

AJR Information

Volume LI No. 1
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Don't miss . . .

Un-merry wife of Windsor
by Richard Grunberger p3

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by David Maier p4

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by Tom Rosenthal p12

Symbolic coincidence

Austria and Russia voted on the same December day. The fact that the erstwhile cradles of Hitler and Lenin now have elections represents a quantum leap forward.

What of the results, though? Nearly four out of five Austrians are, albeit reluctant, democrats. More alarmingly, Russia faces red-brown convergence in the Kremlin. Our (and the world's) hopes have to ride on Yeltsin □

Ninety-Six – a fateful year

At the beginning of a new year leader writers routinely look for handy anniversaries. Whereas these came thick and fast in 1995 – VE-Day, VJ-Day, Founding of the UN – 1996 provides meagre pickings.

Nothing of worldshaking significance seems to have happened in 1946 – or, for that matter, in 1896. Not even during the preceding centuries does any ninety-sixth year appear particularly memorable.

For us Jews though, the date has quite a different import. As befits a people with an extraordinarily long history, our significant ninety-sixth years occurred, eight centuries apart, both near the beginning and the end of the present millenium: in 1096 and 1896.

In 1096 the Rhineland communities – evidence for whose existence goes all the way back to Roman times – were pillaged and decimated by mobs enlisted in the First Crusade. It was a devastating blow. In retrospect, Jewish history since the Dispersion often appears a tale of undifferentiated suffering, but this is a misleading impression: during the first Christian millennium European Jews had lived in relative amity with their neighbours.

The Rhenish communities, particularly Worms, Speyer and Mainz, had evolved into hubs of farflung

trading networks, as well as great centres of scholarship. The Crusader pogroms did more than destroy a cluster of thriving *kehillot*: they led to a twofold marginalisation. Over the succeeding centuries Jews were pushed to the very margins of society and driven from Europe's main trade route to the relative backwater of Poland.

Whereas 1096 thus heralded a slide into a Jewish dark age, 1896 was a pointer towards a brighter future. The year saw the publication of Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* – the founding statement of Zionism and therefore the 'paper' seed from which the flesh-and-blood State of Israel grew.

But Zionism, though the most necessary national liberation movement of late 19th century Europe, aroused furious intra-Jewish dissension. Herzl attracted the obloquy alike of ultra-Orthodox rabbis and de-Judaized intellectuals. (In the pamphlet *A Crown in Zion* Karl Kraus even charged him with coveting the title King of the Israelites).

The Holocaust, of which Herzl had vague premonitions, has largely silenced the latter-day heirs of Karl Kraus. Today the remaining threat to Herzl's inheritance emanates not from anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox rabbis, but from the ultra-Zionists executing rabbinical *fatwahs*.

Though Arab-Israeli peace still teeters on a knife-edge, one thing ought to give us heart in 1996: America's return to world leadership. After a long period of isolationist-induced hesitancy, Washington has at long last nerved itself to knock heads together and pacify former Yugoslavia.

The further pacification of the Middle East must be the world's number one priority in the coming year. To bring it about America (and the West as a whole) must avoid the pitfalls of isolationism and Israel must be supported by world Jewry in upholding the primacy of democracy over alleged theocratic certainties □



Theodor Herzl

Profile

Scrolls to Newcastle

When Samuel Bronfman, founder of the Seagram Corporation, turned seventy-five the family debated what to give someone who already had everything. One relative suggested 'a museum' and this – according to legend – was how the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, was born.

This month's profilee resembles Bronfman in having *museal* association, but he has outdone the tycoon by actually having had a museum – the Shefton Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne – named after him.

Not that Brian Shefton was always so called. Born Bruno Scheftelowitz in 1919 in Cologne as the son of a professor of Sanskrit and Hebrew, he came to England with his parents soon after the Nazi takeover. Here the father worked as a Hebrew teacher, but the uprooting had undermined his health and he died prematurely. Despite this Bruno managed, with the help of sympathetic public school heads alert to his academic potential, to gain a scholarship to Oriel College Oxford in 1938. He read Classics, but the war disrupted his studies. After internment in Preece Heath – alongside such (subsequent) luminaries as Ernst Schumacher of *Small is Beautiful* fame – he served in the Pioneer Corps which assigned him to educational duties.

On his postwar return to Oxford he gravitated towards archaeology and received an award to do field work in Greece. Since the country was undergoing a civil war at the time, he had to carry out his first dig under armed guard, with an earthquake providing additional *frisson*. Greece, and subsequently Turkey, struck him as so alluring that – academic posts being hard to come by – he toyed with the idea of becoming a travel agent.

He did, however, manage to secure a lectureship at Exeter University where the discovery of an Attic vase at a local museum helped him establish a reputation. He next learnt the craft of pottery and wrote a book on Greek vase painting. Advancing up the academic ladder, he moved to Newcastle where he initiated several new developments. He organised Etruscan excavations, added Greek to the existing Roman studies and most importantly, through contacts with Sotheby's, put to-



Brian Shefton

gether the nucleus of what some decades later blossomed out into the Brian Shefton Museum. In 1985 he was made a member of the prestigious British Academy.

Today Emeritus Professor Shefton is as busy as ever. He lectures here, there and everywhere – one of his topics being *The Greek impact on Israel in the 5th century*.

Israel in turn had made an impact on him: he met his wife, who now runs a translation agency, while holidaying there in 1960. They have a daughter, an architectural historian and photographer, of whom he is very proud. Even so, his 'baby' is the Shefton Museum, which in his words "spread Newcastle's fame from Malibu to Moscow."

□ RG

New imperatives for Israel

Professor Naomi Chazan, an authority on Arab-Israeli relations and a Member of the Knesset, addressed the Institute of Jewish Affairs on the decisions Israel faced in the aftermath of Yizhak Rabin's assassination.

She described the assassination as the single most dramatic event in the country's political history. People had not only expressed real grief, but were angry and bewildered. At the rally which marked the end of the week of *Shiva* – incidentally the largest-ever gathering in Israel's history – Prof. Chazan noted that some 80 per cent of those present were below the age of 25. They had, in a real sense, "come of age."

Five main issues now confronted Israel: Firstly, the necessity of finding and trying those responsible for the assassination. Identification of the source of evil would no doubt enable people to distance themselves from it.

Secondly, fundamental elements of Israeli democracy had to be examined and a line drawn between what was, and what was not, permissible. "When," she asked, "does freedom of speech become incitement and opposition become rebellion?"

Thirdly, the relationship between religion and the state had to be redefined. For the last year or two a distorted view of Judaism had been placed *above* the law of the Jewish state. "State law has to be sovereign," emphasised Prof. Chazan, "but we cannot become anti-Jewish ourselves." At the end of *Yom Kippur* she herself had received evidence of a 'prayer' text circulated in certain orthodox synagogues in Jerusalem which authorised the killing of the Prime Minister.

Fourthly, the assassination's influence on the peace process. While Israel remained divided (as political opinions would not have been altered), it was impossible to halt 'Oslo 2'. Israeli evacuation of West Bank towns prior to Palestinian elections was under way, though further redeployment could prove more controversial. Some movement was discernible in the Syrian negotiations (whose basic elements were none too complex), but it was not yet known if there was sufficient political will on both sides for a settlement.

Finally, Prof. Chazan examined the effect of the assassination on Israeli politics in an election year. In her view, present policies had to be maintained as they were supported by the country's youth, but any attempt to broaden the government coalition's base meant modifying policy to cater for the candidate parties. "Changing from war to peace," she concluded, "requires Israel to define who we are and where we want to go."

□ Ronald Channing

SCHINDLER SURVIVOR

A television documentary on the experiences of AJR member Victor Dortheimer, one of Oskar Schindler's survivors, is being made available by its producers Carlton Television, in cooperation with the Holocaust Education Trust, to 1,000 secondary schools in the London area as part of the national history curriculum.

The un-merry wife of Windsor

To prove that *AJR Information* is part and parcel of Fleet Street – if you'll excuse that old fashioned term – in this first issue of 1996 we 'go with the flow' and comment on the on-going Charles-Diana drama.

As in all conflict situations, our first observation springs from an age-old conditioned reflex: we look at the adversaries to ascertain whether to feel guilt by association or to sigh '*Gottlob, kein Jud.*' (That phrase – a Jew's heartfelt response to the 1914 newspaper headline Archduke Assassinated – occurs in Karl Kraus's *Last Days of Mankind*, and translates roughly as Thank God they can't blame the Jews!) *Gottlob kein Jud* certainly applies to Camilla Parker-Bowles, Captain James Hewitt, and even Will Carling.

Of course, even if the protagonists are excluded, in our media-conscious age there is still the possibility that the bearers of bad news will be blamed. ('Shoot the messenger!' as they used to say). However, even here we seem to be in the position of Caesar's wife: neither Jonathan Dibleby, nor Andrew Morton, or even Martin Bashir would have been affected by the Nuremberg Laws.

But be patient. When we look more closely a Jewish dimension does eventually – and one is tempted to say inevitably – emerge. Why inevitably? Because ever since Freud no culturally attuned person has been unaware of – or unaffected by – him. (This applies specially to self-appointed gurus like the strenuously anti-Freudian Kurt Hahn, Prince Charles' Jewish headmaster at Gordonstoun). More importantly, throughout Princess Diana's Panorama replies the unmistakable voice of Susie Orbach, psychotherapist of *Fat is a Feminist Issue* fame, was audible.

Another Jewish bit player in the unfolding drama came from the sphere of literature, not psychoanalysis: Anna Pasternak, greatniece of the author of *Doctor Zhivago*, also wrote a book. Although *Princess in Love* didn't prompt the offer of a Nobel Prize, it earned her lucrative notoriety through the revelation of the Captain Hewitt amour.

And talking of literature: some twenty years ago Roger Peyrefitte asserted in his controversial *Les Juives* that, thanks to

Jewish intermarriage into the European elites, several highly placed contemporary personages, such as President de Gaulle and General Franco, had Jewish antecedents. Nineteenth century tittle-tattle would likewise have had us believe in an amorous entanglement between the mother of Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and her Jewish-born court chamberlain. Actually a fair amount of circumstantial evidence seems to substantiate this particular wrong-side-of-the-blanket legend. After all, the Prince Consort was, unusually for an occupant of Windsor Castle, a committed lover of the arts. He and Queen Victoria enthusiastically patronised Mendelssohn. The Queen had a special rapport with Disraeli – as did her son Edward VII with Ernest Cassel.

And so, for anyone keen to establish a Jewish dimension to the current crisis in the House of Windsor, there really is something to go on. It's not much, but better than nothing.

□ Richard Grunberger



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Reviews

Transplant that didn't take

Meta Frank SCHALOM, *MEINE HEIMAT. Lebenserinnerungen einer deutschen Jüdin 1914-1994. Verein für hessische Geschichte und Landeskunde, 1994.*

It is not difficult to understand the author's self-declared reluctance to put pen to paper. Any autobiography citing the German-Jewish refugee experience is bound to be emotionally stressful, and a preference for silence can be readily appreciated. Meta Frank has, nonetheless, produced a highly readable account of her life and times. But recognition of an author's talents does not imply unquestioning acceptance of every sentiment expressed and statement made.

Meta Königsthal was born in 1914 into an old-established Jewish family in a small country town in Hesse. Though her childhood and adolescence had been untroubled by antisemitism, by 1932 she and her kin were engulfed in the rising wave of persecution. Her future husband, Kurt Frank, was forced to abandon his medical studies and they decided to marry and to emigrate to Palestine as *chalutzim*. As soon as they landed in Haifa things appeared to go wrong. They left their *kibbutz* after only a few days because they disagreed with the principle that work came before visits to relatives. Sharing with others went against the grain.

"Nothing in Palestine was remotely comparable to Germany. When we travelled by bus we saw Arabs sitting unconcerned by the wayside, searching their bodies for lice and fleas. Bedouins lived in tents. There was the stink of sheep, goats, and charcoal. I have to confess that I was quite horrified by the country."

Life was certainly difficult. The Franks found work in a privately-owned orange plantation, but Meta felt disdain for everything around her. She was urged to change her name to Malka (since the Hebrew for Meta implies death) and did so with distaste. Her mother came on a visit in 1935 and she, too, found everything in Palestine abhorrent: "the climate, the dirt, the vermin." However, in 1936 her parents made *aliyah*. The Arab disturbances affected them personally and they wished they had not come.

Albeit distinctly unhappy at the idea, Meta consented to start a new life on a *moshav* near Tel Aviv. Her father and her husband became strongly attached to the pioneering lifestyle: she did not. She did not really get on with her neighbours, mostly Sephardim from Bulgaria who did not have indoor toilets or bathrooms. Israel's independence seemed to bring hope at last of having found a home, but subsequent events destroyed this prospect once again. When Jews from Arab lands were flown to Israel, Meta felt that "[we] German Jews could not really cope with this ethnic mix!"

Significantly, the period from 1948 to 1994 takes up less than a quarter of the story of her life.

Given her background and the difficulties of a new start in an underdeveloped country, the author's initial disenchantment is entirely understandable. But her continued hankering after a Germany which had abandoned her, is less readily acceptable. Anyone is entitled to take or leave Zionism, but a rather negative attitude towards anything non-German is unfortunate, to say the least.

□ David Maier

A creditable attempt

A HOLOCAUST TRILOGY by Julia Pascal, New End Theatre, Hampstead.

Julia Pascal's trilogy *Theresa, A Dead Woman's Holiday* and *The Dybbuk* focuses on different aspects of the Holocaust. Perhaps her most convincing play is the dramatisation of the story of Theresa Stein, the Jewish refugee from Vienna. (She changes her from a young woman of 24 to a middle-aged professor of music, but no matter). The play begins with the seductive strains of a Viennese waltz followed by descriptions of voluptuous pastries and chocolates. Soon the sinister side of the Nazi occupation is revealed as Theresa addresses her students for the last time. Her later bewilderment at coping with a strange country and a new language (English) is well-portrayed, as well as the officialdom which brands her as an 'enemy alien'.

Forced to do domestic work for a living, she ends up being 'evacuated' with her wealthy employer's family to Guernsey. They are allowed to return to England before the Nazis land on the island, but she is not. The play ends with the sound of a train carrying her to we all know where.

On a tiny stage good use is made of simple props, snatches of music and mime to suggest the emotions of the characters and the atmosphere of the time.

The second play, about the Nuremberg Trials, is less successful. It does highlight the familiar German rationalisation "we too suffered", etc. and the arrogance of the concentration camp guard. However, the drama is 'spiced up' and vulgarised with an irrelevant subplot involving an adulterous relationship between an American and a witness.

The third play is an update of the traditional story of the *dybbuk* set in a ghetto in 1942. All in all a difficult project, yet Julia Pascal deserves credit for the attempt.

□ Martha Blend

The manacled muse

ART AND POWER, an exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, South Bank.

'Fast forward' is a newly minted expression familiar to video users. The appropriate term for the impact of this exhibition would presumably be 'fast backward'. One minute visitors queuing for admission are in the rather uneventful 1990s; the next they are catapulted into the lethally dramatic 1930s.

On entering the lofty entrance hall the eye is assailed by several freestanding statues. Here is a nude muscle-rippling Nazi torch-bearer - there a crouching she-wolf evocative of Ancient Rome - above eye level a forward-striding industrial worker and a peasant girl with hammer and sickle raised aloft. The whole array of sculptures is overlooked by a huge painting of St. Teresa offering up dead Franco soldiers to Christ nailed to a diagonally skewed cross.

The Spanish Civil War, which prompted the last-mentioned Tintoretto pastiche, serves as the introductory subject of the exhibition. Among the artifacts on display Republican propaganda posters are particularly striking, as are snatches of contemporary film, while pride of place belongs to innovative works by Dali, Miro and Picasso.

The last-mentioned artists backed the Left in Spain. In Italy uncharacteristically the entire Futurist grouping of painters supported Fascism. Equally uncharacteristically, Mussolini allowed artists considerable latitude, at least until the

continued on page 5

Washington's post

Washington is a city of imperial grandeur, its wide avenues lined with neo-classical buildings housing the bureaucracy of a federal capital and hoarding many of the world's treasures. On a site selected by George Washington, its grand design was conceived by Frenchman L'Enfant, the first modern city to be built as a national capital. The open space of the Mall, an American Champs-Élysées, runs through its heart, crossed by the park leading to the White House. At its epicentre stands the lone, white marble obelisk of the Washington Monument. Nearby, the black basalt wall of the Vietnam War Memorial inscribed with 58,000 names tells a grimmer story.

The White House stands today as a universal emblem of the republic, the home and office of the elected king of the United States of America. Joining a tour means queuing early to sample the splendour of a succession of state rooms, each in regular use. Harry Truman's piano is a pleasant historical footnote; John and Jackie Kennedy's sad portraits a poignant memory.

The dome of the Capitol can be seen from many parts of the city. Completed in 1863 during the Civil War, the Rotunda beneath it is covered in paintings of Washington and theatrical presentations of American history. The Senate and House of Representatives exude suitable gravitas.

continued

mid-30s. His was the only dictatorship under which painters of note – like Chirico – were not put into a straight-jacket (either metaphorically, as in *gleichgeschaltet* Germany, or literally, as in Russia).

Early on the Soviets too had voluntary support from artistic innovators (Malevich, Tatlin). Then from the thirties onwards Zhdanov enforced Socialist Realism, an optimistic aesthetic of which the Hayward shows numerous examples ranging from gymnasts incandescent with health, through apple-cheeked milkmaids to output-boosting iron-jawed workers. Equally ubiquitous are portraits of a tunic-clad Stalin, solicitous father of the people, and depictions of Magnitogorsk or the Dnieper Dam. However, among much run-of-the-rollingmill dross, a fine larger-than-life-sized head of Maxim Gorky stands out.

The Smithsonian museums, which line the Mall, like virtually all museums and collections in the city, are completely free to the public, and national uniformed guides courteously provide information. In a country which pioneered air and space travel, the National Air and Space Museum displays the Wright Brothers' biplane and the capsule which took man to the moon. Fifty years after the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima the Boeing B-29 aircraft Enola Gay, which carried the bomb, is restored to its literally earth-shattering prime.

The National Gallery of Art owes much to its prime benefactor Andrew W. Mellon who garnered a collection of the best Old Masters money could buy in the 1920s and 1930s, including some the hard-up Soviet Union was selling from the Hermitage. Its Rembrandts are quite magnificent. Less well known, the Folger Shakespeare Library contains the world's largest collection of the Bard's printed works and is a major centre of research. In the Library of Congress the black ink and white vellum of the first Bible to be printed with the use of moveable type, by John Gutenberg in Mainz in 1455, belie the five-and-a-half centuries which have elapsed and the information revolution it promoted.

Abraham Lincoln is deified as the President assassinated at Ford's Theatre just five days after the Confederate forces surrendered in 1865. To the huge god-like image of the pensive figure in stone at his

To pass from Soviet to Nazi exhibits is to have an object lesson in *les extrêmes se touchent*. Here too are grandiose architectural blueprints, cleanlimbed athletes, images of industrial dynamism and depictions of a benign tunic-clad leader. But much Nazi art conveys a sense of sadistic martial prowess and/or banal eroticism, absent from the Soviet items on display.

This last section of the exhibition is supplemented by examples of anti-Nazi art: heartstopping etchings and moquettes by Käthe Kollwitz, brilliant photo montage by John Heartfield and riotous paintings by Oskar Kokoschka. The most haunting canvasses though are expressions of Felix Nussbaum's despair at being trapped in Nazi-occupied Belgium. Kollwitz and Nussbaum ensure that visitors leave the gallery in a different frame of mind from the one in which they entered it.

□ Richard Grunberger

memorial is added the drama of his demise at Ford's theatre. A visit to Arlington National Cemetery is a pilgrimage to the grave of Jack Kennedy, with his wife Jacqueline at rest by his side, and the grave of his brother Bobby nearby.

Two large, redundant buildings, Union Station and the Old Post Office (whose tower gives spectacular views), have been refurbished and developed as multi-choice restaurants and shopping malls, bright oases for the city's hungry visitors.

□ RDC

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Letters to the Editor

FRANCO - THE FACTS

Sir - Allow me, as a former inmate of the notorious *Camp de Concentracion* Miranda de Ebro - and author of a PhD thesis on the Spanish question - to correct Mr Schmerling's rhapsodic description of the Franco regime (Letters, November issue). That regime was undoubtedly involved in Hitler's war from the start, though for opportunistic reasons Franco maintained nominal neutrality. On 7 December 1940 he announced himself unable to enter the war on economic grounds, but maintained that he was 'still prepared to join the Axis once Britain was near collapse'. As this event never occurred, Franco gradually returned to 'neutrality' vis-a-vis the Western allies, while helping his Nazi friends by allowing the Gestapo and German spies a free hand in Spain and sending the Blue Division to the Soviet Union. His attitude towards the Jews was similarly ambivalent. In 1940 frontier guards turned back panic-stricken refugees from France causing some of them, such as Walter Benjamin, to commit suicide. After the Vichy regime abolished exit visas no more transit visas were granted, and refugees, such as myself, who climbed over the Pyrenees, were arrested and sent to prison and concentration camps. These conditions were outrageous - though nobody was extradited or killed. It took a hunger strike in January 1943 for conditions to improve and for inmates with visas to overseas countries to be released. The repatriation of Sephardim to Spain is the stuff of legend.

Ellerdale Road
London NW3

Dr R B Jones

BERLIN MUSEUM

Sir - In reply to Ernest David's message regarding a museum in Berlin (November issue) I would like him to know that a *Jüdisches Museum Berlin* has just opened. It is run by the city and is appealing for Jewish memorabilia so that the Berlin-born Jews should not be forgotten.

I sent them two books - a *Familienalbum* and a *Poesie-Album*, the latter belonging to my late mother who

had been to finishing school in the 1890s. The former contained details of my grandfather who had been a prominent jeweller with a shop in the Friedrichstrasse.

The museum, being an official and not a Jewish foundation, took months to acknowledge the gifts, but I would like to feel that anything we send them will keep the memory of the native Berlin Jews alive.

Winston Avenue
Kingsbury
London NW9

Mrs M Smith

ON THE DEATH OF YIZHAK RABIN

The firmament has lost a star,
Not from a bullet in a war.

He died from the assassin's hand,
It happened in the holy land.

Is this what students learn of late
That there's no limit to your hate?

Is this modern democracy,
You kill if you can not agree?

Yeshivot taught how to dispute,
Have they now found a shorter route?

Have people really lost their reason,
When they call disagreement treason?

Today's victim was Rabin,
Tomorrow's could be Benyamin.

Remember each one has a friend,
It soon could spread throughout the Land.

You soon could find you kill each other,
And end by brother killing brother.

You then may find it will be so,
The victor is the common foe.

E.I. Sabielak

DREAMING PYRES

Sir - Balliol College, Oxford accepted a gift of some £350,000 to establish a Flick Chair of European Thought from Flick's grandson. Flick, a friend of Himmler's, employed 40,000 slave labourers, 80% of whom died then and there. Imprisoned in 1947, he was released by the Americans as early as 1950 and went on to make another fortune. He never repented and refused to recompense his victims. It

would surely be an understatement to say that the name and the money are tainted.

The college allegedly didn't know about the source of the money and, when it was pointed out to them, the ethics committee found nothing wrong. There are other skeletons in Oxford's cupboards, e.g. the entrepreneur who built the Buna works in Birkenau/Auschwitz also made a sizeable contribution and no questions were asked. At least the three monkeys are alive and well.

Ipswich
Norfolk

Frank Bright

LIBRARY'S WORK OVERLOOKED

Sir - I have been puzzled by articles in your October and November issues about the prospect of a Holocaust Museum in London. They addressed the question as if there were currently no facilities available for studying the subject, or any centre which puts on lectures, seminars, conferences and exhibitions dealing with the Holocaust. But there is. It is called the Wiener Library, and I am sure many of your readers are familiar with its superb collection and outstanding educational programme.

However, your readers may be excused for not learning about it through the columns of *AJR Information*. For the last five years the Library has put on major educational events, yet hardly any have been reported in your journal. It is a great shame that, for its part, *AJR Information* does not seem able to appreciate the Library's importance in this field. I hope that in future issues the magazine will correct this omission.

University of Manchester Prof David Cesarani

WIENER NEUSTADT WEEK OF ENCOUNTER

Sir - I am deeply moved by the work of Pastor Eiwen and his wife Uli. They generously invited me, a 73-year-old Viennese-born widow, to participate in their second 'week of encounter' in October. The entire 100-strong congregation contributed to the costs of that week for all 23 guests.

For all of us it was an unforgettable week - we were surrounded by sincere love every minute of our stay. It was almost impossible to find the right words to express our thanks. Our hosts stressed repeatedly that they were grateful to us for accepting their invitation so that they

might make amends for all the hurts we had suffered at the hands of Austrian Nazis. (Hurts, I hasten to add, caused not by them personally, for most of them weren't even born at the time).

During the week we spoke to pupils at three high schools whose students had never met anyone Jewish and had no idea what life – and death – meant during the Nazi régime! You can be sure we did not mince words and as a result there were tears on both sides of the platform!

To hear Pastor Eiwen and his wife speak about Judaism, no one could be left in any doubt as to their wonderful sincerity. Even if only in a minority, there are 'true' Christians in Austria who would still not allow anyone, even at risk to their own lives, to raise a hand against us again.

"It is better to build a bridge than a wall."

Willesden Lane
London NW2

Eva Holland

WHY NOT 25 YEARS AGO?

Sir – Having just celebrated the first birthday of the South London group, I write to pass on some thanks. Firstly to AJR Director Ernest David for his keen support, and secondly to our Chairman Ken Ambrose who has done a fantastic job of organisation.

We have enjoyed some fine speakers in the past year and future plans include outings and possibly a Bridge group. Our average attendance is in the region of 50 persons.

I end by asking just one question: Why was this not started 25 years ago? Those running the AJR must have realised that there were members living beyond NW London, even if only by looking at the AJR Information mailing lists! Anyway, do not let my question deter others from forming local groups, even at this late stage. Our group brings pleasure to us all.

Pages Walk
London SE1

Herbert Wolff

AUTHOR, AUTHOR!

Sir – Do any readers happen to know who wrote the poem *Das Riesenspielzeug* (1831). The poem begins:

Burg Nideck ist im Elsass der Sage wohl bekannt....

If anyone should happen to know the name of the author I'd be most grateful to be contacted at 12, Margaret Avenue, Chingford, London E4 7NP.

Gerda Mayer

SURVIVORS' DUTY

Sir – It is a duty of survivors to ensure that the names of their murdered relatives be registered in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. These pages of testimony are symbolic tombstones serving as a memorial to Holocaust victims for future generations.

Sadly, many biographical details may be unknown to the survivor, but as long as the family name, the forename and the last place of residence are known, it will be accepted.

I have known since 1945 that nine members of my immediate family perished; confirmation came from the records kept by the Jewish authorities in Prague, Brno and Terezin. I always believed that these records would automatically be passed on to Yad Vashem. Recently I enquired from Yad Vashem and I was informed that none of my relations' names were on file. They sent me blank forms to complete (and to attach photographs/documents if available).

To date some 2.5 million names have been recorded. In less than a generation there may be no-one living who personally remembers the victims. There must be many survivors who thought like me that registration would be automatic. Blank forms can be obtained from: The Hall of Names, Yad Vashem, POB 3477, Jerusalem 91034. No fee is required for registration.

Liverpool

E.H. Strach

RAISE THE ALARM

Sir – We feel sufficiently alarmed by present political developments to appeal through your columns to fellow-members who share these concerns.

The forthcoming legislation concerning refugees and asylum seekers will inevitably lead to a large number of foreigners in this country, including families with children, being deprived of all social support and left destitute and probably homeless.

As citizens of this country we are responsible for its laws and their consequences. We therefore urge those who share our views on this callous and cold-hearted policy to write to their MPs.

The other issue which affects all of us is the Home Secretary's refusal to accept EU policy on the prevention of the spread of neo-Nazi aggressive filth, much of it over the Internet. Surely we all agree that whatever the, perhaps a little hypocritical, concerns over national

sovereignty, Europe-wide action is required. We propose that this too ought to be made clear to MPs and others.

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The AJR at Work

Buoys and belles

Members of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre had a really great time on the latest of the ever-popular week's holidays organised by the centre in Bournemouth. Even on the coach journey down everyone agreed that the lap-top lunch was 'scrumptious'.

Sylvia and Renée were, as usual, the genial, energetic and ever-helpful hostesses, and a full programme of events meant that there was always something to do, even if having a snooze before dinner was preferred. An added bonus was the unusually fine weather for the time of year – sunshine every day and always warm enough to sit in the sun.

A special outing to the historic town of Dorchester (which Hardy immortalised as Casterbridge), with its Roman ruins and tea-room and souvenir-shop lined old high street, encouraged many purchases and made for lighter pockets.

A special vote of thanks went to David not only for his bingo calling, but also for



Sylvia, left, and Renée hand out the quiz prizes at the Day Centre's Bournemouth week by the sea.

the very enjoyable quiz he devised to exercise our brains and test our memories. The winners certainly deserved their generous prizes.

Of course, the week went all too quickly, so we are already looking forward to joining another holiday in 1996!

□ Alice Jacobi

Continental favourites



Show-stopper Nikki Van der Zyl, accompanied by Daphne Lewis, stirred Continental memories at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre with her selection of European and Jewish songs sung in the language in which they were composed.

Light fantastic

Members said that they had enjoyed the time of their lives at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre's recent Tea Dance. Tangos, foxtrots, veletas – even the good old hokey-cokie – nothing daunted their enthusiasm. The delightful music programme was played by Shelley Weldon who encouraged even the most reluctant to join in the dancing.

An unending supply of delicious sandwiches, cakes and chocolates proffered by the lovely ladies of the help staff made the afternoon complete. So I raise a cup-of-tea in a toast to the organisers of the event. More of the same please!

□ Dr B Shanson

Otto Schiff Housing Association

A new management team has taken over at the Otto Schiff Housing Association, OSHA, with the determination to make the homes the best of their type. The new Chairman is Alan Blacher, Chief Executive is Tony Shepherd and the Head of Social Work is Josephine Woolf □

South London AJR

Fred Tuckman OBE, who was the guest of South London AJR, spoke of his background and experiences as a Member of the European Parliament for Leicester. He was born in Magdeburg, but as his mother was British it was comparatively easy for them to leave Germany. During the war he served in the RAF, after which he enrolled at the London School of Economics, joined the Fabians and served on Camden Council for ten years – though he was later to represent the Conservatives. Currently President of the Anglo-Jewish Association, he described their discussion groups and work for a diverse cross section of Jewry.

A committed European, Fred Tuckman believes that Britain cannot stand alone but must be an integral part of the new Europe – that we can be both good Europeans and good Britons.

The well-attended meeting was chaired by Ken Ambrose, supported by Ernest David, Director of the AJR, and generously fed by the committee's catering team.

The next meeting of South London AJR is planned for Thursday 18th January 1996 at South London Liberal Synagogue, Prentis Road, Streatham. Further information can be obtained from Ken Ambrose tel: 0181 852 0262.

□ Ruth Leggett

AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6
between 10am and 12 noon on the
following dates:

Tuesday 3 January
Monday 8 January
Tuesday 16 January
Wednesday 24 January
Thursday 1 February
and every Thursday from
10 a.m. to 12 noon at:

**AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate,
1a Frognal, London NW3**

No appointment is necessary, but please bring
along all relevant documents, such as Benefit
Books, letters, bills, etc.

Message from the Director

We all like celebrating anniversaries, and given our age profile, these tend to be of events that happened many years ago. However, this month we are celebrating a comparatively early anniversary, only the tenth, of a most vigorous youngster – the AJR Day Centre. This started life in Belsize Square Synagogue in January 1986 and in 1987 moved to its own premises in Cleve Road, West Hampstead, when it became the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.

It was clear from the start that this was a welcome and much needed facility in the heartland of the continental Jewish refugee community, and since its inception has gone from strength to strength. Those of you who go regularly to Cleve Road, to participate in the activities and enjoy the highly-praised meals, have often enough told us how much you appreciate the atmosphere. We, for our part, are happy that we are able to provide you with a comfortable and stimulating environment, and as you will have noticed from the recent building work, we continually try to upgrade the facilities.

So many people, both AJR staff and volunteers, have put so much effort into providing members with the best possible service that it would be invidious to mention names. If I were to try I am sure that I would accidentally omit someone; and so I will not try, but would like to thank you all for your devoted participation in the success of the centre. However, will those of you that I do not mention forgive me for mentioning two names. First, a special thanks to Ludwig Spiro, whose energy and imagination led to the development of the Cleve Road property into the Day Centre that we know today. I would also like to single out for special thanks Sylvia Matus, the manager of the Day Centre, who has put her whole soul into providing that personal warmth that makes this such a special place.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the celebrations on 22-25 and 28 January.

Happy New Year.

□ Ernest David

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Afternoon entertainment –

JANUARY 1996

- | | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| Monday | 1 | CLOSED
– New Year's Day |
| Tuesday | 2 | NEW YEAR CONCERT – Two Voices & a Piano – Eddy Simmons & Helen Blake |
| Wednesday | 3 | WINTER SONG & MUSIC – Sue Kennett (Soprano) accompanied by Gordon Weaver (Piano) |
| Thursday | 4 | THE GEOFFREY STRUM & JOHNNY WALTON DUO |
| Sunday | 7 | DAY CENTRE OPEN – No entertainment |
| Monday | 8 | 'REISELIEDER' – Antonia Kendall (Mezzo) accompanied by Justin Connolly (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 9 | FROM COVENT GARDEN TO DRURY LANE – Amanda Hall (Soprano) accompanied by Ann Collard (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 10 | THE WIZO LADIES CHOIR |
| Thursday | 11 | RING-IN-A-NEW-DUO – Ann Kenton Barker & Basil Taylor (Baritone) accompanied by Marian Hartman (Piano) |
| Sunday | 14 | DAY CENTRE OPEN – No entertainment |
| Monday | 15 | SHOW-STOPPER – Nikki van der Zyl (Soprano) accompanied by Daphne Lewis (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 16 | 'TWO IN A SHOW BY THE VIVO DUO' – Fiona Cooper (Soprano) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski (Piano) |

- | | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| Wednesday | 17 | HERE IS MUSIC YOU WILL REMEMBER – Anthony Hawgood (Tenor) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano) |
| Thursday | 18 | A MUSICAL MEDLEY FOR PIANO & VOICE – Melanie Mehta (Soprano) accompanied by Martin Sharpe (Piano) |

WE CELEBRATE OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY AT CLEVE ROAD

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| Sunday | 21 | TEN YEARS OF SINGING TOGETHER – Hans Freund |
| Monday | 22 | CONGRATULATIONS & CELEBRATIONS – Jack & Rita Davis |
| Tuesday | 23 | JACK DAVIDOFF & HIS PALM COURT ENSEMBLE wish the Day Centre all success |
| Wednesday | 24 | DAY CENTRE TENTH ANNIVERSARY – Music from Operetta followed by A Bouquet of Gypsy Music – Eugen Kurti (Violin) and Stephen Norbert (Piano) |
| Thursday | 25 | WE WERE WITH YOU FOR THE OPENING & NOW CELEBRATE YOUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY – Francoise Geller, Kara Wilson & Gordon Griffin accompanied by Margaret Eaves (Piano) |
| Sunday | 28 | TWO VOICES & A PIANO HERALD YOU ON YOUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY – Eddy Simmons & Helen Blake |
| Monday | 29 | THE PHASES OF LOVE – Ingrid McOdie-Lund (Soprano) accompanied by Andrew Pink (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 30 | THE MUSICAL DUO – Jack Harris & Happy Branston |
| Wednesday | 31 | FANFARE TO JANUARY – Joanna McDonald (Soprano) accompanied by David Mackie (Piano) |

FEBRUARY

- | | | |
|----------|---|---|
| Thursday | 1 | CONCERT-CABARET – Primrose Powell (Soprano) accompanied by Andrew Wells (Piano) |
|----------|---|---|

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Schiller. Suzanne Schiller died 4.11.1995. Sadly missed by her nieces and all her friends.

Lawson. Klaus (Nick) Lawson passed away on the 3rd of November. He will be greatly missed by his wife, son, family and many friends.

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Miscellaneous

Piano Stool. The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre urgently needs a piano stool, either single or double, for use with the existing Knight upright piano. Please telephone Hannah Goldsmith on 0181 958 5080. It would be greatly appreciated.

World Wars. I collect cards and envelopes from the camps. Please send with price asked to Peter C. Rickenbach, 14 Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 1PF.

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

A Drawing Retrospective by David Hockney, Britain's most celebrated artist, is at the *Royal Academy* (until 28 January). The exhibition includes 130 drawings, watercolours, gouaches and sketchbooks, gathered from public and private collections, as well as from the artist himself, and have never been seen in public before.

Recent paintings and drawings by David Hockney will be shown in a special exhibition at *Annely Juda Fine Art* (June-September 1996). This will be Hockney's first show at a private gallery in London since 1989.

The techniques and materials used in sculpture are the subject of an exhibition *Breaking the Mould* at the *National Portrait Gallery* (until 11 February). The exhibition includes the iron death mask of Sir Isaac Newton and a ceramic portrait

of Glenda Jackson, actress and politician.

The Serpentine Gallery is holding (until 25 February) an exhibition *Velleitas* by Jana Sterbak, born in Prague 1955. Sterbak draws on a tradition of Czech Surrealism; her complex beautiful works explore desire, confinement, as well as physical and emotional liberation.

The story of the *National Gallery* in World War II – 'Not one picture shall leave this island', Winston Churchill – is the slogan of an exhibition in Room 1 of the *National Gallery* (until 11 February). There is much to tell, including the daily lunchtime concerts in the gallery organised by Myra Hess and the wartime displays of contemporary work, including Henry Moore's air-raid shelter drawings. A very exciting story that should not be forgotten!

The Tate Gallery is holding an important exhibition of the work of the great French Painter Cezanne (8 February-28 April). Over 90 paintings and more than 60 watercolours and drawings will be on display. *The Tate Gallery Liverpool* is showing "Home and Away: Internationalism in British Art 1900-1990" (through the whole of 1996) □

SB's Column

Brno. A most varied programme makes a visit to the Czech Republic's second city an attractive musical proposition. Recently Brno's National Theatre, an opera house of some repute, not only had Puccini, Verdi and most of the Czech composers – Dvorak, Smetana, Janacek – in its repertoire, but also staged operettas e.g., the pre-Great War *Polenblut* by Nedbal and Friml's *Vagabond King* (70 years old this year).

Vienna. The small Rabenhof theatre devoted the month of November to Jewish themes. The touring Jewish Theatre Tel Aviv presented *Trauschein* by Ephraim Kishon, and *Die kleinen Menschelach* by Sholem Aleichem, whilst the Rabenhof theatre's own ensemble produced a piece evocative of 1945. *Cigarettes in Vienna* contrasts hot jazz in a U.S. army club with Austrian post-war conditions interspersed with the appearance of Lena, a beautiful Jewish 'returnee'. Jazz collides with Viennese song and native mistrust with a mixture of envy and admiration for 'foreign' tastes.

Opera in London. Opera buffs will be happy to learn that English National Opera plans two interesting productions: Wagner's *Tristan* will have ten performances during February and March, whilst *Don Pasquale* by Donizetti will be given in March and April. The Royal Opera House announces the full *Ring* cycle for the coming autumn.

Birthday. There were special TV transmissions to celebrate the 85th birthday of Austrian actress *Jane Tilden* who had made her 'Josefstadt' debut in the Thirties. After some years in the United States, she returned to the scene of her first triumphs where she acted with Attila Hörbiger, Adrienne Gessner, Paula Wessely and Else Bassermann. Unforgotten as Franziska in Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* she managed to maintain her lively and impish stage personality for many decades □

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

In search of 700 boys

Sir Martin Gilbert's lecture at London's Museum of Jewish Life

In 1945/6 the CBF brought over seven hundred teenage orphans of the Holocaust from Poland and Ruthenia to Britain. Despite the small numbers involved, permission for their immigration had to be given at Cabinet level. (Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, fearing their potential prowess in commercial undertakings in London, allegedly wanted them sent to Scotland and the north of England). Settled in hostels in different parts of the UK, they were grouped together in the cultural and sporting Primrose Club led by Yogi Mayer, an ex-Special Operations Executive operative.

These survivors, just seven or eight years old at the outbreak of war, had been witness to an adult world which had gone mad. With their families, and often their whole communities, totally destroyed, their memories of Jewish life and culture made them, in the lecturer's phrase, "the last of a lost generation".

Sir Martin Gilbert is gathering the individual recollections of the '700 Boys' to be published as a comprehensive history. Each account, though different, reveals the deep anguish of those young children. One remembered his family constantly receiving visitors with lavish hospitality. Another recalled that Poles were taught by their church to hate Jews, but allowed them to work as they created employment. Most recalled feeling devoid of all humanity when pushed into trains to go to the death camps.

Later, on arrival in Britain, they could not have faced a greater contrast – a quiet, civilised country the like of which was beyond their wildest imaginings. Conversely, no normal British person could be expected to understand the horrific experiences they had undergone. Here too, the opportunity to choose the pattern of material – Burtons donated seven hundred bespoke suits – was "one of the most exciting gifts of my life" for one overwhelmed recipient.

Though many of the boys wanted to go to Palestine, they could not do so till Israeli independence in 1948. Then many, Rabbi Hugo Gryn among them, volunteered to fight in *Machal* brigades for foreign volunteers in Jerusalem, the Galilee and the Negev.

□ RDC

A riposte

Being of the tribe recently described by Richard Grunberger as a 'necessary evil', i.e. a publisher, I would like to correct one or two misconceptions. (It might interest readers that I am the son of the late Dr Erwin Rosenthal, a distinguished Hebrew and Arabic scholar who frequently contributed to this journal.)

Why does the Editor castigate Bermann-Fischer for carrying on publishing in Germany until 1936, with the damaging implication that he was thereby comforting the Nazi regime? There were many Jews with functioning cultural businesses, whose continuance might have helped to ameliorate, and even criticise, the intellectual horrors of Nazism.

One can hardly blame Bermann-Fischer for staying on until 1936 and one can but admire what he did subsequently. Firstly he transferred the copyrights of his banned (mostly Jewish) authors to Switzerland to protect their incomes from Nazi expropriation. He then tried to set up as a publisher in Switzerland, but, denied a residence permit, went to Vienna. In 1938 he went to Sweden to try and set up his business there. But, as the Germans got altogether too close to Sweden for comfort, he made a perilous overland journey to Japan and managed to get one of the last ships to New York before Pearl Harbour made a Japan-America journey impossible. He then re-established his firm in the United States. Hardly the action of someone seeking to give comfort to Dr Goebbels.

Victor Gollancz, not of course a refugee, was briefly fooled by the left and, I think shamefully, did indeed turn down Orwell's *Animal Farm* as did T.S. Eliot at Fabers, but he did not 'try to suppress it'. He simply, and I stress that it was in my view unfortunate, believed that, as its political message was contrary to his own beliefs at the time, he ought not to publish it. Happily it helped to make the fortune of another Jewish publisher, Frederic Warburg, but Orwell at the time, while certainly not rich, was no more impoverished than any other English writer of his period. He was a prolific journalist and broadcaster, and he was certainly not ailing. He was ailing all through the writing of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, but that was some years later, so that poor old V G ought not to be castigated for crimes he did not commit.

As for my predecessor André Deutsch's publication of von Papen and George Weidenfeld's publication of Albert (not, as stated, Walter) Speer, both of these books were, true or false, important historical documents. Without, I trust, sounding too cynical, I would rather that the modest profits that accrued from their publication went into the hands of victimised refugee Jewish publishers instead of the old English establishment firms.

If I might intrude a personal professional reminiscence, I published with great joy *The Goebbels Diaries* when I was running Secker & Warburg. Again, an important historical document, and I might not too immodestly argue that it is better that such a book be published sensitively by a Jewish publisher rather than insensitively by a non-Jew. The book was edited and introduced by Hugh Trevor-Roper and was, happily, a considerable commercial success.

I had a lot of fun publishing it. I gave a significant proportion of the profits to *The Jewish Quarterly*, much enjoying the prospect of Goebbels' remains spinning wildly in their grave at the thought of that great Jewish editor, Jacob Sontag, finding at least a few months of financial respite out of the proceeds of those evil diaries. Your readers might also care to know that the lawyer representing the Goebbels estate was sumptuously displeased when he read the book's copyright page which made clear where some of those profits were going!

Finally, rather than venting his spleen on publishers in his distinguished journal, might the Editor not have reflected on the extraordinary contribution made to British publishing by those who found themselves here because of Hitler's efforts. Leaving aside the distinction of the established English Jews, such as Gollancz and Warburg, what would British publishing look like today without the Neuraths, the Horovitz's, André Deutsch, Paul Hamlyn, Andor Kraszna-Krauss, Leopold Ullstein, Wolfgang Foges, the Maschlers, père et fils, George Weidenfeld and many more.

If these inspired publishers constitute a necessary evil I wonder what one has to do to be even moderately good...

□ Tom Rosenthal
Chairman and Managing Director
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**KKL - TAKING CARE
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A hierarchy of victims?

On a recent holiday in Crete we found the owners of our hotel so *sympatico* that we let them guide us in the choice of places to visit. They urged us to go to Arkadi monastery, site of a Turkish massacre in retaliation for a Greek nationalist uprising. We went there on a rickety bus which barely managed to drag itself up the steep mountain roads.

Memorial

The memorial turned out to be an intensely private place. No concessions were made to non-Greek speakers and no captions, descriptions or explanations were given in any language other than Greek. Exhibits of all kinds were distributed almost haphazardly throughout the various rooms and the courtyard outside. There were old newspapers, pictures, some relics and also, in a dreadful ossuary, a collection of skulls and bones derived from corpses of all ages and sexes, showing the signs of torture, mutilation and execution.

Slowly the horror of it seeped into my consciousness. Up to that moment it was something strange, something that happened elsewhere and to other people. Now it was becoming real and personal and though I was an outsider I began to feel, what I thought, any Greek coming to this shrine of remembrance might feel. I began to appreciate why such trouble had been taken to repel prying eyes and to discourage voyeurs.

Suffering

The aspects of human joy and happiness may be infinitely varied, but the face of extreme suffering and anguish is always tragically the same. Who could tell the difference between one smashed skull and another, one emaciated corpse, or another, and who would want to?

With these sober reflections we returned to the hotel. Our hostess was anxious to learn our impressions and I told her how reminiscent everything was of all the horrors and atrocities one had ever heard of, like Jews, or Armenians, or Blacks, or anybody. She answered harshly and dismissively:-

'I don't know about those others,' she said, 'but we suffered most' - and that, as they say, was the end of a beautiful friendship.

□ Manfred Landau

THE EMIGRATION GAME (WINTER 1938/39)

Mother and I walk through the streets of Prague.

Her hands are balled against the falling snow.

(Can't she afford gloves? Are they bare from choice?)

There's snow above and endless steps below.

We have a bag of chocolate creams; we play
The emigration game: England, if brown;
Or, if the centre's white, we must stay here;
If yellow it's Australia. Snow falls down.

I pick a brown and mother has the white.
She walks with a straight back; Let's try
again.

Her legs are varicosed; her heels are raised.
She's bearing up and stout of heart. In vain

From consulate to consulate her steps
Inscribe petitions. Soon the sweets are gone.
Then March comes and invaders bar all
routes:

Yet leave no trace of her when they move
on;

Their footsteps beating time and bearing
down.

□ Gerda Mayer

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS - JANUARY 1996

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1-19 | Peoples of Israel, Gaza & Jordan: Manor House Society, Photographs by Valerie Chazan. |
| Mon 8 | Toponymic Trouble - What's in a Place Name?: Club '43, Glyn Hatherall MA, Thames Valley Univ. 8pm |
| Tues 9 | Piano & Flute Concert: JACS Belsize Square, Angus Cunningham & Stephanie Core. 2-4pm |
| Mon 15 | History of German Churches in London: Club '43, Mrs. S. Steinmetz BA. |
| Tues 16 | Your Hampstead Heath: JACS, Paul Canneaux, Heath Superintendent. 2-4pm |
| From 18 | The Dybbuk of Delight - an anthology of Women's Poetry: Manor House. 8pm |
| Mon 22 | List. The Weimar Years: Club '43, John Elton MA. |
| Tues 23 | Jews in the Ukraine: JACS, Cheryl Mariner, Director, World Jewish Relief. |
| Thurs 25 | Chamber Music & the Jewish Connection: Manor House, Schidloff Quartet. |
| Mon 29 | Ein Blick in Fontanes Londoner Tagebücher: Club '43, Prof. Charlotte Jolles, Birkbeck College. 8pm |

FEBRUARY

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Tues 6 | Great Opera Singers 1905 to 1930s: JACS, Martin Grahame. 2-4pm |
| | Political Leaders in the Modern Era: Wiener Library, Prof. Hugh Freeman FRCPsych, FPPHM. 6.30pm. £2. |
| Tues 13 | The United Nations Today: JACS, Percy Gourgey MBE. 2-4pm |
| Sun 25 | Was Peace with Hitler ever an Option?: AJR/Yad Vashem, Prof. Richard Overly, Kings College, London. Logan Hall, London University Inst. of Education. 3pm. Reserved seats £3 from AJR (SAE please). |

Cooking with Gretel Beer



Krenfisch

(Fish in horseradish sauce)

Harvey's of Bristol recently had a grand Austrian dinner, followed by a week of Austrian specialities, all partnered by splendid Austrian wines. One of the most acclaimed dishes was Krenfisch (fish in horseradish cream) taken from my book.

The best fish for this is pike, but any firm-fleshed white fish can be used. At Harvey's they used sea bass.

Serves 4-5

1 pike weighing about 2¼-2½ lbs.

(1kg-1.2kg)

2 generous ozs (60g) butter
salt

2-3 tablespoons finely grated horseradish

7 fl.oz (200ml) sour cream or crème

fraiche

Clean and gut the fish, rub inside and out with salt. Melt the butter in a flame-proof and ovenproof dish large enough to hold the fish. Add the fish and turn it over carefully so that the fish is covered with butter. Sprinkle with finely grated horseradish and pour over the sour cream or crème fraiche. Cover the dish with foil, being careful that the foil does not touch the fish, and bake at Gas Mark 5, 375°F, 190°C. Baste frequently and remove foil toward the end of baking time. Plain boiled potatoes are the best accompaniment □

Chosen – kalla – camera

Jewish weddings in focus

Sundays in Whitechapel used to bring crowds of the local Jewish population to see newlyweds arriving to have their portraits taken at Boris' studio. Boris was the doyen of Jewish photographers in the East End between the wars, no wedding being truly consummated without his black and white record of the event – proud portraits which even today adorn family mantelpieces.

Boris was born in Poland in 1900. At the age of 18 he sought his fortune in Paris where he was introduced to the magic of this new art form. Soon after settling in London in 1922 he set up his first studio in Fieldgate Street, off the Whitechapel Road, and there perfected his photographic technique and established an abiding reputation.

He married Julia in 1929 and, although she had plans for a life in America, it was in Whitechapel that they settled down. In 1932 they converted an old pub into a photographic studio, with a luxurious interior and a large art deco neon sign in blue, turquoise and red outside proclaiming his name and profession.

Julia Bennett, Boris' wife, recalled their commissionaire trying to pacify the police

as newlyweds-bearing limousine followed limousine to the studio on Sunday afternoons. A petite, upright lady still, she was speaking at the opening of the exhibition *Jewish Weddings in Focus* at the splendid new premises of the Jewish Museum in Camden Town. "Boris had good taste and style," she recalled, "and each bride was a princess". Posing his clients artistically was Boris' trademark – he even provided a stool for short grooms to stand on, albeit carefully hidden by the folds of the bridal gown.

Photographing thirty-five to fifty couples in a Sunday afternoon was exhausting and demanding work, but to Boris and Julia well worth the effort. Boris brought a little Hollywood magic to London and, though he died in 1959, earned his slice of immortality through the enduring images he left behind.

□ Ronald Channing

No Paschal lamb

There is nothing lamblike about Julia Pascal. On the contrary, she is a bit of a warrior. First she warred with her family for wanting to turn her into a hausfrau. Then she warred with theatrical managements who would let her act, but not direct. Currently she is on

the warpath against a world that has grown indifferent to the Holocaust.

It is no exaggeration to say that Julia Pascal considers making people aware of the *Shoah* her life's mission. (See page 4.) She pursues this mission with indefatigable energy, performing her Holocaust trilogy in different languages at venues right across Europe (except in Guernsey whose officialdom clearly has something to hide).

One is therefore inclined to say 'more power to Pascal's elbow', yet an interview she gave to *The Independent* in November prompts reservations. In it she said she decided against having children because "they can burn your babies, but not your books." This is sheer attention-seeking hyperbole. No contemporary far right politician – neither the madman Zhirinovskiy, nor the razorsharp demagogue Haider – exudes the sulphurous charisma, and with it the lethal danger, of a Hitler. For Pascal to conjure up the visions of ever-lurking 1930s-style cataclysm in the vastly different world of the 1990s smacks of fleshcreeping melodrama.

In addition, to suppose that a Holocaust could – like floods or earthquakes – recur at any time is to take the *Shoah* out of its unique historical context and to conceive of the world as irremediably evil.

Another questionable point Pascal made in the interview was about "antisemitism on both sides of the Channel." (She is married to a Frenchman). Yet her experience of French antisemitism lacks a Jewish dimension: as a dark-complexioned person living in France she is often taken for a North African and subjected to anti-Arab jibes. Now to call Arab-baiting antisemitism is linguistic logic-chopping. It is also nonsensical. For one, there are highly placed theologians in Saudi Arabia who preach an anti-Jewish *jihad*. For another, to equate the Arab immigrants' exposure to French xenophobia with the Jews' experience of antisemitism is to put measles on a par with the Bubonic plague. The persisting difference in the virulence of the two can be easily demonstrated. If Le Pen came to power and sent all Arabs back to North Africa tomorrow, the day after Arab phobia would cease to exist in France. The poison of antisemitism, on the other hand, is still coursing through the bloodstream of Poles and other East Europeans whose lands have been virtually *judenrein* for the past 50 years.

□ RG

Obituaries

Jesse Zierler

Jesse Zierler passed away aged 70 after a long illness. Berlin born, he had come to England in August 1939 on a Kindertransport.

After evacuation to North Wales, he turned himself into a commercial artist by daytime work as a draughtsman, while attending classes at St. Martin's School of Art in the evening. At the end of the war he learnt through the Red Cross that his immediate family had perished in the camps.

Postwar he was employed as a graphic designer in various advertising agencies and worked his way up to art director. Later he did part-time lecturing in graphic design at Harrow College of Higher Education (now part of the University of Westminster).

In 1979 he exhibited a collection of his paintings of the Dead Sea Scrolls; subsequently he received a commission to design accompanying brochures for the facsimile edition of the Kennicott Bible, a medieval Haggada and the Alba Bible. In 1986 he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers.

For the 1989 Kindertransport reunion he designed exhibition material, as well as souvenir brochures and the book cover for *I Came Alone*; subsequently he became treasurer of the R.O.K.

Since the age of 65 he was a volunteer at the AJR Day Centre, producing posters and teaching bridge to fellow members. He is survived by his wife, son and daughter □

Gunter Wittenberg

Berlin-born Gunter Wittenberg has died at the age of 70. Arriving in the UK on a Kindertransport in May 1939, he was effectively orphaned at the age of 14, although his parents' letters reached him until 1943.

His early years in this country were hard. Gunter was a keen photographer and a good draughtsman, but prospects of a career in either photography or commercial art were slim in war-time Britain and Gunter found a job in an engineering factory. He took a lively interest in his work and enrolled in evening classes to study engineering. Through perseverance

he obtained the qualifications necessary to join the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and within a few years became a chartered engineer.

He founded a small professional engineering company, Rhoden Partners, which soon established a reputation for solving tricky problems in assembly engineering in diverse industries. There was scope in confectionery: After-Eight Mints and Walnut Whips benefited from the skills and ingenuity of Gunter and his talented young team. There were other successes: the first-ever computer designed by the Victorian genius Charles Babbage was finally built and made to work by Rhoden Partners.

Gunter repaid this country's hospitality manifold. He created jobs and served as a council member of the Institution of Production Engineers whose Nuffield Silver Medal he was awarded. He also worked for Amnesty International, for charities which utilised engineering skills to make life tolerable in the world's troublespots, and for harnessing computers to help disabled children use talents their limbs could not express □

SEARCH NOTICES

Joseph Breuer, formerly of Vienna. Please contact Kurt Grübler, 199 Rolins Avenue, Apt. 513, Rockville, Maryland, 20852 USA.

Liane Brauch - married name unknown. Ellen Petzal, neé Rosenthal, a school friend (SHHS) seeks information on Liane or family who emigrated to USA in 1940/41. Please contact Ellen Petzal at Flat 6, 1 Redington Gardens, London NW3 7RY.

Ilse Perl (maiden name) born in Berlin, survived Bergen Belsen, came to UK 1945/6 & married an orthopaedic surgeon. Sought by Bert Lewyn 4370 Harris Trail, Atlanta GA 30327 USA.

Medizinstudent aus Dresden (Deutschland) bittet um Hilfe. Ich beschäftige mich mit dem Schicksal von nach 1933 aus Deutschland emigrierten jüdischen Dermatologen. Bitte helfen Sie mir und teilen Sie mir alle Ihnen bekannte Einzelschicksale von jüdischen Hautärzten, die nach 1933 aus Deutschland emigriert sind, mit. Sven Eppinger, Leeraue 31, 01109 Dresden, BR Deutschland.

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One Man's War

Part 5

Stranded

Wood from the abandoned crates gave us excellent material for brewing cups of tea, though the Yugoslav dinar notes they contained were unsuitable as toilet paper, but came in handy for lighting a fire. I took a 1000 dinar note as a souvenir.

We spent a few days on and near these Greek beaches but had to take cover during daytime from German Luftwaffe planes. They had eight machine-guns mounted on the wings of their Stuka fighters which strafed anything that moved. We even turned our great-coats inside out because thousands of brass buttons could have glistened in the sunshine and attracted a plane.

No more Greek seaworthy fishing or rowing boats were to be found. During the night the area became as busy as an anthill. There was a brigadier in charge of the evacuation from these beaches and under cover of darkness small navy vessels came to pick up remnants of a destroyed army. These boats had to anchor some distance away, as the beaches were too shallow. After some nights of waiting, it was our turn at last. We had to wade in single file into the sea up to our waist, in pitch darkness. Members of the first one or two sections got away when the order came to turn back as the boats were full up and had to be away before daylight. It dawned on us that the likelihood of being taken prisoner by Hitler's men was becoming more and more a reality.

Our CO called all remaining sergeants for an emotional handshake and goodbye, thanked us for our service to King and Country and informed us that all organised resistance and movements had ceased that everybody was on his own.

I had a few NCO friends of Central European background in our company and we discussed and prepared for the likelihood of having to fend for ourselves in the end. This group of about a dozen men had maps and a compass and sprang into action after the CO's goodbye wishes. I was included in this group as I was the only RASC driver. We found a Greek villager to act as a guide on a ten-hour drive and march over a mountain ridge to another hidden bay away from all the ravages of war, where

we would find a small boat to escape. For this service he demanded a very large sum of money, half of which he agreed to accept on completion at the other end of the trip.

From hundreds of abandoned vehicles we selected a small pick-up truck and I loaded it with petrol and provisions, all freely lying about the olive groves.

We started off with a sergeant and the guide and myself (driving) in the cab and the rest of the men in the open back of the truck. After some distance the path became narrower and steeper and many times everybody had to help pushing or watching if the offside wheels had enough grip on the often moving rocks and boulders not to fall hundreds of feet down the mountainside. We came to the point when we realised that we had to abandon the truck, pick up our belongings and start marching.

At the start of this now desperate trip I had a great-coat, a haversack, a backpack, a helmet and now a modern rifle. I could not possibly drive with all these belongings on my body and put them neatly into the open back of the vehicle. As the ride got worse, my friends tried to reduce the weight and started to throw out petrol cans, bully beef cases etc. (unbeknown to me driving in the cab) and anything lying about to which nobody claimed ownership went overboard, including my entire provisions.

□ H P Weiner

(to be continued)

Pensions update

GERMANY

The calculation of German retirement pensions is based on a formula depending on contributions and credits in the UK National Insurance records. As a result of European regulations, UK contribution periods are disadvantageous if they coincide with German credit periods.

The inclusion of some records of what were purely fictitious 'worker week' contributions may have led to German pension awards lower than they should be. The DSS has now agreed to remove this fictitious worker week contribution on request and will advise the German authorities accordingly by means of a revised form E205.

We do not know what, if any, results this will bring, but there have been several communications from the German pension authorities that would indicate that an increased payment may be due.

AUSTRIA

Pensions

The Austrian pensions authority is advising people that those whose pensions were awarded before 1 January 1994 may be eligible for an increase as a result of Austria joining the European Union. Please send a stamped addressed envelope to AJR for a pro forma letter of application which you may send to the DSS. It is advisable to use this.

Nationalfonds

The AJR will help any member complete the questionnaire sent (or to be sent) by the Austrian authorities to enable a claim to be made for AS70,000 from the Nationalfonds. Please telephone the AJR offices for an appointment.

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