

AJR Information

Volume LII No. 6
June 1997

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss...

**AJR Information
and the Second
Generation**

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Sublime enigma

Ronald Channing p13

**Auschwitz – the
view from on high**

Lionel Simmonds p16

Good in parts

Politically present day Germany is a curate's egg, with the bad parts in the South and East. In Bavaria the *Crimes of the Wehrmacht* exhibition prompted counter-demonstrations, and an influential MP (see April issue) wants Jewish immigration curbed. In the ex-DDR foreigners are routinely attacked, Potsdam denies the Wehrmacht exhibition permanent house room and two formerly prestigious East Berlin stages are occupied by plays about respectively Eva Braun and Emmy Goering □

Further thoughts on the 1997 General Election

May Day call by xenophobes

At the risk of annoying readers who consider our remit to be strictly parochial, we focus on the events at Westminster for the second month running. Once again our intention is to do so without allowing party-political bias to creep in. Nonetheless it can be said that the Labour landslide of the First of May has reversed a rightwards drift – both in the economic and political (i.e. nationalistic) meanings of the term – that had been gathering momentum for nearly two decades. Now, while we may have no quarrel with the economic Right, we can do no other than be ultra-sensitive to all manifestations of ultra-Right politics.

The British 'first-past-the-post' electoral system inhibits the growth of smaller parties. Consequently, extremists of any stripe who didn't want to court marginalisation have long tried to creep in under the Labour or Tory umbrellas. In the case of Old Labour, weak leadership in the 1970s allowed bomb-happy left zealots like Arthur Scargill to render them unelectable for many years.

In the Conservative camp xenophobia has been a latent presence for even longer. In the Sixties it focused on the issue of coloured immigration, but once Enoch Powell switched from predictions of inter-racial bloodshed to opposing the EEC the focus changed and new battle lines were drawn. These bisected the Channel. Gradually over the years Europhobia spread through the Tory grassroots as well as the parliamentary party.

One of the longterm results was the receptiveness to delusion of the Europhobe MPs. Thus, in a mirror image of Tony Benn's 'spin' that the minority vote for Michael Foot's Labour Party in the '80s showed the *commitment of eight million voters to a Socialist programme*, the La Pasionaria of the Right, Teresa Gorman, ascribed her recent re-election not to her previously unassailable majority, but to the anti-European gut feelings of her constituents.

Actually analysis of the nationwide election results showed that voters, while hardly enthusiasts for European integration, were less than preoccupied with

the whole issue; in other words, the anti-Tory tide impartially swept away Europhiles and Europhobes alike.

Re the latter we cannot but rejoice at the demise of the Judeophobic Tony Marlowe, the bigoted David Evans and the racist Peter Griffith (whom Harold Wilson memorably dubbed a 'parliamentary leper' back in the 1960s). Nor will many tears be shed over the absence from the Commons of the greatest, because most influential, xenophobe of the Nineties, Michael Portillo.

From this son of a Spanish emigré it is but a short step to his (ex) colleague and fellow Eurosceptic who had been fathered by a Jewish refugee from Romania. Rumour has it that Michael Howard wanted to make immigration an election issue but was – fortunately – overruled by the level-headed John Major.

If the rumour is substantiated it would indicate that Sir James Goldsmith was not the only (part)Jewish candidate in the election who recklessly banged the xenophobic drum in pursuit of power and influence □

AJR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held at
15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 3RL

on SUNDAY 8 JUNE 1997 at 3pm

AGENDA

Annual Report 1996

Hon. Treasurer's Report, Discussion

Election of Committee of
Management (see page 2)

Guest speaker: Stephen Smith, Director,
Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre,
who will talk on 'Forgotten Places –
The Holocaust, its Memory and its Meaning'

Enquiries: AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate,
1a Frognal, London NW3 6AL
Tel: 0171 431 6161

Profile

Stephen Smith

Living in the idyllic village of Laxton in the heart of Nottingham's Sherwood Forest, the elder son of a Methodist minister and a communally active mother, made it quite probable that Stephen Smith would be either a farmer or a vicar. He still lives and works in the countryside, but his work is of a unique and quite unexpected nature.

After early success in farming, he took a new career path in 1991 when he was drawn to the study of theology and learned of the genocide of European Jewry during World War II. "Like other British children," he recalls, "I'd gone through the entire school system knowing nothing about the Holocaust."

While deepening his knowledge at the Hebrew University, a visit to *Yad Vashem* made an impact on him for which he was unprepared. "I felt sad and was frustrated that no one had taught us even the essential facts of the Holocaust," he recalls, "and was angry that seemingly responsible people were not prepared to deal with the subject at all!" He set out to make a personal contribution to filling what he perceived as a gaping omission in the teaching of European history.

Though only 24 years of age, Stephen was determined to implement his plans. He took a diploma in advanced Holocaust studies at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, then began a Ph.D. on 'The Impact of the Holocaust on Christian Thought and Practice'.

But Stephen is a man of action. Enlisting the active involvement of his brother James, a surgeon, and the full backing of his parents, he decided to conceive, design, fund and build a Holocaust memorial and education centre in the entirely improbable location of the family's 19th-century farm house. The preceding half a century had not seen any organisation succeed in establishing a Holocaust museum in Europe outside the concentration camps; Stephen's very idea and concept were audacious in the extreme.

A feasibility study revealed that half a million pounds was required to implement the project. Not only did he harness the resources of the Smith family for the major part of the expense and enlist practical help from friends and local wellwishers, Stephen also set up and continues to run a confectionery business

with which to generate funds to contribute to the Centre's operating costs. During this formative stage, Britain's Jewish community (with few exceptions) was almost totally unaware of his ambitious plans and played no part in contributing to its establishment.

Europe's first Holocaust Memorial Centre was opened at Laxton on 17th September 1995 in the presence of a number of survivors. The existence of the Centre was then revealed to the wider Jewish community through the columns of the *Jewish Chronicle*.



Stephen Smith, director of Beth Shalom

The Centre houses exhibits which were personally researched, designed and often made by Stephen. It offers many additional facilities which include a lofty meeting hall, a library with audio-visual resources, a restaurant, residential accommodation for students and peaceful memorial gardens of great beauty.

The Centre has also established three travelling exhibitions which tour schools, accompanied by Stephen and a survivor to bear witness and respond to questions. In its first year alone Beth Shalom hosted the astonishing number of 20,000 school-children!

Not content with these achievements, Stephen has established Beth Shalom as a publishing house for survivors' testimonies; he edits promotional material and newsletters which are designed and produced to the highest standards, and has even taken his design of the Centre's Hebrew emblem and produced it as a jewel!

As an extension of his own many visits to and detailed knowledge of Holocaust sites, Stephen leads week-long study missions to Poland which, in the company of a survivor and in meetings with Jewish

and non-Jewish Polish intellectuals, provide unforgettable insights in the places where many of the crimes were perpetrated. He is in international demand as a lecturer, returning recently from Latvia and South Africa, and is a member of the advisory panel of the Imperial War Museum currently establishing a Holocaust exhibition and education project.

Paradoxically, as a gentile and student of Jewish history, not the least of Stephen's achievements has been to provide a ready-made, unaffiliated meeting place for members of a seemingly increasingly fragmented Anglo-Jewish community, a new-style 'Jewish' institution whose subject matter fosters a common cause no longer regarded as the exclusive territory of survivors or relatives of victims.

Above all, he has set out to challenge the churches' traditional malevolence towards Jews, to bring them to recognise and accept the consequences of their historical antagonism, and to acknowledge Christianity's debt to Judaism. "After centuries of antisemitism, the Holocaust could have been predicted" he said. "People must be prepared to tackle and deal with antisemitism."

□ Ronald Channing

Election of Committee of Management 1997/98

AGM 8 JUNE 1997

The following members of the Committee are retiring by rotation and are being proposed for re-election:

Mr A.C. Kaufman	Chairman
Mr W.D. Rothenberg	Vice-Chairman & Treasurer
Mrs E.S. Angel	Secretary

The following remain members of the Committee and are proposed as Trustees:

Mr P. Dannenberg
Mr C.W. Dunston

The following remain members of the Committee without need for re-election in 1997:

Mr M. Durst	Trustee
Mrs J. Field	
Mrs J. Kessler	
Mrs S. Landau	
Mr H.E. Levy	

The following have been proposed for election to the Committee:

Mrs G.R. Glassman
Mrs D. Franklin

(Senti)mental aberrations

Elvis Presley was simply "the king", Johann Strauss was "the waltz king". Who, I hear you ask – goggle-eyed from watching the Oscar ceremony – are "the schmaltz kings?"

Any answer to this burning question needs to carry a caveat: just as there were waltz composers in the First and Second Division – Tchaikovsky vs Josef Lanner – so a distinction has to be made between Higher and Lower schmaltz.

Lower schmaltz bears the imprint of Mills & Boon; Higher schmaltz is exemplified by *The English Patient*. In fact, that Oscar-garlanded film is the highest schmaltz: a box-office hit suffused with the doom-laden passion of a latter-day Tristan and Isolde. In parallel with Wagner's opera culminating in a *Liebestod*, the *affaire* between Catherine (Krystin Scott Thomas) and Count Almasy (Ralph Fiennes) reaches its climax, via some startling reversals en route, with death transfigured by all-encompassing love.

Initially Almasy tries to keep his distance from the newly-wed Catherine, but she tempts him by recounting the myth of Gyges and the naked Lydian queen on a starlit desert night. When Almasy catches fire she capriciously remembers her marriage vows, which fills him with raging despair. Eventually the lovers are vouchsafed an intermission of erotic bliss – only to be torn asunder by the pressures of convention, and the Second World War. Finally Catherine expires in a desert rock cave and Almasy carries the corpse, wrapped in a white silken "number" suggestive of a wedding dress, on to the rock escarpment – for all the world like a groom bearing his bride aloft on the threshold of the nuptial chamber.

If *The English Patient* belonged to a newer brand of schmaltz à la Wagner, the less lavishly Oscar-decorated *Shine* continues the venerable tradition of the demented artist epic – motto: "Great genius is to madness near-allied" – a cinematic *genre* memorably illustrated by the Van Gogh-inspired *Lust for Life* of forty years ago.

It is an undoubted fact that several creative geniuses – Gogol, Schumann, Hugo Wolf – went mad, but the great majority didn't. On the contrary, a number of cultural luminaries – Bach, Goethe, Henry James, Charles Ives come to mind at once

– were emotionally so stable that they could easily have qualified as bankers.

What sets *Shine* apart from run-of-the-mill "mad genius" stories are two aspects: a) it recounts the life of the still living David Helfgott, and b) ends with him regaining his sanity. In order to enhance the feel-good factor at its end, the film accentuates every negative ingredient in the earlier reels. Thus Helfgott *père*, in reality a Polish-Jewish Australian immigrant, is turned into a half deranged camp survivor whose absurd tyrannical conduct – entering David for music scholarships, but forbidding him to leave home to take them up – triggers the latter's eventual mental breakdown.

Another Oscar-nominated, yet shamefully unrewarded, film with a more tenuous Jewish connection was *Secrets and Lies* (directed by Mike Leigh, né Liebowitz). Here the schmaltz only intruded at the very end, when a hitherto authentically depicted dysfunctional Cockney family comes together in an atmosphere of sweetness and light to welcome a West Indian girl as a blood relation.

By coincidence my TV viewing of the week that had started on Oscar night ended with the transmission of Arthur Miller's *Broken Glass*. This play focuses on the effect of *Kristallnacht* on a sympathetic and sensitive New York Jewess. When grief over her loveless marriage is compounded by outrage at the widespread indifference towards pogrom victims, she lapses into hysterical paralysis and loses the use of her legs. Accentuating her marital problems is the realisation that the husband hates himself for being – and looking – Jewish. In a superbly bathetic moment a friend of the husband offers him solace by suggesting that to a Chinese Jew he wouldn't look Jewish at all. Bathos, in fact creeps in all the time with characters mouthing lines like "I walk around my past like a stranger" and "I have a knife in my heart".

So far, so bad – but Miller saves up his strongest bid for the schmaltz king's crown till the end. As the curtain descends the husband succumbs to a heart attack at the same moment that the wife regains the use of her legs.

This lurid confection is the latest offering of the man some have elevated into the "world's greatest living playwright". How can we make sense of this paradox? I would suggest that there are two Arthur Millers: one the gritty dramatist of *The*

Crucible and author of *Timebends* – the other a melodramatist nurtured in the conventions of the barnstorming Yiddish theatre of his youth. Miller already showed a propensity for dipping his quill in schmaltz half a century ago, with *The Death of a Salesman*. What could be more bathetic than the *crie-de-coeur* the much put-upon salesman's wife intermittently addresses to no one in particular, "Attention – attention must finally be paid: a man is drowning!"?

□ Richard Grunberger



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Reviews

Survival and continuity

Martin Gilbert, *THE BOYS. TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1996, £20

By presenting the stories of the 732 men and women to whom this book is dedicated "with admiration, affection and gratitude", Martin Gilbert has accomplished an outstanding example of what the late Barbara Tuchman described as the historian's task. "What his imagination is to the poet," she wrote, "facts are to the historian. His exercise of judgment comes in their selection, his art in their arrangement." By making known the story of these 732 *Boys*, Gilbert has provided his readers with the opportunity to pay tribute to the ability to triumph over adversity which characterises the lives of this group of Holocaust survivors.

The *Boys* (and girls) were born in a pre-War Central Europe which did not succeed in hiding its endemic anti-semitic tendencies behind a screen of formal legislation designed, in principle, to give its Jewish citizens equal status. All the same, life for Jewish children was, as most of the *Boys* recall, not all that different from that of their Christian neighbours. Outbursts of verbal abuse and not infrequent violence at school and in the street was something which they learned to endure. But nothing prepared them for what was to come once the countries of their birth were overrun by the Nazi invaders. Some Poles became *Volksdeutsche* overnight and proved it by attacking Jews. But this was merely a prelude to the tragedy which followed: expulsion from schools, from neighbourhoods, from villages and towns; the wearing of distinctive armbands, arrests and disappearances. Some 250,000 Polish Jews fled eastward to the comparative safety of the USSR, but the majority suffered degradation and death.

The *Boys* were then aged eight, nine, ten or twelve. One route to possible survival was by being hidden by a righteous gentile. Slave labour, the ability to withstand ill-treatment, sickness and starvation was another – provided luck was on the side of the child labourer. For those in Buchenwald and Auschwitz the outlook was still grimmer and even when the war had almost come to its end, the dreadful death marches took their toll.

But some of the children did survive and, on the urging of the Central British Fund for Refugees, this country offered asylum to 1000 of them: 732 were found and flown to Britain; 300 from Prague in 12 Lancaster bombers, some from Munich; the rest were transported by boat from Gdynia. They had been rescued. Teenagers now, they were bereft of parents, education, health – strangers in strange surroundings. But care and love restored their health, updated their neglected education, helped them to come into their own again as human beings and as Jews.

They made their own way in the world; but the comradeship of their shared fate held them together. In their adolescence they met in the Primrose Club; in adulthood they formed the '45 Aid Society. And after years of silence over 100 of them told their story – to Martin Gilbert and through him to the world.

Each one of these biographies, says Gilbert, would have made a book in itself. They offer no less fascinating reading as collated by him in this book. Ben Helfgott, for example, Olympic sportsman, dedicated champion of their cause and that of others; or Roman Halter, architect, creator of works of stained glass art; that of Harry Balsam, owner of menswear shops; Arthur Poznanski, singer, choirmaster of his synagogue; Simon Gilbert, US soldier, watchmaker, jeweller; Meir Sosnowicz/Michael Novice, distinguished scientist.

The author is indebted to them all. But two of the *Boys* were catalytic influences on him in finally deciding to write the book: Ben Helfgott urged him to take up his pen and helped him to assemble much of the material. The late Rabbi Hugo Gryn offered him personal friendship and inspiration.

For Jews, all Holocaust survivor stories are a source of inspiration and encouragement as well as of sadness and distress – none more so than the story of the *Boys*. What gives this book particular poignancy is the distinguished author's sensitive handling of the factual information, the immaculately professional objectivity in his presentation of it and his superb literary skills in putting it across. It leaves the reader, any reader, with the deep conviction that through their suffering and their survival the *Boys*, in the words of one of them, "upheld the dignity of man".

□ David Maier

Dorrit M. Sim, *IN MY POCKET*, ABC Publishers, 1996, £7.95

The author tells the story of how she, a seven-and-a-half year old child, left Hamburg on a Kindertransport train at the end of July 1939. It is a 25-page children's book, beautifully illustrated by Gerald Fitzgerald.

Dorrit's story is simply told and in its direct and unsentimental approach achieves a poignancy that any child would appreciate. It can be read aloud to a four-or five-year-old who might well ask questions about the 'little girl'. Any older child would read the book on his or her own.


This book offers a wonderful way in which to introduce the subject of the Holocaust to the younger generation. I found it very touching and would recommend any grandparent to obtain it for some little one's next birthday.

□ Bea Green

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AJR Information and the Second Generation

The past, William Faulkner once wrote, is never dead; it is not even past. I can think of few groups for whom this adage rings more true than the Second Generation, those of us who were born in Britain of parents who escaped or survived the destruction of German and Austrian Jewry by the Nazis. As we reach our middle years, when the older generation fades away and the next generation comes into maturity, it seems to me that we acquire a sense of our own history, the awareness that generations have gone before us and will come after us. But unlike the native British, with their long-established traditions, their history of stability and continuity, we are confronted by history as an abrupt rift, a discontinuity in the flow of families from generation to generation.

We do not know the world in which our parents grew up, in Vienna or Berlin, Frankfurt or Breslau, because it no longer exists. We can never know most of the generation of our grandparents – those faces that gaze out at us from the monochrome sepia of old photographs, those snippets of correspondence in unfamiliar script that held the tenuous link across the wartime void between the generation that escaped and the generation that didn't. In the case of my grandparents, the correspondence ends with one of the 25-word Red Cross messages allowed out of Vienna: "*Erwarten Abtransport Theresienstadt morgen*". And then nothing more.

We are the generation for whom history began anew. We grew up in post-war Britain, we were the first to go to British schools, to speak English without an accent, to assimilate into British values and habits, to say 'Sorry' and 'I do beg your pardon' and 'Yes, it is wet today'. In a way, we had no history, at least in the sense of a palpable history shared with all the others around us, in a common celebration of Englishness: grandfather who could remember the relief of Mafeking and had fought on the Western Front, father who had been in the Desert with Montgomery, the Jarrow marchers and Gracie Fields, the Boat Race and Lyons Corner Houses and the *Dam Busters* march.

Our history, we already sensed in childhood, was not one that could be spoken in the same tones of relaxed confidence, the confidence of a Britain that had

fought the good fight and won; ours was something that our parents kept from us, or tried to drip-feed to us in small doses, so as to accustom us gradually to the idea that our roots lay in another country and another culture. I remember, as a six-year-old about to go to Austria for the first time, jibbing at repeated references to the scale of the Alpine peaks with an excess of childish patriotism: 'Aber Hampstead Heath ist *auch* ein hoher Berg!'. So there we were, in a world where the last echoes of Viennese coffee-houses and Berlin cabaret, of holidays by the Wörthersee and window-shopping sprees along the Kurfürstendamm rang, like a faint tinkle of airs from *Der Rosenkavalier*, over the Finchley Road and down into St John's Wood (if you were one of the lucky ones).

But by now the first generation that came here, our parents, is slowly passing away. Now it is we who are moving into the front line of our little community's history, and it is up to us to transmit that history, if only at second hand, to the third generation. That is not easy, seeing that we never knew pre-war Germany and Austria, that pre-Hitler *Welt von gestern* from which, in part, we come. We know it from the stories of our parents' earlier – I almost said 'previous' – lives, from their memories of *Gymnasium* and *Lyzeum*, of spacious flats with solid furniture, unthinkable without a grand piano, shuttered against the summer heat, stove-warmed against the winter cold, of persecution, escape and arrival in their land of refuge, and of countless relatives dead or dispersed about the globe. But we know all that only at one remove.

There is, however, one secure repository of the history of the Jewish refugees from Hitler who came from the German-speaking lands to settle in Britain, and that is *this very journal*. *AJR Information* has been chronicling for over fifty years the events and issues, the controversies and concerns that affected our parents' generation and that are now passing on to us. If we want to stay in touch with our parents' memories – and in my view that is to keep faith with a heritage which, placed in our trust, might otherwise vanish into oblivion – then we should make the effort to reach back into their culture and their world, so as to bring those forward into our present and into the future that belongs to the next generation.

The *AJR Information* seems to me an ideal means of doing so, and that is one reason why I read it devotedly. Another is the journal's sheer quality. I know noth-

ing to rival it, in the way that it manages to marry a richness of information with a depth of commitment, combining facts with emotion. On its side too, the *AJR Information* needs to reach out to a new generation of readers. It aims in future to publish more articles of interest to the second generation. So I would appeal to all those who, like myself, are part of the generation born out of the emigration from Central Europe to Great Britain, to become readers of this journal, and so to subscribe to their own unique corner of history.

□ Anthony Grenville

A sort of homecoming

The thought of ever returning to Frankfurt, which I left aged eight, seemed inconceivable to me for fifty-eight years. What first changed my mind was the receipt of a memorial book to the 11,134 Shoah victims from Frankfurt – including my parents – sent out by the city's Lord Mayor.

Then I saw an ad in *AJR Information* for a conference on the Kindertransporte at Frankfurt during March, and my wife and I decided to attend.

The accommodation couldn't have been better. There was also a fine exhibition. At the conference itself I found the lectures rather long, with insufficient time to talk to other participants. Even so I met someone who had been in the same infant class as me and who, to my amazement, lives in Frankfurt again.

For me the most important lecture was that given by Ruth Barnett (from the Link Psychotherapy Centre) about the experience of uprooting. This made me tell of my own reminiscences of the day I left. I had blanked out everything, except that I asked my parents "what about my electric train set?" as we said goodbye. They replied "We'll bring it when we come." (How awful they must have felt knowing they couldn't leave at this late stage, only about two months before the war!)

There followed a lecture commenting on Diana Samuels' play *Kindertransport* which stirred a deal of controversy.

At the very end I spoke again to thank the organisers for their kindness and goodwill – and to say how much the occasion had affected me for the better. Six months ago, if anybody had asked me whether I'd go back to Frankfurt, I would have said NEVER – and now I will come again.

□ From a report by Herbert Wolff



Letters to the Editor

FOOTBALL HERO

Sir – Friedrich Torberg, a highly reliable chronicler of interwar Vienna, lists a number of Jewish sportsmen of the time and refers to the fact that the *Verbandskapitän* Hugo Meisl, who created the Austrian “*Wunderteam*”, was Jewish. He does not say this about Sindelar and, unless the Guinness Record of World Soccer can produce compelling evidence, I must conclude that it is wrong. It may be that its authors were led astray by the fact that Sindelar sadly committed suicide soon after the Anschluss.

Guildford
Surrey
Professor Lewis Elton

Sir – We called Sindelar *der Papierene* because he fell over as soon as an opposing player shouldered him out of the way.

The club Austria played in RC colours; I don't think those antisemites would have tolerated him.

Southgate
London N14
Heinz Drechsler

Sir – Your contributor is right in referring to Sindelar as the greatest centre forward of his time. However, had he been Jewish, Sindi would have played for Hakoah, not Austria.

Chigwell
Essex
Fred Rosner

Sir – I have had numerous letters and telephone calls from your readers. The consensus is that Sindelar was not Jewish, but probably a socialist. His girlfriend might have been Jewish. They were found dead together in a gas-filled room in Vienna ten months after the Anschluss. Suicide is probable but not proven.

With what affection Sindelar is remembered by readers now in their seventies and eighties! He expressed, with a football, the wit and grace which are part of Austria's heritage. In too many Austrians, alas, these qualities were overwhelmed by less appealing traits.

Greenhill
Hampstead High Street
London NW3
Ludwig Berlin

X-FACTOR

Sir – Rabbi Wolff expounds an interesting theory in the April editorial. He believes that the rabbis of old expunged Moses from the Haggadah to make sure we wouldn't forget God's influence – the so-called X-factor – in the escape from Egypt. Fair enough.

Then comes the sermon: We are guilty of being unfair to God most of the time because we do not pay due regard to the X-factor in our lives. For example, the stories of nice historical events – the Exodus, the creation of Israel, the liberation of Eastern Europe from Communism – would be distorted without acknowledging the X-factor (ie: God's influence).

But what about the Holocaust, the Spanish Inquisition, the Russian Pogroms? Rabbi Wolff doesn't mention any of these not so nice historical events. Maybe the X-factor was working for the opposition at the time? I suspect he is copying the rabbis of old by being selective in his examples – for the greater glory of God.

Whetstone, London
J Rumney

STAMP OF TRUTH

Sir – The stamp of a large envelope we recently received depicted blue-striped prisoners' clothing flanked by barbed wire with the text “*Befreiung der Gefangenen aus den Konzentrationslagern*”.

The stamp perforation had an unusually large surround listing the names of 23 camps.

We do appreciate this latest, postally widespread German expression of goodwill.

Alba Gardens
London NW11
R I Rosenfelder

MESSAGE FROM A BYGONE AGE

Sir – You described the message as anonymous. This is incorrect. It is quoted in Irene White's book *I came as a Stranger* which I enjoyed very much.

Otto Schiff House
Netherhall Gardens, NW3
Miss I Guttmann

Sir – What makes the author of the amusing *Message from a bygone age* assume that there weren't any yoghurts in “the good old days”? They were available not only in this country, but on the Continent as well, where they were sold in small glass bottles.

College Crescent
London NW3
(Mrs) Margarete Stern

NON-EVENT

Sir – Mr Ernest David referred in his column (April issue) to the state visit of President Weizman being a non event on the television news of both BBC and ITV. I was so incensed by this, I phoned the BBC. After being put through to the right department, I asked the woman who took the call if the BBC was aware that a state visit by the Israeli President was taking place. There was silence, so I added “I just wanted to let you know”. Her response was one word: “Right”. I hoped someone else would make a more effective protest than I was able to.

I continue to look forward to *AJR Information* each month.

Netherhall Gardens
London NW3
Michael Hellman

ACCENT PRONE

Sir – Your article (April issue) stated that ‘everybody at Stootley Rough School – matron, staff, pupils – was of refugee origin’. This is not completely accurate. I myself taught there from 1937 to 1939, during which time there were at least three British teachers who spoke English all the time. I was appointed partly because I knew no German at all.

It was, of course, true that many of the pupils spoke German-accented English, probably owing to the influence of adults who learned English late in life. However, at the 1994 reunion of former Stootley Rough pupils, American accents were the most prevalent; I do not remember hearing any German ones at all.

Dunmore Gardens
Dundee
Margaret K Faulkner
(née Dove)

TRAVEL GUIDES

Sir – Readers may be interested to know that the publishers Marsilio of Venice have brought out a series of Jewish itineraries in Italy. These books, with interesting texts covering the places, their history and art, are beautifully illustrated. They deal with a region at a time and I assume that in time they will be covering

the whole country. To the best of my knowledge two volumes dealing with Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna have already appeared in an English translation.

Harrow
Middlesex

Peter Ross

ILLEGAL OCCUPATION

Sir - The Golan was indeed occupied by Israel in 1967, when she repelled a combined attack by all her Arab neighbours. Because it overlooks much of Israel's low-lying North it enabled Syrian gunners indiscriminately to bombard the Kibbutzim and villages below. For years Israeli children were obliged to play, learn, eat and sleep in shelters in order to survive.

It is important to remember that though pre-1967 there were no disputed Israeli-occupied areas, her Arab neighbours nonetheless found countless reasons to terrorise her civilian population.

Today Koenigsberg is Russian, Stettin Polish and Strassburg French. The reason: a militaristic regime attacked its neighbours and then lost the war.

Bridge Lane
London NW11

M Friedman

Sir - I find George Abendstern's letter (April issue) curious both in content and expression. I wonder what he means by 'radical views', what interest he has in the origin of Golan wines, and why a gentleman with a Jewish name (if it be his) should feel compelled to defend the Syrians, who need no support for their hatred of Israel and their continuous shelling before Israel silenced their guns in 1967.

St John's Wood Park
London NW8

Mrs I Koppel

BOUQUET

Sir - Allow me to express my sincere appreciation of *AJR Information*, and my unbounded admiration for its polymath editor Richard Grunberger. We are enormously fortunate to have a man of his encyclopedic knowledge and trained erudition and wise opinions at the helm of this valued publication.

University of Texas Prof Wolfgang Rindler

COMING IN ON QUEUE

Sir - Surely RG's encounter with ill-disciplined continental queue jumpers (April issue) who raise the heckles of all right-thinking assimilated refugees provides the

perfect answer as to whether the UK should join Europe. It should, if only to exert a civilising influence on the barbarians beyond the Channel.

Ipswich
Suffolk

Frank Bright

CORRECTION

Sir - Just for the record, and because credit should go where it is due, the sponsoring body for the erection of the monument to Raoul Wallenberg was the International Council of Christians and Jews and not the Council of Christians and Jews. I am chairman of the executive of the International Council and had the honour to serve as chairman of the Wallenberg Appeal.

Grafton Road
London NW5

Sir Sigmund Sternberg

SEARCH NOTICES

Jewish historian-author would like to interview or communicate with any Jewish refugees residing in Switzerland during World War II. Kindly contact AJR Box No. 1231 and, if at all possible, supply a fax number as well as your address and tel. no.

Robert Augenfeld (or Arnfeld), a Kindertransportee from Vienna, who arrived in Dovercourt in late 1938 or early 1939 and was later in Manchester. Any information please to Prof. Wolfgang Rindler, Physics Department, University of Texas, Box 830688, Richardson TX 75083-0688, USA.

Isaak Shmulovich Shevelyov (Shevelev), and his cousin **Izrail**, both born in the town of Vitebsk in the Russian Empire around 1880, emigrated to Sheffield, England, prior to 1914. Anatolii Ilich Khaesh, grandson of a cousin (named Freida Shmulova Igudina/Iagudina née Shevelyova) is searching for relations of the above. Please write to him at PO Box 521, St Petersburg, Russia 190068.

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ALL LEGAL WORK
UNDERTAKEN

The AJR at Work

Celebration of freedom

More than 70 members attended the second night Seder at the AJR Paul Balint Day Centre in London. The traditional service, begun by Yakov Azulay, Andrew Kaufman, Ernest David and Howard Matus, was taken up by Rabbi William Wolff, who pointed out that several of the prayers and customs of the Seder originated in early German-Jewish communities.

After an excellent meal – which regular participants have become accustomed to expect – Rabbi Wolff broke with tradition when, with an opened door, instead of pouring wrath upon the heathen, he substituted a prayer for peace and reconciliation.

The evening was greatly enjoyed by everyone present who, for another year, took the opportunity to participate in the age-old Jewish celebration of freedom from persecution.

□ ED

A week to remember



Ilse Driels, Laura Biegler, Mela Peck and Melanie Lobel.

Thankyou for taking us 'Golden Oldies' once again to Bournemouth for a much needed break. It was very enjoyable and you deserve our thanks for being so patient and trying hard to do your best for all of us.

□ Ilse

In our week's holiday in Bournemouth, as usual we enjoyed the beautiful surroundings, very pleasant hotel, excellent food, most attentive service and not least, the very enjoyable entertainments organised by Sylvia, Renée and David Lee.

During a wonderful visit to the New Forest in fine weather, the meadows full of blossom, we visited the birthplace of 'Alice in Wonderland' which proved to be a charming thatched cottage.

On behalf of everybody let us tell the hardworking organisers how grateful we are for giving us such a week to remember.

□ MFW

Ernest and I thank you for a most enjoyable holiday which was well needed and organised beautifully.

□ Jennie

Just to thank you for letting me join you all in Bournemouth. I enjoyed my stay there, especially under your caring leadership. Please put my name on your waiting list for the next trip!

□ Gerda

Welfare day

'Understanding State Benefits' was the challenge put to members of AJR's dedicated team of volunteers, together with Social Service Department staff, at a recent in-house training seminar. The seminar, which explored the welfare rights of older and disabled people, was led by AJR member Hilde Ambrose, an experienced welfare rights adviser.

Volunteers who befriend elderly AJR members are often asked basic welfare questions and readily appreciate the value of a clearer understanding of the rights of people they visit. Hilde Ambrose explained that the system divided into means-tested benefits, which depended on the individual's financial situation, such as housing benefit and income support, and non-means-tested benefits, such as attendance and disability living allowances.

Of course, one day's training did not attempt to turn AJR volunteers into advisers, but hopefully put them into a position to pass on information which could increase income and enhance the quality of life. All volunteers and AJR members are invited to continue taking any problems they may encounter with state benefits to AJR's Social Work

Team, who have experience both in obtaining benefit entitlements and contesting incorrect decisions.

Debbie Picker always welcomes new volunteer recruits. Tel: 0171 431 6161 □

Northern comfort

Since AJR's Northern Group began its activities, the development of a friendly atmosphere has been most heartwarming. People who share similar backgrounds

meet to enjoy one another's company in a convivial environment.

The next meeting of the group welcomes ex-Berliner Louis Rudnic who is to talk on his army experiences: *Escort and Interpreter to a British General*, on Sunday 13th July, 2pm, at the Morris Feinman Home. Please phone Werner Lachs, 0161 798 7969, for further details □

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Balint House Supper

Belsize Square Synagogue
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Tickets £20

Osmond House

20 July at 3pm
Entrance £3

Heinrich Stahl House

31 August at 3pm
Entrance £3

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

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
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following dates:

Wednesday	4 June
Thursday	12 June
Tuesday	16 June
Tuesday	24 June
Wednesday	2 July

and every Thursday from
10am to 12 noon at:

**AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a
Froggnal, London NW3 6AL**

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

It occurs to me . . .

“When I use a word, it means just what I want it to mean,” said Humpty Dumpty in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. I wonder if it is because I am a refugee, educated in a language which is not my mother tongue, or because I was trained as a lawyer where the meaning of words often provides the problems which keep lawyers busy, that I tend to analyse the meaning of words. I have also learned to treat words with caution.

While we all know how important it is to read the small print in a contract, we are unfortunately often deceived by politicians or people in authority who seek to persuade us that black is white or that wrong is right. Goebbels discovered that by constant, loud repetition, lies would be believed and the bigger the lie, the more acceptance it found. Words frequently used by politicians to pull the wool over our eyes are ‘reform’ or ‘simplification’ or ‘justice’.

In this vein the previous government hid their attack on the National Health Service by talking of Health Service reform. This reform resulted in closures of hospitals, excessive layers of well-paid bureaucrats, and doctors retiring early because of the load of additional paperwork.

Sometimes words are so misused that I despair of the people who have authority over us. When a complaint was made to the Ministry of Transport about the confusion caused by dotted yellow lines being replaced by solid yellow lines, they replied it was because of the need to simplify road markings. The fact that the solid yellow line may now mean many different things on the same stretch of road, and is the most confusing description of regulations that can be imagined, is nevertheless sold to the public as simplification.

It is not only the use of words that is significant. In some cases the deceit lies in the non-use of words. In the words of Sherlock Holmes, “Why did the dog not bark in the night?” An example of such omissions is the pledge by our new leaders that they would, for a period of time, not raise income tax. Is it not similar to a pick pocket saying he will not rob your back pocket?

Don't say you have not been warned!

□ Ernest David

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Afternoon entertainment -

JUNE 1997

- | | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| Sunday | 1 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 2 | SUMMER GREETINGS - Rona Israel (Soprano) accompanied by Ian Pace (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 3 | SUMMER MUSIC & SONG - Sue Kennett (Soprano) accompanied by Gordon Weaver (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 4 | AN AFTERNOON OF YOUR FAVOURITE SONGS - Suzanna Marks (Soprano) accompanied by Janet Beale (Piano & Accordion) |
| Thursday | 5 | MEMBERS OF THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA - Robin & Amalia Brightman (Violin & Piano) |
| Sunday | 8 | DAY CENTRE CLOSED AGM - 3pm |
| Monday | 9 | EUROPEAN MEDLEY - Claude May (Baritone) accompanied by Jack Davis (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 10 | SONGS OF LOVE & SPRINGTIME - Tine Birkeland (Soprano) accompanied by Philip Mountford (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 11 | C L O S E D - SHAVUOTH |
| Thursday | 12 | C L O S E D - SHAVUOTH |
| Sunday | 15 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 16 | KISSIN-TIME - Henry Kissin accompanied by Gilmuir Mcleod (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 17 | JENNY LIND - THE SWEDISH NIGHTINGALE by |

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| | | Valerie Hewitt (Soprano) accompanied by Anne Berryman (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 18 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - LUNCHEON CLUB |
| Thursday | 19 | MUSICAL GEMS - Jack Davidoff (Violin) & Jules Ruben (Piano) |
| Sunday | 22 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 23 | SONGS FROM OUR ALBUM - Sheila Games (Piano) & Cantor Michael Rothstein (Baritone) |
| Tuesday | 24 | SHOW-TIME - Helena Guest (Soprano) accompanied by Happy Branston (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 25 | FANFARE TO JUNE - Joanna McDonald (Soprano) accompanied by David Mackie (Piano) |
| Thursday | 26 | THE GEOFFREY STRUM & HELEN BLAKE DUO |
| Sunday | 29 | OPERA POPS - accompanied by Margaret Gibbs |
| Monday | 30 | SHOW TUNES & OTHER FAVOURITES - Elizabeth Freed (Soprano) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski (Piano) |

JULY

- | | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| Tuesday | 1 | Impromptu - With Madeleine Whitelaw & her Students |
| Wednesday | 2 | CELLO & PIANO DUO - Zoe Solomon & Robert Max |
| Thursday | 3 | THE SUNSHINE SINGERS |
| Sunday | 6 | A PARTY AFTERNOON - Dorothy Sayers (Piano & Accordion) |

Diary Date:

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FAMILY**Birthday**

Simson. Mrs Emmy Simson, a very happy 90th Birthday to a lovely lady from her daughter Eva, son-in-law Tony, grandchildren Adele & Davina.

Deaths

Eden. Gertrude (Gerty) Eden. Passed away April 26th in her 92nd year. Now together again with her beloved 'Burschi'. Deeply missed by her son Peter and Marika Eden, daughter Wendy and Allan Blacher, her grandchildren Kathy and Jeremy Berg, Marc and his fiancée Gayle, Tracy and Perry and her great-granddaughter Natasha.

In Memoriam

Heyman. Manon Heyman died 26th May 1987. Fondly remembered by her daughter Madeleine and son-in-law Ricardo.

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

David Hockney, *Flowers, Faces and Spaces* at Annely Juda Fine Art will be on show until the 19 July 1997. A 100 page two volume illustrated catalogue in colour is available at the exhibition.

At The Royal Academy the 229th Summer Exhibition will be shown in the Main Gallery from 1 June to 10 August and you can also still see the *Berlin* of George Grosz drawings, watercolours and prints, 1912-1930 until 8 June.

Contemporary Scottish artists will be shown at the Air Gallery 32 Dover Street until 14 June.

At the Manor House Society in association with the Osband Press until 27 June, the *Book of Ruth*, an exhibition of woodcuts by Maty Grünberg will be on show. Maty Grünberg's dramatic woodcuts – together with the new translation by Linda Zisquit – combine to form a powerful evocation of the biblical text as well as showing the story's contemporary relevance in its portrayal of women as orchestrators of their own fate. Maty Grünberg, born in Skopje, Yugoslavia in 1943 emigrated to Israel in 1948. He completed a Fine Arts Degree at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, before spending three years as a stage designer in experimental theatre in Israel. He now lives and works in London both as a graphic artist and as a sculptor, with bronzes in many public collections.

At Spink & Son, an exhibition of pottery by William Plumpton from 26 June to 11 July in a one-man exhibition is on display.

'Views of Windsor Watercolours' by Thomas and Paul Sandby are on show at the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace until the 13th of July.

Barbican Art Gallery presents (from 19 June to 17 August) the first retrospective of renowned French photographer Marc Riboud's work on China.

Camden Art Centre is showing *Oliver Herring* from 6 June to 20 July. Born in Germany, Oliver Herring trained at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, Oxford. His sculptural objects are knitted

from cellophane, silver Mylar and paper, resulting in a delicate chain-mail like reflective mesh. Also showing at the same time is *Antonio Malinowski's* exhibition of recent paintings. His delicate and precise brush marks emerge from his engagement with Chinese painting and philosophy and his interest in modern physics □



Gladioli with Two Oranges, David Hockney, 1996.

SB's Column

Arthur Schnitzler's plays are performed Europe-wide and translated into several languages. Recently, *Anatol* was staged in Salzburg, *Professor Bernhardt* in Bregenz and *Das*

weite Land in Hamburg. Several adaptations by Tom Stoppard – *The Lonely Road*, *La Ronde* – have been seen in Britain; on June 24 and 25 a dramatised version of *Fräulein Else* will be performed at the London Austrian Cultural Institute.

Dessau. The fifth annual festival in honour of Kurt Weill (born in Dessau in 1900) saw the performance of works by Weill, George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein.

Birthday. On the occasion of the 85th birthday of Carl Raddatz some of his outstanding films were screened again. These included *Gabriela* with Zarah Leander and *Rosen im Herbst*, based on Fontane's *Effi Briest*. He also dubbed the voices of many American film actors such as Robert Taylor, Burt Lancaster, Humphrey Bogart and Kirk Douglas.

Soprano jubilees. Renata Tebaldi who has just celebrated her 75th birthday was at the height of her fame during the forties and fifties, when she rivalled Maria Callas. At home in all the great opera houses, she was outstanding in Puccini and Verdi parts, and as Madeleine in *Andre Chénier*. – 60th birthday honours go to Hildegard Behrens, a most intelligent soprano combining lyrical singing with dramatic intensity. An impressive Salome, she is also a great Wagnerian singer who was recently fêted as Brünnhilde at the New York Met □

german and austrian

ART

1997

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS – JUNE 1997

- Sun 1 Visit to Holocaust Memorial Centre, Notts. AJR
- Sun 1 Mischlinge in Nazi Germany: Wiener Library seminar. Birkbeck College, Malet Street, WC1, 2-5pm, £7 (cons)
- Tue 3 Prof Eric Moonman: The National Health Service. JACS, 2pm
- Tue 3 Prof Edward Timms: A Gemini in German Studies. Sussex University, 5pm
- Thur 5 Dr Rainer Liedtke (Berlin): Jewish Welfare in 19th Century Hamburg & Manchester. Wiener Library, 6.30pm, £2
- Sun 8 AJR Annual General Meeting: 15 Cleve Road NW6, 3pm
- Sun 8 Jewish Wife/Jewish Daughter: plays by Brecht and Sonja Lyndon. The Bull, 68 High Street, Barnet, 8pm, £5 (concs) 0181 449 0048
- Mon 9 Club 43, Annual General Meeting, 8pm
- Tue 10 The Glories of York: Sidney Heppel, JACS, 2pm
- Tue 10 Anita Lasker-Walfisch: A Narrative of Survival, Breslau Prison, Auschwitz & Belsen. Sussex University, 5pm
- Mon 16 Möglichkeiten und Psychologie des deutschen Widerstandes: Isa von der Schulenburg (Lugano), in German. Joint meeting with PEN Centre, Club 43, 8pm
- Sun 15 The Three Sopranos: Mozart, Puccini, Delibes, Bernstein with Hebrew & Yiddish songs. Sternberg Centre, 8pm, £7.50 (£5.50 members)
- Tue 17 A Journey to Petra: Christopher Richard cycles for charity. JACS, 2pm
- Tue 17 Life & Times of Miriam Moses: Aumie Shapiro, Jewish Museum, Sternberg Centre, 8pm, £3
- Tue 17 The Work of Arnold Daghani: Monica Bohm-Duchen. Sussex University, 5.15pm

- Wed 18 Jo Kessler JP: 25 Years in CAB. AJR Luncheon Club, £7. Reservations 0171 328 0208
- Wed 18 Bnai Brith, Scholars' Evening: 11 Fitzjohns Avenue NW3, 8pm
- Thur 19 An Evening with Benny Green: Jewish Museum, Sternberg Centre, 7.30pm, £6
- Fri 20 Representations of the Holocaust: Two-day conference organised by the Wiener Library at University College, London, £25 (concs)
- Mon 23 Austria's role in Central Europe: Dr Emil Brix, Director of Austrian Cultural Institute. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 24 Elizabeth Fried: Music to Charm You. JACS, 2pm
- Wed 25 Bnai Brith, Concert with Caledon Singers: 11 Fitzjohns Avenue NW3, 8pm
- Thur 26 Jewish Carpets: Anton Felton, Jewish Museum Camden Town, 2pm, £4
- Mon 30 Petroleum, Lifeblood of the West: Harry Leyrer MA, Club 43, 8pm
- Ongoing The Life & Times of Miriam Moses and Hannah Billig, The Angel of Cable Street: Jewish Museum Finchley until 14 Sept
Jewish Carpets: Jewish Museum Camden Town until 14 Sept

ORGANISATION CONTACTS
JACS at Belsize Square Synagogue, NW3 4HX. Tel: 0171 794 3949
Club '43, at Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig 01442 254 360
Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1. 0171 636 7247
Jewish Museum, 129/131 Albert Street, Camden Town, NW1 7NB. Tel: 0171 284 1997, and at Sternberg Centre.
Sternberg Centre for Judaism, 80 East End Road, Finchley, NW3 2SY. Tel: 0181 346 2288
University of Sussex Centre for German-Jewish Studies. Diana Franklin 0181 455 4785 or 01273 678 495

KINDERTRANSPORT REUNION 1939-1999

Following the Kristallnacht in Germany in November 1938, the British Government of the day granted 10,000 visas to children from Austria and Germany, an act of mercy that will never be forgotten. These Kinder grew up and made their contribution to national life in the UK as well as in Israel, the USA and elsewhere. They created new families and today have children and grandchildren.

Incredibly, sixty years will have passed in 1999 and an umbrella organisation Reunion of Kindertransport (RoK), led and guided by that veteran lady Bertha Leverton, compiler of the famous book *I Came Alone*, has decided to organise a last reunion for up to 1,000 Kinder during mid-June 1999. The theme of the reunion will be 'Survival and Achievement'. Tributes will be paid to the many organisations which assisted at that time: the Quakers, the churches, the Refugee Children's Movement and of course the government of the day.

The AJR is supporting this event and is participating with the RoK on the organising committee whose members are Bertha Leverton, Ernest David, Bea Green and David Jedwab. Prominent personalities in the fields of academia, politics, communal organisations etc. will be invited to address the conference and there will be separate workshops, giving all participants a chance to compare notes, relive old memories and rejoice in their survival.

To ensure that the second and indeed the third generation will continue to remember and honour the Kindertransport generation, it is intended to establish a permanent scholarship scheme that will collate, study and teach the subject at an appropriate academic institute.

The two-day conference is to culminate in a Gala Concert in which well known choirs, soloists and Klezmer bands will be invited to participate. Arrangements will be made to record the event on video and perhaps also to obtain media coverage. It is hoped that it will prove to be such an unforgettable experience that its memory will stay always with those who took part.

□ Kindertransport Reunion Committee

**AJR/Self Aid
CONCERT BROCHURE**
Include wellwishers, children & grandchildren on enclosed form.



ANDREW KAUFMAN

Andrew Kaufman, who completes his first year in office as Chairman of the AJR at this year's AGM, is a solicitor and specialist in UK-German trade.

Sublime enigma

The names of Heifetz, Milstein, Oistrakh, Elman and Huberman conjure up magic violinists who hailed from Russia and Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At the Manor House Society, the distinguished violinist and teacher, Emanuel Hurwitz, former leader of the Philharmonia Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra and the Aeolian Quartet, discussed the common threads which had made Jewish fiddle playing extraordinary and poignant.

The period from 1890 to 1915 saw a flowering of Jewish violin playing in Russia with an exceptional number of great Russian-Jewish exponents. Hurwitz could offer no single explanation. The violin was inexpensive and portable, but as the quality of instruments was poor, exceptional talent was required to make an acceptable sound.

He recalled St Petersburg's most influential teacher, Leopold Auer, a Hungarian who studied under the legendary Joachim – with pupils who read like a roll of honour among virtuoso violinists – then characterised and played recordings demonstrating their genius.

Misha Elman played from the heart, but was an orchestra's nightmare as he refused to play in tempo. Jasha Heifetz' incredible talent and aristocratic playing made others sound pedestrian. Nathan

AJR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 8 JUNE 1997

Election of Committee of Management

Biographical notes on new candidates:

GABY GLASSMAN

Gaby Glassman was born after the war, the daughter of refugees from Germany. With an MA thesis on transgenerational transmission in survivor families, Gaby has been in private practice for ten years and specialises in counselling victims of Nazi persecution and their descendants. She is active in raising the level of awareness of second generation issues and writes and lectures on the subject. She is a co-founder of the Holocaust Survivors' Centre and a member of the executive

committee of the newly-formed Second Generation Network responsible for liaison with similar groups in other countries. Gaby is married with two children □

DIANA FRANKLIN

Diana's father came to England as a refugee from Fürth, Germany in 1936 and her mother descends from the Samuel family. Diana played the piano from an early age, became an associate of the Royal College of Music in 1977 and now teaches and performs as an accompanist.

Diana's work at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, with Professor Edward Timms, is primarily concerned with promoting contracts with organisations and individuals interested in the Centre's activities, and organising academic events. She also contributes to the administrative organisation of the Centre. Diana is married with four school-age children □

Milstein, the most miraculous player of all, gave recitals into his 80s. Bronislaw Huberman from Poland took his last lesson at the age of twelve! With his mighty



Emanuel Hurwitz, a violinist in the Russian-Jewish tradition.

talent – no-one could play faster – he didn't need vibrato to create great music.

David Oistrakh was a great violinist who could do everything with consummate honesty. Joseph Szigeti (Hungarian-born Joshke Singer) was highly regarded by his peers. The Vienesse Fritz Kreisler possibly had the most influence with his rich vibrato. Yehudi Menuhin was also included as the greatest contemporary

player (now conducting at the age of 80) whose playing was in the Russian tradition.

However, Hurwitz left the enigma of Jewish violin-playing unresolved. Undeniably, over the centuries Jews had acquired an exceptional vocabulary of music – the chanting of prayers and readings is inherent in Judaism's rituals – but lacked an instrumental tradition. The violin, being closest to the human voice in its range and expression, was probably the Jews' first choice of instrument since David put down his lyre. Does this thesis account satisfactorily for the creation of a unique expression of the sublime and a tradition maintained today in Russia, the USA and Israel?

□ Ronald Channing

Paul Balint
AJR Day Centre

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The *Leo Baeck Institute* and the *Institut für Geschichte der Juden in Österreich* continue to seek unpublished autobiographies written by former Austrian Jews. Very often, these memoirs have been recorded for the sake of the author's own children and grandchildren. These documents, however, are of great value to historians as well, since they provide multifaceted information in such fields as the history of the family, religion and the community, everyday life, antisemitism and persecution.

We are actively seeking and collecting memoirs written by any person who formerly lived in the territories of the Hapsburg Monarchy and the Republic of Austria. We would even feel a special sense of gratification if this call for memoirs were to move you to commit the story of your life to writing. Future research will be able to rely only on source material which is made available to it. Each individual's fate recorded for posterity in this way is of enormous significance. 'Lest it be forgotten' □

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creations which won her the award. One of these – a Chocolate Soufflé – is not at all difficult to prepare and it is delicious.

To serve 4:
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 butter for the moulds
 cocoa powder

Preheat the oven to 200°C, 400°F, Gas Mark 6. Butter 4 soufflé dishes measuring 12cm/4¾" in diameter. Separate egg yolks and whites. Break chocolate into small pieces, dot with the butter and set in a warm place to melt. Whisk together egg yolks and sugar over steam – or in a bain-marie – until thick and creamy. Add melted – but not hot – chocolate and butter and fold in not too stiffly beaten egg whites. Divide mixture between the four soufflé dishes and bake for about 8 minutes. Dust cocoa powder over the top and serve immediately □



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Obituary

Chaim Herzog

Chaim Herzog, who has died at the age of 77, brought the courtesy and bravery of a British officer to his roles as general, diplomat, military historian, and President of the State of Israel from 1983 to 1993. Herzog was born in 1919, the son of the Chief Rabbi of Ireland. At school he proved an all-round sportsman, leaving in 1935 to study at a *yeshiva* in Palestine and joining Israel's fledgling army, the *Haganah*.

In World War II, having trained as a paratroop officer at Sandhurst, he fought with the British Army in Normandy, through France and Germany, and rose to the rank of major. He was in the team

which interrogated Heinrich Himmler, and while a district governor took part in the first Jewish DP conference at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

After the war, Herzog headed Israeli Army intelligence, playing a key role in breaking the siege of Jerusalem in the War of Independence. He retired in 1962 as commander of Israel's southern army.

In both the Six Day and the Yom Kippur wars he was recalled to broadcast as the reassuring and informed international voice of Israel. In 1975 Golda Meir appointed him ambassador to the UN. He returned to enter the Knesset in 1981 on the opposition Labour list, and was elected President in 1983 and again in 1988. Herzog was last in England to launch his autobiography, *Living History*, at this year's Jewish Book Week.

□ RDC

Allianz to settle Holocaust victims' claims

Allianz Life Insurance AG will settle claims by Holocaust victims in an unbureaucratic manner, declared Gerhard Rupprecht, Allianz Board Chairman. In cases of doubt, verification will be sufficient even without an insurance policy. The company was currently carrying out an internal audit to ascertain whether or not any claims were still outstanding. He assumed that only a few isolated cases were likely.

However, in the USA victims of the persecution of Jews in the Third Reich and their families have lodged claims for damages amounting to billions against seven European insurers. The plaintiffs accuse the insurers of having failed, after the war, to pay out Holocaust victims' claims. Their petition estimates that there could be 10,000 potential claimants.

Rupprecht said that the law suit was not directed solely against Allianz Life, Europe's largest insurance company. Other insurance companies, which now form part of the combine – in Italy for example – have been cited.

Allianz Life is employing the auditors Arthur Andersen to carry out a complete examination of its records. In the event that any open cases were discovered, "we shall fulfil all our commitments, without legal objections such as the statute of limi-

tations or incomplete documentation", said Rupprecht. Worldwide telephone helplines are to be established to enable everyone concerned to contact the insurance company direct. However, no such claims had been received by Allianz Life in the past ten years.

In 1938 Allianz, according to its own records, had one million individuals insured and one and a half million group insurance contracts. The average sum insured was 5,900 Reichsmark, as on 31st December 1939, and 3,160 D-mark on 21st June 1948.

□ Reuter, Stuttgart

50 YEARS AGO

FROM BELSEN TO PALESTINE

The 'Grand National' Scheme whereby every month Jewish DPs in the British Zone are allowed to leave for Palestine, is in full swing.

A special Transit Camp, consisting of wooden huts, the remnants of a former *Stalag*, has been set up for this purpose at Bocholt, near the German-Dutch frontier, and a team of relief workers of the principal Jewish voluntary agencies operating in Germany are running the welfare, medical and documentation work of the camp.

People stay there for a period of up to 14 days, and a special train then takes them to Marseilles for embarkation to Palestine. At the beginning of April 400 people had left the British Zone; another 260 were sent off on May 2. With singing and waving of Jewish flags and banners the people left, full of hopes for a better future in Palestine □

AJR Information, June 1947

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NEWSROUND

Brazil, Portugal and Argentina investigate Nazi links

President Cardoso of Brazil, Prime Minister Guterres of Portugal and Foreign Minister di Tella of Argentina have each announced the establishment of a commission of enquiry into their country's acceptance of escaping Nazi war criminals and receipt of gold stolen from Holocaust victims during and after World War II.

Second trial

The retrial has commenced of SS officer Erich Priebke who is accused of participating in the massacre of 335 people in the Ardeatine Caves to the south of Rome in World War II. Remaining under house arrest in a Franciscan convent, Priebke refused to appear at further court hearings.

Spring opening

The Arnold Schoenberg Centre, in Vienna's Palis Fanto, is due to open in Spring 1998. It will house his musical scores, writings, paintings and collected works of art.

New deal

Greville Janner, Chairman of the Holocaust Education Trust, told a group of Swiss businessmen that the 1946 agreement on the amount and disposition of \$120 million of gold looted from national treasuries and stolen from the Jews should be renegotiated. At the time, half was handed to the victorious Allies, Britain, France and the US, and half was retained by the Swiss banks.

Romanian assets

During the Ceaucescu régime most of the 400,000 Romanian Jews who emigrated to Israel had their property and possessions confiscated. Senate President Petre Roman has acknowledged the illegality of these acts and pledged to consider the return of communal assets to be followed by restitution for individuals.

Stolen art

Paintings and sculptures belonging to leading Jewish collectors and dealers, which were confiscated in France by the Germans and still remain in the possession of French museums, have been put on display. Prime Minister Alain Juppé has promoted a new initiative to locate their owners.

□ Lionel Simmonds

Auschwitz – the view from on high

The argument whether or not Auschwitz could or should have been bombed will rage interminably. For the record, may I ask readers of your May issue to consider the following?

Bombing in those days was not on a par with today's accuracy, with its laser and other refinements locking on to targets. Marianne Walter mentions a raid on Amiens prison in which a number of Resistance men, doomed to be executed, were released as a result of an Allied air-raid. But she omits to tell readers that Operation Jericho, so-called, resulted in the deaths of 95 prisoners with 87 wounded out of 258 persons incarcerated. True, 12 Resistance leaders due to die made their escape, but at what a price!

Amiens, as the crow flies, is a short distance from Britain while Auschwitz, some 40 miles due west of Cracow, could only have been attacked some hundreds of miles distant from Italy where the nearest RAF or USAAF bases were then situated. For any possible accuracy, only daylight raids could have been launched, deep into enemy territory without fighter escort, a hazardous venture indeed. Night bombing would have been out of the question. Without a doubt, the bombing of Auschwitz would have resulted in fearful Jewish casualties and as an ex-RAF bomb-aimer I thank God that I was never called upon to take part in such a raid.

Also bear in mind that whereas Amiens and its surroundings was friendly Allied territory, Poland was in a totally different category. Then if by some miracle the crematoria had been destroyed, what would have been achieved? Separated from their loved ones, where would the hapless inmates have gone, had any escaped? The hostile Polish people would have rounded them up and handed them over to the Germans and the German guards would have had no compunction in massacring those trying to get away. It is said that the railway lines leading to Auschwitz-Birkenau could have been bombed but railway lines can be repaired in next to no time, even in war.

Ask yourself which hastened the end of the war: mass raids on the German heartland – the Ruhr, Berlin, Hamburg and vital communications centres, or a comparatively ineffective raid on an IG Farben centre near Auschwitz. I had the

privilege of interviewing my wartime chief, the much-maligned Sir Arthur (Bomber) Harris in an article for the *Jewish Chronicle* which appeared in that paper's issue of November 16, 1962. The then Air Chief Marshal speaks far more eloquently than I on the subject.

□ Lionel Simmonds

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