



# AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

## The Queen, Prince Philip and Refugees

In his excellent book, *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain, 1933-1970*, Anthony Grenville writes, 'For a group of immigrants, the [Jewish] refugees developed a surprising degree of regard for the British royal family, the ultimate symbol of the British state.'



HM The Queen entertaining one of Britain's most famous refugees during the recent Platinum Jubilee celebrations

He goes on to tell of a refugee, Gretel Salinger, who was invited to a garden party held at Buckingham Palace in 1945 for those who had done notable war work. She spoke to the Queen (later the Queen Mother):

"'Where have you come from?' I ought to have said: 'From Paddington', but what did I say? I said: 'I come from Germany.' She looked at me and said: 'And you are invited here to this party?'"

I said: 'Yes, Your Majesty. I have worked very hard during the war and I have collected millions [*sic*] of pounds for the war effort.' 'Oh,' she said, 'You mean you are a refugee from Germany'. 'Of course, Your Majesty'. 'That's different, my dear child. I'm glad you have escaped and made your way here'. Where I took my courage from I still cannot say, but I said: 'Yes, Your Majesty, but may I tell you what happened to my family?'

*Continued on page 2*

### JUBILANT JULY

The official Jubilee events may be over but there is much still to enjoy this month, including our recent trip to the Cotswolds (p9) and our forthcoming trip to Southend (p15).

We also look at the installation of the UK's first *Stolperstein*, alongside an article questioning this practice (p10-11). This contrasts well with the planting of a living memorial to The Boys in Windermere (p16-17).

We hope you find our articles interesting and would, as always, be delighted to receive comments.

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*Please note that the views expressed throughout this publication are not necessarily the views of the AJR.*

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## The Queen, Prince Philip and Refugees (cont.)

She said: 'Yes.' 'All my family have been killed in Auschwitz.' She made a gesture, like shielding herself. She said: 'If only I hadn't asked you.' I said: 'On the contrary, Your Majesty, 'this is my *kaddish*, the prayer we Jews have for the dead, that I could tell their fate to my Queen.' She took both my hands and she pressed them and said: 'My darling child, I hope nothing else bad will happen to you and that you will enjoy your life and God bless you.' I stood there crying, crying."

Then there is this story from Eva Behar, who sadly passed away just after the Jubilee weekend:

"I was invited to St James's Palace on the 60th anniversary of liberation, on *Yom Hashoah*. We were all lined up in a huge room and we were greeted by stewards with a tray full of minute sandwiches, so tiny I don't think they were even one mouthful! The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh entered from the right, which I knew was the throne room... When The Queen got to me, she asked: "Why are you here my dear?" I will never forget the way she said "my dear". I said I had been in Auschwitz and Belsen and been liberated from Belsen. She asked: "Was it horrific?" and I replied: "Ma'am, if you could find a better word than horrific then that's the one I would use, but I haven't got one."

But there are other stories about the relationship between Jewish refugees and the Royal Family which are more celebratory. The filmmaker Emeric Pressburger spent his last years in a cottage in the country, Shoemaker's Cottage, a reference to his most famous collaboration with Michael Powell, *The Red Shoes*. Amidst his various awards, including an Oscar, there was a photo of himself shaking hands with the Queen, laughing with Sir Thomas Beecham.

When King George VI died, the Crown no longer had enough carriages for the Royal funeral and the subsequent coronation of the Queen. Another great refugee filmmaker, Sir Alexander Korda, saved the day by donating fourteen horse carriages from the studio's prop department to the Earl Marshal, the Duke of Norfolk.

There is a photo of the Queen with her Mappin & Webb lizard bag, handmade by AJR member, Kurt Wick. Wick arrived in Shanghai with his family in 1939. To make a living, the family set up a shop selling handbags in Hongkou district. In 1948, Wick and his family left Shanghai to settle in London and Wick inherited his parent's handbag business after finishing his education. The Queen and Prince Philip wore Gannex raincoats made by Joseph Kagan, born Juozapas Kaganas in Lithuania, who spent time in the Kaunas Ghetto and invented Gannex soon after coming to Britain after the war.

Elena Lederman told Bea Lewkowicz how she delivered some of her chocolates in person to Buckingham Palace. The Master of Ceremonies told her, "Her Majesty the Queen is very delighted with those chocolates. Who gave you the idea to come?" "Well," I said, "Nobody, but I guessed, it's something completely new, and I'm in England not very long, but I'm very fond of England and I thought she should have a taste."

This summer as we celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee it is worth reflecting on the fascinating relationship between the Queen, the monarchy and refugees, including Jewish refugees.

We usually think of the monarchy as the very epitome of British continuity and stability. But Charles II fled to France in 1651 and spent nine years in exile. His brother James II went into exile twice, first to escape Cromwell and then after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and spent the rest of his life in exile. His son and grandson both lived in exile after failed attempts to win back the throne.

More recently, Prince Philip was himself a refugee. He was born in Corfu in 1921. His family fled after a military coup, first to France and then to Britain. His mother was later recognised as a 'Righteous Among the Nations' by Yad Vashem for sheltering a family of Jewish refugees from the Nazis in Athens during the war. Prince Philip later said, "I suspect that it never occurred to her that her action was in any way special."

In her first public speech, when she was just fourteen, Princess Elizabeth addressed British children who had left their homes to escape the war. "Thousands of you in this country have had to leave your

homes and be separated from your fathers and mothers," the Princess said.

Both Prince Philip and Prince Charles were educated at Gordonstoun, a boarding school in Scotland, founded in 1934 by the German-Jewish refugee Kurt Hahn, who came to Britain in July 1933 after being briefly imprisoned by the Nazis.

But perhaps the greatest symbols of the success of Jewish refugees in Britain were the honours bestowed on so many: the art historian Ernst Gombrich, the scientist Max Perutz and Tom Stoppard were all awarded the Order of Merit; Sir Ken Adam, Sir Ernst Gombrich and Sir Ludwig Guttman were among those who received knighthoods, Baron Balogh, Baron Hamlyn and Lord Weidenfeld were among those made peers, Dame Marie Rambert, Dame Lucy Rie and Dame Olga Uvarov were all made Dames, and there were many more who were awarded other honours.

It is not just the sheer number of awards that is so impressive. It is also the range of achievements which have been recognised: from filmmakers to scientists, from philosophers to potters and dancers. They tell their own story of the impact of refugees on every aspect of British life and culture.

These very different stories remind us of the complicated nature of British history, the dark side of refugee experience and the impact of 20th century refugees. In his Easter Message just a few months ago, The Prince of Wales said, "Today, millions of people find themselves displaced, wearied by their journey from troubled places, wounded by the past, fearful of the future – and in need of a welcome, of rest and of kindness." These are words which will speak to many readers of the *AJR Journal*.

David Herman

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## Majestic Moments



Tomi & Gill Komoly



Renate & Gerry Inow at Buckingham Palace



Sisters and AJR members Gisela Feldman & Sonja Sternberg

Mazeltov to AJR members Tomi Komoly, Renate Inow, and Gisela Feldman & Sonja Sternberg, who were all recently presented with honours at Buckingham Palace and are shown here in the gardens celebrating with other family members.



Special birthday wishes to former Dutch-British resistance fighter and Ravensbrück survivor Selma van de Perre, who turned 100 in June. Our photograph shows Selma in conversation with HRH Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands at Kensington Palace this March. AJR Trustee Gaby Glassman is to the right.

PHOTOGRAPH: HANLEY BRAY



Gerda revisits the scene of her chuppah

## BACK IN MANCHESTER

**Member Gerda Rothberg was thrilled to find her marriage certificate nestling in the archives of the new Manchester Jewish Museum during a recent AJR group trip.**

Based in the beautifully restored former Spanish and Portuguese synagogue in Cheetham Hill, the museum houses a café and an exhibition on the Jews of Manchester. An old map on the floor shows the demographics 125 years ago, when the synagogue was built. AJR members and volunteers were amazed to see how many shuls and Jewish schools there had been, and to hear from Museum guides about the history of the many artefacts.

Gerda, who arrived via Kindertransport at the age of 13, told the group how she had got married in the synagogue in June 1949, as the family she was lodging with were members.

Michal Mochton, AJR's new Outreach worker for the area, said "It was a really great morning and so lovely to meet and chat with so many AJR members and volunteers."

# Family Secrets bring closure

**An AJR member who spent much of his life troubled that his father may have been a Nazi left BBC viewers in tears in May, when he was reassured through DNA testing that both his parents were Jewish. He was subsequently reunited with some of his family.**

Jackie Young, 79, arrived at Theresienstadt when he was nine months old and stayed there for two years and eight months. After liberation he was adopted by a British couple who never told him of his past.

Jackie knew nothing of his past or even that he was adopted until, as a young man, he was preparing to get married to his fiancée, Lita, and needed proof of his Jewish identity before the marriage could go ahead at his local synagogue.

It was only then that he found out about some of his past — his birth in Vienna, his miraculous survival of the Holocaust, his adoption, and the name of his biological mother, Elsa. But of his father there was no record, with the field on his birth certificate left empty. He began to wonder how it was that he had survived and was nagged by the worry that his father may have been a Nazi who used his influence to keep him from the death camps.

Speaking on the BBC programme *DNA Family Secrets*, broadcast in May, Jackie said: "It's the stuff of nightmares to find out I'm not English, these aren't my parents and I came from a concentration camp,"

To discover more of his identity, the BBC show asked Turi King, a professor of Public Engagement and Genetics at the University of Leicester, to examine Jackie's DNA.

When the results came back, she was able to tell Jackie that he is "99 percent Ashkenazi Jewish" meaning that "almost certainly, your father was not a Nazi."

The researcher also found that Jackie had two living relatives, descended from his

Jackie Young being interviewed for AJR Refugee Voices in 2015



great-aunt and – uncle. The programme then showed Jackie being introduced to these long-lost cousins in London, at an emotional meeting,

As compelling as this programme was, the BBC team were not the first people to show interest in Jackie's story. In fact, Dr Bea Lewkowicz interviewed Jackie back in 2015 for the AJR's Refugee Voices Archive. She recalls the interview vividly: "Jackie's interview was one of the first of 2015, when we re-started to interview refugees and survivors from the Holocaust. We were warmly welcomed by Jackie and Lita and after some time Jackie started telling us his incredible story. It was not an easy interview, as Jackie got very emotional about not knowing that he was adopted and finding out that he had been born in Vienna and had come to Britain as a very young child survivor. It was clearly important for Jackie to try and find out something about his birth family."

What was so unusual in Jackie's story was that once he started looking, he found much information. After his arrival in the UK he was taken, together with the other five very young child survivors, to Bulldogs Bank, a hostel in the rural village of West Hoathly in Sussex. For one year they were under the care of Anna Freud and Sophie Dann, who wrote a detailed account entitled *An Experiment in Group*

*Upbringing*, 1951.

Jackie was then adopted by a Jewish couple and Bea finds it remarkable that there was no proper follow up psychiatric care in place, given Jackie's deep childhood trauma.

In his Refugee Voices interview Jackie told her: "You can't lose a family, cannot have a family killed, without it having had a major effect on your life. I wish it didn't, and my [adopted] mother constantly asked 'Can't you just put it away? Forget it?' I used to reply. 'Look, if you were my birth mother, would you want me to forget about you?'"

Jackie also quoted the Roman philosopher, Cicero "*Memory is the treasury and guardian of all things*," explaining his constant search for history. He hoped the laying of Stolpersteine in Vienna for his mother Elsa and his grandfather Leopold might bring some kind of closure, but his search continued. The BBC *DNA Family Secrets* programme assisted him and when Jackie met his distant cousins from his father's side in London, the viewers were privileged to witness a profound moment, when Jackie came closer than ever before to encountering a tangible piece of his history and his lost family.

**Jo Briggs**



# LETTER FROM ISRAEL

BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



## THE CHANGING WORLD OF BOOKS



After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Jerusalem International Book Forum was held once more this

year. The opening ceremony included a (virtual) presentation of the Jerusalem Prize to British author Julian Barnes by the mayor of Jerusalem (accepted by the representative of the British Council in Israel on his behalf), and a televised acceptance speech by Julian Barnes himself (who was prevented by ill-health from making the journey).

It was good to be surrounded by people who, like myself, are in the business of reading, writing, editing, translating and even publishing books, in a variety of languages and from a wide range of countries.

However, the highlight of that first evening

was the address by Stefan von Holtzbrinck, the head of the German Holtzbrinck Publishing Group. Speaking in perfect English, this distinguished guest started by stating the view that recent developments had brought us to a situation in which he personally felt safer in Jerusalem than in central Europe. He then went on to declare his love for the city, which he has been visiting almost yearly since 1988, to pronounce Israel a light to the world and to assert his and his company's solidarity with the country. Of course, the audience applauded enthusiastically.

To hear these sentiments at a time when there have been frequent violent disturbances, mainly in eastern Jerusalem, associated first with Ramadan, then with the death and funeral of the Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akla, was astounding. Like me, many of the Israelis in the audience could hardly believe their ears. And, like me, many people took advantage of von Holtzbrinck's participation in subsequent events, to thank him for speaking so positively.

The next three days of the forum were full of interesting talks, open discussions and informal opportunities to strike

up conversations with old and new acquaintances. A fascinating and entertaining talk entitled *Listen Up: Audiobooks, Podcasts, and New Opportunities*, given by David Rowan, Founding Editor of WIRED UK, began with a couple of video clips indicating where the world is headed. One showed a traffic cop in California stopping a driverless car for not having its lights on. Confounded when he realised the driving seat was empty, the cop returned to his police car to seek assistance, whereupon the driverless car sped away (it obviously had a mind of its own). As Mr. Rowan pointed out, the world – including the publishing world – is becoming increasingly digitised and democratised through AI (artificial intelligence), the all-pervasive Metaverse and the ubiquitous interactivity of everything through smart phones. The future of publishing may well lie with eBooks, audiobooks and other such devices.

Those few days of talks and discussions gave me plenty of new information as well as a great deal of food for thought as I continue to struggle to write and publish.

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# Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication and respectfully points out that the views expressed in the letters published are not necessarily the views of the AJR.

## SECOND GENERATION VOICES

Having subscribed to the *AJR Journal* since my mother's death in 1987, I have valued the knowledge and divergent opinions of your First Generation contributors, as well as the variety of articles. Most of all, I valued the notice about the establishment of the Northern Second Generation Discussion Group back in 2004. This has helped cater for the needs of those of us not living in or around London. This group and the Second Generation Network have continued to provide an invaluable forum for understanding and reconciling the issues around identity and the inter-generational transmission of trauma, which can affect the children, and indeed the grandchildren, of survivors.

I was therefore nonplussed by the comment in your lead editorial (May) that "suddenly the second and third generation are finding their voices..." The Second Generation Network has been organising meetings and events and publishing their members' stories in their journal *Voices* for the past 26 years. Furthermore, during this time, there have also been a plethora of books and publications, such as Anne Karpf's seminal work *The War After* published in 1996.

In order to mitigate this apparent lack of awareness, I would gladly provide a complimentary copy of *Voices* (subject to availability) to any AJR readers who may be interested.

David Gordon (Deputy Editor, Second Generation Voices)

[davidgordon@secondgeneration.org.uk](mailto:davidgordon@secondgeneration.org.uk)

I was delighted to read David Herman's article (May) about the experience of the second generation of refugees living in England, and of course agreed with many of his statements.

I would like to point out that my novel, *The Balancing Game; A Child Between Two Worlds, A Society Approaching War*, published in 2013, also describes the experiences of a child, the daughter of

refugees, growing up in post-war London and endeavouring to cope with the emotional and cultural conflict inherent in her situation (the 'two worlds' of the subtitle). The chapters are interspersed with accounts of life in Jerusalem in 1967, as tension builds up and eventually the Six Day War breaks out and her baby is born.

The book is available on Amazon as a paperback and an ebook, and will soon be produced as an audiobook.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson, Israel

## ONE BIG THANK YOU

The 8th of May this year couldn't come soon enough as the before-Covid-planned Cotswold Trip took off. Superbly run by Susan, together with her friendly and caring team and in the capable hands of a superb coach driver, the days away were a refreshing interlude. An opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

There were many highlights and in the main no lows. It was a pity that the boat had engine failure and wasn't moving (must have been in league with the motor way traffic on the way home which also wasn't moving) but all was swiftly taken care of, leaving just tales to be told.

However, amongst the many highlights of the trip, there is one that stands out for me: the visit to Ragley Hall. Closed to the public, Ragley Hall was most impressive in so many ways, starting with the warm greeting upon arrival with Lord Hertford, the owner, also there.

Refreshments were served even before the tour of the beautiful house began whilst after the tour, for lunch, a superb array of beautifully presented sandwiches, wraps and much more, including a variety of drinks, was laid out. These delights one could enjoy on the sunbathed terrace overlooking the long stretch of the original magnificent carriage way to the house, now grassed over. For a short while relaxing in idyllic surroundings, unashamedly, I forgot the

troubles of the world.

Just one little add-on. Waking up on Wednesday morning to rain, unbelievably by breakfast Susan and her team had already made amazing contingency arrangements if needed. If there were a badge for efficiency, I know where I would award it! Thank you.

June Wertheim, Esher, Surrey

**Note from Editor: A full report and photographs from the AJR trip to the Cotswolds appear on page 9**

## AN IMBALANCE OF PLAQUES

Another blue plaque well worthy of a mention (June) is that of Sir Robert Mayer, Philanthropist, at Mansfield St, London W1.

He came from Mannheim, Germany, to the UK at the age of 19, eventually became a member of the Metal Exchange, and was the founder of the Robert Mayer Concerts for Children, for which he was knighted; the condition of attendance at the concerts was that no adults were admitted unless accompanied by a child. The BBC ran the concerts in the late 1940'-50's and they were attended by royalty.

In 1939 he sponsored several refugees from Germany, including my parents and self, and supported them in the UK.

Gunter George Lazarus, London N3

Your self-indulgent headlining of Isaiah Berlin (June) suggests that you need reminding of the AJR's *raison d'être*: to contribute to the perpetuation of Holocaust memory and the welfare of survivors. This plainly justifies extension of membership to second and third generations. It patently does not justify going backwards and seeking kudos through association with distinguished immigrants (not even refugees) of earlier times and places. If, on the other hand, you are searching greater Russia for victims of antisemitism in the first aftermath of the Russian Revolution, the

places to go are not St. Petersburg or even Riga, but the White Russian armies or, I'm sorry to say, the Ukraine of Simon Petliura (subsequently assassinated in an act of Jewish vengeance).

*Peter Oppenheimer, Oxford*

**Note from our Contributing Editor, David Herman: I am grateful to Peter Oppenheimer for his interesting reply to my article on Refugees and Blue Plaques. In particular, I agree with him about victims of antisemitism in the Russian Pale, perhaps especially Ukraine. New histories of the Russian Empire and especially the Soviet Union are changing the way we think about refugees from the Baltic to the Black Sea. This in turn is changing the way we think about Jewish refugees in the 20th century. It turns out to be an even more complicated history than we realised. Our disagreement about Isaiah Berlin and his family is more illuminating than it may seem and I hope to return to this in a future column.**

I am so glad that you devoted a whole page to the life of Wolf Suschitzky (June). In his review my friend Martin Mauthner mentions that Wolf shot "remunerative TV commercials". Several of these commercials were for me, when I had my own TV production companies, one of which won the Palme D'Or in Cannes in 1971 as "the most outstanding production company in the world".

I also helped introduce Wolf (then still known more formally as Wolfgang) to the late Douglas Hickox and together they made the Joe Orton film *Entertaining Mr. Sloane*. My Austrian cousin Otto, of whom I have written before, had obtained the Orton book rights and asked me to help him find an English film company to co-produce the film with him. The film was not a box office success but we did manage to obtain a Royal premiere. Wolf's son Peter also worked with me – as a lighting cameraman.

Leaving Wolf on page 11 and turning to *Letter from Israel* it was of deep interest

to read of the "few intrepid (Jews) who left Romania in 1882 and settled in Zikhron Yaakov under the aegis of Baron de Rothschild". My wife's great-grandfather, surname Graff, was one of them. There is a monument up in Zikhron to these brave men while Zikhron has become the centre of Israel's wine growing industry. This is where your Carmel wines come from.

Now onwards to your *Letters* page and Ukraine. As Alison Prax writes, at one time Ukraine had the highest population of Jews in Europe. Galicia was part of the Ukraine. The majority of Ashkenazi Jews stem from there. The Ukrainian gentiles were also amongst the most vicious Nazis who supported Hitler. I am not sure what these facts are supposed to be telling us. The current war was perpetrated by Vladimir Putin and we must support the oppressed – the Ukrainians led by Volodymyr Zelensky, a fellow Jew.

*Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.*

## LOOKING FOR?

**HANS MAYER/KENNETH KNIGHT**

Carol Sicherman seeks information on a distant relative, Hans Ulrich Meyer, who arrived in the UK on a Kindertransport from Berlin in June 1939. In 1947 he changed his name to Kenneth William Knight and enlisted in the British military in Argyllshire; he died in Surrey in 2002. Carol knows nothing further about him and would like to learn about his life between 1939-47.

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## LEADING KING LEAR

**AJR member  
Helena Kaut-  
Howson is directing  
Shakespeare's epic  
tragedy *King Lear*,  
at London's Globe  
Theatre this summer.**



Born in Poland in 1940, Helena is an award-winning and internationally acclaimed artistic director who trained at the Polish Academy of Theatre (PWST) in Warsaw and later at RADA in London. She gained a Director's Diploma from both and an M.Phil from the University of Warsaw.

Speaking about the *King Lear* production Helena said: "It touches everybody because it confronts us

with the trauma that lurks behind the breaking of basic bonds, the bonds of family, as well as our bond with nature; it explores the blinding effects of power, and leads us through the seemingly senseless universe to arrive at the need for compassion."

*King Lear* starts on 10 June and runs until 24 July. More info on <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/whats-on/king-lear-2022/>



# ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

Political themes mark high summer in the art world. Climate is the pick for the Royal Academy's 254th Summer Exhibition, while a group exhibition at the South London Gallery explores post colonial violence. And there is an explosive duo at the National Gallery which pairs Ingres' *Madame Moitessier* with Picasso's *Woman with a Book*.

It is the strangest pairing – but shows the two artists at their most voluptuous. Hand on chin, Ingres' 1886 sophisticated poses in an extravagant floral dress, one creamy hand on her chin, and the other lazily fingering a fan. The heavy dress accentuates her flaccid softness while her enigmatic smile recalls the Mona Lisa.

Reluctant at first, Ingres painted Inès Moitessier, the wife of a wealthy Parisian banker, because he perceived something Junoesque in her. Picasso, who admired Ingres' classical perfection, discovered the 1856 painting in 1921 and kept it in his mind for more than ten years until he created his own modernist version, *Woman with a Book*, in 1932.

For all his cubist intentions, for all his robust sensuality and striking, primary colours, *Woman with a Book* is a disdainful version of Ingres' languid portrait and almost seems to be laughing at her. The subject, his lover Marie-Thérèse Walter has flicked the book to parody the fan in Ingres' portrait. Her face itself is mocking and supercilious, with an earthiness that overshadows the classical aristocracy of Ingres' model. While a mirror, also featured in Ingres' painting, cheekily indicates not her likeness but Picasso's.

The Summer Exhibition is co-ordinated by British sculptor **Alison Wilding** RA whose abstracts use traditional materials such as wood, stone and bronze as well as steel, wax and silk. She created her 1987 piece, *Stormy Weather*, from pigment, beeswax and oil rubbed into galvanised steel.

Picasso and Ingres: Face to Face at the National Gallery



The highpoint of the show is the number of public entries it attracts – this year 1200 diverse offerings from a total 15,000. Other artists featured include Royal Academy Schools graduate **Clara Hastrup**, Dominica-born British painter **Tam Joseph**, sculptor **Kathleen Ryan**, conceptual artist **Simon Starling**, sculptor **Gavin Turk**, Brazil-based artists **Denilson Baniwa** and **Sallisa Rosa**, and art-activist **Jerilea Zempel**.

East African culture and folklore will be explored by newly elected Royal Academician **Michael Armitage**, whose work we have featured in the *Journal*, and whose imagination quotes **Titian**, **Goya**, **Manet** and **Gauguin**.

With climate change on the nose, elephant dung bricks will raise a few eyebrows in the architecture section, curated by Royal Academicians **Rana Begum** and **Níall McLaughlin**. Collaborating with **Boonserm Premthada's** fabricated structure uses elephant dung bricks made in the UK. As ever, it is all to play for at the RA!

**Marina Tabassum's** tiny house, the Khudi Bari is a low-cost option for refugees and victims of climate change made from local and reclaimed materials.

In the Annenberg Courtyard, 2020 Royal Academy Architecture Prize winner, **Cristina Iglesias**, whose work explores themes of nature, climate and the environment, has created a room designed for refuge and reflection. *Humid Labyrinth Room (with Spontaneous Landscape)*, balances two opposites: intimacy and the sense of landscape.

**The Show is Over at South London Gallery**

uncovers the hidden depths within the minds of 14 artists pledged to describe what they call the "unfolding afterlife of historical colonial violence" It is curated by the Johannesburg based **Gabi Ngcoba** "in dialogue" with **Oscar Murillo**. There is shock statement art and other more elusive images.

**Bruno Vilela's** *Luana Vitra*, portrait of the artist, wide-eyed in a kind of hair shirt is surrounded by the detritus of boxes and other accoutrements. **Misheck Masaamvu's** *Ending* is a drawing of a hanged hare; **Banele Khoza's** acrylic *Weeping Tulip* is a vase of fading flowers, and a sense of death or decay. There is an installation of orangey brown wall hangings which seems to evoke space, obstacles and sunlight at the same time. Another installation suggests a vague promise of light behind a barred window with broken shards falling off at the sides.

Two works by **Siminikiwe Buglungu** and **Tessa Mars** intrigue by their simplicity. *How Many Does it Take?* feature two smiling young people: a boy at a desk, in a skewed angle, and a girl at an old fashioned Imperial typewriter. Another by **Ishkar Richard**, *Where are my Fucking Flowers performance?* shows a barefoot man bent over, head in the ground and flowers growing. There are plenty of disturbing messages left for us to decipher.

**Picasso-Ingres Face to Face:** free in Room 46 of the National Gallery until 9 October.

**Summer Exhibition:** Royal Academy until 21 August.

**The Show is Over:** South London Gallery, 65-67 Peckham Road, SE5 5LQ until 4 September.



# Our Cotswolds triumph, at last



**This May a group of AJR members spent five wonderful days in the Cotswolds on a trip that was originally scheduled for 2020. Joann Lipsey reports.**

After more than two years of lockdowns, the sun shone on our jolly group of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation AJR members, encouraging all of us to participate in the events organised by Susan, Karen, Ros, Agnes and Michal, from the Outreach Team and Florina and Marilyn from the Social Work Department. Cheltenham was a delightful base for this trip to The Cotswolds – and the central Queens Hotel was ideal for our group of 27.

**Monday:** On our guided tours at Ragley Hall, near Alcester, we met the Marquis of Hertford and strolled around his magnificent historic mansion and estate. It was particularly special to enjoy our light lunch on the terrace in the warm sunshine, overlooking the manicured gardens. Dinner that evening was at the Tudor-style Fleece Pub.

**Tuesday:** We took a one-hour heritage steam train journey through scenic countryside to Broadway. Our coach then drove to picture-postcard Bourton-on-the-Water, where some of us enjoyed lunch waterside in the sunshine, watching the world pass by.

**Wednesday morning's** rainfall didn't prevent us from continuing with our travel itinerary, out to Stratford-upon-Avon. We were able to walk around the impressive RSC Centre before boarding



Lunch on a boat at Stratford upon Avon

the riverboat to enjoy a delightful lunch – some of us felt fueled by the rain outside, to partake of alcoholic accompaniment!

Due to the weather a games afternoon was hastily organised by our intrepid leaders back at our hotel – whilst some of us made good use of the bonus free time to stroll around the elegant neighbourhood boutiques nearby. Later in the afternoon, the sunshine graced us, and a lucky few enjoyed cocktails and good company in the lovely hotel terrace garden. In the evening, we went for dinner to the historic Spa Pump Rooms.

**Thursday:** A short visit to the local bijou Cheltenham synagogue nearby was interesting, but sad to know that they have only 60 members. Our tour's final highlight was the family-owned Dunkerton's Organic Cidery. We were royally entertained by our jovial guide, who took our group around the large premises. A salad lunch was accompanied by tastings of various ciders and locally-produced tasty cheeses with crunchy sourdough baguettes.

My 2<sup>nd</sup> Gen travel companion and I

Welcome dinner at The Fleece, a National Trust property



wished to engage as many of our fellow AJR-group members as possible, all of whom were welcoming and, indeed, keen to share their stories. This was enlightening to us, as most had had very traumatic experiences. However, to us "young ones" aged 75, their positive attitude to life is truly inspirational.

The intrepid travellers originated from all over the UK and my own special thanks go to Agnes who organised travel for the Glasgow group! A thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all of us. I can hardly wait to get together with everyone to do it again!

# A 'Stumble Stone' in Soho

The concept of *Stolpersteine* is well known to readers of the *AJR Journal*, but a new departure is the laying of the first such stone in the UK. This was the brainchild of Morwenna Blewett, an art conservator and academic, who organised the crowd-funding of the stone outside No. 3 Golden Square in London's Soho.

Morwenna says "My motivation for organising the placing of the first *Stolperstein* in the UK, for Ada Van Dantzig, a young, Dutch, secular Jewish woman working in London, comes from a sense of a shared career, and a common adopted city as home. Ada was learning her trade as a paintings conservator in a studio in Soho. This address was a place where she made firm friends, in an environment where she thrived and became accomplished. Across time, conservators were, and are, all united in the common quest to improve the physical lot of a precious object made by another, to ensure its ongoing contribution to our culture.

"Ada came from the Netherlands in the late 1930s, by choice, as young woman with a bright future, to study under a renowned paintings conservator, Helmut Ruhemann. Ruhemann was a German Jew who had fled Berlin



Gunter Demnig

after being sacked from his post at the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in 1934, under the implementation of the notorious Nuremberg Laws. He operated a private studio in Soho; he needed this to supplement his low pay as consultant restorer at the National Gallery. The National Gallery was one of at least two major arts institutions in London that openly exploited displaced refugee labour and expertise to care for their collections, paying the new arrivals less than established London trade studios – despite lauding the abilities of these newcomers as highly educated, artistic and scientific. Ruhemann's studio was a new, modern, international undertaking opened when London was at the centre of the Old Master Art Market; existing London restoration studios were in the main, closed, male, British, and dynastic. Being visible and well-regarded, Ruhemann was at the coalface of jealousy, antisemitism and xenophobia, swapping physical and professional persecution in Berlin for social and professional discrimination in London and having to move his children from various schools because of the antisemitic violence they experienced.

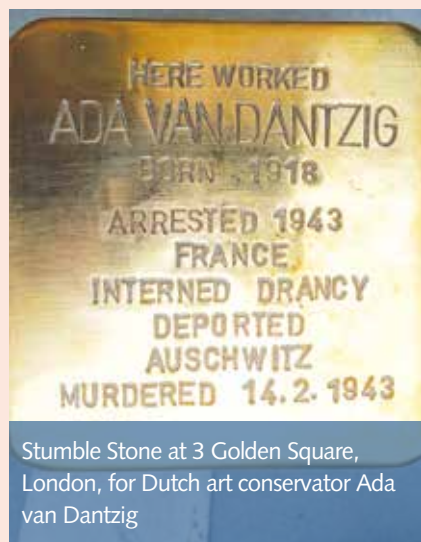
"The words etched into the *Stolperstein* say nothing of Ada's career or her place in conservation history. However, it puts her

name outside her work place in Golden Square. This was one of her last places of choice before she became a victim of Nazi terror, and this dictates the location of her *Stolperstein*. The Nazi regime closed in on the Netherlands, her family became endangered and Ada returned to be with them, as they mounted a plan for the whole family to escape to Switzerland.

"Ada was murdered along with her brother, sister, and parents at Auschwitz in 1943. She was survived by a younger brother, Hugo, who had managed to escape to Switzerland. Hugo's family have supported the placing of the memorial and over a hundred people from across the world have made donations to fund the project.

"Accountability and memorialisation in our civic spaces is a vital and potent route to awareness and can act as an antidote to both conspiracy theories and fading memory. The *Stolperstein* Project is one that has a reach that is vast – it is the largest decentralised Holocaust memorial in the world – but each and every stone is an intimate memorial for a single victim."

Lilian Levy



Stumble Stone at 3 Golden Square, London, for Dutch art conservator Ada van Dantzig



# .....But not everyone approves

Today there are 61,000 Stolpersteine in twenty-two European countries. Eva Amann notes that not everyone agrees that these 'stumbling stones' are a respectful way to remember Holocaust victims.

Walk around any major German city centre and look at the pavement: sooner or later you are bound to see small square brass plaques, called 'Stolpersteine'. They are embedded in front of building entrances and the inscriptions always begin with the words: 'Hier wohnte' – 'here lived'. The name of a person follows, when he or she was deported, to which camp and where, in most cases, he or she was executed. The most common destination is Auschwitz, but Theresienstadt, Riga and less well-known places also feature. These names refer to a continent of horror where each destination spelled death.

And that is what the *Stolpersteine's* creator, the German artist Gunter Demnig, had in mind for his memorial – to arouse the hearts and minds of passers-by and interest them in the fate of people who lived in their midst, fled, or were deported and eventually killed, usually because they happened to be Jewish. *Stolperstein* literally means stumbling block, something that breaks your stride and makes you stop to reflect, a fitting name for this point of remembrance. In Demnig's own words: "You don't stumble and fall down, it is your head and your heart that stumbles."

In 1992 he installed his first Stolperstein in front of Cologne's city hall. It was the fiftieth anniversary of Himmler's order to deport all Sinti and Roma. Later Demnig included other Holocaust victims, Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and those killed by euthanasia. From the start Demnig's initiative was controversial: Did it imply that all



victims of the Nazis were persecuted to the same degree? In 2004 Charlotte Knobloch, the head of Munich's Jewish community, persuaded the city council to ban Stolpersteine in the public domain: 'They should not be allowed to step on us again', ran her argument. That attitude does not reflect the opinion of all members of Munich's Jewish community, much less that of Germany's most prominent Jews. In 2015 Munich nevertheless upheld its decision; instead of Stolpersteine, an association has been putting gravestone-like stela.

Some critics objected to the financial aspect of the Stolpersteine project. How could Demnig use Jewish victims of the Holocaust to make money? At first people who ordered a Stolperstein from the artist paid a fixed sum for research into the person's life and death, and for making and placing the plaque in the pavement. Today there is still a fixed price – 110 euros – but it is paid

to a foundation from which the artist draws a monthly stipend.

In 1992, when Demnig started his project, the plaques only indicated names. Today, thanks to research by individuals and institutions, plaques carry more details. These facts render some individuality to the victims, they are no longer a number in the Nazi death machine.

During a recent trip to Berlin I came across two memorable Stolpersteine. The inscription on the first one referred to a judge who committed suicide after having been deprived of his rights and humiliated. The second Stolperstein recalled a family from Berlin called Tennenbaum. The simple inscription read: 'Flucht 1938 England.' I wonder what happened to them when they reached the UK.

*Eva Amann is a retired teacher of English, who lives near Cologne.*

## Books Bought

MODERN AND OLD

Eric Levene

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# A new view of *Casablanca*?

When Michael Curtiz was born in 1886 his name was Mano Kaminer. He was born in Budapest, in a street not far from where I lived. His father came from the city of Lemberg (in the Ukraine) now called Lviv. His mother came from Nagyvarad, now Oradea, in Transylvania.

He was one of nine children; after attending school he started acting, but considered himself insufficiently talented and therefore gravitated to directing; he directed the first-ever feature film in Hungary. Like so many people involved in art, he frequented the Café New York with Ferenc Molnar, on whose plays several of his films were based. He lived in the predominantly Jewish VIIIth district. At the age of 27 he had his first commercial success in a film made in Kolozsvár, now Cluj.

Shortly thereafter he met a 15 year-old girl – an aspiring actress “with stars in her eyes”. He did not resist and married her and, to show his gratitude, gave her a part in his next film. He made a large number of films in Hungary. His tireless work to establish a Hungarian film industry is now recognised in his country.

After the short-lived revolution in 1919 he escaped to Vienna where he co-directed films with Alexander Korda. In Vienna another 17-year-old girl gave birth to his child. It appears he did take his financial responsibilities seriously, at least until he emigrated to America.

In 1926, while in Berlin, he signed a contract with Warner Brothers. The 10-page contract was a work of art, a legal straight-jacket for him, but still an entry into America with a fixed income. His Hungarian name, Kertesz was quickly changed to Curtiz.

In 1927, in Hollywood, he married the divorced Beth Meredith who not only taught him English but became an invaluable help in his work at Warner Brothers. How much Beth Meredith knew about the women and children Curtiz had



left behind in Vienna is not known. The fact is he left three families with children by him, in Europe. His support for them was erratic and their story would fill a book but during the war he was very concerned about his family in Hungary and he tried to help them as much as he could after the war ended.

Generally, he was a well-liked and much appreciated director. His fractured English was considered amusing: “Bring on the empty horses”. “Stand around in bundles”. “Bark the dog from left to right” and, best of all: “Don’t talk to me while I am interrupting”.

The ever-popular *Casablanca* was made in 1942. Books were written about the making of this film. At one time, Ronald Reagan was suggested for the role of Laszlo. After several nominations Curtiz won an Oscar for directing it.

During the war he was very concerned

about his family in Hungary and he tried to help them as much as he could after the war ended.

Some of his best-known films are: *Charge of the Light Brigade*, *Adventures of Robin Hood*, *The Private Life of Elizabeth and Essex*, *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *White Xmas*, *King Creole*, *Francis of Assisi*, *A Breath of Scandal*. His productivity can be illustrated by the fact that, for Warner Brothers alone, he made 87 films. He lived and worked mostly in America but in his heart he was a European.

Her granddaughter’s tribute to him: “In my heart I truly believe that Kaminer Mano-Kertesz Mihaly-Miska-Michael-Mike Curtiz was as much a man who treasured family as one who needed to make great films”.

Janos Fisher

## AJR POETRY BOOK

The AJR’s Volunteers team has just published its first book of poems. The 60 page anthology features poems written by several AJR members and is dedicated to the memory of Carol Hart MBE, who served the AJR so passionately for over 20 years and whose team set up our regular **Poetry Please** group.



# WILLKOMMEN

Francis Fee is  
marvellous as the  
Cabaret MC

Last night, I was transported back to 1930s Berlin to spend an evening at the risqué Kit Kat Club. As I entered what used to be the Playhouse Theatre in London, I was greeted by gyrating dancers hanging from balconies in the bar, before being escorted to my seat at a table complete with vintage telephone and a ringside view of the stage. As the house lights went down, the MC welcomed us in a variety of languages. “Leave your troubles outside!” he commanded.

Having spent a small fortune on tickets (a birthday treat for my 89-year-old dad) I was determined to leave everything outside and enjoy the immersive experience of this new production of *Cabaret*. I have seen the film many times. Growing up, Liza Minnelli was a favourite in our house (superseded only by Barbra Streisand). My parents took me to see her show when I was a barely a teenager. My sister and I would make up dances to the *Cabaret* soundtrack. My memories connected to the film are joyful and uplifting.

My mother was a survivor. A hidden child who lost most of her family. A young girl, just six years old when her twin sister was deported to Auschwitz and straight to her death, leaving Mum alone. Hardly surprising, the Holocaust was a subject never mentioned in our house, and that included watching films about Nazis. Except for *Cabaret*. That was allowed, encouraged even. Why? Because Liza Minnelli was simply fabulous as Sally Bowles, the English lead character.

It was a pity to have missed the original cast of Jessie Buckley and Eddie Redmayne, but Amy Lennox as Sally and Fra (short for Francis) Fee as the MC were marvellous, as were the rest of the



ensemble. The first half was over far too soon in a blur of Kit Kat Club decadence. The endearing friendship of hedonist Sally with struggling American novelist Cliff, and the gentle humour of Jewish fruit-seller Herr Schultz wooing his landlady, Fraulein Schneider, with all manner of imported fruit before finally conquering her, not with a diamond but with a pineapple – from California *noch* – were a delight to watch. It ended with a moving performance of *Tomorrow Belongs To Me*, a rousing number sung at first by one Nazi Youth, slowly joined by more voices one-by-one until the whole chorus is singing. A prophetic symbol of the rise of the Nazis. According to film trivia database, IMDb, “it has often been mistaken for a genuine Nazi anthem and led to the songwriters, Kander and Ebb, being accused of antisemitism, despite the fact both were Jewish.”

The second act turned even darker, much like the era of Weimar-Germany portrayed. Kristallnacht was symbolised by the breaking of glass under the chuppah, an almighty bang and falling tickertape. Oh, how I wished to return to the carefree days before I had the knowledge I have now, of what happened in 1930s Germany. I felt as if I were the only person in the theatre who understood what this was meant to represent. When Herr Schultz naively declares “I’m Jewish, yes. But I’m German first,” I could have been listening to one of the many AJR members who have told

me that their parents said and thought the same at that time. I looked to my dad and sister sitting next to me who, like almost everyone else in the audience, were oblivious to the symbolism. “Kristallnacht!” whispered the woman sitting behind me to her companion. “Oh, thank god,” I thought. I’m not the only one.”

Fraulein Schneider breaks off her engagement to her Jewish beau after a warning from a Nazi friend. The MC makes antisemitic comments at the end of *If You Could See Her Through My Eyes*. Life is changing for everyone. Sally leaves her heart and soul in the theatre with a haunting rendition of the title song, and I was left devastated. Devastated that the show had ended and I would be unlikely to be able to afford to watch it again, at least not this production. And also, guilty that I loved it so much when it is such an ugly story. Most of all, I wanted to gather the cast around me to tell them more about what happened next. Do they realise the cruelty and enormity of what followed?

I loved it, I hated what it portrayed. If someone offered me a ticket I would go back in a heartbeat.

**Debra Barnes**

Debra Barnes is the AJR’s Next Generations & Communications Manager and also author of *The Young Survivors*.

# REVIEWS

## WOMEN DEFYING HITLER: RESCUE AND RESISTANCE UNDER THE NAZIS

Edited by Nathan Stoltzfus, Mordecai Paldiel and Judy Baumel-Schwartz  
Bloomsbury Academic

During the Nazi regime's darkest hours a unique group of brave women spearheaded the Rosenstrasse protest, securing the release of some 2,000 of their husbands. Their action is very significant as the only mass protest by Germans in the Third Reich against the deportation of Jews. It was led by non-Jewish wives – following the imprisonment of their Jewish husbands and those of mixed Jewish and Aryan heritage – who had been arrested and targeted.

At the end of February 1943 the Gestapo began the final roundup of Jews in the capital, seizing men married to non-Jews. They were imprisoned in an administrative building at Berlin's heart at Rosenstrasse 2–4, near the Gestapo headquarters. The operation co-incided with Berlin Gauleiter Joseph Goebbels' dreadful resolve to clear the Reich capital of Jews by March's end. Demonstrations lasted a week despite repeated orders by guards that protesters "clear the streets or be shot". But by making such a commotion the women secured Goebbels' attention; on March 6 he wrote that he had released the prisoners because of the "unpleasant scenes" of those siding with Jews. The Nazis were alarmed because the women's scenes came when morale was at a low ebb following the loss of Stalingrad and allied bombing on the German capital.

But there were other forms of resistance both in Germany and occupied Europe – in Poland, Hungary, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. People helped those they knew pre-war, those met during hostilities or during the occupation of neighbouring countries and even assisted fugitive Jews. Women were often less conspicuous than men and could more easily move from place to place. In France there was a long list

of women undertaking dangerous rescue work for the OSE (*Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants*). Volunteers would take endangered children to sheltered homes or penetrate internment camps and take children out over the Pyrenees into Spain.

The chapter on Women and Resistance is one of the most fascinating. A powerful example of youthful resistance is student Sophie Scholl from Munich. Together with her brother Hans she worked in the White Rose movement delivering literature, but tragically they were discovered and executed. Backgrounds and ideology varied. About half the members of the Red Orchestra (*Rote Kapelle*) resistance network were women. Through film connections aristocratic Libertas Schulze-Boysen secretly gathered documentation of war crimes for future prosecution. Hilda Coppi came from a working class family in Berlin and, with her Communist husband Hans, hid political fugitives and was involved in anti-Nazi campaigns. Documents and ration cards were forged and upkeep money found and distributed. In Paris wealthy Suzanne Spaak helped the immigrant Jewish population and recruited as many trusted women as could be found to rescue Jewish children, hiding an estimated 500.

There are many thought-provoking reflections on Rosenstrasse including an eye-witness account by Rita Kuhn from her memoir *Broken Glass, Broken Lives*. Several authors in *Women Defying Hitler* examine the Rosenstrasse protest and inevitably there is some covering of the same ground but a very impressive range of scholarship and sources is included.  
*Janet Weston*

## THE MURDER OF PROFESSOR SCHLICK — THE RISE AND FALL OF THE VIENNA CIRCLE

By David Edmonds  
Princeton University Press 2020

Moritz Schlick was the founder of the Vienna Circle – a group of German-speaking philosophers who between the wars came together, first in the Austrian capital's coffee houses, then in academic premises. The early twentieth century had seen radical artists, musicians, writers and architects in central Europe breaking

traditional moulds; similarly, members of the *Wiener Kreis* wanted to shake up prevailing ways of tackling those fundamental philosophical questions that had absorbed thinkers since ancient times – from the nature of knowledge to understanding good and evil.

Most of the Circle's members tended to be left-wing and Jewish. Schlick, however, was of German patrician stock and happened to hold a teaching position in Vienna. Nevertheless he faced growing criticism as Austrofascism clouded 'Red' Vienna's skies. That would seem to explain why, on 22 June 1936, his ex-student Hans Nelböck shot Schlick dead on the steps of Vienna University. At his trial, Nelböck claimed that Schlick's anti-metaphysical stance had driven him to commit the crime. But David Edmonds, who holds a doctorate in philosophy and has written, podcast and broadcast on 'mind matters,' suggests a different motive – jealousy. A fellow student Nelböck desired was having an affair with Schlick. The court sentenced Nelböck to ten years in prison, but the Nazis released him in 1938, the year Berlin annexed Austria.

By then the Circle had disintegrated, and most of its members would be forced to flee. But the international links it had already established would prove useful in helping the refugee philosophers establish themselves anew, mostly in the United States.

The two most famous Continental philosophers who found a safe haven in Britain, Ludwig Wittgenstein and, via New Zealand, Karl Popper, had contacts with the Circle, but did not belong to it. Perhaps the best known Circle member to settle here was the Viennese-born Otto Neurath, developer of the Isotope pictograms. Considered an 'Austromarxist,' he had to flee the city of his birth in 1934, first to Holland, and then to Britain – where he was interned for nine months.

Another Viennese, Friedrich Waismann, who had studied under Schlick, came to Cambridge University in 1937, followed by a long career as a philosophy lecturer attached to Wadham College, Oxford. That also became the academic home of A. J. Ayer. With Quine, Ayer, freshly





## Kindertransport Lunch

Thursday 4 July 2022

A lunch exclusively for former Kinder and their families in the London area.

Contact Susan Harrod on  
susan@ajr.org.uk



## Trip to Sandwich

Tuesday 19 July 2022

Professor Clare Ungerson will lead the group on a walking tour of various landmarks relevant to the former Kitchener Camp in Sandwich, Kent. This will be followed by lunch at The Bell Hotel, where an AJR Blue Plaque has been installed. The day will also include a visit to the Museum and the opportunity to meet with local schoolchildren who are learning about the history of Sandwich and Kitchener.

Contact Susan Harrod on  
susan@ajr.org.uk

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## A day trip to the seaside



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## REMEMBERING PARIS

On Sunday 17 July G2G will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the largest round up of French Jews with a special online event.

Vel d'hiv took place on 16 & 17 July in Paris and affected foreign born Jews in other areas of France. The G2G event will include a film focusing on the experiences of the families of two G2G speakers: Susanna Rosenberg and the AJR's own Debra Barnes. Susanna & Debra will also be available to answer questions, together with Holocaust historian Dr Jamie Ashworth.

<https://www.generation2generation.org.uk/news/events/>

## TREE AMENDMENTS

The captions on two of the photos in our gallery of trees that were planted on Yom HaShoah were incorrectly juxtaposed. The second photo down on the left showed the tree at Stephen's House & Gardens in Finchley, which was sponsored by Peter Hallgarten. The photo on its right showed our tree at Ne've Shalom, Hull.

The trees at JFS in Kingsbury and Yavneh College in Borehamwood were both sponsored by Simon Rubner, Yolanda Woolf and Rachel Kastner in honour of their late father Leslie Rubner.

graduated from Christ Church, Oxford, had actually sat in on meetings of the Circle. *Language, Truth and Logic*, the book he published in 1936 when he was 24 years old, popularised the Circle's work in the English-speaking world.

Another important figure in introducing the Circle's 'logical positivism' to Britain was Susan Stebbing. Britain's first female

professor of philosophy encountered Schlick in Oxford in 1930; in 1934 she invited Carnap to lecture in London, where he met Russell and A. J. Ayer. Stebbing devoted not only her time but also her wealth to helping scholars flee Hitler's Europe. Like Ayer, she is associated with a best-selling book, the blue-covered Pelican, *Thinking to Some Purpose*, published in 1939. It reflects

the Vienna Circle's influence. As Peter West, of Durham University, notes, she 'taught a general audience to use the tools of philosophical logic' in response to the propaganda of that era. While the Vienna Circle's philosophy may have become discredited, it might still be useful in dealing with today's snappy slogans, fake news and disinformation. *Martin Mauthner*

# WONDERFUL MOMENTS IN WIN



**During the past six months I have been privileged to attend some wonderful tree planting ceremonies. Each was meaningful in its own special way. But the memory of standing in the stunning grounds of a lakeshore villa in Windermere listening to first-hand testimony from one of the patients who recuperated there in 1945 will stay with me for ever.**

Cumbrian-born Kevin Coulter was 14 years old when he befriended fellow patient Manny Preter, one of 300 'Boys' who had been rescued from the camps after liberation and brought to the Calgarth Estate in Windermere for rehabilitation. Like many of The Boys Manny was suffering from TB as well as being severely malnourished and had to spend six months in the beautiful Georgian-style villa that had been converted into a children's orthopaedic hospital in 1920. The two boys became great friends who even now, both well into their 90s, make transatlantic calls at least twice a month, Manny having emigrated to the States in 1964.

Kevin shared their story with us as part of a very moving ceremony which also included Trevor Avery, director of the Lake District Holocaust Project, talking about his research into the Windermere children. Over the last 17 years Trevor

has been lucky enough to meet many of the former Boys and their families as well as those in the local community who welcomed them. Trevor's dedication and painstaking research has given rise to an ever-growing number of articles, books, exhibitions, documentaries and films about the remarkable acts of humanity that took place in Windermere during and after WW2.

Also at our tree planting event was Joan Carus, whose family had provided the nearby South Wood house that was home to 25 Kindertransport girls during the war (see *Remembering the Girls*, AJR Journal June 2021) and provides another important chapter in the Lake District's Holocaust history.

Meanwhile the sponsor of this particular tree helped to shed a light on what happened to the Windermere children after they left the Calgarth estate. Carol Levene's father, Yogi Mayer, was leader of the Primrose Club in north London, established in 1947 especially to support The Boys with their integration into the wider world.

Yogi Mayer grew up in the Rhineland and was orphaned by the age of 12. Despite his challenging childhood, he was fearless and positive, with a passion and talent for sport. He was active in Jewish youth movements and trained as a PE teacher. He attended the 1936 Olympic training camp but as a Jew was subsequently excluded from competing in the Games.

Yogi and Ilse met whilst studying but were forced to leave university due to the rise of Nazism. They married and



Members of Yogi Mayer's family with Trevor Avery of the LDHP and Jo Briggs of the AJR

had their first of three children, Tom. Kristallnacht convinced them they had no choice but to flee but, without visas, Ilse's family were tragically forced to remain.

Yogi and Ilse arrived in England in May 1939 and Yogi enlisted and served in the Pioneer Corps and Special Operations Executive. Meanwhile Ilse was evacuated with Tom to rural North Wales, not realising the true horrors of what had happened to those she had left behind.

Yogi's track record of motivating and leading young people made him the perfect choice for German Jewish refugee psychologist, Oscar Friedman, who had been entrusted to lead on the care and rehabilitation of the children rescued from the camps at the end of the War. At the Primrose Club Yogi helped them to recognise that the survival skills they had been forced to develop could bring success in whatever field they chose.





The plaque was unveiled by Yogi's great grandchildren, Leo and Ollie

The relationships between 'The Boys' and their leaders endured and led to the creation of the '45 Aid Society.

Yogi dedicated the rest of his life to youth work, including many years with the Brady Clubs in East London, where he created an environment for youngsters to thrive. He also helped set up the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, with Brady boys and girls among the first recipients.

Yogi's lifelong contribution was recognised in 1997, when he was awarded an MBE for his services to young people, and in 1998 when he received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Potsdam. In 2004 he wrote and published *Jews and The Olympic Games* in honour of all those who could not participate in the Olympics because of religion, nationality or disability.

Jo Briggs

## THANKING THE BOYS

We send our special condolences to the families of these two gentlemen, whose recent passing marks another key moment in this important chapter of Britain's Holocaust history.

### MORITZ MARKOVIC

**Born: 19 November 1928, Khust**  
**Died: 13 March 2022, London**

Moritz was born near Khust, Czechoslovakia (now Ukraine) in 1928; one of a family of seven siblings, he was imprisoned in Auschwitz and then Belsen, before being liberated by the Allies in 1945. He arrived in the UK from Prague in the third group of 'Boys' and spent the next few years convalescing from tuberculosis. In 1960, Moritz married Wendy Leapman, who was to be his devoted wife and lifelong companion, and mother to two children, Jonathan and Jane.

Soon afterwards he opened the City Typewriter Company in Holborn, London where he ran his own stationery business single-handed. Originally mending typewriters, Moritz soon diversified to stationery and later to diecast model cars. When he finally retired, he enrolled at the U3A in Belsize Park, which he faithfully attended for many years, enjoying in



particular lectures on the history of the Jews, European history and the history of philosophy. Moritz flourished in the new-found freedom of his retirement after a hard working life. He enjoyed simple pleasures, family life, a love of nature, gardening and daily walks in Golders Hill Park. He read widely with special attention to world news. In spirit, he was strong and independent. He was a man of few words, but his natural warmth, gentle humour and kindness endeared him to all who knew him. He will be sadly missed.

### JACK AIZENBERG

**Born: 15 April 1928, Staszow, Poland**  
**Died: 18 May 2022, Manchester**

13 year old Jack went into hiding when the Nazis arrived in his home town in November 1942 but was discovered in an attic. He survived multiple labour camps, the Buchenwald and Terezin concentration camps and the death marches. He came to the UK as one of the Boys, and was brought to Windermere for treatment and recuperation. In a BBC documentary aired in 2010 he described his journey as "like going from hell to paradise".

After arriving in the Lake District he began a new life in Whitefield, launching a thriving luggage



company from scratch. Speaking to the *Manchester Evening News* in 2011, Jack told of his enduring love for his adoptive city of Manchester, and its Jewish community.



# OBITUARIES

## NURITH WEIL

Born: 26 July 1921, Pzemysyl, Poland

Died: 14 April 2022, London

**Our mother, born Berta Samuely, always wanted to reach 100 years old and finally did so last July. We had a party in her garden where she was surrounded by all her family and her card from the Queen.**

She used to say, I came here with nothing and now look at my family. At family get-togethers there were 12 of us, including spouses.

She was born close to the border with Ukraine in a town no one had heard of until recently. Pzemysyl, once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, currently receives hundreds of Ukrainian refugees daily.

When she was a baby, the family moved to Berlin – as she said, out of the frying pan into the fire. She had a happy childhood in Berlin and loved her German school, doing well in all subjects, including sport. A younger sister, Dorrit, was born when Nurith was 14. The clouds descended after 1933 when the Nazis came to power. Her father's business was confiscated, and she was forced to move to a Jewish school. Her parents were unable to emigrate, despite her father having two brothers in the USA. After Kristallnacht her father was taken away. In the summer of 1939, Nurith was given a visa for Holland, later changed to a land-girl visa for England, provided that she moved on to Palestine. She said goodbye to her mother and sister, not realising that it was for the last time.

After war broke out she stayed in England. She met her husband Harry at a cello recital

in Bedford where they were both living. The next day he came round with a bunch of roses. Soon they moved to London for the start of an exceptionally happy marriage. Nurith trained as a nursery school teacher, running a nursery in Holland Park for several years.

Like so many Jewish refugees, she refused to talk about the past. She looked only to the present and the future, and she did her best not to burden us with the sorrows of the past.

We grew up in a happy home, full of love. Our mother devoted herself to her husband and daughters. Later she became a fantastic grandmother to Laura, Natasha and Julia, and great grandmother to Isabelle, Juliet, Harry and Daniel.

We will remember her as an excellent cook. In the absence of relatives, friends had a particular importance and they were often at our house. Always elegantly dressed, she was keen on walking and physical fitness. She was enthusiastic about Art and Music, and entertained her husband's string quartets for at least 60 years. Her love of all things Italian was another great passion.

We know we were supremely fortunate to have had her as our mother.

**Joanna Coates & Monica Dobson**

## EDNA SOVIN

Born: 10 August 1938, Berlin

Died: 19 May 2022, London

**Edna Sovin was a respected psychotherapist and supervisor who worked with the Multilingual Psychotherapy Centre, and for Jewish organisations, including Raphael.**

Edna was the only child of Hanna Beerman (née Falkenberg), a doctor and Fritz Beerman, a businessman. Edna's grandfather was a leading member of the Berlin Reform Jewish community and her grandmother was President of the Juedisches Frauen Verein, the Jewish Women's Association.

In August 1939 Edna's parents managed to get visas and come to London. The following year they were interned on the Isle of Man for the next 30 months.

Following their release they settled in Finsbury Park. Edna was educated at the Dame Alice Owens School, and then went to UCL to study Psychology. She married young solicitor Stanley Sovin, in 1962. They had three children, Jo, Jude and Ben. Stanley sadly passed away in 2005.

In the mid-1970s Edna trained as a voluntary Marriage Guidance counsellor, which inspired her to become a psychotherapist. She established her own practice – and also supervised other therapists, which she particularly enjoyed.

Edna's experience as the child of refugees was a core part of her personality. She was always aware of being slightly 'different' and this informed her work she did for the Multi-Lingual Psychotherapy Centre. A year before she died, her reflective essay 'Return to Berlin: my forbidden mother tongue' was published in a book. In it, Edna writes in a very moving and insightful way about what it was like to never fully feel at home as a non-native-born English speaker and to no longer feel at home speaking in German.

Edna was much loved and will be enormously missed by her children Jo, Jude and Ben, their partners John, Nick and Lindy, grandchildren Solomon, Maccabee, Xander, Lulu and Yeshaya and her many friends.

**Jo Sovin**



## DOROTHEE RAPHAELLE COOPERSMITH (née Szapiro)

Born: 31 October 1932, Belgium

Died: 13 December 2021, Cape Town

**My Mother, Dorothee Coopersmith, could trace her family tree back to Rabbi Meir Katzenellenbogen, the Chief Rabbi of Padua and Venice in 1530. He authored many Talmudic commentaries and is buried in Padua.**

My Mother was born in Belgium. Her parents were Rachel from Vilna and Saul from Bialystok and they met at Liege University. Two more children were born apart from my mother, a sister Adele and a brother Rapha. In 1939 my Grandmother received coded letters from her family, saying "It would be good for your health to visit Uncle Martin in Lisbon". In May 1940, Germany invaded Belgium and the family escaped by train, hoping to reach Lisbon, but the train was bombed in Northern France. Walking across the fields, my Grandmother collected ID tags of British Soldiers killed trying to reach Dunkirk. She planned to hand them to The Red Cross. Rapha became ill and my Grandmother risked asking the German Army for help. Medicine was given but the family was detained. My mother asked an officer if he would like it if his children were detained. By good fortune, that night the officer took pity on this Jewish family and came with a parcel of clothes and food and told them to leave late at night through an open door. The family made their way back to Belgium. A very lucky escape.

After the Allied Landings in France, the family re-united, living near Remouchamps. They were helped by many brave people in the Resistance; and so it was, with random good luck, the interventions of many good people and the amazing insight and courage of my Grandmother that she succeeded in saving the family.

In 1948 the family left Belgium for South Africa where my Grandmother had relatives in Cape Town. It was an inauspicious time to arrive in South

Africa, coinciding with the election of the National Party, the start of Apartheid. After my mother completed her training as a radiologist, she was occasionally asked by her cousin Jack Tarshish to help him in certain clandestine activities. In the offices owned by his late father, some floors were rented to the Police Department and cleaners would look through files and pass on the names of people on interrogation lists. Jack would then purchase a ticket for my mother in a First Class Single Cabin on the Union Castle ship to England. My mother would dress in her smartest outfit, accompanied by her own African or Coloured "porter". When it was time for the ship to depart, a whistle would sound for all porters to disembark. But it was my Mother who disembarked leaving the "porter" locked in the cabin. This was a way of helping people leave the country quickly.

In 1953 my Mother went to the famous Gardens Synagogue in Cape Town to speak to the Rabbi about her upcoming marriage to my Father. When she told the Rabbi she had been converted to Catholicism during the War, he said that it would not be possible to marry in an Orthodox Synagogue. My Mother quietly explained to him that conversion and communion had saved her from the fate

of deportation and certain death. The Rabbi was ashamed and of course the wedding happily went ahead in the oldest Synagogue in South Africa.

Later in London, my Mother worked at the Wiener Library, where she met and helped many writers and researchers of the Holocaust. In 1975 my Mother set up a Domestic Agency. Over the years, she had a very impressive list of clients: Royalty, actors, business leaders and fashion designers.

In 2014 my parents moved to live near me in Bournemouth. My parents loved living by the sea, surrounded by the pine trees and beautiful Dorset countryside. My Father passed away in February 2019 and my Mother passed away after a short illness, while visiting Cape Town with me near Table Mountain, close to the Gardens Synagogue. Repatriated to the UK, my Mother is buried at Harbour View Woodland Burial Grounds, near Poole. My Mother was a member of AJR, receiving wonderful support with Life Certificates and enjoying the regular socials, outings and the excellent You Tube Channel which was so vital during the Covid Pandemic.

**Claude Coopersmith**

### JOSEPH PEREIRA

(ex-AJR caretaker over 22 years)  
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**CONTEMPORARY  
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

## ZOOMS AHEAD

Details of all meetings and the links to join will appear in the e-newsletter each Monday.

Monday 4 July @ 10.30am	<b>Online yoga: Get fit where you sit</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439</a>	Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439
Wednesday 6 July @ 2pm	<b>Nick Dobson – An Underground Guide to Edwardian London</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88948691686">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88948691686</a>	Meeting ID: 8894 869 1686
Thursday 7 July @ 4pm	<b>Tommy Schnurmacher – Adventures with an exotic Mum who sounded like Zsa Zsa Gabor</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81405692498">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81405692498</a>	Meeting ID: 814 0569 2498
Monday 11 July @ 10.30am	<b>Online yoga: Get fit where you sit</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439</a>	Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439
Monday 11 July @ 4pm	<b>Fiona Rose – An overview of the life &amp; work of William Morris</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87972950821">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87972950821</a>	Meeting ID: 879 7295 0821
Tuesday 12 July @ 2pm	<b>Judy Karbritz – Spotlight on Danny Kaye</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88959904968">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88959904968</a>	Meeting ID: 8895 990 4968
Wednesday 13 July @ 2pm	<b>AJR Book Club Discussion (no speaker) – <i>The Only Woman in the Room</i> by Marie Benedict</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87534913141">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87534913141</a>	Meeting ID: 8753 491 3141
Thursday 14 July @ 7pm	<b>Joint event with the Kindertransport Association of America</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81277417797">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81277417797</a>	Meeting ID: 8127 741 7797
Monday 18 July @ 10.30am	<b>Online yoga: Get fit where you sit</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439</a>	Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439
Monday 18 July @ 4pm	<b>A presentation about the historic Jewish Ghetto in Venice</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/82628671547">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/82628671547</a>	Meeting ID: 826 2867 1547
Monday 25 July @ 10.30am	<b>Online yoga: Get fit where you sit</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439</a>	Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439
Monday 25 July @ 4pm	<b>July Quiz</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86742757642">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86742757642</a>	Meeting ID: 867 4275 7642
Tuesday 26 July @ 2pm	<b>Eram Sera-Shria – The life of Harry Houdini</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85419551628">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85419551628</a>	Meeting ID: 8541 955 1628
Wednesday 27 July @ 2pm	<b>Liz Whetton – The Cedar Boys at Waddesdon Manor</b> <a href="https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87071475213">https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87071475213</a>	Meeting ID: 8707 147 5213



## CALLING ALL KNITTERS

The AJR's new knitting group welcomes everyone from complete beginners to the most experienced *matinée* jacket knitters, to enjoy together all that knitting can offer.

Thought to have originated in Egypt in the 5th century, knitting is used commercially throughout the world but also offers many benefits as a hobby. As well as improving manual dexterity and hand eye coordination,

knitting can help mental health by lowering blood pressure, reducing anxiety and depression, and slowing the onset of dementia. Joining a knitting group also increases wellbeing and reduces isolation.

So please come and join us, whether you would like to learn or can help other people learn. Crocheters welcome also!

Please contact Noemi via  
[noemi@ajr.org.uk](mailto:noemi@ajr.org.uk)

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