



Jewish Refugees in Wales

On 18 February an exhibition on refugees from Nazism who settled in Wales will open at the Senedd and Pierhead Gallery in Cardiff. It will run until 19 April 2023 and is accompanied by Andrea Hammel's new book, *Finding Refuge* (reviewed by Lilian Levy in the December issue of *AJR Journal*).



Miners Singing, by Josef Herman, who fled from Poland in 1938. In 1944 he went to Ystradgynlais in the Swansea valley. His visit was initially for a fortnight's holiday, but he ended up staying for eleven years. He said: "I stayed here because I found all I required."

The exhibition, which first opened at Aberystwyth University in November, is curated by Andrea Hammel and Morris Brodie.

Hammel, born in West Germany in 1968, came to Britain in 1988 and has written widely on the literature and history of German-speaking refugees, including autobiographies and memoirs, issues of translation, German-Jewish literature and culture, focusing in particular on women's writing. She is a committee member of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies at the University of London and is a member of the Editorial Board of the Centre's Yearbook.

The story of Jewish refugees who came to

Wales in the 1930s and '40s is a fascinating one. Some came as children, staying with foster parents, others as adults. Some only came briefly, like the photographer Edith Tudor-Hart (née Suschitzky) who only worked in Wales for a few months in 1934-5, others stayed for the rest of their lives. Some became well known, like the artists Josef Herman, Heinz Koppel and Martin Bloch (a curious omission from the exhibition and the book) and Edith Tudor-Hart, most did not. For some, their time in Wales was a period of enormous creativity and success, for others it was a desperately sad time, a period of displacement and loss. Edith Tudor-Hart's father, an Austrian Jewish bookseller, committed suicide in 1934, the

Continued on page 2

GREAT HONOURS

Just as we went to press we received news of the sad passing of Zigi Shipper BEM, on his 93rd birthday.

Zigi, who survived Auschwitz-Birkenau and Stutthof, was an indefatigable speaker and his passing highlights the importance of expertly conserving Holocaust testimonies. This will be the subject of AJR's International Testimony Forum in April – please see p17 for details.

Meanwhile we are delighted that several other AJR members who also contribute to Holocaust education have been honoured by His Majesty The King – see full story on p3.

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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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Jewish refugees in Wales (cont.)

mother of Kate (born *Käthe*) Bosse died at Ravensbrück, Josef Herman lost his entire family in Poland during the Holocaust, Paul Schoenmann's mother was murdered at Chelmno, Heinz Koppel's mother at Treblinka and Lia Lesser's father at Auschwitz and her mother at Terezin. Perhaps the saddest stories of all, are of Renate Collins from Prague, who lost sixty-four relatives during the Holocaust, and of three-year-old twins, Lotte and Susi Bechhofer, who arrived in the UK in 1939 and were sent to live with Welsh foster parents. Lotte was diagnosed with a brain tumour and needed constant care until her early death at 35. Susi was sexually abused by her foster father and incidents from her life were later used by WG Sebald in his novel, *Austerlitz*.

For others, separation was more complicated. Harry Weinberger, who came to Britain with the Kindertransport, was separated from his parents when he was 15. They later met up in Switzerland but by then he was in his early twenties and the meeting was 'embarrassing.' 'They were not what I remembered,' he recalled, 'and they didn't seem that interested in what had happened to me.' Harry felt that they never managed to have a close parent-child relationship again.

A surprising number of Jewish refugee artists settled in Wales. Edith Tudor-Hart was born into a Viennese Jewish family in

1908. She moved between Vienna and Britain until the 1930s and came with her husband Alex Tudor-Hart to Llanelli, in south Wales, in 1934. There she took some of her most famous photographs of marching miners (*Demonstration in the Rhondda*) and working-class streets (*South Wales*) but after returning to London she and her husband separated and their only child was in and out of institutions. Her career as a photographer came to an end in 1952 though she lived on until the 1970s. The painter and art teacher Heinz Koppel moved to Dowlais, near Merthyr Tydfil, in 1944 and stayed there till 1956. The surrounding Welsh countryside and the decaying industrial areas of south Wales became two of his main subjects. Harry Weinberger also became an artist and art teacher. Josef Herman, a refugee from Warsaw, lived in a Welsh mining village, Ystradgynlais, from 1944-55 and became best known for his paintings and drawings of miners, especially a large mural for the Festival of Britain. It was in South Wales that he found his voice as an artist and a miners' choir sang the Welsh anthem at his memorial service half a century later. One of his works now hangs in the offices of Mark Drakeford, the First Minister of Wales.

There was a significant number of artists and photographers among the refugees who came to Wales but also a large number of businessmen. Because of rising unemployment in the early 1930s, the British government passed The Special Areas (Development and Improvement) Act in 1934 which gave priority to those who could create new employment opportunities by setting up businesses in deprived areas such as South Wales. Paul Schoenmann, a Viennese Jew, set up a business on the Treforest Industrial Estate, near Pontypridd. By May 1940, there were more than fifty refugee factories on the Treforest Estate, employing almost two

thousand workers. Many of these businesses lasted until the 1980s. Joachim Koppel fled from Germany to Czechoslovakia in 1933 and then eventually to Britain, and set up a business on the Treforest Estate, the company Aero Zip Fasteners Ltd., which by 1965 contributed one third of all British zip exports. Joachim's children included the artist Heinz Koppel who lived in Wales until 1956.

A third important group of Jewish refugees came to Wales as children. They arrived on the Kindertransport and came to live with Welsh foster parents or worked in Wales. Robert Borger, for example, came to Britain from Vienna at eleven and was fostered by two Welsh schoolteachers. He went on to become Professor of Psychology at Brunel University but committed suicide in 1983. Harry Weinberger started work at his uncle's factory on the Treforest Estate during the war and later became an artist. Some came to boarding schools in Wales such as The Czechoslovak State School in Llanwrtyd Wells (whose best-known pupil was Alf Dubs, now Lord Dubs), Bryn Gwalia Hall and Gwrych and Llandough Castles.

Many of these are fascinating stories. Some are less moving, but nevertheless interesting accounts of how entrepreneurs set up successful businesses in Wales or how many refugees fell in love with Wales and Welsh culture. Both the book and exhibition open our eyes to a little-known chapter of the refugee experience in Britain (only one of these names is mentioned in that fine book, *Second Chance*, an almost 700-page book on German-speaking Jews in Britain). For far too long the experience of Jewish refugees who settled in Wales (or who just passed through) has been neglected and it is time to acknowledge the achievements and the dark stories of many of these refugees.

David Herman




AJR PRIVATE TOUR OF THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

**Monday 20 March 2023
10.00am**

Please join us for a private guided tour of the Palace of Westminster and a special audience with Lord Austin of Dudley.

Lunch will follow in a nearby restaurant

Please email Karen Diamond for a booking form and more details on karendiamond@ajr.org.uk

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

AJR's Head of Education and Heritage, Alex Maws, is now helping to deliver training to educators around the world to counter antisemitism.

Alex is part of a team selected by UNESCO to develop and deliver international education programmes that address antisemitism in the framework of human rights and global citizenship. Its aim is to build the capacity of educational systems to address conspiracy theories, Holocaust denial

and all other forms of antisemitism.

In recent months Alex has taken part in workshops with teachers from Canada, Romania and the United States, helping them to develop strategies to counter hate speech and promote social cohesion among students.

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS FOR AJR MEMBERS

The AJR is delighted that a number of our members were included in the King's New Years Honours list. We especially congratulate the following:



Michael Brown, 92, has been awarded a British Empire Medal for his services to Holocaust education and awareness. Mr Brown left Germany in the wake of Kristallnacht and has spoken to many voluntary organisations, religious groups and school children in the UK and Germany about his experiences of fleeing Nazi persecution.



Michael Karp, 64, was awarded an OBE for services to Holocaust Education and Remembrance. Mike, of course, took over the Chair of the AJR last January.

His award is rightful recognition for his many years of service as a Trustee of the Holocaust Educational Trust.



speaking widely in the press about the need to stand up against antisemitism. Her memoir, *Lily's Promise*, published in 2021 after her great-grandson Dov used social media to find the American soldier who liberated her, became an instant bestseller.



Yvonne Bernstein, 85, is also to be made an MBE for services to Holocaust education. She has spent nearly 20 years volunteering at the Jewish Museum and the Wiener Library and has raised the profile of Holocaust Memorial Day by appearing publicly with the Duchess of Cambridge.



Harry Olmer, 95, who marked his third bar mitzvah only recently at Mill Hill Synagogue, said: 'Receiving an MBE was completely unexpected, I had no idea. I wish everyone who has received an honour a huge mazel tov!'



Finally, AJR is also delighted that one of Britain's highest honours was bestowed on **Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis**, who has been knighted as a Commander of the British Empire in recognition of his "significant services to the Jewish community, to interfaith relations and to education".



Harry Heber MBE, 92, who arrived via Kindertransport from Vienna in December 1938, aged just seven. He became an optician, and for many years volunteered with World Jewish Relief, making prescription glasses to send to poverty stricken Jewish communities in Eastern Europe.



Susan Pollack OBE, 93, survived Auschwitz but found out after the War that more than 50 of her relatives had been killed and that only her brother had survived. Susan now lives in London and regularly shares her testimony in schools across the country.

Another Holocaust survivor who was honoured this year is **Lily Ebert**, 99, who is to be made an MBE after

MAZELTOV MARION



AJR member Ilse Paxton, usually known as Marion, is pictured here having tea on her 102nd birthday on 10 December 2022. Beside her is her sister Irene and her family. Marion was born and grew up in Dresden but now still lives in the house in Old Windsor that she bought with her late husband, Richard in the 1950s.



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The Hyphen rides again

It wasn't just about gin & jokes, but they certainly helped break the ice! AJR's new group for descendants of Holocaust survivors and refugees aged between 18 – 40, named The Hyphen after the AJR youth club of the 50s & 60s, launched in January with an online event attended by over 50 young people.

Participants enjoyed a gin & tonic while watching award-winning stand-up comedian, Philip Simon, himself the grandson of a Holocaust refugee. But, as said by Hyphen committee member Joel Hockman, the evening wasn't just about 'gin and jokes.' Theatre-maker Emma Brand told us about 'The Stove', part participatory performance, part communal meal, which The Hyphen will be running in April, while Paul Salmons, chief curator of 'Seeing Auschwitz' explained the thinking behind this exhibition, which The Hyphen will be visiting at the beginning of February.

There was also an opportunity to hear from The Hyphen committee members, after which we broke out into small groups to chat and get to know each other. Keep an eye on our website and newsletter for more news about future Hyphen events, or contact Next Generations manager Debra Barnes (debra@ajr.org.uk) to be put on the mailing list.

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MEET THE HYPHEN COMMITTEE



Joel Hockman: Having spent nearly 20 years doing my own family research, I've had a strong interest in the Holocaust for a number of years. Three of my grandparents were born in Vienna, one of whom was a ballet dancer, the other coming to the UK on a domestic visa and my grandfather via the Czech Republic arriving a few days before war broke out. I discovered some new family during lockdown and wrote up my family tree, which now has over 400 people and 800 photos – not such a small family after all! I'm looking forward to meeting other 3rd and 4th Generations and to hearing about their family stories and what it has meant to them being a 3rd Generation.



Hannah Goldstone: To have a dedicated group for grandchildren and even great-grandchildren of Holocaust survivors is necessary for so many reasons; to share stories and to support others being just two. I was delighted to be asked to be involved with this new AJR group. Having been involved with AJR for many years, having a dedicated group for my age group, linked to this organisation that meant so much to my Zadie (grandpa) is important to me and my family, as it is to many others. I am excited to hear what people want from this group and how it will develop.



Joshua Zitser: I wanted to get involved with The Hyphen because the AJR has played an important role in my family history. Over the years, my grandpa John, a Kindertransport survivor, and grandma Marlene, an Auschwitz survivor, were involved and benefited from the AJR's work. My mother, Lisa, volunteers with the AJR by visiting survivors. And, over the lockdown, I took part in the "My Story" project – a deeply fulfilling experience. Getting involved in The Hyphen was a no-brainer for me because I'm committed to helping ensure AJR has the longevity and prominence it deserves.



Joshua Ross: I am the proud grandson of Leopold Wiener, who fled Czechoslovakia in 1939 aged seven. I was privileged to be introduced to the work of the AJR via Michael Newman, whom I met at the Terezin Declaration Conference in Prague last year which I was attending as part of the UK delegation. I decided to put myself forward to be on the Hyphen 3rd Generation committee to help promote the importance of telling our family's stories of the Holocaust to the future generations. I hope that we can continue to share our ancestor's experiences and keep the flame of their memories alive in the work we do.

DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON'S LETTER FROM ISRAEL



A KIND OF COEXISTENCE



Winter has been reluctant to arrive here in Israel, and as I write this in mid-December we can enjoy the balmy

sunshine (and not having to heat our homes), though our fields and gardens yearn for rain. However, the silver lining to the lack of clouds is that every day is a nice day for going out into the countryside and enjoying the benefits of nature. And after a little exertion in the open air there is nothing better than a slap-up meal in one of the restaurants in nearby Abu Ghosh, where shops and restaurants are open on Shabbat. Our favourite is the *Caravan*, partly because the food is good, it has a lovely view over the Jerusalem hills and also because, in contravention to the Moslem ban on alcohol observed by the other Arab restaurants, it serves wine (and no good meal should be without wine).

Our suburb of Mevasseret Zion sits on a hill overlooking the road to Jerusalem. Occupying the next hill along is the Arab village of Abu Ghosh. At the time of Israel's War of Independence in 1948, when Jerusalem was under siege and the convoys bringing supplies to the embattled city were attacked by the residents

of the Arab villages along the road, the villagers of Abu Ghosh did not join in these attacks, preferring to remain neutral or even aid the Zionists. In the years following Israel's independence the main road from Jerusalem down to the coastal plain went through Abu Ghosh, where some enterprising residents opened a restaurant and café called *The Caravan*. Travellers, including military personnel, often stopped and refreshed themselves before continuing on their way, as in the early years of Israel's existence the roads were poor, narrow and badly maintained. In those days each trip out of the capital was not as easy as it is today.

Now the highway from Jerusalem down to the plain is wide and well-kept, and the former main road still winds through Abu Ghosh, passing shops and garages as well as restaurants. In the seventy-odd years since Israel's independence the village has flourished and expanded, its residents have built themselves fine houses, their economy has prospered and the ancient church in the village has hosted music festivals (currently in abeyance as repairs are being made to the roof).

Mevasseret Zion's local council cooperates with that of Abu Ghosh in matters concerning security and regional administration, so that it came as a shock when the national news broadcast reported that cars in Abu Ghosh had been burned and slogans denigrating Arabs daubed on walls there. Together with other local

authorities, the Mevasseret council was quick to condemn that action, publishing a full-page notice to that effect in the local paper. Meetings between the two local councils were held, and quick and competent police work led to the arrest of the perpetrators.

One of the by-products of that shocking event was a call by residents of Mevasseret to show their support for Abu Ghosh by frequenting its shops and residents, We were happy to comply with that request, and when we got to the restaurant we found ourselves facing a printed notice inside the entrance stating (in Hebrew) 'Because we are all Brothers.'

That notice was issued by the Reform movement in Israel, and I wonder how long that organisation will be allowed to continue to function in Israel once the new government is installed. But the message of the notice is clear, and one can only hope that the spirit of brotherly love, tolerance and acceptance of the other will be allowed to persist.

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Letters to the Editor

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STOLPERSTEINE

Having read the informative article (December 2022) on Vienna's *Steine der Erinnerung* (Stones of Remembrance), I would like to share two takeaways from my recent experience during the placement of Stolpersteine in Germany for my grandfathers. The stones of remembrance are placed outside the houses where victims of the Holocaust lived. In Leipzig a house on the Nordstrasse bearing the number 41, my maternal grandfather's address and very similar to how my mother had described the building, was not my grandfather's home at all. The entire street had been bombed and obliterated, German historians who arrange the placements said. Rather than placing the memorial plaque in front of a building unrelated to my grandfather, I agreed for it to be placed at the nearest intersection to what had been his home, where many more people would see it there.

My widowed paternal grandfather lived with my parents, two sisters and me in Halle-Saale until he was deported to Poland where he perished. Halle's *Verein Zeit Geschichten* who arrange the stones said it was now customary to place stones for survivors as well, meaning my parents, my two sisters who have passed away and me. I was initially hesitant to be memorialised, but agreed when I realised that six stones instead of one would be a much more visible reminder of the Holocaust to all who walked past.

Eve Kugler, London N3

WE SAW IT COMING

David Herman's article *Understanding January 1933* interested me immensely as I can recall that period in my life very clearly. I was seven and a half at the time, my sister was 13. I remember her coming home from skating one day (we used to skate on the pond in the park in our native Fuerth) full of what she had overheard while getting ready to go home:

*Der Winter, der ist kalt,
Der Hindenburg ist alt,
Wir brauchen einen Mittler,
Und der heisst Adolf Hitler,
Heil Hitler!*

That in itself was enough to put us – especially our mother – on our guard.

Hitler had been the *Reichskanzler*, Hindenburg the *Reichspräsident*. Hitler soon assumed the role and title of *Reichspräsident* as well.

My parents had made arrangements to move to nearby Nuremberg, where my father was the assistant manager of the Dresdner Bank, and my sister was to have gone to grammar school (Gymnasium) in April. We did make the move, although my parents were aware that they might soon emigrate, which we did a couple of months later. It wasn't an easy decision; we were some of the first but my mother saw it all coming even then – or almost. Czechoslovakia would have been the first choice as it was the nearest but seemed too near for my mother's liking. England, where we had a number of relatives, she thought too expensive; in Yugoslavia my father had a sister, so that is how we got to settle in Maribor (Slovenia). Then letters arrived from Germany containing stupid remarks such as "Why did you leave in such a hurry? "Es wird heisser gekocht als gegessen". Our experience in Maribor was awful at first and made my mother wonder whether she had made a mistake and she became depressed. We did the right thing though.
Margaret Stern, London, NW3

CONCENTRATION CAMP v. GHETTO

Many thanks to Frank Bright for pointing out that Theresienstadt (Terezín in Czech) was very different to concentration camps such as Auschwitz, as illustrated by sharing his personal experience of both. My husband Ben's sister and brother-in-law, depicted in the wedding photo published with mine and Tony Kushner's article, were transported from Terezín to the concentration camps of Trawniki and Majdanek respectively, where they perished.

Helen Abeles, Leicester

A CHALLENGE

I always look forward to the arrival of the *AJR Journal*. However, recently, I have been disappointed by the dearth of *Letters to the Editor*. In the good old days, I would

first read the excellent Anthony Grenville and then, immediately, turn to the *Letters* pages. Yes, there were pages of them, with members telling us of their experiences of the Holocaust and how they settled in the UK. I realise, of course, that sadly many who wrote are no longer with us but we do have their children and their grandchildren. Surely, they too have stories to tell.

About twenty years ago the Editor at the time asked me to write controversial letters to the *Journal* to stimulate others to respond. This proved successful and so I am going to have a go again at encouraging members to write. Please note – this is being done on my own initiative. I have not been asked by the current Editor to increase her email inbox. I am not even sure whether she agrees with me, or whether she will publish this letter. Let's see, but, in case she does, please tell us about yourselves. We want to get to know you. Once we were all refugees. Haven't we come a long way?

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts.

Note from Editor: I am always delighted to receive letters from our readers, however controversial. Sadly, with a restricted number of pages available, we cannot print them all or in their entirety but I hope you still enjoy the selections that we include.

MEETING THE KING

On 16 December my wife Caryl and I were invited to JW3 for a Chanukah lunch. As we arrived on a snowy icy day, we remarked how much security there was. We sat down for lunch to musicians playing Jewish music. We started dancing and then a special guest arrived with an entourage: HM King Charles III. He came in smiling and started going around the hall talking to everyone.

He then joined us in dancing the hora which he really enjoyed, even kissing a couple of older ladies on their cheeks. He was then formally welcomed by Dame Vivienne Duffield, the founder of JW3. At the end of her speech she presented him with a beautiful menorah which he thanked her for. On leaving he came to our table and asked if we had enough to eat and had we enjoyed the food. He was so charming and really

seemed to be enjoying himself. It was a real honour to be part of this. Long may he reign over us.
Kurt Wick, London NW7

COMPLIMENTS

I discovered your group as a fan of Miriam Margolyes. I was scouring the internet for interviews with Ms. Margolyes and came upon *In Conversation with Miriam Margolyes* by Agnes Isaacs.

After watching the interview, I became interested in learning more about your organisation. As a non-Jew with Jewish friends, I have always taken great interest in learning about the many plights of the Jewish people with an open and compassionate heart. I joined your organisation as a non-Jewish 'overseas friend to the AJR' in hopes of following your research and informative articles. I look forward to receiving each issue of the *AJR Journal* here in America; I am delighted to read it and I learn something new with each edition.

Best of luck in the future to your organisation and your members. I look forwarding to remaining a friend to the AJR.
David Michael Monk, New York, USA

HISTORY

I was delighted with David Herman's leading article (December) on the Continental Britons exhibition which marked the AJR's 60th anniversary in 2002 and the current publication of *Emigré Voices* which eventually resulted. When the original Holocaust exhibition was opened by the late Queen at the Imperial War Museum in 2000, I conceived the idea of a major cultural event which would relate the experiences of the 70,000 German and Austrian Jews who found sanctuary in Britain.

The Jewish Museum and its director responded most positively, offering the design and construction of the displays as well as the main venue in which to display the history. Additionally, the research, collection of documents, photos and authorship were readily accepted by Dr Bea

Lewkowicz and Dr Anthony Grenville; I invited and led senior representatives of the Wiener Library, the Imperial War Museum, the Jewish Music Festival, the Museum of London and others onto a working group.

Bea, who with Anthony had received relevant interview training from the Shoah Foundation, discussed the possibilities of making a film of some 20 interviews as part of the exhibition. Despite a rival bid for funding, AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman accepted my recommendation that we could do this in-house and gave the AJR's full support.

Anthony Grenville generously undertook to author a brilliant short history of the refugee community in record time, which I had specially designed and printed. The opening ceremony had a full house and welcomed special guests Sir Claus Moser, Andrew Sachs of *Faulty Towers* fame, and Rabbi Julia Neuberger who led a panel discussion.

Taking all associated events into consideration, *Continental Britons* attracted 10,000 visitors, a previously unheard-of number.
Ronald Channing, Stanmore

Note from Editor: Ronald is the Former Executive Editor of the AJR Journal.

LOOKING FOR?

POLISH AJEX

Does anyone know any families of the Polish Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women Association, an organisation which was affiliated to AJEX for many years post war? Their chair was a GP, Dr L Kurtzner/Kurzer. If you know of any contacts please ask them to e-mail or phone Martin Sugarman, AJEX archivist, on martin.sugarman@yahoo.co.uk 07806 656756

RUTH MONK

Dr. Zev Munk seeks information about Ruth Monk, born 1920 in Lodz, Poland. Mother Rywka (née Hendeles), father Moszek (Moshe) Monk, brother Avraham (Abram) Monk. Deported from Lodz to Auschwitz in 1944. May have survived. Possibly came to England in 1947.
zevmunk@gmail.com

Note from Editor: This is a repeat of the Search notice which appeared in the August 2022 issue of the AJR Journal. Owing to a computer glitch, Dr. Munk requests that the kind lady who replied then do so again. Many thanks!

AJR trip to Bletchley Park



THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY

Bletchley Park is an English country house and estate in Bletchley, Milton Keynes, that became the principal centre of Allied code-breaking during WW2. The nature of the work at Bletchley remained secret until many years after the war. Bletchley Park features interpretive exhibits and huts that have been rebuilt to appear as they did during their wartime operations.

More info: Ros Hart
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ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

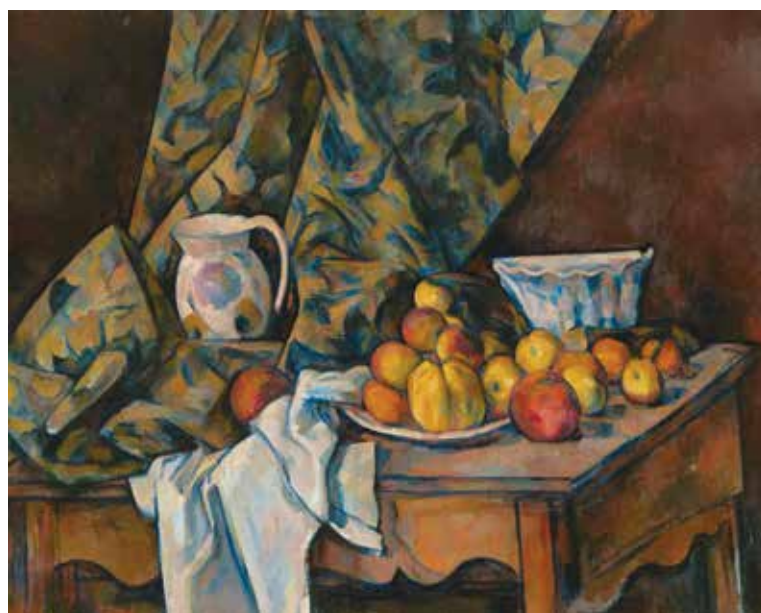
It is in the lack of perspective, the rounded shapes of fruit, the languid, elliptical nude bathers that you see the path to abstraction and conceptual art. Cezanne at Tate Modern offers, perhaps the first among artists of his era, a glimpse of what is to come from the brush of Matisse, Picasso and Mondrian.

The long, oval rigidity of Mme Cezanne's expression in her yellow, embossed chair, screwed up eyes and tight-lipped scowl is something that underscores Cezanne's reputation as a misogynistic genius. Does this rather unattractive work foreshadow darker images by the artist, such as *The Abduction*, a furtive painting showing two nudes, the aggressor painted in violent red, carrying off a woman whose pallor suggests innocent victimhood?

In letters to fellow painter Émile Bernard, Cezanne advised treating nature in terms of geometric shapes, the cylinder, the sphere, the cone. When he painted people, he used these shapes to convey bodies, not souls which he claimed did not interest him. Returning to his portrait of *Mme Cezanne*, some may see her

calm gentle spirit in this, an ineffable glimpse into an attenuated spirit, but to me it shows something less pleasant: irritability, crossness, moods which are also reflected in her clenched hands, as though she is urging her husband to get on with the portrait so she can carry on with her chores. More inscrutable still is his portrait of *Mme Cezanne in a Red Armchair*. Here her eyes are downcast and her hands are not clenched, but neither is she enjoying the experience of being painted.

Arguably he was kinder with fruit. "I will astonish Paris with an apple" he said. In some folkloric traditions, apples are associated with divination, the underworld and eternal life. The biblical Eve obviously had something to do with it. If you look closely at the tousled cloth on the wooden table in his *Still Life with Apples and Peaches*, you might glimpse two hands reaching for the table and making a grab for the fruit. Again, it might just be a trick of the imagination. Cezanne's still lifes dangle in the air which the perspective painters of the time would have balked at; and yet they work; perhaps because he seems to observe but not enter them. Neither the fruit nor the nude bathers have anything sensual about them. They are just points of observation, and perhaps by taking himself literally out of the picture – even



Can you spot any hands in *Still life with apples and peaches*, painted in 1905?

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PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

in his own selfies – that becomes the issue rather than the work itself.

Cezanne may have heralded, perhaps inadvertently, the modernisation of art, simply because his painted objects, people or things, remain compass points on the map of visualisation. Looking and feeling the shapes can open the way to seeing the world differently; if the portraits are inscrutable and fail to draw you in, they seem to be an avatar for mystery, for not knowing, for controlled thought rather than emotional involvement, for the sheer art of watching. And that is what these paintings invite us to do.

Yet there is another, darker side to Cezanne. Apart from *The Abduction* there is also *The Murder*, a work of sheer physical brutality, with nothing detached or distanced about it. One man holds down a woman while the killer delivers the *coup de grace*. The killer's face is not seen, simply the rough muscularity of his body, and the victim is only recognised by a scream and a fall of blonde hair and an outstretched arm. It is a terrifying painting, said to have been inspired by the themes in the novels of his lifelong friend Emile Zola, a supporter of Alfred Dreyfus in his acclaimed book *J'Accuse*. This is ironic because Cezanne was said to have held right wing views and expressed his antisemitism over the Dreyfus Affair, while the Tate tries to present him as a politically concerned artist disturbed by the fate of women.

In another disturbing painting, *The Eternal Feminine*, a blonde nude woman is presented in a pointed white arc or sheet in an almost Christ-like sacrificial pose, surrounded by well-dressed professional men. The arc suggests a surrogate cross.

Finally this great post-Impressionist artist continues to keep his distance from us all, unable to look any of us in the eye.

At London's Tate Modern until 12 March.

AN ENRICHING PEACE SERVICE

In recent years the AJR has greatly benefitted from the services of volunteers from Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP), a German peace organisation founded to confront the legacy of Nazism. One of the two volunteers at the AJR this year is Clara Burger, a 19-year-old student from Tübingen in southern Germany, who shares her experience of her first three months with us.

After graduating from high school in 2021 and one year of working and travelling, I wanted to live abroad for a longer period. I also knew that the work of ARSP would interest and challenge me, to grow personally and to broaden my horizons.

I was delighted that my year was going to take place in London. I was originally supposed to work at the South London Refugee Association. But it wasn't until I switched to the AJR and had my first zoom call in summer with Fran that the anticipation really began to grow.

Eight German and four Polish volunteers came to the UK with me. London itself was very overwhelming and it was difficult to realise that this city would be my home for a year.

In Cricklewood, in north west London, the beautiful Lioba house is home to seven women, three of whom are external students. Sharing it with three other fellow volunteers from ARSP is wonderful.

Five days a week I now work at the AJR with my fellow volunteer, Greta. The AJR thrives on encounters with members in various forms and at different events. The prospect that many survivors from the first generation will soon no longer be around raises questions about how to connect the next generations with one another and how to preserve the testimonies and



Clara enjoyed meeting AJR members at the inaugural meeting of AJR's new Central London group, in a pub near Baker Street

legacies of the eye witnesses in a sustainable way.

Having access to the AJR's numerous resources and being able to read individual stories is not only enriching for me personally, but also provides content for social media. Right from the beginning, I enjoyed working with the website, thinking about how to present the stories on social media and getting an insight into the organisation's PR work.

What I'm most grateful for is that I can meet the members. At least twice a week I travel to different corners of London to attend meetings and by now also to visit individual members in their homes.

I've also been able to join day trips to meetings in Birmingham and Norwich which has been a great way to see AJR members across the UK. At the annual AJR Tea in October, I was able not only to enjoy delicious English sandwiches (definitely something that is missing in Germany!), but could really see the value of organisations like the AJR in providing social environment for elderly people in particular.

I appreciate how open everyone is and how many are simply happy to talk. Second – and third-generation members sometimes feel even more the need to share their parents' stories. Each member of the AJR has a different background. Many came to Britain with the Kindertransport in 1938/39, which plays a big role in remembering the Holocaust in Great Britain. That is why the lives are shaped by families torn apart, arriving alone in a foreign country and gratitude for being able to build a new life in safety in Britain. But often they also speak of

many happy years as British citizens.

On 9 November, all ARSP volunteers were able to attend the AJR's 'Kristallnacht service'. Various people spoke about their own experiences or those of their ancestors, which was very moving for all the volunteers.

The AJR's Jewish Awareness Training, which all ARSP volunteers attended in September, provided a basic understanding of Jewish culture and tradition. Then on Simchat Torah a colleague invited us to her synagogue and I was amazed by the dancing and singing celebrating the different Torahs. Greta and I were warmly welcomed and, as with all Jewish events, we tasted the incredibly delicious food.

The rich cultural offerings in London are fabulous. Musicals, theatres of all kinds and, of course, museums: everything is available. The museums are almost all free and if you know where to look, you can also get good discounts for other events, so we have had great theatre evenings at the National Theatre.

I would like to express my big thanks to everyone who is supporting me this year. None of this would be possible without you! I would also like to thank the IJFD which, together with ARSP, supports my peace service financially.

A special thank you to the AJR for giving me so many opportunities and for being a great support for my year in London. Every person at AJR always strives to give us the best time.

Greetings from London and cheers!

HONOURING WHO SAVED JEWS

In December a very special ceremony took place in northern Israel to award the badge of honour of 'Jewish Rescuer' – mostly posthumously – to 209 members of Hungary's Zionist Youth Resistance Movement. Yuval Alpan is the son of 'Pil', one of the leaders of this movement, and believes this has happened not a moment too soon.



Recipients of the awards, or their descendants, with their certificates

When the Germans invaded Hungary on 19 March 1944 the Zionist youth movements consciously decided not to revolt. Not to take up arms. Instead they decided to try to save their friends, their families and as many as possible of their own people.

They sent messengers to warn the hundreds of Jewish communities all around Hungary. In an operation code named 'Tiyul', thousands of young men and women were smuggled across the border from Hungary to Romania. They operated from the 'Glass House', hiding about 3000 people there. In a daring and sophisticated operation 120 of their captured comrades were released from 'Margit', the central military prison in Budapest. Dozens of them went out into the deadly streets day and night to

find hiding places and food, clothing and money for the persecuted. They provided identification papers that made survival possible for the thousands who needed them, and rescued thousands from the clutches of the 'Arrow Cross' gangs.

Someone wrote to me a few days ago: "The natural instinct in this situation would be to protect yourself, and the sooner the better, but this group of rescuers were there from the beginning to the end, with risks to their lives not on a daily basis but on an hourly basis. It's unimaginable!"

After the coup d'état of the 'Arrow Cross' on 15 October 1944, the pioneers realised that any attempt to create a rebellion or an armed uprising would certainly result in extermination. "So we decided with a clear head", they told me, "because the weight of every Jewish survivor, every boy and girl, is immeasurably greater and more important than how many praises will be recorded in the history of the People of Israel for the brave rebels who sacrificed their lives".

Many fell, were tortured and murdered while fulfilling their mission. None of them expected a medal or asked for recognition. They simply wanted to save

and be saved. In their heroic deeds they saved tens of thousands of Jews. Yet until now many of these heroes have not been formally recognised.

"What did you actually do?" the members of the youth movements who managed to immigrate to Israel from Hungary were asked again and again. "Did you simply forge certificates?" It seemed that in Israel they were taken for granted. As if nothing had been done, and rescue was a matter of course.

In one of his speeches my father, Moshe Alpan (Pil), said: "In the situation we were in during those fateful days, the moral equation had only one answer: the value of life is equal to the number of souls you can save." Then he said, perhaps a little bluntly: "Salvation is a grey matter, compared to blood which is red!" He also asked, in his own poignant way: "How many Jews do you have to save to get a line of honour in history?"

Until recently no settlement or institution, no badge or memory had been established for the special heroism of the Zionist youth movements in Hungary, to recognise the tremendous rescue operations they carried out. Not even a street, square or alley is named after their rescue operations. To this day there is little public awareness or understanding of the motives of these Jewish rescuers and their willingness to sacrifice their lives for the sake of others.



The event invitation

NG HEROES IN HUNGARY 1944



Let us not forget they had no obligation to save others. They listened to their personal, group and movement conscience and took the initiative. They took responsibility and acted, perhaps in the noblest of human behaviour they saved other people. In their actions, they were secret fighters – an example of Jewish and Humanitarian solidarity.

Yoshko Meir, one of the heroes of the underground movement, disguised himself in the 'Arrow Cross' uniform to rescue members of the Resistance in distress. He delivered and distributed hundreds of sponsorship letters for the people who were being taken on the death marches. In his book *The Way of a Warrior* he wrote: "...but if the people of the pioneering underground took part in the historical victory, then they lost the battle for history! 'Why didn't you rebel?' they were asked, with increasing guilt and insolence. 'How many weapons did you have? Why didn't you prepare?'"

But as Meir himself went on to note, dead heroes would have been absolutely no use to the land of Israel. So Meir, my father and their comrades focused their entire war on securing the future of the people of Israel. They refused to turn their lives and deaths to become martyred legends, and they always felt blamed for that.

"We knew," they said "that the nation of Israel cannot exist without Jews. Every soul in Israel must be saved, every Jew must be

uprooted from the claws of the beast of prey, at any cost and by any means. Not a time for the sanctification of God – but a time for the sanctification of life."

In 1981 I was called to the reserve as a fighter in the naval commando unit for a top secret operation to rescue Jews from Ethiopia. We landed on the Sudanese coast in 20 rubber boats and took out about 300 Jews that the Israeli government had decided to rescue. During the operation, the Sudanese shot at our force. At the command of the commander, we did not return fire and did not attack. We worked to save, and we did everything to speed up the raising of the children, women and men upon the boats, and going out to sea to bring them to the ship *Bat Galim*, where a large team of Nurses and Doctors were waiting to treat the survivors in a miraculous way. We were trained soldiers! And we knew that the entire Defence Force of the State of Israel was on alert, behind us, in case something went wrong.

The Ethiopian Jews who were rescued were never asked why they didn't rebel. Yet our parents were asked again and again: 'why didn't you revolt?'. In Hungary, the underground were not trained soldiers and they had no backup. Not from anyone. And yet they recruited themselves into the reserves of the Jewish people. They decided not to take up arms, because there was no chance, but consciously decided to save the rest of the few remainders. Most of them

operated for a long period of time under cover, in compartmentalisation, and at daily and hourly risk. Many of them would have been able to escape themselves but they chose to stay. So I cannot understand why their actions have lain unrecognised until now.

A short story to end: my father and Aba Kovner, one of the leaders of the underground from the Vilna ghetto – both members of the same youth movement 'Hashomer HaTsair' – had a poignant principled debate for many years. Kovner claimed that the youth movements in Hungary should have revolted and taken up arms! Moshe Alpan claimed that they were not equipped for this and that they also knew the end of the war was already in sight, and it was already known that there were almost no Jews left in Europe. "We thought," he said, "that we must save all those who we can." At the end of his days Aba Kovner said to my father: "You were right!"

Note from editor: The event to honour these 209 men and women took place on 13 December at Kibbutz HaZore'a. The kibbutz was established by the Werkleute movement, a Jewish socialist movement that first sought to find alternatives for Jews in Germany, but in 1933, after Adolf Hitler's rise in Germany, the movement adopted a Labour Zionist vision of joining to the Yishuv in Mandatory Palestine and establishing a kibbutz.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS AT GLYNDEBOURNE

Julian Sutherland-Beaston's wonderful painting, featuring the 'cast' of the Glyndebourne tree planting event last January, including the tree, its plaque and the time capsule that was later placed alongside it.

Last January one of AJR's 80 Trees for 80 Years was planted in the grounds of Glyndebourne, one of the finest and most celebrated opera houses in the world. It was sponsored by Ruth Boronow Danson, whose family has close links with opera. Her daughter Jacqueline subsequently commissioned this fabulous painting of the tree planting event. She takes up the story:

If Mary Poppins and her charges popped through a painting to experience a world more vivid and exuberant than life, what I wanted was to do the exact reverse: step *out of* a painting and yet still experience the scene it depicted as though it were happening again today; tomorrow; every day. As indeed, in our hearts, it is.

Where they had fantasy, we'd have real life. Where they had a merry-go-round, we'd have an opera house; where their starry cast was Dick Van Dyke and Julie Andrews ours would be Danielle de Niese, Gus Christie, Jane Tassell, Phil Boot, family and AJR representatives. Not to be outdone by their muster of dapper dancing penguins, our own flock – fleecy singing sheep – would be equally engaging.

In January 2022, we had planted our AJR 80th anniversary tree (a hornbeam *fastigiata*) in the grounds of Glyndebourne, set amidst the quintessentially British East Sussex downs.

Come the awakening spring we had nestled our time capsule at its foot and seen that, already, it had inched up. As if on cue, a chorus of sheep suddenly hied over the adjacent down and (with well practised discernment) out-baa'd my impromptu speech with impeccable timing. Improvisation at its *fortissimo* finest.

Despite not being fantasy elements they featured nowhere in the lovely main photos of the day. Like Glyndebourne's archivist Phil who, after tea with our companions-



in-adventure in the famous Organ Room, had shown us contracts and photos of my father Charles Danson, who had been a chorus member of the Glyndebourne opera in the 1950s.

All these essential elements were an equally integral part of the memories. How to amalgamate them in a single glance? It seemed obvious to me: commission a painting to encapsulate the disparate animated components of the living experience into a fantasy compilation bounded by a single frame.

Luckily the perfect artist was at hand: Sussex-based contemporary realist Julian Sutherland-Beaston, who paints a fresh scene each night at Glyndebourne's Opera Festival.

I already had one of his paintings of the opera house auditorium, acquired years before our AJR tree and time capsule bound our hearts forever to that special place where Daddy sang, and where refugees Fritz Busch, Carl Ebert and Rudolf Bing – the latter commemorated in an AJR plaque – had played a seminal part in the founding of the Festival.

I had long been looking out for a companion Sutherland-Beaston painting depicting an outdoor scene. With the tree planting everything fell perfectly into place: what could be a more meaningful evocation of our special events?

It became obvious during the commissioning process, working from photos plus my verbal description, that Julian's overwhelming desire was to honour the spirit of the two indelible occasions where, in memory of my refugee parents and grandparents, their musical families and a family friend, we reflected their own and other refugees' ongoing assimilation by literally putting down roots in England.

We didn't go as far in the picture as including "go fly a kite", mainly because it wouldn't have been true to life when the other elements depicted so were. In our fantasy compilation authenticity was key. But – to us – the end result, revealed *con brio* last autumn on an easel in the Organ Room to a live audience of some of the cast of characters, could hardly have been more exhilarating, recreating so touchingly the establishment of our living memorial. Truly a legacy.

My mother Ruth Boronow Danson and I – with a member of our next generation, her great-niece Olivia Boswell – had picnicked by the flourishing tree during last summer's Festival. We hope to check in on it regularly.

But no matter how inclement the season, thanks to the enchanting painting we can relive the events and honour all that they stand for afresh each day in resplendent personalised technicolour.

HMD ROUND-UP

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) falls within one of the busiest seasons for AJR and its partners, many of whom organised special programmes around HMD. Here's a selection of partners' events, several of which benefitted from AJR's support.

Holocaust Educational Trust

The Trust coordinated c.100 events across the UK, including a live webcast for dozens of secondary schools. Pupils heard an eyewitness account from Ruth Posner BEM before collectively reflecting on the importance of the day.

Council for Christians and Jews

The Council brought together German descendants of perpetrators with some Jewish descendants of Holocaust survivors to share their commitment to carrying memories and testimony.

Facing History and Ourselves

Year 9 students from across Islington took part in three workshops before writing personal pledges to address antisemitism, discrimination and injustice. A separate webinar for educators provided them with lesson activities and other resources.

Imperial War Museums

The Portraits of Holocaust Survivors exhibition opened at IWM North in Manchester. In London the historian Dan Stone spoke about his new book: *The Holocaust, An Unfinished History*.

Manchester Jewish Museum

The Museum's special Open Day, entitled *We remember them in verbs*, included musical performances, a new exhibition and a baking workshop.

National Holocaust Centre and Museum

The Nottinghamshire museum branched out during the week of HMD, reaching Waltham Forest, Oxford, Sheffield and Manchester, among other places. It also shared two sets of new resources for schools.

National Literacy Trust

The Trust teamed up with award-winning author Tom Palmer to create free resources for students aged 9-14. 25,000 students across the country took part in a related online event.

University of Aberystwyth

The University hosted a talk by Ernie Hunter, whose parents are featured in the exhibition *Refugees from National Socialism in Wales* which was on show at the Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

The Amelia Scott, Tunbridge Wells


Duncan Lustig-Prean shared his mother's eyewitness account of Kristallnacht and renowned Holocaust educator Mike Levy shared tales from his book *Get The Children Out: Unsung Heroes of the Kindertransport*.

Gathering the Voices

The charity took its Gathering the Voices exhibition to Calderwood Lodge primary school where it was seen by over 300 pupils and staff, as well as local dignitaries involved in East Renfrewshire Council's HMD programme.

University of Winchester

The Education and History departments convened a discussion on the theme of 'Ordinary people', looking specifically at Holocaust education in classrooms and Holocaust representation in museums and films. Participants then led workshops and assemblies for around 1,500 local school students.



WILLIAM FRENCH
Butler to the Royal Family

THURSDAY 9TH FEBRUARY
 STARTING AT 11.30AM
 NORTH LONDON VENUE

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO INVITE YOU TO A FASCINATING, AND EYE-OPENING TALK BY WILLIAM FRENCH, BUTLER TO THE ROYAL FAMILY AND HOLLYWOOD STARS, FOLLOWED BY A DELICIOUS LUNCH.. WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF A ROYAL BUTLER! WILLIAM TALKS ABOUT HIS LIFE AND MANY ADVENTURES AND INCREDIBLE STORIES IN THE SERVICE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY AND WELL KNOWN CELEBRITIES.

PLEASE EMAIL ROS HART FOR A BOOKING FORM AND MORE DETAILS, ROSHART@AJR.ORG.UK
 £15 PER PERSON TO INCLUDE A KOSHER LUNCH

AJR FUNDING PARTNER

Imperial War Museums

In the fourth of our series looking at organisations that receive grant funding from the AJR, we focus on the Imperial War Museums, the UK's leading authority on the public understanding of war and conflict and the custodian of the national collection for the Holocaust.

In October 2021, new Second World War Galleries and new Holocaust Galleries opened at IWM London. The opening of these galleries was complemented by the launch of a dedicated Holocaust learning programme for secondary students, which is directly supported by the AJR.

The new learning programme will realistically span a time when there are no longer any survivors or eyewitnesses to the Holocaust alive in the UK, which will have profound implications on the way learners of all ages engage with this subject. Research conducted by IWM to inform the development of the Holocaust learning programme highlighted huge discrepancies in modern audiences' knowledge of the Holocaust, making IWM's responsibility to help improve public understanding of the Holocaust more important now than ever.

Aligned with the approach of The Holocaust Galleries, the new learning programme encourages students to understand that the Holocaust took place in modern times and to consider critically what this reveals about the complexity of human experiences, why and how societies enable genocide and to reflect on the roles and responsibilities of global citizens today.

AJR's support means that students are offered a hybrid learning experience that combines supported and facilitated discussion with digitally enabled self-guided and directed study exploring personal stories and objects in The Holocaust Galleries. Created in partnership with the digital agency Friday Sundae



Students taking part in the IWM's Holocaust Learning Programme

Studio, Olivier award winning playwright Stef Smith and in consultation with Jewish theatre maker Rachel Mars, pedagogy in game theory is used throughout the learning programme to encourage students' conversations with their peers about this complex subject.

Beginning with a facilitated discussion in IWM's Taube Family Holocaust Learning Centre, led by IWM Learning Practitioners who are experts in both museum and Holocaust education, this beginning session helps to identify students' pre-existing knowledge on the Holocaust, outline the learning outcomes of their visit and prepare them for the subject material that they will encounter whilst they visit the Holocaust Galleries. Following this, in smaller groups of three, students are guided with tablets through the galleries by IWM's Holocaust learning app, allowing the group to decide which areas and objects to focus on and asking them questions as they do. At the end of the session, students come back together in the learning centre to discuss what they have learned and to record their personal reflections by responding to the question: Why do we continue to study the Holocaust?

The in-gallery app also encourages students' confidence in navigating and engaging with exhibits. For example, it includes 3D scans of the objects on display with 'hotspots' which, when tapped on, reveal extra information about the provenance of objects, how museums come to acquire and look after objects and why objects are displayed in certain ways.

The AJR's support allowed IWM to consult directly with and invite secondary schools from across the UK to IWM London to ensure that the system and processes designed in the Holocaust learning app matched the aims and needs of both teachers and students visiting the galleries. As a result of this work, feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with one history teacher from Bristol stating that "interestingly the students who aren't particularly engaged in their history lessons in school and weren't necessarily interested about visiting The Holocaust Galleries, were the ones who were most interested in the app experience." IWM also recently welcomed Ofsted Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman to participate in the Holocaust learning programme and who following her visit described the galleries as "humbling, powerful, human and vital".

Commenting on the IWM's programme, AJR's Head of Education and Heritage, Alex Maws, said: "The IWM set out to re-think what a school visit to a museum could consist of, and the result of their effort is a truly unique experience for students who visit the Holocaust galleries. The learning programme makes innovative use of technology, which – somewhat counterintuitively – encourages *more* human interactions and more opportunities to engage with the human stories which are at the heart of the exhibition."

www.iwm.org.uk/learning/sessions/holocaust-learning-london

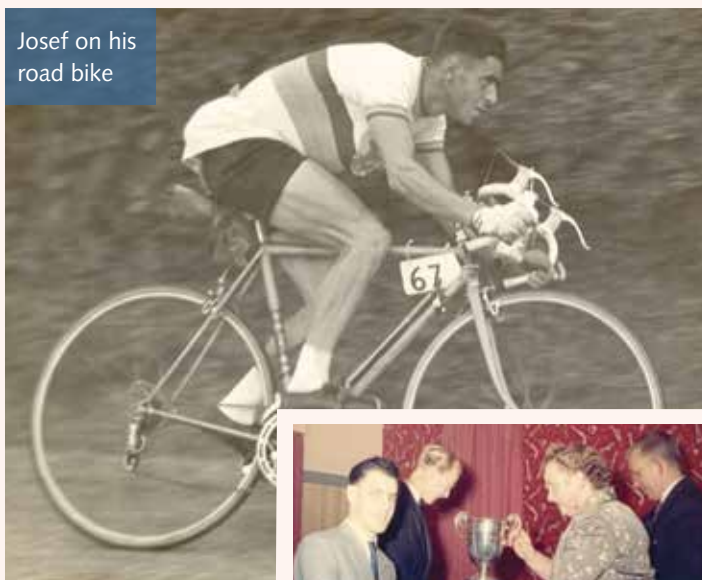
Josef Berger

HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR, WINDERMERE BOY AND AMATEUR RACING CYCLIST

Josef's father with pals in
Obertauern, Austria, 1953



Josef on his
road bike



Josef receiving a trophy

Josef Berger (also known as 'Pepie') survived three years in Theresienstadt ghetto and, following his liberation, made his way to Great Britain. He eventually settled in North London where he worked in the electronics industry and, following redundancy, became an active trade unionist. As well as being a staunch AJR supporter he was also an enthusiastic amateur racing cyclist.

Josef was born in Vienna on 30 June 1933. At the age of six weeks his mother left him in the care of a Roman Catholic family; sadly, he was never able to trace his mother after the war. He remained hidden with his foster family throughout the 1930s but following Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria in 1938, the family were forced in 1939 to send him to a children's home in Vienna. From there, in 1942, he was sent to Theresienstadt. He survived in the ghetto until its liberation by Russian forces in 1945; he would recall later that a Russian soldier gave him his first bar of chocolate for six years.

After liberation Josef made his way back to Vienna on foot from where he was lucky enough to be flown by Wellington bomber to Manchester, eventually to be taken to the Lake District to become one of the Windermere Boys. This was a programme led by Leonard Montefiore (later to become president and guiding

light of the Wiener Library) that brought about 300 boys and girls who had been in the camps to this country to recover and start their lives anew. Josef stayed on the Calgarth Estate, the wartime housing scheme near Windermere where his hostel was located. In 2009/10 Josef contributed to a BBC1 programme about the Windermere Boys and an extract from his oral testimony can be found online at 'The Lake District Holocaust Project', produced and managed by Another Space Ltd. (In January 2020 a drama/documentary, 'The Windermere Children', was also broadcast on BBC4).

Josef eventually settled in North London in Chingford where he started work in 1949 in the electronics industry, mostly with the Standard Telephones and Cable Company, until he was made redundant in 1982. Following this he studied at the Middlesex Polytechnic and went on to obtain a Certificate in Industrial Relations and a degree in Social Sciences. After graduating in 1989, Josef was involved with social research for the Waltham Forest Trade Union Resource Centre. He took British naturalisation in 1967 and, like many who had gone through similar experiences to his, he was very patriotic. He later wrote in his CV 'My experiences during the war were formative in shaping a commitment to working for a more just and fair society'. He became an active trade unionist and shop steward as well as convenor for the Transport and General Workers Union (now 'Unite').

Josef was keen on sport and keeping fit and healthy, and considered this to be his 'philosophy for a happy life'. In the 1950s

and 60s he was an amateur racing cyclist and a member of Tottenham Phoenix Road Cycling Club; in 1960 he recorded cycling over 252 miles in a 12-hour time trial. He continued cycling well into his later years and, in 2000 on a holiday to Austria, he recorded 120 kilometres on one ride, as well as quite a few on other days as well! He would have been 67 years of age at the time. On this trip he met up with his foster sister, Herti, with whom he had kept in touch, and visited his father's grave. He had previously been reunited with his father some time after the war.

Because of his incarceration and experiences in Theresienstadt, Josef's mental and physical health was to suffer for the rest of his life. In the 2000s he did manage to secure compensation and a pension from the Austrian authorities but, like many others in his position, this had been late in coming and was totally inadequate compared to his experiences. AJR members may remember Josef as he was close to the AJR and participated in events, including national and foreign holidays. Towards the end of his life, he took care at home given by the AJR, of which he was very appreciative, looking on the AJR as his family. Josef died in London on 13 January 2022.

Alan Freundlich
Volunteer
The Wiener Holocaust Library

REVIEWS

THE ISLAND OF EXTRAORDINARY CAPTIVES

Simon Parkin
Sceptre

On the outbreak of the Second World War the United Kingdom found itself with a number of Italians and Germans in its midst. Predominant among the latter were German Jewish refugees who had, though not mentioned in the book, officially lost their German citizenship. This was not enough to save many of them from internment as 'enemy aliens' on the Isle of Man. There were ten camps, but this is a very thoroughly researched account of just one of them, Hutchinson camp located in Douglas, the capital city. At one time there were around twelve hundred men in the camp, though the main focus is on the story of just two of them, the good Peter Fleischer and the unpopular Ludwig Warschauer.

Peter Fleischer grew up in the Auerbach orphanage in Berlin, came to the United Kingdom on the Kindertransport, and was interned on the Isle of Man where

he got tuition from the dadaist artist Kurt Schwitters. After eventual release he obtained first class honours at the Royal College of Art and taught at Beckenham School of Art. Ludwig Warschauer seems to have been instantly 'disliked by a majority of internees' for his bullying behaviour. He set up a Technical School at Hutchinson which gave him a powerful position in the camp. One report described him as 'entirely self-centred, cunning and arrogant-minded'. It turned out that he had obtained a passport out of Germany in return for agreeing to be part of an espionage mission. There is no evidence that he actually conducted any espionage but this was not enough to save him from imprisonment at Brixton in 1942.

As the book title highlights, the captives were not of the normal criminal type. They included artists, film directors, set designers, actors and leading academics. We are told of 'A constellation of stars', 'some of the finest and most influential German and Austrian painters', 'a high concentration of luminaries', 'some of the best-regarded scholars in Europe' and even a great-great grandson of Queen Victoria. In the words of one of the chapter headings they formed 'The University of Barbed Wire', at which lectures over

a wide range of intellectual topics were delivered. It's clear that Parkin chose to write about Hutchinson over the other camps because of the inmates' high level of excellence. At times it can appear as if the main scandal was the imprisonment of some outstandingly talented men rather than the more basic moral absurdity of confining German Jews out of fear that they might be pro-Nazi spies. In this way the British imprisoned the same category as did the Nazis. The book ends with a reminder that no British government has issued an apology.

Michael Levin

OUR AMERICA, NUESTRA AMÉRICA, UNSERE AMERIKA

Claudio Lomnitz
Other Press

The AJR had asked the New York publisher to send me a review copy of Donna Rifkind's biography of Salka Viertel, the emigrant scriptwriter who mixed with so many refugees in Hollywood. When the parcel arrived, it seemed unduly large for one book. Opening it, I found not only Rifkind's *The Sun and Her Stars*, but also an unsolicited title with which I was unfamiliar. Nor had I heard of the

CLAIMS NEWS

REGION SPECIFIC FUND

Jewish Nazi victims, who currently do not receive a pension as compensation for persecution during the Holocaust, might be entitled to receive a monthly pension of €375 (USD \$443) if they satisfy ONE of the following types of region-specific severe persecution during the Nazi period:

1. Were at least three months in the Siege of Leningrad; OR
2. Lived between 1st April 1941 and 31st August 1944 at least three months under Axis occupation within the borders of Romania, as they were on 1st April 1941 OR
3. Lived at least three months in France in hiding, including with

access to the outside world. For example, those living in southern France, were able to be out during the day and hid at night when deportations took place and meet the income and assets requirements.

If you think you may be eligible please contact Rosemary Peters on **020 8385 3088** or email rosemary@ajr.org.uk or Melanie Jawett on **020 8385 3072** or email melanie@ajr.org.uk

SUPPLEMENTAL HARDSHIP FUND

If you did not manage to submit your Supplemental Hardship Fund form before the deadline of 31st December 2022, the Claims Conference have asked that you still return it to us as soon as possible in order that they can update your details and inform

you of any funds that might become available in the future. Please either post the form (including photo ID) to the office or preferably by email to Rosemary or Melanie as above. However, please note that people submitting applications now will be eligible only for any future awards and not the payments that were previously available by applying until 31 December 2022. Applications for future awards must be submitted by 31 December 2023.

All applications must now contain your IBAN and sort code (both of which you can obtain from your bank statement) and the signature of the applicant must be certified before submission, which the AJR staff can do. Instructions will be listed on the form.

author, Claude Lomnitz; he is a professor of anthropology at Columbia University, specialising in Latin American history and politics.

The publisher had presumably assumed that Lomnitz's complex family saga, centred on Latin America, might interest many AJR readers. I certainly have long been curious to learn more about the 'yeques' who settled in Latin America: distant relatives on my mother's side found a safe haven in Panama City, and, on my father's side, in Montevideo.

That Lomnitz's tale is not the usual refugee narrative becomes evident when you look at the dizzying two-page map of what Lomnitz calls his maternal grandparents' inter-war 'displacements' – and much of the book is about his mother's family. Fleeing the rampant antisemitism and political turbulence of yesterday's Bukovina and Bessarabia, and today's Romania, Moldova and Ukraine, the family's wanderings took them to Vienna, Paris, Haifa, Caracas, Santiago de Chile, Lima, as well as Bogota and other towns in Colombia. On his father's side, the odyssey – not mapped – started, in 1936, from the family home in Cologne, and continued via Brussels, to Santiago, and subsequently to Israel, Mexico and the United States.

Inevitably, Lomnitz has many a tale to tell about the two families' fortunes and misfortunes. Pre-Nazi extremists, it seems, murdered his paternal great-grandfather in Mannheim in 1922. The previous year, his maternal great-grandfather Boris and family had resolved to flee the Soviet Union by crossing the Dniester River secretly. They were about to start when one infant, Shura, began to cry. The 'people-smuggling' boat captain threatened to drown her. She was left behind with her grandmother. After crossing the river, the family vainly waited in Czernowitz for six years, before finally embarking for Peru. Only after the war did they learn that Shura was alive, having survived the war years in a ghetto.

In Peru, where Jews were uncommon at the time, the family were considered as 'Europeans,' which meant they

were expected to look down on the subjugated indigenous population, and the Chinese labourers who had been imported. Members of Lomnitz's family, however, were left-wing activists. Serious antisemitism reared its ugly head the following decade, with the arrival of the German refugees from Hitler. It was all too easy for the dictator to make the Jews responsible for the country's economic depression. And so, the great trek continued, initially to Colombia.

Lomnitz frequently pauses so he can leave

the main path, and digress on a great variety of topics, from the 'juderias', where Jews lived in medieval Iberia, and the Latin American intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui, to his views on assimilation and Romania's rabidly antisemitic Iron Guard. Discussing Hannah Arendt's 'banality of evil' thesis, Lomnitz argues that 'genocide is not only executed by the bureaucratic machine, it is also narrated into existence by intellectuals and propagandists, myth by myth.'

Martin Mauthner



Remembering and Rethinking: The International Forum on Collecting, Preserving & Disseminating Holocaust Testimonies

April 19 & 20, 2023 • Lancaster House, St James's Park, London

The conference will bring together archives, museums, and other institutions which hold collections of Holocaust testimonies and feature Holocaust testimonies in their (digital and non-digital) spaces as well as educational resources and next-generation participants. With declining numbers of Holocaust survivors and refugees, the conference will facilitate conversations between world-renowned experts to re-evaluate and access the many ways Holocaust testimonies have been collected, displayed, and curated since the end of the Second World War, and reimagine their future usage.

Keynote Speaker: **Robert Williams**, Finci-Viterbi Executive Director USC Shoah Foundation

To book a ticket, please register at: bit.ly/TestimonyConference

OBITUARIES

Erica LUSTIG-PREAN (née Stiebel)

Born: 18 March 1930, Aachen, Germany
 Died: 23 December 2022, Isle of Wight



Erica's parents were Martin and Ilse Stiebel. Her father was Senior Cantor in the Aachen Synagogue. When her parents divorced, she was brought up by her maternal grandparents, Carl and Emmy Bernstein, textile manufacturers.

As a child in Aachen, Erica recalled Kristallnacht in November, 1938. The Nuremberg laws segregated Jewish children and she was moved from her Catholic School to the Montessori school in the city. She escaped from the school when Nazi Brown Shirts arrived to beat up the children.

She recalled also the farcical first visit to her home by uniformed Nazis. Pushing their way into the drawing room, the Nazis were confronted by a large oil painting of her grandfather, Carl Bernstein with his brother, in the uniforms of officers of WW1. The Nazis saluted the painting and left, but had they searched the house they would have found two Jews who her grandfather was hiding, pending their escape to Holland.

In 1939 Erica's grandparents managed to secure an English sponsor for their daughter, Ilse Stiebel (who became Barington upon naturalisation). Ilse fled with Erica in August 1939, two weeks before war began. Ilse's sister Ellen was able to emigrate to the USA while Ilse joined the Army Territorial Service (ATS). 9-year-old Erica suffered several unhappy moves to various refugee hostels during the Blitz.

In 1947, having acquired a British

passport, Erica returned to Aachen to see what had become of her birthplace. As she walked through the ruins of the street where she had lived, an old school friend from the Catholic school saw her and ran across the road to hug her, crying out in joy: "*Erica, Du lebst noch*". (Erica, you are still alive.) But tragically her grandparents were among some 96 family members murdered in, or on their way to, the concentration camps.

Post-war Erica studied at secretarial college in Tunbridge Wells. Through a fellow refugee, Martha Preston, she met her husband-to-be Wolfgang (John) Lustig-Prean, son of an Austrian satirical, anti-Nazi journalist, former Director of the Volksoper Vienna, who had fled Austria. In 1952 she was introduced in Vienna to her fiancé's family. She was greeted by her husband's great uncle, Field Marshall Duke Julius, who clicked his heels and kissed her hand. One Dukedom was bestowed in the late 18th century and was jointly held by all brothers though her husband's grandfather-to-be, Heinrich, was the eldest of the three. He was awarded a further Dukedom for his command of the Tyrol region during WW1. Her future father-in-law, Karl, Duke of Preanfeld and Duke of Fella, was just as charming and cultured. (Karl was a director of the Vienna Conservatoire and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and government cultural advisor in 1952); thereafter trips to Austria became a pleasure.

Erica shared with her husband a deep concern for the way refugees and vulnerable people are treated. She gave without fuss to refugee causes and homeless charities, and also to the RNIB after blindness struck her husband; latterly she donated both cash and clothing to assist Ukrainian refugees. As she grew older, she became ever more determined to ensure that the Holocaust

should not be forgotten; she regularly gave talks, and her family archive was deposited in the Wiener Holocaust Library and in Aachen.

Erica was a former Chair of the Isle of Wight NSPCC; she served on the committee, and edited and contributed to the newsletter of the IoW National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies until her death. She hosted a book club which read books in their original languages. Leading a full and busy life, on her last day she was choosing next year's opera performances, discussing a talk for Holocaust Memorial Day and preparing a holiday in Aachen in July. She died in her sleep, aged 92, after watching a performance of Tosca from Theater an der Wien on television.

In 1952 Erica had married Wolfgang 'John' Prean, chairman of the English Table Tennis Association (1986-91). He predeceased her in 2013 and she is survived by their two sons: Carl is a former international table tennis player and Olympian, and Duncan, a former naval officer, Director of Brighton Fringe and LGBTQ+ and human rights campaigner. Duncan will be continuing his mother's work to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are not forgotten and will give her intended talk in Tunbridge Wells on Holocaust Memorial Day in January.

Duncan Lustig-Prean

JOSEPH PEREIRA
 (ex-AJR caretaker over 22 years)
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Gina NEUGARTEN

Born: 5 September 1921, Berlin
 Died: 5 September 2022, London

Genia (Gina) Neugarten (née Zlotnicki) died peacefully in her sleep, at home, on her 101st birthday.

She was born in Berlin to Chaim – a master tailor – and Herta Zlotnicki. After the rise of the Nazis, the family realised they must flee Germany, and thanks to the window of opportunity when Jews holding Polish passports were expelled, her father was able to reach London and ensure that the family could settle there.

In 1939, some months before the outbreak of WW2, Genia and her younger brother left on the Kindertransport, arriving in London after landing at Harwich. At first the family lived in Whitechapel in London’s East End. Genia learnt English in evening school. She liked to relate that each group of refugees kept themselves to themselves: the Austrian Jews in one corner, the Hungarian Jews in another, the German Jews in a third, and the ex-Berliners in a fourth. During the war she worked in a factory producing prisms for the war effort and was evacuated to Reading. Eventually able to move back to London, the family lived just off Finchley Road in Hampstead (then dubbed “Finchleystrasse” as the number of Jewish German-speaking refugees there was so high).

After the war she met Rolf, himself a refugee from Germany, and they married in September 1948, moving to a basement flat in Hampstead. The family moved to Temple Fortune some years after the birth of her first son, Michael, and this was followed by the

birth of her second son, Steven. Rolf worked in the restaurant trade, first as a waiter, and then later as a restaurant manager, at sites in Central London. Genia too always worked – first as a home seamstress, and then for many years in Boots Temple Fortune as a shop assistant, loved by many customers. When at the age of 60 Boots released her she worked at other pharmacies in the area, but they soon called her back.

After Rolf died in 1979, Genia moved ‘round the corner’ to a flat in Bridge Lane, staying in the same community. She was a member of Alyth Gardens Synagogue, and a long-standing member of the AJR, in whose activities, holidays, and events she happily participated, whether in West Hampstead, Belsize Park, Golders Green, Eastbourne, or Israel. She enjoyed travelling, revisited Berlin, made many visits to Israel (her elder son made Aliyah in 1976), and followed Israeli and British politics keenly.

In later years, as her eyesight, hearing and mobility diminished, her ‘circle of operations’ became more limited – she had always been a walker – but she remained in good health, with a photographic memory and healthy sense of humour, lucid and curious until the end, concerned even about the effects of a possible school strike in Israel at the beginning of September literally two days before she died.

She leaves two sons: Michael – a retired physicist, and Steven – a pianist, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Michael Neugarten



**AJR Annual trip
 JOIN US
 THIS YEAR IN
 WINDSOR**

**MONDAY 15 MAY –
 THURSDAY 18 MAY 2023**



Coach travel from London to Windsor (where our hotel is based), plus three nights’ accommodation. To assist members travelling from outside London we are also offering an extra night on Sunday 7 May based in the London area, with dinner at a kosher restaurant, as an added option.

The itinerary will be a full four days of visits to attractions in Windsor and surrounding areas, returning to the hotel each evening. Please bear in mind that this is a busy itinerary and a fair amount of walking, getting on and off the coach, early starts, steps and sightseeing will be involved.

All meals, accommodation and travel will be included in the price.

Places are limited and are on a first come, first served basis.

Please email either Ros Hart roshart@ajr.org.uk or Karen Diamond karendiamond@ajr.org.uk to receive full details and a booking pack.

IN PERSON EVENTS

| DATE | TIME | IN PERSON MEETING | CO-ORDINATOR |
|----------------------|---------|--|--------------------------|
| Thursday 2 February | 10.30am | Ealing | Ros Hart |
| Thursday 2 February | 12 noon | Glasgow 1st Gen Lunch | Agnes Isaacs |
| Tuesday 7 February | 11.30am | Central London (Baker Street) | Karen Diamond |
| Wednesday 8 February | 12 noon | Glasgow 2nd Gen lunch | Agnes Isaacs |
| Thursday 9 February | 11.30am | Lunch with William French, Royal butler (see ad on p.13) | Ros Hart / Karen Diamond |
| Monday 13 February | 1.30pm | Hampstead, with Amanda Weinberg, author of <i>Tears of Monterini</i> | Ros Hart |
| Monday 20 February | 12.30pm | Brighton | Ros Hart |
| Thursday 23 February | 10.30am | Edgware | Ros Hart |
| Monday 27 February | 12 noon | St Albans | Ros Hart |
| Monday 27 February | 12.30pm | Bristol | Ros Hart |
| Tuesday 28 February | 10:30am | North London | Ros Hart |
| Tuesday 28 February | 12 noon | Oxford | Karen Diamond |

CO-ORDINATOR DETAILS

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ZOOMS AHEAD


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

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Wednesday 1 February @ 2pm | Irene Kyffin – Marc Chagall and the Yiddish Theatre https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88994471290 | Meeting ID: 889 9447 1290 |
| Monday 6 February @ 4pm | Margaret Mills – Jane Austen https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85499927935 | Meeting ID: 854 9992 7935 |
| Tuesday 7 February @ 2pm | Jonathan Bergwerk – The incredible story of Rabbi Hugo Gryn (an Auschwitz survivor) https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/83039193416 | Meeting ID: 830 3919 3416 |
| Tuesday 14 February @ 2pm | Rabbi Claude Vecht-Wolf – A Beatles Bonanza https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/87946791456 | Meeting ID: 879 4679 1456 |
| Wednesday 15 February @ 2pm | AJR Book Discussion (no speaker) – Early Morning Riser by Katherine Heiny https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81647094399 | Meeting ID: 816 4709 4399 |
| Monday 20 February @ 4pm | February Quiz https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81438844861 | Meeting ID: 814 3884 4861 |
| Tuesday 21 February @ 2pm | Lucy Adlington (author) – The Dressmakers of Auschwitz https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81318400747 | Meeting ID: 813 1840 0747 |

KEEP FIT WITH AJR

All AJR members & friends are invited to take part in these online exercise and dance classes throughout the coming month.

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Every Monday @ 10.30am | Get Fit where you Sit (seated exercise) https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439 | Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439 |
| Every Tuesday @ 11.00am | Shelley's Exercise class https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88466945622 | Meeting ID: 884 6694 5622 |
| Every Wednesday @ 10.30am | Dance Yourself Fit with Jackie Turner https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86302485494 | Meeting ID: 8630 248 5494 |



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