

# AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

## 'Peace for our time' rides again

Michael Connarty, MP, Chairman of the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee, distinguished himself recently by saying that Foreign Secretary David Miliband's attitude to the new European Treaty reminded him of Neville Chamberlain's declaration that the Munich Agreement of September 1938 had brought 'peace for our time'. Prime Minister Chamberlain's ill-fated words have become synonymous with his policy of appeasement, which was intended to preserve peace for Britain by buying Hitler off with concessions, in particular territorial ones, at the expense of other, smaller nations.

Accusing a politician of part-Jewish origin of modelling his strategy on the appeasement of the Nazis showed a crass degree of insensitivity. Connarty's remarks also demonstrated a sadly defective grasp of history. For the lesson of the appeasement period, which reached its height in 1938 and ended definitively only when Britain refused to surrender in May/June 1940 as France fell, is not the simplistic Eurosceptic lesson that Connarty seems to draw from it – that negotiating with Europeans is always likely to end by making concessions and thus betraying the national interest.

In reality, the policy of appeasement itself was largely rooted in a distinctly Eurosceptic policy towards events in Europe, a sad tale of drift and neglect of our European alliances that led Britain to the catastrophic situation confronting her in 1940. Faced with the threat from Germany before 1914, British politicians had reacted with statesmanship, winding up their colonial quarrels with France and Russia so as to build an alliance with those countries solid enough to withstand German aggression. But after 1933, faced with a renewed threat from the same quarter, the National Government, under Ramsay MacDonald and then Stanley Baldwin, opted



Churchill with Lord Halifax in Downing Street, 1940 (akg-images/ullstein bild)

for inaction and a hands-off attitude to events in Europe.

When Chamberlain became prime minister in 1937, Britain faced superior German military power in Europe, as well as having to commit considerable forces to the defence of her imperial possessions overseas. Chamberlain decided that the only strategy possible in this situation was to make concessions to Hitler, in the hope of buying time for rearmament – the strategy of appeasement. It was, of course, a fundamental error to treat Hitler as if he were an old-fashioned nationalist who could be bought off with limited territorial gains. But underlying that failure of judgment was another serious error: the failure to promote alliances with European countries that might have formed a common front against Hitler while Germany was still weak.

Instead of standing foursquare with France, the British government repeatedly failed to back its principal potential ally against Hitler when the latter began his campaign of expansion. When he sent forces into the demilitarised Rhineland in 1936, the British made it clear to the French that

they would not support military action against Germany, even though the German forces in the Rhineland were too weak to offer effective resistance. When Hitler marched into Austria in March 1938, the British government reacted with supine passivity. And when Hitler began to put pressure on Czechoslovakia later that year, Chamberlain flew to Germany for negotiations, which ended with the betrayal of the Czechs at Munich and the surrender of the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia to Germany.

Why, after all, should Britain become embroiled in European matters? Why, asked Chamberlain, should we risk war for 'a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing'? Chamberlain here prefigured the Eurosceptic rhetoric that decries any alignment of British policy with those of European nations whose languages one cannot understand, whose capitals one cannot spell, and whose history and culture one knows nothing about.

Chamberlain's refusal to engage positively with other European democracies, like France and Czechoslovakia, ended in world war. His successor, Churchill, took a very different line. Churchill was a convinced Francophile; in June 1940 his government made the remarkable proposal of an indissoluble union between the British and French states, in the hope of keeping France in the war. Any prime minister who did anything remotely similar today would be branded a traitor by the Eurosceptic press.

The historic debates in the War Cabinet in late May 1940, resulting in the decision to fight on against Hitler, have been analysed in John Lukacs's gripping study *Five Days in May* and in Ian Kershaw's *Fateful Choices: Ten Decisions That Changed the World, 1940-1941*. Using

*continued page 5, col. 3*

On 8 November 2007, Siegbert Prawer, Taylor Professor Emeritus of German at Oxford, delivered what he called his valedictory lecture: 'Sigmund Freud's Shakespearean Autobiography'. His farewell lecture was an enthralling experience, though tinged with sadness for the many colleagues and students who gathered to hear it.

Professor Prawer was born in Cologne in 1925, the son of Jewish parents who emigrated to Britain in 1939. He is the brother of the distinguished author and screenwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, who wrote the screenplays for the delightful *Shakespeare Wallah*, for the film of her own Booker Prize-winning novel *Heat and Dust*, and for the much admired E. M. Forster adaptations *A Room with a View* and *Howard's End*, in which last Siegbert Prawer plays a cameo role.

Professor Prawer began his career as a lecturer in the high-powered department of German at Birmingham, where Roy Pascal had assembled a team that included Richard Hinton Thomas, who went on to found the department of German at Warwick, and W. B. Lockwood, the internationally known expert on Germanic languages. Evidently, Prawer flourished amidst this group of Marxist-inclined left-wingers, for in 1952 he published his *German Lyric Poetry*, a collection of beautifully crafted analyses of poems ranging from Klopstock to Rilke.

His output of publications has been prodigious and wide-ranging: he has written a number of books on poets,

## A fond farewell

notably Heine, and formidably erudite studies like *Karl Marx and World Literature*, not forgetting *The Penguin Book of Lieder* and a lecture on the Yiddish poet A. N. Stencl. In recent years, he has written, as he puts it, 'three books on Thackeray and four and a half on film'. His penultimate lecture, given in 2006 at London University, was on 'Freud between Goethe and Darwin', encompassing no less than three giants of the world of ideas.

Readers of this journal will know Siegbert Prawer from his contributions to our letters' page, which have in recent years ranged effortlessly from Shakespeare to Wilfred Owen. But he was also familiar to an earlier generation of readers: over 40 years ago, *AJR Information* carried an admiring report on a lecture he had given on the Jewish contribution to German lyric poetry, on 17 January 1963 at the Leo Baeck Institute, London.

In his farewell lecture, Professor Prawer reminded us that Freud was given a copy of the Schlegel-Tieck translation of Shakespeare at the age of eight, in 1864, on the 300th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth. He then delivered an analysis of the role played by Shakespeare in Freud's writings that was erudite, stimulating and stylish. Of the many fascinating instances he cited where Freud employed

Shakespeare to express his own concerns, the most striking was perhaps Freud's use of figures like Hamlet to reveal his own ambivalent attitudes towards his father, and, in his scientific works, of children in general towards their parents.

The panorama included Hamlet, both in his loyalty to Old Hamlet, his father, and in his revulsion towards Claudius, the usurper-father who claims his mother, a revulsion intensified by the consequent foregrounding of his mother's sexuality; Lear and the tragedy of his relationship with the modest, loyal Cordelia; Brutus and Caesar; and, among Freud's real-life patients, the troubled feelings of the Rat Man towards his father. Shakespeare's adage that the wish is father to the thought was, said Prawer, Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* in a nutshell.

The lecture was a tour de force based on a profound knowledge of the works of both its subjects and on a range of insights that illuminated the way that Freud's thinking reflected, and was shaped by, his reading of Shakespeare. The Jewish dimension was also present, in the form of the uneasy relationship between the emancipated, secularised Jews of the Western, German-speaking cities, like Freud, and the Eastern European, Orthodox *shtetl* world of their forefathers: among all the references to *The Merchant of Venice* in Freud's writings, Professor Prawer found no mention of that classic ghetto figure, Shylock.

Anthony Grenville

RONALD CHANNING joined the AJR in 1994 as editorial assistant to its distinguished magazine editor Richard Grunberger. He came with experience of industry, voluntary organisations, journalism, photography and knowledge of the Jewish community, as well as requisite literary, editing, layout and design skills.

Appointed a Director of the AJR in 1999, in addition to the executive editorship of the *AJR Journal*, Ronald undertook a much wider brief which included nationwide development of outreach groups, participation in Holocaust Memorial Day, fostering AJR-backed refugee history projects, including the outstanding Continental Britons' exhibition, and supporting activities of the Kindertransport. Ronald takes enormous pride in his service to the refugee community.



## Saying goodbye

Three AJR members of staff have retired

Ernie Goldmann, the AJR's part-time Accountant, was born in Upper Silesia. Because his father was registered with the Jewish Blind Society in Germany, the family was able to liaise with the equivalent organisation in the UK and he, his parents and his older brother arrived in this country in 1939 under the auspices of the Jewish Blind Society. After the war Ernie signed articles with a London firm of chartered accountants. Having worked at the AJR for eight years, a stint he has greatly enjoyed, Ernie is looking forward to a far more leisurely lifestyle.

Doreen (Dee) Frankel started at the AJR in 1991 helping Sylvia Matus one day a week at Fairfax Road. Later, she was offered a position at the Day Centre on Sundays organising afternoon tea and dinner. Not



wishing to work any longer on Sundays due to family commitments, she began working two days a week at reception. Dee says she has spent many happy years working for an 'amazing' organisation and that the AJR 'is truly a dedicated charity that gives its members all the support and care they need. I will miss all our lovely members with their smiling faces and, of course, all my friends at the Day Centre and Head Office.'



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## Musings from the departure lounge

Old age a refugee affliction? Not quite. I have just googled 'old age' and there are approximately 23 million links. So there must be a lot of it about. But we refugees 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, and the oldest rate a paragraph – or an obituary – in the *Journal*.

Yet there is something special about our advancing years: we are not just dying, we are dying out. Refugees don't reproduce their own kind; they become extinct. Their offspring are a different species. Watch the old lady looking out of the window of her Hampstead flat and calling to her grandson: 'Plantagenet, stop playing mit dirt!' Or if you prefer to go upmarket: Sigmund Freud's grandson Lucian transmogrified into Britain's greatest living painter.

No one of note has celebrated our terminal condition in poetry, the proper medium for swan songs. Perhaps it is too soon to celebrate a shared history, with so much to make us alike at the level of the common unconscious. On the surface, we are as different from one another as any random selection of the population. We have our stars and our also-rans, yet I cannot help thinking that we are a bit special if only for the fact that in addition to luck there is a gruesome element of natural selection in escape and survival.

Our 'senior moments' too are everyman's and yet different. Infantile regression takes us back not just in time but in place; slips of the tongue hark back to a vocabulary forgotten or repressed. Ancient melodies surface strangely twisted: does the song really go 'Queen, Queen, nur Du allein'? English acquaintances don't see it this way. They think us canny survivors, consider every one of our stories unique, worth writing down. The shrewder among them note that, unlike our English brethren, we lack a proletariat, that among us are – or were – more philosophers than plumbers.

So many of us have done better in this country than they would have done where they came from, and that goes for me too. Had I stayed in Vienna, I would at best have been a minor coffee house wit with a law degree. Yet you should have seen me 20 or 30 years ago,

in my English pomp. 'Heraufgefallen' is the word that springs to mind.

And, while on the subject of my person, I am not growing old graciously. I do not value 'the gifts reserved for old age', in T. S. Eliot's bitter phrase. Mellowing? Not a hope – not with the odour of antisemitism always in my nostrils, even (or perhaps especially) in better-class company.

What occupies my mind and my days is thinking, puzzling about my Jewishness. A few weeks ago I re-read a passage in my mother's diary. 'We ourselves did not belong anywhere', she wrote, in German of course. 'No priest blessed us, no beggar bowed to us, we were alone in a world of strangers. We were Jews, our happiness lay in the family. That was our fortress from which we observed the world, understood it better than they understood us.' That was written by a very young girl in Berlin, pre-Second World War, who had never seen the inside of a synagogue. I still feel beleaguered, a hundred years on.

For light relief, I ponder the refugee balance sheet – not to calculate what we have contributed to English life but whether this country would have been much the same today if we had come here or not. There can be two entirely different answers – for instance, Paul Hamlyn certainly changed the face of British publishing, but would someone else have done so, if he had not been there first? Entire books have been written about the contribution individual immigrants have made in their respective fields, but have they changed the face of the country? What would a Britain without us look like today? Much the same or significantly different? Would the broad stream of history have taken a different course, or were we just corks bobbing on the surface? It comes down to how you think history is made. Do events produce the man, or do men arise to shape events? I am with Tolstoy on this one.

Victor Ross

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## Where are those 'museum pieces' exactly?

by Ray Fromm

Anthony Grenville's article 'Museum Pieces?' (November 2007) claims the authors of a book about my grandfather, *Fromms – wie der jüdische Kondomfabrikant Julius F. unter die deutschen Räuber fiel* (How the Jewish Condom Manufacturer Julius F. Fell among German Thieves) have fallen into the trap of depicting German-Jewish refugees as 'museum pieces'.

In making this accusation, Dr Grenville lists spurious arguments. For example, he castigates the authors, Professor Götz Aly, a noted German historian specialising in the Nazi period, and Michael Sontheimer, a well-known *Spiegel-Magazin* journalist, of concentrating on the internment of my father, Edgar Fromm, and his cousin, Ruth Fromm, without 'the balancing context of 60 years of post-war settlement'. What this 'post-war settlement' actually means is unclear, but in case Dr Grenville has missed the point of the book – and it regrettably seems that he has – it is about how my grandfather built a vast business empire in Germany from nothing and then had it confiscated, first by the Nazis, then by the GDR Communists.

The book describes the mechanics of Aryanisation in painstakingly researched detail and thereby affords an interesting, informative insight into one aspect of the workings of the Nazi machine. Its narrative also focuses on



Ray Fromm

what happened to the Fromm family. Having researched what transpired when most of the family arrived here, it is perfectly understandable for the authors to home in on the British government's sometimes reprehensible treatment of Jewish refugees fleeing here from Nazi-occupied countries. Dr Grenville may well shrug off what occurred then and patronisingly state, for instance, that Ruth Fromm 'was, unfortunately, just one of a number of Jewish refugee women' to be interned. For Ruth Fromm though, in Holloway Prison for two months, the situation was sufficiently traumatic for her to go on a hunger strike. My father too, at that time only 20 years old, was, for the rest of his life, somewhat affected by having been shipped to Australia and mistreated by a largely antisemitic Royal Navy crew and captain during his passage there on the infamous *Dunera*. Granted others may in retrospect have

been less distressed by their internment experiences, but for my father these events elicited modest, yet lingering resentment towards the country that saved him but nevertheless initially put him behind barbed wire for 18 months.

Astonishingly, Dr Grenville seeks to accuse the authors of a 'blatant attempt to elide British and Nazi practice' because Ruth Fromm's internment was a result of being lumped 'as a kind of *Sippenhaft*' – note the authors state 'kind of', by which they do not mean full-blown Nazi *Sippenhaft* – into her father Salomon's Category B internment status. (For those not familiar with the Nazi word *Sippenhaft*, there is no direct translation in English but a definition may suffice here, i.e. a form of collective responsibility whereby family members are liable for the misdeeds of their relatives.) Unlike Dr Grenville, who has not bothered to ascertain the true facts of the matter, the authors were able to establish in interviews with Ruth Fromm that it was because of her immediate kinship with her father Salomon, who by Ruth's own admission had conducted himself somewhat arrogantly at the internment tribunal hearing, that her own internment fate was sealed. Salomon had previously been a British citizen but had given up his British nationality on his return from

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## 'Lifelong Impressions': A major retrospective by Milein Cosman

The Austrian Cultural Forum is to host a major retrospective of the work of the German-born Jewish artist Milein Cosman. The exhibition, entitled 'Lifelong Impressions: Paintings, Prints and Drawings by Milein Cosman', will be presented by the Jewish Museum and hosted by the Austrian Cultural Forum from 9 January 2008, moving to the Hampstead Museum at Burgh House in April.

Born in 1921, Milein Cosman arrived in England in 1939 to study at the Slade School of Art, then based in Oxford. She later moved to north-west London, where she has remained. She was married to the Austrian-born musician, writer, teacher and broadcaster Hans Keller.

Milein Cosman's work is represented in numerous public collections here and abroad, including the National Portrait

Gallery, the V&A and the British Museum. She is also known for her drawings which appeared in the *Radio Times* in the 1940s-60s. Currently, her drawings of renowned musicians are on display in the Wigmore Hall restaurant area.

The exhibition spans over six decades of prolific output, ranging from prints and drawings to oil paintings and watercolours, and includes portraits of distinguished cultural figures such as Henry Moore, Francis Bacon, T. S. Eliot, Iris Murdoch, Thomas Mann, Edith Sitwell, W. H. Auden, Barbara Hepworth and Martin Buber.

There are many pictures of Austria; opera-lovers will particularly delight in the drawings of leading singers from the Vienna State Opera. Nature-lovers will admire the drawings of animals and

birds, in particular the *Swinging Monkey* (mid-1990s).

Pinpointing examples of Milein Cosman's work, I am inspired by two wartime scenes: *Shelter in the Blitz* (1941), which shows Belsize Park underground station, and a picture from *The Eagle and Child* (1942), which depicts soldiers in an Oxford pub.

'Lifelong Impressions: Paintings, Prints and Drawings by Milein Cosman' can be seen at the Austrian Cultural Forum, 28 Rutland Gate, London SW7, from 9 January to 26 March 2008. Admission is free. For further information, please telephone Dina Wosner on 020 8371 7371 or visit [www.jewishmuseum.org.uk](http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk)

Ann Rau Dawes  
Ann Rau Dawes is co-curator of the Milein Cosman Exhibition

## Theft

Several years ago, the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) published a list of German Jews who may have had insurance policies they had to abandon, either because they were forced to flee Germany to avoid Nazi persecution or because they were unable to escape and were dragged off to concentration camps. In still other cases, Jews were forced to sign their policies over to the Nazis.

The list was published on the internet and was the talk of my community of North London Jews who were Holocaust survivors or their descendants. We, particularly those over the age of 60 without computers, phoned friends and asked them to ask their children or grandchildren to check the list for our names.

I logged on to the internet and, in almost no time at all, found my father's name on the list. I don't know why I was surprised. My father was, after all, a successful, modern businessman with a young family – a person who would sensibly buy insurance. But neither of my parents had ever mentioned owning an insurance policy. It was never included in the list of items the Nazis stole from our family which my mother would at times recite with great anger.

When I had secured an application form from the AJR, I phoned my two sisters in New York. We agreed that the youngest of us, Lea, would be the claimant. Our application was posted in November 2003.

For two years nothing happened. Then, in August 2005, we received a standard letter from an official of ICHEIC. Addressed to 'Dear Claimant', the letter explained that some claims were impossible to validate due to the ravages of war and the passage of time, but that we had provided sufficient information for the Commission to conclude that the 'individual[s]' named in our claim 'possibly held some form of insurance'. For these situations, the Commission had created a humanitarian award category and offered us \$1,000.

A standard letter yes – but one that sent money. My share of \$333 sat in a New York bank. The money meant nothing to me. It seemed to have nothing to do with our family. It was unrelated to the trauma of Kristallnacht and the family's flight to France, where my parents were interned in half-a-dozen concentration camps and my



Eva Kugler

younger sister became a hidden child, while my elder sister and I joined a Kindertransport.

Then, unexpectedly, we received a second letter, addressed by name this time. Father's insurance policy had been found. The records showed 'the surrender value was paid to him on June 19, 1939'. That couldn't be right. My father was no longer in Germany on that date. But this was specific. It was about us. It was an acknowledgment in black-and-white. It was the Nazis saying, 65 years later, 'We did this to you. We stole what was yours.'

Soon a third communication arrived – a photocopy of a document headed *Rückkaufsquittung*. This re-purchase receipt proved the existence of an actual life insurance policy that my father had taken out. It also explained the contradiction in dates. On June 19, 1939 it was my mother who had been forced to sign the agreement, giving away more than 1,000 Marks. It was all arranged a few days before she, my sisters and I left Germany. The proceeds of the policy were paid into a blocked account in the Dresden Bank in our hometown of Halle, so mother never got the money. Even if she had, she couldn't have kept it. A Jew leaving Germany was permitted to take out of the country no more than 10 Marks – in our case, 40 Marks for mother and three daughters. That paltry sum was nowhere near the insurance payout of 1,147.84 Marks.

This was a repetition of another occasion on which the Nazis had forced my mother to sign. I remembered the rage with which she recounted how she had been forced to sign over my father's store to the Nazis for a paltry sum, less than a tenth of its true value, and then concluding the story: 'Of course, I never

got even that money!'

My sister Lea went crazy when she first saw the swastika stamp next to my mother's signature. I was equally enraged – not at the swastika but at my mother's signature: 'Amalie Sara Kanner'. My mother didn't have a middle name, but she signed with one. I understood at once. I knew the Nazi decree. Men without a middle name were forced to adopt the middle name Israel; women were assigned the name Sara.

Sara is the mother of the Jewish people. It is an honourable name. But it was not part of my mother's name. She was not Amalie Sara. Looking now at this signature, I could feel the humiliation, as she was ordered not just where to sign, but how. She would have been conservatively dressed, presumably wearing a hat, because in those days women always wore hats when they went out, the hat perhaps adding to her diminutive height. But in spite of her immaculate outfit and her ability to maintain a benign expression to hide her rage, she could not have stopped the rush of blood that would have coloured her face as she signed.

Eva Kugler

### 'PEACE FOR OUR TIME' *cont from p1*

present-day terms, one might say that the arguments of Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, who advocated negotiations with Hitler using Mussolini as intermediary, were essentially Eurosceptic: to achieve tolerable peace terms, Halifax was prepared to disengage Britain from Europe, conceding German dominance over the Continent, and to concentrate on Britain's role as a non-European power, by preserving her overseas empire.

Churchill, by contrast, refused to abandon the European role. He made London the headquarters of the democratic forces fighting to liberate Europe and the seat of European governments in exile, the Free French, Poles, Czechs, Dutch and others, a coalition of the free peoples of Europe. AJR members in particular have cause to be thankful that it was Churchill, not the champions of appeasement and disengagement from Europe, who held power in the summer of 1940.

Anthony Grenville

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right  
to shorten correspondence  
submitted for publication

### THE YOUNGEST KINDERTRANSPORT REFUGEE?

Sir – Re Erika Klausner's letter 'The youngest Kindertransport refugee?' (December), according to the vague rules for permitting children to come to Britain from December 1938 till the outbreak of war, children were supposed to be over five. I know of two three-year-olds and two babies who arrived at Harwich. One of the former was Leah Roth from Borken. She came a few weeks before the war, aged three, with her sisters Hilde, seven, and Friedchen, five. Today, she is Leah Traub and lives in east or north-east London. She has nine children and 45 grandchildren. I saw her again, as an adult, when we held a reunion in London for our former refugee hostel (Windermere) in the summer of 1989. We were told that at the last minute the parents sent Leah instead of the older brother, as they feared England would not be orthodox enough for the boy. Remarkably, Leah's father survived, a changed and physically damaged man; the mother, older brother and two tiny Roth siblings perished. Another friend is Ruth Schwiening (née Auerbach), who came from near Breslau on the KT aged three. Today she lives in Market Bosworth, Leicestershire.

The two babies mentioned above were twins – Susi and Lotte Bechhöfer – whose desperate mother had put them on a train leaving Munich in a basket/cradle. Fostered by a Welsh Baptist minister and his wife, they knew nothing of their origins. Lotte died as an adolescent. Susi, living in Rugby today, heard by chance a broadcast in 1989 about the KT. She wondered, then investigated. The BBC helped her trace her origins. You can imagine the shock that the rest of us did not have to go through. I am glad to know Susi – an extraordinary woman.

Ruth L David  
Ames, Iowa, USA

Sir – I believe I was younger than Erika Klausner as I arrived on 20 April 1939 at the age of 2 years, 10 months, my third birthday being 17 June.

We always look forward to the AJR magazine – such a well-informed and interesting read.

Helga Lazarus (née Singer)  
London N3

Sir – The youngest 'Kind' was four months old, according to Bertha Leverton's records. I actually met her, and spoke to her, last summer in Hyde Park.

(Mrs) Annette Saville  
London NW4

### KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATED IN KOSZALIN



The marchers on reaching the 'old' Jewish cemetery. In the foreground is the gravestone of Leslie B. Brent's great-uncle David Baruch, which was found lying in the nearby stream and, after a period in the local museum, was returned to the newly re-consecrated cemetery. In the background is the cypress planted three years ago adjacent to the large memorial rock with its plaque written in Hebrew and Polish (photograph by courtesy of Z. Pacholski)

Sir – I would like to draw your readers' attention to an event that occurred in Koszalin, Poland, on 15 November – especially as, judging from previous correspondence, there are still some who are unwilling to recognise that the Poles are undergoing a profound change of attitude.

To commemorate Kristallnacht, a candlelight march was organised, and this was attended by some 140 people, including 30 youngsters from a local school. The organisers were Henryk Romanik, a Catholic priest, poet and local historian, and Zdzislaw Pacholski, a professional photographer. I have known these two for seven years and they have been responsible for other events that I have written about in the past in our Journal. They have become good friends of mine. Present, too, were the mayor's wife, the head of the Jewish community in Szczecin (formerly Stettin), the local bishop, a poet living some 100 km away and, significantly, several members of the local Jewish community who normally keep themselves to themselves.

The event began after dark in a small church, where Mr Pacholski described the significance of Kristallnacht and the catalytic role I had played in getting the town to remember its pre-war past. Prayers were said by the bishop and, in Hebrew, by the man from Szczecin, and messages of support were read out from an Austrian journalist and writer (Ute Hoeschele) whose family had lived in the town before the war, as well as from me. The marchers then solemnly proceeded to several former Jewish sites, now marked with monuments of one kind or another – the synagogue, the old cemetery (rededicated two years ago and containing my great-uncle's grave stone – see photograph), and what used to be the 'new' cemetery, now within the Technical University. This was the third annual march; the weather was reasonable for once but there was snow on the ground.

The Poles were clearly *not* responsible for Kristallnacht and its aftermath, yet they feel it appropriate to remember the event as a warning to future generations. Such acts of remembrance do occur all over Poland and it is important for us to acknowledge and welcome this. Significantly, as you will know, Warsaw is to have – at last – a Holocaust museum.

Leslie Baruch Brent  
Emeritus Professor  
London N19

### WHO IS A JEW?

Sir – Mr Phillips should have read my very brief discourse 'On Being or Not Being a Jew' with a little more attention to detail. I clearly state that the question as to who is and who is not a Jew is not a value-free judgement: it depends on who asks the question and who answers it. Although I am not quite sure what he means by 'been brought up in the Jewish way of life' (Hassidic? secular?), I am quite happy to accept the paternal line as equally valid for being Jewish – but then, I am also ready to accept 'Jews for Jesus' as being Jews. Hitler would not have disagreed with either proposition. Conversely, and I said so explicitly, if the answer depends on Halachic Law, then neither would qualify.

Mr Phillips refers vaguely to a 'Muslim race'. If he means the Islamic Ummah, then, generically, Jews are a 'race' by analogous definition. If, on the other hand, as I believe, race is defined by the DNA molecule, then Mr Phillips and I may be of the same race; our Ethiopian fellow-Jews, however, are not.

Harold Saunders  
Manchester

### AMSTERDAM STRIKE REMEMBERED

Sir – On 25 February 1941, under German occupation, a strike took place in Amsterdam protesting against the brutal

Nazi treatment of Jews. The strikers were public transport and other municipal employees, workers in shipbuilding and steel, large stores and many shops and offices. Public transport in Amsterdam was halted for a whole day. The next day, other Dutch cities joined in. More details are to be found at <http://www.februaristaking.nl/english.html>

Please come and join me at the annual commemoration of these events, just after 4 pm on 25 February 2008 at the Jonas Daniel Meijerplein, very close to the Waterlooplein Metro station, Amsterdam. The mayor, the Israeli ambassador and Dutch Jewish groups will be there. Old and frail visitors will be looked after.

Nothing like this strike happened where we came from, which makes it all the more important for us to join in honouring those Dutch heroes. For more information, contact me at [landers@heatherhouseoxford.com](mailto:landers@heatherhouseoxford.com) or at Skinner 58, Nea Chora, Chania 73100, Crete, Greece.

*George Landers  
Crete*

#### ANNA ESSINGER

Sir – I was delighted to see the piece about Anna Essinger in October's journal. Anna Essinger was a relative of my dear late husband. He used to tell me about her school. I didn't realise she was so well known or I would have paid more attention!

*Mary D. Essinger  
Leicester*

#### AFTER ANNAPOLIS

Sir – Peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians are bound to take a long time and it is therefore necessary to take some small steps to alleviate the sufferings of the Palestinians, particularly the 30,000 Palestinians who live in the compound of Hebron ruled by the Israeli army. Its main street, Shuhuda Street, is reserved for Jews only, i.e. the 700 settlers who live above the town. Palestinians must climb with ladders on the roofs to get into their own homes. My daughter Alison was in Shuhuda Street on a study tour and, when she entered the market, she wondered why there were nets above the streets: the settlers regularly throw rubbish, stones and bottles from their homes onto the market and the nets prevented the rubbish from falling onto the stallholders and Palestinian shoppers.

Yehuda Shaul is a religious Jew who, on a visit to this country, told me that when he did his military service in Hebron he took off his yarmulka because he didn't want the Palestinians to see that a religious Jew could tolerate such

conditions. The settlers belong to the Kach group. Baruch Goldstein, who killed 29 Muslims praying in the Hebron mosque, belonged to this group, whose members the Israeli Government considers terrorists.

*Peter Prager  
Ilford, Essex*

#### MISSING THE POINT

Sir – Guy Bishop's apocryphal anecdote (December, Letters) about my grandfather, Julius Fromm, unfortunately misses the point and does not make any sense as it stands, for the correct translation of *Reklamationen* is 'complaints', not 'advertisements' (*Reklame*). Thus the large group of children with which my grandfather is supposed to have been seen refers to faulty condoms, not to any marketing of the product he invented. Whilst on the subject of faulty or burst condoms – something that obviously never happened with a genuine *Frommser* – my grandfather would invariably shift such unfortunate occurrences on to the competition, when he said, equally apocryphally, 'Die Konkurrenz soll platzen!' It is hoped your readers will understand the dual meaning of 'platzen'.

*Ray Fromm  
London NW7*

#### NORTH AND SOUTH

Sir – I would like to thank everyone involved in the three-day trip to London in November. Special thanks must go to Susanne Green and Barbara Dresner Dorrity for their hard work and the professional manner in which they organised it.

The choice of venues was well thought out – from the tour of the Bevis Marks Synagogue to the tour of the Jewish East End. We were shown things too humorous to mention, with a tour guide so knowledgeable and full of enthusiasm about his subject, and a lovely lunch, eaten on the go, from Rinkoff's bakery.

When we had gathered our breath, we were taken to Belsize Square Synagogue for a first-class dinner and a talk by the vivacious and straight-talking Anna Raeburn. There was a trip to see the Wallace Collection of fine art. On our last day, we were taken to the AJR Centre for a very tasty lunch (thank you, chef!) and a very moving Kristallnacht service by Rabbi Rodney Mariner. Thank you all concerned!

*Mrs Sabine Barton  
Mrs Ruth Eisikovits  
Liverpool*

Sir – Just want to thank Susanne (and all concerned) once more for the splendid time you gave us in London. Whenever I

tell anyone about all we did, it leaves them speechless with admiration. Firstly, that we did it all and, secondly, how clever the organisers must have been to fit it all in! How true!

When you come to plan next year's event, how about Liverpool, City of Culture! I can see there is going to be lots going on and I think it would make a splendid holiday. High time that the Londoners travelled north – and a bit west as well, don't you think?

*Dorothy Fleming  
Sheffield*

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# ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Most of us think of Renaissance art and Florence in one breath. We forget beleaguered Siena, whose endless battle against its more powerful neighbour generated its own paler, softer reflection of the Renaissance. **Renaissance Siena: Art for a City**, at the National Gallery (NG) this month, brings 100 works on loan from private and public collections across Europe and America together with the NG's own collection of Sieneese art. Among its greatest artists are **Francesco di Giorgio** and **Domenico Beccafumi**, names which, alongside **Lorenzo Rustici**, **Arcangelo Salimbeni** and **Francesco Vanni**, remain relatively unknown.

Beccafumi was regarded as a Sieneese Giotto. While Florentine contemporaries like Fra Bartolommeo and Michaelangelo worked with strong colour, his work, though more subtle, is astonishingly modern, sometimes almost Impressionistic.

The exhibition, sponsored by Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena, covers the volatile period beginning with the coronation of the Sieneese Pope Pius II in 1458 and evokes a lost Renaissance. Yet Sieneese art forms a civic map of a city which, under constant Florentine threat, turned inward.

There are many busy, narrative paintings whose gestural style typifies the Renaissance: saints and sinners form a backdrop for depictions of the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of Siena, credited with having saved the city from foreign aggressors from the thirteenth century up to the Second World War. Their loyalty is reflected in many luminescent works.

The Virgin theme developed in the fourteenth century, indicating a rediscovery of classical myth or legend: the Sieneese Virgin guides ships to calm waters, yet retains her pale and saintly status right up to the end of the fifteenth century, when she begins to appear more

human and less beatific; already her face and presence seem to be evolving into the next century. The colours, particularly the gilding, are luminescent and in more than one example – particularly **Neroccio de'Landi's** portrait of a young noblewoman, whose hair is a near-white halo and whose downcast eyes typify her



German (Lower Rhine), *Tobias and Sarah on their Wedding Night*, about 1520

© V&A Images / Victoria and Albert Museum, London

as a feminine ideal of modesty and beauty – you could be forgiven for thinking that this exotic Mediterranean city is the original home of blonde ambition.

The light of the Renaissance is reflected in German stained glass in another NG show, **Art of Light: German Renaissance Stained Glass**, until 17 February, sponsored by Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. This is a first for the NG, which maintains that the best Renaissance stained glass often superseded contemporary painting. Many of the Gallery's fifteenth and early sixteenth century artists were also panel painters. The exhibition focuses on three artists of the period: **Albrecht Dürer**, **Hans Baldung Grien** and **Jörg Breu**. The first two worked together in Freiburg creating new windows for the cathedral.

The use of coloured glass flourished in Germany and Northern Europe from the twelfth century, using Old and New Testaments as natural source material. From the Liesborn and Mariawald Abbeys, we can see eloquent scenes from the life of David, and Esau relinquishing his birthright, as well as the more conventional aspects of Christ's life.

## REVIEWS

### The standard text for the history of Pankow Jewry **JÜDISCHE LEBENSWEGE – EIN KULTURHISTORISCHER STREIFZUG DURCH PANKOW UND NIEDERSCHÖNHAUSEN**

by Inge Lammel

ed. by Forderverein ehemaliges Jüdisches Waisenhaus Pankow e.V., die Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes und den Bund der Antifaschisten Pankow e.V.

Teetz/Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2007, 397pp. paper, ISBN 078-3-938485-53-8, 24.80 euros

This book, by the historian Inge Lammel, to which a number of others have also contributed, provides a vivid and poignant, as well as a detailed and well-illustrated, description of the life and fate of Jews in these two adjacent suburbs of Berlin. An amalgam of two earlier books, it has been amended, enlarged and brought up to date.

Inge Lammel came to Britain in 1939 on a Kindertransport, and returned to Berlin in 1947 to study *Musikwissenschaft* at Humboldt-Universität. She has lived in Pankow, which used to be in the DDR, ever since. She established and directed the Archive for Workers' Songs at the Academy of the Arts, played a prominent role in Pankow's anti-fascist organisation, and has published a number of books, most of them concerned with Jewish life in Pankow.

Pankow remains home to an unusually large number of doctors, artists and intellectuals, and it is hardly surprising that before the Second World War they should have included a great many Jews. It is thanks largely to Inge Lammel's careful and persistent research and the resulting books that the life and fate of many of the Jews of Pankow have been remembered and cherished. This book is the culmination of these endeavours. It will be of interest not only to Berliners or ex-Berliners but to anyone with an interest in German-Jewish life. In his introduction, Dr H. Simon describes the book, which is written in lucid German, as *the* standard text for the history of Pankower Jewry.

The book does indeed cover much ground and the reader is treated to a kaleidoscope of fascinating and not always well-known facts. Jews settled

in Pankow, which was still a village in the seventeenth century, relatively late, mainly in the second half of the nineteenth century. An exception was one Daniel Itzig, who was banker to Frederick II and was rewarded for services rendered with permission to establish a business in Pankow in 1761. By 1910 the Jewish population numbered 1,100 and prominent buildings included a brewery, the Garbaty cigarette factory, and the Jewish Boys' orphanage. The large building of the orphanage survived the war, was totally renovated some ten years ago by the Cajewitz Foundation (director and moving spirit: Professor P-A Albrecht) and is, astonishingly, still known as 'the former Jewish orphanage'.

One learns a lot about a wide variety of small Jewish businesses and prominent lawyers and artists, and there are biographical sketches of a number of individuals, from the painter Doris Kahane, who survived internment in the Drancy detention centre in Paris, to the jazz trumpeter and band leader Sigmund Petruschka-Friedmann, who emigrated to Palestine in 1938. One will find a list of doctors, with their Pankow addresses, and a minimal estimate of the number of Pankow Jews who perished (at least 600) in the Holocaust or survived it (some 60), with another 40 who survived underground and 80 who were protected by virtue of being only partly Jewish. A significant chapter is devoted to the religious life of the Jewish community and its synagogues, including the Betsaal of the Boys' orphanage (in which I had my barmitzvah in 1938), and to the Jewish schools and other institutions.

Part II of the book describes in great detail the life and fate of a number of families, the information having been gleaned from diaries and painstaking interviews. As well as telling us about the carefree years of family life before 1933, they inevitably include heart-rending accounts of survival in concentration camps and in other dire circumstances and of the fragmentation of families. One such account is that of the Jedwab family, of which David (a prominent member of the AJR's Kindertransport special interest group until his death a few years ago) was a contemporary and on whose recollections this account ('Reise in die Vergangenheit des David Jedwab') is based. It is all very poignant, for example the account of the Jany family

('von den Nachbarn geachtet, von den Nazis zerstört' (respected by the neighbours, destroyed by the Nazis)): the title and the family photograph say it all. What is clear is that the Jews of Pankow had a great variety of professions and skills and that some were lucky, whilst others paid the ultimate price for their Jewishness.

In Part III, Inge Lammel reviews the impact Nazi Germany had on German Jews, from the organised boycott on 1 April (!) 1933 of Jewish shops, doctors and lawyers to a succession of laws curbing the freedom of Jews, preventing professionals from practising, to the book-burning on 10 May 1933 and the Nuremberg laws that gave the persecution some sort of 'legality'. This inevitably led to the forcible acquisition of the property of Jews in Pankow (and elsewhere), the creation of 'Judenhäuser' following Kristallnacht, the 'cleansing' of schools of Jewish children, and, with relentless inevitability, to the deportations and killings. Once again, Inge Lammel documents all this with names and other details.

Other chapters consist of eye-witness accounts of Pankow Jews who survived and of non-Jews who risked their lives hiding or protecting friends and neighbours. Included here is the extraordinary story of the Pankow policeman, one Wilhelm Krützfeld, who heroically prevented the Nazis from burning down the synagogue in Oranienburgerstrasse, an action in which he was supported by his superior officer Willi Steuck, also a resident of Pankow, who was executed barbarically in the last days of the war. Consideration is also given to Catholic 'non-Aryans' and their families living in Pankow.

Part V recounts the participation of Pankow Jews in the anti-Nazi resistance. Some were killed, but others survived with the assistance of non-Jewish Germans. Again, Inge Lammel helps us to remember some of the forgotten heroes. In Part VI she describes the November pogrom and its aftermath, partly seen through the eyes of those who survived the war, and the deportations. With touching devotion she lists (in 15 pages) the names of the Pankow Jews who were murdered or driven to their deaths, together with addresses, transport numbers, dates and destinations. The remainder of the book deals with Jewish social institutions in Pankow, including the Lehlrlingsheim (school for apprentices)

and the Boys' Orphanage, which receives detailed attention as a major educational institution under several directors. The last director, Dr Kurt Crohn, made his mark as an exceptionally caring man who refused to leave his boys and was eventually deported, together with his wife and young daughter, to Theresienstadt and later to Auschwitz. Crohn died but happily his wife and daughter (the latter now living in Israel) survived. Other institutions described include the Mädchenhaus (girls' hostel) Pankow, the baby and infant nursery, an old people's home for the deaf, and a children's home run by the Fürst sisters.

Finally, we are given a description of life in Pankow after 1945, as told by Professor Ernst Hoffmann. The book is well indexed and exhaustively referenced. Dr Lammel is to be congratulated on providing us with a document of considerable historical importance.

Leslie Baruch Brent

## Seeking recognition of wrongs done

**BADDIEL AND THE MISSING NAZI BILLIONS**  
BBC1, 14 November 2007

In this excellent documentary, David Baddiel said he feared the accusation 'Jews are always trying to get money.' Yet not for a moment did I believe his fear of antisemitism was as paramount as he claimed. I think he was looking for a peg on which to hang his film and the spectre of antisemitism seemed the perfect reason for telling his story.

How on earth can the demand for the return of stolen property be a cause of antisemitism? The Nazis stole from the Jews – a figure of \$150 billion is quoted. At long last, the countries which backed them, particularly Germany and Austria, have had to return their booty to their rightful owners. West Germany, thanks to Adenauer, was reasonably fair from the start. But Austria wouldn't admit its guilt for nearly 50 years. It is now paying some compensation, if only 15 per cent of what it should be. The Swiss banks would undoubtedly have got away with the theft of every Jewish wartime account but for the good works of some American lawyers. As it

*Reviews continued on page 10*

## REVIEWS continued from page 9

is, they stole 80 per cent of the money held in Jewish accounts.

Baddiel also dealt with the difficult issue of the looting of art works belonging to Jews. If ownership could be proved beyond reasonable doubt, some countries were willing to hand back the stolen works – the United States and the United Kingdom, in particular. Some, however, still have paintings hanging in their galleries. (When I visited the Hermitage in St Petersburg, my guide would not enter one particular room, saying all the paintings in it had been looted from Jews.)

Equally difficult, as Baddiel pointed out, is dealing with Poland. At the end of the war, the Communists nationalised all property in Poland. Why, asked the Poles, should the Jews receive compensation when millions of others wouldn't? Why, I ask, *shouldn't* they?

The programme makers wanted me to give them my views on the International Commission of Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC). Of course, many of the Jews who died had life insurance policies which remained unpaid. Of course, ICHEIC was a toothless organisation which did little for Holocaust survivors and their heirs. But the reason I refused to take part is that I didn't wish to give one aspect of the Nazi crimes more importance than any of the others.

Baddiel's example of how the loss of his grandfather's factory in Königsberg was compensated with £700 – enabling his family to buy new curtains! – says it all. When it came to the Nazis stealing from the Jews, the thieves prospered. Little wonder that at the end of the programme Baddiel concluded he didn't care what the antisemites thought about Jews seeking restitution. It isn't just financial compensation that we want: it's recognition of the wrongs done to us.

Peter Phillips

## A professional job

### GOODBYE YESTERDAY

by Gerd Treuhaft

Book Guild Publishing 2006, 174 pp., £16.99 hardback

**B**orn to an Austrian-Jewish mother and fostered by a wealthy Berlin couple, Gerd Treuhaft obtained Austrian citizenship documents in 1934 thinking this would protect him. It did,

but only until the Germans occupied Austria. In 1938 he was arrested: going to the local police station to see if his Austrian passport was still valid had brought him to the attention of the Gestapo. He survived imprisonment in Dachau and Buchenwald, encountering among prisoners there Max and Ernst von Hohenberg, sons of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, whose murder sparked the First World War.

Reaching England in 1939, Gerd swapped his refugee status for entry into the Pioneer Corps. He thought a miracle had happened when his pay rose from 6d to 14s. After a sojourn in Kitchener Camp and still wondering if he was a 'real' soldier, he had to leave France fast in 1940 when the Germans arrived. Weymouth presented quite a contrast. He describes a pleasant seaside town where people gave the soldiers ice cream and sweets. It was hard to believe there was a war on.

Gerd soldiered on until 1944, when he was suddenly discharged as being surplus to requirements. Jobs were scarce and he spent over a year washing dishes in Joe Lyons while publishing occasional articles. His story about his dish-washing days, 'One and Eight an Hour', appeared in an Army magazine. In 1945 he attended the first UN Assembly for *World Review*, a Hulton publication, after which it was straight back to dishwashing.

Gerd enjoyed a successful career as a freelance journalist, contributing to many German publications. He became a showbiz columnist, interviewing such personalities as Sophia Loren, Eartha Kitt and Maurice Chevalier, whom he questioned about singing for the Nazis. Chevalier's answer was: 'What would you have done?'

In the late 1950s Gerd was approached to translate the memoirs of Herman Goering's widow. Being a Jew and a camp survivor, he was surprised to be asked, but he decided to go for it. The memoirs were initially rejected but they eventually appeared in the USA and England. In her Berlin flat, Mrs Goering told the author how much she had suffered during the last year of the war. His comments are not recorded.

Though this book is a very professional job, as befits an experienced journalist, it unfortunately lacks passion.

Laraine Feldman

## Ingenious thriller

### THE LAST TESTAMENT

by Sam Bourne

Harper, 2007, 576 pp., £6.99

paperback

**P**ace in the Middle East? Yes, this is the backdrop for Sam Bourne's new thriller. Following on his best-selling *The Righteous Men*, Bourne dives in with the leaders of Israel and the Palestinians about to sign a permanent peace agreement. This is preceded by a rally in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square, where Israel's prime minister lost his life. But the euphoria of the occasion is blunted, not by the assassination of fictitious premier Yaacov Yariv but by the gunning down of a right-wing activist approaching him – armed, it turns out, not with a gun but a bloodstained letter.

This seminal scene, entitled 'Tel Aviv, Saturday night, several years later', is preceded by an intriguing prologue, 'Baghdad, April 2003', depicting the looting of the museum of antiquities. The mysterious link between these two events forms the ingenious nub of the story.

If the killing of the renowned archaeologist Shimon Guttman rallies the anti-peace camp in Israel, their Palestinian counterparts are incited by the murder, not long afterwards, of the Palestinian archaeologist and nationalist Ahmed Nour. With the prospects for peace rapidly receding, it is time for the entrance of Maggie Costello, a 30-something former star negotiator resident in Washington. Brought in, ostensibly, to shore up the peace process, Maggie meets Guttman's son Uri and the two are drawn together not only by mutual attraction but as partners in a search for the source of his father's message. It soon becomes apparent, amid a plethora of further killings and the torching of the ancient Bet Alpha synagogue in a northern kibbutz, that Shimon Guttman had something important to convey.

A pattern emerges in Maggie's mind: since all the murder victims are connected to a study of the past, it is in the past that Guttman's secret must lie. Conversely, it is technology that points her and Uri in the right direction since Guttman was also a technophile and partial to computer games. The nearer the two young people get to the heart of their quest, the more their lives are in danger.

In this eminently readable novel, sus-

**REVIEWS continued**

pense is built up through the absence of a chronological structure. A chapter entitled, say, 'Jerusalem Tuesday 10.45', may be followed by another set a few minutes or a few hours earlier. As well as creating a sympathetic and well-rounded heroine, Bourne is adept at depicting plausible political scenarios, with chapters devoted to the machinations of the Israeli cabinet and the US consulate and scenes featuring the 'usual suspects' – the extremists on both sides who contribute to the mayhem.

The exposure in the dénouement of the 'least expected' of the villains is highly gratifying, while the conceit at the heart of the novel is no less than inspired. The long-awaited finale – a fusion of hope and irony – is an intimation of the idealism of Bourne's journalist alter ego, Jonathan Freedland.

Emma Klein

**The new shoes**

by Charlotte Gringras

*Dedicated to all the people whose story this is*

My cold feet do not even touch the floor -  
so I sit here, swinging my skinny little legs;  
I look down and notice tears, plopping  
unbidden onto the shiny leather of my shoes,  
brand new shoes that Mutti had bought me  
when she sent me off, days-like-years ago.

Where have they come from, those tears?  
Why now, while sitting on this table, wanting  
to be brave and not a baby – NOT a baby.  
I am four and a half years old at Waterloo,  
my name pinned on my coat, a crying child  
waiting, anxiously, for someone to claim me.

My feet didn't touch the floor in the carriage  
on the children's train where Mutti left me  
with lots of other kids but alone and lonely.  
Not as alone as she was when I last looked -  
on the platform, weakly waving, slowly  
shrinking,  
drenched by my tears on the window pane,  
drenched by the heavy rain and a sorrow  
so profound she was bent under its weight.

Now I try to stop the drips which soak the  
smart  
shoeholes; I bite my lip, grip the table, blink  
hard  
and stare: my stare pierces the crowd, parts  
the throng  
unleashing the person who will choose me,  
the boy with  
brand new shoes. I see a two-handed wave  
above  
the crowd; the hands say out loud, 'Hans,  
come here!'  
She hoists me to such a height above her,  
that with  
my tear-distorted sight, I cannot even see  
the floor.

These old memories cling to the octogenarian  
that is me;  
visions grow sharper all the time, yet, again I  
cannot see.

*Charlotte Gringras wrote this poem while undertaking research  
for a PhD on the lives of Kindertransport members*

**BUTTERFLIES AND BULLETS** – Published by UPSO

It concerns my childhood spent on the run in Nazi Germany. It is, in particular, of Jewish interest. ISBN 978 1 84 375 273 8.  
Available at Waterstone or any good bookshop – **Laura Levy**

**WHERE ARE THOSE 'MUSEUM PIECES' EXACTLY?** *continued from page 4*

England to pre-war Germany. This counted against Ruth Fromm. In pursuing his argument and possibly in an attempt to exonerate the British authorities, Dr Grenville then points out that Salomon was never interned, conveniently omitting to mention why, although the reason (medical) is mentioned later in the book. Furthermore, the authors fully concede that British internment policy should not be equated with Nazi policy towards Jews when they explain that internment policy was eventually changed through democratic protest: 'One of the impressive characteristics of British democracy is that, even in wartime, criticism is permitted.' Where there should therefore be any 'attempt to elide British and Nazi practice' is not clear.

Whatever Dr Grenville may say about how wonderful the British reception for Continental Jews was – in part, it was, of course, if one thinks of the Kindertransport – at the time there was also an undercurrent of antisemitism, particularly among the British establishment, even though this should not be compared with the virulent variety of Nazi Germany. In her excellent *Whitehall and the Jews*, Louise London highlights the ambiguity of British policy towards Jewish refugees; in particular, she mentions that 'in Britain, prejudice against Jews was considered unacceptable, if

it formed an explicit part of a social or political programme', but that 'moderate indulgence in social anti-Jewish prejudice was so widespread as to be unremarkable.' It consequently does not strike me as wrong for Aly and Sontheimer to show the effects of this 'anti-Jewish prejudice', or is Dr Grenville affronted that it should be precisely German authors who point out this fact? If so, is Dr Grenville not suffering from the same lack of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* he accuses the authors of displaying? It's alright for British historians to point out such matters but not for German ones!

Dr Grenville's arguments become ever more spurious when he highlights the fact that Sontheimer interviewed my father 'over a good whisky', something he would never have mentioned had the tippie been a German schnapps. Yet in writing this, Sontheimer merely conveys the conviviality of the occasion without attaching any importance – as Dr Grenville regrettably does – to the beverage's provenance. How anyone can deduce that drinking British, in preference to German, spirits somehow casts someone as a stereotypical museum piece defies belief. Such arguments are not serious.

The sad thing about Dr Grenville's article is that it allows him to exercise his hobby-horse about how German his-

torians portray Continental Jewish refugees as museum pieces, although this hobby-horse ultimately displays rather lame legs. It is even sadder that neither he nor the *AJR Journal* considered the publication of a proper book review, particularly as my family's story mirrors that of German history in the first half of the twentieth century and German Jews' ultimately tragic place in it.

By contrast, the book has been extraordinarily well received in Germany with considerable attention from the mass media and the German quality press, both of which – unlike the *AJR Journal* – have seen fit to give it proper reviews. In Britain too, this interesting, instructive story was considered important enough to feature in the recent BBC1 documentary *Baddiel's Search for the Missing Nazi Billions*. With the book currently being translated into English for publication in New York in early 2009, interest in the story has now also crossed the Atlantic. In Julius Fromm's own backyard though, i.e. in the very journal serving those people from whom he came, it is being practically ignored other than to feature in an article meant to justify a rather tenuous, highly subjective theory about German historians. In the light of this, I venture to suggest that Dr Grenville and the *AJR Journal* have done their readership a disservice.

# INSIDE the AJR

## South London: An unusual Barmitzvah



AJR Director Gordon Greenfield, left, and Walter Woyda at South London 'Barmitzvah' Party

Over 30 of us celebrated our Barmitzvah – 13 years since members south of the river set up the first AJR social group. Aply led by Ken Ambrose, Chairman for 10 years, a Planning Committee oversaw inviting speakers, arranging refreshments and looking out for the welfare of members in the area. Walter Woyda, a founder member and unofficial Chairman since Ken's retirement, welcomed everyone. *Myrna Glass*  
Next meeting: 10 January

**Pinner: History of the Jews of Spain**  
Patricia Brickman gave us a well researched talk on Spanish Jewry under the Romans, the Visigoths, the Muslims, the Christian Church until the Expulsion, and the return of the Jews in modern times. She ably answered questions from a large audience.

*Walter Weg*

Next meeting: 10 Jan. Helen Bamber, 'Survival of the Next Generation'

## Hendon: Nostalgia for Vienna coffee houses

Otto Deutsch told us entertainingly about his family's weekly visits to the coffee house on Saturdays and their weekly visits to Heurigen in Vienna's Grinzing suburb on Sundays.

*Annette Saville*

Next meeting: 28 Jan. Abbegail Slavin, 'Nancy Wake – the "White Mouse"'

## Leeds HSFA: 'Hate Crime'

Neil Franklin, Head of West Yorkshire's Crown Prosecution Service, told us that until ten years ago there was no legislation distinguishing hate crime from any other sort of crime, but the

law has been changed by more recent enactments exacting higher penalties.

*Martin Kapel*

## Ilford members spellbound

Speaking on the history of the Jews in England since Disraeli, the Jewish Museum's Suzanne Alexander held an excellent attendance spellbound.

*Susie Shipman*

Next meeting: 9 January

## HGS: The history of Jazz

Over 20 of us enjoyed a talk by Alf Keiles on the Jewish influence on Jazz. We learned, among many other things, that the first flat record of any kind was made by a Jewish firm in 1903.

*Laszlo Roman*

Next meeting: Mon 14 Jan. Eva Blumenthal, 'History of the Royal Free'

## The Norwich Group Ltd

No fewer than ten of us met for lunch with the nosh brought from as far as Great Yarmouth in one direction and the fleshpots of Wembley in the other. Myrna told us about the accident which had caused the death of one of our members, Tony Plessner, who was knocked off his bike by a negligently opened car door.

*Frank Bright*

Next meeting: 18 March

## Wembley KT discussion

Following an exceptionally interesting discussion about the Kindertransport, Myrna talked about practical matters such as getting to meetings. Looking forward to the next meeting ...

*Laura Levy*

Next meeting: 23 Jan. Social Get-together

## Brighton & Hove Sarid: 'Jesus the Jew'

In a very interesting talk, Rabbi Vivien Silverman pointed out that Jesus (Yehoshua) was born and died a Jew. The founding and spreading of Christianity should be attributed to Paul of Tarsus and his Hellenistic influence.

*Ceska Abrahams*

Next meeting: 21 Jan. Abbegail Slavin, 'Heroes and Heroines'

## Glasgow pre-Chanukah social

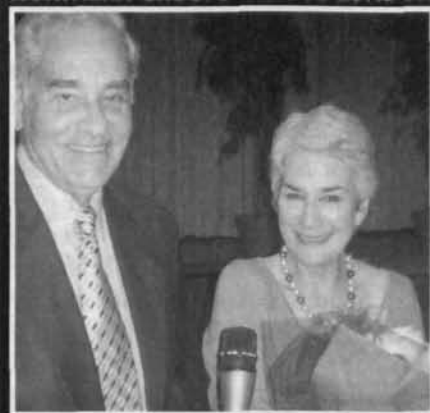
We enjoyed a truly festive occasion with Shirley Bennett – husband Peter on guitar – singing a medley of favourites with gusto. In Susanne's absence, Eileen Brady held the fort and Erna Grace delighted us with an account of her recent AJR London visit.

*Jonathan Kish*

## Cleve Road: First anniversary celebration

We enjoyed our first anniversary celebration, which included a cake with

## NORTHERN GROUPS' VISIT TO LONDON



above: 'Agony Aunt' Anna Raeburn pictured with John Silbermann at Belsize Square Synagogue dinner

below: AJR members are shown round the Max Stern Restitution project at the Ben Uri Gallery

(See also Letters, p. 7)



one candle and musical entertainment by Naomi Hyamson (Mezzo Soprano) and Harold Lester (Piano). In 2008 meetings are to be held on the last Tuesday of each month. *David Lang*  
Next meeting: 29 January

## Reliving army days in Edgware

Some 30 of us listened to Dr Helen Fry speak about her new book *The King's Most Loyal Aliens*. Many in the audience relived their army days during the Second World War.

*Felix Winkler*

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

## Herts: The Wiener Library

Some of us had assumed the Wiener Library had originally been in Vienna, and we were surprised to learn from Howard Falksohn that it was in fact named after Alfred Wiener (1885-1964), started in Germany, and opened in London on 1 September 1939 – known at that time as the Jewish Central Information Office.

*Ruth Tuch*

Next meeting: 22 Jan. 'Safety in the Community'

## East Midlands lunch social

An autumn lunch social attended by 17 of us in a member's house was unusually enlivened due to a prospective



Naomi Hyamson, Harold Lester plus First Anniversary birthday cake at Cleve Road party  
Photo: Charlotte Lang

member meeting a KT friend of some 60 years ago. Also, we were delighted to meet the AJR's Esther Rinkoff.

*Bob Norton*

### North London: 'What is Art?'

Alan Howard showed us examples of classical and modern art, pointing out the aspects that distinguished these works as 'art'. His parting piece of advice was that any pictures in our homes should be there because they give us pleasure regardless of whether they might eventually make our grandchildren rich!

*Hanne R. Freedman*

Next meeting: 31 Jan. Philippa Bernard, 'Queen Elizabeth I's Jewish Doctor'

### 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

**Harrogate**  
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

### Varied agenda at Bristol/Bath

It was interesting to hear about Bettina Cohn's trip to her pre-war boarding school in Germany; Dr Fred Morgan talked about Otto Hess and his daughter's search to find people who knew him; and David Hackel told a funny story about his school days and his teacher Marx.  
*Dana Silbiger*

### Wessex Exbury Gardens outing

Not only had Myrna Glass made all the arrangements – her route planning was such that members living nearer to the Gardens were able to join the bus outside their homes, saving much travelling strain and time.  
*G. M. Ettinger*

### Radlett: History of Jews in England

Our second meeting was an extremely interesting talk by the Jewish Museum's Suzanne Alexander on the history of the Jews in England from 1066 to the present time.  
*Eric Newman*

Next meeting: 16 Jan. AJR Hon President Ludwig Spiro

### ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

**Kent 15 January**

**Oxford 22 Jan. Tu B'Shevat Party**

### 'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

Members requiring benefit advice please telephone Linda Kasir on 020 8385 3070 to make an appointment at AJR, Jubilee House, Merriem 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 16 January 2008

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

### Dr Laoise Davidson

'Songs of the Safadim'

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 7 January 2008

### Alex Faiman

'Russian Jews in China: 60 Years of Trials and Tribulations'

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### January Afternoon Entertainment

Tue 1	CLOSED
Wed 2	Cole Burns
Thur 3	Norman Hoskins
Mon 7	KT LUNCH – Kards & Games Klub
Tue 8	CLOSED
Wed 9	Tony Parkins
Thur 10	Midnight Sunset
Mon 14	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 15	CLOSED
Wed 16	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 17	Victor Munro
Mon 21	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 22	CLOSED
Wed 23	Tina Oberman
Thur 24	Laurie Forte
Mon 28	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 29	CLOSED
Wed 30	Patsy Peters
Thur 31	Roy Blas

**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**

**Deaths**

Kay Betty (née Weil), born Fürth 8 July 1914, widow of Manfred from Berlin, died peacefully at home on 24 November. Lovingly remembered and missed by her son Tony and daughter-in-law Rita.

**Classified**

Bob Gale of Watling Street, Radlett seeks Chess partner. Please contact Esther Rinkoff at AJR on 0208 385 3077 if you are interested.

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**HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE**

'Imagine ... remember, reflect, react'  
Please join us for a  
Holocaust Memorial Day service  
at 2 pm on Thursday 24 January 2008  
at Belsize Square Synagogue,  
London NW3

During the service, to be conducted by Rabbi Rodney Mariner, AJR members will light memorial candles and Kaddish will be recited. There will also be a talk on the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2008, 'Imagine ... remember, reflect, react' by AJR member Lilian Levy

Light refreshments will be provided after the service  
As space is limited, please return the enclosed reply slip by Friday 11 January 2008 to  
AJR Head Office

**AJR TRIP TO ISRAEL  
MARCH 2008**

At the request of our members, the AJR are arranging a 10-day trip to Israel next March

This will be a fantastic opportunity to travel in a group and enable you to visit places such as Jerusalem, the North, Tel Aviv and Lake Kinneret  
The group are planning to stay at the 4-star King Solomon Hotel in Netanya on a half-board basis

Please note that there will be walking involved and it is important that you are able to walk independently  
If you wish to go on this trip, please fill in the form enclosed with this issue of the Journal

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

**Estelle Brookner, Secretary  
AJR Social Services Dept  
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## Obituary

### Rachel Hastings (née Ancona), 1920-2007

The death of Rachel Hastings, in the Marie Curie Hospice, recalled the years 1943-45, when her faith and identity also had to 'die', and be hidden from Fascist and Nazi rule.

Soon after Rachel's birth in Aleppo, Syria, her father, a banker, moved his family of nine children to Jerusalem for religious and financial reasons. Here, Rachel, still a little girl, lost her mother.

The 1929 Arab uprising prompted their father to transfer his family and business to Brussels. In Brussels, Rachel's talents unfolded: her flair for languages – English and French – her gift for dance and music, and a taste for practising her culinary skills at family meals, assisted by her French stepmother 'Tante Esther'.

Rachel's father relocated his business to Alexandria but, with the failure of his banking interests, she was transported yet again, this time to Milan, where in 1938 an unsuccessful bid was made to include her in the US immigration quota for New York. She turned inwards, rehearsing her beloved ballet at night in occupied Fascist quarters. In 1940 she and her sisters, Olga and Vicky, were drafted for work in a box-making factory. Unable to withstand the menial

drudgery and the bombing raids, Rachel suffered a breakdown.

In 1943, seeking refuge in Ferrara, Rachel was given shelter in an evacuated Jewish house by Umberto Antolini, an electrician employed by a touring ballet with which she had worked. She learned from him that her sisters had been sent to Auschwitz. Her 'saviour' was to be recognised as a Righteous Gentile by Yad Vashem.

In 1945 Rachel returned to the family home in Milan, which she found occupied by strangers with her belongings stolen by 'neighbours'.

Rachel's final displacement occurred in 1947. Working as an interpreter for the British Air Force, she found stability with Norman, an English private who 'shipped' her to Liverpool. Here, the Jewish-Christian dimension to her existence emerged yet again, to settle a mixed marriage. She applied her gift for languages to teaching French and Italian, her love of cuisine to nourishing a sacred family cluster, and her wonderlust to rambling through Merseyside until the age of 85.

Asked where she came from, Rachel would always reply in her melodious 'foreign' accent that she was French. She

died 'pianissimo' in a still, minor key, but her life gave out a pulsating spirit of light that flooded all who came within its beam. She leaves two proud sons, Albert and Gordon, his wife Margaret, and two beloved grandchildren, Jennifer and Fiona.

Albert Hastings

My wife and I knew Rachel Hastings as a staunch attendee of the Liverpool AJR group. At times, she brought her ailing sister to the meetings and members admired her for the way she looked after her.

Our personal friendship with Rachel was reinforced by the fact that we were the only two from Liverpool to be invited to St James's Palace on Holocaust Memorial Day 2005, Rachel as a 'Survivor in Hiding' and I as a 'Liberator', having worked in Theresienstadt during the typhus epidemic. Rachel was a great help to me due to my impaired mobility.

Rachel was petite, always smiling and uncomplaining, and ready to give help where needed. Her walk was light-footed, betraying her ballet-dancing career. She will be fondly remembered by her friends.

Eric Strach

### Search Notices

Did you live in Berkshire or Buckinghamshire before, during or after the war? If so, please call me, Rabbi Jonathan Romain, on 01628 671 058 or email me at rabromain@aol.com I am writing a history of the Jews in the area, particularly those settled with local families after coming to the UK on the Kindertransport or those evacuated from London during the Blitz.

I am writing a book on what German and Austrian refugees did in the British Forces from the end of the war until their demobilisation. Many returned to Germany for de-nazification work etc. If you served in the British Forces then as an 'enemy alien', pls contact me ASAP: Dr Helen Fry, 38 Temple Gardens, London NW11 0LL.

Klara Koch (née David), b. Nieder Wollstadt 19.05.1883, came to Manchester in 1939. She lived in the German-Jewish home at 7 Amherst Road, Fallowfield from 1950 to her death in 1958. Any info about her friends there or her husband or son Eugen Koch, born 1.11.1906 died aged 17, pls to Prof Miriam E. David at M.David@ioe.ac.uk

I require information for a book on Kristallnacht in the Eifel region: Euskirchen, Mechernich and Kommern, Kall, Gemünd, Schleiden, Blumenthal and Hellenthal and surrounding area. Personal reminiscences of contemporary witnesses are requested for the volume, to be

published in 2008 by Helios Verlag, Aachen. Documents and photos will be treated in confidence and returned promptly. Please contact urgently Hans-Dieter Arntz, Hasenhecke 16, D-53881 Euskirchen, tel (0)2251 61900, or email hans-dieter-arntz@gmx.de

My father Walenty Widla was born 19.02.1900 in Zabierzow, Poland. The son of Andrzej and Kataryna, he and his wife Anna lived in Warsaw. He was last seen 20.08.1944, then was probably transported to Sachsenhausen or Neuengamme. If you have any info about my father or my relatives, pls contact me, Pawel Plodzick, on p.plodzick@wp.pl

### ARTS AND EVENTS DIARY – JANUARY

Mon 7 Gerald Holm, 'Sibelius (d. 1957) and his Symphonies' Club 43

Mon 14 Ralph Blumenau, 'The Roots of German Democracy' Club 43

Wed 16 Prof Ginette Vincendeau, 'Au Revoir Les Enfants: Personal Memory and National History', FilmTalk, Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. Tel 020 7580 3493

Thur 17 Lodge Meeting at Kenton Synagogue Hall. Baroness Miller of Hendon MBE, 'Life in the House of Lords',

B'nai B'rith Jerusalem Lodge, 8.15. Tel Tom Heinemann on 07973 137 718

Mon 21 Prof Michael Alpert, 'Jews in the Spanish Civil War' Club 43

Tues 22 8th Annual Glasgow University Holocaust Memorial Lecture: Lawrence Douglas (Professor of Law, Jurisprudence and Social Thought at Amherst College, Massachusetts), 'Shattering Nuremberg: The Holocaust and the Law's Response to Atrocity' Western Infirmary Lecture Theatre, University Place. 6.15 pm; Tea

from 5.30 pm. Lecture co-sponsored by AJR

Mon 28 Dr Charmian Brinson, "'The Last Citadel of Free German Research and Learning in Europe": The Freie Deutsche Hochschule in Wartime Britain, 1942-46' Club 43

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

Michael Newman is away



## LETTER FROM ISRAEL



### The spirit of romance is not yet dead, it would seem – not even in Israel

In this age of cynicism and computers, when the younger generation seems to have lost its sense of innocence and seems no longer to retain any romantic ideals, the following incident serves to confound the pessimists. It constitutes a telling illustration of the lengths to which one young man was prepared to go in order to propose to his lady love in the most original and memorable way. My teenage granddaughter, who is active in Israel's Scouts, was a participant in – but not the object of – this incident, so I can vouch for its veracity.

In common with other youth movements, the Scouts in Israel play a prominent role in the lives of Israel's youngsters. The movement, which is apolitical and strives to inculcate values of independence, social awareness and responsibility, provides a framework which unites young people who live in the same area by bringing them together for weekly meetings, as well as fostering contacts between youngsters from different social and regional backgrounds at camps and outings held during the school holidays. By doing this, it cuts across ethnic and cultural barriers to forge a common bond among the many different segments of Israeli society. The vast majority of its members are of school age, though some of its paid officials and functionaries are somewhat older, having completed their military service. It goes without saying that there are close contacts between Jewish and Arab scouts in Israel, as well as between the movement in Israel and its sister-movements in other countries.

It is customary for the movement in Israel to mark important milestones, such as Independence Day or the induction of a fresh intake of nine-year-olds, with a rally involving the entire local membership. The rally itself generally

involves singing and an address of some kind, culminating in the ceremonial torching of a prepared inscription made of wire and jute. Of course, for safety reasons the inscription is set at a height which ensures that none of the participants is at risk. Considerable thought, planning and energy goes into the preparation of these occasions, which serve to heighten social cohesion and augment members' identification with the organisation.

One bright spark (pun intentional) who is active in the movement thought up a plan to use this device to propose to his girlfriend, Moran. In the strictest secrecy, and with the co-operation and hard work of about ten junior youth-leaders, an inscription was prepared in the course of several hours one Friday. That evening, when everything was ready, the young man invited Moran out and suggested that they eat at a nearby restaurant. On the way, one of his tyres developed a 'puncture'. The car came to a halt at the side of the road and the two young people got out, supposedly to attend to it.

At that moment, the young man went down on one knee and held out the ring he had prepared in advance, the signal was given and the torch was set to the inscription, which read 'Moran, will you marry me?' Moran looked up and got the message. With tears of joy in her eyes, she accepted the proposal.

The youngsters who had worked to prepare the inscription also shed tears of joy as they emerged from their hiding place and congratulated the young couple. Ever practical, they lost no time in expressing the hope that in due course they would also be invited to the wedding.

I must confess, there were tears in my eyes, too, when I heard the story.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

## Newsround

### Gravestone of Hannah Senesh moved to Israel

The gravestone of Hannah Senesh, who parachuted behind Nazi lines to help rescue Jews from her native Hungary, has been moved from a Budapest cemetery to her former home on Kibbutz Sdot Yam. Hannah Senesh was caught and executed in Budapest at the age of 23 and was originally buried in an unmarked grave in Budapest that was discovered by her mother after the fall of the Nazi regime. Her remains were moved to Israel's Mount Herzl cemetery in 1950.

### Torah returned to Cologne community

A Torah damaged during Kristallnacht has been formally presented to the Jewish community of Cologne after it was restored in Jerusalem. Gustav Meinertz, a German Catholic priest, risked his life to rescue the Torah from the synagogue and hid it under the Nazis. After the war he returned it to the city's vestigial community.

### Wiesenthal Centre launches 'Operation Last Chance'

Thousands of Nazis thought to be still hiding in South America are the target of the Wiesenthal Centre's 'Operation Last Chance'. According to the Centre, the South American phase will probably be the last major effort to locate and bring to justice Nazis in hiding scattered around the world.

### Auschwitz survivor joins Polish government

Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, 85, an Auschwitz survivor and Yad Vashem 'Righteous Gentile', has been appointed state secretary responsible for Poland's relations with Germany, Russia and Israel. Bartoszewski has been Poland's foreign minister twice since the demise of Communism.

### Jews relieved by Chavez defeat

The defeat of Hugo Chavez's referendum has eased Jewish fears in Venezuela. According to a JTA (New York) report, over half of Venezuela's Jews have left the country since Chavez came to power, while the regime's close ties to Iran and occasional antagonism towards Jews have prompted many others to make provisional plans to leave. The Venezuelan Jewish population is currently estimated at 9,000-14,000.

### Volunteer organisation launched in New York

'Volunteer', a project designed to assist homebound Holocaust survivors in New York, has had its first meeting with an attendance of over 60 people. Volunteers aim to make weekly visits to Holocaust survivors in their homes, providing them with companionship and assistance.



Association of Jewish Refugees  
SERVING HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS  
AND REFUGEES NATIONWIDE  
[www.ajr.org.uk](http://www.ajr.org.uk)

## Holocaust Memorial Day Service

*'Imagine... remember, reflect, react'*

Please join us for a Holocaust Memorial Day service at  
2pm on Thursday 24 January 2008  
at the Belsize Square Synagogue, 51 Belsize Square, London NW3

During the service AJR members will light memorial candles  
and Kaddish will be recited.

There will also be a short talk by AJR member Lilian Levy on the theme for  
Holocaust Memorial Day 2008, 'Imagine... remember, reflect, react'.

Light refreshments will be provided after the service.

- Space is limited -

To reserve a seat please complete the detachable form below and return it to  
AJR, Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL  
by Friday 11 January 2008.



Detach here

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seats for the Holocaust Memorial Day  
service at the Belsize Square Synagogue on Thursday 24 January 2008.