

Anglo-Jewry and the Jewish refugees from Nazism

The article and letter by Susanne Medas that appeared in our August 2012 issue prompted a number of responses that raised the important but sensitive question of relations between Anglo-Jewry and the Jewish refugees from Hitler who fled to Britain after 1933. Whereas many refugees retain grateful memories of support and friendship from Anglo-Jewish organisations and individual British Jews, others, like Edith Holden (October 2012, Letters), harbour a continuing sense of grievance at what they see as the lack of assistance proffered to them and their families by Anglo-Jewish organisations. These two opposing points of view reflect a deeper division within the refugee community about its relations with Anglo-Jewry, going back to the reception afforded to the refugees in the 1930s and 1940s by the Jewish community in Britain.

At the institutional level, the response of Anglo-Jewry to the influx of Jews fleeing Nazism was often generous and energetic. Faced with the Nazi threat to its co-religionists in Germany, and later beyond, Anglo-Jewry reacted in the Jewish tradition of establishing communal organisations to provide material aid and financial support to fellow Jews in distress. It made the organisational arrangements to help the Jewish refugees from the Nazi terror, lobbied the British government on their behalf and raised money. In the early months of 1933, leading members of the Anglo-Jewish community, including Anthony de Rothschild, Leonard G. Montefiore and the German-born banker Otto M. Schiff, founded the Central British Fund for German Jewry (now World Jewish Relief) to raise funds for the refugees from Hitler. At the same time, Otto Schiff organised the Jewish Refugees Committee (later German Jewish Aid Committee), which, with the money raised

by the CBF, arranged for the admission of refugees to Britain, their maintenance and employment.

One of the most important contributions that Anglo-Jewry made to the rescue of Jewish refugees from the Reich was to give an undertaking to the British government in 1933 that 'all expense [relating to the refugees], whether in respect of temporary or permanent accommodation or maintenance will be borne by the Jewish community without



Otto M. Schiff, 1875-1952

ultimate charge to the State'. The Jewish community maintained this undertaking for six years, even though the numbers of refugees, and the corresponding expense, vastly exceeded the initial estimate of 3-4,000. Without that undertaking, the British government, intent as ever on preventing immigrants from becoming a burden on the state, would have been even less willing than it was to admit Jewish refugees fleeing Nazism.

As the persecution of the Jews by the Nazis intensified in the late 1930s, Anglo-Jewry increased its efforts on

their behalf. By 1938, the number of organisations dealing with the many aspects of the refugee problem had proliferated, and new premises were found for them in Bloomsbury House, a former hotel in Bloomsbury Street. Here the administrative apparatus was established to cope with the influx of Jews leaving Germany after the 'Crystal Night' pogroms of November 1938, with the arrival of nearly 10,000 unaccompanied children on Kindertransports from December 1938, or with the many thousands of Jews, mainly young women, who came to Britain on domestic service visas. It was on the initiative of Anglo-Jewry that the Kitchener Camp at Richborough, Kent, was set up, to accommodate Jewish men admitted to Britain as 'transmigrants'. British Jews created a nationwide network of refugee committees that assisted the Jews from Germany and Austria, found places for Jewish children at hostels and orphanages, or helped to support the agricultural settlements where young refugees were trained for work in Palestine.

Saving the young was a priority for Anglo-Jewry. On 15 November 1938, a deputation of leading members of the Jewish community, consisting of Viscount Samuel, Viscount Bearsted, Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz, Neville Laski, Lionel de Rothschild and Chaim Weizmann, met Prime Minister Chamberlain and urged him to admit children under the age of 17. A few days later, the Home Secretary made the announcement that initiated the Kindertransports, to which British Jews like Norman Bentwich, Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld and Nicholas Winton contributed so notably.

Yet at the human level of personal contact and social interaction, relations between Anglo-Jewry and the refugees from

↩ Anglo-Jewry and the Jewish refugees from Nazism *continued*

Hitler were not so smooth. The tensions went back to the divide that had opened up at the time of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish Enlightenment of the late eighteenth century, between the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe, which held fast to their traditional beliefs, practices and lifestyle, and the assimilated, secularised communities of German-speaking Central Europe, which had abandoned much of the traditional heritage of Judaism as they integrated into the society of cities like Vienna or Berlin. The latter tended to look down on the 'Ostjuden' as backward and uneducated, while the traditional Jews accused their assimilated cousins of betraying the ancestral faith.

Much of Anglo-Jewry in the 1930s consisted of the descendants of Jews from Eastern Europe who had come to Britain before the First World War, and as a result the friction between Eastern and Central European Jews was to some extent replicated in Britain. There was a sharp difference in social culture between the two groups of Jews. The British descendants of the Jews from the East had tended to settle in areas like London's East End, where poor foreign immigrants clustered, whereas the refugees from Hitler preferred more affluent areas, reflecting their middle-class origins and aspirations.

AJR Information pinpointed this issue as early as July 1948:

In Germany, the Jew was assimilated and belonged to the middle class; even when losing his fortune, he did not become a proletarian but a petty bourgeois. In the London East End he belonged to a Yiddish-speaking proletarian stratum, though, at a later stage, either he or his children managed to improve their position. The dispossessed refugee did not begin at the lowest rung of the ladder in Whitechapel, but, penniless as he was, took his furnished room in Hampstead or other North-Western parts of the town.

The journal commented aptly: 'Many misunderstandings between the refugees from Germany and other sections of the Anglo-Jewish community may be explained by this different background.'

In his unpublished autobiography, Werner Rosenstock, long-serving General Secretary of the AJR and Editor of its journal, related his encounter with a poor Anglo-Jewish family from the East End; it encapsulated that divide in social class and lifestyle, in Jewishness and

religious observance. After the pogroms of November 1938, the family had taken in a young refugee girl. Expecting 'a downtrodden impoverished child', they were surprised when their guest arrived with several cases full of expensive clothing. Her first request was for a hot bath – in a house that probably had no proper bathroom. Worse still, when the family sat down to the Friday evening meal, the girl had never heard the Sabbath blessings. The family, Rosenstock wrote, was outraged: 'There we are told of the poor Jews in Germany, who are persecuted because they are Jews, and now we learn to our dismay that they still lived in comfort and had no Jewish bonds though their Jewishness was the reason of their plight.'

Anglo-Jewry also saw the security of its position in Britain, recently established and still fragile, endangered by the fresh influx of Jews from Germany and Austria. These foreigners, it feared, could all too easily inflame the anti-Semitism that lurked in certain sections of British society. That sense of insecurity came out clearly in the brochure 'Helpful Information and Guidance for Every Refugee', distributed to refugees by the Jewish Board of Deputies and the German Jewish Aid Committee, both Anglo-Jewish organisations. It urged the newcomers – in terms that many found demeaning – to modify their behaviour so as to avoid giving offence to the British and, by implication, jeopardising the precarious position of the entire Jewish community.

Relations between individual refugees and British Jews could also be difficult, and were sometimes publicised in *AJR Information*. A dramatic example was the experience of the writer and historian C. C. Aronsfeld, who recalled in

AJR Chief Executive
Michael Newman

Directors
Carol Rossen
David Kaye

Head of Department
Sue Kurlander *Social Services*

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

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

DigiBaeck

German-Jewish history online

A new website provides millions of photographs and documents on the history of German-speaking Jewry.

The Leo Baeck Institute has launched a free digital version of its archive documenting 500 years of German-speaking Jewish history.

The project, named **DigiBaeck** (www.lbi.org/digibaek), offers a digital gateway to the Leo Baeck Institute's growing collections. It already includes 3.5 million pages of material that ranges from the personal papers and photographs of luminaries such as Albert Einstein and Moses Mendelssohn to letters, diaries, recipes and other ephemera chronicling the lives of everyday people over five centuries.

DigiBaeck provides instant access to materials ranging from rare 16th century renaissance books to memoirs that document the experience of German-Jewish émigrés across the world in the 20th century.

February 1952 how in the mid-1930s he had incurred the wrath of his employer, an Anglo-Jewish tailor and pillar of the local refugees committee in Leeds. Aronsfeld's offence had been to publish an article in a German-Jewish periodical, an activity that the employer considered so unsuitable for a mere factory hand that he threatened to have Aronsfeld sent back to Germany.

Similar incidents crop up in interviews with refugee domestic servants, who were largely defenceless against their employers. One, for example, was threatened with deportation to Germany, while another was forced to scrub the floors before being allowed to leave her employers, something, she recalled bitterly, that not even the Nazis in her native Vienna had forced on her. Domestic servants were, on balance, treated no worse in Anglo-Jewish households than they were in British ones. But cases of poor treatment by co-religionists, from whom Jewish refugees might have expected better, have lived on in their memories, colouring their attitude to Anglo-Jewry to this day.

Anthony Grenville

The AJR Paul Balint Centre

at Belsize Square Synagogue

51 Belsize Square, London NW3 4HX

Telephone 020 7431 2744

Open Tuesdays and Thursdays – 9.30 am to 3.30 pm

Activities December 2012

Lunch is served at 12.30 unless otherwise stated

Tuesday 4 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
- 10.45 Seated Exercises with Jacky
- 13.45 Entertainer – Will Smith (singer)

Thursday 6 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation
- 10.45 'Let's Read and Discuss'
- 11.15 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- 13.45 Entertainer – Judith Bornstein (singer)

Tuesday 11 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
 - 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
 - 10.45 Seated Exercises with Jacky
 - 11.30 Current Affairs Discussion Group
- KT Chanukah Party**
(reservations required – please telephone 020 7431 2744)

Thursday 13 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
 - 11.15 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- AJR Chanukah Party**
(reservations required – please telephone 020 7431 2744)
- 13.45 Entertainment – Israeli Dance Institute

Tuesday 18 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
- 10.45 Seated Exercises with Jacky
- 13.45 Entertainer – Margaret Opdahl (singer)

Thursday 20 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation
- 10.45 'Let's Read and Discuss'
- 11.15 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- 12.00 Discussion: 'AJR Centre Activities'
- 12.45 Lunch

Tuesday 25 December Centre closed

Thursday 27 December

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation
- 10.45 'Let's Read and Discuss'
- 11.15 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- 13.45 Royal Britannia – entertainment with Lynn and Michael

Tuesday 1 January 2013 Centre closed

THE AJR PAUL BALINT CENTRE – LUNCHESES FRESHLY PREPARED

Please note that lunches at the Centre are freshly prepared on the premises by our in-house chef Cassie

MEALS-ON-WHEELS

To order Meals-on-Wheels
please telephone 020 8385 3075

(this number is manned on Wednesdays only) or 020 8385 3070



Current Affairs Discussion Group

Every Second and Fourth Tuesday of the Month
11.30 at the AJR Centre

Why not join us for lunch after the session?

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 10 January 2013
1.30 at the AJR Centre

'In Grandmother's Footsteps'

An afternoon of poetry with
actress Shirley Jaffe

Shirley tells stories relevant to all of us, in verse.
Copies of all the poems can be borrowed
so that we can follow as she reads.

*Why not join us for lunch at 12.30
and make a day of it?*

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 29 January 2013
1.30 at the AJR Centre

Join us for lunch at 12.30 then enjoy a wonderful
concert with

The Broadside Barbershop Quartet

and

Compere Dr Richard Tennenbaum, who will also
sing Operatic Arias

Chiropodist at the Centre

The chiropodist will next be visiting us
on Tuesday 4 December
9.30 – 12.30

For an appointment please telephone 020 7431 2744

REFUGEES FROM IRAN

There were Anglo-Jewish refugees both before and after the terrible events of the 1930-40s. Some of my ancestors fled from Spain around 500 years ago and ended up in this country some 350 years ago from Holland. Other ancestors fled from Poland around 150 years ago. Some, I believe, even came from Ireland. How they got there, I don't know.

As far as I know, none of my relations suffered in those terrible years except with regard to their experiences in the Blitz and 'For King and Country'. All my stepmother's family who remained in mainland Europe were murdered.

My wife was born in Iran. Her ancestors were refugees from Israel, thanks to the Romans. She has been in this country 50 years and was herself a refugee of sorts, having escaped from arranged family marriages which were *de rigueur* in Jewish families in Iran in those days. Her grandmother married her uncle when she was 11. She had her first child when she was 13.

I met my wife at the London Jewish Hospital in Stepney Green, London, where she was training to be a nurse. My father had met my mother there when she was training to be a nurse. It is long gone.

My wife's family came over to the UK to have a look at their prospective son-in-law. They weren't at all keen on their daughter marrying an unknown foreigner, who practised a strange religion called 'Reform', played a strange game called rugby, and wasted his substance on racing cars (and still does – plus racing motor bikes)! But at least he was a lawyer. Later events proved it wasn't such a bad idea as far as they were concerned.

My brother married a girl from Ealing, west London. Her grandfather was from Iran but had hardly ever lived there. Her father is English and her mother was from Holland; all her family who remained in mainland Europe were murdered by the Nazis. The Iranian family were in the medical profession when they lived there, being doctors to the then Shahs.

In the late 1960s my brother's father-in-law and his wife decided to visit Iran for the first time to see the country and relations who still lived there. My wife's family were at the airport to welcome them. While there they spotted some of their relatives and asked whom they were waiting for. It turned out they were

waiting to welcome the same people. Then the penny (or rial) dropped. My wife's great-grandfather and my sister-in-law's great-grandfather were brothers, or they had the same great-great-grandfather. Maybe not such a surprise. I lived in Tehran for two years, and it seemed to me that every Jewish family in Tehran was related one way or another.

Strangely enough, when I was there, large numbers of Israelis lived in Iran. They all seemed to be working for companies that didn't ever do very much. Of course, most of them were working for Israeli intelligence or were

My wife's family and many other Jews remained, thinking things would 'blow over'. Shades of 1930s Germany. Things didn't blow over ... But at least there was a way out if they wanted, with little or nothing, and there were countries that would take them. Including Israel, of course, France, the USA, the UK and, ironically, Germany.

military advisers. A good friend of mine worked for El Al maintenance – a front for the Mossad.

Then, in 1979, there was the revolution in Iran and that was substantially the end of 2,000 years of a Jewish way of life. Many of the Jewish population had been spirited out to Israel in the 1950s and 1960s by the much lamented Hugo Gryn and his team, but a large number of, I suppose, middle-class Jews remained.

My wife, children and I think most of the Israelis left a short time before it all happened – yes, the children can speak Farsi. At the end, non-Iranian friends of mine got out in the clothes in which they stood up. Some Iranian friends (not necessarily Jewish) were lined up against walls and shot.

So far as I know, there was and is no question of large-scale death camps for Jews or anyone else, but there was considerable discrimination against Jews and no one knew how bad it was

going to get.

My wife's family and many other Jews remained, thinking things would 'blow over'. Shades of 1930s Germany. Things *didn't* blow over. There were so-called revolutionary guards everywhere, many of them just kids with AK 47s who could do what they liked. They were less than sympathetic to Jews. Shades of the SA. But at least there was a way out if they wanted, with little or nothing, and there were countries that would take them. Including Israel, of course, France, the USA, the UK and, ironically, Germany.

I knew some of the family were coming over (fleeing Iran), but I remember arriving home from the office one evening and finding the house full of Iranians and carpets. For some reason, the only thing they could take with them when they fled was a few carpets. For years the house was full of beautiful Persian carpets – until the rightful owners eventually took them away. For a considerable time home was a refugee camp.

Some moved on to Los Angeles – or 'Tehrangeles' as part is now called. Some remained in this country and some went to Israel.

Soon it was impossible to get out of Iran and some of the extended families were still there. Some had become Bahais in the early 20th century. To the Muslims the Bahais are the unforgiven. Two were arrested and shot. One relation tried to escape with some friends across the border into Pakistan. They bribed border guards to take them across. At the border, the guards opened fire. He was shot and literally fell over the border. He came round in a Pakistani hospital. His life was saved by Pakistani doctors. He is now in America. He never heard of his friends again.

As many as possible of the children were smuggled out. Boys of all religions as young as 12 or 13 were being recruited into the army to fight the Iraqis. They were given plastic keys and told they were the keys to heaven and they should go and die for their country. Many did just that. During the war with Iraq, Tehran and other cities were quite badly bombed. Many died.

Things have now improved a little and, in theory, you can come and go but, so far, none of the family, including myself, have dared to try. I would like to visit. It's a breathtaking country. Believe it or not, the skiing was and,

continued opposite ➔

BUT STATUES DON'T TALK ...

The author wrote this article after a recent visit to Vienna (Ed.).

I see an old man in the square bent over kneeling on the ground. I rush over to help him and shout 'Are you all right? One moment and I'll help you stand!'

There I am looking, searching for a response, but he doesn't move. In his hand he's holding a small scrubbing brush. Once again I shout 'Are you all right? Let me help you!', but no response. I bend down and look into his face. His eyes meet mine and I notice his are full of sadness. I see a tear. A tear frozen in time. His lips are tightly closed, not uttering a sound. His face is distorted with pain.

Suddenly his lips do move. He looks at me and recognises me as one of his kind. A Jew. He recounts his story. A story of a

million Jews. A story of a lost generation. A story of incredible cruelty. He tells me how they shaved his beard and head. How they called him 'Judenschwein'. How they forced him out of his house and burnt his home, fetched him in the darkness of the night. How he and his family were flung into a cattle truck and taken to a place unknown to all. He told me how he was then parted from his family. He went to the right, they went to the left. As they parted they shouted 'We'll meet again soon.'

But that was not to be. He worked. They beat him. He begged for mercy. They beat him. He pleaded. They beat him. He pleaded – and they beat him even harder. He raised his head in the hope of finding pity in their eyes. As he did this he looked at the skies and in

the distance saw they were ablaze with colour. The blues, greys, yellows and reds intermingled with every shade of white. How beautiful, he thought – but then he saw the chimneys bellowing forth smoke. The smoke of the innocent, that of so many. He fell to the ground and they dragged him away to meet his destiny.

I listened unable to control my tears: tears of grief, a quiet sadness which enveloped me. A sadness for all those unable to say *Kaddish*, a sadness from which I knew that as long as I lived there would be no escape. I wanted to embrace this old man and wipe away his tear but realised the tear would be there for eternity. It was the tear of the millions expressed by one sole statue 'Frozen in Time'.

Ruth Schwiening (née Auerbach)

A motoring adventure

It was a beautiful summer's day and I was having a number of new experiences. For one thing, I was in the back seat of a motor car with the wind blowing in my hair and we were speeding through the Vienna Woods with the sun flashing through the pine canopy. I'd never been in a car before and I must say it was exciting.

Not only that, but it was a very posh car. An open-topped American car, called a Graham. Open cars are fun. This one was even more so, as the year was 1938 and there were very few cars around. My nurse, Rosina, the daughter of the caretaker in the flats where we dwelt, was looking after me while my mother was working. Her boyfriend had asked her to come for a spin in the car and she had agreed, subject to the seat I was sitting in being available for her charge. I instinctively knew I must sit quietly at the back and not disturb the grown-up conversation of the driver in the front seat and his passenger.

The boyfriend was very smartly dressed. He wore a brown battledress, quite plain except for his left arm, which carried an armband of an attractive bright red colour with a white circular patch carrying a jet black symbol. He was obviously a member of the group of people who were very important now we had become members of the Great German Empire. He had been very kind to me when we met him and it was he who had picked me up and installed me carefully in the seat I was currently occupying. He seemed a very nice man and very clever too for, after helping Rosina into the passenger seat, he moved into the driver's seat and started effortlessly to set the wonderful vehicle into motion.

It wasn't until a few minutes had elapsed that I began to feel it – a sort of queasy feeling in my stomach and a dizziness in the head. I swallowed and it went away but then it returned again, this time higher up in my throat. As the car bumped along, I became more

and more uncomfortable. Things were bubbling up inside me and swallowing continually didn't help. In the end, I gave in and allowed it to happen. I was violently car-sick, all over the beautiful leather-covered seat.

It was cleared up, of course, and they never chided me for it. Rosina handed me over to my mother when she returned from work with a brief description of what had happened. To my surprise, she didn't tell me off either. I felt guilty.

The rest, of course, is history. Within weeks of the event Rosina had to stop looking after me as Jews were not allowed to employ non-Jews. Within months I escaped to the safety of England with my mother. Years later we learned that Rosina's boyfriend and his colleagues had murdered 6 million Jews and that one-and-a-half million of these had been children. Most of them had done less to offend their persecutors than I had. I was lucky.

Frank Beck



Refugees from Iran *cont.*

I believe still is, very good. But then it was pretty good in Germany and Austria in the 1930s. Some of the older generation would like to go home but, like Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria etc in 1945, home no longer exists.

I understand that as long as any remaining Jews have had nothing to do with Israel and Zionism, life can be lived. Those that did have either fled or 'disappeared'. Some of the family are

still there, but we hear very little of what may really be happening. Maybe what did happen and is happening in Iran (and now in many other parts of the world) is at least as despicable as what happened in Europe in the 1930s-40s since it is being done in the name of the same God of the great religions of the world. At least Hitler didn't call on the name of God to justify his actions.

I suppose there is one benefit from all this. To a large extent, outside Iran,

arranged inter-family marriages to relatives are a thing of the past.

Reading your magazine, I am surprised that your correspondents refer to their relations and friends as disappearing, perishing, being deported, being deported to the death camps, going to the gas chambers, starving to death, dying of disease. Perhaps I am guilty as well. Were they not all murdered, pure and simple?

Mark Finburgh



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

RICHARD TAUBER AND I

Sir – My heart missed a beat when I saw the photograph of Richard Tauber in the *AJR Journal* in your October issue. Whose wouldn't, on seeing the face of the man who gave you your first kiss when you were 17 years old!

From a distance of 68 years, it seems unbelievable, but fortunately I recorded it in my diary at the time. It tells me that, on 21 February 1945, I went to hear Richard Tauber sing at the New Theatre in Oxford and, after the performance, I joined a long queue of people outside the stage door all waiting to get his autograph, probably as enthusiastic autograph-hunters as I was. At last, my turn came. I was ushered in and a moment later I was face to face with my idol. I handed him pen and paper and he signed his name, barely looking up.

'I'm from Vienna too,' I said, when I found my tongue. He smiled and said he was delighted to meet someone from Vienna. And that was how I came to receive my first kiss.

My zealous autograph-hunting acquainted me with many celebrities – Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, Anna Neagle and Herbert Wilcox, Anton Walbrook, Daphne du Maurier, Howard Spring, Michael Redgrave, Yehudi Menuhin, Cecil Roth, Carl Yung – but none of them is as indelibly etched in my memory. How *could* they be?

Inga Joseph, Sheffield

A QUESTION OF INSIGNIAS

Sir – I wonder whether any reader can identify German-Jewish student associations (*Burschenschaften*) from the colours of their insignias. I still have two different ones that belonged to my father.

How did he come to join two associations? At Freiburg in 1908 he was approached by student recruiters. Being an innocent from a small town (Glogau) and flattered by their interest, he agreed to join without enquiring much. It turned out to be a Zionist association. At that time, Zionism had very little support in Germany. In the assimilationist circle of his parents, he had to suffer much teasing. They even composed an outrageously ill-rhymed comic song which was sung on family

occasions. That was the custom in those pre-TV days. I still remember the refrain: 'Und so steigt man immer höher/bis man wird ein Makabäer.' The next semester he escaped and joined a non-Zionist duelling *Burschenschaft*.

I would like to identify these two associations and find out more about them. Insignia no. 1 is dated 1908 and has a two-stripe ribbon in yellow and magenta and elaborately scrolled letters, probably JE. Insignia no. 2 is dated 1908-9 and has a three-stripe ribbon in magenta, white, magenta; the middle colour may have faded from yellow; the scrolled letters appear to be EVJ or EUJ.

Peter Fraenkel, London EC2

MORE THAN ONE IDENTITY

Sir – Peter Phillips (October, Letters) was three years old when his parents brought him to England. It is in this country in which he has grown up and lives. That is completely different from coming here as a teenager on the Kindertransport. If Mr Phillips had the understanding to take that into account, he would not so high-handedly condemn Eric Bourne's attachment to his 'Heimat'.

I was born in Munich and came to this country at the age of 14. I am at home here. *But* I also identify with my Munich childhood. I have described myself on one of my visits back there as 'eine bayrisch-jüdische Britin' and here as a 'Bavarian-Jewish Brit'.

Most of us have more than one identity. Has Mr Phillips missed out on it?

Bea Green, London SW13

FROM THERESIENSTADT TO SWITZERLAND

Sir – Mrs Margarete Stern's letter (August) raised my immediate interest. Similar to her father's stepmother, my paternal grandmother, Blanca Graff, was one of the 1,200 people who risked their lives and accepted an offer to leave Theresienstadt. One train only left and the volunteers did not know if it would go east to extermination or west to freedom. For my grandmother, the risk was worth it: her husband, Benno, had already died of starvation in the camp and her son (Werner, my father) and his wife (Mary, my mother) had managed to emigrate

to Australia. Her dream of being reunited with her family was worth all.

Blanca was number 406 to volunteer (I have her letter). The train went through Prague to Constance to Kreuzlingen to St Gallen, where they stayed for eight days, to Montreux, to Les Avants and finally to Engelberg. Blanca was one of 100 people to be accommodated at the Hotel Titlis. Her letters of happiness are heartbreaking. She comments on how she could not believe how well the Swiss treated them: with concern and kindness, with human warmth, concerts and film nights – and checking on their welfare should they not be participating. She comments on what bright colours there were in food and nature, how good it was to eat wholesome, well-prepared food, and even to sleep in a bed again!

That dark chapter ended when Werner Rosenstock, one of your past editors and a former youth group member of the Deutsch-Jüdischer Jugendbund, which my father had led in Berlin, read Blanca's name on a Red Cross list of displaced persons and wrote to my parents that Blanca had survived. She stayed in Engelberg for another year, supported financially by my parents, while they saved enough money to bring her to Australia. She arrived on 7 March 1946, 13 days before I was born! Life and family were recreated.

Do any of your readers have further information on the train trip or Engelberg? I have enquired at the Engelberg Shire Council but was told that the Hotel Titlis burned down a few years ago and, with it, all its history.

Thank you for your wonderful journal, which we look forward to reading each month.

Dorothy Graff, Melbourne, Australia

THANK YOU, BLOOMSBURY HOUSE

Sir – I must join Susanne Medas (August, Letters) in praising Bloomsbury House and its volunteers. They were wonderful to me and I will be forever grateful for how much they helped me.

I was 13 when in April 1939 I came to England with the Kindertransport. I had two sisters who came to England two months before me. One was ten years older than I, the other seven years older. I went to stay with a non-Jewish family and my sisters had to work as domestics. The family I was with were very kind to me but it all came to an end when France fell and my sisters were interned. They were very worried as, of course, they had no idea how long the war would last and what could happen to me in the meantime.

My sisters got in touch with Bloomsbury House for advice. They told them they were sending children to their mothers and, if they agreed, they could do the same for me with my sisters. Of course my

sisters were delighted to be able to keep an eye on their 14-year-old sibling and so I came to Port Erin in the Isle of Man to live with another 4,000 women. No doubt, had I been older, having so many women around me would have driven me mad! But everybody made such a fuss of me and things weren't too bad.

My middle sister was released earlier because she had married just before being interned and her husband had joined the Pioneer Corps and was stationed in Cirencester, Gloucestershire. My elder sister and I stayed in the Isle of Man for about five months. Then we were released and made our way to Cirencester to be with our other sister. Things were rather tough at the beginning: we couldn't find a flat for all of us so we had to rent rooms in different houses.

Before I left Vienna my mother had always told me I must learn a trade and the only apprenticeship I could get in Cirencester was hairdressing – which I hated – and the wages wouldn't even pay the rent. So Bloomsbury House came to the rescue and paid ten shillings a week for three years for my accommodation. We stayed in Cirencester until 1944 and then moved to London. As fate would have it, we found a flat near Ladbroke Grove. The owner was a lovely lady from Romania who had ten children, all grown up and in the Forces, so she had plenty of room. I was then 18 and one day a lovely young man in RAF uniform came home on leave. He was one of our landlady's sons – and that was it! To cut a long story short, we started dating and decided to get married.

But there was a problem: at the time you had to be 21 or receive permission from your parents to get married. But alas, my poor parents never lived to see that day. We didn't know what to do so my sisters contacted Bloomsbury House for advice. As usual, they were so helpful and they sent a Jewish worker to check on my future husband's family. It so happens that my future mother-in-law knew the social worker very well as they had both lived in Notting Hill for a few years. She had only good things to say about the family and said that my future husband was a charming, reliable young man who would make a good husband. The court got the papers from Bloomsbury House and I was granted permission to marry.

Fast-forward 67 years and I have three children, seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. My husband is 91 and I am 86 and we enjoy our close-knit family so much. We see each other constantly as we all live very close to one another. Had I not received permission from the court, who knows how my life would have turned out! So, thank you, Bloomsbury House: the last 67 years of married life have been very good – and

here's hoping for a few more!

*Sonja Arnold (née Breindler),
Bushey Heath*

Sir – This is a kind of postscript to Fritz Lustig's letter in the October issue.

I obviously knew Professor Robert and Mrs Sybil Hutton in my Cambridge days, although I was not aware of their domestic arrangements. Mrs Hutton dealt with the adults on the Cambridge Refugee Committee while Mrs Burkill took charge of the juveniles. Professor Hutton was a prominent member of the Cambridge Allocation Committee of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning. Hence my acquaintance with him.

*(Mrs) Ilse J. Eton (née Ursell),
London NW11*

BLIND PREJUDICE

Sir – One of your correspondents mentioned the town of Boston in Lincolnshire. This brought back a memory from my stay at a 1957 refugee camp in Skegness.

I was awoken in the middle of the night and asked to accompany a fellow refugee from Hungary in an ambulance and translate for him. Evidently there was a bullet left in him from the 1956 revolution which was now causing him excruciating pain. This did not stop him demanding from me that no black doctor should touch him. I still wonder where he acquired this prejudice as coloured people were virtually unknown in Hungary at the time. We arrived safely at the hospital in Boston and, as times were different then, a doctor attended to him straight away. The colour of the doctor seeing to him, I will let you guess

Janos Fisher, Bushey Heath

ISRAEL AND THE UN

Sir – Alan S. Kaye (November, Letters) queries the UN vote on partition on the grounds that it would not pass today in a larger UN. I wonder how many other countries, subjected to Mr Kaye's *ex post facto* scrutiny, would pass such a test. Most countries are products of their time – the constituent parts of the UK have been in various relationships over history and may now mutate again in 2014. Why should Israel alone be subject to Mr Kaye's odd version of the double jeopardy rule?

His analogy between Herzl's Zionism and European empire-building is breathtaking in its *chutzpah* when you remember that Zionism, if taken as a product of its time, is usually, and more correctly, seen as analogous to the contemporaneous *anti-imperial* nationalisms of peoples like the Czechs.

It is something of a relief to find he acknowledges the reality of Israel, but I am unclear as to what is the 'better perspective' that is 'the essential

requirement of moves towards a civilised solution'. He would, I imagine, agree that such a perspective needs to be based on a realistic assessment of history such as his letter signally fails to supply.

I pass on whether 'nationalism, anywhere, is the curse of, and a burden on, the modern world' largely because, while, like all such sweeping generalisations, it probably contains some truth, I nevertheless can't fault those Czechs I mentioned above who wanted to extricate themselves from Austria-Hungary, nor the various peoples who did the same *vis à vis* the Ottomans, and later of course the British. Indeed, I don't even have any particular problem with Palestinian nationalism so long as it is able to reach an accommodation with Israel.

As for Mr Kaye's conclusion, clearly there is nothing inconsistent in being 'Yankee or Russian' and also accepting that 'a man is just a man' or even that 'We're all brothers and we're only passing through'. But his reference to Pete Seeger reminded me of footage of the singer launching into a rousing version of *Tzene Tzene* – introducing it as a song 'from the new country of Israel' without seeming disapprobation.

Mark Schuck, London N12

Sir – Alan Kaye claims that Dorothea Shefer-Vanson doesn't understand certain historical events and their implications, that Israel's existence is not in accordance with the law, and that Israel does not conform to established standards of behaviour. Furthermore, he says that Israel needs to adopt a better perspective towards a civilised solution. That's in spite of Israel finding itself in a distinctly *uncivilised* region, in a sea of backwardness and violence. To me, this sounds no different from those who are seeking to delegitimise the Jewish state whom Ms Shefer-Vanson touches on in her article. It is not something one would have expected to find in a journal which is read by survivors from Nazism as well as Holocaust survivors.

Mr Kaye dismisses the Balfour Declaration as merely 'the political view of the then British government and [it] did not purport to go further.' He is wrong: it *did* go further. The San Remo Conference of 1920 was convened to decide on the former territories of the Ottoman Empire. The Great Powers assigned the Mandate to Britain with the aim of implementing the Balfour Declaration, i.e. to facilitate the formation of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, which at that time included the territory that is today Jordan. Taking this into account, plus the West Bank and Gaza, Israel is in possession of only about a quarter of the territory of Palestine that the Balfour

continued on page 16 ➔

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Throughout the ages bronze has suggested antiquity, mythology, durability. Whether it's an Olympic bronze medal or a work by Michaelangelo, the alloy itself has a mystique evident in the **Royal Academy's** current exhibition, **Bronze** (to 9 December 2012). The exhibition offers a variety of examples, from *bas reliefs* by **Matisse** to huge incense burners. The works span 5,000 years and include archaeological excavations from the Greek, Roman and Etruscan periods



The Chariot of the Sun Trundholm, Zealand, Early Bronze Age, Fourteenth Century BCE, bronze and gold, National Museum, Copenhagen, photo Roberto Fortuna & Kira Ursem, The National Museum of Denmark

to medieval art.

There are Greek gods lined up crowned in laurel; a Bacchus, after **Michelangelo's** *Dionysus*, is adorned with grapes; and the imposing head of *Seuthes III*, a king of Thrace from the early Hellenistic period, was found in Bulgaria as recently as 2004.

But there is also a line-up of South-East Asian images. One north Indian Buddha survives from the earliest times of Buddhist artistic imagery, probably from the late sixth century, the hands making symbolic gestures and the face beneath the elaborate headgear radiating peace.

Celebrated Renaissance sculptures by **Ghiberti**, **Donatello** and **Cellini**, and works by nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists **Rodin**, **Matisse**, **Picasso**, **Moore** and **Koons**, are on show alongside more contemporary works by **Louise**

Bourgeois and Anish Kapoor.

What is exciting is to discover the processes involved in bronze casting. Bronze is an alloy comprising copper, tin, zinc and lead, versatile enough to yield various uses over the centuries. The common casting method is the lost wax process, where a clay model is coated in a layer of wax and then covered with a plaster mould. The mould is heated until the wax melts and molten bronze is poured into the gap left behind. Chiselling, polishing and acid treatments follow to generate different patinas and other details can be added.

But far from inviting you in, the poster boy for the exhibition is shown in mid-shriek – mouth a yawning cavern, eyes dilated. He was created in the early 18th century by **Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi**, inspired by **Bernini's** *Damned Soul*.

Two powerful images captivate you as you enter. One is a life-sized *Dancing*

Satyr from the 4th century BCE discovered in 1998 off the coast of Sicily by fishermen who had found its left leg the previous year. The other image is a trio of austere statues: *St John the Baptist* preaching to a Levite and a Pharisee by **Giovanni Francesco Rustici**. St John is clearly in control with his pointing

finger and authoritative stance, while the other two nod reflectively. There is a barely perceptible Hebrew transcription on their pedestals.

The exhibition is a feast for the historical imagination: a full-sized head of a Jewess from Algiers by **Charles Henri Joseph Cordier** was made in 1862 in part gilt and part bronze.

Some of the oldest pieces – tiny religious objects – were discovered at Nahal Mishmar in a cave in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea. A stunning *Chariot of the Sun*, in which a unicorn pulls a massive globe on wheels, contrasts with a rather terrifying *Chimera of Arezzo*, an Etruscan bronze from 400 BCE. It is a roaring lion with a snake for a tail and what appears to be a goat emerging from its back. Magical realism dates back a long way!

REVIEWS

Law of the jungle

ORDERLY AND HUMANE: THE EXPULSION OF THE GERMANS AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

by R. M. Douglas

Yale University Press, 2012,
416 pp. hard cover, illustrated,
ISBN 9780300166606

This is the ghastly story of how millions of ethnic Germans were forcibly expelled from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania after the Second World War – a story that is very well documented in Germany but virtually unknown outside that country. I came across it on reading the review of this book by Max Hastings in the *Sunday Times* and was appalled by some claims he made: 15 million expelled, with at least half a million dead, in conditions 'entirely comparable with recent Jewish experience at Nazi hands, save that the victims were not gassed.' Further, 'former Nazi concentration camps including Auschwitz had been reactivated for almost equally ghastly purposes.' The review was accompanied by a photograph bearing the caption 'Desperate children evacuated from Berlin by the British in 1946 look for their families.' There seemed something phoney about both the caption and the picture, which showed a group of well-dressed and well-fed children, not in the least desperate, accompanied by three adult women, one of them smiling, and with the soldier's uniform looking anything but British! I determined to discover the truth by reading the book. The photograph was not in it

The author of the book, a well regarded American historian, has written a scholarly and extremely well-researched and documented account of the post-war expulsions. However, he makes it crystal clear, even in his introduction, that, despite some similarities, 'no legitimate comparisons can be drawn between the post-war expulsions and the appalling record of German offenses against Jews and other innocent victims between 1939 and 1945. The extent of Nazi criminality and brutality in central and eastern Europe is on such a scale and of a degree that is almost impossible to overstate. In the entire span of human history, nothing can be found to surpass it ... or to equal it.'

So much, then, for Max Hastings's

claims. The term 'orderly and humane' was coined by the Potsdam Agreement between the 'big three' in 1945. It was, however, a forlorn hope and the countries that were determined to rid themselves of ethnic Germans (primarily Poland and Czechoslovakia but also Hungary and Romania) had already taken the law into their own hands with the so-called 'wild expulsions'. These were admittedly unofficial but none of the governments made any serious attempts to curb or control them. Thus local people and militias dealt out their own form of 'justice', essentially taking revenge for years of incredible hardship and privation under the Nazi yoke, to which most ethnic Germans had at the very least acquiesced and often contributed. Germans were forced out of their homes, often beaten, raped, and killed, with hundreds of thousands forced into vastly overcrowded and disease-ridden detention/assembly camps, some of which were reconstituted Nazi concentration camps. There they were ill-fed and brutally treated, and many succumbed to malnourishment and disease before they were transported back to Germany or Austria in overcrowded freight wagons that were wholly unsuited for the transportation over long distances of mainly women, children and the elderly. Thus many died en route after interminable journeys. In this respect, there was indeed some similarity between the methods that the Germans had adopted for the transportation of Jews – but the intended destinations were very different.

These wild expulsions had been encouraged by the determination of the Germans to continue fighting up to and even after VE Day, thus enraging the local population still further and leading to blind and brutal retaliation. One instance in Czechoslovakia in which British prisoners-of-war tried, unsuccessfully, to intervene, is recorded. It was the law of the jungle, a tidal wave of violence that could not have been arrested by the local 'authorities' even if the will had been there. The *Manchester Guardian* published accounts that described the Czechs as adopting methods 'hardly distinguishable from those of Fascism'. Visits by the International Red Cross were strictly limited and stage-managed. In Poland, one camp commandant was a 23-year-old Jew who had survived a concentration camp and who, with a crew of 17-20-year-old soldiers, ran a camp with the utmost brutality. Subsequent attempts to try him for crimes against humanity failed, and an

even later attempt, in 1990, to indict him led him to flee to Israel, where the Ministry of Justice found that there was no case against him, despite a lengthy dossier of evidence that had been prepared in Poland.

The only country that had considered even as early as 1942 the logistical implications of inevitable mass movements of populations after the war was Britain but, when it came to the crunch, all good intentions were swept aside by the scale of the problem and the rapidly unfolding events. The so-called 'organised expulsions', which began after the Allied Control Council Expulsion Agreement of November 1945, were almost equally chaotic. Trains with up to 1,500 passengers left Poland and Czechoslovakia in dire conditions and with very little notice given to the expellees, some of whom died en route from malnourishment, disease and, in some cases, hypothermia. Matters were complicated because one train from Poland contained Polish Jews who were passed off as ethnic Germans by the Polish authorities, destined for the American Zone for onward transmission to Palestine – an opportunity to rid the country of unwelcome citizens. At one point, the British Foreign Office threatened the Polish government with a total suspension of operations but the notorious ambassador in Warsaw, Cavendish-Bentinck, pleaded the Polish case on the grounds that Western concepts of human rights could not be applied to Slavs!

It is impossible here to do justice to the suffering and hardship the expulsions caused. Both the American and British Zones could barely cope with the constant arrival of trains, their passengers in bad health and often diseased. As for western Germany, which, together with Austria, was the final destination: its cities were in ruins and its population destitute, short of accommodation, and highly traumatised. That millions of returned ethnic Germans were eventually accommodated and absorbed into German society is nothing short of a miracle.

The expulsions came to an end in late 1947. The Western Allies were 'rueful' and recommended that 'the Control Council declare its opposition to all future compulsory population transfers.' Alas, ethnic cleansing has nonetheless taken place in many parts of the world in recent times.

Douglas concludes by summarising why, even today, the expulsions are defended by some: first, the hatred of the Volksdeutsche by their non-

German neighbours; second, the need to prevent future conflicts; third, just punishment of the Germans for their atrocious conduct before and during the war. He claims that none of these stands up to closer examination. Whilst all three statements are undoubtedly correct they clearly do not provide a moral justification for what transpired. The lesson drawn by the author is that 'if such operations cannot be carried out without brutality, injustice and needless suffering, they cannot be carried out at all.' Who would disagree?

Leslie Baruch Brent

Story of a remarkable family GOOD LIVING STREET: THE FORTUNES OF MY VIENNESE FAMILY by Tim Bonyhady

Allen & Unwin 2012, hardback 464 pp., illustrated, ISBN 978-1743310045

The title of this book is a translation of Wohllebengasse, an appropriately named elegant street in Vienna just off The Ring. For many years it was the home of the Gallias, great-grandparents of Tim Bonyhady, an established Australian historian and author. Not only were the Gallias one of the most prosperous Jewish families in pre-1914 Vienna, but they were also among the greatest patrons of the arts. Moritz and Hermine Gallia collected and commissioned the finest art, both in the form of paintings and in the various products of the fashionable Wiener Werkstätte; Moritz actually became a director of the latter. The book describes in considerable detail the family's art collections and their connections with leaders in the art and music world. Hermine actually sat for a portrait by Klimt. Entries in their diaries reveal the many operas, operettas and plays members of the family attended.

The book traces the family back to the mid-19th century and, in particular, covers the lives and descendants of Moritz Gallia and his niece Hermine Gallia, who later became his wife. They were among the thousands of Jews who came to Vienna following the easing of restrictions under the rule of Emperor Franz Josef. Unfortunately, although they were not persecuted, many career and business opportunities remained closed to them. The Gallias were among the many Jews who chose to convert to Catholicism in order to be accepted in Viennese society and in the business community.

The question of religion comes up

Reviews continued overleaf ➤

Establishment of Jewish hostel at Rowledge, Farnham, commemorated

It was while architect Mark Westcott was researching the history of Rowledge House, Farnham, where his family had lived in earlier years, that a seemingly insignificant pencilled entry by Florence Parker (daughter of the first vicar of Rowledge in the 1870s) in an old leather-bound journal held in the Surrey History Centre in Woking revealed a remarkable story.

Florence's diary entry, made after the war, revealed that a Bachad Religious Hostel had been established in Rowledge House by Edie and Shalom Marcovitch (Ma'agan) in 1942.

Jewish children evacuated to the countryside during the war found themselves in areas where there was no communal Jewish life or provision for religious education. An attempt to answer these needs was made



Blue plaque installed on west end of Rowledge House, Farnham, on 28 October 2012; Edie and Shalom Marcovitch (Ma'agan) at home on Kibbutz Lavi, Israel PHOTOS: MICHAEL J. EZRA

by the Zionist youth movement Habonim, which established hostels for evacuated Jewish children. Three were set up in Devon, a second in Rowledge, and a third in Cefn Coed in South Wales.

A blue plaque formally unveiled at Rowledge House on 28 October 2012 commemorated the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Jewish hostel. The unveiling ceremony was organised by Mark Westcott and the actual unveiling performed by Hanna Nyman, a Kindertransport child who had lived in the house with her brother Jochi together with 30 other children during the period 1942-45.

Among those present at the ceremony was Hermann Hirschberger, former Chairman of the AJR's Kindertransport Special Interest Group, representatives from Bachad and B'nai Akiva, occupants of the house past and present, the vicar from the local church, and many other members of the local community.

REVIEWS *cont. from page 9*

frequently in the story, both in the wider context of the effect of the conversions on the Jewish community and in the different attitudes to conversion within the family.

One of the areas in which the Gallias were able to increase their fortunes was by investing in a company developing improved gas mantles for street and domestic lighting at the end of the 19th century. This provides a very interesting scientific chapter in the book!

To a large extent the Gallias were able to overcome the effects of the Great War and the financial meltdown which followed. This did not, however, apply at the time of the Anschluss in 1938, when conversions to Catholicism gave no protection against Nazi persecution. The family was seriously affected, with several members becoming victims of the *Shoah*. Through their connections, the author's mother, grandmother and great-aunt were able to escape to Australia just before the war. The latter part of the book describes their difficult integration into Australian life. The author's mother, Anne, although a Catholic convert, married a fellow refugee, Eric Bonyhady, who came from an orthodox Jewish family which had remained Jewish.

Growing up in Sydney, Tim Bonyhady knew little about the family but was intrigued by the wonderful items in

the homes of his grandmother Grete and great-aunt Kathe. The sisters were among the small minority of refugees who in 1938 managed to take out almost all their possessions, including paintings and *objets d'art*. Tim's mother, Anna, wanted him to concentrate on becoming a pure Australian and even discouraged his grandmother from talking about her life in Austria or their Jewish background. Despite this he gradually became more involved and this led eventually to the writing of this fascinating book, which is not only the story of a remarkable family but also describes how the wealthy – especially wealthy Jews – lived between the turn of the century and the events of 1938. The background also gives an interesting overview of the cultural, religious and political history of pre-war Austria.

The last part of the book consists of notes and explanations of how the author managed to piece together the complex history of his maternal family. A very useful family tree at the front of the book provides an essential overview of the extended family, and most readers will probably find themselves referring to this frequently. The book is finely produced and well illustrated with pictures both of family members and their possessions.

George Vulkan

SEARCH NOTICES

Dr Ladislaus L. Braun, born Hungary, attended University of Pecs. Arrived USA 1939, was eminent physician in Chicago for many years. If you have any information on him please contact me at adaboard@btinternet.com

Dore Silverman, journalist (?), lived in Compaigne Gardens, London. He was instrumental in bringing my parents to England from Germany in 1939. Any information on him please to mail@chantrell1.plus.com

ARTS AND EVENTS DECEMBER DIARY

Thur 6 Lutz Klinkhammer (German Historical Institute, Rome), 'Antisemitism in Fascist Italy, 1922-1945' Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, History Work in Progress Seminar, Arts A108, 4.00 pm. Booking not required

Wed 12 B'nai B'rith Jerusalem Lodge. **Chanukah Party** at Kenton Synagogue Hall, 2.00 pm. With Alex and Jenny Nunes, 'Magical Moments from Movie Musicals' Donation £12.50

KRISTALLNACHT MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD IN LONDON

Introducing the Kristallnacht 74th anniversary service, AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman said that the events of 9-10 November 1938 were a seminal date in the prelude to the Holocaust and had come to symbolise the terror and inhumanity that were to follow. Kristallnacht also precipitated the mass emigration of Jews from Germany and Austria, including the majority of the 70,000 Jews who found refuge in Britain.



Trudy Gold

Guest speaker Trudy Gold, Executive Director of Education and Holocaust Studies at the London Jewish Cultural Centre and a Senior Lecturer in Holocaust Studies, outlined the historical context behind Kristallnacht, pointing out that the events of November 1938 were a major step along the way of the Nazi process of excluding Jews from German and Austrian society. Emphasising that the Nazi Party was elected, Trudy Gold was concerned



Sir Clive Callman

about what lessons were to be learned from Kristallnacht 74 years on.

AJR member Sir Clive Callman, who was born in 1927 and attended a

Jewish school in Berlin at the time, gave testimony. He described the tragic impact of the events of Kristallnacht on his family and friends, before coming to Britain in 1939. Sir Clive underlined his gratitude to the UK for granting him refuge and noted that the Jewish refugees from Nazism had made a substantial contribution to British life.

AJR members took part in a candle-lighting ceremony.

The service, at London's Belsize Square Synagogue, was led by Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg of the New North London Synagogue. His grandfather, Dr Georg Salzberger, had been the Rabbi at the Westend Synagogue in Frankfurt am Main, the interior of which was destroyed on Kristallnacht.

Among those present at the service were Councillor Heather Johnson, the Mayor of Camden, Thomas Schneider, Head of the Legal Department at the London German Embassy, and Christoph Weidinger, Minister Plenipotentiary, and Trude Desmond from the London Austrian Embassy.

Northern AJR members commemorate Kristallnacht anniversary by Werner Lachs

AJR Northern members commemorated Kristallnacht with another most successful meeting at the prestigious Imperial War Museum North. A 'full house' welcomed composer/conductor Carl Davis, who earlier in the year had premiered his composition 'Next Train to Tomorrow' with the Hallé Orchestra and Hallé Children's chorus, supported also by a group of young student actors.

The piece depicted poignantly the experiences of many of the children who were saved from the Nazi atrocities by the Kindertransports. The performance at the time met with acclaim and Carl Davis spoke about his feelings when writing the piece. He answered many pertinent questions with precision and eloquence. We also saw a short filmed interview with former Kindertransport refugee Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines.

The meeting also heard about the Kristallnacht experiences of one of our members, Ursula Rosenfeld. The memorial prayer and *Kaddish* were recited by Khazan Modi Spitzer, himself

'Third Generation'. Chairman of the day was Frank Baigel, President of the Jewish Representative Council of Greater Manchester, and the vote of thanks was eloquently proposed by Gisela Feldman. Thanks go once again to Susanne Green for her impeccable arrangements for the meeting and to the management of the Imperial War Museum North.

SPRING GROVE RETIREMENT HOME



214 Finchley Road
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious

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

Call for more information or a personal tour

020 8446 2117

or **020 7794 4455**

enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk



**JACKMAN ■
SILVERMAN**

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

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

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household
electrical work

PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518
Mobile: 0795 614 8566

Annelly Juda Fine Art

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

**CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE**

INSIDE the AJR

Sheffield CF A Remarkable Piece of Sporting and Survivor History

It was our turn to see the wonderful DVD *Watermarks*. Happily we had a new member joining us from Nottingham and several Second Generation members too and an interesting discussion followed the viewing of this remarkable piece of sporting and survivor history. We bade a reluctant adieu to Susanne Green, our ever kind and helpful Northern Organiser.

Dorothy Fleming

Café Imperial A Lovely Morning

A rainy, blustery day was lightened by a warm hearty breakfast. Jolly chat prevailed and we had a lovely morning.

Hazel Beiny

Pinner From Frankfurt to Finchley

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg told us about his journey from Frankfurt to Finchley. His references to his grandfather, Rabbi Salzberger, struck a familiar cord with many of the 30 members present, particularly those with Frankfurt or Belsize Square connections.

Robert Gellman

Harrogate/York

Sharing Experiences and Cakes

We met at Ken and Inge Little's home for a sharing of experiences, delicious cakes and tea, and a farewell to our group organiser, Susanne Green. We will meet there again on 23 January.

Edith Jayne

St John's Wood Judaica at the V&A

Marilyn Greene, whose grandparents came from Berlin, is the Community Programme Manager at the V&A Museum. She told us about the impressive collection of Judaica there, both in store and on display, and showed us photos of items ranging from a 13th-century spice box to a 21st-century *mezzuza*. Hazel is planning to arrange an AJR visit there, but in the meantime further items can be seen on the V&A website.

David Lang

Welwyn GC Transforming the Lives of the Disabled

In this Paralympic year it was most fitting to learn about WheelPower. Joyce Sheard gave a fascinating, illustrated talk to a very

attentive 'full house' about the charity, which aims to transform the lives of the disabled through sport. WheelPower provides opportunities, training, facilities, equipment and support for disabled people of all abilities, thus helping them to lead full, active lives.

Marianne Linford

Brighton-Sarid (Sussex)

London Hotels in the Regency Period

David Barnett spoke about London hotels in the Regency period (1800-1900). Hotels started mainly from coaching inns and coffee houses, at first accommodating men, then women and families. In 1773 the Grand Hotel opened in Covent Garden, followed by the Savoy and Claridge's in 1845.

Shirley Huberman

AJR OUTREACH GROUPS CHANUKAH PARTY

Thursday 20 December 2012
11.00 am to 1.00 pm



at

Sha'arei Tsedek

North London Reform Synagogue
120 Oakleigh Road North
Whetstone, London N20 9EZ

We will be entertained by

JUDITH BORNSTEIN of THE PANDEMONIUM CHOIR

Judith will sing a selection of
Yiddish songs and Show Tunes.

Chanukah Refreshments, Socialising, Music and Entertainment

Cost: £3.00 pp payable on the door
Booking is essential

Please contact Susan Harrod on 020
8385 3078 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

Edgware An Ear to the Future

Chris Carr spoke to us about hearing aids. Some of us made practical use of the knowledge gained from this lecture and adjusted our aids accordingly. Those of us who don't need the aid as yet may need it in the future.

Felix Winkler

Glasgow CF Culture of Poland

Meeting at the home of Agnes Isaacs, we celebrated 'Our Continental Friends', one of a series of meetings devoted to the cultures of the countries from which our members come. On this occasion, the country was Poland. 'Star of the show' Marion Camrass demonstrated an

illustrated book about the Jews in Poland, a typical piece of Polish embroidery, and examples of Polish folk art in the shape of intricate paper cut-outs. A Polish song was sung and we discussed dialects of Yiddish, spoken and culinary, over the territories of Poland. Our next meeting, of the Book Club, is at Marion's, where we hope to discuss Natasha Solomons's *Mr Rosenblum's List*.

Halina Moss

Radlett A Splendid Presentation

Radlett member Alf Keiles spoke about famous musicians and played some of their songs, all with a love theme, to us. Duke Ellington's 'Love in Springtime' and Peggy Lee's 'Let There Be Love' were followed by the Andrews Sisters, Sinatra, Doris Day, Les Brown, Bob Crosby. A splendid presentation, greatly appreciated.

Bruno Muller

Cambridge Complex, Evil Characters

Helen Fry, supported by James Hamilton, gave us wonderful insight into the role played by Howard Triest, a US army interpreter for two psychiatrists at Spandau prison, where top Nazis were awaiting trial. Helen's recently published book shows a deep understanding of the complex and evil characters held there and Howard's success in gaining their confidence.

Keith Lawson

Fitting Play for an Olympic Year

This was a staged revival of *Chariots of Fire*, the 1981 film about the rivalry between the Jewish runner Harold Abrahams and the Scottish runner Eric Liddell, culminating in the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris. We marvelled at the athleticism of the cast, who must have run many miles around the ingeniously created running track. An enjoyable afternoon and a very fitting play for this Olympic year.

Harriet Hodes

Cardiff Recording Achievements

We were treated to a lively presentation by Colin Heyman on the recent HINENI exhibition. The idea of presenting individual Jewish lives had sprung from an idea of another member, Diana Soffa, who had remarked that the population was ageing and it was invaluable to record their lives. We were given examples of outstanding photography and individual stories, of special interest being the achievements of a number of refugees.

Stella Lightman

North London A Fascinating Subject by Any Standards

Guest speaker Evelyn Friedlander gave a talk on 'Jews in Germany in the 21st Century',

continued opposite ➔

a fascinating subject by any standards and one which gave rise to an interesting discussion. We hope our speaker will visit us again in the not too distant future.

Herbert Haberberg

Hendon History of El Al

El Al's Martin Haley gave us a most interesting review of El Al's operation from its formation in 1948 to today. This was greatly enjoyed by members and was followed by a lively Q&A session.

Felix Sturm

Edinburgh CF

Glimpse into a Retirement Hobby

Flora Selwyn gave us a glimpse into her retirement hobby – single-handedly initiating, compiling and distributing 'St Andrews Focus', the aim of which is to provide accurate, up-to-date local information, promote local businesses etc. As usual, we concluded with a delicious afternoon tea provided by Vivien Andersen.

Jonathan Kish

Marlow CF

Excellent Lunch and Conversation

We met at Alan Kaye's house. Hazel as always produced an excellent lunch and the conversation flowed well. Our thanks to Alan for allowing us to meet at his lovely house. If there are any more readers in the Marlow catchment area we would be delighted if they would join us, but please let Hazel know well in advance that you're coming. Next meeting: Tuesday 26 February.

Alex Lawrence

Glasgow Book Club

Evoking Memories

Natasha Solomon's *Mr Rosenblum's List* awoke memories of what it was like when members first settled in this country. We couldn't help but remember the need to learn new customs and to blend in on arrival. There was a heated debate about the origins of the Bäumer Torte. Thanks to Marion Camrass for hosting the event and providing a beautiful tea.

Agnes Isaacs

Temple Fortune Keep Happy and Keep Your Memory Healthy!

Consultant General Physician Dr Shane Roche gave us an informative talk on dementia, which he defined as loss of global cognitive function, which includes Alzheimer's in about 50% of cases. To avoid dementia, Dr Roche said 'Keep happy and keep your memory healthy.' Many people suffer from some loss of memory but this is not dementia if it doesn't deteriorate over time.

David Lang

Book Club Well Researched and Beautifully Written

Meeting in the restaurant at Joseph's book shop, we discussed *Painter of Silence*, the story of a deaf and mute man who communicated by drawing pictures and

DECEMBER GROUP MEETINGS

Leeds HSFA	2 Dec	Musical Programme
Newcastle	2 Dec	Chanukah Lunch with Lynne Lewis
Ealing	4 Dec	Leslie Sommer, 'The Home Office'
Yorkshire	4 Dec	Pre-Chanukah Party
Edinburgh	5 Dec	Musical Chanukah Party
Ilford	5 Dec	Pre-Chanukah Party
Pinner	6 Dec	Chanukah Party
Essex (Westcliff)	11 Dec	Chanukah entertainment by Rob Lowe
Oxford	11 Dec	Howard Lanning, '80 Years in the Film Industry'
Liverpool	10 Dec	Chanukah Party
St John's Wood	12 Dec	Tim Pike from the Bank of England
Café Imperial	13 Dec	Lunch in memory of Willy Field
Cambridge	13 Dec	Chanukah Party and Social
Leeds	13 Dec	Outing to Grand Theatre
Wessex	13 Dec	Chanukah Party
Manchester	16 Dec	Chanukah Party
Brighton-Sarid (Sussex)	17 Dec	Quiz and Chanukah Party
Kent	18 Dec	Chanukah Party and Quiz
Book Club	19 Dec	Social and Discussion
Glasgow CF	19 Dec	New Year Party
Radlett	19 Dec	Brian Nathan, '20th Century Music'
Wembley	19 Dec	Social Get-together
Edgware, Hendon, HGS, North London, Temple Fortune, Welwyn GC	20 Dec	CHANUKAH PARTY AT NORTH LONDON

CONTACTS

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

lived in Romania in the 1950s. The story was well researched and beautifully written. Next meeting: 19 December at 3.00 pm; book to read: *Unorthodox* by Deborah Feldman. Do come along – you will enjoy it.

Margarete Weis

Wembley Momentous Events

Being joined by yet another new couple, members heard a story from Hedy Orchudesch of an incident that changed her life. This led to others remembering momentous events in their lives. Following the usual delicious refreshments, members sat talking much longer than usual, reluctant to leave.

Myrna Glass

Oxford Warm Clothes and Toiletries

Some time ago we were asked to bring warm clothes and toiletries for young men. Now we learned that these are given to those who arrive with nothing suitable for our weather. Robin Richardson from Separated Child Foundation showed us the pack.

Anne Selinger

Northern AJR Second Generation Discussion Group

This group, facilitated by an AJR Social Worker, meets for the day on a Sunday three times a year, either in Manchester or Leeds.

The next meeting will take place on **3 February** in **Leeds**.

For further information, please contact Barbara on 0161 368 5088 or at barbara@ajr.org.uk. Third Generation enquiries are also welcome.

Leeds Continental Friends

The group report in our November issue should have ended 'Another member was declared not to be Jewish because she didn't speak Yiddish' (Ed.).

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Engagement

Congratulations to Carol and Adrian Rossen on the engagement of their son Scott to Jan Schwartz, New York



COMPUTER HELP?

If you are not sure how to call family over the internet, send an email to a friend or play Bridge on the computer, AJR's Volunteer Services Department is starting a new programme aimed at helping members to learn how to work with computers and surf the internet.

To find out more, please contact Jonathan on 020 8385 3070 or at jonathan@ajr.org.uk

75th Anniversary of the Kindertransport Special Reunion

Sunday 23 June 2013
at JFS,
North West London

Calling all Kinder! The AJR Kindertransport Committee is delighted to announce a Special Reunion to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport, which will take place on Sunday 23 June 2013 at JFS in North West London.

The Reunion, which will include contributions from Kinder, JFS pupils and guest speakers, will be a unique opportunity for Kinder and their families to reconnect and socialise and pay tribute to the British Government for offering them a safe haven.

In the coming months, we will be publishing further details about the Reunion, and other special events which we will be organising to mark the 75th anniversary, in the *AJR Journal*, the *KT Newsletter* and on the AJR website.



106-year-old German-born Johanna Waller has become the oldest person to receive British citizenship. Johanna, an AJR member who has lived in Britain for 70 years, attended a ceremony at London's Camden Town Hall. 'I am proud to be a citizen of the country in which I've lived for more than 70 years,' she said. Johanna did not receive immigration documents on entering the UK and had assumed that she would never be granted citizenship. When, however, local MP Glenda Jackson found out, she lobbied for the naturalisation process to be speeded up.

Dr Anthony Grenville's book *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain, 1933-1970* has been reprinted. For copies (paperback), write to Anthony Grenville at the AJR, enclosing cheque for £22.50 (incl. postage and packing) made out to the author.



BOOKS BOUGHT

MODERN AND OLD

Eric Levene

020 8364 3554
07855387574

I also purchase ephemera

PillarCare

Quality support and care at home

- Hourly Care from 4 hours – 24 hours
- Live-In/Night Duty/Sleepover Care
- Convalescent and Personal Health Care
- Compassionate and Affordable Service
- Professional, Qualified, Kind Care Staff
- Registered with the CQC and UKHCA

Call us on Freephone 0800 028 4645

PILLARCARE
THE BUSINESS CENTRE · 36 GLOUCESTER AVENUE · LONDON NW1 7BB
PHONE: 020 7482 2188 · FAX: 020 7900 2308
www.pillarcare.co.uk

LEO BAECK HOUSING ASSOCIATION CLARA NEHAB HOUSE RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

Small caring residential home with large attractive gardens close to local shops and public transport
25 single rooms with full en suite facilities
24 hour Permanent and Respite Care
Entertainment & Activities provided
Ground Floor Lounge and Dining Room
Lift access to all floors.

For further information please contact:
The Manager, Clara Nehab House
13-19 Leaside Crescent, London NW11 0DA
Telephone: 020 8455 2286

Colvin Home Care

Care through quality and professionalism

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



1 hour to 24 hours care

Registered through the National Care Standard Commission

Call our 24 hour tel 020 7794 9323
www.colvin-nursing.co.uk

ADVERTISEMENT RATES

FAMILY EVENTS

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

CLASSIFIED

£2.00 per 5 words

BOX NUMBERS £3.00 extra

DISPLAY ADVERTS

Per single column inch 65mm £12.00
COPY DATE 5 weeks prior to publication

OBITUARIES

Lottie Levy, 9 February 1923 – 1 October 2012

My mother, Charlotte Abraham, known as Lottie, came to England in 1939 from Bremen aged 16 via the Kindertransport and worked as a 'domestic' for a family in Manchester. As soon as she was 18 she started to train as a nurse at the city's Royal Northern Hospital. She met Hans (Harry) Levy, another refugee from Germany, and they married in 1944. Harry joined the British Army, serving in the Royal Engineers, and they moved to Hendon, north London, where they raised two children.

Lottie worked as a district nurse in Hendon, then, moving to Mill Hill, joined Edgware General Hospital, where she became a Sister and for over 30 years

she and her team ran the out-patient orthopaedic clinics. When she retired from the NHS at the age of 62, she was asked by a couple of orthopaedic consultants to run their private clinics at Bupa, Bushey, a job she loved and enjoyed until she was 70.

Lottie somehow managed to stay resilient and forward-looking in spite of many personal tragedies. Her husband, Harry, died in 1989 at the age of 66; her son, Peter, died in a plane crash in 1994 at the age of 48; and a granddaughter,



Robyn, died in 1997 at the age of 16.

That reliance showed itself as Lottie undertook new activities with enthusiasm and commitment after her retirement. Until about 18 months before her death at the age of 89, as dementia gradually affected her abilities, she served as a volunteer for the AJR, both as a visitor, helping older, housebound people, and as a translator, first in the Hampstead office and then in the Stanmore office. As a member of the AJR's Emergency Fund Committee, she helped to oversee the distribution of critical social, welfare and care grants to members in greatest need. Lottie's combined medical knowledge and translation skills also enabled her to assist in many legal-medical cases.

Lottie was a keen gardener, a member of a psychology study group, a supporter of many charities, a lover of music, a fundraiser for Marie Curie Cancer Care, and a devoted mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who will be greatly missed.

Sue Brandon

Jenny Zundel, 1915 – 2012

My mother, Jenny Zundel, who died in April, was an active member of the AJR. She was born Genia Horoschowska in Vienna to a mother fleeing from pogroms in Poland who arrived in Vienna penniless, with four children and pregnant with my mother. The older children went to an orphanage and Genia to foster care.

At the age of almost three 'Jenny' was fostered, and later adopted, by a childless Jewish couple, Julius and Elsa Steinschneider. In old age she could still remember every detail of the spread they prepared for her (she had had rickets from malnutrition). Her much-loved new parents sold shoes in the Währingerstrasse and lived in the 20th District. Money worries were frequent – she told me of her mother worrying about finances and herself offering 'Ich hab' Kreuzi' (Kreuzer were the smallest currency unit).

Home was stressful, especially after her father died of lung cancer when she was 16. But she loved learning and started secondary school at just ten. From there she went to Vienna medical school, where she met my father, Walter Zundel, the only Gentile to turn left at the top of the stairs instead of right – to hear the Jewish rather than the Gentile professor (and probably to see my mother!).

Following the Nazi annexation of Austria, Jenny was the one woman among the six Jewish students (out

of 500) allowed to continue studying. Later, she was barred from taking her final exams and never qualified. It was clear that she needed to leave Austria. She arrived in Britain in spring 1939, going 'into service' in Manchester, and then to London, where Walter later joined her and they married.

Life in exile was difficult. Walter was initially not allowed to practise medicine here, so Jenny worked as a 'charwoman'. During the Blitz they slept in the Underground. Walter then developed TB and, desperate to get him away from bombs and smog, Jenny miraculously found rooms in Hertford with an older couple who became 'Mummy and Daddy' to them. Here she worked as librarian at Allen and Hanbury's pharmaceuticals. Sadly, she failed to get her mother to Britain and she, her sister and brother-in-law died in Lvov camp in 1942.

Following his recovery Walter became a chest doctor. They moved around the country, eventually to Coventry, where in 1958 they bought land and built their 'dream house'. Although she had two opportunities to complete her medical training, Jenny remained a homemaker, but taught German in evening classes



– teaching had been her forte since she tutored fellow schoolchildren at the age of 14.

More troubles were to follow: after nine years of mental illness, my brother Stephen committed suicide in 1975 aged 27. Yet my parents rebuilt their life, with many friends and a great deal of music, art, theatre and literature. They had a knack of meeting famous people: a very old E. M. Forster once visited our house and they had the teenage Kiran Desai to stay after meeting her in a London theatre queue!

In 1990, after I married, my parents moved to Southgate and had seven more happy years together, including the birth of their only grandchild. They even reconnected with the 'Young Austrians', a group founded in the war and still bearing the same name!

My mother died after a month in hospital with a chest infection and was buried in Coventry with her beloved husband and son. Fifty people came to her memorial service in London to remember this charming, intelligent and generous woman, who could be the proverbial Jewish mother but who gave me a wonderful heritage.

Veronica Zundel



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Start-up nation

I heard about the book *Start-Up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle* by Dan Senor and Saul Singer a couple of years ago but didn't take too much notice. After all, the fact that Israel is a hotbed of innovation, high-tech industry and networking is nothing new to me. I see it all around me among my friends and family, read about it in the newspapers, and have even worked on translating and editing economic reports of it. When I recently toured Jerusalem Venture Partners, a venture capital firm set up in order to attract young high-tech entrepreneurs to Jerusalem and support their endeavours, the book was mentioned, especially since one of its founders, Erel Margalit, is cited extensively in it.

But I spied the paperback version in the airport bookshop as I was leaving Israel on holiday and thought it might make good reading on the plane. I was right. It is, in fact, a fascinating and insightful account of what lies behind Israel's remarkable record in high-tech innovation. According to the authors, many factors are responsible for this phenomenon, among them *chutzpah*, that untranslatable combination of audacity and pushiness that seems to have defined

the *sabra* ethos since before the founding of the State of Israel. In fact, without *chutzpah* the state might never have come into existence. But that isn't the whole story.

Another factor is adversity. The Arab boycott and de Gaulle's 1967 decision to impose an arms embargo on Israel obliged it to become self-reliant in manufacturing arms and weapons systems, and the country has gone on to achieve stellar results in those fields. Israel was established despite intense opposition on several fronts, and in overcoming adverse conditions it had to come up with original and creative solutions.

Senor and Singer maintain that these and other factors explain Israel's outstanding record in registering patents, establishing start-ups and successfully launching new industries, not to mention the number of 'exits' (sales of high-tech firms) which have brought billions of dollars into Israel, giving the national economy an exponential boost in the process. Foremost among these factors is Israel's requirement that all youngsters (apart from the ultra-orthodox and Arabs) serve in the army. This gives young people the opportunity to learn skills, acquire experience and engage

in teamwork that many adults in other countries are able to obtain only at a much later stage of life.

Successive influxes of immigrants have also contributed to Israel's pool of innovative talent. This applies particularly to immigrants from the former USSR, causing Israel to have one of the highest proportions of qualified engineers. But even those who arrived without academic qualifications have shown an ability to adapt and integrate that has served to enhance Israel's labour force. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that major high-tech firms such as Intel, Microsoft and IBM have R&D centres and/or plants in Israel – not to mention Israel's home-grown high-tech, biotech and nanotech firms.

A salient feature of life in Israel is the fact that the country has what the authors call a 'motive'. It was created in order to provide a homeland for Jews, no matter who, how or from where. When most countries restricted immigration, in the 1930s and subsequently, the Jews who were not wanted in their countries of origin were unable to find a haven. As we know to our cost, this ended in the wholesale slaughter of many of our co-religionists. Israel was founded to ensure that this never happened again. For Jews there are no entry barriers or residence requirements to becoming citizens of Israel. This is no small matter for anyone who has experienced prejudice and/or discrimination in their home country.

It's a rare book whose acknowledgements section brings tears to my eyes, but this one did.

LETTERS *cont. from p.7*

Declaration referred to.

The San Remo Agreement was further ratified by the League of Nations in 1922. In effect, San Remo is Israel's Magna Carta; this is irrevocable according to international law, for which Mr Kaye is such a stickler. And for him to question whether Ms Shefer-Vanson believes that the 1947 UN resolution would pass today is rather churlish. Many of those UN member states are authoritarian, strongly biased against Israel, and some have abysmal human rights records.

I ought to mention that in furthering the formation of the Jewish homeland, it

was understood that nothing should be done that would prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine. It was a result of the wars initiated by Arab states that led to the situation that exists today, as well as Arab intransigence and the fact that they are unwilling to accept what is to them a 'foreign' presence in the Middle East.

Rubin Katz, London NW11

'TEDIOUS AND RAMBLING'

Sir – Rubin Katz says (November) that Peter Phillips's letters are 'tedious' but his own,

rambling letters are not only tedious but full of irrelevancies. His reference to Ben-Gurion's 1948 order to the Hagana to set the *Altalena* on fire is biased. Ben-Gurion's main motive was his fear that the Irgun would use its cargo of arms to ignite a civil war. Katz then goes off at one tangent about his own foreign accent and then at another tangent about someone changing his name from Ginsberg to Gainsborough and then to Jones. Then he beats his Zionist drum once again. Surely he doesn't think this gives any new information to readers of the *AJR Journal*?

Gerald Curzon, Ruislip