

# AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

## AJR is major donor to unique school project



The Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre

The AJR is a major donor to a unique exhibition for primary school children, the Primary Learning Centre. The Centre, aimed at 9-12-year-olds, is set to occupy 1,800 square feet on the second floor of the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire.

The Primary Learning Centre is a million-pound project. Beth Shalom has received a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £499,000. In addition to the grant from the AJR, the Centre has received substantial support from Camelot, the Claims Conference and private donors.

The exhibition will tell the often overlooked stories of children in the Holocaust, including the Kindertransport. It will also feature the experiences of hidden children, who were unable to leave Nazi Europe, and commemorate those who were murdered.

Members of the Kindertransport and child survivors will be closely involved, sharing their experiences on a daily basis with children at the facility. The young visitor will sense the disorientation felt by the Kinder as he or she participates in a recreation of a typical journey. One section of the exhibition will feature a train station and the moment of

departure. Visitors will be encouraged to reflect on the emotions felt by the Kinder as they faced the trauma of separation, the decision on which possessions to take with them, and the sense of a lonely journey into the unknown. State-of-the-art technology and educational expertise will be deployed to full effect in the new centre.

Beth Shalom's Chief Executive, James Smith, said that 'Every week, the Holocaust Centre's education and training programmes reach hundreds of secondary school students, sixth-formers and professionals. However, given the incidence of racism in primary schools - where in our county alone three out of four racist incidents occur - it is not a moment too soon for such a resource to be established in the UK.'

AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman has warmly welcomed the Heritage Lottery Fund's support for the Primary Learning Centre, which he described as 'an outstanding project - a particularly appropriate move at this time, as we reflect on the 60th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust and the Second World War'. The Primary Learning Centre is due to open in the autumn.

Howard Spier

## Response to 'The Final Insult'

*The following is the original version of a letter sent to the national press in response to the television programme 'The Final Insult'.*

The 'Final Insult', broadcast on Channel 4 on 11 April, neglected to mention the tangible benefits to hundreds of Holocaust survivors living in this country from monies raised from the Swiss banks and from insurance companies by the Claims Conference through negotiations with the German government and industry as well as from the sales of heirless property. These monies are directly disbursed for the benefit of the survivors through organisations like ours, which exist to meet their needs.

The programme makers gave a misleading impression of the creation by the Claims Conference in 1998 of the Goodwill Fund. This scheme has enabled the families of hundreds of Holocaust victims to secure significant compensation in respect of expropriated properties and businesses in the former East Germany. Had the Claims Conference not recovered these rights/properties (as a result of their prodigious efforts with the German government before 1992), the heirs of these victims would now receive nothing. Successful heirs receive 80% of whatever the Claims Conference recovers; the 20% it retains (and this is the only pool of funds over which the Claims Conference has discretion as regards its distribution) is distributed worldwide to fund specific programmes for the benefit of Holocaust survivors and other destitute Jews such as in the former Soviet Union and, more recently, in Argentina.

It is this latter group which included 'the 14-year-old Ukrainian boy' who was

*(Continued on page 2)*

mentioned in the programme. The unqualified assumption in the programme that the Claims Conference's own funds (the '20%' mentioned above) are to be applied only for survivors has been the subject of intensive debate within the Board of Directors of the Claims Conference itself. The current policy has been agreed - at every Board for the past few years - not by a secret bureaucracy, but by a Board of over 70 people drawn from all over the world, including a number of representatives from this country.

The decision to introduce a deadline for the submission of claims to the Goodwill Fund of the end of March 2004 (some 14 years after the original property restitution law of the unified Federal Germany was passed) was based on the need to allocate increasing resources to needy survivors. Without this 'closure' date the Claims Conference would be precluded from spending any of these monies because there would always be the possibility of heirs seeking to claim their properties.

Through Claims Conference

initiatives, in 2005 the UK will receive \$1.6m, nearly all of which is channelled directly to assist Holocaust victims living on low means or with very real needs. The remaining monies are used to help finance our burgeoning social services department as well as to develop our Outreach Programme, which enables us to make contact with and serve victims of Nazism wherever they live in Britain.

These monies are urgently needed and enable survivors to benefit from everyday items and services such as washing machines, dental treatment and a range of other care in the home facilities. Without the pioneering (and ongoing) efforts of the Claims Conference, we simply would not have these funds to assist our members.

- Andrew Kaufman, Chairman, Association of Jewish Refugees**  
**David Rothenberg, Treasurer, Association of Jewish Refugees and Claims Conference Board Member in Britain**  
**Michael Hilsenrath, President, Anglo-Jewish Association and Claims Conference Board Member in Britain**

## Yom Hashoah commemoration at Pinner Synagogue

Pinner Synagogue commemorates Yom Hashoah with one of the largest gatherings in the UK. This year, the focus will be on survival and liberation. Leon Greenman OBE, a survivor, and Helen Bamber OBE, a Jewish liberator, will relate their experiences.

Leon Greenman was born in England of Dutch ancestry. Although a British-passport holder, he was deported from Holland to various concentration camps, including Auschwitz. His wife and son were murdered but he survived and was liberated in 1945. He has devoted his life to educational initiatives to ensure that a *shoah* never happens again.

Helen Bamber entered Belsen camp in 1945, at the age of 20, to help rehabilitate the surviving inmates. She stayed for over two years as a member of the Relief and Rehabilitation Association of the United Nations. She was awarded the OBE in 1997 in recognition of her work as founder of the

Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture.

Yom Hashoah falls this year on the day that Holland was liberated 60 years ago. We are pleased that the Dutch ambassador, His Excellency Count Jan de Marchant et d'Ansembourg, will attend the evening, as will the ambassadors of Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic. AJR members, their families and friends are most welcome to attend. Tickets are not required.

**Gaby Glassman**

*Yom Hashoah Remembrance Evening, Pinner Synagogue, Thursday 5 May, 8-10 pm*



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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES

**Sunday 19 June 2005  
 at 3.00 pm**  
 at

**The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre  
 15 Cleve Road, London NW6**

Guest speaker  
**Ned Temko**  
 Editor, *Jewish Chronicle*

**Agenda**  
 Annual Report 2004  
 Hon. Treasurer's Report  
 Discussion  
 Election of Committee of Management

All questions for the chair should be submitted by 27 May to the Head of Administration at Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL.

### ELECTION OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The following members will be proposed for election or re-election to the Committee at the AGM on Sunday 19 June 2005

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

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

Anyone wishing to propose any other member for election as Hon Officer, Trustee, or Committee member must submit to AJR's Head of Administration such a proposal signed by ten members qualified to vote at the meeting and with the signed agreement of the person being proposed no later than 27 May.

**AJR Heads of Department**  
 Gordon Greenfield Finance  
 Carol Rossen Administration and Personnel  
 Marcia Goodman Social Services  
 Michael Newman Media and  
 Public Relations

**AJR Journal**  
 Howard Spier Editorial and Production  
 Andrea Goodmaker  
 Secretarial/Advertisements

# My country

Martha Blend

I think of Smetana's *Mà vlast'* (My Country). The melody of one of its sections echoes the winding progress of the River Vltava and Israel's national anthem is based on a similar folk melody. How assured the title sounds! The Czech lands were Smetana's country. What is mine?

'Du bist eine Wienerin' (You are Viennese), I remember my mother telling me when I was quite small. Did she say this because of some cachet that went with being born in Vienna? Probably. She came from Poland, which, though it had been part of the Austrian Empire, was lower in the scheme of things than Austria itself. The Nazis soon put her right. It was made very clear to me during the 15 months I lived under the swastika that I was not fit to be educated with Aryan children.

England took me in. I received two hateful titles there - 'refugee' and 'evacuee' - each reinforcing my ambivalent status. I learned England's language and was fed its culture in schools and at university. My world was divided into three parts. Across the Channel was the Nazi enemy. At home I lived in the mainly Jewish community my foster mother belonged to. The year was punctuated by rituals: Friday night meant chicken soup and candles; then there were the festivals - Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur - and, for me, lessons at the local synagogue, where I learned to read Hebrew. As for languages, Yiddish and Polish were the lingua franca of my foster parents.

But at school, things were very different. Despite some readings from the Old Testament at assembly, we sang the bracing hymns of the Church of England - so unlike the nasal chanting in the synagogue. Overt references to the Christian deity were left out as a sop to the large number of Jewish girls. Later, however, separate prayers were introduced and, while the Christians had their assembly in the more

dignified setting of the hall, we Jewish girls were consigned to the gym with its smells of rubber plimsolls and sweat.

What with the stateless message on my passport, and faced with these multifarious cultures, the only thing to do was to keep them in separate compartments. In one incarnation, I recited Kipling's *The Glory of the Garden*, won a prize with my rendering of Blake's *The Tiger*, and agonised with Milton's *Samson Agonistes*; in another, I sang *Adon olam* in the synagogue and did my best to ignore Christmas.

The question of my nationality didn't come up until I was 17 and about to go to Switzerland on a school journey. To be included in the communal passport, I would have had to be British, have lived here for 65 years, and have never left the country for more than a few weeks; my husband, his father and my children were born here. I am now also entitled to dual British and Austrian nationality, but have declined the offer. Once, an insurance company wanted to put in an exclusion clause for Austria in case I made frequent visits to relatives there. Joke! Go tell them, as they say in Yiddish.

During the war, the British were fighting the Nazis, so my loyalty was to them. After the war, life became more confusing: I'd discovered some relatives in Palestine, but was horrified when the King David Hotel was blown up by the Jews with the loss of British lives. I was equally upset when a Jewish member of the Resistance was hanged by the British.

Now, as my awareness of the subtext of both my English and Jewish education has increased, I have my own views of what I think worthwhile. Perhaps the country I am most comfortable in is the country of the mind, where I can meet John Stewart Mill and Mary Wollstonecraft and Heinrich Heine, as well as my congenial companions of today.

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Fax: 020 7624 5002

## AJR Annual Report 2004

### Highlights of the year

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Jewish Free School in north London. Our guest speaker, Lady Jacobovits, gave a fascinating account of her experiences of being a fugitive in Nazi-occupied France. Afterwards, all present were invited to tour the building, which had recently been inaugurated.

At the Annual Tea in October the Carl Rosa Company entertained members at the Marriott Hotel in central London, where once again our staff turned out in force to help. The buzz of conversation showed the continuing enjoyment of meeting up with friends old and new on this most pleasant occasion.

### Personnel

Towards the end of the year Michael Newman was appointed Head of Media and Public Relations, a role combined with his continued management of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims. Ronald Channing was appointed to the newly created, part-time post of Manager of Cultural and Educational Projects. Sarah Shulton joined the Finance Department, also part-time, and, in Wendi Wilson's prolonged absence, Barbara Fraser joined the Social Work team on a part-time basis.

### Social and welfare services

Marcia Goodman's Social Work team had another busy year, visiting hundreds of members in their homes to determine their eligibility for the range of financial schemes the AJR operates. Following assessments of our members, representatives of the Social Work team complete and submit applications to the Emergency Fund and the Austrian Holocaust Survivor Emergency Assistance Programme.

Throughout 2004 there remained a steady flow of enquiries about welfare benefits. The AJR responded to members' enquiries on a range of social security and welfare schemes, including housing benefit, council tax benefit, carer's allowance, and attendance allowance. It also became necessary to clarify the impact of receiving reparations on existing benefits.

### Homecare Scheme, Emergency Fund and Self Aid

The number of survivors and refugees approved for the Homecare service grew to 139. In 2004 the cost of the scheme - £159,992 - was partly offset by a

contribution from the Claims Conference. We are delighted that the Homecare scheme continues to give survivors and refugees support, enabling them to live at home longer and with more dignity and comfort. We are, of course, grateful to the Claims Conference for their generous contribution towards the operation of this scheme.

A total of £37,302 was paid to 118 claimants of our Emergency Fund in 2004. The Claims Conference supports the Fund with monies secured from the German government as well as from a number of international compensation programmes and enables us to assist needy individuals with medical and emergency matters.

The AJR Trust paid £248,904 to 239 members under our Self Aid of Refugees scheme. A further £18,115 was paid in loans.

### Membership and AJR Groups

At the end of 2004 there were 3,292 AJR members (3,399 in 2003), including 119 new members.

The year was one of consolidation for AJR groups in the Midlands and the South, with the Brighton & Hove, Essex, Ilford, North London and Pinner Groups meeting every month and the South London, Cambridge and Weald of Kent Groups meeting bi-monthly. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Group began meeting in May and planned to meet every other month.

The other seven groups met regularly but less frequently: Norfolk, East Midlands and South West Midlands had a lunchtime get-together every few months, while the Surrey and Wessex Groups met several times during the year and the West Midlands Group meetings included an annual Garden Party.

We give special thanks to two group chairs who stood down last year: Ken Ambrose of the South London Group and Henny Rednall of the West Midlands Group.

The number of groups in the North and Scotland grew to 16, with the main meetings taking place in Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle and Glasgow. These groups are supplemented by the new 'Continental Friends' get-togethers in Bradford, Leeds, Cheshire, Whitefield/Prestwich, Broughton Park/Crumpsall, Didsbury,

Sheffield, Hull, Harrogate, Edinburgh and Dundee. As always, the gatherings were addressed by guest speakers and there was a wonderful opportunity to exchange views and share experiences as well as to renew acquaintances.

### Get-togethers

In July we held a very successful Scotland and Newcastle get-together in Edinburgh and in September over 100 members enjoyed a Northern Groups get-together in Leeds. In August we arranged a day out to the Jewish Museum in Manchester and the Imperial War Museum North. In the South members enjoyed gatherings at Tunbridge Wells in June and in Oxford in early August.

### Volunteers

In 2004 our growing volunteers' department ensured that almost 100 members received regular volunteer befriender visits. The Volunteers continue to receive support and supervision as well as the opportunity to attend Volunteer Forums, which enable helpers to meet and discuss ways to overcome difficulties.

The Day Centre continues to benefit from volunteer drivers and helpers and every month volunteers record and distribute the *AJR Journal* to blind and disabled members.

The quarterly newsletter sent to all volunteers provides information about training sessions, events and staff and volunteer profiles. In September a volunteers' thank you lunch was held at the Day Centre.

The Volunteer Co-ordinator, Carol Hart, also took on the role of secretary to the newly created committees appointed to oversee applications to the Emergency Funds administered by the AJR.

### Holidays

Once again we had an enjoyable holiday in Bournemouth and such a successful week at the Lansdowne Hotel in Eastbourne that we have booked to go there again in 2005. We were made so welcome on a visit to the Jewish Day Centre in Westcliff that we will be repeating this outing in July 2005.

Thirty-six members from the North enjoyed a wonderful five days together at our annual Northern holiday in St Annes. Sixty members from Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Bradford joined them for a day out, including a lunch for almost 100 members at the Fernlea Hotel.

### The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

The in-house entertainment continued to stimulate members, while the monthly KT Lunches were increasingly popular and the monthly AJR Luncheon Clubs were always sold out. Members participated in Keep Fit Classes twice weekly and in a discussion group on Wednesdays.

Bi-annual holidays for AJR members, including Day Centre members, remained popular and summer outings were once again arranged.

We did, however, notice an overall decline in Day Centre attendance and the fact that the fewer members who did come required more attention. As some were no longer able to use public transport, members were encouraged to find alternative means, including taxis and voluntary drivers, funded by the AJR.

In contrast, the Meals on Wheels programme was increasingly popular, with new customers keeping our kitchen busy.

### AJR Journal

The Journal continued its role of keeping members informed of AJR services and activities through regular features such as information on Day Centre events, reports on the rapidly growing number of AJR groups around the country, the Holocaust Claims column, a classified ads page, and Search Notices. Advice on pensions and welfare benefits was also included.

At the same time, the Journal provided substantial cultural/intellectual content in the form of book, theatre, cinema and art reviews, and regular feature articles, while a regular 'Letter from Israel' column was added. A lively letters section was stimulated by Richard Grunberger's editorial and feature articles, demonstrating his unparalleled encyclopaedic knowledge and historical perspective.

We are all deeply saddened by Richard's recent passing and will sorely miss his enormous contribution to the Journal and the AJR as a whole.

### Website - [www.ajr.org.uk](http://www.ajr.org.uk)

Towards the end of 2004 the number of visitors to our website had grown to more than 7,000 per month from over 55 different countries. The website is regularly updated with information and news from the Claims Conference, the Central Office for Holocaust Claims, Search Notices, Regional Groups events and reports, Day Centre programmes and, of course, articles from the *AJR Journal*.

### Kindertransport

The Kindertransport (KT) enjoyed an

exceptionally active year, organised by its Planning Group chaired by Hermann Hirschberger. The highlight of the year was a Barmitzvah service and lunch at Stanmore Synagogue for members deprived of the opportunity 60 years earlier. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev Bernd Koschland and addressed by Rabbi Jeffrey Cohen. Lady Jakobovits, Tony McNulty MP, the Rev Leslie Hardman and the Lady Mayor of Harrow were among the guests.

A prime-time audience of millions viewed a London Weekend Television film of the event entitled *Beyond Hitler's Reach*, with extensive coverage in the national and local press.

In a joint project with the Jewish Museum, the KT teaching pack, *The Last Goodbye*, was launched at Parliament Hill School, and the Oscar-winning film *Into the Arms of Strangers* was shown to a large public audience at the Imperial War Museum.

The *KT-AJR Newsletter*, edited by Bertha Leverton, was circulated to all KT-AJR members, and many Kinder continued to give talks in schools and colleges in the UK and abroad.

### Central Office for Holocaust Claims

The Central Office for Holocaust Claims ensured that the final applications for compensation from a number of indemnification funds were submitted. Filing deadlines passed for the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims and the Claims Conference fund for property in the former East Germany.

In March the Claims Office represented the Umbrella Group of UK survivor and refugee organisations at meetings in New York on the distribution of residual monies of the Swiss Banks Settlement. The AJR subsequently learned that the UK was on the priority list for fund allocations.

Our Claims Office manager, Michael Newman, was also a speaker at an international conference in Paris highlighting the successes of the Claims Office as well as the value of the integrated Umbrella Group.

The services of the Claims Office continued to be available at AJR group meetings and regional get-togethers. Although deadlines to file applications to many funds had passed, the Claims Office continued to offer free advice and assistance to victims of Nazi persecution and their heirs.

Andrew Kaufman  
Chairman

## Treasurer's Report 2004

The highlight of 2004 for so many members was without doubt Holocaust Memorial Day at Westminster Abbey. Our members were prominent amongst the 50 individuals chosen to light memorial candles at Westminster Abbey. Some of our members were invited to meet HM the Queen at St James' Palace on the same day. Our Social Work team worked tirelessly, not only helping those who came from outside London with transport and hotel arrangements, but also taking them for a meal so that they could meet one another and compare memories.

We provided regular financial help under our Self Aid scheme to about 200 less well off members, as we have done for many years. During 2004 we have been able to improve the help we have been giving - the many letters of thanks we have received have shown how appreciated this help has been.

Together with our survivor organisations the AJR is a member of the Umbrella Group, which co-ordinates the substantial funding received from the Claims Conference as well as from the Austrian ASHEAP, the Swiss banks and ICHEIC. These moneys have been used to provide emergency grants to members who are in immediate need: without these substantial moneys we would be unable to provide this assistance to all members who are in need. Unfortunately the decline of the US dollar against sterling has meant that some of these grants, whilst remaining unchanged in dollar terms, have not stretched as far as previously when converted into pounds. The funds from the Claims Conference have been substantially reduced for 2005, but happily the shortfall is temporarily being made good by OSHA. The outlook for 2006 and onwards is not clear.

The selfless work done by our social workers in assessing the needs of our members too often goes unrecognised. On behalf of all the Trustees I want to thank Marcia Goodman and all her team for their devoted efforts.

The work of the Claims Office (for which the AJR has taken over full financial responsibility from the Umbrella Group) has continued under its outstanding head, Michael Newman, who has now joined us as Head of Media and Public Relations. To Michael's and our surprise the work of the Claims Office is still continuing at a high level, even though most of the deadlines for filing claims have passed.

During 2004 we have revised the arrangements for managing our investments. After considering presentations from a number of investment managers, we appointed Rathbone Brothers as our investment advisers. They are particularly experienced in the management of Charitable Funds, and we shall carefully monitor their performance.

We have substantial social service commitments. The costs of running the Day Centre and our meals on wheels service are continuing to increase. The funds we have been enjoying from the Claims Conference are declining. We must anticipate that over the next few years we shall be spending our reserves, which have come from the legacies of generous former members. Indeed, without the high level of legacies we received in 2004 we would already have had to spend a significant part of those reserves during the year.

As always, I wish to thank Gordon Greenfield and all the staff for their dedicated work throughout the year.

**David Rothenberg**  
Hon Treasurer

## Finance Report

### AJR – Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31st December 2004

Income:	2004	2003
Membership/Donations and Legacies	£ 134,881	£ 467,899
Other	5,717	0
	140,598	467,899
<b>Less:</b>		
<b>Overhead Expenses</b>		
Salary Costs	91,792	88,653
AJR Journal	52,419	48,124
Administration/Depreciation	24,163	46,777
	<u>168,374</u>	<u>183,554</u>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit):</b>	<b>(27,776)</b>	<b>284,345</b>

### Summary of Balance Sheet at 31st December 2004

	2004	2003
Fixed Assets (less Depreciation)	2,982	334
Current Assets	341,500	368,245
Less: Current Liabilities	<u>(32,243)</u>	<u>28,564</u>
	<u>312,239</u>	<u>340,015</u>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
General Fund	340,015	55,670
Net surplus/(deficit) for year	<u>(27,776)</u>	<u>284,345</u>
	<u>312,239</u>	<u>340,015</u>

David Rothenberg, Hon. Treasurer 01/04/2005

### AJR CHARITABLE TRUST PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

#### Summary figure for the year ended 31st December 2004

	2004	2003
<b>Income:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Takings – Day Centre and meals-on-wheels	82,077	79,380
Donations received	80	310
	<u>82,157</u>	<u>79,690</u>
<b>Less outgoings:</b>		
Salaries	106,367	106,734
Catering costs	178,732	164,810
Sundry expenses	83,226	74,677
	<u>368,325</u>	<u>346,221</u>
<b>Deficit funded from Charitable Trust</b>	<b>(286,168)</b>	<b>(226,531)</b>

### AJR CHARITABLE TRUST – Summary Income and Expenditure Accounts

#### Year ended 31st December 2004

	2004	2003
<b>Income:</b>		
Covenants/Donations/Claims Conference	468,552	334,037
Investment income	464,836	341,268
Sheltered housing	41,587	38,255
	<u>974,975</u>	<u>713,560</u>
Legacies	<u>712,947</u>	<u>1,586,402</u>
	<u>1,687,922</u>	<u>2,299,962</u>
<b>Less outgoings:</b>		
Day Centre	286,168	266,531
Self Aid, Homecare and Emergency Grants	623,218	533,703
Other organisations	69,000	66,495
Administration/Depreciation	653,855	705,900
	<u>1,632,241</u>	<u>1,572,629</u>
Profit/(Loss) on realised and unrealised investments	635,542	1,777,163
Net Movement in Funds	<u>691,223</u>	<u>2,504,496</u>

Based on final unaudited figures

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

AJR might be able to offer you financial assistance for cleaning, gardening and caring.

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

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right  
to shorten correspondence  
submitted for publication

### RICHARD GRUNBERGER

Sir - Having read his numerous articles in the Journal and its predecessor for a number of years, I wish to comment on his ability to deal with many subjects in a typically abrasive style. He compared personalities in recent and distant history with a detail and accuracy that are rare to find, giving rise to readers' comments, pro and anti, almost week by week. No one could ignore him. I for one have learned a great deal from his writings, having as a boy often accompanied my father, Rabbi Dr Siegfried Klein, in his capacity as editor of the *Gemeindezeitung*, which appeared for many years in the area. Please take great care in appointing his successor, if you haven't already done so: your precious readership, including the second and third generations, needs careful nurturing!

*Julius Klein  
Southsea*

Sir - Never in the history of our Journal has one person contributed quite so much knowledge, wisdom and humour as our sadly-missed Richard Grunberger. May whoever writes his epitaph be forgiven for claiming that, had Richard used his own words, he might have said that he was 'inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity'. It is often said that the graveyards are full of indispensable people. Well, we cannot deny that Richard and his wisdom will be a hard act to follow and, for once, it matters not if some of us could not agree with Richard's sentiments, but perhaps in his own words, he might have said:

In matters controversial  
My perception is rather fine  
I always see both points of view  
The one that's wrong - and mine.

*Werner Abraham  
Sutton Coldfield*

Sir - Even when very often I could not accept his viewpoint on political matters, especially concerning France, his death is definitely a big loss for all of us. He merits being remembered for his many years of dedication to the *AJR Journal*.

*Rolf Weinberg  
Sidcup*

Sir - The *AJR Journal* will be the poorer without his contribution: his well-researched academic and intellectual writings faultlessly executed in the language of his adopted country.

*Ursula Dumke  
Ringwood*

Sir - I enjoyed his articles and his comments in the Journal. He had a wonderful way with words and his opinions were always thought out. They catered well for the Continental Britons, first or second generation. I and all his readers will miss him.

*Bob Norton  
AJR East Midlands Group*

Sir - As a regular reader of your Journal, I too was sad to read about the passing away of Richard Grunberger, whose many contributions as Editor-in-Chief have added so much enjoyment and constant interest with his wise counsel on so many subjects.

*Henry Walton  
Sale, Cheshire*

Sir - His knowledge of history, politics, religion and the arts was phenomenal. Not only was he able to set it down eruditely, but he did so in such a way that the average reader could follow his argument. Some may not always have agreed with his opinion but he always respected the opposite point of view by publishing it. He was in the editor's chair for very many years,

elevating the standard of the magazine - if that was still possible - to even greater heights than before.

*Marianne and Rudi Leavor  
Bradford*

Sir - This is indeed a grievous loss - not just to his family but to the AJR, who have lost a most brilliant journalist and historian. We here in Manchester also had the pleasure of having Richard as our guest speaker some years ago, when he impressed us all with his incisive knowledge of his chosen subject. I know that *AJR Journal* readers everywhere will feel a tremendous void not to see him in print any more. He wrote on so many fascinating and varied subjects, sometimes critically, sometimes with pathos and also not without humour.

*Werner Lachs  
Chairman, Manchester AJR Group*

Sir - Richard was the soul of the AJR! Others have written of his erudition, elegant writing and sense of humour. I remember especially well one day in my nine years at AJR as Volunteers' Co-ordinator: I had often asked Richard about the background and origins of some of our members in order to help my own understanding. That day I asked about the history behind Meyerbeer's opera *Les Huguenots* as I was learning one of the arias from it (I am a devoted amateur singer). Without hesitation, he told me of the Thirty Years' War, the St Bartholomew Day massacre and much more. His knowledge was freely given so that one could share in it.

*Laura Howe  
North Harrow*

Sir - No editor can please all his readers, but he certainly pleased me. I looked forward to each edition with enthusiasm. I particularly admired his staunch defence of Israel and the Jewish people in the face of angry and critical readers who failed to understand a very complicated situation. Mr Grunberger had a great sense of history and a 'Jewish heart'.

*Ruth Sommerfeld  
London NW3*

Sir - I enjoyed his articles - some controversial but always stimulating. I hope that *AJR Journal* readers will support, and not compare, the new editor, who no doubt will bring his or her own style to the *Journal*.

Anita Lewy  
Las Vegas NV, USA

Sir - Although I normally subscribe to the motto 'De mortuis nil nisi bene', I feel strongly that the adulatory comments about the late Richard Grunberger in your April issue give a somewhat one-sided picture of his editorship. In my view, the *AJR Journal* is a publication which ought to be non-political as it addresses a readership right across the political spectrum. Its editor should therefore more or less adopt the stance of a BBC presenter, i.e. try to be politically neutral and not allow his own voice to dominate. This Mr Grunberger signally failed to do and not only the constant trumpeting of his views but also the fact that he frequently implied that those who differed from him were either fools or knaves, often irritated at least some of his readers. It is to be hoped that the next editor, whoever he or she may be, will follow in the footsteps of the admirable Werner Rosenstock rather than in those of Richard Grunberger.

F. Lustig  
Reading

Sir - Having been a pupil of Richard's, first at the Avigdor and then at the Hasmonian, I can honestly say our geography lessons were really enriched when he strode into our classroom to take the lesson. The girls all but swooned: he was a tall, dark-haired and broad-shouldered figure who captivated us as much mentally as physically. His store of knowledge in many subjects was boundless. His grasp and understanding of how to produce a play working with teenagers can only be admired. His passing marks the end of an era and I am sure his colleagues will feel his loss.

A. Elmkes  
London NW11

#### THANKS FOR 'REFUGEE VOICES' CONFERENCE

Sir - We would like to thank you very

much for organising the conference 'Refugee Voices: Testimonies and Archives' at the Jewish Museum in Camden (see April issue). It proved a wonderful opportunity to discover the diversity of ongoing projects about German-speaking refugees and we were overwhelmed by the co-operative and collaborative atmosphere of the conference. We feel that the conference was very fruitful and we hope that this was the beginning of more communication and collaboration in the field of German-speaking refugees. Thank you very much again for this wonderful event.

Prof Edward Timms,  
Dr Andrea Hammel,  
Samira Teuteberg  
Centre for German-Jewish Studies  
University of Sussex

#### BERLIN MEMORIALS

Sir - Peter Zander in his letter (January 2005) provides useful information on the *Shoah* memorial at Bahnhof Grönwald in Berlin. I must point out, however, that he mistakenly implies that Berlin was my native city - in fact, I was born in Vienna. Incidentally, the huge Mahmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas close to the Brandenburger Tor referred to in my letter has just been completed (*The Times*, 16 December 2004). The Berlin tourist office also has a useful pamphlet: *Discovering Jewish Berlin*.

George Vulkan  
Kenton, Middx

#### 'ANTI-AUSTRIAN CAMPAIGN'

I was very pleased to see Mr Channing's tribute (if that is what a profile is) to Ambassador Christiani in your March issue. The profile is not solely a record of the career of a non-Jewish diplomat concerned with Christian-Jewish relations and specially with matters of restitution and compensation who deserved well of both the Jewish community in Britain and any Austrian-Jewish community abroad as may still exist.

Your profile also marks a welcome departure from the visceral and, at

times, unreasoning anti-Austrian campaign in your correspondence columns, of which the last two lines of Mr Peter Phillips's letter in the same issue provide such a good example. Because of what their parents and grandparents did nearly 70 years ago, their descendants today simply cannot do anything right, whatever they do. Such prejudice against people not because of what they do but because of their birth and ancestry is an attitude our members should be particularly anxious to avoid.

Francis Steiner  
Deddington, Oxon

Sir - Your prolific correspondent Peter Phillips points out in his latest letter (March) my mistake in referring to the General Fund instead of the National Fund, for which I apologise. However, he then goes on to describe the city of Vienna's offer to former citizens of a week's expenses-paid visit as a 'cheap gesture'. Bearing in mind that this offer was made by people in authority who probably were not even born when we had to leave the city, this is in itself a cheap jibe. One should also bear in mind that they did not have to make this gesture and, if Peter Phillips has, like me, already received thousands of pounds over the years from the Austrian government as well as a pension, then his comment can only be described as *chutzpah*. But then, some people will always look a gift horse in the mouth.

A. Kessler  
Cheam, Surrey

#### 'NOT ALL GERMANS MURDERERS'

Sir - While in my frequent re-visits to Berlin since the war I don't remember coming across anyone talking about Germany being 'liberated' by the Allies, I can well imagine that many Germans were immensely relieved at the fall of the dictatorship, as would have been many Iraqis at the fall of Saddam Hussein. Not all Germans were Nazi murderers.

Peter Zander  
London W1

# ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

They were refugees from the Nazis, but Winston Churchill's call to 'collar the lot' resulted in some 27,000 enemy aliens being interned in Britain during World War II. They included a disproportionately high number of artists labelled 'degenerates' in a Nazi exhibition in 1937. Named after **Hugo Dachinger's** 1941 exhibition at London's Redfern Gallery, **Art Behind Barbed Wire** at the **London Jewish Cultural Centre** offers, for the first time in Britain, an insight through drawings and watercolours into the conditions of internees in British transit camps. For some, it was a brief and unpleasant episode during a shameful period in Britain; for others, it was pure trauma.



Jooss: *20 years of dance*, 1940  
Hugh Dachinger and Fritz Rosen, Huyton

Internees were ordinary men and women, like the Soho tailor presser who could not afford the naturalisation fees and was interned despite having spent 30 years in Britain before the war. They experienced despair, malnutrition, cramped conditions and separation from loved ones. But their anguish mutated into a desire for expression. The artists set up classes, performed plays and

concerts, and even established the Amadeus Quartet.

Parallels with Terezin's artists spring to mind, although Britain's internees did not, of course, face the prospect of Auschwitz. Instead, they coped with misfortune by creating a vibrant culture - even a university - in the Hutchinson Camp on the Isle of Man, for instance, or at Huyton in Liverpool. Much of the art is swift, impressionistic, or ironic, such as **Richard Franz Bayer's** tea-time cartoons in the camps. Bayer's satirical poems and postcards evoke the irony of escape - followed by internment as a suspect Nazi. The work depicts the simple life of prisoners and the materials were as basic as the subject matter, the food consisting of soup, rice, cheese and biscuits. **Hermann Fechenbach**, who went on a protest hunger strike, began an ingenious series of linocuts of refugee impressions, using pieces of lino torn up from the Hutchinson camp floor. **Hellmuth Wussenborn** also used these for his darkly ironic dustbin containing bones. **Erich Kahn** resourcefully found odd bits of wood to create a very effective primitive art. Sometimes the food on the plate is skilfully transformed into images of distant loved ones.

Established artists had to reinvent themselves in Britain. **Martin Bloch** had worked in Paris, opened a school in Berlin, and in summer taught on the shores of Lake Garda before his internment at Huyton, where he portrayed black and red chalk views of the camp. Later he opened a school of contemporary painting in Britain with Roy de Maistre.

**Kurt Schwitter's** portrait of *Klaus Hinrichson* with its deep, sad eyes projects an internal vision of the man who helped establish the Hutchinson University. Schwitter himself had exhibited at Berlin's Sturm Gallery in 1918 and had become attracted to the Berlin Dadaists, whose attempts to create a new art at the expense of traditional values labelled him a degenerate in Nazi eyes. There is little escape from reality. A road on a cloudy day shows a train and a looming tower, evoking Holocaust images, while **Walter Nessler** depicts the camp at Huyton as a flimsy affair likely to be blown over by the wind.

## REVIEWS

### Uncomfortable reading

#### SIX FROM LEIPZIG

Gertrude Dubrovsky

*Vallentine Mitchell, 2004, 240pp.*

This illuminating study of the experience of six young refugee cousins from Leipzig who survived the Holocaust also focuses attention on the humanitarian actions of the often-overlooked rescuers in Britain who took on responsibility for these and other children.

On the basis of a brief biographical background of the Schmulewitz family in Leipzig, Dubrovsky describes how the children's Uncle Leo registered them for the Kindertransport and the anguish of their parents, who made the heartbreaking decision to send their children abroad. She then traces their often traumatic journeys across Europe, their arrival in a foreign country, and their evacuation to Cambridge at the onset of the Second World War.

Cambridge was one of many places in Britain which set up a local refugee committee following Kristallnacht. Margareta (Greta) Burkill, the driving force behind the Cambridge Children's Refugee Committee (CCRC), recalled her reaction to the events of Kristallnacht: 'The whole of Britain was aghast - the horror of it all went like an electric current through every town and village. The feeling was "we must save the children."'

The CCRC was set up almost immediately, and ultimately took on responsibility for around 800 children - including the cousins from Leipzig - besides dealing with some 1,200 other cases. Greta Burkill, undaunted by the bureaucratic machinery, devoted her time, energy and money to the welfare of these children. But her work, and that of the Committee, was not universally welcomed in Jewish circles. Drawing on Burkill's unpublished memoirs, Dubrovsky reminds us that the Anglo-Jewish community responded very negatively to calls to give hospitality to refugee children. That many non-Jews welcomed Jewish refugee children into their homes is a testimony to their sense of moral responsibility, but, as Dubrovsky points out, the result was that many children were unable to preserve their Judaism. Among orthodox Jews, as

represented by Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld, the head of Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz's Religious Emergency Council, and Hertz himself (Schonfeld's father-in-law), this was too high a price to pay: their priority was to ensure the spiritual growth of the Kinder. This led to a tense relationship between the various parties.

The most moving part of the book is near the end. There are letters dating from December 1938 - full of anguish, longing and love - to one of the cousins by her family. She survived, but they did not. An addendum to this very human story is the reminder that while the British government provided entry visas for 10,000 children, thus saving their lives, its generosity did not extend to the parents, most of whom perished in the Holocaust.

Susan Cohen

### Diary of a sensitive man

#### HANS GÁL - MUSIK HINTER STACHELDRAHT

(Music Behind Barbed Wire)

Peter Halban paperback, 2003, 180pp., £29; may be ordered from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.amazon.de](http://www.amazon.de)

In May 1940 the British government interned thousands of 'enemy aliens' living in Britain, many of them Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany. Among them was the composer Hans Gál. His group was first interned in a camp in Huyton, near Liverpool, then moved to the Isle of Man. This absorbing book is the diary he kept during that time. So far, the book, written in German, has not appeared in English.

Gál was also a literary artist and this diary is very vividly written. The early days were particularly hard, with insufficient food and inadequate sanitary arrangements. But even later Gál is contemptuous of the incompetence of the military authorities. The internees organised themselves much more efficiently than did the authorities, who were grateful, for example, for the card index the internees provided.

Many of the internees being distinguished musicians and academics, the camp soon became a lively cultural centre. Gál played a major part. While in Huyton, he composed a suite for two violins and flute - the only instruments then available in the camp - and he later wrote the music for a revue which was

performed twice. (The suite and the music for the review are recorded on a CD which comes with the book.) In the music we find the same wit as in the book: he records the comedies of a life which was not at all comic, especially for a man of his sensitive nature. Attractive too is his generous estimation of the qualities of others.

The most moving pages are the last ones, which he penned on board the ship on which he returned to England and normal life: he reflects on the positive aspects of the experience of the camps, an awareness 'dass unser Leben hier einen neuen, edleren Sinn bekommen hat ... und alle haben sich dadurch bereichert gefühlt, haben die Wärme einer Atmosphäre von Freundschaft und Kameradschaft genossen, wie wir sie nie vorher gekannt haben.'

Ralph Blumenau

### Tales in Tandem

The first two lines of the poem *Valentine* quoted in the review in our April issue should have been:

Come live with me and be my love  
My pretty one, my turtle-dove.

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING  
AND SCULPTURE

## Letter from Israel

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Each year Israel becomes more and more like other countries. The latest manifestation of this trend is the plethora of grandiose productions designed to attract children during the Chanuka vacation. With each passing year these are more of a hybrid between British pantomime, the Folies Bergère and Broadway musicals.

Devoted grandmother though I am, I refuse to take my offspring's offspring to these commercialised extravaganzas, generally preferring to go to something more low-key. There is one exception, however, and that is the Hebrew children's classic known as *Utzli-Gutzli*.

The story is based on the Grimm brothers' fairy-tale *Rumpelstiltskin*. The brilliant rhyming couplets were written in the early 1960s by one of Israel's leading writers, poets and translators, Avraham Shlonsky. The language, though charming, is somewhat archaic and possibly difficult for the average five-year-old. But the text is full of jokes and witticisms, and is studded with catchy songs and music written by another talented Israeli, Dov Zeltzer.

The Cameri Theatre in Tel Aviv, which revives the play every few years, puts on a colourful and professional production. I took my daughter to the play some 30 years ago and hardly understood a word, being then a relative newcomer to the country. This year I took her children, who sat riveted throughout - it's no mean feat to catch and keep their attention - and enjoyed every minute.

Colourful costumes and catchy tunes are only part of the attraction. The words are clever and humorous, the story has pace and tension, and the acting is professional, if somewhat stylised. No actor in Israel goes on the stage these days without a mike attached to his or her head, so that the art of projecting one's voice has been made superfluous by technology.

All the same, thank goodness not everything in Israel has descended to the level of garish vulgarity that prevails in most popular culture. Thank goodness there are still islands of sanity, with purveyors of entertainment who are not afraid to present children with a challenge. And above all, thank goodness that parents and grandparents can still enjoy a quality production instead of having their ears assaulted by raucous noises masquerading as music.

It's not politically correct, I know, but I have much more than a sneaking sympathy for Peter Shaffer's Salieri. He knew, without a shadow of a doubt, that he was in the presence of an exceptionally gifted composer, and that he himself would never be more than a mediocre one. For my part, unable to do little more than play 'God Save the Queen' with the fingers of one hand, I am invariably in awe of someone with outstanding musical talent, even if I may have second thoughts about the idea of administering poison.

Jacqueline Cole was born in Solihull in the late fifties. She tells me she remembers the moment of her actual birth - I quizzed her on this relentlessly. At the age of two, she says, she was sitting at the piano and playing. Her parents appear to have done little to encourage their precocious child. I remarked that, to the best of my knowledge, despite a pushy father even Wolfgang Amadeus himself wasn't playing the piano before he was three or four.

At the age of ten, Jacqueline became a pupil at the Yehudi Menuhin School, where she was to take part in master classes held by Nadia Boulanger and Vlado Perlemuter. There followed an array of awards, grants and tours, national and international, culminating in her selection as a participant in an Olivier Messiaen analysis class. She was one of four pianists chosen to perform in the final concert in the composer's presence; Messiaen thanked her for her 'most poetic interpretation of *Lalouette Lulu*'.

Jacqueline's gifts do not end there. She plays other musical instruments too: the harpsichord, the chamber organ, the celeste to start with. And, as if this were not more than enough for one person, she is also an outstanding painter, presently Artist-in-Residence at St Sepulchre-Without-Newgate in the City of London. One room in her south-west London home is almost entirely taken up by a grand piano; a neighbouring room is dominated by an enormous wall canvas to which she is

# PROFILE

Howard Spier

## Jacqueline Cole A 'post-obsessionist' lady



continually adding touches.

There is an intensity about Jacqueline that you sense right away. What sustains her is her Christianity, a piercing faith that transports her through all trials and tribulations. Jacqueline cannot understand the mentality of 'self-proclaimed Christians' who hold anti-Jewish views or any views prejudicial towards others. The cynic in me is won over by her obvious integrity.

A student at the Yehudi Menuhin School at the age of ten, a burning aversion to anti-Semitism among Christians, an unbending conviction that all are created equally, a search for meaning with regard to her own work - all this brought Jacqueline to what has now become the focus of her life: the performance and promotion of neglected composers and artists of the first half of the twentieth century, in particular those who perished in Theresienstadt: Victor Ullmann, Pavel Haas, Hans Krása, Karel Reiner, Siegmund Schul, Petr Kien and others.

In 2002 Jacqueline founded the Viktor Ullmann and Pavel Haas Foundations. The emphasis is on performance as a means of increasing

Holocaust awareness.

Viktor Ullmann was deported from his home in Prague to Theresienstadt in September 1942. An Austrian of Jewish descent, he had left Stuttgart in 1933, when forced to flee the Nazis, and chosen to live in the Czech capital, where cultural life flourished between the two world wars. In this period, he forged a new, distinctive style of composition, fusing the traditional and the modern.

In Theresienstadt, Ullmann made a prominent contribution, as organiser, conductor, pianist and music critic, to the development of a cultural life in the framework of the permitted 'leisure activities' of the show camp conceived by the Gestapo to deceive the outside world. He also managed to continue with his own work as composer, seemingly unaffected by the conditions to which he was subjected. He was sent to Auschwitz on one of the final transports from Theresienstadt in October 1944.

Jacqueline has also created a Polish counterpart foundation in Cieszyn, where Ullmann was born. She talks of moving lock, stock and barrel to Cieszyn to pursue her life's work. I do not doubt she will do it.

Earlier this year Jacqueline gave a concert in London's Wigmore Hall dedicated to the Polish-Jewish composer Szymon Laks, a survivor of Auschwitz who died in 1983. Her programme included works by Laks himself and by Ullmann, Haas and Messiaen. Jacqueline is currently also writing a biography of Laks.

Performer, composer, writer, researcher and now editor: Jacqueline is determined to bring into being an academic journal devoted to these neglected composers and to their world. Typically, she has the first three issues planned out.

Jacqueline is secure in knowing that she has found her life's mission. She stresses she is obsessed by her work. Between us, we jokingly coined a term to describe her state of mind: 'post-obsessionist'.

# INSIDE the AJR

## **Pinner and a girl from Kimberley**

A packed audience listened intently as Geraldine Auerbach spoke on the subject 'How does a girl from Kimberley get to have tea with the Queen?' Geraldine recounted, with splendid illustrative recordings, her struggle to resurrect Jewish music and put it on the British calendar. Her initial enterprise in distributing five cassettes had blossomed into what is now the Jewish Music Institute at London University. *Walter Weg*

**Next meeting: Thur 5 May. Bettine Le Beau on 'Happiness is an Attitude of Mind'**

## **Essex Jewish girl**

Speaking about the role of the woman in the Jewish family, Fay Sober said that today's women were educated and confident and in many respects able to compete with men. Should a woman be permitted to become a rabbi? Opinions were divided. Many members of our community felt that a woman could overcome her physical frailness through the strength of her mind.

*Julie Franks*

**Next meeting: Tues 17 May, 11.00 am. Visit from Ilford group - joint meeting with lunch**

## **Fascinating insights at Brighton & Hove Sarid**

Our speaker, Ivor Richards, being ill, we talked about our personal backgrounds and experiences before, during and after the war. Although the history of the Holocaust is well documented, the individual fates always reveal fascinating insights, especially into the attitudes of the local population during postwar visits. Will a united Europe come to terms with the past was one of the topics discussed. *Rudi Simmonds*

**Next meeting: Mon 16 May, 10.45 am. Sarah Wilkes, 'Let Helping Hands Help You'**

## **Lively atmosphere in Manchester**

Our meeting, at the Morris Feinmann Home, began with a few words in memory of Richard Grunberger, who will be sadly missed by our association. We then heard a magnificently researched talk by Fred Elter on the Jews of Shanghai. Susanne Green informed us about forthcoming events, including the holiday in St Annes in July and a day out in Dewsbury in May. As always, there was a lively atmosphere and we dispersed after refreshments including - in anticipation of Purim - tasty hamantashn. *Werner Lachs*

## **HGS overview of English Jews**

Meeting at Balint House, we were treated to a fascinating overview of the history of the Jews of England by Susannah Alexander, Education Officer of the Jewish Museum. Her talk was of great interest to all members, whose number has increased with each meeting. After the lecture, members were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of Richard Grunberger. *Jack Lee*

**Next meeting: Mon 9 May, 10.30 am at Balint House**

## **Get-together in South West Midlands**

Once again we met in Ruth Price's home. We enjoyed ourselves catching up on our news and, of course, having a lovely meal. We hope to hold another meeting in the not too distant future when everyone is well again and able to come. *Ruth Jackson*

## **Well attended meeting at Weald of Kent**

At a very well attended meeting in Tunbridge Wells, the Jewish Museum's Susannah Alexander spoke to us about the history of the Jews in England. She is an excellent speaker who has her subject at her fingertips. I certainly learned a great deal and we all enjoyed it tremendously. We are also always very pleased to meet

each other again.

*Inge Ball*

**Next meeting: Wed 25 May. Magen David Adom director Eli Benson**

## **Mixed feelings in Ilford**

With our scheduled speaker snowbound in Tunbridge Wells, the ever-resourceful Myrna Glass got us all talking about our past and future visits back to our childhood homes on the Continent. All present participated and it was interesting to hear the differing attitudes and mixed feelings on the subject. *Meta Roseneil*

**Next meeting: Wed 4 May, 10.30 am: James Taylor, Head of Research, Churchill Museum (rescheduled from 2 March). Tues 17 May: day outing to meet Essex group in Westcliff (details to follow)**

## **Hull discusses HMD**

We discussed Holocaust Memorial Day, on which Bob Rosner spoke at Beth Shalom to some 100 school sixth-formers, while adult visitors took part in a candle-lighting ceremony. At the Hull Guildhall we watched a dignified and tellingly acted play written and performed by staff and pupils from a local school. A week later Bob joined four other survivors to receive the Holocaust Flame for safekeeping as Laxton's eternal flame in the presence of Notts County Council Chairman Renee Salt. All present congratulated the BBC on a sensitively produced Auschwitz series of programmes.

*Bob Rosner*

**Next meeting: Sun 29 May at Bob's house**

## **South London hears vivid account of MDA**

Eli Benson gave a vivid account of Magen David Adom's (MDA) speed and efficiency in road accidents and *intifada* bombings. The MDA is staffed by medics, para-medics and volunteers and is not financed by the government. Eli Benson said funding was urgently needed and showed a video demonstrating examples of specific costs such as armoured ambulances, bullet-proof clothes and

medical equipment for intensive-care mobile hospitals and satellite technology. *Elizabeth Rosenthal*

Next meeting: Thur 12 May. Walter Woyda on Israeli music

### Grand Tour in North London

Walter Woyda excelled himself in his presentation of *The Grand Tour*, a musical based on the story *Jakubowsky and the Colonel*. The 25 members present were held spellbound not least due to the fact that the underlying story bore a strong resonance to our own past. The musical itself was never performed in this country although it was popular in the USA.

*Herbert Haberberg*

Next meeting: Thur 26 May, 10.30 am. Details to be announced

### FORTHCOMING MEETING

Norfolk Tues 10 May. Lunchtime get-together

#### PASCAL THEATRE COMPANY

is organising an event on Sunday

27 November at Swiss Cottage Library

to commemorate the end of the war.

We are looking for people willing to work with young people to transmit their experiences as refugees (who arrived before 1940), internees, child evacuees, munitions workers, intelligence workers, soldiers etc as a source for research and creativity. Please write/email with details and availability.

With thanks, Julia Pascal

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### The Wiener Library OPEN DAY

Sunday 8 May 2005 2-5 pm

Coinciding with the 60th anniversary of VE-day, the Wiener Library is holding a special Open Day. Visitors will gain a unique insight into the workings of the Library and its current activities and projects.

- Tours of our archive collections.
- Demonstrations of conservation work and advice about conserving and sorting family papers.
- A talk by Jeanette Rosenberg from the Jewish Genealogical Society.
- Kaffee & Kuchen

Contact us at: 4 Devonshire Street, W1W 5BH Tel 020 7636 78247

### YOM HASHOAH

Commemorative ceremony

Thursday 5 May

at

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre,  
Cleve Road, London NW6

11.00-11.30 am

If you wish to attend please telephone the Stanmore office on 020 8385 3070

Space is limited

For those wishing to stay for lunch there will be a charge of £5 per person

### OUTING TO BETH SHALOM HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTRE LAXTON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Sunday 12 June 2005

£21.50 per person including coach fare, entrance and vegetarian buffet lunch (£9 for those using own transport)

Coach will leave AJR offices in Merrion Avenue, Stanmore at 8.45 am

(plenty of parking available in car park)

Booking is essential

Please call Joan Altman on  
020 8385 3085

### DIARY DATES

- 5 May Yom Hashoah, AJR Day Centre
- 8 May Frank Foley statue unveiled
- 16 May Northern groups day out, Dewsbury and Bradford
- 12 June Trip to Beth Shalom
- 19 June AGM (at Cleve Road, London)
- 26 June-3 July Eastbourne holiday
- 29 June Scotland and Newcastle Northern Get-together, Edinburgh
- 10-17 July Northern groups holiday, St Annes
- 13 July Day out, St Annes
- 27 July Day out, Westcliff
- 16 August Northern Groups Get-together, Manchester
- 18 September Annual Tea, Watford
- 23-30 October Bournemouth holiday
- 9 November Kristallnacht

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre  
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### AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

Wednesday 18 MAY 2005

Hannah Saadat

'The Bahai Religion'

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Early reservations please!

Lunch now only £5

Please telephone Susie  
on 020 7328 0208

### FUTURE DATES FOR WEDNESDAY LUNCHEON CLUB

15 JUNE Michael Smith 'Frank Foley'

### KT-AJR Kindertransport special interest group

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD

Monday 9 MAY 2005

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Eric Reich's music quiz

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

May	Afternoon Entertainment
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Mon 2	CLOSED - Bank Holiday
Tue 3	CLOSED
Wed 4	Paul Coleman
Thur 5	Margaret Gibbs
Sun 8	CLOSED
Mon 9	KT LUNCH - Kards & Games Klub
Tue 10	CLOSED
Wed 11	Ronnie Goldberg
Thur 12	Lev Lewis
Sun 15	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon 16	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 17	CLOSED
Wed 18	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 19	Mark Rosen
Sun 22	CLOSED
Mon 23	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 24	CLOSED
Wed 25	Margaret Opdahl
Thur 26	Mike Marandi
Sun 29	CLOSED
Mon 30	CLOSED - Bank Holiday
Tue 31	CLOSED

### '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

### Diamond Wedding

Congratulations to Mia and Peter Schwab on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding on 5 May 2005.

### Deaths

**Fleiss.** Anni Fleiss, born Chemnitz, 12 February 1912, beloved Omi, mother, mother-in-law and friend to so many throughout the world, died suddenly on 24 February. Much loved and terribly missed by all who knew her.

### Day Centre

**Pamela Bloch at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.** Clothes sale, separates etc. Wednesday 4 May 9.30-11.45 am

### AJR DAY OUT

Join us for a trip to Westcliff & Southend Day Centre

Wednesday 27 July 2005

Coach leaving Cleve Road at 10.00 am

£18 per person to include transport lunch, tea and entertainment

Please contact Carol Rossen 020 8385 3085 or Joan Altman 020 8385 3072

### HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

Sun 10 July 2005 - Sun 17 July 2005

AT THE FERNLEA HOTEL

11/17 South Promenade, St Annes tel 01253 726 726

The cost, including DINNER, BED AND BREAKFAST, is £395 per person. The hotel charges a supplement per room for sea view or deluxe room.

Please book early to avoid disappointment

Please contact Ruth Finestone on 020 8385 3070

### ALTERATIONS

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ALL STAFF SCREENED AND VETTED

### DIARY DATE - AJR TEA

Sunday 18 September 2005 at 3.00 pm

at the Hilton Hotel, Watford, Herts

'REISE UM DIE ERDE IN 80 MINUTEN'  
(Journey Round the Earth in 80 Minutes)

Waltzes, foxtrots and tangos from the revue-opera by Robert Stolz  
Performed by

Glenys Groves (Soprano),  
Rodney Gibson (Baritone) and  
David Syrus (Piano)

Further information and ticket application forms will appear in future issues of the AJR Journal

### Jewish Care & the Otto Schiff Housing Association

meet the personal and nursing care needs of the Jewish Refugee Community.

Balint House, Leo Baeck House & Osmond House are situated in The Bishops Avenue, where residents live in spacious and comfortable surroundings, looked after in a warm and caring environment. Residents can enjoy a variety of activities and outings, as well as take part in traditional synagogue services and the celebration of Jewish festivals.

Short term respite care also available.

For more information call Jewish Care Direct on 020 8922 2222 or email us at jewishcaredirect@jcare.org

OSHA Charity Registration Number 210396  
Jewish Care Charity Registration Number 802559

### Colvin Home Care

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### Record your past in a personal television documentary

Many AJR Journal readers will have been, or will have family members who were, affected by the Holocaust.

Their history, sufferings and, in many cases, success in rebuilding their lives, should be recorded for future generations. It is a triumph of good over evil - of which every family can and will be proud.

Portrait Films are professional film makers who can create an invaluable record, on DVD or video tape, documenting your family's story.

It is 60 years since the end of the war, so it is important, and urgent, to record these historically important memories.

*Don't let your past be forgotten.  
Record your story in a Portrait Film.*

For further details call 0117 946 7905  
Or visit our website: www.portraitfilms.co.uk

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020 8455 1335 other times  
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London N12 9TB

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### BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

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We offer a traditional style of religious service.

Details can be obtained from the Synagogue Administrator  
Telephone 020 8959 7086 or  
email: office@synagogue.org.uk

Minister: Rabbi Rodney J Mariner

Regular Services

Friday evenings at 6.45pm  
Saturday mornings at 10.00am  
Religion School: Sundays 9.45am - 12.30pm  
Nursery School: 9.15am - 12.15pm  
Belsize Under 3's: 9.30 am - 11.30 am

Space donated by Pafra Limited

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Tel: 020 7794 3949

## Obituary Irene Corbach

*Keeping alive the memory of  
Germany's Jews*



Irene Corbach: a truly  
'righteous gentile'

Irene Corbach, born in 1937, has died in a Cologne clinic. Her unexpected loss is painful, especially for Jews from Cologne and the Rhineland.

Irene had one passion: keeping alive the memory of Germany's Jews. Together with her late husband, Dieter, she created an atmosphere of love and renaissance. According to Dieter, their work began when Irene noticed the inscription on a house in the Lützowstrasse in Cologne: 'This house was formerly the Jewish Elementary School.' Enough has been written about Irene's untiring research in

tracing people, bringing family and friends together. You only had to ask her about a lost relative or friend and she would tell you where and when they perished or where they could be found now, if they had survived.

Her memory for facts was astounding. She was justifiably proud when her work was recognised by the award of a public honour in Berlin. Irene was a truly 'righteous gentile'. Her greatest achievement was, in my view, that she and her husband showed the world how education was thriving in the Cologne Jewish Gymnasium, appropriately called Jawne, both before and during the Nazi period. The school's headmaster, Dr Klibanski, and his family perished after he had found a place for pupils in this country. Due to Irene's endeavours there is a now a Dr Klibanski-Platz in Cologne. Thanks to her enterprise and 'round robin' letters, there now exists a 'Union of Former Jawne Boys and Girls' - grandparents themselves now and as far apart as California, London and Israel. Her exhibition of the Jawne was shown throughout Germany and has been shown in London schools. With a lack of sentimentality, but a warm and loving heart, Irene fought to the end for what she thought was right and righteous.

Feo Kahn

## Arts and Events Diary - May 2005

**Until 21 August 2005 'Closing the Door? Immigrants to Britain 1905-2005'.** Special exhibition marking the centenary of the 1905 Aliens Act. Jewish Museum, Camden Town

**Until 2 Oct 2005 'The Last Goodbye: The Rescue of Children from Nazi Europe'.** Exhibition on the Kindertransport. Jewish Museum, London N3

**Until 2008 'The Children's War'.** Exhibition on children in the Second World War, incorporating the Kindertransport story. Imperial War Museum. Tel 020 7416 5000

**Mon 2 Club 43.** No lecture (Bank Holiday)

**Wed 4 Prof Richard J. Evans, 'Coercion and Consent in Nazi Germany'.** Lecture series jointly organised by Wiener Library, Centre for German-Jewish Studies and Leo Baeck Institute. Venue: Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. Tel 020 7580 3493

**Thur 5 Yom Hashoah Remembrance Evening** at Pinner Synagogue, Cecil Park, Pinner, 8.00 pm (5 mins. walk from Pinner Metropolitan Station)

**Mon 9 Dr Bea Lewkowicz, 'Introduction of the Refugee Voices project and screening of her film Moments and Memories'.** Club 43

**Tues 10 Prof Eric Hobsbaum, 'Enlightenment and Achievement: The Emancipation of Jewish Talent since 1800'.** Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre, UCL, 7.00 pm

**Mon 16 Prof Ernst Sondheimer, 'Oskar Schlemmer: A Versatile Artist from Stuttgart'.** Club 43

**Mon 23** No lecture (hall not available). Club 43

**Mon 30** No lecture (Bank Holiday). Club 43

### ORGANISATION CONTACTS

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

**Jewish Museum, Camden Town** tel 020 7284 1997

**Jewish Museum, London N3** tel 020 7284 1997

## Central Office for Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

### Payments to victims of Nazi medical experiments

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany is making second payments to 2,432 Jewish victims of Nazi medical experiments. These survivors will now receive \$3,200 (approximately £1,800 or €2,450) in addition to the \$5,400 they each received last year.

From the \$5 billion Foundation: Remembrance, Responsibility and Future, established primarily to pay compensation to slave and forced labourers, more than \$12.5 million will have been distributed to victims of medical experiments, who today live in 33 countries. Please note that it is no longer possible to file applications for either slave and forced labour or for compensation for medical experiments.

### Income tax exemption for reparation pensions

Further to recent requests to clarify the status of pensions paid by the Austrian and German governments, Section 330 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 confirms that pensions and allowances paid to victims of Nazism are exempt from income tax.

The central part of the law 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.'

The exemption extends to back payments made prior to the commencement of a pension. Further, although back payments are a lump sum, they are exempt from Capital Gains Tax.

### Further help

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 telephone 020 8385 3074.

London's splendid Jewish Museum, though sited away from the aficionados' and tourists' main exhibition routes, quietly declaims its presence in a sedate street between Camden Town and Regents Park. With the opening of its latest exhibition on a century of immigration provocatively entitled 'Closing the Door?', it has certainly reached out to a much wider community than before.

A departure for the Museum from the strictly Jewish themes adhered to hitherto, the exhibition focuses on immigration into Britain since the passing of the Aliens Act of 1905. This act was undeniably drafted to deter or to keep out Jews escaping poverty, persecution and pogroms in Eastern Europe, though we are advised that it had only a peripheral effect. But that's only the exhibition's starting point. It moves on to remind visitors of the continual arrival of people into Britain from other ethnic groups and cultures who have settled in the intervening century and have all made positive contributions to their country of adoption.

'Closing the Door? Immigrants to Britain 1905-2005' examines the arguments used to oppose Jewish immigration in 1905 and looks at how these same arguments have been continually recycled as new groups of immigrants arrived in changing political and economic circumstances. The exhibition draws on personal stories, photographs, documents, costumes, religious objects, paintings and sculpture, and even cooking utensils and musical instruments. These help the visitor to consider issues that have affected different generations of immigrants - the challenges to find housing, employment and healthcare, the acquisition of a new language while retaining valued cultural traditions, and the hostility often encountered on the part of the existing community.

Designed in a bold colour scheme to catch the eye, the exhibition's commentary does not overtax the visitor with an excess of information. The only



Deserter Mission Hall: this photograph was used by the anti-alien MP William Evans-Gordon to demonstrate how Jewish immigrants had taken over East End institutions

pity is the obvious constraint placed on the Museum by the paucity of display space, due at some stage to be remedied by a major expansion programme - funding permitting.

Opening the exhibition, Sir Trevor McDonald suggested that it could not have been better timed. 'It reminds us of how we got here', he said, pointing out that migration had never been one-way traffic. Emigrants from Britain had settled in many parts of the world, especially English-speaking North America and Australasia and, as a result, it had been logical for him as a young Trinidadian journalist to further his career in the mother country. 'The reprise of old arguments was extraordinary', he said. It was better to 'celebrate the benefits brought by the arrivals'.

*The 'Closing the Door?' exhibition is open until 21 August. 'The Last Goodbye, The Rescue of Children from Nazi Europe' has opened at the Finchley branch of the Jewish Museum and runs until 2 October. Both exhibitions are accompanied by a stimulating series of talks. For further information, telephone 020 7284 1997 or 020 8349 1143.*

### Racist incidents in London on decline

According to figures from the Metropolitan Police, racist incidents in London have fallen by 35 per cent in the last five years. A total of 12,637 racially motivated crimes were recorded in 2004. Black, Asian, Arab, Jewish or East European people were all more likely to suffer attacks than White Europeans.

### Haider 'founding a new party'

The Austrian far-right leader Jorg Haider has said he is founding a new party in an attempt to rid his political organisation of internal critics and revive its electoral fortunes. Mr Haider took the Freedom Party to a peak of 27 per cent in Austria's elections in 1999, but the party gained only 10 per cent in parliamentary elections in 2002.

### Attacks on French Jews and Muslims at ten-year high

Incidents of racist and anti-Jewish violence in France almost doubled in 2004 - the highest level in a decade. A Commission on Human Rights report found that Jews and Muslims were the principal victims of 1,565 recorded threats and violent attacks in 2004, up from 833 a year earlier.

### Investigation of Finnish role in Holocaust

Finland has begun an investigation of its government's actions during the Holocaust. Although the country is not believed to have deported any of its Jewish citizens, eight Jewish refugees were handed over to the Nazis. Several Jews were also among Soviet prisoners of war handed over to the Nazis.

### Violent crime seen as greatest threat to Israelis

A Tel Aviv University survey has found that violent crime tops the list of Israelis' fears. While 23 per cent of those questioned cited violence as the biggest threat to Israeli society, the state of the economy was second at 19 per cent, followed by traffic accidents at 18 per cent. Seventeen per cent said that terrorism or war was their biggest fear.