

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the Kindertransports

It is 25 years since the first reunion of former Kindertransportees was held in 1988, to mark the 50th anniversary of the initiative that brought nearly 10,000 mostly Jewish children from Nazi-occupied territories to safety in Britain between December 1938 and the outbreak of war in September 1939. It is a pleasure to report that the 75th anniversary of the rescue of the children is to be celebrated in June, with a series of events including the Kindertransport reunion itself, a reception to be hosted by Prince Charles and a symposium to be held at the German Historical Institute London.

The Kindertransports have also continued to attract the attention of scholars, as two recent important books on the subject attest. The first is a volume of essays entitled *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39: New Perspectives*, published by Rodopi (Amsterdam) in 2012 as volume 13 of the *Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* and edited by Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (259 pp., €56). It consists of an introduction and 17 articles by scholars and others with special expertise in the field. Foremost among these are articles by those who came as children themselves: Hermann Hirschberger, a past chairman of AJR-KT, Ruth Barnett and Leslie Baruch Brent. Both editors also contributed articles, and I wrote the opening overview of the subject.

The other articles range widely over many aspects of the Kindertransports, some of them little known, like Jennifer Craig-Norton's piece on the Polish children who came in three transports on the packet steamer *Warszawa* from Gdingen (Gdynia), Frances Williams's on the further emigration of Kindertransport children initially resident in Scotland, and two articles on Kindertransport children in Australia and New Zealand. Professor Edward Timms, founder of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of

Sussex, contributes a comparative study of Kindertransportees and British children evacuated during wartime, while Nicholas Winton, famous as the saviour of children from Czechoslovakia, is the subject of an article by Jana Burešová. Several articles are devoted to the depiction of Kindertransport children in works of literature, including two on Lore Segal's *Other People's Houses*, which has become something of a classic in its genre, and an impressive analysis of W. G. Sebald's



Children of the Kindertransports

(unacknowledged) use in his fictional prose work *Austerlitz* of the memoirs of a real Kindertransportee, Susi Bechhöfer.

Caroline Sharples's article on the Kindertransports in British historical memory is a thoughtful and thought-provoking piece, intended as a corrective to the self-congratulatory narrative with which the British now celebrate the Kindertransports and as a reminder of the darker aspects of the children's experiences, often ignored in public discourse. The article by Cordula Lissner and Ursula Reuter presents a project intended to memorialise the children of the Jawne School in Cologne, about 130 of whom were brought to Britain before September 1939, while those who remained behind were deported in 1942, as was their inspirational headmaster, Dr Erich Klibansky. Bea Lewkowicz reports on the interviews with former Kindertransportees in the AJR's *Refugee Voices* filmed interviews collection. Last but not far from least, Hermann Hirschberger

presents the findings of the survey *Making New Lives in Britain*, compiled from over 1,000 responses to a questionnaire sent to former Kindertransportees by Bertha Leverton, Ronald Channing and Hirschberger, and forming a valuable new source of detailed information.

Never Look Back: The Jewish Refugee Children in Great Britain, 1938-1945 by Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz (286 pp., \$39.95), published in 2012 by Purdue University Press (West Lafayette, Indiana), is an updated version of an MA thesis written some 30 years earlier. The book is in many ways an impressive piece of thorough historical research and a painstaking reconstruction of the process by which the Kindertransport initiative came into being, of the organisational arrangements made for the children arriving in Britain, the machinery set up to cater for their needs (with varying degrees of success) and its functioning in wartime Britain. The book consists of ten chapters, divided into two parts, the first taking the story up to September 1939 and the second covering the wartime years, with a final chapter, 'Epilogue and Memory', devoted to the post-war decades.

Baumel-Schwartz begins by outlining the pre-history of the Kindertransports, ably illuminating for her readers the complexities of the process by which organisations were set up by Anglo-Jewry to assist the Jewish refugees seeking to escape from Nazi Germany to Britain. One of the qualities of the book is the author's willingness to engage with the bureaucratic development of bodies like these, which tends to create friction within the organisations internally and between them externally. She is also concerned to analyse the motives and qualities that caused individual British people, Jews and non-Jews, to become helpers, taking on the often unpopular task of creating the organisational framework that enabled the refugees to enter Britain and, once

Seventy-fifth anniversary of the Kindertransports *continued*

admitted, provided them with the basic necessities of life.

It is gratifying to see recognition accorded to figures like Dorothy Hardisty, the remarkable but largely forgotten woman who in 1939 took over the key position of Executive Director of the Refugee Children's Movement, the most important of the organisations set up to cater for the needs of the Kindertransport children. While acknowledging the exceptional contribution made by the Quakers to the reception of the children, Baumel-Schwartz devotes much of this section of her book to the Jewish helpers and the organisations they founded. She investigates the Chief Rabbi's Religious Emergency Council and the role played in it by the charismatic but divisive Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld, demonstrating a confident command of the specifically Jewish issues at stake.

The emphasis on such issues is also to the fore in her chapter on Youth Aliyah, which takes in such centres as Gwrych Castle in North Wales and Whittingehame House in Scotland, where Jewish children underwent agricultural training so that they could emigrate to Palestine and contribute to the productive capacity of the nascent Jewish state. Of the three chapters that deal with the wartime years, one covers the evacuation of children from British cities and one the internment of 'enemy aliens', while one is given over to the question of the appointment of an official guardian for those children whose parents had perished in Nazi-occupied Europe. Baumel-Schwartz is highly critical of the appointment of a non-Jew, Lord Gorell, to this position; she regards this as a key defeat in 'the battle for the souls of the Jewish refugee children in Great Britain', caused by what she sees as pervasive British xenophobia and the failure of Anglo-Jewry to commit itself fully to the spiritual care of the children.

Missing here is any detailed account of the children's daily life in wartime Britain, during the Blitz, participating in the war effort or as members of HM forces. I have shown in my history of the Jewish refugees from Nazism in Britain that the war was a major factor in integrating the refugees generally into British society; that, however, sits uneasily with Baumel-Schwartz's view, as she would probably regard the very notion of a successful integration of Jewish refugees into British society as a contradiction in terms. Her evident distaste for Britain and the manner in which it received the refugee children may have contributed to her failure to

research conditions in Britain as fully as one might like. To take just one example, she states repeatedly that British children were evacuated in September 1939 from urban centres to 'the Midlands', when the cities of the Midlands were, in fact, one of the principal areas from which children were removed. As anyone familiar with the history of wartime Britain knows, the Midlands were heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe: on 14 November 1940, Coventry suffered the best-known air raid on any British city outside London.

Baumel-Schwartz does not always seem familiar with the development of the community of the Jewish refugees from the German-speaking lands in Britain once they had settled here, perhaps because in this area she relies heavily on former Kindertransportees now resident in Israel and less on the far greater number who remained in Britain. How many of the latter would agree with the judgment that their 'experience as recipients of His Majesty's beneficence was "strange" and "sordid", even if it did enable their survival'? Or that 'large numbers of children developed pleasant but superficial relationships with their British contemporaries, which never [!] deepened into friendship', a claim flatly contradicted by numerous interviews and memoirs?

Any scholar seeking to understand the Jewish refugees in Britain needs to have studied the AJR, their representative organisation since 1941, and its monthly journal, by far the best source of information about them. Baumel-Schwartz seems unaware of the journal's existence, while her only substantive comment on the AJR is the curious statement that the Reunion of Kindertransports (RoK) 'was eventually coopted by the Association of Jewish Refugees' – as if those Kindertransportees had not in the main been AJR members long before the RoK was established. Two stars out of three for this book.

Anthony Grenville

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Wednesday 22 May 2013 at 12.00 noon

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Anthony Penrose

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**at LJCC, Ivy House, 94-96 North End Road,
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susan@ajr.org.uk**

Lithuanian compensation programme

The Law on Goodwill Compensation for the Immovable Property of Jewish Religious Communities of the Republic of Lithuania has designated LTL 3 million (approximately \$1.1 million) to be paid 'to persons of Jewish nationality who resided in Lithuania during the Second World War and suffered from the totalitarian regimes during the occupation.'

All Lithuanian victims of the Nazis whose names appear on the database of the Claims Conference will be notified directly. Others will need to submit an application form.

The deadline for submitting applications is 30 June 2013, with individual awards being made by 31 December 2013. For further information, please visit www.gvf.lt

KINDERTRANSPORT 75TH ANNIVERSARY

If you have not yet heard the wonderful news, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales has kindly offered to host a **Reception** for the Kinder at **St James's Palace on Monday 24 June from 12 pm** as part of our events to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Kindertransport.

Although there are a limited number of places for the lunchtime Reception and we wish to ensure that those Kinder who are coming to the **Reunion on Sunday 23 June at JFS** are given priority, it may now be possible for you to be accompanied to St James's Palace by a close friend or relative should this be necessary. To obtain the application forms to attend the Reception at St James's Palace and the Reunion at JFS, please email kt@ajr.org.uk or contact AJR Head Office on 020 8385 3070. The Palace has asked us to provide them with a final guest list no later than **Friday 17 May 2013**. Please ensure you reply in good time so that the Palace can send you an official invitation, without which you will not be able to attend.

We are also delighted to announce that the well-loved actress and comedienne Maureen Lipman and the Rt Hon David Miliband MP, the former Foreign Secretary, will be guest speakers at the **Reunion**, when JFS pupils will be performing a re-enactment of the debate in the House of Commons which precipitated our arrival. As previously announced, the JFS Choir will sing a selection of evocative songs and Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg will lead a Service of Remembrance. **The day will begin with registration at 1.30 pm and will end after a light supper at 7 pm.**

The **Symposium** on the Kindertransport, organised by the Leo Baeck Institute London

(LBI) in co-operation with the German Historical Institute London (GHIL), the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, and Aberystwyth University (School of European Languages), will be held on **Tuesday 25 June at the GHIL**. You can see a provisional programme for the day on our website at www.ajr.org.uk and details on booking can be obtained at info@leobaeck.co.uk

Please also encourage the children and grandchildren and nieces and nephews of AJR members to come along to a **Special Reception between 6.30 and 9.30 pm on Monday 24 June** for the **Second and Third Generations**. The focus of this event will be how their parents and grandparents arrived here, where they came from, and the various ways in which they travelled. There will be notable guest speakers and time to socialise and network, eat and drink, and meet old friends and make new ones. The venue is to be confirmed but please direct any queries to events@secondgeneration.org.uk or visit the websites www.secondgeneration.org.uk and www.kindertransport.org

Later in the year, on **Wednesday 20 November**, we are organising, with the help of Lord (Alf) Dubs, a special **Tea** in the Houses of Parliament to mark the debate held there on 21 November 1938 which paved the way for the arrival of the Kindertransport. There are only 50 places for the Tea so please book early by emailing kt@ajr.org.uk

To round off the year, World Jewish Relief, in conjunction with the AJR, will be organising a **Memorial Service at Liverpool Street Station on Sunday 1 December**. The Service recalls the arrival 75 years to the day of the first transport of children.

Sir Erich Reich

'Three generations brought together': 75th anniversary of Anschluss commemorated

An event jointly organised by the Austrian Embassy and the AJR commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Anschluss was held at the Austrian Ambassador's Residence in London on 13 March this year.



AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman (left), AJR member Otto Deutsch PHOTOS: VERONIKA KECZKES

Christoph Weidinger, Deputy Austrian Ambassador, told the crowded reception that the Austrian Embassy and the AJR had brought together for the occasion three generations 'to remember, to honour the victims and the survivors, and to help young people of today to make sure that what happened 75 years ago

will not repeat itself in any way.' 'Working towards a world of tolerance is a task that must never end,' he warned. AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman, noting the presence of members not only from London but from across the UK as part of the AJR's annual three-day visit to the capital, said that 'We share a commitment to remembering the victims and stand together to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust and the dangers of racism, extreme nationalism, intolerance and anti-Semitism are

CLOSER TO ISRAEL 65TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

In Israel's 65th anniversary year, the Board of Deputies and the Jewish Leadership Council are arranging a parade and rally at a central London location on **Sunday 2 June**. More information soon in the Jewish press.

THE HOLOCAUST CENTRE

The Holocaust Centre Museum in Nottinghamshire is seeking items from survivors of the Holocaust and their families to tell the personal stories that need to be told.

If you have any photographs, documents or other personal items and would consider donating these to the Museum, please give **Aneesa** a call on **(01623) 836627** or email: aneesa.riffat@holocaustcentre.net

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properly taught.'

Other speakers were AJR members Otto Deutsch and Frances Steiner, Hannah Lessing, Secretary General of the General Settlement Fund and of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, and Moriz Kopetzki, a *Gedenkdienster* at the London Jewish Cultural Centre.

AJR Annual Report 2012

Highlights

Reflecting the changing needs of our membership, we intensified our efforts to support the most vulnerable of our members and continued to organise a number of special events and gatherings.

Following on from the inaugural seminar in September 2011, we organised a two-day series of lectures and presentations at the London Jewish Cultural Centre in conjunction with the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex.

We are grateful to Sir Andrew Burns, UK Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues, and His Honour Sir Clive Callman for their participation in our Kristallnacht service; to Felicitas Weillieder, an Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP) intern, for participating in our Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration; and to Rabbis Stuart Altshuler and Jonathan Wittenberg for leading these services.

The annual three-day visit to London proved as popular as ever with a packed programme capped by a wonderful evening at the Wiener Library in the company of His Excellency the Israeli Ambassador, Daniel Taub. Members also took in a theatre show and a tour of the Royal Courts of Justice as well as enjoying a visit to Harrods.

We held our annual Celebration of Volunteering event at the Wiener Library. Liverpool Wavertree MP Luciana Berger was guest speaker; we also heard from AJR member Ricci Horenstein and her volunteer befriender, Alex Glasner.

We developed our relationship with the newly formed charity Six Point Foundation, created with part of the proceeds of the sale of the Otto Schiff Housing Association homes.

Our outreach groups continued to flourish with regional meetings in Manchester and Edinburgh and the summer garden party in Birmingham among the highlights, as well as a host of outings. We organised an outing to Stoke Mandeville Hospital, where over 100 members saw a presentation by WheelPower, the charity which works with Paralympic athletes.

We expanded the network of institutions acquiring access to our testimony collection *Refugee Voices* by reaching an agreement with the Malach Centre for Visual History, part of the Charles University in Prague. We also set up our own Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/AssociationofJewishRefugees>).

We finalised arrangements to create the new AJR charitable company, which formally came into being on 1 January this year. The company has taken over the assets, liabilities and responsibilities of the AJR Friendly Society and the AJR Charitable Trust.

Personnel

In July Michael Newman was promoted to Chief Executive and in December our longest serving employee, Ruth Finestone,

retired after 32 years' service. A month earlier we said goodbye to our Newcastle-based social worker Eileen Brady, who joined us in 2007. Jim Sutherland, who has previously covered for our Scotland social worker Myrna Bernard, is assisting members in the North East on a temporary basis.

In December we welcomed back Pritika Raghvani, our book-keeper, after a year's maternity leave. In April Mira Shah was appointed on a 12-month contract to assist in the Accounts Department.

To fill the gap left by Susie Kaufman's retirement, Ros Collin was appointed AJR Centre Manager and is proving a hit with members.

Membership

At the end of 2012 total membership stood at 2,709 (down from 2,847 in January 2012). Last year we enrolled 98 members and received notice that 150 had died and that 49 members had moved away or not paid their subscriptions. A further 62 members cancelled their subscriptions.

For 2012 total Second Generation membership was 453, including 36 who joined during the year. At the start of this year we had 35 members aged 100 or older and a further 575 aged 90 or over.

Holidays

As previously, we organised two holidays. In May 16 members enjoyed a wonderful five days in Bournemouth and we hope to increase this number so as to offer this break again this year. Our annual trip to Eastbourne in July was enjoyed by over 30 members, who experienced a very full week with entertainment, trips to the theatre and local outings.

Annual lunch

The annual lunch was held in September at the Hilton Hotel, Watford. Once again, it was a very enjoyable afternoon, with members enjoying a delicious lunch followed by tea with pastries. Entertainment was provided by Glenys Groves, Andrea Hazell and Jonathan Fisher, accompanied by Diana Franklin on the piano.

Financial assistance

We continued our role as lead agency for the administration of grants and assistance from Claims Conference programmes, which are paid to members of five charities, including the AJR. We utilised £2.2m last year, of which more than £600,000 was paid over some 1,300 grants for emergency purposes, such as dental repairs, hearing aids, house repairs and the purchase of white goods.

Additionally, 362 survivors and refugees received Homecare grants at a total cost of £1.3m. Altogether, 150,000 hours of care were provided through this critical programme, which enables us to help maintain members in their own homes as

long as possible.

It gave us great pleasure to pay £517,000 through AJR Self Aid to members with the greatest need, including a special additional payment to commemorate Her Majesty's Jubilee. Currently, around 160 members receive this assistance.

AJR Centre

Now at Belsize Square Synagogue, the Centre continues to offer a convivial setting for members to enjoy entertainment, activities and freshly prepared lunches.

Of the activities introduced since we relocated from Cleve Road, the computer training programme is proving very popular, with members learning how to search the internet and use email and Skype to keep in touch with relatives and friends.

We marked the Olympics in our inimitable way with member-friendly races and competitions.

Social and welfare services

As required by the Claims Conference, our Social and Welfare Services Department continued to provide full assessments of members who apply for the Home Care scheme, Emergency Fund and Austrian Fund. We also made home visits to support members on a variety of issues and continued to work with health and care professionals.

We provided advice and emotional support to existing members and an increasing number of new members. As members advance in years, we receive more enquiries relating to their changing circumstances, while there has been a noticeable increase in requests for information and support regarding the UK Welfare benefit system, assisted living and residential care.

There has been a rise in new referrals for our help as a result of local authorities continuing to cut back on services. We now have a number of new members from north of the border since employing our dedicated worker for Scotland, Myrna Bernard. A significant number of new members are Second Generation who provide care to elderly relatives.

Our social workers maintained their professional status by undergoing training as required by the Health and Care Professionals Council.

The Claims Conference acknowledges the quality of service our Department provides, and last year our Head of Social Services, Sue Kurlander, presented a paper on the effects of dementia related to Holocaust survivors and refugees at a conference in Rome.

The Social Work team continues to collaborate with other social work and welfare organisations such as Jewish Care and the Manchester Federation to provide the best level of support for members in those areas of the country. This is alongside our longstanding relationships with other agencies from the UK Umbrella Group which support survivors and refugees.

Northern groups

Members in Scotland enjoyed another action-packed year with outings to the stunning Howick Hall Gardens, the Earl Grey tearoom, a day at the Falkirk Wheel, and an exquisite lunch and classical piano concert at the Royal Overseas League in Edinburgh. Members in the North East took in the breath-taking floral displays in Alnwick.

Cinema outings included *Madame Butterfly* in 3D, *Anna Karenina* and *Oma and Bella*. Continental Friends' home gatherings included a talk by Lady Joyce Kaplan on 'The Art of Poetry' and Fiona Frank on 'What It's Like to be Jewish in Scotland'.

The Glasgow group invited members to talks by Geoffrey Berg on 'A Day in the Life of a Heart Surgeon', David Neville on 'The Life of a Playwright', and Harvey Kaplan on 'The First 30 Years of the Scottish Jewish Archives'.

The high point of the year was, of course, the Edinburgh Regional. As usual, it brought together First and Second Generation members participating in lively group discussions, followed by a scrumptious three-course meal. Among speakers were J. D. Simons, author of *The Credit Draper*, and Hilary Rifkind, Chair of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities.

The year was rounded off in true Scottish-Jewish style with Chanukah concerts, the Kefli choir, Klezmer music and latkes as well as a New Year's Eve party with mulled wine, haggis, neeps and tatties.

AJR members were guests of honour at the unveiling ceremony of the Queen's Park Charitable Trust's Holocaust Memorial statue at Cathcart Cemetery and at an HMD commemoration at the City Chambers in Glasgow, where the AJR Scotland Memorial Book was prominently displayed.

The Northern groups met approximately every two months to debate subjects of mutual interest and to hear informative speakers, including Professor Bob Moore, who spoke at both the Sheffield and Manchester meetings, and the late Professor Fritz Ursell, who spoke at a Liverpool meeting.

In recognition of the Olympics, many of the groups viewed the film *Watermarks* about the 1936 Hakoah women's swimming team.

In Leeds we had the launch of 'Recipes Remembered' and a Yorkshire groups' Jubilee lunch. There was also a theatre outing to *One Man, Two Guvnors*.

The Northern annual 'get-together' was held in Manchester: 60 members met for a stimulating day of discussion.

Members from Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool were invited to the premiere at the Bridgewater Hall of *The Last Train to Tomorrow* (on the Kindertransports), composed by Carl Davis for the Hallé Orchestra and Hallé Children's Choir – a very moving experience. Carl Davis was also guest speaker at the AJR Northern Kristallnacht Commemoration at the Imperial War Museum North.

In Bradford we held a 99th birthday tea for Lorle Michaelis and a farewell to Springhurst Hall, where we had held

meetings for ten years.

Chanukah parties with musical entertainment were held in Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds (for the Yorkshire groups). At the Yorkshire Chanukah Party Susanne Green introduced Wendy Bott, who has taken over the role of Yorkshire Groups Co-ordinator.

Southern groups

The Outreach groups continued at a steady pace with Essex and Ilford celebrating ten-year anniversaries.

Outings included an exclusive showing of *War Horse* and a trip to the waterways around Oxford where *Alice in Wonderland* was written. We also visited the costumiers Angels and enjoyed an opera performance and tea at the Grim's Dyke Hotel.

Members were invited to hear the Zemel Choir at the Western Marble Arch Synagogue, and there were outings to the RAF Museum, a theatre production of *Chariots of Fire*, and the Bank of England Museum.

Our Bromley and Kingston groups continued to thrive at their respective hosts' homes. Marlow lunches are also becoming a standard fixture at a member's home.

Modesty is preserved at the AJR Book Club and Café Imperial (war veterans) meetings – attendance at the Book Club is all women and at Café Imperial all men!

Volunteers

The Volunteers Department launched a computer help programme, run by Jonathan Rose, enabling members to receive one-to-one computer lessons in their own homes from a pool of trained volunteers. This project has been particularly successful in attracting younger volunteers, especially from the Jewish secondary schools.

We are also fortunate in having secured funding from Six Point Foundation, which has enabled us to start a volunteer befriender service for clients with dementia. Lesley Woolfe was appointed to deliver this project.

Volunteers remain involved in all aspects of the AJR's work. At the AJR Centre volunteers run discussion groups, a book club and a French conversation class and offer manicures; regional groups benefit from volunteers helping with refreshments, writing reports for the *AJR Journal* and welcoming members; and at Head Office volunteers sit on the Claims Conference advisory panels, translate documents and help with other tasks. We have recently begun collaboration with the Judith Trust, enabling people with learning disabilities to help with office tasks.

The *AJR Journal* continues to be recorded and distributed to blind and disabled members by a team of volunteers ably led by Rita Rosenbaum. The befriending service supports members nationally by providing regular visitors to members who would like extra companionship.

The Department also benefits from the support of Rim Irscheid, an intern from the ARSP.

AJR Journal

Wide-ranging leading articles by Consultant Editor Dr Anthony Grenville on historical topics touching the lives of AJR members continued to elicit numerous responses as reflected in the correspondence columns. Regular columnists Dorothea Shefer-Vanson ('Letter from Israel') and Gloria Tessler ('Art Notes') continued to contribute their expertise. Frequent contributors Edith Argy and Margarete Stern provided a characteristic mix of nostalgia and humour. A predominant theme of feature articles were personal memoirs, reflecting readers' sometimes complicated attitudes to returning to the countries of their birth. Among outstanding contributions during the last year were research-based pieces on Jews in German silent cinema by film historian Joel Finler and timely items on the 'father of the Paralympics', Sir Ludwig Guttmann.

The Journal maintained its coverage of annual events such as the AJR's Holocaust Memorial Day and Kristallnacht anniversary services, as well as carrying news on compensation and restitution matters, the AJR Centre, and honours awarded to members in recognition of their contribution to society.

The Letters to the Editor section contained as before some of the Journal's liveliest exchanges, on a wide variety of issues ranging from the historical – not forgetting recollections of the delights (or otherwise) of being kissed by refugee tenor Richard Tauber – to such emotive present-day subjects as the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Kindertransport

The Kinder continued their monthly lunches at the AJR Centre with a wide range of speakers, including Martin Reichard from the Austrian Embassy, Harry Bibring on 'The European Maccabi Games in Vienna', and William Kaczynski on his book *Fleeing from the Führer*.

The KT Planning Committee made progress with arrangements for special events planned for this year to mark the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransports, including a reunion at the JFS on 23 June and a reception at St James's Palace to be hosted by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

Child Survivors' Association (CSA)

In addition to regular social meetings in members' homes, the CSA had two successful outings, to the 'Windermere Boys' exhibition in Manchester and *A Tender Thing*, directed by a CSA member, at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

CSA members attended the European Association of Survivors conference, in Croatia, and the World Federation Annual Conference, in Cleveland, Ohio.

The anthology of child survivor testimonies, *We Remember*, was launched at the Wiener Library in February and was so successful that a reprint was necessary. Two CSA members took part in a television interview on ITV's *This Morning*; the book also featured at the *Ham & High* Literary Festival.

Finance Report

AJR – Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31st December 2012

Income:	2012		2011	
	£	£	£	£
Membership/Donations and Legacies	110,932		146,335	
Other	2,269		2,984	
	113,201		149,319	
Less:				
Overhead Expenses				
Salary Costs	62,121		59,575	
AJR Journal	64,946		56,602	
Administration/ Depreciation	67,191		61,308	
	194,258		177,485	
(Deficit)/Surplus:	-81,057		-28,166	

Summary of Balance Sheet at 31st December 2012

	2012	2011
	£	£
Current Assets	9,031	9,747
Less: Current Liabilities	147,952	67,611
	-138,921	-57,864
Represented by:		
General Fund B/Fwd	-57,864	-29,698
Net deficiency for the year	-81,057	-28,166
	-138,921	-57,864

David Rothenberg, Hon. Treasurer 01/04/2011

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE Summary figures for the year ended 31st December 2012

Income:	2012		2011	
	£	£	£	£
Takings – Day Centre and meals-on-wheels		52,826		63,189
Less outgoings:				
Salaries	64,721		96,414	
Catering costs	105,448		172,802	
Sundry expenses	74,954	245,123	93,838	363,054
Deficit funded from Charitable Trust	192,297		299,865	

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST Summary Income and Expenditure Accounts Year ended 31st December 2012

Income:	2012		2011	
	£	£	£	£
Gift Aid/Donations/ Claims Conference	1,166,248		864,335	
Investment income	472,331		464,473	
Sheltered housing			20,145	
	1,638,579		1,348,953	
Legacies	1,084,518		913,790	
	2,723,097		2,262,743	
Less outgoings:				
Day Centre	192,297		299,865	
Self Aid, Homecare and Emergency Grants	1,237,055		1,026,331	
Other organisations Administration/ Depreciation	206,116		241,836	
	1,344,666		1,245,686	
	2,980,134		2,813,718	
Net outgoing resources for the year	-257,037		-550,975	
Surplus/-Deficiency on realised and unrealised investments	1,264,922		-763,885	
Net movement in funds	1,007,885		-1,314,860	

Treasurer's Report 2012

While the recovery in financial markets over the last 12 months has brought about a welcomed strengthening of our financial position, we must continue to be mindful of the unresolved international fiscal difficulties which may yet lead to on-going instability. Returns on cash investments remain low. We therefore continue to manage our financial affairs in a responsible and prudent way in order to ensure the necessary resources remain in place to support the needs of our members for as long as necessary.

We continue to respond with empathetic consideration to the times we are in and the needs of our membership. Our Self Aid programme has again assisted with the welfare of our most needy members. This year we were delighted to provide additional payments to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, enabling members with the greatest need to celebrate it in a way which might otherwise not have been possible.

The AJR benefited from a significant increase in funding from the Claims Conference, most of which is paid directly as welfare payments to survivors and refugees and to support the social and outreach programmes we deliver. As always, we remain grateful for their generous and critical support and wish them well in their further negotiations with the governments of the countries in which our members suffered.

New, and particularly welcome this year, are the grants provided by the Six Point Foundation, which are being used to support projects and needs outside the remit of the Claims Conference.

While the organisation remains well positioned to continue this work, as the needs of our ageing members increase and support from local authorities is curtailed, the need for other financial support continues and I hope our members continue to remember the AJR in their wills. Legacy income supports much of our activity and we are very grateful to all those who remember us in this way.

It is appropriate that I extend my thanks to the operational and administrative teams which so effectively carry out our work: Sue Kurlander and the social services department and David Kaye and the finance team. The administrative and record-keeping burden has become more complex in order to deal with increasing stringency in reporting and regulatory matters and to keep on top of the thousands of individual payments that must be paid and tracked, not only on behalf of the AJR but also on behalf of the other charitable agencies in the UK Umbrella

group that support Holocaust survivors and refugees.

The year ahead sees us working in the new and more modern guise of being a charitable company. The format may be new with a slightly modified name but the work goes on as before.

David Rothenberg
Treasurer

The Association of Jewish Refugees

AJR ANNUAL REPORT

continued from page 5

The bi-monthly *Newsletter* keeps members abreast of events and publications of interest.

Jewish Refugees Committee (JRC)

The AJR supports the project of digitising the archives of the Jewish Refugees Committee, which we host at our offices in Stanmore. Meanwhile, hard copies of the individual records of the refugees, including some survivors, are available by emailing jrc@ajr.org.uk

JRC volunteer Lilian Levy responded to numerous enquiries for information about the arrival of the refugees.

Grants

As in previous years, the AJR Charitable Trust supported leading institutions in the fields of Holocaust education, research and commemoration, including most notably last year, the localities project developed by the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre. The Charitable Trust also contributed towards Holocaust Memorial Day events at the Finchley Reform and Northwood Synagogues and the Universities of Sussex and Glasgow. We were also delighted to welcome the West Mercia Air Cadets with funding for their educational visit to Auschwitz.

Thanks

It is extremely gratifying to receive letters and cards from members expressing thanks for the efforts of our dedicated staff and volunteers, who really do go the extra mile to assist and support and to deliver our services so professionally and kindly. I would also like to pay tribute to my fellow Directors for their support and contributions throughout the year.

We are nothing without you, our members, and your continuing involvement and active participation in the AJR is remarkable and inspiring. As always, do inform us if you know of anyone who might benefit from our services. My colleagues join me in looking forward to welcoming you at our special events this year.

Andrew Kaufman, Chairman
The Association of Jewish Refugees



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

ANGLO-JEWRY AND THE REFUGEES

Sir – A recent letter by Sylvia Hurst, whose memoir on her Kindertransport experience elicited no response in any Jewish paper, touched a chord in my experience too. I also came to England on the Kindertransport. As a ten-year-old, I didn't want to leave parents, siblings and home, but I had no choice and know that this parental decision changed my life. My parents were among the first to be deported *en masse* in October 1940, when Baden, the Palatinate and the Saarland were 'cleansed' of Jews.

I inherited the letters written by my parents to my older siblings and included them in my book. I was living in the USA while I worked on this book. It took considerable research. I sent it to various Jewish publishers. Some were interested but felt that profit was unlikely. I returned to live in the UK and tried a few publishers here, but without success.

In my home town of Leicester, I eventually met Barbara Butler, who works and publishes for Christians Aware. She was only too willing to publish, conscious of past persecution of Jews by Christians. The book appeared last year under the title *Life-Lines*. George Vulkan wrote a warm review of the book in the *AJR Journal*.

Friends and publishers suggested I send the book to be reviewed by the *Jewish Chronicle*. I did. No reaction whatsoever. Eventually I heard that they felt I should have had a Jewish publisher and not a Christian one; hence they were not interested. Is it the old dislike of German Jews? Did their trials not affect/move British Jews?

In the office of Christians Aware in Leicester hangs a painting by a local artist, a copy of one of the most famous photographs of the War and an icon of the Shoah – an elderly Orthodox Jew bent under the weight of the bundle on his shoulder, presumably a blanket containing the remnant of his erstwhile possessions, which he will need (or not) wherever he is sent. I assume the *Jewish Chronicle* too has such a picture on its walls?

Ruth L. David, Leicester

Sir – I read the various articles on refugee experiences with great interest.

I am now well into my nineties and spent a lot of time – too much! – as a housemaid until (in 1942) I at last obtained a job as a 'temporary civil servant' with the Foreign Office. However, I noticed no mention was made by anyone of the fact that – after the *First World War* – a fair number of Jews entered *Germany* in search of better living conditions – and work – from Poland etc. From the way the 'grown-up' German Jews spoke of them, I would say they were not made welcome (by our grown-up relations) in Germany, so perhaps we should not judge the British Jews too harshly regarding their attitude to us!

(Mrs) Marion Smith, Chorleywood, Herts

A WONDERFUL PORTRAIT

Sir – I have just read Anthony Grenville's article on Hermann Sinsheimer in the *AJR Journal* (April). Frankly, I am impressed and I congratulate you on this wonderful portrait. It is probably the best thing I have read on 'Sins' in such a short format.

*Dr Hans-Helmut Görtz, Co-editor,
Hermann und Christobel Sinsheimer:
Briefe aus England in die Pfalz (2012),
Freinsheim, Germany
(letter translated from German)*

SCHOOL FOR 'HIGH FLYERS'

Sir – In response to Fritz Starer's letter 'School for "high flyers"' in the April issue, the new Chajes Gymnasium is situated in Simon Wiesenthal-gasse 3 (Donau underground) in a large complex near the new Hakoah Sports Centre. There are classes from Kindergarten upwards; the students are apparently mainly from Russian and Israeli families; the headmaster and most of the teachers are non-Jewish.

I attended two major Chajes reunions over the years (one in Tel Aviv in the 70s, the other in London) together with my husband, Felix, who was an ex-Chajesnik as well as a Kind. He was forced to leave the Gymnasium at the age of 12 as he had been booked to go to Palestine – a scheme that eventually came to nothing due to Arab protests. Meanwhile, the Chajes was needed to house Jewish children expelled from their own schools after the Anschluss.

I count some of my closest relatives and friends, including my late husband, among the alumni: my cousins Norbert Brainin (of Amadeus fame) and his brother Hugo, my own brother Harald Brainin, and our close friends the Helfgott brothers, Isaac and Alfred (Avraham Shomroni), as well as several other friends we got to know in London in later years.

Some of the above are sadly no longer alive. I agree with Fritz Starer that it would be interesting to have a history of ex-Chajesniks. We used to subscribe to a Chajes Newsletter, sent out by a dedicated 'old boy' named Uri Spielvogel. The Newsletter continues thanks to the devotion of Uri's daughter Sasha (sashaspiegel@msn.com). For further information, there is a Chajes website about the 'new' school. Avraham in Israel (mashavra@013.net) or Hugo Brainin in Vienna (l.h.brainin@aol.at) would be more informative than I can be.

Mary Brainin-Huttrer, London N3

Sir – In your April issue you published a letter from Fritz Starer drawing attention to the Chajes Gymnasium in Vienna. He asked for information about the re-establishment of the school.

My late mother, Erna Baginsky (née Goldenberg, 1918-2010), was a student there before coming to England in 1938. Visiting Vienna in 2006, I found the school at the address she had given me and by following the route she had described from her home in the 20th district. I was surprised to find that there was a school there of the same name. I took a couple of photographs before the security officer sadly, but understandably, asked me not to take any more pictures.

There is information about the school and its history on the website <http://www.zpc.at/schule/willkommen> If Fritz Starer would like to contact me he is welcome to do so.

William Baginsky, Abbots Langley

JEWISH REFUGEES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Sir – I was interested in Leopold Wiener's article (April), recounting how he and his parents managed to get to England plus the story of his family.

I too came from Czechoslovakia. I came alone on one of Sir Nicholas Winton's children's transports. I was born in Prague. My parents and little brother and countless other relatives perished.

I too have been reading the *AJR Journal* for many years and regret the fact that so little is ever mentioned of Jewish refugees from my country and, indeed, others, of whom there must be a considerable number – from France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium etc. We are vastly outnumbered as the refugees from Austria and Germany came

continued overleaf ➔

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

continued from page 7

in their thousands. However, the Journal can only publish material that it receives so it is really up to us – albeit the minority – to provide the input.

Bronia Snow, Esher

FRANKFURT UNVEILING IN MEMORY OF DIPLOMATS WHO HELPED JEWS

Sir – Your readers may be interested to learn that on 8 May a plaque will be unveiled commemorating Robert T. Smallbones and Arthur Dowden on the site of the former British Consulate General in Frankfurt. The two diplomats were Consul General and Vice Consul respectively from 1932 until the outbreak of war in 1939.

Following the Nazi rise to power the Consulate became a safe haven for many Jews, particularly after Kristallnacht. Furthermore, through the unceasing efforts of Smallbones and Dowden, many Jews were able to escape from Nazi Germany. After November 1938 the so-called Visa Scheme was set up by Smallbones in co-operation with Otto Schiff in London, with the tacit support of the British government. As a result, several thousand Jews – some sources speak of 48,000 – reached safety in this country.

*John D. Goldsmith,
Pfäffikon, Switzerland*

A report on this event will appear in our next issue (Ed.).

STORY OF THE DUNERA

Sir – I am a historian living in Vienna and, together with a colleague, I am working on a project to discover the fate of those Austrians who were shipped from Britain to Australia aboard the *Dunera*, and especially of those who stayed in Great Britain after the war. Their story must be told in Austria and Germany as well. I would be grateful to make contact with any survivors, their families or friends and to receive any reliable information about them. I am planning to come to England later this year, but I would be glad to make contact before that. Please contact me at elisabeth.lebensaft@chello.at

Dr Elisabeth Lebensaft, Vienna

A BIT OF 'BRITISHNESS'

Sir – It saddened me to read Peter Phillips's rather unfair criticism of Margarete Stern's excellent and interesting article 'A pointless topic' in your March edition. Of course, we are all glad to have received the citizenship of our host countries, but what one feels, one can discuss *ad infinitum*. Suffice it to say that we are a dying-out generation. The next one will never know the happy youth I and many youngsters like me spent in Vienna until 1938. That

does not mean I would like to go back and live there – unfortunately one can never recapture one's youth!

The letter by Tom Winter in your April issue made me smile as I too, when arriving in London in June 1939, changed my loyalty from 'Good Old Hakoah' to FC Arsenal! When, after the War, my husband and I got season tickets to Highbury, we felt like we had won the 'Bingo' prize. We are still football (soccer they call it here) crazy, watch every game on TV, and are fiercely loyal to our Arsenal as well as to the England national football team. So maybe there is still a bit of 'Britishness' inside me!

Kitty Schafer, Toronto, Canada

Sir – Margarete Stern's honest expression of feeling not completely British elicited a response by Peter Philips: 'I suggest to her that maybe she should return to Germany.'

Her feeling was and is surely an understandable reaction shared by many refugees. His response is reminiscent of the frequently heard unkind remarks during the War years 'Why don't you go back to your own country?'

George Lazarus, London N3

Sir – Why does Peter Phillips bother to write an ill-tempered letter about Margarete Stern?

She told us she is a loyal British subject. Surely that is enough. For the greater part of my life I have had little contact with Jewish people. I used to attend Friends' meetings. I still remained a Jew. Variety is the spice of life.

Hans Hammerschmidt, Oxford

Sir – I read the article by Margarete Stern with interest. How does it place me, who have lived my first 14 years in Austria, over a quarter of a century in Israel, and the rest in England? All these countries are to varying degrees components in my life, in addition to my Jewish heritage.

It is Israel and Britain that matter in my lifetime and in both countries I was, and am, totally involved economically, culturally and socially. This involvement made it possible for me to identify with Israel at the time and with Britain now without having to measure how Israeli or English I am. I never had the need to pretend and never had any obstacles put in my way.

Belonging for many years to the Thames Valley Liberal Synagogue allowed me to embrace my Jewish heritage. Probably I am a lucky person for being able to incorporate all this – being active and involved helped it all along. It may sound unconvincing and simplistic but for me and my family it has worked.

*Meir Weiss, Mortimer,
near Reading, Berks*

MEHR EIN BUKOVINER?

Sir – The letter 'Echter Wiener oder Schlawiner?' from Margarete Stern (no relative) in your April issue reminded me of the humorous description of many a Viennese Jew as 'nicht ein echter Wiener, mehr ein Bukoviner'. For those not familiar with pre-WW1 European geography, Bukovina was a province to the east of Galicia annexed by Austria from Moldavia at the end of the eighteenth century and the easternmost province of the Austrian part of the Dual Monarchy.

Martin D. Stern, Salford

PENICILLIN: THE UNTOLD STORY

Sir – Concerning the report in your April issue of the talk by Professor Michael Spiro on 'Penicillin: The Untold Story', I am reminded how my late uncle, Dr Gerhard Weiler from Oxford, who owned and ran the Microanalytical Lab, told me that the lab did a great deal of chemical analysis in the development of penicillin. At the time, his lab was unique in England, having been brought to Oxford from Berlin at the invitation of Sir Robert Robinson, head of the Chemistry Department at the University of Oxford. Another scientist involved with the development of penicillin was Dr Chain, who – according to my late uncle – never got the recognition he deserved!

I'm sorry I missed this talk, which would have been of great interest to me.

Tom Heinemann, Wembley Park

ISRAEL HAS AGED VERY WELL

Sir – With regard to Peter Phillips's article 'Israel has not aged well' in your April issue, as the adult Israel became middle-aged, he prospered, though still surrounded by many fractious neighbouring 'cousins' who continued to murder one another at an increasingly rapid rate as they descended into anarchy. Unable to bully Israel and force him into the sea, the 'cousins' decided to spread malicious rumours to all who would listen. They were ageing very badly.

As for the distant bystanders, they were irritated and not a little incredulous by that very small person who was prospering while all around were suffering financially and were only too anxious to listen to the 'cousins' gossip and accusations. They were not ageing too well either.

Unfortunately, some *mishpoche* in the periphery with the bystanders found it convenient to join in the tut-tutting at Israel's audacity to defend himself from the surrounding large bullies. The *mishpoche* had become a grumpy old man. He was lecturing Israel from the comfort of his armchair, demanding standards of behaviour that the bystanders had never met themselves. *He* was ageing badly too. How sad!

Marcel Ladenheim, Surbiton, Surrey

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

He was 19 years old and about to launch himself in Paris. The year was 1901. The show was Ambroise Vollard's summer exhibition and the young artist was **Pablo Picasso**. Shortly before leaving Madrid, he learned of the suicide of his friend, the poet Carlos Casagemas, in Montmartre. This tragedy would profoundly influence Picasso's early work, known as the Blue Period, which features in the **Courtauld Gallery's** current exhibition **Becoming Picasso: Paris 1901** (until 26 May). To create his 64 works for the Paris show, Picasso worked intensely, sometimes completing three canvases a day with a vitality which proves his scope and imagination.

The surreal painting of Casagemas's funeral – dark, weeping figures below, cavorting nudes above – was his provocative, yet subtle hallmark. Ever a lover of women, Picasso was also sensitive to their plight. His visit to the Saint Lazare women's prison generated a painting of a gaunt mother with her children, eloquent of refugees in today's media. In fact, loneliness and despair are surprisingly accentuated by the colour and energy of these early works.

In *Seated Harlequin* the contemplative figure in blue with long, white hands carries an aura of private grief, while in *Harlequin and Companion* two seated people are together and yet separate; their nervous hands carry the story. There is great tenderness also in the sexual ambivalence of *Child with a Dove*, said to have sold for £80 million.

Picasso brought the joy and colour of Spain to Paris too. His *Spanish Dancer* appealed to the



Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Seated Harlequin 1901

French appetite for the Carmen image and there are references to Toulouse-Lautrec, Manet and Degas. It was the debut of a great artist who brilliantly reinvented the work of the Impressionists. Yet it would never happen again. As new genres beckoned, Picasso was about to re-invent himself.

The **National Portrait Gallery's** exhibition (until 27 May) of some 150 vintage prints between 1916 and 1968 is the first to focus on **Man Ray's** photographic portraits, many seen for the first time in the UK. His genius lies in his ability to illuminate the life of the subject beyond the face alone. Photographer to the literati and glitterati of his day, the Philadelphia-born surrealist counted Duchamp, Picasso and Giacometti among his friends and probably photographed every one of them.

Moving to Paris in 1921, he contributed to the Dadaist and Surrealist movements. There, with his lover Lee Miller, he developed the solarisation process, notable in his portraits of Lee, Elsa Schiaparelli, Irene Zurkinden and others. One portrait resembles a smudgy ink painting; another turns an artist's model from a pre-Raphaelite pose into a blonde spinning top. There is an insouciant profile of Coco Chanel in her little black dress and jumble of pearls. The portraits are stylised and narrative. A study of the young Picasso shows him with slicked black hair and a brooding, matador face.

The Second World War prompted Man Ray's return to America. But he became 'serious' when Hollywood got him. Formal poses become the currency of stardom and you feel an interesting artist has been curbed, gilded with *their* stardust rather than his own, resulting in lavish, but less exciting portraits of the stars. Returning in 1951 to Paris, where he remained until his death in 1976, he used experimental colour photography in his portraits of Juliette Gréco, Yves Montand and Catherine Deneuve.

Model/photographer Lee Miller stalked him to a Paris café to announce herself as his new assistant, and he photographs her majestic profile and shiny, short-cropped hair in flapper-girl style.

REVIEWS

Difficult questions, no easy solutions

MUSIC WARS, 1937-1945
by Patrick Bade

East and West Publishing 2012,
433 pp., 16 colour pages and b/w
illustrations, ISBN 978 1 907318 07 8

In an admirably accessible style, *Music Wars* considers the importance of music in wartime, tracing the rich and often complex tapestry of musical life during the period prior to and during the Second World War, focusing on Britain, Germany, occupied France, Russia and the USA. Patrick Bade makes an original contribution to the extent that he considers the way music was equally important to both sides – as a power to evoke emotions and stir political sentiment and as an arena in which to manipulate identities. At times, his approach threatens to create a confusing moral maze, to relativise values by equating both sides, something the reader wants to resist. Yet it has the benefit to show up the complexity of the topic – that nothing is, as Bade later puts it, only 'black and white'. The role of famous musicians and artists caught on the 'wrong side' was not always clear cut, any more than was the reason why certain performers were more 'stained' as a result of collaboration than others. For instance, surveying 'Defeated France', the author notes that most musicians had to collaborate at some level with the Vichy government. Yet in his account of major French composers, he avoids discussing the details of Honegger's and Poulenc's ambivalent relationships with either Vichy or the resistance. However, he raises many important questions in his discussions about the complex issue of collaboration, in France as well as Italy and Germany, showing how in some cases it allowed some musicians to protect Jewish artists.

Patrick Bade's expertise is clearly opera and there is a sense in which the narrative is slightly over-balanced in favour of opera singers, productions and recordings. The author trawls entertainingly through anecdotes such as the slightly shocking tales of how, in the late 30s, the famous Jewish Wagnerian bass Friedrich Schorr and Richard Tauber were dropped off British cast lists to please the Nazis, or how, at Covent Garden, refugee singers (Tauber and Lotte Lehmann) shared the stage with Nazi-sympathising German singers. The ambiguous nature of the art works themselves emerges in the accounts of the production and recording of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* in Nazi-occupied Paris – 'the greatest wartime

Squares for blankets



AJR Centre members knitting squares for hand-knitted blankets to be sent by World Jewish Relief (WJR) to needy Jews in the former Soviet Union (from left) Lin Morris (WJR), Astrid Kerzner, Jenny Gersten, Karin Lawson

achievement of the Opéra Comique', interpreted both as a pro-German gesture by the occupiers and as an expression of anti-German French values by the French audience, many of whom later joined the resistance. Similarly, *Madame Butterfly* curiously was banned by both the Germans (it was about an American) and by the Americans (it was about the Japanese), yet was admired by the British. That the same music could appeal across the board is best demonstrated in Bade's chapter 'War Songs', in which a brilliant comparative discussion of Vera Lynn and her German counterpart Zarah Leander highlights how their hits – 'We'll Meet Again' and 'Ich weiss es wird einmal ein Wunder geschehen' – both address the issues of loss and yearning for home, as did 'Lili Marlene', famously loved by audiences on both sides of the conflict.

In the author's survey of British musical life, the main emphasis throughout is on well-known figures, like Vaughan Williams, Walton and Britten, as also the operatic life of Sadler's Wells, Covent Garden, the Carl Rosa company and hugely popular singers like Joan Hammond and Kathleen Ferrier. There are admirable accounts of important institutions such as Myra Hess's National Gallery concerts and the remarkable efforts of ENSA (Entertainments National Service Association) worldwide, as also the Proms, which drew international soloists 'a quite extraordinary high proportion of which were Jewish'. Oddly, there is no mention of Proms programming of American and Russian repertoire when those nations came into the War, or of the performance of Jewish composers. In contrast to a detailed survey of émigré composers in the USA, far less space is accorded to refugees in Britain. The only comment relates to Tippett, who, when director of Morley College, worked with 'a number of émigré musicians including the composers Walter Goehr and Mátyás Seiber and the string players Norbert Brainin, Peter Schidlof and Siegmund Nissel, bringing a much needed stimulus to London's wartime musical life'. The vocal coach Peter Gellhorn is later mentioned, yet the major musical contributions of artists like Tausky, Goldschmidt or Reizenstein, for instance, are ignored.

Potentially the most fascinating chapter is that on 'Music in Camps', where just a few examples illustrate the human spirit transcending, often defiantly, conditions of captivity. Yet the grouping together of very different examples is problematic. Gal's 'Huyton Suite', written in internment, reflects nostalgia for a lost homeland yet reassurance in his adopted refuge, Britain. And whereas Messiaen as POW and Georges Brassens as German factory slave worker composed in relative

safety, as did German and Italian POWs in Britain, their works cannot compare with those composed and performed in Terezin and the death camps, where music, as well as allowing 'secret gestures of defiance', was either a means of survival or a final outpouring of the soul. Bade appears to celebrate the cultural richness flourishing in all camps without somehow foregrounding the anguish and horror of particular contexts.

As a narrative history of music in the period, *Music Wars* is colourfully narrated and attractively illustrated. The author sheds light on some difficult questions without offering easy solutions and helps us understand how the Nazis 'attempted to appropriate music, bringing it into alignment with their ideology of nationalism, hatred and aggression', whilst also showing, by contrast, how music may bring, as Bruno Walter wrote in 1945, 'a message of hope'.

Malcolm Miller

Malcolm Miller is a musicologist, critic and pianist, and Associate Fellow of the Institute of Musical Research, London University.

An unlikely destination

EXODUS TO SHANGHAI: STORIES OF ESCAPE FROM THE THIRD REICH by Steve Hochstadt

*Palgrave Macmillan 2012, 272 pp.
paperback, ISBN 978-1-137-00671-4*

For Jewish refugees seeking to flee Nazi Europe, it is very unlikely that Shanghai would have been a preferred destination. It was, however, the only destination which freely admitted refugees, especially in the months leading up to the War, and at least 16,000 Jews found refuge there. Professor Hochstadt's book effectively combines the history of the Shanghai Jewish community during the War with the stories of 13 Jewish individuals and families. These were selected from over 100 interviews recorded as part of an oral history project. The book brings to life the remarkable stories of these people, based on their own words.

In a comprehensive introductory chapter, the author describes the situation which faced Jews trying to find a safe haven, and the unique status of Shanghai as a virtually self-governing entity in China, administered by British, American and French interests, but with the Japanese military in overall control. Each chapter covers separate episodes in the lives of the refugees and includes an explanatory introduction to the circumstances at the time.

Leaving their homes in Germany and Austria for a foreign country was a challenge for all Jewish refugees, but far more so for those heading for Shanghai.

First, the pre-War journey on Italian or German ships lasted many weeks; later, in 1940, it even involved crossing the Soviet Union by train, always with the fear of being sent back. Second, the arrival in Shanghai was a complete culture shock. The Western administrations were not enthusiastic about the arrival of large numbers of Jews but, fortunately for the refugees, there was support from the established Baghdadi and Russian-Jewish communities. The Japanese authorities also seemed sympathetic.

The fascinating descriptions of life in Shanghai show the ingenuity and business acuity of many of the refugees, who tried to re-create their European lifestyles in a very different environment. There were Viennese cafés, shops, theatre performances, football matches etc. But living conditions were crowded and there were serious problems regarding sanitation. After Japan entered the war in 1941 conditions became much harder and in 1943 all refugees were forced to move into a Designated Area, which led to very severe overcrowding.

There are many references to the attitude of the Japanese. Some of the Japanese behaved with cruelty and expected total subservience from all the Western refugees. Fortunately, despite demands from their German allies, Jewish refugees were not sent back to Germany or treated any worse than non-Jews. There were, however, serious food shortages and a lack of medical supplies which led to many deaths. The most serious single loss of life occurred when 37 Jewish refugees and a large number of Chinese were killed in an American air raid in July 1945.

Towards the end of the War there was fear of what the Japanese would do when recognising their imminent defeat, but nothing happened and the Japanese just melted away. The problems did not end there as there was fighting between the Nationalist and Communist Chinese armies and full relief did not come till September, when the Americans occupied Shanghai.

How individuals and families coped is described in the first person in the recorded histories of the narrators. The reader gets to know these people as they appear in each chapter from the time of being forced from their homes to their post-war lives in America and other countries. The re-integration of the ex-refugees was not easy and several stayed on in Shanghai for a considerable time before being able to settle in a permanent new homeland. This informative and moving book concludes with short biographies of each of the narrators.

Incidentally, there is now a Jewish museum in Shanghai, covering the story of the war-time Jewish community. The website www.shanghaijews.org.cn is well worth looking at.

George Vulkan

A Very Happy Birthday, Sir Nicholas!

On 19 May this year Sir Nicholas Winton will be 104. Those of us who still remain of the 669 Czech, mainly Jewish, children whom Nicholas Winton saved on the eve of the Second World War would like to wish him a Very Happy Birthday!

Most of us did not know how our rescue had been achieved until Nicholas Winton's part in it became known in 1988. How fortunate that we have been able to get to know Nicky in person over the last 25 years and show him our gratitude and appreciation.

Since the 'Velvet Revolution' in Czechoslovakia in 1989, Nicholas Winton's story has become well known and acknowledged, especially in their schools. He has been invited to Prague many times, and has received Czech honours.

In 2009 Czech Railways arranged a commemorative journey by trains assembled from pre-war engines and wagons to go from Prague to London, remembering the journeys made by the unaccompanied children in 1939. My husband Cedric persuaded me that we should join the 'Winton Train' in August 2009. With all the media attention, taking the train from the one-time Wilson Station was very different from the day my sister Sonja and I



Sir Nicholas greets the children at Liverpool Street Station on the arrival of the 'Winton Train' in 2009

left Prague, with our parents seeing us off, saying 'It won't be for long.' Like most of the other children, we were never to see them again. Our parents, as well as Nicholas Winton, had been far-seeing and caring enough to remove us from experiencing the discrimination and potential danger, even though no one at that time could imagine the horrors to come.

I was invited by Czech television to be interviewed by Jan Kraus on the train, because I still speak Czech. After this was shown twice on Czech television, I was contacted by distant relatives who had survived the Holocaust, from my home town Hradec Kralove and from Litomerice.

Last year I was asked to give talks

to schools and adult groups in Hradec Kralove, talking about my life and the part played by Nicholas Winton. I was also invited to be interviewed by Radio Hradec Kralove about my experiences.

In December 1942 the Jewish citizens of Hradec Kralove and those from outlying villages – a total of 1,200 persons – were rounded up and transported to Terezin, and from there to Auschwitz. Of these only 90 survived. Among those who perished were all the members of my family, including my cousin's two small children. Had it not been for Nicholas Winton, my own name and that of my late sister would also have appeared on the memorial in the Hradec Kralove Jewish Cemetery, which lists all those from the town who did not return. They include my Jewish classmates and other children of my age whom I knew.

A commemorative assembly was held in December 2012 in Hradec to mark the 70 years since the deportations. This took place in the building from which the Jewish people had been taken away in 1942.

When my thoughts turn to the fate that my parents had to suffer I feel they could at least have had that small crumb of comfort that we, their daughters, were safe, thanks to the actions of Nicholas Winton at that critical time.

Thank you, dear Nicky, from a very grateful survivor!

Hana Kleiner

SEARCH NOTICES

Has anyone information about **Margot Aufrecht**, who lived as a schoolgirl in Berlin-Pankow before the War and was incarcerated with her parents and brother in Bergen-Belsen? After the camp's liberation she spent over a year on site, was befriended by General Montgomery's sister-in-law, and is thought to have emigrated eventually to Australia to join an uncle. I am especially anxious also to get in touch with **Heinz Bloch**, his wife or descendants. Please contact Leslie Baruch Brent, 30 Hugo Road, London N19 5EU or email lesliebrent@waitrose.com

Arthur Wallach, a relative and German-Jewish poet, born 1906, left Germany in 1938 with his mother, **Ida Wallach**, a British national born in Australia. They arrived in Australia on the *Strathnaver* in March 1939. I believe they spent time in England, probably in London, after leaving Germany. They probably travelled to England from Essen, where the family lived. Also, my mother, **Annemarie Meyer**, came to England from Hanover in late December 1937 and stayed in a boarding house in London which housed Jewish refugees. She spent some time in Swiss Cottage before leaving for Australia in 1940. Any information please to Margaret Jacobs at wellcutwords@optusnet.com.au

Landkreis Oder-Spree wish to trace **Julius Wolffsberg**, last address Ormesby Road, Kenton and only survivor of the Warschauer family, in whose memories it wishes to lay a *Stolperstein*. Any information please to Amt 25, Breitscheidstrasse 7, 15848, Beeskow

Stolpersteine/ Stones of Remembrance – an update

To friends and supporters of our project: In the last few years my knowledge of databases has grown and I would like to share it with you. I am also including the links to two videos on YouTube about our project as well as a link to a short film about the stones. On our homepage, the menu item 'I wish to have a stone installed' shows the entire process.

Databases

<http://www.doew.at/ausstellung/shoahopferdb.html> – Austrian database
<http://db.yadvashem.org/names/search.html?language=en> – Yad Vashem database
<http://www.holocaust.cz/de/victims> – victims in Czechoslovakia
<http://search.ancestry.de/search/db.aspx?dbid=1459> – victims of ghettos

YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pstpGZZOqyM>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNYLVINdFnM>

Film by Guy Lichtenstein

<https://vimeo.com/36388581>

A book recently published in Austria is informative:

www.findbuch.at

To find old Viennese addresses, use the digital version of the 'Lehmann address books':

<http://www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/periodical/structure/5311>

Elisabeth Ben David-Hindler, Vienna

ARTS AND EVENTS MAY

To 22 May 'Wit's End: The Satirical Cartoons of Stephen Roth' Exhibition at Wiener Library. Stephen Roth was a prolific Czech-Jewish artist whose cartoons lampooned fascist dictators and put a wry spin on political events during WWII. Prior to the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia, he immigrated to London, where he remained the rest of his life contributing pieces to English newspapers

Tues 7 Pamela Weisberger (President and Research Co-ordinator, Gesher Galicia) **'Unique**

and Unusual Resources in Galician Genealogy' Wiener Library, 6.30 pm. Booking essential

Fri 24 Dr Helen Roche (University of Cambridge) **"Why We Knew Nothing about Auschwitz": Former Nazi Elite-school Pupils' Attempts to Come to Terms with the Holocaust'** Wiener Library, 1.00 pm. Booking essential

Wiener Library telephone 020 7636 7247

INSIDE the AJR

Glasgow Book Club Fiction and Fact
Discussing *The Captain's Daughter* by Leah Fleming, we wondered whether keeping secrets could change lives and if coincidences like those in the book really do happen.

Anthea Berg

Ealing Boys Town Jerusalem
Laurence Stein gave an inspirational account of Boys Town Jerusalem, founded in 1948 to house and educate war orphans but now catering for Jewish boys from a disadvantaged background from around the world.

Leslie Sommer

Café Imperial Why No Royal Army?
Lively discussions on the first sunny day in a long, long time. Bill Howard said his Arctic Star medal was winging its way to him by the Royal Mail. Which led to the question: Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, Royal Marines – but no Royal Army?

Esther Rinkoff

Harrogate/York Quite a Range of Interests

We enjoyed once again the hospitality of Inge and Ken Little. The theme of our meeting was 'Hobbies' and we came up with quite a range of interests – from Hardanger embroidery and crochet work to stamp collecting and violin making.

Tom and Sylvia Winter

Kingston CF The First Real Day of Spring
March 5, the first real day of Spring, enabled those who had gathered at Susan's house to enjoy the sunshine in her garden and appreciate her incomparable hospitality and baking skills in her spacious reception area.

Alfred Kessler

Edinburgh CF Jewish Humour
Topic for discussion was 'Jewish humour'. We laughed and laughed and enjoyed ourselves so much. A good way to welcome new member Eva Baur. Thanks due to Judy Russel for hosting the meeting, one of our best ones.

Francoise Robertson

Ilford The Legacy of Ludwig Guttman
WheelPower volunteers Joyce and John Sheard spoke about the help given to disabled people at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, all of which started with German-Jewish refugee Ludwig Guttman. A very uplifting morning for us all.

Meta Roseneil

Big County Chorus
Members from Leeds, Bradford and Harrogate/York were treated to an afternoon of 'harmony, barbershop-style singing' by the Big County Chorus. The singing was followed by a scrumptious tea and this was followed by more singing. A good afternoon was had by all.

Wendy Bott

Bromley CF Discussions on Diverse Subjects

Our first meeting of the year was at the new home of Liane Segal. Hazel led discussions on subjects as diverse as modern literature and AJR events. Personal histories shared included reminiscences of working days spent in haute couture, nursing, further education, hairdressing, and much more.

Dorothea Lipton

Norfolk Shining a Light on the AJR's Funding

Nine of us were present and correct for our lunchtime meeting, goodies courtesy of Myrna. Best of all, one of our guests was AJR Finance Director David Kaye, who shone a light on the Claims Conference and other funds which enable the AJR to extend its helping hand.

Frank Bright

Bradford CF Welcome to Bradford, Wendy!

This was our first get-together organised by Wendy Bott. We met at Shipley Library, our new venue. An enjoyable meeting, with each participant's potted autobiography plus talk of people who have influenced us. We were reluctant to leave. Welcome to Bradford, Wendy!

Anna Greenwood

Pinner Spreading Knowledge of the Holocaust

Dame Helen Hyde DBE gave an account of the hardships suffered by members of her family under the Nazis. This had strengthened her resolve to teach about the Holocaust not only at Watford Grammar School for Girls, where she is Headmistress, but also to spread the knowledge to the wider community.

Walter Weg

Cardiff Clueless Honest Beings
David Wass's talk about shoplifting was enthralling. Much interaction made it hilarious. David gave out 'tools of the trade' such as a sieve, a penknife, an elastic band and a shopping bag and asked us how we would use them to steal. We honest beings didn't have a clue.

Marian Lane

HGS Unusual Topic for the AJR
Naomi Angell gave us an insight into her life before she became an adoption lawyer and the many causes she has fought along the way. A most unusual topic for the AJR but everyone in the room had a story or an opinion.

Hazel Beiny

St John's Wood The Inspirational Story of Rebecca Sieff
WIZO Honorary Life President Gina Monty told us the inspirational story of Rebecca

Sieff (née Marks), a founder member of WIZO and daughter of Michael Marks, creator of M&S. WIZO now has over 800 ongoing projects in Israel.

David Lang

Glasgow CF Meeting at Mark's Deli
An enthusiastic group of members met at Mark's Deli for lunch. We enjoyed the delicious *hamishe* food – our 14-strong group kept the waiting staff going.

Anthea Berg

Brighton-Sarid (Sussex) General Orde Wingate

Godfrey Gould spoke to us about General Orde Wingate, posted to Palestine in 1936 as an intelligence officer. At a dinner with Chaim Weizmann, Moshe Dayan, David Ben-Gurion and others, he committed himself to train kibbutz farmers as soldiers.

Ceska Abrahams

Edgware The Unknown Story of Penicillin

Prof Michael Spiro spoke about the five main people who contributed to the discovery of penicillin: Alexander Fleming, Cecil Paine, Howard Florey, Ernst Chain (a German-Jewish refugee) and Norman Heatley. Fleming, he said, was by no means the principal person involved.

Edgar H. Ring

Radlett Optimism for UK's Financial Future

Our speaker, Tim Pike from the Bank of England, regarded our present economic set-up as the best available but admitted some of its failings. He nevertheless expressed guarded optimism for future developments.

Fritz Starer

Sheffield Friendly and Chatty Meeting
Meeting at the home of Steve Mendelsohn, we welcomed Wendy Bott, our new Co-ordinator. Subject for discussion was 'Someone you met who made a significant difference to your life'. A very friendly and chatty meeting!

Renee Martin

Wembley New Places and New Friends
We listened to an excellent report from a member who had joined those on the recent annual trip to London – a chance to see new places and make new friends. Myrna Glass then gave us very welcome news of forthcoming events and a delicious tea was served.

Ruth Pearson

Welwyn GC From Single to Married Woman

We had a debate on the derivation of the word 'scheidung'. A phone call to my daughter-in-law in LA and a call by her to a rabbi's wife in New Jersey revealed that the word means 'separation' in German – that from a single woman to a married woman. The afternoon continued with a delightful discussion on many subjects.

Hazel Beiny

OUTING TO WESTCLIFF AJR GROUP

TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2013

We are pleased to announce an outing to visit the AJR Essex Group, which meets in Westcliff-on-Sea. This is an annual event and always a most enjoyable and relaxing day out.

The price of £20 per person includes refreshments on arrival, buffet lunch, a tour of Westcliff and return coach journey from London.

For further details, please contact
Susan Harrod, Regional Groups
Administrator, on 020 8385 3070
or at susan@ajr.org.uk

London visit – a very enjoyable three days

This was a wonderful series of outings to places of interest enjoyed by visiting members from the provinces as well as London-based ones.

On day one we visited Kensington Palace, with tea served in the beautiful Orangery. Our guide, Kathryn, gave an interesting talk on the Palace's royal residents, followed by a tour of the rooms. The evening was spent noshing away at Met Su Yan, kosher cuisine of excellence.

On day two we visited the Houses of Parliament to meet Luciana Berger MP, a short talk followed by lunch at Portcullis House. Then it was on to the theatre for *The Audience*, with Dame Helen Mirren, the star of the show, meeting us in person. This was probably the high point of a superbly organised visit. Finally, we attended a reception at the Austrian Ambassador's Residence to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Anschluss.

On the last day, we spent the morning being expertly guided through the RAF Museum in Hendon. Lunch was arranged at the London Jewish Cultural Centre, guest speaker Richard Ferrer, editor of *The Jewish News*. A very enjoyable three days.

Walter Knoblauch, Philip Lesser,
Ingrid Morland

A CHORUS LINE

ONE SINGULAR SENSATION AT
THE LONDON PALLADIUM
Wednesday 10 July 2013
at 3.00 pm

We have a limited number of
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A Chorus Line revolutionised Broadway, becoming the longest running musical in New York theatre history, winning nine Tony Awards, seven Drama Desk Awards, the New York Critics' Circle Award, and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

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To book please contact Susan Harrod
on 020 8385 3078 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

MAY GROUP EVENTS

Launch of Second Generation Scotland	1 May	Speakers' Panel, Cheese and Wine Evening
Café Imperial Ilford	1 May 1 May	Outing to Rinkoffs Howard Lanning, 'Trials and Tribulations of Film Locations'
Pinner	2 May	Herbie Goldberg, 'The Life of Tchaikovsky'
Manchester	5 May	Prof Benny Pollack, 'Reflections of a Refugee after 40 Years'
Ealing Glasgow St John's Wood	7 May 8 May 8 May	Helen Aronson, 'Nigeria in 1956' Theatre outing: 'The Producers' Discussion: 'Someone who has impressed you during your life'
York/Harrogate Welwyn GC Leeds HSFA	8 May 9 May 12 May	Social The Wallace Collection – Landscapes George Dublon, 'The Magic Bullet – the Story of Paul Ehrlich'
Newcastle Sheffield HGS	12 May 12 May 13 May	Author J. D. Simons Social Greg Beitchman, 'The Story of How Reuters was Started by a German Jew'
Whitefield/Prestwich Bradford Hull Brighton-Sarid (Sussex) Edgware Didsbury Cheshire North West London	13 May 14 May 19 May 20 May 21 May 22 May 23 May 28 May	Social at Heathlands Social Social Laurence Stein, 'Boys Town Jerusalem' Richard Tausig, 'Life from the Cockpit' Social Social (at Alyth Gardens) Edwina Mileham from the Wallace Collection Social Get-together Social at home of Lianne Segal Book Club Details to follow
Wembley Bromley Glasgow Book Club North London	29 May 30 May 30 May 30 May	

CONTACTS

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Susan Harrod, Groups' Administrator
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KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070
andrea@ajr.org.uk

Child Survivors Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld 020 8954 5298
H.obstfeld@talk21.com



Pride & Prejudice

OUTING TO REGENT'S PARK OPEN AIR THEATRE
THURSDAY 18 JULY 2013 at 2.15 pm finishing at 5.00 pm

'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife'

Tickets £20.00 per person

If the performance cannot be completed owing to bad weather, tickets will be exchanged for an alternative performance. If you are unable to make the alternative date arranged by the AJR there is no time limit on exchanging your tickets.

However, no refunds will be given.

For a booking form, please contact Susan Harrod
on 020 8385 3078 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

PRESENTATION BY THE AGENCY FOR THE BANK OF ENGLAND

THURSDAY 23 MAY 2013 at ALYTH GARDENS SYNAGOGUE, LONDON NW11 7EN. 2.30 – 3.30 pm

The Agency has spoken at a number of AJR groups around the country and now they are asking for help from our members.

They want your opinions on new bank notes, coins and security issues. Come along and have a chat with the Agency with a cup of tea and a piece of cake included!

No charge – to book your place, just contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3078 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

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 May 2013

Lunch is served at 12.30 unless otherwise stated

Thursday 2 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation
- 10.30 Let's Read and Discuss
- 11.15 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- 13.45 **Margaret Opdahl (Singer)**

Tuesday 7 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
- 10.45 Seated Exercises with Jacky
- 12.00 **KT LUNCH Speaker: Martin Haley, El Al**

Thursday 9 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 11.00 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- 13.45 **Paul Coleman (Entertainer)**

Tuesday 14 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10.30 Current Affairs Discussion Group
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
- 11.30 Seated Exercises with Jacky
- 13.45 **Douglas Poster (Entertainer)**

Thursday 16 May

CLOSED FOR SHAVUOT

Tuesday 21 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
- 11.00 Seated Exercises with Jacky
- 13.45 **Entertainment by Theresa and The Lorian Folk Dancers**

Thursday 23 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10.30 Art Class
- 11.15 Seated Exercises with Rosalie
- 13.45 **Geoff Strum (Light Opera)**

Tuesday 28 May

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Tuition
- 11.15 Seated Exercises with Jacky
- 13.30 **Film Afternoon – an André Rieu concert**

Thursday 30 May

- 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 **Will Smith (Entertainer)**

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please telephone 020 8385 3075
(this number is manned on Wednesdays only) or 020 8385 3070

ONE-TO-ONE BASIC COMPUTER LESSONS

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To book a session with Rim call her on 020 8385 3070



ART / CRAFT CLASS

THURSDAY 23 MAY, 10.30 AM

and **fortnightly** thereafter
ALL ABILITIES WELCOME

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Tuesdays and Thursdays ONLY – 020 7431 2744



FAMILY ANOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Hellman, Kurt Passed away in hospital on 2 April aged 90. Sadly missed by his wife Jane, sister and brother-in-law, together with his nieces and nephew and their families.

We regret to announce the death on 11 March 2013 of our wife and mother **Susan Lustig** shortly before her 92nd birthday. Fritz, Robin and Stephen Lustig.

An obituary of Susan Lustig will appear in a forthcoming issue of the Journal (Ed.).

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OBITUARIES

Alfred Paul Oppenheimer, 14 October 1922 – 17 July 2012

I have lost my beloved husband and best friend. He was quite extraordinary and, despite the difficulties of life he encountered as a boy, he never seemed to lose his desire to better the world we live in. I met him as a widower and we spent 18 years together. I miss him.

As a longstanding member of Scientists for Global Responsibility, he constantly sought ways to reduce the risks brought about by the avaricious use of fossil fuels contaminating the atmosphere. He also joined DESERTEC International, who work diligently towards using solar energy, wind and water to produce the power we need to make our lives so easy. In his eighties, he registered at Brunel University to take a course in controlling global warming.

Alfred started life in Cologne in 1922. His father produced fancy decorations for ladies' shoes and these were exported to England. His mother, an astute woman, gauged the seriousness of life developing under the Nazis. They arranged for some payments remaining in England 'just in case'.

As a child, Alfred was often woken by the gunfire of storm troopers attacking trade unionists on the street outside the family apartment. He and his sister were forced to leave their school and attend a

Jewish Gymnasium. Just after his barmitzvah, one Friday evening in 1935, their bank manager phoned and warned them to leave immediately. Alfred's parents, his sister Ruth and he rushed to leave Cologne on the night train to Aachen. His father was thus not at home when the Gestapo came the next day to look for him. These experiences haunted him all his life.

The family eventually settled in London's Stamford Hill district and Alfred was about to sit his Matriculation exam when Churchill decided that, no matter if a German was a Jew, he or she could still be a spy. Alfred's father pleaded that he be left at school until the exam. This was granted and they were then interned for 18 months on the Isle of Man. He volunteered to work in the hospital there but continued studying in any way he could.

When he returned to mainland England, he was unable to study full-time. He earned an Engineering Certificate at night school during the rest of the war,



at the same time working in a bomber factory and manning an anti-aircraft gun. His greatest frustration was that he was unable to go to university.

Alfred spent time with Hoover as an engineer. He worked with Charles Colston, who left Hoover and took Alfred with him to start his own factory. Alfred helped design the original washing machine in Britain and Colston insisted on selling the machines for an unrealistically low price. The rest is history: Colston continued this folly and went out of business but gained a knighthood.

Alfred's marriage to Rhoda, a psychiatrist dealing with abused children, produced twin boys and then another two sons. He poured his frustrated academic aspirations into working hard to send each son to private schools and universities. One son became a psychologist; a second qualified as a barrister, ultimately becoming a rabbi while always giving legal advice to his community; a third became a Professorial Consultant Obstetrician; the fourth took a degree in music and teaches at a famous music school in Manchester. Together, Alfred and I have 7 children, 18 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

Our 18 years together were a miraculous blending of two people with the same ideals, tastes, beliefs and joys. Rejecting religion, we dedicated ourselves to Humanism. Yet we both shared a pride in our Jewish heritage.

After a long illness, Alfred passed away peacefully three months short of his 90th birthday.

Jacqueline (Jacquey) Oppenheimer

Ruth Frances Albert, 11 April 1927 – 30 January 2013

Ruth, née Loeser, was born in Berlin to a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother. Technically she was therefore not Jewish but, shortly before leaving Berlin, she persuaded a local rabbi to receive her into the Jewish faith. Her much loved father died in the Holocaust but her mother, who had divorced her husband, survived the war.

Like so many Jewish children, Ruth had a turbulent childhood and, when it became impossible to continue her education at her non-Jewish school, her father arranged for her to attend the school of the Jewish Boys' Orphanage in Pankow as a day pupil, as did several other girls. She escaped to England in 1939 on one of the last Kindertransports, was assigned a Quaker guardian and was brought up in a Convent school. Isolated as she thus was from her German-Jewish roots, and having married an Englishman, she largely lost contact with her past life and reconnected only as a result of the first Kindertransport Reunion, where she

discovered me – a former pupil in the Orphanage, as well as Hilde Schoenfeld, who, like Ruth, had been a day pupil there. A close friendship between us followed and three years ago Ruth's reconciliation with her early past culminated in the laying of a *Stolperstein* outside her former home in Pankow in memory of her father.

Ruth became a nurse and later taught English. She met her husband Douglas, who became a dental surgeon, in the emergency room of her hospital and they



lived happily together until he succumbed to Parkinson's syndrome, a fate she was eventually to share. She remained petite and elegantly dressed to the end, gentle and charming, and indulged her passion for Japanese ivory carvings and flower arrangements. Her two sons and one daughter gave her five grandchildren, three of whom very touchingly sang or read poems at the celebration of her life in Leatherhead Crematorium.

Leslie Baruch Brent

LEO BAECK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Obama and the Gordian Knot

The visit to Israel of US President Obama caused great excitement for a variety of reasons.

The first was: why had he come? Was it to reach an agreement regarding dealing with Iran's steady progress towards a nuclear bomb or to exert pressure towards a solution of the Palestinian problem? Or perhaps simply to drum up support among American Jewry, which has been somewhat disenchanted with him of late? Opinions were divided, but the general consensus seems to have been 'all of the above', which, combined, could be defined as something of a Gordian Knot.

Then there was the question of his schedule during the three days of his visit, with all the attendant security and protocol issues. Who would get to meet the President in person, who would be invited to one of the official dinners, and who would simply sit in an auditorium and listen to him speak? Among politicians and leaders of various kinds there was a great deal of jockeying for pole positions, and for sure not everyone got satisfaction, but a fair number did. Even Israel's recently-crowned beauty queen, who hails originally from Ethiopia, was at the President's dinner, rubbing shoulders with chief rabbis, politicians, mayors

and leading members of the artistic and literary fraternity.

But what most concerned the residents of Israel, and particularly those of Jerusalem, were the traffic arrangements and restrictions during the presidential visit, which one wit has defined as an 'Obamination'. The main highway between Jerusalem and the airport just outside Tel Aviv was closed before, during and after the arrival of the President and Secretary of State John Kerry the previous day. Almost all the roads in certain parts of Jerusalem were closed throughout a good part of the visit, causing distress and discomfort to thousands of residents and harming local shops and businesses.

Because I live in a suburb situated just outside Jerusalem the only policy I could adopt was not to venture out of its confines between Obama's arrival and his departure. Luckily, we are well equipped with shops, banks, supermarkets and all that one really needs to survive. Granted, we couldn't have got to our subscription concert on Wednesday evening, but that was cancelled anyway, so all was well in that respect. I'd just like to point out that when we moved here over 20 years ago, there was not a single shop, bank or even ATM, and just one very tacky

supermarket, which I have shunned ever since its rival opened.

The overwhelming impression Obama made was one of support for Israel, concern for its security, admiration for its achievements, respect for the Jewish and Zionist heritage, and warmth and affection for its leaders. In his speeches he tackled the various thorny issues that confront Israel today and, when he addressed a gathering of over 2,000 students, he encouraged them to put pressure on the leadership to attain a peaceful solution with the Palestinians, one that involves establishing a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Obama stressed that this was the only way Israel could be certain of remaining Jewish and democratic. His words were met with enthusiastic applause from the audience, which consisted of young people from all ethnic groups in Israel, but excluded students attending the institution of higher education situated across the Green Line.

Obama's speech made it all sound very simple. Would that it were so! Alexander the Great, who cut the Gordian Knot, thereby solving a problem which seemed intractable at the time, might have had a solution of another kind, but these are different times, and so problems cannot be solved with the stroke of a sword. Moreover, considering the results of the last elections and the composition of the present government, Obama's efforts will probably have little effect. But it would seem that by addressing the students he is hoping for better results in the future.

And so are we all.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *cont. from p.8*

Sir – I'm pleased Peter Phillips is somewhat relieved now that the religious parties are out of the Israeli coalition (April, Point of View). Actually I'm not enchanted with the Shasniks either, but I support my country right or wrong. After all, it's up to the Israeli electorate to decide. However, we are not there yet. Peter still has certain reservations: he now blames the Jewish state for the increase in anti-Semitism, rather than those who promote it, like the BBC, a hostile press, several parliamentarians and the convicted felon Lord Ahmed. Peter even has Tzipi Livni in the Knesset, whom he approves of. So on the whole, there isn't much for us

to dispute, and we should call a truce. Anyway, I will be taking time out because of various commitments.

As a result, Gerald Curzon (December, Letters) can now breathe a sigh of relief: he will no longer have to put up with my 'rambling letters [which] are not only tedious but full of irrelevances'. My 'beating the Zionist drum' must be particularly irritating to him. Readers of this column are now entitled to savour some of Mr Curzon's superior penmanship since he is so critical of mine. But if his last effort is anything to go by, I wager they will be sadly disappointed.

Rubin Katz, London NW11

HOPE FOR 'THIRD PARTIES' OF THE RIGHT

Sir – I read with interest Anthony Grenville's comments about UKIP in the March Journal.

Readers may be interested to know that my partner, Janet Clarke, who joins in all the AJR functions with me, is the local campaign manager for UKIP. She recently ran an active campaign in a seat which had become vacant in Runnymede Borough Council due to the death of the Conservative member. The seat has now been won by UKIP, showing that there is some hope for 'third parties' of the right after all.

*Anthony Portner,
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