

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Butchers, beauties and bigots

With parliament in recess, August usually lives up to its journalistic nickname 'the silly season'. The year 2003, however, was different. This August saw the start of the Hutton Inquiry, the end of the infinitely deplorable lives of Diana Mosley and Idi Amin, and the emergence of Mel Gibson as a purveyor of a hoary tale of deicide on screen.

Although these four events were completely disconnected it is not entirely fanciful to view them as links in a chain beneath the surface of things. Lord Hutton probes the correctness, or otherwise, of Downing Street's claims that Saddam possessed weapons of mass destruction. The elimination of WMDs was, together with regime change, the Coalition's war aim in Iraq. Regime change has, of course, been the subject of heated debate at the UN - with critics of the war accusing Bush and Blair of violation of national sovereignty. Yet in 1979 Idi Amin was forcibly removed from power in Uganda by Tanzanian soldiers with UN approval. Amin had much else in common with Saddam: adherence to Islam, aggression against neighbouring countries, and support for the Palestinian murder of Israeli civilians. Most notoriously, both dictators notched up an extermination rate among their own subjects approaching the half-million mark.

In one respect, however, Amin was unique even compared to such contemporary heirs of Genghis Khan as Pol Pot, Saddam, Assad, Bokassa and Mobutu: he not only killed, but also ate his victims. He was literally a cannibal, and unsurprisingly had huge admiration for the (metaphorical) arch-cannibal of the twentieth century - Adolf Hitler.

Someone who shared his admiration

was Diana Mosley, Amin's opposite in every other way - from looks to social and ethnic origin. Diana Mitford was catapulted from the drone-like existence of the 1920s 'bright young things' to a walk-on part on the world stage through her marriage to the vulpine British Fascist leader Oswald Mosley in Goebbels's house - with Hitler as a wedding guest.

Having once enjoyed privileged access to the Fuehrer, Lady Diana would subsequently parry questions on what she remembered best about him with the mind-boggling answer 'the laughs.' (Did this retort, one wonders, owe anything to WH Auden's *Epitaph for a Tyrant*:



Pope John XXIII



Diana Mosley

'Perfection of a kind was what he was after/And was greatly interested in armies and fleets/When he laughed respectable senators burst with laughter/And when he cried, little children died in the streets?')

Obituaries of the socialite-turned-National Socialist have tended to stress the *glamour of the Mitford gels* at the expense of the fact that in the Thirties many 'blue-bloods' - for instance Lords Nuffield, Rothermere, Hamilton, Bedford - flirted with Fascism. Though it would be simplistic to label all arch-appeasers antisemites, many, of course, were. In evidence one need only recall Hore-

Belisha's uncomfortable tenure at the War Office, or look at such diverse texts as the Tory grandee Chips Channon's diaries and the Anglo-Catholic TS Eliot's Judeophobic poems.

Judeophobia lingers on in the Christian world even after Vatican II formally absolved the Jews of guilt for the death of Christ. A Catholic splinter group headed by Cardinal Lefebvre maintained - alongside the Latin Mass - the charge of deicide against the Jews. They take their stand on the archaic declaration of the Church Council at Nicea in AD 325 that the Jews are 'abhorrent to the will of God.'

These ultra-Catholics (who include Mel Gibson's father) profess to believe that the reforming Pope John XXIII usurped the Holy See after threatening to drop a nuclear bomb on the Vatican, that the Holocaust did not take place, and that the Second Vatican Council was a Judeo-Masonic plot.

Now, Mel Gibson himself is completing a film about Christ's passion which revives the millennia-old charge of Jewish deicide - and we can only hope

that preliminary American reports of the movie's import are unduly alarmist.

Here in the UK, a degree of alarm would also not come amiss. Sharon's acceptance of the road map has not shifted public opinion in Israel's favour, as shown by Richard Ingram's malign refusal to print letters from 'Zionists.'

Another journalist with a strong anti-Israel bias, AN Wilson, has added insult to injury by drooling over Lady Mosley's espousal of 'beauty and laughter' in his posthumous tribute to her. Gibson, Ingram and Wilson are part of the exorbitant price we pay for media freedom.

Breaking into a *Mail* preserve

Richard Grunberger

Like all newspaper publishers, Jewish ones are a disparate bunch. Some, for example Josef Pulitzer (of Pulitzer Prize fame), were on the side of the angels - others, like Robert Maxwell, in the opposite camp. Where exactly does Richard Desmond fit in?

He left school at the age of 14 without any qualifications, went into music journalism at the time of the 'pop explosion', and became a mini-tycoon in his late twenties. Having diversified into vastly profitable soft-porn publishing, he had the inspired idea of launching *OK* as a home-grown rival to the best-selling Spanish-based celebrity magazine *Hello*. The next step in his dizzying career was the acquisition of the *Express* group of newspapers.

Lord Beaverbrook, founder of the mass-circulation *Express*, had been a power in the land, both as a super-rich media boss and a cunning political manipulator. However, since his passing from the scene the paper's readership had shrunk steadily to below a million. Desmond cut jobs, boosted the advertising budget, returned the *Express* to profitability, and even marginally increased its circulation.

He was recently profiled on TV, an exposure from which he emerged as a man of glaring contradictions: a profit-chasing Labour supporter and owner of a porn TV channel, who engages in lots of charitable work and lavished great care on his sons' barmitzvahs.

The impression created by all this must have left viewers feeling distinctly queasy. However, by comparison with the arch-Machiavellian, power-obsessed press barons of the past - Northcliffe, Rothermere, Beaverbrook - Desmond comes across as an innocent abroad. Moreover, by staunching the haemorrhaging of the *Express*'s readership, he denied Lord Rothermere's *Daily Mail* - which once sponsored Oswald Mosley and is still dangerously populist - hegemony over the large middle ground between the quality papers and the tabloids.

End of an era at Eleanor Rathbone House

Ruth Rothenberg

First opened in 1964 to provide sheltered accommodation for elderly Jewish refugees, Eleanor Rathbone House, a strikingly modern 12-storey block of studio flats in Highgate, North London, has been sold at auction for £5.7 million. Named after the social pioneer and MP who fought for the entry into Britain of refugees from Nazi persecution, it no longer serves the needs or preferences of today's potential clientele. Vacant flats have not been reoccupied and the remaining tenants have already been provided with appropriate accommodation.

Eleanor Rathbone House was built as a joint project by the Association of Jewish Refugees and the Central British Fund (CBF), the then recipient of West German reparation funds. The Otto Schiff

Housing Association (OSHA), which in 1991 took over the ownership and management of a number of homes from the CBF, of which Eleanor Rathbone was one, will be the main beneficiary of the sale after the repayment of mortgages and other outstanding loans. Responsibility for the running of OSHA, and of this home, was accepted by Jewish Care three years ago.

When Eleanor Rathbone House was built it represented a new concept in independent living for the elderly. But people's requirements have changed, especially as they are now so much older when they enter residential care. The home's location, on a hill and somewhat remote from shops and buses, is far less accessible and people now prefer separate living rooms and bedrooms to studio flats.

East German property list to be published

Michael Newman

After several years of equivocation and following recent requests from the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the New York-based Claims Conference has agreed to publish a list of properties and other assets once owned by Jewish families in the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

Following German unification in 1990, the Claims Conference, acting in its role as the Successor Organisation, negotiated for the rights of Jewish property owners and their heirs to file ownership applications. Despite a two-year period during which applications were to be made, on its expiry at the end of 1992 many properties remained unclaimed.

The Claims Conference eventually introduced a 'Goodwill Fund' through which eligible applicants who missed the original submission deadline would be

entitled to compensation. However, 20 per cent of the value of the property, or the value of its sale, is retained. Through the Goodwill Fund, revenues raised via the sale of heirless properties have already enabled the Claims Conference to disburse some \$160 million in payments, and a further \$150 million has been set aside to meet pending and future claims.

Publication of the remaining list of Jewish-owned properties in the former East Germany will offer rightful heirs a final opportunity to submit applications in respect of their family's assets, though a six-month time limit for claims from the date of the list's publication is to be imposed. The list of properties will be made available on the Claims Conference website: www.claimscon.org. Applications should be submitted to the Successor Organisation at 26 Sophienstrasse, 60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

AJR Journal

Richard Grunberger Editor-in-Chief
 Ronald Channing Executive Editor
 Howard Spier Editorial and Production
 AJR Journal, Jubilee House,
 Merriam Avenue, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4RL
 Tel: 020 8385 3070 Fax: 020 8385 3080
 e-mail: editorial@ajr.org.uk
www.ajr.org.uk

 **JACKMAN
SILVERMAN**
 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

26 Conduit Street, London W1R 9TA
 Telephone: 020 7409 0771 Fax: 020 7493 8017

Jews as muse

Richard Grunberger

I think there is huge symbolism in the fact - first revealed by AL Rowse - that Shakespeare's Dark Lady of the Sonnets was an Italian Jewess by the name of Emilia Bassano. In fact, Jewish women of talent have acted as the muse to an amazingly large number of Europe's most creative spirits for centuries. Though the sphere in which this has been most pronounced is literature, it is in music that it has had the best-known effect. Leos Janacek, who lived in a loveless marriage, had declined into fallow middle age when the encounter with Kamila Stösslava re-energised him, and spurred him on to compose his outstanding operas *Jenufa* and *Katya Kabanova*. (In passing, one might also mention the dedication - and political manipulation - with which Prokofiev's second wife, Mira Mendelson, helped him to turn Tolstoy's *War and Peace* into an opera.)

The story of Jewish muse-inspired European literati began over 200 years ago with Friedrich Schlegel (brother of the famous Shakespeare translator). Schlegel's ecstatic and sexually outspoken novel *Lucinda* resulted from his infatuation with Dorothea Veit, married daughter of Moses Mendelssohn and herself an author. It caused a scandal, only partly assuaged by Dorothea's divorce and subsequent marriage to Schlegel.

About a century later Richard Dehmel's poetic imagination was fired by a married Jewish lady he tactfully referred to as 'Frau Ida'. The first decades of the twentieth century witnessed three prominent German-Jewish literary marriages. The least productive and long-lasting was Heinrich Mann's. His brother Thomas's lifelong union with Katja Pringsheim created the stable *haute bourgeois* environment conducive to his unremitting literary labours. Bertolt Brecht's marriage to Helene Weigel was both similar and totally different - similar because the actress Weigel was Brecht's co-director of the Berliner Ensemble, and different because she publicly connived at his serial adultery.

In France, a writer at the opposite

extreme to Brecht, the Fascist Drieu La Rochelle, had an even more bizarre relationship with his Jewish muse Jeanette Jeremac. They had lived together in the early thirties, and after the Liberation the ex-collaborator La Rochelle hid out in her apartment. However, fearing discovery and a death sentence for treason, he killed himself in early 1945.

André Malraux married the banker's daughter Claire Goldschmidt when young. They travelled together to South-East Asia, whence Malraux returned with the subject matter for *La Condition Humaine*. The book made him world-famous - but the marriage collapsed.

In total contrast, the poet Louis Aragon showed lifelong fidelity to his Russian-born Jewish wife Elsa Troilet. Separated from her during the war, he penned *Les Yeux d'Elsa*, a famous poem wherein the *résistant* Aragon discerns the lineaments of eternal France in the features of Troilet's face.

Elsa's equally noteworthy sister, Lily Brik, had stayed in Russia, where she played a fickle muse to the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. Lily's final refusal to leave her husband for Mayakovsky - after they had long formed a 'threesome' - plunged the poet into a lengthy depression ending in suicide.

In postwar Britain it was the suicide of a famous poet's Jewish muse that ended an unhappy relationship. Sylvia Plath's *felo de se*, while married to Ted Hughes, is part of folklore - but a few years later the poet's second wife, Assia Weevil, followed in Plath's footsteps (and took their baby daughter with her).

In talking of British poetry one must not forget the Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name. Of WH Auden's many homosexual partners none was more of an inspiration - and a cause of heartbreak - than Chester Kallman. But the volatile blonde American Jew also turned out to be the poet's most enduring partner and collaborator - as proven by their co-authorship of the libretto for Stravinsky's Hogarth-inspired opera *The Rake's Progress*.

NEWTONS

Leading Hampstead Solicitors
advise on
Property, Wills, Family Trusts
and Charitable Trusts

French and German spoken
Home visits arranged

22 Fitzjohn's Avenue,
London NW3 5NB

Tel: 020 7435 5351
Fax: 020 7435 8881

CONSULTANT

to long established English
Solicitors (bi-lingual German)
would be happy to assist clients
with English, German and
Austrian problems.

Contact Henry Ebner

Myers Ebner & Deaner
103 Shepherds Bush Road
London W6 7LP
Telephone 020 7602 4631

ALL LEGAL WORK
UNDERTAKEN

AUSTRIAN and GERMAN PENSIONS

PROPERTY RESTITUTION CLAIMS EAST GERMANY - BERLIN

On instructions our office will
assist to deal with your
applications and pursue the matter
with the authorities.

For further information
and an appointment
please contact:

ICS CLAIMS
146-154 Kilburn High Road
London NW6 4JD

Tel: 020 7328 7251 (Ext. 107)
Fax: 020 7624 5002

Claims Conference - benefactor or villain?

David Rothenberg

Under the German laws enacted in 1990 in connection with the unification of Germany, any claims (not merely Jewish) for restitution of property in former East Germany and East Berlin had to be filed by 31 December 1991, although this date was later extended to 31 December 1992. The Claims Conference was again recognised as legal heir of heirless Jewish property, and effectively bound by the same time limits. In view of the very tight time limits, it sought recovery of property wherever it appeared from the records that it might have been Jewish-owned, and so swept up, for example, property registered originally in the name of Alfred Rosenberg! A number of high-profile cases of disputes arose between heirs and the Claims Conference, where both had apparently filed timely claims.

The only money the Claims Conference has had at its disposal was what it raised from this heirless property save some modest payments from, for example, Daimler Benz, which themselves gave rise to fierce arguments, and recent moneys from the Swiss banks and the German Foundation (already disbursed). It has been paying out this money to survivors and refugees as well as for its education objects almost as fast as it raised it. Disbursing over \$80,000,000 a year to institutions around the world, it is, for example, the largest supporter of Yad Vashem, as well as supporting social welfare institutions, old-age homes and day centres, not only in Israel but throughout the world, including the US and Eastern Europe. We in the UK have been the recipients of support for our Homecare scheme and the extension of our work throughout the UK (as part of the Umbrella Group).

The Goodwill Fund

In a number of cases, the heirs of Jewish owners found that by the time they learned of what their families had owned, even though they had missed the deadline of 31 December 1992, the Claims Conference had lodged a timely claim for what had been their family property. Even if the Claims Conference had law on their side, the heirs felt they had been robbed. From the perspective of the Claims Conference, they felt that not only did they have law on their side, but, if they faced the prospect of having to hand over to heirs what they had recovered on the basis that no heir had filed a timely claim, then they could not use the funds for the benefit of survivors and other vital work within the world Jewish community. After a stumbling first attempt in 1994 to solve this moral and legal dilemma via what they called the Goodwill Fund, they decided to take action in 1997, and stated that they would consider claims filed to them not later than 31 December 1998 by those who felt they had lost despite being heirs.

In July 2000 the Board agreed after impassioned debate the way in which they would operate the Goodwill Fund. Anyone who had lodged a claim before 31 December 1998 and could show they were a legal heir would receive 80 per cent of what the property had fetched, with 20 per cent being retained to cover costs. Furthermore, any heir who lodged a claim subsequently, and who was a 'family' heir, might still be paid out by the Goodwill Fund on the same formula if he or she could persuade an independent panel of assessors of prior ignorance of the possibility of making a claim. Details of the arrangements are set out on the web at http://www.claimskon.org/index.asp?url=successor_org.

In July this year the Board, after another vigorous debate, decided finally to close the Goodwill Fund to future claims made after a six-month period following the publication for the first time of a list of the names of all families in whose name properties claimed by the Claims Conference had been registered. There is a real concern that the final cost of all claims against the Goodwill Fund could exhaust the resources of the Claims Conference, making it impossible for them to continue with their activities.

July 2003

This is the second and concluding part of this article. The article represents the personal views of the writer, and represents neither the views of the Claims Conference nor those of the AJR itself.

The Wiener Library and Leo Baeck Institute

MAX KOCHMANN
MEMORIAL LECTURE

Professor Robert Wistrich
'The Last Testament
of
Sigmund Freud'

Chair:
Professor Peter Pulzer

Wednesday
26 November 2003

For further details,
please contact
the Wiener Library on
020 7636 7247

Return to Düren

Werner Lachs

Düren, a town with its surrounding villages of about 90,000 inhabitants, lies half-way between Cologne and Aachen. Though quite old, it cannot lay claim to an important history, if you ignore the fact that it was heavily fought over in 1945 and practically flattened. But the town and its *Kreis* did play host to a small but vibrant Jewish life going back many centuries.

Family connections

In 1938 about 400 Jews lived in Düren, with numerous small pockets of Jewish life in the surrounding villages, often no larger than one family, following occupations like shop-keeping, cattle-dealing and land-dealing. My late mother was a native of the town, and her elder brother Karl was one of a handful of professionals - a paediatrician. Regretfully, my Uncle Karl and his family became victims of the Holocaust.

When, three years ago, I received a phone call enquiring 'Are you Werner Lachs, and did you have an Uncle Karl who lived in Düren?', I was nonplussed. Peter Johannsen introduced himself as a retired consultant paediatrician who had discovered that a Jewish colleague had lived and practised in his town and, being acutely aware of the fact that almost half of all children's specialists in pre-war Germany were Jews, decided to research the history of his tragic, unknown colleague. He discovered my late grandfather's grave in the cemetery in Düren; the local newspaper revealed the names of the mourners but, of course, our names were not to be found on the deportation lists. With the help of some *Zeitzeugen*, he found out that we had emigrated to England, where it became a task for telephone directory enquiries.



Werner Lachs, left, in what was the garden of his childhood home in Düren, with his wife Ruth and friend Peter Johannsen, who is researching the history of the town's Jewish community

Düren's Jewish history

Now a good friend, Peter is researching and writing a history of the fate of my uncle and the Jews of pre-war Düren. When he and his wife were our guests in Manchester, we helped to fill in many of the details. A religious and active Protestant, he was born in 1933, and his father was a member of the Nazi Party and a Hitler admirer, something my friend could not stomach in later years. It has made him feel very attached to Jewish people and in particular their fate in the Nazi era. When he asked why it was that I and my family and not my uncle had got out of Germany, I replied that until November 1938 we all believed that things could not get worse, that Germany was the country of Schiller and Goethe, and that German was our culture, our language. Too late, the doors were shut to us and a quarter of a million German Jews perished.

Partial publication of his book was the reason for my wife and myself being invited to visit Düren, together with other former citizens. The mayor's words of welcome, at the official town hall reception, were most moving. We met the Hungarian-born rabbi of Aachen, where there is a renascent Jewish community comprising mainly immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Reluctant return

A memorial plaque to former Jewish

pupils was unveiled at a local grammar school, where a question-and-answer session for classes of 16-year-olds followed, all in English (the school has a bi-lingual culture). I had to answer the standard question about how I felt coming back to Germany after all this time and all that had transpired. Though I confessed to having serious misgivings, at one time vowing never to return, I had done so out of piety for the memory of my uncle; any misgivings had been dispelled by the genuine warmth of our welcome.

Düren remains conscious of the horrors of the Nazi era. Its then more than 100-year-old synagogue was destroyed on Kristallnacht, and where it stood there is now a car park, but there is also a plaque *in memoriam*, as there is another at an old, disused cemetery. A later used cemetery is well looked after by the town authorities. One unusual act by the town was to erect ten *stelae* at sites of some of the worst outrages of the Nazi era, for instance the factory building where the Jews were interned prior to deportation. They stand as constant reminders of the dark days of the 1930s-40s.

Where my grandparents' house had stood, I entered the site of the garden in which my sister and I had played happily together. It is still backed by an ivy-covered wall, which I now discovered was part of the old town wall, a childhood mystery I had waited 60 years to resolve!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

ANTI-IMMIGRANT SENTIMENT

Sir - On Monday 21 July BBC1 screened a programme on immigrants. Individual cases were discussed by a panel of groups (with their fixed point of view) followed by a phone-in vote by viewers. Each time the majority of viewers voted against admitting the immigrants. The case for admission had usually been based on humanitarian grounds, the case against on the burden, problems and dangers they would cause to this country.

How far is this public opinion our fault? Have we been seen to cause problems and danger to our host country? *AJR Journal* does publish something about the lives of well-known Jewish refugees and those who have given extraordinary service.

It is, however, more difficult to find out about the benefits or problems that may have been caused by most of us.

If our neighbours and workmates in the UK have formed their opinions on refugees because of their contact with us, we need to do something about it! Can our experience help to find a fairer way to solve the refugee question? Obviously we need to reflect on the causes of intolerance in the refugees' countries of origin and help our politicians to see what can be done about them. Have AJR members any knowledge and experience on how to assist present-day refugees in their locality? Please could we hear about it?

Bettina Cohn
Bristol

ALEXANDER KORDA

Sir - I find much of the aesthetic assessment in Ronald Channing's report on Professor Walker's overview of Korda's output (August issue) questionable. Is *Sanders of the River*,

with Paul Robeson in an animal skin, a classic? Is *The Shop at Sly Corner* memorable? If Korda was Britain's only movie mogul, whatever happened to J. Arthur Rank?

Alan S Kaye
Chalfont St Giles

AN ACCUSATION

Sir - Bill Oakfield seems to specialise in accusations about the failure of Jewish organisations and governments to help us Jews at critical times. Experience tells me that it is possible to quote excerpts from the work of others which fail to give a balanced account of what it was like at the time.

Eric Mark
Belgium

Sir - I was amazed at Bill Oakfield's 'Accusation' and can only assume that he is not familiar with Dr A Zahl Gottlieb's book *Men of Vision*, published in 1998 by Weidenfeld Nicholson (ISBN 0-97-84230-7), now unfortunately out of print.

This book states that Neville Laski, Leonard Montefiore and others went to see Sir Ernest Holderness, head of the Aliens' Department at the Home Office, in April 1933, proposing that all Jewish refugees from Germany be permitted to enter Britain. They supported their proposal with a pledge that 'all expense, whether in respect of temporary or permanent accommodation or maintenance, will be borne by the Jewish community without ultimate charge to the state.'

It is impossible to detail the many actions undertaken by the British Jewish community before the war and the very large sums raised by its leaders, including Lionel de Rothschild and Lord Bearsted, accused in Bill Oakfield's article. The book from which he quotes states: 'While they were more than conscious of their obligations to their

coreligionists, they were also determined to protect their own positions in British society.' Such an argument might explain a reluctance on their part to see a large influx of refugees into Britain, although Dr Gottlieb's evidence is against this. However, it seems totally illogical to claim this as a reason for withholding information about visas for Northern Rhodesia from refugee agencies.

I am not familiar with the documents Bill Oakfield quotes in favour of his theory. However, to level grave accusations against people who are no longer there to defend themselves seems to me to be against the 'sense of fairness' which he so admires. I can understand his feelings of bitterness but believe that they are based on knowing only one side of the story. I think that such obstruction as there was to the admission of German and Austrian Jews came more from the Home Office than from the individuals Bill Oakfield accuses.

Richard Tait
Richmond, Surrey

Sir - Northern Rhodesia as a potential refuge was a well-kept secret (August issue) - which is deplorable - but surely Palestine was a more natural refuge. That it was closed to appease the Arabs, and that it was kept closed to post-war survivors for the same reason, is even more odious.

To remind readers, Bomber Command, which suffered very heavy losses in taking the war to the enemy, was not awarded a medal for their bravery in the face of flak, fighters and weather. Those participating in the Palestine Run by the Navy against no odds at all, merely intercepting and either jailing or sending back to camps 'illegal immigrants', did receive a medal. It was the last occasion on which boarding parties were issued with cutlasses to injure unarmed survivors of years of Nazi persecution.

Frank Bright
Ipswich

BRICKBAT

Sir - The front page of the August issue of the journal has convinced me that my original decision to let my AJR membership lapse was correct. How

can an essentially decent man like Schröder be maligned by the Editor for refusing to lead his country into what was at best a questionable war and at worst a downright illegal one. And to continually mention him in the same breath, so to speak, as Haider is nothing short of obscene. Finally, for a German (or Austrian) Jewish refugee to complain that Germany does not want to make war is so bizarre that words almost fail me.

Also, Günter Grass, who is a well-known humanist and anti-fascist, does not deserve to be so insulted. It is now generally accepted that the destruction of Dresden did not shorten the last war by one nano-second and, apart from incinerating some 25,000 people, mostly civilians, it also cost the lives of some 200 brave bomber crew.

I may have missed something but I cannot remember any comment on or criticism of the muscle-bound Austro-American oaf now running for governor in California. The fact that he is a close friend of the aforementioned Jörg Haider seems to have escaped the Editor and I am delighted to point it out to him.

F Goldberg
Arundel

From the Editor: Since the birth of the Bundesrepublik in 1949 the Bundeswehr has participated in NATO and actually bombed Belgrade. When world peace is menaced by potentially nuclear-armed rogue states like North Korea, Iran and Saddam's Iraq, 'principled' pacifism does not benefit anyone. Just as Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and Eire can be said to have helped Nazi Germany in 1939-45, so the Bundesrepublik's non-involvement in Iraq helped Saddam. As for the 'illegal' war against Saddam, I would have thought that ending a regime which killed 300,000 of its own subjects (a UN estimate) eminently justified.

My criticism of Günter Grass focuses not on Dresden but on the Russian sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff, the victims of which were civilian evacuees but also military personnel.

As for Schwarzenegger, I had composed the following ditty for inclusion in the November issue:

Arnie's progress

*The dad, a cop in Graz, he
Was, like all Grazers, a Nazi.
The son, a beefcake spiced with ham,
Sought adoption by rich Uncle Sam.
The bigot dad 'bought into' hate,
The son may run the Sunshine State.*

BOUQUETS

Sir - The fact that criticism has not deterred Richard Grunberger from continuing to offer us highly readable articles brings to mind Hilaire Belloc's *Epitaph*: 'When I am dead/I hope it may be said:/His sins were scarlet/But his books were read.' Also, just because Ronald Channing, Gloria Tessler, Howard Spier, Michael Spiro and Anthony Grenville have so far, generally, escaped *ad hominem* attacks does not mean that their regular contributions are not read with great pleasure.

Guy Bishop
Connecticut, USA

Sir - May I say how much I appreciate your writings in the Journal - I am just re-reading *Shia malevolence*. I wish a few more folk would realise that here are people as malevolent as the Nazis, and who may have more chance of taking over a large part of the world.

George Stern
London N6

Sir - I am constantly astonished by your erudite articles in the splendid monthly you edit.

Martin U Mauthber
Waterloo, Belgium

CORRECTIONS!

Sir - Shame on you - you made a mistake! Litzmannstadt was Lodz, not Lwow (September issue, p. 3). Frederick Forsyth (letter by Ossi Findling, p. 7) is wrong too: the Riga ghetto was guarded *not* by the SS, but by Latvian police under the command of German police from Prague. Finally, a big thank you for publishing Alison Macleod's poem *Holocaust*.

Ezra Jurmann
London NW6

ARE YOU ON A LOW INCOME AND IN NEED OF HOMECARE HELP?

AJR might be able to offer financial assistance.

Members who might not otherwise be able to afford homecare please contact:

Estelle Brookner, Secretary
AJR Social Services Dept
Tel: 020 8385 3070

Companions of London

Incorporating
Hampstead Home Care

A long established company providing care in your home

Assistance with personal care
General household duties
Respite care
Medical appointment service

'OUR CARE IS YOUR CARE'
020 7483 0212/0213



SPRING GROVE

214 Finchley Road
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious
RETIREMENT HOME

- Entertainment-Activities
- Stress Free Living
- 24 Hour Staffing • Excellent Cuisine
- Full En-Suite Facilities

Call for more information
or a personal tour
020 8446 2117
or 020 7794 4455

enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk

Simon R Rhodes M.Ch.S.
STATE REGISTERED CHIROPODIST

Surgeries at:

67 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (opp M&S)
Telephone 020 7624 1576

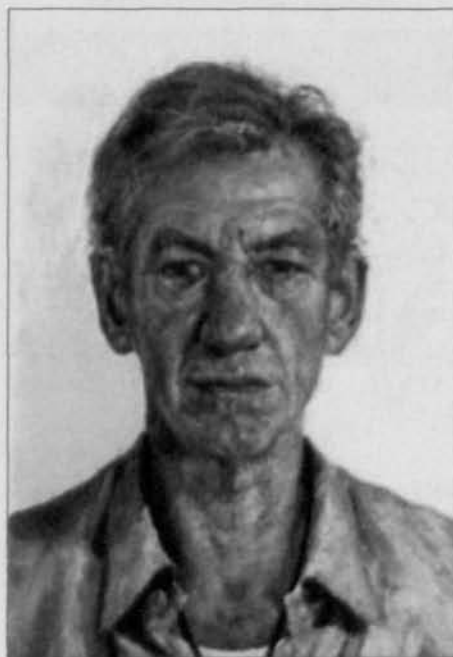
3 Queens Close (off Green Lane)
Edgware, Middx HA87PU
Telephone 020 8905 3264

Visiting chiropody service available

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Everything is present in the human face, as a visit to the **National Portrait Gallery** will confirm. Here, 51 selected works from the **BP Portrait Award 2003** were chosen from a record 858 submissions, which begs the question: what is that elusive quality that makes a winner? I can't help feeling that the faces painted by **Leonardo da Vinci**, for instance, had that spiritual *otherness*, a mysterious quality where you are not necessarily offered familiarity but, rather, synchronicity. Some portraits here, such as **Darren Coffield's** *Portrait of Ivan Massow*, borrow heavily from classical formalism; others are witty, ironic and often trend-setting, and strongly influenced by media imagery.



Sir Ian Murray McKellen Clive Smith, 2002

There's an occasional nod to **Lucien Freud**, whose almost telescopic vision of the pallid and ephemeral nature of flesh is unmatched. I particularly liked the third prize-winner, *Elliot 11* by **Graham Flack**, a monochromatic oil on canvas whose technique of paint running into the features produces a wavering and exposed expression. The first prize, *Untitled*, went to **Charlotte**

Harris, for her highly intimate portrait of old age. Her subject is lined, with red tinged flesh around the eyes and a skin so papery as to be almost translucent.

En route to the awards room, you can see photographs of other, more contemporary personalities - well-known DJs like Princess Julia, described as the gay icon of glamour, and Fatboy Slim, all photographed by Chris Lopez, in an attempt to capture those who are developing popular dance music culture. In other rooms you can find millionaires and politicians, writers like Salman Rushdie and actors like Sir Ian McKellen, as well as some of Saatchi's babes, young British artists like Sarah Lucas. For a fleeting moment it felt as though portraiture at this level was pandering to the great and the good - true art aping media imagery - but then people love to gawp at the icons of their day.

In **Tom Phillips's** portrait of Dame Iris Murdoch, painted in the mid-1980s, his subject's introspective, literary qualities are implied by the unusual background to the canvas - **Titian's** sordid and sensuous *Flaying of Marysas*. Murdoch's powerful face, the almost lifelike curl of her blue collar around her neck, which mirrors the shape of the green ginkgo plant beside her, has something of the grandiosity of the Florentine artists of the Medici period. Here too are aspects of a power more subtle than theirs, yet it poses another question: can we predict from it Murdoch's cruel mental and physical decline through Alzheimer's? Are the ravages of disease present in the inward look in her eyes?

A spiritual robustness shines through the BP winner's portrait of the gentle, fading face - so different a perception from Murdoch's inward intelligence - yet both portraits are so self-contained, so full of knowledge. In the BP exhibition you would be hard pressed to find a smiling face, although you wouldn't go short of a scowl or two. Many are dreamy and all - perhaps influenced by the inroads photography has made into portraiture - are somehow not quite present in their faces.

RG'S INTERFACE

Anniversary I Seventy years ago Chaim Arlosoroff, a rising star of the Mapai Party, was assassinated in Tel Aviv. His murder polarised left- and right-wing Zionists and created a rift, not unlike the Dreyfus Affair. Arlosoroff's thoughts are summed up in a volume edited by Shlomo Avineri, published under the Peter Halban imprint.

Anniversary II Fifty years ago a strike by building workers in East Berlin's Stalin Allee triggered anti-regime demonstrations throughout the DDR. This put Jewish Communists in a quandary. Until Stalin's death (March 1953) the regime had joined in the Eastern Bloc-wide antisemitic campaign - but now the DDR media denounced the rising as Nazi-inspired. This version of events was echoed by Jewish returnees such as the writers Stefan Heym and Jurek Becker.

Adaptation Among the many Jewish authors in English-speaking countries the US-based Chaim Potok is unique in being Orthodox. His novel *The Chosen* has been adapted for the stage, and will be premiered in Florida with the Vienna-born multi-talented Theodor Bikel in the lead. Bikel appeared as Tevye in a staggering 1,600 performances of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Language controversy The legendary *Stammtisch* of German refugees which has been in weekly session in New York's Upper East Side for over 60 years was originally plagued by linguistic disagreement. Oskar Maria Graf (a political émigré famous for his 1933 challenge to Goebbels to burn his books) insisted that only German be spoken at the get-togethers. He was opposed by the poet Hans Sahl, who had established himself in the US as translator of Tennessee Williams's box-office hits such as *Katze auf dem heissen Blechdach*.

Obituary The Viennese-born musicologist Kurt Pahlen has died in Switzerland aged 96. A conductor, composer and writer of rare creativity, he was active in pre-war Europe's musical life, headed the Teatro Colon (the leading South American opera house) in the 1950s, and eventually settled on the north shore of Lake Zürich.

Against a background of refugee haunts

THE STRANGE CASE OF DR SIMMONDS AND DR GLAS

Danny Abse

Robson Books 2002, £14.95

There is a strange quality to Dannie Abse's recent novel, which makes the rather unusual title particularly apt. This strangeness is certainly found in the protagonist, Dr Robbie Simmonds, a solitary bachelor GP approaching his 40th birthday in 1950. With a deformed hand and facial scar caused by paternal neglect at a Guy Fawkes party when he was a small boy, Simmonds grew up a self-confessed 'mama's boy'. Emotionally bereft by the loss of his mother ten years earlier, he lives, cosseted by a devoted housekeeper, in the overlarge, unmodernised family home in Hampstead where every one of his mother's possessions remains untouched since the day she died.

While Simmonds himself is not Jewish, he is only too aware that the area in which he grew up has been virtually 'colonised' by Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe. One, Anton Bloomberg, a patient of his, is his *bête noire*. Simmonds feels revulsion for the refugee businessman but is enchanted by his beautiful young gentile wife, Yvonne, who becomes the object of his fantasies. When Yvonne, who appears to hold the doctor in high esteem, gives him the novel *Dr Glas* by the Swedish author Hjalmar Soderberg, Simmonds finds his basest desires in conflict with his Hippocratic oath. In his emotional turmoil, he sees a situation that closely reflects his own: the doctor hero of the novel impelled to use his craft to rid a charming young woman of her overbearing clergyman husband.

The parallel linking of Dr Simmonds and Dr Glas is a vital ingredient in the literary conceit around which the novel revolves. Simmonds's journal, the principal narrative tool, is bequeathed to Yvonne who, decades later, approaches a former literary agent she once knew to help her get

REVIEWS

the journal published. The journal covers the period from late December 1949 to June 1950. There is a gradual sense of despairing diminuendo in the last few weeks as Simmonds, increasingly haunted by what he perceives as Yvonne's betrayal, finds himself consumed, in his state of sleep-deprived depression, by the fictitious Dr Glas.

While Abse has capitalised on his imagination as a novelist to create this unusual tale, shortlisted for the *Jewish Quarterly* prize for fiction, he has also made use of his medical expertise to provide an authentic background. No less effective is his ability to capture the ambience of the locale and period in which his novel is set, not least the refugee haunts in Swiss Cottage and West Hampstead. The Cosmo Restaurant, the Blue Danube Club and the Embassy Theatre are just a few of the landmarks - some almost forgotten - which are vividly brought to life and will doubtless make the novel a gratifying read for anyone who remembers them in their heyday.

Emma Klein

Need for action

AFTER THE EVIL

Richard Harries

Oxford University Press 2003, £16.99

Richard Harries, the Bishop of Oxford, recently achieved notoriety for his nomination of a homosexual priest to the bishopric of Reading. This book, however, is on a completely different topic: the relationship of Christians and Jews. He begins on a personal note, with his horrified reaction as a boy to the Belsen film. The evil in the title is the Holocaust, for which, he realises, 'the long history of the Church's teaching of contempt for Jews' provided the seedbed. He acknowledges that even today 'most ordinands [to the priesthood] still go

through their training with the old stereotypes about the Pharisees and Jewish legalism, and Judaism as the foil to Christianity [intact].'

These stereotypes are: that Christianity has superseded Judaism - he wants both religions to be regarded as equal but different; that Jews are to be converted to Christianity - conversion, he argues, should be a voluntary act; and that forgiveness occurs in the Old as well as the New Testament.

With regard to the Holocaust, Bishop Harries discusses the thesis of suffering as put forward by many theologians. That Jewish people were individually marked out for punishment for their sins is an obviously absurd idea; that there is collective guilt deserving punishment, as some rabbis believe, I also find distasteful. Other explanations, both Christian and Jewish, figure in the book, though all seem inadequate.

Bishop Harries acknowledges the harm done by Church theologians through their diatribes against the Jews. He is also aware of the negative attitude of some Jews to Christianity, although this is more understandable in the light of their treatment by the mainstream religion. On the subject of Christian repentance for past hostility, he quotes a document promulgated by the Vatican as late as 1998 which asserts that antisemitism is essentially a pagan movement (*sic!*) but that 'erroneous interpretations of the New Testament' may have made Christians 'less sensitive to the persecutions launched by National Socialism.' While the document expresses regret at the failures of the Church's sons and daughters, it is, as Bishop Harries points out, the Church itself as an institution which needs to express sorrow for its teaching down the ages and to radically rethink its whole outlook.

The Church's recognition of Israel is equally lukewarm. This is said to be out of concern for Arab rights and suffering, but is one being cynical in detecting in this a lingering unwillingness to acknowledge Jewish rights?

There is much here to ponder. Disappointingly, there is no plan about how, for instance, the anti-Jewish propaganda of the Gospels can be modified or how the parish priest in Bootle may become aware of the negative effect of Christian teaching on his parishioners' attitude to Jews. There is much right thinking, but what we need is right *action*, since, as James Parkes of the Council of Christians and Jews warned, 'antisemitism is a light sleeper.'

Martha Blend

For youngsters and oldsters

DID YOU EVER MEET HITLER, MISS? A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR TALKS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Trude Levi

Vallentine Mitchell, £9.95

The author of this remarkable book sets out the questions she is frequently asked on her visits to educational establishments in this country and in Germany, as well as her replies to those questions. Some of the questions are trite, like the title of the book, although most are carefully considered. In all instances, the replies are honest and factual and given to the best of the author's ability.

What is particularly heartening in today's atmosphere of intolerance and loutishness is that, despite her unrelenting suffering, Trude Levi, a non-believer herself, is reluctant to generalise about prejudice in respect of colour, race or religion. This point is underlined in her expression of thanks to David Blunkett for his foreword to this book where, as an asylum-seeker herself, she very much hopes that the Home Secretary will always use his influence on the side of fairness when considering applications for those seeking protection.

Prior to writing this book, Trude Levi wrote *A Cat Called Adolf*, which is virtually an autobiography and in which one felt she had needed to try to dispel the evil spirits which hovered around her in her early years. The book under review, however, has

achieved a mental and emotional stage of development the former one seemed to lack. Despite this, Trude Levi's initial book was a great success, and I trust that the present one will have even greater sales, for it is a book that should be read, particularly by youngsters, although it would be good for oldsters too to purchase it.

If one is allowed just one niggly, it is that the editing of the book could have been done more thoroughly.

Martin Hasseck

FILM REVIEW

Ostalgia

GOODBYE LENIN

Directed by Wolfgang Becker

On general release

Pity the poor newspaper reader constantly bombarded by unfamiliar terms: *apartheid*, *perestroika*, *intifada*, etc. The latest arrival is *Ostalgie*, the East Germans' yearning for the good old days before the collapse of the DDR. Pre-1989, millions of them sat in a less-than-gilded cage whose bars they didn't dare rattle. They worked diligently for little pay, enjoyed no-more-than-adequate living standards, and could not travel abroad. Nonetheless, some felt comfortable in this environment of everlasting sameness.

The film *Goodbye Lenin* caters to that feeling. Here, the post-1989 influx of unbridled capitalism is depicted as an event that left people accustomed to a gentler pace of life scarred. The film likewise shows how unification euphoria quickly dissolved into rancorous disputes between smart-ass *Wessies* and slow-on-the-uptake *Ossies*.

All this is conveyed through the unfolding of a story that is both humane and charming. A dutiful son goes to all conceivable lengths to prevent his dangerously ill DDR-loving mother from discovering that during her months-long coma the Berlin Wall collapsed and everything went topsy-turvy.

The extremes he is prepared to go to in pursuit of this deception start with re-equipping their apartment with antiquated furniture and culminate in the production of a fake video in which ex-DDR boss Honecker makes a speech 'abolishing' the Wall so that thousands of Western escapees from capitalism can take shelter in the East.

The son's hugely resourceful ruses to create a 'parallel universe' for the mother are delightful to watch. However, the film takes a nose-dive into *shmaltz* with a heartstring-plucking, last-reel revelation about the absconded father. I have no doubt that any cinema-goer will feel better for having seen this film - but would enter one caveat: the 'cosy' DDR depicted here was also in the habit of shooting dead any citizen who tried to leave it.

Richard Grunberger

Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street
(off New Bond Street)
Tel: 020 7629 7578
Fax: 020 7491 2139

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

WANTED TO BUY German and English Books

Established bookdealer
(AJR member)
always welcomes
invitations to view
and purchase
valuable books

For an immediate response,
please contact:
Robert Hornung
2 Mount View, Ealing,
London W5 1PR
Email: hornungbooks@aol.com
Tel: 020 8998 0546
(5pm to 9pm is best)



PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Norbert Cohn

A professional and a gentleman



Norbert Cohn greeted me in his comfortable North London suburban home wearing a light jacket, collar and tie despite the warmth of the summer morning - at all times the continental gentleman. Though officially retired a decade ago from his optometrist's practice in Swiss Cottage, at the age of 78 he remains active in professional institutions and the German-Jewish refugee community.

Following four years' military service in World War I, father Karl made a living supplying clothing manufacturers. Born in Berlin in 1925, Norbert enjoyed a happy childhood and, at the age of nine, was presented with a brother. The Cohns lived close by the Grunewald synagogue, where they regularly attended services. Norbert recalls his father as 'a typical German of the Jewish persuasion', while his mother, who was a trained dental technician, accepted the role of housewife and mother.

With the accession of Hitler to power in January 1933, the removal of the rights and freedoms hitherto enjoyed by Jews began. Paradoxically, while the lawyers, doctors and civil servants were immediately disbarred from employment, for the business community the regime's investment in new roads and munitions precipitated an economic boom. Norbert was transferred from his primary school to a Jewish school. His barmitzvah in 1938 was the synagogue's last as it was burned to the ground on Kristallnacht, after which virtually the entire Grunewald community decided there was no future for Jews in Germany. To obtain entry visas to the UK for his family and a work permit for himself, Karl wrote to the Chief Rabbi and Lord Rothschild, but neither replied. After nine months of trying he was successful due to the intervention of Commander Oliver Locke-Lampson MP, who generously gave his personal guarantee for the Cohn family.

They left by train on 25 August 1939. At the Belgian border all Jews were searched and items of value, such as jewellery, were confiscated before they were allowed to continue via Ostend and

Dover, arriving at Victoria Station. They spent their first night in the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square but, on discovering that the refugee community had settled around Hampstead, they found a boarding house in Swiss Cottage, then a furnished flat in Greencroft Gardens. Father began importing lace from Belgium - which was not invaded until May 1940 - then went into the textile business selling cloth to the manufacturers. Using a ruse to avoid internment, he went for walks at 5 am around Regents Park! Norbert remembers how members of the refugee community rallied round to help one another, an extended family that geographically and spiritually remains with Belsize Square Synagogue, of which Norbert was a board member for 50 years.

Having arrived in England at the age of 14 armed only with schoolboy English, Norbert was enrolled at a Willesden school, its lone refugee boy, and learned his English by reading the *News Chronicle* with a dictionary.

He matriculated at the age of 17. The family assumed that, at the war's end, they would be sent back to Germany, so in 1942 Norbert settled for a course in optometry at Northampton Polytechnic. Graduating in 1945 with honours, he spent the next six years in a practice in Tooting. As many members of the refugee community can testify, in 1952 Norbert set up his own practice at Swiss Cottage, where he remained for the next 40 years!

An appreciable percentage of the refugees left their eye care in his capable hands, entrusting their children and grandchildren as the years passed. I too recall the velvet-curtained and wooden-panelled practice, and those rows of immaculately polished lenses. Never having any need to change his equipment, systems or methods, Norbert himself became an institution and pillar of his community.

Every week, for the past 58 years, he has taken the Northern Line to hold a clinic at the Institute of Optometry at the Elephant and Castle. Though he 'retired' in 1992 he carried on at the Institute, as well as being the member responsible for optics in the NHS Primary Care Trust of Camden and Islington. He is also Hon Treasurer of the benevolent fund of the College of Optometrists, and for 50 years has been active in the Leo Baeck Lodge of B'nai B'rith.

His wife Miriam arrived in Britain with the Kindertransport. They were married at Belsize Square Synagogue in 1963 and have three children and six grandchildren: Jeremy, who read law at Oxford, is settled in Jerusalem, Anthony is a consultant paediatrician (the first doctor in the family), and Judith is librarian at the *Daily Telegraph*. Miriam recently took over the chairmanship of the Daleham Gardens Leo Baeck Day Centre.

Though he has spent 64 years of his life in England, Norbert could never regard himself as an 'Englishman'. He has a strong Jewish identity and his Central European intellect and accent add to his easy-going charm.

INSIDE the AJR

Ilford inaugural meeting

Thirty-seven of us turned up at an inaugural meeting at Sinclair House, introduced ourselves, and decided we would meet monthly on Wednesday mornings. A small working committee will be formed, to be discussed at the next meeting. Quite a number of people arrived in England with the Kindertransport so there will be many interesting stories to hear in the months ahead.

Meta Roseneil

Next meeting: Wednesday 22 October



North London's Jenny Zundel pictured with Education Minister Stephen Twigg

North London address by Stephen Twigg MP

Now that's what one can call a celebration of our second anniversary! Not only did Helen and Leo Horn excel in organising an array of goodies and wine - not to forget a birthday cake - but we also had an address by Education Minister Stephen Twigg. The over 30 members present were privileged to hear a most illuminating talk outlining his ascent from pupil at Grange Park and Southgate Schools via Oxford and local council member to becoming an MP and defeating Michael Portillo. Stephen Twigg told of his tenure as chairman of the Labour Friends of Israel and as a government whip before becoming a minister. Our best meeting yet!

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday 30 October

Film-maker gives talk to Brighton & Hove Sarid

Jack Grossman, who gave a fascinating account of his life in the film industry, cut his teeth at the long-vanished Unity Theatre in King's Cross, where he worked with, among others, Bob Hoskins, Lionel Bart and Alfie Bass. Then he researched, wrote and directed documentaries. After some years at Cygnet Films, he founded his own company with a partner and they made many features for the then new medium of TV. Since his retirement he has made several films, including one about Beth Shalom.

Next meeting: Monday 20 October:
Judy Ironside

East Midlands (Nottingham) opportunity to socialise

A successful fourth meeting of the revived group was held in Nottingham, in a member's house for a splendid lunch. As usual, it was an opportunity for members to socialise. I was sorry not to see any members from outlying areas, in particular Leicester. We would be delighted to see a few more people and, of course, assist them with transport at no cost to themselves.

Bob Norton

Next meeting: Wednesday 26
November

Summer garden party in Pinner

Once again, Vera Gellman invited us all to gather in her beautiful garden, to admire the flowers, to meet friends, and to partake of a sumptuous tea with traditional strawberries. Some 40 or so members enjoyed it all. Thank you, Vera.

Paul Samet

Next meeting Thursday 2 October.
Pinner Synagogue, 2.00 pm. Zvi Stanislavsky (Jewish Agency) on 'The offer of sacrifice of Isaac and the Temple'

Liverpool: rescue of Danish Jewry

Speaking about the rescue of Danish Jews

in the Second World War, Anita Cantor said that, unlike in many other countries, ordinary Danes, led by King Christian, helped to rescue Jews: in this instance, 7,200 Jews (including the speaker) and 700 non-Jewish relatives. Also, as in many other countries, after the war the Jews who had fled or been deported were welcomed back to Denmark.

Gerry Jason

Norfolk (Norwich) inaugural meeting

Thanks to Myrna Glass's spade work, we met at the Norwich Hebrew Congregation Annex. We found out that, contrary to expectations, not only are there Jews around but there are also a few real Continental ones, all the way from Vienna, Breslau and Stuttgart to an Austrian village near the Czech border. After the formalities we got to know each other inspired by refreshments.

Frank Bright

Next meeting: Tuesday 18
November, lunchtime, same venue

Surrey: exchanging experiences

We had another pleasant coffee morning at the Chertsey home of Janet Clarke and Anthony Portner. As previously, there was no formal programme: members were pleased to see each other and exchange experiences. Renee Goddard and Hanno Fry, who had been invited by the Senates of Hamburg and Berlin, their respective places of birth, talked of their welcome and strenuous experiences.

Hanno Fry

Next meeting: Sunday 2 November.
For details contact Edmée Barta on
01372 727 412

South London tea party at Nightingale House

We had a very pleasant afternoon at Nightingale House. There were 32 visitor members of the AJR present and 11 resident AJR members. The idea was to give an opportunity to resident AJR members who either get out very little or not at all to meet other AJR members,

an idea which was much appreciated by the residents. We were welcomed by Andrew Leigh, Deputy Director of Nightingale House, and Jackie Snowbrick, Activities Team Leader, who gave a tour of Nightingale House to those who hadn't seen it before. A lovely tea was arranged in the bright large lounge. The afternoon was so successful that Walter Woyda suggested we make this an annual event, which seems like a good idea.

Herbert Wolff



South London members at Nightingale House tea party

Manchester 'full house'

A 'full house' at the Morris Feinmann Home heard Anita Canter talk about the near-miraculous escape of the great majority of Danish Jews from the Nazis. Anita was a small child when she and her family were rescued, but the episode has been a major interest in her life and one she has researched thoroughly. Her talk was not only informative but also moving.

Werner Lachs

Next meeting: Sunday 30 November. Annual afternoon tea with a musical presentation

Essex talk by BBC news-reader

Our speaker was BBC World Service news-reader Stewart Macintosh. From being a DJ on Radio Brighton, Stewart made his way up the ladder via various local BBC and commercial stations, including LBC, and kept us spell-bound on his slow but successful ride, including a bumpy stay in Northern Ireland. We were pleased to be able to greet our former organiser Henny after a long illness.

Larry Lisner

Next meeting: Tuesday 14 October

MEET OLD FRIENDS MAKE NEW ONES

Come and join us for a fantastic holiday at the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth.

Sunday 2 November -
Friday 7 November

£300 plus £20 single room supplement including transport, sandwich lunch on outward journey, half board, outings and entertainment.

Call Carol Rossen or Joan Altman on 020 8385 3070 as soon as possible as numbers are limited and demand is high.

AJR GROUP CONTACTS

Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)
Fausta Shelton 01273 734 648

Cambridge
Lisel Eisner 01223 356721

Dundee
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

East Midlands (Nottingham)
Bob Norton 01159 212 494

Edinburgh
Françoise Robertson 0131 337 3406

Essex (Westcliff)
Larry Lisner 01702 300812

Glasgow
Claire Singerman 0141 649 4620

Harrogate
Inge Little 01423 886254

Hull
Bob Rosner 0148 2649156

Ilford
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3070

Leeds HSFA
Trude Silman 0113 2251628

Liverpool
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

Manchester
Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091

Newcastle
Walter Knoblauch 0191 2855339

Norfolk (Norwich)
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3070

North London
Jenny Zundel 020 8882 4033

Pinner (HA Postal District)
Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833

Sheffield
Steve Mendelssohn 0114 2630666

South London
Ken Ambrose 020 8852 0262

South West Midlands (Worcester area)
Ruth Jackson 01386 552264

Surrey
Edmée Barta 01372 727 412

Wessex (Bournemouth)
Mark Goldfinger 01202 552 434

West Midlands (Birmingham)
Henny Rednall 0121 373 5603

Myrna Glass, AJR South and Midlands
Groups Co-ordinator
020 8385 3077

KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

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

THE LUNCHEON CLUB

Wednesday 15 October 2003
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Ralph Blumenau
'Jewish Medicine in Germany'

Early reservations please!
Lunch now only £5
Please telephone Sylvia or Susie
on 020 7328 0208

KT-AJR Kindertransport special interest group

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD

Monday 13 October 2003
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Sylvia Kaduri
will speak on

'The Baghdad Jewish Community'

Lunch £5

Reservations required
Please telephone
on 020 7328 0208

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

OCTOBER	Afternoon Entertainment:
Wed 1	Paul Coleman
Thur 2	Mike Mirandi
Sun 5	CLOSED
Mon 6	CLOSED - YOM KIPPUR
Tue 7	Curtain Up
Wed 8	Jack Davidoff
Thur 9	Nicola Smedley
Sun 12	CLOSED
Mon 13	KT LUNCH - Kards and Games Klub
Tue 14	Ann Kenton Barker
Wed 15	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 16	Opdahl Trio
Sun 19	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon 20	Kards and Games Klub
Tue 21	Joe Kay & Shirley
Wed 22	Margaret Gibbs
Thur 23	Michael Heaton
Sun 26	CLOSED
Mon 27	Kards and Games Klub
Tue 28	Madelaine Whiteson
Wed 29	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton
Thur 30	Jenny Kossev

Death

Naftalie. Rose Naftalie, née Günsberg, Kauber, born in Leipzig, died peacefully 30 July 2003 at the age of 88. Missed dearly by her husband of 54 years, (Manfred) Fred and daughter Evelyn and three grandchildren, all from Hod Hasharon, Israel. She will be missed by us all. Interment took place 10 August Beth David Hollywood, Florida, USA.

Selby. Irene Erika née Kölner. Died on 6 August 2003 after an illness borne with great courage. Much missed by her children, grandchildren, great-granddaughter, brother and sister.

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

Day Centre

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New Clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans, etc. **Monday 20 and Wednesday 29 October 9.45-11.45 am.**

Pamela Bloch at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. Clothes sale, separates etc. **Wednesday 1 and Thursday 9 October 9.30 - 11.45 am**

Chiropodist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre **Wednesday 5 November between 10 am-11.30 am.**

THE CARE AGENCY

Provides you with professional sympathetic, affordable care in your own home.

Live in and hourly rates.

Telephone us on 020 7482 2188

Fax: 020 7482 3985

BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, London NW3

Our communal hall is available for cultural and social functions

Tel: 020 7794 3949

'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

Members requiring benefit advice please telephone

Linda Kasmir on 020 8385 3070

to make an appointment at AJR, Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

ACACIA LODGE

Mrs Pringsheim, S.R.N. MATRON
For Elderly, Retired and Convalescent

(Licensed by Borough of Barnet)

- Single and Double Rooms.
- Ensuite facilities, CH in all rooms.
- Gardens, TV and reading rooms.
- Nurse on duty 24 hours.
- Long and short term and respite, including trial period if required.

From £350 per week

020 8445 1244/020 8446 2820 office hours

020 8455 1335 other times

37-39 Torrington Park, North Finchley, London N12 9TB

Leo Baeck Housing Association Ltd

**Clara Nehab House
Residential Care Home**

All single rooms with en suite bath/shower
Short stays/Respite and 24 hour Permanent Care
Large attractive gardens
Ground Floor Lounge and Dining rooms
Lift access to all floors
Easy access to local shops and public transport

Enquiries and further information please contact: **The Manager**

Clara Nehab House
13-19 Leaside Crescent
London NW11 0DA
Phone: 020 8455 2286

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household electrical work

PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518

ALTERATIONS

OF ANY KIND TO LADIES' FASHIONS
I also design and make children's clothes

West Hampstead area
020 7328 6571

BELSIZE SQUARE APARTMENTS

24 BELSIZE SQUARE, NW3

Tel: 020 7794 4307 or 020 7435 2557

Modern Self-catering Holiday Rooms,
Resident Housekeeper,
Moderate Terms
Near Swiss Cottage Station

ADVERTISEMENT RATES

FAMILY EVENTS

First 15 words free of charge,
£2.00 per 5 words thereafter.

CLASSIFIED, SEARCH NOTICES

£2.00 per 5 words.

BOX NUMBERS - £3.00 extra

DISPLAY ADVERTS

per single column inch 65mm
£12.00

THE HOME CARE PRACTICE

Helps you remain in your own home

We can offer you a wide range of Personal Care and Support long or short term, living in or out at affordable rates.

Please call Jenny Flavill, our Care Manager for a no obligation chat on
Tel 020 7328 8408
Fax 020 7624 5002

**BELSIZE SQUARE
SYNAGOGUE**

51 Belsize Square, NW3 4HX

We offer a traditional style of religious service with Cantor, Choir and organ

Further details can be obtained from the synagogue secretary
Telephone 020 7794 3949

Minister: Rabbi Rodney J Mariner
Cantor: Rev Lawrence H Fine

Regular Services

Friday evenings at 6.45 pm

Saturday mornings at 10 am

Religion School: Sundays at 10 am to 1 pm

Nursery School: 9.15 am to 12.15 pm

Belsize Under 3's: 9.30 am to 11.30 am

Space donated by Pafra Limited

SOPHIE'S NURSES

Suite 51 Park Royal Business Centre
9-17 Park Royal Road

London NW10 7LQ

Telephone 020 8961 4401

Fax 020 8961 0875

email: sophiesnursing@aol.com

www.sophiesrecruitment.com

Sophies (SRS) Healthcare at home will enable people to live full and independent lives within their own homes and continue to enjoy comfort and security

Colvin Home Care

Care through quality and professionalism

Celebrating our 25th Anniversary

25 years of experience in providing the highest standards of care in the comfort of your own home



1 hour to 24 hours care

Registered through the National Care Standard Commission

Call our 24 hour telephone 020 7794 9323

www.colvin-nursing.co.uk

Obituary Otilie Geduldiger

Otilie Geduldiger, who has died at the age of 100, was born in Prague. The only time I ever heard her express anger about her past was when she told me her parents would not allow her to train as a pianist because they thought it was not proper for a girl. Undeterred, she went on to play the piano in the cinema for silent films.

Otti was teaching languages in Bologna, where her oldest sister lived, when the war broke out. She tried to return to Czechoslovakia but was refused entry. In 1939 she went to Portugal, where she was taught to make filigree jewellery while in the refugee camp. She was sent to Panama, where one day there was an announcement that Canada was prepared to take six refugees. Otti was the first to say she would go. In 1941 she settled in Montreal for 15 years.

Otti lost 13 members of her family in the Holocaust, including her mother and younger sister. In 1956 she moved to London to be nearer her two surviving sisters, who were still in Sweden and Italy, and my father, Francis Popper, her cousin.

Unable to sell her now unfashionable jewellery, Otti took a job as a copy typist. She visited us the night before starting work to borrow our typewriter to learn how to type.

She was almost a student-in-residence at the City Lit, attending classes in Italian, English literature, play-reading and choir until her deteriorating sight and hearing made it impossible. Then she joined the Jewish clubs, greatly valuing the friendship and support they offered, culminating in a splendid round of festivities for her 100th birthday.

Otti became younger at heart as she got older. She took genuine delight in other people's success. She expected little in life and was grateful for what she had. She will live on in our hearts.

Elizabeth Campbell

Unveiling of Liverpool Street Station Kindertransport Sculpture

A report on this will appear in the November issue of AJR Journal

Arts and Events Diary October

The Bridge The Wiener Library will be holding a fortnightly, early evening study session over an 8-week period in the autumn, looking at **post-Holocaust Judaism and faith**. Contact Katherine Klinger on 020 7636 7247 or email kklinger@wienerlibrary.co.uk

Mon 6 Club 43. No lecture (hall not available)

Mon 13 Bill Fishman, "The city of dreadful night": Victorian London and the results of the Whitechapel murders of 1888'. Club 43

Mon 20 Herr Heinz Stalder liest aus einem Romanprojekt. In Zusammenarbeit mit der schweizer Botschaft (in German). Club 43

Mon 27 Ruth Bourne, 'My experiences working with the ENIGMA cryptographers at Bletchley Park, 1944-46'. Club 43

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

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

Insurance companies reach agreement on Holocaust claims

Three of Europe's largest insurance companies have agreed to provide an extra £15 million to honour claims from relatives of Holocaust victims. Zurich Financial Services, Winterthur and AXA have reached an agreement with the Eagleburger Commission to bring to an end any legal action by relatives seeking to recover unpaid life assurance policies on those who died in the Holocaust.

The Eagleburger Commission, chaired by former US Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, was established in 1998 to deal with allegations that some insurers failed to honour claims made by Holocaust survivors or the heirs of those who died in the Holocaust.

Its intention now is to highlight recently expanded lists of policy-holders on the website of the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims.

The deadline for filing claims to the Commission has been further extended to 31 December 2003 and the list of policy owners is available at www.icheic.org.

Central Office for Holocaust Claims Michael Newman

Hungarian compensation claims - a clarification

Two of the most recent pieces of legislation in Hungary, laws adopted in 1992 and 1997, have provided some compensation for Holocaust victims. The 1992 law (to cover the enforced wearing of a yellow star and confinement in a ghetto or concentration camp) provided \$50 worth of local vouchers to survivors that had to be spent in Hungary. The deadline for the 1997 legislation 'Compensation for Loss of Life by Political Persecution' was limited to survivors who had *already* applied for and received their first payments. Applications had to be submitted between 7 June and 7 October 1997.

The amount of compensation was very small: Hungarian Forint or HF 30,000 - approx. £130. Under decree 46/2000 AB (XII.14), the Hungarian Constitutional Court increased the amount from HF 30,000 to HF 400,000 (approximately £1,500) as a one-off payment for loss of life of victims. This sum is available only to claimants who applied in 1997: no further claims will be accepted. These applicants will be notified and paid at the address provided in the 1997 claim.

Heirs of recipients who have died since the 1997 disbursement are likewise eligible and should contact the bureau. The address of the Hungarian Central Claims Bureau is:

Kozponti Karrendezesi Iroda
1116 Budapest
1-3 Hauszmann Alajos Street
Tel: 361 203 1556 Email:
kik@axelero.hu

Anyone who applied to this fund before the 1997 deadline but has since moved should contact the fund administrators with details of their new address.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), Jubilee House, Merriam Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL, by fax to 020 8385 3075, or by email to michael@ajr.org.uk. Assistance can be provided strictly by appointment at the Holocaust Survivors Centre in Hendon, north London. For an appointment please ring 020 8385 3074.

Tea, Talk and Traviata

Ronald Channing



AJR members and their guests were welcomed by the Chairman, Andrew Kaufman, to this year's Afternoon Tea and Light Opera, presented by singers from Covent Garden at London's Marriott Hotel. He spoke of the Association as increasingly a national organisation with local groups in all regions of the country, enabling members to reconnect with

their history, cultural tradition and with others who shared their life-changing experiences. A sumptuous tea, and plenty of opportunity to greet old friends, was followed by a programme of operatic favourites, which included *Madam Butterfly*, *La Traviata*, *Die Fledermaus*, *La Bohème* and *The Merry Widow*, all of which were greatly enjoyed.



Andrew and Eric Kaufman



Ludwig Spiro and Edward Levy



Mrs Hilde Kochmann



Theo and Anne Marx



Fred Dunston and Ken Saunders



Mr & Mrs Anthony Spiro and Peter Dannenberg

PHOTOS: RONALD CHANNING

Newsround

Nazi film-maker dies

Hitler's favourite film-maker, Leni Riefenstahl, has died at the age of 101. Both of her major film works - *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia* - were funded by, and intended to glorify, the Nazi regime. A third film, *Tiefland*, used gypsies from concentration camps as extras.

Britons blamed for 'Nazi' attacks

The UK Ambassador to Berlin, Sir Peter Torry, says German schoolchildren visiting Britain are being attacked on the streets because of British 'prejudices and stereotypes' about Germany. He added that 'Part of the stereotyping comes from the repetition and rehash of the war films and comedy programmes like *Faulty Towers*.'

Trainee priest claims Pope Pius XII denounced Hitler

Charles Gallagher, a trainee priest studying at St Louis University in America, says he has stumbled on archival documents according to which Pope Pius XII described Hitler as 'a fundamentally wicked person.' John Cornwell, the British author of *Hitler's Pope*, said he was aware that Pope Pius detested Hitler and the Nazis but that 'he put the Vatican's interests before those of the German church.'

Czech woman honoured by Holocaust institute

Vera Bruzkova, 89, who risked her life to save a Slovak Jewish boy at the Ravensbrück concentration camp, has been made a 'righteous gentile' by the Jerusalem-based Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial institute.

Jan Karski award for Warsaw woman

This year's Jan Karski award for Valour, Courage and Compassion has been made to 93-year-old Irena Sendler of Warsaw. An employee of the city's Social and Health Department at the time and one of very few gentiles having access to the Warsaw ghetto, Mrs Sendler, together with a network of ten Polish helpers, rescued 2,500 children from the Nazis.

French ambassador denies making anti-Israel comments

France's ambassador to Israel, Gérard Araud, has denied newspaper reports that he described Israel as a paranoid country and Ariel Sharon as a thug. The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharanot* says Araud used the phrases repeatedly at a recent reception.