

AJR Information

Volume L No. 8
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£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

Is Guinness good for you? p5

Mid-Thirties memories p12

King Oedipus in Austria p16

A warning!

The uncertainty surrounding the recent Austrian compensation law has allowed rumours to circulate. One rumour that needs scotching in no uncertain terms has it that individual claimants will receive £10,000. The global sum allocated by the mean-spirited Austrian parliamentarians (against Green Party opposition) is far too small for that sort of 'share-out'. Not that there will be a general share-out: it is intended that – as is only reasonable – hardship cases will receive priority.

For further information turn to page 13. □

Populists, terrorists and revisionists

Southern discomfort

When a country's body politic goes rotten the process has to start somewhere, and this starting point is surprisingly often in the South. While Berlin was still the capital of Weimar Germany, Munich was already *Hauptstadt der Bewegung*. Le Pen has captured three town halls along the Riviera; the Italian Neo-Fascists are strongest South of Rome; the biggest vote for a Fourth German Reich has been cast in Austria, where Haider conjures up another Anschluss.

Geography has little to do with it. Interwar Bavaria spawned Nazism in exaggerated reaction to the left-wing *Räterepublik* of 1919. Le Pen's success in the South of France stems from de Gaulle's withdrawal from Algeria after which a million returning French colons settled in the region. Neo-Fascist strength in the *mezzogiorno* owes much to local

underdevelopment and maladministration. Haider prospers because of the feeble denazification of Austria, itself the result of the ludicrous Allied misconception that Hitler's birthplace was his first victim. Currently Austria is also the detection-proof hideaway of the murderous Bavarian Liberation Army (*Bajuvarische Befreiungsarmee*) – so called because they deny the existence of a separate Austrian nation – who target gypsies and liberal politicians.

How does the UK fit into this overall picture? Is there a danger of the British body politic putrefying from a starting point in the South? Not on present showing – but complacency is a poor counsellor. Not all that long ago a BNP candidate topped the poll in a ward at Tower Hamlets. Last month the focus of concern switched from council estates on the Isle of Dogs to crenellated Saltdean Castle in Kent. Its castellan, Alan Clark, argued on TV that Britain should have made peace with Hitler in early 1941 to avoid further bloodshed and save the Empire. What motivated Churchill to continue the war at the expense of 400,000 lives, Clark alleged, was pure self-interest: a peace deal would have ended his premiership.

The implications of Clark's thesis are monstrous. It elevates Hitler – perfidy incarnate – into a potentially trustworthy negotiating partner. If he was open to negotiation, he can't have been as black as painted. He may, *pace* David Irving, not even have known about the Final Solution and such like horrors. In which case these horrors may only have been an *ex post facto* justification for Churchill's war-mongering, and so on.

Let us close this particular Pandora's Box – but not before hyphenating Alan Clark's surname into Pétain-Clark (somehow befitting the owner of a Norman castle, don't you think?) Apropos of Marshal Pétain: France still feels so mortified about its own deal with Hitler of fifty-five years ago that last month it pulped a brand new set of banknotes bearing the image of the Lumière Brothers because the latter served the Vichy régime. □



The site of Prime Minister Eisner's assassination in Munich, 1919.

'Our forgotten neighbours'

This is the title of an exhibition currently on display at the Museum of the Third District (Landstrasse) of Vienna. It features documents, photographs and letters from some inmates of the death camps, and many other items referring to Jews who had lived in the district. Originally, there were more than 13,000 Jews in the area, of whom many succeeded in emigrating before the outbreak of World War II. However, 3,648 people were deported to destinations in the East, such as the Ghetto at Lodz, Opole, Riga and Minsk; only 41 of these survived the Holocaust.

The exhibition also gives the visitor some idea of Jewish daily life and the Festivals – the latter by means of an indoor Succah and some artifacts on loan from the community head office. In one room the names of all known residents after March 1938 are inscribed in the walls in alphabetical order.

Herr Hauer, formerly curator of the museum, now retired, voluntarily undertook the monumental task of listing the names, addresses and ultimate exile destinations, where known. Details, which are obviously incomplete, were gathered from the four corners of the earth and printed in book form of which there are only four copies presently in existence. Such a task would have been almost impossible in any of the densely populated (Jewish) districts – 2, 9 and 20. It took Herr Hauer four years to collect all this data. Before leaving we expressed the hope that the exhibition would be well attended by today's residents of the 3rd District, school parties and others to whom the fate of their former neighbours may still be of interest.

□ Fred and Therese Masserick

The exhibition will be open throughout September and October every Wednesday (4-6pm) and Sunday (10-12am). Karl Hauer can be contacted at 7 Kranzgasse A-1150 Vienna (phone 892-7359).

Dutch pensions update

Whereas previously the Inland Revenue had agreed that Dutch WUV pensions were exempt from United Kingdom tax, rules have been amended so that the exemption will no longer apply automatically where the award is made on or after 13th April 1995. Instead only the first 28 weeks' benefit will be exempt from tax.

□ WDR

Profile

Forty-Fiver

Koppel Kendall was born in 1927 in the Polish market town of Bialobzegi, where the family ironmongery business supplied the local farming community. Koppel's father prayed three times a day at the synagogue, and although Koppel attended the only school in town, which was Catholic, every afternoon he went straight on to cheder.

This way of life was abruptly brought to an end in 1940 when German forces occupied the town, forcing its Jewish inhabitants into a restricted ghetto area. His father was taken away and suffered an unknown fate.



Koppel Kendall

In 1942 the 'town' was surrounded by tanks and its inhabitants were given five minutes to evacuate. Koppel, who quite literally ran for his life, was struck on the head by a Polish policeman who knew him and pushed into a line for those fit enough to do work. It was the first reprieve of many that fate was to deal him. He last saw his mother and two sisters taken to the railway station for transportation to Treblinka.

For the more than a year Koppel undertook tasks for the police around the town, but in 1943 he was deported to a concentration camp which supplied an ammunition factory with slave labour. A year later he was sent to Buchenwald and joined other slave labourers working the quarries. "People died like flies," he recalls. Later came a transfer to a camp

near Leipzig where anti-tank weapons and poison gas were manufactured.

In January 1945 Koppel was transported to Theresienstadt on a 15-day nightmare journey in which the train was continually attacked by Allied planes. They "lived like animals," with no food and innumerable beatings. At the approach of the Russian army, the camp guards disappeared; those inmates with enough residual strength left the confines of the camp to meet their liberators.

Just 17 when he first arrived in Britain, the CBF sent Koppel first to the Lake District. Later he lived in a Habonim hostel in Loughton and studied at Walthamstow Polytechnic, and was subsequently taken under the wing of the Spiro family from whom he learnt the bespoke tailoring trade. A willing and very fast learner, he attended the Regent Street Polytechnic and the London College of Fashion where he was later to be a teacher himself. His wife to be, Vivienne, unsurprisingly insisted that he change his name – so 'Kandelzucker' became Kendall.

In 1956 he had the skills of a first class gent's bespoke tailor and the confidence to open his own business in the Finchley Road. "I wanted to be a great tailor," he recalls, "so I made beautiful clothes. Not Savile Row, but Finchley Row." Among his famous clientele were Sir Gerald Nabarro MP and Max Bygraves; many of his customers were Jewish refugees who settled in the area. His shop-cum-workshop with its multifarious patches of cloth, a cutting table strewn with buttons and thread, jackets and trousers lining the walls in different stages of manufacture, all combine to create a comfortable ambience of apparent untidiness essential to an Eastern European master tailor turning out his best work.

This comfortable ambience has, however, been shattered twice in recent years. On the first occasion Koppel had to fight off an axe-wielding 'customer'; on the second an IRA bomb blew in his shop front. True to form, he also survived these setbacks.

He recently returned from a '45 Aid Society' reunion in Israel attended by many of the 620 child survivors who came to the UK from the camps. Meeting other Forty-Fivers – as well as such of Israel's Men of Destiny as President Weizmann and Prime Minister Rabin – went some way towards alleviating the sadness of his life story.

□ Ronald Channing

Charmless Charmley and know-nothing Northcliffe

Over and over we see individuals once accorded guru status turning out to have feet of clay. Readers may remember the child-rearing expert Dr. Spock and also the philosopher 'Freddie' Ayer admitting, rather late in life that the views which made them famous had been erroneous.

Historians are more prickly about admitting past errors – or, for that matter, howlers. AJP Taylor never retracted his assertion that Hitler's drive to war represented a continuation of traditional European power politics. Nor has Eric Hobsbawm – one of 'us', so to speak – rectified his perennially myopic vision of Communist atrocities.

But at least these lapses showed a certain internal consistency. What, though, are we to make of a historian who blatantly contradicts himself within the space of two years? In his 1993 Churchill biography John Charmley, of the University of East Anglia, castigated the wartime Premier for torpedoing all attempts at a negotiated peace in his determination to beat the Germans at no-matter-what cost.

This year, on the 50th VE Day anniversary Dr Charmley wrote in the *Daily Mail* "sadly, we can never trust the Germans. As Churchill said of them: They are either at your throat or at your feet."

But even this example of Dr Charmley's insight into history pales into insignificance beside this outrageous thesis – advanced in print and on the air in 1993 – that the Holocaust was the Nazis' reaction to impending defeat. Such a thesis invests the Holocaust with a spurious logic not a million miles removed from justifying it. What it does, in addition, is reveal an ignorance of historical facts which in a tenured academic amounts to near-criminal negligence. The spectre of German defeat in the East loomed from February 1943 (the end of the Battle of Stalingrad), whereas genocide operations had started fully eighteen months earlier with the Einsatzgruppen massacres.

One cannot even guess precisely what agenda the *Mail's* 'eminent' historian was pursuing with the above-quoted remarks. The paper's own agenda is – at least in part – more easily divined. It is regurgitating images of the Hun way past

their sell-by date in 1990's Europe out of a spirit of spuriously patriotic Little Englandism. But there might also be a hidden agenda. Could it be that the present proprietor of the *Daily Mail* is trying to erase memories of his grandfatherly predecessor Lord Northcliffe – the most influential pro-Nazi opinion-moulder in 1930s Britain? In 1933 the *Daily Mail* justified Nazi anti-Jewish measures: "The German nation was rapidly falling under the influence of its alien elements". 1935 brought a front page "Hurrah for Mosley's Blackshirts", and on the day of the Anschluss *Mail* correspondent Ward Price filed an obsequious interview with Hitler from Linz. During the Sudeten crisis -- I could go on, but I feel an attack of nausea coming on.

□ RG

Still in demographic deficit

Professor Sergio Della Pergola of the Hebrew University, an authority on Jewish demography, estimates World Jewry to number 13 millions – three million fewer than before the Shoah. The largest Jewish communities are in the USA (5.6 million), Israel (4.4 million), France (530,000), Russia (410,000), Canada (350,000) and Britain (300,000). The figure for Germany has, thanks to the Russian influx, gone up to 50,000.

(N.B. Given the large number of mixed marriages, all figures are approximate)□

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

Reviews

Carolling for the Wehrmacht

Roland Girtler und Friederike Okladek, *EINE WIENER JÜDIN IM CHOR DER DEUTSCHEN WEHRMACHT*, Dachs Verlag, Vienna, 1994.

This is a story with a difference of a young Jewish girl who survived the war with daring and panache in the midst of the enemy. The subtitle of the book is *Die Geschichte einer Rebellin* (The History of a Rebel). It is unusual in yet another way: each chapter of her adventures is commented on by Dr. Girtler, an Austrian social anthropologist whose speciality is the study of rebels.

The life of Okladek was a veritable Odyssey. When the Nazis came to Austria she, then aged 17, managed to get to her grandmother in Holland. When, before long, Holland was occupied, she succeeded in acquiring a new identity, becoming Johanna Deutemeijer. She got away with not wearing the yellow star, but found her disguise precarious. The Underground helped her to cross borders into France, where a web of false stories established her as a more credible Dutchwoman. She invented a German soldier sweetheart who had taken her to Paris with him and there abandoned her.

Odd and daring as it may seem, she found work by answering a small advert – in a *Wehrmacht* newspaper! – for a trained typist with good German. (One might call that taking the bull by the horns). At the office where she worked forms and documents for German organisations were printed. During her lunch breaks she stole quantities of them for the Underground. It was during that period that she had the temerity to accept an invitation to sing in a German Army choir at a Christmas celebration in Notre Dame Cathedral in 1942. Believe it or not, she says she enjoyed the experience.

When the thefts were finally discovered she came under suspicion, but managed to escape once again. She set out on the trail to Spain, an undertaking that called for tremendous physical endurance. It was winter when, with the help of the French Underground, she joined a group to cross the Pyrenees. Frostbitten and exhausted she survived.

In Spain she underwent something of a

personality change. Reverting to her Jewish identity she, in her own words, became a young girl again. She joined a group of Zionists who were trying to get to Palestine, in which endeavour she succeeded. She also met her future husband and lived in a kibbutz. When the war was over, she visited her parents who had made it to Britain. She ends the book with thanks to her *alter ego* Johanna Deutemeijer, whoever or wherever she may be, who, unbeknownst, saved a life – and thus The World Entire.

□ John Rossall

A Balkans brouhaha – not many dead

David Edgar, *PENTECOST*, Young Vic, Waterloo

Amid the encircling gloom of London's theatreland – where six 'gay' plays are currently on offer – the arrival of David Edgar's *Pentecost* at the Young Vic seemed like a beacon. Here instead of ringing yet more changes on the love-that-dare-not-speak-its-name theme, a playwright engages with some of the big issues of our time: Eastern Europe in transition, the role of the West, the refugee question, etc. As an additional bonus *Pentecost* opens with a gripping debate about art history – or more precisely whether a mural in a desecrated church predates Giotto (the founder of 'modern' European art). If the painting could be established as 'pre-Giottan' Edgar's fictitious Balkan state would boast a much prouder past than its dismal historical record – Mongol and Turk invasions, inter-religious mayhem, accommodations with Hitler and Stalin – indicates.

The debate about the painting in turn raises related issues, not the least interesting of which is this: does art – to some a substitute religion – enjoy godlike eternity, or could individual art works be subject to the same birth-and-death cycle as human beings?

Before this rather highflown debate, into which the quest for national self-esteem injects some passion, can be resolved, Edgar stages his first *coup de théâtre*. An armed group of East European and Third World refugees erupts into the church and takes the disputing art experts hostage to use as bargaining

counters in exchange for admission to Western countries of asylum. While negotiations with the authorities drag on, the refugees intersperse the telling of individual hardship stories with snatches of folksong, dance and mime. This multicultural insert sorely tries playgoers' patience. Then, not before time, Edgar stages his second *coup de théâtre*: soldiers burst into the church with guns blazing. They free the hostages at the price of smashing the mural to smithereens – and also send the surviving refugees back to their countries of origin.

I was intrigued to learn that David Edgar actually teaches playwriting. He cannot therefore be ignorant of Aristotle's theory of the three unities – of time, place and action. *Pentecost* suffers from a lack of unity of action. Having started off as a debate about art, nation-building and Balkan politics, it suddenly turns into a drama of desperate asylum seekers. But even the refugee protagonists of the second half show hugely different levels of desperation. What on earth possessed Edgar to place a Baltic Russian alongside an Iraqi Kurd? Sent back to his country of origin the Russian will undergo the 'torture' of having to learn Latvian, whereas the Kurd faces real torture at the hands of Saddam Hussein's thugs.

Beside such basic flaws there are also details which grate. One of the disputing art historians is the Jewish-American Leonard Katz whom Edgar has clearly cloned from the egregious Professor Zak in Malcolm Bradbury's Anglo-American campus novels. Motormouth Katz keeps uncharacteristically *shtum* when a displaced Palestinian likens the Israeli Law of Return to Bonn's law granting ethnic Germans long resident in other countries automatic citizenship. For Edgar to put such a colossal oversimplification in the mouth of one character, while 'denying' another the right of reply, smacks of a lack of evenhandedness.

□ RG

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PETER C. RICKENBACK

Is Guinness good for you?

Addressing the Guild of Jewish Journalists, Alex Brummer, Editor of The Guardian's Financial Notebook, discussed the ongoing ramifications and implications of the Guinness Affair.

The successful, though bitterly contested, bid of £2.7 billion made by Guinness for the Distillers company led eventually to a 1990 'show' trial. By some strange coincidence, each of the first group of defendants (the only group to be both charged and brought to trial) was either wholly or partly Jewish. Anthony Parnes the stockbroker was co-defendant with Gerald Ronson, Chairman of the Heron Corporation, Sir Jack Lyons, a financier and financial adviser, and Ernest Saunders, an acknowledged marketing genius, Chairman of Guinness and Austrian-born Anglican.

Currently a re-examination of their cases is being undertaken after significant doubt has been cast into the safety of their convictions, despite some five years having elapsed. All four defendants have appealed against custodial sentences and substantial fines.

Each of them suffered in their personal and public lives. Sir Jack Lyons lost his knighthood and became ill. Anthony Parnes was devastated by his immense fine and custodial sentence and separated from his wife, Gerald Ronson's Heron Corporation fell upon hard times and Ernest Saunders lost his chairmanship of Guinness, as well as his commercial credibility (though he later returned to business and joined the lecture circuit).

They were accused of creating a false market in Guinness shares to increase the value of the Guinness bid. At the time the US government was cracking down on insider trading and plea bargaining by Ivan Bosky led to a tip-off which Scotland Yard followed up. The newly formed Serious Fraud Office (which has since suffered such major setbacks that its continuance is under question) saw an opportunity for combating suspected fraud and malpractice in the City. In fact the four accused were City 'outsiders', and in Alex Brummer's view, were 'perceived' to be Jewish. The press, chronicling their lavish lifestyles and Jewish connections through charitable donations, appeared only too willing to hint at conspiracies involving

demonic Jewish financiers.

By 1992 the heat was off and all subsequent accusations against associates and advisers of the original four (who could have been assumed to be equally guilty in common sense terms) were withdrawn or nullified, cases being postponed then subsequently collapsing. None of them, including Roger Seelig, were Jewish.

How did it come about that the City 'blue-bloods' escaped unscathed? Why did the press continually refer to the Jewish origins of the accused? Was there a hidden agenda? Should the Anglo-Jewish community have considered this to be a recurrence of the search for a scapegoat in bad times (à la Dreyfus)?

If anything, it revealed the need for a change in the largely ineffective self-regulatory culture of the City. Apparently it was acceptable for Asil Nadir to avoid arrest and prosecution by flying abroad beyond the courts' jurisdiction; for Lord Archer to make an insider killing with the use of an intermediary and only to forfeit the chairmanship of the Conservative Party; for Roger Levitt, whose chicanery was that of a real villain, to get off with a slapped wrist; for the Blue Arrow trial to end with acquittals; for Lord King to resign from the Chairmanship of British Airways in the face of evidence of a 'dirty tricks' campaign against Virgin Airlines; for the former Chairman of Brent Walker, George Walker, to be acquitted. With the exception of Levitt (a real knave) none of these were Jews. The SFO cannot record one other high profile success.

As yet, the Directors of Barings have faced no formal accusations, not even of incompetence; though some bowed out, they enjoyed a large proportion of the £100 million bonuses paid despite the company's loss of an unbelievable £900 million in an unholy gamble on the Japanese stock market. Fall guy Nick Leeson is highly unlikely to have acted entirely alone with such sums at stake.

One thing is certain, should the convicted four win their appeals (and there is a distinct possibility that this could happen) then the sums to be paid to them in recompense will have to be enormous!

□ Ronald Channing

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Letters to the Editor

PARENTS' QUANDARY

Sir – I am surprised at the misinterpretation of my letter in the April issue. I did not suggest that I had a right to expect to have Jewish grandchildren. What I did say was “that my parents deserved that respect”. This I reiterate wholeheartedly and would advise Gisela Feldman (June issue) not to lecture me on love, sympathy and understanding for my fellow men.

Ursula Price (June issue), far from castigating me for my opinions, indeed supports the very essence of my remarks. Nowhere did I accuse or even mention the spouses of my contemporaries who are in most cases, I am sure, of the highest integrity. However, I do take issue with the writer who was fortunate enough to escape with her parents and who lost only one uncle in the Holocaust. My parents had to go through persecution and torture before being gassed at Chmelno. I have lived with this picture of torture in front of me for the past 56 years.

The ‘Final Solution’ has two alternatives: physical extermination or melting into the surrounding culture. The end-result is the same, albeit more humane. Within two generations there would be no more Jews.

Sneyd Road
London NW2

Martin Teich-Birken

Sir – Perhaps the actual wording of Mr. Teich-Birken’s letter was unfortunate, but the fact remains that, having lost one third of our people in the Shoa, further loss through intermarriage is very sad. Most parents whose children marry out would rather have Jewish than Christian grandchildren. Many of them do their utmost to try and instil a knowledge of their roots in them. But anyone who, on marrying out, discards their own religion and adopts that of their spouse, completely cuts off their roots and also the roots of their children and grandchildren. Methinks the Lady does complain too much. She seems proud of her new religion as a Christian and it is she, not her husband, who followed in the footsteps of Ruth (“Your people shall be my people”). Which is not to say that many non-Jewish partners are not wonderful people. They

have to be to marry one of our persecuted race.

I would like to make it clear that our organisation, ROK, welcomes all Kindertransportees, be they of any faith (or any shade of Jewish observance).

Canons Park Close

Bertha Leverton

Edgware, Middlesex

SS WERE NOT A MONOLITH

Sir – Allow me, as a camp survivor of Kaiserwald and Stutthof, to comment on AW Freud’s sentence in the June issue “I felt sorry for the SS man, but then he had not been forced to volunteer for the SS”.

1. In my camp were some SS units of Estonian PoWs who, given the choice between volunteering for the SS Legion and being shot, had ‘volunteered’. In the same camp a German Jew, Horst Schleimer of Berlin, was the SS officer to whom these men had to come for anything they wanted, and poor Horst sweated when he had to enter their quarters and the men were called to attention and saluted, which Horst could not acknowledge. Two more of us prisoners were the men in charge of the armoury and on one occasion had to make a *razzia*, searching the SS for hidden weapons! Unbelievable, but true.
2. In German schools sixth formers were taken on visits to SS barracks, and at the end a list was laid out where they could opt for the SS when their call-up came; once one boy signed the others followed suit. We know how strong one would have to be to swim against the stream at that age.
3. At a ‘selection’ of women, a medical SS Captain was supposed to send the weak prisoners to their deaths. He sent them *all* to ‘life’, and addressed them in my hearing as *gnaedige Frauen* instead of the usual insults. I heard him say to the sergeant who normally did our selections, “Next time the Colonel can do his dirty job himself”, to which the sergeant made no reply.

Although these were exceptions, I believe they should be known.

North End Way
London NW3

E. Mitchell

ERICH FRIED

Sir – This gifted Jewish author and poet saw fit in his novel *Der Soldat und das Mädchen* to eulogize the notorious Irma Grese, chief instructress of Nazi female concentration camp torturers, better known amongst her unfortunate victims under the well-earned pet name of ‘Blond Beast of Belsen’. It was in fact this novel, which had gained Erich Fried a substantial readership among Germans and Austrians, who – so they claimed – up to then had been totally unaware of the extermination of Jews.

By pointing out that Erich Fried never made any secret of his sympathies for the Arab cause (*Laughable charge*, June issue) Mr Cohn seems to imply that no pro-Arab Jew could possibly harbour any pro-Nazi sympathies. Nothing could be further from the truth: Fried was always candid about his admiration for Irma Grese for her refusal to repent of her crimes against humanity, even when standing under the gallows, thereby proving to be a woman of her own convictions.

Lodge Close

Fred Rosner

Lambourne Road, Chigwell

WEEK OF ENCOUNTER

Sir – A few months ago we, an independent church in this city, invited former Wiener Neustadt Jews, who were driven out in 1938, to come to a week of encounter and reconciliation. We did this as Christians who are fully aware that the offence against the Jews came also from Christendom.

So we had the pleasure of being able to greet in Wiener Neustadt 43 people (including some relatives) from different parts of the world. In addition to official receptions, visits to schools and other events, there were also two special highlights that will remain unforgettable.

One highlight was the meeting with our guests in our church building. That was the opportunity for us to express everything that was in our hearts: the reason that we extended this invitation, the confessions of guilt, what ties us together with the people of Israel, and how we want to see and live out our relationship to our guests in the future.

The other highlight was a Sabbath service that our Jewish guests celebrated in the presence of our church congregation on an historic site in Wiener Neustadt. Such a service, led by the son of the last

Chief Rabbi of Wiener Neustadt, together with his son and grandson, jointly celebrated by Christians and Jews, has certainly never occurred in the 800-year history of Wiener Neustadt. Then, at the joint Sabbath meal that followed, a joy was engendered among our guests and ourselves during the singing and dancing that we can only consider to be a miracle when we reflect upon what happened to those people in this city and how difficult it was for some of them to come back to Wiener Neustadt at all.

During this week we became friends. This is a wonderful fruit of the 'Week of Encounter'.

Because there are still a number of former Wiener Neustadt Jews that were not able to be with us this time, we now extend a second invitation this year: From October 22 to October 29 of 1995 we will conduct a second WEEK OF ENCOUNTER, to which we want to invite all those who were unable to take part in May.

Brunnengasse 21 Pastor Mag. Helmuth
A-2732 Würflach, Austria U. Uli Eiwien

FAMILY TREES

Sir - Are you searching for your roots, but just don't know how and where your parents, grandparents and great-grandparents come from? What was their occupation, what did they do for a living? Do you know the place where your relatives were buried? Have they any gravestone?

If you want an answer to any of these questions, I am here to help you! As an historian and biographer I carry out research on family trees. I have access to files in libraries, archives, religious communities, cemeteries and state archives.

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RESEARCH ON THE BENCH

Sir - I am undertaking some post-graduate research on 'Jews and the Magistracy'. I would very much like to hear from anyone who came to England as a refugee and was subsequently appointed as a JP.

I would also be interested in any contact that German-speaking refugees had with the local Bench.

605 Kenton Road Ann Ebner JP
Kenton, Middlesex
(Tel: 0181 204 0438 & Fax: 0171 431 8454)

TRIBUTE

Sir - I read with interest the letter from Miss Joan Stiebel regarding the late Otto Schiff and thought I would mention that I worked as junior secretary with Mrs Susan Horwell for Otto Schiff from 1945-48. Mrs. Susie Horwell was the senior secretary. We worked together at Bloomsbury House looking after refugees. I myself was only 18 years old at the time.

I remember well that Otto Schiff wrote to the Home Office, to Barnet Janner M.P., trying to get permission to be allowed to work for many refugees and he was always kind and helpful to all who sought his help. I remember Otto Schiff as a very caring man who unselfishly tried to help as best he could.

Cheviot Gardens (Mrs) Josie Dutch
London NW2

ANTICLIMACTIC

Sir - I consider my letter (April issue) on AW Freud's series to be fair comment, since I confined my criticism to his style and manner being alien to the British.

Hence the indifference shown to him whilst staying in the British Embassy in Paris and the lack of interest in his story by the War Office.

Ravenscroft Avenue Ralph Freeman
Wembley, Middlesex

This correspondence is now concluded. *Ed.*

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The Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA) which maintains a group of residential and nursing homes for frail, elderly residents, are seeking an additional part-time Care Assistant to work from 9.30am to 4.30pm on two to three days per week at a salary of £80 per week for 16½ hours (including L.W.). Applications from care workers with experience in the care of the elderly would be especially welcomed.

If any AJR members know of someone who might be able to fill the OSHA vacancy for a part-time Care Assistant, please draw it to their attention. For further details and an application form telephone Judy Marks or Rina Durkin, OSHA, Osmond House, The Bishops Avenue, London N2 0BG. Tel: 0181 209 0022.

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PRINTER'S DEVILS

AJR Information apologises for incorrectly captioned photographs on pages 1 and 8 of the July issue.

Hella Pick is the Deputy Foreign Editor of the Guardian.

The AJR at Work

AJR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Another successful year

Max Kochmann, Chairman of the AJR, reported to the Annual General Meeting held at Cleve Road on 8 June 1995, that continuing and satisfactory progress had been made by the AJR in the preceding year.

The Chairman recalled that some two years previously the Committee of Management had accepted a brief whose overall aim was to attract new members – not only former refugees from Nazi persecution, but also their children – by increasing the standing of the AJR in the wider community. More specifically, the brief anticipated an extension of the range of social services, closer cooperation with other Jewish charities and organisations, the development of AJR activities beyond North West London and the continued development of *AJR Information*. Most of these objectives had been achieved.

The AJR had played a major role in the work of the Otto Schiff Housing Association and the formulation of its long term plans. Substantial grants were made to the OSHA residential homes which give priority to the refugee community.

The AJR appreciated the enthusiasm and reliability of the many volunteers upon whom it depended. New volunteers were being continually sought, especially those people who had taken early retirement and were seeking to maintain an active, interesting and satisfying life.

With the expansion in the work of the honorary officers of the AJR it was imperative to attract younger people with their experiences and skills into the leadership and to act as representatives to other communal organisations. It was assuredly a stimulating and rewarding task.

Theo Marx, after 31 years' continuous service and as Chairman since 1976, retired from the Committee of Management. Max Kochmann thanked him for his outstanding contribution in leading the AJR to become a significant welfare organisation and for his valued counsel and friendship, concluding: "I hope that you will have found satisfaction in knowing that your efforts have been successful and that so many people have benefited". Mr. Marx has kindly agreed to continue



Prof. Edward Timms, left, who gave an illustrated talk, with AJR Chairman Max Kochmann.

to serve as a Trustee of the AJR Charitable Trust.

The Chairman paid tribute to AJR Director Ernest David and his staff for their professionalism, and thanked the members of the Committee of Management, the honorary officers and particularly Hon. Treasurer David Rothenberg, for their support. The Chairman responded to a number of questions on matters of concern from among the many members present.

David Rothenberg, presenting the Hon. Treasurer's Report, referred to the importance of legacies in carrying on the AJR's work, particularly at a time when the burden of welfare provision was falling increasingly on the voluntary sector. Increased finance was needed to meet the continually growing requirements.

Professor Edward Timms gave an illustrated talk on the subject of 'The Wandering Jew and the *Ewige Jude*' which brought both enlightenment to his audience and a lively discussion.

Max Kochman was re-elected Chairman unopposed as were all other nominees to the Committee of Management.

□ RDC

Tenth Anniversary of ACJR

The summer of 1985 opened a new chapter for those of us whose parents had come to this country as refugees from Nazi persecution. We had tended to live our separate lives only on the periphery of Anglo-Jewry.

The formation of what came to be known as the Association of Children of Jewish Refugees, ACJR, proved almost to

be a reunion of young people who, sharing experiences with others of similar background, felt they were among long-lost friends.

Quite apart from the regular Saturday Socials, each Newsletter Diary has been filled with social and cultural activities of both Jewish and wider interest: theatre visits, concerts and opera, exhibitions, films, games marathons, meals out and, not least, the ACJR Seder at Pesach. Of the greatest significance have been the discussion groups in which members share thoughts and feelings about our common background, helping to create a sense of belonging and of being among those who understood without having to explain.

I take pride in having served as the first chairman. My wife Susie and I (who met within the group) continue to have real pleasure in welcoming an ACJR group to our Oxfordshire home in the country each summer.

The tenth anniversary of the ACJR is an occasion to celebrate and to consider how we can continue to enrich the lives of our members. Our story is a distinctive and unusual one with its poignancy and faith in the future. Our heritage, the European perspective, is something of rare value.

□ John Dunston

'JC' for the blind

Jewish Care offers to blind and partially sighted Jewish people a sixty-minute edited recording of the *Jewish Chronicle*, every week, without charge. The recording is on a standard cassette tape and posted in a special pack which is used by the listener to return the tape when he or she has finished with it.

Once a month a magazine on tape called 'Sounds Jewish' is produced. This lasts ninety minutes and contains many interesting items such as interviews with Jewish personalities, discussion and commentary on Jewish topics, as well as advice and helpful information for the visually impaired.

Please contact:

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85 Lordship Road, London N16 5HF
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Message from Ernest David

It has often been said that the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre is the jewel in the crown of the AJR, providing a home from home for those of our members who seek a club-like environment with companionship, a wide range of activities and, of course, good food and entertainment.

That it is appreciated is evidenced not by the mere fact of people regularly taking advantage of its facilities, but also by the generous donations and legacies we receive for the use of the Day Centre.

It is regrettable that, despite our membership being spread over all of London, the rest of the country and overseas, we can only operate the one Day Centre, in the area of West Hampstead, where there

is the greatest concentration of members.

At present the Day Centre has over 300 members who enjoy its facilities from Sunday to Thursday. Some people come once a week, and some more frequently. Some come for the morning sessions and some come in the afternoons. Some days are more popular than others.

This means that on some days we have vacancies and would welcome new members. We realise that some people may have transport problems. Where this is the case, we can help with transport arrangements, as we want to ensure that as many people as possible can enjoy what we have to offer □

Double trouble

An urgent request for help was attended

by one of our social workers. The 90-year-old member had received a letter from the London Borough of Camden stating that unless an outstanding council tax account for more than a thousand pounds was paid immediately, she was liable to spend up to 90 days in prison.

Our social worker knew the client well and was certain that there must have been a mistake as she was not liable for this amount of council tax, or anything like it. After making extensive enquiries, it turned out that the client was registered under her address in two separate forenames. Able to produce a passport to prove her identity, and prove that she was the only resident, an apology was received from Camden Council. However, it was a great shame that so much stress was caused to a very elderly lady □

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

Tel. 071 328 0208

Open Tuesday and Thursday 9.30 a.m. – 6.30 p.m., Monday and Wednesday 9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m. – 6.30 p.m.

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

Afternoon entertainment –

AUGUST	
Tuesday 1	THE INTERNATIONAL DUO – Jaehong Yim (Violin) accompanied by Michael Schreider (Piano)
Wednesday 2	DICHTERLIEBE & OTHERS – Sean Williams (Tenor) accompanied by Andrew Pink (Piano)
Thursday 3	OPERA & OPERETTA IN AUGUST – Laurence Hart (Baritone) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
Sunday 6	DAY CENTRE CLOSED – Fast of Av
Monday 7	WHEN THE LIGHTS GO ON AGAIN – A V.E. DAY 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION – Johnny Parker
Tuesday 8	THE VALERIE HEWITT

Wednesday 9	SHOW – Valerie Hewitt (Soprano – Guitar & Piano) accompanied by Ann Berryman (Piano)
Thursday 10	SUMMER MUSIC & SONG – Sue Kennett (Soprano) accompanied by Gordon Weaver (Piano)
Sunday 13	TWO VOICES & A PIANO – Eddy Simmons & Helen Blake
Monday 14	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
Tuesday 15	THE GEOFFREY STRUM & JOHNNY WALTON DUO A MEDLEY OF SONGS & ARIAS FROM MUSICALS, OPERETTA & OPERA – Kim Whyte (Soprano with own accompaniment)
Wednesday 16	ARIAS BY BRAHMS – SCHUBERT – BEETHOVEN & OTHERS – Nikko Ferrinho (Bass/Baritone) accompanied by Andrew Pink (Piano)
Thursday 17	LIGHT CLASSICS – Ian Bradford (Tenor) accompanied by Michael Hattingh (Piano)
Sunday 20	QUIZ – Presented by Lily Rudolfer
Monday 21	MUSIC FROM OPERETTA FOLLOWED BY A BOUQUET OF GYPSY MUSIC – Stephen Norbert (Piano) & Eugen Kurti (Violin)
Tuesday 22	LIGHT CLASSICS & SHOW SONGS – Carmen Lasok (Soprano) accompanied by

Wednesday 23	Christopher Rouse (Piano) TWO VOICES & PIANO – Eddy Simmons & Helen Blake
Thursday 24	Annette Saville ENTERTAINS ON PIANO & ACCORDION
Sunday 27	SANG & KLANG – Angela & Nicholas Arratoon, Diana & Elizabeth Lagroux accompanied by Maurice Hermele
Monday 28	DAY CENTRE CLOSED – Bank Holiday
Tuesday 29	CONTINENTAL COCKTAIL – Helen Mignano (Soprano) accompanied by Sylvia Cohen (Piano)
Wednesday 30	SHOW-STOPPER – Nikki van der Zyl (Soprano) accompanied by Daphne Lewis (Piano)
Thursday 31	LOVE'S OLD SWEET SONG – John Cunningham (Baritone) accompanied by Gael Ford (Piano)
September Sunday 3	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
Monday 4	A MUSICAL AFTERNOON WITH THE "DUO VIVO" – Armen Boldy (Tenor) accompanied by Marek Dabrowsky (Piano)
Tuesday 5	Judi, Bimbi & Rufus Merri-Frowde ENTERTAIN FOR THE AUTUMN accompanied by June Moore (Piano)

FAMILY

Deaths

Baumring. Isaac Baumring, my darling husband Mucky passed away peacefully after a long illness, on 6th June. Deeply mourned and never to be forgotten by me, Trude.

Dr Isaac Baumring. In loving memory of our uncle Isaac Baumring. Maryla Estlein and family, and Genia Weinstein, Israel.

Gunz. Dr Ludwig Gunz (Lutz), formerly of Bonn/London, died in Toronto 2nd June 1995. Deeply mourned by his wife Susan, daughter Evelyn and son-in-law Roger.

Brainin. Mizzi Brainin, who died on 10th June, is deeply mourned by her husband Leo, sons and grandchildren.

Krausz. George Krausz, musician, died on June 24th aged 82. He is lovingly remembered by his wife Marianne and family.

Channing. Charles Channing passed peacefully away on 17th June at Osmond House in his 90th year. Deeply mourned by his sons Stanley and Ronald and their families who appreciate the dedicated care he received from the staff and volunteers of Osmond House.

Herzer. Ruth Edith Herzer, dearly beloved sister of Hilda Herzer, passed away on 14th June 1995 after a long, painful illness. She will be sadly missed by her sister, cousins and many friends.

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Miscellaneous

British North Africa Pioneer Corps. Mr E Pollak, now resident in Heinrich Stahl House, a member of the British N. Af-

rica Pioneer Corps during World War II, is seeking to make contact with other surviving members and examine the possibility of organising a reunion. Please contact either direct or via the Director, AJR. Chess Player wanted, of medium strength. Please write to AJR Information Box No. 1278.

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

Reading Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts: Its Students and Teachers, 1934-1960 (Antique Collectors Club, 1995) I was surprised at the number of 'refugees' who taught at Camberwell: Auerbach, Vogel, Bloch, Wolpe, Ruhemann, to name but a few, as well as (briefly) Lucie Rie, the renowned potter. Of all these artists Martin Bloch stands out. Having studied in Berlin under Lovis Corinth, he came to England as a refugee and for a time in the 1940s shared a studio with Josef Herman. He started teaching at Camberwell in 1947. Bernard Wolpe (1905-1989) was a teacher in graphic design and lettering at Camberwell from 1948 to 1952. A retrospective exhibition of his work was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1980. Mention should also be made of Helmut Ruhemann (1891-1973) one-time Curator and Chief Picture Restorer of the German National Gallery. In England he became a restorer at the National Gallery and taught techniques of painting at Camberwell for several years in the 1950s.

At the 227th Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, (until 13 August) as usual, a number of old friends are showing: Josef Herman with a nice flower painting and a picture of fishermen, Jack Goldhill with a pleasant oil, and Hans Schwarz. There are several impressive works by the late Willi Soukop and a nice drypoint by Milein Cosman.

A Harlot's Progress: A London Life in Six Acts is at the *Courtauld Institute Galleries* (until 27 August). This is a new look at Hogarth's famous series 'A Harlot's Progress' and explains the prints through the metaphor of the theatre, the visitor being presented with the cast, the scenery, the props, the audience, etc.

Poetic Landscape - Political Territory is at the *Barbican Concourse Gallery* (until 31 August). This is a major touring exhibition comprising prints, sculpture and video work by leading artists from the North of Ireland and Southern Ireland.

Japanese Studio Crafts: Tradition and the Avant-Garde is at the *Victoria and Albert Museum* (until 3 September). This is



In *Marble Halls*, Ben Johnson, Royal Academy Summer Exhibition

the most extensive exhibition of contemporary Japanese craft ever seen in Europe and ranges from large, dramatic, fibrework installations to the sobriety of tea ceremony ceramics.

George Rodger: A Photographic Journey is at the *Barbican Art Gallery* (until 27 August). The exhibition includes over 250 works by one of the pioneers of photo-journalism who was a founder member of the great post-war photographic agency Magnum Photos.

Annely Juda is holding an important exhibition **1945 The End of the War** (until 16 September). The list of artists (some 50 in all) is in itself formidable, including such names as Beckmann, Braque, Freud, Gabo, Hepworth, Herman, Magritte, Picasso, Rothko, Schwitters, etc. A 140-page fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition.

The Manchester City Art Galleries are showing **David Hockney's Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy** (a Tate Gallery loan) until 3 September. The painting is being displayed with a selection of prints and drawings of the sitters, produced during Hockney's long friendship with them.

The **BP Portrait Award 1995** exhibition will be at the *National Portrait Gallery* (until 15 October). After its London showing the exhibition will move to the *Aberdeen Art Gallery* (28 October-25 November) □

SB's Column

Hamburg to Tel Aviv. For their recent Israel visit the Hamburg Opera chose a debatable curtainraiser: Handel's *Belshazzar*. Unlike *Fidelio*, whose liberation theme made it ideal for postwar performances,

Belshazzar, the story of the Jews' Babylonian captivity, evokes tragic modern parallels. It is thus a subject which heavy-hearted audiences must have found hard to digest. There was no *Skandal* but sadness prevailed; Hamburg's intentions may have been benevolent and the performance was certainly appreciated. Only the company's second offering, it received loud applause; Mozart's *Figaro* relieved the tension and gave unmitigated enjoyment.

Brecht plays. Nearly 40 years after the writer's death his dramas are as popular as ever on the Continent: towards the end of the season *Arturo Ui* was staged in Berlin, *Dreigroschenoper* at the Thalia in Hamburg and in Zürich, *Mutter Courage* and the *Caucasian Chalk Circle* in Vienna.

Birthday. 70th Birthday honours were given to Wilma Lipp, versatile and reliable soprano. At the Vienna State Opera for several decades her vocal and acting qualities made her a valuable member of the ensemble.

Obituary. The death, at 75, of Bettina Vernon has shocked everyone interested in modern dance. Vienna-born Bettina was a star pupil of the Bodenwieser school; she joined Gertrud Bodenwieser in emigrating and spent the war years touring Australia. Eager to return to Europe, she made her home in England, founded 'Ballet for Two' together with Evelyn Ippen, another principal dancer of the Bodenwieser company; they undertook many tours, often under Arts Council auspices. Bettina, known as a main representative of expressionist dance of the 1920s, was invited by the Vienna State Opera to instruct young dancers only very recently, and this year, together with Evelyn Ippen, staged a Bodenwieser ballet in Linz. Active to the last, she had been looking forward to lecturing in Russia □

SEARCH NOTICE

Gerd Wahle, from Berlin, last heard of in Blackburn, England, during World War II, is being sought by Hannelore Kronheim (maiden name) a former family friend of 60 years' standing in Berlin. Any information on the whereabouts of Gerd Wahle or his sister would be appreciated by Hannah Deutch, 79-15 35 Ave., Apt. 5-E, Jackson Heights NY 11372, USA.

Mid-Thirties memories

The past is another country," it is said. Only, when I arrived in that country, it was The Future. It even had a different official name then: Palestine.

In the mid-Thirties it was becoming the last best hope of the Jews of Germany; elsewhere there was foreboding. And that hope was the great benefice which the distant sun of Palestine bestowed on young Jews who had embraced Zionism. Barely tolerated or already dismissed, we, in our minds, were elsewhere. We were not migrating ... we were ascending to a new life long before we got there.

Of course, immigration was controlled, and even Youth Aliyah was restricted. But I made it, and as the train pulled out of Bonn station, leaving relatives behind in tears, idealism kept our eyes dry and our hearts staunch. It was soon to be tested. In Marseilles we became steerage passengers. Of course we experienced nothing like the journeys to come; yet it was strange for the juvenile ex-princes and princesses. Despite mental and physical preparation, we were shocked by the rats in the steerage sleeping accommodation, so we slept on deck. This was all right in a calm early-autumn Mediterranean but, the French crew, whether jokers or antisemites, drenched us every morning at four a.m. or so with hoses. Well, the decks had to be cleansed.

Still, we had fun on that voyage. The food was good; a *kasher* kitchen kept by a Sephardi cook. One day some British soldiers (many travelled on civilian transport, then, to their stations) approached us. "You Jews eat well, we understand. Can we eat with you?" As the English language champion (German high school vintage) I undertook to negotiate with Adon Kasher. Shrug of the shoulder. The soldiers joined us.

Next day I came in on a babel of voices, English, German, Ivrit. The soldiers liked the food but had asked for beer. Told "tea only", they demanded milk in it. We *chalutzim*-in-the-making didn't mind, but the cook was adamant. Tea without milk, or just water. Kosher alcohol? Not in this under-class. Some Brits went elsewhere, some submitted to milkless tea. We didn't dwell on it; instead we sang songs of Israel-to-come and, freed from parental control, we formed friendships. Innocent, I assure you, but some lasted.

On the third day out or so I developed a nasty sore throat; on the fourth flu was

suspected; and that is how I entered the Holy Land.

It was a shock. Our first sight of the Arabs was disturbing. We had been taught *Eretz Yisrael* as well as *Eretz Ishmael*. But these dark-hued, barefoot troglodytes, who shouted gutturals at us ...

We were soon "rescued" by the thin, tall, middle-aged man in khaki pants and the Jewish worker's blue fatigue blouse.

"*Shalom, Ani Shlomoh*". He briefly spoke to the Arabs in fluent gutturalia. Waving their fists they fell back. Two stayed with us, now smiling. They were merely porters looking for customers. Two had been hired, and helped. Shlomoh was our guide and mentor throughout our years in *Kibbutz Ha-Yarden* for which we were destined.

Now this Shlomoh had once been Peter; and I was now Uriel. For the moment we, some twenty of us, boys and girls in mid-teens, were docile as the train chugged out of Haifa leaving a vague impression of Carmel where Elijah had once vanquished the priests of Baal and where now dwellings flanked the mountainside.

Life in *Kibbutz Ha-Yarden* soon swallowed us up. It was a small settlement, deep in the earth's rift, and very, very hot. As our feet scuffed about in the sand we saw hills to the west, desert to the east, and the mountains of Lebanon to the north; to the south we knew lay the Dead Sea. We were given the few bungalows the *kibbutz* had been able to afford. We youths shared three to a room. We were an uneven number. One boy had to share with two girls. Guess on whom the lot fell! Shlomoh said I struck him as a balanced character. I had no choice.

The more affluent parents had kitted their children out with the best Nazis let them take. I "owned" several pairs of best pyjamas. But this was a socialist *kibbutz* which practised what it preached. I was given a voluminous nightshirt. I made my appearance in the unisex bedroom. "Ah", said viper-tongued, red-haired Jessica from Berlin, "the Archangel Uriel". Like it or not, the epigram stuck.

Ah yes, my flu. I was taken to the paramedic. He was known as Yankel; it should have been Yaakov. He was our health service. Anything complicated was passed on to the list of the doctor who came on horseback from Tiberias. After that it might be hospital in Afula. To me Yankel said "take this" and handed out four aspirins. He was rumoured to have been a *Feldscher* in the Austrian army. The old hands said he enjoyed his work,

in particular lancing boils. Those boils, everybody had them sooner or later. Boils and malaria were no illness like Purim was no *yom tov*. That was still the creed of the *chalutzim* and *chalutzot* in those far-off days.

The *kibbutzniks* who had to give up the moderate comfort of their bungalows and had reverted to the discomfort of wood and tin prefabs could not help resenting us a little (I know, because when we ceased to be tyros we went the same way when more youths arrived). But our hosts had cause for resentment. We did some really stupid things. Like true young Jews, we knew better ... we could not be taught. We argued. We were free of the double restraint of loving home and hostile State. We celebrated this by singing the Nazis' most awful songs, including the one of *Wenn das Judenblut vom Messer spritzt, dann gehts noch mal so gut* (when Jewish blood spurts from the knife, things go twice as well).

Complaints were made against us; the *kibbutzniks* were Lithuanians and Bulgarians; they could not understand that we were trying to show them what it had been like. Our teacher Shlomo explained it. They accepted the excuses, but we stopped the self-torture. Meanwhile we had to look at the rota every morning at five so as to find out what type of work we had been allotted. We found it hot and heavy. Flies when the sun was up; anophelae when it was down; sand everywhere. Studies in the afternoon after a two-hour siesta. Food nourishing but monotonous; refrigerated water rationed. We grumbled quietly; but we were taught what the life of the real pioneers, the founding fathers and mothers of the heroic days, had been like.

And then the rains came. Instantly the sand, underpinned by loam, turned to mud ... the dreaded *botz*. Wet feet, chilly shivers. The first cases of malarial fever among us. Bring back the heat! Three or four concrete pathways linked the main buildings. These paths were soon coated with a film of mud. From the dining-cum-assembly hall to our bungalows we sloshed through the *botz*. We carried trays of food to our sick *chaverim/chaverot*. At a bend in the path I fell into the *botz*, scattering the food. I once fell three times on one mercy mission. Feet were almost always wet. When we came back from the fields and orchards we raced for the shower stalls in hope of catching a spray of warm water. Mostly no luck; the water was heated by a wood-fired Heath Robinson contraption. Our stance, en-

continued

couraged by what would now be regarded as myth, legend and even propaganda, was cheerful defiance.

There was much singing and dancing of the new-Jewish kind, the pioneering songs and the more-or-less rhythmic weaving known as *horah*. We had no ballroom dancing skills, but every fool can turn round in a circle linked on each side with his mates, and kick and stamp. Everyone but me. I love music, but I cannot sing and I cannot dance, not even the *horah*. It was a grave social drawback, but my English and general *bibliophilia* compensated.

All around us the Arab rebellion raged ... we hardly noticed it. Our relationship with a nearby Arab village was good: we had an accord for joint grazing. Local authority was a remnant of the Turkish (pre-First World War) administration. The chairman of the *kibbutz* was called the *Mukhtar* and met regularly with his Arab counterpart.

Nevertheless, night after night flames shot out of the hillocks above us where the oil pipeline from Iraq was bombed by bands of outside insurgents. That is the moment when the British took a hand, and I had my meeting with a Man of Destiny. Well, sort of.

A platoon of British soldiers was billeted on us. These were the honeymoon



Uriel (John Rossall) and Miriam (AJR member Margot Barnard) at Kibbutz Ha-Yarden.

days. I was much in demand to arrange football matches with them. Believe it or not, we usually won. First those Liverpudlians and Scots were annoyed; then they blamed their defeats on the lieutenant who insisted on keeping goal. I can still remember their muttered curses on his failures. We did PT with their drill sergeant and they mounted guard when we went swimming in a bend of the Jordan. Of course, we had swum there safely before their appearance. The soldiers trying to flirt with the girls had been ordered to leave well alone. I heard them mutter about "stooock-ooop Jew bitches", showing

too much leg in their tattered work pants and bust in their blouses. There never was any real trouble, though.

Then, one day, the lieutenant, who socialised with our elite in the dining room, was joined by a major. I was immediately struck by the extraordinariness of this man. Gaunt and blond, he radiated authority, and not only because of his rank. As I passed him he looked up. His eyes were cornflour blue and brilliant. I said "Good..." (whatever time of day). He nodded, but did not smile. That officer was Orde Wingate who, as General Wingate, reaped glory in Ethiopia and death and glory in Burma. At that time he was forming elite squads of Jewish farmers which he led against the Arab insurgents. We heard of Wingate's Old Testamentarian respect for Judaism, which is now a matter of history.

As is the fact that the *Yishuv* trained for the reckoning to come while hoping for a peaceful outcome. Whenever possible, weapons were legally acquired. Once again the Turkish past was a helpmeet. Under the Sultan's *firman* (writ) the local population had yielded a number of auxiliary paramilitaries, known as *Gafurin*. The British continued this; and that was the only, strictly limited, self-protection the Jews were allowed. Volunteers were clad in faded khaki pants and shirts and they were paid a few pence. But they each were allowed an up-to-date Lee-Enfield rifle and ammunition.

Needless to say, they trained us, under strict supervision, in the use of those lethal toys. And somehow there were some automatic weapons and grenades as well for those who showed aptitude. We did tactical trigonometry. A lot of fun? If only our erstwhile German school pals could have seen us. Were we good at it? No; we were like all tyros, a nuisance to the instructors. I remember a *chaverah* doing what no one should do. . . she clumsily pointed the rifle at the instructor, forgot to eject the bullet or activate the safety catch, and pulled the trigger. She missed. The shock made her into a conscientious neurotic.

On top of unaccustomed physical work, plus earnest study, this was quite a weight on young shoulders. Still, we got extra rations of eggs. Most of us soon joined the "corps" of guards (*shomrim*). The settlement was surrounded by barbed wire and strongpoints, and we guarded them day and night once the British platoon had left for other duties. There had been several attacks before we arrived; some serious.

NATIONALFONDS FÜR OPFER DES NATIONALSOZIALISMUS

On 1 June 1995 the Austrian Parliament decided to create the National Fund for Victims of National-Socialism.

Beneficiaries of the Fund may be persons who were victims of national-socialist injustice because of their descent, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicaps, or for other circumstances.

Pre-conditions for the eventual receipt of benefits from this Fund were outlined as follows:

- applicants had to be Austrian nationals and resident in Austria on 13 March 1938; or
- applicants had to be resident in Austria on a permanent basis for at least 10 years prior to 13 March 1938, or had to be born as children of above-mentioned persons during this period in Austria; or
- persons can be considered as applicants in case they lost their Austrian nationality or their right to abode as outlined in b) if they left Austria because of the impending invasion of Austria by the German Wehrmacht; or
- applicants who were born before 9 May 1945 as children of such persons in concentration camps or in comparable circumstances in Austria.

The law intends payment of benefits to persons who have not so-far received any or insufficient payments or who are considered especially needy.

Until the relevant Committee dealing with these questions is fully operational and has specified the afore-mentioned criteria the Embassy cannot provide details as to eligibility and as to the authority to which applications should be addressed.

Further information will be provided by the Embassy as soon as available.

Austrian Embassy, July 1995

During my "service" I can only remember one night of blazing guns.

I was manning a strongpoint and experienced the usual military mixture of boredom, fatigue and a *frisson* of anxiety. Suddenly there was a massive charge on the wires. I fired my carbine (the piece I had been entrusted with). The volleys came from all directions, the searchlights circled. Silence. Attack repulsed. Alert tension till daylight. Then we could see the fallen enemy ... four donkeys. Arab, I think.

Two days later I had to come to London where my mother was dangerously ill. There the Second World War overtook me. And that is another story; another past, another present, another country.

□ John Rossall

Cooking with Gretel Beer



Crispy potato galette

Herbert Berger is Executive Chef at the Café Royal and his culinary creations are numerous. Quite recently he helped me with one of my recipe features for the Sunday Express, dreaming up ways of using a particularly good goat's cheese which I had discovered. Some of his recipes were quite elaborate, but this one –

for a crispy potato galette – is very simple. "And I make it quite often for my family" says Herbert, who incidentally comes from Bad Goisern in Austria. It is particularly good goat's cheese, but any soft, melting cheese can be used.

Serves 4

3 large yellow-fleshed potatoes
50g (2 oz) melted butter
Cerney goat's cheese (about ¼lb)
salt, pepper
butter for the dish

Peel the potatoes and slice them very thinly and evenly. Butter an ovenproof dish and arrange the potato slices overlapping each other, like fish scales. Cover with melted butter and season with salt and pepper. Bake at Gas Mark 5, 375F, 190C until golden brown, then drain off any excess butter. Cover potatoes with thin slices of goat's cheese – or any other soft, melting cheese. Return the dish to the oven for cheese to soften and lightly brown. Serve with a good crisp green salad □

A speaking tour of Germany, May 1995

I had been asked by Irene Corbach whose late husband Dieter did so much to help erect a memorial to the Jews of Cologne, to give a series of talks in Hamburg, Lübeck and other towns.

An hour after my arrival found me and several other speakers in a church hall, debating the best way to teach the Holocaust to quite young German children. Mrs Miriam Carlebach, whose father was the Rabbi of Hamburg and who is a special guest of the town, brought some Hebrew books on the subject, and thought that they would be useful if translated. But I felt that there is a vast difference of teaching method required in imparting knowledge about the most dreadful happening of all time to the victims' children, and to the new generations in the land of the perpetrators. One of the best proofs of a different thinking generation of Germans is the dedicated group of people who are doing something concrete. They are establishing multiracial kindergartens, where tolerance and love are taught from infancy. This group founded the Sternipark Kindergartens and Ilse Burfein, its Director, helped to organise my Hamburg talks.

By coincidence, a house recently pur-

chased was found to have belonged to the former Jewish Community and had housed the kindergarten attended by Miriam Carlebach and her siblings. A very moving dedication was held there the next night, when the only Hamburg Jewish couple who managed to survive the camps as a family (they had one little boy hidden in a Belgian convent) attended.

I met several half Jews who survived in hiding during the last months of the war. I heard for the first time their stories of loving families torn apart by the disappearance of Jewish fathers, either to safety in other countries and never reunited, or to their death in the camps. Now 50 years on, their children too, want to belong, saying they also suffered as Jews.

I spoke in many schools, mostly to mature students and their teachers. Having taken part of our Kindertransport Archive pictures with me, which aroused great interest, I was amazed at their thirst for knowledge. Some told me that the questions they ask of their grandparents in many instances are very inadequately answered, making them delve into books to get at the gruesome truth. And talking about books, one of the biggest surprises I found was the abundance of these in every bookshop I saw in every town. One Sunday at Blankenese, outside Hamburg, I noticed a small leaflet on the ground, depicting a Menorah, which called on the

town to show their collective abhorrence at the attack on the Lübeck Synagogue two weeks before. The meeting was organised by the church. Being Sunday we called in and found some of the organisers of that meeting. They were truly pleased that Jewish visitors had taken the trouble to thank them and told us that they were planning a memorial service for the 9th November. We spoke at length and I made it clear that there never could be any forgiving the actual perpetrators. How terrible it must be to be the child or grandchild of such evildoers. But we must recognise that new generations have arisen who are trying their best to overcome the stigma of the Nazi German past. I worried a little (and my children worried a lot) about giving a talk in Lübeck. I saw the synagogue almost repaired again and was received with every kindness. The local bookseller was in attendance displaying a large selection of Jewish interest books (including our *I Came Alone*). She told me she had a 'visit' from a neo-Nazi who wanted her to take the Jewish books from her window and became abusive. She refused to be intimidated and called the police. I told her that had there been more people like her 60 years ago, things might have been different.

Later, visiting the former death camp Neuengamme near Hamburg and being confronted by such horror committed in our lifetime, I felt almost guilty for accepting the new democratic and repentant Germany which I have seen with my own eyes.

□ Bertha Leverton (ROK)

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Books, letters, bills, etc.

The return trip

The following is an extract from reminiscences a Jewish ex-pupil of Wiesbaden's Gutenberg Gymnasium contributed to a collection the school published on the 50th anniversary of the war's end:

During the summer of 1947 I return to Germany for the first time after more than eight years. The international express train provides a comfortable trip past Hamburg, Bremen, the Ruhr district – vast territories of ruins, rubble, and debris. I visit relatives who live in a small village not far from Paderborn in Westphalia. One uncle is still alive – the only Jewish survivor of a once large family. His wife is a Catholic, so he was not shipped off to the Theresienstadt concentration camp until February 1945. His wife and both sons, born 1934 and 1937, were allowed to stay at home. A 14-year-old daughter was doing forced labour in a camp. She and my uncle survived. The village looks the same as it did eight years ago – it seems like nothing has changed. No, the many Jewish relatives are gone, chased away, and murdered. The vacation paradise of my childhood years looks like it always did, only the people I loved are no longer there. And I don't care for those who live there now. They are disappointed that my uncle came back and that he now demands the return of what always belonged to him. And here I am back from Sweden – "Oh yes, in Sweden you are well off," the peasants tell me. The same ones who now get rich relieving the begging city dwellers of their few possessions in exchange for bread and produce.

I stay in Wiesbaden for three days. Compared to other German cities, the town shows very little bomb damage. I know my way around exactly as I did eight years ago. The streets and the buildings are the same – and yet I find myself in an alien town. The family, and friends whom I left behind in January 1939 hoping for an early reunion, are gone long ago. A policeman in civilian clothes goes with me to visit our former apartment. The chairs, tables, beds, cabinets, carpets – it's all still there – left behind by my parents and grandmother, when they had to leave on August 29, 1942 for their last painful journey. Strangers now live in our apartment. I sense their apprehension that I have come to take things away from them. But I do not want anything. The

dead do not come back (only in my dreams) – so what should I do with dead objects?

□ Paul Kester

Return to Ravensbrück

Dear Ministerpräsident Stolpe, My return journey to KZ Ravensbrück, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the liberation, was a journey of memories and contrasts. Ravensbrück stands for terror, but this time I go voluntarily at the invitation of the Brandenburg State Government. I am permitted to bring a family member and do so with confidence that we shall both return.

When I hesitate at the entrance of the gate of Ravensbrück, a friendly guard says, "Come in – you are free to enter." Opposite the former SS administration building a huge hospitality tent is set up and food is served all day long. Where we stood for countless *Appell* hours, we now sit comfortably during the ceremonial speeches and volunteers bring us drinks. Our hotel in the countryside provides matzo and kosher wine to celebrate Passover.

Fifty years ago in Ravensbrück I looked at Lake Svedsee, with swans on it, and thought that there was a normal place out there – life went on normally there. This time I learn that the ashes from the crematoria were dumped into this same lake. I look at the sad memorial statue of the two women and think "the women I remember were even thinner – much thinner."

Where is there mention of Jews on the memorial wall of the camp naming the nations of the Nazi victims? The plaque on the ground is too small for the enormity of our extermination. We must have more visibility and attention.

Our young volunteer escorts are sensitive and respectful. Our interaction is important for us and them. For us to trust and take – for them to give. I am curious about them. I wonder what their parents tell them. How do they integrate their family legacy? A young newspaper photographer takes my picture. I tell her, "I know why I am here, but why are you?" She says "*Es ist meine Arbeit*," and starts crying. And I do, too.

We survivors are visible here – significant. A most significant experience for me is the visibility of the Israeli flag – an Is-

raeli flag in KZ Ravensbrück and Sachsenhausen. My father was murdered in Sachsenhausen. His brother also. I want them to know I said *Kaddish* for them at the grave pit under the Israeli flag. Lord, you should see to this.

I send a postcard to myself from Ravensbrück – to a home address that will be unchanged when I return. I live on two tracks and take it for granted that this is part of my daily routine. I automatically think of Auschwitz when I take a shower. It hurts when I have no parents to send the first baby pictures to.

Thank you for this return journey. I should not have been there 50 years ago – but I needed to be there now.

□ Judith H Sherman

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King Oedipus in Austria

The Oedipus complex, like nearly all of Freud's works, saw the light of day in Austria. Such a radically new concept naturally generated controversy from the start. Austria was an unexpected birthplace for this complex. It was ruled by the Habsburgs, but the strongest spiritual influence in the country was the Catholic Church.

Knowledge of this disturbing new hypothesis was originally limited to a minute section of Viennese intellectuals; one may even further limit the initiates by adding the adjective Jewish. The provincial population of Austria-Hungary, as far as they could read German, were not familiar with Greek mythology; nor did they have the leisure to involve themselves with this outlandish idea.

Catholicism was a very real and live movement in the Austrian countryside; few rooms in any farmstead there were not decorated with a crucifix in their most prominent corner. The paths and roads of the countryside were framed by *Marterls*, little shrines, erected at frequent intervals, depicting Jesus on the cross, with the Virgin Mary with child Jesus in the foreground. These *Marterls* were well kept and supplied with fresh flowers by the population, whose Catholicism was not a sham belief.

While the peasantry may have been ignorant of Freud's teachings, the priest class was not. The brightest boys of the farming population were selected at an early age for the priesthood, which was considered a great honour for the family and even the whole village. These boys were given an excellent, if strict, education which was free for the impecunious. In due course, they became the leaders of the local communities. The priest's words and opinion had the force of law. Clerics were encouraged to acquaint themselves with the latest trends and views, so that they could recognise any anti-religious tendencies at an early stage and combat them. One has to know one's enemy in order to fight him! News of Oedipus Rex was spread by thunderous denunciations from the pulpit of the godless teachings emanating from immoral Vienna.

And godless they were indeed! The peasant who encountered an image of the venerated Virgin Mary hundreds of times a day, now had to face the proposition

that the little boy in her arms desired his mother in a not very virginal way. Worse was to come. The son of God was supposed to have the desire to kill his father, to commit deicide! Can blasphemy be more intense? Can one be more insulting about the deity? I doubt it. When Salman Rushdie denigrated the teachings of the Koran in his *Satanic Verses*, he came under the permanent threat of assassination. Freud escaped such a threat, though he should not have been surprised if a religious fanatic had done just that!

The counter-attack by the Roman Catholic Church was led by Father Wilhelm Schmidt, a senior prelate, and next to Cardinal Innitzer, the most influential representative of the Vatican in Austria. Indeed, the choice of Cardinal had been between him and Innitzer. His efforts led to the banning of many of Freud's books in Italy. Freud was even worried that, due to Father Schmidt's urging, psychoanalytical treatment might become prohibited in Austria. It did not come to this; as a consolation, Schmidt was awarded a major Austrian civil decoration, which, oddly enough, Freud had coveted for himself. Postulating the Oedipus complex was not a factor which reduced antisemitism in Austria!

Now, 50 years after the war, the *Marterls* on Alpine roadsides are falling into disuse. Possibly the Austrians, after two lost wars, no longer rely on their god, who appeared to have forsaken them. The child Jesus is left to his desires, and Oedipus Rex is as comfortable in Austria as anywhere in Western Europe.

□ AW Freud

Glenda Jackson in Israel

Glenda Jackson, Member of Parliament for Hampstead, addressed a capacity audience at J.A.C.S. Belsize Square on her 'Impressions of Israel' from where she had recently returned as a member of a visiting Parliamentary delegation. She had meetings with Prime Minister Rabin and other government leaders, as well as with members of the Israeli Labour Party. During a visit to the Gaza Strip she held discussions with senior Palestinian officials.

Although her visit was of only four days duration, Glenda Jackson said that she was immensely impressed with both the economic and political progress being made by Israel. Above all, the establishment of peace was an absolute essential for the welfare of the whole region.



Glenda Jackson MP being greeted by Belsize Square J.A.C.S. Chairman Stuart Willner.

Though there remained many obstacles still to overcome, she was optimistic about an eventual settlement. A wide range of questions were put to Hampstead's MP from issues affecting Israel to the UK's political choices, in addition to recollections of her former acting career.

□ Stuart Willner

Manchester home's new facilities

The Morris Feinmann Home in Didsbury, Manchester, has opened a refurbished wing and new dining-room financed by an anonymous donation from a resident who wished to see the gift's benefit during her lifetime. It was also announced that work was to commence on a nursing wing, a project for which there has been a long-standing call and which has now been made possible by a further anonymous donation. The new wing will significantly improve the home's nursing care facilities.

On land adjacent to the Morris Feinmann Home, work has commenced on the construction of 16 luxury self-contained apartments – the Barfield House Apartments – which are due to be occupied in July 1996. The owners will be able to make use of the many amenities of the home and will be guaranteed a residential place if the need should arise.

The Morris Feinmann Home was opened in 1959 and financed by the Jewish Trust Corporation out of funds from the heirless property of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution recovered in the former British Zone of Germany. On completion of the renovations and additions, the home will be one of the best equipped in the country and well suited to serving the refugee community which remains its priority concern.

□ RDC