



AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Righteous Gentiles: Then and Now

When Yad Vashem was established in 1953 by the Knesset, one of its tasks was to commemorate the “Righteous Among the Nations” (*khasidei umót ha’olám*), non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. There are fewer greater tributes. By January this year almost 27,000 people had received this honour, including 6,706 Poles, 5,595 people from the Netherlands, 3,995 French men and women, 2,573 Ukrainians and 1,731 Belgians among them. The largest number of rescuers per capita were the Dutch: one in 1700 people in the Netherlands.



Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations at Yad Vashem

Fifty-one countries and nationalities are represented. People from Cuba and El Salvador, Japan and Vietnam, Egypt and China. Some numbers are surprising. Only 22 Danes, but 601 Germans. More Albanians and Armenians than Britons (22). According to the historian Norman Davies more Jews were rescued in Poland than in any other country. In his book, *Rising '44: the Battle for Warsaw*, he estimates

the total saved as between 100-150,000 Jews. But the highest proportion of Jews per capita rescued were from Denmark. In 1943 more than 7,200 of Denmark’s 8,000 strong Jewish community were rescued and brought to neutral Sweden hidden in fishing boats. The fishermen were never honoured at Yad Vashem because they were paid for their services.

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EIGHT DECADES ON

This November, of course, marks exactly eighty years since the seminal events of Kristallnacht and the advent of what became known as the Kindertransport.

Both topics have been covered extensively over the years by the AJR Journal and within this issue you will find details of several special commemorations. Eight decades on, both topics remain unparalleled and sadly, as proved by our feature on Holocaust Memorial Day on pages 16-17, highly relevant to today’s society.

We trust you will appreciate reading this issue and would welcome your thoughts as to how the milestone anniversaries of these events are being commemorated.

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Righteous Gentiles (cont.)

Some individuals are widely known. Jan Karski, who came to London and Washington to tell the Allies what was happening to the Jews in occupied Poland has appeared in several documentaries, including *Shoah*; Oskar Schindler, of course; Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who disappeared mysteriously in Hungary in 1945; and Varian Fry, an American journalist, who rescued many famous artists and cultural figures from wartime France.

Others are less well known but performed astonishing deeds. Irena Sendler, a Polish social worker, helped save 2,500 Jewish children. Gertruida Wijsmuller-Meier helped save about 10,000 Jewish children from Germany and Austria who escaped on the *Kindertransport* just before the outbreak of the war. She also managed the last transport to the UK on May 12, 1940 on the last ship leaving the Netherlands. Her countryman, Jan Zwartendijk, as a Dutch consular representative in Kaunas, Lithuania, issued exit visas used by between 6,000 and 10,000 Jewish refugees. Another diplomat, José Castellanos Contreras, provided Salvadoran citizenship papers to approximately 13,000 Central European Jews. Ho Feng Shan, the Chinese Consul-general in Vienna, issued visas to more than 3,000 Jews.

The range of the Righteous is extraordinary. They were from many faiths and none: Christians from all denominations, Muslims and agnostics. These remarkable people included pharmacists and nuns, painters and scout leaders, sewer inspectors and monarchs. Two Polish farmers were murdered by the Nazis together with their six children for helping Jews.

Many hid Jews in their home or on their property, in bunkers dug under farmhouses, in barns, convents, attics and forest hideouts, in cemeteries and in sewers. Sometimes the Jews were passed off as relatives or adopted children. Others provided Jews with false papers and false identities. Clergy faked baptism certificates, foreign diplomats issued thousands of visas and passports. And still others smuggled Jews out of ghettos or across borders into neutral or less dangerous countries.

Sir Nicholas Winton is famous today for organising the Czech *Kindertransport* which sent 669 children (most of them Jewish) to foster parents in England and Sweden. Born

to Jewish parents (Wertheim), he was never recognised as one of the Righteous Among the Nations, even though his parents had converted and had him baptised.

The twenty-two Britons who were honoured included Frank Foley, a British MI6 agent, who worked undercover as a passport officer in Berlin and saved around 10,000 people by issuing forged passports to Britain and the British Mandate of Palestine. Ida and Mary Cook (Ida was better known as the Mills & Boon writer, Mary Burchell) helped 29 Jews escape from Berlin in the 1930s, funded by Ida's writing (she wrote twelve romantic novels between 1936-39). A British POW, Charles Coward, was sent to Monowitz in December 1943 and helped a number of Jews escape from Auschwitz and later gave testimony at Nuremberg, describing conditions at Monowitz and the treatment of POWs and Jewish prisoners at Auschwitz.

Other stories were less dramatic but hugely important. The Academic Assistance Council (the AAC), set up by William Beveridge in May 1933, helped bring over fifteen hundred refugee scholars from Nazi Germany and Austria by 1938, many of them distinguished figures in their field. In 1936 it became the Society for the Protection for Science and Learning (SPSL). Key figures apart from Beveridge, included Walter Adams, the first Secretary of the AAC, and Esther Simpson, who for more than nineteen years was in charge of most of the administration and correspondence. Of the refugee scholars sixteen went on to win Nobel Prizes, eighteen were knighted, and well over a hundred were elected as Fellows of the Royal Society and of the British Academy. Some of the best-known figures included the geneticist Sir Walter Bodmer, the art historian Sir Ernst Gombrich and the mathematician Sir Hermann Bondi, the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Max Born, Sir Ernst Chain who helped discover penicillin and Sir Ludwig Guttman, who revolutionised the treatment of those with spinal injury at Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

In his essay on British non-Jewish organisations in support of refugees in *Second Chance*, one of the best books on German-speaking refugees, Gerhard Hirschfeld identifies a number of factors which explain why so many organisations responded to the plight of refugees from Nazism including British traditions of charity and philanthropy and religious

motives, most clearly in the work of Quaker organisations like the German Emergency Committee (GEC), the International Hebrew Christian Alliance and others.

Eighty years on, there is a fierce debate about the rise of antisemitism in Britain. In newspapers and social media Jewish commentators have spoken out passionately but so have many non-Jews who have consistently attacked antisemitism. They deserve recognition. They include newspaper and magazine editors such as Daniel Johnson (*Standpoint*), Jason Cowley (*The New Statesman*) and Professor Alan Johnson (*Fathom*), and columnists like Dan Hodges, Colonel Richard Kemp, Douglas Murray (*Standpoint* and *The Spectator*), Tim Montgomerie (*The Times*), broadcasters like Andrew Neil and Maajid Nawaz and writers like JK Rowling. There are many more.

These writers and commentators fight on a number of fronts: in measured newspaper columns but also the vicious world of Twitter, social media and radio phone-in programmes. They defend Israel and Zionism, but, above all, they defend Jews from antisemitism, supporting statements from figures including Lord Sacks and Jewish MPs and politicians such as Luciana Berger, Margaret Hodge and Louise Ellman.

These are dark times. Antisemitism and Islamophobia thrive. Now, more than ever, we need alliances between decent Jews, Muslims and other gentiles who will stand up for decency and fight together against intolerance. Writers and journalists but also non-Jewish politicians such as Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, Chuka Umunna, and Ian Austin, Sajid Javid, Lord Eric Pickles and the Prime Minister, Mrs. May.

One lesson that brings together the 1930s and today is that when race-hatred is on the march it is easy for people, indeed whole communities, to feel isolated. Who can we turn to for support? In the 1930s and '40s Jews received help from many unlikely friends, people who risked their lives or their careers, Polish farmers, Danish fishermen and Chinese diplomats. Today, when antisemitism is on the rise, here and in Europe, we should acknowledge non-Jews who are prepared to take a stand against prejudice.

David Herman

AJR GRANT FOR *LIBERATORS*

The AJR was very proud to support a recent exhibition at London's Ben Uri Gallery, which helped highlight the achievements of women refugee artists.

Liberators explored the lives and works of twelve extraordinary women artists from the Ben Uri Collection. The stories of these artists, set against the backdrop of two World Wars, the Holocaust and its aftermath, highlighted two waves of Jewish migration to Britain and the tumultuous social, political, religious and artistic upheavals of the early 20th century.

Between 1933 and 1945 more than 300 male and female painters, sculptors, graphic designers, illustrators and architects sought refuge in Britain from National Socialism. Some were young women whose artistic trajectories had not yet been fully formed, such as Eva Frankfurter, Alicia Melamed Adams and Eva Aldbrook, or in the cases of Margarete Marks and Dodo Burgner, faced the fracture of careers recently established in their homeland. A number were also directly affected by the Holocaust. Josefina Auspitz and Chana Kowlaska perished during this time and many, such as Dora Holzhandler and Edith Birkin, lost their families.

The women featured in *Liberators* were selected not only to address the role



and experience of women refugee artists, but also to address broader themes relating to female identity, which include women's suffrage and liberation (Lily Delissa Joseph), motherhood, Judaism, and their place in the establishment of Modernism in Britain (Clare Winsten, Margaret Marks).

The exhibition coincided with an important new outreach initiative which will tour replicas of some of the works featured in the exhibition to non-museum settings such as schools, hospitals, care homes, community groups and libraries, and which is also supported by the AJR.

AJR Head of Educational Grants and Projects Alex Maws said: "Women's experiences are too often marginalised in representations of the Holocaust and the events surrounding it. *Liberators* is both an exhibition and an educational initiative, and has the capacity to engage learners of

all ages in exploring lesser known stories of women artists."

Alicia Melamed Adams is one of only two surviving artists in the *Liberators* exhibition.

Melamed Adams was born Alicia Goldschlag in Drohobycz, Eastern Poland and originally wanted to study medicine. However the Nazi invasion of Poland in September, 1939 put paid to that idea when the Jewish population of her home town were forced into a ghetto. She was the only survivor of her entire family.

She married fellow Holocaust survivor Adam Melamed in 1946 and after two years in Paris, they moved to London where she studied at St Martin's School of Art. Much of her work commemorates the Holocaust and has been exhibited all over the country.



QUESTIONS FOR AJR

If you wish to attend please contact Karin Pereira on 020 8385 3070 or at Karin@ajr.org.uk

The Annual Election Meeting of the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) will take place at 3pm on Thursday 13 December 2018 at Winston House, 2 Dollis Park, London N3 1HF.

All questions for the chair should be submitted by **Friday 2 November 2018** to the Chief Executive at the same postal address, or by email to Michael@ajr.org.uk.

Kristallnacht Service

A Service of Solemn Remembrance and Hope on the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht will be held at Westminster Abbey at 6.30pm on Thursday 8 November.

The service, which the AJR is co-organising,

will commemorate the events of Kristallnacht ('Night of the Broken Glass'), the pogrom against Jews on the night of 9-10 November 1938.

Tickets (free) are available by via www.westminster-abbey.org/events or by calling the AJR office.

Helping Harris House on air

Liverpool AJR member Faye Healey will shortly appear in a new Channel 4 series called *Britain in 100 homes*, thanks to the intervention of the AJR.

Faye, who was born in Danzig (now Gdansk) in 1928, can still remember vividly the day her beloved parents waved her a fond farewell as she boarded a train to England from Poland, little knowing it would be the last time she would ever see them. She was just eleven years old when she was sent to England on a Kindertransport. She was taken in by the Fox family, who welcomed her with open arms. Her older sister was sent to London and her brother to Palestine and the three children did not meet again until after the war.

Faye was enrolled at Northway Primary School where she learnt to speak English in just three months. "All the children used to stand around me because I was a novelty," she says. "I could only speak German. One naughty boy said to me 'it is always polite to say to people when you meet them 'hello you bloody bugger'. I learnt very quickly not to greet people that way!"

Whilst living in England Faye received a couple of letters from her parents but they soon stopped. "I never heard from my parents once the war broke out," she says. "I have chosen not to think about what happened to them as it simply makes me upset. My sister made enquiries after the war but could only find confirmation that they had died. No date or location. Nothing about my parents' final months."

After leaving school Faye studied shorthand,



Faye Healey



Harris House reunion in the 1980s

typing, book keeping and English. In October 1962 she married Frank Healey and they had two children together. Faye worked for 20 years as a lollipop lady for a primary school in their home town of Litherland.

Faye tells very touchingly about her recent, emotional return visit to Danzig – a gift from her children for her and her husband's golden wedding anniversary. The city was virtually demolished and, in recent years, was rebuilt in its former style so that Faye felt it was extremely familiar to her. At first this made her feel nostalgic but then she remembered the Nazi flags and antisemitic slogans that had appeared everywhere before she left. During her recent visit she was asked to give many press and radio interviews.

Faye will be sharing parts of her story in the programme '*100 Homes in Britain*', which is focusing on a house in nearby Southport which opened its doors to 19 girls from

the Kindertransport. The Harris House – so named after the owner, Miss Harris, who donated the property at 27 Argyle Road – opened in February 1939 but was forced to close in July 1940 when British authorities took the view that any refugee over 16 years of age was a security risk.

The girls who stayed at the Harris House collectively contributed to a diary which was discovered years later at a church jumble sale. The diary, which contains inspirational accounts of the teenagers as they adjusted to British life after escaping from Hitler's clutches, is deemed a significant wartime record and is now on display at Manchester's Jewish Museum.

The programme featuring Faye and the Harris House, will be aired shortly and be presented by Phil Spencer of *Location, Location, Location* fame.

Jo Briggs & Lilian Levy

TALES FROM HERRLINGEN

Klaer Weimersheimer, sister of Anna Essinger of Bunce Court, started her Kinderheim in Herrlingen, the same village as Anna's Landschulheim, in 1913. I was there from 1925 (when I was three) for nine years, until 1934.

Klaer's aim was to take children with problems or difficult family circumstances. I came to her when my mother had just died and my father, working full time, could not look after me.

Klaer only took about a dozen children. We called her *Muetterle*, and she was truly a mother: warm, caring, affectionate. We were a big family and there are probably not all that many real families whose children get so much love. For the first year or two, she had my cot in her room next to her bed.

The house had been designed to Klaer's ideas. There was a big balcony where we all lay down in the summer for half an hour after lunch. There was a big garden and we grew all our vegetables and fruit.

Klaer had three children. Peter, the oldest, was a big brother to us. He used to take us on hikes: I still remember this song:

Wenn die Wand' rung ist zu Ende



School days at the Kinderheim in Herrlingen



Klaer Weimersheimer is top left. Peter is second left in the front row

*Pfluecken wir 'nen Strauss;
Dann nimmt uns der Peter wieder
Zerrissen und zerlumpt nach' Haus.*

His sister Hanni got the job of looking after me - she was just three years older. The youngest, Bruedi, played the cello, in fact the three of them used to play trios.

We had a proper school, with teachers from many countries; I started picking up bits of English right from the start. Emma Brander, one of the teachers, was an active member of the SAJ (Sozialistische Arbeiterjugend) and I still remember a few of the songs she taught us - "*Brueder zur Sonne*" and "*Der kleine Trompeter*".

I had some good friends. One was Wolfgang Leonhard, who wrote "*Die Revolution frisst ihre Kinder*". His Communist parents took him to Moscow in 1934. Another, Erasmus Belden, became

a conductor in the USA. And there were the Hodapp boys, whose parents were missionaries in China.

As I got older, from around ten, I joined others in more or less running things. Klaer was very keen on giving responsibility early. By that time Tante Anna's Landschulheim had been established for some years and in my last year at Herrlingen I went to school there. This was maybe a mile the other side of the village; we used to walk across the fields in summer and in winter we skied there.

We're now in 1933. Anna, who saw the light very early, transferred her school to Bunce Court in Kent. She managed to take about 25 children with her. The Landschulheim was taken over by Dr. Hugo Rosenthal and - force majeure - became a purely Jewish school.

The year after, in the summer of 1934, I left Germany and moved to Britain. The time I spent at Herrlingen was a very happy one. I look back with great affection. The year after I left, Klaer emigrated to Palestine and set up Meshek Yeladim.

P.S. During the war the Kinderheim was taken over by Rommel and his family. It was there that he killed himself. The village now has a Rommel museum and a street named after him.

Peter Block

Letters to the Editor

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

OTHER PEOPLE'S PROBLEM

Let's face it. We all know (although many will never admit it even to themselves) that there is a broad, if mostly latent, streak of anti-Jewish prejudice running through all strata of British society. In my opinion this is a historical fact. An illustration from a job interview for a technical service position in about 1955: "We don't mind, but some of our customers might object"!

Things got worse when Israel was founded, largely because Jews were no longer the underdogs. Matters accelerated when the Left as a whole found that State's policy objectionable, and lately have become politicised as part of an anti-Corbyn dirty tricks armoury. This is NOT a Jewish problem, but one for the "others". So we have to live with it.

E.M.Feld, London N3

HOLOCAUST TRANSLATED

Unlike Ruth Barnett (September 2018), when I talk to students or adults I start by saying that it is the wrong word for what is intended to be conveyed. To start with it is a Greek word. They are then surprised to hear that it means "a sacrifice wholly consumed by fire" from *Holocaustón*, where *holos* is "whole" and *Kaustós* a "burnt offering". I then explain that the "caustic" in caustic soda, a drain-cleaning chemical, is the same word as the second part of *Holocaust* in that it burns away dirt, and that what was done to us was neither an offering in any sense nor had anything to do with drain cleaning.

The word is used today to our cost with *gay* (in the old sense) abandon where it is wholly inappropriate, and is applied in areas other than modern Jewish history where it has no place. It was introduced in recent times to obfuscate, to avoid the truth, and in that it has succeeded. Even "The Final Solution to the Jewish Question" would have been preferable and unambiguous. To have resorted to a word which is all Greek to nearly everybody, and wrong to boot, confuses

rather than enlightens an interested audience.

Frank Bright, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk

ANTISEMITISM AND CHRISTIANITY IN EUROPE

The article by Dr Elena Rowland was very interesting and informative. But I thought the omission of the York massacre in 1190 and expulsion and exclusion of all Jews from Britain for over 350 years was particularly interesting. My father, a first generation Kindertransport German survivor of the Holocaust, also disregards the darker corners of Britain's history.

It is totally understandable in the context of coming from Nazi Germany to a largely tolerant democracy in August 1939, but given the present day world-shaping decisions we are making, it would be better to have a more objective contextual view of where England, the Labour (and Tory) parties stand in Europe and the world today.

Tony Levi, London N2

THE LABOUR PARTY TODAY

Oh dear! First we have Heinz Grunewald disagreeing with Deborah Lipstadt. Now we have Eric Sanders disagreeing with the former Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks. Gentlemen – the Labour Party today is not the Labour Party of Attlee, Wilson, Callaghan, Blair and Brown. It is now the Labour Party of Jeremy Corbyn, a proven antisemite. Eric Sanders writes about "evidence". I could fill both AJR Letter Pages with "evidence". Just google "Jeremy Corbyn and antisemitism" and you will have hours of painful reading.

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.

FUTURE GENERATIONS

Just a few thoughts regarding your invitation to us youngsters to be more active in the AJR. For starters, please can we stop this 2nd/3rd generation banter: We all have refugee roots regardless of when and where we were born.

As far as I am concerned, I am first generation British, born 1949 in Westminster Hospital and circumcised by the same doctor as Prince Charles. My mother left Germany in October 1938 and found guarantors for both her parents, who got out in July, 1939, so why do I have to define myself as anything other than first generation British?

My father is part of the Kristallnacht/Dachau/Kitchener Camp/Isle of Man/Ile au Noix Canada cycle which is what I would like to see respected in depth as each reaches 80 years of history.

We do not know how AJR will develop over the next decade. The Wiener Library and the Jewish Museum would be appropriate meeting hubs and I would like to see monthly articles documenting Jewish matters of 80 years ago, starting at the Kristallnacht events.

Eric Elias, London N3

INTERESTING ARTICLES

Congratulations on your interesting article about the new Holocaust Centre in Huddersfield. The two pieces on the opposite page (page 5) about Frank Foley and Fritz Bauer are also very important. I have no evidence but I think Frank Foley rescued my Dad by getting him a boat passage to Shanghai in 1939. I have woven that into my play "*What price for Justice?*"

Regarding Fritz Bauer, I have always wondered whether my Dad had any contact with Fritz Bauer. He must have known of him in the late 1940s and they both had huge difficulties with the still pervasive Nazi attitude and former Nazis' influence in the legal profession. It was Bauer who got wind of Eichmann's hiding place and alias. Bauer mistrusted his German colleagues so sent the information straight to Mossad. My Dad was also a judge in Berlin before the war, but a year younger than Fritz Bauer.

Would you please pass on to David Herman my thanks, for not only

including my letter about the Reith lectures on war, but responding with the challenge to readers for their opinion.
Ruth Barnett, London, NW6

NOTE FROM EDITOR: We are glad readers found our recent article on Major Frank Foley interesting. Our thanks also go to John Curtis for highlighting the fact that there is a commemoration to Major Foley at Hoop Lane cemetery.

CZECH MATES

I found David Herman's article describing the fate of Czech refugees very interesting. I was particularly struck by the story of Leo Weiner's father who, with four degrees, worked as a cleaner.

I experienced something similar when I came here in 1982. Ignorant about Britain I studied English during the day, while in the evenings and weekends working as a dishwasher in a Roman Catholic Hospital. A nun told me: 'Doctor, do not forget to clean the bathroom and toilet!'

I think Leo's father was right to change his name to Wilson. I changed my name by deed poll to Rowland and, in spite of my foreign accent and look, secured work in a microbiology laboratory to complete my MSc. There, an English technician, identified me as "...another Czechoslovak Jewish, frustrated old spinster," I was financially recompensed by the Court for this remark and got another job, at a higher salary.

The problem with overseas qualifications is that you need a sponsor of sorts. I was lucky as people from my laboratory verified that I was capable. However I also took a Psychology course and despite my tutor signing the papers for the British Psychological Society, I have never been able to work here as a doctor. Many years after the war life is still not easy for graduates from Czechoslovakia.

Dr Elena Rowland, London SE18

David Herman's excellent and informative article about Jewish Czech immigrants was spoiled by the inclusion of Robert Maxwell among "these distinguished refugees" without mentioning that Maxwell was a crook who deprived thousands of his employees of their pensions and did nothing to endear the reputation of Jewish refugees to our British hosts.

Perhaps Mr. Herman could write an article about the many distinguished Jewish Hungarian immigrants who have contributed so much to the UK and who rarely appear in the pages of the AJR Journal?

John Farago, Deal, Kent

NOTE FROM EDITOR: Thank you for this excellent suggestion, which we are including in our plan for 2019.

SUSI BECHHÖFER

Thank you for the obituary on Susi Bechhöfer (October). Her story was one of the more tragic ones I have heard and I would like to add a few details, having known her reasonably well. Like Susi, I came to England with the Kindertransport (I was 7 years older) and I also lost my parents in Auschwitz.

I first met her in Leicester where she gave a talk to the Jewish community. She was at the time incredibly shy and really afraid of speaking publicly.

During her talk we were shown a BBC film which included a few pictures of the man who became her father. Her mother was left pregnant by this man, with twins. It could not have been more wretched at the time.

Her mother Rosa fell in love with a German soldier. He wanted to marry her but of course Hitler had made a law in 1935 forbidding marriage and any sexual relationship between Jews and Aryans, the word the Nazis commonly used for Christians.

Bechhöfer is spelled with an ö. Susi

learnt her original name just as she was about to begin an examination when the headmistress told her to use her "real" name, of which Susi had no previous notion. What most upset her was that she had never seen an o as an ö, and wondered how she could explain such to her friends.

During the meeting a local Jewish lecturer in Jewish history challenged her with questions about the State of Israel. Susi had little knowledge about Zionism and he should have been more considerate, sensitive or at least understanding.

I think she had a good marriage and a good son. Her husband died before her and had a Christian burial. She had the strength to wish to be buried with him. Surely that was to be admired?
Ruth L. David, Leicester

MY SISTER WAS SAVED

Frank Bright's letter regarding the sinking of three ships in the bay of Lisbech in late 1945 took me back over 70 years.

One of the ships mentioned was deserted by its crew and was floating aimlessly in the Baltic until a Norwegian sailor took charge of it. It was bombed by Allies who believed it to be transporting German troops. Then, on nearing the shore of Schleswig-Holstein, many Jewish prisoners were forced into the water and shot dead by the SS.

My sister Mergrit was one of the lucky ones who was liberated by British troops when the ship eventually reached dry land. The Colonel in charge cleared the local hospital to make space for Jewish prisoners, including my sister, who was suffering from typhus. I am forever grateful to him.

This account is based on a letter I received describing my family's suffering. I read it only once and it is now safely locked in a steel cabinet.
Ernest Kolman, Greenford

ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

Our collective imagination may be too romantic, skewed by Gauguin's imagery, but The Royal Academy's Oceania exhibition shows a different perspective. Oceania covers a third of the earth's surface with thousands of volcanic islands and coral atolls in the Pacific ocean

Art is a pragmatic realisation of everyday life between islands, sustained by fishing, travelling, punctuated by war, and enhanced by terrifying gods, masks, and deadly rituals. The fact that one deity is the god of island eating tells you about a people used to volcanic eruption of the sort we see in Indonesia and other areas today. The thread of ancestor and deity worship reflects an awareness of the world and the cosmos, the fragility of life and the tension between opposing forces of war and fertility.

Papua New Guinea and the neighbouring Bismarck islands were colonised 30,000 years ago. In August, 1768, four years before George III founded the Royal Academy, in sailed Captain James Cook, commanding the HMS Endeavour, on a scientific mission to track the transit of Venus in Tahiti and to explore the southern hemisphere for the Admiralty. In the first of his three voyages to the Pacific they were confronted by a life they had probably never imagined; as alien to Europeans as they in their red coats and white breeches must have seemed to the islanders.

As you enter the exhibition, the first thing you see is a sheet of blue hanging from the ceiling, a concoction of polythene and cotton thread, representing the ocean, called Kiko Moana, made by four Maori women artists from the Mata Aho Collective. It flatly evokes the sea which is said both to connect and separate them, suggesting nothing of its turbulence. As you move inside you see canoes and

Ta Moka panel
1896-99
New Zealand



large paddles, including one called a soul canoe with sculpted beasts, turtles and birds, weapons and many totemic images, such as masks worn at festivals. There is an early 19th century feather cloak, surprisingly modern looking in a vivid orange and yellow design. The materials used for the sculpture and jewellery include palm leaf, coconut palm, shark teeth and vertebrae, human hair and shell. Some of the masks show glaring eyes and wide open mouths disclosing terrifying molars. Nearly everything is made of wood, and was either discovered or made in the mid-19th to 20th centuries. It begs the question: was this art replicated from originals made hundreds of years earlier? And where is the European influence that we know took place?

The answer is found in a riveting single channel video created by **Lisa Reihana**. Real and animated figures move against a painted island backdrop showing the indigenous islanders: the women, enrobed in white, swaying, the men sometimes masked, and finally the cultural interaction with the bemused redcoats. It's not all plain sailing. There

are problems, even violence. One islander views the scientific instruments the seamen have introduced. Another has brought an easel and is trying to paint. The implication is that the people will develop European traits, and the Europeans themselves will learn from a more native, spiritual awareness. Christian missionaries initiated change, encouraging the rejection of the deities as pagan idols, but in fact many islanders opted to embrace new narratives. The uglier face of intrusive colonialism was that it brought disease, sexual abuse, land appropriation and labour exploitation. But the art of the islanders themselves remains primitive, powerful and languishes in the memory.

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CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



O JERUSALEM!



I was fortunate enough to attend a talk by Peggy Cidor, who writes on Municipal Affairs for the *Jerusalem*

Post and various other publications and also works as a documentary researcher. She is well-informed about the workings of the municipality and various candidates for Jerusalem's upcoming municipal election, and was at pains to put her audience in the picture about the eight candidates, and the different lists and policies each one represents (in the meantime, one of the candidates, Yossi Havilio, whose chances of being elected were considered very slim, has withdrawn, so that the number is now seven).

One of the salient points Ms. Cidor stressed was that the number of candidates is unprecedented in the fifty years since the Six-Day War of 1967, when the city was reunited under Israeli rule. In fact, the largest number ever was three, and that was in 2005. Just prior to the Six-Day War Teddy Kollek had been elected mayor, and he remained in office from 1965 to 1993. The current mayor, Nir Barkat, has announced that after completing two terms of office he will not stand for re-election and seeks to move to the national arena.

Also unprecedented is the presence in the forthcoming election of two Arab candidates and lists. In the past the Arab population of Jerusalem

has boycotted the municipal elections, refusing to recognise their legitimacy. This represents a turning-point in the attitude of the Arab residents of Jerusalem and may well contain the seeds of positive future developments. It would seem that the fear of reprisals from extremist elements which condemn participation in Israel's institutions has abated, accompanied by the realisation that neither the Palestinian Authority nor Hamas are able or willing to provide the municipal services that are so badly needed by the population of East Jerusalem.

Seeking to dispel confusion about the various candidates, Ms. Cidor explained the background, political and religious affiliation, likely areas of electoral support and proposed policies of each one. The plethora of candidates is certainly confusing for anyone who has not kept abreast of the intricate political dance of the various individuals and their groupings, not to mention the infighting within certain groups. Thus, the current front-runner, Zeev Elkin, who is a member of the Likud party, represents it in the Knesset and has been endorsed by Prime Minister Netanyahu, is opposed by the Jerusalem branch of the Likud party, which feels slighted at not having been consulted as to who should represent it.

Further confusion is provided by the plethora of religious, orthodox and ultra-orthodox candidates of every shade and stripe. Although these factions have generally been divided in the past, there have been rumours in the press of late of a projected unified list and candidate being put forward by all the religious parties, which could well result in that person being elected mayor of

the city. What that would mean for the future of Jerusalem is unclear, as many of the laws and byelaws governing daily life there have been endorsed by Israel's Supreme Court, and are hence immutable. But there would undoubtedly be a change in the general atmosphere, whether for better or for worse is a matter of opinion.

In June 1967, when the entire city came under Israeli rule, Jews constituted seventy percent of the population and Arabs thirty percent. Since then, this ratio has changed, and now stands at sixty to forty percent, whether due to natural increase or population growth. Zeev Elkin has stated that it is his objective to restore the former proportion, by building housing for Jewish residents and redrawing the boundaries of greater Jerusalem, which currently include several major Palestinian refugee camps on the outskirts of the city. But he also affirms that he will work to improve the infrastructure of East Jerusalem, which has suffered many years of neglect. His close connection to the Prime Minister and the ruling Likud party will doubtless help to give him access to the necessary funds.

The mayor of Jerusalem is elected for a five-year term and generally functions with the help of a coalition of several parties, including at least eight salaried Deputy Mayors, each one with a sphere of 'ministerial' concern. There is no doubt that whoever is elected will seek to provide for the needs of his (or her) constituency, and it remains to be seen who will benefit as a result and who will suffer.



AJR SCREENINGS

The AJR is sponsoring a number of film screenings this month, as part of the 22nd Jewish Film Festival.

AJR-sponsored performances include "Winter Hunt" on Saturday 10 November at 18:00 in London and Tuesday 20 November in Manchester, plus "Refuge Britain" on Sunday 11 November and "Resistance" on Sunday 18 November, both in London.

www.ukjewishfilm.org

Nursing and Jewish women refugees:

Eighty years ago, on 26 November 1938, *The Nursing Mirror and Midwives' Journal* published a letter from 'Sister' appealing to her fellow nurses to welcome young German Jewish women into the profession:

"None of us can open our daily papers and remain unmoved at the desperate predicament of the German Jews. Can we not – those of our profession – do something to aid this human suffering? Many of these poor wretched creatures are well-educated young women, girls brought up in refinement, now flung helplessly into a chaotic world without mercy or pity.

The doors of some of our hospital training schools have already been opened to a few of them but the number is, as yet, quite inadequate. Those of us who are not matrons need not be left out. There must surely be many trained nurses like myself, willing to 'big sister' one of these young ones, to make our homes their homes, and to help them over a very difficult passage of their lives.

If such a scheme could be launched I, for one, would be pleased to accept responsibility for the welfare of one of these girls, to take her into my flat, to fit her out with uniform and books prior to her entrance into some hospital training school, and give her a home for off-days and holidays."

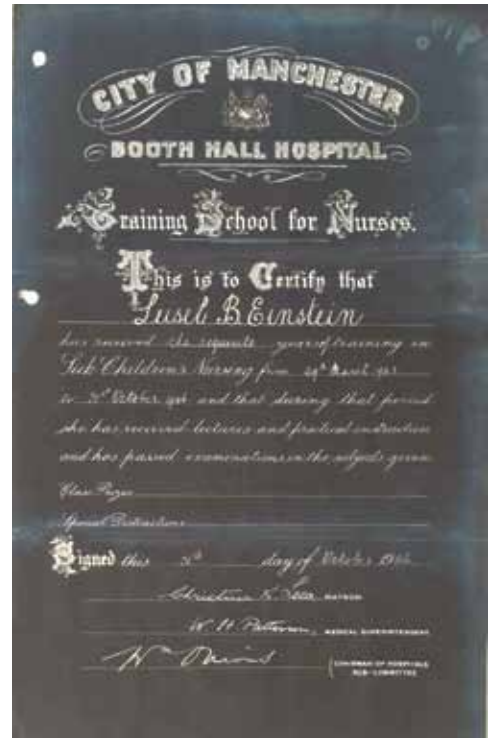
There is no subsequent letter or article that tells us if this Sister was able to create such an opportunity in her own home, but we do know that no such scheme was ever launched within the wider profession. Individual refugee nurses would experience kindly homes of British nursing colleagues who willingly offered them friendship and a sympathetic space away from the hospital. But there were many, both within the nursing profession and in the wider public, who were able to read their daily papers and remain very much 'unmoved' by the plight of Jewish



Ruth Rawray and babies

refugees from Nazi Europe.

In about 2011, I was working on an oral history project about nursing in the Second World War. During these interviews a few participants reflected on the arrival of young Jewish refugees into their nurse training hospitals. In one such interview Nurse BN describes a girl who 'appeared at the [hospital nursing] school' in about 1938. BN thought she must have had connections in England, to have been able to escape. She continued, 'They explained it to us, but you didn't appreciate it. You know, you couldn't conceive in your own mind what was going on'. It was clear to me that there was an important story here, of young women refugees fleeing Nazi Europe and entering the nursing profession here in Britain. Then in 2017 I wrote to the AJR asking if they would publish a letter seeking refugees who had been nurses and who would be willing to be interviewed. The AJR were happy to help. I had no idea how many would respond and feel able to talk about their nursing lives, but I have managed to interview eight women and have been sent memoirs of others by their children, nieces and nephews. I have also found a number of oral histories already in archives around the country.



Liesel Einstein's certificate

Drawing on both written and oral personal testimony, the purpose of my research is to tell the story of the young women who fled Nazi Europe for Britain, and entered the nursing profession at a time of mass shortage of nurses and wartime health care needs. Like the wider population of Britain, there were nurses whose antisemitism wrought misery on the refugee students. There were others like the Sister and Nurse BN above whose kindness and pursuit of professional excellence enabled these young women to establish themselves in Britain, as nurses and as welcomed, valuable members of the profession and society as a whole.

Edith Bown (née Jacobowitz) was one such young refugee. Edith fled Germany with her brother in 1939, but not before she had witnessed at first hand the horrors of Kristallnacht, which we remember this month. In her oral history interview, preserved at the Royal College of Nursing Archives in Edinburgh, Edith recalled:

That night we did not sleep. The radio blurted out obscenities directed at Jews, Communists and other sub-humans. We watched the jewellers across the road being smashed, and looted by teenage Hitler youths, boys were led by SA men...

A training, a profession and a living

The morning after Kristallnacht, as the official propaganda version called it, I went to school as usual. In fact, I was the only member of the family to venture out. My mother liked to keep everything as normal as possible. I went by tram that morning. The conductor and the passengers were highly amused by the sight of broken shop windows. They applauded the looting as one way of getting even with the Jews.

Edith's parents were arrested in May 1939, at which point despite her father's concerns about the children being sent away, such decisions became a matter of urgency. Edith and her brother left for Ireland a month later. They never saw their parents again. Edith had wanted to study medicine, but such ambitions were no longer possible. Nursing was an option, and she commenced at Newton Ards Hospital in September 1942 – not the only refugee nurse whose ambitions lay outside nursing. Several of those whose testimonies I have accessed wanted to be doctors, one a concert pianist and another a journalist. None of these were possible in Britain. Their choices were gendered and opportunistic on the part of the government and the public need: domestic service or nursing. Yet, whilst both jobs provided accommodation, meals and a uniform, nursing was able to provide something that domestic service could not.

When Hortense Gordon realised that she would not be able to study medicine, she

accepted the value of nursing: 'it was training you could do that didn't cost anything, and that was a progression'. Like Hortense and Edith, Charlotte Hoxter had dreamt of being a doctor. She was not allowed to take the *Abitur* (A levels) because she was Jewish and her family sent her to England soon after. Her reasons for entering nursing were pragmatic, she liked people and nursing offered a training, a profession and a living. Despite her ambitions to be a doctor being thwarted, Charlotte's daughter told me that she had loved nursing and that her work 'fulfilled her'.

Another refugee, Mia Fuchs, wrote: 'I started training as a nurse at the [Keighley and District Victoria] hospital in March 1941. I was pleased to finish my work as a domestic but I had quite mixed feelings about my future as a hospital nurse.' Lee Fischer (née Einstein) recalled that when she reached eighteen, Britain was in the middle of the war and everyone was expected to support the war effort. She applied to Booth Hall Children's Hospital in Manchester. Like many of her compatriots, she was working as a domestic servant at the time. Cruelly, the woman for whom she worked sacked her on the spot when she saw the invitation for an interview for nurse training. Some, like Kitty Schafer had always wanted to nurse, or as in the case of Ruth Rawray, were already experienced nurses when they fled to Britain. For some the opportunity offered by nursing was deeply personal and

redemptive. As Gertrude Roberts said: 'I was nursing people, I was meeting sick people, I was kind of making up for not nursing my parents, I was at last able to help someone. And I've done it ever since.'

Not all those who took up nursing enjoyed it. Annie Altschul, a refugee from Austria, admitted that she disliked general nursing intensely. She later found her home in psychiatry and became the first professor of mental health nursing in Britain. Others enjoyed the work, but found nursing in Britain lacked promotional opportunities unless you were British. Many of the refugee nurses, like their British counterparts, left to marry and have a family of their own. Some returned to nursing later in life. The stories I have listened to and the testimonies I have read are varied and deeply humbling. But I have been struck by a number of similarities: the determination to take the opportunities provided, a resilience in accepting when life was not ideal and a belief that nursing could make a difference to them and their patients.

Dr Jane Brooks RN

Senior Lecturer, Division of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work
University of Manchester
Dr Brooks will be speaking at the Royal College of Nursing on 13 November at 5pm (www.rcn.org.uk) and to the Jewish Historical Society on 13 December at 7pm at University College London (www.jhse.org)



Mia Fuchs' visa



Ruth Rawray in the middle

REVIEWS

CONTEMPORARY HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES: THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS CONTINUING RELEVANCE

Routledge

ISBN 978-0815364634

AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman was proud to be among the joint-editors of this fascinating collection of essays on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Written in honour of Clemens Nathan, a Holocaust refugee and AJR member who passed away in 2015, the collection includes essays written by leading international human rights experts, including former US President Jimmy Carter, UNESCO Secretary General Audrey Azoulay, and the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams.

The UDHR was drafted by the UN Commission on Human Rights in the aftermath of WW2 in an attempt to address the wrongs of the past and plan for a better future for all. This book offers a timely contemporary view on the UDHR and its continuing relevance to today's issues.

Examined through these universal principles, which have enduring relevance, the authors grapple with some of today's most pressing challenges, several of which, for example equality and gender related rights, would not have been foreseen by the original drafters of the Declaration, who included Eleanor Roosevelt, René Cassin and John Humphrey.

The essays make a compelling and detailed argument for the on-going importance and significance of the Declaration and human rights in our rapidly changing world.

Michael Newman's co-editors were Dr Carla Ferstman, Alexander Goldberg, Dr Tony Gray and Dr Liz Ison and Richard Nathan – daughter and son of the late Clemens Nathan.
Kathy Cohen



THE WEINSTOCK LETTERS 1939 - 1948

Soferpress

ISBN 978-965572021

This beautifully produced book gives a fascinating insight into the lives of the Weinstock family, four of whose children escaped Vienna despite the subsequent murders of both their parents and their fifth sibling.

The book contains a comprehensive collection of letters, cards and telegrams which passed between various members of the Weinstock family between 1939 and 1948. They vividly bring to life their pain at being separated, the parents' delight that their children had arrived safely and were doing well in England and the desperate tones of the surviving siblings as letters from their parents and missing sibling became ever more scarce. In fact brother Zvi had travelled to Palestine in 1941 but was killed in the caravan going to Mount Scopus in 1948.

Two of his siblings – Sara Schreiber and Esti Kalms – are members of the AJR, having arrived on the Kindertransport. Sara's son David Schreiber helped them to gather together all the correspondence and get it translated and reproduced in this lovely coffee table style book.

Jo Briggs

BITTER SWEET

by Stefan Popper

The Book Guild Ltd

ISBN 978-1-912362-35-6

Stefan Popper's family could never have imagined what an adventurous life lay ahead when he was born in Vienna in

1932. To everyone's surprise his sister Lisa put in an appearance eleven minutes later. Her childhood memories are also included in this book published in memory of the twins and dedicated to refugees everywhere.

His father was a lawyer and they lived in a large expensively-furnished fourth floor flat on the site where Mozart had written *The Magic Flute* and indeed died. "Mutti" (his mother) came from a prosperous family which owned Café Herrenhof. It was decorated in art deco style with a ballroom and seating for 1,000 in the heart of the cultural city. Guests included Franz Werfel and Sigmund Freud.

Delightful photos of the twins as small children illustrate the book. The household employed a cook, maid and nanny but this quickly changed as a carefree childhood was disrupted after the Nazis annexed Austria in 1938. Later that year the Poppers were baptised in Christ Church, Vienna, during the mass baptism for Jews. Although his parents were not physically hurt or imprisoned, life became tough and intimidating and their livelihood went.

With difficulty they set off by train and boat for a new life in Cyprus, a British Crown colony, and were joined by grandparents. The children enjoyed idyllic times while the parents took up sweet-making for a living, interrupted by Stefan's father's internment. Locals were friendly and hospitable but the family had to move around with Stefan and Lisa frequently changing schools.

But soon with fears of Cyprus being invaded, they were evacuated and set sail for Tanganyika via Palestine. This was David Livingstone and Masai territory but there were always Jewish refugee families not too far away. Here amongst the mango trees and pleasant way of life lurked deadly African dangers, snakes, scorpions, lions and malaria. Boarding school beckoned at Arusha in the north east of the country, modelled on the English public school system. Many teachers had been missionaries and standards were high, but it was two days from

home by rail and hazardous roads.

After the war Stefan's father was repatriated to Cyprus so back they all went to tireless struggles with confectionery; it is certainly very interesting reading about the various enterprises. Sadly, soon his father's health began to fail and he died in 1956 while on their first visit back to Vienna since being forced to leave. Stefan had studied law in his spare time and left Cyprus for England to further his career the following year.

Here his tale ends and the book was published posthumously. Many relations perished and included are five additional moving stories of relatives and how they survived the war against all odds. Tante Cilka hid in a nunnery, others lived underground in Vienna and the more distantly connected Chava Livni had a horrendous time in camps. Yet she lived eventually to become a great-grandmother.

Stefan died in 2016. He became a solicitor, later qualifying as a doctor before becoming a coroner for South Yorkshire where he worked on the first Hillsborough inquests. A truly fascinating life and book.
Janet Weston

NEWCASTLE OUTING TO BETH SHALOM



We were privileged to visit Beth Shalom, the Holocaust Memorial Museum near Nottingham. Museum guide Dan Newton welcomed us and gave a résumé of the exhibits on show, and then joined the Group for lunch before we toured the Museum. The Group was extremely touched by the exhibits and memorabilia, which gave us an insight into the lives of

people before and during the Holocaust.

One member of our group, Gay Keenaghan, a Kindertransport survivor, shared her own experiences with us before we laid stones in the Museum's garden in memory of the 1.5 million children who perished.

Lucy Gibbons and Ronnie Boam

EDITH POULSEN

The October issue of the AJR Journal carried a lovely photo of Edith Poulsen taken at her 100th birthday party. Edith came from Austria in 1939, just a week before her 21st birthday, and worked as a housemaid. At Edith's request we should

point out that her daughter Sylvia, who was mentioned in the accompanying report, was born in 1941 to Edith and her first husband, who sadly passed away just two years later. Edith then married Charles Poulsen in 1949.

INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS IS STILL ELUSIVE

On 26 September, diplomats participating in the 73rd United Nations General Assembly joined a meeting organised by UNESCO on the topic of "Education to prevent racism and discrimination: the case of antisemitism". The AJR was represented at the event by our Head of Educational Grants and Projects, Alex Maws.

The very fact that such a multilateral meeting took place was significant, and introductory remarks by Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, praised the work of the International

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in adopting a definition of antisemitism which was agreed upon by its 31 member states. However, many of the prepared remarks highlighted the fact that international consensus on the nature and causes of antisemitism remains elusive.

The Prime Minister of Morocco, Saadeddine Othmani, decried the international stigmatisation of migrants and refugees, then minutes later Hungary's representative blamed these very migrants for rising antisemitism. His remarks, which fit squarely within the context of Hungary's well documented recent turn towards xenophobia and Holocaust distortion, went unchallenged, yet the same Hungarian minister earned applause for asserting his country's support within the UN Human Rights Council for the State of Israel.

Representing the UK, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, spoke powerfully about his own experience visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz Project. He cited this as an effective example of a government-sponsored educational initiative highlighting the consequences of antisemitism taken to its extreme.



Around the AJR

Most of these reports are summaries of much longer reviews which, due to lack of space, we are unable to include in their entirety. If you would like further information on the actual event please contact either the author or the AJR regional co-ordinator.

EDINBURGH

Our subject this month was "The Healing Power of Music" and was chosen by our charming 89 years-young hostess, Pamela, and her talented son, Karl.

We each related a personal story on how music had played a part in our lives. This was followed by a splendid tea, accompanied by music of course!
Lilian Bell

ESSEX

Louis M. Gottschalk, American composer 1829-1869. What a treat we had listening to the music of this outstanding pianist second only to Liszt in his time. We enjoyed pieces he had written, all played on CD for us by Henry Goldstein. There's always something new to learn!
Meta Roseneil

PINNER

The social historian Pam Fox, supported by her husband as reader of short paragraphs, entertained us with portrayals of Jewish Golders Green from the beginning of the 20th century to more recent times.

Her book should be interesting.
Henri Obstfeld



LEEDS

The group met in a lovely new café at a local dairy farm, which serves homemade Italian ice cream. It was a great way to celebrate Arek Hersh's 90th birthday.
Wendy Bott

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NOVEMBER GROUP EVENTS

All AJR members are welcome at any of these events; you do not have to be affiliated to that particular group. As the exact timings of these events are often subject to last minute changes we do not include them in the AJR Journal and suggest you contact the relevant regional contact for full details.

Pinner	1 November	Andy Thomas – Conspiracies: The Facts, The Theories, The Evidence.
Radlett	2 November	Nick Dobson: Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole – two extraordinary Victorian ladies.
Glasgow	4 November	Kristallnacht Commemoration
Ealing	6 November	Maurice Kanareck - Refuseniks
Ilford	7 November	David Barnett – Tea Shops & Corner Houses: the Story of Joe Lyons
Harrogate/York	19 November	Social get-together
Prestwich	21 November	Social get-together
Kingston and Surrey	22 November	Film: "Nina's Children"
Glasgow Book Club	22 November	Book club
Kensington	26 November	Social at Ruth & Peter Kraus
Edgware	27 November	Maurice Kanareck - Refuseniks
Book Club	28 November	Social get-together
Newcastle	28 November	Pre-Chanukah lunch
Muswell Hill	29 November	Leslie Sommer- My time in the Civil Service
North London	29 November	Jo Briggs, Editor of the AJR Journal

LOOKING FOR?

The AJR regularly receives messages from members and others looking for people or help in particular subjects. Here are some of the most recent requests – please get in touch directly with the person concerned if you can help in any way.

BIRKENAU HOSTEL IN ANNAN

Henry Herner, now of Florida, USA, was placed at the above hostel in Dumfriesshire and attended school in Greenock, Renfrewshire, together with about 50 other Kindertransport boys and girls from Austria and Germany. He would be delighted to hear from any of them. hherner@hotmail.com

DR. L.G.T. KING – RESTITUTION LAWYER

Bridget King would like to hear from anyone who remembers her grandparents Alice and Lutz King (originally Königsberger) from Berlin. He was a restitution lawyer, usually known as L.G.T. King, with an office on Cricklewood Broadway. They lived in Gladstone Park Gardens. bridget.king@web.de

ELSE URY

British biographer Clare Mulley is researching the popular German Jewish children's author Else Ury, who was murdered at Auschwitz in 1943. Clare hopes to look at issues around imagination and censorship and to pay attention to some of the children who may have read Ury's books or known of her as an author – both among those who survived the war and those who tragically did not.

Sadly, in her diaries Anne Frank did not mention Else Ury or the main character from her most famous *Nesthäkchen* book series, but it is possible that others might have made references in diaries or letters. claremulley.mulley@gmail.com or 07713 485 188

FRANK CLIFFORD HEINZMANN

AJEX Archivist Martin Sugarman is seeking information on Frank Clifford Heinzmann who was killed in France in 1944, serving in the Hussars (Armoured Div). He has a Cross on his grave which one can get changed with proof that he was Jewish. martin.sugarman@yahoo.co.uk

HIRSCH FAMILY OF HEPPENHEIM

Adolph, Leopold and Heinrich Hirsch came to London in the 19th century and

lived at 10 Kensington Palace Gardens. They were donors to the Synagogue in Heppenheim which was inaugurated in 1900 and destroyed in 1938. Several family members lived in Heppenheim until 1942 when they fell victim to the Nazis. The Heppenheim Stolperstein Association would like to contact their English relatives. dr.hermann_mueller@t-online.de

UK DOMESTIC PERMITS

Eve Kugler, whose late cousin came from Germany in June 1939 aged 19 and worked as a domestic servant, is interested to hear more about people who took in Jewish refugees as servants, what their motive was, what they expected of their household employees and the relationship between them. Her cousin never spoke of her own experiences. eve@shatteredcrystals.net

SOROKSAR (HUNGARY)

Tom Horvath Neumann is researching the history of Soroksar (just south of Budapest) and of its Jews, only a few of whom survived the events of 1944. Almost all of those who survived left Hungary for various destinations and Tom would be pleased to hear from their descendants. tom@estom.co.uk



Some of the popular Nesthaekchen series of children's books, written by Else Ury, who was murdered at Auschwitz. British biographer Clare Mulley is hoping to find people who read these books or even met their author.

Creating a day to remember

Holocaust Memorial Day has expanded almost beyond recognition since it was first introduced to the UK by Tony Blair in 2001. **Jo Briggs** talks to **Olivia Marks-Woldman**, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT), the charity which has promoted and supported this vitally important day across the UK since 2005.

When the HMDT 'inherited' Holocaust Memorial Day from the Home Office just 300 events were taking place under its banner. In 2018 over 11,000 HMD events took place across the UK and the date of 27 January is now firmly fixed in the minds of pretty much every event planner or programmer in both the public and the private sectors.

The HMDT provides ideas, materials and support but leaves the format and execution of individual events entirely to the event planners. Olivia and her team are constantly amazed by the creativity and enthusiasm demonstrated.

Approximately half of the events are targeted at adult audiences, encompassing churches, cinemas, village halls, museums and galleries, prisons and workplaces. The other half are run by schools, designed mainly but not exclusively for their pupils.

The important thing to remember, Olivia stresses, is that the majority of events are run by non-Jewish people for a non-Jewish audience. This clearly differentiates HMD from Yom HaShoah, which is the Jewish community's own special day for honouring all our people affected by the Holocaust.

Olivia joined HMDT in 2012, heading up a team of twelve outreach, communications and operational staff. She has worked in the charity sector for most of her career but says she has never

felt as enriched or privileged as she does in her current role.

"The modern world sometimes feels very divided and frightening. It is wonderful to help people come together to learn from the scars of genocide and pledge towards a better future," she explains.

A study into the impact of HMD, carried out by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University in 2016, found 70% of respondents who had taken part in an HMD activity were afterwards more aware of the causes and conditions that can lead to genocide. 66% said they felt more sympathetic toward people from different backgrounds and 93% of respondents took some form of action as a result of an HMD event.

Achieving the right balance between the Holocaust and other genocides can be tricky and comes under close scrutiny. Olivia is adamant that the Holocaust will always have primacy. Its scale in terms of numbers and transition across national boundaries was unprecedented, as was the level of sophistication employed by its perpetrators. "But many of the characteristics of the Holocaust were sadly far from unique," she explains. "The Khmer Rouge forced its victims in Cambodia to wear a blue scarf, Bosnian Muslims were forced into concentration camps, and the Rwandan Hutus employed high level propaganda techniques to label the Tutsis as 'vermin'. These genocides may not have incorporated mass murder on such a horrific scale as the Holocaust but their perpetrators were no less evil than the Nazis."

When asked whether the HMDT is likely to shift its focus towards current day genocides Olivia says the Trust's own resources are strictly limited to events where the alleged perpetrators have already been indicted for the crime of genocide at an international tribunal. "There is sadly no shortage of terrible things happening in the world, and we encourage local communities and organisations to understand the relevance of the Holocaust to today's world."

Olivia's own family mostly came to England around the turn of the 20th century and, like most Jews, has always felt a strong connection to those who were directly affected by the Holocaust. She believes passionately that everyone, regardless of age or background, should know about the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and the subsequent genocides, and should set aside time to remember all those who suffered.

Each Holocaust Memorial Day has a different theme, to provide event planners with fresh ideas and to create a platform for its participants to learn new things. The 2018 theme was 'The Power of Words' and readers of this Journal will remember reading about the popular HMD event that the AJR held to advise members what to do with their own personal archives.

The theme for the 2019 HMD is 'Torn from home'. Olivia and her team hope it will encourage audiences to reflect on how the enforced loss of a safe place to call 'home' is part of the trauma faced by anyone experiencing persecution and genocide. It will help participants consider what happens when individuals, families and communities are driven out of, or wrenched from, their homes, because of persecution, alongside the continuing difficulties survivors face as they strive for new homes when the genocide is over.

HMD 2019 will also include marking the 25th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, which included the murder of approximately one million Tutsis. The HMDT's activity pack for 2019 includes stories from survivors of the Holocaust and the Rwandan and Cambodian Genocides, to help audiences identify commonalities and also differences between people forced out of their homes during these three separate but similarly tragic events.

Real life stories of this type are at the heart of all the HMDT's activities and the Trust is enormously grateful to all AJR members who have chosen to share their stories and take part in various HMD events. Their testimonies are typically published by the HMDT in long and short versions, the latter being particularly suitable for children and



Pledges are made as people mark HMD



Olivia Marks-Woldman



adults with low level literacy skills. When used effectively they can have a profound impact.

As an example, Olivia quotes the case of the Polmont Young Offenders Institute, the largest of its kind in Scotland. At the request of the Prison Governor the HMDT helped the Institute to create a broad programme around HMD which included the production and subsequent presentation of a special piece of artwork. The ceremony attracted the local MSP and various other dignitaries. However the highlight for many of the young offenders was learning about the individuals persecuted, for example, Johann 'Rukeli' Trollmann, the popular German Sinto boxer who was discriminated against, sterilised, and finally deported to a concentration camp, where he was murdered. Rukeli's story so inspired one young offender that, despite having never spoken in public before, he insisted on personally presenting Rukeli's story.

Another positive example comes from a special needs school in Harrow where a pupil with severe autism was so motivated by attending the national HMD commemoration service that for the first time he addressed his school assembly to raise wider awareness of the Holocaust and genocides. The school has now revised upwards his educational targets and long term prospects.

The Holocaust survivor who will be featured in the 2019 HMD activity is Renee Bornstein, née König, born in Strasbourg in 1934. When she was five years old the family moved to a small town thirty miles from Limoges. They survived the

Holocaust by hiding in barns, farms and convents until, in 1943, her parents made the agonising decision to send Renee and her two siblings to Switzerland. Marianne Cohn, a resistance worker, was murdered by the Gestapo for helping Renee and other children escape. Renee eventually married another Holocaust survivor and, thanks largely to the warmth of the Manchester Jewish community, they were able to heal and bring their children up with Jewish identities.

School pupils and other people who take part in the various HMD 2019 events will be encouraged to send a postcard to either Renee or to Sokphal Din, whose family were forced from their home during the genocide in Cambodia. Every class or organisation that writes will receive a response.

Although thousands of schools and organisations have already registered for HMD 2019, planning their actual events is often left until much closer to the date. The Trust is well prepared for this, with a catalogue of instantly downloadable resources and numerous suggestions for HMD-related activities that require little or no advance planning.

As the number of Holocaust Memorial Day events increases and more and more organisations get involved, it is important to maintain absolute clarity about who does what. In 2013 the HMDT established an HMD Partnership Group. The group, whose members include the Holocaust Educational Trust, the Wiener Library, the Imperial War Museum, the Council for Christians and Jews, JW3, the Jewish Museum, the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation,

Interfaith Scotland, the Aegis Trust and the Ishani Foundation as well – of course – as the AJR, meets quarterly. It helps create effective working relationships, avoid duplication by sharing ideas and information and extend the reach and impact of Holocaust Memorial Day. The AJR is represented on the partnership group by our Head of Volunteering Carol Hart. The AJR and HMDT also work together within the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) network, represented by our CEO, Michael Newman and Olivia. AJR's input is highly valued by the HMDT – "The AJR is a pleasure to work with," says Olivia.

It's this collaborative approach, combined with the inspiring vision of Olivia and her team, which has helped to make the UK's Holocaust Memorial Day such a presence on the world stage. Most countries around the globe now mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day to some extent, but the UK is respected as leading the way. Our mix of national and local events and our inclusion of other genocides is seen as a model for other nations who have perhaps not been as effective at engaging different sectors of society and making the theme relevant for contemporary audiences.

The UK's Holocaust Memorial Day has become far more than one day. Activities take place over a month and the impact lasts far longer. People come together from different communities to learn from the past, increase their empathy for others, and do more to create a better future.



Jewish Legacy

Leaving a legacy

This month is Jewish Legacy Awareness Month, which helps to promote the concept of “post life-time” donations.

The campaign is run by the charity Jewish Legacy which was established in 2012 in response to the fact that, although 75 per cent of the Jewish community give to Jewish causes during their life-time, only 1 in 4 leave a gift in their Will to charity.

Working with almost 50 other Jewish charities, including AJR, Jewish Legacy promotes the idea about how, upon our death, we can improve someone else's life.

Gina Ross, the Jewish Legacy's Chief Executive, explains: “Legacy giving applies to all ages and levels of income. Whilst we realise that friends and family are obviously a priority, leaving a gift to a cause that is important to you doesn't need to affect the gifts you leave to them.”

Watch out for campaign information throughout the Jewish media as well as in pharmacies, Kosher shops and online.

“We want to show how important legacies are to our charity partners. As part of our Awareness Month, we will be posting daily case studies on Facebook. These case studies are from our charity partners, showing how each of them have used and/or would use money they received from gifts in Wills to improve lives,” says Gina.

For more information visit www.jewishlegacy.org.uk or call Gina on 020 3375 6248.

TO MY GRAND CHILDREN

By Faina Michlin

I would like to live a little longer,
I would like to belong to you a little more.
I would like to see you getting older
And more beautiful and clever. Even more
I would like to share your achievements,
Joy and happiness – and more and more.

I would like to help you when you need me
I would like to dry your tears with my love.
I would like to shield you from misfortune
If it (God forbid) would fall on you
Like lightning from above.

I would like to encourage you for ever
In the situations sent by life
I would like you to endeavour everything
With the help of my undying love.



Kindertransport Commemorative Shabbat

30 November - 1 December 2018
Shabbat Vayeshev

Join World Jewish Relief and get involved in commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport.

Synagogues and communities across the country will be arranging events on Shabbat Vayeshev to remember the rescue of 10,000 Jewish children from Nazi-Europe.

For more information and ideas visit: www.worldjewishrelief.org/kindershabbat or call us on 020 8736 1250



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Kindertransport
 A special interest group of
 The Association of Jewish Refugees



LUNCH

Wednesday 14 November 2018
At New North London Synagogue
80 East End Road,
London, N3 2SY
12.30pm

We are delighted to be joined by
Miriam Halamy
 Author of
The Emergency Zoo

Miriam will be talking to us
 about her new book due for
 publication early 2019.

We will also be joined by
 the pupils of Akiva School

Call Susan Harrod on
020 8385 3070 or email
susan@ajr.org.uk
£7.00 per person.
Booking is essential.

**WHY NOT TRY AJR'S
 MEALS ON WHEELS
 SERVICE?**

The AJR offers a kosher Meals on Wheels
 service delivered to your door once a week.

The delicious meals are freshly cooked
 every week by Kosher to Go. They are then
 frozen prior to delivery.

The cost is £7.00 for a three-course meal
 (soup, main course, dessert)
 plus a £1 delivery fee.

For further details, please call
 AJR Head Office on 020 8385 3070.



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AJR FILM CLUB

HAMPSTEAD
 Starring Diane Keaton



on **MONDAY 12 November 2018**
at 12.30pm
 at **Sha'arei Tzedek North London Reform**
Synagogue, 120 Oakleigh Road North,
Whetstone, N20 9EZ

Lunch of smoked salmon bagels, Danish
 pastries and tea or coffee will be served first:

Based on a true story, Diane Keaton plays
 an American widow who finds unexpected
 love with a man living wild on Hampstead
 Heath when they take on the developers
 who want to destroy his home.

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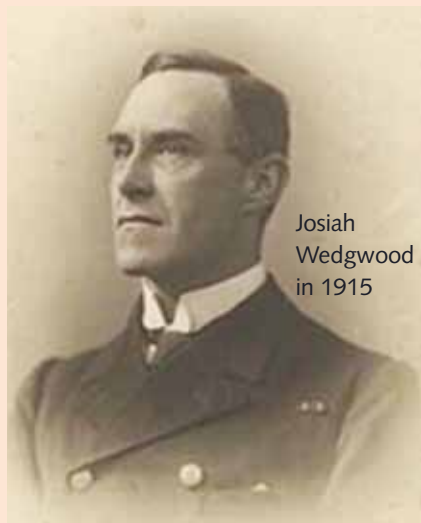
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Events and Exhibitions

TESTAMENT TO DEMOCRACY



Josiah Wedgwood in 1915

2018 is the 75th anniversary of the death of Josiah C. Wedgwood, MP for Newcastle-under-Lyme and a man who campaigned passionately for wide-ranging causes, not least the fight against Nazism and fascism in the 1930s and early '40s. He guaranteed over 200 adults, enabling them to get visas, and hosted many at his house.

At a special conference at Keel University on 22 November AJR member Lesley Urbach will present a paper on Wedgwood's efforts to persuade the British government to give refuge to Jews and socialists from Nazi-occupied Europe between 1933-1939.

22 November 2018

Keel University

Tickets £15, from

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/commemorating-josiah-c-wedgwood-public-lecture-tickets-49281521357

KINDERTRANSPORT ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM

The Kindertransport 80 Years On:

Critical Approaches to Kindertransport Research and Historiography will bring together academics from across the UK, the USA, Israel, Australia, Canada, Italy, Germany, France, and Croatia. Papers will cover all aspects of the Kindertransport's history, historiography, literature, representation and legacy.

Keynote speakers will include Ruth Barnett, former Kind and noted psychologist and educator, Diane Samuels, author of the acclaimed play *Kindertransport*, James Bulgin, Content Leader of the Holocaust Galleries, Imperial War Museum, and Dean Mary Fulbrook, Professor of German History, UCL.

For further information please contact KT80Symposium@gmail.com

KINDERTRANSPORT COMMEMORATION

Lord Alf Dubs and Barbara Winton invite everyone connected to the Kindertransport to the commemoration event for its 80th anniversary, which is being organised by the Safe Passage movement.

15 November at 3.00pm

Friends Meeting House, London

kindertransport@safepassage.org.uk

LAST TRAIN TO TOMORROW

A special performance of Carl Davis' musical drama about the Kindertransport, to mark its 80th anniversary. The young Herefordshire singers will premier a brand new song that Carl Davis has written especially for this event.

1 December 2018

Leominster Priory

www.lasttraintotomorrow.eventbrite.co.uk

KRISTALLNACHT SERVICE

A Service of Solemn Remembrance and Hope on the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

6.30pm on 8 November 2018

Westminster Abbey

www.westminster-abbey.org/events

KINDERTRANSPORT EXHIBITION

Part sponsored by the AJR, this special exhibition will share the stories of six Kinder in their own words.

8 November 2018 - 10 February 2019

Jewish Museum

www.jewishmuseum.org.uk

AJR ANNUAL CHANUKAH PARTY All Welcome



Wednesday 12th December 2018
at North West Reform Synagogue
Alyth Gardens, Temple Fortune, London NW11 7EN

Cost £10.00 per person
payable at the door
(Places must be booked in advance)

Starts at 12.00pm Ends at 3.00pm

A welcome by the
Chief Executive of AJR
Michael Newman

Magician Zap will perform table magic to amaze and entertain you during a delicious two-course lunch.

After lunch the Choir of Akiva School will perform a selection of Chanukah and popular songs for our enjoyment.

It is essential that we know exact numbers for catering.

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

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

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