

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Saved by a transit visa

Surprisingly little has been written about the Jewish refugees from Hitler who reached safety in Britain on transit visas, though at least 5,000 of them were admitted in 1939, in the last desperate months before the outbreak of war. In November 1938, at the time of the 'Crystal Night' pogrom, the Nazi authorities had rounded up some 30,000 Jewish men and detained them in concentration camps. The Nazis were prepared to release detained Jews, if they had entry visas for foreign countries and would emigrate immediately.

A problem arose, however, with visas, entry certificates and travel documents that were not immediately valid: visas for America, for example, were granted according to a rigid quota system with a strict annual limit, the result being that a visa granted in 1939 might only be valid for a later year, thus delaying any possibility of emigration. But a released Jew who was not able to emigrate quickly faced the threat of re-incarceration in a camp – effectively a death sentence. In this emergency situation, the British government agreed, after negotiations with a group of leading British Jews, to admit to Britain on transit visas Jews from Germany who had a realistic prospect of re-emigrating elsewhere.

This device almost certainly saved the lives of the several thousand men admitted as 'transmigrants', plus the family members they were then able to bring to Britain, at least as many people again. Fred Pelican describes in his autobiography, *From Dachau to Dunkirk*, how he was released from Dachau in April 1939, only to be warned by the SS that if he had not left Germany within a week he would be returned to the camp, 'and this time forever'. He had a ticket for a ship scheduled to leave Liverpool for Shanghai (where no visa was required), but only on 28 October 1939; crucially, he also had the life-saving transit visa for Britain that enabled him to leave Germany within a few days.



Making music at Kitchener Camp

Like most transmigrants, Fred Pelican stayed in Britain, serving with distinction in the army. The requirement that transmigrants should re-emigrate from Britain was quietly dropped, and they assumed the same status as refugees permanently resident in Britain. In a circular sent to its members in August 1944, the AJR was able to reassure those who had arrived as transmigrants that they need not fear to fill in a form from the Jewish Refugees Committee that drew attention to their status: the clear implication was that the AJR had received assurances that there was no longer any danger that transmigrants would be obliged to leave Britain.

In 1939, Werner Rosenstock, who served as editor of *AJR Information* from 1946 to 1982, was employed at the Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland, the only major Jewish organisation still functioning in Germany after the November pogrom. He worked in the department responsible for selecting those men from the camps whose applications for transit visas would be successful, and thus he had considerable first-hand experience of the scheme.

In an article in *AJR Information* in November 1958, on the twentieth anniversary of 'Crystal Night', Rosenstock

described the desperate atmosphere of those months. He worked for a committee that chose as many emigrants as possible, provided they were under 45 and had some kind of documentation promising entry to a foreign country, from the mass of shorn-headed applicants freshly released from Nazi camps and from those still imprisoned, whose cases were pressed by their relatives. The agonising decisions the committee had to make were all too often a matter of life or death.

The view from the windows in the Reichsvertretung's headquarters in Berlin's Kantstrasse underlined the urgency of the situation: to the left was the burnt-out shell of the Fasanenstrasse Synagogue, a reminder of the November pogrom and its victims in the camps, while to the right was a station, Bahnhof Zoo, where the movements of troop trains indicated that the remaining period of peace was likely to prove short. Rosenstock paid tribute to two of the men who played a key part in the rescue work, stayed at their posts, and were later deported: Senatspräsident a. D. Richard Joachim, head of the department in charge, and Landgerichtsdirektor a. D. Walter Sprintz, chairman of one of the two selection committees. Rosenstock himself only reached Britain just before the outbreak of war.

Once in Britain, the transmigrants were housed in Kitchener Camp at Richborough, near Sandwich in Kent, a disused First World War army camp. The arrangements in Britain were organised by a committee of four leading Anglo-Jewish figures. Lieutenant-Colonel Julian Layton went to Berlin to negotiate the release of the endangered men with the Nazi authorities. Ernest Joseph arranged the accommodation. Sir Robert Waley-Cohen made the financial arrangements. The Jewish Refugees Committee was jointly responsible with the British government for financing Kitchener Camp; the total cost of the camp to the

continued overleaf

SAVED BY A TRANSIT VISA continued from page 1

Jewish community in the 18 months of its existence, from early 1939 to summer 1940, was £100,000.

Professor Norman Bentwich negotiated the immigration technicalities with the British authorities. He prevailed on the Home Office to issue blocks of permits for transmigrants, which were sent to the Reichsvertretung in Berlin, where they could be issued individually to the selected applicants for emigration. In his obituary of Bentwich, who died on 8 April 1971 aged 88, Werner Rosenstock recalled the unfailing punctuality with which the permits arrived in Berlin from Bentwich's office at the Central British Fund for German Jewry.

According to Fred Pelican, the routine at Kitchener Camp provided only a modest measure of comfort: refugees were given sixpence a week and a postage stamp for a letter home and were confined to camp, a pass being necessary for short periods of absence. But Pelican greatly appreciated the community spirit among the inmates, feeling that he had become 'part of a large family', and he enjoyed the array of entertainment on offer to inmates. He was befriended by a middle-aged British lady from Broadstairs, Mrs Joyce Piercey. The kindness of his benefactress meant a great deal to him, especially after his treatment in Dachau; he came to relish the convivial exuberance of the English seaside resorts that he was now free to visit.

The pool of talent in the camp was considerable. Organised activities included courses of study and team sports, as well as a camp orchestra, a theatrical group and a camp journal, the *Kitchener Camp Review*. When Mr E. Hearn advertised the laundry service he ran in West London in the *AJR Information* of April 1955, the journal reminded its readers that in an earlier incarnation his name had been Herrstadt and that he had entertained Kitchener Camp inmates as the magician 'Harun al Rashid'.

Herbert Freeden (Friedenthal), co-editor of *AJR Information* from 1946 to 1950, was among those accommodated at Kitchener Camp. His description of the camp, published in the journal in March 1959, dwelt on the inmates' consuming fears for their relatives back in Germany and on the insular attitudes of the inhabitants of Sandwich who, for all the warmth of the welcome they extended to the newcomers, made it plain that they expected the refugees' stay in Britain

'Wonderful Pre-Seder' at Cleve Road Centre



'I am writing in appreciation of the wonderful Pre-Seder we had at the Cleve Road AJR Centre. Rabbi Stephen Katz took the service, explaining again the well-known story in the *Haggadah*. We had a wonderful festive meal. Many thanks to Susie Kaufman and her capable and friendly staff and many thanks also to Rabbi Katz, who conducted the service so well and with lots of feeling.'

Josie Dutch

to be short. Yet Freeden also remembered the beauty of the Kent countryside with some nostalgia, and he admired the novel and daring plan that had been devised to extricate as many Jewish men as possible from the grip of the Nazis by setting up a transit station in a now forgotten spot in the south-eastern corner of England.

When war broke out, many of the camp inmates volunteered to join the two companies of the Pioneer Corps, No. 69 and No. 74, that were formed there. Writing 30 years later, in September 1969, Herbert Freeden recalled the Rosh Hashanah service that had been held in the camp after war had been declared. Rabbi Werner van der Zyl, later minister at the North Western Reform Synagogue and subsequently at the West London Synagogue, struggled to bring dignity to the improvised setting of a huge tent dimly lit in the blackout. Almost 3,000 people attended the service; Freeden imagined their prayers rising and travelling across the sea and the closed borders to meet with the thoughts and hopes of their dear ones trapped in Germany.

On 20 June 1971, a ceremony was held at the site of the former camp, at which a plaque was unveiled by Julian Layton, in the presence of a number of former inmates and staff members of the camp, the Mayor of

Sandwich and Norman Bentwich's widow, Helen. The AJR had taken charge of the arrangements. The inscription reads:

This plaque is to commemorate the Richborough Transit Camp (1939-1940) where 5,000 men found refuge from Nazi persecution on the Continent. During the Second World War most of them volunteered to fight for the Allied cause. - Erected in gratitude to the citizens of Sandwich and East Kent who, as in the past, welcomed the refugees.

Anthony Grenville

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of
THE ASSOCIATION OF
JEWISH REFUGEES
MONDAY 22 JUNE 2009
11.00 AM

at the Paul Balint AJR Centre
15 Cleve Road, London NW6

Lunch, if required, £5 payable in advance

Agenda

Annual Report 2008
Hon. Treasurer's Report
Discussion

Election of Committee of Management

All questions for the chair should be submitted by Mon 1 June to the Head of Administration at Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx. HA7 4RL.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The following members will be proposed for election or re-election to the Committee at the AGM on Monday 22 June 2009:

Mr A C Kaufman, Chairman, Mr W D Rothenberg, Vice Chairman & Hon. Treasurer, Mrs E S Angel, Secretary, Mr C W Dunston, Trustee, Mrs D Franklin, Trustee*, Mrs G R Glassman, Trustee, Ms Karen Goodman, Mrs J Millan*, Mr E Reich, Mr A Spiro*, Mr Tim Schwarz

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

Anyone wishing to propose any other member for election as Hon Officer, Trustee, or Committee member must submit to AJR's Head of Administration such a proposal signed by ten members qualified to vote at the meeting and with the signed agreement of the person being proposed no later than 1 June.

AJR Directors
Gordon Greenfield
Michael Newman
Carol Rossen

AJR Heads of Department
Susie Kaufman Organiser, AJR Centre
Sue Kurlander Social Services

AJR Journal
Dr Anthony Grenville Consultant Editor
Dr Howard Spier Executive Editor
Andrea Goodmaker Secretarial/Advertisements

Views expressed in the *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

The Budapest Judenrat and the Warsaw Ghetto revolt

With regard to the recent correspondence in your columns, in particular between Andrew Elek and M. D. Spiro, I am in no position to comment on whether the Judenrat misled the Budapest community with regard to the fate of those deported. I can, however, shed some light on events in Poland that have a bearing on this matter.

Contrary to what was believed in Budapest, the Warsaw Ghetto revolt was not triggered by news of the death camps – the fighters had known of Treblinka for some time. Nor was the destruction of the Ghetto a result of the revolt – that was inevitable. The fighters rose up when the Germans mounted their final assault on what was left of the Ghetto. The assault was timed for 19 April 1943 to coincide with the first day of Passover.

Moreover, the epic revolt was not about saving lives. Though armed, the fighters were powerless to do that. By this time, they were few in number and were resolved to go down fighting in order to save their dignity and the honour of the Jewish people. It was the first revolt since Roman times and their heroism inspired the founding of a state! Poorly armed, the Ghetto fighters held out for over four weeks and only a handful escaped through the sewers; the rest perished. Furthermore, Adam Czerniakow, the Warsaw Judenrat chief, did not commit suicide 'at the first request to hand over his brethren' as stated. He did yield to Nazi demands but, on realising he could not sate their appetite for more and more victims, he took his own life. The last entry in his diary reads: 'They demand that I kill the children of my nation with my own hands. There is nothing left for me but to die.'

M. D. Spiro suggests the Ghetto inmates could have disappeared into the general population, affording them a much better chance of survival than staging revolts. I cannot always tell whether he is referring to Hungary or Poland. The two were different. Poland was one of the worst places for a Jew to find himself in. And, contrary to what was implied, many did run in different directions, but few survived.

The process that led to their annihilation was gradual so it was possible to escape – at least in the early days – but there was nowhere to run to. Any who did run never got far unless they were lucky enough to find a brave Pole willing to accept the risk of hiding them.

But to openly pass for a non-Jew, as he refers to, was quite another matter, at least in Poland. For that you needed certain things in your favour: a Slavic appearance; the ability to speak Polish without a Yiddish accent and mannerisms that many had; and the need to be in possession of good 'Aryan' papers, though these would not stand up to Gestapo scrutiny. One also had to contend with blackmailers – *shmaltzovniks* – who roamed the streets: Poles had a bent for sniffing out Jews. And finally you needed money, and not least the guts, to pull it off. But all this would not suffice in the case of males – they carried their inescapable identity on them.

The Ghetto revolt was the first general uprising in Europe. It set the tone for the Poles the following year, when they timed their uprising to the Red Army's reaching the gates of Warsaw on 1 August 1944. This was not out of desperation, as in the case of the Jews, but recklessness, the intention being to keep the Russians out of the capital. It ended in disaster for the inhabitants, including Jews, who lost their cover.

As luck would have it, on hearing artillery fire my sister and I, posing as non-Jews, set out for Warsaw to celebrate, believing liberation was just hours away. Unfortunately, the uprising began that very day and we were caught up in the inferno, unable to return to my safe house. The Red Army halted its offensive on realising the uprising was staged by nationalists strongly opposed to them and let the Germans put it down with a savage vengeance. This prolonged the war for us by almost six months as we found ourselves on the wrong side of the Vistula, with the Russians on the opposite bank. The delay enabled the Nazis to stoke the ovens of Auschwitz until January 1945.

Rubin Katz

NEWTONS

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

French and German spoken

Home visits arranged

22 Fitzjohn's Avenue,
London NW3 5NB

Tel: 020 7435 5351

Fax: 020 7435 8881

JACKMAN • SILVERMAN

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

Telephone: 020 7209 5532
robert@jackmansilverman.co.uk

AUSTRIAN and GERMAN PENSIONS

PROPERTY RESTITUTION CLAIMS EAST GERMANY – BERLIN

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

For further information
and an appointment
please contact:

ICS CLAIMS
707 High Road, Finchley
London N12 0BT

Tel: 020 8492 0555

Fax: 020 8348 4959

Email: keylaw@btinternet.com

AJR Annual Report 2008

Highlights of the year

In 2008 we commemorated the 70th anniversary of two historical events which continue to resonate today with many of our members. In reaction to the events on Kristallnacht, the British Government agreed to admit into this country 10,000 unaccompanied children from Nazi-occupied Europe.

In November last year, the Kindertransport Committee organised the Celebration to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the British Government's decision to admit the Kinder and we were delighted to welcome HRH The Prince of Wales as the guest of honour.

Hosted by JFS, the day-long event featured speeches from luminaries such as the Chief Rabbi, Lord Janner, Lord Attenborough and the Home Office Minister, the Rt. Hon. Tony McNulty MP. The event also included a klezmer band and a panel discussion with Bertha Leverton, Edwina Currie, Lord Alfred Dubs, Lady Jakobovits and Linda Rosenblatt representing World Jewish Relief.

Sir Martin Gilbert gave the keynote address, 'The British Government, the British People and the Kinder', and recalled his visit to Lady Thatcher to discuss her recollections of the Jewish girl to whom she and her family gave a home in 1939.

The commemoration also featured a presentation from former Kindertransport Chairman Hermann Hirschberger, who gave a summarised report on the Kinder archive, featuring research data about the Kinder, their experiences before and after the Second World War, and their contribution to life in Britain.

We repeated our three-day visit to London, this time for members from the South of England, and were delighted to welcome Baroness Rabbi Julia Neuberger as our guest speaker at a dinner at the Belsize Square Synagogue. The visit included trips to the theatre and museums and a tour of London's East End.

The Annual Tea was held at the Hilton Hotel in Watford in September. Once again, it was a great success with 400 members attending a delightful event. The Garden Party, with Glenys Groves and colleagues from the Royal Opera House, entertained members with 'Favourite Operettas with Gypsy Violin'.

In March the AJR took members from all over the country to Israel for the first time. This was a very successful holiday. Members were kept busy enjoying all the sights of Israel and had free time to meet up with their families. At Yad Vashem a special presentation was made to the AJR

for their help in collecting names for that organisation's archives. We hope to arrange further holidays for our members.

Personnel and membership

After a brief tenure as Head of Social Services, Maisie Holland was replaced by Sue Kurlander, who started work in October. Sue previously worked for Jewish Care and for Jewish Family Services in the United States. She has many years' experience of working in social services.

Pritika Raghvani joined the AJR in August as an additional book-keeper to assist with the increasing work of the busy finance department.

At the end of 2008 the total membership of the AJR was 3,137, including 144 new members. Approximately one-quarter of those who enrolled last year identify themselves as 'Second Generation', while our regional groups programme continues to help us attract many new members.

Social and welfare services

Our dedicated team of social workers continues to provide sound advice and support with a range of social and welfare services for those of our members in need throughout the country.

As well as making assessments for a number of programmes to assist those members with limited means, the social work team liaises with local authorities and works closely with colleagues from other organisations serving Holocaust survivors and refugees to exchange ideas, share clients and plan the provision of future services.

The social work team are also in constant contact with colleagues working at the AJR Centre, on the regional groups programme, and at the Claims Office to continue to identify and assist any member who may be in need of our services.

The social workers also make applications to a number of programmes administered by the Claims Conference with monies negotiated from, among others, the German and Austrian governments, the Swiss banks, and European insurance companies. We also receive an allocation from the Hungarian Gold Train Settlement.

Financial assistance

The AJR, as the lead agency for the Claims Conference in the UK, is responsible for distributing grants which for 2008 totalled a record of just over \$3m. The funds are paid to clients of five charities and administered from our offices. In

total, we have made some 1,500 grants for emergency purposes. We are pleased to acknowledge the funding from the Claims Conference, which has materially improved the lives of so many of our members with the greatest needs.

There are also 350 survivors and refugees in receipt of Homecare grants with a total cost of £882,000 during the year. The Homecare programme enables the AJR to help maintain clients in their own homes for as long as possible.

Additionally, we are pleased to have paid through our Self Aid scheme £544,505 to 206 members with the greatest need during 2008. This included an increase in the monthly allowance of an equivalent of £10 per week over 2007.

Regional groups and regional get-togethers

The year 2008 marked ten years of developing the regional groups. Myrna, Susanne, Hazel and Esther, the group coordinators, together with Susan Harrod, the groups' administrator, have continued to enable members to participate in a variety of meetings, outings and other events.

We currently have 43 regional groups, with around 16 meetings most months. Many of the out-of-town gatherings consist of both lunch and a speaker. In November last year alone, 21 meetings were organised and were attended by 429 members.

Outings included visits to the Wiener Library, Kew Gardens, Hatfield House and Bletchley Park. Theatre trips included *Winton's Children* (where members actually met Sir Nicholas Winton and Esther Rantzen), *Gone with the Wind*, *Gigi* in Regents Park, and *Stealing Klimt* as part of the Jewish Film Festival.

The new groups set up this year were Temple Fortune (February 2008) and the Cafe Imperial group for AJR members who are veterans of the armed forces during the Second World War.

In July 150 members from groups throughout London met for another regional get-together at Radlett, when we were fortunate to have Esther Rantzen as our guest speaker.

We were delighted to welcome Anita Parmar from the Holocaust Educational Trust as the guest speaker at our Scotland and Newcastle get-together in Edinburgh in July. Anita gave an overview of the Trust's work devising teaching materials and working with teachers and pupils in schools throughout the country, their ground-breaking *Lessons from Auschwitz*

programme, and their BAFTA award-winning DVD *Recollections*.

Suzanne Bardgett, Curator of the Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum London, gave a presentation on the impact of the Exhibition at the Northern groups gathering in Manchester in August.

Overall attendances for group meetings rose again last year and approximately 40 per cent of our members attended at least one regional group meeting in 2008.

Holidays

The AJR holidays are still proving to be very successful. There was one Northern holiday arranged in St Annes-on-Sea where members from Glasgow, Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, Hull and London enjoyed a relaxing week. The holiday-makers were joined by members from the Northern groups during the week to enjoy a day out in St Annes.

There were also annual trips – to Bournemouth in July and Eastbourne in October – where members enjoyed very full weeks with entertainment, trips to the theatre, and outings to local places of interest.

Central Office for Holocaust Claims

The Claims Office assisted with enquiries following Hermann Hirschberger's successful campaign for the improvement of pensions paid to certain Kinder.

Advice and assistance were also given on payments from the Austrian General Settlement Fund and the Euro 100m Fund created by the German Government to make gesture payments to Holocaust survivors who worked in ghettos.

Although the deadlines for most compensation and restitution programmes have expired, the Claims Office continues to help with enquiries on pensions, dormant bank accounts, outstanding insurance policies and lost properties.

Volunteers

Volunteers continue to play an important role in the life of the AJR. During the past year, befrienders have continued to visit our more isolated and lonely members, offering them company and support. We have also consolidated our association with Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, arranging for four students from Poland and Germany to act as befrienders for our members.

AJR are very fortunate to have so many loyal volunteers. Over 15 per cent of our befrienders have been visiting for over ten years and a further 20 per cent for over five years. We continue to attract volunteers through our members but, since the inception of the Jewish Volunteer Network (JVN), half of our new

volunteers contact us via the JVN website.

Both the AJR Centre and our regional groups continue to be supported by enthusiastic volunteers and we have a new partnership with Hasmonian Girls School in which some of their sixth-formers offer a manicure service at the AJR Centre.

At the offices in Stanmore we are fortunate to have volunteers who offer invaluable administrative support as well as support with the translation of documents.

AJR Journal

The *AJR Journal* maintained its blend of regular features, including historically-oriented leading articles, correspondence columns, reviews (books, cinema, theatre, exhibitions, music), group reports, and the Letter from Israel column.

In thought-provoking leading articles, Consultant Editor Dr Anthony Grenville tackled a variety of political and cultural subjects relevant to readers' lives and experience. An article which evoked an exceptional response was "'Underpaid, Underfed and Overworked": Refugees in Domestic Service'.

The correspondence columns were as lively as ever. As previously, the subject of the Middle East conflict provoked the most passionate debate.

Gloria Tessler's Art Notes column was as always authoritative, while Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's Letter from Israel presented a fascinating everyday perspective of life in that country.

Occasional contributor Peter Phillips had the knack of raising provocative subjects such as 'God on Trial'. Humour too was well represented – predominantly in recollections by Victor Ross.

Poignant memoirs by readers were also a popular feature. A special anniversary, covered in depth, was November's Kindertransport Celebration.

AJR Centre

The Centre continues to serve freshly prepared, three-course kosher lunches three days a week and to provide a range of entertainment for our members.

As well as preparing the Tea at the Belsize Square Synagogue to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, the Centre held coffee mornings before the Israel, Eastbourne and Bournemouth holidays, while the Luncheon Club and Kinder Lunches continued to be well attended.

We were delighted to welcome two speech therapy students from University College London who spent three months with us as part of their course, as well as a German and a Norwegian student to work with us.

We introduced a music and movement class and a new exercise class together with our keep fit class, which is proving

to be very popular, as is the loyal chiropodist, while the clothes sale still proves successful.

We welcomed a group of members for lunch as part of their three-day visit to London which was enjoyed immensely and, for the first time, we introduced a pre-Seder Lunch which was very well attended. The year ended with a Kindertransport Chanukah Tea Party, and a lunch party for the rest of our members.

We use a local mini-cab company extensively. We are bringing in and taking home many more of our members, as they are now less mobile. The year 2008 saw more members requiring our meals-on-wheels service and we obtained compartmentalised containers which are much easier for our members to handle.

Kindertransport

As well as organising the 70th anniversary Celebration, the Kindertransport Committee continued to produce the ever popular *Newsletter*. The Kinder continued to sell out their monthly luncheon meetings – including those with guest speakers – at the AJR Centre as well as the special Chanukah Party.

Refugee Voices and education

Agreements were reached with the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris and the Wiener Library for them to acquire *Refugee Voices*, the AJR's audio-video Holocaust testimony collection. Information about the archive was circulated to institutions both in the UK and abroad and Michael Newman delivered presentations about the project at meetings of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research.

The AJR Charitable Trust (AJRCT) continued its support of the AJR Holocaust Memorial Books, giving a grant towards the production of the South Yorkshire and The Midlands book, the fifth publication alongside editions for Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Newcastle.

The AJRCT also gave a grant towards Yad Vashem's annual Yom Hashoah commemoration and supported events to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.

Despite a membership with an average age of 85 we continue to be a thriving organisation, assisting our members throughout the country as well as attracting many new members. Our dedicated staff continue to demonstrate their commitment to ensuring that we are able to provide for our members in order that they may enjoy a more comfortable life.

Andrew Kaufman
Chairman, Association of
Jewish Refugees

Report of the Treasurer 2008

The year 2008 has been a very difficult one financially for the AJR. We have been affected, as have so many other institutions and investors, by the world financial crisis. For us, that means that not only have we made significant losses on our investment portfolio despite the best efforts of our investment managers, but, equally importantly, our income from our liquid resources has fallen. That is because interest rates were falling throughout 2008 and we are continuing to suffer from a further fall in 2009. Whilst the reduction in the value of our investments has no significant impact on our income, the fall in interest rates has an immediate effect on what we have to spend on our welfare and other programmes.

On a brighter note, our receipts from the Claims Conference – both on its own behalf and as distributor of funds on behalf of various bodies and governments for the assistance of Holocaust survivors and refugees – have been maintained and even increased, and we have benefited further from the fall in the value of sterling against US dollars and euros in which these receipts are denominated.

These funds are received via the Umbrella Group on which we are represented and on which bodies acting across the entire spectrum of Jewish life in Britain work harmoniously together.

Despite our financial setbacks, we have been able to maintain, and in many cases increase, the assistance we can give to our needy members. Our object is to ensure that refugees and their dependants can live in dignity and comfort. We are still finding individuals and their families throughout Britain who qualify for such help. Our thanks particularly to those far-flung regional groups who have been active in bringing the AJR to the attention of those who previously were unaware of our existence. It is thanks to the work of Michael Newman, who has organised these groups, and our loyal and hard-working social workers that our welfare work continues to be of the highest standard. We are grateful to all of them not only on our own behalf but also on behalf of our many members for whom they care.

Where members are considering making a new will, I would ask you please to consider a legacy to the AJR Charitable Trust. We give special thanks to those of our members who have already provided such legacies to us in their wills. These are (apart from our investment income) the main source of the money without which we could not carry on with our vital work.

I want particularly to commend the efforts of all our staff, and my special thanks to Gordon Greenfield who has done an excellent job as Director of Finance.

David Rothenberg, Treasurer,
Association of Jewish Refugees

Finance Report

AJR – Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31st December 2008

Income:	2008		2007	
	£	£	£	£
Membership/Donations and Legacies	78,600		84,456	
Other	4,410		5,323	
		83,010		89,779
Less:				
Overhead Expenses				
Salary Costs	56,691		66,872	
AJR Journal	52,704		54,487	
Administration/Depreciation	52,432		27,186	
		161,827		146,545
(Deficit)/Surplus:		-78,817		-56,766

Summary of Balance Sheet at 31st December 2008

	2008	2007
	£	£
Current Assets	88,047	167,316
Less: Current Liabilities	1,996	2,448
	86,051	164,868
Represented by:		
General Fund	164,868	221,634
Net deficiency for the year	-78,817	-56,766
	86,051	164,868

David Rothenberg, Hon. Treasurer 01/04/2009

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE Summary figure for the year ended 31st December 2008

Income:	2008		2007	
	£	£	£	£
Takings – Day Centre and meals-on-wheels	80,858		74,871	
Less outgoings:				
Salaries	93,753		96,666	
Catering costs	190,285		178,497	
Sundry expenses	81,904	365,942	93,843	369,006
Deficit funded from Charitable Trust		285,084		294,135

AJR CHARITABLE TRUST – Summary Income and Expenditure Accounts Year ended 31st December 2008

Income:	2008		2007	
	£	£	£	£
Gift Aid/Donations/Claims Conference	710,630		527,190	
Investment income	632,818		644,124	
Sheltered housing	29,246		35,145	
		1,372,694		1,206,459
Legacies	607,001		1,180,090	
	1,979,695		2,386,549	
Less outgoings:				
Day Centre	285,084		294,135	
Self Aid, Homecare and Emergency Grants	1,008,253		849,256	
Other organisations	283,072		243,390	
Administration/Depreciation	1,069,966		1,072,982	
	2,646,375		2,459,763	
Surplus/-Deficiency on realised and unrealised investments		-3,851,085		114,875
Net Movement in Funds		-673,209		7,681
		-4,524,294		122,556

LILY FREEMAN

invites all her friends to the opening of her exhibition 'HAPPY PAINTINGS' in Oils and Water Colours
7 May – 6-8.30 pm
at Hampstead Museum, Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3
until 17 May inclusive, 12-5 pm
Saturday by appointment
(closed Sundays and Tuesdays)

HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

Sunday 12 July 2009 –
Sunday 19 July 2009
INN ON THE PROM
(formerly known as THE FERNLEA HOTEL)
11/17 South Promenade, St Annes
Tel 01253 726 726
The cost, including Dinner, Bed and Breakfast, is £550 per person
The hotel charges a supplement per room for sea view or deluxe room
Book early to avoid disappointment
Booking form – contact Ruth Finestone on 020 8385 3070 – 07957 665468

JEWISH MUSEUM LONDON

Volunteer your time – bring Jewish history to life

This autumn sees the relaunch of the Jewish Museum London after a £9m building project. Volunteers will help us provide visitors with the best possible experience.

Our visitors really value hearing firsthand experiences and it would be great for AJR members to be stewards in our religion, history and Holocaust galleries. You will have the opportunity to meet visitors in an informal and personal way and would be ideal ambassadors of the museum.

For information contact
esther.nelkon@jewishmuseum.org.uk
or telephone 8371 7361.

WANTED TO BUY German and English Books

Bookdealer, AJR member, welcomes invitations to view and purchase valuable books.

Robert Hornung
10 Mount View, Ealing, London W5 1PR
Email: hornungbooks@aol.com
Tel: 020 8998 0546



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

'UNDERPAID, UNDERFERD AND OVERWORKED'?

Sir – 'Underpaid, underferd and overworked'? Indeed. Your series of articles recently highlighted the plight of refugee girls. What about the boys?

They were often equally underferd, religiously brainwashed and shamefully neglected and left to their own devices when looking for some modicum of education, training or work. The little 'Blue Book' given to us on arrival in this country by the Refugees Committee left little doubt as to our future prospects in this country:

'One of the cares of the Jewish Committee will be the training of young people for occupations useful to them, and their neighbours, overseas. The training will be mainly: For boys – Agriculture and Handicrafts; For girls – Nursing and Domestic Service.'

'Please do not expect these young people to be trained as doctors, dentists, lawyers, professors, etc ...'

'The example of Palestine shows what miracles manual labour can accomplish ...'

The intention of the Jewish Refugees Committee was clear enough. They intended us to be a compliant 'Lumpen-proletariat' for use overseas – Palestine was as good as any destination as long as we did not remain in this country to cause them embarrassment or expense.

E. G. Kolman, Greenford, Middx

REREADING THE READER

Sir – My own rereading of *The Reader* has led me to believe that Hanna's illiteracy is symbolic of the inability of many of her generation to 'read' the signs of the Nazi times and indeed to face up to their past. Through the court's judgement she is not a victim of a miscarriage of justice but of her own shortcomings and failings. Far from being exculpated, she is shown as a morally weak supporter and collaborator who became guilty due to her generation's 'lack of human orientation', as Ralph Giordano put it. She is morally, as well as linguistically, illiterate.

Hanna's obsession with cleanliness and orderliness is not just a personal trait. The ridding of Germany of the 'contaminants' – Jews, Gypsies, the incurably sick, the work-shy and a-social, liberals, democrats, communists, pacifists, socialists, intellectuals, etc – was a measure of hygiene, a cleansing action, an attempt to bring about strength through homogeneity, order, discipline and certainty. Her comment that the release of the people in the

church would have led to an uncontrollable situation, to chaos, is thus significant.

Jurgen Schwiening

Market Bosworth, Warwickshire

Sir – In his patient and fair discussion of *The Reader*, Anthony Grenville omits one of its crucial and, unfortunately, winning ingredients – its element of soft-porn, for instance near the beginning of the book, when Hanna Schmitz bathes the young boy. This combination of soft-porn and the Holocaust makes the book particularly offensive.

Nicholas Jacobs, London NW5

SIR NICHOLAS WINTON – THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Sir – I do not want to get into a slanging match with Bea Green over her letter regarding Sir Nicholas Winton (December 2008). However, I must repeat that I found her remarks highly derogatory towards him and so did all those with whom I discussed them. I am therefore delighted to hear (April 2009) that she intended to praise him.

Tom Schrecker

Val d'Isère, France

TRIBUTE TO THE GIRL GUIDES

Sir – It may not be generally known that the Girl Guides were also involved in bringing Jewish children to England. I was one of the lucky ones they helped, though I don't know of any others. Because I had been a guide in Vienna my mother approached the Girl Guides Association in London to help find a home for me. They were able to find the most wonderful foster-mother. The situation was perfect: they lived in the vicinity of the Quaker school where my brother had just arrived as a boarder and I would be able to go to the same school as a day-girl.

At the age of 13, I was sent to England on my own on the assumption that the Guides would take care of me – which indeed they did. On arrival at Victoria, I was met by one of their senior officers, who took me to stay at the house of one of her colleagues, where I stayed the first two days. So keen to be helpful, they insisted on showing me some of the sights of London before dispatching me to Middlesborough, my final destination, in the care of a kind Jewish lady who appeared to know about other refugee children.

The Guides Association continued to take an interest in me, provided me with regular pocket money, and sent me very nice presents at Christmas and on my birthday. I remained in regular contact with one of them. They found me a pen-

friend in London and when, after my first year at an English school, arrangements were made for me to transfer to Scotland, where my parents had arrived in the meantime, I was invited to two of their summer camps. I made good friends among the Guides in various places where I came to live and they were helpful in enabling me to integrate.

Eva Frean, London N3

'GOD ON TRIAL'

Sir – Mrs Stern's explanation (April) as to why 'Orthodox rabbis don't want to share a platform' with Progressive rabbis evoked a minute of anger, then one of incredulity and finally pity. Perhaps such ignorance and venom that she displays would be better marked by silence, yet I feel compelled to respond.

For over 60 years I have been privileged to know many rabbis from Orthodox and Progressive communities, but never any who 'don't believe in anything, not even in G-d'. As to converting 'non-Jews', I cannot envisage how one can convert to Judaism someone who is already a Jew unless it be from gas to electricity. As the Board of Deputies of British Jews person currently charged with furthering interfaith relations, I would hope, and even pray, that Jews from every 'branch' would have, and show, respect for each other's perception of their heritage. Certainly, Hitler and every anti-Semite would not regard their differing points of view as a hindrance to persecution.

Yes, there are fundamental differences between Orthodox and Progressive Jews. An agreement to share a platform does not imply that those who do so agree with others on that platform. It does, however, presume a preparedness to share views, to learn from each other, in friendship and with tolerance. Such is surely the right road to our survival as Jews, just as those of all faiths and beliefs talking with each other holds the key for all of us to live together in harmony and peace.

I cannot claim that what I have written are the words of G-d. But I do believe that such would be His will, and would ask your correspondent to take a deep breath and heed them.

Jack Lynes, Pinner, Middx

Sir – 'Shallow', 'callous', 'muddled', 'ill-informed' – that's what Mrs M. Stern called me in her letter in your April edition. Coming from her, I consider these words compliments. She continued in her diatribe to say that 'Progressive "rabbis" ... don't believe in anything, not even in G-d', that they 'convert non-Jews left, right and centre to their pseudo-religion', and that it is 'No wonder Orthodox rabbis don't want to share a platform with them.' Mrs. Stern, you are very biased, and that is the nicest word I can call you. I am sorry to belong – in theory if not in practice – to the same religion as you.

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts

continued overleaf

LETTERS *continued***'ANTI-ISRAEL STANCE' OF GOVERNMENT**

Sir – Why all the surprise at the government's anti-Israel actions and stance (*Jewish Chronicle*, 27 March)? There is an election to come in the near future and the Prime Minister and his government know there are very many Muslim votes out there to be garnered. Incompetent they may be – but stupid they are not. By taking an anti-Israel (and, by definition, an anti-Semitic) stance, they are more likely to persuade these people to vote for them. All this while paying lip service to being concerned for the safety and welfare of the Jewish population of the UK. If it were not so sad and serious it would make me laugh!

Mrs E. Holden, London N14

'FAILURE OF A REVOLUTION'

Sir – I enjoyed Anthony Grenville's article 'Failure of a Revolution' (March), in which he skilfully traces the history of German and Austrian Social Democracy and their links with England. I would like to draw attention to an interesting and important figure, Ernst Toller, an ardent socialist who also had to flee from Germany in 1934 and lived in London for nearly three years.

Toller was a famous German-Jewish dramatist whose work achieved a popularity almost unprecedented in England for a German writer. His autobiography appeared in English translation and was reviewed in publications such as *The Times Literary Supplement* and the *New Statesman*. He engaged in public debate with H. G. Wells and was translated by W. H. Auden. In short, he was soon scarcely less of a celebrity than he had been in Germany, where he was condemned to a lengthy prison sentence for having been the commander-in-chief of the short-lived Bavarian Soviet Republic.

Toller spoke also on literary subjects. In a lecture at Manchester University on 'The German Theatre Today', he discussed the stylistic innovations of Expressionism and the opposition by right-wing political ideology which denounced all modern experiments as cultural Bolshevism.

The time Toller spent in Britain was crucial for the development of his political views, in particular on socialism, pacifism and the 'Jewish question'. His revolutionary experience in Germany taught him that force was inevitable, that pacifism was incompatible with political action to defend freedom. Admitting the inadequacy of socialism, the eponymous hero of *Hinkemann*, a symbol of the Jew, rejected by society, says this to himself in a visionary Expressionistic interlude: 'You have always suffered, in every society, in every age and, marked by a dark fate, you will still have to suffer even when, in some bright future, a socialist society has been established.'

While in England, Toller also wrote *No*

More Peace, in which the dictator of Dunkelstein, Cain, appeals to the racism of the population, calling for purity of blood and forbidding marriage with foreigners. Like Hitler, he does not need to force his will on his people: they willingly support his policies. Toller is, of course, foretelling Hitler's rise to power and the eventual Holocaust. This play was produced in the West End, where it was a failure. It was time to leave Britain. In 1936 he went to America, where he was even less successful and where he committed suicide. There is no plaque on 1 Lambolle Road, Hampstead, to commemorate the fact that Toller lived there.

Dr Andras Herskovits, London W8

'THE KING'S OWN LOYAL ENEMY ALIENS'

Sir – In recent reviews Dr Helen Fry has rightly been praised for her literary output, but, if it is suggested that she was the first to write at length about the contribution of German and Austrian refugees in the British forces, that is hardly fair. The term KOLEA (the 'King's Own Loyal Enemy Aliens') was, I think, coined by the late Peter Leighton-Langer, whose important work on the subject appeared in Germany in 1999. The first English work on the subject was probably a book by Professor Norman Bentwich, *I Understand the Risk*, which appeared in 1950.

*Francis Steiner,
Deddington, Oxfordshire*

SUPPING WITH THE DEVIL

Sir – I refer to Mr Spiro's letter in your March issue. I don't hold a brief for Samu Stern, but to make him responsible for the loss of thousands of lives, I find somewhat wide of the mark.

Stern was appointed head of the Judenrat in Budapest by the Germans. Some four-fifths of Budapest Jews survived the Holocaust. This may not have been Stern's doing, but he could claim credit for helping to achieve a higher survival rate than was the case elsewhere. Taking his own life would hardly have helped anybody.

I am afraid we cannot get away from the fact that those of us, even teenagers, who were not blinded by misguided Hungarian patriotism knew sufficiently well what going to a 'humanitarian labour camp' meant and those who did not want to believe the evidence of thousands of Eastern refugees – or, more likely, thought they were superior – were unlikely to have been convinced by Stern's – or anybody else's – words.

As a practical point, it would have required one-half of all Hungarian gentile families to take in one Jew each to save all the Jews in Hungary. Before Kasztner rescued me and my family, we twice stood at night on a street corner waiting for 'friends', who took our money, to take us in, only to have to slink back to our ghetto house at day-break. One only has to 'enjoy' a current Budapest demonstration

under red and white flags to realise that disappearance on any scale was not a practical proposition.

Rather than try to attach blame for these past tragic events, may I suggest it would be more productive to consider ways in which we can prevent a recurrence, something which becomes ever more likely with deteriorating economic conditions? Undoubtedly the 'new' Jew described by Mr Levy of Wembley (same issue) will help, but could we try to add to this?

George Donath, London SW1

STOLPERSTEINE UNEASE

Sir – I appreciate the feelings of Walter Wolff (March) but I object to his condescending reference to a 'small band of well-meaning people'.

I was fortunate enough to leave my home town, Stuttgart, early enough (1936) so as not to qualify for a *Stolperstein*, but when I was there last November I was shown some of the *Stolpersteine* by one of the local organisers of the project. I was deeply impressed by the sensitivity and understanding shown by this guide, and his collaborators, towards the probable feelings of the unfortunate people commemorated in this way and their descendants. To my mind, a *Stolperstein* in front of the house where my fellow-citizens – people like you and me – lived is the best possible way of ensuring that they are not forgotten. Yes, walk over these tablets, and perhaps every so often a passer-by will stumble a bit, read the inscription and remember what happened there in the dark time of the Nazis. I was much moved by the sight of these memorials and am grateful to the people involved – no longer a 'small band' – in setting them up in ever more towns, in Germany and beyond.

*Professor Ernst Sondheimer
London N6*

DER HUND MIT DER WURST

Sir – In last month's issue, my sister, Marion Goldwater, remembered my father's words to the 'Anvil Chorus'. I have another version which he sang: 'Wie kommt Spinat auf's Dach, die Kuh kann doch nicht fliegen' (usw). He was obviously a prolific poet.

Hans Danziger, London W4

WISDOM OF THE SAGES

Sir – The wisdom and perspicacity of our sages is legendary and the tradition continues unabated. Here is an example sent to me by a reliable informant from California.

Their rabbi was opening his mail one morning. Taking a single sheet of paper from an envelope, he found written on it only one word: 'shmuck'. At the next Friday night service the rabbi announced: 'I have known many people who have written letters and forgotten to sign them, but this week I received a letter from someone who signed his name ... and forgot to write the letter!'

Frank Bright, Ipswich

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

The Black Death destroyed one-third of Europe's population in the fourteenth century, but for surviving Jews a further tragedy loomed. In town after town across mediaeval Europe, the local populace turned on them, accusing them of bringing on the plague by poisoning the wells and water sources. The terrified Jews hid their precious belongings before fleeing the pogroms that followed. One thousand were killed on one day alone, 2 March 1349, in the German town of Erfurt.



Jewish wedding ring First half of fourteenth century, gold. Courtesy of The Wallace Collection. Pic © Erfurt treasure, TLDA

In 1998, in the course of building work, an exceptional hoard of some 600 items of mediaeval gold and silver was excavated near the eleventh-century synagogue in the old Jewish quarter of Erfurt. Now these items can be seen at the **Wallace Collection** exhibition **Treasures of the Black Death** (until 10 May). These poignant and personal pieces are shown with other jewellery, unearthed in the Jewish quarter of Colmar, France, in 1863.

The most exciting of the items are three earliest known Jewish wedding rings, decorated in the form of miniature houses, symbolic of both the marital home and the Temple. Given as ritual wedding gifts by the bridegroom to the bride, they are inscribed with the word 'Mazaltov' and claimed to be the only surviving Jewish wedding rings from mediaeval times. One is engraved gold opaque and translucent enamel. Another has a tiny bell (which rings!) and a single padlock. The craftsmanship is stunning in detail and delicacy.

There are double cups used in wedding ceremonies and several goblets, one tiny

enough to be a *kiddush* cup. The highly decorated silver and enamel brooches are typical mediaeval ornamentation with garnet from India, sapphires from Ceylon, turquoise and pearls. There are belts, chains and cosmetic bottles and amulets used as Jewish symbols, such as the half-moon and star. Several examples of heraldic symbols include associations with eagles, lions and leopards.

The coinage and silverware indicate a thriving and diverse economy in which Jews were protected in exchange for taxes. Some treasures may have been used as financial pledges. The remains of the Erfurt synagogue, once the site of a Nazi dance hall, will now be a museum and the treasures will shortly return there in a permanent display.

Van Dyck and Britain at Tate Britain (until 17 May) explores the seventeenth-century Flemish artist's influence on British culture, an influence due mainly to his patron, Charles I. Anthony Van Dyck, known for his equestrian paintings of the king, was an early devotee of Italian artists like Titian and introduced that southern energy into royal portraiture. Fantasy, role play and allegory lent renewed vigour to the old sterile court portraiture, while retaining the puritanism that would break out in the Civil War.

In these court paintings, Van Dyck captures the sumptuous costumes with a sensuality that vies with the tight-lipped, hollow-eyed expressions of their wearers; the women particularly appear sexless and puritanical. Charles knighted him and gave him rooms at court. In return, he was expected to provide the public face of divine rule and to present a cosy picture of royal life.

It was far from the truth. Relations between king and parliament were on the brink of collapse. Yet in one equestrian painting the king wears an other-worldly expression, while his footman gazes up at him in beatific awe. The sorrowful, aquiline structure of the king's face is surely one of our most enduring royal images.

There is a touching portrait of Charles II as a child wearing a suit of shining armour. Van Dyck pre-deceased his patron by eight years, but it was left to his successor, **Peter Lely**, to convey the more relaxed court of Charles II. The work of later artists, such as **Thomas Gainsborough** and **John Singer Sargent**, proves the enduring influence of Van Dyck's formal portraiture.

Annely Juda Fine Art

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

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

REVIEWS

'Grande Dame of Austrian literature'

**THE DARK AND THE BRIGHT:
MEMOIRS, 1911-1989**
by Hilde Spiel

Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 2007,
444 pp. paper; translated and with an
introduction by Christine Shuttleworth

The Austrian writer Hilde Spiel became a legend in her own lifetime, dubbed the 'Grande Dame of Austrian literature' (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*). In fact, her life was typical of the displaced intellectual of the twentieth century. Born in Vienna to well-to-do Jewish parents, she emigrated even before the Anschluss, arriving in London, together with her husband, Peter de Mendelssohn, in autumn 1936; while revisiting her native Vienna frequently in the post-war years, she returned permanently only in 1963. During some 25 years of emigration she created an impressive oeuvre, including novels such as *Flute and Drums* and *The Fruits of Prosperity* (originally written in English), a biography of Fanny von Arnstein, literary essays and critical works as well as numerous translations from English. Her memoirs were first published in German in two parts in 1989-90; her translator (her British-born and educated daughter) has combined the two volumes into one, but omitted nothing of note.

Spiel's memoirs have a European sweep. She moves easily between English and Austro-German culture, without losing her footing in either. She is an acute observer, revealing a keen sense of place and of the time that defines it. Her evocation of the Vienna of the 'Ständestaat' ('time of contradictions'), her impressions of wartime London and her encounter with occupied Berlin in 1946-48 – all evoke a unique historical moment.

There are also impressions of the English literary world she aspired to join. In 1937 she joined the PEN Club – an English institution neglected by the English but highly valued by literary émigrés, to whom it offered friendship, assistance 'and something that came close to a feeling of being at home'. PEN introduced her to Naomi Mitchison, Storm Jameson and Henrietta Leslie, who became a great friend. She also describes her contacts with other literary notables such as Cyril Connolly, V. S. Pritchett and, above all, Kingsley Martin, editor of the *New Statesman*, to which she became a regular contributor.

Spiel has the ability to isolate the personal moment which reveals the *Zeitgeist* in a way that the historian cannot. Visiting Kingsley Martin's home in 1945, they heard on the radio that the

continued overleaf

REVIEWS *cont. from page 9*

Americans had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Realising that this meant the end of the war, Martin observed: 'I expect you will go back to your own country now,' voicing a general assumption, but shattering her private illusion of assimilating into the English world. However, it was as a correspondent for the *New Statesman* that she first returned to Vienna – and experienced the gulf between those who had emigrated and those who had not: 'a chasm [...] that would never close again.'

Spiel's translator, her daughter Christine Shuttleworth, who is still resident in London, has served her well. While this English version is very welcome, it also prompts the question: why has it taken 20 years?

Richard Dove

Richard Dove is Emeritus Professor of German at the University of Greenwich.

A thrilling read

FREUDS' WAR

by Helen Fry

UK: *The History Press*, 2009, 240 pp. hardcover

This book, by a gifted historian of the Central European refugee community in this country, is not about Sigmund but about his son, Martin, and his grandson, Walter. Although neither changed the intellectual climate like their illustrious forbear, their adventures in two world wars make life in the Berggasse seem almost uneventful. Their letters, printed here in generous extracts, give fascinatingly detailed accounts of life at the front in the First World War and of the experience of detainees and combatants in the Second World War.

The opening chapter provides a glimpse of the lifestyle of the Freud family in the good times, with Sigmund the patriarch and Martha making the domestic wheels go round with a considerable army of helpers. The story switches to Martin at university, where he already shows bravery in defending Jewish students against their anti-Semitic contemporaries, sustaining a physical injury in the process. Nonetheless, when war breaks out, Martin doesn't hesitate to join the Austrian army. He describes in graphic detail life on the Italian front: 'The whole of the valley of the Piave was a vast swamp ... In some places men sank up to their necks ... the horses were canner and simply refused to go when the ground became too soft.'

Following the surrender of the Austrian army, Martin ends up a prisoner of the Italians. He records his weight gain after a diet of spaghetti! On his release, he

completes his legal studies and marries Esti Drucker, the daughter of a wealthy Jewish businessman. The marriage is a troubled one due to Esti's volatile temperament, but they have two children: Walter and Sophie.

Meanwhile in Austria, political storm clouds are gathering. Sigmund refuses to believe in the possibility of the barbarism that is to follow. Two of his sons who have located to Germany are more realistic and emigrate to England. Only after repeated raids by the Gestapo and the interrogation of his daughter Anna by the Nazis is Sigmund persuaded to leave the country where his great work has been achieved.

The fates of Sigmund's son and grandson are less comfortable. Like many other refugees, Martin is interned as an 'enemy alien': 'Our sufferings were mental. We had no communication with the outside world and no newspapers. We did not know what was going on outside and the last things we had heard before we were cut off were discouraging.' Rumours of a Fascist takeover of the government create an atmosphere of despair in the camp – but relief when a new camp commander permits the internees to hear the news of the Battle of Britain.

Walter's experiences are even more bizarre. Arrested while taking an examination, he was shipped to Australia on the *SS Dunera*. As is well known, conditions for the 2,000 prisoners on board the troopship were dreadful. Once arrived in Sidney, conditions improved and the camp became a mini-university. In 1941 Walter returned to England, where he joined the Pioneer Corps.

Seeking out more dangerous action, Walter joined a unit training for special operations behind enemy lines. He was sent on a mission to Austria, which was then still in Nazi hands although the Soviet army was fast approaching. Everything about his parachute drop went wrong and he became isolated from the rest of his party. But, by sheer bravery and *chutzpah*, he persuaded the mayor of the town near where he landed to take him to the airport which was his target. There, single-handed, playing on Nazi fears of Russian revenge, he persuaded the commander to surrender the airfield.

The final irony was being put up in the Nazi officers' mess, where heel-clicking and protocol were observed 'as though the nearest Russian was in Vladivostok, not fifty miles away.' He describes how one by one those present asked to speak to him privately to tell him how much they loved the Jews: 'I looked at them in their fancy uniforms, trying to smile kindly at me and doing their best to imitate an impression of civilisation. They didn't even have the guts to have me shot.'

There is much more of interest in this

narrative, which I highly recommend as a thrilling read. The book contains many family photographs, including the famous one of Sigmund with two of his sons in the uniform of the Austrian army.

Martha Blend

Invaluable personal testimony

HIS MAJESTY'S LOYAL INTERNEE:
FRED UHLMAN IN CAPTIVITY

by Charmian Brinson, Anna Müller-Härlin and Julia Winckler

London: *Vallentine Mitchell*

(www.vmbbooks.com), 2008, 166 pp. paper

In the early summer of 1940, nearly 30,000 Germans and Austrians living in Britain were interned behind barbed wire in accordance with Churchill's policy of 'Collar the lot'. Among them were some of Europe's finest brains and artistic talent. One such internee was artist Fred Uhlman, who kept a daily diary of life in internment. On 25 June he received a knock on the door from a policeman, a familiar scenario up and down Britain. Uhlman was taken to a temporary camp at Ascot before being transferred to the Isle of Man, where he was allocated to Hutchinson Camp. It was here that he mixed with fellow artists, including Kurt Schwitters and Klaus Hinrichsen, and with whom he shared a sense of betrayal at being interned.

Now published with a series of articles and letters, *His Majesty's Loyal Internee* reproduces the diary in full and provides a rare glimpse of life in captivity. It also includes his later 1979 memoir, which provides distilled reflections on his experience in the camp. Fascinating are the comments Uhlman makes about the intellectuals he mixed with and their daily cultural activities and lectures.

The diary also records the periods of deep 'sickening depression' which Uhlman suffered, often characterised by overwhelming black clouds. This was deepened by the knowledge that his wife was about to give birth to their first child, whom he did not see until the end of December 1940, when he was released. His feelings of despair are captured in the drawings he sketched during his time at Hutchinson, some of which are reproduced as illustrations in the book. There are glimmers of hope, for example in his sketch 'Untitled, Dance of Death', where the girl smiles in the face of death and is not afraid. But the fact remains that although some of the images of his work remain deeply disturbing and tragic, the book is one of the few surviving personal accounts from that period and as such is an invaluable personal testimony and record of social history.

Helen Fry

Dr Fry is the author of The King's Most Loyal Enemy Aliens: Germans Who Fought for Britain in the Second World War.

PROFILE

by
Howard Spier

LARGER-THAN-LIFE: THE STORY OF LORD PETER EDEN

Locating Lord Peter Eden's home was no problem: the enormous Bentley with its 'PE' registration in his fashionable, narrow north London thoroughfare seemed from a distance parked almost half-way into the house. Next thing I noticed – couldn't miss in fact – was the sign near the door welcoming the visitor with the distinctly unwelcoming greeting 'Oh no, not you again!' My encounter with Peter Eden was unlikely to be a dull one.

As I soon discovered, Peter Eden is a larger-than-life figure, in more ways than one: tall and imposing, genial, charming and, of course, full of humour.

What did it feel like being a lord, I asked somewhat provocatively. I got the humorous reply I was expecting: 'Oh, it's OK for booking a table in a restaurant, though nowadays you don't even need to be a lord to get a table – the restaurants are half-empty anyway!' On the subject of restaurants Peter can speak with far greater authority than most. Pushed a little further, he explained that it was precisely for his contribution to the restaurant and hotel trade that he had been honoured.

Peter was born Werner Adolf Engel in Breslau in 1921 into an affluent, middle class family. His father ran a wholesale grocery business. The large house the family lived in still stands, though converted into 11 flats.

As Hitlerism took firmer control, Peter was thrown out of school at the age of 15. 'I was never a brilliant pupil anyway,' he admits. He began an apprenticeship as an electrician, then attended an ORT course in Berlin in oxycetaline welding. In 1937 he returned to Breslau. The family business had been taken over by the authorities. In April 1939 he left for England under a guarantee given by an English couple known to his uncle living in London. He discovered after the war that his parents were among the first Jews to be transported from Breslau to Lithuania.

In Edgware Peter found a job as a welder for 30 shillings a week. Then, in May 1940, having been interned for a short while on the Isle of Man, he was shipped off on the notorious *SS Dunera* to Australia. He refuses to condemn the



British authorities for the conditions on board the *Dunera*: 'These were extraordinary days. There was panic. Bad organisation. Things can happen.' In August 1941 he returned to England on the first ship back. He joined the Pioneer Corps in Ilfracombe and was transferred to the Royal Engineers and

*'Never be sorry for
what you have done.
Only be sorry for what
you haven't done!'*

sent to Algiers and then Tunisia. At the end of the war, now bearing the name Peter Eden, he was sent after intensive training to various units in Germany, tracking down Nazi criminals and supervising security in prisons. He rose to the rank of captain.

Demobbed in 1947, Peter returned to London. He stayed with his uncle and took a job with a Jewish company of dress-makers. To this he added a job as a cleaner and then a job as his boss's driver – the three jobs totalling £10 a week.

On his boss's retirement, Peter became a traveller selling womenswear. He was a good salesman, Peter assured me. I could see no reason to doubt him. In the mid-fifties, he started up his own

womenswear company. He made and sold bikinis. Business was good.

In 1959 Peter married for the first time. He was 38. 'I married too young,' he says laconically.

In the late 1950s-early 1960s, trade in women's fashions became difficult. With a friend, Peter opened a hotel, the Hyde Park Towers. Soon he opened a bistro in Bayswater, offering a three-course meal with wine at a price just below the psychologically important £1. Eventually he was operating a chain of 14 restaurants. In 1973 he opened his first brasserie. Having acquired ownership of a total of five hotels, in 1982 he sold them off, buying in their place commercial properties. He began selling off his restaurants too. His largest brasserie was sold just a couple of years ago. Now he devotes time from an office at home to looking after his commercial investments.

Peter has been married to his third wife, Joy, for nine years though they knew each other much earlier. He and Joy do a lot of travelling, not least to their second home in Bournemouth.

Peter has two daughters. Some years ago, he made a pact with God that if his younger daughter, Tamara (his other daughter is named Vanita), diagnosed with a large brain tumour, survived, he would attend synagogue every Friday evening. Happily, Tamara did survive. Peter kept his promise. Earlier this year, Peter was one of six people who lit candles at the AJR Holocaust Memorial Day service at Belgrave Square Synagogue.

Until 17 years ago, Peter was to be seen every Tuesday ferrying members to and from the Cleve Road AJR Centre in his large car. He praises the 'marvellous' kitchen at the Centre. He very much regrets that legislation prevented him as a volunteer from carrying on this activity past the age of 75.

I put it to Peter that he really ought to write the story of such an eventful life. But he waved aside my suggestion, asking, with characteristic humour, who had any interest in women's fashions! 'It's important to have both luck and a laugh in business!', he insisted, adding: 'Never be sorry for what you *have* done. Only be sorry for what you *haven't* done!' Difficult to think of a more can-do approach to life.

INSIDE the AJR

Edinburgh 'The Jewish Museum of Berlin'



Aubrey Pomerance (seated, at right), Head of Archives at the Berlin Jewish Museum, described how the collection of 4,000 artefacts when the enlarged museum opened in 2001 had now virtually doubled. He stressed, however, that the museum was always looking for new material. In fact, over 95 per cent of all material currently on display had been donated. *Philip Mason*

Ilford: Gloom and doom at the Bank
Roger Beales of the Bank of England could offer no more intelligence to what we already knew of the current financial situation. It was all doom and gloom. He did, however, give us some tips on how to spot a dud £10 or £20 note so we learned something. *Meta Roseneil*

Next meeting: 6 May. Mid East update

Pinner: A strange affair

To an exceptionally large audience, Prof Gerald Curzon described the strange relationship between the famous philosopher Martin Heidegger and his brilliant student Hannah Arendt. At first they were lovers and a close relationship continued for 50 years (albeit on a more intellectual level), though he never renounced his Nazi past and she was Jewish. AJR Life President Ludwig Spiro gave a spirited vote of thanks before the customary fabulous tea. *Walter Weg*

Next meeting: 7 May. Sister Helen Jenner, 'Taking Care of Ourselves'

Liverpool: 'My Life in Germany during the War'

AJR member Inge Williams told us of her wartime experiences in Germany during the War. Somehow the family managed to remain in Göttingen under very difficult conditions, but in February 1945 her father was transported to Theresienstadt, where he died in May 1945 after it was liberated. Only very recently did Inge discover that her father was deported after the liberation of Auschwitz. *Susanne Green*

HGS: Waiting for the (next) messiah

Rabbi Daniela Thau gave a very well attended meeting a fascinating PowerPoint presentation on the nine major, more or less monotheistic world religions. Given that all religions preach peace and love, there is clearly a lot of work left for the Messiah – whenever he or she may come or return. *Laszlo Roman*

Next meeting: 11 May. Helen Fry, 'The King's Most Loyal Enemy Aliens'

Wembley Get-together

We had a topical discussion followed by a friendly chat and an update of personal news

among those present. All this was topped up by tea and cakes provided by Myrna. We looked forward to a joyful Pesach.

Tom Heinemann

Next meeting: 13 May. Social Get-together

South London: The rescue of Hungarian Jews

Some 20 of us heard a fascinating account by Prof Ladislaus Löb of the controversial rescue of some 1,700 Hungarian Jews under the Nazi regime. This was the first of our longer, but less frequent, meetings, including a delicious lunch and time to socialise. *Edith Jayne*

Brighton & Hove Sarid: Journey through the world of science

Dr Sam Barsam took us on a memorable journey through the world of science. We heard of, among many other Jewish scientists, the microbiologist Albert Sabin and the nuclear physicist Julius Oppenheimer. *Fausta Shelton*

Next meeting: 18 May. 10th birthday celebrations

Wessex: 'Steel and Schnaps ...'

David Lawson forged for the 22 members present the links implied in his title 'Steel and Schnaps, Sausage and Soldiers, Scrolls and Survival: The Story of Ostrava'. A lively tour of 18th-20th century Eastern Europe. *Susy Ellis*

Edgware: The story of Rezső Kasztner

Prof Ladislaus Löb told us of the part played by Rezső Kasztner in enabling 1,700 Jews to escape from Nazi-occupied Hungary to Palestine, as it then was, and of his eventual murder in Israel. *Edgar H. Ring*

Next meeting: 19 May. Stewart Mackintosh, 'From Broom Cupboard to Bush House'

Glasgow: Preserving the past

There was a particularly large turnout for our spring meeting – many members arrived early clutching plastic bags containing treasured possessions. Our speaker, Aubrey Pomerance, Head of Archives at the Berlin Jewish Museum, emphasised the importance of using these irreplaceable artefacts to help document not only the 1930s-40s but also the contribution of the German-Jewish communities to both their native country and their adopted lands. A very special afternoon. *Claire Singerman*

Essex: The Jews of England

Susannah Alexander spoke to us about the history of English Jewry from 1066, when William the Conqueror became king and he was accompanied by Jewish financiers. *Larry Lisner*

Next meeting: 12 May. Janette McCarthy, 'The Bank of England'

Radlett: Holocaust Memorial Trust

Shabna Marshall said the Trust paid particular attention to the education of young people. One of its most important activities is sending sixth-formers on a visit of Auschwitz; on their return, they become excellent ambassadors for peace and tolerance in their own communities. *Fritz Starer*

Next meeting: 20 May. 'The Pears Family Foundation' Visit to Welwyn GC Group, 28 May

Temple Fortune: The Mayor of Barnet

Barnet Mayor John Marshall gave us insight into his public life, which began in Scotland as an Aberdeen councillor followed by a

move to London, where he became an Ealing councillor. In 1979-89 he was MEP for London North and was instrumental in getting some 'refuseniks' out of the former Soviet Union. In 1987-97 he was also MP for Hendon South. *David Lang*

Next meeting: 21 May. Ben Uri Gallery Director Suzanne Lewis

Hendon: Anne Frank Trust

Rochelle Hodes told us Anne Frank's diary had been translated into 70 languages and had sold 20 million copies. The Trust promotes tolerance and fights prejudice, among many other things visiting schools and prisons. *Annette Saville*

Next meeting: 18 May. Shirley Rodwell OBE

Harrogate reports

We welcomed Arek Hersh, who greatly added to reports of experiences of long ago and more recent times. He is soon to be awarded an MBE for his work in education. Rosl Schatzberger told us of her and her husband Marc's visit to London to attend the 70th anniversary celebrations of the Kindertransport. Susanne reported on another successful Chanukah party in Shipley and informed us about forthcoming events, including the annual holiday in St Annes. We hope to meet again on Monday 1 June. *Inge Little*

Oxford: The story of Kitchener Camp

Prof Clare Ungerson explained the history and purpose of Kitchener Camp, recounting how Jewish refugees trained there after Kristallnacht. An excellent account of the camp's history appears in the April issue of the Journal, page 7. *Anne Selinger*

Next meeting: 19 May. Rabbi Daniela Thau (re-scheduled from February)

Bromley CF Social Get-together

Eva Byk was our gracious host in her beautiful home in Bickley and Hazel Beiny did her usual mothering of us. Discussions on a variety of topics became quite lively. Further activities are planned. *Robert A. Shaw*

West Midlands (Birmingham):

Reassurance from neighbourhood police

We met in the Hall at Singer's Hill as usual to listen to advice from friendly neighbourhood police representatives PC Simon and PW Toni. They were reassuringly able to calm any worries we had about the statistics of falling crime in Birmingham, in particular crimes of violence. *Fred Austin*

Next meeting: 12 May. Outing to Moreton in Marsh

Another pleasant lunchtime meeting at East Midlands (Nottingham)

We welcomed the AJR's Esther Rinkoff, our regional co-ordinator, as well as Susan Harrod, Head Office administrator, enabling us to thank her for all the work she does for members and for her to meet members outside London. Another very pleasant lunchtime meeting *Bob Norton*

Sheffield CF: The nature of fiction

At a well-attended meeting at Steve Mendelsson's home, we admired the newly published Memorial Book for South Yorkshire and the Midlands. We were impressed by the ambitious plans the Imperial War Museum North has for using the volumes in Holocaust education. In a discussion of 'The Holocaust in Fiction', the very nature of fiction proved controversial, but more discussions are planned. *Dorothy Fleming*

Next meeting: 14 June at Dorothy's home

North London: 'Women of the Bible'

Alan Cohen's presentation of 'The Theory of Art and Music' proved a most interesting subject, enjoyed by a good audience. The theme was 'Women of the Bible', his interpretation of the appropriate music to each painting.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: 21 May. Walter Woyda, 'Two by Two'

Welwyn GC: An interesting discussion

At the home of Monica Rosenbaum, we were delighted to meet Sue Kurlander, AJR's recently appointed Head of Social Services. All present enjoyed the interesting discussion and, as always, the delicious refreshments.

Hazel Beiny

Next meeting: 28 May. Visit by Radlett Group. Michael Anvoner, 'Where There's a Will'

Ealing: A quintessentially English soap

A fine turnout was enhanced by Andrea Cameron's talk on the history of Pears soap. Founded by Andrew Pears, a barber in Gerrard Street, Soho, in the 18th century, this quintessentially English soap, we learned, is now manufactured in India!

Esther Rinkoff

Next meeting: 5 May. Walter Woyda, 'Milk and Honey'

Cardiff: Magen David Adom

Our guest speaker, Eli Benson of Magen David Adom, gave us insight into the day-to-day work of this organisation. We learned, among many other things, that volunteers have a six-week intensive training programme, and that they deal not only with the effects of terrorism but also with births and diseases.

Marion Lane

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

**Cleve Road
'Two Paths to the Palace'**

Our inspirational speaker Bea Klug (front, second from left), who is almost 89 and virtually blind, told us of the two great achievements of her life: the foundation of the Wessex Healthy Living Centre in 1977 and her founding of the Anne Frank Trust UK in 1990. Bea remains the Honorary Life President of both organisations and for this work she received an MBE in 2002.

David Lang

Next meeting: 28 May. Judy Kelner, 'Desert Island Discs'

Leeds CF Purim meeting

At a very full Purim meeting, Susanne Green told us about the recent visit to London and the ceremony at the Imperial War Museum North for the presentation of the Memorial Books from Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool and South Yorkshire and The Midlands. We also had a quiz and afternoon tea.

Barbara Cammerman

ALSO MEETING IN MAY

Norfolk 12 May. Social Get-together
Bristol/Bath 14 May. Lunch. Speaker: Eli Benson of Magen David Adom
Cleve Road/ Ilford/ HGS/ Ealing 14 May. Outing to Kew Gardens
Kent 27 May. Janette McCarthy of the Bank of England

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 May 2009

Jo Baker

Fingerprint expert from
Scotland Yard

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 11 May 2009

Ruth Schneider
'Yiddish Theatre'

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

Reservations required
Please telephone 020 7328 0208

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
9.30 am – 3.30 pm

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CENTRE IS
CLOSED ON TUESDAYS**

May Afternoon Entertainment

Mon 4	CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY
Tue 5	CLOSED
Wed 6	Ronnie Goldberg
Thur 7	Mike Mirandi
Mon 11	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 12	CLOSED
Wed 13	Anita Elias
Thur 14	Michael Heaton
Mon 18	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 19	CLOSED
Wed 20	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 21	Geoffrey Strum
Mon 25	CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY
Tue 26	CLOSED
Wed 27	Gayathrie Peiris & Bill Patrick
Thur 28	TOP HAT Entertainers

'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

Members requiring benefit advice please telephone
Linda Kasmir on 020 8385 3070 to make an
appointment at AJR, Jubilee House, Merriion Avenue,
Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

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

INSIDE

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Births

Congratulations to **Hazel and Lloyd Beiny** on the birth of a granddaughter.

Congratulations to **Helena and Stephen Reid** on the birth of a second granddaughter.

Deaths

Lia Ellman née Wermuth, daughter of Feige Goldberg and Moshe Wermuth (Nestel), born Komarow, Poland, January 1922, wife of Sidney, believed sole survivor of the family during the Holocaust, sadly passed away on 8 October, 9th Tishri 2008. Beloved mother, much admired and missed by sons and grandchildren. Ever in one's thoughts.

Eric Ruschin, long-term volunteer at the AJR Centre, passed away on 27 March 2009. Sadly missed by his friend Rita Brent and all the Canetti and Sherman families.

Classified

FREE cups and saucers (London N2). Please call 020 8444 8351 before 19.00 hours.

Paul Balint AJR Centre

Chiropodist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Centre Wednesday 6 May, 10-11.30 am

Pamela Bloch Clothes sale, separates etc. Thursday 28 May, 9.30-11.45 am

SPRING GROVE RETIREMENT HOME



214 Finchley Road
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious

Entertainment - Activities

- Stress Free Living
- 24 House Staffing Excellent Cuisine
- Full En-Suite Facilities

Call for more information
or a personal tour

020 8446 2117

or 020 7794 4455

enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk

PillarCare

Quality support and care at home

- Hourly Care from 1 hour - 24 hours
- Live-In/Night Duty/Sleepover Care
- Convalescent and Personal Health Care
- Compassionate and Affordable Service
- Professional, Qualified, Kind Care Staff
- Registered with the CSCI and UKHCA

Call us on Freephone 0800 028 4645
Studio 1 Utopia Village
7 Chalcot Road, NW1 8LH

AJR OUTING TO THE MÉMORIAL DE LA SHOAH, PARIS Wednesday 9 September 2009

We are delighted to offer an opportunity to visit the *Mémorial de la Shoah*, the Holocaust Museum in Paris. The *Mémorial*, the largest Holocaust-related institution in Europe, comprises a Museum, an Archive Centre and an Education and Training Centre.

We will leave St Pancras at approx 8.30 am, returning that evening at approx 6.30 pm. Included in the price are return train travel by Eurostar and transfer by coach to and from the Gare du Nord to the *Mémorial*.

The cost will be around £75.00 but this is dependent on train availability. Bookings and full payment must be received by Tuesday 12 May 2009.

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 for further details.

DID YOU ARRIVE FROM GDYNIA ON THE WARSZAWA ON 29 AUGUST 1939?

We are looking for Kinder who arrived at London Docks on 29 August 1939, the day of the last sailing of the *Warszawa* from Gdynia.

A national paper is considering a special feature to commemorate the arrival.

For further details, please contact Andrea Goodmaker on 020 8385 3070

OUTING TO BETH SHALOM HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTRE

LAXTON, NOTTS

Sunday 21 June 2009

£25 per person including coach fare,
entrance, vegetarian buffet lunch
Coach will leave AJR offices in
Merrion Avenue, Stanmore at 8.45 am
(plenty of parking available in car park)

Booking essential

Please telephone 020 8385 3070

Colvin Home Care

Care through quality and
professionalism

Celebrating our 25th Anniversary

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



1 hour to 24 hours care

Registered through the National Care Standard Commission

Call our 24 hour tel **020 7794 9323**

www.colvin-nursing.co.uk

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household
electrical work

PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518

Mobile: 0795 614 8566

AJR HOLIDAY IN EASTBOURNE

The AJR are doing another holiday
in the Lansdowne Hotel
in Eastbourne

FRIDAY 17 JULY to FRIDAY 24 JULY

**£420 per week plus £40 per week
single room supplement**

to include transport from

**Cleve Road, lunch on outward
journey, half-board, outings and
entertainment**

**Book early to avoid
disappointment**

**Please contact Carol Rossen or
Lorna Moss on 020 8385 3070**

AJR TRIP TO ISRAEL OCTOBER 2009

Dates to be confirmed

We will be flying with El Al from Heathrow.
Alternative arrangements can be made for
members living outside London.

We will be staying at the Ramat Rachel Hotel in Jerusalem. The hotel is set in beautiful grounds with indoor and outdoor pools open all year round as well as a leisure club. There will be a full itinerary but also free time to see family and friends.

The price, in the region of £1,300, will cover return flights, transfers in Israel, half-board accommodation, and all excursions with a professional guide.

For further details please contact
Carol Rossen or Lorna Moss
on 020 8385 3070

LEO BAECK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

CLARA NEHAB HOUSE
RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

Small caring residential home with
large attractive gardens close to local
shops and public transport
25 single rooms with full
en suite facilities

24 hour Permanent and Respite Care
Entertainment & Activities provided

Ground Floor Lounge and
Dining Room

Lift access to all floors.

For further information please contact:

The Manager, Clara Nehab House
13-19 Leaside Crescent,
London NW11 0DA
Telephone: 020 8455 2286

ACACIA LODGE

Mrs Pringsheim, S.R.N. Matron
For Elderly, Retired and Convalescent
(Licensed by Borough of Barnet)

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

Between £400 and £500 per week
020 8445 1244/020 8446 2820 office hours
020 8455 1335 other times
37-39 Torrington Park, North Finchley
London N12 9TB

OBITUARIES

George Clare, 1920-2009

My father George Clare was born Georg Klaar in Vienna on 21 December 1920, the only son of a family of assimilated and patriotic Jews. His early life was chronicled in his book *Last Waltz in Vienna*, which is considered a seminal work of Holocaust literature and won the 1982 W. H. Smith Book Prize. He wrote it as a memorial for his parents – to pull them out of the anonymity of the Holocaust – and for his children – that they should know their history.

George and his mother Stella escaped to Ireland in 1938 thanks to the help of their friends, the Hirsch family, who were opening a ribbon factory there, where George worked for a time. His father, Ernst, a banker, got out to France.

The central tragedy of George's life is that when his father phoned him to ask if he should try to get to Ireland or whether

Stella should come to France, they both agreed she should join him in France, a country they loved. Sadly, from there they were both eventually deported to

Auschwitz. George found out only years later that his mother's name was not on the list – she chose to go with her husband.

George came to Britain in 1941 and joined the army, serving in the Pioneer Corps and eventually the Royal Artillery. At the end of the war he worked with the Allied Control Commission, who 'de-nazified' artists including the conductor Furtwängler and a troupe of midgets from the Berlin circus! This era was chronicled in his second book, *Berlin Days*.

After the war George got a job as a



journalist at the *Manchester Guardian*. From there he went to work for the Axel Springer Verlag in Hamburg, becoming a close friend of Axel and founding the Springer Foreign News Service, the first of its kind. He became a director of the Springer Group and moved back to London to run their office here. In the 1980s, he retired to Suffolk, where he continued to write and lead the life of an English country gentleman. He and his wife returned to London four years ago as his health deteriorated. In 2005 he was granted an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Galway for his literary achievements.

For a man whose family was destroyed George leaves behind four children, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren – not a bad testament! He died peacefully at the Royal Free Hospital, London on 26 March 2009. The cremation was held at Golders Green Crematorium on 8 April 2009.

Sylvia Voysy

Frank Henderson, 1916-2009

Frank Henderson was born Friedrich Hirschfeld in the German town of Gotha. In 1938, because he was a Jew, he was expelled from Berlin University, where he was studying law. Returning to his hometown, he found it impossible for Jews to obtain work. Following Kristallnacht he went into hiding with his family, often living for days without food.

Friedrich's father Yaakov decided to sell all his possessions to buy visas for his four sons. He was, however, unable to buy visas for himself and his wife Hermione. He died at Auschwitz, Hermione at Theresienstadt.

Meanwhile, Friedrich had set sail for England and his brothers for Australia, Sweden and Argentina respectively.

Arriving in Manchester in 1939, Friedrich was sent to a displaced person's camp in Bury and later to the Cassel Fox Jewish refugee hostel in Upper Park Road, Salford.

He was given the option of being interned in the Isle of Man or joining the British army. He chose the latter, where he was advised to change his name to Frank Henderson.

Having served in the Pioneer Corps at Dunkirk and in Normandy, while on leave Frank met Viennese refugee Dorothea Roth, who was living in a home for Jewish refugee girls in Salford. They married within six months.

After the war Frank became an interpreter for German prisoners and interpreted at the Nuremberg Trials. Later he began work as a toy salesman. He eventually established a successful leather goods

wholesale business.

In around 1960 Frank learned about German compensation for Nazi victims and their survivors. Having successfully claimed for himself and his brothers, he devoted his spare time to helping others achieve the same.

His son George recalls: 'He decided to devote as much of his spare time as possible to helping people who could not manage to make claims for themselves. For more than 40 years he helped hundreds of people. He had great satisfaction in fighting and winning his clients' compensation cases. There are many people around today – dayanim, rabbis and lay people, some of them well into their 80s – who survive on the pensions he claimed for them.'

Frank's other passion was singing. From the age of ten he had been a member of the choir of Berlin's Great Synagogue. In Manchester, he was one of the first to join Fabian Gonski's choir at Higher Crumpsall Synagogue, where he was a regular attender until it became too far to walk from his Salford home. He was also a member of the Manchester Jewish Male Voice Choir.

Frank is survived by his son George; daughters Ruth Finestone, an AJR social worker, and Judith Abbey; and brother Joachim of Australia.



ARTS AND EVENTS DIARY MAY 2009

Until 10 May Treasures of the Black Death Gold and silver jewellery found at Colmar in the nineteenth century and at Erfurt in the 1990s. The jewellery was buried at the time of the Black Death in the mid-14th century, almost certainly by Jewish families. At Wallace Collection, London W1, tel 020 7563 9500

Mon 4 No lecture (Bank Holiday) Club 43

Sun 10 B'nai B'rith Jerusalem Lodge. 12th Annual Interlodge Supper Quiz. At Middlesex New Synagogue, 6.45 pm. Contact Sheila Hart

Mon 11 Jens Brüning, 'Der internationale Alleswisser Paul Marcus (Alias PEM): Feuilletonist und Kritiker, with Readings' (in German) Club 43

Tues 12 Anton Pelinka, 'Changing Minds and Building Institutions: Political Developments in Austria since 1945' At Austrian Residence, 7.00 pm. Tel 020 7636 7247. Wiener Library/ Austrian Embassy Lecture and Discussion Series

Thur 14 Prof Atina Grossman, 'Close Encounters: Jews, Germans and Allies in Occupied Germany' At Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. Tel 020 7580 3493. University of Sussex Centre for German-Jewish Studies Lecture Series

Mon 18 Ken Baldry, 'Arnold Schoenberg: The Father of Nasty Music' Club 43

Thur 21 B'nai B'rith Jerusalem Lodge. Raymond Sturgess, 'Life at the English Criminal Bar'. At Kenton Synagogue Hall, 8.15 pm

Mon 25 No lecture (Bank Holiday) Club 43

Mon 1 June No lecture (hall not available) Club 43

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



LETTER FROM ISRAEL



Demise of an institution

The demise of an institution is almost as sad as the death of a person. This is what I felt when I attended the meeting of B'nai B'rith's English-speaking Albert Einstein Lodge in Jerusalem on a cold night in December.

A handful of mainly elderly people gathered in the B'nai B'rith building to attend the lodge's 'special annual general meeting', which was in fact its final and closing meeting. Cognisant of my late father's close association with the lodge, the current committee kindly invited me to attend. The invitation was accompanied by the agenda for the meeting, the last item being the resolution 'to continue and finalise the process of voluntary liquidation of the *Amuta* (non-profit association)'.

The letter brought back memories of the days and nights my father had spent as a member, and later president, of the lodge, dealing with its day-to-day running, recruiting new members, persuading existing members to join committees, and generally making it his life's work after he and my mother moved to Israel in the 1980s.

My father once told me that his parents and grandparents had been members of B'nai B'rith in Hamburg, so I imagine he was eager to continue the family association. Consequently, when my parents moved to Jerusalem and my sister's father-in-law, the late Rabbi Joseph Rosenfeld, invited them to join the lodge, they did so willingly. They were immediately taken into its warm bosom, acquiring many 'brothers and sisters' and making many close friendships.

The B'nai B'rith organisation in Israel fulfils many functions. It extends financial and practical aid to needy groups and individuals, it provides a social and intellectual framework for its members, and it also acts as a channel whereby newcomers to Israel can be helped to integrate. As is the practice in B'nai B'rith worldwide, each

lodge is more or less independent when it comes to arranging meetings, lectures and social activities. Annual dues are paid to the head office in Tel Aviv and these are used to cover the various overheads.

The membership of the lodges for German-speaking members, which were established throughout Israel when immigrants from Central Europe first came to the country, is rapidly ageing and contracting, yet several continue to exist. The need for an English-speaking lodge in Jerusalem would seem to be as acute today as ever considering the large number of English-speaking newcomers to Israel.

But the incumbent leaders despaired of finding younger successors to take over the various committees and decided to close the Albert Einstein lodge. The process was not an easy one. Because the lodge was registered as a non-profit association it was subject to the supervision of a government-appointed regulatory body. The process involved extensive paperwork, which was attended to with characteristic thoroughness by one of the outgoing committee members.

When it came to the crunch, however, and the assembled members were called upon to vote on the closure, a knight in shining armour in the form of Rabbi Raymond Apple stepped forward. He objected to the procedure and suggested that what was to be closed was the non-profit association, but not the lodge itself. He put forward his proposal for a series of meetings and guest lectures, encountering only mild resistance from the other members. His was the only voice of hope that evening. While my sister and I expressed our readiness to help in this new endeavour, to date no one has approached us about this.

So it would seem that what was once tantamount to a second home in Jerusalem for many English-speaking immigrants has finally closed its doors.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Newsround

Teenagers 'ignorant about Auschwitz'

A survey of over 1,000 British secondary school pupils aged 11 to 16 found that a quarter were unaware of the purpose of Auschwitz. The survey was commissioned by the film company Miramax and the London Jewish Cultural Centre to mark the DVD release of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

Warsaw museum exhibits 1,000 years of Jewish life in Poland

A new exhibition by the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw has brought together photos and documents depicting 1,000 years of Jewish life in Poland. The exhibit is one of several efforts by Polish leaders to fight stereotypes that Poland remains anti-Semitic.

More German teenagers drawn to neo-Nazi groups

Approximately one in 20 15-year-old German males is a member of a neo-Nazi group, a higher proportion than are involved in mainstream politics, according to a report issued by Lower Saxony's criminal research institute. According to the study, conducted in 2007-08, over 14 per cent of respondents said the Holocaust was 'not awful', while a similar number tended to believe that Jews were not entirely blameless for their persecution.

Dutch teenagers ordered to visit Anne Frank House

A Hague judge has ordered four teenagers to visit the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam after finding them guilty of discrimination for insulting Jews at a rally. The boys must prepare a report to the judge about their visit to the museum.

City of Vienna gives up art expropriated in Nazi Germany

The city of Vienna has set a precedent for the restitution of artworks expropriated by the Nazis by giving up a work a German-Jewish banker was forced to auction in 1934. The city council chose to return the painting *Pappenheim's Death* by Hans Makart to the heirs of Herbert Gutmann though the Austrian law for art restitution covers only the period 1938-45.

New website launched to combat Holocaust denial

A new website aimed at curbing Holocaust denial includes a history of Muslim-Jewish relations in English, French, Arabic and Farsi. Among those unveiling 'Project Aladdin' were Jacques Chirac, former President of France, and Abdurrahman Wahid, former President of Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation. The initiative was launched at UNESCO's Paris headquarters and is partially sponsored by France's Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah.