

80
YEARS
1946 – 2026

AJR JOURNAL

80th Anniversary Issue



This month the *AJR Journal* celebrates its eightieth anniversary, making it the longest-lived Jewish publication in Britain to have appeared continuously, except only for the *Jewish Chronicle*.

In this lead article **Dr Anthony Grenville**, editorial consultant to the Journal for many years, explains how the monthly journal was first published in January 1946, five years after the AJR itself. Initially known as *AJR Information*, it was renamed *AJR Journal* in 2000.

Both the AJR and its Journal have long outlived their counterparts in the USA, Israel or Latin America. Even *Aufbau*, which under the editorship of Manfred George (1939-65) became the great voice of the refugees in the USA, is no longer published there. The *AJR Journal*, on the other hand, continues to flourish, as does the AJR itself, which continues to serve the refugees from Nazism and their descendants, as a distinct community with its own unique identity and place in British society.

The origins of the Journal lie in the circulars sent out by the infant AJR to its members during the wartime years. These circulars were usually eight pages long and appeared roughly quarterly. They were little more than newsheets, carrying information relevant to the situation of the refugees (as 'enemy aliens') in wartime Britain and especially to the fate of the Jews trapped in occupied Europe, as well as items specific to the AJR and its activities.

In 1946, when the wartime restrictions on paper were lifted, *AJR Information* commenced publication, under the editorship of Werner Rosenstock, along with Herbert Freedman (Friedenthal), who left for Israel in 1950, and Ernst Lowenthal, who went to Germany in 1946 to join the Jewish relief effort. Rosenstock's principal

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SPECIAL ISSUE

Welcome to this very special issue, which coincides with exactly nine years since I took the helm.

Editing this Journal, through which I browsed for many years from my mother-in-law's coffee table, is an absolute privilege, bringing me into contact with many truly inspirational people. This issue contains obituaries of two such people - Vera Schaufeld and Manfred Goldberg - who were, ironically, the first two AJR members I ever visited at their respective homes to interview for the Journal.

Both Vera and Manfred were dedicated to Holocaust education, making it equally fitting that this issue also contains a four page feature on our recent international forum: Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust.

Working with a wide range of external contributors, as well as the AJR's in-house team, I have tried to put together an issue which reflects the incredible heritage of this publication and the community it serves. I hope you enjoy it.

Jo Briggs – Editor

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Please note that the views expressed throughout this publication are not necessarily the views of the AJR.

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Eighty years (cont.)

role was as General Secretary of the AJR, in which capacity he was responsible for its administration until his retirement in December 1982. As a result, the journal did not have the appearance or content of a free-standing publication like *Aufbau* but was, at least initially, more like an adjunct of the AJR's administration, in this respect continuing to perform the function of the wartime circulars. Rosenstock was not a writer or journalist, which also showed itself in the columns of the journal, though he could call on a considerable pool of expertise from among the refugee community. One such example was Robert Weltsch, editor of the *Jüdische Rundschau* in Germany until 1938 and after 1945 *Haaretz* correspondent in London.

The journal was originally eight pages long, each consisting of three columns; it gradually expanded to its current length of twenty pages. Its format remained fairly constant over the first decades of its existence. The front page carried an editorial in its left-hand column, with the other two columns devoted to a substantial article on another subject. The contents of the inside pages reflected the changing concerns of the refugees. Initially, when the refugees' daily lives were still affected by government decisions, the first inside page contained information about debates in Parliament and other official pronouncements relevant to the refugees. Though interaction with British society always occupied much space in the journal, by the early 1950s, when the refugees' official status in Britain was secure, the second page was largely turned over to news from Germany and Austria, including restitution matters. Other column contained news about Anglo-Jewry and Israel.

Still another column kept readers in touch with the actors, writers and other figures in the arts known to them from pre-emigration days, as well as numerous reviews of books and exhibitions that sought to maintain contact with pre-Hitler German-speaking high culture. The journal also published letters to the editor, reports on the work of the AJR, and many advertisements, both personal and commercial. *AJR Information* carefully recorded the achievements of its members, which it featured in articles published on occasions like their round-number birthdays and, from the mid-1950s, in their obituaries. Werner Rosenstock's pride in

the past achievements of German Jewry and his continuing attachment to its native culture marked the journal fundamentally, as did a painful awareness of the refugee community's losses during the Nazi years.

After an interim period following Rosenstock's retirement, what one might term the journal's classical form underwent a substantial change with the appointment in 1988 of Richard Grunberger as editor. Grunberger, who had come via Kindertransport from Vienna, was a former teacher with a degree in history and a published author – his *Social History of the Third Reich*, first published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson in 1971, is still in demand. Grunberger's writing was further enhanced by his encyclopaedic knowledge of the history and culture relevant to the refugees from Nazism (as well as a taste for polemics). Under his editorship, the intellectual, cultural and stylistic aspects of the journal shone; the journal was read and discussed eagerly, as was evident from the correspondence in the letters pages.

Grunberger saw his role as "trying to bridge the gulf of where the refugees came from and where they have found themselves for the last 60 years. I want them not to lose contact with what they have left behind, because there was a very rich German cultural Jewish life of which they are the last representatives. On the other hand, I want them to be more acculturated to English life and English culture. I am trying to act as a mediator between the two and as a

propagandist for the amalgam of the two cultures."

Grunberger was succeeded in January 2006 by Anthony Grenville, the first member of the second generation to hold the position of editor. Grenville, whose parents came from Vienna, was a career academic who had a keen interest in the history of the German-speaking lands. Following in the footsteps of his predecessor, he aimed to write about subjects of current interest that also related to an aspect of the historical or cultural past of German-speaking Jewry. On Grenville's retirement in December 2017, David Herman, the son of the Polish artist Josef Herman and German psychotherapist Nini Ettlinger, was appointed contributing editor. Herman has written for many highly regarded literary and cultural publications in Britain and the USA. He writes the front-page article of the journal, while the overall editorship has, since January 2017, been the responsibility of Jo Briggs, who has adapted it for the era in which its readership is predominantly drawn from the second, third and even fourth generations. The journal remains a living memorial to the refugees from Nazism, to their settlement in Britain, and to the losses that they suffered in the Holocaust.



RESIDENTIAL TRIP TO DERBYSHIRE

SUNDAY 26 – THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2026



Join us on our AJR residential trip to Derbyshire where we will see the beautiful scenery of the Peak District, lovely historic villages, a magnificent castle and much, much more...

Demand for these trips is always high and places will be booked on a first come first served basis.

Members should make their own way to Derby where we will be based. We will have local coach travel whilst we are there.



roshart@ajr.org.uk



ANNUAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE 2026

TUESDAY 20 JANUARY 2026 at 2PM
BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

You only need to book if you wish to attend in person.

Online live stream (no booking necessary) via <https://synagogue.org.uk/services/live/>

CELEBRATING THE AJR JOURNAL

Please join us at
BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE on
TUESDAY 20 JANUARY,
at 12.30pm, before our annual
HMD service, to celebrate the
80th anniversary of the *AJR Journal*.

Speakers will include previous and current editors and contributors and a look back at some of the stories that have made the headlines over the past eight decades.



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THREE COMMUNITIES EIGHTY YEARS ON

David Herman writes: It is only right that Tony Grenville should write the lead article for this special issue. He has been such a special figure in the Journal's history. It is an honour to follow him, a Jewish Sancho Panza to his wonderful Don Quixote, Mutley to his Dick Dastardly.

For 40+ years I have written for most of Britain's Jewish magazines and newspapers: the *Jewish Quarterly*, the *Jewish Chronicle*, *Jewish Renaissance*, *European Judaism*, *Jewish News*, the *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* and, since 2018, the *AJR Journal*.

In my first year with the *AJR Journal* I wrote on Corbyn and antisemitism, Freud, Philip Roth and Jewish food ("Tastes of Home"). This was a sign of things to come and conveys a sense of what the *AJR Journal* has meant to me, as a writer and as a reader.

First, crucially, is the range of subjects it offers to any writer. Modern Jewish history, of course. Exile and displacement. The tragedy of the Holocaust. Modern Jewish culture: starting with the artist Milein Cosman and the great children's writer Judith Kerr, and moving on to Edmund de Waal, John le Carré and Germans, Jews and Refugees, and then, last year, the photographs of Bill Brandt, Ruth Praver Jhabvala and Andrew Sachs as Manuel, the luckless waiter in *Fawlty Towers*, all three German-Jewish refugees. And, of course, special anniversaries. I have written on the 80th anniversary of the *Anschluss* and the Evian Conference; the 75th anniversary of VE Day; the 80th anniversary of Barbarossa, ninety years since Hitler came to power and eighty years after the liberation of Auschwitz. Writing for the *AJR Journal* has given me a chance to soak myself in Jewish history, culture and modern politics, to celebrate the great Jewish cultural figures and the

darkest moments of our history.

Second, the *Journal* has allowed me to become part of your community. I should have said three communities not one. First, there are you, the readers. Your letters have always meant so much to me. You have kindly shared your personal stories and your knowledge. You have gently pointed out my shortcomings and flaws. One of my joys of every year is the annual commemoration of Kristallnacht at Belsize Square Synagogue and the tea party that follows, a chance to meet extraordinary refugees like Kurt Marx, now a hundred years old. I remember the first time we met and as we talked I suddenly realised he might have known Ralph Blumenau in pre-war Germany. "Yes, of course!" he smiled. "We were at school together!"

Second, there is another community, the team who work at the AJR itself: the Chief Executive, Michael Newman, who celebrates his own 25th anniversary with the AJR this year, our editor, Jo Briggs; her assistant, the wonderful Lilian Levy, who retired last year; Tony Grenville, the sage of AJR history; Alex Maws, the Head of Education, and Bea Lewkowicz, the Director of Refugee Voices, who has preserved the testimony of so many for posterity; and many, many more indispensable members of the team.

The third community is those who were left behind. So many of you lost family during the Holocaust. For me, this means two members of my mother's family who were murdered, Kurt and Else Rathenau, who were killed in June 1942 in what is now Belarus, and all of my father's family from Warsaw. People, of course, but also places. My father's neighbourhood in Warsaw no longer exists. Not one building survives. My mother's childhood home in Berlin also. The AJR and this *Journal*, like my first literary home, the *Jewish Quarterly*, was founded by those who managed to escape but it has always preserved the



Josef Herman (1911-2000), *Refugees*

© BEN URI COLLECTION

memory of those who didn't.

This is why when Michael Newman kindly asked me if I would be interested in writing for the *Journal*, I didn't hesitate for a moment. It was a chance to remember the people I had grown up surrounded by: Jewish refugees, men and women who spoke, late in the night, in hushed tones of people long gone and places which only they remembered.

Like them, this publication knows there is much to mourn but also much to celebrate.



**FREEMASON'S HALL
COVENT GARDEN, LONDON**

TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2026



Please join the AJR for a private guided tour of the Museum and the Grand Temple followed by an exclusive talk by Museum curator Dr Mark Dennis on 'The Jewish Dimension in Freemasonry'

Cost: £10 per person



karendiamond@ajr.org.uk

A part of our family

Third generation AJR member and freelance journalist Etan Smallman recounts how the AJR Journal and its predecessor were central to much of his own family's history and milestone events during the past 80 years.

Some inheritances, I sometimes enviously observe, include vast trunks bursting with diaries, photos and even paintings bearing family secrets. All I have from my mother's parents, who each fled Berlin by a whisker in 1939, is a slim leather-bound folder – embossed with “Urkunden” (documents) and containing some letters and a Nazi-issued passport – as well as a bag of assorted tarnished cutlery from their mid-century London restaurant.

It looked like it was going to be an uphill struggle to trace the stories of Ilse Ruth Manasse and Suesskind (Sigi) Balsam, who both died before I was born.

But then I came across this, the *AJR Journal*.

By the time I clicked on to it about a decade ago, its hundreds of issues had all been digitised. I quickly found that my grandfather had been one of its earliest contributors – his first advert appearing in December 1946, in Issue 12 of what was then called the *AJR Information*.

A one-minute walk from the AJR's offices in Fairfax Mansions was my grandfather's business, the Burlington Restaurant at 169a Finchley Road. This first ad announces that, with “S. Balsam, Manager” in charge, it is “again under old management”. (I still have not got to the bottom of quite what that strange formulation of words means, or why the advert boasts a “formerly well known Continental atmosphere”).

The thing I would really love to have is a

menu, yet the old AJR journals are a good second best. They tell me that the restaurant – open from 8am to 11.30pm – plied Hungarian, Viennese, Czech and Polish cuisine. One national fare is strangely absent, though, considering my grandfather had made his name in Berlin as manager of the prestigious Café Uhlandek. But perhaps, in 1946, a taste of Germany was not flavour of the month for either native Brits or refugees (who, the article on the front page of that issue reports, were applying for UK citizenship in booming numbers).

My grandfather's Metropolitan Police file – produced for his own naturalisation application in 1947 – reveals that, in April 1940, the Home Office had refused him permission to become a director of the Burlington when the company was formed. But he had since become principal shareholder and during the war had employed 25 people and served 2,500 meals a week. The eatery would, in the second half of the 1940s, be renamed Cafe Balsam.

Other sources show it was a favourite haunt of members of the Amadeus Quartet and its basement was the first London home of the Blue Danube Club, which Peter Herz had initially run as a “Barbed-Wire Cabaret” while interned as an “enemy alien” on the Isle of Man.

By 1948, my grandparents had left 169a to open Balsam's Restaurant “in the heart of Mayfair”, at the corner of Down Street and Hertford Street, where I am told Princess Margaret once dined.

Thanks to *AJR Information*, I know that the new establishment was offering Tea Dance (4-6pm) and Dinner Dance (from 8pm) complete with “Popular Viennese and Gipsy Music”. The April 1949 issue was advertising that at Balsam's, Peter Herz “Presents a New Revue” (by this point he had found a permanent home for his Blue Danube at 153 Finchley Road).

Sigi would continue placing ads, of increasing size, throughout the Fifties, when the restaurant, “by candlelight”, was open until 2.30am. The specialities were fillet and rump steak, Wiener schnitzel, roast chicken, escalopes and apple strudel.

Old issues also reveal that the entertainment was provided by artists including Ruth Silvestre – who sang in Italian, French, Yiddish and Hebrew. She wrote in her memoir of being accompanied by a pianist and fiddle player dressed in red shirts and black cummerbunds and singing to “ladies of the night who brought their clients to Balsam's”.

The *Information* tells me about Cafe Balsam's successor on “Finchleystasse” too. By 1951, the old premises had become the Dorice (its first mention is a listing for a talk on “Assimilation in Jewish History” hosted by AJR youth group, the Hyphen). The Amadeus remained loyal to 169a, and a classical music critic once told me that when reading a book that mentioned this: “I actually tried to look up the restaurant, to see if it was still open, because I love old-school Viennese cuisine.” Alas, he was only about 35 years too late.



Sigi Balsam, outside Cafe Balsam, Finchley Road



Sigi, third from left, with staff of Cafe Balsam, Finchley Road



Etan's grandparents, Ilse and Sigi, with his aunt, Nancy, and mother, Susan



Etan's mother, Susan, and grandfather, Sigi Balsam



Advertising card for Balsam's Restaurant in Mayfair



Balsam's Restaurant in Mayfair

Beyond the restaurant notices, on the journal's pages are charted the vicissitudes of my family story – hatch, match, dispatch, and more.

In 1952, from their home on 27 Lindfield Gardens, my grandparents “announce the birth of their daughter Susan Hannah” – my mum. Just eight years later, Sigi was sharing the tragic news of the death of Ilse, aged 47. It was yet another crushing bereavement, following the murder of his first wife, Cilly, in the gas vans of Chelmno; the declaration of war a week after his arrival in Southampton had blocked their plans to meet in America.

Ilse's death would be the end of both a joyful family life off Finchley Road and of the restaurant. Sigi would – unhappily – remarry another refugee and move with my mother and aunt to his third wife's home in Leamington Spa. He must have felt out on a limb in Warwickshire, away from the hub of refugee life in London. So it makes sense that he continued to send occasional updates back to Finchleystasse, including news of his “luncheon party for 90 disabled people” to mark the wedding of Charles and Diana, and the wedding of his own daughter, Nancy, in Haifa.

In 1973, he wrote in to say that “Sigi Balsam, restaurant owner, formerly Berlin, then London, Finchley Road and Mayfair” had celebrated his 75th birthday on Valentine's Day. And an article titled “From Hampstead to Leamington” was penned to mark his retirement at 84 in 1980, having opened his first restaurant in Berlin in 1928 and been “active in the catering trade for 50 years”.

The *AJR Journal* noted that “many readers will still remember the years when he owned

the Balsam (now Dorice) Restaurant”. Of his old customers back in Finchley Road, it added: “Mr. Balsam did not mind if they could not afford more than a cup of coffee. He served them with pleasure, because he himself was one of them.”

In 2017, more than 70 years after my grandfather had first taken out an advert in *AJR Information*, I placed one myself – searching for any memories of Sigi and Ilse. It took me on a wonderful journey.

Editor Jo Briggs replied to point out a recent listing for a talk by cousins Tony and Charlotte Balazs, about both the Cosmo and Dorice (their mother/aunt, Doris, had worked at the former and founded the latter). I would meet them both to hear their memories.

I contacted the AJR's Dr Anthony Grenville, who replied: “I thought that I was just about the only person who knew anything much about Balsam's restaurant (from ads in the old *AJR Information* in the 1940s), and now you turn up, a direct descendent of the family!”

Marion Manheimer sent me an email – for 40 years, her parents owned the Cosmo, where I'm told my grandfather worked when he first arrived in London. She invited me to her home in which a table was piled high with photos, reviews and Cosmo-branded matchboxes. I scribbled furiously as she regaled me with stories of the eccentric staff and customers. What language did they mainly speak, I remember asking. Marion corrected me: “They shouted,” she said, “in foreign accents”.

In between all of this, she mentioned that someone was working on a musical, for the

Insiders/Outsiders festival. I had not gone wearing my professional hat – as a freelance journalist – but that was too good to ignore. I ended up not just writing a feature for the *Financial Times* magazine about *The Ballad of the Cosmo Café*, but befriending its creator, legendary scenographer (and ex-Cosmo customer) Pamela Howard.

That article ended up in the hands of a long-lost cousin, whose son reached out to me via Twitter. We all met up at Louis Patisserie in Hampstead – the closest we could find to an NW3 cafe of the old continental variety – and stayed in touch.

I have since written about Finchleystasse for the *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jewish News*, as well as the *AJR Journal* itself – its back issues always proving the most invaluable resource.

I had a full circle moment in November, at the Association's “Remembering & Rethinking” conference on Holocaust teaching at Finchley Road's JW3 – itself named after the postcode that had been so central to Jewish refugee life in the 20th century.

I opened the folder given to each participant to discover a walking tour created by Dr Bea Lewkowicz, director of the AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive. Number six along the route was 169a – site of the Burlington, Balsam and Dorice – and today, in the neatest of echoes, a shop selling luxury German kitchens. And it was illustrated with the very first advert Sigi had placed eight decades ago, reminding the conference-goers of that “formerly well known Continental atmosphere”. My grandfather would be kvelling.

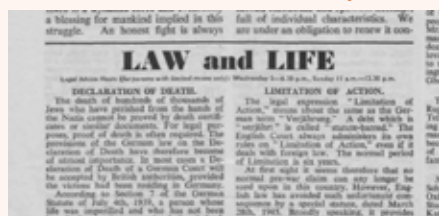
I would love to hear your own stories. Please contact me at etansmallman@gmail.com

JOURNALLING THROUGH THE DECADES

Flicking through the almost one thousand back issues of this Journal is like flicking through our community's scrapbook: its longings, its triumphs, its memories, and its humour. In the next few pages we trace that journey, reflecting the heartbeat of daily life over 80 years.

When the first issue of *AJR Information* appeared, it was more than a newsletter, it was a lifeline. For Britain's tens of thousands of Jewish refugees the years after the Holocaust were defined by loss, displacement, uncertainty, and hope. Over the past 80 years, this Journal has quietly chronicled their world: from relief and resettlement to small shops, caf  bars, community clubs, old age homes, and eventually education, testimonies, heritage and new generations.

1946–1950s: Survival and Solidarity



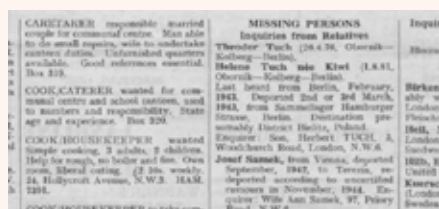
This early period also included regular listings of the community's social service and welfare initiatives, while our August 1946 issue announced 'a new phase' in the campaign for claims against Germany.

One of the strangest adverts from the early issues offered '  300 for smoking ideas', while another advert proudly declared that something called 'Kamillosan' is 'now available everywhere'. A third advert, and clearly more directly relevant to our readers, reassured them that the Burlington Restaurant was 'again under old management', just as Etan Smallman describes in his article.



A selection of adverts from the 1940s

Many refugees had lost everything – home, family, job – and began again with almost nothing. Their struggles are reflected in the *Law & Life* column, introduced in our very first issue. Questions about securing family allowances, furnished accommodation, travel documents, naturalisation and employment frequently appeared.



February 1946

The Journal's classifieds and small adverts became one of their first tools of rebuilding: seeking lodgings or jobs, and even – heartbreakingly – missing people. These ads were modest, but extraordinary in their significance.

avail themselves of Marriatt, the Jewish marriage bureau, and were urged to add Vesop to their cooking for that 'essential' continental touch.



A selection of adverts from the 1950s

The Arts were introduced, with reviews of exhibitions written by Helen Rosenau, by coincidence profiled here last Autumn by the Ben Uri Research Unit.



January 1956

Meanwhile the first of, sadly, many articles over the decades about antisemitism in the UK appeared as early as May 1946, when AJR members were firmly urged to integrate, assimilate, and do their bit for Britain and its communal life.

1950s–1960s: From Necessity to Normality

As Britain recovered from war and austerity, many refugee families reestablished themselves, opening shops, small businesses, and caf  s where refugees could gather and feel 'at home'. There were also specialist tailors, furriers, opticians, chemists, all offering a touch of the 'Continental' background that many refugees craved and many Brits admired.

The Journal's 'Situations Vacant' column became very lively, no longer just for blue collar jobs. Other adverts reflect the comfortable lifestyles of some refugees, who were liberally offered books, kosher caterers, guest houses, upholsterers, pianos and dehumidifiers. They could also

Restitution was a major topic throughout this period, with travel companies advertising specialist trips to Germany. The launch of the Austrian Fund was announced in the July 1956 issue, which also reported on 'infighting' between the Jewish Trust Corporation and the Council of Jews from Germany regarding the allocation of German funds. The burgeoning desire for restitution was perhaps fuelled by the first appearances of Holocaust testimony in this Journal.

The June 1956 issue of the Journal is especially poignant for two reasons. An article entitled 'Shadows of the Past' reported how the performance of an anti-Nazi play had been prohibited to avoid hurting tender feelings, while another article about the 'Mental maladies of refugees' reported that the incidence of nervous & mental disorders and depression among the refugees was almost five times greater than among non-refugees. The same article did also say however that 'personality disorders and neuroses are very rare amongst Jews' – something that many today might like to discuss...



In November 1956 the Journal reported that *The Diary of Anne Frank* was being premiered on stage in seven German cities and that "a stark and solemn silence" settled on the audience, many of them in tears and putting their heads in their hands.

The January 1966 issue reported that 'Hello Dolly' was doing very well in London and was now being prepared for premiere in Israel. The same issue provides a shocking insight into employment rights of the time, with an article about ten teachers at Hendon Reform Synagogue being dismissed for asking for wage increases.

1970s–1980s: Stability, Social Care and Community Infrastructure

As the first generation aged, the needs of the community shifted. Many survivors entered middle and old age; some required care, others companionship, social contact, welfare support. The AJR stepped in, and the Journal reflected these changing needs.



May 1960 – a turning point?

The May 1960 issue (Vol. XV No. 5) is often cited as a turning point in the *AJR Journal's* evolution. Its leading article – in German – by the historian and sociologist Eva G. Reichmann, then director of research at the Wiener Holocaust Library, exploring the hybrid identity of "German + Jewish + British," exile, guilt, memory, and belonging.

But the same issue – on pages 13–16 – is full of adverts from well established refugee businesses – for example the corset manufacturer Silhouette; chocolate makers Ackermans Chocolates; and the bookshop Libris.

This juxtaposition is powerful. On one page: a serious meditation on identity, memory, loss, guilt, exile. On the next: ads for corsets, sweets, books – everyday consumer life. It shows how, fifteen years after the war, refugees were simultaneously processing trauma and trying to live otherwise – shop, read, conform (or resist), adapt, build comfort, and claim a place in British society.

It also carried reports on social service developments, community trips, testimonies, obituaries, club news alongside adverts and classifieds for care services, social support and community clubs. In this way, the Journal itself matured: from refugee bulletin to community chronicle, from survival tool to heritage archive.

The August 1973 issue reports on Arthur Koestler's "Thank-you Britain" Fund lecture, the theme of which was the duality of existence of refugees. The article is fittingly titled "Two Pairs of Spectacles". Mr Koestler reflects that "... when in this country he considers himself as a foreigner, but when



Adverts from the 1970s

visiting the Continent he feels thoroughly British". As if to highlight the point, the article is followed by adverts for continental catering and hotels alongside an advert for foundation garments that would 'solve figure problems'.

The inclusion of articles in German continued intermittently until the late 1990's. It seems that over time, the interest in – and probably abilities – reading articles in German dwindled.

From the late 1970's and well into the 1980's the article topics became more academic and less of a guide to living in Britain. For example, in December 1976, the lead editorial was titled "The Great Paradox – Early Marxists and Judaism". The editorial of April 1980 took a political and historic look at the relationship between Israel and both Britain and America; while the July 1989 issue reflected on the Bicentenary of the French Revolution.



September 1986 – Easier days?

The establishment of the Paul Balint Day Centre was announced in the September 1986 magazine. The centre initially operated on Wednesday and Thursday but within a few years was open every weekday with a range of entertainment on offer. This reflects the changing needs of the AJR members, many of whom had retired and wanted to gather.

Continued on page 8

Journalling through the ages (cont. from pg7)

The 1990s – lightness with new Labour

The 1990's brought a change of tone to the articles and the letters to the editor. The writers seemed to relish amusing titles and topics that were more light-hearted than those of the previous decades. For example, from April 1990 to April 1994, every edition had a column titled "Verse and Worse" which presented an amusing play on words in verse form.

VERSE AND WORSE

JILLY COOPER

A geyser gushing 'gosh' and 'super'
A horsey-raunchy-snobby trouper
Archer than Jeffrey is J. Cooper
Whom no one calls a party-pooper

JULIE BURCHILL

The hour of need brought forth great Churchill
The hour of sloth spawned a Ms Burchill
A sinuous scribbler skilled at snarling
Who loves both Jews and Joseph Stalin

ASIL NADIR

'I'm Robin Hood and not a heel'
He doesn't cease to importune
– Asil is asking for *asyl*
Close to the nadir of fortune

DOWAGER COUNTESS SPENCER

Not up to the young Spencers' mark
Nor glimpsed around Great Windsor Park
– They are *machutenim* no more –
Raine does all commoners abhor
Cornflakey millions hold no charms
Besides a bespoke coat of arms

ROBERT ADLEY

A train buff, not to say fanatic,
A thinker idiosyncratic
Who, Jewish-born, consigned to hell
As 'terrorism's primal cell'
The strife-torn State of Israel

July 1993

April 1996 saw an article introducing readers to "The discreet charm of the schmoozeoisie" – a term adapted by an American Professor of English to refer to people who earn a living by talking on the radio or TV. The writer then went on to coin new phrases of their own.

'True Blues' *schmooze* for 1922 Committee sessions, news *schmooze* for Current Affairs, *schmooze* news for gossip columns, cruise *schmooze* for shipboard gossip, *schmooze* cruise for a Swan-Hellic lecture trip, *schmooze* crews for talkshow panellists, crews' *schmooze* for astronauts' chitchat, short fuse *schmooze* for road rage counselling, Blues *schmooze* for a *Musical Express* column, and *schmooze* Blues for BBC phone-in cutbacks.

April 1996

In January 1996 the Journal amusingly discussed the Jewish dimension of the Charles and Diana drama, in an article wittily entitled 'The un-merry wife of Windsor'. This is typical of the puns that had begun to regularly appear in these pages, with even the occasional cartoon reflecting this wordplay.



July 1996

Another example of the more entertaining tone that appeared in the 90's was the inclusion of a cookery column by the renowned food journalist, Gretel Beer. Her column was in every magazine from July 1993 to January 1999 – usually on page 14. Her recipes included Rose Cakes (November 1995); Krenfisch (January 1996); B'soffene Liesel (July 1996) and Kardamon-Mandel-Auflauf in grijner Apfelsuppe (November 1996) and many more.

However, alongside the light-hearted or amusing articles there continued to be ample coverage about the impact of the Holocaust on survivors, the long-standing issue of reparations and restitution, and the continued existence of antisemitism (eg 'Hatred on the Internet', May 1998). The October 1997 magazine included a four-page feature about a visit to Polish concentration camps. ('Heartland of European Jewry'), which appears to be the first coverage of such a trip.

2000 and Beyond – Memory, Testimony, Generational Bridge

In April 2000 the magazine was formally renamed from *AJR Information* to *AJR Journal* – a subtle but meaningful shift. The work of rebuilding was largely done, the size of the first generation was shrinking; what remained was memory, identity, legacy.

Today, the *AJR Journal* continues to connect generations. It also keeps alive the memory

Cooking with Gretel Beer



Mohr im Hemd

Half-way across the Atlantic seems a funny place to argue about a recipe, but that's exactly what happened on the QE2 recently. There was a Viennese food festival on board with several Austrian guest chefs – quite a lot of the "resident" Cunard chefs are Austrian as well – and we all claimed to have the best recipe for Mohr im Hemd, that wonderful chocolate pudding topped with chocolate sauce and whipped cream. On comparing the various versions I found that my own recipe was almost identical with that of Rudi Sodamin, Cunard's Corporate executive chef – and another Austrian, so here is the combined version.

For the pudding

4 eggs
2oz (70g) butter
2oz (70g) icing sugar
2oz (70g) grated plain chocolate
2oz (70g) ground unblanched almonds
butter and icing sugar for the pudding basin
whipped cream lightly sweetened with vanilla sugar

For the sauce

8oz (225g) plain chocolate
8oz (225g) icing sugar
pint (280ml) water

December 1995

of places and businesses that once were vibrant parts of refugee life. As this article shows, it has become more than a magazine: it is a community memory book, reflecting the stories of men, women and children who fled persecution, who landed in a foreign country, traumatised and dispossessed – and who, over decades, rebuilt, adapted, survived, flourished, loved, aged. It tells the story of shops and cafés, of comfort garments and books, of care homes and clubs; of culture, hope, and community. A community that, against all odds, preserved its identity and handed over legacy – and journalled it, month after month, year after year.

May the *AJR Journal* continue to be that bridge – between past and present, between survivors and descendants, between memory and future.

Jo Briggs and Debra Farbey

Congratulations AJR

Thank you to everyone who has sent their best wishes on our Journal's special anniversary. Here are a few of the letters we received before this issue went to print.



On behalf of us all at Belsize Square Synagogue, we wish to congratulate everyone involved in the *AJR Journal* on its special 80th Anniversary issue.

To many of our congregants past and present, the *Journal* or "*Blaettchen*" has been an essential part of their monthly reading – a connection with their past and a constant source of interest and stimulation.

As 98-year-old Ilse Nothman – who arrived in this country on the Kindertransport – says: "I'd like to say a sincere thank you to everyone who's been involved in the *Journal* over all these years. When I receive my copy each month, I always know there'll be something of interest to read, telling me things I didn't know, recounting powerful stories about refugees and their families. You learn about their lives, the courage and resilience they displayed. My sister and I arrived on the Kindertransport and my parents eventually followed us to the UK, but so many others were not so fortunate. Reading their stories is rather humbling. I also like the excellent book reviews which have given me a source of extra reading material.

My mother used to enjoy reading the *Blaettchen* and I still do. I've kept various copies over the years including the issue containing the obituary of my husband Henry. I'm very pleased you are still managing to produce a publication of such quality and interest after 80 years!

LEE TAYLOR

Chief Executive Officer, Belsize Square Synagogue

On behalf of World Jewish Relief, previously known as the Central British Fund, may I share my delight on the wonderful 80th anniversary of the *AJR Journal*. For 80 years this remarkable publication has brought important learning, history, reflection,

social engagement and memory to our treasured shared audiences. A heartfelt thank you AJR.

PAUL ANTICONI OBE

Chief Executive, World Jewish Relief

We write to you to congratulate you on this remarkable milestone. Few publications can claim such longevity or such profound moral purpose. Since its foundational days, the *Journal* has been a constant and reliable lifeline for German-Jewish speaking refugees in Britain – a source not only of vital information, but also of community and hope. Through its pages, survivors and refugees searched for family and friends, followed news of the postwar period related to restitution and war crimes trials, celebrated social, cultural and scholarly achievements, read astute analyses of political developments, and most importantly of all, found reassurance that their histories would not be forgotten. The *Journal's* steadfast, credible voice has helped define our understanding of refugee and survivor experiences and the legacies of the Holocaust. This is an achievement of profound importance.

Our two institutions – the Association of Jewish Refugees and The Wiener Library – have shared this commitment from the beginning. Our intertwined histories live on the *Journal's* pages: early appeals for donations of books, pamphlets, photographs and original documents "in all languages" and by Eva Reichmann to the AJR's members to "bear witness"; lively reports on joint lectures and community events; advertisements for the Library's services, including its research support using the International Tracing Service archive, as well as tributes and obituaries that reveal the close relationships between our organisations' trustees, staff and supporters. These pages not only reveal the partnership of our two organisations but the trust of a community determined

to safeguard the evidence and memory for future generations.

As we mark your special anniversary, we honour the *Journal's* unique role as both a witness and a guide, documenting the past but also helping its readers navigate an ever-changing present. We look forward to continuing our shared mission to champion the voices of refugees and survivors and to preserve their memory.

With warm congratulations and best wishes for the decades ahead,
**DR CHRISTINE SCHMIDT and
DR BARBARA WARNOCK**
Acting Co-Directors, The Wiener Holocaust Library

The AJR *Journal* has done a good deal over the years to support the wider organisation, probably without even realising it.

Soon after the Outreach department was set up in November 1998, the *Journal* began publishing reports of meetings which had taken place the previous month. As a result of reading these, members in other parts of the country asked if they might also convene social groups. Westcliff-on-Sea and Kent (Tunbridge Wells) come especially to mind.

In addition, the reporting of Holocaust Memorial Day events in 2001 and subsequent years created awareness of the existence of other European Jews living in their areas, leading to more people enquiring about and then joining the AJR. Thus it was that in the early 2000s, with an average age of 70, the membership of the AJR grew. This can't have happened to many organisations.

MYRNA GLASS

Myrna retired in October 2013 after 15 years' dedicated service with the AJR's Outreach department.

CONNECTED THROUGH THE JOURNAL

During its eighty year history the AJR Journal has regularly carried search notices and other calls to action, resulting in many of our readers establishing connections with other readers. One such example is our 2G member **Diana Cook**, who recently connected through a notice in the Journal with the German academic **Dr Dominique Miething**, only to find that the subject of their correspondence had herself been a noted contributor to these pages over 70 years ago. They share their story, “Saved by a pacifist”:

Diana explains:

It was some time after my refugee mother died when I at last felt able to sort out boxes of personal papers and photos that I had inherited. A newspaper cutting from the Yorkshire Times, dated 1961, floated out of a pile of documents I had stacked up. I recognised the woman in the photo immediately. She was dressed in graduation cap and gown and smiling broadly, having been just awarded an honorary degree by Leeds University. I knew her as ‘Tante Martha’, a lady beloved and highly respected by my parents.

I had memories of visiting her and her sisters (the ‘Aunties’) when I was a child. We would regularly drive to Leeds from our home in Hull for tea and cake on a Sunday afternoon. I knew that Martha Steinitz was Jewish and had left Germany after the first World War. She became a much-loved teacher of German language classes at Swarthmore (a Quaker centre for adult education), and she had enabled some of her large family – four sisters of her nine siblings – to make their home with her. My parents always spoke of

her as a remarkably learned and cultured person, but as a child this went rather over my head. My mother, then Margot Pogorzelski (1920-2014), aged nineteen, had stayed with Tante Martha when she fled Nazi Germany, and before she became a student nurse at St James’s Hospital.

I remember their small, dark and gloomy terraced house, feeling bored as the conversation was in German, and there were no toys or pets to play with. I sat under the dining table and amused myself with the fringes on the green chenille tablecloth until I was offered cake.

Like so many other descendants of Jewish refugees, I am often haunted by the questions I never thought to ask. As I found out more about her escape, and the fate of my mother’s family, I wanted to know more about Tante Martha. I knew that she sponsored mum by paying £50 – a considerable sum in 1939 – to enable her to leave Nazi Germany. But I never asked about how they were connected, who she really was, and whether any more lives were saved by her generosity.

Having searched the internet and archives at Friends House in London (I presumed she was a Quaker) I drew a blank. I found out that she had been secretary of War Resisters’ International (WRI), a worldwide pacifist network which still exists today. Then, reading an article in the March 2024 issue of the *AJR Journal*, about Esther Simpson, another Leeds Jew and Quaker, I wrote to the Editor wondering if any reader knew more about ‘Tante Martha’. My notice appeared in the April 2024 issue. Two months later, I received an email from Dr Dominique Miething at the Freie Universität in Berlin. He was carrying out archival research on inter-war pacifist women; Martha Steinitz was one of these and he was writing her biography. I was astonished and delighted.

Dominique takes up the story:

When I encountered Diana’s letter, I recognized her name immediately, because four years earlier, I had come across some of her correspondence with the late Renate Steinitz, author of the family story: *Eine deutsche jüdische Familie wird zerstreut* (2nd edition, 2016). These



Diana Cook and Dominique Miething at the Mendelssohn-Remise, Berlin, 22 May 2025

documents were archived in the attic of a family home belonging to some of the Berlin Steinitz family members, whom I had contacted in early 2020. Now being able to get in touch with Diana suddenly presented me with a wonderful opportunity to speak to one of the few people in our times who had met the remarkable Martha Steinitz.

She was born on 11 March 1889, in the Upper Silesian region of today’s Chorzów, Poland. Very few details are known about her youth. Even when she emerged in the “No More War” movement in Berlin after WWI, the written evidence of her commitment to peace is sparse at first. However, beginning with her leadership role in the German Branch of the WRI, Steinitz quickly became a transnational mediator between the British and German peace movements.

Moving to England in late 1924, Steinitz enjoyed the country’s more liberal atmosphere. Her move was motivated, in part, by her friendship with the Whiting family, renowned members of the Leeds Quaker community. She was deeply impressed by their humanitarian work for reconciliation. She also admired the courage of the thousands of British conscientious objectors and tried to make their fates known to the German public after WWI.

Steinitz continued to campaign for the global outlawing of war and for the right to conscientious objection to military service. To this end, she worked closely with Fenner Brockway (1888-1988) and

Herbert Runham Brown (1879-1949), and corresponded with Thomas Mann, Albert Einstein, and Martin Buber, among others, and published prolifically. From the mid-1930s on, her cherished principle of nonviolence found a new form of expression in adult education, teaching at least four German classes per week. Occasionally, she also offered courses in art and music history, and later also added courses on Jewish culture and religion, Zionism and against antisemitism.

In September 1933, Steinitz was granted British citizenship. Using her relative privilege of a safe home and a small income, she then saved the lives not only of some of her sisters and her nephew Werner Goerke, but also of Diana's mother Margot and of other persecuted people such as friends from the German peace movement.

Using her contacts with the Jewish Refugees' Committee (founded by Otto Schiff in Spring 1933), the AJR, and the WRI, she helped Jewish and non-Jewish refugees on their way to Britain. Long-standing friendships, for example with



Margot Pogorzelski in 1943

Esther Simpson (1903-1996) the secretary of the Academic Assistance Council in London, enhanced her network.

In cooperation with the Leeds Jewish Refugees Committee (the counterpart to the Quakers' Leeds Committee for Non-Jewish Refugees) Steinitz personally offered evening classes from June 1940 for those new arrivals who wanted to learn English. Reflecting on these interactions, she wrote in the May 1946 issue of *AJR Information*: "From the time of their arrival it has been my object to get them into personal touch with my numerous English friends, with the result that all those Jewish refugees who wished to move out of their somewhat confined circle were able to form valuable friendships, widening their horizon and, incidentally, that of their Gentile neighbours and friends."



Martha Steinitz at the Honorary Degree Ceremony, Leeds University, 18 May 1961

More than half a decade later, Steinitz's activities were still remembered by Caesar Caspar Aronsfeld (1910-2002; see *AJR Information*, September 1952, p. 5), who had also fled to Leeds and played a key role in setting up what is now the Wiener Holocaust Library in London.

On 24 June 1966 Steinitz died unexpectedly in Leeds, where she had resided for four decades.

Perhaps it is now time to commemorate Martha Steinitz – for instance, with a Leeds Civic Trust Blue Plaque?

Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication and respectfully points out that the views expressed in the letters published are not necessarily the views of the AJR. Please address any letters to editorial@ajr.org.uk.

ORT EXPLAINED

The initials ORT deserve a more accurate commentary than David Herman's assertion (December 2025) that they stand for Organisation for Rehabilitation through Training. This odd designation was adopted purely to give the English version the same initials as the Russian original. The literal meaning of the latter - *obshchestvo remeslyennovo truda* - is Society for Skilled-Trades Labour. The point being to enable young Jewish men to qualify as skilled manual operatives (plumbers, mechanics, stonemasons or whatever) and thereby earn a reasonable and dignified living and not be confined to itinerant peddling whether of liquor ("Bronfenbrenner") or haberdashery. This is an important fragment of social history.

Peter Oppenheimer, Oxford

WINTON'S LEGACY DOWN UNDER

The interesting report by Debra Barnes (December) on AJR's recent visit to Prague prompted me to reflect on the following coincidence.

My cousins Eva (b.1926) and Anita (b.1931) Graetzer arrived on a Winton Kindertransport in March 1939. Their parents Siegfried and Herta (sister of my father Max) were sadly unable to leave our hometown of Olomouc and perished, together with my grandmother Paula and so many other relatives.

After my own family's escape in July 1939 both girls joined us in Harpenden where we all lived till 1945. Eva married a refugee from Stuttgart, Kurt Weinstein, in 1946. They had a son, Eric, then emigrated to New Zealand in 1952, when

Kurt also anglicised his name to Ken Winton.

Fast forward to 2026 and Eric Winton now lives in Sydney and has two married sons (Ariel and Daniel) and four grandchildren. I guess Sir Nicholas Winton would be amused to know that among his 'children' there are now 10 Wintons living in Australia!

Peter Briess, London NW3

STAMPS

When sending post of any kind to the AJR office please take care to use only the NEW style stamps which have a barcode alongside them. Letters or parcels using the old stamps incur the AJR, as the recipient, an additional charge.

The AJR Team

MAKING AN ART OF IT



Paula Rego, *Bride* 1994. Tate c. Paula Rego



Wolfgang Willrich's book, *Die Säuberung des Kunsttempels* (*The Cleansing of the Temple of Art*), helped to inspire Goebbels to confiscate 'Degenerate Art', now archived by the V&A



This bust of Chaim Weizmann by Jacob Epstein was acquired by the Ben Uri last year

Gloria Tessler has reviewed dozens of art exhibitions for the AJR Journal over the years. She reflects on her experiences.

During my years writing for the *AJR Journal* I have been exposed to some of the world's great artists, surely one of life's most ineffable gifts. Some of them flow towards me now – Monet's sunlight on water, Turner's dramatic sunsets, the innocence of Chagall's metaphysical paintings, animals and flying brides depicted in the primary colours of hope – even as Jewish life in Vitebsk, his Russian birthplace, was facing destruction.

On the lighter side I have also encountered some hilarious, embarrassing incidents. One was during the Belgrade-born performance artist, Marina Abramović's exhibition at the Royal Academy in 2023, when visitors were invited to walk through two standing nudes – a male and a female – while desperately trying to avoid physical contact! This, of course, was nothing like standing back to admire *The Rokeby Venus* by Velasquez.

But no matter how groundbreaking or performative the art, it means nothing without one essential ingredient; the ability to move you, to speak with a personal voice, to make you laugh or cry.

In the summer of 2021 Tate Britain showcased Paula Rego's portrayal of the trafficking and abuse of women, including female genital mutilation. I have always admired how this Portuguese visionary explores the complex relationship between victims and their perpetrators, which may include the presence of love, as between herself and her own dying husband. Rego campaigned against injustice all her life.

But writing about art for the *Journal* always meant far more. Growing up as an art student in the imagined shadow of my mother's cousin, the Czech artist and poet Petr Kien, murdered in Auschwitz, symbolised both the loss of life and the true meaning of art.

The Nazis confiscated over 16,000 modern artworks from public institutions and then, with shameful irony, showed 650 examples at the infamous "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Munich in 1937, to be mocked and laughed at. The V&A holds the only document

detailing the full extent of the Nazis' systematic purging of German museums and public collections from 1937. It was created by Joseph Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda.

The best place to view Jewish and other immigrant art is undoubtedly the Ben Uri Art Gallery, which has some 1,300 artworks in its permanent collection. Sadly, many are stored away due to its London gallery's limited space. But under its dynamic leadership the Ben Uri has been transformed into a digital and research led global institution, creating online and 3D exhibitions, recording, sharing and teaching the immigrant contribution to British art since 1900.

Last month the Ben Uri celebrated its own 110th anniversary by showing several works by Jewish artists who escaped the Nazis, including Eva Frankfurter, and Frank Auerbach, who arrived in 1939, and Josef Herman and Ernst Eisenmayer, in 1940. The BU recently acquired other rarely seen and important works, including Jacob Epstein's bronze bust of Chaim Weizmann and Hitler's suicide by George Grosz.

Other exhibitions I have reviewed have centred around the Jewish refugees who were interred in Britain, for example German-born Hugo Dachinger, who created the evocative poster, *Art Behind Wire Internment Camp*. Other works make you consider what they are concealing. I look at Jack Bilbo's portrait, *Miriam*, and I wonder what this curly, auburn haired woman was to him – a lost love, a daughter? Or *Two Sisters*, a beautiful bronze sculpture of young girls lovingly entwined, produced by Georg Erlich while interned on the Isle of Man. Who were these girls?

Another focus for my column has been the great Jewish Modernists born in Britain to Jewish immigrant parents. For example, Mark Gertler, Jacob Epstein, Emmanuel Levy and David Bomberg. The latter, a great favourite of mine, was a prominent figure among the Whitechapel Boys, an informal group of young Jewish artists born in London's East End.

Throughout all the exhibitions that I have reviewed for the *Journal*, I have been struck by the positive and enlightening influence art has made on humanity. We need that injection today, as much as ever.



HISTORIC TEA FOR AJR CENTENARIANS

Living for 100+ years is as remarkable as publishing a journal for 80 years. Which is why the German Embassy, London, in partnership with the AJR, was delighted to welcome nine extraordinary guests for afternoon tea on 8 December for a deeply moving afternoon tea.

Hosted by Her Excellency Susanne Baumann, the intimate event was designed to celebrate the lives and contributions of some of the last remaining eyewitnesses to the Holocaust – individuals who have not only survived persecution but rebuilt their lives in Britain with remarkable courage and determination.

Among the guests were:

Henny Franks (102) who escaped Nazi-occupied Germany via the Kindertransport before serving in the British Army during the Second World War. Recruited at 19 into the Auxiliary

Territorial Service (ATS), she trained in Nottingham and later worked transporting ammunition in Westcliff-on-Sea. Henny has been awarded the Defence Medal, the War Medal 1939–45, and in 2023 - the year she turned 100 - the HM Armed Forces Veteran Badge, which she accepted with characteristic humility, remarking, "I didn't know I was eligible."

Anne Callendar (105) who only joined the AJR at age 103 and had never previously engaged with a Jewish or refugee community organisation. Her testimony has since been recorded for the AJR's Refugee Voices Archive, including her parents' recollections of Kristallnacht and her father's arrest and imprisonment in Dachau. She received her AJR membership at the German Embassy in 2023 - a fitting tribute to her remarkable life and journey.

Kurt Marx (100) who witnessed Kristallnacht first hand and later travelled to the UK on the Kindertransport. Born in Germany in 1924, he survived persecution, served in the British Army, built a successful career, and raised a family in Britain. This year, he marked a joyful milestone by celebrating his third Bar Mitzvah.

Alice Hubbers (100) who left Vienna on a Kindertransport at age 14. Her father, imprisoned in Dachau and then Buchenwald, was unaware that her mother had arranged her escape. Her parents later fled to Shanghai, returning to Austria in 1946; Alice was reunited with them in 1947. After arriving in the UK, she lived in Dovercourt camp and with families across Lincoln, Scotland, Torquay, and London before working in retail—fondly recalling her time at Selfridges. She later married, had three children, and is now grandmother to four and great-grandmother to four.

Reflecting on the event, AJR CEO Michael Newman said: "It was profoundly moving to bring together these remarkable centenarians - people who have lived through one of the darkest chapters of history yet have gone on to build rich, full lives in Britain. We are immensely grateful to Ambassador Baumann for honouring them with such warm hospitality. Their stories remind us of the enduring importance of memory and the responsibility we all share to ensure that their experiences continue to be heard."

REMEMBERING & RETHINKING 2025

TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST

In November the AJR hosted Remembering & Rethinking 2025, a two-day international forum on Holocaust teaching, research, and remembrance. The next three pages include reports and photographs from what turned out to be a ground-breaking conference.



As well as plenaries the conference included a number of break out sessions

The AJR supports a wide network of organisations, researchers, and projects dedicated to remembrance and learning. *Remembering & Rethinking 2025* demonstrated this leadership in action — bringing together educators, academics and policy makers from the UK and around the world, and showcasing collaboration, innovation, and reflection across the field.

The programme featured a diverse range of panels and breakout sessions addressing new academic research, digital innovation, and trauma-informed approaches to Holocaust teaching. Discussions such as “*Teaching Digital Natives about the Holocaust*” and “*What Do We Mean by Holocaust Education in 2025?*” invited delegates to consider how educators can adapt to new technologies and learner needs, while maintaining authenticity and historical integrity.

A particularly powerful session, “*The Role of Holocaust Testimony in Teaching and Learning*”, explored how survivor and refugee testimonies remain central to effective Holocaust education. Contributors included Dr Bea Lewkowicz (AJR Refugee Voices), Amy Gee (Holocaust Educational Trust), and Dr Susan Krasner (Holocaust Learning UK) who reflected on the enduring impact of first-hand accounts and the opportunities for connecting younger generations to

these stories, in innovative and meaningful ways.

The AJR’s own extensive testimony projects – Refugee Voices audio-visual archive, *Holocaust Testimony UK* and the *My Story* written testimony series – were highlighted as invaluable educational resources.

International experts such as Catherine Clark (USC Shoah Foundation), Heather Mann (UNESCO), Dr Waitman Wade Beorn (University of Northumbria), and Prof. Oren Stier (Florida International University) also shared emerging research and best practices in Holocaust education and remembrance.

During the conference, AJR announced a new evaluation of the UK’s Holocaust education sector and its own grant programme, led by Ben Barkow (former Director of the Wiener Holocaust Library) and Clementine Smith (formerly HET), to identify good practice and opportunities for collaboration. The study will inform AJR’s ongoing work to strengthen connections, share resources, and promote partnership across the sector.

Commenting after the event, Alex Maws, AJR’s Head of Education & Heritage, said: “As the largest dedicated funder of Holocaust education in the UK, AJR is proud to convene conversations that shape the future of how this history

is taught and understood. By centring survivor testimony and supporting innovative research, we can ensure that these stories continue to resonate powerfully with future generations.”

Evening receptions at the Austrian Embassy hosted by His Excellency the Austrian Ambassador Bernhard Wrabetz and at The Freud Museum provided moments of reflection and connection, with moving remarks from Hedi Argent, a Jewish refugee from Nazism who witnessed Kristallnacht.

The AJR extends its gratitude to all speakers and partners who supported the forum.

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One of the panels during day 1 of the conference



The AJR's Alex Maws posed an important question

A GOOD TIME TO REIMAGINE HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

The forum was the brainchild of the AJR's Head of Education and Heritage, Alex Maws, who believes that the revised National Curriculum gives us a golden opportunity to improve the teaching of the Holocaust.

Hardly a week passes without a well-meaning friend or family member sending me another opinion piece or podcast about what Holocaust education is supposedly getting wrong. Broadly speaking, I find myself agreeing and disagreeing with these critiques in roughly equal measure. This is partly because there are countless perspectives on what effective Holocaust education looks like – but also because people cannot even agree on what “Holocaust education” actually is. Are we meant to study the genocide of Europe’s Jews in depth, or

use it as a case study to illuminate any number of other themes?

These questions were very much on my mind during our educational forum. It was inspiring to be among so many colleagues who devote their professional lives to improving how we teach the Shoah. I was particularly struck by the sector’s willingness to engage in honest, critical self-reflection. As with any conference, many speakers were eager to showcase new projects, and there were numerous examples of innovation and good practice. But these were balanced by searching conversations about what still needs to change. The opinion writers and podcasters might have been surprised by how rigorously practitioners already interrogate their own assumptions.

The forum took place just two weeks after the Department for Education released the final recommendations of a year-long review of the national curriculum for England, led by Professor Becky Francis. Many of the challenges we encounter in Holocaust education are, in truth, challenges rooted not in our field but in the broader structure of education itself.

Since the first national curriculum was introduced in 1991, the Holocaust has been a compulsory topic for Key Stage 3 history, and the prime minister has already reaffirmed a commitment to

keeping it in place. This mandate matters, but it is also vague and increasingly insufficient. If the revised national curriculum, set to arrive in 2028, aims to meaningfully support Holocaust education, it must do more than simply retain the requirement.

Some of the new recommendations are promising. An increased emphasis on media literacy and critical thinking, the inclusion of religious education in the national curriculum, making citizenship a statutory subject, and efforts to slim down GCSEs could create more space for exploring the Holocaust from multiple perspectives. Yet, these changes will not, on their own, amount to a major reimagining of how the Holocaust is taught.

The real potential lies in a piece of seemingly technical educational jargon – “vertical and horizontal coherence”. The term may sound abstract, but it represents a significant opportunity. Vertical coherence refers to the logical progression of key themes from one school year to the next. Horizontal coherence means aligning the study of related topics across different subjects at the same time.

Together, these principles could allow students to build a deeper, more connected understanding of Jewish life
Continued on page 16



The audience had time to chat between sessions



AJR member Hedi Argent shared her testimony during a reception at the Austrian Embassy on the first evening of the conference



First generation members Lydia Tischler and Eva Clarke enjoyed catching up during our reception at the Freud Museum on the second evening

A good time to reimagine Holocaust education (cont. from pg 15)

before, during, and after the Holocaust, rather than encountering the topic as an isolated historical event.

The Holocaust, antisemitism and Jewish life each deserve dedicated attention in the curriculum. They are distinct subjects but intimately connected; one cannot be taught meaningfully without reference to the others.

Too often, Holocaust education has been weakened by a lack of contextual grounding in Jewish history and antisemitism. While the government has opened the door to this new approach, it will not provide the detailed blueprint. That responsibility falls to England's Holocaust education sector.

If we seize the moment, we have an opportunity to design the significant shift that many commentators have long called for. This will require substantial collaboration between multiple organisations – something not always easily achieved. But as November's AJR forum demonstrated, we are experiencing a rare moment of shared purpose. The AJR is proud to help fund and convene work of this kind. Our sector must not let this opportunity pass us by.

VIEW FROM THE 4G

Noah Eastwood, a reporter for The Telegraph, volunteered at our forum and shares his thoughts.

For two days each year my employer turns me loose to volunteer at a charity of my choice. There is no compulsion to do so, but I try to always use these days to support good causes – and break the monotony of a nine-to-five office job.

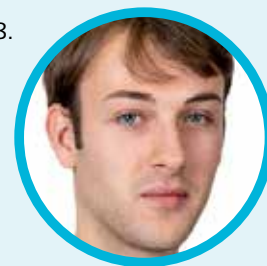
I had no previous connection to the AJR before I walked through the doors of JW3, a Finchley Road-based community centre, to volunteer at its Holocaust education conference on an icy cold Monday morning in November.

Fuelled by copious amounts of coffee and pastries (I later learned solid catering is a mainstay of AJR events), I spent the mornings stewarding attendees to the main auditorium before nestling into a seat myself as the first talks began.

Volunteering with the AJR had been incredibly straightforward and I was encouraged by the prompt and warm response I received to my unsolicited email offering to help.

During a Zoom call, I explained that my great-grandfather was a Jewish refugee to Britain from Austria following the

Anschluss in 1938. He never had any relationship with the AJR, to my knowledge.



Since obtaining Austrian citizenship in 2022 under new laws designed to mend generational ruptures with Austria caused by the Holocaust and WWII, I have thought more about the far-reaching impacts of antisemitism both today and in the past. Becoming involved with organisations like the AJR has helped me make sense of my own identity.

Over the course of the two-day conference, I became familiar with the terminology used to describe Jewish refugees to Britain and their descendants. A handful of surviving "first" generation refugees – who came here as children – were in attendance, as were their children and grandchildren, known as "second" and "third" generations.

I was surprised to find myself referred to as the "fourth" generation. The more I thought about this, the more it felt comforting to know I could be part of a tradition that keeps alive the memory of those who escaped a terrifying fate.

I am not myself Jewish as my great-grandmother was not. She came to



Guests assembled at the Freud Museum on the second evening

Britain in 1938 from Austria with my great-grandfather, living to be a huge figure in my life before she died in 2009.

One moment that stood out to me from the conference was meeting the Austrian ambassador at his embassy in Belgravia during the first of two evening events, the second being at Sigmund Freud's home. After listening to the powerful first-hand testimony of Hedi Argent, an Austrian Holocaust survivor, I told him of my family's story and that I had in recent years become an Austrian citizen.

Austria's policy is to provide no official recognition to laws passed by the criminal National Socialist regime that stripped thousands of Austrians of their nationality. In the Austrian government's view, these people and their descendants never ceased being Austrian and modern citizenship laws merely acknowledge this.

During the AJR conference, I was pleased to hear from Hannah Lessing, who oversees the many and varied tasks of the Austrian National Fund, about how it has distributed more than €170m to victims of National Socialism and causes that raise awareness of its crimes, including supporting the AJR's work.

Austria is one of only a handful of countries that mandates Holocaust education in schools, we were also told. Yet, despite the seemingly rock-solid foundations countries like Austria have

built in response to their dark history, the poison of antisemitism continues to spread around the world. It is becoming more entrenched, not less, in western societies that have grown up with state-of-the-art Holocaust education.

How can this be? What can educators do – if anything – to respond? Is the job of Holocaust education really to "innoculate" future generations against antisemitism?

I was struck by the boldness of the approaches shared by many of the speakers at the conference, which called into question fundamental assumptions many of us hold.

While the answers are still far from clear, we certainly seem to be asking the right questions now.



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OBITUARIES

Manfred GOLDBERG MBE

Born: 21 April 1930, Kassel

Died: 6 November 2025, London



Manfred Goldberg was born in 1930 in Kassel, Germany, to Orthodox parents from Poland who had sought refuge and a new start. As Nazi antisemitic laws tightened, his childhood became a struggle, with arrests and beatings a constant threat.

In August 1939 his father was arrested and deported to Poland, then sent back to Germany. With an emergency visa arranged by Frank Foley, the Passport Officer at the Berlin Consulate, he escaped to England, expecting his family to follow soon. War began only weeks later, and Manfred, his mother and his younger brother, Herman, were trapped.

In December 1941 they were deported to the Riga Ghetto. Over the next three and a half years Manfred endured what he later called "hell on earth": starvation rations, slave labour, violence, concentration camps and death marches.

In April 1943 a dedicated teacher secretly taught Manfred his Bar Mitzvah, and he was able to read his entire portion from a Sefer Torah.

After a day of working on the railways in their next camp, Manfred and his mother returned in the evening and were distraught to find that his brother Herman had been taken by the SS, never to be seen again. No record of him was ever found, despite Manfred's endless search.

Against the odds, Manfred and his mother survived and, after the war, reached England, where they reunited with his father and began to build a new life. Manfred, now 16, made a conscious decision not to live in the shadow of what had happened; determining that when he married, his

children would have a normal orthodox Jewish life and not be the children of a survivor.

Despite not attending school since he was eight, Manfred learned English quickly, caught up on his education, and earned an honours degree in Electronic Engineering.

He often said the best decision of his life was marrying his beloved wife, Shary. Together they were ultimately blessed with four sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Those who knew him remember his quiet wisdom. He was calm and rarely flustered and taught by example. In business he acted with integrity; in life he was generous with his time, volunteering to help those in need and supporting many charities. A proud lover of Israel, he visited often.

For decades he did not speak publicly about the Holocaust and said little even at home, hoping to shield his family. Around 20 years ago he was asked to speak at his local synagogue on Tisha B'Av. Having refused many times previously, he finally agreed. The experience was painful, but the response convinced him he had a duty to continue. He became a regular speaker for the AJR and other organisations—as well as schools, companies and government departments—through the Holocaust Educational Trust.

In 2017 Manfred, together with his lifelong friend and fellow survivor Zigi Shipper, accompanied Prince William and Princess Catherine to the notorious concentration camp of Stutthof, where they had been incarcerated. In 2019 he was awarded a BEM for his services to Holocaust Education.

In 2022, King Charles commissioned his portrait as one of seven survivors to mark Holocaust Memorial Day; the portrait now sits in the Royal Collection. Most recently,

Manfred was awarded a further honour – an MBE – which he received personally from His Majesty the King at Clarence House only weeks before his death.

Letters from those who heard him – especially schoolchildren – moved him deeply. They showed what a strong impact his words made.

He remained steadfast in his Judaism, and he met the difficult news of his terminal illness with quiet strength and stoicism.

Of Manfred's many legacies, one is especially striking: the Holocaust Educational Trust's Testimony 360 project. He was filmed answering more than one thousand questions. Now, through a sophisticated AI tool, children in schools can continue to have virtual conversations with him. Manfred himself was amazed by the technology, noting that "I seem to have achieved immortality".

Manfred was loved by all who knew him, and strangers would stop him to say how inspiring they found his talks. His family feel profoundly blessed to have had him as a husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather, and hope to emulate the values he embodied.

May his memory be a blessing to us all.

The Goldberg children



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Vera SCHAUFELD MBE

Born: 17 May 1926, Czechoslovakia

Died: 17 November 2025, London



Vera's extraordinary journey - from a frightened nine-year-old refugee to a revered educator and tireless campaigner for Holocaust remembrance - embodied resilience, compassion and an unwavering commitment to justice and memory.

Born Vera Löwyová in Klatovy, Czechoslovakia, her early years were shadowed by the growing danger facing Jewish families under Nazi aggression. In 1939, with her homeland invaded and the threat to the Jewish community overwhelming, Vera's parents made the heartbreaking decision to send her on the Kindertransport. It was a traumatic farewell: her parents remained behind, unable to secure visas, and were ultimately murdered.

In Britain, she was met at Liverpool Street Station, bewildered and frightened by announcements she could not understand, surrounded by other children awaiting foster families. She was fortunate to be taken in by a caring family who provided her with a home and a new beginning. After the war, she trained as a teacher - a vocation she held dear and pursued with dedication

Like many refugees she was deeply passionate about the new state of Israel and decided to spend some time there. She told me how, on her first night at Kibbutz Nitzanim, near Ashkelon, she met a fellow refugee, Avram Schaufeld, and felt an instant connection. When he excused himself from dinner, to go and milk his "sheeps", she not only corrected his grammar, she insisted he show her, doubting it was possible. They were married for almost 65 years.

In 1954 Avram and Vera returned to Britain and settled in Wembley where Vera

resumed her teaching career and Avram became a senior physiotherapist. They had two daughters, Rachel and Judith, who between them have given them four wonderful grandchildren.

But Vera's legacy extends far beyond her own survival and personal life. Haunted by the loss of her family, she resolved that their memory - and the memory of the millions who perished - should not fade. She became a passionate educator and ambassador for Holocaust remembrance, devoting much of her life to sharing her testimony in schools and colleges across the UK.

Integral to this work was her involvement with the AJR, where she was widely regarded as an "extraordinary ambassador" whose dedication remained "unfaltering." She recorded her personal testimony for our Refugee Voices archive, participated in countless lectures, memorial events and educational programmes, and helped bring alive the human dimension of the Kindertransport for successive generations.

Her contributions were formally recognised in 2019 when she was presented with her MBE medal at Buckingham Palace for her services to Holocaust remembrance and education. In the same year, she received an honorary doctorate from the University of Roehampton.

Beyond formal accolades, those who knew her - work colleagues, fellow survivors, students and community leaders - remember Vera for her kindness, warmth and gentleness. The Holocaust Educational Trust described her as "an extraordinary woman whose gentle and kind nature touched everyone who had the privilege of meeting her." The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust said that she "left an indelible mark" and that her intelligence, warmth and generosity

would continue to inspire those working to keep Holocaust memory alive.

Vera's story is one of unimaginable loss transformed into a lifelong mission of hope and remembrance. She refused to let the horrors of the past define her only in grief; instead she used them to educate, to challenge prejudice, and to nurture empathy. Through her testimony, she encouraged young people to confront intolerance, racism and antisemitism - messages as vital today as ever.

She is mourned by her family, by her colleagues at the AJR, by Holocaust remembrance organisations and by the countless students and educators she touched. Her presence, her voice, and her spirit will be deeply missed. But her legacy endures in the stories she shared, the lives she shaped, and the generations who will continue listening, learning and remembering because of her.

May the memory of Vera be a blessing — and may her life continue to inspire us all.

Jo Briggs



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IN PERSON EVENTS

Please note to attend in person meetings you must contact the co-ordinator listed for exact times and venue.

DATE	TIME OF DAY	AREA	CO-ORDINATOR
Tuesday 6 January	Lunchtime	Enfield	Ros Hart
Wednesday 7 January	Lunchtime	Bristol	Ros Hart
Wednesday 7 January	Morning	Glasgow	Agnes Isaacs
Thursday 8 January	Afternoon	Pinner	Karen Diamond
Monday 12 January	Lunchtime	Bournemouth, with Tamar Hodes, author of Mixed	Ros Hart
Tuesday 13 January	Morning	South London	Karen Diamond
Wednesday 14 January	Morning	Edinburgh	Agnes Isaacs
Wednesday 14 January	Morning	Golders Green, with Judy Karbitz talking about Al Jolson	Ros Hart
Thursday 15 January	Lunchtime	Bushey	Karen Diamond
Monday 19 January	Lunchtime	North London	Ros Hart
Monday 26 January	Afternoon	Radlett (South Herts)	Ros Hart
Tuesday 27 January	Evening	Glasgow University Holocaust Lecture	Agnes Isaacs
Wednesday 28 January	Lunchtime	Bromley	Ros Hart

CO-ORDINATOR DETAILS

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ZOOMS AHEAD

Details of all meetings and the links to join will appear in the e-newsletter each Sunday.

Monday 5 January @ 4pm	Carol Eini – The Rochmanns: Jewish Entrepreneurs in the German Cigarette Industry https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/84255513104	Meeting ID: 842 5551 3104
Wednesday 7 January @ 4pm	Nick Dobson - The East End 1900-1914: the people of the Abyss https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/83602424292	Meeting ID: 8360 242 4292
Wednesday 14 January @ 4pm	Aubrey Pomerance - Berlin Jewish Museum https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89557054890	Meeting ID: 8955 705 4890
Monday 19 January @ 4pm	Margaret Mills - The History of Valentine Cards https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85276122526	Meeting ID: 852 7612 2526
Wednesday 21 January @ 4pm	Book Discussion (no speaker) - The Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/83313212826	Meeting ID: 8331 321 2826
Wednesday 28 January @ 4pm	Are you a budding artist? Join us to share a piece of your own art or to talk about your favourite painting or sculpture https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86546755090	Meeting ID: 8654 675 5090

KEEP FIT WITH AJR

All AJR members & friends are invited to take part in these online exercise and dance classes throughout the coming month.

Every Mon @ 10.30am **Get Fit where you Sit** (seated yoga)
<https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/85246889439> Meeting ID: 8524 688 9439

Every Tues @ 11.00am **Shelley's Exercise class**
<https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88466945622> Meeting ID: 884 6694 5622



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