

# AJR journal

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## The joys of advertisements

Historians and others who study patterns of consumption have long been aware of the importance of advertisements as rich sources of material; Gideon Reuveni of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex, for example, has published fascinating work on the Jews of Germany as consumers in the pre-Hitler era. As I have myself learnt a great deal about the community of Jewish refugees from Nazism in Britain from the ads in the back issues of *AJR Information*, I was intrigued by recent letters to the editor referring to shops owned or managed by refugees on post-war Finchley Road, Hampstead. To the information provided by Frank Beck and Margarete Stern, I might for instance add that Norbert Cohn, the refugee optician at 20 Northways Parade, was not the only one in the area at the time: the ophthalmic optician A. Otten was initially located just along Finchley Road, at 3 Regency Parade.

Hampstead in north-west London was the principal area of settlement of the Jewish refugees in Britain and it contained the greatest concentration of institutions associated with the refugees. These included the Freud Museum at 20 Maresfield Gardens (previously Sigmund Freud's last home); Belsize Square Synagogue (previously the New Liberal Jewish Congregation); the four offices occupied by the AJR until it decamped to Stanmore (at 279a Finchley Road, its founding address in 1941, from 1943 at 8 Fairfax Mansions, then at 9 Adamson Road, and finally at 1 Hampstead Gate, Froggnal); and Otto Schiff House at 14 Netherhall Gardens, the first of the homes built in London for elderly refugees and jointly administered by the Central British Fund and the AJR.

Commercial enterprises founded by refugees also proliferated in this area, the best known being the Cosmo restaurant and café on Northways Parade. Many of the others advertised in *AJR Information*, for example the Dorice, another restaurant popular among refugees, located opposite the Cosmo at 169a Finchley Road, and Joseph

Suschtzky's bookshop Libris at 38 Boundary Road, a mecca for scholars and connoisseurs of German books. Well known in its time was the Blue Danube Club at 153 Finchley Road, where Peter Herz directed Continental-style reviews until he returned to his native Vienna in 1953; the Blue Danube Club was itself an offshoot of another *Kleinkunstbühne*, the small-stage cabaret theatre *Das Laternndl* (The Lantern), which had been set up at 69 Eton Avenue by the wartime Austrian Centre.

The distinctively Continental atmosphere of the Finchley Road area was in considerable measure food-based. Alongside the refugee-

in 1968. Its second branch, just off Finchley Road facing the side of what is now Waitrose John Barnes, opened in 1956 and survived into the 21st century.

Refugee businesses in this part of London catered to their clients' needs across the board of everyday life. In the sphere of office equipment, A. Breuer of 43 Buckland Crescent specialised in the repair and maintenance of typewriters, while Ernst Rosenthal of 92 Eton Place, Eton College Road, offered 'photocopies in the middle of Hampstead'. The jewellers J. Mount Ltd., of 17 Winchester Road, had formerly traded as Grubner & Neuman in

Brünn (Brno, Czech Republic). Among those in the clothing trade was C. L. Ferber, of 17 Manor Mansions, Belsize Grove, specialising in hand-made lingerie and blouses; however, the best-known of such shops, Madame H. Lieberg, 'the exclusive salon de corseterie', was located some distance away, at 871 Finchley Road, in Golders Green.

West End Lane, the main thoroughfare in West Hampstead, played host to a large number of refugee shops and businesses. A guided tour some six decades ago might have started at the Patisserie Weil, at

221 West End Lane, where one could sample apple strudel, *Zwetschenkuchen* (plum cakes) or Mandelberg cheesecake. Stepping outside, one would immediately pass a carpenter's workshop, F. Friedland, at number 227, and a firm of decorators, Brodecor Ltd., run by H. W. Oppenheimer, at number 229a (on the corner of Sumatra Road). Almost opposite, at number 176, was Mirro Furs Ltd. The manager was A. Spiegel, formerly of Berlin; German speakers will recognise the pun in the name 'Mirro', for Spiegel means 'mirror' in German. Further down West End Lane, at number 108 near West Hampstead tube station, was Otto Froehlich, a watchmaker and jeweller.

Just off West End Lane to the east, at 16 Fawley Road, was a reminder of more long-term considerations, Leo Horovitz, a sculptor and stonemason who advertised 'memorials



These ads appeared in the September 1966 issue of *AJR Information*

owned cafés and restaurants were shops that sold food products exotic by the standards of post-war Britain: Home Products Stores of 160 Finchley Road (on the corner of Froggnal) specialised in 'Continental Delicatessen', while the butchers Rabenstein Ltd., of 5 Fairhazel Gardens, advertised as 'Wholesalers and Retailers of first-class Continental Sausages'. The best known establishment in this field was that of Richard Mattes, scion of a Rhineland sausage-making family, at 122a Finchley Road; founded in 1947, this expanded under Mattes and his son Werner into Mattessons, a major enterprise that became a household name in Britain through the TV ads for its meat products. The longest-lived refugee business was Ackerman's, at 9 Goldhurst Terrace, which sold chocolates. Werner Ackermann, a would-be actor turned chocolatier, opened his first shop in Kensington High Street; Ackerman's was awarded the Royal Warrant

## The joys of advertisements continued

for all cemeteries'; and to the west, at 30 Dennington Park Road, was the painter and interior decorator M. G. Streat. (I am grateful to Professor Michael Streat for confirming that this was his uncle, the musician Max Streat, formerly Max Strietzel.) No tour of the area would be complete without a mention of the Rosemount boarding house, at 17 Parsifal Road, off Fortune Green Road, which advertised itself as 'the boarding house with culture' and was run by Mrs Rose Peiser, mother of the actress Lilli Palmer.

Some idea of the sheer number of refugee businesses all across Britain can be gained from the ads in two of the AJR's publications: *Britain's New Citizens: The Story of the Refugees from Germany and Austria* (1951) and *Dispersion and Resettlement: The Story of the Jews from Central Europe* (1955), which contained 17 and 25 pages of ads respectively, with up to ten ads per page (not all of them from refugee businesses). Firms in the textile trade clustering around the Oxford Circus area in central London included Schwarzschild Ochs Ltd., Hertie Ltd., W. Herz Ltd., H. Wertheim Ltd., Strauss & Co., Dick & Goldschmidt Ltd. and S. Bischheim & B. E. Beecham Ltd. Simon Bischheim was a member of the AJR's executive and his son Richard Beecham was a co-founder of Dunbee-Combex, a plastics manufacturer that went on to be one of Britain's most important toy manufacturers.

There was also a large number of refugee businesses outside London. Some of them, like Lankro Chemicals Ltd. of Eccles, Lancashire, founded by Dr F. H. Kroch, or Metalastik Ltd. of Leicester, founded by Mac Goldsmith (Max Goldschmidt), were of national importance. Refugee businesses were prominent in what had been designated by the pre-war government as 'special areas', unemployment black spots where new industrial estates were established during the Great Depression. For example, Western Brush Co. Ltd. was still flourishing on the Treforest Trading Estate, Pontypridd, Glamorgan, in the 1950s, to judge by an ad in *Dispersion and Resettlement*, as was its

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## Landmark Agreement for Jewish Child Survivors

The Claims Conference has reached a landmark agreement with the German Finance Ministry to provide compensation to Jewish child survivors of the Holocaust, defined as Nazi victims born on or after 1 January 1928.

The reparation covers those who were in concentration camps, in ghettos, or were for at least 6 months in Nazi-occupied territory or 12 months in Axis countries, in hiding or living under a false identity. Those eligible will receive a one-time payment of €2,500 (approximately £2,000).

Unlike the Claims Conference-operated Article II Fund, there are no

income or savings criteria and recipients of the Article II Fund can also receive this lump-sum award. Similarly, there is no restriction if a person receives the German Government compensation known as BEG.

Recipients of the Article II Fund should have automatically received the short application form. All other applicants will need to complete the longer form, which is available from the AJR or via the Claims Conference's website ([www.claimscon.org](http://www.claimscon.org)).

Only the longer application form requires notarisation, which can be done by the AJR.

equivalent on the Team Valley industrial estate in Gateshead, Loblite Ltd., manufacturers of lighting fittings and electrical accessories.

One of the areas that benefited most strikingly from refugee enterprise was the remote region around the Solway Firth in Cumbria. Among the firms that set up there were Marchon Products Ltd., manufacturers of synthetic detergent raw materials, and the large chemical producer Solway Chemicals Ltd., both founded by Vienna-born Frank (Franz) Schon, who was given a life peerage in 1967 for his outstanding contribution to British industry, becoming Baron Schon of Whitehaven. Also located far from London was O. P. Chocolate Specialities Ltd. (see letter from Mrs A. Rosney in the December 2014 issue of the *AJR Journal*), which produced Mozart Bon-bons, Pischinger Torten and its 'Original Viennese Dessert' in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales. Blackburn in Lancashire was home to two firms specialising in footwear: Newman's Slippers Ltd. and Dr. Herbert's, whose full name was Emsa Works and Herbert Foot Appliance Ltd.

Among firms known far beyond the refugee community were Corsets Silhouette, owned by the Lobbenberg family, which relocated from London to Shrewsbury when war broke out, growing to employ 3,500 employees there, and whose foundation garments included the widely advertised line 'Little X'; Etam (Etablissements Mayer), which dealt in hosiery; and Colibri, manufacturers of luxury cigarette lighters, founded by Julius Lowenthal in Frankfurt and transformed into an international luxury brand after his son Jack joined the business. From their premises in Crutched Friars, London EC3, the wine merchants S. F. & O. Hallgarten helped British palates to learn to appreciate German fine wines. A number of these enterprises were early refugee success stories, in contrast to the usual picture of a community that was largely penniless until the tide of post-war economic growth floated it up into prosperity.

Anthony Grenville

## Visit to Imperial War Museum London

Monday 27 April 2015



Explore the ground-breaking new  
**First World War Galleries and  
the Holocaust Exhibition.**

Coach travel and lunch included,  
together with a welcoming address by  
Suzanne Bardgett, Head of Research  
at the Museum.

**For further details, please contact  
Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or  
at [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)**

## HOLIDAY IN ISRAEL

We are delighted to announce that the AJR is organising a members' trip to Israel on 11-21 May 2015 (inclusive)

*We will be staying at the new  
Herods Herzliya Hotel*

### FLIGHTS

Luton-Tel Aviv 09:40/16:40

Tel Aviv-Heathrow 17:15/20:50

*(note different return airport)*

Price per person sharing a twin-bedded room on a half-board basis £1,375  
Price for a single room on a half-board basis £1,950

*Prices include guided tours and transfers*

**For further information and to register a place, please contact  
Andrea Goodmaker  
on 020 8385 3070 or at  
[andrea@ajr.org.uk](mailto:andrea@ajr.org.uk)**



## Exploring ways of commemorating the Holocaust for future generations: A historic intergenerational conference

One third of school students hugely underestimate the scale of the Holocaust, believing that the number killed was two million or less, with 10 per cent believing that 100,000 people were murdered. These were among the preliminary findings of ground-breaking research carried out and presented to a Holocaust Generations Conference earlier this year by Professor Stuart Foster, Paul Salmons and Ruth-Anne Lenga of the Institute of Education's Centre for Holocaust Education. The Centre had surveyed over 8,000 pupils and held follow-up interviews with over 300 pupils across all years of secondary education in England.

Most young people, the researchers concluded, appeared mystified why the Holocaust had happened, beyond a vague idea of 'hatred' and 'prejudice'. At the same time, less than one-third of pupils who had studied the Holocaust knew what anti-Semitism meant; this figure could be compared to over half who knew what 'Islamophobia' meant and over 90 per cent who understood the term 'homophobia'.

This historic one-day inter-generational gathering of Holocaust refugees and survivors and their descendants, co-organised by the AJR, the Second Generation Network and the Kindertransport Association, was held in mid-January at University College London's Institute of Education and attended by some



Lord Alfred Dubs

300 people. The aim of the conference was to explore ways of commemorating the Holocaust for future generations.

One of two keynote speakers, Lord Dubs, a former Labour Member of Parliament and a *Kind* who left Czechoslovakia on one of Sir Nicholas Winton's trains, lit one of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's '70 Candles for 70 Years', designed by Sir Anish Kapoor in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Referring to current events, particularly in France – the murder of four Jews in a Paris kosher supermarket – but in Europe in general, Lord Dubs concluded that 'we are failing': prejudice was still around us everywhere.



Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE

The second keynote speaker, Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE, the daughter of a German refugee who arrived in the UK on a domestic visa, said that her experience as a 'half' Second Generation refugee had left her with a 'very soft spot' for refugees and asylum-seekers as well as for civil liberties and gay rights. Due to her background, she said,

she never felt fully secure anywhere. She was, however, very proud of Britain's reception of immigrants and stressed that more should be done to publicise the help given to Jewish refugees from the Nazis by UK diplomats such as Robert Smallbones.

At a fascinating Inter-generational Panel, Joanna Millan, a representative of the First Generation and an AJR Trustee, said she had very early memories of the

Holocaust and these had influenced her to carry out family research; Philippe Sands, a Second Generation lawyer specialising in human rights and genocide issues, stated that according to his recollections 'these things [matters pertaining to the Holocaust] were not really talked about'. Third Generation member Hannah Goldstone declared that she had picked up her knowledge about the Holocaust from her grandfather and that she saw herself as 'a custodian of the truth of the Holocaust' – 'both a heavy responsibility and a necessary burden'.

Those in search of an interesting workshop were spoilt for choice, with 11 to choose from, including themes such as 'Secret Listeners Who Bugged the Nazis in WWII'; 'Anti-Semitism in Post-Holocaust Europe'; 'Preserving and Accessing Our History'; and 'Tracing Your Family Back to Before the Holocaust'.



**ARE YOU TRYING  
TO FIND LONG LOST  
FAMILY MEMBERS IN  
THE UK OR ABROAD?  
HAS YOUR SEARCH HIT A  
BRICK WALL? OR DO YOU  
JUST NOT KNOW WHERE  
TO BEGIN?**

ITV's Long Lost Family is back for a fifth series taking on the searches which no one else can solve and reuniting family members after years spent apart.

In Britain today there are literally tens of thousands of people desperate to find family members who are missing from their lives: people adopted as babies, estranged from their siblings or separated from their family by war or social upheaval.

If you want help tracing a family member, or know someone who does, please contact us to find out more ...

Email us at

LONGLOSTFAMILY5@walltowall.co.uk

Alternatively, please write to Long Lost Family, Wall to Wall Television, 85 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8TX

**Or contact us directly:  
Call Lisa on 020 7241 9235**

### **Kinder who came to the UK via Dovercourt**

**Wednesday 25 March**

(leave to get to Harwich for 11.00  
and return after lunch)

The Harwich and Dovercourt High School is running a project which is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Transport and refreshments  
will be provided.

**For further details, please contact  
Hazel on 07966 887 434  
or at [hazel@ajr.org.uk](mailto:hazel@ajr.org.uk)**

### **NORTH WEST LONDON AJR GROUP**

**Monday 30 March 2015  
at 12.00 pm**

**Two-course lunch  
£7 payable at the door**

.....  
Followed by our guest speaker:

**Tony Balazs**

**'The Dorice and Other Continental  
Landmarks'**

.....  
Booking necessary. Please call  
Hazel on 07966 887 434 or  
Esther on 07966 631 778

## MY HUNGARIAN COUSINS

I think your mum had a boyfriend in Sweden.'

My mother had just died and my wife and I were looking through her flat. A sad duty. On the cabinet beside her bed was a small diary with a tartan cover. It was filled with addresses and birthdays in her neat handwriting. And there it was: Gunnar Ericson, Sysslomansgatan 17, Linköping, Sweden. It was one of many of her friends I didn't know. After all, I had been married and away from her for many years.

'It's possible, but in any case I should tell all these people what has happened. I'll draft a letter and send it to everyone in the diary.'

I did just that. And in due course the replies arrived.

Gunnar Ericson *wasn't* a boyfriend. He was a cousin by marriage and his reply was warm and informative. We started to correspond and, as we did, the story emerged.

My grandpa Marcus was born in Nitra, a little market town outside Bratislava in Slovakia, in 1870. He was one of eight siblings in an orthodox Jewish family. His favourite brother was Nathan. When the brothers married they found it hard to earn a living and support their respective families so they took advantage of the resources available in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and moved into the big towns, where there were more opportunities. Marcus and his wife

Leonora moved to Vienna and Nathan and his wife Bertha to Budapest. Nathan found a responsible and lucrative job as an agent for a timber company and Marcus and Leonora opened a grocery store near the docks in Vienna.

One brother learnt to speak German, the other Hungarian. But they kept in touch in their native Slovak. Each brother kept a comfortable home, raised a family and earned a living to support it all. Neither neglected his religious duties; above all, they were practising Jews, in communities somewhat separated from their mainly anti-Semitic neighbours.

Budapest and Vienna were good for them. Their children grew up healthy and talented. There was musical ability in the Budapest family and daughter Mancini was particularly gifted. As she grew up into a beautiful young lady

she left school with excellent marks and moved to the Conservatoire, where she studied viola. On graduation, she found no difficulty in pursuing a career as a musician. She joined an orchestra with three other young women and it was a good and successful one, giving promise of a lucrative and satisfying vocation.

The orchestra toured Europe, performing its repertoire of chamber music to admiring audiences in all the important cities.

It was in Stockholm that it happened, as it was bound to do. A young Swedish civil servant, Gunnar Ericson, attended the concert and he was smitten with the beautiful viola player. He looked her up after the concert and introduced himself. To his delight, he received positive signals. The attraction was mutual.

There followed a period during which Gunnar spent all his money on fares and hotel bills, pursuing his lovely viola player all over Europe. It was clear that this was the real thing for both of them and that they would be marrying and settling down in Stockholm. She was prepared to abandon the orchestra and become an amateur musician – but what about her parents? Being orthodox Jews, they would undoubtedly have objections. Gunnar grasped the nettle and went to Budapest to negotiate for them. It wasn't easy but love conquers all and they gained grudging assent for the union. Mancini moved to Stockholm and they married. They established a home and had two sons and Mancini kept in touch with

her loving family as a dutiful daughter. She never neglected her music, which continued to be a delight to all of them.

All the while, Europe was in political turmoil. A militaristic, anti-Semitic Germany threatened many countries and the Budapest and Vienna families were less than secure. Luckily, Sweden was an oasis, having established a credible neutrality, which Germany found it convenient to honour. Mancini was lucky. Then came the Anschluss of Austria, the beginning of the World War, and eventually even the German invasion of Hungary, which had in any case already been in the thrall of the fascist and anti-Semitic Arrow Cross organisation. Most of the Austrian family escaped. The Hungarian family was trapped, with the notable exception of Mancini, safe in Stockholm with Gunnar and her Swedish family.

It was here that Gunnar's position as a civil servant in the foreign office became significant. Could the family escape from Hungary to neutral Sweden with his help? Easier said than done. He spoke with his boss, an architect and merchant called Raoul Wallenberg, who had business interests in Hungary and was willing to go to Budapest as Swedish consul and help save the lives of at least some of that city's Jews, who were in serious trouble, many having already been deported. Gunnar was given the job of arranging the details and he was able to offer Mancini's help. Not many people in Stockholm at the time were bilingual in Swedish and Hungarian! In addition, he suggested that Mancini's father be recruited to help Wallenberg with local knowledge when he settled in his post as consul.

Wallenberg worked fiercely on his humanitarian project. With help from various emergency funds, he purchased houses and furnished them with Swedish flags and brass plaques marked 'Swedish Cultural Centre', 'Swedish Library' and so on. He proceeded to issue Swedish passports to potential victims and installed them in these safe houses. Needless to say, Mancini's family were among the nearly 10,000 people eventually saved by this plan. Wallenberg even risked going to the railway station and giving out passports to people in the process of being deported. The Arrow Cross fascists tried to stop him and fired shots over his head as a warning. One of them later admitted that they hadn't shot to kill because they admired his bravery!

Once the family was safely installed in a Swedish safe house, Mancini was able to sit at her teletype in Stockholm and exchange messages with her parents as part of the daily communication between Wallenberg and his support team at home. The whole thing was tolerated by the Nazis because they supported Sweden's neutrality and could use their diplomatic credit with them to restrict Sweden's free-trade privileges.

Wallenberg's heroism had a bitter reward. Some months later, the victorious Soviet army fought its way westwards and evicted the Germans. This selfless humanitarian hero was too much to accept for Stalin, who assumed that no one could have so much influence without the support of the Americans. Wallenberg was arrested, accused of being a CIA spy, and sent to the USSR without any formal process. He disappeared into the *Gulag* and was never seen again, except for a few unreliable sightings by fellow prisoners over the next decade.

As for my Hungarian family, thanks to Raoul Wallenberg and the magnanimity of the Swedish government, they survived the war. Hence the reference



1900-style portraits  
Marcus and Leonora  
(above)  
Nathan and Bertha

## COMPLETING A PILGRIMAGE: AFTER 73 YEARS, RETURN TO CANFRANC

Following a surprise contact from the grandson of a French Resistance leader 73 years after I fled Nazi-occupied France, I returned to the Franco-Spanish border crossing at Canfranc for a three-day commemoration, 'Historic Days at Canfranc'. Today Canfranc is an abandoned train station deep in the Pyrenees in the middle of nowhere, but during the Second World War the station was heavily patrolled by the Gestapo as Jews and others fleeing the Nazis crossed into Spain and war materials from Franco were shipped to Germany.

When it was opened in 1928 Canfranc was the second largest station in Europe. The *raison d'être* for such a huge station was that the gauge, the width of the tracks in Spain, is not the same as in France. At the border, passengers had to change trains and wait for hours while goods were moved between French and Spanish freight cars.

The three-story terminal building is 240 meters – more than two football fields – long. It had customs and security offices, shops, restaurants, an infirmary and apartments. In one of these apartments lived Albert LeLay, the chief French customs officer and leader of the French Resistance at Canfranc. Under cover of his post, he moved freely between French and Spanish trains, mingling with people travelling between the two countries. His position enabled him to pass secret documents and messages between the Resistance and Allied embassies and other anti-Nazi in Spain. Aware when Jewish travellers were in danger, he regularly saved them from arrest by hiding them in secure places in the huge station, in the village, and often in his own apartment.

All this I learned from my hosts: Victor Fairen, LeLay's grandson, Jose Antonio Blanco, producer and director of the film about LeLay, *Hero of Canfranc*, and the Mayor of Canfranc.

My first journey to Canfranc began in June 1939, when my mother, my two sisters and I fled Germany to join our father in Paris. Six months earlier my mother had succeeded in buying

a forged visa for France that bought his release from Buchenwald. At the outbreak of the war the French arrested my father as a German national and my sisters and I were admitted to a children's home in a suburb of Paris run

shared her memories of the journey. We travelled first to Marseilles but, instead of boarding a ship there, we went by train to Toulouse. In normal times, this trip, as well as the next part to Pau, near the border, would have taken only a few hours but our journeys were plagued with delays. We spent a night on benches in a railroad station and another night in Pau, where we slept two to a bed.

There was one last, unexpected stop in France at Oloron. Waiting on the station platform were prisoners from the nearby concentration camp of Gurs who were relatives of some of the children. Not permitted off the trains, the children leaned out of the windows desperately trying to touch their loved ones and threw them the bread they had saved from their breakfast.

At the French border, Ruth said all the passengers had to disembark and walk across to Canfranc, where we were held up for several hours. Boarding the Spanish cars, we found hard uncomfortable wooden seats. There wasn't enough of them so the boys climbed up on to the luggage racks and slept there.

After my talk and the interviews with French and Spanish TV and the local press, I was taken to the station. International travel ceased in 1970 after a derailment on the French side destroyed a bridge which France refused to rebuild. The French side of the station is derelict but much of the Spanish half of the building has been restored to its former opulent art-deco glory. In Canfranc village I was shown a monument erected as a tribute to freedom for the oppressed and to human dignity. Importantly for a place without a Jewish presence, on one side of the four-sided monument is carved the single word 'Shalom'. I ran my fingers over the letters and the unremembered event in my life when I was a ten-year-old in Canfranc at last became real to me.

Then I told Jose Antonio my parents had been inmates in Gurs in 1943 and he agreed to drive me there. The camp is huge and the grounds are well maintained. There is a single reconstructed barracks, much shorter and narrower than the barracks in Auschwitz. There is also a cemetery with more than 1,000 identical gravestones paid for and maintained by German cities that deported thousands of Jews to Gurs in 1940, many of whom died there.

Walking where my parents had endured the horrors of the Holocaust was for me an unexpected opportunity to honour their courage and resourcefulness in their successful fight to survive Hitler and Nazism. I felt I had completed a pilgrimage.

Eve Kugler

*Walking where my parents had endured the horrors of the Holocaust was for me an unexpected opportunity to honour their courage and resourcefulness in their successful fight to survive Hitler and Nazism. I felt I had completed a pilgrimage.*

by OSE, a Jewish welfare organisation. With the fall of Paris, we were evacuated to a new OSE home near Limoges in central France.

In 1941 the US issued visas for a few hundred Jewish children trapped in French concentration camps. When the Resistance was unable to smuggle children out of the camps, the visas were given to the OSE. My elder sister Ruth and I were in the small group that left the OSE home at the end of June 1941.

In an hour-long talk to an audience of over 100 people as part of the 'Historic Days' programme in Canfranc's school auditorium, I related this history, which culminated in the long dangerous train journey to Canfranc. In truth, I had no actual memory of crossing the border on the way to Lisbon and New York in the summer of 1941, which I stressed repeatedly to the various Spanish officials who had invited me to come. It didn't matter, they said. What counted was that I was someone who had actually escaped the Nazis and made the border crossing during those dangerous times all those years ago.

My sister Ruth did remember, so I

remonstrated with them, one of them took out a revolver and shot him dead. As far as I know, there was no enquiry or trial. Life was cheap in Budapest in 1945.

Gunnar and Mancie are both dead now too, though I was in touch with Gunnar until near the end. I still have email communication with some of the next generation and I do hope my children develop an interest in family relations before it's too late.

Frank Beck

### My Hungarian cousins *continued*

to Gunnar Ericson, Sysslomansgatan 17, Linköping, Sweden, in my mother's diary.

Except for one member of the family. Shortly after the war was over, one of Mancie's brothers, who had been deported before the safe houses were available, returned home. He had survived both Auschwitz and one of those notorious death marches. One day, on his way to the dentist, he saw two drunken Russian soldiers molesting a young Hungarian woman. As he





# Letters to the Editor

*The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication*

## BRITAIN: THE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION

Sir – I would like to say how impressed I was with the Holocaust Generations Conference organised by the AJR, the Second Generation Network and the Kindertransport Association earlier this year. Thoroughly informative and stimulating with so many speakers and topics – it was difficult to know where to go first!

I found the afternoon session with Professor Stuart Foster, Paul Salmons and Ruth-Anne Lenga particularly professional, well prepared and interesting. Especially it reconfirmed my impression that so many students, and indeed society in general, see Holocaust victims as just that – *victims*. There is so little realisation of who these people were and of the contribution they made to German and European culture, science and economy – of the numerous doctors, teachers, lawyers, entertainers, musicians, scientists, industrialists, retailers and others who made such an enormous impact on their respective countries.

Nor is there much realisation of what their children (of whom some 1.5 million were murdered) could have contributed had they been allowed to live their lives to the full.

How can we succeed in conveying this to society – and I am thinking in terms of British society in particular?

I am conscious of the huge number of books, memoirs, historical biographies etc written on this subject in the last 20 years. I am also aware of the great contribution made by many documentary film-makers, e.g. Lawrence Rees, Rex Bloomstein, in the past. Doubtless many of the more educated members of our society are aware. But I wonder how far down the social spectrum this has really filtered? Many plays, films and events on this subject are supported mainly by us Jews, who know the story all too well. I have friends who live in provincial parts of Britain where knowledge of Jews and the Holocaust is very scant indeed!

It was Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* which was responsible for bringing home to many of the post-war younger

generation the very existence of the Holocaust. But this film covers only one tiny episode in a long and tragic saga, which lasted from 1933 to 1945 – to say nothing of its after-effects. And it shows the Jews as victims only.

Would perhaps the production of a film which conveys to young people especially the contribution of such popular figures in the entertainment and musical world as Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Danny Kaye, Leonard Bernstein, Amy Winehouse and the multitude of other popular singers and entertainers begin to bring this point home? Many people are not even aware that they were Jewish! How can we bring this home to the mass of our people?

Further, I wonder how many people are aware that Britain would not have had M&S, Tesco, ICI, Shell, Odeon Cinemas, and so many other organisations. Britain would not have been what it is without the Jewish contribution. Perhaps one of our documentary-makers, preferably non-Jewish, would make a film entitled 'What Would Britain Have Been Like Without the Jews?'

Perhaps some of your members and readers of the *Journal* might have some suggestions? I feel this could be another weapon in the fight against anti-Semitism and ignorance of who the Jews really are.

*Peter Briess, London NW3*

## CAPTURING THE MEMORIES OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Sir – I refer to Colin Rosenstiel's plea (February, Letters) to capture the memories of victims of the Holocaust and your response to his plea, which notes the AJR's *Refugee Voices*. We could add to this the oral histories of refugees held in other collections. For example, the British Library's collection National Life Stories includes the oral history of Dame Steve Shirley, who arrived in this country by Kindertransport (<http://sounds.bl.uk/related-content/TRANSCRIPTS/021T-C1379X0028XX-0000A0.pdf>). My own history is also included.

It would be a useful service to our community to identify sources of oral

histories such as that of Dame Steve Shirley and provide links to them.

*Frank Land, Emeritus Professor, Information Systems and Innovation Group, London School of Economics*

## TERRORISM IN THE HEART OF PARIS

Sir – The French values of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* have been attacked. The civilised world condemned this attack on free expression, perpetrated by a section of people purporting to represent a religion whose extremists strive to rule the world. The murder of French journalists was one of the most horrendous crimes perpetrated by extremist Muslims since the destruction of the twin towers and the murder of the Israeli Olympic team members.

As if that were not enough, other terrorists simultaneously besieged a kosher supermarket, killing four shoppers. Had it not been for the swift action of the police, more could have met an early end. To paraphrase Primo Levi: *where was God when Paris happened?* And just before Shabbat?

Every Jew in the world must shudder at this evil deed, as it could happen to any one of us. We must not allow this event to fade into oblivion or accept this horrific act as a *fait accompli* but fight it with every fibre in our bodies and every cell in our brains. Had the perpetrators of this dastardly crime not been allowed to roam freely in the country, this evil deed would not have happened!

Apologetic Western leaders insist that they are not opposed to the terrorists' religion but to their deeds! Obviously, the terrorists' deeds and their words are the direct results of the preaching of some of their religious leaders, as we have also experienced in this country. Anti-Semitism is a crime that must not be tolerated!

The worlds' leaders, gathering in Paris, recognised the devastating cancer in our midst. Their efforts must now be turned, as promised, into a concerted attack on terrorism to preserve our values. If this were to fail, our progeny would not forgive this generation for its reluctance to fight the evil power. Our historians would condemn us long after our bones will be all that's left of us.

*Fred Stern, Wembley*

Sir – No doubt all of us were upset by the recent massacres in Paris in one of which Jews were the target. Another upset were the statistics published about the growing anti-Semitism here. These caused many of us to consider where we might emigrate. It occurs to me that in the obvious choices, such as America, Canada or Australia, there is also anti-Semitism, even if it is less prevalent. As for Israel, at our age we would only be a burden on the state: few of us are multi-millionaires or young enough to contribute.

My advice? Don't panic but make the most of the rest of your life. With little effort, by bombarding the biased media with calls

and letters and attending the occasional demonstration, you could – so to speak – show the flag.

I would like to add that I was taken aback by the provocative rebuttal that your correspondent Peter Phillips dished out to Clare Parker in your February issue. No doubt Peter Phillips knows what he is writing. However, it does not excuse his being rude and condescending.

*Janos Fisher, Bushey Heath*

## THE HISTORY OF OUR PEOPLE

Sir – Clare Parker accuses me of not knowing the history of our people. She asks: ‘When did Judea become the West Bank?’

It was around 1,000 BC that Canaan became the Kingdom of Israel. The justification for occupying it was that God had promised it to the Jews. About 80 years later, Israel split into two kingdoms: Judah and Israel. In 1922 the League of Nations turned the region into two states: Palestine and Transjordan. In 1948 the United Nations divided Palestine into two states: a Jewish one and an Arab one, with Jerusalem under an international regime. Transjordan became the West Bank. The Jews agreed and modern Israel was founded, with Ben-Gurion at its head. Does Clare Parker not accept the fact that the Jews accepted the UN decision?

I’ll do my best to ‘unconfuse’ Peter Phillips (January, Letters) in respect of our voting system and a written constitution.

Under the current British election system – ‘first-past-the-post’ – British voters are not proportionally represented in Parliament and, since the Second World War, many governments have had full control while representing less than 50 per cent of the electorate.

A written constitution customarily lays down that certain radical changes of national importance require a two-thirds majority. It would almost certainly have prevented Mrs Thatcher from selling the 30 industries which belonged to the nation to private enterprise. The sell-offs included British Leyland, the British steel industry, our ports, British Air, British Telecom etc, which Harold MacMillan described as ‘selling off the family silver’. Nor could Mr Major have privatised the coal mines. And the current government could most certainly not have crippled our National Health Service the way it has done.

*Eric Sanders, London W12*

Sir – Peter Phillips is not only confused, as he himself admits, but apparently he doesn’t know the difference between our current electoral system – ‘first-past-the-post’ – and proportional representation.

Can a system which enables a minority of voters to elect the government of the country and makes it advisable for voters in marginal constituencies to use ‘tactical voting’ be called democratic? Not in my view! Proportional representation would prevent both and would therefore ensure

that every vote counts, which it cannot do at the moment.

And what about the House of Lords? Is it democratic for unelected bishops to be able to influence legislation in a country in which the majority of the population doesn’t go to church? Let alone all the other undemocratic rules of our parliamentary system. Yes, Britain is ‘more democratic’ than many other countries but we could be so much ‘more democratic’ with some major changes and a written constitution.

And what right has Clare Parker to refer to Israel as ‘our land’? I am not a Zionist and, having been naturalised in 1947 as a British citizen, after six years’ service in the British army I consider *Britain* ‘my land’. She should not assume that every member of the AJR shares her views.

*Fritz Lustig, Muswell Hill, London*

Sir – I was under the mistaken impression that our magazine, the *AJR Journal*, especially its readers’ letters columns, was produced by ex-refugees for ex-refugees.

It is now used by longwinded persons as a chopping block to attack the Jewish state, no doubt helping Israel’s enemies.

May I suggest to those individuals that they make *aliya* and so become Israeli citizens with a vote, taking their soap boxes with them. Otherwise shut up!

*Ernest G. Kolman, Greenford, Middx*

Sir – Leslie Brent (February, Letters) has very succinctly expressed my view and that of many others of the Israeli government’s aggressive policies. The admirable work of Daniel Barenboim and his West-Eastern Divan Orchestra shows that there is another way and suggests that peaceful coexistence can be achieved. The current policies of the Israeli government create increasing numbers of enemies and will never achieve the peace we all desire.

*Hannelore Braunsberg, London NW3*

Sir – As the daughter of German refugees and a relatively new subscriber to the *Journal*, I am sorry that Leslie Baruch Brent feels so isolated in the expression of his distress about the terrible destruction in Gaza carried out by the Israeli government last summer. While I have many much-loved relatives in Israel, I am appalled at the destruction and suffering that was perpetrated and I know how many generations it will take to heal the damage.

For me, the impact of being a member of the ‘second generation’ has left me extra-sensitised to instances of dehumanising others and actions that drive people further apart. Thank you, Mr Brent, for speaking out – my heart lifted when I read your letter.

*Judy Sherwood, Matlock, Derbyshire*

Sir – Oh dear! More anti-Israel letters in your February issue. You seem determined to upset and hurt some of your readers. As a Holocaust survivor, I want to express

my disgust at these ‘bleeding hearts’, who do not realise that the safety of our Israeli brethren is paramount.

Seventy years since Auschwitz, remember: *Never again*.

If I wanted to read this sort of pathetic nonsense, I would buy the Israel-bashing *Guardian*. Very disappointed.

*(Dr) Marcel Ladenheim, Surbiton, Surrey*

## MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY OF FATE

Sir – In his review of Shlomo Sand’s book (February), Leslie Baruch Brent sees ‘a certain lack of intellectual rigour’ in Sand’s resigning from being a Jew but not resigning from his Israeli citizenship. But if you decide that you are not a Jew because (a) you are not religious; (b) you do not accept that the Jews are a separate race; and (c) you do not, like Leslie, feel Jewish ‘by sentiment’ or experience, I cannot see why you cannot perfectly logically hold on to your citizenship of a country in which you have lived since early childhood, with which – despite all the criticisms you have of it – you identify yourself, and which you try to change by your actions as a citizen.

Incidentally, I believe that all Jews, irrespective of religion or ethnicity, are members of a community of fate from which you cannot resign even if you wanted to, and Sand’s denial of this is all the more odd since he was born in an Austrian camp of displaced persons – presumably because his mother was Jewish.

Sand could, of course, resign his Israeli citizenship as an act of protest against what the Israeli government and the majority of its citizens are doing. But that is another matter and is not logically incumbent on him, any more than it is logically required of a British citizen who is bitterly critical of, say, the Iraq war, arms sales to Saudi Arabia, or the cruel social policies of the government to renounce his citizenship in protest.

*Ralph Blumenau, London W11*

## THE SHOP THAT DEFINITELY EXISTED

Sir – I notice that my letter about my mother’s wool shop in your December issue gave rise to a little follow-up correspondence. Margarete Stern doubts the existence of the shop, but I would assure her that it did exist, that it was architect-designed in the best 1950s style, and that it was at no.19 Northways Parade for more than 20 years. There is a convenience store there now.

The teenage son of the Vogels, who ran the tailoring shop on Northways Parade Mrs Stern mentions (they were called the Vaughans by the time I knew them), became a chartered accountant. I was a few years older and gave him some maths coaching to help him on his way up.

As for Pat Brody’s letter, I was very gratified to hear from someone who knew most of my family.

*Frank Beck, London NW3*



# ART NOTES

GLORIA TESSLER

The name Rubens equates with fleshy, voluptuous nudes. But, according to the Royal Academy's current exhibition, **Rubens and His Legacy: Van Dyck to Cézanne** (to 10 April 2015), his influence stretched far wider – into landscape, nature, battle, and into every artist under the sun (well, perhaps not the *Sun's* page 3!) who came after him. Really?

The Royal Academy considers Peter Paul Rubens, who lived and worked from the late 16th century, to be the most influential of Flemish painters, who made such a



Peter Paul Rubens *The Garden of Love* (1633) ©Museo Nacional Del Prado, Madrid

great mark on the future of painting that they include Van Dyck, Watteau, Turner, Delacroix, Manet, Cézanne, Renoir, Klimt and Picasso. The list goes on. The trouble is that in such a catch-all of an exhibition, it's hard to focus on Rubens himself amid connections that seem at times almost spurious.

Rubens himself was patronised by the *glitterati* of his day, including several crowned heads of Europe. He developed his robust style from studying the great Italian masters, whose own influences drew him to paint altarpieces, portraits, idyllic landscapes and the mythological themes popular in his era, as evidenced by his *Pan and Syrinx*.

The Royal Academy has named six themes under which to place Rubens and his future disciples – Poetry, Elegance, Power, Lust, Compassion and Violence – beginning with his assistant Van Dyck and

moving on to the greatest of artists 300 years in the future.

Rubens's works graced many aristocratic homes, and followers tended to emulate the effect he achieved with raw, free brushstrokes. In *Tiger, Lion and Leopard Hunt* the battle between bearded, turbaned men killing ferocious lions and tigers is visually striking but completely bloodless – an attempt perhaps to show the Flemish artist's obsession with muscularity or, at a deeper level, carnality in its most primitive form, expressing less the struggle than the connection between man and beast.

Artists of the 18th and 19th centuries like Watteau, Renoir and Cézanne were preoccupied with salon paintings and, while Rubens's effect on Renoir is obvious, barely a noted painter is left out of his supposed influences. Turner is said to have been taken by Rubens's depth of colour, such as in his many-peopled *Garden of Love* with its cuddly cherubs. Both Rubens and Van Dyck portrayed a Genoese noblewoman: the former shows her in delicate semi-profile with a dwarf, thus accentuating her cool beauty, while Van Dyck's depiction of her with her son is more austere.

But the styles couldn't be more different. In a room created by Royal Academician Jenny Saville, there are further responses to Rubens's influence on 20th- and 21st-century art, including Picasso, Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. While these artists clearly influence each other, again I find it whimsical to suggest that the work of each of the great painters in the entire exhibition derives from Rubens more than from any other great master. Saville suggests that Rubens's influence 'runs through the pathways of paintings. Like Warhol he changed the game of art.' But physicality is one thing: but what about the essence of what Rubens is saying?

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## REVIEWS

### Biographical sketches of 300 Kinder

MEMORIES THAT WON'T GO AWAY:  
A TRIBUTE TO THE CHILDREN OF THE  
KINDERTRANSPORT

by Michele M. Gold  
edited by Marian Lebor, illustrated  
by Gabriella Y. Karin

Kolarim International Publishing,  
2014, 306 pp. paperback, available at  
[amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk),  
ISBN 978-965-7580-10-6

Not another book about the Kindertransport, you may mutter! Much research has been done on this subject, while the London premiere of *The Last Train to Tomorrow*, Carl Davis's touching song cycle about the Kindertransportees, was recently performed in London's Roundhouse under the aegis of the AJR. Well, this book is rather different from what has gone before.

Biographical sketches are given for some 300 *Kinder*, together with their childhood photographs, and the intention is therefore highly laudable. The author's mother came to England on a Kindertransport and her grandparents perished in the Holocaust and that prompted her to compile this book. She moved from the UK to Los Angeles and her introduction, as well as the preface by Michael Berenbaum, Professor of Jewish Studies at the American Jewish University in Los Angeles, and the foreword by the Czech filmmaker Matej Minac, are perhaps better suited to an American readership, which, I suspect, is less conversant with the Holocaust and the Kindertransport than its British counterpart.

Ms Gold does not explain just how she selected the 300-odd *Kinder* from the 10,000 who came to this country before the war. Was the choice random or entirely dependent on information readily available in Holocaust institutions in the USA and the Wiener Library in London? Although I published my autobiography in 2009 I am not included (naturally I don't hold that against her!), nor are many friends of mine. Nor is the now almost iconic photograph of a group of children, myself among them, in the compartment of a German train after crossing the Dutch border; we were part of the first transport that left Berlin on 1 December 1938.

My main criticism is that the entries for different *Kinder* vary hugely in length. Some fill several pages, while many are confined to two or three sentences, merely stating the town of origin and



the date of arrival in the UK, leaving the ultimate fate of the individuals in the air. The information is not always up-to-date, suggesting that it was gleaned from archives rather than from personal interviews. I was struck by the fact that quite a few children were eventually reunited with their parents, not always happily, and by the large number who moved on to the USA after the war. What also emerges clearly – and we knew this already from previous research – is that the great majority succeeded in carving out a successful career in their new environments and that most married and brought up children.

Whilst the majority stayed in the UK or emigrated to the USA, quite a few finished up in Palestine/Israel and in countries such as Australia, Canada, France, Belgium, Switzerland, South Africa, Sweden and New Zealand. About 16 came from Prague on one or other of the Nicholas Winton trains and Winton's biographical details are set out. Bunce Court School, the German-Jewish co-educational boarding school brought to England in 1933 by Anna Essinger, who took in some 60 Kindertransport children, is barely mentioned and is described as a hostel. Among the *Kinder* I recognise are Ruth Barnett, Bertha Leverton, Hermann Hirschberger, Martha Blend, Sol Muller (a fellow pupil of mine in the Jewish Boys' Orphanage in Berlin-Pankow who also appeared in that train photograph), Werner Krebs and Peter Wegner (both at Bunce Court School), Bernd Koschland (no mention of his role in the Kindertransport Association, a special interest group of the AJR), Otto Deutsch, Bea Green (I had no idea that among her other accomplishments she had been an opera singer), Dorrieth Sim (no mention of her book), Frank Meisler (the creator of the many Kindertransport sculptures), and – most intriguingly for me – a sentence or two about Erich Goldstein, a fellow pupil at the Pankow orphanage who also appears in the train photograph. The entry merely states that 'he became a famous violinist'. He did indeed play the fiddle well but he totally disappeared and I would love to hear from him!

One other point that struck me forcibly is that although we hear grumbles from time to time about the mistreatment of *Kinder* in the UK, we were undoubtedly the lucky ones. Some children were sent to Belgium, Holland or France and had the most gruelling experiences. Such a one was Eric Goldfarb. His family split up, his sister to the UK and his brother to Shanghai. He was sent to France to the Quincy-sous-Sénart chateau. When the Germans occupied France he and 15 other boys were sent to a French boarding school in Clamart. A few months later he

was moved to an OSE (Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants) children's home in Creuse, where he spent 18 months at school and learned the craft of leatherwork. In August 1942 the home was raided and he was sent to do agricultural work while others were arrested. He was provided with false papers and told to make his way to the Spanish border. Instead, he and some other OSE boys made their way to Lyon and tried to cross into Switzerland. A Swiss guard sent them back to France, where Eric eventually joined the Resistance and took part in the liberation of Lyon. On reaching the German border with the Free French Forces, he left and returned to Lyon. After further escapades he worked in a camp for Jewish orphans and finally went to Paris, where he met old friends and his future wife. What heroism!

Finally, a very special mention must be made of Gabriella Karin, who came originally from Bratislava and now lives in Los Angeles. Her numerous and very fine line drawings of scenes in many of the cities from which the *Kinder* came give the book a very special dimension.

Leslie Baruch Brent

### A surprisingly hopeful book BEATEN BUT NOT DEFEATED: SIEGFRIED MOOS, A GERMAN ANTI- NAZI WHO SETTLED IN BRITAIN by Marilyn Moos

Chronos Books, 2014, 364 pp.,  
paperback, ISBN 978 1 78279 677 0

'I was', writes Marilyn Moos in her biography of her late father Siegi, 'brought up without a history'. Once in exile in England, the erstwhile Communist Siegi Moos endeavoured to put his German past, his comrades and his lost family members behind him and create a totally new life for himself and his family. Cut off from her father's, and indeed also her mother's past, the young Marilyn had only a few clues to go by: the bottle of wine her otherwise abstemious parents opened, for example, on hearing of Stalin's death and some astonishing information from a researcher concerning her mother's one-time affair with a Communist spy. *Beaten But Not Defeated* represents the author's efforts to 'rescue' her father's life and with it – inevitably – her mother's too, while at the same time attempting to make sense of it all by setting their early years, at least, within the context of the political left in Germany.

The biography focuses, as intended by the author, on the man in the public sphere, not primarily on the man as she had known him – though of course Siegi

as a father and as a husband also forms part of the picture, especially in the post-war years.

So who was the public figure Siegi Moos? He was born into an assimilated Jewish family in Munich in 1904, witnessing the revolutionary struggles there in 1918-19 as a boy in his mid-teens and the emergence of the ultra-right in Bavaria shortly after. These were presumably formative experiences (though records of his life are scarce for this period); however, his own political activity appears to have started after he moved to Berlin in 1928, by which time he was a young man in his twenties.

Against the backdrop of the Wall Street crash of the following year, which brought misery and instability to the still nascent Weimar Republic, Siegi joined the German Communist Party, the KPD. Records point to his having been extremely politically active at this time and a member of various revolutionary groups, in particular the Red Front and the Proletarian Freethinkers, as well as in the field of *agitprop* theatre. Marilyn Moos provides us with a useful rundown of some of the achievements and divisions of the German anti-fascist left in these immediately pre-National Socialist years, even though she does run the danger here of her readers losing sight of her central figure, her father. There is one date, however, which draws the political and the personal back together again: 1 May 1929. For this was the day of the May Day Demonstration that culminated in a violent police attack on the crowd and represented a defining moment in the relationship between Communists and Social Democrats; it was also the day which marked the start of Siegi's relationship with his future wife Lotte, who, like him, was taking part in the demonstration.

Following the Nazi assumption of power, Siegi initially went underground in Berlin, then fled to France and from there to Britain, arriving here in 1934 (Lotte had preceded him by a few months). In Britain, Siegi became a member of the small group of German comrades who made up the KPD group in British exile. Indeed, initially he appears to have acted as leader of this group, handing over to Jürgen Kuczynski in late 1936 or early 1937. Marilyn Moos supposes that her father's withdrawal from the Party in 1937 was the result of Lotte's return from the USSR in the autumn of 1936 with a first-hand account of the show trials. The story of Lotte Moos's relationship with the Irish Communist Brian Goold-Verschoye, her visit to Moscow to be with him, and the disastrous consequences for Goold-Verschoye himself has been told before

continued on page 10 ➔

– notably in semi-biographical form in Marilyn Moos's fine novel *The Language of Silence* – but it belongs here too, even if only as providing some of the background to Siegi Moos's rather desperate frame of mind, for both personal and political reasons, at this time. By 1938, however, in one way or another, Siegi and Lotte were back together again and would remain together for the rest of their lives.

There follows the rather remarkable story of how Siegi, within the space of a few years, transformed himself from a revolutionary into a respectable academic at the Oxford Institute of Statistics. Apart from the inevitable period spent in internment (less than three months, in his case), he worked there until 1947 when, accompanied by Lotte and baby Marilyn, he took up a lectureship in Economics at the University of Durham. The year 1947 was also that of his naturalisation. Siegi became a popular lecturer, not only of undergraduates but also of trade unionists and non-university students in the extra-mural department. He published widely, enjoying all in all a successful university career.

Yet, despite their settled circumstances, this was not a happy time for the Moos family, who lived an exceptionally isolated existence. Marilyn Moos, from her child's eye perspective, writes of her parents' 'unintelligible' paranoia: their fear that the house was being watched, for instance, or their habit of smothering the telephone with cushions to prevent their conversations from being overheard. Within the household, Siegi tended to be ensconced in his study working, while Lotte would shut herself in her bedroom (writing, as it later transpired), both parents being largely unapproachable. The young Marilyn was brought up within a highly restrictive regime which grew sterner the older she became. As for the family past, this was never, ever mentioned.

In more recent years, however, in particular after studying her late parents' MI5 files, the author has come to see that her parents' paranoia was perhaps not quite as groundless as she had previously assumed: the CIA, so she has discovered, requested to see Lotte's MI5 file as late as the 1950s. In addition, she has realised that the loss of family in the Holocaust – a loss that was never openly acknowledged – caused her parents to walk on 'emotionally thin ice' throughout her childhood. But in any case, by the end of their lives together, Siegi's and Lotte's lives had taken a definite turn for the better, following Siegi's retirement and the couple's move to Hackney,

where they embraced the activities of a local cultural centre. Marilyn Moos sees parallels here between Siegi's experiences, late in life, of reading his poetry to radical Hackney audiences and his pre-1933 activities; she points to similarities between now and then in his political engagement. This, coupled with the fact that father and daughter, previously estranged, became reconciled towards the end of Siegi's life, turn this into a surprisingly hopeful book, a turn of events that is anticipated in its title: 'Beaten but not Defeated.'

Charmian Brinson

### A wonderful gift for younger members of the family

**THE BOY FROM BAMBERG: A PERSONAL TESTIMONY AND BIOGRAPHY OF GÜNTER LÖBL FROM BAMBERG WHO BECAME GEORGE FREDERICK LOBLE MBE JP AS TOLD TO GERALD STERN**

edited by Monica Stern née Loble and Joel Stern

*Published privately, 2014, 212 pp., hardback plus appendices*

This beautifully produced and extensively illustrated memoir contains many photographs and ancestral trees.

The Löbl family was well established in Germany with a business manufacturing outdoor electric light fittings and accessories that had been started by George's grandfather. Their trademark was Hulorit (from Hugo Löbl and the German brand name Bakelit) and their Bamberg factory was built in 1928. The brand was known throughout Germany and internationally. It was the first of several Löbl electrical family businesses, the last of which was Loblite Ltd, which was sold by George Loble in 1994. George's father and uncles had fought for Germany in the First World War only to be victimised by the Nazis in the Second World War.

After Kristallnacht everything changed. The business was sold but for far less than its value and the proceeds immediately confiscated. Günter/George, his parents and several other family members managed to leave Germany, but elderly relatives trapped there were murdered. The Löbl family had some connections in England which helped them both to leave Germany and to set up a new business after their arrival. But when war was declared with Germany they became 'enemy aliens'

and the men were interned.

Before his mother arrived George was taken in by two families, the Platts in Clapton and the Stanbrooks in Abbots Langley. On her arrival his mother worked as a cleaner – quite a change for somebody who had enjoyed a comfortable life in Germany with a nanny, cook and chauffeur.

The book follows their fortunes and their life in Newcastle, where George and his wife Eve still live. They have been involved in many aspects of public service, in particular fundraising for the Women's Cancer Research Society and Breast Cancer Research and the founding of the Newcastle Reform Synagogue. Both of them have been active members of Rotary and George pays tribute to his wife, who survived brain surgery, which left her with aphasia; this has affected her speech and communication skills but has not prevented her leading an active life.

These days George concentrates on family, travel and voluntary work. He gives talks about the Holocaust to schools, religious groups and the University of the Third Age and has been interviewed on local radio and TV. He and his son-in-law Gerald Stern have created a wonderful gift for the younger members of the Loble family.

Laraine Feldman

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## KEEP THE MEMORY ALIVE

### Holocaust Memorial Day 2015



## Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration – organised with care and dignity

I had somewhat low expectations for the Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration held on 27 January at Central Hall Westminster, for obtaining tickets for it was rather like drawing water out of a stone.

In the event, I was deeply impressed by the care and dignity with which the event was organised. The reception for the survivors that preceded the commemoration in the main hall was done thoughtfully and elegantly. The appearance of virtually all the party leaders (thankfully with the exception of UKIP, I think) at some of the small tables laden with sandwiches and biscuits showed how seriously it was taken nationally.

It so happened that the Prime Minister, whose Holocaust Memorial Commission was responsible for the event, happened to sit at our table and it was a humbling experience to be sitting next to three camp survivors. The commemoration itself was brilliantly and movingly staged, with excellent speeches (the Chief Rabbi, the Prime Minister and Prince Charles foremost among them) and appropriately solemn and beautiful music and poetry as well as survivor testimonies. To relax after all that with a glass (or two) of some very decent wine was the icing on the cake.

The organisers are to be congratulated on an event that did justice to the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. We may not see the like of it again.

Leslie Baruch Brent



At the UK national Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration at Central Hall Westminster, Prime Minister David Cameron announced that the Government would commit £50 million to the creation of a new National Memorial, a world-class Learning Centre and an Endowment Fund to secure the long-term future of Holocaust education in this country.

### HMD IN SCOTLAND Reception

The Scottish Commemorative Reception for Holocaust Memorial Day 2015 was sponsored by Bob Doris MSP at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and organised by Interfaith Scotland and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

Despite the snowy conditions, almost 60 of Scotland's survivors and Second Generation members of the AJR attended from Glasgow, St Andrews, Dundee, Montrose and Edinburgh.

Among us were survivors of Auschwitz and Theresienstadt, Kindertransportees and others with individual stories of heroic survival. It was by far the largest gathering of AJR members in Scotland for a while and a wonderful opportunity for our members to meet and chat at the lavish kosher lunch provided.

Speakers included Ela Weisberger, a survivor of Terezin, Humza Yousaf MSP and Henry Wuga, who spoke about his journey to this country on the Kindertransport and lit the specially commissioned candle.

### Lecture

First and Second Generation members attended the 15th Annual Holocaust Lecture, sponsored by the AJR and held at Glasgow University's Western Infirmary Lecture Theatre.

Mary Fulbrook, Professor of German History at University College London, told a packed audience that only a fraction of the perpetrators of the Holocaust had ever been brought to justice: the countless numbers involved made it virtually impossible for all involved to pay for their complicity. Identifying those responsible who were working behind the scenes was also a problem. Furthermore, she said, there had been no desire among the Allies to bring justice to bear on the German community at large.

Professor Fulbrook also questioned whether or not memorials were the best way of remembering the Holocaust – who were they for, she asked. Members agreed this was one of the best in this series of Holocaust lectures.

Agnes Isaacs

### The last of a decade of HMD events at Ivy House

On 23 January I attended a superbly organised and very moving commemoration event at the London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC).

The programme was very carefully and aptly chosen. To bring alive the stories of six survivors, representing a perfect range of different experiences, by telling their stories and then questioning them in person was most effective and in line with the 2015 slogan 'Keep the Memory Alive'. And to have the grandson of one of them – Simon Lasker-Wallfisch grandson of Anita Lasker-Wallfisch – providing the musical interludes, also so carefully and aptly chosen, was awesome.

Trudy Gold, as ever, set the scene and made it spell-binding, particularly voicing the paradox of anti-Semitism, currently at perhaps its highest point since 1945, while Holocaust education has grown in depth and extent since 1991 and Holocaust commemoration since 2001.

What the Mayor of Barnet had to say was memorable and to the point. Impressive was his emphasis on keeping the memory of genocide in general alive, not only to remember but also to act to stop people thinking it was possible to get away with such crimes. MP Mike Freer was also impressive and well chosen for the programme.

Finally it grieves me sorely that, in the year we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust, we are tending to overlook the fact that 2015 is also the centenary of the Ottoman genocide against its Christians. As Mala Tribich said in response to being asked why she tells her story to students: 'If the murdered are not remembered it would be as if they never existed and the Nazis will have won.'

This magnificent commemoration event at the LJCC makes me wonder what is going to be possible next year when, sadly, we no longer have our LJCC home base in Ivy House.

Ruth Barnett



### GLASGOW A True Hero

We attended the screening of *The Forgotten Hero*, an event sponsored by the Swiss Embassy. This documentary, filmed in Budapest, tells the story of Swiss diplomat Carl Lutz, who worked in the Hungarian capital from 1942 until the end of the war and in that time saved as many as 62,000 Jews by issuing *Schutzbriefe* (protective letters) and finding safe houses for them. The documentary was of special significance for me as I realised that in 1943 my own grandmother had risked her life to obtain a *Schutzbrief* – a document my mother Eva takes with her to schools when talking about her Holocaust experiences. Carl Lutz was a true hero.



*Agnes Isaacs*

### CAFÉ IMPERIAL Array of Topics

An array of topics was covered – from the kindness of the Society of Friends to the Jewish refugees and war trials of earlier years to present-day issues such as Prince Andrew, footballers and Sasha Baron's new film *Grimshy*. Our thoughts were with Vera on the sad loss of Harry Meyer, who will be much missed by our group.

*Esther Rinkoff*

### ILFORD Getting to Know Each Other

Our social get-together was a great success. It gave us the opportunity to get to know each other and to learn a little more about other members' life stories. There was no shortage of chat and everyone enjoyed the company around them. A very pleasant morning.

*Meta Roseneil*

### PRESTWICH/WHITEFIELD CF Discussion, Tea and Music

We discussed, among other things, the recent atrocities in Paris. Afternoon tea followed, accompanied by music by André Rieu brought along by Ruth and Werner.

*Wendy Bott*

### PINNER A Word in My Earphones

The BBC's Judi Herman is constantly on the lookout for promising stories to incorporate into her broadcasts. Privileged to meet interesting and famous characters in various situations, she has the extraordinary talent to dramatise these scenarios yet she still finds time for acclaimed productions such as *Stones of Kolin* for her synagogue.

*Walter Weg*

### GLASGOW BOOK CLUB Birthdays Celebrated in Style

We celebrated the birthdays of members Halina Moss and Marion Camrass in style as well as discussing J. K. Rowling's *The Casual Vacancy*, a dramatisation of which is due to be shown on TV this year.

*Anthea Berg*

### HGS Medical Services in WWI

Dr Susan Cohen told us that in WWI nurses played a big role in the care and rehabilitation of wounded soldiers and that young women who had no knowledge of looking after the sick wanted to do their part by working as assistants to them. Soon women were admitted to medical schools: it was a big change for a woman to become a doctor in the male-dominated profession.

*Hortense Gordon*

### ESSEX Winter Warmer

Larry brought along his own penned paintings of Elvis accompanied by a personally addressed letter from the Presley Estate Poems by David Kwiatkowski. Mersey Beat Poet Adrian Henri, a favourite of Esther, made Otto laugh. Otto himself recalled looking as a 10-year-old for the first star on a Friday night to declare Shabbat – then he hadn't a care in the world about things to come in Vienna.

*Esther Rinkoff*

### DIDSBURY CF Animated Conversation, Good Company, Delicious Pastries

Our 'social' was a lovely mix of animated conversation and debate, good company and delicious Danish pastries. A good time was had by all!

*Wendy Bott*

### ST JOHN'S WOOD Firing Questions at Firemen

Crew Commander of the Red Watch in Paddington and three strapping firemen came to our meeting. There were amazing revelations on how one becomes a fireman and we fired questions at them before they could even discuss safety issues in the home. When we went out to explore their fire engine, they got an emergency call to the very building next door to the synagogue – there was a fire at the American School! An exciting morning!

*Hazel Beiny*

### BOOK CLUB Group Therapy

There was a great deal to be discussed: mothers-in-law, daughters, sons-in-law, husbands, boyfriends; the recent troubles in Paris; and – eventually – the book itself! *The Testament of Mary*, a short novel by Irish writer Colm Tóibín, proved somewhat controversial for our group but it's good to challenge. Forthcoming books: *The Miniaturist* by Jessie Burton and *The Baroness* by Hannah Rothschild.

*Esther Rinkoff*

### BRADFORD The Life and Times of Geoffrey Perry



(from left, back and front rows) Rudi Leavor, Stephen Tendlow, Ian Vellins, Albert Waxman; Erika Williams, Susi Shafar, Lily Waxman, Bronia Veitch

Ian Vellins, our guest speaker, spoke engagingly on the life and times of Geoffrey Perry, who apprehended the traitor Lord Haw-Haw at the end of the war and who died recently. Ian revealed many aspects of this talented and successful media man, who first introduced the concept of 'house' magazines but remained silent about his wartime experiences until very late in life.

*Stephen Tendlow*

### BRIGHTON 100th Anniversary Film

Esther brought *The Sturgeon Queens*, a 52-minute 100th-anniversary film about a Jewish immigrant family who set up in New York a smoked and pickled fish business by the name of Russ and Daughters. Their descendants successfully developed the business into a chain of delis and restaurants. This excellent film was narrated by its customers.

*Ceska Abrahams*

### EDGWARE History and Legacy of Concorde

Peter Lang spoke to us about the history and legacy of this aircraft. When Concorde was ready many airlines ordered it but on close examination cancelled their orders. Only the British and French airlines committed themselves to purchasing it.

*Felix Winkler*



**HARROGATE/YORK CF Continental-Style Afternoon Tea**

We were treated to a Continental-style afternoon tea courtesy of Suzanne Ripton: homemade Moroccan orange and cardamon cake followed by blinis and smoked salmon. We also discussed various HMD commemorations of the past week, including those at York Minster and Leeds Town Hall, as well as the Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report. *Wendy Bott*

**WELWYN GARDEN CITY Lovely Start to the New Year**

An excellent attendance on a freezing January day on which we discussed everything from the latest movies to politics. A lovely start to the new year. *Hazel Beiny*

**RADLETT An Outstanding Fish Meal**

We watched the highly entertaining film *The Sturgeon Queens*, about the 100th anniversary of a tiny fish shop and restaurant in New York which was run by an impoverished immigrant from Eastern Europe and is now a celebrated business. When in New York, make sure you visit Russ and Daughters for an outstanding fish meal! *Fritz Starer*

**NORTH WEST LONDON Catching Up**

Over a lovely lunch we caught up with what we'd all been doing over the past year. We also discussed anything and everything connected with current affairs. A most enjoyable informal meeting. *David Lang*

**WEMBLEY The World of Flowers**

A fascinating, informative and beautifully illustrated talk by Nick Dobson dealing with dahlias, pelargoniums and fuchsias. The usual nice goodies followed. *Avram Schaufeld*

**BROMLEY CF The Perfect Antidote**

We met at Liane's home for a delicious lunch provided by Hazel, who also told us about future AJR events. Debate, reminiscence and the warmth of companionship made our meeting the perfect antidote to winter's chill and gloom. *Dorothea Lipton*

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**Child Survivors Association-AJR**

Henri Obstfeld

020 8954 5298 [h.obstfeld@talk21.com](mailto:h.obstfeld@talk21.com)

**MARCH GROUP EVENTS**

<b>Café Imperial Ealing</b>	3 March	Social Get-together
	3 March	Dr Jonathan Oates: 'Ealing from Saxon Times'
<b>Iford</b>	4 March	Leslie Sommer: 'Life at the Home Office'
<b>Pinner</b>	5 March	Clive Bettington: 'Great Characters of the Jewish East End'
<b>HGS</b>	9 March	Prof Michael Spiro: 'The Story of Chocolate'
<b>Whitefield Essex (Westcliff)</b>	9 March	Social
<b>St John's Wood Glasgow</b>	10 March	Susie Barnett: 'An Old School Reunion'
<b>West Midlands (Birmingham)</b>	11 March	Rob Lowe: 'The History of the Savoy'
<b>Wessex Brighton</b>	11 March	Lunch at Marks Kosher Deli
	12 March	Annual Concert at Town Hall
<b>Edgware</b>	12 March	tba
	16 March	Richard Stanton: Music and Comedy Morning
<b>Norfolk Edinburgh Radlett</b>	17 March	Mijael Even-David, new Rabbi at Edgware Masorti
	17 March	Frank Bright: 'My Life'
	18 March	Social Get-together
	18 March	Esther Rinkoff: 'Israel Revisited – the Red Coat'
<b>Glasgow Book Club</b>	19 March	Discussion
<b>Kingston and Surrey</b>	23 March	Social and Tea
<b>West Midlands (Birmingham)</b>	23 March	Visit to Blenheim Palace
<b>Bradford Welwyn GC</b>	24 March	tba
	24 March	Jane Greenfield: 'Growing Up on a Farm'
<b>Book Club Wembley</b>	25 March	Social Get-together
	25 March	Tony Zendle: 'Mishmash: A Walk through Jewish Trivia'
<b>Kensington North London</b>	26 March	Inaugural Meeting
	26 March	Prof Michael Spiro: 'The Story of Chocolate'
<b>North West London</b>	30 March	Tony Balazs: 'The Dorice and Other Continental Landmarks'
<b>Oxford</b>	31 March	Leslie Sommer: 'My Career at the Home Office'

**FAMILY ANOUNCEMENTS**

**Deaths**

**Gisa Gabriele (Gaby) Low**, born Hamburg 26.07.1916, died peacefully in London on 11.01.2015. Much loved aunt of Peter and Annette Woolf, sister to Rita Woolf (née Low).

**Hilde Mayer** Passed away peacefully in her 99th year. Much loved aunt of Margot and Freddie Haas and great aunt of Joanna, Carol and Paula. She will also be sadly missed by her great-great nephews and nieces and she was delighted with her two great-great-grand nephews. She was a lady of independence and great character.

**TRANSLATOR REQUIRED**

To provide digital/word-processed transcription of around 35 hand-written family letters (supplied in digital format) from German to English (various writers in 1930s-40s)

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**'SUITCASE 1938'**

A recording of a performance of 'Suitcase 1938' is available online free of charge at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwFd1nzFyUc>

'Suitcase 1938' was performed at train stations across the country in the lead-up to the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the first Kindertransport at Liverpool Street station on 2 December 1938.

Details of the show, which was produced and directed by Jane and Ros Merkin, can be found at [www.suitcase1938.org](http://www.suitcase1938.org)

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The Community Care Co-ordinator will take responsibility primarily for the welfare needs of our members and recruit as well as liaise with our team of volunteers.

You will need to be able to work independently with sensitivity and have an understanding of Jewish customs and practices. Hours may be flexible by arrangement.

**For further information/application pack, contact Lee Taylor on 020 7794 3949**

**Closing date: 6 March 2015**

**'FORCED WALKS'  
15 April 2015**



'Forced Walks' is a participatory walking art project led by artists Lorna Brunstein and Richard White.

On 15 April 2015, the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Belsen, Lorna and Richard will make a walk based on the testimony of a survivor of the Nazi Death Marches. Using the original route as a guide, the walk will take place in the UK through a familiar landscape in an area close to their home.

Lorna and Richard are inviting others to join them on foot or online or to make their own walk in their area.

Documentation of the project and creative responses to the experience will form the basis of an exhibition later in the year.

For further information, please see <http://forcedwalks.wordpress.com/>

If interested, please contact Lorna and Richard on [forcedwalks@gmail.com](mailto:forcedwalks@gmail.com)



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For information please contact The Association of Jewish Refugees on 020 8385 3070.

[info@sixpointfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@sixpointfoundation.org.uk)  
[www.sixpointfoundation.org.uk](http://www.sixpointfoundation.org.uk)

**KINDERTRANSPORT LUNCH**

**Wednesday 11 March 2015  
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Please join us for our next lunch at North West Reform Synagogue, Alyth Gardens, Finchley Road, London NW11 7EN

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## OBITUARY

### Mike Nichols, born Berlin 6 November 1931, died New York 19 November 2014

The celebrated American film and theatre director Mike Nichols had an impressive career which spanned over 50 years. Beginning with a trio of Neil Simon comedies on Broadway in the mid-1960s, he directed a wide range of plays and films including comedy, drama, musicals and occasional revivals of such classics as Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

He had his first big success in the cinema with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in 1966 followed by *The Graduate* (1967) and was so closely associated with the contemporary American scene that it comes as a bit of a surprise

to learn that he was born Mikhail Igor Peschkowsky, the son of a Russian-Jewish doctor. The family were forced to flee Nazi Germany for the US in the late 1930s. (The name Nichols was adapted by his father from his Russian patronymic Nicholaevich, shortly after arriving in New York in 1938. Mike and his younger brother joined him soon after.)

In fact, Mike's maternal grandparents were both among the leading Jewish intellectuals in Germany during the early years of the 20th century. Grandfather Gustav Landauer was a famous left-wing political theorist, activist and pacifist who was murdered by the Freikorps, a right-wing militia, in 1919, while his wife, Hedwig Lachmann, was a successful writer and translator, whose brilliant reworking of Oscar Wilde's *Salome* for the German stage was adopted by Richard Strauss as the basis for his celebrated opera.

Having grown up in New York, Mike attended the University of Chicago and acquired his first taste of show business as an actor in cabaret and improvisational theatre with the Compass Players in Chicago. This led to his first success onstage as the co-star of the show which became known as 'An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May' and reached Broadway in the 1960-61 season.

Soon after, he began directing and demonstrated a special talent for working closely with his actors and an imaginative approach to staging. Beginning with a series of Neil Simon plays (*Barefoot in the Park*, *The Odd Couple* and *Plaza Suite*), he

is recognised as one of the many remarkable Jewish talents who emerged in New York in the 1960s. Not a writer himself, throughout his career he depended on, and collaborated closely with, many of the new Jewish writers: Neil Simon, Murray Schisgal, Jules Feiffer, Nora Ephron, Elaine May and Tony Kushner on *Angels in America*, the Emmy-winning TV series in 2003.



He most famously launched the career of Dustin Hoffman, choosing the diminutive Jewish and virtually unknown actor to star in *The Graduate* in 1967. As Hoffman later remarked: 'There is no piece of casting in the 20th century that is more courageous than putting

me in the part.'

Although best known around the world for his many films, Nichols was most successful as a multi-award-winning theatre director. His later pictures included *Carnal Knowledge* (1971) starring Jack Nicholson and Art Garfunkel and three pictures starring Meryl Streep: *Silkwood* (1983) and *Heartburn* (1986), scripted by Nora Ephron, and Carrie Fisher's *Postcards from the Edge* (1990).

But his most Jewish movie was his 1970 adaptation of *Catch-22*, Joseph Heller's brilliant satirical novel set on a small Mediterranean island during the Second World War, scripted by Buck Henry (Zuckerman) with a cast headed by Alan Arkin, Martin Balsam, Richard Benjamin and Art Garfunkel with Bob Balaban, Jack Gilford and Marcel Dalio.

**Joel Finler**

*Joel Finler is a film historian with a special interest in US and Jewish cinema.*

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## ARTS AND EVENTS MARCH DIARY

**Tue 3 'My Story: Miriam David'** Miriam E. David, a professor of education at UCL's Institute for Education, will speak about the flight of her father's family from Germany in the late 1930s and discuss how she and her sisters reconstructed the story from memories and other evidence such as AJR slips, photographs and 'Nazi' passports. She will also consider the role the UK played in relation to refugees and their relatives in the war period, specifically internment and how her mother became 'stateless' on marriage to her father in 1941. The audience will have a chance to ask Miriam questions following her talk. At Wiener Library, 11.30 am-12.30 pm. Refreshments will be served from 11.15 am. There is an optional free tour of the Library and archives at 1 pm. Tel 020 7636 7247

**Thur 5 Professor Rod Kedward: 'French Resistance: Myths, Lives and Videotape',** Founding Historians Lecture 2015. This illustrated lecture looks at the multiple faces of representation. At Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, BSMS Chowne Lecture Theatre, Brighton and Sussex Medical School, 18:30-19:30

**Fri 13 Eva Schloss MBE**, stepdaughter of Otto Frank and a founder of the Anne Frank Trust, will speak at West London Synagogue dinner, 7.15 pm. £25 members, £35 non-members for a 3-course meal including wine. Tel 020 7535 0275 or online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/wls175](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/wls175)  
**13-27 March** Paintings by Eva's brother Heinz recovered after the war will be on display in the Goldsmid Hall alongside prints of **Children's Art Work from Terezin**, courtesy of the Jewish Museum, Prague. Please contact Jane Gough on 020 7535 0291 or at [jane.gough@wls.org.uk](mailto:jane.gough@wls.org.uk) to arrange a viewing.

**Mon 16 '1945 – Envisaging a New World Order'** To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the Centre for German-Jewish Studies is organising a one-day workshop. At Arts A108, University of Sussex, 9:00-18:00

**Thurs 19 Anthony Kauders** (Keele University): 'Dr Mabuse's Legacy: A History of Hypnosis in Twentieth-Century Germany'. At Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, Arts A, Room 108, 16:00-17:30

**To Fri 27 Making Their Mark – The Jews of Bradford** Exhibition at LJCC, tel 020 8457 5000

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## LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

### Where is a Jew to feel safe?

To get four million French people out onto the streets on a cold Sunday in January is quite unusual. In fact, it has never happened before, and hopefully never will again – or at least not for the kind of reasons it happened this time.

The murder by Muslim terrorists of cartoonists and journalists in the offices of *Charlie Hebdo*, the French satirical magazine, aroused feelings of horror, distrust and distaste throughout the civilised world. The idea of killing for the sake of ideology, religion or honour is something that is totally alien to most normal people and became *passé* when the European wars of religion ended in 1648 with the compromise solution *cuius regio, eius religio* (your ruler's religion shall be yours).

Yet here it is, right under our noses, in the most civilised city of the civilised world. France is not some 'shitty little country' in a backwater of the Middle East (as Israel was defined by an unnamed American official a few months ago); nor is Paris, the cradle of the rights of man, a place where just anyone, even a Muslim extremist, can get away with murder.

What brought the French out into the streets *en masse* was the feeling that their basic rights were being violated, that someone was seeking to deprive them of the right to speak their minds freely and

to poke fun at anyone and everyone. What brought the French out into the streets was *not* the hostage-taking and murder of four Jews in a kosher supermarket.

The French are used to Jews being killed simply because they are Jews. Let's not go into the co-operation and collaboration of the French government, police and railway system during the Nazi occupation. In Toulouse not long ago, a rabbi and several children were murdered by a Muslim terrorist outside a Jewish school and there was no apparent outcry. Security outside Jewish institutions was increased for a while but then relaxed.

The same happened in Belgium, where four people were murdered, once again by a Muslim terrorist, at the entrance to the Jewish Museum there. The idea that anyone who wants to can get hold of a deadly weapon and use it against innocent people who happen to be Jewish is an idea that has returned to haunt the Jewish diaspora in this post-Holocaust era.

Israel is not without its dangers, as we all know, and it doesn't take much for a single Muslim extremist with a kitchen knife to wreak havoc on a Tel Aviv bus, as happened not long ago. The terrorist was quickly overpowered and the injured treated and evacuated to hospitals by teams practised in such activity. That, however, is small consolation.

So where is a Jew going to feel safe? Australia? Even the remote antipodes have had a taste of Muslim terrorism, though on a relatively small scale. London? Having just spent a few days there, I wouldn't want to guarantee anything. The crowded Tube carriages and shopping centres seem to me to be easy targets for anyone determined to make a statement by shedding blood – and, if it happens to be Jewish, all the better. Wasn't it a leading figure in the BBC who is Jewish who said that he was starting to feel uncomfortable as a Jew in England?

Expressing anti-Israel – i.e. what amounts to anti-Jewish – sentiments is becoming *de rigueur* on university campuses in the USA as well as in European democracies. In the IS-ruled area of Syria-Iraq, 13 teenage boys were executed recently for the crime of watching a football game on television. If that didn't bring every football fan in England out onto the streets, nothing will.

It is the apathy of the masses that is the most dangerous tool in the hands of the terrorists. *Chapeau* to the French, who at least showed that they were prepared to stand up and be counted! As for the rest of the so-called civilised world, if it continues along this road it will eventually have no choice but to submit to those who are prepared to take action, abusing the democratic system in order to subvert Western values and going on to kill and maim in the name of Allah.

Recent signs of a slight change of heart among the over-tolerant governments of Europe, and the fact that at least in Israel we are fighting against this trend both overtly and covertly, provide some consolation in these troubling times.

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

#### 'FACEBOOK MINYAN'

Sir – I recently went to Budapest before travelling on to Vienna as part of the Jewish Welcome Service to Austria. While on a guided tour round the Budapest synagogue I learned for the first time about the Neolog Judaism movement. What was funny was the lady guide's retelling of the story of Moses's experience on coming down from Mount Sinai: it was only the men who put up the Golden Calf – the women had been away sewing and doing all the usual household things! Thus the task of punishment of having to go to synagogue three times a day was confined to men and that's why the women don't have to go ....

Anyway, on to Vienna with the 2014 group of survivors: I learned lots but my one

criticism would be that the togetherness was all organised and not once did we meet together in one room except to eat. So, at the end of the last meal together, I suggested setting up a Facebook group – but I didn't realise that in order to be registered by Facebook, you need ten members. It's my conjecture that the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, is inwardly searching for *minyans* even if he doesn't yet realise his subconscious!

*Joseph Glasberg, London NW5*

#### SIMPLE REALLY

Sir – Margarete Stern (December 2014, Letters) says that 'practically no one knows for sure when to say *I*, *me* or *myself*' nor does she mind saying *me* instead of *I* for

fear of sounding snobby. Anyone who is proud of their grammar would never use *me* instead of *I* – it grates grammatically and I agree with her that it sounds uneducated, which it is. Why would an educated person want to sound uneducated?

However, it is easy to work out what is correct. The rule is to go by what you would say if you were on your own. It doesn't change if you are with another person. So it is correct to say 'I went to the library' but never 'Me went to the library'. If you had gone with another person you would say 'Michael and I went to the library' - which is correct – not 'Michael and me went to the library' – which is incorrect. Simple.

*Jacqueline Goymour, London NW2*

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