

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

How I came to believe in miracles

Leslie Baruch Brent

I am a scientist - to be precise, an immunologist - and I don't believe in miracles. However, this summer I experienced a week which has made me wonder. This is a very personal account of that week but I believe the personal is transcended by something of far wider significance - the apparent need of Poles to make up for their antisemitic past.

I was born 80 years ago in Köslin, then a small German market town in Hinterpommern (Pomerania), between Stettin and Danzig. In the late nineteenth century, a vast synagogue was built and existed until its destruction during Kristallnacht, when both the 'old' and the 'new' Jewish cemeteries outside the town were also obliterated.

The Russian army largely destroyed the town in 1945, and since then it has become wholly Polish, with no trace of anything German (other than some pre-war buildings) or Jewish. Köslin became Koszalin. In 1989 I decided to visit the town for the first time since I fled from it in 1936, and I did so in the

company of my first wife Joanne and my son Simon. Due to its great growth and extensive rebuilding I found it hard to orientate myself in the town, though the park and nearby woods and coastline were as I remembered them. Some landmark buildings that had survived included, amazingly, the one near the station in which my family and I had lived in a small third-floor flat in the mid-thirties. I didn't know a soul and, not unexpectedly, it proved to be a cathartic visit.

Five years ago I received a fax from Zdzislaw (Zibi) Pacholski, a professional photographer in Koszalin, telling me he had discovered my grandfather's tombstone. It had apparently been found lying in the stream which flowed alongside the old Jewish cemetery and it now sits in the local museum, the only Jewish artefact in the region. It was the tombstone of my great-uncle David Baruch, born in 1840.

Four years ago my wife Carol and I returned to Koszalin to inspect the gravestone and to get to know, among

others, Zibi and his wife Nina. This time we had friends there. I was now able to appreciate the town for what it had become since my childhood.

Zibi, an excellent photographer, is also deeply interested in the Jewish history of Koszalin. He had discovered the 2003 website of the British Transplantation Society on which they had celebrated the first publication of a paper in *Nature* half a century ago that had led to the award of the Nobel Prize to its senior author, Professor P. B. Medawar. I had been the junior author and Zibi suggested to the mayor of Koszalin that something should be done about this man, who now called himself Leslie Baruch Brent. And so it was that earlier this year I received a gracious invitation from the mayor of Koszalin to spend a week, accompanied by Carol, as an honoured guest in his city.

We arrived in Koszalin in early July and I had the most extraordinary week of my life there. We were treated like celebrities.

Continued on page 4

A sad but proud occasion

Two years ago I saw a photograph of a memorial stone which had belonged to the synagogue in my home town of Wesel am Rhein. The stone, which recorded the names of six German Jewish soldiers who fell in the First World War, was destroyed along with the synagogue during Kristallnacht.

In 1914 the Jewish population of Wesel numbered 260, of whom 65 joined the forces and seven were killed. I discovered a seventh name not on the original memorial. I felt that these soldiers' sacrifice had been forgotten. Determined to right this wrong, I learned that the restoration of the memorial stone was at the

discretion of the local authority. Eventually, the problems of finance, design and planning were overcome.

This September, in the presence of, among others, Ulrike Westcamp, the Mayoress of Wesel, Rabbi Katz and representatives of the Duisburg Jewish community, relatives of a soldier named on the stone, and representatives of the Defence Ministry, we assembled in the local cemetery. Following an address by Mayoress Westcamp, I laid a wreath 'In the name of the former Jewish Community of Wesel' and gave a brief address. A sad but proud occasion.

Ernest G. Kolman



Ernest Kolman speaking at a ceremony marking the restoration of a memorial stone to German Jewish soldiers who fell in the First World War

PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING



Bertha Leverton MBE, founder of the Kindertransport reunion, pictured with AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman at a party celebrating her investiture at Buckingham Palace. Kindertransport Chairman Hermann Hirschberger said that Bertha 'thoroughly deserves this great honour for her untiring personal commitment to making the unique rescue operation of the Kindertransport known not only in the UK but throughout the world.' Andrew presented Bertha with a silver picture frame on behalf of the AJR.

Anthony Grenville to become regular contributor to *AJR Journal*

We are delighted to announce that from the beginning of next year, Dr Anthony Grenville will become Consultant Editor of the *AJR Journal* and contribute regularly to these columns.

Dr Grenville, whose parents left Vienna for London in 1938, lectured in German at the Universities of Reading, Bristol and Westminster between 1971 and 1996. Since 1995 he has been Honorary Secretary of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies at the University of London. Since 1996 he has been researching the German-speaking refugees from Nazism in Britain, making special use of early issues of *AJR Information*. He has also been commissioned by the AJR to direct *Refugee Voices*, a programme of 120 filmed interviews with former refugees across Britain.

Second Generation Voices: Ten years on Barbara Dorrity

The newsletter *Second Generation Voices* resulted from a national conference for members of the second generation organised by LINK therapists, who recognised that the descendants of refugees from, and survivors of, Nazi persecution needed to discuss many issues. Following LINK's second national conference in 1995, participants were invited to produce a newsletter, which would provide a contact point for its readers nationwide. The first *Second Generation Voice* emerged in January 1996 and has appeared three times a year. *Voices* consists of personal accounts, in prose or verse, artwork, reviews, events listings and letters. The added 's' reflects the fact that there is no one second-generation voice.

A questionnaire about the content of *Voices* indicated that personal histories were most popular. There are accounts of visiting the country of a parent's birth (or death); reports on group meetings, sometimes of 'dialogue' work, for example with second-generation non-Jewish Germans; reviews and the occasional short story. *Voices* enjoys receiving contentious articles: visits to Israel tend to raise many questions.

Initially, *Voices* received letters from first-generation readers, saying they were the only people affected by the Holocaust - but has not had such letters for a long time. Perhaps *Voices'* longevity is the answer. It is a space where writers can say what they think and explore how their parents' histories have impacted on them. For some they have had a

major impact - which does not have to be negative: it has produced much creativity. For others, it has had a minor effect, or they 'choose' it to be so. The experiences are many and varied, from the loss of many close elder relatives, and all tangible reminders of that loss, to a more vague displacement sensation, such as having (foreign) grandparents in this country, but not knowing where they grew up.

The inability of some parents and grandparents to talk directly to their children about their wartime experiences is certainly an issue for *Voices* readers. *Voices* has been able over the last 10 years to 'give voice' to their responses.

In 1997 the Second Generation Network organisation was formed - 'the same but different' to the Association of Children of Jewish Refugees (ACJR, now 20 years old). The Network's events are likely to be discussion groups, or meetings with a speaker, and occasionally a conference, mostly, but not always, in London, publicised in *Voices*. The Network has encouraged the formation of groups nationwide, and contacts with other second-generation groups worldwide, several of which have contributed articles to *Voices*.

Enquiries about joining the Second Generation Network and receiving *Second Generation Voices* can be made on 020 7431 4106 or to *Second Generation Voices*, c/o The Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH

Arts & Events Diary December

To 16 February 2006 'The Last Goodbye: The Rescue of Children from Nazi Europe' Jewish Museum, Finchley

To 8 January 2006 'Albert Einstein: Man of the Century' Jewish Museum, Camden Town

Thur 1 Dec 'The Holocaust and the Moving Image'. Discussion by film-makers Rex Bloomstein, Jack Gold, Peter Morley and Michael Darlow. London Jewish Cultural Centre, 7.30 pm

Mon 5 Charles Dreyfus MA, 'North African History Reviewed in 1943' Club 43

Thur 8 Gerd Koenen, 'Terrorism and Antisemitism in Postwar Germany'. At Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. Tel Leo Baeck Institute on 020 7580 3493. Joint lecture series: Wiener Library-Centre for German-Jewish Studies-Leo Baeck Institute

Mon 12 Hans Seelig MA, 'Some Musical Anniversaries of 2005' Club 43

Wed 14 Anthony Julius, 'Resonances of the Blood Libel'. Centre for Jewish Studies, SOAS, Room B102, Brunei Gallery, Russell Square, London WC2, 1.00 pm. Tel Colin Shindler on 020 7898 4358

Mon 19 'An Informal Chanukas Evening' Club 43

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club 43 Meetings at Belsize Square Synagogue, 7.45 pm. Tel Hans Seelig on 01442 254360

Jewish Museum, Camden Town, tel 020 7284 1997

Jewish Museum, Finchley, tel 020 8349 1143

London Jewish Cultural Centre, Ivy House, London NW11, tel 020 8455 9900

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

**JACKMAN ■
SILVERMAN**

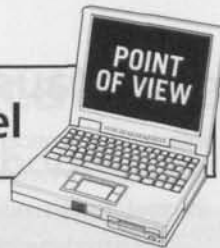
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Land purchase in Palestine-Israel



Shortly after Israel's pull-out from Gaza, a truck carrying mortar bombs towards the new frontier for lobbing into Israel as a thank-you for the pull-out exploded, causing deaths and injuries. Hamas promptly blamed Israel for this. This episode characterises the Palestinians' attitude towards Israel: they bomb innocents, even when things are going their way. But, in one respect, they are unable to apportion blame, and that is with regard to the purchase of land.

Under Turkish protectorate, Palestine was a virtual desert. Nomads and Druses roamed the country wherever their goats found greenery and then moved on. Under the British mandate, Jews who managed to settle bought patches of land from whichever landlord they could find: no land was simply acquired. Landlords were only too pleased to receive payment. Difficulties arose when a landlord could not be found. When I was driving through Haifa some years ago, a derelict house in our path caused us to make a small detour. As its owner could not be located, the house could not be bought and pulled down.

The difficulties were compounded when, on the establishment of the State of Israel, many Palestinians, landlords or not, left, encouraged to do so by radio broadcasts from neighbouring Arab countries, thus creating the largest and most long-living mass of refugees ever. They should have been helped in their self-imposed, tragic circumstances by the oil-rich Arab states, but were not.

In 1967 Israel, having pushed back the invaders, pursued them and was left with Arab territories on her hands. Israeli requests to begin peace talks were met by a deafening silence. The question now was what to do with the conquered territories. Purchase from either refugees who now had no papers as to ownership would be extremely difficult, and eventually the settlements were created. It was a logical step to

cultivate barren land, though settlers should have been warned that the unlikely event of peace talks might involve the issue of their leaving those lands and losing any assets. Most recently, that is exactly what happened and the settlers withdrew, reluctantly but eventually with good grace.

Proof that the original intention had always been to purchase land legitimately recently came to light in an unusual manner. As I was looking through old family papers, I came across a set of variations for violin and piano on the Chanukah hymn by a composer by the name of Waxmann, published in Berlin presumably in the 1930s (no date could be found). On the back page was an appeal by Arnold Zweig, the famous author, exhorting people to buy land for emigrating Jews. Below are excerpts from the 1930s appeal:

There is in Palestine a Jewish awareness. It is growing under normal difficulties, but growing. The Jews in Germany are watching this reconstruction with a deep bond and burning interest. Growth in Palestine means unlocking the land through Jewish work. Jewish work is qualified through Jewish soil. We must purchase this ground. We cannot, as is the case elsewhere, colonise by means of territorial annexation.

Keren Kayemet Leisrael has the task of bringing land into the possession of the Jewish community. This it has done hitherto with success: over 150,000 *dunam* are now eternal Jewish property. Thirty Jewish villages have sprouted in which, in the words of two well-known authors, '20,000 happy people' are working. The existing ground is occupied; our co-operative settlements and towns are growing. We must provide new land for the new settlers. 'We' means every Jew. We therefore turn to all of you to build this homeland, where Jews can develop their own way of life without being slandered, despised and hated. We turn to you to give generously together with many thousands at the forthcoming festival of Chanukah to Keren Kayemet Leisrael (Jewish National Fund)...

Rudi Leavor

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AJR participation in Holocaust Memorial Day, January 2006

Preparations for next year's Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) are gathering pace, with details of the event in the Millennium Conference Centre in Cardiff on 26 January beginning to emerge. The AJR has been asked to discover how many of its members are interested in participating.

As with previous HMD commemorations - in London, Manchester and Belfast - the event is centred on a theme. The 2006 event is focused on the impact an individual can make.

The newly created HMD Trust's theme 'One person can make a difference' will give recognition to the efforts, and honour the bravery, of individuals such as Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld and Janusz Korczak as well as more celebrated heroes, including Raoul Wallenberg, Oskar Schindler and Sir Nicholas Winton.

The annual themes of the HMD Trust are 'intended to help mark Holocaust Memorial Day by providing a focus through which people can draw on wider materials and then examine the continuing relevance of the Holocaust'.

The HMD Trust is now eager to gather

information concerning the number of Holocaust survivors and refugees who are interested in attending the national event.

The Trust was formally registered as a charity in May this year with Her Majesty the Queen as its patron. It is chaired by Stephen Smith OBE, founder of the Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre. Eleven other representatives of leading organisations involved in Holocaust education as well as Jewish and non-Jewish communal life, including the Board of Deputies and the Holocaust Educational Trust, have been appointed Trustees.

In addition to raising awareness of the Holocaust, the HMD Trust aims to ensure that the evils committed during that period are neither forgotten nor repeated. It is also a stated objective to remain vigilant in the light of more recent atrocities and to promote a democratic and tolerant society which is free of racism and other forms of bigotry.

While the Trust will continue to receive financial support from the Home Office, it is envisaged that it will raise its own funds in the future. The Trust is also seeking a

chief executive to take over from the person seconded from the Home Office who will oversee next year's event.

As next year's anniversary falls on a Friday, the event has been put back to the evening of Thursday 26 January. At this stage, no arrangements for travel and accommodation - the costs of which will have to be met by participating individuals - have been made, but we are interested in gauging the level of interest in attending.

As well as the official HMD event, details of commemorations throughout the country will appear on the recently launched HMD website www.hmd.org.uk, which contains resources and information for teachers and the general public. The site also features testimonies of survivors as well as advice and assistance on organising a local event.

If you wish to attend Holocaust Memorial Day in Cardiff please write to Mrs Estelle Brookner at AJR Head Office, Jubilee House, Merriem Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL or email socialsec@ajr.org.uk

Michael Newman

Continued from page 1

Events organised for us included a visit to the Archives Institute, where I was able to inspect the birth, marriage and death entries of members of my family (all carefully preserved in their German leather-bound tomes), and visits to the museum (where my great-uncle's tombstone stood among beautifully displayed exhibits of the city's past) and the regional Chamber of Physicians, where I was formally presented with a certificate of honorary membership, the first in the society's history. Before our departure the mayor gave me a leather-bound folder enclosing my family's documents, beautifully photocopied on to vellum paper.

A scientific symposium had been set up in my honour on the subject of 'Transplantation', with speakers from Warsaw, Gdansk and Szczecin (Stettin) and a contribution from me, and one evening was spent in a theatre into which 120 people had crammed merely to ask me questions about my life. Somewhat embarrassingly, I was asked to unveil a large plaque in Polish, German and English outside the house in which I had lived with my family. On our last evening we attended a fine choral concert - dedicated to me - in

the cathedral (formerly the Marienkirche). Leaving Koszalin, I carried with me a box of presents: a variety of books about Koszalin, three paintings, a videotape (in German), a bust of Hippocrates, a mug and other memorabilia - but, most importantly, my family's documents and a wine bottle carrying the remnant of a label showing the Star of David and a Hebrew letter. This pre-war bottle had been found on the site of the cemetery and Henryk Romanik, not only a priest but also a poet, had written a long poem about it, linking the bottle symbolically with me and my family. He presented me with an English translation of this touching poem.

But quite the most significant and moving event was the re-opening of the old Jewish cemetery. The site, having been identified, was tidied up and surrounded with a green wire-mesh fence. The Star of David had been incorporated into the ironwork gate, and inside was a large ice-age boulder with a plaque in Polish and Hebrew recounting the cemetery's history. In front of the boulder was an irregularly shaped area of white pebbles, with a small cypress tree.

Taking part in the ceremony were the

mayor, the bishop of Koszalin and two priests (one of these, Henryk Romanik, had helped to prepare this event), two Jews from Gdansk (one a rabbi) and two from Koszalin, a woman from Warsaw representing the chief rabbi (she was the chief executive of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Culture in Poland), and a professor of transplant surgery. And, of course, the ever-present Zibi, recording it all for posterity. Carol and I were the guests of honour and the ceremony, which began with a two-minute silence to commemorate the victims of the London bombings, was watched by a crowd of about 100. This included some 30 Jews living in the city - the first time they had appeared as a group (I had not even realised there were Polish Jews in the town). The ceremony was intensely moving and the re-opening will, I hope, help to give the Jews in Koszalin some sense of communal identity. It is intended in due course to move my great-uncle's tombstone, which began this extraordinary odyssey, back to the cemetery from which it had been so brutally plucked in 1938. Do I believe in miracles? Well, maybe.

Making a New Life: Educational opportunities*

Bernice Shooman

Among the varied and remarkable themes emerging through the unique experiences of those contributing to the Making a New Life: Holocaust Survivors in Yorkshire Project, the loss of potential scholarly status is particularly poignant and pertinent. These accounts may resonate with familiar feelings recognised by readers and we on the research team would greatly welcome your responses.

Nazi ideology prescribed one fate for all European Jews. Although anti-Jewish policy was applied in various ways in the occupied countries, John Chillag and Waldemar Ginsburg, incarcerated in severely congested ghettos, shared a common destiny. Not only doomed to humiliation and deprivation, they were also severed from their educational opportunities and ambitions.

John attended a gymnasium in Győr, Hungary, the total population of which was approximately 50,000; the Jewish community was about 5,000. Of 36 boys in the class, 5 were Jews. Discrimination against Jews in Hungary culminated in the Race Laws of 1941, similar to the 1935 Nuremberg Laws in Germany. On 19 March 1944 the Germans occupied Hungary and, in April of the same year, the population of one district of Győr was evacuated and designated as a ghetto for the Jewish population. According to John:

Before we were forced into the ghetto, I was 17 years old and about to complete seventh grade in grammar school. I should have taken my final examination in June 1945. I was the only Jew who came back [from the camps], to take an accelerated course towards matriculation [final exam]. I obtained good results and might have gone to university the next day. But how could I? Somehow I had to earn a living.

On 11 April 1945 John was liberated from Buchenwald concentration camp and, while recovering, supervised the loading of patent and work-process documentation. Unbelievably, he was reunited with some of that same material 18 years later, when he began work at the British Library in Yorkshire.

On graduation from grammar school in 1939 Waldemar enrolled in the Architectural Department of the University of Kaunas, Lithuania: 'I adapted well to the new demands of student existence. At the same time, I became



John Chillag's Identity Card, 1949



Waldemar Ginsburg second from left, Joseph Kagan second from right, 1953

anxious about the pace and scope of ominous developments. Nazi-inspired racial antisemitism was spreading like a contagious disease across the German border.'

Two years later, in June 1941, exactly a year after the arrival of the Red Army, the German army advanced into Lithuania. By July that year over 30,000 Jews, including Waldemar, were marched into a ghetto. The majority of the ghetto workforce was assigned to the airport for relentless gruelling work.

'I noticed, a few rows in front of me, a young man taking off his yellow Star of David. He disappeared. Joseph Kagan survived, made his way to England and became Lord Kagan of Elland.' In the autumn of 1948 Waldemar eventually settled in Elland, West Yorkshire, where he worked for Kagan Textiles until his retirement.

In defiance of the Nazi ideology which denied their civil human rights, including education, the threads of John's and Waldemar's careers have woven a rich tapestry into the Yorkshire landscape of Boston Spa and Elland.

Making a New Life Project
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Email: b.l.harrison@leeds.ac.uk

*This is the third article in the series. See AJR Journal, October and November issues.

The Chairman,
Management Committee
and Staff wish
all AJR members
a Happy Chanukah

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

NO MEETING OF MINDS

Sir - To publish an obituary of Simon Wiesenthal which reduces his life and work in seeking justice for the victims of the *Shoah* to a quarter-page when you choose to spend one page each on the drivel of Walter Wolfgang's left-wing activism and Inge Trott's 'dream gone sour' - has the *AJR Journal* lost all sense of its *raison d'être*?

Peter Simpson
Pinner, Middx

Sir - Pace the views of Messrs Trott and Wolfgang, 'The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza came about because in 1967, as in decades before, the Palestinians and Arab states were intent on liquidating the Jewish state' (quotation from a recent issue of *The Economist*). Long before 1967 Israel had to contend with arson, armed infiltrators and indiscriminate landmines. Why are we constantly reminded of the expulsion of the Arabs, but never of the thousands of Jews expelled from Arab states in 1948, 1956 and 1967? The Israelis made it their business to absorb them - unlike the Arabs, who to this day allow their brethren to languish in refugee settlements.

Robert Miller
Leatherhead, Surrey

Sir - Two anti-Israel points of view in one issue of the *AJR Journal* - what a U-turn! Walter Wolfgang castigates 'unquestioning pro-Israeli articles' but is himself a man of 'unshakable conviction' of the opposite opinions. He defends the USSR 'hanging on with great difficulty to its East European satellites' at a time when everyone else was giving independence to their colonies, and talks about the 'overly aggressive' United States at a time when Stalin was murdering millions in the *Gulag*. Wolfgang is not, I'm afraid, a 'fighter for justice' but a defender of tyranny.

'Several wars followed [the 1967 conflict]', writes Ms Trott, 'which the Israelis always won - mainly due to their superior weaponry supplied by the Americans.' But there was only one war, not several after 1967 - and that in 1973. The Israelis used French fighter bombers, upgraded British Centurion tanks and Israeli-made Merkavas. The Arabs always had more and better weapons, and the Israelis won because of the superior bravery and training of their fighting men, but at a heartrending human cost.

'After 1967 Israel occupied an extensive part of Palestinian territory', continues Ms Trott. But there was no Palestinian territory in 1967; indeed there has never been an independent state of Palestine. The West Bank was annexed by Transjordan after the 1948 war, but that was recognised only by Britain and Saudi Arabia, so the territory may have been Jordanian or *terra incognita* but was certainly not Palestinian. Israeli offers to return territory in return for peace were met by the Khartoum resolution 'No negotiations, no recognition, no peace'.

'As long as any Jewish settlements remain inside Palestinian territories (*sic*) there can be no just peace.' That's right. All the Arab states are virtually *judenrein*. Gaza has been made *judenrein* as a token of Israel's desire for peace. Ms Trott wants the West Bank to be *judenrein* as well with, no doubt, a substantial addition of Arabs to the 20 per cent Arab minority in Israel. It doesn't sound like justice to me.

Professor Bryan Reuben
London South Bank University

Sir - It is regrettable that Walter Wolfgang was allowed to use your profile page to make such blatant propaganda for his views. The arrogance of the man is colossal. If his views are based on an absolute loathing of war, then he must have opposed the war against Hitler's Germany. He does not

represent to me the Jewish religion's call for justice.

Eric Sanders
London W12

CHILDREN OF BLANKENESE

Sir - Having recently moved from London to Hamburg, and being an avid reader of your journal, I came across O. Findling's letter about the 'children of Blankenese'. Since I now happen to live in Blankenese, I also read in the November edition of the local paper about a recent meeting of Blankenese 'children' from around the world. The group was received by local Germans with open arms; another visit by 'children' who were accommodated in the same Warburg Children's Health Home in 1947-48 is planned for next year. The villa does belong to the Jewish Warburg banker family. I am pleased to see the efforts being made by German theatre, television and radio, as well as exhibitions, to deal with this painful period of German history.

Barbara Dreyfuss
Hamburg

AUSTRIAN RESTITUTION GROUP

Sir - Below is a letter sent by the Austrian Restitution Group to plaintiffs in the *Whiteman v Austria* lawsuit in the USA. We ask you to be kind enough to reproduce it.

To whom it may concern

We are writing to ask you and your fellow plaintiffs in *Whiteman v Republic of Austria* to withdraw the litigation so that compensation payments from the General Settlement Fund (GSF) can begin.

In submitting our request we express our dismay and extreme frustration at the continued delay in distribution of payments from the General Settlement Fund (GSF).

At the outset, we would like to say that we are all applicants to the GSF and, accepting that the Claims Conference was party to the Washington Agreement that provides for the GSF, we would like to point out that we ourselves are not members of that organisation and that they in no way speak for us.

Whilst we recognise your right to pursue litigation against the Federal Republic of Austria, you should be aware that by doing so you are delaying justice to thousands of Austrian Holocaust victims around the world, including

many needy survivors and refugees in this country.

We are aware that the Washington Agreement is based on the principle of legal peace and that, as long as Austria has not settled its Holocaust era debts, it continues to hold on to the properties and other assets appropriated from our families.

As we stated in our letter to President Andreas Khol earlier this year, in our opinion the progression of any lawsuit should be totally separate from the process of disbursing payments from the GSF so that we survivors can enjoy some modicum of justice in our latter years.

Moshe Jahoda, the Claims Conference representative on Austria, with whom you are no doubt familiar, has gone on record to refer to the alarming mortality rate amongst Austrian Holocaust victims - as many as two survivors per day are dying, having been denied the opportunity to benefit from their rightful inheritance.

Time is now against us and we are looking to you to take the only honourable course of action open to you and withdraw the lawsuit so that payments from the GSF can begin with immediate effect.

Austrian Restitution Group
Peter Phillips
peterphillips@supanet.com
Richard Degen
Roger Juer
Evi Labi

PRAISEWORTHY SCHEME

Sir - In my capacity as a 'Zeitzeuge' I was recently invited to host a seminar of some 20 (non-Jewish) students at the Jewish Museum in Berlin. They were approaching their *Abitur* and had studied the Holocaust, including inspecting files in workshops in the Museum appertaining to my life. Three of them gave a short presentation touching on the Holocaust in general and my life in particular. Comments from me were invited and questions asked. They were well informed, were interested in the subject, and gave positive input into the prevention of such catastrophes.

The venture was financed by the Stiftung Begegnungsstätte Gollwitz, initiated by two gentlemen who, through personal and political conviction, wish to counter the rise of antisemitism in Germany by fostering meetings between young Jews and non-Jews. There is an

impressive list of committee members. A castle in Gollwitz, near Potsdam, will be its headquarters when it is fully restored. In the meantime, workshops are being organised such as the one in which I took part and currently an exhibition is being sent to those places in the province Mark Brandenburg where there were synagogues before 1938. The scheme appears to be most praiseworthy and more information can be obtained from Elke Weisser, Bleibtreustrasse 46, 10623 Berlin, BRD tel (0049 30)8891 8650; email weisser@stiftunggollwitz.de.

Rudi Leavor
Bradford

WIDE-RANGING INTELLECT OF RICHARD GRUNBERGER

Sir - My father, Alfred Halberstam, arrived with his parents in August 1939 from Berlin. He died in 1994. Since that time, I have found myself cut off from my German roots. I did, however, find some solace in the contributions of Richard Grunberger, whose wide-ranging intellect kept me in touch with my father's and my own past. I am sure there are many readers who miss his input. I would respectfully suggest that you reproduce in each edition of the magazine one of Richard's columns starting with the earliest. This would be very rewarding for me and, I suspect, many other readers.

Simon Halberstam
London N6

NO JEWISH COMMUNITY ON ISLE OF MAN

Sir - Thank you for sending me the latest issue of the *AJR Journal*, which gave much information which has hitherto eluded me. Here, on the Isle of Man, we hear virtually nothing about Jews. There is no Jewish community and no synagogue. In the cemetery in Douglas, the island's capital, there is a small corner where a number of graves, largely of internees transported to the Isle of Man during the war, can be found. Forty-one families are supposed to reside on the island. I have so far met three gentlemen and their wives: Mr Glanz, Mr Rivlin and Mr Fingerhut. They have passed on. Mr Fingerhut's daughter, Margaret, a well-known pianist in the North of England, visited the island and gave performances. She and her father were well liked.

Peter H. Chapman
Isle of Man

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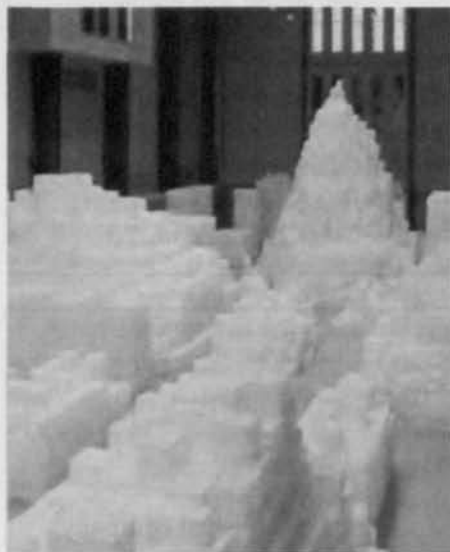
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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler



Rachel Whiteread **EMBANKMENT**
© Tate 2005. Photo: Marcus Leith

Recent natural disasters, from the Boxing Day tsunami to earthquakes and hurricanes, take our thoughts seamlessly to the world of nature. December, too, evokes the silent contemplation of a white sky. Thus contemporary sculptor **Rachel Whiteread's** *Embankment* fills the east end of **Tate Modern's** Turbine Hall with a towering installation of 14,000 white polyethylene boxes, some rising 12 metres high, some resembling more intimate pathways. A bland, empty cityscape? The fragile peaks of the Arctic?

Whiteread was only partly influenced by her Arctic trip, since the installation, inspired by clearing boxes at her late mother's house, invites the association of the box with collective memory, loss, familiarity, sentimentality. Imaginative, resourceful, emotional, certainly - but does it work? Whiteread, who won the European commission to create a Holocaust memorial for the Judenplatz in Vienna, clearly laid the groundwork for this type of interior conception. Five years ago, she placed in the centre of the Judenplatz the cast interior of a library, books and all, to create a telling monument to man's inhumanity and to man's enduring

desire for self-development.

You could read something of conflicted man in this new installation, especially since it gives resonance to political controversy over greenhouse emissions and our need to address the health of the planet. To that extent her sculpture is a poignant evocation of an earth turned ash-white, of melting icecaps, of the silence of a deadly city. But, like so much of conceptual art, it works better on an intellectual than a visual level. And here place is as important as substance. Restrictions of the view sadly diminish the sculpture's impact. The exhibition continues until April next year.

It's a far cry from **Simon Starling's** shed-boat-shed, one of the four **Turner Prize** contenders at **Tate Britain**, or **Darren Almond's** sonic experience with shoes sliding on a ballroom floor, but the **National Portrait Gallery's** **Self Portrait Exhibition** offers, until January 2006, a more accessible tribute to self-expression which tells you much about the artists themselves. There is the handsome **Gustave Courbet**, apparently dying of a broken heart - an earlier inclusion of his mistress is replaced by a red wound - the fractured *Doppelgänger* of **Francis Bacon**, and the penetrating stare of the red-haired **Vincent van Gogh**.

While many artists portrayed themselves with the palettes and tools of the trade, others affected the attire of the nobility. **Sir Joshua Reynolds** shades his eyes while gazing into the distance and many women artists, lacking a painterly tradition, present themselves as beauties decked out in tight bodices and flowered hats. But one, **Anna Dorothea Therbusch-Lisiewska**, has the courage to present herself as the older woman with a monocle. Like that of **Pierre Bonnard**, **James McNeill Whistler's** face has an evanescent quality, giving the sense of a fugitive Old Master; **Frieda Khalo's** striking, heavy-browed looks are framed with all the Mexican iconography of birds and flowers. But the massive rear view of **Jenny Savile** is a tactile presentation of sheer pink flesh, dappled, creased, the profile squashed into the side. Pretty it isn't. Brave, cynical and brutally honest it is.

REVIEWS

Silent survival

IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST: NAZI PERSECUTION OF JEWISH-CHRISTIAN GERMANS

by James Tent

University Press of Kansas, 288pp.,
\$29.95

This story of Nazi Germany's *Mischlinge* provides insight into the suffering of a group largely neglected by scholarship. By 1935 approximately 112,000 Germans had been re-categorised as 'half-Jews' or 'quarter-Jews' and labelled with the derogatory title *Mischling*.

At first, these individuals were left in a legal limbo, defined by Nazi law as a 'third race'. But it became apparent that whether people were half-Jewish or one-quarter Jewish, Nazi racial fanatics planned to exterminate them all. The increasingly persecutory legislation, social ostracism and economic hardship imposed on *Mischlinge* were eclipsed by deportation, incarceration and forced labour.

Although *Mischlinge* suffered to an alarming degree, most survived the Holocaust. But their traumatic experiences were not often spoken of after the war, primarily because their survival had depended on following the motto 'Keep silent'. Many of these victims, plagued by survivors' guilt, maintained their silence after the Holocaust.

The opening chapters address social turning points for these individuals: the first day of school and relationships within the classroom, the fight for economic livelihood, and the development of relationships between the sexes.

Tent describes each individual's personal experiences, asking: how did their teachers treat them once the new radically-charged category had been created? What happened with previously friendly schoolmates? Did *Mischlinge* have access to any form of higher education? What challenges did they face in finding employment?

Most *Mischlinge* were prohibited from engaging in employment above

the lowest possible status, regardless of qualifications. Also, the terrible trend of isolation is evident, as is the developing theme of silent survival.

The book addresses the need for human contact and the Nazi prohibition against friendships as well as sexual friendships between *Mischlinge* and Aryans. The *Mischlinge* mostly adopted the survival strategy of limiting one's friendships and suffering alone.

From the spring of 1944, male *Mischlinge* were rounded up and sent to forced labour camps. Female *Mischlinge* were forced to perform low-status labour while living at home. Tent reveals the declining status of *Mischlinge* of both sexes, many of whom found themselves classified with other 'undesirables'. Once the victims had been robbed of their freedom it would be an easy step to transfer them from forced labour camps to death camps already operating in the East. Any illusions *Mischlinge* had harboured regarding their privileged status were shattered when the Nazis forced them to cast their lot in with the Jews suffering in the camps.

For 12 years many of these individuals survived by keeping silent. After the war, they discovered that their Aryan counterparts expected them to remain silent forever. Many believed their neighbours were correct and maintained their silence regarding their persecution. Others sought compensation for lost educational and economic opportunities, while still others began to share their stories of betrayal and ostracism, offering proof of the Nazi desire to eradicate all traces of Jewry.

Tent's study shows how the tragedy of Nazi brutality lives on in survivors, who bear the anguish of a life forever altered by hatred, indignity and indifference. For many survivors, keeping to the shadows has been a constant way of life.

Kurt Winter

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

FILM

Legendary Jewish swimmers

WATERMARKS

directed by Yaron Zilberman

Screen on the Hill, Belsize Park,
North London

Jewish survivors loathe the perception of their role in Nazi Europe as acquiescent victims. A very different truth is observed in the uplifting 77-minute documentary film *Watermarks*, which features a group of women swimmers who belonged to the legendary Viennese Jewish sports club Hakoah, founded in 1909 when Jews were banned from national sports clubs but ironically encouraged to compete nationally.

Hakoah's reputation grew through its women swimmers, who dominated national competitions of the day. When they refused to represent Austria in the 1936 Berlin Olympics since this meant giving Hitler the salute, Austria stripped them of their medals, and in some cases all their records were erased.

To preserve this cameo of Jewish history in the midst of the Nazi inferno, Israeli film director Yaron Zilberman embarked on a world-wide mission to track down members of the original team, arranging a reunion at the swimming pool in Vienna where they last competed 65 years ago. His vision was to return them to the place where their teenage athletic hopes were first raised and then dashed.

Hakoah's leader, Dr Rosenfeld, miraculously managed to secure safe passage for the girls and their families from Nazi-occupied Europe and produced a Hakoah newsletter to maintain contact with the athletes around the world.

Zilberman's original brief was to make a film about the Hakoah football team, but he was so captivated by the story of the women swimmers that he filmed their story instead. He could not resist using one stunning fact about the football team: Hakoah beat West Ham 5:0 in the 1920s.

Zilberman has produced a unique memoir of the swimmers' experiences in a film sponsored by the Wiener

Library and shown at the Jewish Film Festival. He skilfully presents seven talented athletes, each of them powerful and charismatic, who still keep up their daily swimming regime. One of them refuses to be photographed in anything other than her swimsuit. He interviews them in their homes around the world and interweaves these discussions with black-and-white footage and photographic images of their heyday as Olympic-class swimmers.

In a moving moment, the film captures an exchange between an Austrian taxi driver and one of the swimmers, in which he refers to the Jews in Nazi Europe as 'non-native'. This seems to show that old-style antisemitism is still alive in Austria today.

The work of composer Herman Leopoldi is interspersed throughout the film, enhancing the emotion of the story. Our only problem with this film is that the blending of past and present is not seamlessly achieved. Some of the treatment gives a fragmented effect to the whole. Inevitably many questions are left unanswered.

Donna Tessler and Gloria Tessler

A fitting epitaph

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE THIRD REICH

by Richard Grunberger

Orion Publishing Group (tel 020 7240 3444): Phoenix, 2005, 663 pp.

Alongside the *AJR Journal*, which he edited with such distinction, Richard Grunberger's most lasting intellectual legacy is probably his study *A Social History of the Third Reich*. First published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in 1971, then in paperback by Penguin in 1974, the book has re-appeared this year in a paperback version under Weidenfeld's Phoenix Paperbacks imprint.

It is a remarkable tribute to the book that its analysis of everyday life under the Nazi dictatorship has not been overhauled by the myriad studies on National Socialism that have appeared over the last 30 years. Its meticulously detailed examination of 30 areas of life under the Nazis can still be read with

great benefit since it succeeds in bringing to life for its readers the facets of German society that it covers. These range from 'The Party' and 'The Army' to 'Justice' and 'Corruption', 'Consumption' and 'The Family' and - inevitably, knowing Richard - 'Humour' and 'The Cinema'. The book was in advance of its time in its selection of subject areas: the chapter on 'Denunciation' anticipated Robert Gellately's work on Gestapo methods of control, as that on 'Ritual and Führer Worship' foreshadowed Ian Kershaw's early work on the public acclamation of Hitler.

Though the book has remained popular with readers for decades, its initial reception was surprisingly cool. In the early 1970s, academic work on Nazism was strongly influenced by class-based, Marxist analyses that concentrated on the links between capitalism and the various brands of Fascism, of which National Socialism was seen as just one variant. One of the principal disadvantages of this long discarded view was its downplaying of the Holocaust: how could the murder of six million Jews fit into a pattern of class conflict based on economic motives rather than on racial ideology?

Richard saw things differently. Now that the centrality of the Holocaust to the National Socialist project is almost universally accepted, his closing words on the destruction of European Jewry have come resonantly into their own: 'This will be Hitler's permanent memorial - and he would hardly have wished for another. History will record that just as hatred of the Jews was the kernel of Nazi theory so their murder was the culmination of Nazi practice.'

Anthony Grenville

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THEATRE

Mystery of power and charisma

LIES HAVE BEEN TOLD

by Rod Beacham

New End Theatre, Hampstead, North London

Rampaging, rumbustious, by turns terrifying, charismatic and charming - these are the adjectives commonly used to describe the character of media magnate Robert Maxwell. His sudden death was as enigmatic as his life. And, after he fell off his luxury yacht named after his daughter, Ghislaine, while cruising off the Canary Islands, it was discovered that he had embezzled millions of pounds from his companies' pension schemes to buttress his failing empire. Emperors such as Julius Caesar come to mind when you consider Robert Maxwell: they were great in their lifetimes and great was their fall.

In this new play, Philip York plays the flawed tycoon with a mixture of poise, jocularly and emotional terrorism, as he struts and dominates the stage in this most effective one-hander. At times he is the buccaneering sea-dog in a peaked sailor's cap above his cheeky grin, at other times he hurls himself at the audience with all the bravado of a stand-up comic.

Rod Beacham has written a scintillating play about Maxwell's life and times, alluding to the antisemitism he suffered as a Czech Jew in the Nazi era and his determination to redeem the past through powerful achievement. What emerges most strongly from this production, however, is the dogged, single-minded personality of a man who reaches the top. Whether Maxwell actually realised a private dream, whether he was totally corrupt and self-serving, whether he jumped or was pushed - these are questions that are not answered to anyone's satisfaction. How can they be? This is not a play to delve too deeply into the human condition. It is the mystery of power and charisma which drives it into top gear.

Gloria Tessler



Letter from Israel

All one can say about an article comparing Kristallnacht with the evacuation of Jewish settlers from Gaza ('Then and now', October issue) is that it is 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'. How can someone look back with nostalgia to the 'gemütlich' way the Nazis persecuted Jews and destroyed synagogues and find it superior to the manner in which Israeli settlers were removed from their homes?

It evidently means nothing to whoever penned that diatribe that Israel is a democratic country with an elected government. That government decided that the cost in human, political and material terms of continuing to defend the 8,000 settlers in the Gaza Strip was too high. Countless Israeli and Palestinian lives were lost during the 38 years of Israel's presence there. But the clinching argument was demographic. It is difficult to justify a situation in which over one million Palestinians are crowded into shanty towns and refugee camps, while a handful of settlers live in comfort under their noses.

One of the points 'overlooked' by the writer of that article is that the violence accompanying the evacuation stemmed from the resistance put up by the settlers. Led by people whose worldview countenances discrimination, and by extremists who sought to gain political clout, the settlers were gulled into thinking that they could impose their views on the majority.

It didn't happen, and some settlers had to be taken away by force. Many more, though, walked away of their own free will and accepted the government's compensation package. Temporary accommodation was provided for all those willing to accept it and permanent solutions are in the pipeline.

Space does not permit me to rebut all the specious arguments and misrepresentations the article contains. Suffice it to say that the pathetic accretion of factual distortions is very far from the truth.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Hermann Hirschberger takes his communal duties seriously. His ability to communicate in well-honed speeches, his experience of speaking about his childhood deprivations to schoolchildren, and his well-proven organisational skills have benefited many in the Jewish community and beyond, not least the members of the Kindertransport, AJR's special-interest group.

Hermann was born in Karlsruhe in 1926, the second of two sons. His father, a bank manager, exhibited all the solid middle-class virtues. Though devoid of luxuries, they lived in a comfortable apartment, with the family observing the highest traditions of German-Jewish orthodoxy. His mother's family lived in Fürth and Hermann remembers making fairly frequent visits there.

By 1932 he vividly recalls witnessing street marches by the Nazi Brownshirts. With Hitler's accession in 1933 he felt the intensification of the anti-Jewish hatred.

Both his parents believed in the importance of education for their boys. At the age of five Hermann joined the *cheder* (Hebrew classes) and in September 1932, aged six, he entered the state primary school, one of only two Jewish boys in the class. The teacher raised no objection to their being called 'Jewish swine' and 'filthy Jews' and arrived in full SA regalia once a week. Their maltreatment extended out of school, worsening over the next three years.

In 1936 Karlsruhe opened a separate Jewish school. Ironically, its educational standards were very high due to the arrival of dismissed Jewish teachers. Going to and from school, however, meant an inevitable confrontation with Hitler youth, the fear and anxiety of these encounters remaining with Hermann for life.

The morning after Kristallnacht, on his way to school, he saw their synagogue on fire and Gestapo blocking the school gates to 'Jewboys'. His father was arrested and imprisoned, but allowed home after two dreadful nights.

His parents realised that life for Jews was finished in Germany and virtually

PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Hermann Hirschberger Kindertransport Chairman with a special brand of humour



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

everyone wanted to leave the country. Finding it impossible to obtain refuge as a family, they decided to enrol the boys on the Kindertransport. The brothers left home in March 1939, accompanied to Hamburg by their father, to embark on the liner *SS Manhattan*. Once on board, Hermann fell victim to an inconsolable homesickness. Both parents were murdered by the Germans at Auschwitz.

In Southampton they were met by representatives of the Jewish Refugee Committee, put on a train to Waterloo, and taken to a synagogue in London's Soho. Hermann was in a group sent to a refugee hostel run by the B'nai Brith in Cliftonville, where he celebrated his Barmitzvah. He was later evacuated and billeted with a coalmining family in Staffordshire.

At the age of 15 and while living in a refugee hostel, he began work in a Cricklewood factory which manufactured diesel fuel-injection pumps for submarines. His education had to continue at evening classes and Hermann's efforts earned him matriculation in 1944. At the end of the war he became a design draftsman with a machine-tool company, continuing to attend evening classes for the next seven years, a dedicated if lonely life.

Gaining his professional qualification as a chartered engineer in 1953, he joined Smiths Industries, then Elliot Automation and, in 1968, Kodak, where for ten years he was the Chief Designer in their Development Department, managing a staff of 90.

In 1962 Hermann married Eva, the daughter of refugees who settled in Brazil, and they have two children and four grandchildren. After taking retirement in 1989, his communal responsibilities expanded. Herman was a founder member and chairman of Belmont Synagogue, represents the synagogue on the Board of Deputies, and has been an Employment Resource Centre adviser, a school governor and a Young Enterprise adviser for Harrow. After visiting Karlsruhe in 1988, where he addressed German schoolchildren, he was invited to recount his experiences to the synagogue, JACS and especially at schools, giving up to 30 talks a year, even at the age of 79.

After attending the Kindertransport reunions in Harrow in 1989 and in Jerusalem in 1994, he joined the Kinder's planning committee and organised the monthly luncheon meetings at the AJR Day Centre. With David Jedwab's untimely death, Hermann took over the role of acting chairman, eventually accepting election to the chairmanship in 2003.

During his term of office KT-AJR (Kindertransport) has been very active. At the dedication of the Kindertransport statue at Liverpool Street Station, Hermann replied on behalf of the Kinder. He oversaw the organisation of the Bar- and Batmitzvah ceremonies at Stanmore Synagogue, presides at the splendid annual Chanukah parties, and his special brand of humour continues to enliven the monthly lunch meetings. The most recent highlight was the invitation to meet Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall at Clarence House as part of the celebrations of the ending of the Second World War, at which he again spoke eloquently for his fellow Kindertransportees, stressing the immense sacrifice made by their parents' selfless act, which had saved their lives.

INSIDE the AJR

Bradford Continental Friends regular get-together

Susanne Green arranged what has now become a regular get-together in the Mornington Hall, at our Bradford Hebrew Congregation Synagogue. The meeting was very well attended and, once again, we had a new guest - a lady from Holland, who, unknown to us, had lived in our district for many years. Susanne was assured that these enjoyable meetings were most informative and everyone looked forward to the next function, due to take place on 6 December.

A. A. Waxman

Weald of Kent: Vienna coffee houses

Otto Deutsch gave us a most interesting and touching talk about 'The Viennese Coffee Houses'. He made abject poverty sound such a delightful experience! But what shone through was what a valuable sense of security, a loving family and the Jewish faith can give children - which is such a good foundation for what lies ahead. We were also given a very beautiful impression of Vienna, especially by night. Thank you, Otto.

Inge Ball

Revealing meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne

Having decided to be without a speaker on this occasion, members discussed 'Life in the Early Years after Arrival in the UK'. The fascinating stories that emerged illustrated the courage and ingenuity of what were mere children in the face of adversity. We had thought we knew each other pretty well, but sharing this particular phase in our lives has brought us closer together.

Kurt Schapira

Next meeting: Sun 11 Dec. Pre-Chanukah Party with entertainment by the Kol Hashirim Choir

Refreshing voyage in Brighton & Hove Sarid

We had a lively discussion on what it means to us individually to be Jews. It

was a refreshing and fascinating voyage into our different backgrounds and experiences. We all enjoyed the meeting, which culminated in dipping apple into honey for a Happy New Year.

Fausta Shelton

Next meeting: Mon 19 Dec. Early Chanukah Party and Quiz

Pinner outing to Waddesdon Manor

Twenty-two members visited Waddesdon Manor. Created by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild in the style of a French chateau, the Manor contains beautiful examples of eighteenth-century French furniture and art. Lunch in the Stables restaurant was much appreciated. Our thanks for the Tender Loving Care of Vera Gellman and Irene Marcus, who provided a packet of 'goodies' for each traveller.

Ernest Simon

Next meeting: Thur 1 Dec. Early Chanukah Party

Edinburgh Continental Friends: Nostalgic trip to Leipzig

We were fascinated by a talk by second-generation member John Danzig on his recent return visit, with his father and family members, to Leipzig, their home town. They went on to visit Berlin, the home town of John's late mother - a highly nostalgic and emotional trip for all the family. John also told us about the Jewish Museum in Berlin and the new Holocaust memorial sited next to the Brandenburg Gate.

Susanne Green

Next meeting: Thur 1 Dec. Theatre outing

Talk on German Jewish philosophers in Manchester

Local solicitor Jonathan Davies, speaking to us on 'Jewish Philosophy in Germany', dealt extensively with the period of the Enlightenment and how this affected Jewish thinking and events leading up to the Nazi period. In particular, he spoke about the life and thoughts of Franz Rosenzweig. We are planning a pre-Chanukah social, a much-enjoyed annual event.

Werner Lachs

Information shared in Hull

We heard Susanne's account of the St

Annes's holiday and shared information on Berlin's Jewish Museum and Holocaust Memorial visits. Our recent enjoyable visit to the northern groups' Manchester event was discussed at length. Among other activities, the Leeds memorial book project was of general interest and we resolved to join Bradford's pre-Chanukah party. We had a new female member at the meeting who has now joined AJR.

Bob Rosner

Next meeting: Sun 12 Feb

Edinburgh annual get-together

The 32 guests were treated to a cup of morning coffee, and updates on AJR matters were given by Head Office's Susanne Green, Marcia Goodman and Michael Newman. In ensuing lively discussions, topics addressed issues seen through the eyes of the Second Generation, and the life members made for themselves in the UK. Following a splendid lunch, Edinburgh Chairman Rev Ernest Levy told us amusing stories representative of the association.

Judy Gilbert

North London welcomes Wiener Library speaker

Katherine Klinger, responsible for Education and Outreach at the Wiener Library, told us that as far back as 1929 Alfred Wiener was well aware of the threat of Nazism and began collecting evidence. Today, the Library is the most comprehensive source of information on the Holocaust. A most impressive and informative morning.

Ruth Jacobs

Next meeting: Thur 22 Dec. Pre-Chanukah Party and Quiz

Weald of Kent: demands of Israel's ambulance service

Magen David Adom director Eli Benson told us how Israel has had to acquire and adapt an organisation capable of dealing with the consequences of suicide attacks to the more ordinary demands of blood storage, intensive-care services, everyday accidents and emergencies, and even the delivery of babies. Yet MDA depends entirely on donations.

Edith Bown

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Wessex Tues 6 Dec. Chanukah Party and Quiz

Ilford Wed 7 Dec. Chanukah Party

Cambridge Thur 8 Dec. Chanukah Party Pot-pourri

Essex Tues 13 Dec. Pre-Chanukah Party and Quiz

Cardiff Wed 14 Dec. Inaugural meeting. For further details, call Head Office on 020 8385 3070

Oxford Tues 20 Dec. Pre-Chanukah Party and Quiz



All smiles: members of Sheffield Continental Friends group: (from left) Steve Mendelsson, Dorothy Fleming, Rene Martin, Inge Joseph, Otto Fleming

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Tel: 020 7328 0208

KT-AJR Kindertransport
special interest group
MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD

Monday 5 December 2005
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Ronnie Goldberg will entertain
Reservations required
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Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
9.30 am - 3.30 pm,
Sunday 2 pm - 5.30 pm

December Afternoon Entertainment:

Thur 1	Kristina Lian
Sun 4	CLOSED
Mon 5	KT Lunch - Kards & Games Klub
Tue 6	CLOSED
Wed 7	Margaret Opdahl
Thur 8	Douglas Poster
Sun 11	CLOSED
Mon 12	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 13	CLOSED
Wed 14	Katinka Seiner
Thur 15	Ronnie Goldberg
Sun 18	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon 19	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 20	CLOSED
Wed 21	CHANUKAH PARTY
Thur 22	Jack Davidoff
Sun 25	CLOSED
Mon 26	CLOSED
Tue 27	CLOSED
Wed 28	CLOSED
Thur 29	CLOSED

DIARY DATES

28 December 2005	Kinder Chanukah Party at Holocaust Survivors' Centre
26 January 2006	Holocaust Memorial Day
30 January	20th anniversary of opening of Day Centre

For further information about these events, please call us on 020 8385 3070.

'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

Editorials and articles published, and opinions expressed, in *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birth

The Trustees, Management and Staff of the AJR wish Jane and Gordon Greenfield mazeltov on the birth of their granddaughter.

Deaths

Hillman Hilda, born in Vienna, died 23 October 2005 aged 90. Hilda emigrated to London from Vienna in 1939. She was an extremely beautiful, strong-willed and kind woman who survived the treachery of the Second World War. Since her beloved husband David passed away, she was cared for by her granddaughter Tina and daughter Evelyn. Hilda is, and will always be, greatly missed by her children Evelyn and Brian, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Koebner Hanna, née Klein, daughter of Rabbi Siegfried Klein, born Düsseldorf 1923, died London 5 October 2005. Marion, Robert and Julius mourn her passing.

Thanks

Mrs Minner would like to thank all her friends and AJR staff for their cards and good wishes.

Classified

CO-WRITER FOR A BOOK sought by a creative lady in NW London. Flexible hours. Tel Hedi on 020 8202 1987.

Day Centre

Chiroprapist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, Wednesday 14 December, 10-11.30 am.

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Lord and Lady Callaghan: Eulogy

Excerpts from the eulogy given by Lord and Lady Callaghans' son-in-law Professor Michael Adler at the memorial service in Westminster Abbey earlier this year.

Jim and Audrey were horrified by the Nazi atrocities against the Jews, got in touch with the Jewish Refugee Committee to offer their support and, as a result, invited a young refugee journalist to live with them. Jim's understanding of the evils of Nazism was further developed by his membership of a British Parliamentary delegation to Russia in 1946 and attendance at a War Crimes Trial. Jim was so shocked by this that he became determined to help the Jewish community in any way possible. An opportunity arose after the war

through a meeting with Alfred Wiener, a German Jewish refugee who had amassed a huge collection of material about the Nazi atrocities, which was later used in evidence at the Nuremberg Trials. Wiener had no trouble persuading Jim that his collection of material was an important way of preventing any recurrence of Nazism. The Wiener Library, as it became known, struggled for funds and faced closure. Jim stepped in to become chairman of the Library's endowment appeal, which raised £1 million to save the Library.

This was not a 'special' event but an example of how he and Audrey lived, thought and worked. They showed all of us how we should live and contribute to society.

Central Office for Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

Tax-exempt pensions

Following several requests, the Claims Office reproduces here the confirmation that the pensions paid by the German and Austrian governments are exempt from income tax.

Section 330 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 states that 'Annuities and pensions payable under any special provision for victims of National-Socialist persecution which is made by the law of the Federal Republic of Germany or any part of it or of Austria shall not be regarded as income for any income tax purpose.'

Bulgarian compensation

President Georgi Parvanov of Bulgaria is considering paying the country's small and elderly Jewish population compensation to settle a decades-old dispute over the wartime confiscation of a Jewish facility in central Sofia.

Although a lawsuit being contested in Bulgaria did not find in favour of the Jewish community, it is understood that the Bulgarian government has been considering compensating the Jewish community in a different form.

While some communal and personal properties were returned after the Second World War, if direct indemnifications were paid it would be the first time survivors in Bulgaria will have received compensation in respect of their Holocaust-era experiences.

Insurance Commission

To clarify details in a previous column, the Insurance Claims Commission, the freephone number for claimants wanting to check the status of applications submitted to the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims is 00800 2525 3535.

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), Jubilee House, Merrion 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.

Obituaries

Raymond Klibansky

Professor Raymond Klibansky, one of the most distinguished practitioners of the history of philosophy, has died at the age of 99. He was born in Paris, the son of a German wine merchant. Just before the First World War the family moved to Frankfurt am Main.

In 1923 he went to Heidelberg University and from 1927 was an assistant at the Heidelberg Academy. In 1933 he left Germany for the UK, having played an important role in securing the removal of the library of Aby Warburg to London, where it opened in 1934 as the Warburg Institute. The contact with Warburg confirmed his interest in medieval and Renaissance philosophers. He was appointed honorary lecturer at Kings College London before moving to Oriel College, Oxford in 1936.

During the war he was attached to the Political Warfare Executive at Woburn Abbey. After the war he returned to Germany to assess the level of collaboration with the Nazis by sections of the population. In 1946 he accepted the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics at McGill University, Montreal, which he retained until 1975.

In one of many projects, he edited a series of volumes noteworthy for the renewed emphasis given to the philosophy of science and to philosophy in Asia and Eastern Europe. His concern with intellectual freedom led him to defend East European human rights activists. He married Ethel Groffier, who collaborated on one of his final works,

Ideas Without Frontiers, whose title encapsulates his life and work.

John Rossall

A former journalist at the *Mirror* newspaper, John Rossall (Rosenthal) was for many years a book reviewer for *AJR Information*. He was born an only child in Duisburg in 1920. His father, an engineer, fought for Germany in the First World War but was invalided out in 1917. When they moved to Bonn, John joined the local Zionist group; he emigrated to Palestine in 1936. Kibbutz HaYarden, where he settled, combined hard physical labour with an intellectual ambience. His parents obtained visas for entry into Britain.

In 1938 he went to England for an operation on a leg, but stayed in London. He found a job in the distribution department of a Bournemouth paper and moved to Dudley as a sub-editor on a West Bromwich weekly. After the war he joined an evening paper in South Shields, Tyneside, then moved to Newcastle. In 1954 he joined the Daily Mirror Group in Manchester but, after Robert Maxwell's takeover, was transferred to London.

John was the author of a book on Tutankhamun and a novel, *King among the Prophets*, in which he brought biblical characters to life. He was a reserved man who found his greatest pleasure in reading history books. From 1986 he submitted well-informed book reviews to *AJR Information*.

Ronald Channing

London's ambitious centre for Jewish education and culture

The lure of an open day at the London Jewish Cultural Centre's (LJCC) splendid new home, close by Hampstead Heath, was one I could hardly resist. Established some 23 years ago as an independent pioneer of Jewish culture, education and the Hebrew language as the Spiro Institute, under its more recent leadership and the direction of Trudy Gold, innovative educational programmes have earned it an admirable reputation. Though the LJCC welcomes students of all ages, from the crush of people at the open-day attendance it can be deduced that a significant element are those who find they now have the time to pursue long-held interests in Jewish history and culture.

For several years the LJCC has been holding its courses in Kidderpore Avenue, Hampstead. Ivy House, a listed building situated adjacent to the entrance to Golders Hill Park and former home of ballet dancer Anna Pavlova, has been completely renovated over the last 18 months, representing an investment of privately donated funds, totalling £2 million. On three floors, it houses nine classrooms, each with audio-visual equipment, a hall complete with grand piano, which can seat 180 for debates, discussions and concerts, a cinema, a performance and exhibition area, and, from its windows, presents magnificent views across north-west London. Equally commendable is the provision of a vegetarian café, which will certainly draw the inquisitive inside.

A number of 'taster' lectures were on offer. I joined Rabbi Jeremy Rosen's overview of Jewish political history, covering 2,500 years and differentiating the main strands of modern Zionism, which proved a veritable 30-minute *tour de force*.

Daytime and evening courses on offer from this autumn term include modern Jewish history, Judaism, film, creative writing, the visual arts, literature, Hebrew, Yiddish and French. Equally popular are the yoga, Pilates and 'Feldenkrais' (I must be missing something) classes. In the coming months, a cultural programme will include book launches, talks, debates, Jewish London walks, film screenings and musical evenings. An exhibition on Anna Pavlova will

be mounted in January and 350 years of Jewish life in England will be celebrated.

The LJCC's Holocaust Centre and Anti-Racist Department takes speakers into schools, publishes educational resources, organises conferences and fosters relationships with educational organisations in Austria, Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and China. For next year conducted tours have been arranged to visit Berlin, Prague and Crakow, rediscovering the rich Jewish heritage of communities decimated in the Holocaust.

Ivy House is situated on North End Road about a half-mile from Golders Green Station. There is no parking on site, but on North End Road and on nearby Wildwood Road, though this is somewhat restricted. For an education programme and more information, call them on 0208 455 9900.

Albert Einstein, Man of the Century

Once again the Jewish Museum in Camden is up with the times, presenting an exhibition celebrating the centenary of the publication of Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity and two of his other earth-shattering papers. The exhibition was researched and created by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, whose Friends organisation in this country is closely associated with the project.

Albert Einstein, undoubtedly one of the most prominent thinkers of the twentieth century, radically transformed our understanding of the universe. As an ardent humanist, he took an outspoken stance on the political and social issues of our time and, as a committed Jew, advocated a distinctive moral role.

Through a fascinating range of documents, photographs, cartoons, letters and objects, the exhibition explores Einstein's troubled personal life, his political and religious views, and his identity as a Jew and a refugee. Facsimiles of some of the seminal scientific documents of the twentieth century can be read together with his correspondence with President Roosevelt on the feasibility of nuclear weapons. For further details, contact the Jewish Museum, Camden, on 0207 284 1997.

Newsround

UN creates Holocaust Memorial Day

The UN General Assembly has passed a resolution designating 27 January as the annual Holocaust Memorial Day. The resolution, proposed by Australia, Canada, Israel, Russia and the USA, was adopted by consensus. Co-sponsored by 104 member nations, the measure is the first Israeli-initiated resolution the General Assembly has passed.

Antisemitic publications on sale at Frankfurt book fair

Antisemitic tracts were on sale again at this year's Frankfurt book fair. English-language copies of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and Henry Ford's *The International Jew* were to be found on the shelves of an Iranian bookseller. Last year the fair, one of the world's largest gatherings of publishers, was criticised for allowing Arabic book publishers to display Arabic versions of Holocaust-denial books and other antisemitic texts.

Nazis spied for East Germany

Nazi veterans were protected from prosecution for war crimes by the former East German secret police, the Stasi, a historian claims in a new book. Henry Leide, author of *Nazi Criminals and the Secret Service: The German Democratic Republic's Secret Way of Dealing with the Past*, traced the careers of 35 of Hitler's close followers and discovered that they had found refuge in the ranks of the Communist secret police.

Neo-Nazi rally in Prague shouted down

About 150 Prague residents, including well-known Czech personalities, protested against a neo-Nazi demonstration on Czechoslovak Independence Day. The clash took place when 60 neo-Nazis gathered in front of the German embassy to protest the imprisonment in Germany of Holocaust-denier Ernst Zundel.

US spy Jonathan Pollard to be freed in ten years

Jonathan Pollard, the US Navy analyst jailed for life for spying for Israel, is to be freed in ten years. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has said that Pollard, who is serving a life sentence in a North Carolina prison, is scheduled to be released in November 2015. US administrations had consistently rejected appeals to show clemency to Pollard.