

60th
Anniversary
Issue
1941-2001

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

The Last Decade

Richard Grunberger

Cast your minds back to 1987. Mrs Thatcher seemed the lessee of 10 Downing Street in perpetuity, and the Iron Curtain was bisecting Europe. Meanwhile, in my interview for the editorship of *AJR Information*, I was asked if I could commit myself to the job for ten years. (After fourteen years I still wear the green eyeshade, while AJR members have demonstrated *their* commitment by instantly snapping up all the tickets for the 60th anniversary event at the Grosvenor House Hotel).

1989 ushered in momentous change in Eastern Europe. The collapse of the Berlin Wall brought to power post-Soviet governments which at least paid lip service to their obligation to Jewish ex-citizens; this development attracted new readers who hailed from the ex-DDR and elsewhere. At the same time, *AJR Information* changed its type face and layout for the first time in 45 years.

Throughout the 1990s the Association diversified its activities at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. In addition to the 'Drop in' Advice Centre and the ever-varied entertainment programme, it launched chiropody, optical, dentistry and physiotherapy services. In mid-decade, the Day Centre served an average of 24,000 kosher meals annually (some via meals-on-wheels). 1997 saw the inception of the AJR Luncheon Club. Around the same time an important - and, regrettably, somewhat belated - development occurred: the founding of local AJR groups. Starting in South London, the 'movement' spread via Pinner to Manchester, Birmingham,

Leeds, Nottingham, Cambridge, Surrey, Brighton and Bournemouth. As we go to press new groups are in the process of formation in North London, Liverpool and Edinburgh.

All this activity has to be set against the backdrop of harsh demographic facts. A mid-decade survey showed that four fifths of our members were



PHOTO: NEWMAN

Werner Rosenstock, General Secretary of AJR and editor of *AJR Information* 1941-1982 and Secretary of the Council of Jews from Germany.

over 70 years of age, with roughly half of those actually octogenarian! This inevitably resulted in a steady (but gratifyingly slow) decline in membership. However, the millennium year brought a reversal of the downward trend, when the affiliation of 550 KT (Kindertransport) members boosted AJR enrolment to around three thousand and eight hundred - quite apart from lowering the average age. Over the last few years we have also chalked up other notable achievements, such as the setting up (jointly with other

interested organisations) of the expert-staffed Central Office for Holocaust Claims. Since January 2001 our monthly publication has appeared in a revamped colourful design under the title of *AJR Journal*. And last, but by no means least, in May 2002 the Jewish Museum, Camden Town, will host the exhibition *Continental Britons*, which - mounted by the AJR - should be a landmark celebrating our diamond jubilee.

At this point in time, when Israel is the target of much ill-informed - and occasionally plain ill-intentioned - criticism, we continental Britons might easily fall prone to feeling demoralised and vulnerable. To combat such moods we need a sense of belonging, and the conviction of Israel's intrinsic right to exist. Our Association, conceived 60 years ago to generate a sense of community among the uprooted, can still satisfy that need.

In addition to fostering a general consciousness of indivisible Jewish identity, this journal sees its function as making readers feel proud, rather than apologetic, about their origins. Decades after the uniquely beneficial original influx of German-Jewish refugees into this country, new generations still draw from that gene pool. Sir John Krebs, the head of the Food Standards Agency is the son of Sir Hans Krebs - Nobel Prize winning biochemist - while Matthew Kneale, recipient of last year's Whitbread prize for the novel *English Passengers*, is the grandson of Alfred Kerr, theatre critic of the *Berliner Tageblatt*. Remember, reader, you read it here first.

Louis Farrakhan is a homophobic misogynist black supremacist who notoriously called Hitler a 'great man'. He heads the *Nation of Islam* - a name which, on closer inspection, makes total logical nonsense. Islam is a worldwide religion whose identification with any one nation would undercut its universal message. Nor do US Blacks (now designated 'Afro-Americans') constitute a separate nation - otherwise how could Colin Powell be US President Bush's Secretary of State? Neither is it conceivable to equate the 20-odd million Afro-Americans with Mohammedanism. It is Christianity, and more precisely the Southern Baptist Church which, in addition to serving as the matrix for Black leaders like Martin Luther King, Black writers like James Baldwin and Black artists like Mahalia Jackson, still provides the spiritual home for the bulk of the community.

The decision by some radical activists half a century ago to call themselves Black Moslems stemmed from the notion that

Charlatan Farrakhan

Christianity underpinned White rule, whereas Islam was colour-blind. This represented a total misreading of the actual situation: Arab slave traders perpetrated the same horrors in East Africa as Europeans had done along the West coast of the continent. For good measure, Farrakhan has numbered Jews among the major instigators of, and profiteers from, the slave trade. This, given the Jews' underprivileged position at the time, is nonsense in historical terms - but it tapped into the resentment twentieth century residents of Harlem felt towards Jews they encountered as landlords and owners of corner shops.

Simultaneously, though, it was Jews who largely initiated the Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, and took part in the (sometimes lethally dangerous) Civil Rights campaign that shook up the Southern States in the 1960s.

Mention of the Deep South calls to mind

another of Farrakhan's chimerical notions. He wants the US government to clear out the White population from four States of the Union to provide space on which all Blacks from the entire USA could be settled. To implement this scheme would require uprootings and population transfers approaching the scale of the partitions on the Indian sub-continent in 1948.

The prescription for racially troubled Britain that Farrakhan would presumably offer might well be an all-Black South London mini-state centred on Brixton, Toxteth etc. would be decanted. This would, in turn, trigger harebrained schemes for autonomous Muslim (or Hindu) mini-states in Bradford (or Leicester). In the current parlous state of race relations, the UK needs a visit from Farrakhan as little as a crowded theatre needs someone who shouts 'Fire!'

RG

Rescuing Czech scrolls

Michael Heppner

The Scroll from Frydek-Mistek (Katia Gould, *August 2001*) is one of over 1400 Czech Scrolls which have found new homes with living congregations across the world.

That this happened is thanks to the Memorial Scrolls Trust at the Westminster Synagogue. Under the leadership of Rabbi Harold F Reinhart, the Westminster Synagogue rescued over 1500 forgotten scrolls, which were stored in a damp synagogue in Prague, and brought them to London in 1964. Without this imaginative initiative, this collection of sacred scrolls from some of Europe's most historic congregations would probably have rotted away or been sold piecemeal and disappeared. Keeping this precious collection of scrolls together - and distributing them on permanent loan to congregations who care - was a major achievement for which Westminster Synagogue's Memorial Scrolls Trust deserves to receive sole credit. 100 Czech Scrolls have been sent to congregations and other institutions in England.

The Czech Torah Network is a relatively new organisation based on an internet website www.czechtorah.org whose purpose is to remind congregations with these Czech Scrolls that each scroll comes from a particular congregation and to help them to build the heritage of that lost congregation into the life of their living congregation. More than that, the Network emphasises the duty to honour and remember the individual Jews from that congregation who perished and who are likely to be forgotten unless someone takes a direct interest in them.

The Czech Torah Network runs seminars and workshops where scroll congregations learn how to find the names of the Jews from their particular memorial congregation, how to find out when they were deported from their home town, and how to find out as much as possible about them. They are encouraged to find Czech survivors who can tell them about what life was like in the town before the war. They are urged to set aside one Shabbat in the year - on the anniversary of their deportation - to focus their congregation's attention on their Czech scroll, its heritage and its lost Jews. They are told about the Roll

Call, where members of the scroll Congregation each 'adopt' one victim from the memorial congregation for individual remembrance.

All this is intended to ensure that the lost Jews of Frydek-Mistek, and the hundred and more other Czech congregations whose scrolls have been loaned by the Memorial Scrolls Trust to living congregations across the world, will be remembered as people, and not lost in the anonymity of six million dead.

Refugee exhibition mementos

If you are able to donate or lend items of relevance to the exhibition "Continental Britons: the German-Jewish refugee experience in Great Britain", please contact Dr Bea Lewkowicz or Carol Seigel at the Jewish Museum, 80 East End Road, Finchley, London N3 2SY. Tel: 020 8349 1143. Fax: 020 8343 2162. An incorrect telephone number was given in the September issue.

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Assassinations

Richard Grunberger

Criticism has been directed at Israel over her so-called 'assassination policy'. This is a misnomer since the dictionary definition of to assassinate is 'to murder a public or political figure.' The Israeli Defence Force has never contemplated killing Arafat. What it aims to do is to decapitate a hydra-headed snake to preempt its next poisonous strike. The term assassination, being a form of murder, carries pejorative undertones in most people's minds. This is a wrong and stereotypical connotation. When Brutus killed Caesar he viewed it as an act of tyrannicide. The same applied to Georg Elser's attempt to blow up Hitler at Munich's Bürgerbräukeller in November 1939.

Assassinations, of one form or another, have punctuated the whole of modern Jewish history. None was more crucial than that of Alexander II in 1881, which gave the Tsarist authorities a pretext for scapegoating the Jews, and precipitated both mass migration to the West and the first stirrings of Zionism. That assassination was part of a late 19th century upsurge of anarchism, a creed which, though formulated by leftwing antisemites like Proudhon and Bakunin (who viewed Jews as germ carriers of capitalism), had such prominent Jewish adherents as Emma Goldman.

The next earthshaking assassination - that of Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo - triggered the Great War. This catastrophe buried the Habsburg Empire which had afforded two million Jews equality before the law. Astonishingly, two Jews were the most prominent assassins of the war and postwar periods. In 1916 Friedrich Adler, the son of the founder of Austrian Social Democracy, shot Prime Minister Count Stürgkh on the grounds that he had declared war without parliamentary consent. In 1922 Vera Kaplan seriously wounded Lenin because he had brutally repressed her Social Revolutionary Party. (Kaplan was executed whereas Adler, benefiting from a postwar

amnesty, went on to become Secretary of the Socialist International).

In 1922 also occurred the most important rightwing assassination of Weimar Germany, the killing of the Liberal (and Jewish) Foreign Minister Walter Rathenau. This was the climax of a series of *Vehme* - or kangaroo court - murders whose most prominent other victims were the Catholic Mathias Erzberger, and the Socialist Jew Kurt Eisner. In the early thirties, Nazi agents murdered the emigré Jewish academic Theodor Lessing, and the Catholic Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss. Meanwhile the Tel-Aviv seafront witnessed the (hitherto unresolved) assassination of the brilliant leftwing Zionist Chaim Arlosoroff by what must be assumed to have been a follower of Jabotinsky.

And then, in November 1938, occurred the most pathetic Jewish assassination of all time: the murder of the Paris-based German diplomat, vom Rath, by 17-year-old Herschel Grynszpan, which provided Goebbels with the pretext for unleashing the horrendous Kristallnacht pogrom. The Second World War provided the only instance of a prominent Nazi falling to an assassin's bullet, but by the time of butcher Heydrich's death, the Shoah, which he helped initiate, was in full swing.

Simultaneously the few Jews who managed to escape from Europe and reach Palestine were denied admission by British officialdom wedded to a policy of appeasing the Arabs. When the Yishuv's frustration at this boiled over, the top British official in the Middle East, Cairo-based Lord Moyne, fell victim to Jewish assassins' bullets (1944). Another victim of rightwing Jewish anger was the UN mediator Count Folke Bernadotte in 1948 - as, of course, was Prime Minister Rabin in 1995. It is not an upbeat note on which to end, but then, *pace* Lewis Namier: "We Jews don't have a history, we have a martyrology."

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ARTS & REVIEWS

Art Notes

Gloria Tessler

Many artists are preoccupied with the search for human identity within a society obsessed with formalism. Some abstract artists are concerned with the interior mind, which becomes more accessible when you are involved in the mental arithmetic of installations. German-born artist, **Katharina Fritsch** goes the other way with a body talk so formal, so ritualistic that it invites you to question the soul. This appears to lie at the root of her figurative sculptures which conversely suggest the very absence of the human figure. An example of this is her gigantic sculpture of a monk, so thickly, blackly, daubed that it swallows light, a comment, perhaps on the formalism of religion which can, if too rigidly applied, swallow the spirit. **Tate Modern** is showing her work - her first major public showing in Britain - until 9 December and it promises to be a very exciting event. *Company at Table 1988* is described by the Tate as "one of her most dramatic and disturbing works." In this installation, 32 life-sized identikit men sit at a long table covered with a red and white cloth of geometric design. The geometry and the literal hands-on pose of the cloned figures - eaters, conference planners, prisoners, we do not know - invites a larger spiritual question. Their identity is part of the mystery, but it is intensely moving in its evocation of all our personal fears. Like many



Katharina Fritsch: *Company at Table 1988*.
Museum für Moderne Kunst (on permanent loan from Dresdner Bank).

contemporary artists Fritsch, who was born in Essen in 1956 and lives and works in Düsseldorf, is fascinated by what can be the mind-numbing excesses of religion, myths and iconography. Her own national history may have led her to a specific interest in man's endless quest for his individualism in an age of materialism.

I was glad to see that the **Ben Uri Art Gallery** was planning to take its travelling exhibition, **The Ben Uri Story**, to the Edinburgh Festival as we went to press. Its first venture into Scotland is part of the Ben Uri's new regional strategy. In the absence of a permanent home (see September *Art Notes*), the Gallery is planning to leg it around the country, which at least offers Britain as a whole the chance to see its unique collection. The new strategy combines a national programme of travelling museum exhibitions for provincial communities, a Ben Uri Schools Award, a programme offered to all Jewish secondary schools, and the Jewish Artists of the Year Awards, open to artists aged between 17 and 22 and 23+, with funds shared between Cancer Research and the Ben Uri. The gallery has also appointed three new men to its executive, in order to help achieve its objective, which is to create an international museum and arts resource to the tune of £100,000 per year. John Wosner, chair of PKF Accountants, joins the team as Honorary Treasurer and chair of the gallery's new finance committee; Gordon Hausmann of CH Hausmann & Co, Solicitors, as Honorary Secretary and Peter Batkin, international advisor to the board of Phillips, previously international director at Sotheby's, as chair of its museum strategy committee.

RG's INTERFACE

Anniversary. 60 years ago Los Angeles - dubbed the 'city of rebirth' by Ludwig Marcuse - accommodated the pioneering German language publishers *Pazifische Presse*. The enterprise kept afloat for six years during which it achieved the publication of eleven works by Thomas Mann, Franz Werfel, Lion Feuchtwanger and other emigré authors. Individual copies were sold by subscription via the *Aufbau*.

Library. Jews, as befits the People of the Book, have often been great bibliophiles. Stefan Zweig depicted *Buchmendel* as a hoarder of books, and Lion Feuchtwanger consecutively built up three libraries - in Berlin, Sanary-sur-Mer and Pacific Palisades. The Kuczynski Library at Weissensee (East Berlin) is a 65,000 volume family heirloom dating back to Königsberg in 1790. Immanuel Kant gave the founder a set of first editions of his work. The library's penultimate owner Jürgen Kuczynski, Rektor of the Humboldt Universität, was himself the author of over a hundred books (including a forty-volume history of the working class under capitalism).

Honour. The 95-year old scriptwriter and film director, Billy Wilder, has received the Gold Medal of Honour of Vienna's Hochschule für Musik und Theater. Born Samuel Wilder near Cracow, he grew up in Vienna and went, via Berlin, to Hollywood. A collaborator of Ernst Lubitsch, Wilder first achieved fame with *Ninotchka*, and reached his apogee with *Some Like it Hot*. He was given an Oscar for lifetime achievement in 1986.

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

Reviews

Survival and identity

RADICAL THEN, RADICAL NOW,

Jonathan Sacks,

Harper Collins, 2001.

"When Jews ask the question 'Why be Jewish?' we know that we are in the presence of a major crisis in Jewish life." So says Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks. He views the current era as the prolongation of the fourth major crisis in Jewish history, provoked by "a crescendo of antisemitism" culminating in the Holocaust. Fifty years after the liberation of the concentration camps, in conditions of unprecedented prosperity, the future of the Jewish people is threatened by ambivalence, indifference and assimilation.

In this book, conceived originally as a wedding gift for his son, Sacks makes an eloquent attempt to answer the initial question and convince today's young Jews of the value of maintaining their heritage. He

presents Judaism as a radical attempt to transform the world. The biblical proposition 'God created man in His image' is, he argues, a revolutionary concept of equality, overturning the order prevailing in ancient myths and rituals, where kings aspire to be gods and ordinary human beings are expendable.

Tracing Jewish history from biblical times to the present, Sacks makes use of some striking images. Abraham, according to Jewish legend, is confronted with "a palace in flames", the symbol of a perfect creation being destroyed by evil, chaos and disorder. It was Abraham's task to protest against this senseless destruction and, in partnership with God, become the forefather of a people dedicated to create a moral society where the dignity of each human being is respected and order restored.

All too often in Jewish history, however, corrupt, power-seeking kings or priests failed to heed the rebukes of the prophets and disaster resulted. In contrast, Sacks observes, it was in their moment of greatest

powerlessness with loss of land and sovereignty that the Jewish people showed their greatest strength, creating communities that survived two millennia, in the face of hostility and persecution, while the civilisations of their oppressors came to nought. It is the values that preserved them, a passion for social justice and education among others, that mark the continuing vitality of the Jewish contribution to wider society.

Concerned at the preponderance today of intermarriage and loss of Jewish identity, Sacks makes intriguing use of the story of Jacob and Esau as a metaphor for the Jew who negates his Jewishness. Jacob was always modelling himself on Esau till he struggled with the unknown force and came to know himself. Only then were relations between the brothers restored to harmony. Similarly, Sacks claims, it is the Jew who is secure in his identity who is respected in the gentile world.

Emma Klein

A tale of 'bloody refijees'

WOLFY AND THE STRUDELBAKERS,

Zvi Jagendorf,

Dewi Lewis, 2001.

The refugee experience of World War II is the central theme of this insightful novel, rooted as it is in personal experience. This is not the world of erudite and acculturated German refugees, but of a family of *Ostjuden* from Vienna who are, as Wolfy observes, not so much refugees as "bloody refijees."

Wolfy Helfgott finds himself in England on the eve of war with his parents, uncle, aunt and cousin Bernie. The sense of upheaval and chaos prevailing in England is the background to the Helfgott's odyssey which takes them from a reception camp for refugees on the south coast to a small town in Shropshire, where father Chaim (now known as Harry Halfgo) finds a factory job. Eventually

the family progresses on to the austerity of post-war London.

Wolfy is a story of the absurdity and paradox that often accompanies the experience of finding oneself in an alien culture. When Chaim wins a competition at his wartime factory to write a poem for the 'Sing For Victory' competition, the resulting piece - which has the opening line "How pleasant to work in the sorting shop" - is constructed as an acrostic making the phrase HELP RUSSIA. Unknown to the work force this is an idea Chaim has based on the structure of the synagogue prayer *Ashrei*.

Throughout the novel, the unifying thread is the sense of dislocation - spiritual, as well as physical - in the situation of the refugee, which centres around Wolfy's efforts to make sense of what he sees going on around him. This ranges from the demands of Jewish religious observance in the context of a state grammar school education to the

secret affair between two refugee friends of his family, and finds its apotheosis in the devil-may-care pleasure-seeking of his cousin Bernie in the face of his parents' religious values.

One of the more impressive features of this promising debut novel is the number of fine examples of metaphor. For example, the brilliantly executed opening section where a man (in fact a relative of the Helfgotts) is found dead on arrival at a Viennese tram terminal with empty pockets and nothing whatsoever on his person to identify him - because, as it happens, he was returning from a shabbat visit to his Rebbe. This extraordinary and haunting image succinctly sets the tone for the ensuing story of the fate of the refugee - his journey to unexpected destinations and the accompanying loss of identity.

John Adler

At the time of going to press this book is listed in the Booker Prize longlist

What if...?

HITLER'S LOSS: WHAT BRITAIN AND AMERICA GAINED FROM EUROPE'S CULTURAL EXILES,

Tom Ambrose,

Peter Owen, 2001.

The question, clearly, is absurd - yet irresistible: just suppose Hitler had not been consumed by a hatred for the Jews; imagine a situation in which the Third Reich, instead of being obsessed with the destruction of Jewry, had sought to make a virtue of an outstandingly achieving German Jewish population. What might have been the result? A pointless question? Of course. And yet it is one that has frequently been posed, perhaps more frequently in private than in public.

Tom Ambrose suggests that expelling the Jews probably cost Germany the war, assuming there would have been a Second World War. But the result of the expulsions - quite apart from the waste caused by the mass murders - was the greatest cultural migration in Western history since the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. A vast swathe of talent, even genius, was denied access to work before being expelled or deciding to leave. Some of Germany's most eminent artists, writers, musicians, scientists, academics, businessmen and bankers moved to Britain and America. As well as Einstein and other well-known names, there were countless others who have remained either unrecorded or under-noticed. Nor was this confined to Germany. As more and more of Europe fell to the Nazis, the number of refugees rose dramatically. Within a year of the Anschluss in 1938, 100,000 Jews left Austria.

Not all of the refugees were Jews, of course. Non-Jewish communists, socialists, liberals, academics of no political affiliation, and non-Jewish anti-Nazis joined the exodus.

Perhaps the most extraordinary story to emerge from this book concerns Fritz Haber, Germany's most famous scientist in the period

following the First World War, the first man to synthesise ammonia from the nitrogen in the air. Before Hitler took power, Haber found no difficulty in reconciling loyalty to Germany with his Jewishness. He won the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1918 and was the inventor of a system to deliver poison gas against the Allied forces during the First World War. More than that, Haber, continuing his experiments with poison gas in the 1920s, eventually produced Zyklon B - the gas which would be used against his fellow Jews in the death camps. Haber, according to Ambrose, was "a Nazi in attitude" and thought he was safe, until 1933. When Max Planck, by then president of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute, pleaded with Hitler on Haber's behalf, Hitler replied: "Our national policy must not be altered - even if the loss of Jewish scientists means the end of German science for a few years, we must just do without it." Haber fled to Switzerland.

The book is full of striking accounts of how Jewish scientists and other refugees helped transform and reinvigorate the allied war effort; of how they played a significant role in the development of the atom bomb; of Ernst Chain's exceptional contribution to Fleming's development of penicillin; of the influence of three Jewish refugee architects - Berthold Lubetkin, Eric Mendelsohn and Erno Goldfinger - on the post-war development of British architecture and design. It is a remarkable story and will fill an important gap in many people's knowledge.

Ambrose asks an intriguing question at the end of the book: did the exiles actually achieve more than they would have done had they been able to remain in their homelands? Frustratingly, he decides not to answer. Although that is no doubt a sensible strategy, it does leave the book resting on a rather weak conclusion.

Geoffrey Goodman

This review originally appeared in the Jewish Chronicle on 15 June 2001



Record Review

Erik Levi

One of the most recent contenders to challenge Universal Classics Eloquence label, by offering CDs that retail at under £5, is EMI Classics. Their new Encore series hits the shops in the Autumn, providing generous playing times for each disc as compensation for rather skimpy booklet notes about the repertory and performers. Inevitably the focus is on standard fare with particular emphasis on concertos. Alas, the performances are not quite as gripping as one might have hoped. Hungarian pianist György Cziffra enjoys legendary status amongst devotees of virtuoso playing, but I find his interpretations of the Grieg Concerto and Rachmaninov's Second turgid and wilful (CDE 5 74732 2). A better proposition is Cziffra's collection of the Liszt Piano Concertos, *Totentanz* and the Hungarian Fantasy - bravura works that can easily accommodate to the pianist's idiosyncratic sense of fantasy (CDE 5 74736 2).

Another disc of nineteenth-century repertory, featuring the Cello and Piano Concertos of Schumann with Jacqueline du Pré and Daniel Barenboim as soloists, contains moments of poetry and thoughtfulness, but neither work generates sufficient electricity to warrant an unqualified recommendation (CDE 5 74755). In contrast, the German pianist Christian Zacharias avoids spectacular gestures, delivering musically satisfying and insightful performances of Beethoven's Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos with the support of the rich orchestral tone of the Dresden Staatskapelle. (CDE 5 74721-2)

While none of the releases mentioned so far really scales the heights, David Oistrakh's 1960 recording of the Brahms Violin Concerto with Otto Klemperer conducting a rather unwieldy-sounding French National Radio Orchestra has all the warmth and epic qualities one could wish for. The coupling of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, with David taking the viola in partnership with his son Igor, is equally inspired, though purists might find the sound of the Berlin Philharmonic slightly overblown in the orchestral tutti (CDE 5 74724-2).

Central Office For Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

The Government of the Czech Republic and the Federation for Jewish Communities in Prague have together created the Endowment Fund for Victims of the Holocaust (EFVH).

Residents in the former Czechoslovakia who owned property confiscated during WWII and who have not previously received compensation are now entitled to a share of a 300 million Czech Koruny fund (approximately £5.5m).

Applicants must prove that the original owner of the property was a victim of Nazi persecution and must provide ownership details of the real estate. Extracts of the *cadaster* (land register), which can be obtained via the Federation of Jewish Communities, are accepted as evidence of ownership. Other documents such as birth and death certificates should be included as necessary.

The amount of compensation paid to each applicant will reflect the value of the property but in any case will not be awarded until after the filing deadline of **31 December 2001**.

Having applied to the EFVH for compensation, applicants are free to pursue restitution of the property through legislation.

Claim forms are available from this office and completed applications should be addressed to the Endowment Fund for Victims of the Holocaust, Legerova 22/1854, 120 00 Prague 2, Czech Republic. The telephone number is 0042 02 2426 1615. The email address is neumannova@mybox.cz and further details about the fund can be found at www.fondholocaust.cz

Romanian property claims

The deadline for filing claims in respect of properties confiscated in Romania between 6 March 1945 and 22 December 1989 has been extended until 14 November 2001.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Froggnal, London NW3 6AL. For assistance with the completion of application forms please telephone 020 7431 6161 for an appointment.

Arts and Events Diary October

Tues 9 Dr Nils Roemer: The City of Worms as a theatre of Jewish memory. Centre for German-Jewish studies, University of Sussex. 5.15 pm.

Wed 10 Dr Amy Gottlieb: Emigration of Jewish DP's in the postwar period. Wiener Library. 6.30 pm.

Mon 15 Anthony Auerbach: Translating contemporary art from Austria. Club 43. 7.45 pm.

Wed 17 Dr Donald Bloxham: Genocide on Trial: the war crimes trials in the formation of Holocaust history and memory. Wiener Library. 6.30 pm.

Tues 16 Dr Herbert Loebel: Christian anti-Judaism & Christian antisemitism 1800-1900. Centre for German-Jewish studies, University of Sussex. 5.15 pm.

Mon 22 Jens Brüning: Publizistische und erzählerische Texte (1915-1970) von Gabriele Tergit. Club 43. 7.45 pm.

Tues 23 David Maier: Jewish Life in Freiburg 1919-1939. Centre for German-Jewish studies, University of Sussex. 5.15 pm.

Wed 24 Prof Paul Weindling: The survivor as witness German medical war crimes and allied trials. Wiener Library. 6.30 pm.

Mon 29 Prof Heinz Wolff: A caring technological society in the 21st century. Club 43. 7.45 pm.

Tues 30 Dr Raphael Gross: The German *Volksgemeinschaft* & the Eichmann trial. Centre for German-Jewish studies, University of Sussex. 5.15 pm.

Wed 31 Prof John Klier: Holocaust memorialisation in post-Communist Russia. Wiener Library. 6.30 pm.

Until 20 Oct The Yiddish Queen Lear written & directed by Julia Pascal. The Bridewell Theatre. Tues-Sat 7.30, Suns 3.30 and 7.30. 020 7936 3456.

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club '43, Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig. Tel: 01442 254360
The Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 129-131 Albert Street, NW1 7BN. Tel: 020 7284 1997

University of Sussex, Centre for German-Jewish Studies, Tel/Fax: 020 8381 4721.

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"A Tree of Life" - The Story of Belsize Square Synagogue

David Maier

When Jewish refugees from Central Europe arrived in London in the years between 1933 and 1939, the boarding houses, bedsits and modest flats in and around Swiss Cottage became their first homes in the new country. Their present existence was vicarious, their future undecided. Some of them found much needed neighbourly companionship among their fellow-immigrants and met in small groups in each other's homes to chat, perhaps to play a game of *skat* or chess. On Friday evenings they might stay together for *Erev Shabbat* prayers, recited in the manner they remembered.

In Germany and Austria they had belonged to mainstream *liberale* congregations, which, unlike the Anglo-Jewish form of Liberalism, subscribed to a fairly traditional interpretation of rituals and liturgy. In the event, it was Rabbi Dr. Israel Mattuck, the leader of the Progressive movement in this country, who, committed as he was to refugee causes, invited these *ad hoc* worshippers to the Montefiore Hall of his own synagogue in St. John's Wood for more formal prayer meetings. The first of these 'refugee services' was held on 24 March 1939, with Rabbi Dr. van der Zyl delivering the sermon in their native tongue.

Refugees at prayer

This service became a regular weekly event, conducted by 'visiting' German-speaking rabbis and cantors, now bereft of their own congregations. But it was one person above all who gave strength to this refugee endeavour, this hope to be able to rebuild a synagogue in the image of those destroyed on *Kristallnacht*: the Hon Lily Montagu added the aspirations of this group to her other numerous concerns for the welfare of human beings in need of assistance. Born into a family with impeccable credentials as pillars of religious orthodoxy, secular philanthropy and cultural humanism, she pursued her own convictions in respect of each of these issues. She was particularly devoted to the development of Progressive Judaism in this country; and when, in June 1939, the refugees at prayer formed themselves into the 'New

Liberal Jewish Association' as a constituent of the World Union of Progressive Judaism, Lily Montagu took on its leadership. Rabbi Dr. Georg Salzberger, newly arrived from Frankfurt am Main, became its first Minister and he was joined by Cantor Magnus Davidsohn. Services were still held on 'borrowed ground' - at St. John's Wood, at 30 Buckland Crescent, in the Wigmore Hall, in St. Pancras Town Hall. Then, in 1951, the vicarage at 51 Belsize Square became available and was acquired to serve as the congregation's own synagogue and offices.

During his 17 years as their spiritual leader, Dr. Salzberger encouraged the members to regain their traditional religious values in a changed and changing world. He was succeeded by Rabbi Jakob Kokotek who, like Dr. Salzberger, had stayed with his German congregation until emigration became urgent. Now he was able to lead his synagogue's growing membership into further stages of development and consolidation. Gradually, English replaced German as the language of his sermons. Gradually too, the Sephardi pronunciation of Hebrew was introduced into the religion classes and then into the liturgy itself.

Distinct identity

When Lily Montagu died in 1963, the membership of the congregation, whose guiding light she had been for almost a quarter of a century, had grown into four figures. It was now an integrated part of Anglo-Jewry, while still retaining its distinct identity and character. Rabbi Kokotek's translation of the German *Einheitsgebetbuch* went hand in hand with the musical arrangements of the liturgy by the Rev. Joseph Dollinger, Magnus Davidsohn's successor as cantor and teacher.

Equally important were the milestones which the congregation passed during the fourth decade of its existence. In 1971 it changed its name to 'Belsize Square Synagogue', in 1973 the new communal hall was opened and in 1977 Joseph Dollinger was succeeded by Cantor Louis Berkowitz. When Rabbi Kokotek

passed away in 1981, an era came to an end. His place was taken by Rabbi Rodney Mariner. Born in Melbourne and a graduate of that city's Monash University as well as of London's Leo Baeck College, Rabbi Mariner brought to his new ministry great energy and enthusiasm, and a breadth of erudition in both secular and religious learning, which ideally suited the congregation's wish to widen its horizons without abandoning its roots. Within a year of his induction he was joined by Rev. Lawrence Fine, a native of New York, whose considerable musical gifts and cantoral talents uniquely characterise sabbath and festival services.

Still developing community

By the end of its golden jubilee year, Belsize Square Synagogue, now an independent congregation, could point with some pride to further achievements: a set of *Prayers For All The Year*, edited and translated by Rabbi Mariner; a new beautifully decorated Torah scroll, regular branch and junior services, a Judaica shop, a well-organised, highly popular religion school, a nursery school, wide-ranging youth activities and adult education programmes.

Today, the executive and board, supported by active committees and sub-committees, conduct the affairs of a still vibrant, still developing community. A regularly up-dated website is one medium of communication with members and non-members. The art and architecture of the synagogue sanctuary provide a suitable ambience for its services, many of which are enhanced further by the competent performance of ritual offices by younger members, by the talents displayed by the youth and community choirs and, not least, by the participation of the worshippers.

Sixty-two years after its modest beginning, Belsize Square Synagogue - *Kehillah Kedoshah "Etz Chaim"* - is still a very special *shul*.

AJR 60th anniversary service and Kiddush at Belsize Square Synagogue on Saturday 10 November at 10.00am.

Sixty years on - the diamond jubilee of the AJR

Dr Anthony Grenville

In October 1942, about a year after the founding of the AJR, a letter to the Foreign Office from the Aliens Department of the Home Office gives what is probably the earliest account in any Whitehall document of the fledgling organisation. "Object: To be responsible for the Jewish Refugee Community in London and the country. The Association does not serve any particular Jewish group or party. The Committee includes Orthodox and Liberal Jews, Zionists and non-Zionists. The Association has no desire to duplicate the work of existing refugee committees. It wishes to cooperate with them in trying to find constructive solutions to questions concerning refugee life."



A reception for young refugees

The aims attributed here to the AJR, as well as its attitude to its work for its members, make clear in a nutshell why the Association has outlived by so many decades other refugee organisations like the Free German League of Culture or the Austrian Centre, all of which have long ceased to exist. The author of the Home Office report stresses even at this early stage the AJR's ethos of service to its members, of sensible and constructive work on behalf of all the Jewish refugees from Central Europe in

Britain, irrespective of political and denominational allegiances.

Because the AJR had no aims other than the interests and well-being of its members, it has continued to represent over six decades the community originally created when up to 70,000 German-speaking Jews arrived in Britain in the years after 1933. Many of them migrated on to other countries, many more are no longer with us, but the AJR goes on, sustained both by its selfless service to its members and by their affection for 'their' organisation and its eagerly read journal.

The AJR was founded when the refugees were emerging, scattered and disorientated, from internment, and it was essential for the organisation to have a channel of communication with the membership. The small and hard-pressed committee that then ran the AJR under very difficult conditions consequently ensured that, from the summer of 1941, circulars were sent out to all members to promote a sense of communal solidarity and to report on developments of concern to the refugees.

These circulars, eleven of which were sent out between summer 1941 and late 1945, were the forerunners of the Association's much-loved journal, the *AJR Information*, now *AJR Journal*. They contained information about matters of vital interest to the refugees, such as the gradual lifting of the restrictions placed on 'enemy aliens', the fight to secure entry to Britain for Jews from Europe, and the prospects for the naturalisation of those resident here. They attempted to convey what was known about the situation of the Jews from Germany and Austria under Nazi rule; and they described the integration of the refugees into the war effort and their relations with British society generally.

The AJR had three basic aims during the war: to obtain permission for refugees with transit permits to stay in Britain; to assist those still in Europe by participating in schemes to send parcels to the camps via the Red Cross; and to

AJR

1941-2001

60th
Anniversary
Supplement

prepare post-war claims for restitution. After the war, these aims did not alter radically, once one takes into account the changed conditions of peace. They were now to secure the right to naturalisation for all refugees who wished to stay here; to embark on programmes of relief for the surviving Jews in Germany and Austria and, especially, of social welfare services for the needy among the refugees in Britain; and to lead the fight for compensation, first from the Federal Republic of Germany, then from Austria.



Gabriele Tergit

The format of the wartime circulars was carried over to the *AJR Information*, which first appeared in January 1946 and has continued to appear monthly ever since; it changed its title to *AJR Journal* in January 2001. The editors in 1946 were Werner Rosenstock, who acted as editor and also as General Secretary of the Association from 1941 to 1982, and Herbert Freeden, who left for Israel in

1950. Rosenstock was replaced as editor of the journal by Murray Mindlin (1982-86) and C.C. Aronsfeld (1986-88), before the present editor, Richard Grunberger, took over as the 'voice' of the AJR in June 1988.

The Association started out in cramped accommodation at 279A Finchley Road, but moved in 1943 to 8 Fairfax Mansions (off Fairfax Road), where it stayed until it moved across the Finchley Road to Adamson Road, then on to its present offices in Hampstead Gate, Frognal, all in north west London. At the end of the war, there were some 50,000 German-speaking Jewish refugees resident in Britain, a number that has, sadly but inevitably, decreased considerably over the years. Despite a certain inflow of new members from the second generation, the AJR's membership has also declined. Interestingly, however, the journal, which at the outset had a circulation of about 5,000, still has a circulation of some 3,800; in particular, the recent integration of the Reunion of Kindertransport into the AJR has brought about a welcome increase in the readership and the membership.



Rabbi Dr Leo Baeck

Werner Rosenstock was the invaluable mainstay of the Association for over forty years. Its founding chairman was Adolf Schoyer, who was given the title of President when he returned to Germany after the war. He was succeeded by Hans Reichmann, whose wife, Eva G. Reichmann, also played a leading role. A place of honour was reserved for Rabbi Dr Leo Baeck, who settled in London after surviving Theresienstadt and became the spiritual leader of the



Library at Otto Schiff House

refugees. Walter Breslauer played an important part in the ultimately successful efforts to secure restitution from the Federal Republic, as did Rudolf Bienenfeld and Charles Kapralik in the negotiations with the Austrian Government.

In the early years, the AJR performed an important international linking function between the organisations of the Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria in Europe and those in the overseas countries of refuge, principally America and Israel. With its sister organisations abroad it formed the Council of Jews from Germany, of which Leo Baeck was president and Werner Rosenstock later became secretary, and which promoted the interests of the refugees, especially where restitution was concerned. The United Restitution Office, set up for that purpose, was initially based in the AJR's offices in London - a situation which has been recreated by the establishment of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims in the present offices.

Once the process of naturalisation had been largely completed by 1950, restitution became the dominant issue over the next decade. From the mid-1950s, the proceeds from *Wiedergutmachung* allowed the AJR to undertake a programme of welfare activities. It had already set up an employment agency and a social services department (under Adelheid Levy), to which were then added the Old Age Homes, built with money from restitution claims. As the membership aged, social welfare activities broadened, with the introduction of a meals-on-wheels service and the provision of a day centre in West Hampstead.

As a token of their gratitude to their adopted country, AJR members also contributed to the Thank-You Britain Fund, which resulted in a cheque for £92,000 being handed over to the British Academy in 1966, for the purpose of funding academic research. The very significant charitable activities undertaken by the AJR now fall under the generous aegis of the AJR Charitable Trust. There can be no finer monument to the AJR than the proud record of service rendered to its members by those involved in its residential, social service and care work, not forgetting the local groups that have been set up more recently, following an initiative taken in South London.

The *AJR Information* has continued to promote the interests of the refugees and to reflect their preoccupations, their predilections and their distinctive Jewish identity down the decades. It championed the refugees' right to British citizenship, and now, under its new name, it continues to confront antisemitism and any other hostile manifestation arising in British society. It fought for restitution, and it still takes a lively interest in relevant affairs in Germany and Austria, especially where neo-Nazism appears and casts slurs on the German-Jewish past. It preserves the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and it celebrates the rich cultural heritage of German Jewry. Similarly, the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain itself, so rich in history and so closely bound up with the community it represents, still retains the name that links it to the proud traditions that the Jewish refugees brought with them from their Continental lands of origin to their adopted British home.

'Settling down in England' Lord Moser's memoir of the AJR

Ronald Channing

Claus Moser, distinguished academic, civil servant, aesthete and former German-Jewish refugee, reminisced on his 65 years in Britain as the keynote speaker at a joint Sussex University, London University and AJR symposium on the value to historical scholarship of six decades of the publication of *AJR Information*.

Until 1933, he and his brother had experienced a happy childhood in Berlin where his family felt very German. Among 70,000 other refugees from Germany and Austria, his immediate family had been fortunate in reaching Britain in the 1930s. More distant members had perished with millions of others, many because they were proud Germans and believed that Hitler was a temporary aberration. "It all remains in the mind," he said.

Remarkable achievement

"To have published *AJR Information* (now *AJR Journal*) continuously, at a very high standard, for six decades, is a remarkable achievement," said Lord Moser, emphasising that he spoke from personal experience. In the 1940s his parents had derived enormous confidence, support and security from its pages. "It has been part of my family since it was first published," he recalled.

Disagreeing with those who suggested that the subject was over-emphasised, Claus Moser derived a real sense of satisfaction from the attention the Holocaust was currently receiving. The permanent Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum should be a source of pride and he felt strongly that there was now less risk of the Holocaust being forgotten.

Unanticipated welcome

While Britain was not particularly warm



Lord Moser, left, presenting Richard Grunberger with a gold-embossed bound volume of the last two years' issues of *AJR Information* in appreciation of his 13 years as editor.

PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

to foreigners, in the 1930s the evidence was that this country was one of the most welcoming to refugees. He felt that a number of remarkable non-Jews especially deserved appreciation: "I feel a continual sense of gratitude to the host country for welcoming us." Having spent his first thirteen years in Berlin, he still did not feel "totally English." Lord Moser thought it "one of those nice coincidences in life" that he received his peerage 65 years to the day since arriving in England in 1936.

Speaking of his fellow German-Jewish refugees, Claus Moser believed that although they differed in age, financial standing, professional qualifications, in what they had left behind, in their links to this country and in what they were to achieve here, they were in the main middle class, urban, liberal, rather cultured, well educated and, on the whole, not very religious.

The then existing Jewish community in Britain, mostly of Eastern European origin and from poorer and more religious backgrounds, "were not waiting to receive us," he remembered, and he remained intrigued that Jews of German origin had yet to develop a significant relationship with the mainstream Anglo-Jewish community.

Endless list

The refugee contribution to British society included 20 scientists who became Nobel laureates and 50 members of the Royal Society. Others distinguished

themselves in publishing, journalism, industry and the law. "The list is endless," said Lord Moser.

Glyndebourne Opera owed its existence to Fritz Busch and Karl Ebert (political refugees); the Amadeus Quartet transformed chamber music; the conductors Solti and Klemperer reigned supreme, while the refugee community formed large parts of their audiences. Gombrich created the study of the history of art and Pevsner took an unequalled architectural tour of Britain.

Lord Moser reminded us, however, that many endured hard and tough lives and some even returned to Germany.

AJR in the life of refugees

Refugees owed a debt of gratitude to the AJR. Founded in 1941, its aims were to help fellow refugees, to end enemy alien status and internment, to achieve naturalisation and secure restitution. "It is a remarkable story," he said.

AJR Information had always remained neutral on religious issues. Both the AJR and *AJR Information* had proved to be "extraordinarily helpful in enabling us to settle down and to assimilate," said Lord Moser. They forged a bond between refugees and "the AJR enabled my parents to retain a part of their own identity."

"I feel incredibly confident in its future," said Lord Moser, advising the *AJR Journal* to retain all its interesting items and to pursue an agenda well beyond that of the 1930s. Encouragingly he concluded, "No other journal can do it as well."

AJR Information - a ten year digest

A cross section of extracts in the 50th anniversary celebration edition of *AJR Information* provided an insight into the events and issues which had affected the lives of AJR members over the previous fifty years. Issues ranging from politics, economics, history and culture, to the downright domestic came together as pieces in a jigsaw to create a picture of a thriving community, its interests and concerns. The last ten years also yield a snapshot, albeit of a different nature.

February 1991

The pundits who pooh-pooed comparisons between Saddam Hussein and Hitler were wrong. As controller of the Gulf's oil reserves, possessor of nuclear weapons and manipulator of the Islamic multitude, Hussein could inflict worldwide damage. His strongest affinity with Hitler, however, lies in his murderous designs on the four million Jews in Israel.

June 1991

More than a hundred guests attended the official opening ceremony of Balint House, the Otto Schiff Housing Association's new residential home in the Bishop's Avenue. Special tribute was paid to the Paul Balint and Andrew Balint Charitable Trusts, whose most generous donations to the Appeal Fund, complementing the Housing Corporation's subsidy, had helped to realise the completion of the new home.

June 1992

The Berlin Senate invited former pupils of Jewish schools after 1933 to a World Reunion in March 1992. Over 240 attended, including spouses or children, and were accommodated in three hotels according to their former schools.

October 1993

It would have taken a brave man indeed to hazard a forecast about the September signing on the White House lawn. How much braver are Rabin and Peres - and even Arafat - in their endeavours to reverse a blood-suffused tide that has been flowing for close on a century.

December 1993

German Jewry is currently split with the national leadership approving, and the local community objecting to, Berlin's brand new War Memorial. A memorial that brackets murdered Jews together with fallen German soldiers as "victims of war" fails to differentiate between

genuine victims and - however reluctant - perpetrators.

March 1994

The Vatican's recognition of Israel is a milestone, for all that it comes 45 years after the birth of the Jewish State. It is a further step on the road towards acceptance of Israel as a 'normal' country by the comity of nations.

July 1994

At the 1994 AGM, Mr Theo Marx paid tribute to Dr Werner Rosenstock, who was the first General Secretary of the AJR and became the founding editor of *AJR Information* in 1946, in which post he remained for 36 years. As a formal and permanent record of Dr Rosenstock's work an inscribed brass plate will be affixed in the AJR's new offices in Hampstead Gate.

June 1995

Historically significant identity cards which were issued to more than 9,000 children, forced to flee Nazi Germany without their parents, have been rediscovered by archivists working for the Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief.

April 1996

Steven Spielberg is donating the entire proceeds from the film *Schindler's List* to the historical documentation called the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation. Between now and the end of 1997, world wide interviews with survivors will be conducted.

September 1996

In a ceremony near Kielce, Poland's Prime Minister apologised for the 1946 pogrom in which 45 Jewish survivors of Nazi concentration camps, who returned to their native town, were butchered

August 1997

AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman announced the establishment of an AJR Research Centre for the collection of Holocaust-related materials, to be situated at Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre in Nottinghamshire.

February 1998

The AJR has reached an agreement with World Jewish Relief accepting responsibility for the welfare of some 80 needy former victims of Nazi persecution currently receiving assistance from WJR's Jewish Refugee Committee. They

originate from Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Germany and Hungary.

March 1999

As a permanent reminder of the children who came to Britain on the Kindertransports before the war, and as a token of gratitude to the British people and Parliament of the time, World Jewish Relief has commissioned a sculpture, to be erected on a prominent site in London in the year 2000.

June 1999

The 60th anniversary Reunion of Kindertransports was an event steeped in poignancy. A staggering twelve hundred septuagenarians - out of the original ten thousand Kinder - came from America, Australia, Israel and Britain to a venue not far from Bloomsbury House.

March 2000

A new archive and research unit for the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex was opened by its Chancellor, Lord Attenborough, who stressed the significance of the department's historical research and its value as an important resource for the University.

June 2000

Britain's first permanent Holocaust Museum opens this month in a specially created wing of the Imperial War Museum. As well as being a strong educational tool, the exhibition also serves as a tribute and memorial to the millions of victims of National Socialism.

September 2000

The German authorities have agreed to establish a compensation fund of £3.2 billion for distribution to surviving slave and forced labourers who worked for the Third Reich.

March 2001

As its contribution to the first Holocaust Memorial Day in the United Kingdom, the AJR sponsored and initiated events on the campuses of the University of Sussex and Imperial College, London, altogether reaching some 2,000 students.

July 2001

The Polish President is to apologise formally for the massacre of Jedwabne's Jews on the occasion of the 60th anniversary massacre in July this year. The monument blaming the Nazis is to be replaced with a new monument.

PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Fred Durst



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Born in Munich in 1924, Manfred was the second child of a printer, Bernard Durst, who had migrated from Galicia, and his wife Paula who came from a very orthodox family. Part of the city's 8,000-strong Jewish community, he and his sister Ilse, older by two years, lived in a kosher home, went to Synagogue and attended weekly Hebrew classes. Though the family were of modest means, they enjoyed a very happy childhood, but sadly, when he was just ten, his mother died.

At school the Jewish boys increasingly became targets for teacher-supported bullying, then in 1936 were expelled. He ended up in a Jewish school with his sister, but was deprived of his beloved skating and athletics. Throughout the summer of 1938 the lives of the Jews in Germany and Austria were becoming ever more precarious. Emigration was the prime topic of conversation as everyone was desperate to get away from the dominating physical presence of Hitler and the mob-mania which accompanied his frequent public appearances. In June 1938 Munich's beautiful main synagogue was demolished

As Bernard Durst was still officially a Polish citizen, despite having fought for Austria-Hungary in World War I, in October 1938 he and his children were woken by banging on their door at 2 a.m. and given little time before being taken to prison for two days and then put on a train for Poland. Within 20 miles of the border the train was turned around, as the Poles were busy expelling their German-born Jews, so the Dursts avoided the statelessness and cruel fate of many others.

After Munich's remaining synagogue was burnt down on Kristallnacht, Bernard decided that the Kindertransport to Britain was his children's only hope. So early in the morning of 3 January 1939, Fred and Ilse boarded a train to Frankfurt, part of a group of five to six hundred children en route to the Hook of Holland, and then sailed to Harwich. In the bitter cold of winter, frightened, disoriented and exhausted, the children were housed in the chalets of the

misleadingly named Dovercourt holiday camp.

Fred made the best of his time at Dovercourt, getting used to England and the English; the hour or two every day spent learning English proved particularly valuable. Sundays were occupied with the children being paraded for inspection by prospective foster parents which, for the older girls, could well mean unpaid domestic service, as it did for Ilse.

When Dovercourt reverted to its original use in March 1939, Fred was sent to a hostel in North Kensington for 40 boys between the ages of 14 and 16, supervised by two local synagogues. St Marks Road Hostel was strictly observant and local fascists lost no opportunity to paint swastikas on the doors and demonstrate their violent antisemitism. Fred befriended an orthodox boy, Isaak 'John' Najmann from Breslau, who was to become a life-long friend and business partner, and attended a local Jewish school. When he learned that his father had reached Shanghai he wrote every week.

With the outbreak of war came evacuation to a village in Wiltshire, where the villagers had little or no understanding of either Jews or kashrut. Fred worked on his host

family's allotment, fed the chickens and joined the local scout group.

Sent back to St Marks Road following his 16th birthday, during the *Blitzkrieg* on London, Fred - together with John - began a five-year jewellery apprenticeship in Hatton Garden. As a profitable sideline, the boys made bracelets out of silver three-penny bits. By 1944 Fred's employers were making bomb-sights and automatic pilots, yet he continued his classes in the design and manufacture of jewellery and set up a workshop with John in the Portobello Road while still carrying on the day job. That year he also learned of his father's death.

After the war the boys set up their own business together and worked extremely hard to develop the largest manufacturing jewellers in Britain with factories in London and Birmingham. Fred became a lecturer in design and business management and served for fifteen years as a member of the British Hallmarking Council. In 1977 he received the Freedom of the City of London and was made a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. In 1980 he was Chairman of the British Jewellery Association.

In 1951 Fred married Marion, also from Munich. Settling in north London, they had a son, Michael, and kept in touch with fellow refugees and survivors through the Jewish clubs and societies in the Swiss Cottage area. Both he and Marion remain active members of the New London Synagogue and have developed a close interest in supporting the security and welfare of Israel.

After retiring from the jewellery business in 1988, Fred became increasingly active in the AJR as a member of its Management Committee and still chairs the Leo Baeck House Committee in the Bishop's Avenue. Golf is his favourite relaxation. Despite having showed outstanding courage, resolution and resourcefulness, Fred claims to have led a charmed life.

The author thanks Fred Durst for access to the manuscript of Shirley Toulson's book 'On Strange Ground'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

ANGLO-JEWRY & THE REFUGEES

Sir - Having spent 1939-1941 at Dovercourt, Barham House Clayton, then in internment camps and finally, until 1948, in the army, I had little or no contact with that element of British Jewry described by Dr Grenville (*August 2001*). However I did not escape discrimination by those to whom he refers. In 1966 I read for and was admitted to the Bar. Not long after starting in practice, I learned from friends who, like myself, were members of B'nai Brith that the most prominent and affluent Jewish solicitors in the town had let it be known that they considered "that Yekke to have had the unmitigated temerity and impertinence to aspire to a professional and social status which he did not merit and accordingly they would not ever dream of briefing him." They never did. Not to this very day.

If I had had to rely on Jewish solicitors and my fellow B'nai Brith members (as they all were), I would never have succeeded at the Bar at which I still practise. -

Name & address supplied

Sir - I had the sort of experience to which Dr Grenville refers. I worked in seven different households between 1935 and 1940: the two Anglo-Jewish families exploited me in a thoughtless way, one of the German-Jewish families proved outrageously mean and the British non-Jewish families were ignorant of my traumatic state of existence. The huge publicity for the Kindertransport contrasts greatly with the silence about the hardships of most domestic refugees who arrived here from a warm and

cultured home having and earning very little. Thank you for shedding some light on this depressing chapter.

*Gerda Kaufman
Harrow, Mddx*

Sir - Most of us would agree that the mistreatment of some Jewish refugees working as domestics for Anglo-Jewish families was quite disgraceful. However as an "English Jew" from a "lower middle-class household" I deeply resent the implications of this article. Have we not yet learnt how dangerous it can be for a nation, or any group of people, to assume superiority, even if it is only cultural. In my own family and amongst our contemporaries there existed a good proportion who were not only interested in music and the arts but engaged in them professionally.

Our communities are coming ever closer together, particularly the youngsters. Whilst it is important to know what happened in the past, one should not get stuck there.

*E Persky
London NW4*

Sir - Dr Grenville displays an unfortunate and contemptuous attitude towards British Jews, echoing the attitude of some German Jews in the inter-war years towards the *Ostjuden*. Does he think that *all* British Jews had little interest in, and *all* refugees were steeped in, musical and artistic high culture? What about Myra Hess and Harold Laski among many others?

As to the subject of domestics in Jewish households, has he done a thorough scientific survey? Some of

the horror stories he tells suggest rather naïve and unreasonable expectations on the part of refugee workers - asking an employer to be a guarantor for a mother meant asking him to be financially responsible for her for an undetermined number of years.

Whilst admitting that many refugees might have had positive experiences with British Jews, Dr Grenville fails to provide balance with positive anecdotes. My mother, a domestic in a Jewish household, was treated with respect and consideration. Although just another anecdote, it should serve to caution readers that sound surveys are necessary to establish general trends; a casual "by and large" (*pace* Dr Grenville) is not worthy of an historian.

*Dr Hugh Lytton, Prof Emeritus
University of Calgary, Canada*

RACE - THE BIG ISSUE

Sir - Pity those Jews who attempt to justify a particular strain of antisemitism (*July Letters*). Mr F Rubin will probably agree that in his native Hungary, antisemitism was alive and well throughout the ages and active and virulent in the 19th century i.e. well before ethnic Jews could become communists. He might also agree that Jews have been active and prominent in the fields of agriculture, industry, commerce, medicine, literature and politics: of the 14 Hungarian Nobel Prize-winners, 9 have been Jews.

Since 1989, it is often heard in Hungary that between 1945 and 1989 all the Jews were communists: untrue but logically possible. However what is also proposed, viz that all Hungarian communists (Party membership around 2 million) were Jews (Jewish population around 100,000), is more problematic. If someone could come up with something new and interesting on the origin and causes of Hungarian (or any other) antisemitism, I would

read it with interest. Meantime, please do not lower the tenor of this publication with self-loathing nonsense.

L Roman
London N22

RIGA MEMORIAL SERVICE

Sir - My mother, four brothers and two sisters were deported from Kassel and shot on arrival in Riga in December 1941. I arrived in this country in June 1939 on a Kindertransport. I have no memorial for my family; it is my fervent wish to attend the memorial service in November (*August letters*). I am 72 years old and only speak English. I am reluctant to go alone and would dearly love to have company for the trip. If anyone is attending the service, please contact me.

Ellen K Davis,
29 Heatherslade Rd, Pennard,
Swansea Tel 01792 233009

TIME TO TALK

Sir - The older I get (I am now over 88) the more I feel the urge to talk to someone in authority about the many Germans who were of enormous help - at their own peril - during the Hitler period.

Name & address supplied

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Sir - Your monthly *Journal*, a 'heaven sent' breath of fresh air, is wonderfully mixed in content and covers all subjects well. Sadly, to those of us who are quick readers, the fresh air is soon replaced by the normal stale repetitious codswallop of those other publications which concentrate more on sensationalism than good reporting. Please carry on as you have always done and pass on your knowledge of affairs to those of us who are not as knowledgeable as yourselves but would very much like to be.

Frank Reichmann
Finstock, Oxon

The Lingfield House story

Zdenka Husserl, Rachel Oppenheimer (Eve), Joanna Millan (Bela)



Alice Goldberger with some of her charges

As we celebrate the AJR's 60th anniversary, it is fitting to remember that 56 years ago, the Lingfield House children, rescued from Nazi persecution, arrived in this country on 15 August 1945, the birthday of Alice Goldberger. Alice looked after them in Windermere, Lingfield, and later in Isleworth. She died fifteen years ago.

The Lingfield story begins after WWII. Having returned the Czech Air Force to Prague, the RAF saw that the returning planes would provide the perfect transport to bring to England the 1000 children the British Government had agreed to admit on a temporary basis. (In the event, only 732 children could be found.) All the children were taken to Windermere in the Lake District. After a few weeks the youngest - aged only three and four - were sent to Bulldog's Bank in Sussex to be looked after by Gertrud and Sophie Dann whilst the older children stayed on. How was this tranquil and beautiful spot chosen? Major OFG Stanley, Conservative MP for Westmorland and Secretary of State for War in 1940, saw the potential in the Sunderland Flying Boat Factory, closed just before the war's end. The accommodation block, originally built to house workers, seemed ideal for us youngsters to recover and be rehabilitated

before moving on to new countries and new homes.

We moved to Lingfield, Surrey, at the end of 1945. Four months later, 24 of us were living in the large house donated by the late Sir Benjamin Drage. Those who could not be reunited with relatives, or adopted, stayed there until 1949 after which we continued to live together in Isleworth until starting work or training in our chosen careers.

In October 1978, at the age of 81, Alice was honoured in the TV programme *This is Your Life*. This celebration of her work brought together many of her 'children' who, by now, had grown up and dispersed across the world. Many were married with children and grandchildren; the majority had not seen each other for 40 years. Alice would have been so proud to know that all her children had met up again for her centenary and that, despite the terrible start in life, they appeared to be doing well. Together we shared the memories of our happy childhood in Windermere, Lingfield and Isleworth and paid our respects and thanks to Alice, Sophie, Manna, Gertrud and Suse who made this possible.

INSIDE the AJR

New Edinburgh AJR group's inaugural meeting

Fifteen people, first and second generation, gathered in Edinburgh to inaugurate AJR's latest group. To break the ice, each person introduced him/herself, giving a short résumé of the often poignant events which brought them to the city. It was a moving experience for the listeners and speakers alike.

Judith Gilbert

For further information, contact Judy Gilbert (0131 667 4266) or Vicki Gruneberg (0131 332 6181).

Inaugural Meeting North London AJR Group

The inaugural meeting at Southgate & District Reform Synagogue, Whetstone, was attended by over forty people. Everyone introduced themselves, saying where they had originally come from. Walter Woyda, a founder member of South London AJR group, then explained that group's set-up and general working. It was agreed that the group would meet monthly on the morning of the last Thursday in the month whenever possible. A planning committee was formed and will meet shortly.

Myrna Glass

Next meeting: 25 October at 10.30 am. Details to be announced.

South London

Congratulations and thanks to Susannah Alexander from the Jewish Museum, Camden Town, for a fluent and interesting survey of the history of the Jews in England, given without notes. From the Phoenicians to the present day, we certainly learned a considerable amount.

Ken Ambrose

Next meeting: 15 November - Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith: How the Leitz family saved Jews in the war.

Pinner

After several days of boiling sunshine, this year's garden party took place on a day of torrential rain. But it takes more than that to dampen the spirits of local AJR members, 40 of whom gathered for a

luscious tea (scones and cakes all home made by our host Vera Gellman), much talk and general good feeling.

Paul Samet

Next meeting: 4 October - Emmanuel Young: 'The occupational hazards of an orchestral conductor.'

Surrey



Some of the bathing belles at Tony Freud's Surrey home

A beautifully kept Surrey garden on a perfect summer's day was the setting for a splendid fresco luncheon. Over twenty members savoured delicious food - including home-made *Zwetschkenknödel* made by host Tony Freud - and there was even an opportunity for a refreshing dip in the pool. Many thanks to our generous host for his hospitality.

Robert Miller

Next meeting: 14 November - Details to be announced.

Brighton

Susannah Alexander, from the Jewish Museum in Camden Town, gave a fascinating talk about the origins and later development of Anglo-Jewry. The earliest recorded Jews came over with William the Conqueror and later established small communities in Winchester, York and Lincoln. The gradual return four hundred

years after expulsion saw an increase in numbers with sudden spurts in the 1880s and 1930s. The talk ended with the arrival of 'The Boys' - graphically described by Martin Gilbert in his book - immediately after the end of WWII.

F Goldberg

Next meeting: 22 October - Judy Ironside: Brighton & Hove Jewish Film festival 2001

Wessex

Rhinefield House, in the heart of the New Forest, was the venue for a magnificent cream tea enjoyed by seventeen members. Known as the "Jewel in the Forest", the imposing mansion was built in 1709 as a hunting lodge. It is now a country house hotel. Some squirrels were in evidence but not the famous New Forest deer which William the Conqueror liked to hunt. The weather was kind and enabled us to stroll around the beautiful grounds and admire the Canadian redwoods and copper beeches.

Michael Stewart Rivlin

Next meeting: 23 October - Alf Keiles: Jewish contribution to jazz.

Leeds

Next meeting: 28 October - Bill Williams: Holocaust - a message for today.

Day Centre Reunion

For the first time in 50 years, three former Kindertransportees - who last shared lodgings at the Refugee Children's Hostel at 243 Willesden Lane - met up by chance at an AJR-KT Luncheon Club event at the AJR Day Centre. Herbert Wolff had kept in touch with Harry Rudel and Harry Rudel had maintained contact with Lore Heinemann; but Lore and Herbert had lost touch and had to be re-introduced!



Glenda Jackson MP and Camden's Mayor, Councillor Roger Robinson, open National Volunteers Week 2001 in Camden to promote volunteering. Amanda Shaw, AJR's Volunteer Services Co-ordinator (3rd from right), joined the Camden Volunteer Bureau's bus tour of the Borough.

KINDERTRANSPORT NEWS

David Jedwab

The reminiscences of Kinder continue to form an important part of our regular Kinder Lunches on (usually) the first Monday of the month.

At the August meeting, David Jedwab talked about returning to Berlin in 1994 for the first time after 55 years and the emotions aroused in him and his immediate family. At the September meeting, Ralph Aubrey described his 'Exodus from Germany', initiated by himself and his mother, his father having escaped to Paraguay.

Despite the heartache engendered by separation from family, one can only wonder at the grown-up manner in which the young Kinder coped with situations of extreme stress.

Kinderlunch

15 October: Erich Reich and Flor Kent will report on the Berlin to Auschwitz Bike Ride which raised over £70,000 for Jewish children in the Ukraine and Russia, and for the Liverpool Street Sculpture. The Bike Ride is to become an annual event drawing in schoolchildren from all over Germany as well as UK participants. The Kinder give this event their full support. Please reserve your place early at the AJR Day Centre, 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6, Tel: 020 7328 0208.

THE KINDER OFFICE WISHES ALL ITS READERS SHANA TOVA.

Understanding the past

Carers must understand the particular background and culture of residents in residential and nursing homes so as to provide care appropriate to their physical and emotional needs. This is the main conclusion of a report published by the Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA) after research conducted at Osmond House in Hampstead by a team led by the Home's manager Gaby Wills. The report "provides a valuable insight into the ways in which people who develop dementia can be affected by events that occurred earlier in their lives" says Ms Wills. There is to be further research which will follow up the findings from the report.

MK



AJR SHABBAT

at Belsize Square Synagogue,
London NW3 in the presence
of the Mayor of Camden

Members and friends are invited
to a service of commemoration
and celebration

Saturday 10 November 2001

Service commences at 10am
to be followed by an AJR
Kiddush at 12 noon

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

Sunday 25 November 2001

Tea Dance/Sing-a-long

3pm - 5.30pm

Jack Davidoff and Jules Rubin

Tickets £7

Please call Sylvia or Susie at the
Day Centre on 020 7328 0208
for a reservation

FIFTH GREAT SEASON! AJR-KT LUNCHEON CLUB

Wednesday 17 October 2001
15 Cleve Road NW6 3RL
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Guest speaker: Suzanne Bardgett,

Director of the Holocaust Exhibition
at the Imperial War Museum

'An update on responses to the
Holocaust Exhibition'

Reservations

£7.50 for everyone!

From Sylvia, Renée and Susie

Tel: 020 7328 0208

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

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
between 10am and 12 noon on
the following dates:

Thursday 4 October

Thursday 11 October

Wednesday 24 October

Tuesday 30 October

Wednesday 7 November

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

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6
Tel: 020 7328 0208

Monday - Thursday 9.30am - 3.30pm, Sunday 2pm - 5.30pm

OCTOBER	Afternoon entertainment:
Mon 1	Kard & Games Klub
Tue 2	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - SUCCOT
Wed 3	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - SUCCOT
Thur 4	Guyatherie Peiris & Bill Patrick
Sun 7	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No entertainment
Mon 8	Kard & Games Klub
Tue 9	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - SHEMINI ATZERET
Wed 10	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - SIMCHAT TORAH
Thur 11	Sergi & Suzanne Berkorvany
Sun 14	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No entertainment
Mon 15	KT LUNCH & Kard & Games Klub
Tue 16	Daphne Lewis & Sheila Games
Wed 17	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 18	Eddie Simmons entertains with Bill Bradley at the piano
Sun 21	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No entertainment
Mon 22	Kard & Games Klub
Tue 23	Amanda Palmer entertains
Wed 24	Jenny Kossew - Accordionist
Thur 25	Maire Halliday with Michael Heaton at the piano
Sun 28	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No entertainment
Mon 29	Kard & Games Klub
Tue 30	Robert Lowe - from Mozart to Musicals
Wed 31	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton

Announcements

Deaths

David. Rose David née Lewkowitz, born in Kreuzburg in 1904 passed away aged 97 after a lengthy illness on 25 July 2001. Sadly missed by her family in Israel and England and all her friends.

Mayer. Harry Mayer, London, formerly Majerowicz, Berlin. Taken from us suddenly on 13 July 2001 aged 76. Devoted husband of Irma, kind generous Papa to daughter Jackie, son Robert, grandchildren Amy, Alex, Rachel, Patrick and Angus. Sadly missed by all his family and friends, many scattered around the world including former teacher Kurt Messerschmidt and fellow students from the Volksschule der Jüdischen Gemeinde, Rykestrasse, Berlin 1931-1939. He will live forever in our hearts and minds.

Meyer. Lottie Meyer passed away in hospital on 31 July 2001 following a long illness. She will be greatly missed by her husband Otto and her two grandsons, Anthony and Michael. She was a much loved and respected lady. May she rest in peace. Otto Meyer.

Reed. Lici Reed passed away peacefully on 30 July in Bournemouth, just before her 84th birthday. Devoted wife, mother and grandmother, will be greatly missed by Louis, David, Ruth, Lee and Adam. We will remember her with love.

Short. Anna Short died 23 July 2001 in Gateshead aged 92. Much missed by Gilbert.

Strauss. Charles Strauss died on 31 July. A very much loved husband, grandfather and friend of many. Deeply mourned by his wife Inge, sons Edwin and John, daughter-in-law Sally and grandchildren Claire and Paula. A member of the AJR for 60 years.

Classified

Miscellaneous Services

Manicure & Pedicure in the comfort of your own home. Telephone 020 8343 0976.

Manicure & Pedicure at your home. Call Gail for further details 07970 597919.

Day Centre

Pamela Bloch at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. Clothes sale, separates etc. **Thursday 18 October 2001** 9.30am - 11.45am.

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans, etc. **Wednesday 24 October & Thursday 8 November** 9.45am - 11.45am.

Societies

Kaffee Klatsch Klub, established 1986. Monthly entertainment for Jewish Europeans, 60 plus. For further details telephone 020 8554 0443.

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London NW11 0DA
Phone: 020 8455 2286**

**Centre for German-Jewish Studies
University of Sussex
Research Officer (Refugee Experiences and
Achievements)**

The Centre wishes to appoint a part-time Research Officer with a good knowledge of German to contribute to research on the experiences and achievements of German-Jewish refugees of the 1930s. This appointment will provide an exciting opportunity for original research work at one of the leading international centres for German Jewish studies

The appointment will commence on 1st January 2002 for one year, with a possible extension for a further year. The person appointed on this 0.5 contract will be expected to work 18 hours per week throughout the working year and will receive a pro-rata salary based on the annual Research and Analogous Scale 1B (£17,451-£19,486).

The closing date for applications (accompanied by a CV and the addresses of two referees) will be **Friday 12th October**. For further information and particulars please contact Chana Moshenska, Centre for German Jewish Studies, Arts B, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN. Tel. 01273 678837.
Email: c.moshenska@sussex.ac.uk

(The Centre's web site is accessible at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/cgjs/>)

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Saturday mornings at 10am
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An Englishman's tragedy compounded

Ronald Channing

It was 1962 and Colin Jordan, then leader of the National Front, was enjoying public notoriety. Haranguing a huge Blackshirt rally in Trafalgar Square, he expounded the false mantras of racial hatred and Holocaust denial. In the crowd was Leon Greenman, an English Jew born in London's East End, improbably a survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau, whose wife and young child perished there. That day in Trafalgar Square, Leon decided to set down the terrible events he had witnessed. Only now is his testimony being published.

Addressing a book launch at the Jewish Museum, Finchley, Leon recalled trading as an antiquarian bookseller and living with his wife and baby son in Rotterdam during Germany's invasion of Holland in 1940. Despite his British citizenship, on 8 October 1942 they were taken to Westerbork transit camp, allowed only a blanket each and a pillowcase with medicaments. The next four months he spent fighting for recognition of his rights as an English national. Despairingly, he later learned that the documents that would have earned his release were sitting on the camp commandant's desk unopened the very morning the family was deported to Auschwitz.

After a 36-hour nightmare journey, from 700 arrivals of all ages, he was among 50 men selected for slave labour; all others were murdered. To this day he finds his survival inexplicable when hunger, vermin, disease and beatings were meted out indiscriminately. He made a promise to God that, should he survive, he would dedicate himself to telling the world, and from 1946 he entered on a lifetime of fighting fascism and Holocaust denial, telling groups of adults and schoolchildren how his family life had been destroyed and how he survived five different concentration camps.

Even now - sprightly, articulate and passionate, with a crystal clear memory in his 91st year - Leon travels every Sunday from his home in Ilford to the Jewish Museum. Here, the mementos of his family life, which he hid from the Nazis, are displayed and here he tirelessly explains how, though an Englishman with every right to be interned until the war's end, he was maltreated and marked for extermination along with his Dutch-Jewish neighbours.

'An Englishman at Auschwitz' is published by Vallentine Mitchell in its Library of Holocaust Studies series at £11.95 and is available from the Jewish Museum and bookshops.

Obituary - Irene Bloomfield

Irene Bloomfield, who died on 23 July aged 82, brought professional counselling into the Jewish field. Continental Jewry was far more at home with the idea of help through psychiatry and psychotherapy, so it took time to establish in Britain and, in fact, came through the initiative of a Catholic priest, with whom Irene Bloomfield, with her professional qualifications, helped to found a counselling centre in Westminster in the 1960s. Because the centre was used by Leo Baeck rabbinic students to learn counselling techniques, she was able to steer the way towards setting up a much needed Jewish counselling centre, the Raphael Centre, which opened in 1978 under her clinical directorship. Many of its volunteer counsellors were fellow-refugees.

Irene, born Irene Herzberg, in Berlin, left school at 15 when she was expelled for refusing to give the Nazi salute, and was sent to Sweden by her

parents. She came to England on a domestic permit and her parents followed. But she had already left for Palestine, where she combined British army service with Hebrew University study. Her father died in her absence and she felt she was honouring his memory, when she returned to London after the war, by following in his footsteps as a psychiatrist. She started work on child guidance in Exeter in 1952 and returned to London to a psychotherapy post at University College Hospital in 1957.

She was devoted to her work and her clients - her marriage in 1966 only lasted five years - but only after her retirement from the Raphael Centre in 1992 was she able to concentrate on the refugee world and its long-simmering emotions. With a colleague, she worked on inter-generational problems both here and, more recently, in Prague.

Ruth Rothenberg

Search Notices

Eva Lemler, born Vienna 22.01.1919. Last address in Vienna: Grundsteingasse 47, Ottakring. Fled Vienna for England, probably in 1938, by train and boat. Travelled with her cousin Sali Sigal, and possibly with the Schlesinger (sp?) family. Any information, please contact Marilyn Sheridan (Miriam Sigal), 3718 North Placita Chimenea, Tucson, AZ 85716, USA. Tel: (520) 321-4713. Email: marilyns@dakotacom.net

Elfreda Luft, lived with Ms Anne Cassirer at 3 Chandos House, Riffel Road, London NW2 4PE. Any information please contact Anthony Lavy, Lavy Haynes Solicitors, Heath Street, London NW3 6TP. Tel: 020 7435 7441.

Richard Garson (formerly Gerstel) and/or his brother Victor. Last contact London 1941/42. Please contact Edith Gerson (née Urbach): Tel 001-212-935-6486. New York, USA.

Walter Trier. Researcher seeks information about the life of this illustrator of children's books and the books he illustrated during his exile in London and Hertfordshire 1936-1947. Please contact Dr Gillian Lathey, National Centre for Research in Children's Literature, University of Surrey Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PH. Email: G.Lathey@roehampton.ac.uk

Emil Bieber, Max Halberstadt, Erich Kastan and Kurt Schallenberg, Jewish photographers from Hamburg. Photos and other documents sought for exhibition of their work. Contact Wilfried Weinke, Bernadottestr. 56, 22763 Hamburg. Tel: 0049 408811715. Email: weinke@compuserve.com.

Jewish Volunteer Committee, once at 67 Great Russell Street, London WC1. I have a letter addressed to Lothar Auerbach, dated 26 October 1939: "I hereby acknowledge receipt of your form of 24.10.39, No. A 224 in which you offered your services in a Jewish Military Unit of His Majesty's Forces if and when such a unit is formed." As far as I know, such a unit was never formed. According to the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen, the Zionist Federation was at that address at one time. Any information please contact Ruth Schwiening, née Auerbach: Tel:01455 292035. Email: Schwiening@tesco.net.

I too am a refugee!

Moise Rahmani

The world talks about, and pities, the Palestinian refugees. They are confined to camps and are often the target of harassment and humiliation by the host countries - Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Jordan. (Just look at the case of Kuwait which, the day after the Gulf War ended, expelled all Palestinian inhabitants from the country). However there are also refugees in whom no one is interested - the Jewish refugees from the Arab countries. From Morocco to Yemen, nearly one million Jews were exiled from their homes. This started in 1948 and continued in 1956 and 1967. I was part of the second wave of these expulsions.

Stripped of goods, assets confiscated, subjected to arbitrary measures, there are nearly one million of us and no-one, except for our families in Israel, cares at all about our fate, neither the UN, which seems to be very one-sided, nor Europe, hardly impartial and always pontificating, nor the far from objective media. The Arabs, after all, have the oil.

I am a refugee from the Arab countries and our fate has not moved anyone. Israel, in spite of her difficulties, instead of putting us in camps, integrated a large number of us. She continues to absorb other Jews from the former Soviet Union, another million. Other nations, including Italy, France and Belgium, provided refuge for some, including Jews of Egyptian origin.

My history seems rather banal. I was born an Egyptian in 1944. My father, born in Cairo in 1908 was, like his father before him, an Ottoman. Egypt as an independent state did not yet exist. In 1922, during the slicing up of the Ottoman Empire, the Egyptian government passed a law granting Egyptian nationality to anyone

born in the Ottoman Empire and residing up to that date in Egypt. My grandfather, a native of Damascus, benefited from this law and was naturalised as an Egyptian, as were his sons.

In 1948, imitating the Nazi regime in Vichy, the Egyptian government expropriated the assets of all those Jews naturalised after 1922. At the age of 30, my father became stateless. As his mother had been Italian (my great-grandmother died in Rhodes as an Italian, as the island was occupied at that time by the Transalpine force) and, after a great many incidents, we also took on this nationality.

I did not benefit from any international aid whatsoever, either financial or moral. I do not remember any protests, not even those paying lip service, nor support from Europe or the UN. No-one raised a voice. We were only helped by the Jewish communities in our host country and by Israel for those who chose to go there.

I pity the Palestinian refugees. Couldn't the Arab states, instead of creating a hotbed of hatred, have integrated them?

I am also a refugee. Our house was taken, the fruits of my father's labours and those of his family stolen, our places of worship vandalised, my precious stamp collection torn away from me. However, I turned the page. This I had to do and have neither hatred nor bitterness towards those who chased me away. I am also a refugee but I did not teach my children to throw bombs, stones or Molotov cocktails.

Of the million Jews of Arab lands, fewer than 10,000 remain, sometimes exposed to arbitrary rulings but, more often than not, tolerated and despised.

Click on the AJR web site for photos of AJR's 60th anniversary tea at the Grosvenor House Hotel.
www.ajr.org.uk

AJR Journal extends its sympathy to all those who have lost family and friends in the recent terrorist outrage in the USA.

Newsround

Kos memorial

A memorial commemorating the Jews of Kos, deported to Auschwitz in 1944, has been erected at the entrance to the island's old synagogue, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*. Twelve of those deported survived and three descendants still live on the island.

Gecas dies

Since Lithuania's request for his extradition was rejected by the Scottish authorities on the grounds that the alleged war criminal was too ill to face proceedings, Anton Gecas has died.

Jedwabne mayor resigns

The mayor of Jedwabne, the Polish town in the public eye after the truth about a massacre of Jews by their non-Jewish neighbours came to light, has resigned. He has found that many of the townspeople seem unwilling to acknowledge the newly uncovered facts.

Slovakian commission

The Slovakian government is to set up a commission to establish the value of property seized from Jews with a view to considering compensation, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*. The central Jewish representative body has recommended that any proceeds be applied to the preservation of Slovak Jewish culture.

Mugabe accuses Jews

Zimbabwe's president has accused southern African Jewish businesses of conspiring to close down textile and clothing businesses in Zimbabwe. Jewish businesses in Zimbabwe are already operating in difficult circumstances.

Wallenberg monument daubed

A monument of Raoul Wallenberg in Stockholm was defaced within hours of its inauguration by King Carl Gustav. The purpose of the defacement has yet to be clarified.

Stamp issue

The opening of the Berlin Jewish Museum on 9 September was marked with the issue of a postage stamp valid for the German postal system.

MK