

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

All Our Yesterdays – the 1960s

Ah, the Sixties! Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, all enveloped in a heady haze of reefer smoke. 'If you can remember the Sixties, you weren't there.' Seriously speaking, though, the Sixties were a decade of fast-moving change, during which entire areas of British society underwent a fundamental transformation. How did the refugees from Nazism react to the 'decade of revolution'? After all, they had mostly arrived in Britain in the late 1930s; the society into which they had integrated and with which they had become familiar was that of the Second World War, late 1940s austerity and the cosy consumerism of the 1950s. The explosion of youth culture, of radical anti-establishment politics and of challenges to authority and convention across the board, exhilarating though it was, would have aroused mixed feelings in them, as it did in the over-30s generally.

Britain in the 1960s famously became known as the 'permissive society'. As Philip Larkin put it, sex began 'between the end of the Chatterley ban [1960] and the Beatles' first LP [1963]'. The decade saw social inhibitions loosened and social taboos lifted, a relaxation in attitudes to sexual behaviour, including the legalisation of abortion and homosexuality, the liberation of individual lifestyles from the sometimes oppressive conformity of the 1950s, and the toleration of activities previously condemned as immoral or anti-social. *AJR Information* is full of valuable information about refugee attitudes, behaviour and lifestyles during the Sixties, which are otherwise well-nigh impossible to reconstruct 40 years later.

The revolution in fashion that was so central a part of the Sixties image brought a riot of colour, energy and innovation to the monochrome cityscapes of post-war Britain. It also heralded an era of liberation, especially sexual liberation, symbolised by the miniskirt; even *AJR Information*, which



The Beatles: 'Abbey Road'

took little interest in fashion, commented on the shortness of skirts, an indicator of new freedoms that did not escape its (male) correspondents' eye. In October 1961, the arts column written by PEM (Paul E. Marcus) referred to the film *Victim*, in which a young barrister is blackmailed over a homosexual liaison; the reason for the report was that the film had a refugee cameraman, Otto Heller, but PEM made a point of calling the film 'the courageous Rank picture [Rank was the distributor of the film] starring Dirk Bogarde'. *Victim* is often seen as the first British film to treat the subject of homosexuality seriously and sympathetically, a sign of the more liberal attitudes that would lead to its legalisation in 1967.

The new frankness about sex in the permissive society enabled Frank Wedekind's sexually explicit play *Spring Awakening* (*Frühlings Erwachen*) to be performed for the first time in London, at the Royal Court Theatre, with the refugee actor Peter Illing, as PEM noted in June 1965. A new note of openness also crept into some of the advertisements in the personal columns of the journal: an expression of feelings as intimate as 'MARTITA

PFLMCHN. Everything has changed, I have changed, everything will be as you want it. Let us discuss things. Please telephone' (March 1968) would have been inconceivable in a personal ad ten years earlier.

One of the most striking features of the decade's rejection of established authority was the satire boom of the early 1960s. Following on from the revue *Beyond the Fringe* (1960), in which Jonathan Miller, Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Alan Bennett made their names, a wave of savage political satire found expression in the magazine *Private Eye* (founded 1961), with Gerald Scarfe's cartoons, the television show *That Was the Week That Was* (1962/63), presented by David Frost, and the Soho club The Establishment, where the political and social establishment was mercilessly lampooned.

Reviewing the refugee performer Agnes Bernelle's 1963 one-woman show at The Establishment, in which she sang songs by Brecht and other writers of the 1920s, *AJR Information*'s Egon Larsen saw London as rapidly catching up, in theatre and satire, with the Berlin of the 'Roaring Twenties'. The comparison between the cultural ferment of that decade in Germany and the 'Swinging Sixties' in Britain, both remarkable for their exuberance, innovation and impatience with established authority, was to become routine: interviewed on the BBC in 1968 before the first night of the musical *Cabaret*, which probably did more than anything else to perpetuate the image of Berlin in the late Weimar years, PEM inevitably found himself asked to compare Berlin's 'golden years' in the pre-Hitler period with the London of the 'Swinging Sixties'.

One of the younger refugees, the distinguished filmmaker Karel Reisz, born in Ostrava in 1926 and one of the Czech-Jewish children rescued by Nicholas Winton,

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ALL OUR YESTERDAYS – THE 1960s *continued from page 1*

made a film that accurately reflected the mood of the mid-1960s, *Morgan: A Suitable Case for Treatment* (1966), memorable for the gangling, anarchic performance of David Warner as the main character. But Reisz had come out of the British New Wave cinema of the late 1950s and early 1960s, having already directed a seminal work of cinematic social realism, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960, with Albert Finney), and produced *This Sporting Life* (1963, with Richard Harris). Reisz went on to make films like *The French Lieutenant's Woman*; it was left to a non-refugee New Wave director, Lindsay Anderson, to make the classic British film about rebellion against authority, *If...* (1968, with Malcolm McDowell).

One area where Sixties culture apparently failed to impinge strongly on the refugees was pop music – perhaps because they were already too old, even those who had arrived as children before the war being past 30 in 1963 and around 40 in 1970. That made a difference at a time when the generation gap was particularly wide, when youth was particularly determined to make its own independent, insubordinate voice heard and when young people were particularly heedless of their elders' authority – 'trau keinem über dreißig' ('don't trust anyone over thirty'), as German student radicals declared.

I have read every issue of *AJR Information* in the 1960s from cover to cover, and have found hardly a single mention of the Beatles or the Rolling Stones. While

refugees adapted to Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly and others in the first wave of American pop singers of the 1950s, it seems to have been left to their children, born during and after the war, to revel in the newly exciting British pop scene, where the Beatles and Stones gave way to the Kinks and the Animals and The Who – remember 'Talking 'bout My Generation'? – and to the heavy rock of Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple and Ten Years After. A 'Stairway to Heaven' indeed for a generation that believed itself to be recasting the world. But the Second Generation in Britain produced no figure comparable to Daniel Cohn-Bendit, 'Danny the Red', son of Jewish refugee parents from Germany and one of the leading figures in the French student movement.

In truth, the refugees, like most of the older generation in British society, looked on at the explosion of youth culture from a distance, with a mixture of incomprehension and somewhat derisive humour. The obsession of 1960s culture with fashion, its ability to create ever-newer and more outrageous trends, seemed to them ephemeral, insubstantial, infatuated with its own trendiness. When Alfons Rosenberg wrote a piece for *AJR Information* in 1968 to mark the eightieth birthday of the Czech-born refugee Bruno Adler, who, under the pseudonym Urban Roedl, had published studies of such literary figures as Matthias Claudius and Adalbert Stifter, he stressed that these were intensely private writers, immune to the fads and fashions of their time: 'They were in a way

timeless, putting everything that was fleeting, easy, "with it", superficial in its place i.e. nowhere.'

The use of the currently fashionable term 'with it' (in the sense of being attuned to the latest modish trends) left no doubt that the target here was 1960s culture. Reviewing an exhibition of paintings by Inge Sachs, a post-war arrival from Berlin, in 1968, Rosenberg again signalled his reservations about the novel formulations of the day, even as he used them himself: 'There is something – to use the fashionable jargon – psychedelic about her work', he said, with an almost audible gritting of his teeth.

May 1968 was famously the month in which student radicalism came to a head, with the student revolts that broke out in Paris and other Western cities. Earlier that year, the refugee writer Egon Jameson gave a lecture to Club 43 with the title 'Auf die Barrikaden, ihr Greise!' ('To the Barricades, Old Men!'), a clear jibe at the slogans of the student revolution. Jameson's lecture, as PEM observed, brought out the element of conflict between the generations: 'His attack on today's overrated youth received an enthusiastic reception from his audience.' What was emphasised here was not the idealism, spontaneity and desire for change of the student activists, but their empty rhetoric and the radical gesturing that passed for a political strategy. The refugees' attitudes to radical left-wing politics will be the subject of my next article.

Anthony Grenville

AJR welcomes new Head of Social Services

The AJR is delighted to welcome Maisie Holland as its new Head of Social Services. Maisie is very pleased to be taking over the job from Marcia Goodman, who retired at the end of last October. 'I am sure Marcia will be a hard act to follow!', she says.

Maisie has been trained as a Social Worker, Counsellor and Supervisor and has been teaching counselling for several years. She has worked in health, employment and in private practice as a counsellor as well as working as As-

sistant Clinical Director of the Raphael Jewish Counselling Service. Maisie is hoping to bring her knowledge, skills and experience to the Social Work team and is looking forward to meeting as many AJR members as possible very soon.



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What is Palestine and who are the Palestinians?

by M. Storz



What is the origin of the terms Palestine and Palestinians?

The name Palestine is probably derived from the Hebrew *Pleshet*, the name given to a small coastal strip of land occupied by the Philistines (*Plishtim*). The ancient Greeks called the land Philistia, but this name fell out of use until revived by the Romans much later.

The Romans called the land Syria Palaestina and later simply Palaestina. This name was given to the province of Judaea, which the Romans wanted to clear of the presence of Jews after the revolt of Bar Kochba. It was first applied to a small part of the land and only later to the entire country. In Roman times, the term Palestine had no connection with either Arabs – or, of course, Muslims – and the land had then been occupied mainly by Jews under Roman rule.

After the Romans, the name Palestine had no official status until it was adopted after the First World War for a region mandated to Great Britain.

Following the rise of Islam, Arab Muslims occupied Syria, including Israel/ Palestine, and Iraq, together with a vast area from Libya to Persia, which became the Arab or Islamic empire. But the Arabs living in Palestine were not then called Palestinians in the way they are so called nowadays.

People may be identified in two principal ways: by reference to the country in which they live or to the race to which they belong. When one talks, for instance, about Americans, one is referring to people living in America and citizens of the USA, but this does not indicate the race to which they belong. This is why one also talks about Italian-Americans, Jewish-Americans, etc.

So does the term Palestinians refer to the land in which these people live or to the race to which they belong? It has been suggested that the Palestinians are the ancient Philistines, but this seems unlikely as the present-day Palestinians are almost certainly the descendants of the Arab Muslims who invaded the Holy Land in the seventh century. As for the Philistines mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, it is doubtful whether any have survived, at least not as a recognised group.

The term Palestinians appears to have come into common use only since the 1950s-60s. According to a report

published in the *Jewish Chronicle*, an American public relations firm was consulted by Arabs living in Palestine as to how best they should describe themselves – they were advised to call themselves Palestinians.

Before the War, the inhabitants of Palestine were always referred to as Arabs and Jews. There were occasional references to Palestinian Arabs – inhabitants of Palestine belonging to the Arab race – and to Palestinian Jews, as one might have referred to German Jews or Russian Jews. In fact, the term Palestinians could just as well be applied to Jews, who were, after all, the inhabitants of the land when it was called Palestine by the Romans. Instead, the term is now applied exclusively to the Arabs living in Gaza and the West Bank.

The Palestinians can call themselves whatever they like. True, but the constant use of this term seems intended to imply that the Palestinians belong to Palestine, that Palestine belongs to them, and that they are the indigenous people of the land – whereas the Jews are alien intruders from Europe.

In fact, it is unlikely that there are any indigenous people in Israel/ Palestine as the land has been occupied or conquered by so many races. The original indigenous people were probably the Canaanites, who no longer appear to exist. Also, a good percentage of Israeli Jews are Sephardim, many of whom were driven out of the Arab countries in which they had lived – in some cases, such as Iraq, longer than their Arab neighbours.

The problems of the Middle East today probably cannot be solved by claims of history or religion and there will have to be a solution catering for the political aspirations and humanitarian needs of the people involved. However, the Jews are fully entitled to emphasise their historical connection to a land in which they have been present for centuries, admittedly at times in small numbers, and to

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My grandparents' *Stolpersteine* in Austria

Among the first *Stolpersteine* (stumbling stones) in Austria were those laid at a ceremony in Mödling, near Vienna, on 14 August 2006 in honour of the memory of my maternal grandparents, Adolf and Rosa Kohn, and my uncle, Norbert Kohn, who were deported and murdered by the Nazis.

Stolpersteine were the idea of German artist Gunter Demnig and many had already been laid in Germany. My grandfather, who was secretary of the synagogue in Mödling, lived with his family at Enzersdorferstrasse 44 and these three *Stolpersteine* were laid in the pavement outside his home so that their names would not be forgotten by all who pass by.

I was born in Vienna before the war. My father was a *Pferdehändler* (horse dealer) in Wolkersdorf, a village north of Vienna, where we lived in a comfortable house with adjoining stables. He supplied the local farmers with horses but, after the Anschluss, he was imprisoned and we had to give up our home and the business. My mother and I went to stay with her parents in Mödling but worse was to come on Kristallnacht. Like many other synagogues, my grandfather's synagogue was burned down that night. I clearly remember the Nazis in their jackboots kicking down the door of my grandparents' house and arresting two of my uncles, Siegfried Kohn and Ernst Kohn, who were sent to Dachau. After six months, and with help from their family, they obtained papers allowing them to go to Shanghai.

The Jews were now forced by the Nazis to live in cramped conditions in Vienna and we had to move several



The only surviving photograph, taken in 1937, of Charlotte Lang with her grandparents

times. I well remember my father coming from his imprisonment with his head shaven and looking terrible. The conditions were so severe there that many of the men died.

I would probably have suffered the same fate as my grandparents and my uncle but for the foresight of my father, who placed an ad in *The Times* on 27 October 1938 which said: 'Reliable young couple, wife capable housekeeper, husband expert in handling and breeding horses, farmer, can drive car, seek posts. Siegfried Diamant, Heinestrasse 5/22, Vienna 2.'

Luckily, a farmer in the west of England answered the ad and sponsored my parents and me. So it was that in May 1939, as a very small child, I had to leave Vienna for England and say goodbye to my grandparents and my uncle, never to see them again. We had to leave all our possessions behind. Life was not easy in England, but at least we were alive.

Meanwhile, can you imagine what life was like for my grandparents and my Uncle Norbert, who had to live in Vienna from 1939, unable to leave but not knowing what fate awaited them!

I have priceless testimony in the form of letters and postcards which they sent from Vienna to my Uncle Siegfried and Uncle Ernst in Shanghai, although not all their letters got through. They speak of their despair and lack of power over their destiny. For example, in a letter dated 13 April 1941 my grandmother wrote to Siegfried and Ernst:

My very dear children

We are very sorry to hear again and again that you are without mail from us. You will sympathise with us and realise how worried we are, but we must leave everything in God's hands. Father went today to the *Kultusgemeinde* [Jewish community office] in connection with the coming Holy Days (Pesach). There is little hope we will be able to observe them. We have to abide by God's will.

Greetings and thousands of kisses
Your loving Mother

These letters and postcards began in October 1939 and ceased in August 1941, when the end was near. As inscribed on the *Stolpersteine*, my Uncle Norbert was deported in 1941 to Opole in Poland and was subsequently murdered. My grandparents were deported in 1942 to Theresienstadt and from there were sent to Treblinka, where they too were murdered.

Despite all that happened to my family and myself in the Holocaust, I kept my Jewish faith and in 1962 I married David Lang. We had two sons, Michael and Paul, who were both *barmitzvah* and married at Golders Green synagogue. Now we have three grandsons and the eldest, Jamie, was *barmitzvah* in April 2006. Hitler did not succeed in his evil intention of destroying the Jewish people.

Charlotte Lang (née Diamant)

It began with an email. Esther Rinkoff, the AJR's Southern Region Coordinator, told me that someone called Erika Klausner had noticed my name in the *AJR Journal* and thought I must have some connection with the family which had fostered her when she had arrived on the Kindertransport. My immediate reaction was that this couldn't be the case. Nobody had ever mentioned anything like this, and anyway my mother's family, who were German refugees, were far too busy looking after themselves to take anyone else in. So I promptly replied to Esther:

A Happy Reunion

by Clare Ungerson

'Sorry, nothing to do with me.'

Then I went to a concert. As I sat listening to wonderful Mozart arias, something crept into the back of my mind: we must be talking about my father's family! They had come to this country in 1911 from Russia and had never left the Communist Party - which somehow meant that they had never acquired British citizenship. They spoke

Yiddish at home and had never learnt to read or write. The more I thought about it, the more possible it became that, identifying with the outcast and the vulnerable, they were the people who had taken in little Erika.

The next day things became clearer. A letter came from Erika outlining the circumstances of the family that had fostered her. She wrote of my grandparents' surname and the first names of their three sons - my father and my uncles. I was thrilled. I immediately rang my two cousins on

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Second World War internee records for the Isle of Man

by Alan Franklin

As is well known, the Isle of Man (IOM) was used as a centre for holding enemy aliens during both world wars. The Manx National Heritage Library, located in the Manx Museum in Douglas, receives a steady stream of enquiries on this topic. An exhibition on internment held in 1994 with an accompanying booklet entitled *Living with the Wire*¹ and the libraries' selected bibliography *Internment during World Wars 1 & 2*² increased the number of enquiries received and led to the decision in October 2000 to establish a project to reconstruct as complete a list as possible of men, women and children interned or detained on the IOM in 1940-45.

Assembling the lists has been a painstaking process achieved thanks to a volunteer, Cary Ellis, able to devote a few hours a week to reading through files and inputting personal details into alphabetical lists. The major primary resource has been the wartime administrative records compiled by the IOM Constabulary.³ The scope of the project was soon expanded to incorporate names extracted from a number of other sources already in the Library collections. The combination of official and personal records served to add to, or clarify, details, such as where two individuals of the same name could not be clearly distinguished.

Initially viewed as finite, the project has been further extended due to the growth of information available particularly in memoirs, personal papers and published research.⁴ There has been a dramatic growth in the publication of wartime experiences, which has led to a considerable expansion of the libraries' stock. People released from the Manx camps are often mentioned, such as by Helen Fry in *Jews in North Devon during the Second World War*.⁵ The rise of the internet has helped source accounts and allowed the acquisition of a number of out-of-print accounts.⁶ The National Archives at Kew hold many records and its online catalogue has provided a variety of sources. The December 2006 issue of *Ancestors*⁷ revealed the existence of six nominal rolls at Kew of Manx camps in 1943-45.⁸ These

provided many additional names, although they include a number of PoWs rather than just internees.

Official Records for the IOM camps are in two main series – those produced by the British Government and local records produced primarily by the Isle of Man Constabulary. Experience has shown that a large proportion of the UK records has been lost or destroyed or is subject to access restrictions. In contrast, much information relating to internees' time spent on the IOM has survived in the police Alien registration records. More details of the type of

An exhibition on internment held in 1994 increased the number of enquiries received and led to the decision in October 2000 to establish a project to reconstruct as complete a list as possible of men, women and children interned or detained on the IOM in 1940-45.

records which have survived are given below, but the most significant are the personal details provided by the Alien Registration cards.

The lists produced so far are substantial, consisting of 8,058 men and 7,019 women; numbers have increased from 4,667 and 6,393 respectively since January 2004. The records for women and children are much more detailed due to the survival of many alien registration cards as illustrated below. These exist for 3,267 women (some with details of their children added). No trace of the equivalent for men has been found – these are believed to have been destroyed. Details for men are therefore often solely a name on a list with minimal information. Coverage of male internees contains a very high proportion of Italians,⁹ who were usually detained longer and therefore stand more chance of appearing in the records. This contrasts sharply with the

mainly German and Austrian male refugees, who often stayed on the island for a few months and do not appear on any lists. I would speculate that the index for men probably now includes about half of the estimated numbers of internees. There are male internees from at least 17 nationalities: Austrian, Belgian, British, Chilean, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Luxemburgers, Norwegian, Polish and Russian.

The gaps are one area which needs to be addressed by continuing to search for records that have survived off-island and by appeals such as that made via the *AJR Journal*¹⁰ for information from internees and their families to help complete the lists.

The following section illustrates the types of records available for female internees and children in the police records. Extraction from these has now been completed.

On analysis, it would appear that only about half of the entries for women in the list have record cards (3,267). However, most of the cards have a pencilled serial number on them – the highest number noted is 4,043 for a Finn transferred to the IOM on 8 June 1945 who left on 26 July 1945. This implies that some 776 are lost and that the actual percentage held may be around 80. It is also possible that children were given individual numbers but no record cards were completed: they are usually noted on the reverse of the mother's card, sometimes just as 'and child/ren' without names – unless a ledger turns up we may never know the exact total. A search using the word 'parent' revealed over 200 entries, but most of these are merely *Applied for USA Visa Parent xxx*. Refining this to include children with a date of birth between 1925 and 1944 has so far produced 71 names. Numbers were obviously substantial as J. W. Barwick (see below) lists two kindergarten, two elementary schools and a boys' and a girls' school and records 50 births to 1941.

Barwick wrote in 1941 reporting approximately 3,000 women and

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

THE YOUNGEST KINDERTRANSPORT REFUGEE?

Sir - I was interested to read Erika Klausner's letter in the December issue. I arrived via Kindertransport at Cotton Wharf, London, on the *SS Warszawa* on 16 February 1939 at the age of 20 months. I had the very good fortune of being accompanied not only by my three older siblings but also by my parents. They had been given permission to travel with us at the very last moment, because of my young age, from the refugee camp in Zbonszyn, where we had been since leaving Freiburg in October 1938.

Renee Moss (née Irène Alpern)
Netanya, Israel

Sir - Erika Klausner was *not* the youngest Kindertransport refugee. My cousin, Zilla (Koppold) Weininger, was just under 7 months old when she and her two brothers - Siegman (Koppold) Silber and Harold (Tzvi Sh'daimah) Koppold - came to England in the last week of August 1939. Siegman was 2 years and 10 months, his brother Harold 6 years and six months.

Edith (Grunbaum) Maniker

KINDERTRANSPORT REFUGEES' UNHAPPY MEMORIES

Sir - I always enjoy reading the *AJR Journal*, but Rubin Katz's article in your December issue was of special interest to me as I was one of Rabbi Schonfeld's Kindertransportees, coming over on one of his Kindertransports in December 1938.

Mr Katz writes that many of the Anglo-Jewish community did not consider Jewish refugee boys suitable escorts for their daughters. This brings back many unhappy memories as the girls were also not considered suitable for their sons. When I first met my late mother-in-law, she was so much against me that she told me no son of hers would marry a refugee - but we *did* marry and were married for 49 very happy years. My late mother-in-law and I eventually became friends. I forgave her but I shall never forget the hurt.

Trude Goldberg
Leeds

MEMORIES OF A 'FRIENDLY ALIEN'

Sir - I well remember appearing at an internment tribunal in Cambridge before a magistrate and two assessors who questioned me to decide my status as an

alien', writes Ernest G. Kolman (December, Letters). This gave me a feeling of *déjà vu* for I too was sitting in the self-same place in 1941, an extremely frightened 16-year-old schoolgirl, terrified in case she was giving the wrong answer or making a bad impression.

I had come along with my parents. We were sitting in the corridor outside the courtroom waiting for my name to be called out. After a while, we saw a young girl emerge from there, sobbing uncontrollably and being led away by her parents. It was heart-rending to watch and it made my apprehension even more real. What grave crime might this young girl have been accused of to deserve this, I recall wondering. Fortunately for me, I seemed to find favour in their eyes and was classified as a 'friendly alien'.

(Mrs) Margarete Stern
London NW3

WHAT IS A JEW?

Sir - Harold Saunders, in your January issue, equates Liberal Judaism (which accepts the paternal line as valid for being Jewish as long as the child is brought up 'Jewish'), with 'Jews for Jesus'. This is an appalling analogy and not worthy of any fair-minded person. If Mr Chapman did not mean this comparison he should apologise. 'Jews for Jesus' is a cult. Liberal Judaism is a highly respected part of Progressive Judaism. The comparison is insulting and odious.

Peter Phillips
Loudwater, Herts

TRIBUTE TO RONALD CHANNING

Sir - May I add a footnote to your farewell tribute to Ronald Channing (January)? His outreach activities, which you rightly emphasise, included strengthening the links between the AJR and researchers at British universities who have become increasingly interested in documenting the experiences of refugees from the 1930s.

Here at Sussex, we have been fortunate in having Ronald on the Steering Committee for our project on British Archival Materials Relating to German-Speaking Refugees (1930-1950), while he was instrumental in helping us - with support from the AJR - to build up our programme of Holocaust education, including well-attended public events to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

The momentum created by Ronald's work for the AJR is likely to continue long after his retirement.

Edward Timms, Research Professor
Centre for German-Jewish Studies
University of Sussex

'PEACE FOR OUR TIME'

Sir - I refer to the article "'Peace for our time' rides again' in your January issue. One of the important reasons I have for not wanting to miss any of Dr Grenville's articles is the very informative and high standard of journalistic presentation of the truth that was hidden by the establishment during the last war and, alas, I am still missing even more truth.

This concerns Russia before Britain knew that the Soviet Union was misled by a dictator possibly not known even to the heads of state at that time. Was the Fascist dictator Hitler less dangerous than the Russian one? After all, one may assume that the intelligence departments in the Western world were able to expose anything contrary. They would surely have known all about the concentration camps and the tragedies that were to follow. This would have been more available if the Western states would have acted immediately to Russia's request to open a second front. The war would have ended a few years sooner than 1945. This would have saved six million Jews and millions of other innocent lives. However, England and other Western supporters had different long-term objectives.

A. Jonas
Macclesfield, Cheshire

Sir - There is a certain lack of clarity in Anthony Grenville's article. As I understand it, Dr Grenville is trying to equate the current Eurosceptic line with appeasement, in that Eurosceptics don't want to be involved in Europe and neither did the appeasers in 1938. But the two things are completely different. Appeasement allowed the surrender to a bully on the basis that postponement was better than dealing with the matter head-on. It was not necessarily anti-Europe, simply putting Britain's own interests first. The world paid the price for this appeasement.

The Eurosceptic line is, I suggest, not necessarily anti-Europe *per se*. What it is opposed to is diktat by a few unelected officials in Brussels who presume to tell sovereign states what to do and how to run their lives. While some Eurosceptics may favour a total withdrawal from Europe (and there may be sound free-trade economic arguments for so doing), others would simply opt for a United Europe of States, rather than a United States of Europe.

The light of freedom which has been the hard-won cornerstone and basis of life in the United Kingdom for centuries, and is respected the world over, is now in danger of being extinguished once again

by another subtler form of dictatorship - that of a centralist, unelected, uneconomic and corrupt bureaucracy.

*Philip Goldsmith
Uzes, France*

Sir - I think Anthony Grenville and his source book by Tom Seger (December 2007) give too favourable a picture of British attitudes to the Palestinian Yishuv, but I am not a historian!

Martin Gilbert's *Churchill and the Jews* describes Churchill's denunciation of the MacDonald White Paper as a betrayal of the Mandate, which he considered an obligation towards world Jewry, entered upon during the First World War, and much earlier, the massacre of the ancient Jewish community in Hebron was not prevented by the Mandate authorities. However, my main grievance against the Chamberlain government was their attitude at Munich, when they dismissed Czechoslovakia as a strange country of no interest to Britain. The attitude to the Holocaust, in which so many of my family died, was *not* just heartlessness - appeasement was an incredibly foolish and brutal policy. Friends were sacrificed to keep the wolf from the door and - unsuccessfully - to avoid another world war.

*Kurt Metzger
Watford*

Sir - Your article in connection with the Marxist family of Miliband stated that David was part-Jewish. I am flabbergasted. I have lived eight decades but I have never heard of anyone being part-Jewish. In my beloved country, people could be Jewish or outsiders, but you were either of the Chosen People or not of the Chosen People. Could you kindly enlighten me on what is a part-Jew? What part of David is Jewish?

*Joseph von Dombovary VBE
London N2*

AFTER ANNAPOLIS

Sir - Just as I thought we were enjoying a bit of a respite from Israel-defaming letters, up pops Peter Prager's one-sided piece (January). Before he jumps to the wrong conclusion, I would point out that I'm not a kippa-wearing Jew.

He refers to a street in Hebron that he claims is reserved for Jews only. Would it be so terrible if Jews had the one street? But it's not true. The street in question is not closed to Arabs, but is subject to tight security, as it leads to the small enclave where Jews once lived, before they were all massacred in 1929, and to the Cave of the Patriarchs, from where Jews were barred when it was controlled by Arabs. At best, they were allowed to go as far as the 7th step - any further and you would have your throat cut. Under Israeli jurisdiction, Arabs have free access to Abraham's tomb, but Jewish worshippers

are only allowed in one day a month, when it is closed to Arabs. Israel is entitled to maintain certain pockets for security reasons under the Wye Agreement.

Two years ago, when I travelled to Hebron, I had to do so in an armoured bus. The street Mr Prager refers to as Shuhuda St (*sic*), Israelis know as King David St. No doubt local Arabs call it that, as it stands for 'martyrs to the cause' or 'suicide bomber' street. In Arabic idiom, it is one and the same.

The deeply religious Jews who choose to stay there do so because after Jerusalem this is their most revered site, if not more so. There were Jews in Hebron long before King David made Jerusalem his capital. And for Mr Prager to claim that they all belong to the Kach Party, which is outlawed, is simply an aspersion. If they do belong to anything, it would be to Yesha, the umbrella organisation for the communities of Judea and Samaria - but to some that is equally a sin.

I wonder which organisation sponsored his daughter's 'study tour' of Hebron. How could she have come by that shocking street name unless it was from a suspect source? I know she didn't get it from any official map or street sign. She also told her father that there was netting there to stop 'settlers' from throwing stones and rubbish at Arab shoppers - as if Palestinians never throw stones! The Israeli authorities put up netting where there's a danger to the public. You will also find it at the very top of the Western Wall, to stop stones from raining down onto the worshippers below - unless Ms Prager would have us believe that this is in place to stop garbage from reaching to the top!

I fear little will come of Annapolis, because resurgent Islam has amply demonstrated that it is unwilling to share a land with another people or religion, least of all Jews. They are unable even to live in peace with each other, unless it is under an absolute dictatorship. Come on, Mr Prager, open your eyes!

*Rubin Katz
London NW11*

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'MUSINGS FROM THE DEPARTURE LOUNGE'



Bettine Le Beau and Tom Conti at a charity event at the Contis' home

Sir - Victor Ross's article (January) made me smile and I found myself nodding approval of his comments, especially his insight that 'we refugees [in my case, Holocaust hidden child] are defined by age as no others - you can't be a young refugee from the Nazis. I suppose the youngsters among us are in their seventies'.

By the will of G-d, I find myself single again and, whenever I meet a fanciable contender, I can't even chop off a dozen years as automatically mental arithmetic would come into play. C'est la vie!

*Bettine Le Beau
London N3*



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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Milein Cosman and her sketchbook are rarely apart. Even now, when the diminutive artist's eyesight is failing, it is an opportunity to discover the 'abstraction' – or essence of the person. Her pen-and-ink drawings of the many writers, artists and musicians she has met, who include Iris Murdoch, Francis Bacon and Igor



Franz Kafka by Milein Cosman

Stravinsky, demonstrate this economy of line in order to capture the intellectual intensity of her sitters.

Cosman's exhibition at the **Austrian Cultural Forum**, presented by the **Jewish Museum, Lifelong Impressions: Paintings, Prints and Drawings**, runs until 26 March. The artist's life story, from her birth in Germany in 1921 to her fortuitous arrival in Britain to study art at the Slade, in London and Oxford during the war, were described in our January issue.

This energetic artist discusses her art and philosophy in a 123-minute interview she gave the researcher Bea Lewkovicz as part of the AJR-sponsored Refugee Voices

Archive. Many of her sitters were contacts of her musician/writer/broadcaster husband Hans Keller and her drawings of the musicians can be seen in the Wigmore Hall in London and the Palais des Beaux Arts in Paris.

Only two works at the exhibition relate in any way to the Holocaust, which she and most of her family were spared. *Flight*, a lithograph she did in 1941, won the Slade Lithography Prize and was inspired by a cousin's personal story. A pencil drawing of Belsize Park Tube station, *Shelter in the Blitz*, from this period does not quite convey the mass of sleeping bodies seeking shelter in London's wartime underground.

'I do not carry nature into politics, and it is not right,' she says, while admitting that the recurring dark, brooding clouds over the Rhine – for example in an oil painting depicting her father – may contain a hidden meaning. In the AJR interview, she reflects: 'It is a miracle for my generation to be allowed to go to art school when horrendous things were happening in Europe.' Today, you could describe her drawings as rapid leaps of faith – instantly grasping the energy of conductor Otto Klemperer, the profundity of Martin Buber, for instance.

A near-death experience propelled cyclist **Tim Smyth** into an artistic vision. **The Nature of Machines** launched the opening of a new West End photographic gallery, **Rathbone**, in Windmill Street, where Smyth's broken fragments of vehicles in which people lived and died bear no resemblance to their scrap metal source. The indentation and pock marks arising from these often tragic accidents form what he describes as a photo documentary. He accepts that the epiphany which led him to photography can be morbid. Tim uses old technology to achieve this organic art, rejecting the digital camera for the old bellows and tilted lens.

There is a simple aesthetic in **Scott Schwager's** exhibition at the **Arts Club, Dream Imagery and the Art of Disguise**. His Symbolist drawings of entwining hands and birds suggest a rite of passage, and his abstract paintings, such as *Circle of Life*, reprise this theme in brilliant colours.

REVIEWS

Poems that speak of the refugee experience

KINDERTRANSPORT, BEFORE AND AFTER: ELEGY AND CELEBRATION. SIXTY POEMS 1980-2007

by **Lotte Kramer**
edited with an introduction by **Sybil Oldfield**

Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, 2007, xii + 76 pp. paperback, ISBN 978-0-9554114-2-7, £10 + £2.50 p&p

Drawing on her many former volumes, Lotte Kramer has put together the poems that speak of the refugee experience. This book, which has been brought out by the University of Sussex's Centre for German-Jewish Studies to mark this year's 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht and the first Kindertransport trains to Britain, will evoke many echoes among readers of this journal.

The poems – gentle, sensitive, accessible – are preceded by an introduction by Sybil Oldfield, from which we learn that Kramer came to this country at the age of 15 accompanied by a teacher and four fellow pupils. They were first given hospitality by a 'bohemian' upper-class Irish woman, to whom Kramer dedicates one of her poems: she 'cooked huge meals on her kitchen range/ In a slapdash manner each day' and her 'Schubert songs and her Dickens' regaled their evenings.

Sadly, Lotte Kramer's formal education had come to an end with her departure from Germany and she seems to have worked hard throughout the war. Her second home here was as a mother's help. Nevertheless, the *Oxford 1940s* Kramer describes is an oasis of peace and tranquillity: 'The colleges were locked facades to me ... But still regarded with romantic awe.' She finds treasured second-hand books – 'An early Schnitzler with the spine in shreds' – and discovers the delights of the British restaurant. Yes, once the bombs had stopped falling, England was an almost dreamy place: 'War was somewhere else.'

Kramer did not start writing until quite late in life, but she is now being translated into German and Japanese. However, the Holocaust was not a subject matter until she came across the

powerful poems of the late Karen Gershon. The latter breached a wall of silence.

The poet writes of the love affair (alas, unreciprocated) that many German Jews had with the country of their birth; of hand-made objects – utterly useless but cherished as keepsakes; of German friends who remained faithful; of small things and great.

Perhaps her strongest poems recall her childhood: the mother waving at some prisoner-convicts from a train – ‘poor men’; their maid ‘broad on her stool, (coffee)machine placed firmly between thighs’; the grandfather ‘smelling of sausages and fresh air’. Above all, she remembers her father, who in his younger days had written plays: ‘old manuscripts/ Yellowed and mourned ...’ The father too who in the poem *Non Emigrant* missed his quota for the US, who chose to ‘stare the madness out’.

The volume includes his last Red Cross letter. If nothing of his early work survives, that letter ought to be carved in stone: ‘Unser Wohnsitz ändert sich. Alles Gute, bleibe gesund geliebtes Kind. Gottes Segen wird mit Dir sein ... Dich in Liebe gedenken Dir immer – Deine Eltern 30.3.42.’

Gerda Mayer

Endless food for thought

THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS

by John Boyne

Black Swan (Random House), 2006, 224 pp., £6.99 paperback

A novel with a Holocaust theme by a non-Jewish author seen through the eyes of a nine-year-old German boy? Surely there must be some mistake! But this is, in fact, the essence of John Boyne’s powerful and haunting work. And when Bruno, the boy in question, forced to leave his happy home in Berlin for some godforsaken dump in Poland he believes is called ‘Out-With’, turns out to be the son of the commandant, the plot and circumstances of the novel could not be more remarkable.

Though the publishers are ostensibly a division of Random House Children’s Books, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* can by no means be considered a novel for children – for teenagers, maybe. While Bruno is not the narrator, the reader is guided by what the boy sees.

Nevertheless, a mature perspective is needed to monitor his journey.

This starts with the promotion of Bruno’s father, following a dinner in Berlin attended by no less than ‘The Fury’. And it is not only Bruno who is none too happy. ‘That a son of mine should be ...’, Bruno recalls his grandmother fuming, before his father retorts ‘A patriot.’ The grandmother storms out of the house after a robust rejoinder, ending with the words ‘And to see you in that uniform makes me want to tear the eyes from my head.’

That Boyne, through the freshness and innocence of his child protagonist’s perspective, succeeds in conveying the subtle and complex distinctions that exist, even within a Nazi environment, is no mean accomplishment. For, more than any of the other characters, it is Bruno who sees people as they are.

His father, for example, does not need to compensate for his mother’s ‘treacherous’ opinions by indulging in excessive sadism. The same cannot be said of Lieutenant Kotler, a particularly unpleasant young officer whose professor father, it appears, left Germany for Switzerland in 1938. From the outset of their acquaintance, Bruno hates and fears Kotler, while his elder sister is all too keen to flirt with him and his parents treat him with great civility. It is Bruno’s judgement that is verified in instances throughout the book.

As a child, too, Bruno lacks the snobbery and prejudice of his elders, enjoying a friendly relationship with the maid, Maria, and Pavel, the Polish ‘waiter’, who, he learns, was formerly a doctor. Where, unsurprisingly, he is naïve is in his total ignorance of the rationale and purpose of ‘Out-With’, even after his father explains that the mass of people Bruno views ‘beyond the fence’ from his window are ‘not people at all’.

Instead, the lonely child envies the people in striped pyjamas the possibility of enjoying life in a community and sees no significance in the pillars of smoke emerging from the same direction. The focal point of the book is the intense friendship he forges with Shmuel, a Polish-Jewish boy of exactly his age whom he encounters on a visit to the fence.

The book’s devastating conclusion leaves the reader stunned, while providing endless food for thought.

Emma Klein

A story of missed opportunities

THE HOLY SEE AND HITLER’S GERMANY

by Gerhard Besier and Francesca Piombo

Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 272 pp., \$35.00 hardcover

This is a story of missed opportunities and timid representations against an iniquitous regime. The details of the strands of policy are of Byzantine complexity, but the main drift of the information we are given in this book strikes many chords in the minds of victims of the Holocaust.

Gerhard Besier, Director of the Hannah Arendt Institute for Research in Totalitarianism at the Technical University of Dresden, and Francesca Piombo, a researcher based at the same institution, take us through the turbulent times of the 1920s and early 1930s. Initially, there is resistance by some Church leaders to the Nazis’ racial policies, but these voices are stilled as opposition is ruthlessly suppressed. A plea by New York’s chief rabbi to the Pope to intervene against Hitler’s ill-treatment of Jews has little effect. The Vatican does, however, show particular concern over the inclusion in the Nuremberg Laws of converted Jews such as Edith Stein.

Eugenio Pacelli, as Papal Nuncio in Munich (later to become Pope Pius XII), is aware of the bullying and hostility of the Nazi Party, but he and Pope Pius XI are swayed by reports of its popularity with German Catholics. Cesare Orsenigo, also a Papal Nuncio, says it is his impression that there are ‘scarcely any German non-Jews’ who disapprove of the Nuremberg Laws. He notes that the Jews are being held responsible for the doctrine of Communism and adds prophetically: ‘If, as looks likely, the Nazi government [lasts], then the Jews are bound to disappear from the nation.’

Orsenigo seems to view this possibility without alarm and feels the time is not ripe for a confrontation with the Nazi regime. Since the Church’s main fear is of the spread of Communism, it treads an uneasy path of accommodation with the dictators. It even gives way on allowing members of the Nazi Party to attend mass in uniform. Hitler blows hot and cold

Reviews continued on page 10

REVIEWS continued from page 9

towards the Church but, once he declares his desire for friendly relations with the Vatican, a Concordat which is supposed to protect the rights of Catholics in worship and education is agreed. The Concordat is frequently breached.

Finally, the Holy See expresses more openly its disapproval of Nazi racial policies and threats towards neighbouring nations in the encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* – but this has itself been watered down and is completely ignored. Informed about the atrocities of Kristallnacht, it remains silent. In March 1939 Pacelli, who has by then succeeded Pope Pius XI, seeks to bring about a peace conference, but his efforts are overtaken by events.

This book makes us well aware of the tightrope the popes were walking, but demonstrates that ultimately politics always overcame morality. It stops short of describing the role of the Pope in the Second World War and the Vatican's shameful collusion with fleeing Nazis. One cannot help wondering whether a more forthright denunciation of Hitler's policy by the Vatican might not have done something to stop the Holocaust.

Martha Blend

Limits to human imagination

ESCAPE FROM HELL: THE TRUE STORY OF THE AUSCHWITZ PROTOCOL
by Alfred Wetzler

Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2007, 288 pp., edited by Peter Varnai, foreword by Sir Martin Gilbert, introduction by Robert Rozet, translated by Ewald Osers

Alfred Wetzler, who died in 1988, was one of five surviving escapees from Auschwitz. His companion, Rudi Vrba (b. Walter Rosenberg), died in 2006. In 1944 the two men hid under planks covered with tobacco and soaked in benzene to confuse tracker dogs, secured by Soviet prisoners. After three days the hunt was called off. Having left Auschwitz, they walked through Nazi-controlled territory for 18 days, a harrowing journey during which Poles and Slovaks risked their lives to help them. Their report, including information provided by two other escapees, Mordowicz and Rosin, became known as 'The Protocol

of Auschwitz' and led to the rescue of 120,000 Budapest Jews who were to be deported.

Wetzler and Vrba were worried they would not be believed. The Prague correspondent of a Swiss newspaper questioned the validity of their escape: 'So how did you manage if it's so difficult?' The two men found the journalist's disbelief unbearable but, as the title of one chapter says, there are limits to human imagination.

It was finally agreed that Wetzler and Vrba should write their report, which was to be sent to Moscow. The original typed version is reproduced in the Appendix. 'The Protocol of Auschwitz' reached a worldwide audience in 1985 as a central part of Claude Lanzmann's documentary *Shoah*. Originally released by the Washington War Refugee Board in 1944, the document is brutally factual, though containing a number of anecdotes. One such touched on the fate of four Dutch Jews invited to visit Auschwitz in 1943. Following a show of well-fed Dutch prisoners, the men signed a statement that everything was in good order. But on their arrival at Birkenau, which they had insisted on seeing, they were murdered. A telegram was allegedly sent to Holland claiming they had been the victims of 'an unfortunate automobile accident'.

This book first appeared in 1964 under Wetzler's Slovak resistance name of Jozef Lanik. The author was determined to tell the world what he had witnessed.

Laraine Feldman

POINT OF VIEW continued from page 3

indicate that the Arabs originate from Arabia and that all the countries they now occupy, except for Arabia, were acquired by invasion and conquest.

Some Palestinians, such as Hamas, deny the historical connection of the Jews to the land of Israel, or Palestine, and seek to turn this land into an Islamic province of Greater Syria. The Jews are entitled to point out that their connection to this land, as described in the Hebrew Bible, is much older than that of the Arabs – and that this is the only land they claim as their homeland, whereas the Arabs have more than 20 other lands, all of which, with the exception of Arabia, were acquired by conquest.

Normal Adolescence

by Lili Hart

Up in the clouds, joyous and gay
Down in the dumps the very next day
New interests, new hobbies without any limits
Dropped just as fast within a few minutes
Young minds in revolt, hating authority
Can't wait to be free, to reach their majority
Intolerant, opinionated, knowing it all
Criticising their Elders with never a pall
Noisy and proud, restless and rude
With their continually changing mood
Yet decent and generous, fair and kind
Though often and easily changing their mind
Capricious, emotional, quick, effervescent
The problems and trials of each adolescent!

SIBELIUS: 50 YEARS ON

Speaking to Club 43 on the 50th anniversary of Sibelius's death, at the age of 91, Gerald Holm focused on the Finnish composer's late symphonies, and the symphonic poems, playing extracts from the mighty Fifth Symphony with its mesmerising, climactic final movement. Mr Holm, a specialist on matters Scandinavian, maintained that the highly idiosyncratic character of many of Sibelius's compositions – in particular their bleak, austere tone – owed its existence in large part to the influence on the composer of the primal, yet dark nature of the Finnish landscape, as well as a sense of long-suffering oppression.

Albeit not with the agreement of all

present, Mr Holm insisted that Sibelius did not belong to the first rank of symphonic composers. At the same time, in the handling of the orchestra and as 'pure music', the symphonic poem *Tapiola* was 'a masterpiece of the first order'.

With regard to Club 43 matters generally, Chairman Hans Seelig was pleased to point to the considerable coverage the organisation's activities had recently received in the German and German-Jewish press. Further, he mentioned that the Austrian Ambassador to the UK had agreed to speak to the group, possibly in May, under the provisional title 'How the Austrians Discovered Democracy'.

HS

A HAPPY REUNION *cont from page 4*

my father's side. They both had a vague idea that there had been a young girl from Continental Europe – a bit older than us – who was briefly strongly connected with our grandparents.

Immediately I rang Erika, things slotted into place. In early April 1939 Erika had come, aged three and probably the youngest child on the Kindertransport, to England to stay with my grandparents, John and Devora Ungerson. Erika told me she was a strong-willed little girl and had made it clear that she missed her parents very much. So my grandparents, who lived in a modest bungalow in Eltham, agreed to sponsor her parents. In this way, the Klausners were able to leave Vienna and arrive in England in August 1939. This small, recovered family lived with my grandparents for about a year and then moved out and formed their own household elsewhere in London. The Klausners had kept in touch with the Ungersons until the mid-1950s, when the Klausners briefly emigrated to Canada. Erika and I talked a long time on the phone that evening – she remembered my grandparents well as well as meeting my own parents (and presumably me) when my parents visited my grandparents during the war and into the 1950s. And, of course, she remembered my two cousins, whose parents had lived closer to my grandparents and so had visited them more often.

Thus it came about that on a misty

Refugees from Danzig/Gdansk – London visit by City President

In March 2008, the President of the City of Gdansk (formerly Danzig) will be coming to London to meet ex-Danzigers who left the city before the war, either on the Kindertransport or earlier (as I did in 1938).

This meeting is being organised by Mietek Abramowicz, a Jewish Gdansk historian and writer, together with Frank Meisler (ex-Danzig), who will be hosting the President. It is therefore imperative that we find as many ex-Danzigers as possible. I have located two: Renee Martin (née Berendt) from Sheffield and Ina Fryer (née Braude) from London, both members of the AJR. I introduced them to each other and, to their surprise, their parents had

been great friends!

As an aside: Mietek Abramowicz was part of the hosting party which celebrated Danzig writer Günter Grass's 80th birthday. He took Grass (who had served as a boy in the SS forces) to the new Gdansk synagogue, where Grass attended a service.

I ask all ex-Danzigers, whether members of the AJR or not, to contact the AJR or me direct.

Alex Lawrence
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October day in London, four ladies of a certain age met in a posh hotel in Richmond and swapped photographs and memories. It was a remarkable feeling to look at and listen to someone who had known our grandparents so well and whose little family had been rescued by them. We told her what had happened to John and Devora and the three Ungerson sons and caught up with our own 'stories so far'. And, as is the way when four middle-aged ladies meet, we talked of grandchildren (not hers or mine) and husbands and ailments. We have all

taken different paths in our lives, and it was a deep pleasure to find this long-forgotten, common foundation to our beginnings.

Professor Ungerson is currently undertaking research into the Kitchener Camp. Funded by the Central British Fund for German Jewry, this was a refugee camp for Jewish men in Sandwich from February 1939 to May 1940. In its later stages, it became a Pioneer Corps camp. If you have memories of this camp and/or documents relating to it, please telephone Professor Ungerson on 01304 617801.

ISLE OF MAN *continued from page 5*

children in the Rushen Camp,¹¹ whilst Charmian Brinson notes that by mid-1940 some 3,600 women were placed in category B and that estimates of internee numbers vary with 4,000 usually cited, although Cuthbert stated in 1947 that there were 5,000 with a maximum capacity of 5,200 for Rushen camp.¹² This would confirm that the numbers above do contain a number of duplicate entries, which may be slightly reduced as more detail comes to light. Of course, with internees coming and going, the figure of 5,000 may have been an estimate at the time, perhaps reflecting the peak of numbers. Some statistics for Rushen Camp are in the records (a hand-written table) and these give a total for those in camp and already released or transferred of 4,150 in October 1941. The women are from

a smaller pool of nationalities – predominately German and Austrian with a large proportion of refugees.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Living with the Wire: Civilian Internment in the Isle of Man during the two World Wars* (Douglas: Manx National Heritage, 1994), ISBN 0-901106-35-6.
- ² *Internment during World Wars 1 & 2*. Available on MNH website at <http://www.gov.im/mnh/heritage/library/bibliographies/internment.xml>
- ³ MNHL – MS 09310, received November 1986.
- ⁴ A good example is the series of yearbooks published by the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies. Volume 7 contains a series of articles about the IOM.
- ⁵ Helen Fry, *Jews in North Devon during the Second World War* (Tiverton: Halsgrove, 2005), ISBN 1-84114-437-1.
- ⁶ Internet sites include Abe Books at <http://www.abebooks.co.uk/>; Bookfinder at

<http://www.bookfinder.com/>; and Amazon at <http://www.amazon.co.uk/>

- ⁷ Roger Kershaw, 'Lock them up!' in *Ancestors, National Archives Magazine*, December 2006, pp. 36-41.
- ⁸ The National Archives, HO 215/469, 471, 473, 475, 478, 502.
- ⁹ Due to the survival of a 1940 camp nominal roll for the Palace Internment Camp MNHL MS 10147 acquired in June 1999 and the large number of Italians in the later camp nominal rolls for 1943-45 mentioned above.
- ¹⁰ Letter from Rudi Leavor, *AJR Journal*, October 2007.
- ¹¹ J. W. Barwick, Report on Alien Internment Camps in the UK (April 1941), Library Ref. B115/77.
- ¹² Charmian Brinson, 'In the Exile of Internment', extract from *Politics and Culture in Twentieth-Century Germany* (2003), Library Ref B115/76.

The second, and concluding, part of this article will appear in next month's issue of the Journal.

INSIDE the AJR

Manchester Chanukah Social

Our popular Chanukah Social was attended by more members than ever. Entertainment was provided by Carol Jason, a most accomplished musician, accompanied by Peter Lingwood, a musician with theatre and broadcasting experience. Susanne Green gave us a progress report on the Manchester Memorial Book, which, hopefully, will go into print early in 2008. *Werner Lachs*

Hendon: 'Refugees in the British Army'

Speaking to us about her book *The King's Most Loyal Enemy Aliens*, Helen Fry said she had found that one in seven of the 75,000 German and Austrian refugees who came to Britain in 1933-39 enlisted in Britain's forces in the Second World War. By the end of the war, she said, the refugees had distinguished themselves out of all proportion to their numbers.

Annette Saville

Next meeting: 25 Feb. Kurt Wick, 'The Jews of Shanghai'

Wessex Chanukah Party

Myrna had brought sheets of Chanukah songs, which the 25 members present sang with enthusiasm. We were then entertained by Naomi Hyamson, accompanied by Jennie Gould, to a most enjoyable recital of operatic arias and piano solos.

George Ettinger

Next meeting: 19 Feb. Details tba

Yorkshire Chanukah Party

Over 40 of us enjoyed a Chanukah Party at Mornington Hall in Shipley. Members travelled from Hull, Sheffield, Leeds, Elland, Grassington, Shipley, Baildon and Bradford. Musical entertainment was provided by Geoff Menzer and Les Sans Nom. Ruth Rogoff explored the origins of Chanukah and Rudi Leavor sang *Ma'oz Tzur*. Some members were enjoying Chanukah for the first time in many years. *Albert Waxman*

Pinner Chanukah Party

There were about 70 of us for our Chanukah Party and 10th birthday. We were splendidly entertained by the Glasson Duo, who played pieces ranging from Dvorak to Strauss to Scott Joplin to Kurt Weill. Then we got down to the lighting of candles, singing and the serious business of eating latkes and doughnuts. We were delighted to welcome AJR Life President Ludwig Spiro.

Paul Samet

Next meeting: 7 Feb. Alf Keiles, 'An Afternoon at the Movies'

Essex talk by former mayor of Southend

Dr Alan Crystal, former mayor of Southend, spoke about his duties as a liberal councillor on the planning and licencing committees. Members mentioned that in the last few years Southend has had quite a few Jewish mayors. Dr Crystal said this was because Jewish people were more caring and liked to help their communities.

Larry Lisner

Next meeting: 12 Feb. 6th Birthday Party

Oxford Chanukah Party

Do you know the difference between a menorah and a chanukia? Do you know your blood group? A 'mixed subject' quiz entertained us at our Chanukah celebration - with doughnuts of course.

Anne Selinger

Next meeting: 5 Feb. Details sent out

Radlett update on AJR activities

Several more members joined our second monthly meeting, at which Michael Newman updated us on the various services the AJR provides.

Eric Newman

Next meeting: 20 Feb. Rabbi Simon Francis, 'The Jews of Greece'

Weald of Kent Chanukah Party

A most enjoyable Chanukah Party and quiz with an abundance of 'eats' for all. Myrna told us how the customs of the festival had developed. It was a joy to meet friends again - particularly those who had recovered from illness.

Edith Brown

Wildly divided opinions in Wembley

We met again in the homely surroundings of Harris Court with a lively discussion on whether the term Holocaust should include other genocides - opinions were wildly divided. As usual, Myrna provided a delicious tea and we all went home happy.

Tom Heinemann

Next meeting: 13 Feb

Ilford Chanukah Party

Our Chanukah Party was well attended, with the usual Chanukah fare served by four of our stalwart members. Myrna gave us a general knowledge quiz. An enjoyable morning for all.

Meta RoseNeil

Next meeting: 6 Feb - tba

Kingston CF international gathering

The meeting, in Edith's flat, was attended by a dozen members who hailed from all over Europe, including Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Denmark and Poland. Future outings were discussed, and it was decided that Kew Gardens were to be visited on 30 April during the bluebell season.

Alfred Kessler

Next meeting: 2 April



Yorkshire Chanukah Party: Bronia Veitch, Rachel Hunter and Annie Perez - all born in Belgium - enjoy the opportunity to speak French and Flemish again

Cleve Road guest speaker:

George Layton

George Layton told us his parents were born in Vienna but managed to get here from Prague before the war with his elder brother Peter. George has frequently appeared on stage and television and is also an author, having written many comedy series. He read us his short story, *The Back Bedroom*. Future meetings are to be held on the last Tuesday of each month.

David Lang

Next meeting: 26 Feb. Alan Cohen, 'What is Art?'

Belated Chanukah Party in Edgware

It was a belated Chanukah Party with all the trimmings of the festivity except the *Ma'oz Tzur*. Naomi Hyamson with her beautiful voice, accompanied by Harold Lester on the keyboard, treated us to a variety of musical tastes. As usual, a most pleasant afternoon.

Felix Winkler

Next meeting: 15 Feb. Jerry Lewis, 'The Board of Deputies'

Liverpool progress report on NHD

A well attended meeting was given an update on events at the National Holocaust Memorial Day in Liverpool on 27 January. Most of our members are actively involved in the many events taking place during January. Musical entertainment was provided by Tamar.

Guido Alis

Brighton and Hove Sarid Chanukah Party

A jolly time was had by all. Latkes, doughnuts and a game of Dreidel, plus a well organised quiz by Myrna, proudly won by Alfred Huberman. Wishing Fausta a speedy recovery!

Esther Rinkoff

Next meeting: 18 Feb. Social Get-together

Cambridge educated and entertained

We were both educated and entertained by Michael Berkson on the subject of the Board of Deputies. It was an organisation that was there for the benefit of all Jews,

regardless of their affiliation, he told us.

Hazel Beiny

Next meeting: 14 Feb. Howard Falksohn, 'The Wiener Library'

North London belated Chanukah Party

Our last meeting of the year was a belated Chanukah Party with excellent refreshments. We enjoyed a general knowledge quiz in the capable hands of Myrna Glass.

Stuart Willner

Next meeting: 28 Feb. Jerry Lewis, 'The Board of Deputies'

West Midlands (Birmingham):

Holocaust education

Karen Pollock of the Holocaust Educational Trust explained lucidly the continuing need for Holocaust education and the sensitivity it was necessary to bring to the undertaking. We also had the pleasure of welcoming Head Office's Esther Rinkoff.

Philip Lesser

Next meeting: 5 Feb. Radio presenter Adrian Goldberg

ALSO MEETING IN FEBRUARY

HGS 11 Feb. Alan Cohen, 'What is Art?'

Herts 21 Feb. Social Get-together

Temple Fortune (Inaugural Meeting)

21 Feb. Details sent out

AJR GROUP CONTACTS

Bradford Continental Friends
Lilly and Albert Waxman 01274 581189

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

Bristol/Bath
Kitty Balint-Kurti 0117 973 1150

Cambridge
Anne Bender 01223 276 999

Cardiff
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

Cleve Road, AJR Centre
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

Dundee
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

East Midlands (Nottingham)
Bob Norton 01159 212 494

Edgware
Ruth Urban 020 8931 2542

Edinburgh
Françoise Robertson 0131 337 3406

Essex (Westcliff)
Larry Lisner 01702 300812

Glasgow
Claire Singerman 0141 649 4620

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Inge Little 01423 886254

Hendon
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3070

Hertfordshire
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3070

HGS
Gerda Torrence 020 8883 9425

Hull
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

Ilford
Meta Rosenell 020 8505 0063

Leeds HSFA
Trude Silman 0113 2251628

Second Generation gathering in the North

Our next meeting will take place on **Sunday 24 February 2008**.

We are looking into alternating between Manchester and Leeds.

For information, please contact Barbara Dresner Dorrity on 0161 368 5088 or barbara@ajr.org.uk

HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

Sunday 20 July 2008 –

Sunday 27 July 2008

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Members requiring benefit advice please telephone

Linda Kasir on 020 8385 3070 to make an appointment at AJR, Jubilee House, Merion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

Liverpool

Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

Manchester

Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091

Newcastle

Walter Knoblauch 0191 2855339

Norfolk (Norwich)

Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

North London

Jenny Zundel 020 8882 4033

Oxford

Susie Bates 01235 526 702

Pinner (HA Postal District)

Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833

Radlett

Esther Rinkoff 020 8385 3077

Sheffield

Steve Mendelsson 0114 2630666

South London

Lore Robinson 020 8670 7926

South West Midlands (Worcester area)

Myrna Glass 020 8385 3070

Surrey

Edmée Barta 01372 727 412

Temple Fortune

Esther Rinkoff 020 8385 3077

Weald of Kent

Max and Jane Dickson
01892 541026

Wembley

Laura Levy 020 8904 5527

Wessex (Bournemouth)

Mark Goldfinger 01202 552 434

West Midlands (Birmingham)

Ernest Aris 0121 353 1437

Paul Balint AJR Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6

Tel: 020 7328 0208

AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

Wednesday 20 February 2008

Professor Leslie Brent

'Poland and Immunology'

Please be aware that members should not automatically assume that they are on the Luncheon Club list. It is now necessary, on receipt of your copy of the *AJR Journal*, to phone the Centre on 020 7328 0208 to book your place.

KT-AJR

Kindertransport special interest group

Monday 4 February 2008

Abbi Benari

'New Dimensions in the Middle East'

KINDLY NOTE THAT LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT 1.00 PM ON MONDAYS

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Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
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PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CENTRE IS CLOSED ON TUESDAYS

February Afternoon Entertainment

Mon	4	KT LUNCH – Kards & Games Klub
Tue	5	CLOSED
Wed	6	Simon Gilbert
Thur	7	Geoffrey Strum
Mon	11	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	12	CLOSED
Wed	13	Anita Elias
Thur	14	Jen Gould
Mon	18	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	19	CLOSED
Wed	20	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	21	Mike Mirandi
Mon	25	Kards & Games Klub
Tues	26	CLOSED
Wed	27	Madeleine Whitson
Thur	28	Margaret Opdahl

Hazel Beiny, Southern Groups Co-ordinator
020 8385 3070

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

Susanne Green, Northern Groups Co-ordinator
0151 291 5734

Susan Harrod, Groups' Administrator
020 8385 3070

Esther Rinkoff, Southern Region Co-ordinator
020 8385 3077

KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

Child Survivors Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld 020 8954 5298

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birth

Mazeltov from all at the AJR to our Chairman, Andrew Kaufman, and Susie on becoming grandparents to Ella Grace.

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London Visit

**Dinner with
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4-6 March 2008**

The AJR are organising a 3-day visit
to London for members from the
South and West of England.

The visit will include museum and
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For further details, please contact
Susan Harrod on 0208 385 3070.

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Central Office for Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

We have received the following statement from the Claims Conference in connection with the proposed litigation in the United States against the Italian insurance company Assicurazioni Generali.

AJR members are advised that anyone who has already received a settlement in respect of a policy issued by Generali cannot receive a second award in the event that the proposed litigation is successful. The AJR would also like to point out that we are not involved in the litigation.

Statement by the Claims Conference on Holocaust-era insurance

The Holocaust Insurance Accountability Act (H.R. 1746) proposed legislation currently pending in Congress would reopen processes that were established to deal with Holocaust-era insurance policies through the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims ('ICHEIC').

The mission of ICHEIC was to identify and compensate previously unpaid, pre-war Jewish insurance policies, at no cost to claimants. However, the ICHEIC process covered only part of the European insurance market. Many European insurance companies were not part of the ICHEIC process. Ultimately, five large European insurance companies participated in ICHEIC, in addition to the German insurance companies which participated as part of the agreement with the German Foundation. The German

Foundation provided a DM 10 billion fund, primarily for former slave and forced labourers.

In the end, ICHEIC distributed approximately a half-billion dollars in payments to Holocaust-era insurance policy-holders and heirs of policy-holders and in funding for critically needed homecare for thousands of elderly and ailing Holocaust survivors. In addition, through the efforts of ICHEIC, the names of over 500,000 (most likely to be Jewish) Holocaust-era policy-holders were published.

We are concerned that the proposed legislation, though intended to assist survivors at a time when they need it most, will have negative consequences for survivors worldwide and will ultimately cause serious harm to the common goal of all who are involved in this issue, especially to the critical efforts to assist the neediest survivors.

First, although the ICHEIC claims and appeals processes have concluded, the insurance companies which participated have made commitments to continue to accept and process remaining Jewish Holocaust-era claims – applying the ICHEIC standards in their decisions – at no cost to the claimants and without regard to any statute of limitations.

Second, we believe that the proposed legislation may well raise the expectations of survivors only, in the end, to disappoint them. The costs, time and effort required to engage in litigation, as the legislation provides, will be excessive, if not prohibitive. In addition, the mandatory publication by the insurance companies of all policy-holders will, at this point, yield little new

information regarding Jewish policy-holders. Even assuming that European data protection hurdles could be overcome, most of the policies which would be disclosed would not be Jewish-purchased policies; many of the policies would have been paid; and many of those not paid would have been previously compensated. Thus, we are concerned that the huge expectations that the legislation will generate on the part of survivors will simply not be met – leading to upset, disappointment and frustration.

Finally, the proposed insurance legislation will, by effectively reopening previous agreements, significantly damage vital, on-going Holocaust-related negotiations with Germany and other governments for the continuation and expansion of hundreds of millions of dollars in crucial funding for the neediest survivors in the United States and worldwide. At the same time, it will undermine the support the U.S. government provides to survivors as other governments lose faith in the ability of the U.S. to keep its promises.

As a result, and most significantly, we urge the U.S. Congress to concentrate its efforts on one of the highest priorities for Holocaust restitution – the failure of many governments in Eastern Europe to adequately address the issue of Jewish Holocaust-era property.

**Roman Kent, Treasurer,
Claims Conference**

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 mnewman@ajr.org.uk

ARTS AND EVENTS DIARY – FEBRUARY

To 26 March 'Lifelong Impressions: Paintings, Prints and Drawings by Milein Cosman', Austrian Cultural Forum, 28 Rutland Gate, London SW7. Tel Dina Wosner on 020 8371 7371

To 10 February 'Champion of the Child – Janusz Korczak' Manchester Jewish Museum, tel 0161 834 9879

To 9 February 'Faces in the Void' A joint photography and poetry exhibition. Two Czech Torah scrolls that survived the Holocaust led photographer Marion Davies and poet Jane Liddell-King to the Czech Republic. The exhibition combines image and text to reflect on the universal themes of loss, survival and regeneration. Venue: Michaelhouse, Trinity Street, Cambridge, Monday to Saturday, 9.30-5.00, tel 01223 309 147

Mon 4 Barbara Bland, 'Outposts of the French Revolution: Germany and Others' Club 43

Mon 11 Jim Burtles KJ, FBCI, 'The People, Plants and Animals of Namibia (formerly German South West Africa)' Club 43

Mon 18 Prof Michael Alpert, 'Jews in the Spanish Civil War' Club 43

Thur 21 Prof Tilman Allert, 'The Führer Gruss' Joint Centre for German-Jewish

Studies/Leo Baeck Institute/Frankfurt Jewish Museum Lecture Series 2007-08. Venue: Wiener Library, tel 020 7580 3493

Mon 25 Dr Edward Batley, 'Confrontations with Mortality: Friedrich Schiller's Affinity with Freemasonry' Club 43

Thur 28 Professor Dina Porat, head of Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of

Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism, 'Are the Middle Eastern Conflicts the Source of Recent anti-Semitism?' Venue: Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. In conjunction with Kingston University. Tel Neil on 020 7636 7247

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



LETTER FROM ISRAEL



Bible reading ceremony brings elevated status

When I contemplate my time at the Jewish primary school I attended in north-west London some 50 years ago, there are few incidents of note that remain in my memory. Dull lessons, stultifying routine and hackneyed custom are all that swim into my ken. I do not recollect a single outing to any of the myriad sites of interest or cultural enrichment in which London abounds. I hope things have improved today.

I very much fear that in Israel this is also largely the case. In my own small way, I have attempted to remedy the situation as far as my own children and grandchildren are concerned, but this is, of course, on a very minor level.

Last week, however, I was made aware of a welcome interruption to my smaller granddaughter's mundane school routine when I was invited to attend the ceremony marking her and her class-mates' graduation to the elevated status of being able to read the Bible. They are now in the second form and are considered sufficiently proficient in reading and writing. The school does not belong to the religious education stream so that, while the pupils are taught about their cultural, historical and spiritual heritage, they are not subjected to sermonising and no belief system is inculcated.

The event was held in a local synagogue. It began in the synagogue itself, with the children sitting in the centre and the parents and guests sitting at the back and along the sides. The rabbi, a bearded young man in modern clothing who spoke in a relaxed, everyday manner, quizzed the children on their knowledge of some basic religious concepts. These involved such terms as kiddush, the Temple, the centrality of Jerusalem, the Torah, and the patriarchs (but not the matriarchs). He was somewhat taken aback when a little

boy answered 'Abraham' when asked who had destroyed the first Temple. At the end of this part of the evening, the rabbi took the children to the Ark of the Law and showed them the scrolls inside, even opening one up for their inspection. I was later informed that one little boy, who had insisted on coming despite not being well, vomited on the carpet and had to be taken home. Fortunately, the rabbi had left by then.

Then everyone proceeded to the hall downstairs, where the parents sat on chairs in a circle and the children performed dances and sang songs that were connected with the subject. Most of the songs were modern Israeli ones containing only a very vague association with anything biblical – and the dances even less so. But it was an opportunity for the teacher and her wards to show their prowess in both those fields.

The children were very sweet and well-behaved. The teacher and her helpers were proud of their performance, and of course the parents and relatives also enjoyed the event, in the preparation of which considerable effort had evidently been invested.

The festivity ended with each child being called by name to receive the treasured book, after which they all read out its first sentence in unison. It was a very touching moment and reminded those present that nowhere else in the world today is it possible to find six- and seven-year-olds reading and understanding a text that is over 2,000 years old.

Since no event in Israel is complete without food, the evening ended with pupils, teachers, parents and guests all falling eagerly on the tables laden with sandwiches, cakes and other goodies that had been prepared by eager volunteers.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Newsround

'Righteous diplomats'

The Foreign Office is to erect a commemorative plaque in honour of British diplomats who



Frank Foley

saved Jews and other victims of Nazi persecution before and during the Second World War. The plaque will list between six and eight diplomats known to have helped Jews flee Germany before 1939 or countries threatened by German invasion during the war. The most prominent of the diplomats is Frank Foley, who is thought to have saved at least 10,000 Jews, issuing visas, helping people forge passports and even hiding Jews in his own home.

Record number of visitors at Auschwitz museum

A spokesman for the museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau has said that more than 1.2 million people visited the death camp in 2007, the largest number since the museum was founded in 1947. Most visitors were from Poland, mainly because schools often require a visit to the camp for its students.

Ariel Muzicant confirmed as head of Austrian Jewish community

The board of Vienna's Jewish community has confirmed Ariel Muzicant, who has been its president since 1998, for a further five-year term. Vienna's Jewish community is the largest in Austria, which numbers some 15,000 Jews, half of whom are registered members. Muzicant also heads the Austrian Jewish community.

Anne Frank tree rescued

A steel frame has been designed to support a diseased chestnut tree that is next to the Anne Frank Museum in Amsterdam and which featured in the young girl's diary. The cost of the frame is reported to be 50,000 euros (approx £36,000).

Percentage of world Jewry living in Israel on the rise

According to a report by the Jerusalem-based Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, the world Jewish population in 2007 is estimated at 13.2 million, a rise of some 200,000 over 2006. Israel is now the home of 41 per cent of world Jewry.