamin told us the story of the Basque children in 1937. We found the comparison with the KT children of great interest.

Anne Selinger

Next meeting: 23 Aug. Annual Summer Luncheon

Temple Fortune

The Bank of England

Andrew Moorhouse from the Bank of England gave us interesting insight into

continued on page 15

Norfolk (Norwich)
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077
North London
Ruth Jacobs 020 8445 3366
Oxford
Susie Bates 01235 526 702
Pinner (HA Postal District)
Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833
Radlett
Esther Rinkoff 020 8385 3077
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South London
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Laura Levy 020 8904 5527
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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 1 August 2011

Baruch Ben-David

'The Unique Connection between Albania and the Jews'

KINDLY NOTE THAT LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT 12.30 PM ON MONDAYS

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August Entertainment

| | | |
|------|----|---|
| Mon | 1 | KT Lunch – Kards & Games Klub |
| Tue | 2 | CLOSED |
| Wed | 3 | Margaret Opdahl |
| Thur | 4 | Geoffrey Strum |
| Mon | 8 | Kards & Games Klub |
| Tue | 9 | CLOSED |
| Wed | 10 | David Peace |
| Thur | 11 | Ronnie Goldberg |
| Mon | 15 | Kards & Games Klub |
| Tue | 16 | CLOSED |
| Wed | 17 | Paul Toshner |
| Thur | 18 | William Smith |
| Mon | 22 | Kards & Games Klub – Monday Movie Matinee |
| Tue | 23 | CLOSED |
| Wed | 24 | Roy Blass |
| Thur | 25 | *ANNIE'S QUIZ* |
| Mon | 29 | CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY |
| Tue | 30 | CLOSED |
| Wed | 31 | Jane Rosenberg |

'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

Members requiring benefit advice please telephone Linda Kasimir on 020 8385 3070 to make an appointment at AJR, Jubilee House, Merriam Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

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

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Eisner, Herbert Sigmund, husband of Gisela and father of David, Thomas, Clare and Harriet, died 28 June 2011 aged 90.

Goldsmith, Lily (née Steinhardt) died 30 June after many years of illness. She is now reunited with her husband, Anthony Goldsmith (né Goldschmidt), and the family she lost in the Shoah. Despite her ill health, she took great pleasure in her grandchildren and was even able to attend two AJR events over the past year, which she thoroughly enjoyed. Survived by her son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren, she will be forever missed. Robin Goldsmith, London.

Loewenstein, Edith died peacefully on 25 June 2011. She is sadly missed by her three daughters and all the family and friends.

TRIP TO ISRAEL

We are hoping to arrange a trip to Israel from 29 November to 8 December 2011 staying half-board at the King Solomon Hotel in Netanya.

£1,300 pp in twin/double room, £200 supplement for single room

Price includes El Al flights from Heathrow, transfers to and from hotel, sightseeing most days, entrance fees where necessary.

We have been able to book the excellent guide we had on our last trip.

For further details, please contact Carol Rossen or Lorna Moss on 020 8385 3070.

This will be a fairly full itinerary which will involve some walking.

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AJR
70TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION LUNCH
WITH LIGHT OPERA

Sunday 18 September 2011

12.30 to 4.30 pm

Hilton Hotel, Watford

Please see
ticket booking form insert
in this issue of the Journal

If you would like to advertise in our
brochure please contact Carol or
Lorna on 020 8385 3070

AJR intern addresses
ARSP gathering

AJRintern Lena Mangold addresses 50th anniversary celebration of work in the UK of the German organisation Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP). The meeting, in Coventry, was also devoted to 10 years of the ARSP's Trilateral Programme, which focuses on encounters between young people from Britain, Poland and Germany

PHOTO: LILIAN LEVY



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Thursday 8 September 2011
All-day event including
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Our guest speaker, Jonathan Wittenberg, Rabbi of the New North London Synagogue, was born in Glasgow into a family of German-Jewish origins. Rabbi Wittenberg will talk about his epic walk from Frankfurt to Finchley. On the centenary celebrations of the Westend Synagogue in Frankfurt, where his grandfather was the Rabbi, he lit a torch from the Eternal Light at the synagogue and walked, accompanied by his dog, through Germany and Holland to rekindle the Eternal Light at NNL's new building.

Places limited – be sure to book early!

£25.00 per person

For further details, please

call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070

Unveiling of Statue
Hook of Holland

Thursday 30 November 2011

Details to follow

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

OBITUARY

Rolf Weinberg, 6 March 1919 – 23 June 2011

The highest decorated Jewish officer in the Free French Forces under General de Gaulle's command, Rolf Weinberg died in hospital after a short illness with his loyal, loving Ruth at his bedside. We will not easily see the likes of Rolf again.

Born in 1919 in Herford, Westphalia, Rolf was hounded out of Germany by the Nazis in 1938. Once on the boat that was to take him to Montevideo, he vowed to fight the Nazis and anti-Semitism tooth and nail for the rest of his life.

His war-time experiences are well-known not only through his book, *David's Fight, 1939-1946*, but also through his many talks to JACS, friendship clubs and the like. In the Battle of the River Plate, at the behest of the British embassy in Montevideo, he, with others, mingled with the crew of the German battleship *Graf Spee*, which had entered Uruguayan waters for repairs, disseminating false intelligence concerning a large formation of British naval ships gathering off Montevideo, a policy that led the *Graf Spee* commander to scuttle his ship.

After the fall of France in June 1940, Rolf was accepted to serve with the Free French Forces under the command of the London-based General de Gaulle.

After training in Camberley in 1941, as a Second Lieutenant Rolf left on a mission to Lebanon to investigate arrested German



Rolf with grandson Carlos

officers who were trying to penetrate the Free French Forces. From 1942 he served under General Koenig's 1st Division of the Free French Forces attached to Field Marshal Montgomery's 8th Army, fighting from El Alamein to Tunis.

In 1943 he was one of a group transporting weapons captured from the Afrika Korps to the Haganah in Israel, where he met General Dayan. Until the last, Rolf maintained his connection with Israel's military and the Mossad.

In 1944 Rolf's part in the liberation of France was to make contact with the French Resistance and he was decorated with the Médaille Militaire, the French equivalent of the Victoria Cross. Rolf also took part in General de Gaulle's victory parade in Paris and moved with French forces to occupy Germany. He was later a member of the Free French Veterans in England and then received the order of the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, a rare decoration for a non-Frenchman.

After the war Rolf moved back to Montevideo. A short spell in Germany was followed by his and his wife Sara's settling in Spain, where they had a couple of successful men's fashion boutiques. Rolf lost Sara in 1988 and in 1990 made the move to London, where he was joined by Ruth, the partner of his youth. He joined the AJR and lived for some years at the Paul Balint AJR Centre in Cleve Road. Furthermore, in Belsize Square Synagogue he found his spiritual home.

Rolf Weinberg was much more than a decorated war hero. Those privileged to have known him saw in him an upright, generous and loyal friend – forthright, not mincing his words or hiding his opinions. Until the end, he was fighting anti-Semitism and, while he could laugh at a good joke (and tell some himself), he was a serious man, deeply troubled by the state of the world as it is today, as if all his efforts had been in vain. He was especially concerned about Israel and would often confide in me: 'I have done my bit. I cannot do any more. God only knows how it will all end. There are no leaders with vision any more.' The world and the Jewish community have lost a great man.

Rolf survived by Ruth, three sons from his previous marriage, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Walter E. Goddard

INSIDE THE AJR continued from page 13

the history and work of the Bank, which was founded in 1694.

David Lang

Next meeting: 11 Aug. Jenny Manson, 'What It Feels Like to Be Me'

Hendon A talk by a Freeman of the City of London

Retired librarian Andrea Cameron recalled how she became a Freeman of the City of London and then a Liveryman of the Stationers. She is now Hon. Librarian to the Worshipful Company of Stationers.

Shirley Rodwell

Next meeting: 22 Aug. Larry Ross, 'The Jewish Museum'

Cleve Road Jews and mental illness
Prof Gerald Curzon gave us a broad view on

mental illness and the Jewish population over the centuries with particular reference to depression.

David Lang

Next meeting: 30 Aug. Renée Tyack, 'They Called Her Cassandra'

North London

The story of Thomas Cook

Joy Cooper spoke to us on 'Tickets to All Parts of the World' – the story of Thomas Cook. Most fascinating to hear the history of a world-famous enterprise started by one man.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: 25 Aug. 10th anniversary lunch

Glasgow Book Club: A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian

The Glasgow Group is a lively group in a

relatively small Jewish community and the Book Club a very lively group within it. At the home of Halina Moss, we discussed the novel *A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian* by Marina Lewycka. The book was well received for its warmth, humour and humanity despite its title, which is humorous in itself.

Halina Moss

Pinner 13th birthday celebration

At an additional meeting (postponed from December) to celebrate our 13th birthday, we were entertained by Lynn Radnedge, who sang, accompanied on the piano by Michael Heaton.

Paul Samet



LETTER FROM ISRAEL



London, Libya and economics

As an alumna of the London School of Economics, I received the following notification by email at the beginning of March:

'It is with great regret that I am writing to inform you ... that the LSE Council has accepted the offer of resignation of Sir Howard Davies as Director. This follows an extraordinary meeting of the LSE Council yesterday evening. Sir Howard has, at the behest of the Council, agreed to continue to serve as Director whilst arrangements for succession are resolved.

At the same meeting, Council also resolved to commission an independent external inquiry into the School's relationship with Libya, to be chaired by Lord Woolf.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Kirk, Director of
Development and Alumni Relations'

It transpires that not only has the LSE accepted donations from that arch-villain Muamar Gaddafi, but may also have granted a not entirely merited doctorate to his not much less villainous son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. Naturally, as long as the Gaddafis were not openly involved in savagely murdering the unfortunate subjects of Libya, this went unremarked.

But someone spoke out and the matter emerged into the cold light of day.

The whole affair is, of course, very saddening. It is awful to find that the reputation of that august institution, which was founded in 1895 by leading intellectuals of the day (including some Jews) and even played an important role in rescuing academics whose lives were in danger from Nazi persecution in the 1930s, is now tarnished.

I enjoyed the three years I spent at the LSE in the early 1960s, when it was affectionately known as 'The London Shool of Economics' because of the large number of Jewish students there (not to mention members of its teaching staff). I joined the choir and the Jewish and Israel Societies and remember the jolly times we had. These included attending the annual debates held at SOAS, when Arab students would put forward a motion condemning Israel (long before 1967), which was invariably voted down amid much merriment on our part.

By coincidence, a few days ago I attended a reunion of LSE alumni in Israel. We were a motley crowd, some of us leading lawyers or professors, and others, like myself, having had a steady rise to obscurity, but all with

fond recollections of the time we had spent at the LSE. Among those present were Professors Judith Buber-Agassi and Joseph Agassi, who completed their doctorates at the LSE in 1960, he in philosophy, she in sociology. Addressing the audience, the British ambassador assured us that no matter how vociferous the minority in the UK which speaks out against Israel, the British government is steadfast in its support, even though it is not always in agreement with its policies. Calls for boycotts of various kinds are generally countered by government-backed delegations fostering co-operation in trade, research and culture, while the trade links between the two countries have never been more extensive.

Nevertheless, the impression one gains from the British media is that anti-Israel sentiment (and thinly-veiled anti-Semitism) abound in England, especially on university campuses, while London (and much of England) seems to be in thrall to Arab money.

But wealthy people have always funded institutions of higher education, and it is undoubtedly unfair to criticise what universities do to supplement their budgets given the government's funding cuts. When the only person other than Jesus to have colleges named for him at both Oxford and Cambridge is Lord Wolfson, we should be the last to point a finger. But somehow I doubt that Lord Wolfson demanded a doctorate for his son or that university policy should be dictated by him. At least, I sincerely hope he didn't.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *continued from page 7*

considerable courage – much as did the headmaster and staff of my own grammar school after the Anschluss, though they were by no means card-carrying socialists.

The Schottengymnasium, to whose tolerance I have paid tribute in these columns before, was probably the only school in Austria which did not obey the orders of the Nazi authorities to exclude Jewish boys or otherwise discriminate against them, on the thin pretext that they did not have any.

In the course of a general reform of Benedictine monasteries, it had been decided to reinforce the religious character of their schools and one of these measures was to restrict future

access to the schools for Catholic pupils. It took about eight years for the existing non-Catholics to work through the system and the last Protestant and Jewish boys left in the summer of 1936. Thus, when the authorities asked all schools about their Jewish pupils, they replied with a straight face – if one can do so by correspondence – that they didn't have any. (It was rumoured that, in reply to a further enquiry about 'Rassenjuden', they replied that they had no information about their pupils' ancestries. But I cannot vouch for this.)

As a result, we were able to finish the academic year 1937-38 in the normal way, with normal exams and leaving certificates, even though everybody knew

who was involved as none of us wore the ubiquitous HJ badges and, while at official functions we stood to attention like everybody else, we didn't give the Hitler salute. Again to the credit of staff and pupils – although there were Nazis among the boys, including the son of the Nazi governor of Austria, 'Reichsstatthalter' Seyss-Inquart – nobody gave the game away.

At the end of the year, the headmaster and staff suddenly knew very well who the non-Aryan boys were and what help they would need abroad. And such help was freely given, for instance in the form of letters of recommendation. I feel sure Dr Kroeger would have done the same!

F. M. M. Steiner, Deddington, Banbury