

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Trotsky recycled

Though the 'great' revolutionary has been dead these sixty years, his ghost refuses to lie down. This is shown by various current developments which range from the sublime to the ridiculous. To start with the latter, cinema-goers will soon see Trotsky, the sexagenarian lover, on screen. A Hollywood film, currently in production, features him and the painter couple Frieda Kahlo and Diego Rivera in an 'eternal triangle' situation. Trotsky is Geoffrey Rush, whose role as the pianist in *Shine* established him as a first-rate interpreter of brilliant Jewish monomaniacs.

Of Trotsky's brilliance there can be little doubt. In the early days of the Communist International he would address gatherings consecutively in Russian, German, French and English. By the late Twenties however, this internationalism, as well as personal rivalry, had pitched him into a fight to the death with the Russia-centred Stalin.

Dying in Mexican exile, he bequeathed to the world the less than benign legacy of Trotskyism. This still has adherents in Western countries. In France, Prime Minister Jospin only transmuted into a Social Democrat after a spell as a Trotskyite militant, and their presidential candidate Krivine polled two million votes some years ago.

In Britain, Trotskyism is only a residual force that intermittently attracts the spotlight by mobilising opposition either to neo-Nazis or to Israel. These two targets may be

mutually contradictory, but the twisted logic of the true Trot believers can accommodate both. The recent riots in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford have breathed new life into the Trotskyite anti-Nazi League (ANL), an organisation which superficially appears to be fighting the good fight.



Leon Trotsky

However, odd as it may seem, in a peculiar way the ANL feeds on racism to provide itself with a *raison d'être*. We have the Birmingham Labour MP Siôn Simon's account of how the anti-Nazis deliberately exacerbate race relations in his constituency for their own political advantage.

Last month's mayhem in the Northern textile towns was orchestrated by a bizarre coalition of BNP skinheads, Taliban-inspired young Muslims and Trots. The Trotskyite would-be fomenters of

revolution see the disadvantaged Asian inhabitants of the mill towns as a proletarian mass potentially capable of being mobilised for class war.

The mayhem that occurred - especially in Bradford, where rioters badly damaged the economic infrastructure of their own locality - dovetails neatly with Leon Trotsky's notorious *Elendstheorie*. The theory of immiseration stated, in a nutshell, that in order to goad workers into manning the barricades, Socialists should not ameliorate their conditions, for instance by trade union action but, on the contrary, expose them to the full force of capitalist exploitation. A variation on this perverse high risk prescription - didn't the KPD argue that the Nazi take-over would finally open the German workers' eyes to the reality of capitalism? - was played out in last November's US presidential elections. There the Democrat would undoubtedly have won - irrespective of the Florida shenanigans - if the Green 'consumers' advocate' Ralph Nader had not split the anti-Bush vote. Having helped to put the man who tore up the Kyoto protocol into the White House, the Greens attempted to justify their wrecking tactics by arguing that under Bush, America's consumers will embark on a steep learning curve about corporate greed - and, anyway, Gore was hardly an anti-capitalist friend of the earth.

Yet again 'the best is the enemy of the good'. In their bizarre way the advocates of recycling the earth's finite resources are currently recycling Trotsky.

Loathsome

Among the comments on Michael Portillo's demise, one described him as a "self-loathing Tory." Echoes here of 'Jewish self-hatred' - yet the difference is vast. Portillo could, conceivably, abjure Toryism, whereas Jewishness is genetically (as well as in many cases, culturally) transmitted.

In the nineteenth century, self-loathing Jews would convert to Christianity and embrace reaction. In the last century they often abjured religion and veered leftwards. Hirsch Apfelbaum became Gregory Zinoviev, not merely to evade Tsarist police scrutiny, but also to slough off his Jewish identity. Yevsektia (Jewish section of the Soviet Communist Party) militants enthusiastically closed down synagogues and hounded Zionists.

Anglo-Jewish Communists did not want to lag behind their comrades. Imbued with the 'faith', they transmitted their own anti-Zionism to the next generation. Signatories to the latest 'Boycott Israel' appeal include such CPGB progeny as children's books author Michael Rosen, and the comedian Alexei Sayle.

These boycott-mongers blithely ignore the fact that Yasser Arafat trod Ehud Barak's olive branch - the most courageously far-reaching peace offer for half a century - into the dust. Nor do they seem perturbed by the existence of Hamas' Gaza training school for pre-teenage suicide bombers, where virtual toddlers are being educated for death, and promised instant translation to a virgin-thronged paradise.

Such an enterprise ought to revolt any humanely-inclined person on several counts: the rape of the mind of minors, the glorification of death, stupefying religious mysticism, and the depiction of women as chattels.

When, one wonders, will the boycott lobby use its leverage among the Palestinians to arrest the slide into the mind-boggling backwardness and Dark Age savagery which Hamas personifies?

RG

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Berlin's Jewish Museum re-opens

Closed for nearly a year to prepare the permanent exhibition, Berlin's Jewish Museum opens this month with a number of special events. The inauguration ceremony on 9 September will take place in the presence of German President Johannes Rau and Chancellor Schröder and will be attended by prominent international guests from the worlds of politics, business and the arts. After a concert given by Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and a gala dinner, the Museum will be opened by President Rau. During the week which follows, special events will celebrate the opening, including a Day of Remembrance in honour of donors and lenders of exhibition artefacts, a 'Students' Day' and a day geared towards families.

The exhibition has been planned with a 'family' audience in mind. The approach is chronological and is based on scholarly research. Over twenty historians, Jewish studies' specialists and art historians have been involved in researching the permanent exhibition. The exhibition will change in the light of ongoing research and the academic debate surrounding the history of the Jews in Germany.

Between its initial opening in January 1999 and January 2001, there were nearly 350,000 visitors to the empty building.

Irving's appeal fails

The Court of Appeal has endorsed the judgement of the High Court in finding that no libel had been committed by Prof Deborah Lipstadt when she described David Irving as a dangerous spokesman for Holocaust denial in her book *Denying the Holocaust*. One of the Appeal Court judges was quoted as saying that Irving could be described as dangerous by virtue of his historiographical methods. The Court of Appeal judgement upholds the description of Irving by Mr Justice Gray as a racist Holocaust denier who deliberately distorted historical facts. Prof Lipstadt expressed herself pleased with the judgement but acknowledged that there would always be those prepared to pervert historical records for their own ends.

Refugee mementos needed for new exhibition

Photographs, artefacts and documents relating to refugee experiences and refugee organisations are sought for an exhibition currently being created to record and illustrate the experiences of German-speaking Jewish refugees in Britain. Sponsored by the AJR, in association with the Jewish Museum and the Wiener Library, the exhibition is due to open at the Jewish Museum, Camden, in the spring of next year, a major event in celebration of the AJR's 60th Anniversary.

Among subjects of special interest are refugee hostels, refugee businesses, enemy alien tribunals, internment (on the Isle of Man and elsewhere), refugees' work experiences, shipment to Canada and Australia, and experiences in the Pioneer Corps and in other regiments of the British Army. Organisations of interest include Belsize Square Synagogue, the Free German League of Culture, the Austrian Centre, the Laterndl and Blue Danube Club.

Any material on the Finchley Road area, as well as refugee life in general, is also of great interest to the curators. This includes information about the Cosmo Café (photos of the interior and exterior being especially sought), the Dorice, and other meeting places.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you believe that you could either donate or lend items of relevance to 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 1141. Fax: 020 8343 2162.

*The Chairman,
Management
Committee and Staff
wish all AJR
members a happy,
healthy & peaceful
New Year.*

Exiles to the left of them - exiles to the right of them

Richard Grunberger

One of the questions which puzzled observers of the South African scene during the apartheid years was that the Afrikaners, though descended from Dutch stock, were infinitely more bigoted and backward-looking than their cousins 'back home'.

The partial answer to the question is suggested by the synonym for Afrikaner, i.e. Boer. This word, cognate with the German *Bauer* (smallholder), indicates that the Afrikaners left overcrowded Holland in quest of land they might appropriate for themselves. They backed up this appropriation with a version of Calvinism in which Blacks were predestined to be the White man's servants.

The obverse process to this redistribution of the population of the Netherlands - whereby (some) bigots emigrated and more liberal elements remained at home - occurred in mid-19th century Germany. After the failure of the

1848 Revolution many liberal Germans lost hope and went abroad (mainly to America). They had already been preceded into exile by free spirits like Heinrich Heine and George Herwegh. Thus it happened that the ex-'48er Carl Schurz became US Secretary of the Interior at the time Bismarck made himself 'Iron Chancellor'.

Interestingly enough, Britain has, over the last thirty years, created its own tiny offshoot, a 'settler' mini state with a Boer mindset and near-permanent sunshine. A quarter of a million expatriate Britons live along the various Spanish costas. Most are ludicrous xenophobes, calling the continental Europeans, among whom they live dishonest and worse. They likewise harbour hardline views on asylum seekers in the UK - while they themselves have found asylum from the British climate (not only in its meteorological, but also in its political and cultural manifestations).

Name association games

Richard Grunberger

During the American presidential election campaign, 'shrinks' reported that the long drawn-out election battle caused some of their clients to have dreams revolving around images suggested by the names of the presidential candidates. Some dreamt of the burning bush out of which God spoke to Moses - others of blood and mayhem. A presidential candidate, almost as unfortunately named as Al Gore, was Bob Dole; his name must, at least subconsciously, have suggested unemployment pay to American voters. However, name association games can also yield humorous results. At the time of the Watergate scandal a lot of innocent amusement could be derived from the fact that two of the main culprits were called Ehrlichman and Kleindienst (*Ehrlich* translates as honest, and *ein kleiner Dienst* is a small service).

English public life has also thrown up some peculiar misnomers. The excessively slim William Pitt was known as 'the bottomless pit', while Edward Heath attracted the epithet the 'blasted heath'

from his Shakespeare-reading critics. At a less elevated level Britain has had a close-shaving Chancellor of the Exchequer called Barber and a Foreign Office Minister named Butler, who really acted out the role of Jeeves vis-à-vis Joachim von Ribbentrop (who, of course, was a far cry from Lord Peter Wimsey). To continue the Ribbentrop theme: Nazi luminaries bore telltale names like Todt (death) Knochen (bone) Axmann (axe-man) Speer (spear) List (cunning) and Daluege (Lie). More recently two outstanding German Chancellors have borne the names of Brandt and Kohl, both pregnant with meaning. The former translates as conflagration (e.g. *Reichstagsbrand*) while the latter has two connotations. Literally, *Kohl* means cabbage, but informally it denotes rubbish or nonsense.

The current Austrian Chancellor, who conferred respectability on the neo-Nazi Haider, glories in the appellation Schüssel meaning bowl. What the name calls to mind, however, is no Jamesian Golden Bowl but a *Leibschüssel*, i.e. bed-pan.

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London's newest market

Most European cities grew from a medieval core, their population burgeoning as a consequence of agrarian enclosures and industrialisation. Mid-nineteenth century railways, which linked manufacturing towns with their markets, also brought cheap and efficient travel to the new suburbs. In London, an army of horse-drawn carts, carriages and buses, upon which the whole distributive economy depended, clogged the narrow city streets long before an age of motorised transport achieved a similar impasse.

Forty years ago traffic congestion in Central London had reached a crisis point. Prof Colin Buchanan produced his reasoned analysis of 'Traffic in Towns' and the concept of charging a fee for entry into congested city centres was first mooted. Charges were to be based on notional 'congestion costs' ie the costs of reduced journey times imposed by the last (marginal) motorist on vehicles already using the system. This concept (challenged at the time by this author in the letter columns of the *Financial Times* no less) was considered too political a hot potato for its time, even by such a go-head Minister of Transport as Ernest Marples.

Fast forward to the present, and London's first elected mayor, the redoubtable Ken Livingstone, has accepted use of the market in road space as a prime source of finance for public transport. In two years' time an inner London zone, entry into which will cost £5 during working hours on Mondays to Fridays, will be demarcated, with defaulters being entrapped on a computerised camera system and fined. It is hoped to reduce traffic by some 15%, but even a planned additional 200 buses hardly begin to offer the needed carrying capacity. Only a revitalised underground railway - whose fate is currently subject to a major political battle - can provide that.

Life and death of a Polish shtetl

Gloria Tessler

The life of the doomed Polish village Luboml, decimated by the Nazis in October 1942, has been recreated at Camden's Jewish Museum at the behest of one of its most devoted surviving sons. Aaron Ziegelman emigrated to the US in 1938 at the age of nine and 60 years later he decided to preserve the unforgettable faces of his past in the travelling exhibition **Remembering Luboml - Images of a Jewish Community**, in London until October 28. Ziegelman recalls a place without cars, radio or running water, famous names or even a big mountain or a picturesque river. "But there was a thriving community, socially, culturally, religiously and politically." Only 51 out of the population of 4,000 Jews survived.

Some 2,000 photographs and artefacts from over 100 families and international archives, facilitated by the town's own four professional photographers, tell his story. You don't so much stare at the photographs, you enter them. Like so many small places the world over, vulnerable to massacre by tribe, terrorism or political dictat, Luboml is now a ghost town, haunted by the murdered Jews who formed ninety per cent of its population. Their faces tell a story of optimism as well as poverty: the football team, a group of cyclists and children queuing for clothes donated by the Talmud Torah.

Jewish artistic talent

Jewish Artists Awards 2001, a competition to find talented artists, is being promoted jointly by the Ben Uri Gallery and Friends of the Hebrew University. It offers opportunities to Jewish artists aged 17 and over whilst raising money for cancer research at the Hebrew University and for the acquisition fund of the Ben Uri Gallery. The awards ceremony will take place on 18 November 2001 as part of the Festival of Jewish Arts and Culture.



Jewish girls in Luboml, 1930s.
Collection of Fruna Golod.

Opening the exhibition, the Polish-Catholic actress Rula Lenska quoted from her late mother's memoir in a *faux* Polish accent, which spoke affectionately of local Orthodox Jews in their foxtail hats with shops full of sweet - smelling soap. Later photographs of survivors, stern-faced and uncomprehending at a monument to their Holocaust dead in 1945, are the most poignant. And what about the woman cuddling her grandson en route for America? Was she emigrating alone? Her face has an unfathomable sorrow, hope, strength and fatalism.

Indeed, the greatest tribute Ziegelman can pay to his birthplace is for its people to be remembered not as victims but as a community of true vitality. "And by doing so," he claims, "we add dignity to their memory."

There will also be an exhibition of finalists' work. Details will appear in the Arts & Events guide in the November issue of AJR Journal.

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Anglo-Jewry and the Refugees from the Continent

Final part

Dr Anthony Grenville

The tendency of the refugees to remain at arm's length from Anglo-Jewry, while embracing many aspects of British life and society, emerges clearly in the *AJR Information*. Originally, the founders of the Association had expected the refugees to integrate fully into Anglo-Jewry; this was indeed explicitly stated as one of the aims of the Association on its foundation in 1941, but it was to remain unfulfilled.

The amount of material on Anglo-Jewry in the journal is so huge that I can only cover a tiny sample of it here, taken from the years 1957/58. In March 1958 appeared articles (in German) by Nelly Wolffheim, an eminent teacher and educationist. The articles have the title 'Jüdische Beziehungen zu Nichtjuden' ('Jewish relations with non-Jews') but the catalyst for them was Nelly Wolffheim's encounter with British Jews, a group stranger to her than most non-Jews: "The idea of analysing my relationships with non-Jews arose from conversations with several English Jews in whom I encountered an attitude which was alien to me. I had not, in Germany, come across this fear of assimilation and rejection of closer ties with non-Jews. The conscious tendency to keep to their own kind was totally alien to me." The bafflement of the assimilated German Jew at the enclosed sub-culture of Anglo-Jewry, defined by customs and practices designed to maintain a separate Jewish identity, finds clear expression here.

Favourable impressions of the British

Her evident unease with British Jews led Nelly Wolffheim to review her relations with non-Jews in Britain, which she depicts as highly positive. She lists the conditions under which she lived after her arrival in Britain shortly before the war, in the home of her guarantor, a devout High Church Anglican: "An invitation to stay with her for 6 weeks (it became months), room with en suite bathroom, meals together, breakfast in bed, afternoon tea

with guests in my room, when I felt like it, and absolutely no obligation to work." She went to Oxford as a wartime evacuee, and was profoundly impressed by the tolerance and consideration she encountered in Christian circles there, in particular the British gift for putting strangers at their ease by politeness: "One didn't have the feeling one was an exotic foreigner, but rather that one could be oneself...Ideological disagreements were overcome by polite behaviour and the kindness of landladies."

What interests me here is not so much the accuracy of Nelly Wolffheim's observations of the British, but rather the question of perceptions. Perceptions are all-important in this area, and the perceptions here, as so often in the *AJR Information*, are twofold. Anglo-Jewry is seen as alien, difficult to approach and as guided in its communal life by habits and values not shared by assimilated German Jews. The British, by contrast, are generally depicted in a thoroughly favourable light; their qualities of tolerance, decency, fairness, courtesy, a gentlemanly consideration for those less fortunate and an understated generosity of spirit are repeatedly emphasised. One might speak of a dual mechanism of rejection and attraction at work here, of the rejection of Anglo-Jewry as one of the factors fuelling an eagerness to embrace what is plainly a *Wunschbild* of middle-class British society. The process of assimilation into the professional middle class, brutally interrupted in Germany and Austria, was to be resumed and accelerated in Britain.

Anglo-Jewry in the *AJR Information*

For many years, the *AJR Information* ran a column entitled 'Anglo-Judaica', which aimed to keep its readers informed about developments in Anglo-Jewry. The image of Anglo-Jewry in the *AJR Information* in 1957/58 tends to dwell on its failings, especially the problems of internal

conflicts, financial deficits and declining membership. In March 1957, fairly typically, the journal reports in its column 'Anglo-Judaica' the failure of the Centenary Appeal for Jews' College to meet its target after 4½ years. Another theme is the dearth of culture in Anglo-Jewry, as in the comments of the writer Alexander Baron, who is reported as saying at a symposium held during Jewish Book Week that there was no market for Jewish literature in Britain, where Jews "grew up in an atmosphere hostile to art". In April 1957, one of the perennial internal divisions within Anglo-Jewry emerges in the report of a statement by the President of the Anglo-Jewish Association that there was "absolutely no chance of reconciliation" between his organisation and the Board of Deputies.

The theme of a breach between the friends of the refugees and other sections of Anglo-Jewry appears in the reports of a bitter conflict at the West London Synagogue, where the Senior Minister, Rabbi Reinhart, and his deputy were driven to resign. Rabbi Reinhart, who had run the inter-denominational 33 Club, which welcomed the newly arrived refugees and had helped care for refugee children at Lingfield House, Isleworth, was known to have taken a special interest in the refugees, and the journal pointedly published a tribute to him the following month, detailing his charitable efforts on their behalf.

Throughout, a clear divide between the attitude of Anglo-Jewry and that of the Continental Jews from the German-speaking lands can be discerned. The cultural and historical factors separating them led, in my view, to the refusal in large measure of the Continental Jews to merge into Anglo-Jewry and their consequent willingness to recreate their own Continental culture within the framework of a close association with and assimilation to Britain, to British society and a British style of life.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

UNFAIR TREATMENT

Sir - As a survivor of a German forced labour camp and AJR member, I was disgusted to learn that 51 American lawyers are creaming off more than US\$ 54 million from the money to be paid to us survivors and victims of the forced labour camps, whilst the sums allocated to us are comparatively paltry - between \$2500 and \$7500 each. More unsettling is that the Conference of Jewish Material Claims against Germany, World Jewish Congress and other Jewish organisations are doing nothing to effect a more honest, fair and fast distribution of the monies. I understand that the legal teams will get all their money in the next few weeks, yet many survivors like me will have to wait. Does anyone care about us enough to fight for justice on our behalf? Or are we to die as victims without proper compensation for our sufferings?

Hedi Frankl Fischer
London NW4

ISRAEL & THE PALESTINIANS

Sir - If only the solution to the Israel-Arab conflict was as simple as Inge Trott suggests (*August Letters*). The simple truth is that no one on the Palestinian side is prepared to make a lasting peace with Israel; whenever progress is made (as at Camp David), immediate further demands are put on the table by the Palestinians.

Never has Abba Eban's statement that "Since 1947 the Palestinians have never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity" been truer than today.

Freddie Ingram
Newcastle/Tyne

Sir - In biblical times, the Israelites lived also on what is now called the

West Bank and on some land east of the River Jordan. In 1948 the Jordanian army seized the West Bank and held it until 1967. It has always been the custom for victors in war to annex territory of the vanquished to keep them away from their borders in the event of future conflict. (Examples are Alsace-Lorraine and the annexation by Russia and Poland of a considerable part of East Germany). If the Arabs had won one of the wars they initiated, would they have returned any conquered territory?

In Summer 2000, Ehud Barak offered some far-reaching concessions to achieve peace. Arafat rejected them and chose to increase the Intifada before Ariel Sharon walked on the Temple Mount. If mortal enemies confront you with guns and suicide bombers, it is not an adequate response to throw matzo balls at them.

Henry Schragenheim
London N15

STATISTICS, STATISTICS

Sir - So a recent survey in Austria showed that 24% of Austrians believe the country would be better off without Jews (*Newsround July 2001*). I would like to know who commissioned the survey and whether it is lawful in Austria even to ask such a question. I wonder how I would feel coming out of - say - Chancery Lane underground station and being asked whether this country would be better off without its Pakistanis?

Henry Bass
London W2

AUSTRIAN PENSIONS

Sir - I have had recent correspondence from the General Secretary of the *Nationalfonds der*

Republik Österreich which makes it clear that the standard payment to ex-Austrian refugees will no longer apply for reasons, they say, of fluctuations in the exchange rate creating inequality between recipients in different countries. From now on, payments - to be made in the payee's local currency - will be the equivalent of a fixed sum determined in Austrian Schillings. My latest information is that the amount receivable in the UK will be AS 105,000, considerably less than previous payments.

HE Reiner
London NW7

ONCE A JEW...

Sir - No-one can be baptised twice (*July Letters*) unless the person abrogated his Christian faith and then returned to it later. The sense of the Nuremberg Laws was purely racial and had nothing to do with religion. I was a "Gesetzesjude" born of a Christian-born half Aryan mother and a Jewish father who converted to Catholicism before his marriage to her. Until I was 14, I did not know of my Jewish ancestry. In 1941 I converted from RC to Anglican. So "once a Jew" does not apply to me because only under Nazi race laws was I ever a "Jew."

EH Kenneth
Grimsby

AWAY FROM IT ALL

Sir - If places on next year's trip to Bournemouth prove hard to come by, the reason will be the kindness and expertise of Carol and Sylvia who made our holiday such a happy event. The Cumberland Hotel offered us excellent food, a lovely terrace and a swimming pool. We visited Beaulieu in the New Forest and enjoyed a trip by rickety bus as well as a ride on the Monorail. Evening entertainment included Bingo and a quiz where many members excelled themselves!

Steffi Steiner
London NW3

Central Office For Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

Austrian Reconciliation Fund

With the rejection of two law suits in a US court, those victims of Nazi persecution used as slave and forced labourers in Austria can now receive compensation payments. In exchange for providing reparations, the Austrian state and industry have secured legal peace.

As with the Foundation created in Germany, the Austrian Reconciliation Fund makes compensation payments for slave labourers - AS 105,000 (approx £4,000) - and forced labourers - AS 35,000 (approx £1,500). A third category of labourers who worked exclusively in agriculture and forestry will receive a payment of AS 20,000 (approx £700).

Those interned in Mauthausen or the sub-camps of Dachau should apply through the German Foundation.

It is thought that as many as 20,000 former labourers are expected to benefit. The deadline for making application is 27 November 2002. Completed applications and further enquiries should be addressed to PO Box 44, A-1011 Vienna, Austria.

Swiss Refugee Programme

Applicants under the Refugees class of the Swiss bank settlement have until 30 September 2001 to file claims. Compensation is paid to those "who were either denied entry or expelled from Switzerland, or were admitted into Switzerland but abused or mistreated there."

Claims advice sessions

The first in what is hoped will be a series of talks on Holocaust-era compensation and restitution claims has taken place. Over 50 survivors and refugees from the North of England and Wales attended the question and answer session at Harold House in Liverpool. Further meetings are planned for Edinburgh and Glasgow on 3 September 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.

Congratulations

to Hilde Boman-Behram on the award to her by the City of Vienna of a gold medal in recognition of her contribution to expressionist dance, choreography and teaching.

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Arts and Events Diary September

Mon 3 Ralph Blumenau: Wisdom & Cleverness. Club 43. 7.45 pm.

Sun 9 Cartoon workshop led by Janis Goodman. 3 pm. Jewish Museum, Finchley.

Mon 10 Harry Leyrer: Demography - the fateful science of population study. Club 43. 7.45 pm.

An evening with Rabbi Lionel Blue - 8 pm. £5. Jewish Museum, Finchley.

Mon 24 Mary Shakeshaft:
R.L. Stevenson - Jekyll & Hyde?
Club 43. 7.45 pm.

Until 23 Sep Judaica exhibition at the Jewish Museum, Dorotheergasse 11, Vienna.

Until 14 October Leo Baeck:
Aus dem Stamme von Rabbinern.
Frankfurt Jewish Museum.
0049 69 21230705.

Until 28 October Remembering Luboml: Images of a Jewish Community. Jewish Museum, Camden Town.

Until 4 Nov Kladovo - successful & unsuccessful escapes to Palestine. Photographic exhibition at the Jewish Museum, Vienna.

Until December Exhibition of Jewish cartoonists. Jewish Museum, Finchley.

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

Sternberg Centre for Judaism/Jewish Museum, Finchley. 80 East End Road, London N3 2SY. Tel: 020 8346 2288/8349 1143.



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ARTS & REVIEWS

Art Notes

Gloria Tessler

This is not the first time, in this column, that I have called on Jewish entrepreneurs to help find a home for the **Ben Uri Art Gallery**. The pocketful of artists exhibited this summer by the Ben Uri at the **Manor House** should make those with the power to transform the position of Jewish art in Britain ashamed of themselves. Happy to lend their names to major national events in the art world, they turn their backs on the gifted artists within their own community, leaving their works in the dark. Why does the Ben Uri still have no home? Why is most of its considerable collection of acclaimed art in storage? And why is it left to the brave souls who man the Manor House Society but are unused to the planning of art shows to hang a paltry few exhibits unlinked in style or subject matter on walls unsuitable for works of art because of their classic embellishments? Aptly named **Secrets from the Ben Uri Collection**, the history of these few paintings on display, including **Jacob Kramer's** discreet pastel portrait of Lord Rothschild, remains indeed a secret, the lives of its artists a mythology. The exhibition is devoid of wall-texts or brochures. The lack of communal sponsorship for Jewish art contrasts with the £150 million spent annually on arts sponsorship in Britain, even during two recessions.

How horribly ironic it is that I have just returned from a visit to Terezin where I was moved, as ever, by the works of the imprisoned artists including those by the children. The old ghetto and transit camp has changed since I was last there, and the theatre which housed the budding and full flowered talents of some of mankind's

most gifted martyrs has been reconstructed alongside the ghetto dormitory. It is enough to make you cry when you consider how the Nazis fostered the gifts of their victim-race while we do nothing, in our own community, about those celebrated by outsiders. Interestingly, the ghetto this summer featured a competition among Czech schoolchildren to paint what they felt about Terezin had they been incarcerated there. The work was poignant in subject matter and treatment, and you felt the children really empathised with their task. Inevitably, you are drawn to comparisons with the work of the genuine child inmates. It took me some moments to realise the answer that was always obvious. The real children of Terezin were, of course, no longer children.

There is a definite tactile quality to **Dorian Levine's** drawings and watercolours at Highgate's **Lauderdale House**. They represent 80 years of the artist's work, in which Kenwood and other parks feature prominently - and these, with some of his still-lives, have a confident, energetic yet delicate touch.



'Friends' - George Byam Lynch

Caribbean art was also celebrated this summer with **George Byam-Lynch's** rhythmic and exciting paintings at the **Sheridan Russell Gallery** and an extended exhibition, **New Horizons in Jamaican Art**, at the **Jamaican High Commission**.

RG's INTERFACE

Birthday. The Berlin-born, US-domiciled pianist, Grete Sultan, is ninety-five. She originated from a family which epitomised the German-Jewish *Bildungsbürgertum*. Her grandmother corresponded with Clara Schumann and her parents' social circle included the composer Busoni and the eminent surgeon Sauerbruch. As a young musician Grete herself made the acquaintance of Schönberg and Bartok. None of this helped after 1933. The family was decimated, but Grete reached Lisbon in a sealed carriage in 1941! Some time after arriving in New York, she moved into the Westbeth building, Greenwich Village, where her neighbours were the dance pioneer Merce Cunningham and the modernist composer John Cage. Cage dedicated a work to her which she recorded.

Roll of honour. A June issue of the mass circulation weekly *Der Spiegel* carried, in addition to an interview with Marcel Reich-Ranitzki, his *Kanon der deutschen Literatur*. Of sixty-two listed 19th and 20th century writers, sixteen, i.e. a quarter, were (wholly or partly) Jewish: Heinrich Heine, Arthur Schnitzler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Karl Kraus, Carl Sternheim, Alfred Döblin, Franz Kafka, Kurt Tucholsky, Joseph Roth, Erich Kästner, Anna Seghers, Peter Weiss, Paul Celan, Sarah Kirsch, Wolf Biermann, Jurek Becker. Jews never exceeded one percent of the population of Germany.

Death. The Canadian writer Mordecai Richler has died aged 70. His family intended him to become a rabbi, but he produced work which some considered a slur on the Jewish community. In the film of *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, for instance, the protagonist, commissioned to make a barmitzvah film, screened footage of initiation rituals among primitive tribes. Latterly Richler's work was focused on French Quebec's separatism in which he detected an antisemitic undercurrent.

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

Reviews

A weighty work

THE HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPAEDIA,
ed. Walter Laqueur,
University Press, 2000

Whoever uses this splendid work of reference may think they have acquired knowledge of the fateful events from other sources; perhaps they are survivors themselves. But they can scarcely know the background, the steps whereby the murderous plans were put together or muddled up and thus made more terrible. Of course, this is an encyclopaedia; so one looks up, often not in sequence, what the moment brings up.

The main work is preceded by a chronology beginning with 1933 and ending at 1945. The main articles are signed, often with illustrious names. The chief villain, Adolf Hitler himself, spreads over almost eight pages. And no matter how often one has read about this character, one must be astonished anew at how such poison can have accumulated in one human mind. The article is written with cool consideration, allowing no David Irving-like speculations - AH is the inventor and initiator of the elimination of the Jews in Europe. Not Goebbels, not Göring, not even Himmler. They were puppets of the

puppeteer. Their own weight is recorded in their own niche of this compendium, and thus is their place in crime fixed.

The encyclopaedia is signified by the word 'Holocaust'; yet astonishingly the accuracy of the word in this context is doubted. It denotes a burning sacrifice, yet it was in reality an extermination made possible by WWII, its means adjusted to changing situations. By the time of the vaunted Wannsee Conference, the killings were well under way and it was an attempt to bring 'order' into chaos. The Conference is notable for systematising the euphemisms for mass killing and/or temporary exploitation. Perhaps the words *Shoah*, or ethnic extermination, would be more telling. But 'Holocaust' has by now been universally accepted. The question is raised whether the Final Solution (another sickening euphemism) was only the spearhead for actions such as the decimation of the Slavs and others to make room for a German empire, primarily in Eastern Europe. There is one example of this: the Gypsies. It is astonishing, perhaps shameful, how little one knows about that attempted extermination. True, even after reading Raul Hilberg's excellent entry, it is still difficult to understand the so-called race experts' theories about why and how

to do away with that minority. Often the 'science' part of it runs counter to the anti-Jewish nonsense - e.g. Gypsy *Mischlinge* were sometimes treated worse than their Jewish equivalents. But, tragically, the fatal results were often the same. It shook me that their fate did not quite stir me as much as that of the Jews.

Obviously, high up in the Compendium is the word 'Antisemitism' - another poisoned dart, horribly imprecise and yet tragically fateful. It was invented in 1879 by the German journalist Wilhelm Marr. In his article, Peter Pulzer holds the sentiment responsible for "post-Christian" Jew-hatred. I think this hatred pre-dates Christianity - say the Egyptian diaspora and its end in the famous Exodus which gave rise to anti-Jewish tales resounding into our time.

The encyclopaedia deals with the Nazi atrocities in the various European countries in their alphabetical places. Researchers will find unexpected events recording heroic support for the persecuted, some memorialised as Righteous Gentiles. Names include those of a Japanese consul in Berlin and a 19-year-old girl in Holland.

This is a weighty book in every sense of the adjective (it weighs almost 5 lbs). Rarely can such terrible happenings have been spelled out so concisely, so scientifically.

John Rossall

Collaboration or self-help?

THE INEXTINGUISHABLE
SYMPHONY, Martin Goldsmith,
John Wiley & Sons Inc, NY, 2000

The *Inextinguishable Symphony* is the popular name given to Symphony No. 4 by the Danish composer Carl Nielsen. Written in 1914 it is a transcendent work conceived as a beacon of hope for the forces of renewal that he hoped would follow the carnage of the Great War. It was to have an unanticipated and ironic future, when in 1942 it became the last work to be performed by the Jüdische Kulturbund of Berlin prior to

its enforced dissolution and the implementation of the Final Solution.

The Kulturbund is one of the more controversial features of the story of anti-Jewish attrition in Germany after 1933. Historians and commentators on the Holocaust seem divided in their view of it. Originally conceived by Kurt Singer, the former director of the Berlin Opera, he saw it as a way in which Jewish artists who had been removed from their jobs, could be given employment and provide a much needed source of cultural enhancement to the increasingly isolated community. The fact that the Kulturbund was used by Goebbels as

a means of propaganda to combat growing international criticism of Germany's treatment of the Jews, has been interpreted by some as a form of Jewish/Nazi collaboration. Martin Goldsmith quite rightly dismisses this reductionist analysis and illustrates, in considerable detail, the enormous value the organisation had as a vitally important morale booster for an increasingly harassed and desperate population. As he says, the suggestion that anyone, in the aftermath of Kristallnacht, would have been lulled into a sense of false security and neglected to emigrate because of Kulturbund

performances, is basically devoid of conviction. As it happens, his own parents' escape to the USA via Lisbon, only weeks before American entry into the War, amply makes the point that virtually anyone who could, did get out. The problem was the seemingly insurmountable difficulty of so doing, from an economic and bureaucratic point of view, for all but a fortunate minority.

With such a powerful and deeply personal story to tell, it is hardly surprising that the author has succumbed to the temptation to sink into sentimentality and hyperbole.

Land of promis(cuity)

BEFORE NIGHT FALLS,
Julian Schnabel,
on general release.

MOUTH TO MOUTH,
Kevin Elyot,
Royal Court Theatre

Time was when Jews and homosexuals were airbrushed off screen and stage. The starcrossed lovers in *Marty*, originally conceived as Jewish, reached the screen as American-Italians, Rock Hudson's marriage gave a new meaning to the phrase 'shotgun wedding' and Terence Rattigan transposed his heroes' same-sex love objects into the female gender. Since the Sixties, Hollywood and Shaftesbury Avenue have outed Jews and gays. Barbra Streisand kept her name (and her nose); on the West End stage the love that once 'dared not speak its name' has become so vociferous that sensitive theatre-goers require ear-plugs.

The tragic fact that the Jews (in Lewis Namier's words) have 'no history - only a martyrology' has throughout the last half century inspired stage and film classics from *Anne Frank's Diary* to *Schindler's List*. It sometimes seems that gay scriptwriters, anxious to create an equivalent martyrology of their own, are mining the AIDS epidemic for similar nuggets of drama. Two recent examples of this are the film *Before*

Whilst this tends to create a certain irritating sense of mawkishness, one should not let it obscure the very real depth of research that underpins this rendition of an extraordinary episode in 20th Century history. There is an element of 'Hollywood' story telling in the author's tendency to obscure the demarcations between fact and fictional recreation. Yet, it ultimately prevails as a book worth reading because of the sheer power of its subject matter and the care with which it has been researched.

John Adler

Night Falls and the play *Mouth to Mouth*.

In the film, an exiled Cuban writer is shown dying squalidly in New York after half a lifetime of 'gay abandon'. In other words he appears to have had as many sexual partners as a voracious bachelor would consume restaurant meals. This endless chain of promiscuity is somehow presented as a glorious exercise of personal freedom. Freedom - both in its political and sexual manifestations - is in fact the major theme running through the film. I loved the director's take on Cuba's poverty under Batista, and lack of freedom under Castro, but simply hated the sex.

When it came to *Mouth to Mouth*, I hated just about everything about it. In the Royal Court-premiered play, the catalyst is an incident where a fortyish AIDS sufferer, who had, sometime previously, saved a drowning schoolboy by giving him the kiss of life, goes 'mouth to mouth' with him on dry land. In addition to unrequited paedophilic yearnings, the play featured a philandering and simultaneously clueless father, and a mother who, having conceived her son out of wedlock, now harbours 'Oedipal' feelings towards him.

It appears that the death of tourists resulting from the Foot-and-Mouth epidemic caused the premature closure of *Mouth to Mouth*. Verily, it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good!

Richard Grunberger



Record Review

Erik Levi

In general, I am not a great fan of sampler discs on the grounds that it is far more desirable to experience complete pieces of music than bite-sized chunks. But it could be argued that this format offers an opportunity to introduce listeners to repertory not normally top of their shopping list. For this reason, Deutsche Grammophon's two-disc set *The Romance of Korngold* (461 834-2) is extremely welcome as a necessary corrective for a composer who is often dismissed as merely a purveyor of sentimental Hollywood film music.

In fact, Korngold's achievement was far more wide-ranging. Hailed as a precocious genius by Mahler, Korngold's prodigious talents took Central Europe by storm, his opera *Die tote Stadt* enjoying enormous success in the early 1920s. But by the time he emigrated to Hollywood as a refugee from Nazism, his opulent romantic style was no longer fashionable, and he was unable to resuscitate his concert and operatic career in the austere postwar era.

This generously-filled survey of his output offers some of his best-known works including the gloriously nostalgic Violin Concerto, wonderfully performed by Gil Shaham, and the famous operatic arias *Glück, das mir verblieb* (from *Die tote Stadt*) and *Ich ging zu ihm* (from *Das Wunder der Heliane*). But there are also some rare items such as the 1940s Passover Psalm and an intriguing excerpt from *Der Schneemann* which demonstrates the remarkable compositional fluency of the eight-year old. Predictably, Korngold's film music is well-represented, but it is rather frustrating that we get a paltry six minutes from the slow movement of the Symphony, especially since many experts regard it as the composer's masterpiece. And listening to just the first movement of the delightful Symphonic Serenade for String Orchestra made me impatient to hear the rest of the work.

PROFILE

Marion Koebner

Helen Aronson



spirits up. A year later, all the children were deported. Her next job was the 'privileged' one of working in a confectionery factory. During that time, she miraculously survived a 'round up' by hiding for hours in a bed in a house already cleared by the Nazis, returning home to her frantic mother and brother long after dark.

After the liquidation of the ghetto in 1944, she was among the 750 Jews chosen to stay behind to clear the ghetto of property. This became the concentration camp known as Jakuba 18. Helen's job was cleaning the Gauleiter Biebov's offices. Discovering that her mother was listed for deportation, she threatened to go with her. In this way, she was able to save her mother. Her unexpected friendship with Biebov's German secretary - who hid food for her at grave danger to herself - led to Helen being the chief witness in her postwar rehabilitation proceedings. Helen was one of those liberated by the Russians in January 1945, having hidden in a bunker - in freezing conditions and with little food - to avoid the last *appel* in the camp.

Immediately after the war, Helen

A sprightly 74 - year - old, Helen Aronson is perplexed but clearly delighted to receive one of the Greenwich Women of the Year 2001 awards. Hearing her story leaves one in no doubt that the award is richly deserved.

Helen was born in Pabjanice, a textile town in Poland then known as 'little Manchester.' The youngest of three children of a Zionist father, she remembers a happy childhood attending a Jewish primary school, protected from the antisemitism to which her older siblings were subjected at the *Gymnasium*. Her sister emigrated to Palestine in 1937.

The Germans entered Pabjanice a few days after the outbreak of war. Within weeks, wearing the yellow star had become compulsory and the segregation of Pabjanice's Jews was established with their move into the newly formed ghetto. With rationing in force, Helen's father found a way of getting ration cards for many who were unable to obtain them. As a result, together with two of the town's prominent inhabitants, he was arrested and imprisoned for several months, leaving his family to fend for themselves. Helen recalls the day he was released, carried home on the shoulders of his fellow townspeople. It would not be the first time her father demonstrated his courage and dedication to help others, which Helen feels destined to continue.

The Jews of Pabjanice were the first in the region to be moved to Lodz ghetto in May 1942. Helen and her family were able to stay together but the father volunteered to accompany those young children immediately separated from their parents and sent to Chelmo where they, and he, were murdered. Hearing that they were Mostush Chmura's family, Chaim Rumkowski - the now notorious *Judenälteste* - assured Helen's mother that he would look after them; it is to this that Helen attributes her survival. Initially she worked in an orphanage, accompanying the children to work and doing what she could to keep their

lived with her mother and brother in Lodz until emigrating to England in September 1946, thanks to an uncle in London providing the necessary documents. The hope that her mother and brother would follow was unfulfilled, her mother joining her sister in Palestine and her brother, thanks to friends, going to live in Australia. Helen's desire to make up for her lost education by going to school in London was thwarted by her uncle who wanted her to do his domestic work.

Very soon after arrival in Britain, Helen had been introduced to the son of one of her fellow travellers on the boat. They married. Originating from Warsaw, her husband had studied in Britain and was employed by the Ministry of Defence as an electrical engineer, a post involving some foreign postings. During the 1950s, Helen and her husband lived in Nigeria. Helen worked at the Israeli Embassy and was thrilled to be able to meet Golda Meir who, as Israel's Foreign Minister, visited Nigeria in 1958.

After a short stint in Shropshire, the family moved to Blackheath. As well as bringing up two daughters, Helen worked as a secretary for the same company for 23 years. Since retirement Helen has devoted herself to voluntary work, her special project being the Reminiscence Centre in Blackheath. As well as housing an exhibition about refugees from different eras (including a short section on Helen's story), the Centre provides "reminiscence boxes", a scheme devised by the charity Age Exchange. Helen helps to prepare the boxes - a collection of objects redolent of the past - which are then loaned to schools, residential homes and other institutions, as a means of educating children about a bygone age or stimulating older people into remembering their own stories.

Helen has provided information and documents both to the Holocaust Education Centre, Beth Shalom, and to the historian Martin Gilbert for his book *The Holocaust*. She is an active member of South London AJR, being their finance officer.

INSIDE the AJR



Members at Liverpool AJR launch with Marcia Goodman (centre front) and Susanne Green (centre back)

Liverpool AJR group's first meeting

Twenty refugees and Holocaust survivors, many travelling long distances, gathered at Liverpool's Harold House for the inaugural meeting of Liverpool AJR, the latest addition to the family of AJR's regional groups. A further nineteen people from North Wales and the North West pledged their support for future meetings.

A warm welcome from Susanne Green, AJR's North Region Groups Co-ordinator, was followed by a talk by Marcia Goodman, AJR's Head of Social Services, on the services available to members, including those of the new Central Office for Holocaust Claims headed by Michael Newman.

Each of those present was invited to give a short autobiography, a moving and interesting process which helped everyone to get to know each other. Losing no time at all, a planning committee was formed to arrange future events, Norman Fyne and Ruth Eisikovits being its first members. An early invitation was extended to Michael Newman, and a pre-Yomtov 'get-together' was booked for Harold House on Thursday 13 September at 11.30am to which all are invited. The members ended the meeting by enjoying a delicious buffet.

For further information about Liverpool AJR, tel: Susanne Green on 0151 291 5734.

Brighton

In the unavoidable absence of the scheduled speaker, Myrna Glass stood in to give a thumbnail sketch report of her recent visit to Israel. She had attended a lecture by Prof Gerald Steinberg whose view was that Yasser Arafat did not wish to go down in history as the man who recognised the State of Israel and gave up Palestinian territory. Hence he made no positive proposals during the 'Peace Negotiations' and did not want a permanent settlement. She also reported on a conference where the efforts to alleviate the acute water shortage and other environmental issues were debated. A lively discussion followed.

Rudi Simmonds

Next meeting: 10 September - social get-together

South London

Susannah Alexander's interesting talk about 'The Jews in England', started with the arrival of the first Jews who came with William the Conqueror in 1066 and followed their expulsion by Edward I and their return under Oliver Cromwell in 1650, after which they slowly acquired civil rights and counted a Jewish mayor and a Jewish MP among their number. Moneylending, blood libel and ritual murder allegations all played their part in the historical sweep which concluded with the 20th century waves of immigration from Russia, Poland and Nazi Germany.

Anne Poloway

Next meeting: 13 September - AM Alfred: "Democracy, voting systems & referenda."

Pinner

Selecting from his vast collection of jazz works, member and jazz aficionado Alf Keiles traced his own progress in South Africa from the time he arrived from Germany in 1936. During his engineering apprenticeship he met Peter Lotis (*Suddenly a song is born*) and then his future wife Esther, recalling wedding memories with Frank Sinatra (*I'll never smile again*). Together they met many world-famous artistes such as Sarah Vaughan (*The more I see you*) and set up Dorkay House to teach the Blues to the underprivileged talented blacks with phenomenal success. Alf made the moulds for the first South African LPs with Mr Harris of Trutone, whose daughter Etta Lazarus was in our audience.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: 6 September - Howard Midgen: Towns, mountain and tribes of Morocco with Jewish interest.

Leeds

Distinguished speaker Dr Stephen Smith spoke of memory and the obligation to remember. Remembering was essential to history and memorials were required to give dignity to those who had perished and to remind future generations. After showing slides photographed in Poland where nature has brought beauty and tranquillity to places where there had been brutal murder and violence, Dr Smith gave a discourse on education and learning from history and personal experiences. He described the recent developments at Beth Shalom. Everyone was visibly moved. It was a very special meeting and a great social occasion.

Trude Silman

Next meeting: 9 September - Jon Silverman (Title to be announced)

West Midlands

Next meeting: 30 September - Sir Bernard Zissman (Title to be announced)

KINDERTRANSPORT NEWS

David Jedwab

The two nominees proposed by the Kinder, Sigi Faith and Erich Reich, were duly elected to the AJR Management Committee at the AGM. We are confident that both will represent the interests of all AJR and Kinder members.

The Kinder will be well represented at the AJR 60th Anniversary Tea on 9 September. We hope you have ordered your tickets as the Tea is sold out.

Sue Read, director of *The Children Who Cheated the Nazis*, is to donate all 45 videotaped interviews from the film to the Wiener Library. Funds are required to convert this digitized material into viewer-friendly form - the Kinder have made a contribution towards meeting this cost. There are also ongoing discussions with the Wiener Library regarding the deposit of Kindertransport archives with them, as promised by the RoK.

Kinderlunches

3 September: speakers will be Lisa Schaefer, who organized Bertha's tours in Germany and Flor Kent, the designer of the Liverpool Street Kinder sculpture.

15 October: Erich Reich 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

Start the week

AJR's Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in Cleve Road, West Hampstead, invites members to start the week with a relaxing Monday. Whether your interest is in cards and games, or just relaxing in our lovely garden after a tasty lunch and schmoozing with your friends, you will always find a warm welcome from Sylvia Matus and her team.

The Day Centre is open between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm on Mondays. To find out more, telephone Sylvia on 020 7328 0208 or just turn up.

The Last Kindertransport

Edgar Flacker

Sixty-one years ago, a small number of German and Austrian Jewish children were able to reach safety in Britain from German-occupied territory. They disembarked at Liverpool harbour on 15 May 1940 after crossing the Channel and moving northwards along Britain's western coastline. An attempt to land on the south coast had failed as overzealous gunners, taking their boat - the SS *Bodegraven* - for an enemy vessel, had opened fire.

When puzzled British officials tried to talk to the children on arrival, they found communication difficult. The children spoke mostly in German, but one word, a name which to the officials' ears must have sounded like *Weesemuller*, was mentioned again and again, and became the key to understanding their story. The name was that of Gertruida Wijsmuller-Meijer, a courageous Dutch lady who had devoted her life to humanitarian causes. She was involved in Kindertransports from the beginning, travelled to Vienna in early December 1938 to meet with Eichmann and set up the first transport to the Netherlands and Britain for 600 children. Acutely aware of the implications for Jews of the German invasion of her country, she made a spur of the moment decision on 14 May 1940 to attempt, alone, to save as many children as she could. She organized transport, collected about 40 children from the Amsterdam Municipal Orphanage and drove them to the nearby port of IJmuiden, entrusting them to the captain of the *Bodegraven*, which departed for Britain that evening. Unfortunately she was unable to obtain more vehicles. A total of almost 2,000 children had to stay behind.

As very little is known about this last Kindertransport, it would be appreciated if Wijsmuller Kinder came forward to tell their story. Dr Flacker can be contacted through the Wiener Library.



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

SEPTEMBER		Afternoon entertainment:
Sun	2	Day Centre Open - No Entertainment
Mon	3	KT Lunch - Kard & Games Klub
Tue	4	Amanda Palmer Entertains
Wed	5	Primrose Powell Concert Cabaret
Thur	6	Jenny Kossew
Sun	9	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - ANNIVERSARY TEA
Mon	10	Kard & Games Klub
Tue	11	Stephen Baron & Paul Balmer - Violin & Piano
Wed	12	Daphne Lewis & Yeta Mendelsohn
Thur	13	Jack Davidoff & Friend
Sun	16	Day Centre Open - No Entertainment
Mon	17	Kard & Games Klub
Tue	18	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - ROSH HASHANAH
Wed	19	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - ROSH HASHANAH
Thur	20	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton
Sun	23	Day Centre Open - No Entertainment
Mon	24	Kard & Games Klub
Tue	25	Amanda Palmer Entertains
Wed	26	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - KOL NIDRE
Thur	27	DAY CENTRE CLOSED - YOM KIPPUR
Sun	30	Day Centre Open - No Entertainment

Announcements

Deaths

Michael Wald passed away peacefully in his sleep. Greatly missed by his wife Ellen, his children Malcolm and Sara and grandchildren.

Classified

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AJR Social Services Dept 020 7431 6161

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To baldly go

Richard Grunberger

Max: I'm only glad that Malcolm Rifkind didn't run.

Leo: Why is that?

Max: Because I can imagine what the competition would have called his backers.

Leo: What?

Max: *Rifkinder*.

Leo: What makes you say that?

Max: Didn't they dub Michael Portillo Miguel? And call his backers

Portillistas? And pronounce his name Portiyo to make him sound even more foreign?

Leo: But he isn't foreign *halachically* speaking.

Max: How do you make that out?

Leo: He has an English mother.

Max: Scots actually.

Leo: I stand corrected!

Max: But more importantly, how many Tories know *Halacha*?

Leo: That's true.

Max: And because they're not versed in Judaism, they don't know the importance of something else.

Leo: Which is?

Max: Hair. If the rabbis were short of hair they (a) covered the remnant with elaborate yarmulkas and (b) grew beards that could have been woven into rugs. But what do the Tories do? After "lightbulb" Hague, they anoint "billiard ball" Iain Duncan Smith.

Leo: They're a collection of alopecia addicts!

Max: If you study history you'll find that leaders usually become maniacs to compensate for physical handicaps. A withered arm drove the Kaiser, a singular testicle Hitler and a

pockmarked face Stalin. Hair loss accounted for at least three European dictators: Mussolini, Lenin and Khrushchev. And here comes Duncan Smith, looking like Samson after his tryst with Delilah!!

Leo: But he shows no dictatorial tendency.

Max: I wouldn't take that for granted! Just look at how readily his name would lend itself to a certain type of chanting.

Leo: Such as?

Max: Such as "*Wir danken unserm Führer Duncan*."

Leo: But this is England!

Max: Precisely! That's why I'm so astounded by the present-day Tories' lack of hair awareness. The English have always displayed instinctive political nous. How did they ensure that the crown didn't fall into the hands of a bald psychopath or a hairless loony? By making women, who are hardly ever bald, eligible for the throne. This country had Elizabeth as a queen a whole two hundred years before Russia and Austria got round to doing so with Catherine the Great and Maria Theresa.

To which I would add that the early Tories knew exactly how to trump their opponents. To convince the populace that the other side were devious and going to any lengths to disguise their hair loss, they dubbed them *perruques*.

Leo: *Perruques*?

Max: That's what they called the opposition among themselves but in public they labelled them Whigs - a short, sharp monosyllable that said it all! Whig was such a devastating form of abuse that, within a century, the Party disappeared from view just like the alopecia it was meant to disguise.

Leo: Clearly a case of "hair today, gone tomorrow."

disease. He also correctly predicted that further, often isolated, outbreaks would occur even after the disease appeared to have been vanquished.

Of course the Chief Scientific Adviser does not work in isolation, particularly when the problem lies outside his own speciality. Science now covers such vast areas of knowledge that no-one can be an expert on every aspect of it. Professor King is a prominent physical chemist whose research subject is the physics and chemistry of solid surfaces and reactions on them. He will therefore have consulted scientists working in the fields in question (in this case animal diseases and epidemiology) both in Britain and overseas allowing him to marshal the

Search Notices

Mala Zimetbaum. Born in Brzesko, Poland 16/01/1918. From March 1928, lived with her family in Antwerp, Belgium. Joined Hanoar Hatzioni. Later worked as a seamstress for Maison Lilian and then as a linguist-secretary in a small diamond business. She was arrested on 22/07/1942 and deported to Auschwitz on 15/09/1942. Her number was 19880. She escaped with Edward (Edek) Galinski - number 531 - on 24/06/1944 but both were recaptured and murdered. Would anyone who knew her in Poland, Belgium or Auschwitz or has any information about her and her family please contact John Paul Leavey, 42 Saint Brigids Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Eire. Tel: 0353 1459 2567. email: jpleavey@eircom.net

Margarete Pohl-Collin. German refugee living in London until 1960s. Corresponded with Karl Wolfskehl in New Zealand. Any information about her sought by researcher for Bayerischer Rundfunk. Please contact Ulrike Voswinkel, Siegfriedstrasse 10, 80803 Munich, Tel 0049 89348789, email voswinkel@aol.com

Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling. Author seeks anecdotes, lore, memories, leads regarding the Louis-Schmeling fights of 1936 and 1938 from those who read about or listened to them in England, Germany, Austria, or elsewhere. Contact David Margolick, 315 W. 86th St. #14F, New York, NY 10024. margolick@aol.com

Leopold Altmann. Born 5.5.1876 (?) in Schildberg/Poznan. Emigrated from Berlin to London ca. 1939. Had a daughter Betty. If you have information on them or their descendants, please contact Marianne Hartmann, Pastorsesch 10, 48159 Münster, Germany. Tel: 0049 251 212362, e-mail: H.Hartmann@uni-muenster.de

relevant evidence and then present busy ministers with a crisp analysis and recommendations on the most appropriate action to take.

King's predecessor from 1995 to 2000 was Sir Robert May who held a research professorship in zoology jointly between Oxford University and Imperial College, London. Both May, an Australian, and King, born in South Africa, come from the British Commonwealth. Perhaps their origins allow them to talk more plainly than their English equivalents. May once described as 'crap' the science coverage in two English tabloid newspapers after their one-sided reporting of the debate on genetically modified food. He is now an independent life peer.

Science Notebook

Prof Michael Spiro

Science Bigwigs

Did you know that the Government has a Chief Scientific Adviser? He normally acts behind the scenes so that few people know his name, but the present incumbent, Professor David King of Cambridge University, has appeared several times on TV during the foot-and-mouth crisis. In March he warned the Government that the outbreak was out of control and that it was essential to cull infected animals (cows, sheep, pigs) within 24 hours and to create disease-free zones around all infected areas to check the spread of the

What this month means

Rev Bernd Koschland

A year has gone by. It seems like yesterday that we said "see you again soon" to our neighbours in shul, soon being anything from a day to another year. Once again, Rosh Hashanah is upon us, to close a year which has been a momentous one especially for Israel. Hopefully, as 5762 begins, there will be peace and tranquillity in the land.

Just as we look forward to any major event or activity in our lives and count the days, so we should have prepared for Rosh Hashanah as the beginning of the year and the subsequent festivals of Yom Kippur and Sukkot. The previous month of Ellul, with prayer, Shofar and introspection, has laid the foundations for the High Holydays. We look at ourselves and ask simply: "Over the past year, what has been our relationship with G-d, with people? What have we achieved, what have we failed to achieve?" If we have failed somewhere, why have we failed? What went wrong? How can we remedy the situation? At the same time, let us look at what we have done well, what we have achieved, and give ourselves a pat on the back. In all this, we must be absolutely honest with ourselves; we can hide things from others but never from ourselves.

As we approach the High Holydays we must establish or re-establish a proper relationship with our fellows, a prerequisite for the festival according to Rabbinic teaching. Unless we have appeased our fellow human beings, we cannot approach G-d on Yom Kippur to ask for His forgiveness, for His mercy. Judaism is not just a religion of ritual; its ethical and moral teachings are equally important, if not more so, as Hillel pointed out to the heathen who asked to be taught the Torah while standing on one foot. His approach was a negative one: "Do not do to another

what you would not have done to yourself." To reach that level is still a difficult task and more so the positive statement of "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18).

The Shofar of Rosh Hashanah should stir us to positive action, awaken us to our duties in the three areas of relationship: G-d, other people and ourselves. The festival has emerged and developed over time from the biblical celebration found in the Torah and as recorded in the book of Nehemiah (chapter 8) when Ezra the Scribe read the Law to the people and then instructed them to go home and rejoice.

Yom Kippur commences with the absolute solemnity of Kol Nidrei, reflecting historical associations, especially of Jews who had abandoned their faith through force and wished to return to their people. The day is one of spiritual reflection for ourselves. It is a Day of At-one-ment, of being at one with all our fellow Jews, as we stand before the Almighty and plead our cause, to ask for Divine forgiveness and mercy. We recall our dead relatives and pray that they may speak for us before the Divine Throne, also those who have no grave because of the Holocaust.

As the Shofar announced the beginning of solemnity, it also announces the end; it thrusts us forward into Sukkot, the festival of joy, a festival celebrating the harvest, to the sound of the swishing Lulavim. The Sukkah recalls that we have Divine protection. We conclude the season of festivity with prayers for rain, essential for our physical sustenance, just as we also celebrate with the conclusion of the Reading of the Torah, which is the source of our spiritual sustenance.

Shanah Tovah!

AJR web site is live - www.ajr.org.uk

One of the modern faces of the AJR - the AJR web site - is being discovered by a worldwide audience with 'hits' registered so far from surfers in the USA, Europe, Israel and the Far East. The site includes extracts from the *AJR Journal* (past and current issues) as well as claims information and advice.

Additional pages provide information about our services, and a page of links to other relevant sites. If you wish to comment or tell us about other links, we would be delighted to hear from you. The site will be continually developed and updated. Take a look at www.ajr.org.uk

Newsround

Vatican's refusal to cooperate

A panel of Catholic and Jewish historians researching the role of the Church in the Holocaust has suspended its work after being refused full access to Vatican archives. One area of research is the extent of Pope Pius XII's knowledge of the Holocaust during WWII.

Berlin site decision

Land which includes Hitler's Berlin bunker may be given by the German Government to the Claims Conference, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*. If transferred, the bulk of the value will be distributed to the descendants of the family from whom it was confiscated.

Barenboim breaks taboo

Daniel Barenboim and his Berlin Staatskapelle played music from *Tristan und Isolde* as an encore to a programme in the Israel Festival after consulting the audience. Some of the Jerusalem audience stormed out in protest but the majority stayed and gave a standing ovation.

Berghof site to become hotel

The Intercontinental chain plans to build a luxury hotel near the Berghof retreat which served as one of Hitler's command centres. The contract prohibits the owners of the site from exploiting its past.

Oldham bans Holocaust speaker

Leon Greenman, a survivor of Auschwitz and a regular speaker at London's Jewish Museum, was prevented from speaking at an Anti-Nazi League rally in Oldham. The council was concerned that public order would be compromised.

Provocative campaign

Provocative posters forming part of a campaign to raise funds for the Berlin Holocaust Memorial information centre and library have been withdrawn after discussions with the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

MK