

AJR journal

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Refugee Children Now and Then

The admission of refugee children, especially those from war-torn Syria and those languishing in often appalling conditions like the notorious 'Jungle' outside Calais, is a highly sensitive political issue. The government's recent decision to limit to a mere 350 the number of unaccompanied child refugees admitted under the Dubs amendment to the Immigration Act 2016 has added fuel to the flames.

The Kindertransports of 1938/39, which brought almost 10,000 children, mostly Jewish, to safety in Britain, are frequently used as a point of reference by right-wing newspapers like the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*, which appear to be as hostile to the admission of 'immigrants' now as they were to the Jews after 1933: celebrating Britain's generosity towards the Kindertransports, whilst declaring that there is no room left for the refugees of the present.

The more liberal press also highlights the Kindertransports, but often ignores the historical and political realities of 1938/39 in favour of a self-congratulatory discourse about British hospitality to refugee children. An example is an article by Rohan Silva (who styles himself a former advisor to David Cameron) in the London *Evening Standard* of 19 December 2016. Without providing a shred of historical context, Silva invites his readers to picture a train bringing Jewish children from Vienna:

Shortly after they arrived here – in the bleak midwinter, so to speak – the young refugees were taken to a cinema. When they walked in, they each found a chocolate bar on their seat, a Christmas present from the local community.

Plainly, he does not know that the Christian festival of Christmas, presents and all, was something of a taboo to observant Jews in central and Eastern Europe.

Silva also glosses over the conditions experienced by Kindertransport children in reception camps like Dovercourt, near Harwich. The inadequate nature of the accommodation – the huts designed for summer holiday-makers were virtually

unheated in winter – the poor food and, above all, the lack of emotional support for children separated from their families are factors well known from many accounts: Lore Segal's memorable portrayal of childhood emigration in her memoir *Other People's Houses*, or the recollections of Richard Grunberger, Editor of this Journal



Then: Kindertransport children en route to new lives in Britain

from 1988 to 2005, in the film *Continental Britons*, directed by Dr Bea Lewkowicz. Even children who were taken in by British households often experienced insensitive or cruel treatment, as Ruth Barnett described in painful detail in her autobiography *Person of No Nationality: A Story of Childhood Separation, Loss and Recovery*, and with a whole series of placements endured by Annette Saville, as described in her volume of memoirs *Only a Kindertransportee*.

None of this intrudes on Silva's chocolate-box depiction of British generosity to refugee children, where native anti-Semitism and xenophobia play no part:

Just think about that for a moment. It was the eve of the Second World War, and much of Europe was succumbing to ethnic hatred and extremism. Against that backdrop, this festive offering was simply magnificent – a wonderfully open-hearted and charitable gesture.

(If this was the quality of the advice offered to Prime Minister Cameron, it is perhaps not surprising that his European policy met with the success that it did.) It

is of course true that the Kindertransports to Britain were a remarkable humanitarian initiative, saving the lives of nearly 10,000 children. But they were also the product of the conflicted politics of their day. British immigration policy in the 1930s was often less than generous in its treatment of Jews seeking refuge from Nazi persecution, influenced as it was by public hostility to mass immigration and by widespread distaste for Jews.

The historical background to the Kindertransports

In November 1938, in the wake of the anti-Semitic pogroms known as the 'Crystal Night', a delegation of prominent Jewish figures went to Downing Street to urge Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain to admit Jewish children from the Third Reich without delay. Chamberlain gave the delegation what can only be called a polite brush-off. But when the cabinet discussed the matter the following day, it decided to admit children

under seventeen, without requiring visas or any other documentation. That did not, however, extend to their parents, many of whom remained in Germany and perished. The provision made for the children was inadequate; they were mostly left to fend for themselves, dependent in many cases on the British adults to whose care they had been entrusted – which proved to be something of a lottery. Many Kindertransportees settled more or less happily in Britain, flourished and built successful lives and careers for themselves; others never succeeded in putting the experience of forced emigration and separation from their parents behind them.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Cameron and May governments' policies towards child refugees have been significantly more restrictive than that of the Chamberlain government in 1938/39. Cameron refused outright to participate in any scheme to distribute the refugees and immigrants flocking into Europe across the member states of the European Union, while

Refugee Children Now and Then *continued*

May has limited the number of children admitted under the Dubs amendment, itself inspired by the Kindertransports, to a tiny fraction of the number of unaccompanied children admitted in 1938/39. Those who support that restriction argue, with some justification, that the situation in 2017 does not bear comparison with that of the late 1930s; for one thing, the sheer number of immigrants already resident in Britain vastly exceeds the relatively small number of refugees from Nazism admitted in the 1930s, just as the numbers of refugees spilling out from the troubled areas of the Middle East and elsewhere hugely exceed those seeking to escape from the Nazis in the pre-war years.

Some former refugees from Nazism complain further that refugees arriving in Britain today have access to benefits and social services not available to the refugees of the 1930s. In one sense, that is undeniably true: the welfare state as we know it was only created by the Labour government after 1945. But it is surely fairer to compare the treatment of the immigrants of the 1930s with the treatment of the native British of the day. By and large, both the refugees of the 1930s and the immigrants of more recent decades have had access to much the same welfare services and benefits as British people in comparable situations of need. To argue that the refugees of the 1930s were unfairly treated, in terms of state-provided social welfare, by comparison with the immigrants of more recent decades is rather like arguing that the earlier refugees were discriminated against because in 1939 they had no access to open-heart surgery on the NHS.

The admission of child survivors after 1945

The precedent for the present government's policies on the admission of refugee children is arguably less the Kindertransport programme of the pre-war period than the post-war policies of the Labour government. After 1945, the Home Office continued to propose and sometimes to implement measures designed to restrict the number of Jews, including



Now: Migrant children look through a metal fence in Slovenia (Picture: Getty Images)

children, entering Britain. The total number of children admitted, most of whom had survived the war in camps or in hiding, was in hundreds, rather than in thousands. The largest group of post-war Jewish child immigrants was that known as 'The Boys', 732 children (including 80 girls) who arrived in Britain by plane from Prague and Munich in the months after August 1945, when the British government decided to admit 1,000 child orphans who had survived the camps. Among them was Ben Helfgott, who later represented Britain in weightlifting at the Olympic Games and founded the '45 Aid Society. Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld brought out another group of child survivors.

A number of Jewish children who had relatives here arrived separately. Many of them made substantial contributions to British society: I am proud of being related by marriage to the late Roman Kocen, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto who was an outstanding neurologist at the National Hospital in Queen Square, London. The present government, which has made no great effort to ease the path to entry to unaccompanied child refugees with family ties to Britain, might just bear such contributions in mind. As far as the Jewish refugees from Nazism in general are concerned, they may well conclude that they were fortunate to be faced with the government of Neville Chamberlain in the 1930s, rather than that of Theresa May in 2017.

Anthony Grenville



NEW LOOK FOR AJR JOURNAL

In our March issue we shared the latest design for the new AJR logo. Now you can see how the design is evolving – and especially how the AJR Journal might look.

The main differences are obviously the logo and the colours, but we are also making the Journal visually easier to read. According to Tammy Kustow, Creative Director of Graphical, the agency behind these designs, the new layout allows more space for both images and text to create a visually appealing page structure.

"Font sizes are legible and consistent and the colour palette will reflect the new brand identity, with solid colour boxes utilised to differentiate multiple articles on the same page. Overall this modernises and refreshes an already excellent publication," says Tammy.

The actual content of the Journal is unlikely to change substantially, at least in the short term. We will maintain our core staples, such as Anthony Grenville's leading articles, our letters and reviews pages, and we will of course continue to regularly publish news about matters affecting refugees and obituaries of AJR members who sadly pass away. We will also try to give you more of an insight into the work of the AJR and the key people in our team who are here to help our members.

Jo Briggs, who is currently editing the Journal in the absence of Howard Spier, is also interested in receiving feedback about how the content might evolve. "We are here to please our readers, so if there is something you would particularly like to see covered in the AJR Journal – either as a one-off or a regular feature – then just let us know," she says.

You can write to Jo directly on jo@ajr.org.uk or via the AJR office.

Graphical will now work with our editorial team and our existing printers to apply the new designs to the May issue. Watch this space!

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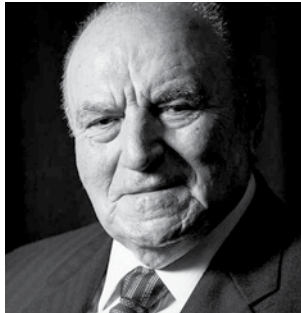
YOM HASHOAH EVENTS, 23 APRIL

As well as the national Yom HaShoah Commemoration Ceremony, taking place at Barnet Copthall Stadium in the afternoon of 23 April (to secure your ticket please call Carol Hart on 020 8385 3083 or book online at www.yomhashoah.org.uk), there are smaller events taking place at synagogues and centres around the country.

In Pinner, starting at 8.00pm and in the presence of the Romanian Ambassador, Holocaust survivor Leslie Kleinman – who was born 1929 in Romania – will share his remarkable journey ‘from Terror to Tolerance’. All are welcome and there is no charge.

By pretending to be 17 at the Auschwitz ‘selection’ Leslie was sent to the ‘right’. His entire family was

sent ‘left’, apart from his oldest sister, who sadly died at liberation. Leslie eventually came to the UK as one of “The Boys” who later formed the ‘45 Aid Society.



Leslie Kleinman

Another Romanian survivor, the late writer Elie Wiesel, will be featured at both the Pinner event and at JW3 on Finchley Road. During the Pinner event, some of his words will be read by youth members of the shul. At JW3, starting at 7.30pm, Elie Wiesel’s book *Night* will provide the focus for readings by Kerry Shale, interspersed with music by singer Rachel Weston, pianist Ilan Lazarus and violinist Robert Hartman. Rabbi Roni Tabick will then lead a short service.

Tickets are £8 each – book at www.jw3.org.uk

Sekretair goes home

The splendid “Sekretair” that once belonged to the renowned German-Jewish educator Anna Essinger is making its way back from London to Germany, where it will be on display at a new cultural centre in Blaustein, near Herrlingen.

AJR member, Leslie Brent, who inherited the desk after Anna’s death, decided to make the donation after learning about the new centre. He felt it highly appropriate that the Sekretair makes its permanent home back in the country where she had such a strong influence on education, both before and after she had to flee to England in 1933.



Sekretair

Spiritual Care

The Claims Conference has just published Kavod Issue 7, available for viewing at kavod.claimscon.org. This issue focuses on spiritual care of Holocaust survivors and other important interventions, including the use of the Snoezelen multi-sensory room, from authors around the world.

New Online Archives

The International Tracing Service (ITS) has published two further resources in its online archive. They include the card index of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany and material on death marches from concentration camps. They can be viewed at digitalcollections.its-arolsen.org

Limmud4Diaspora

Roma, Armenian and Jewish diaspora will be the focus of some special days being organised by Limmud4Diaspora – an exciting new project to enhance the development of diaspora communities who have been grossly misunderstood and persecuted in the past. Diaspora supporting each other and working together can create a network that crosses nation state boundaries to everyone’s advantage – contact Ruth Barnett via rutheclb@gmail.com for more details.



Diaspora silhouette

Culture & The Third Reich

The Music Club of London and the Mastersingers are this month jointly staging a weekend of activities focusing on art and music under the Third Reich.

Taking place on 8 & 9 April in the Houseman Room at University College London, events will include art and music that was endorsed by and/or despised by the political regime. They will also show the film “Das Reichsorchester”, about the role of the Berlin Philharmonic in cultural propaganda, and give recitals of both classical and musical theatre pieces of the 20s and 30s.

Further information and tickets available from mikemorgan@wagner65.wanadoo.co.uk or call 01494 514 252.

German Contribution to Modern British Art

Two new exhibitions open this month at London’s Ben Uri Gallery & Museum, both celebrating the work of German refugee artists.

The Upper Gallery features the work of Eva Frankfurter, who escaped to London in 1939, where she took as her subject the ethnically diverse, largely immigrant population among whom she lived and worked.

The Lower Gallery brings together art works and archival material by an array of both celebrated and lesser-known German-born refugee artists from 1900 onwards. Paintings, posters, prints,

drawings, cartoons, book illustrations and sculptures explore issues of identity and migration via the German refugee experience in England, supported by oral testimonies from three generations of German migrants, and displayed alongside the work of a contemporary German immigrant artist.

Both exhibitions run until 4 June and a full review will appear in the June issue of the AJR Journal.



Four paintings from the estate of Eva Frankfurter

MY STORY: Vivian Benveniste

My mother Trudie Dukes was born in Vienna in January 1908 to Elsa and Otto Schick.

Her young life was easy. She enjoyed music, art, theatre and all the cultural activities that a Jewish family of that time would expect their children to enjoy. She initially married and then divorced Herman Tandler but they remained friends. Herman helped many children escape via the Kindertransport, before being caught by the Nazis and sent with his parents to Dachau in 1942, where they were murdered.

In 1938 my grandparents encouraged Trudie to find a position in England, to leave Austria and the terrible situation that was emerging for the Jews.

She came to England as a domestic, as did her compatriots at the time, leaving behind the comforts and luxury of a Viennese home, to say nothing of the love of her devoted parents and grandmother.

Life was tough in Cambridge but in the early 1940s Trudie met the most amazing dapper fellow Viennese, Eduard (Eddie) Dukes, who had escaped to England around the same time as her. They married in 1942, and although they didn't have much, they enjoyed life to the full. Then, much to their surprise, as Trudie was nearing 40 and Eddie was almost 50, I arrived.



Vivian Benveniste with her mother

Their biggest regret was losing the families they had left behind. The exception was Trudie's brother Richard, who joined the Resistance and survived the war, eventually ending up in Palestine. But through the Red Cross, my mother learned that in 1942 her mother was deported to Maly Trostinec in Belarus, where she was murdered in the forest along with thousands of others.

My great grandmother Anna Gewitsch was transported to Theresienstadt, where she was also murdered in September 1942. A few weeks later my father's brother (whom he could never bring himself to even mention) was also sent to Theresienstadt, but managed to survive for two years before being murdered at Auschwitz.



Blagowshtchina Forest in Belarus

His name was Emile Dukes.

In the 20 years since my own mother passed away I have spent a great deal of time searching for my roots. The internet is a great help, and through a website called www.IM-MER.at I made contact with a wonderful lady called Waltraud Barton. Each year she arranges a ceremony in Blagowshtchina – the forest in Belarus where the mass murder took place. She has also fixed a plaque for each Shoah victim murdered there who was born in Vienna – so far there are over 400. She arranged for Kaddish to be said on behalf of my grandmother, which made me feel very emotional although I wasn't there myself to hear it. I hope to travel this year or next to find closure.

Being an only child I feel privileged to have had such a wonderful life. My relationship with my parents was as if we were one. Everything my mother did, she did for others. She volunteered as a friend of the Royal Free Hospital for twenty years, and she regularly visited a housebound friend. She was a true inspiration, and it is partly thanks to her example that I myself have helped and cared for an elderly couple until they passed away.

In 1997 my mother suffered a stroke, so I asked her to give a testimony to the archive of the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation. Although she was very ill and – it turned out – only had a few weeks to live, she shared her story to help ensure that – in the words of the Shoah Foundation – FUTURE GENERATIONS NEVER FORGET WHAT SO FEW LIVED TO TELL. I made a promise to her and myself that I would pass on her story to my two children, Jeff and David, and my six grandchildren, and encourage them to do the same to ensure that the Holocaust memory will never be forgotten. Being second generation has affected me in so many ways, even though I never knew my family that perished. I realise that the only way for my parents and other survivors to lead a normal life was to try to shut away all the terrible things that happened.

The most amazing testament, of course, is that after starting out with just my mother and father, with no grandparents, aunts or uncles who survived, I now have a family of 12 people. My parents would not believe it if they could see it, and they would be very proud to know that something so lovely has risen from the ashes of something so horrific.



AJR CARD AND GAMES CLUB

Please join us at our new Card and Games Club

Monday 8 May 2017 at 1.00pm

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

Open to all levels Bridge players – come and join us

We also offer card games, backgammon, scrabble. You decide.

Games are dependent on numbers being sufficient – the more the merrier

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

£7.00 per person

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

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



Opinion piece: The Sound of Silence

Note from Editor: As the Government invites us to vote on the shortlisted designs for the National Holocaust Memorial, this is a thought provoking read.

"Hello darkness my old friend, I've come to talk with you again"*. And to survivors and refugees, there can of course be no greater darkness than the Holocaust.

The survivors and refugees speak out about what happened. They go to schools. And town halls. And libraries. And commemorative events. Some people listen. And go back to their lives. School children listen; some even cry. And then go back to their lessons. Soon there will be no one to speak about what they went through. Silence will fall on those events.



The Sound of Silence © Simon & Garfunkel

Hundreds, thousands of volumes of testimonies and histories will remain, mainly for academics and historians. Written in good faith, but with few to read them.

Fictional films will endure. Many of them are of course 'Holocaust-Lite': Could a young German boy really meet and befriend a Jewish boy from the other side of the Auschwitz fence? (*The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*). Is a horror-free Holocaust something really to make jokes about? (*Life is Beautiful*). They tell a falsified story.

Other films (*Sophie's Choice*, *Shindler's List*, etc.) may be more realistic in terms of the events. But Sophie never existed. And Shindler's motives were actually less than honourable – wasn't acquiring cheap slave labourers from those about to die his principal aim?

So the directors receive their awards, and the actors receive their Oscars. Whole production teams have something to add to their CVs. Those playing the victims are well-fed and go home each night to dinner with their families. None of them really die. The make-up artists and costume designers earn well. The composers and orchestras release CDs.

Armies of lawyers and solicitors act

for the victims and their families. Taking a large share of the restitution. But without sharing in the pain. Those running and working for Holocaust-related charities receive their salaries. Hundreds of sculptors who have designed their memorials are publicly acclaimed, well-paid, and their CVs are enhanced. It's a stepping stone to their next lucrative commission.

As someone once said, there's no business like Shoah-business. And still there are Holocaust victims and their children who continue to live in poverty and need, hurting and bearing their scars. But people would rather visit a memorial than attend to the victims. It's so much easier.

In the end, there can only be silence. Visiting memorials, watching films, reading books – these are all praiseworthy, with everyone joining in the words: 'Never Again'. But this is no longer the right response. It is the silence that counts.

Jewish tradition states that when one visits someone in hospital, one goes to listen but not to initiate speech or to talk about oneself. And the same when one visits a mourner in their home during the Shiva. One's silent presence establishes a real connection to the one who is suffering. Not talking about how bad the traffic was. Or how difficult it was to park. Or how successful the children are. Or where the next holiday will be. Just silence. And listening. *"Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was."* (Book of Job)

On Remembrance Day, after the speeches and music have finished, the two-minute silence is always the most powerful moment. You don't need to practise it. You don't need to rehearse it. You don't need to pay for it. You can't add it to your CV. It doesn't make anyone rich or famous. You simply stop. And clear your mind. And connect.

"No words as Pope Francis visits Auschwitz death camp in silence" was the Guardian's headline of 29 July 2016. *"Francis had said he wanted his visit – the third by a pope – to be conducted in silence. "I would like to go to that place of horror without speeches, without crowds – only the few people necessary."* His only public words were written in the Auschwitz guest book: *'Lord, have pity on your people. Lord, forgive so much cruelty'*.

Some England football team players, in Poland for the 2012 European Championship, were taken to visit Auschwitz ahead of the tournament. The Independent reported (7 June

2012): *"Silent and shaking their heads in disbelief, Joe Hart and Phil Jagielka afterwards described the tour of the Nazi concentration camp as a 'surreal experience'. There was an unbroken silence in the team bus as it rolled away from the grounds of the place where fable says there is never the sound of birdsong"*. There were no speeches, no press conference, no public statement, no photo opportunity. Just a few silent tweets after the visit. Other players chose not to visit. And that was fine. Silence – like poppies on Remembrance Day – should always be one's own chosen response, never imposed.

"People talking without speaking, people hearing without listening, people writing songs that voices never shared. No one dare disturb the sound of silence".

David Wirth

The Isabella Plantation Richmond Park Thursday 11th May 2017



The Isabella Plantation is a 40 acre woodland garden set within a Victorian woodland plantation planted in the 1830's. First opened to the public in 1953, it is best known for its evergreen azaleas, which line the ponds and streams and should be at their peak of flower.

We will have a guided tour of part of the flower gardens and you will then be able to look around at your leisure.

Although there is seating at regular intervals it is not suitable for anyone unable to walk unaided.

We will arrive by minibus at 12pm – bring a packed lunch to eat before our guided tour. After our visit we will have tea in Kew at The Original Maids of Honour.

For details and booking please contact Susan Harrod on susan@ajr.org.uk or 020 8385 3070

10-DAY VISIT TO ISRAEL NOVEMBER 2017

The AJR is considering organising a 10-day trip to Israel in early November this year. The cost of the visit is not yet decided. Carol Rossen will be accompanying the trip.

If you would like to join the trip, please contact Lorna Moss on 020 8385 3070 or at lorna@ajr.org.uk as soon as possible.



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

JEWISH ORIGINS, DEVIL'S WORK, AND LIONEL HARRIS

Sir – I very much look forward to the arrival of the AJR Journal each month and wish to make a few points regarding some articles which appeared during the past year. In Anthony Grenville's essay in June on the movie star Hedy Lamarr it would have been of interest to mention the fact that she, like many celebrities, went to great lengths to conceal her Jewish origins. According to her biographer, "Hedy kept her Jewish heritage secret throughout her life; her son and daughter only learned of it after her death" (Hedy, *The Most Beautiful Woman in Film* by Ruth Barton, 2010). She is perhaps best remembered for her role in *Samson and Delilah* (1949) from producer-director Cecil B. DeMille, who also concealed his Jewish origins. (His mother, Matilda Beatrice Samuel from Liverpool, was a cousin of Sir Herbert Samuel, the first High Commissioner of Palestine under the British mandate in the 1920s).

On a somewhat different note, I recall that Gloria Tessler in her May Art Notes about Giorgione writes: "At a time when the all-powerful Catholic Church rejected landscape painting as the work of the devil..." Where in the world did she discover this? I would be interested to learn about her source.

Finally, I am currently writing an essay on the Jewish theatre and TV director Lionel Harris who died in 1985. Born in the East End, I think, of Jewish immigrant parents, any information on him or his family would be much appreciated. Please contact me by post or phone at 7a Belsize Sq. NW3 4HT or 020 7794 7175 (afternoons).

Joel Finler

PROPOSED KITCHENER CAMP NETWORK

Sir – My late father arrived in England just before the Second World War. He was placed in the Kitchener Camp in Sandwich, Kent, a camp set up for German and Austrian refugees by the Anglo-Jewish community. By September 1939, the camp housed nearly 4000 men, most of whom had come from three concentration camps in Greater Germany.

I would like to set up a "Kitchener Camp Network" group where descendants of

these men could share our parents' experiences and how their lives later developed in England and further afield.

I understand from Clare Ungerson, whose book *Four Thousand Lives* is about the Kitchener Camp rescue, that there are plans for a temporary exhibition in Sandwich on the Kitchener Camp in 2018 and that the newly refurbished museum in Sandwich will have a permanent display.

Our Kitchener Camp Network could visit in 2018 and be involved in the museum developments.

If of interest please email me at sn.kitchenercamp@gmail.com

Stephen Nelkin

SPEAKING FOR THE GOLDEN OLDIES

Sir – I read Dr. Grenville's most interesting article about Thomas Mann and having read Mann's "The Magic Mountain" it made me realise how lucky I am to be alive. There is so much emphasis on youth today that I would like to speak for us "Golden Oldies"!

I believe that when you are old you must train yourself to be more tolerant, have patience and not get too excited – bad for blood pressure! – if people do not have the same opinions as you have. Just sit back and smile.

I look at my old age with happiness. I am 95 and have many physical problems. However, you must have a positive outlook and a great sense of humour – which I have – and must be able to laugh, especially at yourself. You must also still keep your interests; I still go to lectures, classes for seniors, play bridge once a week and I never watch TV during the day! The only exception is for my hobby – FOOTBALL. I changed my loyalties from "the selige Hakoah" (soccer team in Vienna) to Arsenal when I came to London in 1946, having heard about them in Vienna from my brother.

MORE lessons learnt – forget your pride when you need help – I call it "bin vom hohen Ross gefallen" (fallen from my high horse). I am a little handicapped, walk or crawl with a walker and DO need help, especially as I am still living alone in my apartment. I cannot do very many things anymore so I appreciate all the help I get.

The other most important thing is TALK!! The curse of our technological

advance is loneliness. I do not have Facebook or Twitter etc., but I do have a computer with e-mail and internet and Google for "furthering my education"!! However, you also need people to talk to ("Durchs Reden kommen die Leut' zusammen" – people come together through conversation) and I am lucky to still have some. I could never live with the excellent quotation "Kuerze – Wuerze"!!!

I was lucky to have had an exceptionally happy marriage for 68 years to a wonderful man and am blessed with a fantastic daughter who is bilingual and "spoils me rotten". My two grandchildren and five great grandchildren, even though they do not live near me, are in constant contact and bring me much joy.

In short – ENJOY your life whilst it lasts and thus I hope I'll reach my 96th birthday in April – if not you would read it in the AJR Journal!

Kitty Schafer, Toronto, Canada

HOW MANY VOLUNTARILY RETURNED?

Sir – Following on from your article in the February issue on the Beckhardt family in which mention was made of the family's (in large measure voluntary) return to Germany from exile in a mostly safe and friendly country, namely Britain; I wonder is anyone aware of any figures, or best estimates, relating to the number of Jewish exiles, former German nationals, who similarly voluntarily returned to Germany in the immediate post-war period in an attempt to re-establish their lives there?

My impression is that it was very small, and that the oft-cited statistical reference point for rare events in general of 0.1% may itself be somewhat of an overestimation. I am happy to have my feelings either corrected or confirmed by those with greater knowledge on the subject than myself.

To clarify, the numbers I am seeking relate to voluntary returnees, rather the number of those Jews still alive in Germany at war's end, such as those sheltered by sympathetic Germans for the duration of the war, or survivors of the concentration camps who decided to remain there rather than emigrate elsewhere.

Mike Couchman, Margate.
mkcchmn@gmail.com

WHO NEEDS ENEMIES WITH FRIENDS LIKE THAT?

In reply to Sally Bloom's letter (Jan. 2017) as to why the gas chambers or the railway lines leading to them were not bombed, the answer is that, although Churchill was in favour of it, he didn't run the show. For the sake of greater accuracy the 8th USAAF did the bombing of targets of their choice and they could not have cared less about Jews. The US Assistant Secretary for War, J. McCloy, turned it down on four occasions. One official at the British Foreign Office minuted: "a disproportionate amount

of time is wasted on these wailing Jews" (*Europe, a History* by Norman Davies, p. 1026).

The RAF could have done it. Its Mosquito, far more versatile than a bomber, could carry four 500lb bombs at over 400mph or, even better, eight rocket projectiles, which could be placed very accurately on a small target, whether it was a tank, a locomotive or a gas chamber. That none of it was done is worth remembering.

*Frank Bright,
Martlesham Heath, Suffolk*

WIENER LIBRARY 'WALL OF HONOUR'

I refer to your feature "Our Wall of Honour" and quote: 'The Wiener Library asks for a minimum of £2,000 for a commemorative plaque.' There are many refugees whose kith and kin deserve to have their names on such a 'Wall of Honour' and who are unable to find this large sum from limited resources and are, as a result, prevented from honouring friends and relatives.

Whoever thought this up does not live in the real world, at least not in the world of refugees with limited means. Scrap the whole idea and think again to include all victims, irrespective of them having relatives or friends who have the odd £2,000 kicking around.

Ernest G. Kolman, Greenford, Middx

PROUD OF MY JUDAISM

Sir – I am very upset that Laszlo Roman has questioned my Judaism (AJR Journal March 2017). Both sets of my grandparents were Jewish – they came from Galicia. Also, I myself am a Holocaust Survivor, having fled Vienna along with parents in February 1939, aged three.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's "Letter from Israel" in the same issue of the Journal, highlights a talk given in Israel on Judaism by Rabbi Gabi Dagan where he stated that "emphasis starting in kindergarten and going through to high school and vocational education classes *should* be on the values of Liberal Judaism as opposed to the rote learning and restricted intellectual scope of orthodox Jewish learning".

Dorothea went on to tell us that "this was the approach of Rabbi Leo Baeck, one of our greatest modern Rabbis." He was a Liberal Jew, just like me. I strongly recommend that Mr. Roman reads the works of Rabbi Baeck, and learns from him.

Lastly, I believe the Muslims, like the Jews, should integrate. If the Muslims would only stop wanting to practise Sharia Law (and all it entails) in non-Muslim countries, I believe that Islamophobia in the UK, and elsewhere in the world, would inevitably be reduced. So to answer your question, Mr. Roman, as to whether I would dare criticise Muslim religious practice as well as Jewish, the answer is YES!

Peter Phillips, Herts.

IN TUNE WITH OUR COUNTRY

Sir – We write as the orthodox observant third generation children of David Kaye.

Peter Phillips chooses to disparage our religious practice rather than respond to the crux of our justified rebuff of Mr Phillips' assertion with regard to our British values.

Our British values allow us to accept that Mr Phillips may be quite entitled to express his egregious disregard for the way we chose to practise our religion. However he has no justification in promulgating a view that our Modern Orthodox education and way of life (however he chooses to disparage it) makes us "uneducated in being British" as stated in his original letter published in January.

I think he will find that the secular qualifications we hold, the patients we treat, the multi-cultural children we teach, the clients we assist, and the communities with which we work across the entire cultural, religious and ethnic spectrum of the UK, are testimony to our being professionally, socially, and emotionally totally in tune with the ways, customs and standards of our country, and completely capable in the delivery of our services.

Our religious observances provide a moral compass which assists and guides us and engenders in us the kind of tolerance and understanding that Mr Phillips seems to lack.

*Simone Simon, Danielle
and Danny Feuer*

NOTE FROM EDITOR: ERRATA

Some printing errors occurred in previous journals. We are grateful to the following readers who pointed them out:

William Wolff – March edition, Page 4: The caption should read "Wiener Library" (not Weiner)

Margarete Stern – January edition, letters page, "Prince Monolulu of the

Falashas" should read: her father had "a tip on a horse" (not a trip on a horse). Also in the article "Putting Things Right" – the name Bunzl was wrongly written as Bunst.

Walter Goddard – February edition, letters page, "Putting things right" should have said that Ruth Renfield's cooking was "das Heim" or even "daheim", but definitely not "der heim".

February edition, **Book Review** "I only wanted to live" should have been attributed to Dorothea Shefer-Vanson and not Dorothea Weber.



AJR FILM CLUB

Please join us at our next Film Club at Sha'arei Tzedek North London Reform Synagogue, 120 Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone N20 9EZ

on **Monday 24 April at 12.30pm**

including lunch of smoked salmon bagels, Danish pastries and tea or coffee.

BROOKLYN

Brooklyn is a 2015 British-Canadian-Irish romantic drama film directed by John Crowley and written by Nick Hornby, based on Colm Tóibín's 2009 novel of the same name. The film stars Saoirse Ronan, Emory Cohen, Domhnall Gleeson, Jim Broadbent, and Julie Walters. Set in 1951 and 1952, the film tells the story of a young Irish woman's immigration to Brooklyn, where she falls in love. When her past catches up with her she must choose between two countries and the lives that exist within them for her.

£7.00 per person.

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

KT LUNCH

Wednesday 10 May 2017
at New North London Synagogue,
Finchley, 12.00 pm

Guest Speaker – **Sir Eric Pickles**



Sir Eric Pickles is a British Conservative politician who has been MP for Brentwood and Ongar since 1992 and was Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government until May 2015. He was the Chairman of the Conservative Party from 2009 to 2010 and is currently the Chairman of Conservative Friends of Israel. In 2015 he was appointed UK Special Envoy for post-Holocaust issues.

We also hope to be joined by Year 6 Children from Akiva School.

Places must be booked by 1st May. Please contact Susan Harrod at AJR on 020 8385 3070 or email susan@ajr.org.uk

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ART NOTES

GLORIA TESSLER

In its extensive retrospective of **David Hockney's** work, **Tate Britain** delivers the artist's multi-faceted artistic achievement, from painting to drawing, photography and, in his latest adaptation, video. He is certainly one of the most popular contemporary artists, and it's easy to see why, for the sheer joyfulness of his blazing colours, although some may recoil from their stridency. Despite naming Picasso as a key influence in his work, this easily accessible Post-Modernist artist shows little that is subtle or nuanced. Curators may robustly examine his oeuvre, reading signs, wonders and precedents into it, but Hockney himself seems deliciously full of the joy of creation. It is something many artists would crave.

The Tate show, organised in collaboration with the Centre Pompidou and the Metropolitan Museum, presents a chronology of his work, from his years as a student in 1961, to the 1970s, when he experimented with Abstract Expressionism, Cubism and the breaking up of imagery, reflective of his idol, Picasso, or even Francis Bacon. But Hockney cannot seriously abandon the draughtsmanship and design, which is a major source of his talent. He cannot let go of the trees, the roads, the mountains, the pools and the people who inhabit them. In recent years his often eccentric, even iconoclastic portraits of friends and family members were shown at the Royal Academy which had earlier featured his stunning and unrealistic landscapes.

But he does challenge accepted form and convention: the definitions of structure and perspective. There is a gentle self-parody in

his double portraits, notable for the absence of communication between the protagonists. For instance the disdain which plays between novelist Christopher Isherwood and artist Don Bachardy, as they sit in two armchairs and where the books on the table do the talking. Or *Pool with Two Figures*, in which a fully dressed man stares down from the poolside to the swimmer. Many paintings are homo-erotic: *Domestic Scene*, shows one man showering another. Hockney's sense of design and symmetry are evident in *Model with Unfinished Self-Portrait* 1977. The lush paintings of LA and its swimming pools clearly invaded his Yorkshire landscapes of the 2000s.

Woldgate Woods with their taut young trees and cardinal red forest floor reflect the Californian sunshine more than the dour Yorkshire countryside. Or the Expressionist *Going Up Garrowby Hill* (2000) painted from multiple perspectives. In many ways these later works which infuse his home landscape with colour borrowed from another place are like a return to the fantasy world of childhood. And yet his collection of charcoal treescapes, so beautifully drawn, so immediate, eclipses them all.



David Hockney, *Garrowby Hill*, 1998



David Hockney, *Pool with two figures*, 1971

His preoccupation with technology in 2010 led to *The Four Seasons*, a multi-screen video experience achieved by fixing several cameras to a vehicle which was then driven along a Yorkshire road. It shows different aspects of the same scene as perceived by a moving observer. It is a nostalgic reflection of Yorkshire's changing seasons, celebrated before his return to California in 2013.

(Until May 29)

REVIEWS

Goodbye Berlin

THE BIOGRAPHY OF GERALD WIENER
by Margaret M. Dunlop

250 pages, hardback, Birlinn Ltd, 2016,
ISBN 978-1-78027 420 1, £20

This book was written by Wiener's second wife. Throughout the book she refers to herself as a third person – "Margaret" – never as "I", making her first appearance on page 108.

Apparently Gerald's father was much more interested in playing the piano and accordion than in running his shop. He was also a womaniser, who frequently cheated on his wife. She eventually, together with their two-year old son, moved in with her father, who had retired to Berlin. At school Wiener, then called Horst, had a very good friend: Hardy Seidel. The Seidels moved to England in 1936, and helped get Horst (Gerald) onto a Kindertransport. His Polish grandfather thought "it would all blow over", but Gerald's mother managed to get to England on her own to train as a midwife at the Radcliffe Infirmary, and sent Gerald first to the Christ Church Cathedral Choir School, and then City of Oxford High School. He left aged 16 and worked on a farm, before enrolling at Edinburgh University, with agriculture as his subject.

During his student years Wiener got himself baptised, and joined the Congregational Church. He gained a distinction in Genetics, and the lecturer, Hugh Donald, recruited him.

He met his first wife at a dance. Sheila was also a student and had to forgo the chance of joining the Foreign Office, as at that time married women were not accepted. But their love was more important, and they married at a Registry Office in 1952.

Working for the new National Animal Breeding and Genetics Research Organisation, Wiener and his colleagues began a 20-year study of a major breed of cattle and its implications for genetic improvement. He used this for his Ph.D.

Travelling to the USA in 1956, he looked for his father in San Francisco. He found his father's sister – aunt Thea – but his father had died of a heart attack two years earlier. In spite of his disappointment, he was pleased to befriend his half-brothers and his step-mother (his father's second wife Ursel).

In 1981 he returned from a business trip to Australia to find a note from his wife on the kitchen table stating that as their children had now left home, she was leaving also. Even though they had not been getting on well for some time, her leaving him, and their subsequent divorce, came as a great shock.

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CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

One day, in a park café, he struck up conversation with a lady (Margaret) and her daughter at the next table. A friendship developed, eventually leading to marriage in October 1985.

There is no space here to fully cover Gerald's eventful career. Suffice it to say that Gerald helped to create *Larry, the Lamb* – the first mammal in the world to be cloned from cell – and he celebrated his 90th birthday in April 2016.

The book is well written with lots of detail. It has many photographs, which are reproduced to a very high standard, and also has an Index.

Fritz Lustig

German Rabbis in British Exile

FROM 'HEIMAT INTO THE UNKNOWN' by Astrid Zajdband

De Gruyter, Oldenbourg. 2016. ISBN 978-3-11-046948-6

To declare an interest – this reviewer had the privilege of reading and commenting on drafts of the 2014 PhD Thesis for the University of Sussex upon which this book is based, and in the Foreword he is thanked for his help and cited in the Bibliography.

The book is exceedingly important. As the author explains in her introduction, 'German Jewry was an ethnicity and an identity' in which religion often played a secondary role, and 'no study of the rabbinate during the Nazi era has yet been undertaken.'

The opening chapters cover the changing role of the Rabbinate in Germany from the Enlightenment up to 1938, including the new pressures of communities falling under threat or shrinking through emigration, and then in concentration camps. (Official statistics spoke of 535,000 Jews in Germany at the onset of Nazism, of whom 300,000 were unaffiliated and non-practising; some say a further 300,000 were omitted from this survey and a 1935 document from the Ministry of Interior refers to a further 750,000 'mixed race Jewish Germans'..... who were forced due to the Rassengesetze to re-identify with Judaism). Synagogues were suddenly filled to overflowing. Many sought inspiration, information or comfort from the rabbis – who were themselves victimised and incarcerated, their homes and libraries destroyed.

A major moral dilemma for many communal and spiritual leaders was whether to leave, or stay with their communities. Rabbis arriving in Britain, whether Orthodox or Liberal, had to re-establish themselves in a very different society and without the same status or security they had been used to. Some found themselves interned or deported after all. A chapter covers the period 1945-1956, by which time of course it

was clear there was minimal chance of returning to Jewish communal work in Germany or Austria.

One Appendix covers the 50 German and 4 Austrian rabbis who emigrated to England, and another covers 92 rabbis who did not get out in time and perished with their communities – some of whom had planned emigration but were trapped as the borders closed on the outbreak of war. There is a list of 29 rabbis who "died while escaping persecution" – it is not wholly clear how this is defined but the dates of death are all between 1938 and 1945 even if the place of death is in America, Palestine, England or Switzerland.

The Bibliography cites many unpublished theses and manuscripts, while many footnotes refer to individual unpublished memoirs, revealing the depth of the author's research. Illustrations show some of these rabbis as young men or older, in one case soon after release from a concentration camp.

Anyone seeking to understand the way in which Jewish refugees from the Continent regrouped around certain rabbis or the influence many of these men had on the community here needs to see this book. There are a few tiny infelicities in the English but these do not detract from the value of the work.

Rabbi Dr. Walter Rothschild

New insight on the world's grimmest chapter

THE HOLOCAUST – A NEW HISTORY by Laurence Rees

Viking 2017, pp 509 hardback £25 ISBN 978-0-241-29700-1

Eminent academic Laurence Rees has spent 25 years speaking to survivors and perpetrators of the Holocaust and produced a most authoritative masterpiece on the worst crime in world history.

Rees, former Head of BBC TV History programmes, follows a chronological order of events leading up to the cataclysm. He explains how anti-Semitism had existed for thousands of years, and even as early as Biblical times, harmful ideas arose about the Jews.

The prologue sets the scene with Freda Wineman's previously unpublished testimony providing a poignant and distressing account of her family's arrival and separation at "Hell" at Auschwitz Birkenau in 1944.

After Germany's ignominious defeat in the First World War, Hitler blamed his own personal failures and the nation's suffering on "the Jew". This dominated his autobiography *Mein Kampf*, which also laid bare thinking on policing who was allowed to breed and Germany's need to gain territory in the east. In this sea of discontent a new radical political force, the National Socialist German

Workers' Party or Nazis emerged.

Nobody then could have possibly predicted it leading to the murder of six million blameless citizens solely because of their race. But as hyperinflation wrecked savings and the political situation deteriorated, the Nazis gained momentum.

After Adolf Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, Dachau concentration camp opened and a massive rearmament programme started.

Hatred was whipped up against the Jews whilst increasingly brutal Nazi policies also targeted homosexuals, gypsies and the disabled. The restrictive Nuremberg laws in September 1935 marked a watershed, with Jews increasingly persecuted.

Rudi Bamber was "absolutely in shock" after his father was murdered, "violence totally unnecessary and uncalled for" when Jewish property, shops and synagogues were destroyed during Kristallnacht in November 1938. Austria was annexed as Hitler's empire building swiftly moved across Europe. Czechoslovakia was invaded and as German troops rolled into Poland, World War II began. Denmark, Norway, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands were also invaded.

Hitler hated communists and Bolsheviks, but invading the Soviet Union was to be Germany's downfall.

As war bit deeper concentration/death camps opened relentlessly, millions of people were deported, put to forced labour, brutally tortured and murdered. Once defeat looked likely, the horror was intensified and gas chambers facilitated mass killings as the Final Solution reached its climax. After liberation the world was stunned at what was found.

The unimaginable horror in which so many Jews died, suffered untold agonies, were forced to lose their homes, livelihoods and families is very harrowing and distressing reading.

However Rees is excellent at narrating different conditions prevailing in each country. He benefits from the perspective of time, has met hundreds of people who experienced history personally and his work is much richer for these eye witness accounts.

The early background is particularly interesting and reveals Hitler selling his paintings to Jewish dealers and that the officer who recommended him for an Iron Cross was a Jew.

Rees is a master of detail, his skill at grasping his subject awesome as the narrative flows from country to country and catastrophe to catastrophe.

Despite the length and minutiae, the book is very straightforward and the reader never loses the thread. Sources are meticulously documented and the scholarship is to be marvelled at.

Janet Weston

A Lack of Dutch Courage

The story of Anne Frank is well known. But what happened to the German Jews in the Netherlands after the Holocaust is not. While Otto Frank was looking for a publisher for his daughter's diary, the Dutch government was expropriating German Jews and deporting them. German Jews who fled to the Netherlands were confronted with triple persecution: prior to the Second World War in Germany, during the war in the Netherlands and after the war by the Dutch government.



Ysselsteyn cemetery

The political scientist and historian Isaac Lipschits painted a grim picture where anti-Semitism after the war was worse than before 1940 and wartime experiences were systematically downplayed.

Holocaust survivors, especially German Jews, were very poorly treated. They were arrested at the Dutch border, classified as enemies, and imprisoned alongside former SS soldiers in internment camps, where they were maltreated and forced to work.

One Jewish woman whose whole family had been gassed in Poland was then imprisoned by the Dutch Government for sixteen months. Another woman was not allowed by the Dutch camp commandant to attend the funeral of her German husband who, having survived Ravensbrück, was maltreated and killed after arriving in the Netherlands in 1945. His wife was deported to Germany.

Initially Jews could apply individually for a non-enemy declaration. But in October 1944 the Dutch government started to expropriate German Jews, in the reverse order of their arrival in the Netherlands. Known as Operation Black Tulip, this post-war ethnic cleansing and resulting expropriation lasted until July 1951. Houses were ransacked and the furniture confiscated by the Dutch government. The total value of the

post-war expropriation is still unclear.

Thousands of German girls who had come to the Netherlands between the wars to work for Jewish families in the Netherlands became unemployed after WWII and were also deported.

A restricted section of the Dutch National Archive contains thousands of files on persons (both Dutch and German) who were expropriated after the war. However, this part of Dutch history is not taught in school or included in WWII commemorations. Archives are hard to find, and notably absent in Dutch memorial sites and museums, or at the sites of the largest former internment camps, Mariënbosch and Avegoor. As a result, many Dutch people remain ignorant of this black page in their history.

The Dutch government only began issuing death certificates for those who went missing during WWII in late 1949. Many cases remain unresolved and

although numerous German-Jewish surnames can be found on the deportation lists, the lists appear incomplete. Estimates as to the number of German Jews living in the Netherlands before and after the war vary widely.

In October 1946, one month after the start of Operation Black Tulip, a separate cemetery for Germans was created in Ysselsteyn by the Dutch Graves Service. Over 31,500 Germans residing in the Netherlands were (re) buried there but thousands remain unidentified. On 1 November 1976, the cemetery was transferred to the German Federal Government, who entrusted the German War Graves Commission with its maintenance. On the annual Memorial Day in November, the victims of the war are commemorated, as are the post-war deportees who did not survive their expulsion.

Angela Boone

Angela Boone MA is a cultural anthropologist who studies the post-war situation in the Netherlands. In 2016 she received a fellowship from the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure to carry out research at the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen.

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Regaining Our Stolen Nationality

Note from Editor: On 16 March the AJR and the German Embassy jointly held two events for Holocaust survivors who are considering reclaiming their German identity. This article was written for us by someone who has been through this process already.

The Holocaust left an extremely bitter taste. Germany, the country in which three of our dear parents were born and in which their families had lived for generations, had murdered several of our close family members and millions of fellow Jews. Our parents - just children - had escaped with their lives. So why, after almost 80 years, would we consider regaining German nationality?

My father, an only child who was born and brought up in Montabaur, Westerwald, was sent on the Kindertransport in March 1939. His parents and grandparents were all murdered by the Nazi regime, along with almost 200 of his cousins, uncles and aunts who all originated in the nearby village of Meudt.

My mother-in-law's family escaped from Düsseldorf, first to Holland in 1935 and then to England in 1939. Although her grandfather quite amazingly survived Westerbork and subsequently Theresienstadt, her two uncles were not so lucky and were murdered in Auschwitz, together with their wives.

At the end of the war, the family applied for restitution, only to find an arrest warrant and substantial fines in place. My mother-in-law's father and uncles had all been sentenced in absentia in 1939 for transferring money out of Germany, contrary to the Nuremberg Laws. It was not until 1958 that the family, aided by costly lawyers, were fully acquitted and the State ordered to pay all the costs.

My father-in-law's family left Bamberg in 1939 for England, where their manufacturing skills were valued for the war effort. Very sadly, my father-in-law's two grandmothers were held in Bamberg and forced to pay for an 'old age home', using all their remaining assets. The home turned out to be Theresienstadt, from where they were deported and murdered in Treblinka.

Growing up in England the 'elephant in the room' was always the Holocaust. As a child, I wondered why my father had a slight German accent. Why did he get upset when my sister and I asked about his home life? Why did I have only one set of grandparents? Why were there so few photos of my father's family and virtually no items of memorabilia?

In later life, business frequently took me to Germany where I looked at older

men and wondered what part they had played in the Nazi dream. My family name, 'Stern', frequently raised eyebrows and occasionally questions that I really didn't want to answer.

I occasionally felt vulnerable, realising that these were 'the people' who had decimated my family. But I also marvelled at how bombed and humiliated Germany had picked itself up to re-emerge as an industrial and cultural power-house, producing the high quality materials I needed for my business.

In 1999 I ventured to Germany on a 'roots trip' with my wife, children and my parents-in-law. My father refused to return. We first went to Bamberg in Bavaria, where my father-in-law grew up. He enjoyed re-visiting his childhood



Gerald Stern helping to unveil the Jewish memorial at Montabaur in 2013

haunts and we were all enchanted by this pretty town. Everyone came to meet him, even the current Headmaster of his former secondary school, who had a copy of his school report saying "could do better" - well, he did! He grew a successful business in England with his brother and was heavily involved in charity work, receiving an MBE.

We visited an exhibition showing the contribution made by Jewish families and businesses to Bamberg, saw the memorial to the Jews who perished in the Holocaust, and another memorial situated within the Jewish cemetery. We visited former family homes, each with their Stolpersteine (brass marker stones) bearing the names and details of those murdered. We were greeted by the Mayor. The town had gone out of its way to recognise and attempt to repair the many wrongs of Nazism

Then we headed 300km north to Montabaur. We were received with great courtesy by a former contemporary of my father, but the contrast between Bamberg and Montabaur was huge.

Although Jews had lived in Montabaur since the 1300s, in 1999 the only single trace of anything Jewish was a small dark metal sign on a supermarket stating it was the site of the Synagogue destroyed on *Kristallnacht*. There were no memorials, no *Stolpersteine*, and the street name *Judengasse* had been replaced with *Elisabethenstrasse*. Everything marking the existence of a Jewish community had been erased and the events of the Holocaust 'swept under the carpet'.

The purpose of this article is to show how parts of Germany have changed and come to terms with its dark history and to show it now in 2017 in the much better light it deserves. As such, I will condense 14 years of sometimes difficult negotiations into the next short paragraph.

Eventually, after much effort, the Montabaur Council, agreed its Jewish community should be properly remembered. In November 2013, a magnificent memorial was unveiled in the exact spot where my grandparents and other Jewish residents had been held on *Kristallnacht*. The ceremony was attended by 29 members of my own family and other emigrants, along with 250 locals. People gave me keepsakes - a year book showing my grandfather and great-uncles were members of the choir and various local clubs, a coat hanger bearing the logo of a family member's clothing store, and so on. *Stolpersteine* were installed and paid for by residents. *Judengasse* was reinstated alongside *Elisabethenstrasse*. Signs were erected about the town's Jewish history.

I also instigated another Jewish memorial in the town of Herborn where my great-grandparents had lived, which was also unveiled in November 2013.

For me, the 14 years spent working towards these goals was worthwhile and somewhat cathartic. I feel that many of the new generation of Germans are now willing to confront their past and are remorseful. Nothing can bring back those whose lives were brutally taken, but having their identities fully restored with honour within their communities is something.

So it was that my next project was to regain my German nationality. My wife and I both applied under Article 116 Part 2 where "those who between January 30, 1933 and May 8, 1945 were deprived of their citizenship on political, racial, or religious grounds, and their descendants, shall on application have their citizenship restored." We now have dual British and German nationality.

Gerald Stern



Birmingham AFTERNOON DELIGHT

Our annual pilgrimage to see The Orchestra of the Swan took place on a drab grey February afternoon. We were lifted by the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart and the beautiful wind percussion of Joanna Lee's Blue-Blaze-Dance Suite, a world premiere.

Esther Rinkoff

Book Club DOWN AND OUT

Published in 1933, George Orwell's **Down and Out in Paris and London** describes the poorest in society and the hardships they faced. Poverty is the theme of the Parisian half of the book; unemployment the British half. We also discussed the hardships experienced by Jews before and during WWII and how hunger leaves a legacy even on second generation survivors.

Helena Horn

Bradford FREEFORM FLOW

Although a 'suggested' discussion topic had been offered, members had so much else to chat about that the meeting took its own shape and form and, although the group was small, the conversation flowed as fast as the afternoon tea was eaten.

Wendy Bott

Brighton THE FORGOTTEN BUSINESS

David Barnett spoke about E. Moses & Son, the biggest business in 18th century Britain. Originally from Alsace, Moses settled in the East End of London trading in clothes and textiles (known as a 'slopseller'). When he brought in ready-made, cut-price clothing his Aldgate store became the forerunner of large department stores. Son Isaac extended the business, which finally closed in 1883.

Ceska Abrahams

Bromley CF NATHAN & SONS

David Barnett spoke fascinatingly on Joseph Nathan, born in London, who showed little promise in his youth but became a highly successful businessman in England and later in New Zealand, where he and his many sons founded the firm of GLAXO. A delicious tea was organised by Liane Segal.

Esther Rinkoff

Cambridge AN ARMY CHAPLAIN

Dr. Rob Ginsburg gave an excellent talk on his father, the late Major Ginsburg, whose work took him to Egypt, other parts of the Middle East and later Germany. His father

showed great ingenuity and real courage in meeting the needs of Jewish conscripts as well those of local Jewish communities facing an increasingly hostile Arab world.

Eva Stellman

AJR FILM CLUB

An excellent lunch on 13 February was followed by two very different films.

The first, Churchill's German Army, was a gripping film showing the bravery and risks of a few former German Jews who were all proud to wear the King's uniform and contribute to the defeat of the Nazis.

The second showed Alice Herz-Sommer describe her life from the hardships of World War One and its aftermath, through to arrest by the Nazis and eventual escape to Britain. It was moving hearing the story of her fortitude and calmness, interspersed with her playing classical piano music.

Didsbury LOUD & CLEAR

There was nearly a "full house" as Didsbury members ate lunch and discussed topical issues of the day, with everyone voicing their opinions loud and clear. Also, Gisela told us about the interview she gave recently to Beth Shalom.

Wendy Bott

Edgware AVOID BEING SCAMMED

Community Police Officer Diane Trimmer explained how we can avoid being burgled or pickpocketed or defrauded. She handed out gadgets to everyone to help protect our property. We also surprised Naomi Fleming with a cake and flowers on her special birthday.

Ilse Moxton

Edinburgh CF GREAT OUTINGS

Members enjoyed visiting Beth Shalom, the National Holocaust Centre. A superb day was had by all in St. Andrews, the home of Golf, as well as a day at the magnificent Dumfries House with its priceless treasures. Olivia Marks Woldman, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, was the keynote speaker at the Annual Regional Event, attracting members from Scotland and Newcastle.

Agnes Spier

Essex (Westcliff) ROOTS TO REALITY

Myrna Glass explained how AJR was originally set up by Jewish victims of Nazi oppression for welfare reasons but soon developed into a nationwide network of regional groups for social purposes. She was very instrumental in the latter; indeed our late Chairman, Otto Deutsch, contacted her to form our group. Also Benji Gordon, a visitor, explained his wish to film 15 survivors and their testimonies using a virtual reality method.

Susie Barnett

Glasgow Book Club SILVER LININGS

Members gathered at Anthea Berg's house to discuss this month's book, "The Silver Lining Playbook". The complicated lives of the main characters led to a lively question and answer session. We rounded off the discussion with a delicious afternoon tea and a chat with Anthea's grandson. We look forward to enjoying our next book "The Forty Rules of Love".

Agnes Isaac

BUSY MONTH IN GLASGOW

Barbara Winton's talk, held in conjunction with Giffnock Synagogue and the Glasgow Jewish Archives, attracted 250 people. We were fortunate to meet with Ben Helfgott at Yom HaShoah. Edward Green, the Queen's former Jeweller, gave a most fascinating presentation on the Queen's Jewels.

Glasgow members also attended an excellent talk by Rabbi Wittenberg at Eastwood House. He spoke about his latest book "My Dear Ones", a tribute to his family. Like so many 2nd Generation, he did not ask his father questions but came across letters after the passing of his father.

Agnes Isaac

Hull PAPAS & TEA

Veronika once again treated us to a fabulous fish and chips lunch at the renowned 'Papas' ... and then back to her lovely home for tea, cake and chat. Our biggest thanks to a wonderful lady.

Wendy Bott

Ilford HELPING ISRAEL

We had an interesting talk by Harvey Bratt on UJIA's work in Israel and the UK. Workers urgently needed are being brought to the Galilee, while in the UK gap-year students are encouraged to take pride in Israel, to enable them to combat hostile questions at university. Finally, a quiz on Israel gave us quite a few surprises.

Meta Roseneil

Kensington A LOVELY AFTERNOON

We met on a spring-like day at the beautiful home of Ruth and Peter Kraus. Our hosts treated us to a spread of delicacies, while the discussion flowed with topics ranging from Trump to Brexit, and everything in between.

Alfred Kessler

Kingston/Surrey LEGALITIES SHARED

We met at Susan Zisman's house for a fascinating talk from former solicitor Colin Davey on how the English legal system works, both in civil and criminal matters. We ended by discussing the film "Denial" and David Irving's case for defamation against Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books. A fabulous tea followed.

Kathryn Prevezer

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

Liverpool ON THE UP

Liverpool members enjoyed sampling an array of delicious baking whilst discussing a variety of topics, including how Liverpool has become a vibrant and exciting city in recent years after a long period of decline. *Wendy Bott*

Newcastle PHILOMENA

Newcastle members enjoyed an afternoon viewing of the film "Philomena" and a chance to socialise over cakes and tea. *Agnes Isaac*

North London A TALK ON THE LAW

Colin Davey told us of several civil and criminal cases (some seemingly quite humorous) and stressed the importance of such concepts as 'contract' and 'duty of care'. A useful piece of information was that any disclaimer notices in public car parks should be placed at the point of entry and not inside. *Hanne R. Freedman*

North West London STAND WITH US

Tamir Oren from Stand with Us, the non-profit pro-Israel education and advocacy agency, began by sharing some fascinating insights from his seven years as a paratroop officer in the IDF. One particular operation went into the Gaza Strip to destroy missile sites that were firing rockets into Israel from civilian buildings. To avoid civilian casualties, Israeli aircraft dropped warning leaflets in advance over the area. However in some cases this led to booby traps being left for the IDF soldiers. Now in England Tamir believes dialogue and education is the road to

APRIL GROUP EVENTS

As the exact timings of these events are often subject to last minute changes we do not include them in the AJR Journal and suggest you contact the relevant regional contact for full details.

Hull	2 April	Antiques Roadshow – Holocaust Edition DVD
Prestwich	3 April	Social get-together
Ealing	4 April	Harvey Bratt - UJIA Update
Book Club	5 April	Discussion and Tea
Ilford	5 April	A return of one of our regular speakers – David Barnett
Pinner	6 April	Alan Cohen, Music and Art Expert – 16th & 17th Century Music and the meaning of Chiaroscuro
Radlett	19 April	Bring a memorable piece to talk about
Cambridge	20 April	Philippa Bernard – Oliver Cromwell and the Jews
Wessex	20 April	UJIA
Bromley	20 April	Social get-together – Godfrey Gould speaking on Orde Wingate
Glasgow CF	23 April	Yom HaShoah
North West London	25 April	Dr Pam Fox – The History of the Jewish Community in Golders Green
Wembley	26 April	Social get-together
Glasgow Book Club	27 April	The Forty Rules of Love
North London	27 April	Nick Dobson – Underground Guide to Historical London
Welwyn Garden City	27 April	Social get-together
Ealing	2 May	Speaker – details to follow
Book Club	3 May	Social get-together
Ilford	3 May	Nick Dobson – An Underground Guide to Historical London

peace, including the use of social media such as Facebook to reach the younger generation. *David Lang*

Pinner AMERICAN JEWISH GANGSTERS

We were pleased to welcome back Dr John Matlin. He told us there were plenty of Jewish gangsters, especially during Prohibition, who were as murderous as their fellow criminals. It was both shocking and fascinating to hear all about these infamous people. *Robert Gellman*

Welwyn Garden City A SOCIAL

We met in Monica's very welcoming home for coffee, cake and a chance to catch up with each other after a tough winter for some of our members. We discussed the film "Denial" and talked about plans for forthcoming meetings/outings. *Eva Stellman*

Wembley SMALL BUT SOUND

Sadly we were a small gathering for our first meeting of 2017. We chatted about current affairs and the AJR. We all hoped that more members would attend the March meeting. *Kathryn Prevezer*



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LOOKING FOR:



The AJR regularly receives messages from our members and other people looking for help in particular subjects. Here are some of the most recent requests – please get in touch directly with the person concerned if you think you can help.

Life in 1930's Berlin

Dr Dennis Dell would be very grateful for any information that can help fill in the gaps about the lives of his parents-in-law Dr Rudolf Herz and Hildegard Erica Jacob in Berlin in the 1930s. He has lots of information about their post-war life in Britain, but very little about their experiences in Berlin before WWII.

den.rob@verizon.net

Invitation to Kinder

Professor Eva Thüne (University of Bologna, Italy) would be very interested in meeting Kindertransportees and/or those who came to the UK to take up positions in domestic service. Her main interest is how individual attitudes to the German language and German/Austrian culture have developed since arrival in the UK, compared to those who travelled to Israel on Youth Aliyah.

evamaria.thune@unibo.it

Charles / Karl Joseph Wolff

Alexander Atanassow from Dresden is looking for any evidence of the literary and cultural work of Charles/Karl Joseph Wolff who emigrated to London in 1933. Born in 1876 in Koblenz, and married to Hedwig Adolphine nee Adolphi, Wolff was co-founder and President of Club 1943, and was also on the board of the Pen Club of German Authors.

a.atanassow@online.de

East of England records?

Mike Levy has recently completed the first ever analysis of over 1,400 record cards of Jewish refugees who passed through the East of England from 1939 to the end of the war. If you or your family were housed in Cambridge or the East of England during this period, you may have been recorded. Do get in touch if you want him to check.

mike.levy82@gmail.com

Hochfeld / Blitz

Jeremy Bliss would like to make contact with the family of Herbert Hochfeld, husband of Thea Elizabeth Blitz and father of George Leopold Hockfield. Jeremy believes they may be related.

jb@jeremybliss.com

Jocelyn Baber's Memoirs

Sarah Skinner from Devon has recently discovered a draft manuscript of

OBITUARY

Inge Herzberg Tweed

Born 30 November 1922 Berlin, died 15 December 2016, Colchester

Inge Herzberg Tweed was the eldest of three daughters. Their father, Emil Fabian, came from a family of business people and artists (including Erwin Fabian whose sculptures are in galleries across the world). Sadly, Emil himself died when Inge was five years old.



Training Diploma, teaching needlework at the Jewish Free School.

She and Gunther divorced in 1974. Later she married Ivan Tweed and moved to Colchester, where after planting a vineyard he suddenly died. Inge faced this tragedy with courage and

determination, turning their house and grounds into a successful guest house and caravan site, working till she was 75.

She was very proud to be a British Jew, representing Colchester Synagogue on the Board of Deputies and actively supporting local charities. She enjoyed reading the AJR magazine and attending a residential trip.

Inge was blessed with very positive view of life, incredible 'chutzpah' and shrewd judgement. Her artistic and practical abilities always made her well dressed and elegant. She was very hospitable and her cooking and baking, especially Marmorkuchen (marble cake) made her whole family and friends happy! She was also very adventurous, loving travel and new experiences.

Inge met Julius Badyan, a refugee from Poland. They were partners for 16 years, sharing a happy, caring and mutually supportive relationship until her death.

Above all Inge was a wonderful mother. She leaves her sisters, 3 daughters, a stepson, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**Susan Marcus, Ruth Wellin
and Gaby Slade**

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The cost is £7.00 for a three-course meal (soup, main course, desert) plus a £1 delivery fee.

Our aim is to bring good food to your door without the worry of shopping or cooking.

For further details, please call
AJR Head Office on 020 8385 3070.

Jocelyn Baber's Memoirs, dated 1984, and is interested to know if these have ever been published?

sarahdawnskinner@aol.com

Ex-German citizens

Do you originate from Germany? Will you be restoring your German citizenship post the Brexit vote? Would you be interested in being featured in a new book project on Restored German Citizenship, by Berlin author Donna Swarthout.

dswartha@aol.com

Otto Lucas

Anna Nyburg would be very grateful for any information about the life of milliner Otto Lucas (1903 – 1971).

a.nyburg@imperial.ac.uk

If you would like to place a search in a future issue of the AJR Journal then please email editorial@ajr.org.uk, including the words SEARCH REQUEST in the title of your email.

OBITUARIES

Wolf Suschitzky

born 29 August 1912 in Vienna; died 7 October 2016 in London

Wolfgang Suschitzky was a documentary photographer and cinematographer perhaps best known for his atmospheric stills of pre-war London and his work on the 1971 film *Get Carter*.

Wolf grew up in a Jewish working-class district of Vienna where his father and uncle had opened a Socialist-themed bookshop. His older sister Edith was a highly successful photographer who was unfortunately arrested for her left-wing activities in May 1933, reflecting the extent of anti-Semitism and right-wing politics of the Austrian government at the time. As Wolf himself later recalled, "We saw what was coming very early." His sister fled to London with her English husband later that year, leaving many valuable negatives behind, and was followed by Wolf in 1935.

Wolf married a Dutch girl and they lived briefly in Holland before returning to London to assist his sister, who had opened her own photo studio. He embraced photography, developing a special interest in documenting London street life in a highly original, spontaneous and unsentimental style. His sister introduced him to similarly politically left-wing young film-makers, who were



pioneers of the British documentary movement. Wolf easily made the transition from photographer to movie cameraman, working closely with Paul Rotha at Strand Films including on his first feature *No Resting Place*, in 1950.

In 1955 Wolf shot *The Bespoke Overcoat*, which won the Oscar for the best 2-reel short of the year.

However, his career as a lighting cameraman really took off in the 1960s, beginning with his remarkable location filming of *The Small World of Sammy Lee* in 1962, starring Anthony Newley. The film was recently released on DVD and reviewed in *Sight and Sound* which wrote, "the location shots of Soho and Whitechapel connect Sammy's character with a very real London, and link the twin aspects of his divided self."

A few years later Wolf shot *Ulysses* for director Joseph Strick on location in Dublin. Then he was specially hired by director Mike Hodges to work on the gritty thriller, *Get Carter*, starring Michael Caine. Somewhat undervalued at the time, the film is now widely regarded as a landmark in the development of the English thriller genre, due in no small part to Wolf's brilliant camerawork capturing the many Newcastle locations so effectively on the screen.

His other feature films as lighting cameraman included *Entertaining Mr. Sloan* (1970), *Living Free* (1971) and *Theatre of Blood* (1973).

True to his left-wing roots, Wolf was a staunch supporter of the film trade unions, the ACTT and BECTU. His sister, along with her husband Alex Tudor-Hart, was more of an activist and was put under surveillance for a time by MI5. Her photography documented the difficult living conditions of the working classes, as well as everyday street life and miners in Wales. After her death Wolf published a tribute book for her appropriately titled *The Eye of Conscience* (1987).

There have been many exhibitions of Wolf's work over the years, most recently in 2016 entitled Wolf Suschitzky's London at the Photographer's Gallery, and in 1994 a book *Sixty years of Photography: Wolf Suschitzky 1934-1944* was published.

Wolf is survived by his three children: Julia Donat, Misha Donat, the writer on classical music, and Peter Suschitzky who has carried on his father's tradition as an outstanding director of photography on a wide range of independent films beginning with Kevin Brownlow's *It Happened Here* (1966) and a number of features directed by David Cronenberg.

Joel Finler

Esther Brunstein 1928 – 2017

Esther Brunstein (nee Zylberberg), a remarkable Holocaust survivor and refugee, and a living link with Poland's secular Yiddish culture, died on 17 January. Esther grew up in Lodz among a family of textile workers. She went to a very progressive Yiddish school – the Medem Shule – named after a prominent Bundist (Jewish socialist) ideologue. When I interviewed her several years ago she described the impact of that special upbringing on her.

"There was a great feeling of belonging... we really felt we were being taken care of as little people. As people we mattered... The school was run on free and democratic lines... Boys and girls did everything together. There was a great sense of equality... We were one of the few co-educational schools at the time... What this school has given me... was a very strong feeling of what was right and what was just. We somehow managed to carry it within us. And... it helped me in the ghetto in the darkest hours of the war. I always retained this feeling and belief in my fellow human being. I still carry it within me."

Esther's education was cut short at the age of 11 when the Nazis overran Poland. She spent four years in the Lodz ghetto and then survived Auschwitz and Belsen. After the war she was taken to Sweden to recuperate from typhus. She discovered that her brother Perec

had also survived the war and was living in London. She joined him here in 1947 after obtaining a "special permit" as a domestic worker.

I came to know her well in the mid-1980s, and studied Yiddish with her weekly, at her home, for several months. Esther had acted in the Yiddish theatre in London. Her husband, Stanislaw, painted backdrops for the Yiddish theatre, where they met, and his poignant paintings of Jewish life in interwar Poland were the backdrop on the walls of their house as we pored over Yiddish stories and poems.

Soon after Esther arrived in London she had wanted to talk about her experiences but people were not keen to listen. After she got married and had children, she found it too painful to speak about, but carried it with her all the time.

But she found her voice again, about these traumatic experiences, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, after I introduced her to a younger generation of anti-fascists. They coaxed her to speak at Anti-Nazi League events. She was a wonderful speaker and educator who told her own story so movingly, and drew lessons for humanity about the need to oppose all forms of racism, support minorities and work for a more humane world.

Soon she was speaking around the country,



especially to school students. She could empathise with them, I believe, especially because of her memories of her school experiences and what they meant to her throughout her life. Esther spoke at a United Nations event in support of refugees in 1998 at its New York headquarters and she opened the permanent Holocaust exhibit at the Imperial War Museum in London in 2000.

In her later years she struggled physically but still tried to attend events that were important to her. In 2013 she came to an event marking the 70th anniversary of Szmul Zygielbojm's suicide – a dramatic political protest at the allies' passivity with regard to saving Europe's Jews. Zygielbojm represented the Bund on the Polish Government in Exile in London between 1942-43. Esther recalled her warm memories of Zygielbojm when she was a child. Her closest schoolfriend was one of Zygielbojm's children. As she spoke I remembered the day in 1996 when we unveiled a memorial plaque for Zygielbojm, and Esther read, with her beautiful Yiddish diction, his heart-rending suicide note.

She is survived by her daughters Lorna and Denise, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

David Rosenberg



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

A Bitter Road

On a recent visit to London I saw an ad for the exhibition 'A Bitter Road — Britain and the Refugee Crisis of the 1930s and 1940s' at the Wiener Library. To my surprise, a friend who is a resident of London (and the daughter of refugees) had not known about it.

The exhibition displayed photographs, letters and documents recounting the stories of some of our co-religionists who sought refuge in England or anywhere in the free world in the years before the Holocaust.

Just as today, there was considerable opposition to the idea of admitting large numbers of refugees into Britain, and several bureaucratic hurdles had to be overcome before an individual refugee could enter. Irrespective of age-old prejudices against Jews and fears of being swamped by foreigners, the authorities wished to avoid overburdening the British taxpaying public. That a relatively

large number of refugees were able to find a haven in Britain was down to their persistence and resourcefulness and the kindness of individuals in various strata of society.

I was born in war-torn England to parents who were refugees. I grew up surrounded by refugees, whether my parents' friends and relations or colleagues at work in a Jewish charitable organisation. The term 'refugee' had a very negative connotation, and although many former refugees have become well-integrated into British society, establishing solid families, running successful businesses and contributing to art, science and society in general, the need to prove their loyalty and integrity is still important for many of them.

The underlying objective of the exhibition is to point out the similarities between those seeking a haven then and now.

Many of the items on display reveal heart-breaking stories of parents and children

yearning to be reunited. One segment is devoted to the Kindertransport, and another to how refugees helped one another, through the Refugee Committee. One of the exhibits is an early edition of AJR Information, which preceded this Journal, whose headline reads: 'The First Five Years.' It made me wonder why the current version of the AJR Journal is not a permanent staple at the Wiener Library.

One letter mentions England's provision of refuge to the Huguenots who fled Catholic France after 1685, highlighting the British tradition of affording hospitality to people whose lives were in danger.

When my parents and their compatriots left Germany no-one could imagine what lay ahead for European Jewry, though the signs were ominous. The same cannot be said for the refugees who are currently fleeing Syria, and the exhibition concludes with a survey of what is being done to help those refugees, and how much more could and should be done.

Given the current atmosphere of xenophobia that seems to be enveloping ever-greater parts of our world, this exhibition serves as a timely reminder of the grim reality that surrounds us.

SIX POINT FOUNDATION: The End of a (brief) Era

Last month saw the closure of Six Point Foundation (SPF), the charity which has helped to enhance the quality of life of financially restricted Holocaust survivors and refugees of Jewish origin resident in the UK.

Founded in 2011 with funds from the sale of assets of the former Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA), SPF has helped hundreds of individuals, directly awarding them grants to help improve their standard of living.

Frank Harding, a trustee of both SPF and the AJR, explains: "The Foundation was set up as a spend-out, grant-making foundation. My fellow trustees and I are delighted with everything the Foundation has been able to do, and the number of people whose lives have been made easier as a result."

Mr Harding paid particular tribute to SPF Chairman Susan Grant's role in uniting trustees around a shared goal: ensuring that SPF funds reached as many survivors and refugees as possible in as effective a way as possible, former OSHA Chairman, Ashley Mitchell, whose vision and skill enabled the creation of SPF, and SPF's

Executive Director, Susan Cohen, whom he describes as "having been marvellous throughout."

SPF also created the SPF Connect project, enabling over 450 survivors and refugees who had not previously used computers, or found using them tricky, to experience the benefits of being on-line in their own homes. SPF Connect is also being installed in every Jewish residential care home in the UK for more communal uses. [Note: Any first generation reader who is not on the computer and would like to become part of the SPF Connect scheme should call 020 8951 2539; you will receive a return call from Natpoint, the company running SPF Connect]

SPF also made over £2.5m in grants to charities working with survivors and refugees throughout the UK. The AJR was one of the beneficiaries of these grants.

"Most of our grant recipients experienced appalling hardship and emotional distress in their early years," said Mr Harding. "We can never compensate for what happened to them, but at least we have been able to make their twilight years more comfortable."

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