

# AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

When financial clout secured the German publishing octopus Bertelsmann a slice of the American market, some US authors such as Philip Roth expressed concern about the firm's possible past Nazi connections. To still such fears, Bertelsmann put out a corporate history which laid heavy emphasis on their Catholic provenance and their preoccupation with publishing books of religious instruction for the laity. It also purported to show that they had not only kept their distance from the NS regime, but had actually been closed down on Nazi orders in 1944.

Painstaking research by Professor Saul Friedländer and Hersch Fischler has now exposed this as a threadbare fabrication. During the Third Reich books bearing the Bertelsmann imprint had in fact glorified war. One title read *With Fighter Plane and Machine Guns over Poland*. With regard to the Jews, Bertelsmann had incurred twofold guilt. They published antisemitic filth - another of their books depicted in pornographic detail the murder of Ukrainian children by Jewish members of the Soviet secret police - and, just as reprehensibly, they had employed slave labour in the Vilnius ghetto. It emerged, moreover, that the firm had only been closed down by the authorities in 1944 because they had amassed large stocks of paper in breach of paper-rationing regulations.

In this Bertelsmann's owners were typical of nearly all German industrialists. This entire, hugely influential, segment of German society put ingratiation with the Nazi regime for purposes of self-aggrandisement and profits before even the most minimal considerations of humanity.

Since the war some have attempted to clear their corporate name by advancing the argument that in employing Jewish slave labourers they were prolonging their lives. Others took the step, fraught with danger, of actually commissioning

## SelfExculpAbility



Werner von Braun



Herbert von Karajan

reputable historians to write authoritative histories of their enterprise. Scholars ready to undertake this chore were entering a minefield; even Professor Hans Mommsen had doubts cast on his professional integrity when he published a history of Volkswagen.

Despite having been a pet project of the Führer, the Volkswagen 'Beetle' became hugely popular in postwar Europe. Hitler's *autobahnen* were likewise seen as the inspiration behind Britain's and other countries' motorway networks. The world's postwar perception of Germany gradually became a mixture of the contrasting attitudes summed up in two media-generated catchphrases. On the one hand, there was goose-stepping - Basil Fawly's 'Don't mention the war!' - and, on the other, the ubiquitous advertising slogan *Vorsprung durch Technik*.

*Vorsprung durch Technik* meant, among other things, that the über-manager of the slave-labour programme, the architect Albert Speer, was viewed in a different light from his only marginally more culpable co-defendants at Nuremberg. Respect for technical achievement divorced from any moral considerations also helped ease the integration of Werner von Braun into the top echelon of the US space administration.

Technicians of death also benefited - unintentionally - from one of the basic

tenets of Magna Carta, namely 'trial by peers'. It seems that judges, prosecutors and senior civil servants in the Bundesrepublik all felt tied by masonic bonds to colleagues whose crimes had finally caught up with them. This explains how even some participants in the Wannsee Conference - the 'planning meeting' for Europe-wide genocide - got off scot-free, and how someone like Dr Globke (responsible for the J in the passports of German Jews which kept them caged inside the Third Reich) became head of Adenauer's Chancellery.

Under the debris of every collapsed dictatorship lie rotting corpses crying out for burial. In this respect, post-Communist Russia was not totally dissimilar to post-Hitler Germany. The ex-KGB officer who operated a large nickel-mining operation with slave labour has recently been hailed as the founder of the Siberian city of Norilsk.

However, for all that technical experts received similar treatment in both countries, the situation in the arts was different. Of course Russia has no counterpart to Leni Riefenstahl who, having glorified the greatest monster of the century on the silver screen, spent the last half-century protesting her innocence. But it is among the musical elite that the Russians - Shostakovich, Rostropovich - have a far purer ring to their names than do their German counterparts. Richard Strauss collaborated with Leni Riefenstahl by composing music for her 1936 Olympic Games film; Carl Boehm acquired a spacious Jewish apartment in Vienna at a knock-down price; Herbert von Karajan took advantage of the dismissal of Jewish conductors; Wilhelm Furtwängler substituted for the anti-Fascist Toscanini; and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf owed her meteoric rise to Nazi patronage. Yet all these flourished post-1945 without once feeling obliged to intone a heart-felt *mea culpa*.

## Literati debase 4-letter word

Richard Grunberger

A generation ago Ken Tynan caused outrage by uttering the F-word on air. What really shocks now is the indiscriminate use of the N-word - an expletive so obscene that I hesitated before writing its initial. Just as an adult would be taken aback to hear the F-word bandied about in a children's nursery, so I am quite staggered to hear the N-word trip lightly off the tongue of fastidious literati.

Louis de Bernières, whose depiction of the Wehrmacht's Cephalonia massacre in *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* showed a perfect grasp of the Hitlerian mindset, has now joined Tom Paulin in tarring Israel with the Nazi brush.

One would have expected practitioners of the writer's craft to be more fastidious in their use of loaded words. Let us just measure the enormities ascribed to Israel against some incontrovertible results of Nazi rule. By the end of Hitler's War, Europe's Jews had been all but exterminated. Russia mourned 20 million (and Yugoslavia two million) dead, while a quarter of a million Dutch had been deliberately starved to death. During a half-century of Israel's intermittent war with Arabs and Palestinians the overall number of the latter - in Israel, the territories and neighbouring countries - has shown a fivefold increase. Admittedly, there has also been a contemporaneous quadrupling of Israel's Jewish citizenry, but this owed far less to natural population growth than to mass immigration originally from Arab countries hell-bent on becoming *judenrein*.

Since neither Tom Paulin nor Louis de Bernières subscribes to *AJR Journal*, they will, alas, not clap eyes on this badly needed corrective to their loose use of language (unless, of course, some public-spirited reader e-mails them).

## £1 million healthcare breakthrough for Austrian victims in UK

Ronald Channing

A new fund to help needy Austrian refugees and Holocaust survivors who find themselves in financial difficulty and in need of urgent medical attention comes into operation this month. The Austrian Holocaust Survivor Emergency Assistance Programme will be administered by the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) in the UK on behalf of an 'umbrella group' of six Jewish charities, at the request of the US-based Claims Conference.

### Benefits

Grants to refugees and survivors from the Austrian Assistance Programme's fund - which will begin operating with £1 million at its disposal - will be made to those living on low incomes, who have a medical problem requiring urgent attention, or who suffer a domestic emergency with which they cannot afford to deal. It is anticipated that the fund will be operational for two years, until 2005. The Programme's key objective is to provide financial assistance to Austrian victims of the Nazis.

Applications for benefits can be made through any of the organisations which constitute the 'umbrella group' of six Jewish charities, each of which is responsible for the welfare of former victims of Nazi persecution living in Britain. They are the AJR, Jewish Care, World Jewish Relief, Agudas Israel Community Services, Claims for Slave Labour Compensation, and the 45 Aid Society.

### Assessments

Following the receipt of an application for benefit from the Austrian Assistance Programme, a social worker from the appropriate organisation will make an appointment to visit the applicant in order to make an initial assessment of his or her needs and to recommend awards accordingly. The funds can be used to finance a number of items, including wheelchairs, the installation of

appliances and aids for the housebound, as well as dental care and the payment of emergency rent to prevent eviction.

Details of less straightforward cases will be referred to a special vetting committee, whose members will include both lay and professional representatives from the leading Jewish welfare organisations, who will assess and adjudicate on the applications. Each award from the Austrian Assistance Programme's fund is being kept within a maximum payment of £5,300 per person. Similarly, a maximum of £1,650 will also be paid to help former Austrians 'buy into' the Austrian Social Security pension scheme.

### Information

A mailing with information on the new scheme is being sent out to 1,400 former recipients of awards in the UK from the Mauerbach Fund, which distributed modest compensation payments to needy Austrian survivors in 1997 and 1998. This is being undertaken by the Claims Conference to raise awareness of the availability of the Austrian Assistance Programme.

The UK's allocation, planned to reach £1.2 million, is part of a worldwide fund of £6 million (\$9 million) which was negotiated between the Austrian Ministries of Social Affairs and Finance and the Claims Conference. In addition, the scheme benefited from an endowment representing the residual balance from the Bank of Austria litigation which was launched in the US in 1998.

For additional information about the Austrian Holocaust Survivor Emergency Assistance Programme, or to make an application for benefits, please contact AJR Head of Social Services Marcia Goodman tel 0207 431 6161 at AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal, London NW3 6AL.

This report was compiled from information supplied by Michael Newman and Marcia Goodman.

### AJR Journal

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## When Irish Ayes are smiling

Richard Grunberger

The Second World War visited death and suffering upon more people than any other catastrophe in history. The only way of coming to terms with this unimaginably devastating tragedy is to focus on its positive after-effects, of which there are three: (a) the notion that democracy and human rights have potentially worldwide application; (b) the creation of the State of Israel; (c) the concept of a unified Europe.

The last-mentioned was certainly an idea whose time had come by 1945, as dazed survivors glanced at the ruins all around them. European integration started with a nucleus of 6 countries, which then expanded to 15 and will reach a total of 25 in the foreseeable future.

This incremental, continent-wide expansion, however, doesn't tell the whole story. The EU is at present in considerable disarray. Voting procedures are disputed. Smaller member states complain of being browbeaten by big ones. Above all, the Stability Pact, designed to underpin the strength of the euro, shows signs of unravelling.

But none of these problems is beyond the wit of man to solve. They represent the growing pains of a maturing supra-national organism - pinnacle of the evolution of a continent which for centuries was the beating, as well as blood-spattered, heart of the world.

Mention of blood brings us to the crux of the matter. Given Europe's relatively modest proportion of the world's land mass, its soil has been more saturated in blood than that of the other continents. Spain fought wars in the Netherlands and Italy, Russia in Poland and the Balkans, Sweden in Germany and Poland, Turkey in the Balkans, France pursued European primacy and Germany world domination by war - in pursuit of which both countries fought each other intermittently for 300 years.

No more! Today France and Germany are locked in an indissoluble marriage of mutual convenience. Over and above banishing the spectre of intra-European conflict forever, the EU acts as an agent for draining the murky recesses of Balkan politics of xenophobic toxins. For example, Croatia, which only ten years ago was in thrall to the nationalist demagogue Franjo Tudjman, knows it will only follow neighbouring Slovenia into the enlarged EU if it can show cast-iron democratic credentials.

Even so, integration into the Union offers no absolute guarantee against the recrudescence of racism. The Haider phenomenon in Austria - no less than Le Pen in France - reminds us of the ever-present danger. But if Haider today no longer presents the threat he did two or three years ago it is in no small measure due to the EU's mooted boycott of Austria after his party's accession to power.

It is no exaggeration to say that the attitude to European unification is a litmus test for separating out extremists - of both right and left - from mainstream democratic politics. In the Irish referendum on the Nice Treaty left-wing Sinn Feiners made common cause with right-wing 'pro-Life' Catholics in the NO campaign. The main point of these Naysayers was attachment to Irish neutrality - as if De Valera's stance during the last war had been something to be proud of!

Another, more keenly felt, cause of Irish shame until the 1970s was the fact that young men could not find work at home. Thanks to EU subsidies that situation has now been reversed. When emissaries from the would-be accessor states of Eastern Europe told Dublin audiences not to be selfish and deny others the advantages they themselves enjoyed, the Irish, to their credit, responded. Green is also the colour of hope!

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## The nucleus in perspective

Michael Spiro

The nucleus has had a bad press recently. In speculations as to whether Iraq again possesses weapons of mass destruction, the most feared have been nuclear devices. Closer to home, when British Energy recently ran into financial difficulties, we were reminded that this company generates its electricity in nuclear power stations using uranium as fuel. When the company was privatised in 1996 it was deliberately not called British Nuclear Power for fear that nobody would want to buy shares in an organisation labelled with what *The Times* termed 'the dreaded N-word'.

By themselves, of course, nuclei are neither good nor bad. Every atom has a nucleus at its centre, and the whole world (including ourselves) is made up of atoms. Nuclei consist of a mixture of protons (positively charged) and neutrons (uncharged). Almost all nuclei are completely stable. Very large ones, however, are unstable and give rise to natural radioactivity, as in the radium discovered by Marie and Pierre Curie. Some other nuclei can be made unstable and may produce radioactivity by bombarding them with free neutrons. In some of these processes huge amounts of energy can be generated. This forms the basis of the nuclear power industry (and of the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima). Nowadays radioactive materials have many beneficial applications in sterilisation processes and in radiation therapy for cancer patients.

A modern non-invasive medical technique depends on the smallest nucleus of all, that of the hydrogen atom which consists of just one proton. Hydrogen exists throughout our body, most commonly in the form of water (H<sub>2</sub>O). There are thus many H atoms in fluids like blood and urine, but fewer in muscle and still fewer in bone. Lipids such as fat also contain many hydrogen atoms. These can act as tiny magnets. In the hospital the patient is asked to lie on a bed surrounded by a large electromagnet, and the hydrogen nuclei inside the body tissues then align themselves with the magnetic field. A radiofrequency transmitter is then switched on as well, to generate a second magnetic field which makes the hydrogen nuclei flip, resonating in harmony with the radio waves. The signals resulting from this nuclear magnetic resonance technique provide information on the concentration and environment of hydrogen nuclei in different parts of the patient's body. This can enable healthy and diseased tissue to be distinguished. When the direction of the magnetic field is varied, a three-dimensional image is obtained and computerised. Medical people term this useful diagnostic tool MRI or magnetic resonance imaging (so omitting the word 'nuclear' which might upset patients). Radiologists, however, maintain that NMR stands for No More Radiologists while MRI means More Radiologists Immediately!

## Return to Berlin

Although I visited Berlin with a friend last year, neither of us saw the displays in the new Jewish Museum designed by Daniel Liebeskind, and we recently returned to do so.

Now it is filled with Berlin's Jewish historical memorabilia, all beautifully displayed in this huge, maze-like building, each feature of which is full of symbolism. One impressive section describes the story of the Mendelssohn family. I also discovered a large collection of photographs and documents about Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig and their collaborators in the *Lehrhaus* (educational centre). Franz Rosenzweig was my mother's cousin and I well remember spending many childhood holidays in the 1920s in his house, where I met many of these people. It was a *déjà vu* experience.

The Reichstag dome is now a splendid glass structure which presents wonderful views of the rebuilt capital. Some of the churches in East Berlin were converted into museums, of course, but on the Kurfürstendamm the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche is a haven of meditation and peace. Like Coventry Cathedral, it combines an old ruin with the beautiful stained-glass windows of a modern construction.

We saw an excellent performance of *Nathan der Weise* at the Brecht Berliner Ensemble theatre, but we also enjoyed the city's good food, especially a *Kaffee und Kuchen* session at the Staatsoper Café Unter den Linden. All-in-all, the Jewish Museum alone is worth making a visit to Berlin.

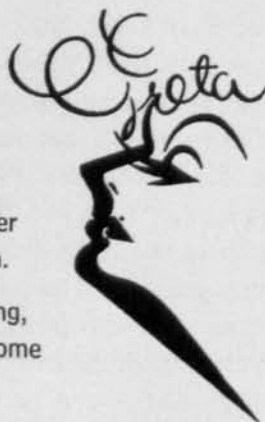
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## The Continental heritage

Ronald Channing

Rabbi Julia Neuberger, chief executive of the Kings Fund, led a symposium on 'The Heritage of the Past: Blessing or Burden?' attended by a packed audience at the Jewish Museum. Having German Jewish parents "completely shaped my life," said Julia Neuberger, who from her earliest years recalled the German accents of her parents' friends. A feeling of social superiority appeared unavoidable. Even a Continental diet played a role in defining their cultural identity.



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Left to right: Dr Anthony Grenville, Katherine Klinger, Rabbi Julia Neuberger, Anne Karpf and Stephen Brook

In the German Jewish scholarly tradition "culture mattered," she said. A love of literature and the arts certainly prevailed and "it was important to discuss what you thought of a book or a picture." There was a strong sense of obligation to other members of their group, then to the wider Jewish community, and thereafter to Britain as their country of refuge.

Anne Karpf, journalist and author of the seminal work *The War After*, disapproved of the concept of a 'second generation' as it articulated a claim to victimhood, and found it "grotesque to focus on our background." She divided refugees into two camps: the 'kvetchers' and the 'fine brigade'. Kvetchers enjoyed a culture of complaint and special pleading - a sort of Woody Allen-like neuroticism. Fine brigaders, on the other hand, were "obsessed with assimilating and not making a fuss." They would much prefer to brush everything under the carpet and

## CONTINENTAL BRITONS

always sought happy endings.

Ms Karpf called for a truce between the two camps. The children of refugees and survivors had probably allowed for a little too much of the past in their lives. While "connecting with the past" could be a blessing - for example, the raising of consciousness through audio and video testimonies - she believed it was time to move on.

Author of a study of Anglo-Jewry, *The Club*, Stephen Brook confirmed that his parents had instilled in him the best bourgeois values, yet the loss of many of his relatives in the camps was "not my tragedy." Despite limited finances, he had been taken to concerts and opera at Covent Garden from the age of eight. He had experienced no bitterness in the

parental home, had an excellent education and had encountered no discrimination whatsoever at university.

While we should not forget about the past, Stephen Brook said, it was well to remember the achievements of such people as the architect Daniel Liebeskind. On a recent visit to Berlin's large Holocaust memorial construction site, it had occurred to him that there were possibly enough memorials already. Like Anne Karpf, he believed that his generation, the children of refugees, should not dwell on the past. Katherine Klinger, founder of the Second Generation Trust, and Dr Anthony Grenville, AJR researcher and historian, joined in a panel discussion. Speakers from the floor reflected the diverse experiences of refugees from Central Europe and Holocaust survivors, many of whom had successfully integrated into British society and culture.

### Arts and Events Diary - December

**Mon 2 Geoffrey Ben-Nathan MA**, 'Who and Where are the Ten Lost Tribes?'. Club 43

**Mon 2 and Tues 3 Remembrance Concerts for Pavel Haas**, a Czech Jewish composer deported to Terezin in December 1942. Viktor Ullmann Foundation. New North London Synagogue, Manor House, 80 East End Road, London N3 tel 020 8346 8560. 8.15 for 8.30 pm

**Thur 5 David Pryce-Jones**, Lecture with the historian and author of *Unity Mitford* and *The War that Never Was*. London Jewish Cultural Centre. 7.30 pm

**Mon 9 Dr Eva Roman**, 'Post-traumatic Stress Explained'. Club 43

**Tues 10 'Four Faces of Israel'**, one-man show presented by **Rabbi Benji Levine**: a confrontation with preconceived ideas. Norrice Lea Synagogue, London N2, 8 pm. Spiro Ark tel 020 8958 6272

**Until 6 April 2003 'By the Rivers of Babylon: The Story of the Jews of Iraq'**. Major new exhibition following the successful *Continental Britons* exhibition. **Sun 8 December: 'Music of the Jews of Baghdad'**. 3 pm. Jewish Museum, Camden Town

**Wed 11 Prof Tony Kushner** (University of Southampton), 'Perspectives from a New Millennium: London's Jewish Museum at 70', Jewish Museum, Camden Town. 7 pm

**Thur 12 Cathy Gelbin** (Dept. of German, University of Manchester), 'Mayhem in the Republic: Golem Figures in Contemporary Literature in German'.

Room A18, Arts Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road. 4-5.30 pm tel 0161 275 3614

**Thur 12 Prof Michael Brenner** (Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich), 'The Politics of Jewish Historiography'. Wiener Library. 6.30 pm

**Thur 12-Fri 13 Austrian Cultural Forum London, Beethoven Piano Competition**. Contact Alberto Portugheis, tel 020 7602 9515

**Sun 15 Book launch of *The Righteous***, those who saved Jewish lives, with author **Sir Martin Gilbert**. London Jewish Cultural Centre

**Mon 16 Hans Seelig MA**, 'A Final Look at Some Musical Anniversaries of 2002', followed by an end of term get-together. Club 43

#### ORGANISATION CONTACTS

**Centre for German-Jewish Studies**, University of Sussex, Brighton. Contact Dr Eric Jacobson tel 01273 877169

**Club 43** Belsize Square Synagogue. Meetings 7.45 pm. Contact Hans Seelig tel 01442 254360

**Jewish Museum**, 129-131 Albert Street, Camden Town, London NW1 tel 020 7284 1997

**LJCC**, King's College, Kidderpore Avenue, London NW3 tel 020 7431 0345

**Wiener Library** 4 Devonshire Street, London W1 tel 020 7636 7247

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right  
to shorten correspondence  
submitted for publication

magnificent assertion of all the values everyone, but everyone, should treasure.

*Francis Deutsch  
Saffron Walden*

## GRAZ

Sir - One of the highlights of this city, which will be the European culture capital in 2003, is the newly built synagogue erected on the site of the previous Romanesque one burnt down on Kristallnacht. The new edifice has a beautiful dome consisting of 12 pillars representing the 12 tribes of Israel united by a cupola with the Star of David. I can recommend a visit to this unique symbol of the future of Jewish revival.

*A Dutch  
London NW2*

## KINDERTRANSPORT SCULPTURE AT LIVERPOOL STREET STATION

Sir - Let me introduce myself to you as the person who has been editing *Kinder-Link*, the newsletter of KTA (the American Kindertransport Association) for over a year. My plan is to do a lead story on the above subject for our next (Winter 2003) issue. I would appreciate any advice, information and research material that you could provide. I am a great admirer of *AJR Journal* in its present format, particularly when I think back to the old issues of 20 to 30 years ago. My endeavour is to make *Kinder-Link* as socially and culturally relevant as your journal.

*Irene K Schmied  
USA*

## TUNNEL VISION

Sir - I would like to add my voice to that of Bern Brent (October issue). Like him, I have been increasingly irritated by some of your editorials, by the invariably one-track mind applied to such many-faceted issues. How can a man with the wide erudition of your editor have such tunnel vision? I have enjoyed the rest of your excellent journal but no longer wish to support it.

*Anita Bild  
London N6*

## THE USES OF ILLITERACY

Sir - It is entirely inappropriate, on the basis of anti-Euro advertisements, to accuse all Britons of illiteracy. There are many people in this country who would be entirely happy to be merged into the European Union, monetarily and otherwise. Nor do I think that Vic Reeves has in mind the ancient history of immigrants to this country referred to in Mr Grunberger's article, when he says 'Britain owes nothing to Europe.' Much more probably he is referring to the more recent history of the twentieth century where the only things we - Britons as well as 'we refugees' - have to thank Europe for are two world wars and massive loss of life imposed on Europe by Germany. And in case it escapes anyone's attention, this same country is now one of the largest members of the EU, together with France, which has been an 'enemy' of Britain throughout history. Furthermore, they set the agenda for Europe. Richard Grunberger is fully entitled to his opinions, and to voice them. However, he must surely allow for the fact that others do not share his desire to be, once again, at the mercy of their erstwhile antagonists.

*Mrs Edith Holden  
London N14*

## DIVERGENT MONOTHEISTIC FAITHS

Sir - May I point out a few interesting differences between Judeo-Christianity and Islam. Jews and Christians are enjoined by the Torah and the Gospel to be pacifists. Take the concept of martyrdom. A Jew or a Christian who deliberately chooses death is not a martyr: he is guilty of a mortal sin and will go to hell. The Muslim who deliberately chooses his own death to kill others goes to heaven, and is worshipped as a martyr and a saint. Judeo-Christianity values human life; for Islam, human life is expendable. That is why we have no defence against

the suicide bomber. What's the difference between a Jewish mother and an Arab mother? The Jewish mother says 'my son the doctor'; the Arab mother says 'my son the martyr.'

*Andrew Herskovits  
London W8*

## UNEASY LIES THE HEAD

Sir - Sigmund Freud, who had three sons, called the middle one 'Oliver', in honour of Cromwell. The latter had invited the Jews back into England after an official absence of 370 years. Hitler was not quite two years old at the time of Oliver Freud's birth. It is a pity that Freud senior did not believe in his own prophetic powers and did not leave Vienna for England until after the Anschluss.

*AW Freud  
Oxted, Surrey*

## PRAGUE FLOOD DAMAGE

Sir - Having read in the October issue that the synagogues in Prague have been damaged by the recent floods, I wondered whether a fund had been set up in the UK to which one could donate. Would other readers be willing to join me in making a donation?

*Valerie Hems  
Ipswich*

## THANK-YOU BRITAIN LECTURE

Sir - The trustees of the Fund deserve our heartiest thanks for obtaining Lord Woolf as this year's lecturer and he is to be thanked for such a clear rebuttal of the main allegations of where the Human Rights Act might endanger the comity between the institutions that Britain's unwritten constitution promotes. His bald statement that those who reject in principle the values enshrined in the European Convention which the Act imports into domestic law were simply wrong, was a

**BOUQUET**

Sir - Mr Bern Brent (October issue) is entitled to his opinion - hopefully he will find a paper to his liking in Australia - but I am sure I am speaking on behalf of the majority of your readers by saying what a good paper the *AJR Journal* is and what an excellent editor you are. May you continue ad infinitum!

*Kitty Schafer  
Toronto*

**THE TRUTH ABOUT TABA**

Sir - Peter Prager (October issue) claims that at Taba Arafat accepted the Clinton proposals of December 2000 as a basis for further negotiation. But according to Dennis Ross, the chief American negotiator, Arafat walked away from the proposals, which included 97 per cent of the occupied territories to go to the Palestinians in a joined-up state, plus a share in sovereignty over Jerusalem. Ross says that Arafat came to the White House on 2 January and 'said yes, and then he added reservations that meant that he rejected every single one of the things he was supposed to give ... he rejected the idea of Israeli sovereignty over the Western Wall, which would cover the areas that are of religious significance to Israel ... He rejected the idea on refugees (and demanded that they should all be allowed to return to Israel) and he rejected basic ideas on security and would not even countenance that Israelis would be able to operate in Palestinian airspace (when landing at Ben-Gurion Airport).'

The American initiative then came to an end, as Ross explained, not because Sharon was elected but because Clinton ceased to be President. At the World Economic Forum in Davos on 29 January Arafat launched a vitriolic attack on Israel, accusing the IDF of using depleted uranium in their weapons. He then said he did not want a breakdown of the peace process, but the tone of his attack meant that there was no real prospect of progress. Mr Prager might like to check his facts in future rather than launching a damaging and inaccurate attack on Israel.

*Bryan Reuben  
London SW4*

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Which our 'mouse's' mode  
Has left us to solve  
With the best resolve  
I can't comprehend  
This technical trend!

*Lili Hart  
London NW2*

**CELEBRATION TEA**

Sir - I thought the outing [northern get-together] to Nottingham was superb, but I must say the October Celebration Tea was the best event organised by the AJR that I have ever been to. The music was superb and I knew every bit they played and remembered both the German and the English words. I would so have loved to join in. To Carol and Sylvia and everyone who helped, the most grateful thanks from all the West Midlands Group members who came.

*Henny Rednall  
Birmingham*

**STOCK OF JOURNALS**

Sir - I have a stock of *AJR Information/ AJR Journal* going back to March 1974 which I shall be glad to pass on to any individual or institution interested. Please contact me via AJR head office.

*Gunter Lubowski  
London NW3*

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# ART NOTES

## Gloria Tessler

Mme de Pompadour is one of those figures whose name is as familiar as bread and butter, but whose role remains a mystery. The National Gallery is debunking the myths with an exhibition of her portraits or others that she inspired in her role as politician, artistic chatelaine and mistress of Louis XV. **Madame de Pompadour: Images of a Mistress** depicts one of the most powerful women of the eighteenth century. Blamed for her role in France's Seven Years War, she came to personify the Age of Enlightenment as a protégée of Voltaire with modern views on religion. Although her artistic tastes were not innovative, she spent more money on the arts than anyone of her time - certainly more than her successor, Mme Du Barry. But she also commissioned some bad paintings by **Carle Vanloo** of children in the guise of artists and musicians. She even won the Queen's favour by urging the King to buy her presents.



Madame de Pompadour  
by Jean-Marc Nattier

The paintings of her or inspired by her are less interesting than what they reveal about her life. Born in 1721, Jeanne Antoinette Poisson was already

married when she fell in love with the King at a palace ball. She called him her 'Chat Roi' and she was his 'Belle-Minette'. Some of the artefacts of her life - the baroque French console table with a heap of musical instruments at its feet, the oak and coniferous wood writing-table with its secret compartments - conjure up a time of trysts and courtly intrigue. She was herself an ardent letter-writer.

The work is largely allegorical, defining the Marquise's beauty and culture, but most of all her gift of image-making. Centuries before paparazzi, this lady created her own fan club at court and in the public domain. Whether she was **Boucher's Venus**, the mythical shepherdess *Issa*, or **Drouais's Vestal**, she used art to secure her place in the King's affections. She even turns up calmly reading in Boucher's hectic painting of the *Flight from Egypt*. Towards the end of her life she reinvented herself as an adviser and sympathetic ear through sculptures like **Falconet's Love Sacrificed to Friendship**, featuring Cupid with a finger on his lips. **Drouais's** last respectful portrait of her proved her final transition from femme sensuelle to femme savante.

**Mark Gertler\*** at the **Ben Uri** spans the artist's development from the Dutch masters who inspired his early work in 1906 to the flashes of **Gauguin**, **Picasso** and **Renoir** which appeared later. Gertler might have wanted to paint Mme de Pompadour himself since his female portraits from 1929 onwards have a glowing sensuality - painted lips, cubist forms and brilliant colours. Yet the hidden strength that informs all his work stems from the same source: the warm, earthy solidity of his early years, most present in the paintings of his family. Gertler is not subtle. A peasant robustness informs his work, even his rabbinic paintings. His still-lives never achieve the fragile realism of Chardin. But the vitality makes them jump out of the frame.

\*Five paintings are on loan from the Tate.

## RG's INTERFACE

**Literature.** Imre Kertesz, who as a child survived Nazi death camps, has won the Nobel Prize for Literature on behalf of Hungary - a country which, he says, has failed to absorb the Holocaust into its consciousness. He currently lives in Germany, a paradox he explains thus: 'The language in which we survivors speak lives as long as we speak it. Once we fall silent, the language is lost too - unless one of the larger languages takes pity on it and lifts it on to its lap, as it were in a *pieta* painting. German is the language today that is most likely to do this.'

**Film.** Dana Janklowicz (whose father Harold arrived in Shanghai from Germany aged eight) has, together with her husband, Amir Mann, made the documentary *Shanghai Ghetto*. To bypass the obstructive Chinese bureaucracy, the couple entered the country as tourists armed with a small digital camera. They received help from local residents, and particularly from Mr Wong, curator of the museum that was once the Ohel Rachel Synagogue.

**Poetry.** (a) New Jersey legislators are deliberating whether to strip Amiri Bakara (the name the black playwright Le Roi Jones adopted after converting to Islam) of the state's poet laureateship. Bakara's poem *Somebody Blew Up America* contained the lines 'Who told 4,000 Israeli workers at the Twin Towers/ To stay home that day/ Why did Sharon stay away?' (b) The Nigerian Nobel Prize winner Wole Soyinka's new collection includes the poem *Elegy for the Nation*, which refers to the introduction of *shariah* law into the Islamic north of Nigeria: 'The cairn of stones is building for the first/ Butchery in a public square /A female scapegoat/ Tethered for primordial rites that men devise.'

**Music.** Stefan Wolpe, a German Jewish avantgarde composer and musicologist who reached the USA via Palestine, would have been 100 this year. Several of his works, including the absurdist chamber opera *Schöne Geschichten*, are being performed in New York as a centenary tribute.

## Moral or material restitution?

### THE VICTIM'S FORTUNE

John Authers & Richard Wolffe

Harper Collins 2002

Did the battle for restitution for the debts of the Holocaust seek to compensate survivors and descendants of victims, or was it geared primarily for the benefit of those instigating the action? While the question might appear somewhat subversive, this new work documents endless skirmishes between bureaucrats, lawyers, government officials and other powerful individuals, all caught up in the 'restitution industry'. Reference is, nonetheless, made to Norman Finkelstein, author of *The Holocaust Industry*, and the verbal barrage he engages in against Israel Singer of the World Jewish Congress and a key protagonist of the movement for restitution. Whereas Finkelstein's arguments were likely to have been fuelled by his anti-Zionist agenda, Authers and Wolffe have presented their findings with admirable objectivity.

Ostensibly, the restitution crusade, which gained the backing of the Clinton administration thanks to the influence of the WJC's billionaire president Edgar Bronfman, aimed to gain compensation for property, possessions, bank accounts, businesses and insurance policies misappropriated by the Nazis and their allies, as well as for slave and forced labour. However, the campaign initiated by Jewish and American officialdom is vastly complicated when a small-time New York lawyer files against the United Bank of Switzerland on behalf of a survivor client, thereby opening the field of battle to a host of high-powered class-action attorneys.

Through extensive interviews and first-hand observation, Authers and Wolffe bring to life personalities and events and succeed in involving the reader in the fluctuations and suspense of the narrative. Deals, painstakingly constructed, are ambushed by conflicting interest groups; adversarial tactics are used, even when representatives of 'the other side' had also suffered under the Nazis. Ady

# REVIEWS

Steg, for example, a child refugee in France and former resistance fighter, is obliged to endure the abrasive treatment meted out to the French delegation charged with appropriating looted artworks; Generali, the Jewish-owned Italian insurance company whose chairman was a prisoner in Auschwitz, is given a drumming by many, including the indefatigable Martin Stern.

How effective, in fact, was the campaign? Authers and Wolffe record the endless delays between signings of agreements, accompanied by official self-congratulation, and the actual disbursement of money to an ever-dwindling band of survivors. Particularly reprehensible was the fate suffered by the Swiss whistle-blower Christoph Meili, who was immediately presented with a 25 per cent legal bill for a supposed million dollar settlement that failed to materialise.

Most important, was the quest primarily for moral or material restitution? Certainly apologies, for example that of German President Johannes Rau, were greatly appreciated; nevertheless there remained the danger, as one American Jewish leader warned, that 'Jews and their money' might appear to be 'the last sound bite of the history of the twentieth century'.

Emma Klein

## Dark lady of DNA

### ROSALIND FRANKLIN: THE DARK LADY OF DNA

Brenda Maddox

Harper Collins 2002

In April 1953 *Nature* published a letter from Francis Crick and James Watson which, in the words of Brenda Maddox, 'unpicked the secret of life, four billion years old, a drama that moved day by day, almost hour by hour, in the first seven weeks of 1953.'

In 1961 they and Maurice Wilkins were awarded the Nobel Prize for their discovery of the Double Helix. Despite

her major contribution, Rosalind Franklin got nothing.

Rosalind Elsie Franklin was born on 25 July 1920 into an Ashkenazi family, members of well-established Anglo-Jewish aristocracy. She became interested in science and decided to devote her life to it - an unusual choice for a girl of her social and intellectual background. She was gregarious, but shy and aggressively sensitive. She graduated from Newnham College at a time when women's degrees were 'titular'!

A major subject in the Cavendish Laboratory was X-ray crystallography - analysing the connections between spots on an X-ray photograph and the type of atoms shown on the plate. Rosalind read papers and went to lectures on this subject. She became 'hooked'. In 1951 she began work at King's College, London, where the research included the X-ray diffraction of protein. Whereas for many years molecular biologists had considered protein to be the most likely container of the genetic material, now many scientists, including those at the Cavendish and Kings, tended to think that this was the nucleic acid in DNA.

Rosalind's skill in chemical preparation and X-ray photography was contributing towards understanding the shape of the DNA molecule. But its exact internal figuration and chemical content were still to be discovered until Rosalind produced an X-ray photograph, later described by Bernal as 'the most beautiful X-ray photography ever known'.

Rosalind was to include it in a paper on which she was working when Watson, without her knowledge, saw the photograph. He raced to inform Crick. Their work on building a model of the helical structure with its intertwining two strands could now be completed. The Double Helix was born.

By then Rosalind had moved from Kings to Birkbeck College to research into viruses using her expertise in X-ray photography. Unfortunately, her health was deteriorating. She was diagnosed as having ovarian cancer, but continued working. By then

Wilkins, Crick and even her harshest critic, Watson, had modulated their views on her, but it was all too late. She died on 16 April 1958 and was buried in the family vault at the Willesden cemetery. Brenda Maddox has in unambiguous, uncluttered language given us a sympathetic portrait of this remarkable, difficult and riven personality.

Ronald Stent

## Dual lens

### THE PHANTOM LANE

Lotte Kramer

Rockingham Press, 2000

This latest collection of Lotte Kramer's poetry is imbued with a sense of history, rooted in her childhood in Germany and linked to her adult life in England. Many of these poems are concerned with facing up to ageing and death, with the title poem, *The*

*Phantom Lane*, setting the mood. A wood seen from a train sets her wondering about its far side: 'On the other side, the exit/ I shall never know./ Nor the secret certainty/ of unexplored trees.'

There are fewer poems about the Holocaust than usual, though those she includes are very moving. *Chimneys* links the English scene to her past: she sees it standing among fields where men used to make bricks out of clay, yet it reminds her of the death camps.

There follows a series about other countries: the siege of Leningrad, Goethe in Rome. I particularly liked *Vesuvius* for its haunting refrain - 'Still the dense living/ over the dead' - and for her unerring choice of form to enhance her subjects. In this collection she ranges further than ever. Her poems about animals are deeply realised.

Three poems about paintings follow, allowing her to see through the dual lens of her own imagination and the painter's eye to an almost surreal degree.

Towards the end of the collection I came on several poems about the body as it ages. *Your Hands* is a fine example: 'Everything moves in your hands/ the salt of maleness/ swims on the blisters of childhood,/ whole continents open your fists.' *Perpendicular* is about the veins on her own hands, which most of us try to ignore or disguise.

This is a collection not to be missed. It is Kramer's finest, in which she courageously leads us through her own experience of ageing, while at the same time delighting in life.

Jill Bamber

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## Trading-floor Wozzek

### BODILY HARM

Channel Four, October 14, 15

Let's have no more complaints about the dumbing down of television programmes! *Bodily Harm* provided incontrovertible proof of TV scriptwriter Terry Grounds's wide erudition by conflating the Greek myth of Pandora's Box - from which all evils flew forth - with the plot of *Wozzek*, first fruit of German expressionist drama.

Georg Büchner's anti-hero *Wozzek*, it

will be remembered, was a born loser, the victim, simultaneously, of his bullying captain, his flighty adulterous wife, and the sadistic regimental doctor. Grounds's anti-hero Mitch is a commodity trader in the city who commutes daily from the desirable Potters Bar residence he inhabits with his pushy wife and pre-teen daughter. On Mitch's 44th birthday his personal Pandora's Box snaps open and the evils that fly out get cumulatively worse. His wife arranges a party where he doesn't know a soul. His daughter asks to be sent away to boarding school. His baby-faced boss sacks him at a moment's notice. His wife gets drunk and has oral sex with a neighbour within Mitch's hearing; when he attacks the Lothario he comes off worst. His father intimates that he prefers Mitch's (jailed) elder brother, while the mother announces that the father is dying. Mercifully at that point the notion of 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof' kicked in, and the first part ended.

On the following night the tearduct-draining hysteria-edged tragedy turned side-splittingly comic! Mitch left home and slept rough. The mother made a suicide pact with the moribund father, and died while he survived - just. Mitch talked to her corpse in the mortuary and stuffed hanks of his hair into her palsied hand. The father, an absentee from the funeral, doggedly set off to walk to Tenby, his habitual vacation spot. Overtaken by car-borne Mitch, and placed on the rear seat, he reached Tenby as a corpse. Mitch hoiked the corpse out of the car and lugged him up to a bench, affording a splendid view over rock-girt Tenby Bay. Finally Mitch drove, with his wife and daughter captive at the back of the car, hell-for-leather towards the cliffs and slammed on the brakes within inches of the precipice.

A surprise happy ending then - but not half as surprising as the plaudits this maudlin tosh received in the quality papers. To my untutored eye, *Bodily Harm* appeared fatally flawed from the outset - for, if the City teemed with the uncouth predators shown on screen, how did gentle, vulnerable Mitch ever last in that jungle right up to his 44th birthday?

Richard Grunberger

# PROFILE

Howard Spier

## Anne'll fix it



Anne Marx

Anne Marx is a 'doer'. You sense it right away. Others may talk, but *she* gets on with it. At the same time, there's a splendidly bashful side to her: 'Don't make a big thing about this profile, will you - not too much space!', she asked earnestly.

Anne was born 77 years ago in a large family house in Nuremberg. The family hop business employed some 25 people. When in the early 1930s the notorious antisemite Julius Streicher became *Gauleiter* of Franconia, the family, feeling under severe threat, left for Garmisch, returning briefly to Nuremberg when Jewish children were no longer allowed to attend the local school.

By the mid-1930s Anne's father had taken the first step towards living in England by joining the Kohnstamm family leather business and opening a new factory for them on the Treforest estate in Wales. In 1937 Anne, her mother and two sisters fled the Nazi regime to join him, making their home in Penarth outside Cardiff. For several weeks the girls were placed in a boarding school to learn sufficient English to enter a day school. Anne remembers her mother looking after other refugees arriving in Cardiff, welcoming them and finding them accommodation - acting almost as a sort of estate agent. In this atmosphere charitable work seemed the most natural thing in the world.

When the war broke out refugees were not permitted to live on the coast so the family moved to Abergavenny, at first living on a farm and later in a big house. They became fully integrated into the local society, and only English was spoken at home.

Despite passing with ease School and Higher Certificates - the equivalent of today's GCSE and A Level examinations - Anne was prevented by a lack of financial resources from pursuing her mathematical studies at university.

Deciding instead to study to be an actuary, she moved to London in 1943 and took a job as a trainee with Sun Life. She passed the first two stages of the actuarial exams - only to be rewarded with a letter stating that the Institute of Actuaries did not admit women to membership in the profession! For this reason, in 1946 Anne started a statistical department with a West End firm which owned several mills in Lancashire.

Once settled in London, the Kohnstamm family joined the West London Synagogue. Following the suggestion of its senior rabbi, Dr Harold Reinhart, Anne began voluntary work at the Oxford-St George's Settlement in the East End under the guidance of Sir Basil Henriques. Later she joined Richard Hauser (the husband of Hephzibah Menuhin) as a lay member of the social psychiatric team he had started at Woodberry Down.

In 1948 Anne married Theo, a fellow refugee. His father had been a board member of the AJR from its inception in 1941 and, following his father's

death, Theo was invited to take his place. He eventually served as chairman for many years and remains to this day a member of the AJR's Charitable Trust.

A turning point in Anne's life was a meeting with Vera Levy, a powerful personality in the synagogue who was involved in the creation of a new old age home, Hammerson House, to be opened in The Bishops Avenue in north London. She asked Anne to become its admissions and welfare officer. The offer came at a time when Anne, having worked for some years with problem children and in schools in the East End, felt some difficulty - even conflict - between that and bringing up her own three children. She therefore readily accepted the opportunity of working with the elderly. She has done so ever since the home opened more than 40 years ago and has performed the whole gamut of jobs - from matron to chef to launderer to whatever else needed doing at the time.

In 1987, when the AJR's Day Centre opened in West Hampstead, Anne became a volunteer. In 1995 she set up the monthly Luncheon Club, which has gone from strength to strength. To date, the Club has had 54 different speakers, to name but a few: Ralph Blumenau, Leon Pilpel, Sir Sidney Samuelson, Sister Margaret Sheppard, and a number of rabbis.

Anne's life, as is evident, has been devoted both to her family and to communal and charitable work. Although some 50 members of her continental family perished in the Holocaust, there are currently some 3,600 names on her family tree, including large branches in Holland, Switzerland and the United States.

Anne says she has lived the life she wanted to live and is the first to admit it has been a fortunate one. She continues to do everything she can to help those less fortunate.

# INSIDE the AJR

## Pinner: Ludwig Spiro on internment



From left to right: Mike Magus, Gerda Leigh, Ludwig Spiro and Myrna Glass

We had one of our largest-ever audiences - around 50 - for Ludwig Spiro, AJR Life President, speaking on the subject 'Making the Best of It: The Internment of Refugees, 1940-41'. Ludwig preferred to dwell on the positive lessons he learned from internment: it was most important to remain active, mentally and physically. The internees possessed a wide range of skills and interests and within days of arrival at Onchan, a Popular University had been established, offering some 500 lectures per month on a range of subjects, English being among the most popular. For the younger internees, aged between 16 and 19, there were special classes and a 'youth centre'. The Amadeus Quartet and Rawicz and Landauer had their origins in the camps. In all, roughly half the number of Jewish refugees (about 57,000) in the UK were interned.

Note: Readers may be interested to see the booklet *Living with the Wire*, published by Manx National Heritage in 1994, ISBN 0 901106 35 6.

Paul Samet

## Next meeting: Thursday 5 December

### West Midlands trip to London

A group of us went to London, both to visit the Day Centre and to see the Continental Britons exhibition at the Jewish Museum. The staff at the Day Centre were wonderful and within a very short time served us the most beautiful lunch. And they were all so friendly! The exhibition brought back many memories for those of us who came with the Kindertransport. In a matter of seconds I was back in Dovercourt and at the

Rusthall Beacon in Tunbridge Wells.

Henny Rednall

### Brighton & Hove Sarid: 'Why the Jews?'

We were privileged to have as our guest Rabbi Pesach Efune, a graduate from the New York United Yeshiva and Minister of the Hebrew Congregation in Brighton and Hove, where he and his wife Penina started the Torah Academy - the only Jewish school in Sussex. His talk, entitled 'Why the Jews?', was a carousel through history, examining psychological and economic aspects of antisemitism, from Massada to the ghettos of mediaeval Europe, and from the Holocaust to today's adverse stance of the media on the Middle East conflict. Rabbi Efune's passionate delivery aroused a host of lively questions from the audience. A meeting thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Fausta Shelton

## Next meeting: Monday 16 December

### Surrey trip down memory lane

The venue for our latest quarterly trip down memory lane was very generously provided by Edith Vanstone. The meeting was enlivened by Tony Freud's telling a couple of hilarious (Jewish) jokes. All the while we were able to admire the view across our hostess's beautifully kept floral border - in every respect a most enjoyable autumn morning.

Robert Miller

### Essex: a very welcome guest

We were privileged to have as our guest speaker Bertha Leverton. Many years after she was rescued by the Kindertransport from the Nazis, Bertha's dearest wish was to find the forgotten 'Kinder' and invite them to a special reunion. Articles in the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jerusalem Post* and a BBC radio broadcast enabled her to make contact with the Kinder. Eventually a flood of letters arrived from all over the world, bringing the index of names she had to almost 2,500. In 1989 the first Reunion was organised in London and was attended by over 1,000 Kinder, of whom 250 were from the USA. Her book *I Came Alone* contains stories written by the Jewish children of the Kindertransport.

Julie Franks

## Next meeting: Tuesday 10 December

### 'Birthday' social in Manchester

At a highly successful 'birthday' social at the Nicky Alliance Centre, some 50 guests sat

down to an enjoyable tea. They were entertained by Glaswegian Irene Conway, who presented most charmingly a much varied programme of words and music, much of it in a nostalgic mood. There was a magnificent spirit of friendship and bonhomie and several newcomers were welcomed. Photographers from the Jewish press were present.

Werner Lachs

### Sheffield: recreating the *Heimat*

We met for the second time at the Kingfield Communal Centre. Though heavy rain and strong gales caused several members to stay at home, we just exceeded a *minyan* to hear Dr Otto Jakobovic, a founder member of the group, who gave a fascinating account of his life prior to deportation in former Czechoslovakia, an area which is now part of Ukraine. He introduced his talk with a short history of that ever-changing corner of Eastern Europe. Following a lively question-and-answer session, we decided that other members could provide similar insights into their own experiences as children in their *Heimat* and how they managed to get to the UK just in time.

Steve Mendelsson

### Leeds HSFA: a talk on klezmer

Over 30 people listened with great interest to the many examples of music played by Alan Zinober as part of his talk on 'Klezmer and the Sephardi Experience'. Alan Zinober, Professor of Mathematics at Sheffield University, is a second-generation 'Continental Briton', his mother having originally come from Breslau. As a hobby he is a member of a Klezmer group. Klezmer, mainly jolly music originating in Eastern Europe and mostly played at Jewish weddings, experienced a revival in the 1970s in America and is now popular (not only with Jewish audiences) in many parts of the world. Sephardi music is of Spanish origin, having been exported with the Jewish population after the Inquisition and developing mostly in parts of the Balkan countries.

Thea Skyle

## Next meeting: Sunday 15 December. Stephen Silman, 'Neve Shalom - An Oasis of Peace'

### North London given outline of Jewish Genealogical Society

Dennis Hill of the Jewish Genealogical Society gave an outline of the Society's

activities and facilities for members who wish to trace their antecedents. A database for UK genealogy is available, as are, to some extent, databases for Latvia, Lithuania, Austria and Germany (and for Poland at a later date). Judging by the number of questions raised by members, the subject generated considerable interest.

*Herbert Haberberg*

**Next meeting: Thursday 19 September**

#### **Wessex and Rothschilds: The Musical**

A total of 38 people, including members of the AJR group holidaying in Bournemouth, were enthralled by a talk on *Rothschilds: The Musical*. Walter Woyda came from London specially to tell the story of the musical and illustrated it with some of the songs. The show ran for 507 performances on Broadway in the 1970s, but regrettably has never been professionally performed in London. The music was by Jerry Bock, who also wrote the music for *Fiddler on the Roof*. A lovely afternoon.

*Myrna Glass*

#### **'Making things happen': Max Kochmann memorial lecture**

Max Kochmann was a man who 'made things happen', Professor Edward Timms of Sussex University's Centre for German-Jewish Studies told the audience at the inaugural Max Kochmann lecture at the Wiener Library. Max had been instrumental in fostering co-operation between the Wiener Library, the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and the Leo Baeck Institute. In addition, the strength of his commitment to the AJR, of which he was a former chairman, and to the Belsize Square Synagogue, was well known.

Professor Timms recalled that when Max Kochmann was awarded an honorary degree from Sussex University, this was also regarded as an honour to all the refugees who had come to the UK in the 1930s. Hilde Kochmann, Max's widow, unveiled a plaque in his honour.

Speaking on the subject 'Is multiculturalism good for the Jews? A literary view', Professor Sandor Gillman of the University of Chicago gave an informative lecture on the role of the Jew as portrayed in a number of contemporary European novels, including the much-acclaimed *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith.

LK

### **AJR HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS**

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### **KT-AJR MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD**

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**Joy Puritz will speak on**

**'The Life of Elizabeth  
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**Lunch £5**

**Reservations required**

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DECEMBER		Afternoon Entertainment:
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Sun	8	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	9	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	10	Joe Kay/Pianist
Wed	11	Francoise and Friends
Thur	12	Cantor Stephen Robins
Sun	15	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	16	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	17	The Kentertainers
Wed	18	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	19	Ronne Goldberg - Guitarist
Sun	22	DAY CENTRE OPEN - AJR/FJR - R Grunberger: "Dual Allegiance"
Mon	23	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	24	DAY CENTRE OPEN UNTIL 1 PM

**THE DAY CENTRE WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL  
SUNDAY 5 JANUARY 2003**

**Birthday**

**Reiner.** Best wishes to Hedy Reiner on your significant birthday 5 December, Hans, family and friends.

**Deaths**

**Sheldon.** Eric Sheldon died on 5 October 2002. Deeply mourned by his loving wife Eva, daughters and sons-in-law Anne and Jeremy Banks, and Carole and Chris Filby, and his grandchildren Debbie, Jessica and Joshua. May he rest in peace - Shalom.

**Classified**

*The Britains Who Fought for Hitler* Channel 5 21.00 16 October 2002. Did anybody record this programme on video? If so, can I borrow it, or come and see it? My telephone number is 020 7435 0231. P Rickenback.

**Miscellaneous Services**

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**Day Centre**

**Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.** New clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans, etc. **Thursday 12 December 9.45-11.45 am.**

**Chiropodist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre** Wednesday 11 December 10-11.30 am.

**AJR GROUP CONTACTS**

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Fausta Shelton 01273 734 648

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**Leeds HSFA**

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Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

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Larry Lisner 01702 300812

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We meet every Wednesday at 8 pm at 11 Fitzjohns Avenue, NW3 (near Swiss Cottage)

In addition we have regular visits and outings to the theatre, concerts, museums and places of interest, parties, local informal groups, bridge, etc.

We look forward to seeing you soon. You will be most welcome.

Enquiries: 020 8958 2859

The AJR does not accept responsibility for the standard of services offered by advertisers

## Obituary Eva Trent

Anyone who had more than a fleeting contact with Eva, who has died at the age of 82, could not fail to notice her intense interest in and sympathy with her fellow human beings. Anyone who had a need which Eva could fulfil found her ready to help in a practical way. The AJR benefited greatly over many years from her voluntary effort, particularly in relation to Eleanor Rathbone House, whose residents she visited regularly right up to the time when her progressive illness forced her to go into hospital. Even there, literally at death's door, she still worried about one of the elderly residents, and asked for information about her progress.

Eva was one of two daughters of the Berlin lawyer Dr Walter Breslauer, who for many years was Secretary of the Jewish Community of Berlin. Her mother was a university graduate, a rare achievement for a young Jewish woman in her time. The whole family emigrated to Britain before the war, and Eva's sister soon went to the USA. Her father became a founder member of the AJR and worked strenuously for his fellow refugees in the United Restitution Organisation.

Following her mother's death, Eva decided - typically given her caring nature - to look after her father in her own home until he had to go into Osmond House for the last few months of his life.

Eva married and had two children, both of whom died tragically at the age of two due to 'Tay Sachs', a genetic disease,

little known at the time. Owing to her strong nature, Eva came through this ordeal and went on to adopt Monica, who proved to be a most devoted and supportive daughter but who herself succumbed to cancer in mid-life, having given Eva three much-loved grandchildren.

Eva's strength enabled her to carry on in the face of various complaints, which became more serious as the years went by. However, she never deserted the causes she had adopted and gave splendid practical support to, among others, Amnesty International and the Medical Foundation, as well as being a good neighbour and keeping in close touch with many relatives and friends. She also found time and energy to pursue various courses of study at further education establishments and in private groups such as creative writing and literature as well as painting and visiting galleries and museums.

Her husband, Herbert, supported her throughout her active and sometimes traumatic life and became her main and devoted carer at the end.

I first met Eva in Germany in 1935 and she became a close friend who took an interest in everything that occurred in our family. It is very hard to realise that she is no longer with us. Many people and several organisations - such as AJR - will miss her a lot. Our sympathy goes out to her husband Herbert, her son-in-law Alex, and her grandchildren Laura, Murray and Alasdair.

KA

## Central Office For Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

### Belgian Restitution Commission

Applications for compensation in respect of assets looted in Belgium during the Second World War can be made to the Indemnification Commission for the Belgian Jewish Community's Assets. The Commission was created in December 2001 following the work of the Study Commission on Jewish Assets initiated in July 1997.

While the total amount to be distributed by the Commission has not yet been disclosed (the Jewish community continues to be involved in three sets of negotiations with Belgian banks, insurance companies and the government), the fund is expected to be endowed with €110m (approximately £73 million).

Anyone who has previously completed an application form for asset restitution to the Belgian office of the World Jewish Restitution Organisation or the Belgian Jewish community does not have to complete another form. Heirs of the original owners of assets are also eligible to apply.

The 2,000 already filed claims will be passed to the Commission early next year for assessment. Applications must be filed by **19 March 2003** and the Commission hopes to complete its work by the summer of 2004.

To receive a claim form and explanatory materials, please write direct to the Commission at: Federal Public Department Chancellery and General Services, 16 rue de la Loi, Wetstraat 16, 1000 Brussels, Belgium. The telephone number is 0032 2 501 04 45. Enquiries can also be made via email to [marc.detrzegnies@premier.fed.be](mailto:marc.detrzegnies@premier.fed.be).

For further information and details of the work of the Commission, visit either [www.combuysse.fgov.be](http://www.combuysse.fgov.be) or [www.premier.fgov.be](http://www.premier.fgov.be) and follow the links.

### 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.

## Search Notices

**Hedwig Salm** née Spiegel, born 29.08.1874 in Kirchbörde. Married to Hugo Salm born 10.11.1874 in Wickrath, died March 1938 in the Netherlands. Mrs Hedwig Salm left the Netherlands in March 1938 for London and lived in the UK possibly until about 1969. Information, please call London 020 8908 0582.

**Frieda Klagsbrun** née Schaefer, husband Maximilian. Dentist of 18 Weinburggasse Vienna 1. Emigrated to

London 1939. Information, please call London 020 8908 0582.

**Abraham Reens and family** in wartime Amsterdam, especially his eldest son Robert, my late husband, who came to England in 1958 and died here of wartime ill-treatment. The Maror Bureau have recognised my claim for our daughter and myself. Information, Mrs Rosemary Hook-Reens, [cissbee@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cissbee@yahoo.co.uk).

## Lord Woolf says Human Rights Act has strengthened democracy in Britain

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Woolf, said, in a lecture sponsored by the AJR, that the Human Rights Act has 'strengthened our democracy by giving each member of the public the right to seek the help of the courts to protect his or her human rights in a manner that was not previously available.'

Lord Woolf's address, entitled 'Human Rights - Have the Public Benefited', was in a lecture series initiated by the AJR. In 1965 the proceeds of a 'Thank-you Britain' appeal held by the AJR were presented to the Academy as a token of gratitude from those who had found refuge in this country from Nazi oppression. The money raised was to be directed by the British Academy to two principal purposes: an annual (now bi-annual) lecture on a theme related to the broad sphere of human studies, and the award of similarly oriented fellowships.

Lord Woolf said Britain was now confronted by dangers possibly even greater than those which threatened the country in 1939. These dangers were

pressures posed by the need to protect the public from crime, pressures created by an unprecedented number of asylum seekers and, above all, 'pressures created by the need to protect this country from merciless acts of international terrorists.'

Lord Woolf stated that before the Human Rights Act had come into force two years ago, 'it had become increasingly apparent that the citizens in this country, by comparison with their European neighbours, were at a significant disadvantage in having to rely primarily on the self-restraint of the government of the day for the protection of human rights values.' Now, judges would step in to safeguard unpopular minorities if parliament or the government, urged on by the tabloids, trampled on their rights. Lord Woolf added that any unpopularity that the judiciary might incur would be 'a price worth paying' to ensure Britain remained a democracy committed to the rule of law.

HS

## AFTERNOON OF MUSICAL MEMORIES



Far left: Soprano Glenys Groves thrills the audience

Left: Left to right: Ruth Jacobs and her brother Harry Heber, who came to Britain on the Kindertransport, with Harry's wife Marion and Ruth's husband Norman at the AJR Celebration Tea and Concert

More than 540 elegantly attired members of the AJR and their guests filled the London Marriott Hotel's sumptuous banquet hall, the chosen venue for this year's AJR Celebration Tea and Concert. The opera singers of *The Garden Party* entertained an enraptured audience with a programme of selected Continental melodies, from Strauss to Léhar, from Mozart and Offenbach to Verdi. The singers' presentation and performance gave much enjoyment and calls for encores.

In his address of welcome, Chairman Andrew Kaufman recalled that the past year, the Association's 60th anniversary, had been marked by a number of special events, the highlight of which was the AJR-sponsored Continental Britons exhibition at London's Jewish Museum. With the formation of new AJR groups in most parts of the country, it was possible to say that the AJR was truly a national organisation.

RDC

## Newsround

### Insurance deal signed in Washington

After four years of negotiations, an agreement has been reached in Washington on the processing and payment of Holocaust-era insurance claims against German companies. The signing will trigger the release of £64 million to pay valid insurance claims against German companies, with a further £32 million put into a reserve fund, and almost £113 million more to be used for humanitarian purposes, including programmes to benefit survivors.

### Goldhagen book blocked in Germany

The Catholic Church in Germany has won an injunction in the high court preventing the sale of Daniel Goldhagen's book *A Moral Reckoning: The Role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and Its Unfulfilled Duty of Repair*. The Munich archdiocese complained about a photograph purporting to show Cardinal Michael Faulhaber with members of the SA.

### Beth Shalom announces plans for expansion

The Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre has announced plans for development which include the creation of four new areas to be built on the plot adjacent to the current Memorial Centre. The new areas are: an education centre, with a capacity to teach up to 300 schoolchildren and university students each day; the Aegis Centre, the world's first permanent exhibition on the anatomy of genocide; a lecture hall and multimedia facility; and a library which will be an international resource of texts, videos and documents on genocide and mass violence.

### German Jewish women network

A Network of Jewish Women in Economics, Research, Media and Institutions has been launched in Germany with a conference of workshops and panel discussions at the Jewish Community Centre in Berlin.

### Peshev Museum opens in Bulgaria

The Peshev Museum has been inaugurated in Bulgaria. The museum, sponsored by the Israeli embassy in Bulgaria, is dedicated to Dimitar Peshev, a politician who, during the Nazi occupation, helped save the lives of thousands of Bulgarian Jews condemned to extermination.