

1956 – year of change

Which were the defining transitional years in the history of post-war Europe? Many would nominate 1968, the year of mass student unrest; others would opt for 1973, the year of the oil price rise that put an end to the period of high growth rates, Europe's post-war 'economic miracle'. But for Britain, where student unrest was on a modest scale and where the dismal performance of the economy made the German *Wirtschaftswunder* a distant prospect, neither of these years appears to represent a historical turning-point.

Instead, 1956 stands out as a year of change in Britain, when the established order of post-war society was turned on its head. In politics, 1956 was the year of Suez, Prime Minister Anthony Eden's ill-fated military intervention in Egypt, which revealed in humiliating fashion the limitations of Britain's fading claim to be a 'world power'. The failure of political judgment evident in this military adventure, and the evident dishonesty of the government's attempts to justify it as a means to restore peace to the Suez Canal area, seriously undermined the British public's hitherto largely unquestioning belief in the ultimate competence and trustworthiness of its rulers. The discrediting of the ruling class was taken a stage further with the Profumo affair in 1963, when senior public figures were revealed frolicking with nubile young women and, in Profumo's case, lying to parliament about it.

Nineteen fifty-six was also a year of dramatic change in the world of the British theatre. The first performance of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* at the Royal Court Theatre on 8 May 1956, directed by Tony Richardson and starring Kenneth Haigh, was a landmark in British culture, ushering in the era of the 'angry young men'. The play can be seen as a calculated rejection of the conventions and values of the well-made play, the genre that had dominated British theatre in the interwar years and continued to do so in the decade after 1945, despite the huge changes in British society that had occurred over that period. The play's main character – one can hardly call him its 'hero' – is

the resolutely lower-class Jimmy Porter, and its action takes place in the cramped, shabby, provincial flat occupied by Porter and his wife. With its direct onslaught on the class-obsessed conformity and smug complacency of post-war Britain, its distrust of established standards and values, and its general lack of respect



John Osborne, 1929-94

for 'official' society, *Look Back in Anger* brought a new, sharply left-wing tone onto the British stage.

In Osborne's second play, *The Entertainer* (1957), the role of the washed-up vaudeville comic Archie Rice was taken by Laurence Olivier. Having embodied British establishment patriotism in his role as the King in the wartime film of *Henry V*, Britain's leading actor was now playing a figure whose slide into mediocrity and cynicism mirrored the increasingly threadbare condition of establishment values and the scepticism that they were increasingly encountering in post-war society. The floodgates were now open, as the plays of Arnold Wesker, *Chicken Soup with Barley*, *Roots* (both 1958) and *Chips with Everything* (1962), with their vision of a class-ridden society from the viewpoint of its poorer, under-privileged members, and John Arden's *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* (1959), a bitter indictment of the violence perpetrated by Britain in its colonies, conquered the stage. This new style of radically naturalistic drama, dubbed 'kitchen sink drama', giving prominence

to downtrodden, inarticulate characters in down-at-heel, sometimes sordid settings, was epitomised by Wesker's *The Kitchen*, set in the basement kitchen of a restaurant.

Like the strange and menacing early plays of Harold Pinter, *The Birthday Party* (1958) and *The Caretaker* (1960), these dramas broke decisively with the well-made play's focus on upper- and middle-class characters and settings. I can still recall the sense of excitement I felt when, as a 14-year-old boy, I was taken to see Lindsay Anderson's production of Willis Hall's *The Long and the Short and the Tall* at the Royal Court in 1959. A play about the war – dramatising the fate of a patrol of British soldiers in Malaya in 1942 during the Japanese advance – that had no officers! No clipped upper-class accents, no moustaches masking understated emotions, no officer-class actors behaving as if they had swagger sticks up their behinds! The production of *The Caretaker* that I saw in 1960, with Donald Pleasance as the tramp Davies opposite Alan Bates and Peter Woodthorpe as the brothers Mick and Aston, also had the novelty value of portraying, as if through a distorting mirror, the life of society's neglected underclass.

Nineteen fifty-six marked a turning-point in British social attitudes and social culture. Left-wing politics acquired a new chic as it became *de rigueur* for its devotees to be seen on the annual CND march to Aldermaston. The new social realism erupted into British cinema with Karel Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), starring Albert Finney, an adaptation of the novel by Alan Sillitoe that brought the everyday life of the British industrial working class onto the screen. It was followed by *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1962), an adaptation of a short story by Sillitoe, directed by Tony Richardson and starring Tom Courtenay as a rebellious borstal boy whose ultimate act of defiance of the system he hates is to disown his talent for running by handing victory in a race to an upper-class adversary. Milder in tone, for all its frankness in depicting the joys and pitfalls of working-class love life in northern

continued overleaf ➔

 1956 – year of change *continued*

England, was John Schlesinger's film *A Kind of Loving* (1962), adapted from the novel by Stan Barstow and starring Alan Bates and June Ritchie. The bleak setting of the industrial North was shared by *This Sporting Life* (1963), adapted from a novel by David Storey about the life of a Rugby League footballer, directed by Lindsay Anderson and starring Richard Harris.

The principal victims of the abrupt shift in fashion that overtook the British theatre in the mid-1950s were Noel Coward and Terence Rattigan, established and highly successful writers of well-made plays. Rattigan's reputation has never recovered from his fall in critical esteem 60 years ago, though in figures like the desiccated classics teacher Crocker-Harris in *The Browning Version* (1948) and in plays like *The Deep Blue Sea* (1946) and *Separate Tables* (1954) he was able to create unlikely depths of emotional resonance. But solidly conventional plays like *The Winslow Boy* (1946), not to mention the pre-war comedy *French without Tears*, now look rather like period pieces.

Noel Coward has fared better, with *Private Lives* (1930) currently enjoying a successful revival at London's Gielgud Theatre and plays like *Hay Fever* (1925), *Bliethe Spirit* (1941) and *Present Laughter* (1942) well established in the theatrical repertoire. He is remembered for his striking cabaret act, especially when performing his own songs, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, *London Pride* or the post-war *Don't Let's Be Beastly to the Germans*. Coward is celebrated by his admirers as 'The Master' (though the range of his activities rather suggests jack-of-all-trades). But does this mastery extend much beyond cleverly constructed plots, often involving marital mishaps (as in *Private Lives* and *Bliethe Spirit*), sparkling but brittle dialogue, and characters who combine a world-weary cynicism with sallies of wit that have the iridescent brilliance of soap bubbles? When war broke out in 1939, Coward, whose plays had epitomised the escapism and frivolity of the 1930s, rallied to his country's cause. While Rattigan served as a rear-gunner in the RAF, Coward directed the patriotic film *In Which We Serve* (1942), in which he appeared, slightly risibly, as the captain of a Royal Navy warship on active service in the Mediterranean; he even wrote a now forgotten play, *Peace in Our Time* (1946), that takes place in a Nazi-occupied Britain.

Arguably the greatest of the next generation of comic playwrights is Tom Stoppard, who made his breakthrough in 1967, with the National Theatre's production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. Those fortunate enough to see that production, with John Stride as

AJR CENTRE TO CLOSE

It is with great sadness that we announce the closure, at the end of this year, of the AJR Centre at Belsize Square Synagogue. Despite the best efforts of our dedicated staff and an expanded and interesting programme, we have not been able to attract a greater attendance from among our membership.

Sadly, the number of members attending the Centre has dwindled since we relocated to the Synagogue from Cleve Road in January 2012 to the point that it has become very difficult to justify maintaining the service. It is a great shame that more of our members have been unable to benefit from the camaraderie and unique setting the Centre has offered since its opening in 1987.

Our intention is to integrate AJR members into the Community Centre (formerly the Sobell Centre), which meets in the new Jewish Care building, Amelie House, in Golders Green. The Community Centre organises many of the activities – including arts and crafts, a discussion group, painting, exercise classes and a music group – that we offer at Belsize Square and serves hot cooked lunches. Although we will be losing the identity of the AJR Centre, we very much hope that our members will feel at home at the Community Centre.

We are mindful that some members may have difficulty making the move to the new Centre but we will continue to do everything possible to make the transition

as smooth as possible. We will arrange for a member of staff to initially accompany members and help in making the move.

As with Belsize Square, and before that Cleve Road, we will continue to transport members to and from the Community Centre for two days a week, and for members who have been regular attenders at the AJR Centre we will contribute to any additional costs that may be incurred in participating in the new setting. The decision to close the Centre in no way affects any of the other social or welfare services we provide or members' entitlement to any financial assistance.

Regrettably, closing the AJR Centre means that there will most likely be some staff redundancies and we will be losing the services of loyal and popular employees. I would like to put on record our enormous thanks to everyone who has worked at our Centre and been involved in its operation during the past quarter of a century.

We also recall the foresight and endeavour of our late President and former Treasurer, Ludwig Spiro, in paving the way for the creation of the AJR Centre as well as the generosity of Dr Paul Balint with regard to his donation to finance the project.

All involved played a decisive role in establishing and providing a wonderful service for a remarkable community of people that will always have a place in our hearts.

Michael Newman

Rosencrantz and Edward Petherbridge as Guildenstern – or was it the other way round? – sensed that we were witnessing the emergence of a scintillating new talent. Stoppard's play is often compared to Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, but with the important difference that Beckett's audience shares the disturbing bafflement of his two main characters, Vladimir and Estragon, in the face of an empty, incomprehensible universe, whereas Stoppard's audience, safely familiar with the plot of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, can look on with amusement at the antics of his two bewildered courtiers. Stoppard's next play, *Jumpers* (1972), was notable for splendid performances by Michael Hordern and Diana Rigg but, like *Travesties* (1974), which featured a strong performance by Tim Curry (fresh from his success as Dr Frank N. Furter in *The Rocky Horror Show*) as the Dadaist Tristan Tzara, did not quite match *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*. Among other modern comedies, I have seen one part of Alan Ayckbourn's trilogy *The Norman Conquests*, but have not felt inclined to repeat the experience.

Anthony Grenville

KRISTALLNACHT 75TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

AJR

Wednesday 6 November 2013, 2 pm
at Imperial War Museum North,
Manchester

Guest Speaker: David Cesarani,
Research Professor of History,
Royal Holloway College, University of London,
and a leading historian on the Holocaust

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the service – for catering purposes, please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

AJR

Thursday 7 November 2013, 2 pm
at Belsize Square Synagogue

Guest Speaker: Carl Davis, the world-famous
conductor and composer who has written a
piece entitled *The Last Train to Tomorrow*

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the service – for catering purposes, please contact Karin Pereira on 020 8385 3070 or at karin@ajr.org.uk

LIBERAL JEWISH SYNAGOGUE
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AJR

Saturday 9 November 2013, 6.30 pm

Service of Remembrance and Commemoration

Please contact Joanne Caplan on 020 7432 1283 or
at rabbispa@jls.org

Little Robert lost, big Bob found

A few months ago I received a letter from Canada. The sender's name on the envelope was Tanya Tintner and my address wasn't quite correct. 'PLEASE FIND!', it said and good old Royal Mail did find me. I was intrigued.

In the letter Tanya said that, as the widow of the conductor Georg Tintner (and his junior by 36 years, as I found out later), she was constructing an extensive Tintner (my maiden name) family tree and, since she was going to be in London for a fortnight, would like to meet me. She had found me 13 years ago in the Australian National Archives, which also held a record of my marriage, and had quite recently got my present approximate address from an article in my local newspaper, the *Ham and High (Hampstead and Highgate Express)*. The power of the internet!

Tanya came to see me and showed me what she had so far found out about my paternal family. She had my father – Gustav, playwright – and my brother – Leo, bridge champion – but not insignificant me. I gave her all I knew about the family, including information I had recently obtained from the *Kultusgemeinde* in Vienna.

When I took a closer look at the *Stammbaum* she had so far constructed I became very excited. I found a Ron Tintner, neurologist, in Dallas, Texas; above him Robert; and above Robert Otto. I knew then that Robert had to be my little cousin, six years younger than I, about whose fate I had been wondering for some 80 years. Otto was my father's youngest brother, who committed suicide in 1932 after his wife had left him (for good reasons) taking Robert, who was then about six years old, with her. It was then that our families lost touch.

I begged Tanya to find Robert and she promised she would contact Ron as soon as she got back to Canada. She was as good as her word and I got two emails, a short one from Ron and a long one from his father, Robert (who now calls himself Bob). He seemed as excited as I was at this totally unexpected

development. Apparently he'd given up hope of ever hearing from me again. Of course, neither of us knew if the other was still alive.

In that first email, he gave me a brief account of his life since we'd last seen each other. His mother remarried and the family escaped to Shanghai in 1939 and stayed there until, in 1949, they moved to Israel, where he met and married German-born Ester. In 1954 the couple re-emigrated to the US with their two-year-old son Roni. They now live in Houston, Texas, and have three children, eight grandchildren and 'almost' two great-grandchildren (the second one is due any moment now). His mother and stepfather died in Israel.

I remember Robert as a sweet, platinum-blond, blue-eyed little boy (he has since assured me that his eyes are, and always have been, green), whom I loved but, I fear, I may have bossed about a bit. I still feel guilty about that. He remembers me, rightly, as skinny and, wrongly, as tall and, he says, as the big sister he had always wanted but never had and whom he adored. Incredibly, he was not aware that his father had five siblings nor that I had a brother. He remembers only his Uncle Gustav (my father), his Aunt Claire (my stepmother) and me. He recalls details of our flat that I have forgotten.

We have been exchanging emails regularly since we 'recovered' each other after all those years and he has been telling me the amazing story of his life in exile in instalments. Of course, we would dearly love to meet but he has mobility problems and I, frankly, can't quite face the journey to Houston. So I suggested the next-best thing: Skype. He was a bit reluctant at first because he had never done it before but is now an enthusiastic 'skyper'. Not only are we able to see and hear each other, but I have also 'met' Ester.

Alas, he is no longer blond and I am no longer skinny and there are quite a few wrinkles between us, and he may be 6'1" to my 5'2", but he will always be my little cousin and I his surrogate big sister.

Edith Argy

Alas, he is no longer blond and I am no longer skinny and there are quite a few wrinkles between us, and he may be 6'1" to my 5'2", but he will always be my little cousin and I his surrogate big sister.

ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING

Annual Meeting of the Association of Jewish Refugees

Tuesday 5 November 2013 at 11.00 am at the AJR Paul Balint Centre, Belsize Square Synagogue, London NW3 4HX

If you would like to attend, please reserve a place by calling Head Office on 020 8385 3070

Lunch, if required, £7 – must be ordered and paid for in advance (please telephone 020 7431 2744)

As we near the end of our first year as the newly constituted charitable organisation, the meeting will be an informal opportunity for the Directors (Trustees) and Executive to report on our activities and plans and respond to your questions about the services we provide.

AJR LUNCH

Sunday 20 October 2013

12.30 pm to 4.30 pm at the Hilton Hotel, Watford

If you wish to attend, please complete the enclosed form and return it to us ASAP

PillarCare

Quality support and care at home

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

Call us on Freephone 0800 028 4645

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



JACKMAN · SILVERMAN
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

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

‘ROYAL JEWS’ JEWISH REFUGEES FIND A HAVEN IN THE ROYAL COUNTY

At the beginning of the 1930s, most Jews in Berlin and Munich had never heard of Burnham or Maidenhead, yet within a few years these Berkshire towns and villages were to become the homes of many of them.

It has been well documented, not least on the pages of the *AJR Journal*, how Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe dispersed throughout Britain in search of sanctuary, but now particular light has been shone on the large number who spent time in the Royal County.

*Royal Jews: A Thousand Years of Jewish Life in and around the Royal County of Berkshire** records the surprising amount of Jewish life there since the 12th century. However, with the exception of those fleeing London to escape the Zeppelin raids in 1917, the numbers were relatively small. This changed dramatically in the approach to the Second World War, with the Continental Jews being a significant presence.

Many of the refugee children came through the Kindertransport or via the ‘Winton trains’ and went straight to their adoptive families in the Home Counties. They faced the shock not only of a new country, a strange language and being without their parents, but also tasting country life for the first time. Cows and chickens were no longer confined to books but were in the backyard and part of household life.

When ten-year-old Ulrich Oppenheim settled in Pinkneys Green, for instance, he was alarmed to be asked one morning to bring in one of the geese so that it could be got ready for dinner that evening.

Other children were allocated homes in London but faced further disruption during the general evacuation of Londoners to the countryside once war was declared. Attendance at a succession of schools was one of the characteristics of their lives as well as the suspicion of classmates who – as children do even in normal circumstances – immediately pick on those who are different in some way.

By the time Marion Vanderwart arrived in Warfield after living in London for several months, she had exchanged her Continental plaits and clothes for a much more English look – ‘but there was nothing I could do about my foreign accent and I had to endure the quizzical look of anyone to whom I spoke for the first time.’



Berlin-born sisters Gertrude and Eva Evans, trained nurses who worked at Borocourt Hospital in Peppard, came to the UK as adults, escaping internment because their skills were needed

But if they suffered from xenophobia, few reported anti-Semitism. Nine-year-old Henry Kuttner in Eaton Hastings was typical of many when he found that his new family tried to locate books on Judaism so that he could learn about his heritage while he received tuition on the Old Testament specifically provided by the local vicar.

Other refugees came as adults. For some this was because of their job, such as Berlin-born sisters Gertrude and Eva Evans, who were both trained nurses and worked at Borocourt Hospital in Peppard. Despite being classified as ‘enemy aliens’, they had escaped internment because their skills were needed. However, they were restricted from travelling more than five miles away, while Gertrude recalls several occasions when she was accused of being a spy by locals because she didn’t close her black-out curtains tightly enough.



Among refugees who arrived after the war were 25 Jewish teenagers from Buchenwald and Theresienstadt who came to Woodcote, a country house in Ascot, for rehabilitation

The situation was typified by a newspaper advert in 1942 which, under ‘Situations Vacant’, offered a position running a family home in Maidenhead and added ‘refugee not objected to’. That employer may have been welcoming, but

the implication was that this did not apply to everyone else.

A typical occupation for the refugees was that of domestic servant, though often without knowing what it involved. This was the situation of W. W. Brown and his wife, who exchanged office life in Vienna to serve as a butler and cook in a large estate in Berkshire without any prior experience. After a short while, they were gently asked to leave as the ‘season’ was beginning, guests were expected and it was essential that the staff knew how to, for instance, put out their riding clothes properly and lay the breakfast table correctly.

The couple were fortunate enough to secure another position shortly afterwards with a retired Indian army colonel in Crowthorne; the position was more successful and they gradually mastered the art of English etiquette. Looking back, they recorded fondly: ‘The *Ohs* in various intonations and the *It’s not done* were early introductions into the English way of life. We laughed to ourselves when we first encountered them. Over the years we have learned to appreciate, respect and admire much of what seemed ridiculous at first.’

Whilst many refugees arrived without any money the Diener family was in the unusual position of receiving royal help as the Duke of Windsor (the uncrowned Edward VIII) frequented their Vienna restaurant the Three Hussars. After the Anschluss, he acted as a guarantor for them to come to England, while the Duchess brought their jewellery out of Austria and deposited it for them at Barclays Bank, Knightsbridge. The family settled in Wargrave, opened another restaurant, The Green Monkey, and remained in the area for the rest of their lives.

There were others who came to the area as part of their preparation for military duties. Peter Arany did some initial training in Hurley before becoming part of one of eight commando units that landed at Normandy on D-Day. The journey from Viennese citizen to British soldier had involved major changes, including jettisoning his previous pacifism.

As he crossed the English Channel in preparation for the attack, he wrote: ‘At twenty-two I had already had a rich, full life, and therefore could not complain

continued opposite ➔

An affair remembered

Helen Smethurst, my mother (now deceased), helped to look after Kindertransport children during the summer of 1939, when she would have been 19. She used to tell me of the poor state the children were in – often malnourished and traumatised – when they arrived. I'm afraid I cannot recall much detail of what she said but she did mention that one of the children was Helmut Einstein, the nephew of Albert. This may give a clue as to the identities of the children in the photographs.

My mother's family lived at Thornton Hall, Thornton Curtis, near Grimsby in Lincolnshire. They were well-to-do people, owning a trawler fleet and one of the earliest frozen food production companies in the country.

Presumably wishing that she should have the best education, her parents sent my mother to a girls' private boarding school – Stootley Rough in Haslemere, Surrey. Pictured is an entry she submitted in 1940 to the 'Old Girls' section of the magazine of her former school describing how she had spent the previous summer.

In 1938 or 1939 my mother was taken by her aunt on a holiday to Chamonix to learn how to ski. There she met a young Austrian-Jewish ski instructor and keen photographer by the name of Walter Neuron (pictured). Written on the back of the photos of Walter is 'Walter Neuron, La Valliassane, Chamonix, Mont Blanc, Haute Savoie, France'.

My mother told me that what made her so alive to the plight of the Jewish people was that Walter kept in touch with her after she returned home. He wrote saying his situation was becoming very dangerous and that he needed money to leave Europe. This upset her terribly because, although her family were well off, she herself existed in a practically cash-free environment, as young women did then.

To my mother's great regret, she never heard from Walter again. But, as a result of her feeling unable to help him, this sadness made her determined to do whatever she could to help.

I have no idea how she found out about the children's reception centre in Kent she mentions in the school magazine but she did – and felt she had made at least some contribution.

I recently looked Walter Neuron up on the internet and it appears that a ski instructor of that name, together with his family, did actually escape to America. There he taught skiing at the Hannes Schneider Ski School in North Conway, New Hampshire, and later joined the elite US 10th Mountain Division. If this is indeed the same person, what a pity my mother never knew about it!

Didy Metcalf



HELEN SMETHURST writes: "I spent last summer in Kent working among refugees from all countries. Among them were Poles, Germans, Czechs, Austrians, and Rumanians. I was with children from the ages of twelve, whose parents had either been shot or were in concentration camps in Germany. After September 3rd I was moved to a camp for older refugees, where I stayed until the end of September. The whole time I was the only English person among them." Helen now works one day a week in a Canteen in Grimsby, and has finished her training in the Fire Brigade. She says that she is also very busy salvaging waste paper.



ROYAL JEWS *continued*

if it were to end there and then. But before that I, who had been harassed by the Nazis, intimidated and targeted for extermination, would at long last have the opportunity to strike back.'

Fighting a very different kind of war was Fritz Lustig, who was based at Wilton Park, Beaconsfield, where he was eavesdropping on the conversations of high-ranking German prisoners of war in their cells so as to pick up intelligence they inadvertently revealed. Not far away, in High Wycombe, was Alice Gross, at RAF Bomber Command. She worked in photographic reconnaissance and was part of the process responsible for locating the launchpad of the V1 flying bombs in northern France that terrorised London towards the end of the war.

For those who settled locally, some became involved in life around them;

others mixed primarily with fellow refugees, with whom they felt more comfortable. This was the case with Ilse Fuehrenberg of Prague after she met her Vienna-born husband, Paul Illoway, in London in 1940 and they then moved to Slough. As she put it, 'We refugees were family for each other and we stuck together.'

Some of the refugees arrived *after* the war. They included 25 Jewish teenagers from Buchenwald and Theresienstadt who came to Woodcote, a large country house in Ascot, for rehabilitation under the auspices of the Central British Fund. They presented a challenge for the staff, as the warden, Manny Silver, reported: 'In the camps, survival meant breaking the rules. Boarding school discipline could not apply. After the Nazis, what punishment could there be for someone who stole food or did not come to class?

We devised a co-operative way of life, based on mutual respect ... and how best we could prepare them for the future.'

The haven Berkshire offered them and many others was not forgotten and the Royal County features in the lives of countless refugees. Some left the area; others settled permanently; some stayed apart from Jewish life; others became mainstays of the local synagogues (in Reading and Maidenhead). They form a microcosm of the experiences – both enriching and traumatic – of the refugees in general.

Jonathan Romain

* This article is based on Rabbi Romain's forthcoming book *Royal Jews: A Thousand Years of Jewish Life in and around the Royal County of Berkshire* (396 pp. paperback), price £15.99, available to AJR members at £9.99 from rabromain@aol.com or 01628-671058.



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

KINDERTRANSPORT REUNION

Sir – Anshel Pfeffer ('On 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport, British Jews finding it hard to ask questions', September) bases his criticism of British Jewry in the late thirties on selective sources. It is a general truth applying to wide issues that, in retrospect, more could have been done. But, quite apart from the fact that it is difficult to see any point in raising this issue now, Mr Pfeffer is, in my opinion, guilty of a few tendentious and misleading statements.

He asks: 'Why did it take a particularly violent outbreak of state-sanctioned anti-Semitism to get the British government to change its policies and allow the victims of Nazism into Britain?' and 'Why were the children of the Kindertransport allowed in but their parents consigned to extermination?' Both questions can be answered by a study of the House of Commons debates during that time. Fears of adding to unemployment and a basic opposition to immigration, including some latent (and some open) anti-Semitism, was the prevailing mood. Some leading members of the British establishment even believed that Hitler was a bulwark against Russia and internal communism.

Mr Pfeffer quotes Professor Tony Kushner: "'I raised ... the fundamental question of was it the right thing to separate them from their parents and why were they alone ...'" This is particularly misleading. Who separated the children from their parents? From my knowledge, the truth is that parents wanted to make sure that their children at least were safe. It was the parents who registered their children with the Kindertransports.

It is all too easy to condemn in retrospect and, if it had any influence on present-day decisions and actions, it would even be a useful exercise – if correct. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Attitudes to immigration have not changed.

Eric Sanders, London W12

Sir – Anshel Pfeffer's article is a timely reminder of the realities behind the rescue of the Kinder. An even larger elephant in the room was the difference in attitudes

towards the German and Polish Jews. As flawed as the Kindertransports were, the response was in total contrast to that of the children of Polish-born Jews trapped in France. Despite appeals from no less a person than Albert Einstein to give visas for these children in 1941, nothing happened until after the fall of Vichy and the majority of these children were deported to their deaths in the summer of 1943.

Unfortunately these attitudes appear to continue. We are told that Kristallnacht was the turning point and defining event of the Holocaust. What about the 'stateless' Polish-born Jews deported from Germany weeks earlier on 18 October and left without any means of survival? To misquote the famous poem of Pastor Martin Niemöller: 'First they came for the Polish Jews and I didn't speak out because I was a German Jew. Then they came for me and suddenly I realised they meant me too!'

Joan Salter, London N10

Sir – Anshel Pfeffer's article reminds me of a Jewish salesman driving home to Golders Green who generously gave me a hitchhiker's lift from outside the camp where I was doing some of my Army National Service in 1958-59.

When, in reply to his question, I said that two of my elder sisters had come over on a child transport – no such word as Kindertransport in *his* vocabulary – from Berlin in 1939, he replied: 'I've never met anyone like you before!' This was a whole 19 years later at least.

There was never any family secret about the rotten treatment my sisters got from an Anglican clergyman's wife in Liverpool. Or how they were rescued by my eldest sister, then still a teenager. But, to bear out Anshel Pfeffer, I only realised what the worst part of this treatment consisted of when my sister finally told me a few months ago. I had never asked, for fear of upsetting her.

Andrew Sheppard, Ramsgate Village, Gorey, County Wexford, Ireland

Sir – As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransports, we should remind ourselves of the 10,000 or so

German refugees who reached Britain before 1938 and who, for reasons of religious faith or political conviction, had decided that Nazi Germany was no longer a country in which they could live in peace and safety and that abandoning house and home, and in many cases wealth and business, was for them the only option.

Some were fortunate enough to be able to salvage parts of their possessions, and in some cases money, during the emigration process. My parents were not among these. For them, their flight from Germany in 1933 meant exchanging a comfortable middle-class existence for a life of profound impoverishment in countries (Britain and France) which were often unwelcoming – and at times hostile – to penniless refugees. What they did of course salvage was their lives – something which too many of the Kindertransport parents had to forfeit as they became victims of the murderous practices of Nazi Germany.

While we should rejoice in the rescue of 10,000 children in 1938-39, we might also wish to remember that 80 years ago marked the beginning of a new diaspora of German Jews and democrats.

Eric Bourne, Milldale, Alstonefield, Ashbourne

Sir – Eric Elias wrote in your July issue 'I welcome all the commemorative events on behalf of Kinder ... Nevertheless, why is no one organising an event for those who travelled the same route at the same time but with no support and on their own?'

Hear, hear!, I say. The answer to his question, probably, is that our journeys were just not so newsworthy and were, I suppose, dull in comparison.

The Kindertransport was horrendously awful for the Kinder and their parents but it has today been turned into an adventure journey. This, of course, is in no way the fault of the Kinder. To the British press, the Kindertransport showed the kindness of the British people to homeless Jewish children – and the press were, and still are, milking it for all its worth. Even the September issue of the *AJR Journal* devoted no less than four pages to the Kinder plus a couple of letters. Is this not gilding the lily? Sorry to be cynical but don't all these Kindertransport stories tend to hide the fact that the British government turned its back on the Kinder's parents, as did Anglo-Jewry?

Unlike Eric Elias, I was not on my own when I came to England. I had support because I was with my parents. However, I was only three years old and my parents were obviously traumatised and grief-stricken by what had happened to them in Vienna. They survived Kristallnacht but didn't for many years get over the fact that they were refugees in a

country where they were penniless and couldn't speak the language. My father, a Viennese-trained doctor, was not allowed to work as a medical practitioner here till 1942. We lived on what we had brought with us, which was hardly anything.

No, we were not interned. No, my mother did not have to work as a domestic servant. No, my father was not one of the professional men who, like so many, ended up washing plates in restaurants. A lot of refugees had it much tougher. But, agreeing with Eric Elias, should not our survival too be celebrated like those of the Kinder?

We came to England in February 1939. My parents are dead but next year, if I'm 'spared', it will be my turn to celebrate 75 years of being here. How about all of us non-Kinder refugees joining up for a big, big party on 3 September 2014? Perhaps the AJR will organise it? If they do, I would be more than delighted if the Kinder came too!

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts

Sir – Ruth David should choose her words more carefully. In her report on the KT Reunion, she arrogantly makes the ridiculous statement that 'we Kindertransportees were the group of immigrants that had done more for Britain than any other immigrant group ever in the UK.' No doubt her own award has given her the grand illusion that the bunch of Kindertransport children grew up to be different or better than the rest of us refugees.

Walter Wolff, London W11

Sir – May I thank the AJR for organising the Kindertransport Reunion and the reception at St James's Palace, and also the stimulating *Journal* that maintains my sense of belonging – although it seems rather odd to call ourselves refugees when most of our lives have been lived happily as British citizens!

John Farago, Deal, Kent

TWO WISE, WITTY PEOPLE

Sir – Even though I have lived in Dublin for over 18 years now, I still receive my monthly copy of the *AJR Journal*. In the September edition I was saddened to see that both Katia Gould and David Maier have died. I worked at the AJR with Katia for seven years, and met David many times when he would drop into the offices for a chat.

The then editor, Richard Grunberger, and David had a warm relationship. It was a privilege for me to be allowed to share the office as they chatted and laughed. Their humour was always gentle, always clever and, most importantly, always funny.

As I have said before, Katia worked hard during my period of employment

at the AJR to turn me from a trainee into a professional. Whether she succeeded or not is not for me to say. However, she never once gave up. I still very much appreciate her efforts.

I would like to send my condolences and respects to the families and friends of these two wise, witty people.

Maurice Newman, Dublin

WHEN IS A POGROM NOT A POGROM?

Sir – Why do we continue to honour Hermann Göring by using his catchphrase 'Kristallnacht' when referring to the November pogrom of 1938?

At the time, it was the Nazis who derisively called their pogrom 'Reichskristallnacht' (Night of Broken Glass), which later became known as Kristallnacht for short.

Since then, and unwittingly, the Jewish community worldwide has adopted and perpetuated this Nazi monicker which gleefully celebrated the Nazis' breaking millions of windows in Jewish-owned business premises and homes throughout the expanded German Reich and triggered the arrest and incarceration of thousands of Jewish men and the death of many of them. It also led to the nationwide Jewish community being fined one billion Reichsmarks as a punishment for their 'hostile attitude towards Germany and their abominable crimes'.

Surely it would be better to call a pogrom what it is – a pogrom – and to stop romanticising this terrifying atrocity with the dramatically attractive title of Kristallnacht – Crystal Night.

Political correctness has got itself a bad name, but in this instance it should be harnessed in support of a just cause. Let us campaign to stop glorifying the November 1938 pogrom with the Nazis' chosen title of Kristallnacht and call it what it really was – 'the November 1938 Pogrom'.

Michael Heppner, London N21

WHY RETURN TO GERMANY?

Sir – I have for some time been curious as to the motivation of individuals in returning to Germany after the 39-45 war. Some cases are known to me which are logical, such as intermarriages in which the partner has retained the property.

Michael Sherwood, Bushey

'ANTI-ISRAELI BIAS'

Sir – I would like to take issue with Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's myopic, ill-informed and hugely biased article 'The campaign against Israel in Britain' ('Letter from Israel', August). Ms Shefer-Vanson is evidently one of those who regard every criticism of their country's policies as anti-Semitic and/or pro-Palestinian. I am frequently critical of my government's

policies – not least the Blair government's disastrous attack on Iraq – but does that make me anti-British? I would claim the very opposite.

I read *The Guardian* (the *bête noire* of the more ardent Zionists in this country) daily and I listen frequently to the BBC's Radio 4 'Today' programme as well as to the BBC's news bulletins (radio and TV). Both institutions have at times been attacked as biased against Israel. In my view, nothing is further from the truth. Indeed, the BBC and its Trustees have not infrequently been accused by pro-Palestinian organisations of what they perceive as a bias in favour of Israel. That suggests, does it not, that the BBC reporting must be about right?

In my view, we should be grateful to both institutions for their independent and courageous reporting – even when it does give an unflattering picture of the way the Israeli (or, for that matter, any) government and its army conduct their business. Sadly, Israeli actions towards the Palestinians, and indeed their own Arab citizens, often leave them wide open to criticism. For example, should the fact that 1,000 new settlement homes, some provocatively in East Jerusalem, were approved at the beginning of the so-called peace talks – thus virtually scuttling any hope of real progress – be left unreported?

Happily there are Israelis – a minority it is true but one that is all the more important for that – who have the courage to be fiercely critical of some of their government's policies. One of these is Uri Avnery, a veteran liberation soldier, former member of the Knesset and untiring peace campaigner, whose well-informed and often highly critical weekly analyses of Israeli politics would no doubt make Ms Shefer-Vanson blanch. I regard him as a true Israeli patriot whose steadfast advocacy of an equitable two-state solution to the conflict will, I hope, one day prevail.

As I don't read the tabloids (except at the hairdresser's), I wouldn't presume to judge whether or not they are part of this 'campaign against Israel', but I doubt it very much.

Before any reader accuses me of being a 'self-hating Jew' – whatever that may mean – let me assure you that I like to think of myself as a tolerably normal person, who, as a scientist, likes to view our sad world as objectively as possible.

Leslie Baruch Brent, London N19

KINDERTRANSPORT DATABANK

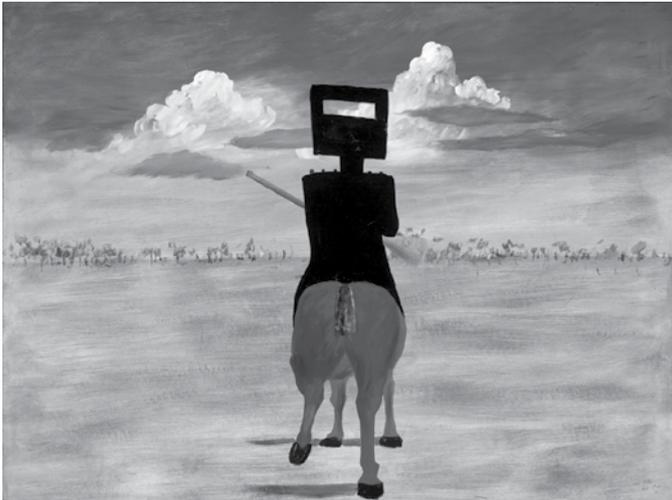
Sir – Lorenz Beckhardt's letter in the August *Journal* had me turn to the AJR's own Kindertransport research results (free to download and so available for all to analyse, from the AJR website at

continued on page 16 ➔

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

This month's exhibition at the **Royal Academy**, described as the most significant survey of Australian art ever mounted in the UK, offers a chance to study the light and the extraordinary colours of the world 'down under'. To accentuate the point, some of the artists on show use natural earth pigments and other local materials. The sunsets and the vastness and flatness of this antipodean landscape all evoke something primitive and sensory, as well as exploring the pioneering spirit of the settler. 'Australia' (the exhibition ends on 8



Sidney Nolan, *Ned Kelly*, 1946. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

December 2013) includes over 200 works from 1800 to the present day and covers paintings and drawings, photography and multimedia. Culled from major collections in Australia, these are mainly on show for the first time in the UK.

It is this connection with the landscape that most inspires the artists here. **Sidney Nolan's** surreal enamel work on composition board presents the back of a horseman riding across a parched desert into blue skies filled with cloud, but his head appears to be a narrow window or mirror within a deep frame. The work, in a four-part *Ned Kelly* series, is described by this Australian artist and Royal Academician as 'a story arising out of the bush and ending in the bush'. In this painting, the sense of endlessness and 'beginninglessness' is perfectly evoked by the strange and rather laconic rider who emerges geometrically from the horse itself.

Most of the artists have a narrative feel for the wildness and history of their country. **Charles Meere's** *Australian Beach Pattern* is a crowded beach scene, almost urban in its physical intensity, but there is a hint of the crucifixion in the background. **Frederick McCubbin's** *The Pioneer* describes a rather British forest landscape in three scenes and has a touch of Pre-Raphaelite romanticism.

The 200 years spanned by the exhibition feature the colonisation of the indigenous peoples by the first settlers and include the works of 19th-century Aboriginal artists such as **Albert Namatjira**, **Rover Thomas** and **Emily Kame Kngwarreye** and some from the Papunya Tula group of the Western Desert. The 19th century also spawned a number of works by European immigrants such as **John Glover** and **Eugene von Guerard**, whose *Bush Fire* is a mystical skyscape of black and red cloud with a tiny, helpless moon whose light is almost obliterated.

The Australian Impressionists drew their magic from the mythology of the Australian bush. These include **Arthur Streeton**, **Tom Roberts**, **Charles Conder** and **Frederick McCubbin**. Contemporaneous with them are the early Modernists, like **Margaret Preston**, **Grace Cossington Smith** and **Roy de Maistre**. The show goes up to the 21st century with artists known and recognised internationally, like **Bill Henson**, **Gordon Bennett** and **Tracey Moffatt**.

But for many of these artists, their message is their distinctiveness from European artistic tradition. They sought to break the rules and explore their own vision of their national identity, whether they are the indigenous peoples or those who came with external influences.

AJR Chief Executive
Michael Newman

Directors
Carol Rossen
David Kaye

Head of Department
Sue Kurlander Social Services

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

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

REVIEWS

Gripping but flawed thriller

HANNS AND RUDOLF: THE GERMAN JEW AND THE HUNT FOR THE KOMMANDANT OF AUSCHWITZ
by Thomas Harding

London: William Heinemann, 2013,
348 pp. hardcover, tel 020 7840 8400,
www.randomhouse.co.uk,
ISBN 978 0 434 02236 6, £20.00

Hanns and Rudolf? Hanns Alexander, a German Jew, and Rudolf Höss, the Kommandant of Auschwitz, bracketed together as though they were somehow friends or colleagues? Alexander, from a well-to-do Berlin Jewish family who fled to the UK and became a bank employee, and Höss, born in Baden-Baden into a strict Catholic family who perfected the technique of mass killing that made Auschwitz the most efficient instrument of the 'Final Solution'?

The author requests the forgiveness of those offended by this bizarre coupling, arguing that his book is 'a reminder of a more complex world, told through the lives of two men who grew up in parallel and yet opposing German cultures'. His rationale is that his story 'challenges the traditional portrayal of the hero and the villain', i.e. the men had much in common in that they were both adored by their families, respected by colleagues, and grew up in Germany in the early 20th century; furthermore, at times Höss showed 'a capacity for compassion', while Alexander 'was not always above suspicion'.

Hanns Alexander was Thomas Harding's great-uncle. It was at Alexander's funeral, in London in December 2006, that the family heard for the first time that he had personally tracked down the Kommandant of Auschwitz. How could it be, asks Harding, that 'this nice but unremarkable man ... a bit of a rogue and a prankster, much respected for sure, but also a man who liked to play tricks on his elders and tell dirty jokes to us youngsters, and who, if truth be told, was prone to exaggeration', was a war hero?

The basic facts are that in May 1945 the first British War Crimes Investigation Team was assembled to hunt down the senior officials responsible for the Nazi atrocities. One of the principal investigators was Lieutenant Hanns Alexander, who then was serving in the British Army. Rudolf Höss, who became his principal target, was by this time, like other Nazi war criminals, on the run. Powered by an overwhelming sense of

continued opposite ➔

bitterness over what had been done to his people, Alexander, in the gripping story told here, successfully and with great tenaciousness sought out his quarry. Höss was handed over to the Polish authorities and, following a trial in Warsaw, hanged in April 1947 on a site immediately adjacent to the crematorium of the former Auschwitz I concentration camp.

It cannot be denied that *Hanns and Rudolf* is a rattling good read – a thriller in the mould of, say, *The Day of the Jackal*. It's also clearly based on copious research. Yet, in some other respects, it seems to me that the book is less successful. First, the author's contention, in his prologue, that this is 'a Jew-fighting-back story' – alongside, for example, uprisings in ghettos and revolts in camps – simply doesn't ring true. Can this really be portrayed as 'a Jew-fighting-back story' given that it so obviously takes place in what is, to all intents and purposes, the aftermath of the war?

Furthermore, it seems to me that the 'Hanns-Rudolf' style of story-telling is, in itself, ultimately unconvincing. Whatever effort one makes to show the opposite, this juxtaposition never feels more than an artificial one. The reality is that the two men have *essentially* not a jot in common other than the fact that their lives interlink in the specific context that one is hunting down the other.

Despite these reservations, there can be no doubt that this is a book that is hard to put down!

Howard Spier

Testimonies of Nazi persecution of Roma and Sinti

TRÄUME ICH, DASS ICH LEBE? BEFREIT AUS BERGEN-BELSEN
by Ceija Stojka

Munich: Random House, 2009, 128 pp. paperback

WINTER TIME: MEMOIRS OF A GERMAN SINTO WHO SURVIVED AUSCHWITZ
by Walter Winter

Hertfordshire University Press, 2004, 192 pp. paperback

SHARED SORROWS: A GYPSY FAMILY REMEMBERS THE HOLOCAUST
by Toby Sonneman

Hertfordshire University Press, 2002, 296 pp. paperback

There is a myth – almost as potent as that of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion – that Gypsies can't read or write and, moreover, don't even want to. This myth may have contributed to the lack of Roma testimonies in Holocaust archives, online Holocaust learning resources, and bookshelves where Jewish

testimonies abound.

But how can there not be testimonies when the Nazis murdered somewhere between half a million and a million Roma and Sinti Gypsies? There are always some survivors who feel the obligation to tell humanity what happened.

I have collected several such testimonies in book format and found more on the internet, of which I recommend the following:

'Forgotten Genocide' A digital exhibition, including six testimonies at www.romasinti.eu One is by Settela Steinbach, a picture of whom, looking out of a cattle truck, has become an icon of the Holocaust and is often, wrongly, assumed to be a Jewish victim.

www.rromaniconnect.org/romasintiholocaust Including Romani Rose, who fought for the memorial to the Nazi genocide against the Sinti and Roma dedicated in Berlin this year (see below).

www.requiemforauschwitz.eu A full orchestral requiem dedicated to all victims of Auschwitz by the Sinti and Roma Philharmonic Orchestra of Frankfurt, written by Roger Moreno Rathgeb and conducted by Riccardo Sahiti.

Perhaps the most moving of all the testimonies of persecution of Gypsies by the Nazis I have read is Ceija Stojka's book *Träume ich, dass ich lebe? Befreit aus Bergen-Belsen*. Ceija survived many concentration camps with her mother and finally returned to the family home near Vienna. She wrote many books of stories and poetry, unfortunately not translated into English, and died in January this year at the age of 79. This particular book, written for young children, describes Ceijka's liberation from Bergen-Belsen at the age of 11. She hides none of the horror but writes in a style that is beautiful and inspiring despite the awfulness she describes.

Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinto Who Survived Auschwitz is an amazing story of personal courage, including the beating up of an SS guard and confronting the notorious Dr Mengele in order to obtain food for the children in his block. Walter's stories include such topics as family life, service in the German navy, from which he was later discharged 'on racial grounds', and his experiences of Auschwitz, Ravensbrück and Sachsenhausen, where he was conscripted to fight against the Red Army on the Russian front.

Shared Sorrows: A Gypsy Family Remembers the Holocaust is unusual in that a Jewish woman tells the story of how she came to meet a Roma Gypsy woman in America. The two friends raised money together to make a trip to Europe to research their families' histories and Holocaust experiences. Sonneman tells the story of their joint venture as well as the stories of the two families intertwined, giving her book a heart-rending poignancy.

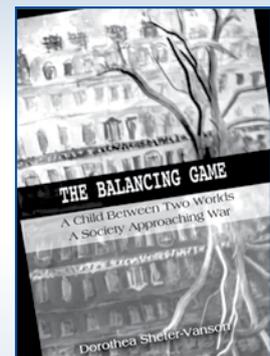
It is also special in that it provides a template for the potential friendship and support two of the most persecuted ethnic groups can give each other once the barriers of fear and prejudice are overcome.

Earlier this year, just across the road from the Reichstag in Berlin, Romani Rose and Angela Merkel dedicated the new memorial to the Sinti and Roma victims of Nazi genocide. The perspex fence surrounding the memorial gives a very moving narrative of this part of Nazi atrocities, so often forgotten or discounted. Inside is a large pool around which are stones bearing the names of all the ghettos, holding camps, labour camps and killing camps that housed Sinti and Roma during the Third Reich. All these names are only too familiar from the accounts of the Jewish experience in the Holocaust.

Ruth Barnett

The Balancing Game: A Child Between Two Worlds, A Society Approaching War

by Dorothea Shefer-Vanson



The *Balancing Game* describes the strange and unique world occupied by a Jewish child, the daughter of refugees from Hitler's Germany, growing up in a run-down part of post-war London. The novel also tells the story of Felicity, a young woman who is pregnant with her first child and is living in Jerusalem before and during the Six-Day War of June 1967. The two tales intertwine, eventually connecting in an unexpected way.

Available at Amazon.com or BarnesAndNoble.com; or from: dorotheashefer@gmail.com

www.fishburnbooks.com

Jonathan Fishburn

buys and sells Jewish and Hebrew books, ephemera and items of Jewish interest.

He is a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association.

Contact Jonathan on
020 8455 9139 or 07813 803 889
for more information

International Tracing Service Archive now available for family research at the Wiener Library

The British Government has asked the Wiener Library to make available to the public the UK's digital copy of the International Tracing Service (ITS) Archive, which provides access to documents that can help determine the fate of individuals during and after the Second World War. After months of preparation, the Wiener Library is now ready to assist those looking to do family research.

During the Second World War, millions suffered from deportation, incarceration and displacement due to the actions of the Nazi regime and its collaborators. The British Red Cross began to trace missing persons in 1943. The ITS Archive grew out of these and other efforts by the Allies and humanitarian organisations to reunite families in the aftermath of the war.

The ITS Archive is stored in Bad Arolsen, Germany, where post-war tracing efforts merged, and holds over 100 million pages of documentation on the fates of 17.5 million people during and immediately after the war. The collection contains documents gathered by Allied forces as they swept through Europe, liberating concentration camps, forced labour camps and other incarceration sites. Researchers can also find records from displaced persons camps as well as documentation on emigration. Finally,

the Archive records efforts of the ITS and other institutions to trace individuals, including children, in the post-war era.

In December 2011, following discussions with a group of stakeholder organisations, including the AJR, the British Government deposited the UK's digital copy of the ITS Archive at the Wiener Library. AJR member Eugene Black spoke at the event held to mark this occasion about his experience obtaining from the ITS in Bad Arolsen records which documented his deportation from Hungary to camps in Germany and his liberation at Bergen-Belsen. For decades, Mr Black thought his sisters had been gassed in Auschwitz. However, the ITS documents revealed that they had been killed in an Allied bombing attack on a factory near Buchenwald, where they had been forced to work after being deported from Auschwitz. The Wiener Library's digital copy of the ITS Archive may allow family researchers to discover similar stories.

With support from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Heritage Lottery Fund and private donors, the Wiener Library is now able to process requests for research of individual fates during and after the war. Readers should note that requests

for humanitarian use of the archives may often be better carried out through the expertise of the ITS's staff at its headquarters in Bad Arolsen. In the autumn, the Library will also provide a work station for those who wish to use the Archive for academic research.

Priority will be given to Holocaust survivors and their families but all are welcome to submit enquiries for research assistance. Despite the Archive's massive size not every victim of persecution appears in the documentation. Further, due to the complexity of the Archive, the number and type of available documentation for each enquiry varies significantly and may take many weeks to retrieve.

Before submitting a query, it is helpful to gather as much information as possible, including full names and name variants, date of birth (even if approximate) and any information, however speculative, about the person's whereabouts during or after the war. Queries should be submitted via www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/International-Tracing-Service

(Dr) Christine Schmidt
International Tracing Service
Archive Researcher,
The Wiener Library for the Study
of the Holocaust & Genocide,
London WC1
tel +44 (0) 20 7636 7247

... 75 years on – Jewish Arteck and the Kindertransport ...

Jewish Arteck is a summer youth camp like no other. It operates in a lovely setting on the banks of the Uedersee, an hour's drive north of Berlin, with all the sport and leisure activities you can imagine. But it is the energy, imagination and hunger for learning of youngsters and their leaders from Russia, Israel, Germany and America that create the magical and powerfully inspirational experience of being part of Jewish Arteck. I had the privilege to be invited to Jewish Arteck 2013.

Ich bin eine echte Berliner, born in Wilmersdorf and living in Charlottenburg until Kristallnacht, after which I came to England on the Kindertransport at the age of four with my seven-year-old brother in 1939. It took all of 50 years – until the first Kindertransport Reunion in 1989 – before I could come to terms with my German past and reclaim my Berlin roots. Now, I welcome every opportunity to spend some time in 'my city'.

In 2012 I signed up for 'Limmud.de'

in Berlin's old Jewish High School. Here I met Ella Nilova, who, to my delight, invited me to Jewish Arteck 2013 to take part in its core theme – the Kindertransport. So, together with Ruth and Jurgen Schwiening and Frank Meissler, sculptor of the Kindertransport memorials, who came with two friends, I spent three memorable days as part of Jewish Arteck.

The children had already had three days of creative thinking and practical preparation before we arrived on 12 July in time for Shabbat. Out of an excited chaos of 64 jostling, jabbering children and youth leaders emerged a joyful Kabbalat Shabbat service. The room was decorated with colourful posters, an Ark and lots of candles, most of which were made, but all of it prepared, by the children. A haunting but joyous trumpet solo ushered in silence and a service that gripped everyone. Many of the children were experiencing a Shabbat for the first time. The ensuing Shabbat meal was followed by an *oneg*/cabaret produced by groups of children with their leaders:

songs, games, dance and story-telling prepared to entertain their guests – us!

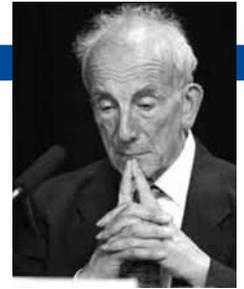
Shabbat was then devoted to learning about the Kindertransport through an informal 'Talk Show', in which the four guests each gave a brief introductory talk. After this we were each 'interviewed' by a smaller group in four different rooms. I have never experienced quite so many searching questions. The encounter with my group was an inspiring experience and, as I gathered, so were the others. These 64 ambassadors will, I am sure, raise awareness of the wider meaning of the Holocaust in the difficulties we still have in embracing diversity. After lunch we carried out a processing of the morning's experience through workshops in small groups.

Finally, the children prepared their after-dinner cabaret, presented as 'English Tea', sitting round candle-lit tables for tea and cakes with 1920s background music and little 'acts' on the theme of 'Englishness' to honour us, their 'English guests'. A Shabbat I

continued on page 15

'Remember the past – but go forward!'

Seminar on refugees' integration into the UK



Professor Peter Pulzer

The AJR, the London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC) and Sussex University's Centre for German-Jewish Studies came together in September for a two-day seminar: 'German and Austrian Jewish Refugees: Their Impact and Personal Legacy'. Held at the LJCC's Ivy House, the seminar, built on presentations, discussions and lectures over the past two years, was very well attended, with the presence in the audience of many 'Second' and 'Third Generation' members together with a number of Israelis.

In the opening session, 'First Generation' refugees Bea Green, Edgar Feuchtwanger, Ruth Jacobs, William Kaczynski and Clemens Nathan reflected on their experiences of fleeing from their home countries and settling in Britain and the effect this had had on their families, culture and heritage.

In the following session, Professor Peter Pulzer, himself a former refugee, looked back on 'A Year of Anniversaries', specifically those of Hitler's appointment as Chancellor and Kristallnacht. Professor

Pulzer stressed that for the Nazis terror was not a means but an end in itself.

A 'Second Generation' panel comprising Diana Franklin, AJR Trustee Frank Harding, Allan Morgenthau and Melissa Rosenbaum reflected on the impact their coming from a refugee family had had on their upbringing, education and family lives.

Rev Bernd Koschland, his daughter Beth and grandson Sammy, members of an 'Intergenerational' panel, discussed the impact of the refugee experience on each of the generations. The 1989 Kindertransport Reunion had been a turning point. It was important to 'get on with living', they concluded.

Illustrator John Minnion gave a multi-media presentation based on his ironically entitled book *Hitler's List: An Illustrated Guide to Degenerates: Jews, Bolsheviks and Other Undesirable Geniuses*.

Professor Edward Timms gave an illustrated talk on the often neglected contribution of women – among them Anna Freud, Hilde Spiel and Marie-Louise

von Motesiczky – to pre-war Viennese culture as well as to refugee culture in London.

A 'Third Generation' panel – Hannah

Bowers, Laurence Field, Alisa Franklin and Michael Newman – discussed what some saw as the 'burden' of Jewish identity.

In the final session, Nicky Gavron, the former Deputy Mayor of London, said that her mother, prevented from taking part in the 1936 Berlin Olympics due to her being Jewish, had fled to the UK. Praising London's 'diversity', she contrasted the Berlin Olympics with last year's London Olympics.

The seminar was brought to an end by AJR-Kindertransport Chairman Sir Erich Reich. Putting the Kindertransport into historical context, Sir Erich expressed gratitude to the British Government: while 'more could have been done', he said, the UK had nevertheless done more than anyone else. Emphasising the refugees' contribution to British society, his conclusion was 'Remember the past – but go forward!'

UK Jewish Film Festival 30 October – 17 November 2013

'Refugees'

The AJR is delighted once again to be supporting the UK Jewish Film Festival and will be the exclusive sponsor of the 'Refugees' strand of this year's Festival.

'Refugees' is built around five films, each of which will be followed by a panel discussion and a Q&A session or special event. As well as five events in London, there will be events in Manchester, Leeds and Glasgow. The 'Refugees' events include:

Orchestra of Exiles will be introduced by Anita Lasker-Wallfisch and there will be a violin solo by her grandson Abraham Jacobs. Directed by Josh Aronson, the film portrays the extraordinary story of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra and the heroic feats of its founder, Polish violinist Bronislaw Huberman.

Harbour of Hope, directed by Magnus Gertten, recounts the lives of two concentration camp survivors who found refuge in Sweden. The event features a Q&A with one of the surviving refugees from Sweden and an introduction by the Swedish Ambassador to the UK.

Directed by Rachel Goslins, *Besa: The Promise* weaves Albania's heroism

in the Second World War through the *vérité* journeys of two men, a renowned Jewish-American photographer and a Muslim-Albanian. The film will be introduced by the Albanian Ambassador to the UK.

In *My German Friend*, directed by Jeanine Meerapfel, the daughter of German-Jewish immigrants to Argentina befriends the son of a senior SS officer and together they become embroiled in the radical politics of late-1960s student life in Germany. The screenings in London and Manchester will include a Coffee & Bagel Brunch.

The screening of *From Cable Street to Brick Lane* features a Q&A with director Phil Maxwell and a panel discussion with participants in the film on the Jewish immigrant experience. Incorporating archival footage of the 1936 Battle of Cable Street, the film pays tribute to successive generations of immigrants and trade unionists in London's East End and their triumph over prejudice and intolerance.

Full details, including the dates and venues of the 'Refugees' films, together with all screenings in this year's Festival, are available at www.ukjewishfilm.org

Michael Newman

ARTS AND EVENTS OCTOBER DIARY

Wed 2 'Coffee & Conversation: A Suit-able Promise' Rev Bernd Koschland shares his experience of the Kindertransport. 11.30 am

Thu 3 Pears Annual Lecture by Dr Wendy Lower: 'Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields'. 6.30 pm

Tue 8 Jane Merkin: 'Suitcase', illustrated talk, 6.30 pm, by executive producer of 'Suitcase', performed at Liverpool Street Station on 70th anniversary of Kindertransport. The script is being revised for an Arts Council-funded 75th anniversary tour of stations beginning 11 Nov and ending at Liverpool Street Station 2 Dec. Other stations will include Glasgow, Manchester and Harwich International

Fri 18 Dr Rachel Century (Holocaust Memorial Day Trust): 'Hitler's Helpers: The Female Administrators of the Holocaust'. 1.00 pm

Wed 23 Dr Suzanne Brown-Fleming (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum): 'November 1938: Perspectives from the Vatican Archives' Concerns that shaped the Holy See's muted response to Kristallnacht'. 6.30 pm

Mon 28 Thomas Harding: 'Hanns and Rudolf: The German Jew and the Hunt for the Kommandant of Auschwitz'. 6.30 pm

All events at Wiener Library:
admission free
but booking essential
tel 020 7636 7247

INSIDE the AJR

Definite 5-Star Rating for *The Sound of Music*

I spent the most idyllic summer's afternoon watching *The Sound of Music* at the Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park. This musical contains the most crystal-clear singing and amazing choreography. I was mesmerised all the way through and the songs were so amazingly catchy that I have been singing them all week and I still can't get them out of my head. I am so pleased the AJR took me along. I would absolutely recommend it and I would give it a definite 5-star rating!

*Amy Shaw
(aged 10, granddaughter of
Karen and Julian Shaw)*

Edinburgh A Most Pleasant Way to Spend an Afternoon

A most enjoyable outing to the Royal Overseas League Hotel. A delicious lunch was followed by a superb piano recital of works by Chopin and Liszt. A most pleasant way to spend an afternoon.

Agnes Isaacs

Pinner Annual Garden Party

This by now legendary party was again fabulously hosted by Vera Gellman, helped by an indefatigable team. Another most enjoyable occasion for all of us.

Walter Weg

Ealing Life of a Guide at Kew Gardens

A fascinating talk by Judith Lawson, who gave us a virtual tour of Kew Gardens, including trees which date back to the 1750s.

Leslie Sommer

Outing to Edinburgh Synagogue Festival Open Day

A large contingency of Glasgow and Edinburgh members enjoyed a taste of the Edinburgh Fringe in the comfortable surroundings of the Edinburgh Synagogue hall.

Agnes Isaacs

Cambridge 800 Years of the Mayoralty

Mayor of Cambridge Paul Sanders gave us wonderful insight into his function and the history of the mayoral role in the town - over more than 800 years.

Keith Lawson

Ifford A Morning Full of Nostalgia

At our 11th anniversary party, Nigel Colman gave us a brief biography of Frank Sinatra, amply illustrated with many of his well-loved songs. A morning full of nostalgia.

Meta Roseneil

HGS Meeting with Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust joined the group at Hammerson House for a discussion of the Trust's work in the UK. For further information, contact alice.owen@hmd.org.uk

Alice Owen

Essex (Westcliff) Visit to Prittlewell Priory

We enjoyed an exceptionally interesting visit to the 12th-century Prittlewell Priory, home of the Cluniac monks. A very special morning.

Esther Rinkoff

Oxford Annual Lunch

We greatly enjoyed our fifth annual summer lunch in Susi and John Bates's large conservatory. It was delightful to meet Kathryn, our new Group Co-ordinator.

John Fieldsend

Welwyn GC Illuminating Afternoon

The Deputy Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield, Leslie Paige, gave us an account of his duties. Later, members shared with him stories of how they had come to England and what they had done with their lives. A most illuminating afternoon.

Leonora Koos

Kent Glorious Sissinghurst

We enjoyed tremendously and learned so much from a tour of the glorious Sissinghurst Castle Gardens. How interesting to venture into the horticultural 'rooms' created by Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson.

Janet Weston

Sheffield Favourite Hobbies and Pastimes

Several new members were made most welcome. We learned a lot about stamp collecting, needlework, biography-writing, pottery and photography, all followed by tea and lots of friendly chats.

Renee Martin

St John's Wood A Fascinating and Sad Story

Raphael Ambalo told us that only one Jew now remains in Afghanistan. Thousands have left, mainly for New York and Israel. A fascinating and sad story.

Zvi Schloss

Newcastle Superb Production of *The Sound of Music*

We attended an absolutely superb production of *The Sound of Music* at the Theatre Royal, enjoying favourites such as 'Climb Every Mountain'.

Agnes Isaacs

Brighton & Hove Sarid 'An Inspirational Person'

Iris told us about a time when she was 12 and a group of KT children at her school were crying for their parents, whom they'd never see again. Scarlett talked about a teacher who helped her further her education, leading to her professorship. Many more stories to tell!

Ceska Abrahams

Marlow CF A Most Interesting Conversation

We didn't have a speaker but this was made up for by the most interesting conversation in which each member contributed topics from their own experience.

Alex Lawrence

Glasgow CF BBC Return Visit by Popular Demand

Due to popular demand, this was our second BBC tour. Members had the opportunity to take part in a radio production, sit in the news reader's desk, and see behind the scenes.

Agnes Isaacs

Edgware 'Talking to a Mop'

Journalist Stewart Macintosh told us about his activities at the BBC, which we all found very interesting.

Felix Winkler

Radlett New Services in Herts Libraries

A very enjoyable meeting at the home of Alf Keiles. Librarian Jane Williams told us about many of the new services available in County libraries.

Kathryn Prevezer

Leeds CF 'The Glenn Miller Orchestra'

Members spent an enjoyable evening at Leeds Grand Theatre listening to 'the Glenn Miller Orchestra conducted by the famous Ray McVay'.

Wendy Bott

North West London Reminiscences of Rosh Hashana

Our conversation, at Alyth Synagogue, turned to reminiscences of Rosh Hashana in Germany and Austria. A reflexion of the times they were brought up in was that most of those present didn't celebrate the high holy days until after they were married.

Shirley Rodwell

Book Club Group Therapy

An unexpected relocation from Joseph's to Costa didn't stop this lively group from discussing almost everything except Elizabeth de Waal's *The Exiles Return*. Group therapy! Our next book: Ben Elton's *Two Brothers*.

Esther Rinkoff

North London Celebration of 12th Anniversary

We celebrated our 12th anniversary - how time passes! A pleasant lunch followed by Nigel Colman's presentation on the

life and music of Barbara Streisand. Next year's question: How does a group celebrate its bar mitzvah?

Herbert Haberberg

Glasgow CF A Perfect Day Out

Almost 30 people turned up for a visit to Kibble Palace. It was almost standing room only in the Botanic Gardens café as first, second, third and even fourth generations joined us for afternoon tea. A perfect day out.

Agnes Isaacs

CONTACTS

Hazel Beiny
Southern Groups Co-ordinator
07966 887 434
hazel@ajr.org.uk

Wendy Bott
Yorkshire Groups Co-ordinator
07908 156 365
wendy@ajr.org.uk

Myrna Glass
London South and Midlands Groups Co-ordinator
07966 969 951
myrna@ajr.org.uk

Susanne Green
North West Groups Co-ordinator
0151 291 5734
susanne@ajr.org.uk

Susan Harrod
Groups' Administrator
020 8385 3070
susan@ajr.org.uk

Agnes Isaacs
Scotland and Newcastle Co-ordinator
07908 156 361
agnes@ajr.org.uk

Esther Rinkoff
Southern Region Co-ordinator
07966 631 778
esther@ajr.org.uk

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

Annely Juda Fine Art

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

**CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE**

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household
electrical work

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

OCTOBER GROUP EVENTS

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--|
| Ealing | 1 October | Anna Andlauer: 'The Rage to Live: The International D.P. Children's Center Kloster Indersdorf 1945-46' |
| Newcastle | 1 October | Visit to Discovery Museum |
| Ilford | 2 October | Edwina Mileham: 'The Wallace Collection' |
| Pinner | 3 October | Anna Andlauer: 'The Rage to Live: The International D.P. Children's Center Kloster Indersdorf 1945-46' |
| Glasgow AJR | 6 October | 'Glasgow Now and Then' |
| Manchester/Liverpool | 6 October | Visit to Beth Shalom |
| Cardiff | 7 October | Lynne Bradley entertains |
| Manchester/Liverpool | 7 October | Visit to Holocaust Centre at IWMN |
| Essex | 8 October | 'The Wallace Collection' |
| Welwyn GC | 8 October | Freddie Godshaw on his life (at home of Monica Rosenbaum) |
| Birmingham (West Midlands) | 9 October | Screening of <i>Watermarks</i> |
| Broughton Park/ Crumpsall | 9 October | Meeting at Beenstock Home |
| Edinburgh CF | 9 October | Social |
| St John's Wood | 9 October | Gillian Reynolds: 'The Best Job in the World' |
| Wessex | 9 October | Annual Lunch |
| Glasgow CF | 10 October | Outing to 'Fiddler on the Roof' |
| Marlow | 10 October | Social Get-together |
| Hull CF | 13 October | Social |
| HGS | 14 October | Simon Lee, Hampstead Heath Superintendent: 'Appy 'Ampstead' |
| Edgware | 15 October | Prof Michael Spiro: 'The Curious History of Aspirin' |
| Kent | 15 October | Jenny Mason: 'Public Service on the Brink' |
| Oxford | 15 October | Joyce Sheard of Wheelpower |
| Radlett | 16 October | Anna Andlauer: 'The Rage to Live: The International D.P. Children's Center Kloster Indersdorf 1945-46' |
| Cambridge | 17 October | Prof Alison Sinclair: 'Wrongdoing in 19th-Century Spanish Popular Culture' |
| Brighton | 21 October | Tba |
| Café Imperial | 22 October | Social Get-together |
| Cheshire CF | 22 October | Social at home of Brettlers |
| Norfolk | 22 October | Social Get-together |
| Book Club | 23 October | Regular meeting |
| Liverpool | 23 October | KT film |
| Wembley | 23 October | Social Get-together |
| Sheffield CF | 27 October | Social |
| Prestwich/Whitefield | 28 October | At home of Lachs |
| North West London | 29 October | Raymond Sturgess: 'Life at the English Criminal Bar' |
| Manchester/Liverpool | 30 October | Outing to 'Fiddler on the Roof' |
| Nottingham (East Midlands) | 30 October | Social at home of Schwiengings |
| North London | 31 October | Angela Schluter: 'Nazi Father, Jewish Mother' |

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



MEALS-ON-WHEELS

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

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



ART / CRAFT CLASS

10.30 AM
ALTERNATE THURSDAYS
ALL ABILITIES (and NONE) WELCOME



ONE-TO-ONE BASIC COMPUTER LESSONS

at the AJR Centre
To book a session with Dora
call her on 020 8385 3070



FANCY A MANICURE?

BOOK IN WITH THE AJR CENTRE
Appointments 10 am – 2.30 pm Tuesdays ONLY
Tel 020 7431 2744

FAMILY ANOUNCEMENTS

Marriage

Congratulations to Carol and Adrian Rossen on the marriage of their son Scott to Jan.

Death

My dear son, Louis Steven Haar, born 20 April 1949, passed away quite suddenly on 20 July 2013 leaving behind bereaved and shocked family and friends. May he rest in peace. Cilly Haar and family.

CLASSIFIED

Portable typewriter wanted. Please reply to Box No. 1269.

BOOKS BOUGHT

MODERN AND OLD

Eric Levene

020 8364 3554 07855387574
ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk

I also purchase ephemera

LEO BAECK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

CLARA NEHAB HOUSE RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

Small caring residential home with large attractive gardens
close to local shops and public transport
25 single rooms with full en suite facilities.
24 hour Permanent and Respite Care
Entertainment & Activities provided.

Ground Floor Lounge and Dining Room • Lift access to all floors.

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

Activities October 2013

Lunch is served at 12.30 unless otherwise stated

Tuesday 1 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 11-12 Seated Exercises
- 12.30 'Hooray for Hollywood': A special concert with Robert Habermann – a KT Lunch OPEN to all (please book in)

Thursday 3 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation with Ruth
- 10.30 Book Club
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 Entertainer – Mike Marandi

Tuesday 8 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 10.30 Current Affairs Discussion Group with John Kay
- 11.30 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 Entertainment – Margaret Opdahl

Thursday 10 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.30 Art Club
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 Entertainer – Paul Coleman

Tuesday 15 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 10.30 NEW Singing Group with Michele
- 11.00 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 A Musical Afternoon with Carla Freeman

Thursday 17 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation with Ruth
- 10.30 Book Club
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 12 pm LUNCHEON CLUB – SPEAKER Angela Schulter

Tuesday 22 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 11.00 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 SPEAKER – Hearing Dogs for the Deaf

Thursday 24 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.30 Art Club
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 Entertainer – Frank Crocker

Tuesday 29 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10-12 One-to-One Computer Lessons with Dora
- 11.00 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 Entertainer – Geoff Strum (light opera)

Thursday 31 October

- 10-12 Coffee/Chat/Knit/Cards/Board Games
- 10.00 French Conversation with Ruth
- 10.30 Book Club
- 11.15 Seated Exercises
- 13.45 Entertainer – Roy Blass

OBITUARY

Max Sulzbacher, born Düsseldorf 28 November 1929, died Jerusalem 27 April 2013

Max Sulzbacher was born in Düsseldorf in November 1929. His father, Martin, who later became well known as a bookseller from their home in Golders Green, was a banker. By the time Max reached school age Jews were barred from ordinary schools and he became a pupil at the school established by the local Jewish community. His father managed to smuggle funds to England and in October 1938 he left for England with his wife, Max and Max's two younger brothers and baby sister. He was able to buy a house in London's Stamford Hill district and furnish it with the contents of their lift, which arrived safely.

Max became a pupil at the Jewish Secondary School in Stamford Hill, where he quickly learned English. In 1939 the school was evacuated to Shefford in Bedfordshire. In 1940 the entire family was interned on the Isle of Man and Max's father was sent to Canada on the *Arandora Star*. Two days out of Liverpool the ship was torpedoed and several hundred people drowned. Fortunately Martin was a strong swimmer and was rescued after six hours in the water. A week later he was one of those sent on the horrendous voyage of the *Dunera* to Australia.

The Sulzbacher family were a close and caring family and Max's father had arranged for his own parents, his siblings and nieces and nephews to come to London. On 20 September 1940 tragedy struck the family when a bomb hit their house in Stamford Hill and Max's grandparents, two uncles and two aunts were all killed, leaving

five orphaned children.

At the end of 1941 Martin was allowed to return to England. He rented a house in Golders Green and the family, including Max's orphaned cousins, were re-united. Max and his next older brother, Walter, returned to Shefford, to where the Jewish Secondary School had been evacuated. After the war the school returned to north London and Max remained a pupil. In 1946 he took the Matriculation exam but failed in English. However, he persisted in his studies for the rest of his life, eventually becoming a chartered accountant. He passed the Intermediate Accountancy Examination with honours. After several difficult years he became a partner in a West End firm of accountants and remained with them for 20 years until he retired.

Max was an enthusiastic member of the Leo Baeck Lodge of B'nai B'rith, where he met Deena, whom he married in 1958. They had four children, three of whom now live in Israel and one in Antwerp. Max and Deena were well known in Golders Green for their generous hospitality. Max was famous for his excellent *leyning* (reading from the Torah scroll) and could be called on at a moment's notice any week of the year to fill in if needed. They were members of the Golders Green Beth Hamedrash (Munk's) but he also frequently attended the Dunstan Road United Synagogue, where his Torah reading was also very much appreciated. He was an expert on the intricacies of the Jewish calendar.

In 1986, after almost 30 years, Max and Deena separated and Deena followed her children to Israel. Max married Ju-

dith, a very artistically talented and original woman, in 1989. Judith died of cancer in 2007 and in 2008 Max too made *aliya*.

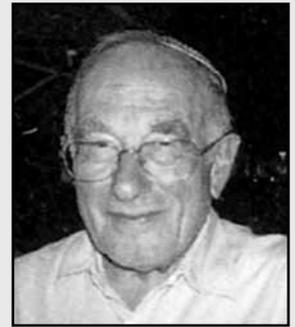
He joined his two brothers, his sister and many cousins, all of whom were by that time in Israel. He was delighted with the opportunities for secular and religious learning that he found in Jerusalem and became the mainstay of the services in the retirement home where he lived.

Max was a long-time member of the AJR and the *Journal* frequently published letters from him, which gave him great pleasure.

He was strong and physically fit – he once climbed Snowdon on a day trip from London and swam in the icily cold Highgate Men's Pond and in the sea at Brighton, where he and Judith lived for some time. Walking over the South Downs with Max was an exhilarating if exhausting experience. Whether walking or driving, he had an unerring sense of direction.

Last year Max developed throat cancer and underwent an eight-hour operation. During Passover this year, while he was in Antwerp with his younger son, he became unwell and returned to hospital in Israel. He died in Jerusalem on 27 April 2013.

Eva Blumenthal



75 YEARS ON *cont. from p.10*

will never forget!

Sunday followed with a deeply moving commemoration of the Kindertransport at the Friedrichstrasse memorial, which had been sculpted by Frank Meissler – all very impressive as everyone had been issued with a red or blue T-shirt carrying the Jewish Arteck logo. Following a picnic lunch in the Lustgarten, we had a guide to explain the pillars that were there as one of 11 sites in Berlin representing *Zerstörte Vielfalt* (Destroyed Diversity) commemorating the Nazi intolerance of diversity and modern culture. The final visit was to the Ephraim Palais to

see the collection of 'Degenerate Art'.

This was an unforgettable three days out of the ten days organised for this international group of young people by an equally international, dedicated and talented team of youth leaders. The year 2013 is the eighth year of Jewish Arteck and I hope it will continue for a long time to come. Not only does it enable Jewish youth to reclaim and enrich their Jewish culture but it does so through unique informally constructed events that tap the abundance of curiosity, imagination and enthusiasm of all who meet for the encounter.

Ruth Barnett

SPRING GROVE



**London's Most Luxurious
RETIREMENT HOME**

214 Finchley Road
London NW3

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

Call for more information or a personal tour

020 8446 2117

or 020 7794 4455

enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

'Baby boomer' volunteers for Israel

Under the slogan 'Export your Expertise', Marla Gamoran has established 'Skilled Volunteers for Israel', a nonprofit organisation aimed at bringing professionals from the US and the UK to volunteer in their area of expertise for a limited time in Israel. The organisation was set up in 2010, when Marla found there was no specific outlet for people born between 1946 and 1964 - 'baby boomers' who are now nearing retirement age. In many cases, these individuals feel that as well as still being able to make a contribution to society, they would also like to do something for Israel. The organisation seeks to match volunteers with appropriate projects in Israel's nonprofit sector, where their skills can be used in tackling issues affecting society at large.

Using contacts, the internet, rabbis and any medium she could find, Marla set about making connections with various Jewish organisations and groups, initially in New York, but later in other parts of

the US. At a later stage she extended her range to the UK, Europe and anywhere where Jews of the right age and with appropriate skills were to be found. With little professional help, she has produced a brochure illustrating and delineating the work of the organization. The official website, <http://skillvolunteerisrael.org>, gives a long list of the various fields in which volunteers can use their skills.

In the event, no major Jewish organisation was prepared to back the project, but that did not deter the energetic Marla and she continued to concentrate on what she calls 'building relationships of mutual benefit'. Fortunately, Marla was able to obtain seed money from an individual donor, thereby enabling her to set up an office with a secretary in Israel. In the US she does all the work herself. She found that it was possible to undertake marketing by making use of social networks, emissaries and other suitable channels.

The opportunities for volunteering in Israel are many and various and include working in archives, education, business consultancy, grant writing, marketing, scientific and other research, medical aid and many others. Thus, volunteers have helped to tutor Israeli schoolchildren in English, engaged with immigrant and low-income communities, translated material, contributed to websites and developed school curricula, to name but a few of the projects Marla's association has sponsored.

To date, about 25 volunteers have been placed in a wide range of projects, organisations and institutions in Israel and for varying lengths of time, usually of at least one month. Future plans include bringing such volunteers to Israel in the framework of a group rather than as isolated individuals. The financing of each volunteer's trip is undertaken by the individual him- or herself, but the connections in Israel and social support network are provided by Marla and her team.

Thus, this enterprising and enthusiastic young woman has created an entirely new field that enables retired professionals to volunteer and support Israel, providing a rewarding and satisfying experience for all concerned.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *cont. from p.7*

www.ajr.org.uk/kindersurvey). He had given enough data about his father, Kurt, to find other Kinder who indicated in their survey response that they too arrived on 13 June 1939 on the *Europa* and were taken to Barham House boys' camp, near Ipswich.

In fact, 25 Kinder who had completed the survey had been at Barham House as their first reception camp. Aged between 7 and 15, none of them unfortunately mentioned their ship's name, but 2 (a 13-year-old and a 15-year-old) said they departed from Bremerhaven on 12 and 13 June. One of these came from Berlin and completed the survey in California; the other was from Hamburg and lived in Stroud, England, when he filled in the survey form.

Over 1,000 Kinder from around the world responded to this survey and provided searchable data that allow anyone with an interest in the Kindertransport to find people and facts in this unique and publicly accessible databank.

*Tom Heinersdorff,
London N2*

LAST 'WINTON TRAIN' DOCUMENTARY

Sir – We are researching a documentary for the German public TV channel ZDF about the last 'Winton train' that never left Prague on 1 September 1939. Of special interest are the children who were due to leave on that train but were unable to do so. We would be grateful for any documents that could identify these children and those who tried to get them out.

*James Pastouna,
Ulrich Stoll, Berlin,
tel +49 30 2099-1285,
email Stoll.U@zdf.de*

RESILIENCE TO WRONG-DOING

Sir – Recently as I listened to Mark Tulley's programme on Sunday morning on Radio 4, a poem by Lotte Kramer was read. I believe it was called 'A Tablecloth Unravelling'. I wonder if there is any way of locating this wondrous poem.

Incidentally, in the late 1970s I undertook a nursing course at the Chest

Hospital in London's East End. Many patients were Jewish and were the most wonderful and generous people I have had the good fortune to nurse. At that time, I had never tasted – let alone heard of – smoked salmon. Patients' relatives used to provide nurses with, among other things, sandwiches of rye bread and salmon. Delicious – a food I still enjoy, though now, alas, it never tastes as good as then. I knew little then of the history of the Jewish people and they have always been remarkable in their resilience to wrong-doing.

*Marian McNulty,
Newport, Gwent*

A GOOD HOME FOR GERMAN-LANGUAGE BOOKS

Sir – The Wiener Library and the Department of German at the University of London are grateful recipients as long as one can arrange for volunteers to transport the books to them.

*Julia Iskandar and Jack Scott,
London, NW11*

Published by The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR), a company limited by guarantee.

Registered office: Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

Registered in England and Wales with charity number: 1149882 and company number: 8220991

Telephone 020 8385 3070 Fax 020 8385 3080 e-mail editorial@ajr.org.uk

For the latest AJR news, including details of forthcoming events and information about our services, visit www.ajr.org.uk

Printed by FBprinters LLP, 26 St Albans Lane, London NW11 7QB Tel: 020 8458 3220 Email: info@fbprinters.com