

AJR Information

Volume XLVIII No. 5
May 1993

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

**Annual Report
1992 pp8,9**

**Moscow to Mill
Hill p2**

Council tax p11

**Warsaw then
- and now**

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising made little real difference to the fate of the ghetto-dwellers, but had enormous symbolic significance. In a totally different way Poland's official homage, fifty years later, had more to do with symbolism than reality. Nonetheless, the attendance of Catholic bishops and the Pope's belated move on the Auschwitz convent are welcome. The church is the only force capable of altering ingrained Polish attitudes. □

Postponement

The inclusion of the Annual Report has necessitated the holding over of part 9 of Ralph Blumenau's History series until June.

Bridging the concepts of freedom and morality

Counting Days and Rendering Account

The seven weeks of counting each and every day, which, by religious custom, started on the second night of Pesach, come to an end upon the Eve of Shavuot. This ritually measured passage of time ensures a link between our ancestors' first steps as a free people and the beginning of the Jewish faith, between their liberation from oppression in Egypt and the revelation to them of the written Law on Mount Sinai. Throughout the ages emphasis has been placed upon the import of this intellectual bridge between the twin concepts of freedom and morality and on the truth that one is meaningless without the other.

There is another view, no less worthy of attention. For, as Shavuot also came to be the time when thanks were offered for the safe completion of the early harvest, the Omer period can be taken as denoting progress from the one-off miracle of passage through the Red Sea to the annually repeated bringing in of crops. This seems to tie in with two further anniversaries which now fall in the period. Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim, commemorating Israel's

Declaration of Independence and her victory in the Six-Day War, occur at a time when the Evening Service includes a prayer for the restoration of the Temple. They bear witness to the fact that the Jewish people has regained its ability to back belief in miracles with realistic self-reliance. As the late Yigal Allon remarked: 'Thanks to its spiritual foundation our people achieved that simple everyday reality which a man calls his home and a nation its homeland'.

There is one further aspect to this special time-span of the seven weeks. For reasons now no longer absolutely certain, the Omer period is one of semi-mourning, of formal austerity with only one brief intermission. This sense of sadness has been deepened by one more latter-day addition: Yom Hashoah, Remembrance of the Holocaust. There is no need to comment on its message. Except, perhaps, to say that counting days may prove to be a kind of mental metronome by means of which we can adjust the rhythm of our memories and bear more readily the burden of our own miraculous survival. □ D.L.M.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held on
Thursday 10 June 1993, 7.30 p.m.
at
15 CLEVE ROAD, LONDON NW6

AGENDA

Annual Report 1992
Hon. Treasurer's Report
Discussion
Election of Executive Committee
Followed by a talk by **Ralph Blumenau** entitled 'The University of the 3rd Age'.
Refreshments will be served after the meeting.
All questions for the Chair should be submitted to the Administrator at:
1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognaal, London NW3 6AL
by 3rd June 1993.

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following members have served on the Executive Committee since the 1992 Annual General Meeting and will be proposed for re-election at the AGM on Thursday 10 June 1993.

Mr C. T. Marx	Chairman
Mr M. M. Kochmann	Vice-Chairman & Honorary Treasurer
Mrs K. Gould	Honorary Secretary
Mrs E. S. Angel, Mrs M. Brook	
Mr C. W. Dunston, Mr J. H. Dunston	
Mr M. Durst, Mrs H. Goldsmith	
Mr A. C. Kaufman, Mr H. E. Levy	
Mr W. D. Rothenberg.	

Mrs C. Srebnik has been nominated for election to the Executive at the AGM.

Jewish Refugees and Refugee Work 1933-1993

International Conference to mark the 60th anniversary of the CBF and the Wiener Library

The conference was held on the 14 March in London supported by the Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief and the AJR.

The morning session was chaired by Sir Claus Moser, himself a former refugee, and the keynote address was given by Professor E. Friesel, Israel State Archivist, on the subject of 'Jewish Migration 1880-1990'. He gave a historical survey of Jewish Migration and looked at these events in the context of a continuing migration to this day and future years.

Dr Louise London, who had received an award from the 'Thank-You Britain Fund', given to the British Academy by the members of the AJR, presented a paper on 'Refugee Agencies and Their Work'. Dr A. J. Sherman's paper was on the subject 'The British Government, The Jewish Community and Refugee Agencies'. Professor Bernard Wasserstein of Brandeis University gave a paper on 'The Jewish Refugee Issue in Britain 1939-45'. All these discussed the political, social and historical circumstances of the Refugee Issues of the period 1933-45 which was vital to the escape of European Jewry before and during the holocaust.

The subject of the afternoon session was 'Jewish Refugees and Refugee Work in the Post-War World'. The papers recounted the work for Refugees in the post-war period of the main agencies involved and particularly CBF, AJR and others.

The Wiener Library will be publishing a book based on this conference. □ M.M.K.

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ALL LEGAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

Profile

Moscow to Mill Hill



Mr & Mrs Michael Schreider. Photo: Newman.

Before setting off to Mill Hill to meet my profilee I read the morning papers. 'The Russian President and Parliament are hurtling towards a head-on collision' wrote one Moscow correspondent. Another quoted the views of the volunteer guards outside the parliament buildings: 'Russia has never lost a war. Why don't we fight now?' 'Only anarchy can restore order.' 'Yeltsin and his aides are all Jews. So was Lenin'.

I drove towards tranquil, suburban Mill Hill oppressed by the thought that a new Time Of Troubles was dawning for Russia. The temporary *impasse*, I reflected, could end in one of three ways - with a Yeltsin victory, a parliamentary victory or endemic civil war. In the last two eventualities the outlook for Russia's Jews was grim indeed.

Michael Schreider, went one better (or worse), saying that no matter what happened Russian Jewry had little future; that is why he had emigrated shortly after the failed hardline *coup*. I found this baffling because on first sight he seemed the sort of person who should have benefited from the failure of the *putsch* and the strengthening of democracy. Michael shook his head, saying that the dead weight of Russia's history would delay the advent of a stable democracy by several years, if not entire decades.

He knows whereof he speaks. As a family the Schreiders have long experience of the near insupportable weight of Russian history. Michael's grandfather only managed to get into a Czarist university via a *gymnasium* gold medal and because as a student he was temporarily exempt from the ban on Jewish residence outside the Pale of Settlement. Becoming a lawyer he 'fortu-

nately' died before the onset of Stalin's purges. His wife was killed by the Germans occupying the Crimea. Michael's father qualified as a professor of Chemistry but was denied promotion because the Soviets discriminated against Jews in academe. Michael in turn experienced widespread antisemitic prejudice, not least in the form of graffiti on student notice-boards; he was then lecturing on music at Moscow University.

Generational experience of Judeophobia convinced him and his wife that post-Communist Russia was no place to bring up their two small children. Today six Schreiders - three generations - live in a rather crowded house in Mill Hill where the first sight that greets the visitor is a (second-hand) upright Bechstein in the entrance hall. Michael teaches three days a week at a college in Kent, gives piano lessons and additionally pursues a career as a concert pianist. He has played at charity functions attended by HM the Queen Mother as well as in diverse synagogue halls. He has also been a highly appreciated performer at the Paul Balint-AJR Day Centre.

I left him cheered by his determination to succeed in a strange environment - but also bleakly pondering the superficial similarities between Germany in 1933 and Russia 60 years on. □ R.G.



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Half century of Leo Baeck Lodge

The Leo Baeck (London) Lodge is part of the World Wide Order of B'nai B'rith – one of the largest Jewish voluntary organisations in existence.

Most members of the Leo Baeck Lodge reside in North and North West London where the Lodge Centre is based.

The 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Lodge will have as its climax a Celebration which is to be held on 2 June 1993 at the historic Banqueting House of the former Palace of Whitehall.

Appropriate Setting

This provides a most appropriate setting for it was here that Oliver Cromwell received Manasseh Ben Israel when authorising Jewish resettlement in England in 1656.

The event will be of particular interest to many readers of AJR Information, a majority of whom take a keen interest in matters associated with the Leo Baeck Lodge and B'nai B'rith through being either members or friends of members.

For further information about this event please see the notice below (right). □

CBF Auction at Sotheby's

Two of CBF World Jewish Relief's leading committees – CBF Friends and London Women's Division – are to host a Gala Dinner and Auction at Sotheby's, as part of the CBF's 60th Anniversary year programme, on Tuesday 23 November 1993.

Eminent communal figures are donating personal items of historical interest and the CBF invites the whole community to mark the CBF's 60th Anniversary by contributing any of the following:

- Silver * Antiques * Objects d'Art *
- Sculpture * Jewellery * Paintings *
- Furniture * Judaica * Decorative Arts *
- * Oriental Art * Collectables *
- Memorabilia from CBF Refugees

CBF World Jewish Relief is currently caring for hundreds of Jewish refugees from Bosnia and the former Soviet Union while they seek asylum in the U.K. Proceeds from Sotheby's special CBF auction will go towards providing housing, medical aid, clothing and education for Anglo-Jewry's newest, neediest constituents.

Items not sold at the Gala Dinner will be auctioned by Sotheby's in their regular, appropriate sales. For further information, please contact: Nicole Ozin, CBF World Jewish Relief, Drayton House, 30 Gordon Street, London WC1H 0AN. Tel: 071-387 3925 Fax: 071-383 4810 □

Nationalism: its varieties and vagaries

It is a contemporary cliché that the Phoenix arising out of the ashes of communism in Eastern Europe is not democracy, but nationalism. What cynical – or merely pessimist – observers of the recent transformation overlook is that nationalism can be of a benign, or malignant, variety. (Admittedly, the latter predominates East of what used to be the Iron Curtain.)

There was always a danger that an independent Croatia would express a degree of indebtedness to its wartime predecessor, the bloodsoaked Ustasha state. President Tudjman confirmed one's worst fears by trivialising Jasenovac (the Croat Auschwitz), which he depicted as a Jewish-administered quasi-sanatorium in his book *Bespuca*. The State of Israel has accordingly – while recognising Croat independence – refused to establish diplomatic relations with Zagreb.

Independent Slovakia, whose wartime Catholic-backed pro-Nazi government closely resembled Croatia's, is too new and enmeshed in teething troubles to have

evolved a clearcut identity; even so, Prime Minister Meciar's record hardly inspires confidence.

In the Ukraine the situation appears more hopeful, for all that President Kravchuk, like Meciar, is a former Communist apparachik who 'reinvented' himself as an extreme nationalist. Here the danger was that Hetman Chmelnitzki, who moulded a Ukrainian identity by his 17th century revolt against Poland, would be elevated into 'father of the nation'. This would have been disastrous for Ukrainian-Jewish relations: Chmelnitzki murdered more Jews than anyone before Hitler.

In the event the Cossack hetman did not fit the bill as the Ukraine's George Washington. For one, he had *detached* the (Eastern) Ukraine from Poland only to *attach* it to Russia; for another he butchered the Uniates (Orthodox in communion with Rome) who predominate in the Western Ukraine. The capital of that region, Lvov, has recently put up a ghetto memorial. The inscription on the plinth refers to Jews done to death by the Nazis.

Alas, it omits to mention the many Ukrainians who willingly did the Nazis' 'work' for them!

□ R.G.

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B'NAI B'RITH



50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION to be held on 2nd June 1993, at BANQUETING HOUSE WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1

The President, Officers and Council of the Leo Baeck (London) Lodge No. 1593 invite readers of 'AJR Information' to a celebration on 2nd June 1993 to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Lodge's foundation.

The Banqueting House of the former Palace of Whitehall, London's most beautiful historic building, will provide a magnificent and memorable setting for the Celebration – it was here that Oliver Cromwell received Manasseh Ben Israel when authorising Jewish resettlement in England in 1656.

Many personalities in public life and in Jewish affairs have indicated their intention to participate in this event.

A reception buffet (with wines) will be followed by a musical entertainment. This will precede tributes by eminent personalities, after which refreshment will be served.

The all-inclusive price to participate in the Celebration is £30 per person.

Admission is by ticket only. For Admission Tickets please apply to:

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Reviews

Howard's Beginning

ROOTS, SCHMOOTS, Channel Four series, broadcast in March



Howard Jacobson.

Photo: Simon Bishop.

The boy had long done well – now he has done good. Jacobson, son of a Manchester market trader, made it to Cambridge and burst upon the literary scene with *Coming from behind*, a hatchet job on a Wolverhampton poly comparable to *Lucky Jim's* on Oxford. His next novel, *Peeping Tom*, owed its success with the English reading public to a judicious mixture of Thomas Hardy worship and prurient sex.

Since those frolicsome days Jacobson has acquired *gravitas* – and has done so via a preoccupation with matters Jewish. *The Very Model of a Man*, a highly imaginative gloss on the Bible story led, by logical progression to the bang-up-to-date *Roots, Schmoots*. And since we live in a multi-media age and Jacobson is no stranger to self-proportion, the last-named book has simultaneously spawned a TV series.

Some viewers of my acquaintance reacted to this Jewish odyssey on the box with pained cries of *pas devant les goyim*. I do not share their qualms about exposing outlandish Jewish demeanour – or even Jacobson's Jesus parody with outstretched arms atop a precipice in the Judean wilderness – primarily because Channel Four watchers are not *Sun* readers.

There were many cherishable vignettes in the three-parter. In the opening programme on Israel the (aforementioned) Sermon on the Mount flashed with shafts of insight and wit that had me cheering. I was less happy, though, with the overlong sequences on

Yeshiva logic-chopping and the Hasidic custom of shearing toddlers' locks on *Lag B'Omer*, for all that they yielded weirdly arresting images on screen. There is another, more 'normal', Israel out there which didn't get enough of a look-in.

If the American middle section of the series also over-emphasised whackier aspects of Jewish life, I didn't object too much. The U.S.A. is, after all, *das Land der unbegrenzten Möglichkeiten*, so why not leave viewers goggle-eyed over a kosher dude ranch, a coven of Jewish feminists spouting high-falutin gobbledegook, and a showbiz-trained rabbi who performs instant conversions by total immersion along the balmy (barmy) Florida coast?

The triptych concluded on an emotional high – or low – with Litvak-descended Jacobson's shadow silhouetted against a solitary Jewish tombstone leaning skew-whiff in an overgrown Lithuanian wilderness. *En route* our Virgil displayed a modicum of ignorance by inveighing against peasant life – and concomitant superstitions – as utterly un-Jewish. (In fact agriculture was a Jewish occupation along the Carpathians and in Bukowina.) Overall, what made the East European sequence so uplifting, despite its elegiac tone, was the encounter with the girl students editing the Warsaw-based journal *Jidele*, and the two delightful Litvak lads who guided Jacobson around the pathetic remains of century-long Jewish existence on the Baltic shore.

□ R.G.

Coming from behind

Howard Jacobson, *ROOTS SCHMOOTS*, Viking 1993, £16.99

This book is, ostensibly, about Howard Jacobson's travels in search of the meaning of his life. For most of us such intellectual wanderings are a luxury to be squeezed in amongst the mundanities of earning a living, worrying about the children, arguing with the neighbours and deciding what to watch on TV. For Mr Jacobson it makes an excellent subject for a book with an accompanying TV series. In the end, no one cares whether he finds his Jewish roots, as long as he makes an entertaining story of his journey. And this he has managed.

On his travels to America, Israel and Lithuania he meets and argues with a wide selection of Jews. Although intelligently written and often hilarious, there are few surprises in store. Predictably, the Americans are portrayed as New York intellectuals, Californian hippies or Borscht Belt Ethel Merman fans – fertile ground for a sophisticated humourist, but not fresh territory.

Thought-provoking

The section on Israel is refreshingly free of cod-sentimentality whilst being occasionally touching. The influence of Jewish Fundamentalists (*frummies* to the author) on the future of the state is discussed at length and makes for some very thought-provoking reading. *Frummies* everywhere come in for censure in this book, and

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May 24th. Club 43.
50th Anniversary Celebration. Attendance
by Invitation only.
May 31st. No Lecture. Bank Holiday.
June 7th. Dr Erich Vio.
Liest aus eigenen Dichtungen.

sometimes it seems as if Jacobson's search for his roots is in spite of his religion. He wants to experience 'Jewishness' without the Torah and, it should be said, he found the soulmates amongst secular Israelis. Here he was able to eschew religion whilst being at the very heart of Judaism.

In Lithuania Jacobson visited the villages from which his forbears originated. Here, in a neglected graveyard in the middle of nowhere, he seems to have experienced a truly moving emotional connection with the past. For the first time in the book the reader can feel that the writer has found what he was looking for and that, up to this point, he did not really know himself what it was.

Mostly, this is a funny book, and Howard Jacobson has a rare talent for spotting pretension and shallowness in the most solemn and serious people and occasions.

It is sad to think that, after all this soul-searching, Mr Jacobson would probably never have got on well with his forebears. They were Jewish Jews and he seems to be a Jewish Atheist. He doesn't give religious people a good press, which is his prerogative, but he feels forced to love the Jews, almost against his will. As he puts it: *What Jews love more than anything, more than art, more than music, more than words even is: one another.*

□ M.N.

Pitching truth against falsehood

Pierre Vidal-Naquet *ASSASSINS OF MEMORY: ESSAYS ON THE DENIAL OF THE HOLOCAUST*. Jeffrey Mehlman. Columbia University Press, 1992/3. 205 pp. US\$ 32.00

This is not an easy book to read or to review. Not only is its context – the Nazi genocide of Jews and gypsies – a highly emotive subject; more to the point, perhaps, the author's intellectual approach calls for a corresponding measure of academic interest and knowledge.

Indeed, it is precisely the concept of 'intellectualism' which is the key to Vidal-Naquet's collection of essays, here skilfully combined to merge into a coherent and convincing thesis. The author, an eminent historian and sociologist, takes Emile Zola's pro-Dreyfus *Manifeste des Intellectuels* as his point of departure for a painstakingly intellectual analysis of pseudo-intellectual historical revisionism. He casts his net of accusations widely, catching the likes of Arthur Butz, author of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, alongside Ernst Nolte of Historikerstreit fame. But his specific target is the Frenchman Robert Faurisson and his 'mad anti-Semitic passion'.

It is not Vidal-Naquet's aim to argue with revisionists by seeking to refute their spurious claims: the truth is known and amply backed by irrefutable evidence. His purpose is to show up these ideologies for what they are and raise the question of why and in what manner they have surfaced.

It is a powerful indictment. He attacks the disgracefully malevolent methods of Holocaust deniers who do not play a kind of game, as did some of the earlier historical revisionists, but are in deadly earnest in the fullest sense. He pillories them for the grotesqueness of such fraudulent assertions

as that the Holocaust was only Allied propaganda, or that the gas chambers in Auschwitz served hygiene purposes, or that the Final Solution was no more than a non-lethal form of ethnic cleansing justifiable in a time of war, or, indeed, that it was not the Germans who were responsible for the Second World War. He is enraged by the spurious reinterpretation of events in order to exonerate the Nazis or, worse still, to support extreme left-wing aspirations.

Vidal-Naquet minces no words, accepts no excuse, respects no person in his scholarly condemnation of a line of a self-styled methodology which eschews scientific investigation, avoids discussion and engages simply in an exercise of public relations and academic gamesmanship. He himself is meticulously objective in every detail. Not least does he disparage any tendency towards exaggeration of established fact since factual analysis does not need any 'fantasy or propaganda' which can at best be only helpful to those whose aim it is to spread deliberate falsifications.

He writes in sorrow and in anger: sorrowing as a Holocaust orphan, and angry because truth is denied – not by populist mobsters but by academics like himself.

What can be done, he asks, to deal with this attempted 'murder' of a memory? Trials of surviving war criminals are, he believes, at once 'necessary and ludicrous': Eichmann was properly convicted and executed for his misdeeds. The deliberate falsification of history is equally criminal; but what is to be done with 'paper Eichmanns' like Faurisson and the others? The author has no easy answer, except that of 'opposing paper with paper'.

In fact, this book itself should put an end to 'scientific' anti-Semitism, to racial hatred based on lies and backed by pseudo-scholarship. And in a perfect world it would. Alas, we do not live in one.

□ David Maier

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Letters to the Editor

OVERCHARGED

Sir – Bank charges unfortunately are on a rising trend and a few letters of complaint are unlikely to make an impact. Much better to ask the German paying authority to pay your pension in £ sterling, either to your bank account, or by cheque to yourself. This avoids *any* charge (and Lloyds Bank will make no profit from this transaction).

Van Llanidloes
Powys

H. K. Meyer

TOO PAROCHIAL

Sir – For many years my family have been subscribers to *AJR Information* and have been impressed with its contents. In consequence it has been well read by all.

I find, however, that it does not deal at all with the activities of refugees who are not in the close Jewish circle but work in the wider community.

Both my husband and I were refugees ourselves, but after service in the British forces during the war have had little contact with refugees as such.

After having had my family I became involved with the plight of one-parent families, and still work with a Women's Refuge helping battered women from different backgrounds and religions! I am also with Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Line, helping women to deal with the trauma of rape or incest.

But once a week I help in a charity shop which supports the Jewish charity ORT.

All the groups I am involved with have brought me many friends, and though at times very harrowing, the involvement can be very satisfying.

Elm Avenue
Watford, Herts

Alice Anson

IS THE PAST ANOTHER COUNTRY?

Sir – In the 29 January issue of the *Jewish Chronicle* Vernon Bogdanor of Oxford University quotes the following speech:

'I know that the large majority of the German people consider themselves on your side in this battle' declares the president of one of the provincial parliaments. 'The Minister of Justice has addressed a Jewish meeting to assure them that the government in whose name I now speak shares the outrage you are feeling towards the events

you have assembled to protest. Fortunately, in the most recent federal elections, the leading anti-Semitic party has secured only a little more than 3 per cent of the vote. There is no danger.' There is only one problem: the above paragraph does not refer to events in 1992, but to 1928. The anti-Semitic party . . . was the Nazi party, which less than five years later came to power in Germany.

The question is, will the new anti-Semitic Party, which polled 8.3 per cent in the recent Hesse elections become the Government of Germany, and if so how long will it take and how will it affect the EC?

Hawkshead Lane
North Mymms

Margaret Toch

The National Front polled 13 per cent in the recent French General Election, yet no one envisages them forming a French government in future! Ed.

BRAUNAU-BORN AND CHRISTENED ADOLF

Sir – It is not easy to be the object of anyone's compassion. It seems we are better equipped to deal with the indifference of our fellow creatures than their concern. A special touch is needed by those who feel called to redress the injustices of this world, and every now and again someone comes along who has it.

Adi Wimmer, that other Adolf from Braunau am Inn, is one of them. I first met him one wintry Saturday in 1990 when he came to interview me for his book of oral histories of Jewish victims of Nazi Austria (which has just been published). When I had received his circular some three months earlier asking for participants, my first reaction had been euphoria: the albatross had stirred, and an Austrian was actually apologising to me! I thought that the question of Jewish exiles was a dead duck, but here was an Austrian who wanted to document and save for posterity the little histories of Austria's share of Nazism.

Looking a bit like an undergraduate and speaking perfect English, this unlikely Austrian emissary had come to lay my ghosts for me. A cup of coffee, a quick chat, and the interview was about to begin. He placed the tape recorder on the floor between us and a notebook on his lap, and told me to start. Having for decades resisted all

attempts to be dragged back into my foreign past, the command was not easy to obey. I simply didn't know how to begin. Words like childhood, emigration, separation, transports, came to my mind but they were nothing more than floating evocative sounds, hinting at things that couldn't be properly defined. And there was the added anxiety that I might crumple into silent sobs. I did not, but the credit for this must go to the interviewer. With a supreme effort I at last began:

'Two days after my 11th birthday. . .'

'You'll have to speak German', he interrupted me.

'I can't!' I protested. But of course I did. And of course once I started I couldn't stop. A professional to his fingertips, when the floodgates were open he let me ramble on to the end in my rusty and terrible German, only occasionally coming to my assistance with a word I couldn't recall.

Later I found out that he claims to have no guilt complex (why should he? he was not yet born) but he listened to what I had to say as if he wished to atone for each dead relative, each dead friend.

And what was I to make of his statement that his interest in Jewish Nazi victims was entirely egoistic because, to be acquainted with our history, is to be armed against a Nazi come-back?

Egoism makes some people act in the strangest ways, such as devoting the best years of their lives to exposing their country's Nazi atrocities single-handed; such as speaking out against Neo Nazism in Nazi-infested Carinthia; such as putting Hitler's forgotten refugees back on the map and restoring their faith.

Did I say egoism makes some people do these things? Actually I only know one, and he is Adi Wimmer.

Endcliff Hall Avenue
Sheffield

(Mrs) Inge Joseph



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'Excuse me, Sir,' the policeman said, 'but you seem to have forgotten something'.

Standing in the narrow hallway of my uncle's house, the constable had seemed ill at ease when the front door was opened to him by my aunt; he had become progressively more uncomfortable during the short drama which followed his announcement that he had come to take my cousin Norbert away to be interned.

Bach Sonata

My aunt, a tiny woman easily prone to hysteria, had screamed, rushed up the stairs and spreadeagled herself across the doorway of a bedroom from which could be heard the sound of a violin playing the same bars of a Bach sonata over and over again: it was obvious that the musician was not going to stop until he felt he had got it right.

'Nein', she was moaning, 'nein, you are not going to take him'!

Finally my uncle, recovering from his own shock, had persuaded his wife to move out of the way. He himself entered the bedroom whose occupant she had been trying to protect, and closed the door behind him. The violin playing ceased abruptly.

It was August 1940. Not only were my family, so recently rescued from the nightmare of Hitler's Austria, suffering anxiety attacks, but the British Government had begun to do so too. Were some so-called refugees from Nazi oppression dangerous

enemy aliens? Was the Home Office, in fact, harbouring agents of the Third Reich? Which explains why a local police constable had been sent to 'arrest' my 17 year old schoolboy cousin Norbert, the legendary future violinist.

Potential threat

In 1940, however, Norbert, considered a potential threat to Great Britain, had to be incarcerated, along with other aliens of assorted ages, to ensure that they did not endanger the war effort.

My uncle emerged from Norbert's room, pale-faced. He came down the stairs, followed by my copiously weeping aunt.

'You will give him some moments?' he said, almost pleadingly to the embarrassed policeman; 'he must pack a suitcase, yes? He must dress himself. You understand -' he added leaning closer and speaking as if imparting a confidence 'often the boy practises violin in pyjamas; he forgets to dress. Sometimes even he forgets to eat. Important for him is music, always music'. It was a puzzle and irritant to my uncle, who was totally tone-deaf, that Norbert, the orphaned son of his wife's late brother, could be so fanatical. The other boy, also living with them, was so normal.

Ten minutes or so elapsed. Cupboard doors were opened and slammed shut in the room at the top of the stairs. The sound carried. The policeman shifted nervously from foot to foot, clearing his throat from time to time. No-one spoke further to him. My aunt was now in the kitchen, hurriedly preparing food for her nephew to take into

the unknown. My uncle was trying to telephone my father to tell him what was happening. Presently he went back upstairs and came down carrying a suitcase, which he placed by the front door.

Finally the door of my cousin's room was flung open and Norbert emerged. A shock of his thick hair, unbrillianted, fell over one eye. In spite of his plumpness he still had the face of a rather innocent schoolboy. Down the stairs he came, looking remarkably unruffled. He had his violin case in one hand, and clutched a stack of music, stuffed into a briefcase, in the other. Under one arm he carried a spare bow.

'I am ready', he said, Which is when the policeman spoke:

'Excuse me, sir, but you seem to have forgotten something'.

Absent minded

Intent on not leaving behind any of the music or accessories which he would want in prison, my absent-minded cousin had indeed forgotten something.

The constable cleared his throat once again. 'Your trousers, sir', he said reprovingly.

There was Norbert, the prodigy, usually a casual dresser but on this sombre occasion clad in shirt and blazer and wearing his old school tie, fiddle in hand - ready to go to gaol in his underpants and slippers.

At the time nobody felt like laughing, but it has made a good after-dinner story at Amadeus Quartet get-togethers since. And, unlike many, it is a true one.

□ *Mary Huttner (née Brainin)*

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Under a new Agreement regular hardship payments will be made to victims of the Holocaust who were hitherto unable to apply for or received only inadequate compensation payments.

Claims may be filed by persecutees who were held in concentration camps for at least six months. Those who were confined in ghettos or lived in hiding for at least eighteen months are also entitled to claim.

On instructions our Office will assist you to prepare your Application and pursue the matter with the authorities.

For further information please contact:

ICS - Claims
146-154 Kilburn High Road
London NW6 4JD

Tel: 071-328 7251 (Ext. 107)

Fax: 071-624 5002

AJR

Our new address is:
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Our new phone number is:

071-431 6161

Our new Fax number is:

071-431 8454

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Annual Report 1992

1992 has once again proved a busy and fruitful year for the Association. Demand for our welfare services continues to grow and our staff's loving care in welcoming members, ministering to their comforts, and helping them with their problems, is widely appreciated.

Our report records with satisfaction not only the continuation, but also the extension of our traditional services to members. It highlights changes that have been made in the process of adjusting to new challenges. We are confident of our ability successfully to continue serving our members in a changing economic and social climate, subject only to their active support of our efforts through financial and personal commitment.

Social Services

The changing economic climate during 1992 was reflected in a significant increase in the number of members finding difficulty in making their financial ends meet. Among the problems brought to us for help and advice were such matters as British and foreign pensions, insurance claims, consumer questions, debt problems and housing, and not least the form filling involved in most of these cases.

As head of our Social Services Mrs Agi Alexander displayed all her skills in dealing with the DSS and other government departments. Together with our team of social workers she attended various training sessions to keep up with important changes which, as a result of the new community care legislation coming into force during 1993, will affect the care of the elderly throughout the country. It is intended that the elderly should in future be looked after for as long as possible in their own homes. As an initial response the AJR has started a meals-on-wheels delivery service covering a limited area of north west London. The meals are cooked and packaged at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre and may also be obtained direct from the Day Centre. With the purchase of new equipment it is hoped to extend the service to meet a demand which already exceeds that of the similar service operated by the Association some years ago.

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

Our members continue to enjoy the Day Centre's varied programme of activities, including outings, arranged by Mrs Sylvia Matus and her group of helpers, both staff and volunteers.

An important feature of the Day Centre has always been the provision of luncheons and other meals, prepared with particular regard to our members' tastes. In the coming year the contract caterers will be replaced by our own in-house catering under the supervision of Mrs Susie Kaufman.

The additional costs arising from these new activities were met by a substantial increase in the financial contribution from the AJR Charitable Trust. As its name implies, the funds of the Trust are for charitable purposes. The facilities of the Day Centre are open to all members, irrespective of ability to pay. We must, therefore, ask all those able to do so, to pay a little more for the benefits they derive from attendance at the Day Centre. Without such additional contributions we cannot extend our services to the most needy among us. The same applies to the meals-on-wheels service, already referred to above, especially in regard to its proposed extension to serve members outside north west London.

Volunteers

Our team of volunteers who give so freely of their time at the Day Centre and elsewhere within the organisation, are a splendid example of how the work of volunteers complements that of our staff. The additional activities now on offer to our members call for more volunteer helpers to come forward. As little as a few hours each week can make all the difference to many of our lonely clients.

Residential Care

At the time of the opening of the first residential home for elderly Jewish Refugees, the AJR, being considered uniquely qualified for the work, was given responsibility for recruitment and admission procedures. The Otto Schiff Housing Association now carry out their own admission arrangements. The year under review thus saw the severance of the AJR's involvement in the day to day work of the residential homes. We regret this development. As a result our Homes department, run successfully by our competent and dedicated staff for almost 40 years, has been closed. Its former head, Mrs Ruth Finestone, is now engaged in social work at the Day Centre. Our social workers will continue to visit members who are resident in the Homes of the Otto Schiff Housing Association to ensure that their welfare and needs are fully taken care of.

Sheltered Accommodation

During 1992 the eight flats at Cleve Road have remained occupied. Mrs Katia Gould continued to handle applications for Eleanor Rathbone House and Otto Schiff House, where nearly all the flats were let by the end of the year. Some vacancies remain at Eleanor Rathbone House which, like Otto Schiff House, is administered by OSHA, the AJR Charitable Trust having a one-third interest in the former.

AJR Club

1992 saw the untimely passing of Club Vice-Chairman Mrs Susie Horwell. Her dedication and devotion to the Club over many years is greatly missed. Club members now fully participate in the activities on offer during the day at Cleve Road and the name happily lives on in the designation of the evening and Sunday activities as 'AJR Club' sessions.

AJR Information

The year proved a milestone for the Editor of *AJR Information*. A questionnaire was sent out to all members to gain their opinions of the journal. Richard Grunberger was delighted with a widespread positive response to the questions. The comments received will be borne in mind in future issues. The Editorial Advisory Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr John Martin, meets regularly and has proved helpful to the Editor and Publicity Manager Maurice Newman.

Self Aid

The AJR Charitable Trust, together with other sources, again made a substantial contribution to enable Self Aid to meet the needs of members who have financial problems.

Those present at the annual concert held in November enjoyed the piano virtuosity of John and Kathryn Lenahan in an interesting and varied programme. However, greater costs and reduced support, already mentioned in last year's report, have prompted us to seek a smaller venue.

Accordingly, the next concert will take place in October at the Royal Academy of Music, Marylebone Road, London NW1. We hope the facilities at the Academy's recently refurbished hall, though on a smaller scale than we have been used to at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, will permit us to maintain the happy social atmosphere that has been so characteristic of our more than forty past concerts. Details of the concert and the exact date will be announced in due

course. Buying tickets for the concert helps to ensure its financial and social success.

We confidently look forward to our members' and friends' full support, so that those who come to us for assistance may continue to receive all the help they require.

Membership

The extension of our facilities and activities has encouraged the recruitment of new members. We have thus maintained numbers above the 4,000 level, but still need to persuade more members' relatives and friends to join us, so that our much needed services can continue well into the next century.

In particular we should like to achieve greater support for the care of the elderly from the 'second generation' of our community. The work to which our Association is dedicated represents a valuable and important part in fulfilling the social and welfare needs of today's society. Jews everywhere are known for their sensitivity towards the needy of their community and have always been in the forefront of the care for the elderly in their midst. We must do all we can to ensure that our involvement in this vital task shall not be hampered by lack of support from within our own community.

Future Plans

As this report goes to press the office move to Froggnal will have taken place. Hannah Karminski House, home to so many of our activities over the years, is no longer suitable for our needs and will be sold.

We hope to be able to bring our meals-on-wheels delivery service to members in more areas of London and to expand our much needed Social Services.

Staff and Volunteers

Ever since its foundation the AJR has had the benefit of the services of a loyal and devoted staff, as well as of numerous volunteer helpers. Headed by our efficient and enthusiastic Administrator, Mrs Lydia Lassman, this has been the case throughout the year under review. It is, therefore, with genuine pleasure that once again we conclude this report with expressions on behalf of the officers, the executive committee and the membership at large, of our appreciation of their contribution to the success of our affairs, coupled with our warmest thanks.

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee which has met regularly during the year, continues to be actively engaged in the work of the AJR and to monitor its activities. (See front page for election of executive committee.)

□ C. T. Marx, Chairman

Treasurer's Report

- Day Centre attendance up – 300 visitors per week.
- Meals-on-wheels now average 300 per week.
- Expenditure on Welfare, Social Services and Care £510,895 in 1992 – up 11% on 1991.

In my report last year I stated that the demand on our services was rising fast. This annual report shows how the AJR, financially supported by the AJR Charitable Trust, has responded to the increasing needs. Thanks to the large legacies received last year we are again able to increase our contributions to the running costs of the Residential Homes of the Otto Schiff Housing Association.

We continually aim at improving the efficiency of our administration and the move to new offices, as well as upgrading our computer facilities, will enable us to cope with the increasing workload and keep our costs under control.

AJR

Our membership is now 4,100. The income covers the cost of *AJR Information* and operating expenses. The cost of our Social Services is paid by the AJR Trust.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31 December 1992

	1992	1991
	£	£
INCOME		
Membership Fees, Donations	164,766	102,204
Grant from AJR Trust	120,000	175,000
	<u>284,766</u>	<u>277,204</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Rent, Postage, Telephone etc	32,254	32,776
Salaries	190,965	180,189
Pension Contributions	14,182	18,874
Administration Expenses	7,029	11,035
AJR Information	30,824	28,608
AJR Club	836	-4,035
	<u>276,090</u>	<u>267,447</u>
Net Income	<u>8,676</u>	<u>9,757</u>

Summary of Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1992

	1992	1991
	£	£
Fixed Assets less Depreciation	11,160	13,012
Current Assets	72,001	62,840
Current Liabilities	-19,471	-20,388
	<u>63,690</u>	<u>55,464</u>
Staff Retirement Fund	-28,890	-29,340
	<u>34,800</u>	<u>26,124</u>
Represented by General Fund		
Balance at 1/1/92	26,124	16,367
Net Income for the year	8,676	9,757
	<u>34,800</u>	<u>26,124</u>

Self Aid of Refugees

The Annual Charity Concert now only provides a small income to this charity which gives financial support to those in need. The AJR Trust provides the additional funds needed. Unfortunately, poverty in our community is still increasing and more people required our help. We are grateful to the Leo Baeck (London) Lodge Trust Fund who through the Welfare and Old Age Committees of the Leo Baeck Lodge support us with this task.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31 December 1991

	1992	1991
	£	£
INCOME		
Concert receipts	2,380	4,746
Legacies/Donations	395	13,868
Grant AJR Charitable Trust	30,000	18,000
	<u>32,775</u>	<u>36,614</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Aid Grants	34,228	29,433
Administration Costs	5,157	5,516
	<u>39,745</u>	<u>34,949</u>
Net Shortfall/Income	<u>-6,970</u>	<u>1,665</u>

AJR Charitable Trust

The Charitable Trust provides the financial support for all the Social Service work of the AJR and support for the Otto Schiff Housing Association Residential Care Homes. The Trust's current income is not enough to cover our expenditure. We are, therefore, counting on our members and friends to continue to help us in this work and remember us in their wills.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31 December 1992

	1992	1991
	£	£
INCOME		
Covenants/Donations	22,092	15,752
Investment Income	448,435	305,966
	<u>470,527</u>	<u>321,718</u>
Legacies	232,370	629,515
	<u>702,897</u>	<u>951,233</u>

Note: 1992 Investment Income includes Profit on sale of property.

EXPENDITURE

Grants:		
AJR Day Centre/Meals on wheels	139,297	100,498
AJR	120,000	175,000
Self Aid	30,000	18,000
Otto Schiff Housing Association		
a) Refurbishment	-	198,982
b) Contribution to running costs	155,000	109,400
Other Organisations	1,844	960
Administration Costs/Depreciation	30,526	25,807
	<u>476,667</u>	<u>628,647</u>

□ M. M. Kochmann, Hon. Treasurer

The AJR at Work

Communal Seder at Cleve Road



Of all the festivals that punctuate the Jewish year Passover is the most heart-warming – and there was plenty to warm one's heart at the Second Seder held at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. An impressive turnout of around a hundred participants, a mouthwatering meal (which a dedicated staff had spent all day preparing) and, above all, a festive spirit engendered by the way Cantor Marshall Stone conducted proceedings. The Cantor not only reminded us, *pace* Koussevitsky and Jan Peerce, of the narrow gap separating *chazanut* from the concert and opera repertoire, he also leavened – if one may employ the term – the occasion with flashes of homely humour.

The order of service was performed somewhat abridged. Some of the omissions, e.g. the 'parable' of the four sons were welcome to this participant – others, such as the *Chad Gadya*, were not. All in all, though, throughout the evening I kept hearing ancestral voices – not least those of my father – and felt plugged into the joyful noise unto the Lord that is the essence of Jewish prayer.

□ R.G.

Forthcoming Attraction



Connaught Opera, is a mobile opera company. They have toured for the Council for Music in Hospitals and were among the first groups to bring 'potted' opera to country house hotels and historic homes with a production of *La Traviata*.

Maria Arakie made her classical recital debut at The Wigmore Hall and has sung a diversity of operatic roles including Carmen, Michaela, Mimi, Violetta as well as Gilbert & Sullivan operettas.

Glen Wilson has been guest principal with Opera A La Carte in California, singing The Captain in *HMS Pinafore* at Laguna Beach and Don Giovanni in Hollywood. He also performed Marcello in Regency Operas' *La Boheme*.

Carol Wells has performed on BBC Radio, British and American Television and in all major London Concert Venues. She has also worked in children's theatre and acted as Musical Director for *Salad Days*, receiving praise for her playing from its composer Julian Slade. □

The Connaught Opera will be appearing in a Summer Show at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre on 25 July. For further details see the June issue of AJR Information.

MEALS ON WHEELS

WE ARE NOW ABLE TO OFFER A LIMITED DELIVERY OF MEALS ON TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS TO MEMBERS LIVING IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Cricklewood, West Hampstead/ Finchley Road, Hampstead, Golders Green, Finchley, Edgware, Stanmore and Harrow

The cost for a kosher 3 course meal is £3.00. Delivery charge 50p. Payment for meals to be made to the Driver.

Meals can still be collected from 15 Cleve Road on weekdays (Mondays – Thursdays) for £3.00 per meal.

Members who feel they may qualify for delivery because of mobility problems, or other reasons, should contact Mrs Ruth Finestone for further details and an assessment interview on: 071 328 0208

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre WEDNESDAY HELPER

A reliable, energetic volunteer is wanted at the Day Centre on Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. to make and serve coffee, serve lunch and help generally. Needs to be willing to work as part of a team.

Sunday helpers and holiday relief volunteers for Tuesday & Thursday evenings sought urgently.

For further information contact Laura Howe, AJR Volunteers' Co-ordinator: 071 431 6161 or Sylvia Matus, Day Centre Organiser: 071 328 0208.

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

OPEN DAY

All members, volunteers and friends are invited to **Join us on**

**Sunday 4th July 1993
at 2.30 p.m.**

Entrance £2
to include refreshments

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE (AJR CLUB)

AFTERNOON HIGHLIGHTS

**Music – General Knowledge
Quiz & Buffet Supper**

Thursday May 20th 1993

Quiz – 4.30 p.m.–5.30 p.m.

A moving experience

The offices of the AJR have recently moved to new premises off the Finchley Road. For readers of *AJR Information* this move has simply entailed making a note of the new address and phone number. For the staff, however, the move was a little more complex, given the extra difficulties involved in transplanting a whole office community.

Naturally, the AJR handled the move in a sedate, dignified fashion. Crates were packed weeks in advance, seating arrangements and office plans mapped out on graph paper and shelf space allocated according to the needs of each department. This did not happen by magic. The spade-work was carried out by Lydia Lassman, the AJR's Administrator, and her assistant Carol Rosen. This dynamic duo could be spotted disappearing under stairwells and poking around in dusty basements counting computer cables for weeks prior to the move. Both of them demonstrated frightening efficiency. The end result of all this careful planning was a smooth, untraumatic, peaceful transfer to the new premises.

This is just not good enough! An office move should result in at least one shouting match, leading to fisticuffs, over who gets the desk by the window. Ignoring this ancient tradition smacks of the worst kind of thoughtless modernism. A true tra-

COUNCIL TAX (an AJR Social Service Department update)

On 1 April 1993 the Poll Tax was replaced by a Council Tax (CT) the main features of which are as follows:

- It is essentially a property-based tax valued as at 1 April 1991
- There will only be one bill per dwelling regardless of the number of residents (although more than one occupant may be liable to pay it)
- Each bill is based on the relative value of the property compared to other properties in the local area
- There are discounts for dwellings with only one resident adult
- CT Bills will also be reduced for some residents who are:

- disabled
- facing a large increase compared to what they paid in Community Charge (this is called a **transitional payment**)
- on low incomes
- living with other residents on low incomes

As this is a completely new tax there are bound to be some teething problems. We have already come across a number of these. For example: any of the above listed deductions should be made automatically by the council — without you having to make a claim for it. However, whilst some councils list the deductions made on their bills, others do not, so it is important that the bills are checked to see that full entitlement is given.

Under the Poll Tax everyone, without exception, had to pay at least 20 per cent of the total bill. With the Council Tax those on Income Support will have nothing to pay. However some people in this category have received a bill in error.

If you do not get Income Support you may still get all your Council Tax paid if your income is low — but the more income you have, the less Benefit you will get.

As soon as you receive a demand, please check it and if in any doubt at all contact our Social Services Department immediately so that any errors may be dealt with without delay. □

ditionalist packs in seven minutes and unpacks at leisure, speaking to no one until fully settled in (this may take up to two years, but the traditionalist knows that haste makes waste).

Since the AJR insist on keeping abreast of the times everyone has settled in with undue alacrity and the office is, once again, running like clockwork. Oh how one yearns for the relaxed pace of a more leisurely age!

□ M.N.

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
Tel. 071 328 0208

Open Tuesday and Thursday 9.30 a.m.—7 p.m., Monday and Wednesday 9.30 a.m.—3.30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m.—7 p.m.

Morning Activities — Bridge, kalookie, scrabble, chess, etc., keep fit, discussion group, choir (*Mondays*), art class (*Tuesdays and Thursdays*).

Afternoon entertainment —

MAY

- Sunday 2* Balaton Hungarian Folk Dance Group
Monday 3 CLOSED
Tuesday 4 A Concert given by Gitte Sorensen (Flute) & Vegard Lund (Guitar) of LIVE MUSIC NOW
Wednesday 5 Light Classical Music — Bahiya Callan (Soprano) & Lianne-Marie Skrinier (Soprano) with Piano

- Thursday 6* Musical Harmony — Jack Harris & Happy Branston
Sunday 9 METROPOLITAN POLICE BAND
Monday 10 An Hour of Music in May — Satya Barham and Geoffrey Whitworth
Tuesday 11 The Stajex Players
Wednesday 12 Light Musical Entertainment by Tessa Newman & Isabel Barry
Thursday 13 A Musical Pot-Pourri — Jane Rosenburg accompanied by Ian Stirling
Sunday 16 A little Light Music — Schubert — Chopin & Gershwin — Laura Shur
Monday 17 Wings of Song — Harriet Goodwin (Mezzo) accompanied by Zoe Smith
Tuesday 18 The Richard Tauber Memories — George Kazanzi (Baritone) accompanied by Happy Branston
Wednesday 19 'RECHORDIA' — Susi Bishop — Helen Hooker — Vicky Rees — Karen Barton
Thursday 20 A Recital in May for Cello & Piano — Shirley Smart & Katherine Summerhayes

- Sunday 23* Songs for All — Shirley Gurevitz accompanied by Anne Berryman
Monday 24 A Lunch-Time Musical Affair — Rona Israel (Soprano) accompanied by Charlotte Matthews (Piano)
Tuesday 25 Hans Freund: A Concert for Shavuot
Wednesday 26 CLOSED
Thursday 27 CLOSED
Sunday 30 An Hour of Music & Fun with Debbie O'Brien at the Piano
Monday 31 CLOSED

JUNE

- Tuesday 1* Duo Kinnor entertain with a Pot-Pourri of Music — Madeleine Whitelaw & David Richmond
Wednesday 2 (a) Outing to House of Commons
(b) The Orchard Trio — Piano, Flute & Oboe
Thursday 3 Nikki van der Zyl & Rosa Butwick Entertain with Michael Liebermann
Sunday 6 Summertime Serenade — Joanne Fellermann (Soprano) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth

FAMILY EVENTS

Deaths

Kingsley Gertrud Hazel Kingsley, born 7 July 1919, in Vienna, passed away after a short, painless illness. I will always remember my lovely wife and friend of 53 years for her golden heart and for helping anyone in need. All the family and her good friends will miss her.

Lewis Walter Lewis, born August 1914, died on 21 March 1993. Mourned by his wife, children, grandchildren and sisters.

Ruhemann Mrs Ellen Kessel-Ruhemann died, after a long illness, on 23 March 1993 in Norwich, aged 85.

Tichauer Gerard Tichauer, born in Berlin 1909, died in Harrow, 24 March 1993. His was a long and eventful life and he will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by his wife Hilda, daughter Lydia, his family and all his many friends.

In Memoriam

Weiss Karl Weiss who left me heartbroken March 1982, also Tommy who died suddenly March 1956 not quite 11 years old. 'To the world they were only grains of sand, to me they were the world'.

CLASSIFIED

Seeking friendship

Chess player of medium ability wanted. Box No. 1244.

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Art Notes



Forces Sweethearts.

Imperial War Museum.

One exhibition not to be missed is *Forces Sweethearts* at the Imperial War Museum in association with Royal Mail International (until 15 October). It includes true-life love stories, meetings and partings, reunions and the stories of those who never came back; wartime weddings and everything associated with them including wedding dresses made from parachute silk; dream girls including Vera Lynn, the Varga girls from Esquire, and Jane's lucky scarf and fan mail.

Spinks will be holding their annual exhibition of *English Watercolours and Drawings* from 3–28 May. Works by a wide variety of important artists will be on show including a delightful view of Hampstead from the Vale of Health by Cornelius Varley (1781–1873) and views of Dresden from the River Elbe by William Callow (1812–1908).

Our old friend *Lily Freeman* is again showing her paintings at Burgh House, New End Square (12–23 May). She says that this is probably her last exhibition 'as

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she is getting old', but who believes her? The Camden Arts Centre is showing new work by three young artists: Alison Marchand, Paul Winstanley and Dorothy Cross.

The Bowes Museum is housed in a magnificent chateau on the outskirts of a small Teeside town and contains an important and varied collection of art. The house is at present undergoing refurbishment and the National Gallery has taken the opportunity to show a selection of paintings from its collection (until 20 June).

There is a fine El Greco, bought in 1869 for £8, with other Spanish paintings including two Goyas. The French paintings include a beautiful Courbet and there are also interesting Italian and Netherland paintings. The exhibition is sponsored by the Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation.

The Manchester-based Whitworth Art Gallery's *Royal Residences of the Victorian Era* (until 31 July) is a small exhibition of watercolours from the Royal Library at Windsor. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were great patrons of the arts and commissioned many of the works. The exhibi-

tion reflects the rich interior decoration of the Victorian era, the splendours of Windsor, the sumptuous rooms of Buckingham Palace, the domesticity of Osborne House and the tartan fabric of Balmoral.

Georges Roualt (1871–1958) was a prolific artist who worked in a variety of media until his death. The first exhibition of his early work *Georges Roualt: The Early Years, 1903–20* is being held at the Royal Academy (until 6 June). This exhibition is sponsored by BMW and Harpers and Queens and a 60 page booklet with full-colour illustrations will accompany the exhibition. Price £4.95. This exhibition will be followed by the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition (until 15 August).

The *Ben Uri Art Society* is showing classics from its permanent collection (until 23 May). Included in the exhibition will be recent acquisitions, given to the Society by friends and galleries. Barry Fealdman, the Society's former Curator and Art Correspondent of the *Jewish Chronicle* will be talking at the gallery about collecting Jewish art on 3 June at 8 p.m. □

SB's Column

Austrian Plays in Britain. Plays by Austrian writers are rarely performed in this country. A Schnitzler work was occasionally presented in a rough translation, a Nestroy comedy adapted by Tom Stoppard for modern requirements became *On the razzle* and some playlets appeared on fringe stages in the form of experimental theatre. Among the latter, Thomas Bernhard's *Elizabeth II*, a fantasy about the Queen's visit to Vienna, was performed at the Gate Theatre, Notting Hill. Bernhard's anti-Nazi play *Heldenplatz* caused a minor sensation (and lengthy debates) at the Vienna 'Burg' a few years ago with a cast including Marianne Hoppe. Bernhard's *Theatermacher* can be seen at the London Almeida Theatre in May with Alan Bates in the lead.

Plums of German cinema. Under this heading a number of German films are being shown by London's Goethe institute on the first Monday of each month. Highlighting some of the best postwar productions, a start was made with the 1945 film *Under the Bridges in March*, and *Das Mädchen Rosemarie* in April. The latter is the 1945 story of the call girl Nitribitt (much in the news at that time) starring Nadja Tiller. Chancellor Adenauer attempted to suppress the showing because of political allusions involved. The series will continue throughout the year.

From the Music Scene: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau announced his withdrawal from the concert platform. However, the popular baritone will carry on recording on an international basis. The Salzburg Festival has completed plans for the next two years: in 1994 Claudio Abbado will direct *Boris Godunow*, and Sir George Solti will conduct the *Missa Solemnis*; the same team is to prepare events for 1995; both are – according to the festival administration – worthy successors to Karajan's ideas.

Obituaries. Soprano Judith Hellwig, a faithful member of the Vienna State Opera from 1946 to 1972, has died in Vienna. She was 85, Slovakian-born, and found particular favour with the press as Donna Anna and as Agathe in *Der Freischutz*. Lillian Gish, who has died at the age of 96, was rightly called the grand old lady of silent films, having belonged to the circle of film greats from Mary Pickford to Harold Lloyd and Rudolph Valentino. With the advent of the 'Talkies', she transferred much of her work to theatre and television, scoring in *Arsenic and Old Lace* alongside Helen Hayes (who died recently, aged 92). She played minor roles until 1987. Her heyday, though, was much earlier in the century when her popularity was immense and every youngster sang:

*Jetzt gehts der Dolly gut
Sie sitzt in Hollywood
An einem Tisch
Mit Lillian Gish.* □

40 Years Ago this Month

A TRUE JEW

In paying a tribute to Dr. Leo Baeck many will speak of the philosopher and rabbi.

I can only say a few words about the man who lived what he preached. When he struggled against the Nazis to protect his flock amid hourly danger to his life, resisting all temptation to save himself, I had the honour of being in touch with his work till September 1938. When I accompanied my husband and my children to refuge in England, Dr. Baeck remained in Germany defending a position which he knew was lost, and he held on with no illusion about the prospects of his own survival.

In 1943, he was arrested and sent to Theresienstadt. There he triumphed over evil. He gathered strength from the strength he gave to others.

When liberation came, the Russians threw at the mercy of the Theresienstadt prisoners a number of young Nazis – strangers to the camp – to let the Jews taste the sweetness of revenge. But such was the spiritual power of Rabbi Baeck and others like him that the Theresienstadt Jews had compassion, and not one of the Nazis came to any harm.

Throughout his life Rabbi Baeck has loved his neighbour as he loves himself. To him this is no effort. He follows the law not only of his religion but of his own human nature which represents what is best and noblest in the Jewish race.

Lola Hahn-Warburg

From a special edition of *AJR Information*, dedicated to Dr. Leo Baeck on the occasion of his 80th birthday, May 1953.

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Deploying literary aplomb
He doled out sex in *Peeping Tom*
So that his current search for Roots
Shows an advance from *schmutz* to
Schmoots

MICHAEL HOWARD

His father from Romania came
(You'd never guess it from the name)
Despite of which – truth must be told –
On Maastricht he blows hot and cold

SPEAKER KHASBULATOV

While Betty Boothroyd clamours 'Order!'
He oversteps decorum's border
And in quite unparliamentary terms
Calls Yeltsin's team a can of worms

Search Notices

Would **Rosel Kauber** (formerly of Leipzig), or anyone knowing of her, please contact Rudi Friedmann whom she first met on holiday in the village of Herleshausen, near Eisenach (Thuringia). R. J. Friedmann, Casella Postale 199, CH 6902 Paradiso Ti, Switzerland.

Mrs Grete Kac-Sobel of 335 Hanbury Street, Stepney, London died 3 or 4 years ago. She was born in Halle, Germany. Could anyone who can provide information about her date and place of birth, maiden name and date of death please contact her niece: C. Kella, 12 Hagiva Street, Ramat Hasharon, Israel 47239.

Messrs Pannone & Partners (Mr H. H. Marcus) of 14 New Street, London EC2, telephone: 071-972 9720, fax: 071-972 9723, would like to obtain information about Mrs Kate Fowles née Joskovitz who, in 1939, lived at either 37 Northfield Road, Stamford Hill, London N16, or at 145 North End Road, Golders Green, London NW11. This enquiry relates to property in Germany registered in Mrs Fowles' name.

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CARING AND PERSONAL SERVICE

THIS ENGLAND

Britain's schoolchildren were urged yesterday to give up fatty food like hamburgers and chips . . . by an 18-stone minister nicknamed Billy Bunter

Daily Mirror

Head bans his daughters from going to school

Daily Express headline

Eton schoolboys could soon find it difficult to hold their heads up high. Their weekly supply of 3,000 starched collars dependent on a 75-year-old machine, known as a starch dolly, may be in jeopardy.

The Times

In these days of space flight it is encouraging to know there is still a place in the world for mad British explorers like Sir Ranulph Fiennes

Today editorial

Mr Curtis, the rector of Crewkerne, is near despair about the plundering of rural churches 'There's been nothing like it since Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries' he says.

The Independent

Consider the difficulties of the Duke of Westminster and the London Ambulance Service and tremble. We are all on the ledge.

The Guardian

'It's a splendid year for bores. There is a man with glasses who is Prime Minister and a man with glasses who is leader of the Opposition'.

Private Eye editor Ian Hislop

When the Queen goes out to dinner she takes her own cutlery because, a Palace aide explained, 'The Queen likes to take her own utensils wherever she goes'. Why? Is she worried about germs? Afraid of being poisoned? Or – a more interesting possibility – is she kosher? It is noticeable that she never undertakes engagements on Saturdays and, for all we know, Windsor Castle might be an *eruv*.

Lynn Barber, *Independent on Sunday*

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REGULAR VISITS TO LONDON

Obituaries

Karen Gershon

Karen Gershon (née Käthe Löwenthal) who died in London, aged 69, merited the epithet 'the voice of the kindertransport generation'. She found her vocation at a precociously early age, publishing several poems in the *Jüdische Rundschau* while still at school in Nazi Germany. In late 1938 her middle class parents sent her from Bielefeld to safety in Scotland.

The fact that she was never to see them again filled her life with unassuaged sorrow, for all that she found fulfilment as an English-speaking poet, and in personal terms: she and her (non-Jewish) husband had four children, three of whom settled in Israel. (As, indeed, did nine of her thirteen grandchildren). Of her *Selected*

Poems a critic wrote 'Miss Gershon has chosen a simple direct diction and flatness of tone, which seemed a weakness when some of these poems appeared singly in various magazines, but which cumulatively achieve great power and searing honesty. This is a remarkable and moving work'.

Her work schedule, which included poetry reading, reviewing, participation in TV programmes etc, was a busy one; only this year an account of her Nazi-shadowed youth entitled *The Lesser Child*, appeared both in German and English. She will probably be best remembered for her 'collective autobiography' of kindertransportees, *We Came as Children*, which gained her both widespread public recognition and several awards. □

Gerard Tichauer

Gerard Tichauer has died, aged 84. He was born in the famous Moabit district of Berlin. A hard-working youth with an ear for music, he gained an engineering degree and was employed by AEG as a research engineer. As head of the Socialist Students' Group at Berlin University, where he read political history at evening classes, he attracted the attention of the Nazis very quickly. In 1933 he fled Germany for Holland, taking his mother with him. After a brief spell in Rotterdam they moved to London where Gerard met Otto Schiff, who arranged their passage to South Africa. There Gerard worked as a development engineer at Stellenbosch University. On the eve of war he joined the South African army. Upon being invalided out he joined the Cape Town Ballet as pianist (John Cranko was the choreographer).

He returned to Britain in 1948. From 1950 to 1974 he was the technical manager of a group of 33 companies, at the same time as running a company of his own.

AJR members will, perhaps, know Gerard Tichauer best for his work at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, where he regularly appeared as pianist. Always ready to come in and entertain, often at a moment's notice, he will be much missed there. He will also be mourned by his wife Hilda, daughter Lydia, family, many friends and admirers (including myself). □ M.N.

OTTO SCHIFF HOUSING ASSOCIATION

An important announcement of interest to all who are contemplating Residential Care for themselves, relatives or friends

Recent 'Care in the Community' legislation makes it advisable for anyone considering Residential Care to make contact with the Otto Schiff Housing Association at the earliest opportunity.

The new legislation is likely to make entry into Residential Care Homes more difficult. We therefore wish to give individual members of the community advice which is appropriate to their personal needs and circumstances.

Without any obligation please contact:

Mrs G. Randall, Tel: 081-209 0022 or write to her at
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Birthdays

Frieda Kochmann 95

It is a pleasure and a privilege to send Mrs Frieda Kochmann our congratulations and good wishes on her 95th birthday on the 16 May. Her trim and erect figure is seen regularly at the Services of Belsize Square Synagogue, at Balint House and at the many functions and activities of the B'nai B'rith Leo Baeck Lodges.

She retired from the House Committee of the Otto Schiff House last year, after she had served on the committee since its inception. Nevertheless, she continues to visit Balint House, to which many of the residents of the Otto Schiff House were transferred, to call on the residents and give support to the staff. She regularly advises on matters of Kashrut and religious services.

Her energy and active participation in the life around her is undiminished. She is untiring in her involvement in the activities of the Leo Baeck Lodges. Her organising abilities backed by long experience and common sense are widely appreciated.

Frieda Kochmann is a deeply religious person and has an extensive knowledge of Jewish Ritual and Practices complemented by a high moral standard. She has an astounding memory and, therefore, is a mine of information about people and events. As the head of her closely knit family she sets an example to her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren which they all wish to follow. She maintains regular contact with her many friends and is in frequent correspondence with those living in all parts of the world.

We hope Frieda Kochmann will continue her active life in good health and much happiness for many years to all our benefit. □

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Dr Curt C. Silbermann 85

Dr Curt C. Silbermann, Joint Chairman of the Council of Jews from Germany and Chairman of the Board of the American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, will be 85 on 23 May. His unrelenting activities in the interest of our community have gained new topicality recently when East Germany became part of the German Federal Republic. This necessitated efforts to promulgate legislation more or less analogous to the regulations applying to the Western parts of Germany, both with regard to communal and to individual property. It is reassuring for German Jewish victims of Nazism that Curt Silbermann is their spokesman as member of the Claims Conference charged with settling this complicated issue.

His lifelong association with the Council of Jews from Germany has resulted not only in constructive co-operation with the other sections of the Council in Israel, Britain and France but also in long-standing personal bonds with their members.

We sincerely wish Dr Silbermann undiminished vigour for many years to come.

□ W.R.

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AGM guest speaker



Ralph Blumenau.

Photo: Private.

The guest speaker at this year's Annual General Meeting will be Ralph Blumenau. Cologne-born, he came to this country in 1937 and read History at Oxford. He taught for 28 years at Malvern College, Worcestershire, retiring as Head of History in 1985. Ralph Blumenau currently lectures on History of Art, History of Philosophy and History of the Jews at the University of the Third Age; he is also contributing a series of about 15 articles on the Jews in the German-speaking Lands to *AJR Information*. □

The views expressed in *AJR Information* are the editor's — and not necessarily those of the Association.

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