

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

The longest hatred - and the longest march

Since 1945 a plethora of studies have appeared which traced the history of antisemitism from the Holocaust all the way to its original roots in the Christian charge of deicide (i.e. the killing of Jesus). Since this dismal history extends over close on two millennia one noted historian, Robert Wistrich, called his study *The Longest Hatred*.

Alas, it seems that even the 2,000-year estimate of the duration of Judeophobia is an understatement. The twentieth-century Iraqi nationalist Khayrallah Msallat's pamphlet *Three Whom God Should Not Have Created: Persians, Jews and Flies* indicates as much.

The significance of this caption becomes clear when we glance back at ancient history. The Babylonian Empire, from which modern Iraqi nationalism draws its inspiration, reached its apogee with Nebuchadnezzar, conqueror of Jerusalem (586 BC). Later that century though, the Persian king Cyrus the Great overthrew the Babylonian Empire, captured its capital, and let the Jews return to Jerusalem.

Khayrallah had relatives who died in Rashid Ali's anti-British uprising of 1941. This would have turned Iraq into a Nazi outpost at the very same time as the Wehrmacht was advancing towards the Middle East through Russia as well as North Africa. Mercifully, the British suppression of the uprising put paid to Rashid Ali's plan.

Four years earlier in 1937 Khayrallah's widowed sister bore a child, Saddam Hussein, whose upbringing the pamphleteering nationalist took in hand. His formative influence explains the Iraqi dictator's megalomaniac identification with Nebuchadnezzar, destroyer of Jerusalem. Their joint images are currently projected on outside billboards throughout the length and breadth of Iraq.

Several Sundays ago Prime Minister Blair was adjured by a million demonstrators - among them many Jews - to refrain from military action against the self-styled Emperor of the Second Babylonian Empire and would-be conqueror of Jerusalem.



Howard Jacobson

Note well that these peaceniks marched under the twin slogans 'No War on Iraq' and 'Freedom for Palestine'. The conflation of these two quite disparate issues has prompted the well-known author and *Independent* columnist Howard Jacobson to engage the denigrators of Israel in open combat. The redoubtable Jacobson is currently battling the many anti-Zionist zealots among *Independent* readers and your Editor - a grizzled fellow combatant on a Lilliputian parallel battlefield - feels for him.

While the deeply flawed thinking behind the coupling of the rally's pre-published keynote demands - the pacifist 'No War on Iraq' and the bellicose 'Freedom for Palestine' - should already have sounded a cautionary note to Jewish demonstrators, worse was to follow. The placards issued by the rally's co-sponsors, the Muslim Association of Britain, showed a map of undivided Palestine (in glaring contrast to the 'two-state solution' allegedly favoured by that organisation). Mayor Livingstone's speech was a long, hate-filled diatribe

against the Jewish State, for whose actions Red Ken could think of none of the extenuating circumstances he urged HM Government to consider in dealing with UK-born Taliban volunteers. Another speaker was Tony Benn, whose televised interview with Saddam amounted to a replay of the questions the *Daily Mail's* obsequious Ward Price put to Hitler at Linz on 12 March 1938. The entitlement of a third speaker, George Galloway, to address a peace-and-freedom rally is surely fatally undercut by his admission that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the saddest event of his life.

Completing the quartet of left-wing advocates of appeasement laying claim to the moral high ground in an insidious guerrilla war against their Party leader and Prime Minister - surely the most morally driven occupant of No 10 since William Ewart Gladstone - was Mo Mowlam, who enjoys secular sainthood on account of her folksiness and battle with cancer. Her halo lost much of its lustre when she blundered into the peace-or-war debate with a display of culpable ignorance. She warned her Hyde Park audience that battling Saddam would be far harder and costlier than fighting the Taliban because 'Iraq is far larger, both in area and population, than Afghanistan.'

I do not necessarily share the feeling taking root in the Jewish community that these persistent critics of Israel are motivated by antisemitism. No - my great fear is that anti-Americanism is now gripping Western Europe with the same virulence as that with which antisemitism previously infested Central and Eastern Europe. And if the paths of America and (Western) Europe diverge any further, we face the prospect that the genie of global anarchy - incubated in places like Iraq, Iran and North Korea - will finally escape from the bottle.

From Gallia to Gaullism

Richard Grunberger

For all that France has always claimed to be the epicentre of Catholic Europe - starting point of the Crusades, and residence of half a dozen counter-Popes - she has habitually played a maverick role. In the mid-sixteenth century, when Christendom quaked before the advancing Turks, she egged them on for her own power-political advantage. For the same reason, her chief minister, the Catholic Cardinal Richelieu, deployed French troops in the Protestant interest during the Thirty Years' War.

In the 1919 Treaty of Versailles Clemenceau imposed heavier burdens on Germany than his co-signatories had intended - yet a mere 21 years later Marshal Pétain outdid the rest of Continental Europe in his willing collaboration with the occupying Germans.

Meanwhile, on this side of the Channel, Franco-British co-operation was so mired in difficulty that Churchill described the Cross of Lorraine - emblem of de Gaulle's Free French - as the heaviest cross he had to bear throughout the war.

In the 1950s Gaullist France strained every nerve to escape from the inferior status her wartime fate had condemned her to. As senior partner to more populous Germany (whose Nazi past obliged her to punch below her weight), she set about unifying Europe around a Paris-Bonn axis. This gave her sufficient leverage to exclude the United Kingdom from the Common Market, to exasperate America by contracting out of NATO's integrated command structure, and to threaten Canada with the secession of Francophone Quebec province. In addition, she assiduously wooed the Arabs and built Iraq's nuclear reactor (which Israel speedily blew up). She also subsequently projected herself as patron of sub-Saharan Africa (including Zimbabwe).

Today Chirac discharges de Gaulle's bequest by thwarting America's global designs, curtailing Britain's influence in Europe, and pursuing her own advantage in the Middle East with blithe disregard for Israeli interest.

Still revealing Nazi victims' fates Germany's International Tracing Service

Michael Newman and
Sam Holder

The International Tracing Service (ITS) at Arolsen in Germany has existed since 1948.

Its primary aim is to gather information concerning people affected by the Second World War, whether incarcerated, lost, persecuted or displaced. Nonetheless, documents relating to both before and after the war have been recovered, enabling persecutees and their families to piece together scattered histories.

Today, the records at Arolsen are used extensively to reveal the times and places of persecutees' incarceration, in many instances providing the evidence required to substantiate and expedite indemnification claims. On a recent visit to Arolsen, Michael Newman, who heads the Central Office for Holocaust Claims, was shown the example of prisoners at the Neuengamme concentration camp: obscure records can be used as proof of these victims' internment and possibly entitle their heirs to a compensation award.

Researching the fate of members of his own family at the hands of the Nazis, Michael discovered the date on which his great-grandfather was deported from Cologne to Buchenwald as well as a list of personal possessions he took with him. A further inspection of the files showed his cause of death as tuberculosis and heart failure - invariably a euphemism for murder.

Due to the large degree of human error in translation, the ITS has categorised many of the documents phonetically. For instance, the common surname *Schwartz* has over 150 spelling variations: a



Researching among 47 million documents at the International Tracing Service, Arolsen

surname could be *Svartz*, but actually listed under *Chivarsch*. By utilising phonetically classified records, the ITS can cover many historical alternatives, from name changes to mistranslated records.

Many of the documents are crumbling into history. For the ITS to remain an archival and historical service, the task of preservation needs to be carried out with great skill. From the restoration of bound books to the meticulous task of paper-splitting, ITS experts use state-of-the-art techniques. Although there are over 47 million documents containing references to over 17 million people, the preservation process is making large gains. Equally, the ITS is protecting the remaining evidence of the atrocities committed by the Nazi regime. Responding to claims remains a top priority. In 2001 ITS managed to send responses to over 400,000 people.

The ITS can be contacted at Grosse Allee 5-9, D-34444 Bad Arolsen, Germany. For information on how to use their services, please contact the Central Office for Holocaust Claims at the AJR offices.

AJR Journal

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May Day thoughts

Richard Grunberger

As surprises go, the revelation that the ex-Master of Balliol, the Communist historian Christopher Hill, was a Soviet mole in British wartime intelligence was something of a damp squib. For me, the real bombshell was the fact that, even as a junior lecturer, this fighter for the proletariat employed a butler to serve him tea on the lawn of his Oxford house.

In a similar vein, the public school-educated 1930s poet Cecil Day Lewis, author of an *Ode to Lenin*, only admitted fellow members of the Cheltenham branch of the Communist Party to attend meetings at his house via the tradesmen's entrance.

In Russia, Count Alexei Tolstoy, Stalin Prize-winner for his novel *The Road to Calvary*, was a Soviet celebrity. When visitors called unexpectedly at his country residence, the butler would open the door and announce: 'The comrade Count has gone to Moscow on Party business.'

In several instances, Communist Party high-ups were themselves of upper-class descent. Felix Dzerzinski, founder of the dreaded Soviet secret police, was a Polish aristocrat, and Togliatti's successor as leader of Italy's Communists was Enrico Berlinguer, of Sardinian aristocratic lineage. The top Austrian Communist Ernst Fischer was married to a baroness who entitled her autobiography *Blaues Blut, Rote Fahnen* (Blue Blood, Red Flags).

The Westminster parliament, which lost its two Communist MPs in 1951, still had a Communist peer sitting in the House of Lords in the 1970s. This was Lord Milford (previously Wogan Philipps, painter husband of the novelist Rosamund Lehmann), whom Anthony Powell immortalised in his *Dance to the Music of Time* sequence.

Of course, in Britain the about-to-be reformed House of Lords is no longer a stronghold of the hereditary principle.

Some may argue that an entirely reformed upper house bereft of any

hereditary peers must also put a question mark over the future of the monarchy. If no one can have a birthright to a seat in the Lords, why should there be a hereditary claim to the throne?

To argue along those lines is to ignore the history of Poland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries where, on the death of each king, a new one - usually from a different family - was elected. Interestingly enough, in the English Civil War of the 1640s, which ended with the beheading of King Charles I, members of the nobility fought *both* in the Royalist and Puritan ranks. This type of confusion was repeated 150 years on when, in the course of the French Revolution, a cousin of King Louis XVI voted for the latter's execution - thereby earning the self-contradictory soubriquet *Prince Egalité*.

Strange to relate, there is an actor currently on the European political stage who literally deserves the title *Roi Egalité*, or Citizen King. This is Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, elected President of Bulgaria in 2002 - 56 years after he, a 9-year-old king, had been ejected from the throne via a Communist-engineered referendum.

Simultaneously with eliminating old-style monarchies in Bulgaria and Romania, the Soviets were laying the foundations of new dynasties in Asia. In North Korea Kim Il Sung became absolute ruler in 1945, and, on his death in 1980, his son Kim Jong Il took over. Syrian Socialist Ba'ath Party leader Hafez al-Assad seized power in 1970, exercised it over 30 years, and, on his death, bequeathed it to his son. In Iraq, another Ba'athist socialist, Saddam Hussein, established his rule in 1975, and is currently grooming his sons Qusay and Uday for the succession. In other words, perverted forms of left-wing ideology have spawned three hereditary power structures besides which even the medieval theocracy of Saudi Arabia looks misleadingly benign.

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AJR ANNUAL REPORT 2002

60th Anniversary

The highlight event of AJR's 60th Anniversary celebrations was the 'Continental Britons' exhibition at the Jewish Museum, opened by Lord Moser. It was accompanied by a film of refugee testimonies, a history of the experiences of the German-speaking Jewish refugee community in Britain specially written by Dr Anthony Grenville, and complemented with a programme of talks, visits and concerts which together attracted a record 10,000 visitors.

An AJR-funded project at the University of Manchester, started in 2002, is researching and writing the history of refugees who settled in the Greater Manchester area.

Membership and AJR Groups

At the end of 2002, the AJR had 3,499 members (3,648 in 2001), including 166 new members.

The number and activity programmes of AJR's 18 groups nationwide were continually expanded to serve members in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Harrogate, Sheffield, Hull, Birmingham, Nottingham, North London, Pinner, South London, Surrey, Westcliff, Bournemouth, and Brighton and Hove. Many previously unable to benefit from AJR's activities and support services joined as AJR members. The financial support of the Claims Conference, especially for the transport budget, which enabled otherwise housebound members to participate in group meetings, was particularly appreciated. Members from groups in many parts of the country made specially conducted visits to the Continental Britons exhibition.

Get-togethers

'Get-togethers' for AJR groups and individual members from Scotland, the North of England and the Midlands were initiated in June at Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire. Members received information and advice on AJR social services and Holocaust claims and expressed their opinions. A second Get-together was held in Manchester in November at which

AJR's 'Refugee Voices' video testimony archive project was launched. This important and imaginative undertaking will conduct 120 professionally structured interviews over three years, commencing with AJR members from the Day Centre and reaching out to a representative cross section of the refugee community nationwide.

Kindertransport

The film 'The Power of Good', recording attempts to save Czech Kinder, was shown at the Imperial War Museum as the KT-AJR's contribution to the 60th Anniversary celebrations, in the company of Sir Nicholas Winton, Esther Rantzen, Vera Gissing and the Museum's Director General, Robert Crawford, and in the presence of 200 Kinder.

KT-AJR members continued their successful monthly luncheon meetings at the AJR Day Centre, ending the year with their traditional Chanukah party.

Social Services

AJR's Social Work team continued to meet the increasing demand for their services from members throughout Britain. They worked closely with AJR groups and regional organisers to identify and offer support to AJR members around the country, undertaking to visit each client at least once a year. The appointment of a part-time Manchester-based social worker strengthened the provision of AJR services to members living in the North.

Both existing and newly enrolled members sought much needed help with problems brought on by old age, which included poor health, loneliness and isolation, as well as financial advice, emotional problems and how best to cope at home or decide to move. Expert advice is available on welfare benefit rights and on issues relating to German and Austrian pensions.

Homecare Assistance, Emergency Fund and Self Aid

For refugees and survivors who are increasingly frail and living on a low income, dealing with their personal care, home cleaning, laundry and gardening becomes a source of daily anxiety. By providing continual support, the

Homecare Assistance scheme enabled them to maintain independence and remain in the security of their own homes as long as possible with more dignity and comfort. In 2002 the scheme expanded significantly to serve 106 members (7 others passed away during the year) at a total cost of £91,696, part of which was offset with a contribution from the Claims Conference.

A total of £44,557 was paid to 120 claimants from the AJR's Emergency Fund, supported by the Claims Conference, helping needy individuals with medical and other emergency expenditures. Self Aid grants were made to 205 members at a total cost of £254,448 during 2002, an increase of 5.6% on 2001. A further £57,689 was granted in loans.

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

There was a significant increase in Meals-on-Wheels prepared in, and delivered by, the Day Centre. The Centre's regular activities, which continued to attract an appreciative following, included the entertainment programme, a discussion group, a keep fit group, and increasing participation in the cards and games club. Special celebrations of the Jewish festivals included a popular second night Pesach Seder. Clothing and shoe suppliers regularly attended at the Centre.

The Luncheon Club, meeting usually on the third Wednesday of each month, attracted large audiences for a variety of interesting speakers. Tea was served in the garden for a Bournemouth reunion and lunch provided for members of provincial groups visiting the Continental Britons exhibition.

Staffing, Holidays, Outings and Events

Carol Hart was appointed Volunteers' Co-ordinator and, with the retirement of Agi Alexander after years of devoted service, Linda Kasmir took over the Welfare Rights portfolio.

Both holidays in Bournemouth were again over-subscribed. Special day trips were arranged for members to Eastbourne, Althorp House, the Maids of Honour Tea Room in Kew, and the

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Continental Britons exhibition. AJR's Annual Celebration Tea at the Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square, with entertainment provided by the 'Garden Party' opera company, was greatly enjoyed by 600 guests.

AJR Journal

The *AJR Journal* continued to command respect and attention for its analysis of current affairs and presentation of a spectrum of news, comment, reviews, the arts, science, profiles, information, events and AJR group activities. The editorial's robust defence of Israel, commencing with January's *My country, wrong or wrong*, when faced with continual suicide bombs and other attacks on civilians - several on buses and on children - from extremist Palestinian groups, filled the letters pages with a correspondence from markedly differing viewpoints.

AJR Website

www.ajr.org.uk

The website recorded more than 3,000 visits per month. It was regularly updated with information and news from the Claims Conference and the

The year 2002 has seen a significant broadening of the activities of the AJR, with local groups springing up throughout the country. We have taken on a Northern regional organiser to support these groups; the location of this year's AGM at Beth Shalom in Nottinghamshire is further recognition of the importance of our members outside London.

We have continued to work with other groups in the United Kingdom's Jewish community in the Umbrella Group, to co-ordinate both our social service facilities and our approach to the Claims Conference in New York. These approaches have produced generous grants towards our Homecare and Emergency Funds, and support for our regional work. We did not, however, enjoy help towards our important Day Centre work, which we are continuing to fund from our own limited resources.

Central Office for Holocaust Claims, as well as search notices, regional groups' events and reports, Day Centre programmes and articles from the *AJR Journal*.

Volunteers

A number of volunteers were recruited to meet the needs of AJR members seeking befrienders. Others undertook to drive members to the Day Centre, or to record and distribute a monthly taped version of the *AJR Journal*. Training and support were provided for all volunteers, many of whom attended AJR's regular volunteers' forums. New links were established with B'nai B'rith First Unity Lodge, AJ6, Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade (JLGB), and University College, London. An updated volunteers' quarterly newsletter added to their understanding of the work, and a volunteers' party expressed AJR's appreciation.

Central Office for Holocaust Claims

The Central Office offered free advice and assistance to victims of Nazi persecution and their heirs living in the UK. During 2002 it helped to direct £12

million in compensation and restitution payments to refugees and Holocaust survivors from more than a dozen different indemnification funds. Representatives spoke at meetings across the country and held personal consultations at AJR's Northern Get-togethers at Beth Shalom and Manchester.

The Central Office negotiated directly with government departments to obtain a beneficial change in social security legislation and an amendment to tax regulations. It also helped to draft the British Bankers Association's guidelines on the repayment of bank charges on Holocaust reparations and publicised the outcome. Updated claims procedures and the answers to many enquiries appeared in the *AJR Journal*, on the website and in the press.

Summary

As can be seen from the above report, it was another busy year. We did our utmost to ensure that services to AJR members were delivered speedily, effectively and, above all, caringly.

Andrew Kaufman
Chairman

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Claims Office, ably led by Michael Newman, is another creation of the Umbrella Group, and has continued its vital work, ensuring that those who have claims, whether to the German Foundation as former slave labourers, to the Swiss Bank Fund, the Dutch Maror Funds, the Austrian or French Funds and to other funds, are able to submit claims in a timely manner. This is a unique and valuable resource, which we are seeking to preserve.

We are continuing to identify members of the refugee community who, whether because of age, infirmity or misfortune, need our support. Thanks to our own funds, which derive from the generosity of our more fortunate members and are augmented this year by the Claims

Conference, we are able to assist not only within regular payments but also with help, be it for basic furnishing and equipment, medical, dental and optical costs, or to maintain their own homes so that our members can continue to live in familiar surroundings.

During 2002 we were also appointed to help distribute funds on behalf of the Austrian Government to refugees from Austria; this has enabled us to extend even further the help we are giving.

We have continued to run the organisation under tight budgetary control, as is essential for all within the voluntary sector. Although we have again enjoyed significant legacies, we have, in common with all in the sector, suffered from the steep fall in stock markets around the world.

W.D. Rothenberg
Honorary Treasurer
See Finance Report overleaf

Finance Report

AJR Income and Expenditure Account
Year ended 31 December 2002

Income:	2002	2001
Membership/Donations and Legacies	115,551	128,043
Grant from Self Aid	5,000	5,000
	<u>120,551</u>	<u>133,043</u>
Less:		
Overhead Expenses		
Salary Costs	84,309	101,822
AJR Journal	45,798	46,462
Administration/Depreciation	43,010	84,014
	<u>173,117</u>	<u>232,298</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus:	<u>-52,566</u>	<u>-99,255</u>

Summary of Balance Sheet at 31 December 2002

	2002	2001
Fixed Assets (less depreciation)	8,922	22,403
Current Assets	69,797	107,301
Less: Current Liabilities	23,049	(21,480)
	<u>55,670</u>	<u>108,236</u>
Represented by:		
General Fund	108,236	207,491
Net surplus for year	<u>-52,566</u>	<u>-99,255</u>
	<u>55,670</u>	<u>108,236</u>

David Rothenberg, Hon. Treasurer
1 April 2003

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

Summary figure for the year ended 31 December 2002

	2002	2001
Income:		
Takings - Day Centre and meals-on-wheels	84,688	77,197
Donations received	352	841
	<u>85,020</u>	<u>78,038</u>

Less outgoings:

Salaries	111,634	118,550
Catering costs	155,233	150,230
Sundry expenses	66,854	64,320
	<u>333,721</u>	<u>333,100</u>

Deficit funded from
Charitable Trust -248,701 -255,062

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST Summary Income and Expenditure Accounts (based on final draft figures) Year ended 31 December 2002

	2002	2001
Income:		
Covenants/donations**	197,458	96,831
Investment income	302,100	328,527
Sheltered housing	39,003	31,859
	<u>538,561</u>	<u>457,217</u>
Legacies	933,532	984,816
	<u>1,472,093</u>	<u>1,442,033</u>

Less outgoings:

Day Centre	248,701	255,062
Self Aid, Homecare and Emergency Grants	355,993	284,605
Other organisations	70,055	50,429
Administration/Depreciation	553,505	498,491
	<u>1,228,254</u>	<u>£1,088,587</u>

Loss on realised and
unrealised investments 1,001,922 702,873

Net movement in funds -758,083 -250,671

**Includes contribution from World Jewish
Relief and the Claims Conference.

With Appreciation

We would like to express our
gratitude and appreciation for
the legacies received in 2002

by the AJR and AJR Charitable

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

REACTIONARY STANCE

Sir - There are in the March editorial many spurious assertions in an attempt to vindicate a reactionary stance.

The Editor wants to know why the Prime Minister of Israel 'won the villainy stakes'.

I will enlighten him. Sharon was the principal architect of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, a war which worsened that country's sectarian violence. An Israeli commission of inquiry found him directly responsible for failing to prevent the massacres at Sabra and Chatila. He is now the prime minister of the most dangerous government Israel has ever had.

In his harangue the Editor slanders Noam Chomsky, who was not afraid to oppose the Vietnam War. The writer also endeavours to besmirch Tariq Ali, a radical who has remained at the forefront of anti-war campaigns - and there is nothing wrong with that.

Finally, we have an intemperate attack on Marxist 'dogma', an attempt to rubbish 'the vice of Marxism'. What twaddle! The whole of Marx's work is a radical critique of philosophy.

Martin Hasseck
London NW4

I reiterate my claim that the democratically elected Sharon is far less of a villain than dictators like Saddam Hussein or Kim Jong Il. I also wonder if Mr Hasseck would retrospectively extend his peacenik roll of honour from Chomsky and Tariq Ali to Neville Chamberlain? As to Marx, he is never to be forgiven for advocating the dictatorship 'of the proletariat' - Ed.

Sir - It is totally wrong to go on and on supporting the Israeli government's actions when it is only going to lead to international detestation of all Jews. The total corruption and hate between all Israeli factions is appalling - it is up to clear-headed and unbiased diaspora

Jews to try and make the Israelis and the rest of the world see reason. By supporting Bush and the war you are helping to bring about the total destruction of the Jewish homeland.

You, RG, are an educated and thoughtful man - for God's sake use that influence for good! Cancel my subscription please, till your thoughts begin to make sense!

Mrs G Brenman Wells,
Somerset

Sir - Now Jews have set themselves up as the goyim, the relentless people of the land, in a part of the world where other peoples have their histories and had their rights. I am no longer proud of my Jewishness and, if I am not ashamed of it, it is because of people like Daniel Barenboim and Amos Oz.

Given what I see as the generally blinkered and suicidally short-sighted editorial stance of *AJR Journal*, I have decided to end my family's long connection with the Association. At present, my sympathies are more with organisations such as Jews for Justice to Palestinians.

Carla M Wartenberg
London NW3

Sir - I have decided not to renew my subscription to the *AJR*. My reasons for doing this are the following: as I live outside London, my contact with the *AJR* has been almost exclusively through its journal and I have to say that I find the *AJR Journal* unappealing, largely because of the editor's tendentious and too-pervasive effusions.

Karl Overton
(Emeritus Professor) Edinburgh

Sir - From far-away Venezuela, and being an erstwhile Kind, I rather enjoy receiving *AJR Journal* monthly. I thoroughly enjoy your sometimes vitriolically entertaining, sometime controversial, informative, intellectual

and highly stimulating contributions. Personally, I feel you are the heart and soul of the magazine.

Henry Herner
Caracas, Venezuela

Sir - Just a pat on the back for your work and hopefully the 'seed' will fall on good ground.

R Willis
Loughborough

Sir - You write eloquently and display a wide cultural knowledge on many topics (excepting your approval of the EU). Some of your readers do, I know, dress children in lederhosen in the interest of marital harmony. I feel that you also have a number of readers who are real Jews and have genuine concern for the survival of Israel and Judaism - and that you personally approve of such people enough to upset everyone!

H Needham
Kenton, Middx

MAX SCHREIBER

Sir - My mother, then divorced, met Max Schreiber in 1937-38. They were intending to marry but, following the Anschluss, legislation forbidding marriage between Jews and non-Jews was adopted almost immediately. In order to protect my mother, who now lived alone in our flat (the rest of us had left the country by that time), Max joined the Nazi Party. Feigning zealotry, he was soon promoted. On becoming chief of Vienna's Hietzing district, Max did whatever he could to assist Jews fleeing from Austria by claiming they were patients and smuggling them into a clinic in the district. At night they were picked up and taken abroad, usually first to France and then to the UK or USA.

Most probably in 1943 Max was given away, or somehow found out, and he was eventually shot. I believe that at least 150 Jews were saved by his efforts. My mother was sent to Theresienstadt, where she died. Most regrettably, due to the circumstances, I have no proof of any kind of Max Schreiber's assistance to Jews in Vienna. Should any reader have any knowledge at all of this matter, I would be ever so grateful.

Ilse Challis
Hereford

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler



Flora c.1515-20 by Titian

There's still a chance to catch the **Titian Exhibition** at the **National Gallery** (it runs to 18 May). From his portraiture illuminating the quiet place in the inner soul, to an almost surreal treatment of mythological and religious subjects, Titian is unequalled. His dramatic use of light and colour was inspired by Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione when he was still a young man. Of course, he worked at a time when the Church and its artistic patronage were prominent, lending themselves to all the potent drama of Christian imagery. Here, whether it is the Pieta or the Madonna in all her innocence, Titian is pure Renaissance Man. His fertile imagination challenges the boundaries of his time.

But in many ways it is in the field of myths that Titian embodies the three artistic C's - Cruelty, Compassion and Curiosity. In *The Flaying of Marsyas*, the protagonist, who dared to challenge Apollo, is tortured by beatific nymphs while a wise elder looks on musingly. Titian seems to offer us here the darkest, most violent aspects of our nature with a sort of sleight of hand, as though we are actually seeing something quite different.

The Rape of Lucretia by **Tarquin** shows the interplay between the beautiful woman - perfectly bejewelled and coiffured - and the equally ornamented rapist threatening her with a dagger. Her purity and terror are almost prayerful. Thus Titian evokes for us an eternal empathy with the vulnerable - yet his voyeurism is equally compelling. What is astounding about this fifteenth-century artist is his modernism. *Allegory of Prudence* was at first considered a political allegory, showing three ages of man with their vulpine counterparts. Equally surreal is *The Worship of Venus*, in which the goddess figure is less the subject than the scores of tiny cherubs, crawling and picnicking on the grass or flying clumsily through the air. Titian represents the first in a series of three exhibitions of Renaissance painters which will continue until 2004 featuring **El Greco** and **Raphael**.

Contemporary Israeli artists featured in a new venture for the **Zionist Federation**, an exhibition at the **Robert Sandelson Gallery** in London's Cork Street. The mixed media exhibits were perhaps more adventurous in their style than in their content. Notably few dealt with the current political situation in Israel, apart from **Gaia Tchetchik's** *Wasteland* series of desert prints mounted on aluminium, which convey a landscape emptied of life. Delving into the world of watercolour abstracts, **Pamela Silver's** soft and colourful work evokes her subconscious dream-life. Jewish themes are provided by **Yuval Shaul's** oil and metal paint on paper, notably his *Kiddush Cup*. Perhaps the interplay between Middle Eastern and Western thought comes through **Maya Cohen Levy's** subtle and interesting Islamic oil abstracts. It is not surprising that death should preoccupy Israeli artists. **Ronit Agassi's** most arresting leaf designs are perforated with simple images of daily life, from soldiers and tanks to children and old people. They express the sense of natural death as both a process of nature and the demise of a civilisation.

RG's INTERFACE

Blast from the past The film *Far From Heaven*, currently receiving both critical and public acclaim, is a (slightly modified) remake of Douglas Sirk's 1950s movie *All that Heaven Allows*. Douglas Sirk had a dramatic life. Born Detlef Sirk in Northern Germany, he started a promising film career in the later Weimar years and married twice. He had a son by his first marriage and when he, an Aryan, took a Jewish second wife, the boy's Nazified mother denied him access. The son meanwhile had become a child star of the German screen, and the only opportunity Detlef Sirk had of seeing his child was on cinema visits.

Memorial Man This was the epithet *The Times* applied to Daniel Libeskind, Polish-born child of Holocaust survivors, when he was chosen as chief architect for New York's new World Trade Center. Libeskind has already designed an impressive number of public buildings, some - like Osnabrück's Felix Nussbaum Museum and Berlin's Jewish Museum - directly Holocaust-related, while others - e.g. the Imperial War Museum North in Trafford, Manchester, and the (yet-to-be-reconstructed) Victoria and Albert Museum - serve a more general purpose.

Anniversary The off-Broadway Mint Theatre, New York, has finished a run of Arthur Schnitzler's *Far and Wide* (original title *Das weite Land*) to mark the 90th anniversary of the play's first performance. In 1912 the 52-year-old playwright was so well established that its premiere took place simultaneously in Berlin, Bochum, Breslau, Hannover, Leipzig, Munich, Prague and Vienna!

Death Marcel Prawy, dubbed 'Opernführer of Vienna', has died aged 91. In a lifetime devoted to music Prawy worked with Rudolf Bing and Jan Kiepura, was Director of Vienna's Volksoper and wrote a standard history of the Staatsoper. His funeral oration was delivered by the 98-year-old Cardinal Koenig, the prelate who had done much to cleanse postwar Austria's Catholic Church of the stain of collaborating with Fascism.

Flowers from evil?

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE: WHY THEY FIGHT AND CAN THEY STOP?

Bernard Wasserstein

Profile Books, 2003

Professor Wasserstein begins this thought-provoking analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a famous quotation from Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* (The Flowers of Evil): 'Mon semblable, mon frère!' ('My fellow, my brother!'). This conception of the two contestants as 'frères ennemis', inextricably interlinked by historical destiny and geographical proximity, underlies the book.

Wasserstein argues that Israelis and Palestinians, far from being doomed to eternal conflict by immutable hatred and insurmountably antagonistic positions, are in reality motivated to fight each other by clearly definable interests and what they consider compelling reasons. The logical corollary is that these interests can be ascertained, defined and brought to a negotiated settlement.

The author is under no illusion that his thesis of the ultimate resolvability of the conflict looks, on the surface, less than convincing against the background of the current bloodshed. But in five closely argued chapters he shows how, at the deeper level of the underlying factors that determine the configuration of the conflict, the apparently irreconcilable positions of the two sides are, in reality, capable of reaching an agreed settlement.

Wasserstein examines five crucial areas: population and demographic change; society and social change; environmental concerns, especially the totemic issue of water resources; territorial borders; and the political dynamic driving the negotiations between the two parties. His analysis, based on a formidable mastery of the history and development of the conflict, is notably dovish in its rejection of the policies and attitudes of Israeli hardliners.

Professor Wasserstein's demolition of the myth that the British split

REVIEWS

Transjordan off from Palestine to prevent the 'rightful' occupation of both banks of the Jordan by Zionists, for example, is a triumph of history over fabrication. He clearly believes that negotiating a compromise solution - not electrified fences and Berlin-style walls - is the only viable way to guarantee Israel's security in the long term, so that in the end peace may come from the current evil.

Anthony Grenville

No hint of quackery

FRITZ SPIEGL'S MU-SICK NOTES - A MEDICAL SONGBOOK

Parthenon Publishing, 2002

Music and medicine, as do both art and science, share an ancient history, stretching from primitive tribal rituals to the modern phenomenon of doctors' orchestras and music therapy. Their cross-fertilisation has also, as Fritz Spiegl's highly original and entertaining anthology amply proves, given flower to a wonderfully entertaining repertoire of comic songs and dances. Spiegl, whose untimely death occurred just a few weeks ago (see profile of him in the August 2002 issue of this journal and obituary on page 15 of this issue), is well-known as a BBC producer and witty cultural commentator and *MuSick Notes* is an ideal expression of his twin passions. The book is far more than a humorous foray into Victorian music: it provides a fascinating social history of medicine through the reception of new drugs, therapies and medical developments from the eighteenth century to the twentieth. In addition, it represents a fascinating window into a little-known musical repertoire, with nearly 50 songs featured, including advertising jingles for brands of medicine, ballads, dances, each of them a document of social attitudes to health issues over three centuries.

A few titles may offer a taste of the scope of the selection, from 'The Pain Killer Polka', one of the few purely dance compositions, composed by the eminent nineteenth-century musician Frederic Archer, to the comic song about the newly invented 'Laughing Gas', with a 'Ha Ha Ho Ho' chorus somewhat distant in mood from the witches' chorus of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*! I especially enjoyed those songs poking fun at contemporary quackery, such as 'A Lecture on Phrenology', which ridicules nineteenth-century cranial medical theory, and several humorous music-hall songs, including 'Doctor Compositis' about a doctor's 'shop', 'The Drug Stores' and 'Curious Cures'. This, the cover claims, was sung by the author at over 2,500 performances, a fact hard to believe, perhaps, with such puns as 'They cured a man who said he had a banjo on his head - They soon found out he only had guitar - 'groan'!

Some songs celebrate important discoveries such as 'The Thyroid Gland', composed in 1921, about thyroid transplants, and a new fad for dieting, dealt with in 'Mr Double Stout' (a song performed by the famous Harry Clifton), 'Banting' and 'The Thinnest Girl I know'. Here, the mention of Cod Liver Oil enables a pun on Kipling's 'Gunga Din' - the 'Eye of the Little Yellow God' now transformed into 'And Emulsion from the Little Yellow Cod'! There is a song about 'Thermogene', warm underwear, and 'The Health Jolting Chair Gavotte', about a Victorian antecedent to the vibrator, and the list of medical issues dealt with in these jovial musical pages goes on and happily on. One exceptional item is the earliest - the 'Lithotomy Sonata' for viol da gamba by the French Baroque composer Marin Marais (1656-1728). His programmatic evocation of each stage of an operation is surely unique, from the 'trembling of the patient', his 'determination to mount the operating table', the incision, the blood flowing, and finally a jolly dance of relief. This, Spiegl humourously remarks, is 'for the surgeon'.

Indeed, Spiegl's introductions to each song overflow with wit as well as erudition about the history of medicine, and it is these commentaries which give the selection of songs both value and character. For the music itself is mainly light and frothy, the best of it approaching a Sullivanesque spirit. The book itself is beautifully produced with a section of colour plates of the imaginative song sheet litho covers, and large black and white illustrations. The music and texts are presented either in lucid facsimile or transcribed and are thus performable - a boon for medical parties as for musical soirées. If laughter is one of the best natural therapies, there is no hint of quackery in my prescription of Fritz Spiegl's *MuSick Notes* to any reader requiring a boost of uplifting joie de vivre, and a most effective cure-all for many a rainy - and sunny - day.

Malcolm Miller

Jacobean play with modern resonance

THE ROMAN ACTOR

by Philip Massinger

RSC at the Gielgud Theatre, London

Philip Massinger, though hardly a household name today, belonged to the vibrant theatrical scene that distinguished London in the decades following Shakespeare's death. *The Roman Actor* features as its megalomaniac anti-hero the Emperor Domitian, son of Vespasian and brother of Titus, destroyer of Jerusalem. During Domitian's rule Rome sinks to even lower depths than under Caligula's, with fearful citizens aware that their only safety lies in flattering the whims of their Emperor who has styled himself a god.

Domitian, like his predecessor Nero, loves the theatre. The climax of the play is an emotion-charged scene when he performs in person on a stage within the stage. Suspicious of his wayward wife, he orders a troupe of actors to perform a drama of marital infidelity - at the climax of which, under the guise of play-acting, he

stabs his rival for the Empress's affections.

Massinger's plot affords plenty of scope for highlighting the contrast - as well as the interplay - between art and life, illusion and reality. What in addition gives the play an astonishing contemporary resonance is the monstrous Domitian's intense infatuation with the stage. This foreshadows Saddam's novel-writing ambitions, Hitler's obsession with architectural plans, Mao's twin passions for calligraphy and poetry, and Stalin's close monitoring of Shostakovich's compositions.

Though set two millennia ago, and written in the 1600s, *The Roman Actor* is, to a considerable extent, a parable for our own time. The Royal Shakespeare Company, headed by Anthony Sher, stages it with panache, using sound and lighting to impressive effect.

Richard Grunberger

Mark to praise

HOP-PICKERS' HOLIDAY

Gerda Mayer

Happy Dragons Press, Toppesfield:
'New Garland' Series, No. 3, 2003,
£4.25

I enjoyed this short collection very much for its energy and playfulness, as well as for its fresh use of language. It is partly autobiographical: we learn that the author escaped from Czechoslovakia as a child. *Kde Domov Muj* (Where is My Home? - the Czech national anthem) is movingly introduced in the lines: 'A small wind lightly/ Steps over the harebells. / Like tall ragged kings/ Rise the fir trees of Bohemia.'

As the poet travels home in her imagination, 'The dead unroll the past .../ if I return/ if I return at all, / Bohemia, green magician, take me by the hand.' I like the way she hitches nature to fresh imagery as, for instance, in *The Garden*: 'the cherub gooseberry, / the angelic redcurrant .../ Not the Garden of Eden .../ The boy from upstairs was/ Adam to my naked

Eve.' She wonders if her father, who placed her there, knows she 'rode away/into a safe land?' For sure, this is the prayer of all refugees separated from their loved ones.

One of my favourites in this collection is *The Road*: '... its streetlamps/ glitter like blades .../ gaze for one moment/ up at the blue/ It will crunch up your bones.'

The eponymous poem *Hop-pickers' Holiday* wakened echoes for me because as a child I went hop-picking: 'The women quick and chirpy ... / The children tumbling into hops ... / good-natured as September suns/ that honeyed green bells.' Lovely.

In *New Poems*, Gerda Mayer discovers one of her own poems in a library with a pencilled-in judgemental cross. She takes it home to erase it and ends: 'Reader, if you must mark, then mark to praise it.' I have no difficulty at all in doing that.

Jill Bamber

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PROFILE

Paul Samet

Dr Hannah Hedwig Striesow: Distinguished citizen



Hannah Striesow, a sprightly 94-year-old, was born in Bamberg and studied medicine in Halle. Due to the Nazi restrictions, she was not allowed to graduate as MD after taking the *Statsexamen*. Not being permitted to practice either, she was obliged to become an assistant to a dental surgeon in Hamburg until, in 1936, she came to England. Initially, this was to visit a sister but she decided to stay, though not before going back to Germany to buy clothes, reckoning that she would not have money to buy any more, for some time at least.

As with many other refugee doctors, Hannah's qualification was not recognised in England at the time, so she became a trainee nurse at the London Jewish Hospital, on a salary of £25 per year. Of that, some 25 shillings had to go on 'training fees'. After three years' training she became a staff nurse and began work as night sister at Lingfield Epileptic Colony.

In late 1939 Hannah married, but this had to be kept a secret as nurses were not permitted to marry. Her (non-Jewish) husband, Hans, was an internee on the way to Canada on the ill-fated *Arandora Star*, but he luckily survived by swimming away from the ship, to avoid being sucked under when

the hull went down. He was to have been sent to Canada a second time, but Hannah successfully claimed the right of a married woman - that she had to give permission for her husband to be sent overseas. Her claim was successful and Hans was interned on the Isle of Man for a while.

On her husband's release, Hannah decided that her 'biological clock' was ticking: if she was to have children, there was little time to waste. When she was 36, in 1944, her first son was born, followed by a second one two years later. One son became a banker, the other a schoolmaster (later headmaster). Both are now in retirement.

In 1950 Hannah was informed about the exciting possibility of her German qualification being recognised here, following a probationary period. This was a common procedure at the time as the country was short of doctors for the newly established National Health Service. Many refugee doctors had been placed on a temporary register during the war and were later transferred to the permanent register.

So, it was back to the London Jewish Hospital to renew her medical skills but, shortly before the end of this probation, Hannah had the opportunity of taking over a general practice in Forest Gate. A new career at the same time as having two young children! Within two years, she had some 3,500 patients. She retired in 1990, aged a little over 80. She still lives in the house where her practice was and remains in touch with many of her former patients.

That Hannah's work in the community was successful is shown by the Outstanding Citizen Award given to her in 2001 by Newham Council which she proudly showed me.

At the age of 94, Hannah's movements are naturally somewhat restricted, but her mind remains highly active. She retains the same interest in life and keeps very busy. The day after I met her, she was due to go on a visit to Germany. Long may she continue!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and National Get-together

of the

ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES

SUNDAY 1 JUNE 2003 at

Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre
Laxton, near Newark, Nottinghamshire

Guest speaker

Dr Stephen Smith

Director, Beth Shalom

Agenda

Annual Report 2002

Hon. Treasurer's Report

Discussion

Election of Committee of Management

All questions for the chair should be submitted by 16 May to the Head of Administration at 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Froggnal, London NW3 6AL.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Participation in this meeting at Beth Shalom requires advance notification and transportation may be pre-arranged. An optional vegetarian lunch at £10 per person is payable in advance.

Please either complete the form inserted in *AJR Journal* or telephone AJR head office for details.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The following members will be proposed for election or re-election to the Committee at the AGM on Sunday 1 June 2003

Mr A C Kaufman, Chairman*
Mr W D Rothenberg, Vice-Chairman*
& Hon. Treasurer
Mrs E S Angel, Secretary*
Mr P Dannenberg
Mr C W Dunston, Trustee
Mrs D Franklin, Trustee
Mrs G R Glassman, Trustee
Ms K Klinger
Mr E Reich
Mr A Spiro, Trustee

*Committee members retiring by rotation and being proposed for re-election

Anyone wishing to propose any other member for election as Hon. Officer, Trustee, or Committee member must submit to AJR's Head of Administration such a proposal signed by ten members qualified to vote at the meeting and with the signed agreement of the person being proposed no later than Friday 9 May 2002

INSIDE the AJR

Shmooz party in Newcastle

Over 30 members, including some of the second generation, met for a 'social' in the Marcus Abraham Hall. Old friendships were renewed and a most enjoyable 'shmooz party' ensued, fortified by a selection of delicious sandwiches prepared by Gillian Pearlman and cakes specially imported from Manchester by Northern Region Co-ordinator Susanne Green. Entertainment was provided by the Kol Hashirim Choir, who kept us spellbound with a variety of songs ranging from a lullaby in Yiddish to numbers from popular musicals. Following a welcome from Walter Knoblauch, Susanne gave a brief outline of future activities, regionally and nationally.

Kurt Schapira

'Experience accounts' in Sheffield

At our fourth meeting, attended by 17 members, three members recalled their experiences as refugees from Nazi oppression. Harry Brooke (Berlin) discussed his deportation to Australia - the shocking conditions on board the *Dunera* and the ship's narrow escape after having been hit by a glancing torpedo. Returning to the UK, he joined HM forces, ultimately serving with the parachute regiment. Sue Pearson (Czechoslovakia), a protégée of Sir Nicholas Winton, gave an account of her journey to England in 1939; currently she talks to schoolchildren about the Holocaust throughout the country. Three weeks before his finals as a medical student, Otto Fleming (Vienna) fled to Palestine, where ultimately he joined HM forces and served as an orderly in the Medical Corps. After demobilisation he settled in Britain, where he completed his studies and became a GP. We were also delighted to welcome to the meeting AJR Head of Social Services Marcia Goodman, who brought us up to date on activities in the provinces.

Steve Mendelssohn

Next meeting: Sunday 13 July: further 'experience accounts'

Leeds HSFA: Shanghai - safe haven for Jewish refugees

As Shanghai had no restrictions on immigration during the Nazi period, Linda Rosen told us, it became a safe haven for many German, Austrian and Polish Jewish refugees - some 17,000 between 1933 and 1939. Previously there were in Shanghai mainly Sephardic and Russian Jews, who had established three synagogues. In 1939-40 some 2,000 Jews left for other countries. After Pearl Harbor Japan took over the administration of Shanghai, interning only the Sephardim, and rejected Nazi demands to exterminate the Jews. In 1944-45 the ghetto was liberated by the Allies. By 1950 most Jews were resettled in other countries. Shanghai thus saved the lives of many Continental Jews.

Ruth Sterne

East Midlands light lunch

We had a light lunch at the home of one of our members, giving us an opportunity to meet others from our geographically widely scattered group. A number of members have been unable to attend recent meetings for a number of reasons and we would love to welcome them to our next meeting. The AJR can assist anyone with transport difficulties at no cost to themselves. If you would like help, please telephone me (01159212494) or Myrna Glass at the AJR on 020 7431 6161.

Bob Norton

Next meeting: 18 June for lunch

South London group sees video of play on Holocaust

Helen Aronson, born and brought up in pre-war Poland, showed us a video of her play about her life and the lives of other Polish Jews following the Nazi occupation of Poland. Some 250,000 Jews were sent to the Lodz ghetto; Helen, her mother and brother were among the 750 Jews who survived the ghetto's liquidation. Helen wrote and devised the play in memory of her father and to mark National Memorial Day and noted that it was very well acted by British children.

Anne Poloway

Harrogate members' hectic life

Susanne Green managed to gather together 15 members from Harrogate, Leeds, York and surrounding areas. As we were joined by two non-members, short histories were

repeated to ensure our guests felt part of us. The rest are, of course, more like old friends enjoying a few hours in each other's company than strangers who met less than a year ago. Due to the hectic life of some members we had to juggle with dates for our next meeting.

Inge Little

Next meeting: 28 May, 2.30 pm at 1 Masham Close

Essex: Israel and the West

Michael Rosen of the Israeli Embassy updated us on the situation in Israel. This state, born only a half century ago, has to fight for its very survival against almost impossible odds. They are still trying to absorb people from countless different countries, nationalities and languages who all have one thing in common: their passionate love of Israel. Sadly, the West does not understand what Zionism is about. We should try to explain to them that we are the victims, not the cause, and we should teach the non-Jewish children understanding instead of hatred.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tuesday 20 May, 11 am (not 13 May): 'How I Came to Live in This Area' - group members

Pinner: story of the Wiener Library

Daniel Finkelstein, Associate Editor of *The Times*, gave an illuminating talk on his grandfather, Alfred Wiener, a Prussian who took it upon himself to alert the world to the rising danger of Hitler. Alfred was a meticulous collector of every scrap of information in the firm belief that the truth will prevail. With commendable foresight, in 1933 he moved his office to Holland and then to London, where the UK authorities eagerly availed themselves of his data without admitting the source, which then became the Wiener Library. This highly important mass of information was used at Nuremberg and a copy of the trials was presented to Alfred. Thanks to his persistent efforts, the financial future of the Library is secure, with a section now at Southampton University and other documents in Israel.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thursday 1 May, 2 pm: 'Napkin on my Sleeve'. Speaker: Lucille Memeth, past Lady Mayor of Westminster and Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London

North London's musical tour of the globe

Our very own Annette Saville did us proud in presenting her musical programme 'Around the World by Piano'. Starting in Vienna, we travelled the globe before coming home. A most enjoyable performance, to be repeated in the not too distant future. Annette did leave us with a problem though. Do we start up our own Glee Club or will some of our vocal members double as Spice Girls? In case of the latter, watch out David Beckham!

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday, 1 May, 10.30am: Abbie Ben Arie, 'Middle East Update'; Thursday, 29 May 10.30 am: Michael Newman, 'An Update on Holocaust Claims'

Brighton & Hove Sarid next meeting: Monday 19 May, 10.45. Aubrey Milstein: 'My Life and Works'



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Anthony Streatfeild, former deputy managing director and chairman of Christie's in the UK and Europe, one of the world's truly great art houses and auctioneers, was the guest speaker at the AJR Luncheon Club. Now holding special responsibility for the restitution of artworks looted from victims of the Holocaust, which, viewed from his unique perspective, was the subject of his talk

Southern Groups Assistant Organiser

Karen Benardout has been appointed Assistant to Southern Groups Organiser Myrna Glass. She will help Myrna with the organisation of events for the existing groups and with the planned expansion of new groups in the South of England and the Midlands.

Memorial Service for DAVID JEDWAB

Monday 12 May, 11.30 am

AJR Day Centre, 15 Cleve Road,
London NW6

A short service will be conducted by Rev Bernd Koschland and Rabbi John Rayner, to be followed by the regular KT lunch.

All Kindertransportees are invited. Pre-registration essential for those who wish to stay for lunch (£5).

Please phone 0207 328 0208 no later than Tuesday 6 May.

AJR HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

**Sunday 18 May 2003 -
Friday 23 May 2003**

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Newcastle

Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

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Larry Lisner 01702 300812

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, London, NW6
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THE LUNCHEON CLUB

**Wednesday 21 May 2003
11.45 am for 12.15 pm**

**Rabbi Michael Farbman
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**Monday - Thursday
9.30 am - 3.30 pm,
Sunday 2 pm - 5.30 pm**

MAY	Afternoon Entertainment:
Thur 1	Jack Davidoff
Sun 4	CLOSED
Mon 5	CLOSED
Tue 6	Ronnie Goldberg
Wed 7	Roy Douglas
Thur 8	Michael Heaton
Sun 11	CLOSED
Mon 12	KT LUNCH - Kards & Games Klub
Tue 13	Stephen Baron
Wed 14	Opdahl Trio
Thur 15	Madeleine Whiteson
Sun 18	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon 19	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 20	Margaret Gibbs
Wed 21	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 22	Joe Kay & Shirley
Sun 25	CLOSED
Mon 26	CLOSED
Tue 27	Jenny Kossew
Wed 28	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton
Thur 29	Mike Mirandi

Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain Benevolent Society

Notice is hereby given of a Special General Meeting of the Society to be held on Thursday 22nd May at noon at the AJR Day Centre, 15 Cleve Road, London NW6.

At the meeting it is intended to propose an amendment of the Rules of the Society

as follows:-

"Clause 11 (1). The annual general meeting shall be held in May or June of every year in London. Delete the words "in London"."

Births

Finestone. Ruth and Eric together with Barbara Preston wish to announce the birth of their new granddaughter Zara Grace, born to Amanda and Tony on 17 March. Mazeltov to great-grandfather Frank Henderson (Manchester).

Deaths

Kaufman. Gerda Kaufman, née Philipp, died peacefully on 6 April 2003 aged 84. Greatly missed by her husband Eric, son Andrew, daughter-in-law Susie and grandchildren Oliver and Nicole.

Kreindler. Marion Kreindler (née Sonnenfeld) May 1928-March 2003. The Sunray Girls remember one of their friends and ask those of you who knew her to treasure her memory with us.

Morley. Lilo Morley (née Muller) passed away 21 March after months of suffering. Sadly missed by her husband Rudy, daughter Susan and Michael, son Bobby and Ruth, grandchildren Sophie and Alexander, Samuel, Hannah and Holly.

Stone Setting

Kemp. The Stone Setting for the late Roy Kemp will take place on **Sunday 15 June 2003**, Bushey Cemetery at 5 o'clock.

Miscellaneous

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

For Sale

Riviera Bath Lift. £650 new, no reasonable offer refused. Please contact Naomi on 020 8446 4727.

Day Centre

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New Clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans, etc. **Thursday 1 May and Tuesday 20 May 9.45-11.45 am.**

Pamela Bloch at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. Clothes sale, separates etc. **Thursday 29 May 9.30 - 11.45 am.**

Chiropodist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre **Wednesday 14 May, 10-11.30 am.**

A HOME FROM HOME

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Obituary Fritz Spiegl

Fritz Spiegl, who has died at the age of 77, was an outstanding musician and a prolific author and journalist on musical and English-language themes. He had an enormous breadth of interests and a clear sense of the absurd.

He was born of Jewish and Catholic parentage in Zumdorf, close to the Austro-Hungarian border. Following the Anschluss he was sent by the Kindertransport to England. He was taken in by the War Secretary, Captain Margesson, and his American wife, who sent him to Magdalen College School, Oxford.

During the war years he was apprenticed as a typographer and designer at Colman, Prentis & Varley. Later he also studied at the Royal Academy of Music. From 1948 until 1963 he was principal flautist of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RLPO).

A year after joining the RLPO he founded the Liverpool Music Group, an organisation established to propagate his love of Mozart and which, under his direction, frequently subverted itself into a humorous band, adored on Merseyside for its 'Nuts in May' and 'April Fool' Concerts.

Having arrived in England knowing no English, he became more knowledgeable than most about its grammar and syntax. He pursued these themes in columns for the *Liverpool Daily Post* from 1970 onwards, and from 1989 contributed a 'Wordplay/Usage and Abuse' column to the *Daily Telegraph*. He returned to these themes in books and numerous letters to newspapers whenever he felt the language was being abused by modern writers.

He also contributed to, among many others, *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *Private Eye* and, at various times, presented radio series such as *Start the Week* and *Mainly for Pleasure*. *Contradictionary*, his final attack on what he saw as the maltreatment of the English language, is to be published posthumously.

Fritz Spiegl was also a member of the AJR. He was profiled by the *AJR Journal* in its August 2002 issue and two of his books reviewed, in last month's issue and in this one.

HS

Arts and Events Diary - May

To 8 June Am I My Brother's Keeper? Rescue in the Holocaust. Jewish Museum, Finchley

Sun 4 Yom HaShoa commemoration: 60th Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Logan Hall, University of London. Tel Board of Deputies 020 7543 5400

Mon 5 No lecture (Bank Holiday). Club 43

Mon 12 Dr David Williamson, 'The First British Occupation of Germany, 1918-29'. Club 43

Thur 15 Daniel Snowman, 'The Hitler Emigrés'. London Jewish Cultural Centre, 7.30 pm. £5

Fri 16 Dr Dorothea McEwan (Warburg Institute), 'Struwwelhitler and Schickelgruber'. Institute of Germanic Studies, 29 Russell Square, 6 pm

Mon 19 AGM. Club 43

Mon and Tues 19 and 20 *Company of Angels*, performed by mask, mime and puppet company Horse and Bamboo. Show based on the life of Charlotte Salomon, the German Jewish painter who died in Auschwitz. Jackson's Lane Community Theatre, London N6 tel 020 8341 4421

Mon 26 Club 43. No lecture (Bank Holiday)

Mon 2 June Club 43. No lecture (hall not available)

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

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

Jewish Museum, Finchley Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, London N3 tel 020 8349 1143

London Jewish Cultural Centre King's College, Kidderpore Avenue, London NW3 tel 020 7431 0345

Lewis Goodman

It has been pointed out to us that the parents of Lewis Goodman did not perish in concentration camps as stated in the obituary which appeared in our August 2002 issue, but died after the Second World War.

Search Notices*

Ruth Lederer, from Austria (?). During early years of war lived at home of Overtons, Church Street, Rugby. Had younger brother. Worked at George Over Ltd Booksellers, Market Place Rugby. Information, Doreen Curren (née Fry), 96 Buryfield Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 2DQ tel 0121 705 1779.

Dolly and Elsa Sobell. From Germany (?). Sobells arrived at Liverpool Street Station, lived with us for a while. My parents were named Sherkin or Scherkein. Information, please contact Bernie Carton, 6 Freston Gardens, Cockfosters, Herts EN4 9LX tel 020 8449 3363.

Gerda Weiler, born 23.4.25 Dresden, survived internment in Riga/Stutthof concentration camp. Any information please to john@tehillah.freeseerve.co.uk.

Hermann Rosenthal, born 27.7.1878 Witten-Annen, Germany, died 25.4.1968 and wife **Emmy née Lion**, born 20.10.1885. Last known address 25 Hilton Crescent, Prestwich, Manchester, Lancs. He came to England in 1939.

Ida Kohlberg née Rosenthal, born 19.5.1893. Came to England 1948. Address in 1962: 145 Grove Ends Garden, London NW8.

Gertrude Brown née Rosenthal, sister of Ida Kohlberg.

Emmi Jacobs, born 24.5.1931, came on Kindertransport to England?

I am working on documentary about Jewish citizens of Waltrop. Information, please contact Karl-Heinz Schomberg, Nach der Deine 15a, 45731 Waltrop, Germany heidecrew@aol.com.

Clausen, Hilda (Becker). She lived in the house of Cicely Marshall in London from June 1939 and during the war, helping with domestic and other work. Historian working on exiles and refugees in wartime London seeks any information available about her. Please email Giovanna@btinternet.com.

In connection with research project on Jewish Children's Home Sonnenhalde in Bollschweil, near Freiburg-im-Breisgau, the Stadtarchiv Freiburg seeks information about **Dr Annerose Heitler** from Baden-Baden and Berlin, then Brighton. Please contact D L Maier, 46 Westfield, 15 Kidderpore Avenue, London NW3 7SF tel 020 7794 5071.

*Includes Search Notices resulting from screening of television programme on Sir Nicholas Winton.

Learning from the past Britain's controls on 1930s Jewish immigration

Ronald Channing



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Lord Moser

Lord Moser, former refugee, academic and senior civil servant, was guest speaker at the launch of a paperback edition of Louise London's extensive historical investigation into government attitudes, policies and controls on the immigration into Britain of Jewish refugees from Nazi persecution in 1933-48. He recalled the warm welcome given to his own family on their arrival in 1936. Nothing could lessen the widely felt gratitude for allowing the entry of 70-90,000 Jewish refugees.

The story of the reality of those years, however, was really rather gloomy, he suggested. Louise London's analysis shows what happened behind the scenes in Whitehall. Her book reveals "how the official mind [in government] works." A system of visas was introduced, though it proved unhelpful for Jewish applicants, but public opinion did turn more sympathetic after Kristallnacht in November 1938.

Lord Moser drew three general points from *Whitehall and the Jews* which had "resonances" for Britain's present policies towards asylum seekers. First, the then government had "no declared policy" on refugees, but their actions were not very generous. Second, no statistics on the subject were to be published, and, as a consequence, both the magnitude and increase in demand were not quantified. Third, government policies (though undeclared) were originated by need and self-interest, not by humanitarian

considerations of saving Jews. Little or no consideration was given as to their potential contribution to the nation.

Lord Moser quoted the book as revealing that the Central British Fund had 500,000 files on Jewish refugees who wanted to get out of Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. It was probable that those who were refused entry into Britain were considerably greater in number than those who did gain entry.

Significantly, those granted admission were not permitted the status of permanent residents, being asked to give assurances that they would not stay. This was a country of relay, not of immigration. Lord Moser regarded this as "A most powerful, central reminder. We were not accepted as refugees who were to live here permanently." After the war the government, especially Herbert Morrison, did attempt to get them to move on, but the civil service appeared to take a more relaxed view and, in the event, most of the refugees neither moved on, nor returned to their countries of origin.

Clearly it was the Jewish organisations which were "enormously helpful" in guaranteeing the costs of accommodation and sustenance so that there was no call on state provision. Paradoxically, it appeared that official Jewish representative bodies agreed with the government's contention that an influx of too many Jews into Britain could generate antisemitism.

In conclusion, Lord Moser said that it had fallen to an ill-organised immigration department to manage the situation, but there was happily a useful degree of discretion. In public, as the book reveals, government policy was to be seen as doing a great deal - even if they actually did very little. Lord Moser recommended making today's administrative system related to refugees more welcoming, something which would go a long way towards easing problems associated with asylum seekers. He recommended the book as an important piece of historical research and valuable as background to today's issues.

Whitehall and the Jews, 1933-1948, by Louise London, is published in paperback by Cambridge University Press at £21.95.

Newsround

German Jewish leader backs Iraq campaign

Paul Spiegel, leader of the German Jewish community, expressed support for the coalition campaign in Iraq despite the German government's opposition to the war. 'With all the horrors of war', he said, 'one must not forget that it is about putting an end to decades of suffering and dictatorship.'

Eruv plan revived in Manchester

Following the successful setting up of an *eruv* in London, a proposal for an *eruv* in Manchester is to be submitted to local councils. According to a report in the *Jewish Chronicle*, the Manchester proposal was put on hold three years ago pending the outcome of the effort to set up an *eruv* in London.

Controversial politician quits FDP

Jürgen Möllemann has finally quit the Free Democratic Party. His decision follows a long period of tension with the party leadership on a range of issues, including the distribution of an anti-Israeli flyer.

Historian severs links with US producers

The historian Ian Kershaw has severed all connections with the US producers of a television series that was to have been based on his biography of Hitler. He is understood to have feared that the producers would sacrifice historical accuracy to make the series more eventful.

Nazi doctor stripped of award

Dr Heinrich Gross, 87, has been stripped by the Austrian authorities of the Honorary Cross for Science and Art, first class, which he was awarded in 1975. Dr Gross was convicted in the 1950s on charges of carrying out child killings in the Nazi era.

Ban on neo-Nazi party rejected

Germany's constitutional court has rejected a request from the government and parliament to outlaw the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party. Three of the seven judges decided that the presence in the party of government informants, which raised the questions of whether any could have acted as provocateurs, made it impossible to proceed with the ban.