

AJR journal

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Second generation memories

As it passes into middle age and beyond, every generation looks back on its own stock of memories, sometimes embellished, sometimes diminished, sometimes transmuted and even falsified by the passage of time. In this respect, the memories of the second generation, the children of the Jewish refugees who fled from the Nazis, have arguably taken on a special quality. Born and brought up in their parents' countries of refuge – in the case of most of our readers, Britain – many of them retain links through family memories to aspects of their parents' past in their native lands.

But the Nazi years and the Holocaust created a gulf between the post-war British present and the pre-war Continental past. This was partly the result of the destruction of the Jewish communities in the German-speaking lands, along with their entire culture and way of life, which could be recreated only very partially in the countries like Britain where Jewish refugees had settled. The fact that National Socialism, dedicated to the elimination of the Jews, had originated and come to power in Germany, later including Austria, formed an almost insuperable barrier to the emotional and psychological reconciliation of the Jewish refugees with the societies of their former homelands.

At least as important as a barrier between past and present for members of the second generation was the psychological impact of their parents' inability to speak about the fate of their family members who had died in the Holocaust. That suppression of painful memories, often amounting almost to a taboo, affected many refugees, though they had not themselves directly experienced the wartime death camps. The second generation, born between the 1940s and the 1960s, often grew up in households where the absence of grandparents, for example, was never spoken about openly, but remained suppressed and unarticulated beneath the surface of everyday normality.

My parents, if I may use my family as an example, accustomed themselves to return visits to Austria quite quickly after the war, though my father's first journey back to Vienna in late

1946 proved traumatic. Thereafter, however, they took annual holidays in Austrian resorts like Kitzbühel and Pörschach am Wörthersee,



Hedy Lamarr (Kiesler), 1914-2000

the kind of resorts where prosperous Austrian-Jewish families had enjoyed leisured vacations in the vanished era before March 1938. As my father had regained possession of the family firm in Vienna, he needed to go there quite often on business, sometimes accompanied by my mother.

My parents first took me to Vienna as a boy in 1958. They showed me all the city's sights – the Spanish riding school, the big wheel at the Prater, St Stephen's Cathedral, the Hofburg and Schönbrunn palaces – they let me roam around the Innenstadt, the city's First District, and they took me along the Höhenstraße high above the city, from the Cobenzl to the

Kahlenberg and the Leopoldsberg, to enjoy the spectacular views across Vienna and its surroundings. I learnt that in 1683 the King of Poland, Jan Sobieski, had launched his attack on the Turkish forces besieging Vienna from the Kahlenberg and that much of the Höhenstraße had been built in the 1930s to provide work for the unemployed during the Great Depression; both these topics came across to me as almost equally remote historical episodes from a distant past. What relevance could they have to an English schoolboy?

Only many years later did I realise that I had been shown nothing at all relating to our personal family history, apart from the family firm. Not until I saw my father's documents decades later did I find the address where he had lived with my grandparents, in the Hohenstaufengasse in the First District; and while I had picked up that my mother had been brought up in the Hörllgasse, one of the streets in the Ninth District running parallel to the Berggasse where Freud lived, I did not know her exact address. I had no idea that my parents had lived as a young married couple in the Capistrangasse, in the Sixth District, just off the Mariahilferstraße. My parents had systematically avoided taking me to any locations connected to their pre-emigration past and in particular to their parents, who had all been deported and killed.

At home, in the same way, my parents never spoke about the family and the Holocaust. Of course, I realised as a child that I had no grandparents and was able to work out the reason why. But I also understood instinctively that I must never ask my parents about it. Even the photograph of my maternal grandfather playing chamber music with Einstein stood mutely on the mantelpiece in my room, never commented on. I assume that my parents wished to shield me from the horror of my grandparents' fate. I also assume that it was simply too painful for them to talk about it openly. As a result, the entire area was subject to an unspoken but rigorous interdict and relegated to a forbidden zone. As a schoolboy, I once complained about our school food, likening it to the food in POW camps (which

RELOCATION OF AJR HEAD OFFICE

The AJR's Head Office will be moving at the end of June 2016 to

**Winston House
2 Dollis Park
London N3 1HF**

The new address is close to Finchley Central Tube Station, Northern Line, and is on a number of bus routes.

The AJR's telephone number will remain **020 8385 3070**.



I knew about from popular books like *The Wooden Horse* and *Colditz*), and, when that had no effect, to the food in the concentration camps (about which I knew nothing). Sharply reprimanded, I gathered that this was a taboo area, though I didn't at that stage understand why.

When I was a student at Oxford, my mother took me aside and showed me the few scanty documents that passed as death certificates for my grandparents. She kept them hidden from my father and impressed on me that I must never tell him about them. We never broached the subject again. To my lasting regret, I followed the unspoken injunctions of my childhood and never asked my parents about their pre-1938 past. Consequently, I am reliant for what I know about their life in Vienna on memories of scattered incidents mentioned in random conversations that I heard or overheard more than half a lifetime ago. Did my father play tennis for Hakoah, the Jewish sporting club? Did my mother leave Vienna illegally in summer 1938, after the Nazi authorities had refused her a passport, to ensure that my father returned to Vienna from a business trip to Britain? Or are these embellishments added on to stories that I heard as a child and that have been magnified in my memory over the course of time? Second generation memories, suppressed and sometimes distorted by the blanket of silence cast over them, are frequently subject to such vagaries.

Two of my youthful recollections of my mother's stories concern her school friends. My mother was sent to a select private school for girls, the Mädchenmittelschule Luithlen, at Tuchlauben 14, in Vienna's First District. Originally founded as one of the 'Höhere Töchterschulen' (schools for the daughters of the better classes), by the 1920s its intake was heavily Jewish. In a class just below my mother's was, she told me, a girl called Hedy Kiesler, who while still a teenager caused a scandal by appearing naked in a film. That film was *Ecstasy* (1933), directed by the Czech

Gustav Machatý, and Hedy Kiesler went on to become Hedy Lamarr, star of numerous Hollywood movies and celebrated for her beauty; ruminating in *The Mating Season* (1949) on the person that he would most like to accompany him to a desert island, P. G. Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster nominates Lamarr, whose charms excel even those of the delectable Cora 'Corky' Pirbright! Sadly, the films in which Lamarr acted are now mostly forgotten; unlike Marilyn Monroe in *The Seven Year Itch* (1955) and *Some Like It Hot* (1959), she had no director like Billy Wilder to maximise her acting abilities.

The Luithlen girls socialised with those from the Schwarzwaldschule, a renowned progressive school for girls run by the educationalist Eugenie Schwarzwald. The writer Hilde Spiel has left a vivid description of the school in *Die hellen und die finsternen Zeiten: Erinnerungen 1911–1946 (The Light and the Dark Times: Memoirs 1911–1946)* (1989). I remember my mother telling me that one of the Schwarzwaldschule girls that she knew had married, in London, the ruler of a Malayan state. Unlikely as it may seem, that was Marcella Mendl, the sixth wife of the much-married Sultan Ibrahim of Johore (1873–1959), a playboy and one of the richest men in the world. Mendl, born in Vienna in 1915, is usually described as Romanian, but that was merely the nationality of her father, who left his family when his daughter was five years old; she was brought up in Vienna. She fled Vienna after the Anschluss and met Sultan Ibrahim by chance in London in 1940. The most recent object of his affections, a 27-year-old showgirl called Lydia 'Cissie' Hill, had been killed in Canterbury by a German bomb. He promptly married Marcella, 42 years his junior; she bore him a daughter and remained with him until his death. In these cases at least, my memories hold good.

Anthony Grenville

AJR Chief Executive
Michael Newman

Finance Director
David Kaye

Heads of Department
Karen Markham *Human Resources & Administration*
Sue Kurlander *Social Services*
Carol Hart *Community & Volunteer Services*

AJR Journal
Dr Anthony Grenville *Consultant Editor*
Dr Howard Spier *Executive Editor*
Karin Pereira *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.



Eastbourne Lansdowne Hotel

**Sunday 3 July to
Sunday 10 July 2016**

Come and join us for a week
Make new friends and meet up
with old friends

£425pp for twin/double

£450 for single room

Sea View rooms an additional

£15 per room per night

Prices include transport to and from
Eastbourne from Jubilee House, Stanmore and
Finchley Road (behind Waitrose).

Dinner, bed and breakfast plus cards and
entertainment in the evenings.

Carol Rossen will be among those
accompanying the trip

Space is limited so book early

For further details,
please telephone Lorna Moss
on 020 8385 3070



75th Anniversary of the AJR

SCOTLAND REGIONAL

Wednesday 8 June 2016

in Edinburgh

Special guest speaker

Olivia Marks Woldman

Chief Executive, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

'Football, Cement and a Wooden Spoon'

Three-course lunch

Film by young film-maker Misha Cooper

My Dearest ...

Transport will be provided

For further details contact

agnes@ajr.org.uk or tel 07908 156 361

NORTHERN REGIONAL MANCHESTER

Tuesday 19 July 2016

Please join us at our annual Northern Regional Get-together

Our keynote speaker will be **Mike Levy**,

playwright, journalist and educator for the Holocaust Education Trust,

whose subject will be **'From Hitler to Hi-de-Hi'**

This is the story of the Warner's Camp which was used as a transit camp for the first wave of Kindertransportees in December 1938 and later became the location for the BBC TV series 'Hi-de-Hi'.

The day will include refreshments and lunch, discussion groups and musical entertainment. We will also have a demonstration of SPF Connect, a new project funded by Six Point Foundation to help older people get online by providing a free, easy-to-use touch-screen computer and training. It's an excellent opportunity to meet and socialise with friends old and new.

For full details and an application form, please contact

Wendy Bott on 07908 156 365 or at wendy@ajr.org.uk

COMBATting ANTISEMITISM

I was invited to write an article for the *AJR Journal* about our recent important and successful conference in Berlin but so much has changed since March that I thought it useful to broaden my reflections and cover not only our achievements abroad but what we will seek to achieve at home too.

I launched the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combatting Antisemitism in London some seven years ago with a number of other parliamentarians from across the world. Our aim was simple: to learn from one another about successful models in facing down and beating antisemitism in our own countries. The London conference concluded with the publication of a 'London Declaration', a paper that has been welcomed, signed and adopted by political leaders from across the globe, from Britain to Costa Rica and Australia.

Our London event was followed by a second in Ottawa, Canada. This conference led to the establishment of a permanent working group, based in the United States with the aim of engaging, collaborating with but also challenging directly the various social media companies to do more to tackle the scourge of cyberhate. The results have been good and the companies are already showing some signs of maturity in their approach.

This March we were hosted by the German Bundestag and Government for the third international conference. The more than 100 parliamentary delegates who attended were addressed by Chancellor Angela Merkel, the Foreign Minister, the Parliamentary President and many more top German political leaders. Current and former Justice Ministers from Canada, Israel, Australia, Italy, France, Germany and the UK discussed the various legal approaches to tackling antisemitism and a number of other significant figures, including UNESCO Director Irena Bokova and European Commissioner Frans Timmermans, offered their thoughts on combatting this evil racism.

Most importantly, we established our onward work. We decided that work to combat

To consider Hitler as anything other than a racist, genocidal despot is historically untrue. Britain – including many Jews – fought against the Nazis for our vision of democracy and paid a high price for doing so.

internet hate in Europe needs parliamentary attention and so we will be seeking to shine a light on the internet companies and their efforts on the Continent. We saw an opportunity to address antisemitism in sport, particularly football, and have already engaged FIFA about what more can be done. Finally, we agreed to seek to better understand migrant antisemitism – the scope and nature of the problem and how it might be handled.

The international gathering was an early high point in the year and we were especially pleased to launch a British 'best practice' guide on combatting antisemitism which set out the approach and successes achieved by the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism. Regrettably, only months later we had a new set of challenges to deal with at home.

After prolonged complaints about antisemitism in the Labour Party, Ken Livingstone exacerbated matters when he questioned Hitler's ideology. To consider Hitler as anything other than a racist, genocidal despot is historically untrue. Britain – including many Jews – fought against the Nazis for our vision of democracy and paid a high price for doing so. We will not allow any rewriting of the history of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party's racist ideology.

People remain rightly shocked at the level of anti-Jewish hatred and Holocaust revisionism that is going on and so we have been demanding leadership. A number of inquiries – parliamentary and Labour Party-specific – have been launched. My advice is simple. The Jewish community now needs to say to the Labour Party 'This is your problem – sort it out now and forever!'

British Jews need not be worried about their position at home in the UK. Decent people in this country abhor antisemitism, as my constituents' response to my

challenging Ken Livingstone demonstrates. At the parliamentary level, my All-Party Group Against Antisemitism has helped secure changes in the approach taken by the police, government, CPS and many other institutions.

The challenge now is that the various ongoing inquiries, if they are to have value, should command the total confidence of the Jewish community. As I have said elsewhere, if Labour cannot combat racism then we are nothing – and racism always includes antisemitism.

When I was growing up, it was ingrained in me that I must always stand up to racism. For 110 years my family have done this in the Labour Party. At every point, shoulder-to-shoulder with Jews. I give you this promise. We are the majority in Labour and we will not concede one inch to the antisemites and their apologists. Swift, decisive and unequivocal leadership is required. It is now or never.

John Mann

John Mann is the Labour MP for Bassetlaw and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism and the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism

OUTING TO KENWOOD HOUSE & GARDENS

FOLLOWED BY TEA

Tuesday 28 June 2016 2.00 pm

Join us for a Kenwood Highlights Guided Tour – an introductory tour of the house and its superb collection of artworks and furnishings.

We will then have tea in the Old Kitchen and you can admire the gardens at your leisure.

For details and a booking form, please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk



JOIN US FOR A DAY TRIP TO WESTCLIFF ON SEA

Tuesday 14 June 2016

Coach Leaving Finchley Road and Stanmore Station


First Stop

Southchurch Hall, a Grade 1 Listed Medieval Moated House Guided Tour followed by a Delicious Fish and Chip Lunch with a sea view at Simply Sea Food at Leigh on Sea
Fish and Chips • Dessert

Second Stop

Walk along the promenade for Ice Cream

For a booking form and full details please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk or email esther@ajr.org.uk



EU REFERENDUM

IN? OUT? SHAKE IT ALL ABOUT!

**Monday 6 June 2016
at 12.00 pm**

at North Western Reform Synagogue, Alyth Gardens, Temple Fortune, London NW11 7EN

Guest speakers
Mike Freer MP
Sir Bernard Zissman

A sandwich lunch with tea and coffee will be served after the debate
£7.00 per person payable on the door

Booking is essential
Please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk or email esther@ajr.org.uk

PROPOSED TRIP TO BETH SHALOM FROM NEWCASTLE & SURROUNDING AREAS

Sunday 10 July 2016

We are arranging a trip to Beth Shalom, The National Holocaust Centre, in Newark near Nottingham.

The AJR will arrange a return coach and lunch at Beth Shalom, including entrance, at a cost of £13.00 per person.

If you are interested please contact Agnes Isaacs at agnes@ajr.org.uk or on 07908 156 361

'THE BLUE DANUBE'

Rudolf Kauders is a survivor. He was born in 1920 in Vienna, where both of his parents were tram conductors. He spent a happy childhood until the Nazi takeover, when the family's small council flat was 'aryanised'. His Jewish father lost his job and was later to become a slave labourer.

Arriving in Britain as a refugee in June 1939, Kauders was assigned to farm work, where he was called a 'bloody Jerry'. In May 1940 he was interned, spending 13 months on the Isle of Man. He joined the British army in 1943 in the hope of fighting the Nazis – only to be sent to Burma to fight the Japanese. Having survived the Burma campaign, he returned to Austria in December 1946 with his new wife, fellow refugee Mela Katz. He completed his studies in 1950 while also publishing articles and short stories before starting a career as an industrial chemist and technician, eventually becoming a pioneer of energy conservation and environmental protection.

The story below is an extract from *Donauwalzer am Irawadi: Exil in England, Kampf in Burma, Rückkehr nach Wien ('The Blue Danube' on the Irrawaddy: Exile in England, War in Burma, Return to Vienna)* (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2011, ISBN 978-3-85476-372-7). The book is an account of his life in exile and early years in Vienna, illustrated by his own drawings and cartoons. The story, typical of the book, is told in an informal style giving a light touch to its serious subject matter.

Rudolf Kauders still lives in Vienna, as do his two daughters. For further information, please contact Lilian Kauders at lilian.kauders@gmx.at

Richard Dove

I still have nightmares about my experience of waking up one day and finding myself alone in the dangerous and hostile jungle. Absolutely no sign of the brigade anywhere! In front of me were two paths that cut across each other, presenting me with four possible directions to choose from but no way of knowing which one the brigade had taken. What had happened? Where was everyone?

Slowly I realised what had happened. I remembered I'd been really ill for several weeks, so ill I couldn't walk without staggering, reeling and swaying like a drunk. With every step

I took, waves of nausea and blackness swept over me. I was suffering from severe diarrhoea and had almost no drinking water left. My tongue was swollen to a large, dry lump and my mouth was parched. My pulse was pounding in my head and I'd hardly slept in weeks. I was a wreck.

Then the most unimaginable thing happened. This furrowed, rugged face with innumerable wrinkles on the forehead, protruding cheekbones, white wispy hairs in the middle of the chin and on both cheeks, flashing eyes, dark skin covered in strange tattoos, long unkempt hair, and a mouth red from betel nut juice – this mysterious, inscrutable face suddenly lit up and the old man began in an odd sort of falsetto voice to hum 'The Blue Danube'.

Gradually I recalled that College Boy, my trench mate, had been replaced by a soldier who was suffering from even worse diarrhoea than he was, a man who kept dozing off and couldn't manage to stay awake to keep his stint on watch. We were supposed to be alert and ready to fend off silently advancing Japanese soldiers so there was nothing to do but take on his watch in addition to my own – which of course meant I had to stay awake through two shifts, each four hours long.

That morning in the jungle I simply wasn't able to get up and could hardly keep my eyes open. I couldn't figure out if I'd just been sleeping really soundly or had actually fainted. Finally, sometime around noon I came to and found myself lying near a tree, with my rifle propped up beside me. Clearly I couldn't have been lying there all night: I would never have made a decision on my own to leave the trench so someone must have carried me out and placed me beside the tree. I managed to pull myself together and went looking for my trench, where I found my trench mate still there, lying at the bottom with no sign of life. He was neither moving nor breathing: he was dead, obviously having fallen victim to dysentery.

After a really deep sleep, akin to the sleep of the dead, I felt a little better and decided to take the widest of the paths in front of me, but my mind was

really confused. Was this the path the brigade had come in on yesterday? I searched around for clues but was soon exhausted and hungry and, to make matters even worse, there wasn't a single drop of water left in my canteen.

Still, I forced myself to keep moving and wandered along without seeing a single living soul, which all in all was probably just as well as the area was said to be crawling with Japanese jungle fighters. I knew my gun would be of little use as protection with all the thick undergrowth surrounding me, stretching in places all the way down to the river, so I decided to keep a grenade handy just in case I should come face-to-face with the enemy. I searched along the bank of the river, desperately hoping to find tracks or some signs of where my unit had gone, but found absolutely nothing.

Suddenly, just ahead of me, where the river made a sharp turn, I saw a small clearing – a rice field! I took a deep breath and put together the Burmese words I would use on the first local I came across, muttering to myself as I walked 'Have you seen white people marching by? In what direction did they go?' Finally, I spotted an ancient-looking farmer bundling rice straw together.

I went straight up to the farmer and gave him a reassuring smile. He seemed to have no problem understanding my question but, when his gaze fell on my weapon, his facial expression changed to a scowl: 'People with guns not good.' 'Japanese not good' I added. 'Neither good' was his laconic retort. As we talked, I learned that the entire community of his village had been wiped out because of the war. He regarded neither the English nor the Japanese as friends. 'Burma should be Burmese, not English, not Japanese!' he said. Actually, as the word Burma simply means 'the land or the country', the people of Burma do not need a special word for their country. For them it is simply 'the land', their home, Burma, the country.

I kept asking him where the white soldiers had gone and the old man eventually pointed in one particular direction. I was about to go on my way but decided to turn back and speak to him again. I was so happy to be finally on the right track that I felt it wouldn't hurt to spend a few more minutes chatting with the old farmer. I racked

continued on page 5 ➔

A magical summer

It was in May 1928, when I was eight years old, that I stopped being 'ein besseres Kind'. To be 'ein besseres Kind' a bathroom and a live-in maid were *de rigueur* and I was to lose both.

I forget what my father was dealing in then – was it shoes or watches? – but he decided he wanted to be a full-time librettist. I believe it was at the beginning of my second school year, in September 1926, that his operetta *Das Land der Liebe* (The Land of Love) was performed at the Bürgertheater in Vienna. The composer was the then popular and successful, but now totally forgotten, Edmund Eysler, also a Jew, whose non-Jewish wife was to save him from deportation by the Nazis.

There I was, sitting in a box with Mutti and my father at the premiere of the operetta and I do remember my intense pride at seeing my father, together with Eysler, on the stage at the end of the play bowing repeatedly to hearty applause. The play was well received and my father anticipated wealth and fame but it was not to be. The theatre got into financial difficulties and the show closed, with the theatre, after very few performances.

At the beginning of 1928 my father started writing the libretto of *Ihr erster*

Ball (Her First Ball) and it was in May of that year, just before the end of my third school year, that he decided that Vienna cramped his style and that we were going to live in Salzburg. He gave up our nice flat in the 9th District, sold the furniture, and pocketed some 'key money'.

I remember nothing about our stay in Salzburg except my father saying there were too many anti-Semites there and that he couldn't write in such a hostile atmosphere. What followed were some of the happiest months of my life.

We travelled to Altmünster, a village in the Salzkammergut, Austria's Lake District, surrounded by mountains and rented rooms right by Lake Traun.

I was enrolled in the local school but after a few days the teacher told my father that my presence demoralised my classmates because I was too 'advanced' and she wanted me to leave. I obliged happily. It meant three-and-a-half months of total freedom!

The lake beckoned and I begged my parents to let me learn to swim. I was taught by the Herr Bademeister himself. He fitted an elastic band round my waist and attached to it a long rod by which he guided me. I can still hear his instructions:

'Einatmen, ausatmen!' (Breathe in, breathe out!). All I learned was the breast stroke but it was enough to turn me into a fervent and intrepid swimmer and, though Lake Traun is one of the coldest in Austria, I swam in any weather.

Mutti and I walked in the woods and picked mushrooms and cyclamen and my father sometimes rowed us over to Gmunden, the nearest town, where we had coffee and cake. Or I played with local children who had befriended me.

I also remember an odd episode. A friend from Vienna brought us a young pigeon, which was intended to serve us as a meal. We put it in a cage, fed it regularly, and became so fond of it that it was with reluctance that we eventually released it.

My father, an early riser, walked for at least an hour before breakfast. It was on those walks, he said, that his best lines occurred to him. By the end of the summer he had almost finished the libretto of 'Her First Ball', which, however, was not to be performed for some years.

An enchanted summer had come to an end and it was time to return to Vienna, homeless and practically penniless.

But that's another story ...

Edith Argy

'The Blue Danube' continued

my brains for something friendly to say but oddly enough the only thing I could come up with was 'You Burmese know how to cook really well. I much prefer your food to that of the English.' His face lit up. I praised the excellent taste of the rice and the Burmese custom of preparing so many different dishes for a meal. I added that I felt I was in a position to speak with some authority on the subject of gastronomy as I came from a country where people prided themselves on their cuisine and devoted a great deal of time to the preparation of fine food.

This seemed to make a great impression on him. He clapped one hand to his forehead and pointed to me with the other, asking in an almost screeching voice 'What, you are not English?' 'No' I said grinning and love of my country welled up in me like a fountain. Though it seemed highly unlikely that this old Burmese man had ever heard of Austria I whistled, with a great deal of effort, the first few bars of

'The Blue Danube' waltz, but I couldn't go on, partly because my lips were so dry and cracked but also because I could hardly keep from laughing.

Then the most unimaginable thing happened. This furrowed, rugged face with innumerable wrinkles on the forehead, protruding cheekbones, white wispy hairs in the middle of the chin and on both cheeks, flashing eyes, dark skin covered in strange tattoos, long unkempt hair, and a mouth red from betel nut juice – this mysterious, inscrutable face suddenly lit up and the old man began in an odd sort of falsetto voice to hum 'The Blue Danube'. His rendering of the melody had something of an oriental flavour about it but it was clearly and unmistakably Johann Strauss!

It turned out that the farmer had learned the tune from a record because he had been so taken with how it sounded. 'And that's where you come from, where they sing this song?' he asked. He was very excited and

wanted to invite me into his house but I had to be on my way. 'No, no, no!' he screamed. 'Yes, yes, yes!' I shouted laughing over my shoulder. The old farmer ran after me, holding on to me by my clothing and letting fly a torrent of words, the only one of which I understood was 'dschapani' (Japanese).

Eventually it dawned on me that the old man had taken me for an Englishman – one of those foreigners who, he said, wanted to take his country away from him. And so he'd decided to send me in the wrong direction, straight into the arms of the Japanese.

I soon caught up with my unit and was given a wildly enthusiastic welcome. It was very rare that someone who got lost made it back to the unit after such a long time but I'd been lucky. I thought to myself 'Sometimes it is indeed good to be an Austrian!'

Rudolf Kauders

(Translated by Karin Millet)



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

'REFLECTIONS OF AN UNREPENTANT GERMAN JEW'

Sir – Victor Ross's article 'Reflections of an unrepentant German Jew' in your April issue shows only negativity and nostalgia in remembering the past and what might have been had the Nazis not come to power – without even questioning how they *did* come to power despite all the cultural inheritance of Heine, Goethe, Beethoven, etc. Just to blame it on the 'mustachioed monster' is not good enough.

Clearly Mr Ross must agree that there is no Jewish future in Germany today, but why the continued negative speculating that the current century will bring no joy for us Jews? He, like all UK voters, can think positively about how he can vote on 23 June for the future good of Anglo-Jewry. On my assessment, it's a no-brainer to free the country from the shackles of the non-democratic EU elite, but he could also find that the intellectual vibrancy of Jews of all denominations that he is missing is alive and thriving in Israel today. This is notwithstanding the ill-informed views expressed in some letters in your columns, particularly with regard to the erosion of democratic values in Israel. By comparison, the democratic values in the EU have lain in the dark for ages now.

Peter Simpson, Jerusalem

Sir – Victor Ross's article rang a lot of bells for me. I too am haunted – in the best possible way – by my German childhood.

When I meet a *Landsmann* we invariably end up singing 'Kommt ein Vogel geflogen' and various other

nursery songs we can both recall. My late husband always said that's when I sound just like a five-year-old!

My late Mutti had exceptional recall and could quote the wonderful poetry of Goethe, Schiller and Heine. Her rendition of 'Die Glocke' and excerpts from 'Faust' were fantastic and when she got to 'Rübezahl' there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

She was full of aphorisms always so apt and I remember these with pleasure but also some pain. She would admonish my brother and me with 'Der Klügere gibt nach' and one of us would have to give in. 'Kommt Zeit, kommt Rat' was another of her wise sayings. 'Den Teufel an die Wand malen' was a warning to be heeded. 'Auch ein blindes Huhn findet mal ein Korn' was another of her favourites.

At times I like to test myself on my German: can I remember the words for 'disappointment' or 'surprise'? I am delighted when I come up with 'Enttäuschung' and 'Überraschung', words obviously still deep in my memory.

Although I quite often visit a number of German-speaking refugees in my role as AJR volunteer befriender, most of these would rather speak English. No doubt their mother tongue recalls only sad times and they like to show their prowess in English. I regret not having many opportunities to air my mother tongue but I too have developed a great passion for the English language.

I thank Victor Ross for highlighting the memories and voices of our childhood – now after so many years almost another life altogether.

*(Mrs) Meta Roseneil,
Buckhurst Hill, Essex*

KINDERTRANSPORT CASE FOUND IN CHARITY SHOP

Sir – I found the pictured case in an RSPCA shop in Earlsfield in south-west London. It measures 16in x 11in. The label is as I found it and appears to have been added at some point in the past – perhaps to remind future generations of the case's significance? The charity shop told me they



didn't add the label but did write the price on it. The case was empty.

I was fascinated and shocked to find the case as my husband, Wolf Blomfield, came to England on the Kindertransport in March 1939 from Berlin. We still have the case Wolf carried but on our last move it managed to get buried under boxes in the loft! So I have been searching for it for a while now. Seeing a case in a charity shop reminded me how easily these precious objects can get mislaid or discarded.

Can readers help me reunite this case with its owner or family? It has made at least one extraordinary journey and deserves to be back with those who can value its history.

Luci Blomfield, London SW4

PADDINGTON BEAR AND THE KINDERTRANSPORT

Sir – Readers may recall my musings (*AJR Journal*, January 2015) that the common perception and image of Paddington Bear bring to mind a Kindertransport child – sent away alone from a faraway land, a sign hanging around the neck, carrying a worn suitcase, and arriving bewildered at a main station in London following a long journey by boat and train – a stranger in a strange land, to be met by new 'parents'.

Michael Bond, the author of the Paddington stories, claimed that he had been inspired by the sight of evacuee children passing through his local station in Reading and that the character of Mr Gruber in his books was based on his own literary agent Harvey Unna, who as a Jew had fled Nazi Germany and arrived virtually penniless in London.

A further connection emerges with the recent death (March 2016) of Peggy Fortnum, aged 96, the original illustrator of the Paddington books, whose beloved drawings have provided readers with their visual image of the Bear. Following the start of the Blitz, Peggy joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service but was injured one night when run over by a truck. The Army admitted liability and gave her a grant to study at the Central School of Art in London, where she became good friends with Judith Kerr, the German-Jewish refugee who with her family had fled from Nazi Germany and arrived in London. Judith is, of course, very well-known as the writer and illustrator of *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* and *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* and is still writing today.

Perhaps there is more of the refugee child from Nazi Europe in Paddington Bear than one had previously thought.

David Wirth, London SE21

EDITH NUSSBAUM

Sir – The Wiener Library has received documents pertaining to Edith Nussbaum which were discovered among a collection of philatelic material purchased by someone who subsequently donated it to the Library.

Edith was born on 14.9.1907 into a Jewish family in Dortmund. Her father was Moritz Nussbaum, a businessman, born 14.5.1878, died 12.5.1943 in Terezin. Her mother was Jenny Nussbaum, née

Plaut, born 30.3.1883, died 15.5.1944 in Auschwitz.

Edith is described on documentation prior to emigration in 1938-39 as a Kindergarten teacher. She became a naturalised British citizen in 1947 and was then resident in north London and described as a teacher.

Should readers have any further information on Edith could they please contact me directly.

*Howard Falksohn, Archivist, The Wiener Library, London WC1, tel 020 7636 7247
hfalksohn@wienerlibrary.co.uk*

'ARNHEM 1944'

Sir – Anthony Grenville's article in your May issue was a reminder of the desperate fight of the 1st Airborne Division against impossible odds. A number of refugees were a part of this as members of the 21st Independent Para Company (Pathfinders). Its job was to drop in advance of the main body, secure, clear and defend the drop or landing zone, and bring in the paras or gliders by means of a radio beacon. The job done, the company, like the glider pilots, fought as infantry.

Three of the refugee Pathfinders died at Arnhem: John Rodley (Rosenfeld), Tim Bleach (Bleichroeder) and Walter Landon (Lewy-Lingen), who was recommended posthumously for a high decoration. Other refugees at Arnhem in the 21st were Chris Blakely (Bachwitz), Martin Lewis (Lewin), George Bruce (Preger), Harold Bruce (Schilling) and John Stanleigh (Schwarz).

The 21st's experience of combat had been as a spearhead of the Allied advance into Italy, landing at Taranto and driving up past Foggia. Two of its three platoons returned to the UK and these fought at Arnhem. One platoon stayed in Italy and later dropped into the South of France (Le Muy) and Greece (Megara). Three refugees fought in this little 1st Para Platoon, dropping first in the South of France (Le Muy) and later in Greece (Megara-Athens). They were Mike Compton (Hoffmann), John Melford (Mendelsohn) and myself (name unchanged).

Peter Block, London SE24

YOM HASHOAH 'RAZZMATAZZ'

Sir – I think Steven Frank (May, Letters) is speaking on behalf of most camp survivors. I went for years to the commemoration at Mauthausen Camp, from which I was liberated by the US Army. But in recent years I have stayed at home lighting candles and remembering the 50 members of my family, whose names are in Yad Vashem in Israel, rather than be with people who have nothing to do with my experience.

Clare Parker, London NW11

SPREADING TOLERANCE

Sir – The moving and accurate report in a recent issue of the Journal on the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen also makes it very tempting to step closer to the identities of the victims.

The majority were Jews. There are separate memorials for the Roma and for the political enemies of Nazism and

a memorial for those sent to the camp because of their sexual orientation.

Wide-ranging and reliable research in the 1960s established that in any human community there will be about 5 per cent of people whose sexual practices will differ from those of the rest. This 5 per cent does not choose to be different – they are born different. The discovery of this laid the foundation of the creation of the enlightened laws that we have today.

Applying the crucial 5 per cent test to large groups of people, we can safely say that out of the 6,000,000 Jewish victims, approximately 300,000 had a different sexual orientation from the rest of this group.

Conservatives among us may feel uncomfortable with this fact. But it is a fact all the same. The knowledge of this may spread some tolerance over an area of human activity that badly needs it.

Nicholas Pal, London NW6

ANTI-SEMITISM THEN AND NOW

Sir – Anti-Semitism on the Labour left has, quite rightly, been strongly condemned. The *Jewish Chronicle* has made Ken Livingstone and Jeremy Corbyn 'Enemies Number 1 and 2'.

I don't disagree with this – Livingstone is undoubtedly a rabid anti-Semite – but I would remind readers that this is not the first time that the Labour Party has shown its ill feeling towards Jews. Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin were hardly sympathetic. Attlee's government prevented survivors from the *SS Exodus* landing in Israel; Bevin conspired with Syria to try to ensure that when the 1948 partition came into effect the Palestinians would come out winners. All Corbyn did was to call Hamas and Hezbollah 'friends'!

Also, please recall the more discreet anti-Semitism of the late 40s, 50s and even 60s. There were Jewish quotas in the Civil Service, schools, universities and clubs. We took it – quietly. Perhaps we were still traumatised by the Holocaust and were therefore immune to these insults. Remember the sign in a hotel in Bournemouth 'No dogs, no Jews'. Our race laws would today forbid quotas and rude signage but it was there then.

Is today's anti-Semitism worse? It's more overt but I doubt if it's much worse. At least, anti-Semitism is being condemned by most of the media and there's going to be a commission to look into it.

I am, however, still troubled by anti-Zionism. Some say it's synonymous with anti-Semitism. Indeed, on social media the word 'Zio' is being hurled as abuse more often than 'Yid'. I can understand anti-Israeli sentiments but I don't understand anti-Zionism. Zionism was a movement for the liberation of Jews and to provide Jews with a homeland. Would anybody deny Zionists this right?

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts

'LETTER FROM ISRAEL'

Sir – I always enjoy Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's 'Letter from Israel' but was disappointed by her use of the term 'ethnic cleansing' (April) to describe the actions

of Nebuchadnezzar.

This concept emerged from the Serbian military. It is a successor to the Nazi term *judenrein* (clean of Jews). If it is cleansing to be rid of a certain ethnic group, then that group itself is presumed to be dirty. So 'ethnic cleansing' is a thoroughly racist term and it is very disappointing that it has got into normal usage. Surely we should have the awareness to resist adopting it.

Michael Levin, Forest Hill, London

Sir – I must complain about the 'Letter from Israel' in your March issue. The contents of the 'Letter' have nothing to do with Israel. Surely it should provide some information on happenings in Israel, not comments on articles from the *Financial Times*.

Felix Sturm, London NW4

ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

Sir – In response to the invective over the Israel/Palestinian problem recently expressed in your letters' pages by the self-regarding Jenny Manson and Dr Jennifer Langer, maybe they have an approach we don't know of with regard to negotiating with Palestinian hardliners. Also, maybe they could ask Corbyn and Livingstone to advise them while we observe.

Yvonne Klemperer, London NW6

Sir – No doubt Jennifer Langer is well-intentioned when writing about the so-called Jungle in Calais and the plight of the Palestinians on the West Bank. However, her good intentions are going to be counter-productive to us living in England and to people living in Israel.

The camp in Calais is populated by mostly economic migrants, not genuine refugees. By all accounts it includes a number of people returning from Syria after being trained there to commit atrocities here.

As for the poor Palestinians occupied by Israel, they are not doing that badly considering what problems, and by what methods, they cause innocent Israelis. I know the argument 'What came first – the chicken or the egg?' Had the Arabs let Israel live in peace, had they not turned Gaza into a terrorist state, they could have had a better life. Mind you, I have yet to hear about the mass emigration of Palestinians from the West Bank to other Arab countries. I suspect one of the reasons for this is that they are not welcome there.

Dr Langer, may I suggest you concentrate your efforts on more deserving causes closer to home?

Janos Fisher, Bushey Heath, Herts

Sir – If Dr Langer was shocked at what she saw last summer in Hebron she would be even more shocked to learn that it is a city of very ancient and purely Jewish lineage. It was there that Abraham purchased the field as a burial place for his wife Sara, and that David was anointed king and ruled there for seven years. Jews lived there continuously throughout Byzantine and Turkish occupation until the pogrom by

ART NOTES

GLORIA TESSLER

It's not about answers, it's about questions. It questions ideas, it questions form. If form exists it is organic and does not occupy a fixed place in time. Puzzled?

You may well be but **Conceptual Art in Britain, 1964-1979** at **Tate** (until 29 August 2016) tells the story of the Conceptual movement from its birth in Britain's art schools, such as St Martin's School of Art, the Royal College of Art and Coventry School of Art, from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s.

The development occurred at a pivotal time in the West when intense political and social change followed the devastation of war 20 years earlier. The lure of the market place, the rise of youth culture and populism all began to change thought patterns. Harold Wilson's Labour Government gave way to the election of Margaret Thatcher.

To many people though the Conceptual movement is epitomised by **Tracy Emin's** unmade bed – a parody of the seductive nudes portrayed by Goya or Velazquez, Ingres or even Picasso. Emin's bed was in every sense a naked expression – baring all except the nude herself. It is pure Conceptualism. Just as **Duchamp's** urinal showed a thing to be just the thing in itself, or Damian Hirst's dead animals in formaldehyde tried to make us see the organic matter in everything that lives – or once lived – and breathed.

If you want to call it art – and many don't – it is an art of ideas, of interchangeability, of concepts, just as it says on the tin. Fine Art had already reached its zenith. What more to say?

The first thing you can't miss at the exhibition is a pyramid of oranges by **Roelof Louw** – a triangle of perfectly symmetrical fruits. Because this art form can be participative he invites you to take an orange – obviously from the top of

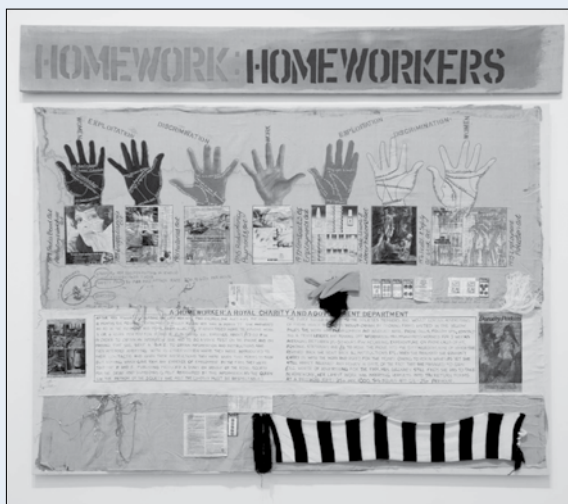
the pile. And, as curator Andrew Wilson explains, if a thing is organic it is capable of change and equally of decay. So it was a case of to try or not to try. My companion was first in line to grab one, and others followed hesitantly, eying each other and then tentatively picking an orange from the middle of the pyramid. I wonder how much, if anything, is left of it today.

But apart from the oranges, a mirror, a large jet-black oblong described as possessing colours I couldn't see, and a huge piece of multi-media propaganda on behalf of *Homeworkers* by **Margaret F. Harrison**, there wasn't a great deal to catch the eye.

There's **Richard Long's** *A Line Made by Walking*, which literally shows the path his feet carved out of a landscape: a man burying himself in a deep hole in the turf. Or the same photograph of three animated people, each bearing a different caption. Then there's the clever stuff – words stretched right across a wall in the format of musical notation minus the double clef.

The wittiest exhibit was **Michael Craig-Martin's** *An Oak Tree* (1973). Well, actually it's a glass of water pitched high on a glass shelf.

Now the important question: did I take an orange? I'll leave you to guess ... I declined.



Margaret F. Harrison *Homewreckers* 1977

Annely Juda Fine Art

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

CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

REVIEWS

The remarkable life and achievements of Harry Jacobi

RESPONDING TO THE CALL: A LIFE OF LIBERAL JEWISH COMMITMENT. A Festschrift in Honour of Rabbi Harry Jacobi MBE
edited by Danny Rich

London: Liberal Judaism, 2015, 208 pp. paperback, £9.99, ISBN: 978-0-9934458-0-4

The term *Festschrift* has a long academic tradition and refers to a collection of essays or articles written to honour a living person prominent in his or her field. It is not a biography although the writings usually make reference to that person's achievements. This volume, which follows this tradition, is written to honour Rabbi Jacobi's 90th birthday. There are 15 essays by authors who are themselves prominent in the Progressive Jewish movement. The Introduction is by Rabbi Danny Rich, also the book's editor.

It is difficult in only five pages to cover the remarkable life and achievements of Harry Jacobi but, to provide background to the reason for this book, the first article is a short biography, written by his granddaughter Abigail Jacobi. As an additional update, in November 2015 Rabbi Jacobi, aged 90, still recited *El Mole Rachamim* while officiating at the annual AJEX Remembrance Parade. More recently, in March 2016, he had the pleasure of blessing his first great-grandchild, the grandson of Rabbi Richard Jacobi.

Two of the essays are written by Harry Jacobi's children, Rabbi Dr Margaret Jacobi and Rabbi Richard Jacobi. Margaret discusses the evils of the biblical city of Sodom in the context of their relevance in the present day. She suggests that many things seem to have changed little since biblical times, with an emphasis on material possessions and an unfair distribution of wealth, mistreatment of the poor, rejection of strangers, and misuse of the justice system. Richard introduces a very thoughtful discussion about the form of prayers as printed and the response of those who pray. He feels that the current Liberal prayer book should be revised to make it more relevant to present-day 'pray-ers'.



Rabbi Frank Hellner puts forward a strong argument for bilineality, i.e. that authentic Judaism can be passed on equally through the mother or the father. Another essay expressed from the Liberal Jewish angle is by Danny Rich, Senior Rabbi and Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism. This discusses the history of and relationship between Liberal rabbis and various United Synagogue chief rabbis since the beginning of the last century.

By no means all the essays are primarily Liberal Jewish. Rabbi Andrew Goldstein, for instance, writes an appreciation of the remarkable life of Rabbi Dr Richard Feder, who survived the *Shoah* in Czechoslovakia and did much after the war to restore life to the Jewish community there, eventually becoming the country's chief rabbi. On a biblical theme, Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh's essay concerns the teachings of his favourite prophet, Jeremiah. In an interesting discussion it also relates to the depictions and interpretations of Jeremiah by Rembrandt and Chagall. In an essay on 'The Enigma of Ecclesiastes', Rabbi Rachel Benjamin discusses her interpretations of what is probably one of the most interesting, but also challenging, books in the Bible.

The final essay in the *Festschrift* (alphabetical order of writers' names) is by Rabbi Alexandra Wright and is entitled 'A History of Judaism in One Object'. The Rabbi refers to the series of broadcasts on 'The History of the World in a Hundred Objects' and her search for which single object would best represent Judaism. She considers many symbolic and historical objects and comes to a surprising yet very appropriate conclusion: Why not read the essay to find out?

The above summaries cannot cover all the 15 essays but are intended to give a flavour of the variety and high level of the contributions to this tribute. Although the *Festschrift* may appear to be of particular interest to members of Progressive synagogues it contains many ideas and points for discussion which will also appeal to many in the wider community.

George Vulkan

An informative, moving book

THE HOUSE THAT SAVED US by Peter Briess

London: LifeBook, 2015, 197 pp.,
www.lifebookuk.com

The author begins with a dedication to his parents, Hans and Else Briess, to whose foresight he owes his life, and to those relatives who perished in the Holocaust.

What follows are interesting details concerning the history of Olomouc, the Moravian city in which he was born. As in so many parts of Europe, Jews in what is now part of the Czech Republic were

successful in commerce. This was also the case with Peter's family, who dealt in malting.

Peter touches on life and art in late 19th- and early 20th-century Vienna, which saw a remarkable blossoming of culture, mentioning the writers Schnitzler and Zweig, the painters Klimt and Schiele, and the composers the Strauss family, Lehar and Kalman.

The personal story of Peter's father is interwoven with the history of the times. The number of Jews in Olomouc may be guessed by the erection of the beautiful synagogue, which accommodated 1,500 worshippers. Sadly it was burned down during the Holocaust. His parents married in this synagogue and a beautiful dedication by the officiating rabbi to his mother is quoted along with an illustration of it.

An interesting episode is Peter's father leaving alone for the Sicilian town of Taormina in 1931 to celebrate his son's birth. Not something that would be tolerated by wives today, I guess!

In 1935 the villa which provides the title of the book was built. Pictures of it feature prominently in these pages. In reality, it was a house with two apartments on two floors. Peter's grandparents lived on the ground floor; his parents and he and his sister Hana lived on the top floor; their housekeeper Anezka occupied the basement. Peter and Hana led an idyllic life, unaware of political developments.

The author's father travelled on business fairly often. On one trip he met Joe Gilbert, a distant relative who offered a guarantee for the family to come to London. Joe was subsequently to found the Hillel Foundation and Carmel College in the UK.

In April 1939 the idyllic life came to an end with a knock on the door of the villa. An SS man arrived with the message that the commandant of the local Gestapo wanted the villa for his own use. His father was in no position to object but shrewdly asked for visas for the family



to leave the country. The visas for the parents and children were forthcoming, but the grandparents were not included.

There followed an uneventful, albeit nervous, journey to England. Here, the family split up, with Peter being sent to boarding school in Sussex. Later he joined the RAF. In 1951 he obtained a university place

in Geneva for a three-year chemistry course.

It would have been interesting to read in greater detail of the author's travels with his French girlfriend and his parents – preferable to the endless descriptions of friends and relatives.

Ending the book with a highly appreciative and loving portrayal of his parents, Peter expresses regret that, like so many of his generation, he did not ask them more about their past and the many problems they had faced. His hope is that his family's younger generation will read his book, which should help them learn where they came from and the tragedy that befell their ancestors. An informative and ultimately moving volume.

Janos Fisher

SPRING GROVE



London's Most Luxurious RETIREMENT HOME

214 Finchley Road
London NW3

- Entertainment
- Activities
- Stress Free Living
- 24 Hour 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



Yom HaShoah commemoration, London 2016 Carol Hart, the AJR's Head of Volunteer and Community Services and a member of the Organising Committee of Yom HaShoah UK; Sadiq Khan, the newly elected Mayor of London; Lord Levy

LUCKY TO HAVE A DANZIG PASSPORT

THE FREE CITY OF DANZIG AND ITS JEWS, 1920–1939

Of all the new national entities created in Europe after the First World War, the Free City of Danzig (German: Freie Stadt Danzig; Polish: Wolne Miasto Gdańsk) was the smallest and most short-lived. Following a decision made at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, Danzig was established as an independent city-state on 15 November 1920 and placed under the protection of the League of Nations. The intention was to safeguard this affluent and strategically important port city on the Baltic from the expansionist aims of Germany. The League appointed High Commissioners to oversee its administration and to ensure compliance with obligations stipulated in the Treaty of Versailles. The land area of the Free City was just under 2,000 square kilometres and consisted of the town of Danzig, the seaside resort of Sopot, and about 200 villages and hamlets.

Before the First World War, Danzig was a prosperous Hanseatic city, part of Germany. It had earned its wealth from its position at the head of the river Vistula, which drains half of Poland. The population of the Free City of Danzig was about 400,000 and largely German-speaking. Although it was called a 'Free City', it had all the attributes of an independent state. It had its own currency, the Danzig Gulden, as well as its own postage stamps and passports. Peculiarly there were two postal services: one Danzig, the other Polish. The railways were Polish, as was the main railway station. This was important to Jews as they were able to freely congregate there and eat at the station restaurants, which they were unable to do in the rest of Danzig under the Nazi regime.

The vast majority of the population of Danzig, including the Jews, wanted to

retain their German citizenship. However, the League of Nations insisted that they become citizens of the new city-state of Danzig, a decision that almost certainly saved the lives of many Jews.

Before the First World War, the Jewish population was about 2,700 but by 1929 it had grown to over 10,000 as a result of a large influx from Russia and Poland as well as some Jews from West Prussia, which had come under Polish rule. It is estimated that around 60,000 Jews came to Danzig between 1920 and 1925, the majority of whom then moved on to the USA and Canada. There was considerable tension between the German Jews, who had previously been in the majority, and the new Ostjuden (something still seen today with the immigration of Russian Jews to Germany).

In 1933 the Free City of Danzig elected the Nazi Party by a majority, which they did not achieve even in Germany. The Danzig Nazi Party had racist policies similar to those of its German counterpart but in many important respects treated the Jews of Danzig differently to the way Jews in Germany were treated.

Jews in Danzig did not have a 'J' entered in their passports and did not have to change their names to include 'Israel' or 'Sara'. The Danzig government facilitated the sale, at knock-down prices, of Jewish-owned property to local people or institutions. Kristallnacht came to Danzig three days after the German pogrom and the main synagogue was spared thanks to the actions of the Jewish population.

Most remarkably, after Kristallnacht the City of Danzig facilitated the emigration of the remainder of the Jewish community who had not already fled. In order to fund this exodus, the Danzig government purchased the various properties of the Jewish community, including the

cemeteries, for 330,000 Danzig Gulden. Additional funds were raised from the American Joint Distribution Committee, which in return took to New York all the synagogue valuables: ancient books, Torah scrolls, and antique silver collections.

The Danzig authorities demanded that, in order to help the Jewish community to emigrate, all members should commit as a body to leaving the state. On 17 December 1938 the Danzig Jewish community agreed to this course of action at a meeting held in the Great Synagogue.

The plan was to charter large boats from the Black Sea or Mediterranean ports and unload them illegally in Palestine. This was a double win for the Nazis: making Danzig *judenrein* and frustrating the British!

The first transport of 500 people left Danzig on the night of 2 March 1939. A second transport left via Trieste in September 1939, and the third and final one left Danzig on 26 August 1940, arriving in Haifa on 24 December 1940. There were also four Kindertransports to England, the last of which left Danzig on 23 August 1939.

Danzig was abolished as a Free City by the Nazis on 2 September 1939 after their invasion of both Danzig and Poland. For the remainder of the war, it was part of the German Reich.

My grandfather, Leo Anker, and his nephew, Erwin Lichtenstein, were intimately involved with the Danzig community and the exodus. I am planning to write their story, and that of the Danzig community in the Nazi period, and would be pleased to hear from any readers with first-hand information, either through the AJR or at danzigproject@outlook.com

Leslie Michaels

Thank-Offering to Britain Award 2016-17

The *Thank-Offering to Britain Fellowship for 2016-17* has been awarded to Dr Jean-Marc Dreyfus of the University of Manchester. The *Fellowship*, which is awarded by the British Academy, was originally funded by donations from the Jewish refugees from Hitler. The fundraising was organised by the AJR and the proceeds were handed over to the British Academy in 1965 as a token of the refugees' gratitude to Britain to be used for research in the humanities and social sciences. Dr Dreyfus has contributed this description of his research project.

Disclosing post-Holocaust and deportation exhumations: the example of the French national search mission for corpses, 1945-58
Studies that investigate the significance of the corpse in war and mass violence

form a growing field of scholarship – hence the importance of describing the post-Holocaust and post-deportation search missions in Europe. In the final months of the war, deportees' bodies were no longer incinerated due to the absence of fuel (wood or coal) for the incinerators – as in the 'camp hospital' of Vaihingen (Neckar Valley). The corpses of prisoners who fell in the death marches were abandoned by the roadside or buried quickly and anonymously by local communities.

After liberation, the French state, like most other European states, decided to recover the corpses of deportees – all, even the Jews, seen as Resistance fighters – and to repatriate them. From 1945 to the late 1950s, this search mission devoted considerable resources to strengthening its forensic techniques, earthmoving equipment and

identification capacity with the support of diplomats, deportee organisations and the families of those missing. Work was carried out all over Germany but not further east. Few corpses were found in individual graves: most of the 50,000 were exhumed from mass graves and the sorting of bones was a difficult operation. Beyond the French search mission, the project will consider three similar endeavours: the British, Belgian and Italian ones, the latter known as 'Onorcaduti'.

Two questions arise: 1) What was at stake in the exhumations of deportees' corpses – what meaning did they hold, humanitarian or nationalist? 2) Why were these enterprises forgotten by the Holocaust memory culture that developed from the 1980s on? My study aims to address anew the topic of the aftermath of the Holocaust.

TRAVELS INTO A BOHEMIAN PAST

I had been toying with doing a 'Who Do You Think You Are'-style family trip to the Czech Republic for some years but it was my Grandma Anne's death in 2012 that really got things moving. My grandfather, who died when I was young, had brought her to London in 1939 as his then fiancée. Born 'Anna' in the German-speaking Sudetenland, she had met my Grandpa Frank ('Franz' in German, 'František' in Czech) while studying at Prague's Charles University. But like many in her circle of *mitteleuropäische* refugee friends, who religiously completed their German crosswords while chatting in Czech and German over coffee and strudel, she was often reluctant to discuss the past.

So the tools with which I, my brother Simon and my Dad set out on our trip were limited. The Czech Republic is geographically small and, while our indispensable family tree, dating back to 1700, showed connections in most corners of Bohemia, we decided to base ourselves in Prague for the six days. Our aims were modest: to get a feel for the country, see what signs we could of our family's footprint, and leave enough time to enjoy the local beer.

We had an early triumph in Prague's Jewish Quarter. Armed with an old photo of the 'Max Munk'-labelled shopfront of my great-grandfather's leather business, above which my grandfather had been born, we located the shop, almost identical in its new guise as a hair salon, only now in one of Prague's swankiest districts. Standing outside, cameras in hand, it was hardly surprising to be approached by a man who lived in the building with his elderly mother. The mother had lived there for decades and seemed to recall the name Munk. My great-

grandparents, who had not been willing to leave for London in 1939, were deported to Terezin in 1942; they never returned. I doubt the woman had been more than a child in the 1940s but her half-memory added a bitter aftertaste to the pleasure of finding the place.

Attending *Kabbalat Shabbat* at the Altneuschul in Prague was similarly evocative. It is Europe's oldest active synagogue, with a beautiful mediaeval gothic interior. But looking towards the tiny openings in the *mechitza* wall, I was rather distracted by Grandma's prized anecdote of visiting as a secular law student, wandering straight into the main *shul* and sternly being shooed towards the women's section.

Locating the grave of Grandma's father, Rudolf Selikovsky, in the huge Prague New Jewish Cemetery (where Franz Kafka is also buried) was another success. But outside Prague things were a little trickier. Without our guide, for instance, it would have been difficult to access the Jewish cemetery in Golcuv Jenikov, from where much of the Munk family originated. It was strange to think that the sleepy market town once housed a Jewish community said to date back to the 1400s, in whose *yeshiva* the American Reform movement's founder, Isaac Mayer Wise, studied. But in the



Jamie and father David in front of family shop

streets surrounding the grand synagogue it was still possible to imagine what once had been.

In all, from the shock of imagining my grandfather, at almost my exact age of 30, being uprooted from his home, family and country, to the fascination of discovering my own Czech heritage, the trip was something of an emotional rollercoaster. But, like Grandpa, I'm normally pretty OK after a hearty plate of goose, dumplings and red cabbage washed down with a large glass of Pilsner.

Jamie Munk

KT LUNCH

Wednesday 8 June 2016
at Alyth Gardens Synagogue
12.30 pm

We are delighted that we will be joined by Austrian Ambassador to the United Kingdom Dr Martin Eichtinger. He will be speaking about his diplomatic career and will be open to questions.

Prior to moving to the UK, Dr Eichtinger held various positions in the Austrian Government, with a career spanning over 30 years.

For further details and booking, please contact Susan Harrod at AJR on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

We look forward to seeing you

AJR FILM CLUB

Please join us at

Sha'arei Tsedek North London Reform Synagogue,

120 Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone, N20 9EZ
on Monday 4 July 2016 at 12.30 pm

A lunch of smoked salmon bagels, Danish pastries and tea or coffee will be served first.

'The Comedy Harmonisters'

This fascinating film tells the story of the famous German sextet the Comedian Harmonists, three of them Jewish, from the day they first met in 1927 to the day in 1934 when they were banned.

£7.00 per person

Booking is essential

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

HITCHEN LAVENDER FARM

a fragrant day out

Thursday 21 July 2016

Following a tour of the farm and a stroll around part of the lavender field, we will hear about the history of lavender in the area, its benefits and uses, and how to grow and maintain it. We will be shown a selection of the 65 varieties that grow on the farm and discuss the wildlife it attracts. Picking a bag of fresh lavender is included in the tour.

Lunch in the Farm café and travel by coach are provided.

For further details, please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk



AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB

Please join us at our new Card and Games Club
on Monday 11 July at 1.00 pm

at North Western Reform Synagogue,
Alyth Gardens, Temple Fortune, London NW11 7EN

Card games including Bridge, Backgammon, Scrabble – you decide.
Games are dependent on numbers being sufficient.

A sandwich lunch with tea, coffee and Danish pastries will be served on arrival.

£7.00 per person

Booking is essential – when you book please let us know your choice of game.

Please call Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk





EDINBURGH The 'Animal Years'

Karl Stern gave us an entertaining whirlwind of a talk on the 'animal years' of his adventurous life. His childhood passion for animals, especially snakes, had taken him far and wide collecting, lecturing and getting caught up in escapades. His talents had served him equally well working in childcare and now in his retirement as a gifted contemporary artist specialising in collagraphs.

Jonathan Kish

AJR FILM CLUB *Nowhere in Africa*

Meeting in Whetstone, 25 Film Club members enjoyed *Nowhere in Africa*, expertly introduced by Martin Aaron. The film is based on Stefanie Zweig's autobiography, in which she recounts her family's flight from Nazi Breslau to Kenya, where hankerings after the lost German life and marital tensions are set in beautiful landscapes.

Henry Cohn

EALING 'Don't Write Me Off Just Yet – Jewish Nonagenarians'

Having interviewed a number of amazing Jewish individuals who had passed the age of 90, Lawrence Collin told us his interviews suggested a positive attitude: pursuing and supporting particular causes and having a good family life were often key factors in achieving a great age.

Leslie Sommer

GLASGOW SPF Connect

Six Point Foundation's Susan Cohen spoke to us about all the great work they have done and the many good causes they have helped. Their latest project, SPF Connect, a simplified computer, was demonstrated at the meeting by Natpoint. These easy-to-use computers are personalised to the individual's needs and interests and are on offer to first-generation Holocaust survivors.

Agnes Isaacs

EALING A Sobering Morning

Before the war, Lesley Urbach told us, Herbert Morrison MP was friendly towards Jews. However, he later spoke

out strongly against Jewish refugees entering Britain, declaring this would increase anti-Semitism. Nonetheless, 70 per cent still managed to arrive, thanks mainly to Winston Churchill. A sobering morning!

Meta Roseneil

CAMBRIDGE A Wonderful Jewish Lady

David Barnett spoke about Lady Judith Montefiore, a truly wonderful Jewish lady who was extremely well educated and multilingual. She and her financially successful husband had many benevolent achievements to their credit not only in the UK but also in other European countries and the Holy Land.

Ruth Clapham

GLASGOW A Super Pesach Lunch

A large group of Glasgow members were joined by two Edinburgh members at Mark's Deli in Giffnock. We enjoyed a super Pesach lunch and chatted to friends old and new. We were happy to welcome Yvette to the Group. Looking forward to a Pesach outing to the Deli next year!

Anthea Berg

NEWCASTLE Behind the Headlines

Sunday Post former deputy editor Colin Grant gave us an often amusing talk on his life in journalism. He illustrated this with many intriguing stories such as his brush with British intelligence as a result of acquiring unique photos of the terrorist attack on Glasgow Airport. Later David Biermann entertained us with a medley of tunes from around the world on his violin.

Alan Cahill

PINNER History of London Cinemas

Our Blue Badge Guide Rachel Kosky kept us entertained about the history of cinemas in London. We all remember the Picturehouses and it was a delight to be reminded of the days before multi-screen cinemas.

Walter Weg

KINGSTON/SURREY Increasing Circle

We sadly missed Bronia and Tom Snow. Tom had recently passed away but they have always been an essential part of the Group and we send our sympathies to Bronia. But the ever-decreasing circle was increasing for a change and we were delighted to welcome new participants from the Kingston Group.

Edmee Barta

PRESTWICH CF How Holocaust Survivors View Their Places of Birth

We were joined by mature student Sam Elkin, who as part of his Master's degree was interested in finding out how Holocaust survivors viewed their

places of birth. A discussion ensued over a delicious lunch and Sam was left with much to consider. Thanks go to Ruth and Werner Lachs for their hospitality.

Wendy Bott

KENSINGTON Visit to Israel Recounted in Glowing Terms

We met once again at Ruth and Peter Krauss's lovely home. David De Haas told us about his and his wife Judy's recent visit to Israel, describing the country and its achievements in glowing terms. Peter Wayne recommended the specially adapted easy-to-use computers supplied by SPF Connect.

Eva Stellman

ESSEX (WESTCLIFF) Extraordinary Story

Our newest recruit Naomi Angel spoke about her German-Jewish mother and how she came to be adopted a week after her birth. Fifty years later she discovered her two brothers in Israel. We were moved to tears by the extraordinary story and the photos and documents, including Naomi's own painting of a sculpture of a mother and child made by her birth mother.

Susie Barnett

NOTTINGHAM (EAST MIDLANDS) A Nice Social Afternoon Meeting

Some 17 members from three counties came along and we had a nice social afternoon meeting. We very much missed Esther Rinkoff but welcomed Kathryn, our AJR Social Worker. The venue and a very nice lunch were generously provided by the son and daughter-in-law of a member.

Bob Norton

CESHIRE CF Until the Next Time

Ernie and Vivienne Hunter's lovely home was the venue for our meeting. We chatted over lunch about places we had visited that had left us with a lasting impression. Time flew by too quickly until it was soon time to say 'au revoir' until the next meeting.

Wendy Bott

RADLETT A Remarkable Woman

Dr Barnett gave an account of the life of Lady Judith Montefiore, who was very active in supporting or starting many charitable organisations mainly for the benefit of the Jewish poor. She also left us the first Jewish cookery book! Dr Barnett spoke with great warmth about this remarkable woman and brought her vividly to life.

Fritz Starer

WELWYN GC Varied Subjects of Discussion

Though a bit depleted in numbers on this occasion, we enjoyed discussing topics ranging from the EU referendum and the London mayoral candidates to family matters and other varied subjects.

Eva Stellman

GLASGOW CF FILM CLUB *Woman in Gold*

A good number of members turned up to Anthea's house, which had been converted into a mini-cinema for a showing of the excellent *Woman in Gold* starring Helen Mirren. Much discussion ensued about where people came from and looted family treasures.

Anthea Berg

BROMLEY Wishing Lianne Better and Looking Forward to the Next Meeting

We met again in the lovely comfort of Lianne's home but sadly Lianne was unable to be there due to illness. However, her daughter Laura was kind enough to host the afternoon, at which no less than four members of the second generation were present, allowing tea and conversation to flow. We wish Lianne better and look forward to the next meeting.

Esther Rinkoff

BRIGHTON Pesach Subjects

With our eagerly awaited nonagenarian speaker caught up in heavy traffic, we enjoyed a discussion on diverse subjects. We discussed age, which was considered no bar to achievement, as well as Pesach and the seder plate, including recipes for

charoset, matso breis and kneidlach. We concluded with a Passover quiz.

Shirley Huberman

HULL CF A Good Mix

Meeting around the lunch table at Olive's, we chatted about celebrities who had recently passed away, e.g. Terry Wogan, Paul Daniels and Ronnie Corbett. We also discussed other news items and talked about our favourite holiday locations. A good mix, all agreed!

Wendy Bott

EDGWARE Vintage Wedding Glamour

Vintage Wedding Glamour in London's East End is a collection of wedding pictures with a Hollywood-style backdrop taken by Boris Bennett. Michael Greisman traced the history of Boris's work from the time he immigrated from Poland to his achieving fame with his own 'Boris' studio in Whitechapel from 1927 to the mid-1950s. A most enjoyable afternoon!

Alice Fraser

WEMBLEY Tour of Literary London

Nick Dobson gave us a fascinating tour

of literary London through visits to Underground stations. He was very ably assisted by Vincent, who read extracts from poems and books.

Ruth Pearson

PROVOST HOSTS HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR



East Renfrewshire Provost Alistair Carmichael hosted a civic afternoon tea in honour of Judith Rosenberg, 92, one of only two remaining survivors of the concentration camps living in Scotland. Also present at the tea were Paul Morron, President of Glasgow's Jewish Representative Council, Stanley Lovett, Honorary Consul of Israel in Scotland, and Judith's friend Ethne Woldman.

JUNE GROUP EVENTS

Ilford	1 June	Kathryn Prevezer: 'Highlights of Trips to Istanbul, USA and Barcelona'
Glasgow Book Club	2 June	Social
Pinner	2 June	Gabriele Ferrario: 'Fragments of History – the Cairo Genizah'
Ealing	7 June	Eva Clarke: 'Born Survivors' (life story)
Harrogate	8 June	Trip to Harlow Carr Gardens
KT LUNCHES	8 June	Austrian Ambassador Dr Martin Eichtinger
Wessex	9 June	Summer Outing to Upwey Wishing Well
Essex (Westcliff)	14 June	Annual Lunch
Radlett	15 June	Lynn Julius: 'Jews in the Arab World'
Cambridge	16 June	Louise Heilbron: 'The First Woman Rabbi in England – Rabbi Jackie Tabick, Her Legacy and Her Role Models'
Imperial Café	16 June	Lunchtime Social Get-together
Brighton	20 June	Lynn Julius: 'Jews in the Arab World'
Cheshire	20 June	Social
Edgware	21 June	Louise Heilbron: 'The First Woman Rabbi in England – Rabbi Jackie Tabick, Her Legacy and Her Role Models'
Marlow	21 June	Lunch and Film Afternoon
Glasgow	22 June	Film Club
Kent	22 June	Lunch
Welwyn GC	23 June	Social
North West London	27 June	Michael Myers: 'My Time with the IDF'
Prestwich	27 June	Social
Leeds	28 June	Chazan Alby Chait accompanied by Phil Cammerman on piano
Book Club	29 June	Social Discussion
Wembley	29 June	Lesley Urbach: 'Herbert Morrison – Labour MP and Campaigner'
North London	30 June	Lesley Urbach: 'Herbert Morrison – Labour MP and Campaigner'

CONTACTS

Susan Harrod
Lead Outreach & Events
Co-ordinator
020 8385 3070 susan@ajr.org.uk

Wendy Bott
Northern Outreach Co-ordinator
07908 156 365 wendy@ajr.org.uk

Agnes Isaacs
Northern Outreach Co-ordinator
07908 156 361 agnes@ajr.org.uk

Kathryn Prevezer
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator
07966 969 951 kathryn@ajr.org.uk

Esther Rinkoff
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator
07966 631 778 esther@ajr.org.uk

Eva Stellman
Southern Outreach Co-ordinator
07904 489 515 eva@ajr.org.uk

KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Susan Harrod
020 8385 3070 susan@ajr.org.uk

Child Survivors' Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld
020 8954 5298 h.obstfeld@talk21.com



Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey for The National Holocaust Centre and Museum

The Dean of Westminster, The Very Reverend John Hall, is honouring the Centre's 20th Anniversary by holding a Service of Thanksgiving and Re-commitment.

The Service is on **Sunday 26 June at 6.30 pm**. It will champion what has been achieved by the Centre over the past 20 years but will also look to the future with a re-commitment to challenge prejudice and promoting understanding.

School children, survivors and the founding family will be involved in what will be an inspiring and important day in the Centre's history.

The service is open to everyone.

To book your seat please visit www.westminster-abbey-the-national-holocaust-centre.eventbrite.co.uk



CONFERENCE

WELCOME TO BRITAIN?
REFUGEES THEN AND NOW

In Memory of

Eleanor Rathbone, 1872-1946,

'The MP for Refugees'

20 June 2016, 9.00 am - 5.00 pm

at

King's College London, Strand Campus

Keynote Speaker:

Baroness Helena Kennedy QC

£20.00 inclusive

To book, please contact Lesley Urbach at lurbach@aol.com or on 020 8346 2256

www.rememberingeleanorrathbone.wordpress.com

Did we save your family?

We can help piece together your family record, like we did for Jerry

In the 1930s and 40s, World Jewish Relief rescued tens of thousands of people from the Nazis. We have the digitised family records of those we helped. Now we want to give them back to you, for free.

Find out if we helped your family at: www.worldjewishrelief.org/archives
Tel: 020 8736 1250

"These papers are a piece of family history which I will treasure forever"
Jerry Springer



WORLD JEWISH RESTITUTION ORGANISATION CALL TO ACTION

For details of the WJRO's campaign to raise awareness of the outstanding issues of Holocaust-era property restitution and to join our campaign, please visit <https://www.change.org/p/property-restitution-for-holocaust-survivors>

CLASSIFIED

Joseph Pereira (ex-AJR caretaker over 22 years) is now available for DIY repairs and general maintenance.

No job too small, very reasonable rates.

Please telephone

07966 887 485.



JACKMAN SILVERMAN

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

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

'I AM A REFUGEE'

The 'I am a Refugee' campaign will be launched on 20 June 2016 for International Refugee Day. This campaign aims to challenge xenophobic rhetoric against refugees and asylum seekers by celebrating their contribution to the UK and will remind the public that those we give sanctuary to give back in return.

A number of refugee ambassadors will be recognised by plaques on buildings where they have lived or worked.

We need your support to raise a minimum of £21,863 to make this campaign a reality.

To donate please visit <http://campaign.justgiving.com/charity/jointcouncil-welfareofimmigrants/iamarefugee>

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

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household electrical work

PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518

Mobile: 0795 614 8566

PillarCare

Quality support and care at home

- Hourly Care from 4 hours – 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 CQC and UKHCA

Call us on Freephone 0800 028 4645

PILLARCARE
THE BUSINESS CENTRE - 36 GLOUCESTER AVENUE - LONDON NW1 7BB
PHONE: 020 7482 2188 - FAX: 020 7900 2308
www.pillarcare.co.uk

Books Bought

MODERN AND OLD



Eric Levene

020 8364 3554 / 07855387574

ejlevine@blueyonder.co.uk

I also purchase ephemera

www.fishburnbooks.com

Jonathan Fishburn

buys and sells Jewish and Hebrew books, ephemera and items of Jewish interest.

He is a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association.

Contact Jonathan on

020 8455 9139

or 07813 803 889

for more information

OBITUARIES

Feodore Kahn, born Trier 15 December 1909, died London 13 November 2015

On 13 November 2015 Feodore Kahn passed away after a short illness. Born in 1909 in Trier, Germany, she was the eldest of three daughters of Salomon, a cattle dealer, and Selma Joseph. Unusually for the times and their background the two eldest daughters went to university (the youngest had her education interrupted). Feo studied French and English at Cologne, with terms spent at Freiburg and Paris. Her doctoral thesis, on the French Jewish poet André Spire, had sadly to be left unfinished – the family still has the draft. As a young and recently qualified teacher she taught at the Jawne, a Jewish high school in Cologne. Among her colleagues was the painter Ludwig Meidner. Many of her Jawne pupils came to England on the Kindertransport and some remained in touch with her until recent days.

Feo fled to England in 1938 with her husband Leo. Happily her parents, her sisters Hilde and Ruth and their husbands (Hans Jacobi and Rudolf Graupner) also emigrated and for many years they formed a tight-knit group in Wembley. Leo worked for a time at Bloomsbury House. He was interned on the Isle of Man, an experience he recorded in his novel *Obliging Fellow*. Rather than re-qualifying as a lawyer, he became the archivist at the Wiener Library and subsequently was in charge of the Nuremberg Trials archives at the Imperial War Museum.

Feo initially found a teaching job in

a renowned girl's school on the South coast, and then in London. In these early years in England she taught, helped other refugees, including her own parents, to master English, and bore two children.

Leo and Feo's circle of friends, during the war and afterwards, including the Rosenstocks, Weissenborns, Spiros, Meidners and Jack Bilbo, sounds like a roll-call of the early days of the émigré community and the early history of the AJR.

Feo successfully continued her teaching career well beyond normal retirement age. While her main subject was French she also taught German and, when needed, Latin and Spanish. Strict in her approach to linguistics and grammar, she was a kind and tolerant teacher who gained the devoted loyalty of her pupils.

As if full-time work, bringing up her children and running a household were not enough, she also managed to carry out other activities, such as occasional court interpretation and, in later years, lecturing in schools on her personal experiences under Hitler and as a refugee. She was even interviewed for German television.

Following Leo's death in 1989, Feo continued to remain intellectually and physically active. Her mind remained clear and shrewd to the end and her memory of events and of people,



from the First World War onwards, fascinated a constant stream of visitors. A younger generation of Germans, keen to 'set the record straight' and establish worthy memorials, found their way to Feo and she contributed much to articles, museum exhibits and a book about a murdered uncle.

Feo rejoiced in her family, her two children, her four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. News of an

imminent sixth arrived just in time! Although scattered geographically, they were devoted to her and made frequent trips to Wembley. A year ago what had once been a scattered remnant, but was now again a small and intense tribe, gathered in a country house to celebrate her 105th birthday. Feo's comment afterwards was 'When can we have the next party?'

Feo remained lucid, mentally active and fiercely critical virtually to the end. With her passing a chapter of history closes. Over a long and eventful life, she contributed much and to many. She was surrounded by the admiration of acquaintances, the affection of friends of several generations, and the love of her family. Her memories survive in the memories of those she passed them on to. She loved and was loved.

Stephen Kahn

Marianne Krausz, born Berlin 4 July 1919, died London 22 March 2016

Marianne was the only child of Gertrud (née Borgzinner) and Leo Prochownik, who lived in the Wilmersdorf district of Berlin. They had decided to wait until the close of war before bringing a child into the world. Marianne, an only child, grew up surrounded by a large family of aunts, uncles and cousins. Her father Leo was an illustrator and painter in the Expressionist style. Her mother Gertrud, very unusually for those days, went to work as a social worker and eventually took charge of the Jewish Social Care bureau. When in 1933 the Nazis came to power life became increasingly difficult for them. Leo was banned from working and in 1936 he was diagnosed with cancer. He died not long after in that same year.

Marianne, along with many young Jewish people, started training to gain the skills she needed for work abroad. She learnt English and basic seamstress skills.

In early 1939 Marianne was able to obtain a visa to come to Britain. Many of her friends were already here or arrived soon after. As she



proudly used to tell us, within a week of arrival she had found work and lodgings in Hampstead, which remained a favourite part of London.

Gertrud remained in Berlin as the Social Care office still needed her. By 1943 she heard that the Gestapo were looking for her, following the deportation to Auschwitz of her sister and brother-in-law. She was luckily able to go into hiding. She survived the war in Germany due to the help of several people, one of them Dr Lothar Kreyssig, whose family remain in contact with ours to this day.

During the war Marianne began training as a nurse in Harefield Hospital and in August 1946 she and her mother were reunited in London. They emigrated to Sydney, Australia, in 1947 to start a new life far from the turmoil of Europe. Marianne worked as a nurse and truly loved the Australian way of life. She met her future husband George Krausz at the 'All Nations Club', where many Jewish refugees would congregate during the 1950s. George was a successful classical musician of Hungarian origin. In 1958 Marianne gave birth to twins Julie and Jennifer and that

same year George won a prestigious composers' competition. Part of the prize was a bursary to study composition in Italy, which he took up in early 1961. Whilst spending time in Europe, George found it better for professional reasons to remain in Britain and Marianne, Gertrud and the girls joined him in London in 1962. They bought a house with a large garden in Kingsbury and Marianne developed a love of gardening.

In 1978 Marianne was involved in a serious car accident. Despite severe head injuries she was able to recuperate over many months and return home to live with George. In retirement she and George were able to enjoy many happy years together including re-visiting places from their youth in Europe. Their first grandchild Daniel was born in 1993. Sadly George passed away suddenly in 1995 and did not see the birth of two more grandchildren, Adam and Rosza.

Marianne moved to a retirement flat in Preston Road and continued to enjoy visiting exhibitions, attending concerts and reading. She remained independent until the final three years of her life. She died peacefully surrounded by her family. She will be missed by all of us.

**Jennifer Krausz and
Julie Krausz-Rogerson**



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

The Israel I live in

I've been called many things in my lifetime but this (a letter in the April issue of the *Journal*) is the first time I've been derided as being 'bland' or even 'beige'. That is perhaps the unkindest cut of all, whether justified or not.

Over ten years ago I was asked by the then editor of this journal to write a monthly column about life in Israel. There was no reference to my political views or any of the many current events which overtake us on a weekly, daily and even hourly basis. Any attempt on my part to keep up with all or any of these in this column would be futile, particularly in view of the fact that the printed format of the *AJR Journal* requires that copy be submitted well in advance of its publication.

So I write about the more mundane or less controversial events and happenings that I encounter. And I must admit that I live a very pleasant and relatively uneventful life at the heart of one of the most turbulent regions of the world at a particularly chaotic time in its pretty chaotic history.

I apologise in advance if what comes next sounds complacent and anodyne but that is the nature of bourgeois life anywhere in the world. When I graduated from a rather left-wing university some 50 years ago the last thing in the world I

wanted was to join the ranks of those who had undergone what we dismissively called *embourgeoisement* and so I emigrated to Israel. But becoming bourgeois, sadly, is generally what tends to happen to anyone who marries and has children. Acquiring property is necessary in order to put a roof over your child's head, gaining an education is necessary in order to get a job and put food in your child's mouth, and the process is more or less inevitable.

In the initial stages of our life as a family my husband and I worked and studied, brought up three children, and struggled to pay the mortgage and put food on the table. Gradually, however, the economic situation in Israel improved, and so did our own. Today, as a retired couple, we enjoy the benefits of the national health system, private and state pensions, and an extensive circle of relatives, friends and acquaintances, most of whom enjoy material circumstances that are more or less like our own.

The Israel I live in is one in which people enjoy a comfortable standard of living, consume cultural events, enjoy an active social life, and on the whole are not beset by financial worries. We have almost all lived through wars, have children and grandchildren, and are not unaware of what is happening around us. Many of my

Sabra contemporaries have served in the army (though I myself have not) and my children and grandchildren have and still do. We tend to avoid discussing politics when we meet as the subject is either too boring and depressing or might arouse tension – not good for our blood pressure. Politicians all over the world, including in Israel, tend not to be models of probity and it is disingenuous to expect anything else.

I know there are problems in Israel but I accept my inability to do anything about them. I'm still waiting for someone to show me a country that has no problems. We vote when the elections come round but have stopped going to political demonstrations, which anyway tend to be futile. Those demonstrations in which I participated in my youth achieved either nothing or the opposite of what I desired. The overall situation in Israel and the Middle East is too complex for me to determine what is the best solution. Once I thought that a two-state solution would resolve matters but today that does not seem to be feasible. In order for that to be a viable solution a great many things would have to change on all sides.

That's my two-pennies' worth, for what it's worth, and I would suggest that anyone seeking a more sensationalist text and rabid opinions should look elsewhere. I feel that by living and writing in Israel I am making my own small contribution to the present and future of the Jewish people. My Israel is a place where life is pleasant and the sunshine is plentiful. That probably explains why my mood is sanguine and my opinions bland.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *cont. from p.7*

Palestinian Arabs in 1929 which killed 67 Jews and forced the remainder to flee. That occurred during the Mandate.

For the concrete walls, checkpoints, watchtowers, etc to which Dr Langer objects, one has to go back to 1687, when Newton published his *Principia*, among these being the law that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Between January and December 2002 Arabs killed 472 Jews and injured 2,109 in 134 incidents. These were the 'actions'. The 'reaction' was the walls, etc. Between April and December 2013 (my latest figures) Arabs managed to kill a mere six Jews in six incidents but it wasn't for want of trying. The reduction is statistically significant. The walls etc saved lives – even if only Jewish ones – and that may not count

with some. Looking at it another way: no murders, no walls.

As for water shortages experienced by Arabs, this is an old canard: the PA, not Israel, has been the water authority on the West Bank, so-called since Oslo. It is corrupt, doesn't mend leaks, allows illegal boreholes, and refuses to accept offers of help and to adopt methods of recycling, conservation and in agriculture, where Israelis are experts.

The supply of electricity raises hopes. Until now Palestinians have not paid a penny for it and their debt to the Israel Electricity Corp. has risen to 1.76 billion shekels (£310 million). A series of power reductions reminded the PA that their free ride is unsustainable. In April this year the PA agreed to reduce their debt by 20 million

shekels. Not much but a beginning. Another example of cause and effect.

Frank Bright, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk

Sir – I am responding to Hanna Nyman's letter in the April journal.

I agree that under the fourth Geneva Convention it is legal to try Palestinians living in the West Bank in military courts as there is a military occupation of the area. The problem is the pick-and-choose nature that the Israeli Government has towards the convention as the settlers are tried in civilian courts. The legal reason for this distinction is hard to find. The justification seems to lie in politics: Israeli citizens would not find military courts satisfactory.

Jenny Manson, London NW11

Published by The Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR), a company limited by guarantee.

Registered office: Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL

Registered in England and Wales with charity number: 1149882 and company number: 8220991

Telephone 020 8385 3070 Fax 020 8385 3080 e-mail editorial@ajr.org.uk

For the latest AJR news, including details of forthcoming events and information about our services, visit www.ajr.org.uk

Printed by FBprinters LLP, 26 St Albans Lane, London NW11 7QB Tel: 020 8458 3220 Email: info@fbprinters.com