

# AJR journal

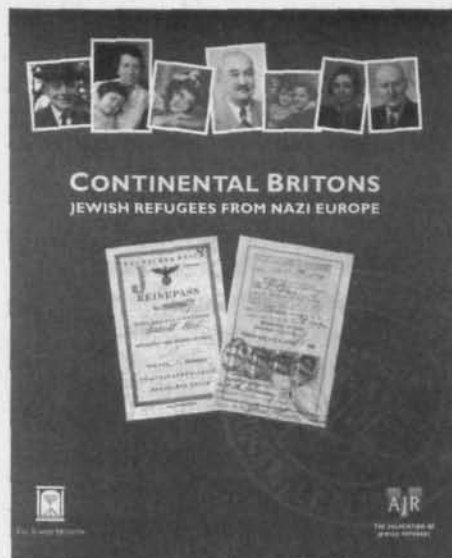
Association of Jewish Refugees

## A legacy for posterity

One of the most remarkable features of the AJR is its sheer longevity. Founded in 1941, it is still energetically preserving and promoting the history and heritage of the community it represents. Unlike its sister organisations, the American Federation of Jews from Central Europe and the Irgun Oley Merkas Europa in Israel, the AJR is very much alive and kicking: our members have the great good fortune to be able to read this journal, but *Aufbau*, its American equivalent, ceased publication in the USA some years ago. The exhibition 'Continental Britons', which ran for six months at the Jewish Museum in Camden Town in 2002, generously funded by the AJR, demonstrated the Association's commitment to memorialising the past of its membership.

Inevitably, however, the lifespan of the AJR as we know it is limited. Now that even those refugees who came to Britain on Kindertransports just before the war are in their seventies, the number of members who experienced life in Central Europe before emigration is declining inexorably. And, unlike immigrant groups from Jamaica, Bangladesh, Cyprus or Pakistan, the Jews who fled to Britain to escape Hitler have no living community in their countries of origin with which to maintain contact, no reservoir of 'Continental' Jewish culture on which to draw and from which to replenish their ranks.

But the AJR's Charitable Trustees, with an eye to the future, have initiated a project designed to preserve the history and culture of the refugee community for posterity. Since 2003, the AJR has been funding a programme of filmed interviews with former refugees and Holocaust survivors now resident in Britain. 'Refugee Voices', as the AJR's testimony archive is called, is being directed by Dr Bea Lewkowicz and myself, who were also responsible for the 'Continental Britons' exhibition. The AJR instructed us to con-



The 'Continental Britons' exhibition

duct interviews across the entire country, avoiding the usual concentration on North-West London, and to film 'ordinary' people, avoiding well-known refugees whose lives were already largely documented. By early 2007, our team of interviewers had filmed interviews with 150 refugees and survivors, from Edinburgh to Southend and from Glasgow to Hampshire and Bristol. The London area has a large but fair share.

We have a particular concentration in the Northern cities, Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool, thanks to the assistance we received in finding interviewees from the AJR's Northern Co-ordinator, Susanne Green. In Manchester, we were fortunate enough to secure the invaluable co-operation of Rosalyn Livshin, who effectively took on the organisation of the bulk of the interviews in the North. Through her contacts with the Orthodox community, she arranged a number of interviews with Orthodox refugees and survivors, thus adding an important dimension to the story of the Jews from Central Europe in Britain, one that counterbalances any overemphasis on the more assimilated refugees.

As one might expect, the largest single contingent of interviewees comes from

Berlin, followed by Vienna, then a number of German cities such as Hamburg, Munich, Frankfurt and Breslau (now Wroclaw). But we have interviewees with places of birth scattered throughout Eastern Europe – from Elbing in East Prussia to Lvov in Poland (now Lviv in Ukraine) and Uzhgorod in Carpatho-Ruthenia (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, USSR, now Ukraine), and even two from Italy, one of them with parents from Istanbul. Thanks to our efforts to interview as representative a sample as possible, our interviewees' experiences reflect most aspects of the history of the Jews who experienced Nazi persecution in Europe and came to Britain.

By far the largest group consists of pre-war refugees from Germany, Austria and the German-speaking parts of Czechoslovakia, mostly middle-class, assimilated Jews; there is a group of camp survivors, often from Eastern Europe and more traditionally observant, as well as some who survived in hiding. But there are also interviewees who came to Britain via Palestine, or who escaped to Shanghai and endured Japanese captivity, or who were deported from eastern Poland to Kazakhstan by the Soviets in 1939 and made their way to join the British in the Middle East, or who left occupied France for North Africa, to be liberated by the Allies after El Alamein. We have an interviewee who was among the Jews from Denmark famously rescued by sea to Sweden, and one who was on the notorious ship *St Louis*, which crisscrossed the Atlantic seeking a country willing to accept its cargo of desperate Jews.

The interviews also cover a very wide range of wartime experiences in Britain. Many interviewees had arrived before the war as penniless refugees, often as domestic servants, or had taken other forms of menial employment. Some were interned on the Isle of Man; there are vivid accounts by internees

*continued overleaf*

**A LEGACY FOR POSTERITY** *continued from page 1*

and also by internees deported to Australia on the notorious vessel *Dunera*. Others joined the British forces; one ended up as a fighter pilot flying Typhoons with the RAF over North-West Europe, and another was the sole survivor when his tank was blown up during the ill-fated advance towards Arnhem in 1944. The memories of refugees who returned to a defeated Germany as members of the victorious British forces are particularly clear.

Other refugees recall in detail civilian life in Britain during the war, with the daily grind of shortages, rationing, air raids and long hours in factories and offices, though a number were involved in civil defence, and one worked in the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office. Of course, some of the most powerful narratives are those of the camp survivors, which form a sombre and compelling contrast to those of the refugees who escaped to Britain. The interviews also contain accounts of a very wide variety of post-war experiences, with career patterns ranging from an Oxford professor to a milkman, and a large amount of information about many facets of refugee life in Britain over the post-war decades.

The 150 interviews in the 'Refugee Voices' archive, amounting to well over 400 hours of film, will prove to be a goldmine of information for historians and other researchers. The archive is designed to be user-friendly, so that the information it contains can be accessed as quickly and easily as possible. All the interviews have been transcribed, i.e. all the words spoken have been typed out by audio-typists and put onto computer. This is a very expensive and labour-intensive process, especially as the transcripts produced by our audio-typists have to be checked by people more

expert in the field, to eliminate errors. (Some audio-typists don't know Charlottenburg from Czernowitz, or Pesach from *payes*.)

But it is essential to provide scholars using the archive with a written transcript that they can read at their own pace, as working from a film alone is well-nigh impossible. The Shoah Foundation's collection of filmed interviews, though far larger than 'Refugee Voices', does not have transcriptions of the filmed interviews; learning from our experience as volunteer interviewers with the Shoah Foundation, we have included the transcripts as part of 'Refugee Voices', one of several features in which we hope to have improved on earlier collections.

The archive consists of three parts: the filmed interviews themselves, the transcripts (over 4,000 pages), and a large database with 44 categories of information about the interviewees, ranging from their parents and places of birth to their experiences of war and emigration, and their professions, families and places of residence after 1945. In the first instance, we expect the users to be academics, researchers and educationalists, followed by students. There may also be commercial users, such as film companies making television programmes on the subject, who might be willing to pay for the use of footage from the films. Access to the archive will be controlled, so that it will be available only to bona fide users.

We are in the process of negotiating, on behalf of the Charitable Trustees, with institutions where the archive could be deposited. We are currently negotiating with a leading German university as the depository in Europe. Given the very favourable reception that 'Refugee Voices' has received whenever we have demonstrated it in Britain and in Germany,

**Kristallnacht service at AJR Centre**

Please join us at the AJR Centre, Cleve Road, for a service commemorating Kristallnacht on Thursday 8 November at 2.00 pm.

Following lunch, which will be at 12.30 pm, Rabbi Rodney Mariner of the Belsize Square Synagogue will lead a short service, concluding with Kaddish.

The lunch and service will also be an opportunity to meet AJR members from the North of England and Scotland who will be paying a three-day visit to London.

To reserve a space for lunch (£5 on a first-come, first-served basis) and/or the service, please ring the Centre on 020 7328 0208.

**Michael Newman**

we are confident that the archive will be fittingly housed. We will keep readers informed of developments.

In its 'Refugee Voices' archive, the AJR is creating an important memorial to the refugee community, one that will be available to scholars and researchers far into the future. That community particularly needs such a memorial, against the day when the generation of the refugees themselves is no longer with us. For with the best will in the world, the British-born children of the refugees – the second generation – can never reproduce the German- or Austrian-Jewish culture of their parents. Take my own case: though I have immersed myself in the language and culture of German-speaking Central Europe for many years, I can never be a Viennese like my parents – only a passable imitation of a middle-class Englishman. Studying modern languages at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford, is no substitute for, say, the Schottengymnasium and the University of Vienna.

**Anthony Grenville**

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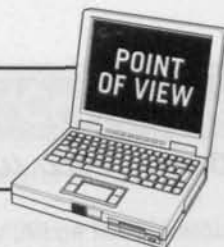
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## Too few Jews



I read the other day that the last census counted 270,000 Jews in this country. Is that all? But then these are self-declared, tick-box Jews and one wonders about the psychology of self-definition. Are they the sons and daughters of Jewish mothers? What about half-Jews and their offspring? What about closet Jews? No one knows the answers. Is there a better way of counting who should be in and who out?

We lack a universally accepted definition. And the task is not made easier by progressive dilution. My granddaughter admits to being a quarter Jewish, a quarter closet Catholic, 50 per cent Brazilian, and 6 per cent Romanian. I know this adds up to more than 100 per cent but then so does my granddaughter. Plus she travels on an Australian passport and works in New York.

At least we don't lose many through conversion. Heine spotted why not when he said that a Jew could hardly be expected to believe in the divinity of another Jew.

There is no scientific test for proving one is a Jew. According to Shakespeare, if you prick us, we bleed – yet a blood test won't reveal a thing. If you are male, circumcised, read the *Jewish Chronicle* and manage a hedge fund, it creates a presumption, but no more. You could still be a member of the BNP.

The absence of certainty gives rise to the Reverse Presumption: if someone is special, the odds are they must be Jewish. The landscape is strewn with victims of that endearing conceit: Hollywood affords two notorious examples – Chaplin and Disney. The former became resigned to being labelled a closet Jew; the latter, a bog-standard antisemite, fought the slur to his dying day.

The task would be easier if the community were more structured and we had a proper class system, an aristocracy, with all the ingredients of a layer cake. We have a meritocracy instead: Prince Albert (Einstein), the Duchess of Newburgh (aka Dame Julia Neuberger), assorted lordships, knights and a nosegay of Jewish princesses

notwithstanding, the rabbi is still top dog – scholar, healer, arbiter in one.

Secularisation splits these functions among scientist, doctor, lawyer. All of them rank above the billionaire businessman. A proper Jewish mother would rather her son were a dental surgeon than a millionaire, although the two combine nicely. Yet Jews have always been honoured more readily for lending money than for lending a hand to make the world a better place.

Artists are outside the pecking order. But they rank high. Note how many Jews crowd the intersection of art and commerce. Nearly-artists often end up as art's entrepreneurs: publishers (a refugee speciality), producers, gallery owners, impresarios, artists' agents, plastic surgeons – anything with a whiff of the Muses about it.

As a refugee, I have found standing outside the English class system quite useful. For example, it has allowed me to talk tough with the unions. Being identifiable neither as traitor to the working class nor as upper-class twit, I was able to dispense home truths which no Englishman would have dared utter.

My father had a good definition of Jewish class: if you were born where your grandfather was born, you were upper-class; if you were born where your father was born, you were middle-class; and if you were starting in a new country, you were back at the bottom of the heap. He came to this country with very little English and managed to acquire a wonderful command of the language, translating his beloved Goethe better than many a published version I have seen. He also wrote a short biography of my Romanian grandmother, calling it *The Rubayat of Oma Kahane*.

So how do we discover how many of us there are if we can't agree on who we are? Do we go by religion, self-belief, ethnicity (ghastly word, ghastly thought), tribal feeling? Do two half-Jews count as one whole Jew, with bonus points for fasting on Yom Kippur? Perhaps we are not meant to be counted. We are the chosen people – that's what counts.

Victor Ross

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## An Afternoon Tea with Opera & Songs

The AJR's annual Tea was a great success once again, with some 400 people attending the prestigious event at the Watford Hilton Hotel. A quartet of opera singers – The Garden Party – accompanied on the piano by Diana Franklin, a member of the AJR's Management Committee and administrator of the University of Sussex's Centre for German-Jewish Studies, performed a programme of popular operatic arias and Viennese songs.



PHOTOS: RONALD CHANNING

## A SUCCESS STORY: VIENNA'S LAUDER BUSINESS SCHOOL

On a recent trip to Vienna, I took the opportunity to visit the Lauder Business School, which provided an inspiring picture.

The School is the brainchild of Ronald S. Lauder, Chairman and President of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, and the result of a collaboration between him and the Austrian authorities. It offers students a chance to study the global economy and international business by merging the best the American business educational system has to offer with the finest European business tradition. Furthermore, students at the School have a chance to gain a deep knowledge of Judaism.

The fact that the college campus is located in the beautiful Maria-Theresia Palace and its surrounding park strikes the visitor as poetic justice, bearing in mind that the Austrian empress, for whom this palace was built, was known for her antisemitic prejudices. The municipal government of Vienna expressed their support by dedicating the premises to the Lauder Business

School. Thus it was made possible for the impressive buildings to be restored and expanded to include auditoriums, lecture rooms, computer labs, library resources, an assembly hall, faculty offices, a dining hall, dormitory facilities and student commons.

Looking back over several years of diligent spade work, the Dean of the School, Professor Silvia Kucera, feels rightly proud to have obtained at long last accreditation by the Austrian and EU authorities for running first- and second-degree courses and for awarding the relevant Bachelor's and Master's degree diplomas.

Behind her Viennese charm Professor Kucera reveals profound sympathy for everything her School stands for. She points out that the first-degree three-year programme allows an entire semester for work experience, with the two-year Master's programme being very much practice-oriented. All courses are conducted in English.

Students are currently recruited from more than 26 countries, ranging from

Israel, North and South American countries to most European countries. Over 90 per cent of the student intake is Jewish.

It is gratifying to note the benevolent role the Austrian government has played and is still playing in this success story. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*

Frederick W. Rosner

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## Enemy Aliens – 'Collar the lot!'

by Fred Stern

### Part one: My internment

The recent literary output on internment prompts me to write my personal account as an internee to ensure that this chapter of British history is chronicled and preserved for posterity, rather than erased as an uncomfortable reminder of gross misjudgement. It records the fate of thousands of refugees who owe their lives to this country and of those who worked ceaselessly to rescue us from the clutches of the Nazis. This article is no more than a thumbnail sketch of an episode. It represents my own experience rather than stating an opinion.

When Winston Churchill proclaimed 'Collar the lot!' he was expressing the fears of the people and panicked into an act of great folly by losing, at a stroke, the most valuable and trustworthy people in this country. His action achieved no purpose. On the contrary, it diminished the war effort and increased the war's duration not only by reducing the workforce but also by stifling the

contribution of the most well-meaning friends that Britain ever had.

On Sunday 12 May 1940, police came to the youth hostel in Bournemouth where I was living by the grace of the Jewish committee, which was not very anxious to rescue Jews from Germany and Austria. My mother, who had the great foresight to find domestic work in England, pleaded with the committee for my inclusion in the Kindertransport. The police not only interrogated the boys, but also inspected our belongings. Among my dear possessions was a Morse tape set I had used in my scouting days in Vienna. This battery-operated device, connected by wire, was viewed with suspicion as I might have used it to communicate with invading German ships off the coast of Bournemouth! It was confiscated, as was a map of Switzerland on which was marked in red the route travelled by coach on a holiday with the Scouts.

I hurriedly packed my schoolbag, forgetting my pyjamas and toothbrush:

we were only going to be taken away for a short period! I was not allowed to phone my parents (I managed to bring my father over in time before the war started – the rest of the family perished). We arrived in Southampton and camped in a school gym. We were joined by many other boys, given a rough blanket and laid on the bare floor, my schoolbag serving as a pillow. I managed to secure a toothbrush and used one of two shirts as a nightdress! After a week, we were sent to Huyton, where we stayed in a holiday camp. I was allocated a tent, shared by four boys. We slept on straw mattresses, which we filled. They were used by day as bridge tables.

After a time we were moved into houses which, after the tent accommodation, resembled five-star hotels! Those of us who were enterprising found ways and means to improve our living standards by 'organising' forays to secure extra food, blankets, shoes, clothes, tools and other

*continued on page 11*

## Reunion of refugees who served with the British forces in the Second World War

In September (writes Colin Anson), a reunion of refugees in the British forces was hosted by the Imperial War Museum and attended by some 200 veterans and their families. The event, sponsored by the AJR, the Leo Baeck (London) Lodge and the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, also served to launch a book by Dr Helen Fry entitled *The King's Most Loyal Enemy Aliens*.

A generous tribute was paid to the refugees' contribution to the war effort by Field Marshal Lord Bramall, former Chairman of the Museum's Board of Trustees, followed by an historical overview by Dr Fry, accounts of their experiences by four veterans, and a screening of the film *Lift Your Head, Comrade* about refugees in the Pioneer Corps. A day of deep emotion for surviving 'Enemy Alien' veterans able to attend the event.



Eric Sanders (left), Susan Lustig, Willy Field



Field Marshal Lord Bramall (left) and Colin Anson

**Eric Sanders**, born Ignaz Schwarz in Vienna, arrived in England in October 1938. He volunteered for the army in February 1940 and was assigned to the 88 Company of the Pioneer Corps stationed in France. In 1943 he volunteered for 'hazardous duty' and was trained for Special Operations Executive to be dropped behind enemy lines. He trained as a radio operator and was stationed in Italy from September 1944. After the war, he returned to Vienna as a translator in the British-Austrian Legation Unit, which was reconstructing laws for the new, democratic Austria.

**Susan Lustig**, born Susan Cohn in Breslau, emigrated to England on a domestic permit in July 1939. In 1943 she was called up for war

work and joined the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service initially as a dental orderly before transferring to a PoW camp in Buckinghamshire with the Intelligence Corps. Here in March 1944 she met her future husband, Fritz Lustig.

**Willy Field** was born William Hirschfeld in Bonn. Following Kristallnacht he was taken to a prison in Cologne. In November 1938 he was moved to Dachau concentration camp. Having emigrated to England, he was interned and he eventually boarded the troopship *Dunera* for Australia. In 1941 he volunteered for the British Forces and returned to England to serve in the Pioneer Corps. He transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps, training as a tank

driver, and saw frontline fighting in France, Belgium and Holland.

**Colin Anson**, born Claus Leopold Octavio Ascher in Berlin, left for England with the Kindertransport. In December 1940 he joined the Pioneer Corps. As part of 87 Company of the Pioneer Corps, he played in a band and orchestra around Wales. In 1942 he volunteered for 'special duties', training in a German-speaking Commando unit. He took part in the invasion of Sicily, suffering a serious head injury. He later served in Italy with the Intelligence Section of No. 2 Commando Brigade. After the war he returned to Germany as part of the British Control Commission, engaged in the denazification process.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right  
to shorten correspondence  
submitted for publication

### REMEMBERING INTERNMENT

Sir – Here we go again! After 60-odd years, we have people complaining about internment. What is the matter with everybody? Here was a country which, out of the goodness of its heart, took in 10,000 children who in the majority would have been exterminated by an evil regime. This country then engaged that evil regime in a fight for its life. Consequently, it had to consider its own security. So it took certain actions, including interning people it considered to be enemy aliens. Unfortunately, members of the Kindertransport were swept up in the panic. So now, 60 years later, people are complaining. I say to them: just remember your luck that a country like England opened its doors to you and that you are able to complain – unlike millions of unfortunates who were exterminated.

*S. Muller, Bloxham, nr Banbury*

Sir – Liberated from Buchenwald and emigrating in December 1938 to relatives in London, I accepted the following September an engineering job in Manchester, where in June 1940 I was arrested and taken to Huyton internment camp. There on the same day a non-Jewish youth said to me: 'Come with us to Canada!' I agreed and found that 'us' were six communists who had left Berlin with the aid of their German underground network. Unobserved, we got on the troopship *Ettrick*, which had just unloaded 1,000 Canadian soldiers and was now loading for the return about 1,500 refugees and 1,500 German PoWs.

Why refugees and prisoners together on one ship? Canada and Australia had agreed to accept prisoners but, because of unemployment at home, objected to refugees. Among the *Ettrick* refugees was the grandson of the former Kaiser, also a boy of 15 whose father was a major in the British army. The boy was born in Berlin and his father had not 'naturalised' him – hence he was an enemy alien like all refugees.

By far the majority of German refugees were interned on the Isle of Man and in other British camps well

away from an anticipated mid-summer 1940 German landing on the south coast with all the hazards affecting natives and refugees alike. Events on Jersey and Guernsey warned us that natives are not always friends of refugees. All measures taken thus regarded refugees as a threatened, not as a potentially threatening, minority.

In late September 1940, the danger of invasion subsided with shorter days and rougher seas, while in 1941 Britain was to be equipped to resist. Thus the release of internees overseas was necessary and in Britain opportune. Released persons could choose to return to work or offer to serve with an anglicised name in auxiliary troops, or even stay in camps overseas or at home. I went back to my job in Manchester and to endless exercises fighting fires caused by anticipated bombs that never came. My wish to fight was thwarted by the argument that my work was more important than my death in battle.

My practical plea is to understand that the fight of a nation for an independent existence has a much wider ambit than the worries of any minority and that the degree of empathy and practical genius governing this nation in extreme danger cannot but be admired.

*M. L. Meyer, West Dulwich*

Sir – Following your two recent articles on refugees, including internment on the Isle of Man, my wife Marianne and I visited Onchan with the express purpose of researching this subject. We have a brown, pre-printed postcard written by Marianne's father from 'Mereside, Empress Drive, Douglas'. At this address we found a hotel and restaurant whose owners had for two years been doing their own research and had found that this was the headquarters of the army commanders who had supervised the buildings in Douglas and Onchan and to which all post would be addressed for distribution to the different houses. When they took over the hotel, they had installed frosted glass in the windows of the restaurant with the letters 'HQ' surrounded by a circle of barbed wire.

The librarian in the Manx museum who dealt with this subject was extremely knowledgeable, but lacked names of internees, depending on filling the gaps by word of mouth or written enquiries. If anyone can help with names of relatives or friends who were interned on the Isle of Man, please send them to Alan Franklin, Manx Museum Library, Douglas, IoM, IM1 3LY, tel (01624) 648 000, e-mail alan.franklin@mnh.gov.im

*Rudi Leavor, Bradford*

### KT NATURALISATION

Sir – I would like to correct Eva Light (September) about naturalisation. I came to England on the Kindertransport from Vienna in July 1939 and went to non-Jewish foster-parents. Immediately after the war I too was made a ward of court. But not by one particular person. A judiciary committee was appointed by the relevant government department to fulfil that duty. Some time in 1947 I was informed that I could apply for British nationality as my parents had not survived. The usual procedures were waived and all I had to do was to complete the appropriate form and have it signed by a notary, for instance a justice of the peace. So I became a British citizen 3 months before my 18th birthday. However, I remained a ward of court until I reached the age of 21.

*Lisl Bohea (née Taussig)  
Gosport, Hants*

Sir – Ever since my mother, Grete Exiner-Westman, who was employed by the Kindertransport project in Bloomsbury House until 1942, died in New York in 1991, I have felt that the adults who made these transports possible were not researched and written up properly. Eva Light's letter proved this need once again. As far as I remember, my mother told me that Lord Gorell, who was involved as a trustee with the transports, volunteered to be the adoptive father of all the children so that they could apply for naturalisation and not be considered orphans at the time.

*Susanne Dyke (née Exiner)  
Eastbourne*

### LOSS OF CULTURAL LEGACY

Sir – Re the loss of our culture (Fred Stern, August), I noticed to my consternation several years ago that all the German books at Cleve Road had been taken out of the bookcase and that all German magazines had gone. When I questioned the then management about this, they told me members only wanted to read in English. From my experience with the elderly, I have found that they want to speak, read and eat

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the way they did as children. My generation is to blame for the loss of Continental culture because they hid their origins etc from their children, trying to make them English.

(Mrs) A. Saville, London NW4

#### JEWISH GIRLS' SCHOOL

Sir – The main purpose of our visit to Wolfratshausen (see August issue) was to inform the local people what happened to us in the 1930s as the time between the wars had been omitted in local publications about Wolfratshausen. They called us *Zeitzeugen* and we were especially welcome in the local schools and schools further afield to talk with 14–16-year-olds. One school had done its own research about a local Jewish family, which is now part of the exhibition of photographs, newspaper cuttings and material collected from various archives, including one from Jerusalem. The exhibition also contains a video of interviews with ex-pupils in Israel, the USA, Canada and the UK. During our stay there was an open evening for the general public and a short presentation by each of us, followed by questions from the floor.

At the official opening, we spoke to many representatives of local government and religious communities, and members of the Jewish community in Munich. For myself, I think the efforts of the Wolfratshausen History Society were well worth supporting. It was good to see so many young people.

Bettina Cohn, Bristol

#### 'OBVIOUS PARALLEL'

Sir – Recent correspondence in your columns touches on a point not made nearly enough of: the obvious parallel between the annexation of a large part of Germany by Poland and the occupation of parts of the West Bank by Israel. Throughout history aggressors have paid for their defeat by the loss of territory. The fact that the West Bank was part of the Kingdom of Israel seems about as relevant as the contention that Silesia was, centuries ago, a province of an ill-defined country of Poland.

Doubtless I will be accused of being naïve when I suggest it may not be altogether inappropriate to look at the example of Alsace-Lorraine, where people of German origin appear to be living quite happily under French rule (albeit that national barriers in Europe have, fortunately, become less relevant). As, it seems, the majority of Arabs within the current borders of Israel do. I have had a number of encounters with Israeli Arabs in Israel who were obviously well-disposed towards Jews. I recall an Arab

waiter in a hotel in Eilat telling me he felt it incumbent upon him to visit the Arab countries – but he couldn't wait to return to Israel. I would like to think he wasn't just a good actor!

John D. Phillip, Barnet, Herts

#### ATTNANG PUCHHEIM

Sir – Kitty Schafer (September) mentions Attnang Puchheim, as did Victor Ross – 'two words that gave me the giggles and can raise a smile even today' – in the August issue. I have a different recollection of that place. Early in 1945, while prisoners at the Ebensee sub-camp of Mauthausen, we were taken to Attnang Puchheim on at least two occasions to clear the railway station after successful bombing raids by Allied bombers. What a joy it was seeing Attnang Puchheim then!

Ron Leaton (previously Roman Licht)  
London NW8

#### BLIND EYE OR DEAF EAR

Sir – I read both articles on the difficulties of English (September) with the greatest interest but cannot agree that one should turn a blind eye – or even a deaf ear – to the transgressions committed by famous people. If it is only us (we?) who take exception to this, so be it! Having taught English to Cambridge Proficiency level to foreign au pair girls, I have always felt that they were the only ones who spoke English correctly, as regards the present generation. Jeremy Paxman is not of our generation and perhaps feels that his 'lapses' will endear him to his contemporaries.

It would be defeatist to follow the present trend, by famous (youngish) people, of disregarding correct grammar, whatever the experts might think about it. I would love to know whether modern German is similarly affected, but I think not. I believe it is a purely English idea that grammar does not matter.

(Mrs) Marion Smith  
Harrow, Middx

Sir – To whom it may concern: As a late newcomer to this scepter'd isle without any English, which was soon to bewitch, bother and bewilder me, I ask why is the 'gh' not pronounced in 'daughter', the 'k' in 'knee' and 'knock', the 'p' and 'o' in 'cupboard', and the 'w' in 'sword' and 'Chiswick'? Fortunately I had Frau Irma Loewenberg from the Rhineland as a teacher and she gave meaning to am, was, had been, shall be, shall have been – and I have been consulted on these matters by the natives, who remain impervious to my exhortation that 'those ones' is a grammatical inexactitude.

We had a dog by the name of

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Chumley. His reluctance to react to that name can only be ascribed to his superior breeding and the fact that he spelled it Cholmondeley. But then he was an English bull terrier.

Frank Bright, Ipswich

#### TOO FAR AWAY

Sir – I am taking this opportunity to thank you for the *AJR Journal*. Without it I would be even more cut off from many activities. New Zealand is too far away.

Eva Hayman, Auckland

# ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

In a mere nod to the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade, the National Gallery presents **Scratch the Surface**, which features two paintings: *Mrs Richard Oswald* by **Yohann Zoffany** and *Sir Joshua Reynolds's*



*Colonel Tarleton*, who, as Liverpool MP in the 1790s, argued against abolition. Both were enriched by the slave trade, which evolved in Britain during the Elizabethan era and powered the shipping, banking and art industries. The works belong to the Gallery's national collection but, in a modern response, 2004 Turner Prize nominee **Yinka Shonibare** has created an installation in the high atrium of the Barry Rooms in which a dead pheasant is wired to the ceiling, symbolically shot by the headless effigies of Oswald and Tarleton.

Excluded from the show, but part of the NG's **Work, Rest and Play** exhibition, is an eighteenth-century piece of delicately woven fabric whose floral motif illuminates the life and death of

slaves (see report next month).

**David Breuer-Weill** is a man of many visions. In the **Ben Uri's Project 3**, a disused car park in Covent Garden houses 50 massive paintings of ant-sized people trying to communicate, to excavate their truth, to reach the light. Eventually he abandons gestural art for a more spiritual quest, hinting at the dissolution of earthly life, although the ineffable longing remains. The ideas are sometimes too big to work, but I found these later paintings quite moving.

**Bomberg's** linear purity exercises the talents of younger artists at the **Ben Uri**.

All credit to artist **Sarah Lightman**, who curated **Bomberg's Relevance** on the 50th anniversary of his death and put herself and seven others to the test. **Joe Schneider**, who admires Bomberg's Spanish landscapes, chose *Ghetto Theatre* for his linear collage-portraits, *7 Passers By*, which, he claims, resemble a Renaissance triptych and, like *Ghetto Theatre*, evoke a sense of immigrant otherness. He relates this to the fading Jewish East-End experience.

**Gideon Rubin's** inspiration was Bomberg's *Mount Zion with the Church of the Dormition*. His own work, *Black Boots*, uses similar colours to reflect in a boy's faceless solitude a glimpse of Bomberg's high, perpendicular church. **Polly Townsend's** *Night Ridge* lends deep blues and soft lemon to her interpretation of this painting. The brilliant impasto of Bomberg's *Broken Aqueduct, Wadi Kelt* near Jericho finds resonance in **Michael**

**Ajerman's** nude study, *Cabron*. Sarah Lightman in *Generations (2)* conveys the rectilinear disposition of Bomberg's red and black *At the Window*, in which a woman with one leg on a chair looks away, her rigidity suggesting a priest at confession. Lightman embellishes the dream: her three figures, fading from youth to ghostly old age, stare out at time passing.

**Jane Millican's** *Daytime Audience* gives vivid form to Bomberg's blue and ochre *Ghetto Theatre Study*. Bomberg's 'search for pure form' has symbolic meaning for **Adriana Swierszczek**, whose *Abduction of Europa* is based on *Racehorses*, a skeletal work of geometric precision, and fleshes out the gridwork into a surreal study of water, mythic creature and swimmer.

## REVIEWS

### A meaty, wise book

**FIVE GERMANYS I HAVE KNOWN**  
by **Fritz Stern**

New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006, 546 pp., pbk £7.32

The eminent, Breslau-born American historian Fritz Stern interweaves his and his family's history with that of the five Germanys of the title. The first is the pre-Nazi Germany of his parents and grandparents from about 1870. This is the least interesting part of the book. That history has been told so many times, and the family history that goes with it – of acculturated, patriotic German Jews whose assimilation went to the point of baptism into Christianity – is also standard. Baptism did not save them from persecution in the second Germany – that of the Nazis – from which the family emigrated to America in 1938, when the author was 12 years old. Again, there is little here that one has not read before. The book comes alive only after about 130 pages, in part because the history of Germany after 1945 is less well-known to the general public than the earlier periods, and in part because the adult Stern had more first-hand experience of it than of the earlier periods.

True, the child's experiences in Nazi Germany had been unpleasant enough, and they made Stern aware of politics at an age when children in more fortunate lands are unlikely to concern themselves with such matters. In the United States, from his schooldays onwards, Stern felt the duty not to be silent, as so many Germans had been when faced with the erosion of freedom, and he began to speak and write on politics as a liberal (against Nazism, of course, but also against Communism and McCarthyism). He became a historian at Columbia University and focused increasingly on the history of Germany. His themes were not only what had brought about the German catastrophe, but also that the Nazis had overwhelmed a democratic Germany whose roots could surely be nourished.

Stern's third Germany – post-war West Germany – soon began to invite him to give lecture tours, and his role as mentor – encouraging liberalism while censoring any evasiveness about the past – won him increasing status in West Germany. He is good at discussing the debates between Germans about their own past: those centring around



Fritz Fischer in the 1960s, Ernst Nolte in the 1980s, and Daniel Goldhagen and Martin Walser in the 1990s. A climax of Stern's career was the invitation in 1987 to address the Bundestag on the anniversary of the East Berlin uprising of 17 June 1953. Some West Germans wanted to see that as a movement for reunification; Stern insisted it was a movement for freedom, but not for reunification.

Even the fourth Germany – the East German state – allowed him in 1961 to conduct research in the archives for his magnum opus: the book on Bleichröder, Bismarck's banker.

The fifth Germany is the reunited Germany, and this awarded him the Peace Prize for 1999. Stern had indeed been a staunch advocate of reconciliation where it was merited – between Jews and Germans, between West Germans and East Germans (he is critical of the patronising way in which the West Germans treated the East Germans), and between Germans and Poles. He notes that in recent years the Poles have acknowledged the German past of Breslau, now Wrocław; and the University of Wrocław asked him, as a son of Wrocław, a born German and an American citizen, to speak during its 300th anniversary and to receive an honorary degree.

A meaty, wise book, albeit marred by a degree of narcissism.

Ralph Blumenau

**A labour of love and devotion**  
ERZWUNGENE FREITOD – SPUREN  
UND ZEUGNISSE IN DEN FREITOD  
GETRIEBENER JUDEN DER JAHRE  
1938-1945 IN BERLIN (Traces of and  
Documents Relating to Jews Driven  
to Suicide in Berlin, 1938-1945)  
by Anna Fischer

Published by [www.textpunktverlag.de](http://www.textpunktverlag.de)  
2007, pp.192, 14.95 euros

New research on the Holocaust is constantly surfacing and this book, published under the auspices of the Centrum Judaicum in Berlin, chronicles the brief histories of 42 individuals or couples who, sometimes with their children, chose suicide rather than deportation. Moreover, the names of a staggering 1,677 people with their birth and death dates, and maiden names where appropriate, are tabulated by year of death.

The book is copiously illustrated with photographs of the deceased and relevant artefacts, for instance two wagons of 'Zieh aus, zieh ein mit Silberstein' are shown. Charlotte Silberstein, wife of

Fritz, himself the son of the original owner, committed suicide on her 38th birthday. Fritz perished in Auschwitz; his mother and daughter survived.

Anna Fischer, Hermann Simon, Director of the Centrum Judaicum, and Rabbi Joel Berger of Stuttgart have written moving introductions. Apart from the enormous amount of research required to have produced this book, it was clearly a labour of love and devotion. Each person was given a ritual burial, mainly in Weissensee cemetery and officiated by Rabbi Martin Riesenburger, but also in the interdenominational cemetery in Stahnsdorf.

To quote from Riesenburger's memoirs: 'Draussen tobte sich der Wahnsinn des Nazismus aus, hier in der Einsamkeit des Friedhofes aber wurde jeder Heimgegangene mit Würde und Andacht der Erde übergeben. Ich will nicht verhehlen, daß wir oft genug mitgeweint haben.' (Outside raged the madness of Nazism, while here, in the loneliness of the cemetery, each of those who went home was laid to rest with dignity and devotion. I will not deny that we and the relatives did our share of weeping.)

Rudi Leavor

### A sign of weakness

THE ISLAMIST: WHY I JOINED  
RADICAL ISLAM IN BRITAIN, WHAT I  
SAW INSIDE AND WHY I LEFT  
by Ed Husain

Penguin, 2007, 288 pp., £8.99

Ed Husain, a British-born Muslim, became an Islamic fundamentalist at the age of sixteen. He moved through the various Islamic groups, from those preaching local insurrection to those seeking global domination and the restoration of the caliphate. Eventually, he became a local leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir, the most uncompromising group of all. He came to despise the non-Islamists – Jews, Christians, blacks, gays and even 'partial' Muslims, those who pursued a quietist agenda and tried to get on with their lives. He learned how to organise demonstrations and intimidate the opposition, including other Islamic student societies. He records here his surprise at how easily the police and the college authorities crumbled before his attacks and gave in to his demands for funding and for meeting space, ostensibly for prayer. Nor would they ban extremist speakers or posters. Hizb saw the surrender of the authorities – perhaps correctly – as a sign of weakness rather than tolerance, but their 'successes' drew

other Muslim students from moderate, and even rival militant Islamic, societies to rally under its banner.

As a racist, homophobic, neo-fascist organisation, Hizb could, of course, rely on the support of the extreme left such as the Socialist Workers' Party. The British National Party were more circumspect, because, although they believed in a master race, they thought the master race was the Aryans and not the Muslims. Nonetheless, they could at least unite in anti-Israel demonstrations. Husain quotes from one of Hizb's pamphlets: 'The only meeting place between a Moslem and a Jew is on the battlefield.'

Eventually, one of the youths at the author's college, a Christian of Nigerian extraction, was murdered by a black convert to Islam. Husain had welcomed the convert when he first came to Newham College and he felt unremitting guilt at the murder. Slowly, under the influence especially of Professor Dennis Judd, a British historian, and Faye, his girlfriend and eventually wife, he threw off the Islamist indoctrination, reverted to the moderate Islam of his parents, and wrote this book.

That he has written it offers hope to moderate Muslims everywhere. Meanwhile, he complains bitterly that the British authorities accept organisations such as the Muslim Council of Britain as being representative of the Muslim community. Books advocating violence are on sale at mosque bookstalls; jihad and terror are preached, not only against the West, but also against moderate Muslims. Even the most tolerant of societies needs to defend itself.

Bryan Reuben

### SCREEN

#### A powerful tribute

I HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN YOU:  
THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF  
SIMON WIESENTHAL  
directed by Richard Trank;  
narrated by Nicole Kidman  
at selected cinemas

While Simon Wiesenthal has always come across as a larger-than-life figure, a significant feature of this documentary about his life and work is the essentially human aspect it reveals of the man who never sought to be portrayed as a hero. The camera's focus on the renowned 'Nazi hunter's' expressive face belies the stereotypical impression of a man obsessed with retribution. For, as the film makes clear,

Reviews continued on page 10

## REVIEWS continued from page 9

justice, not revenge, was what impelled him to dedicate his life to the cause, demanding great sacrifice from Cyla, his devoted, long-suffering wife.

The horror of what Wiesenthal, like numerous survivors, had to endure is depicted in footage from Mauthausen and in the knowledge that he and his wife had lost 89 family members. His one consolation was the survival of Cyla, who had escaped capture with gentile papers. The film builds up the couple's romance, which began at high school. After the war their daughter, Pauline, is born. She later marries and moves to Israel but is a powerful presence in the film, providing more valuable insights into her father's predicament. Here was a family man driven by a sense of duty, not only to the millions of victims who were Jewish but also to the gypsies and homosexuals. The film is further enriched by interviews with colleagues, friends and others, not least Ben Kingsley, who had played Wiesenthal in the film *The Murderers Among Us*, and Frederick Forsyth, who based *The Odessa File* on information provided by Wiesenthal about the network which shipped Nazi criminals to South America. Forsyth also reveals how the film of his novel led to the exposure of Eduard Roschmann, the 'butcher of Riga'.

Controversy was, of course, never absent from Wiesenthal's life and is exemplified by various episodes in Vienna, where he lived and built up his documentation centre after the Second World War. His popularity was at a nadir when he claimed that several members of Chancellor Bruno Kreisky's government were former Nazis and pointed a finger at Friedrich Peter, head of the Freedom Party, which led to his office being torched. Conversely, he courted controversy in refusing to condemn Kurt Waldheim, distinguishing – to my mind admirably – between a Nazi past and involvement in Nazi crimes. Criticism was also evident nearer home, for example from Mossad chief Isser Harel, who challenged Wiesenthal's claim to have tracked down Eichmann.

The involvement in the film of the Wiesenthal Center, and its founder, Rabbi Marvin Hier, admittedly contributes an element of hagiography to this powerful and moving tribute. Nevertheless, it is heart-warming to witness the apparent Viennese *volte face* with regard to Wiesenthal, when he becomes the city's pet, crowned with honours from every source. And most satisfying of all is the finale – Wiesenthal's 90th birthday party, complete with kosher dinner, at Hitler's favourite Imperial Hotel.

Emma Klein

LETTER  
FROM  
ISRAEL

## The Jewish 'priest'

In the framework of the Israel Translators' Association, I belong to a group of translators living in the Jerusalem area. Although we have monthly gatherings and lectures, most of our activity consists of almost daily online discussions about translating expressions, information about research resources, and offers of work. Many of the individuals involved are very knowledgeable, particularly about Jewish subjects, while sometimes the queries are more technical. Thus, when one unfortunate member suddenly lost her 'spellcheck' and 'thesaurus' functions – both essential for translators – another member told her (and the rest of the group) how to overcome the problem.

But occasionally the subject matter of the emails that pour into my mailbox deviates from the purely professional, reflecting the interests of the other members of the group (though they are careful to steer clear of politics).

This was the case with an email entitled 'Hatikva'. Upon opening it, I found a message telling me to put my speakers on and visit the website <http://genealogy.org.il/BergenBelsenHatikva.mp3>. There I found a recording made in April 1945 by a British reporter in which freed Jewish prisoners from Bergen-Belsen sang *Hatikva*. In the prelude to the song, the reporter relates how the 'Jewish priest' accompanying the British troops liberating the concentration camp organised a Friday-evening service. This was the first Jewish service ever held in the camp, and the first in a decade on German soil without fear of persecution.

The recording was certainly touching. But even more touching was the following response sent by one of the members of the group, Danny Verbov, and quoted here with his permission: 'The Jewish "priest" was actually the Jewish army chaplain, Reverend Leslie Hardman MBE, who also happens to be my grandfather. He is now 94 years old and has been married for 70 years to my grandmother, who is 96! I think he'd prefer being called a rabbi.'

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

## Arts and Events Diary – October

**24 Oct to 25 Nov** *Lotte's Journey*. A play based on the life of the German-Jewish artist Charlotte Salomon. New End Theatre, Hampstead, tel 0870 033 2733

**To 25 Nov** *Auktion 392: Reclaiming Galerie Stern*, Düsseldorf, Ben Uri Gallery tel 020 7604 3991

**Mon 1 Oct** Dr Robert L. Goldman, 'George L. Fox: An Amusing Portrait of the 19th-Century American Burlesque Comedian and Pantomimist' Club 43

**Mon 8** Dr A. M. Schleich, Minister Counsellor, Head of Culture and Education, German Embassy, 'Anglo-American Cultural Relations' Club 43

**Wed 10** Philippa Bernard, 'Roderigo Lopez, Jewish Physician to Queen Elizabeth I' Leo Baeck (London) Lodge

**Mon 15** Ernst Flesch MA, 'A Trip through Southern Africa' Club 43

**Wed 17** Rabbi Rodney Mariner, 'The Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture' Leo Baeck (London) Lodge

**Thur 18** Councillor Bob Blackman, Leader of Conservative Group on Brent Council, 'Inside Local Politics' B'nai B'rith Jerusalem Lodge. Kenton Synagogue Hall, 8.15 pm. Tel Tom Heinemann on 07973 137 718

**Mon 22** Dr O. Geudtner, 'Thomas Mann und Theodor Lessing. Hintergründe und Auswirkungen einer Feinschaft' (in German) Club 43

**Wed 24** Peter Spiro, 'Eugen Spiro, German Impressionist Painter' Leo Baeck (London) Lodge

**Mon 29** Prof E. Sondheimer, 'Wilhelm Hauff and his "Märchen" (Tales)' Club 43

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

*Leo Baeck (London) Lodge Meetings at 11 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London NW3, 8.00 pm. Tel 020 8958 2516*

## The legacy of Anna Essinger

The last few years have seen a remarkable revival of Anna Essinger's reputation as an educationalist and headmistress of avant-garde co-educational boarding schools for (mainly) Jewish children in Ulm and Kent. As early as 1933, she transferred her school in Herrlingen, near Ulm, to Bunce Court, a manor house on the Kent North Downs. When the Kindertransports arrived, she expanded her school, which became home to hundreds of refugee children, although there was always a minority whose parents valued her progressive educational ideas. In 1940 she was forced to leave what had become a military zone and she transferred the school to Trench Hall, in Shropshire. After the war, she returned the school to Bunce Court but was obliged to close it for financial and other reasons in 1948.

In Ulm hers is a household name. Two schools now bear her name and plaques are affixed to the house of her birth and the buildings that housed her school in Herrlingen. Recently the 125th anniversary of her birth was celebrated in style, in the same year in which Ulm celebrated Albert Einstein's equivalent birthday! Recently, the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* published an entry about her, at least one doctoral thesis has been written in Germany about her, and there have been Bunce Court reunions. This year saw events at Trench Hall and at Bunce Court.



Anna Essinger

Trench Hall, now known as the Woodlands (Special) School, provides teaching and care for some 37 adolescent children from Shropshire. Its head became aware of the Bunce Court connection and, stimulated by Bunce Court archivist Martin Lubowski, embraced the idea that a plaque be affixed to the main building to mark its connection with Anna Essinger's school. A plaque was duly unveiled on 24 May in the presence of a dozen Old Bunce Courtians (OBCs) and wives, teachers and governors of the school, and present-day pupils and local people. BBC Midlands made a programme encapsulating the history of the Kindertransports and Anna Essinger's schools. Robin Wilson, the school head, made an introductory speech; I spoke about what the school had meant to its pupils; and Martin Lubowski described how the idea of

the plaque was brought to fruition. Although the building was much the same, there had been many changes. Yet somehow the spirit of Bunce Court seemed to live on. The final, elegant touch was the presentation of certificates with photographs of the school to OBCs present.

The Bunce Court event on 19 July involved the return of the school bell and the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to it. The bell had spent the last 27 years outside the home of OBC Ernst Weinberg in California! The main Bunce Court building had been subdivided years earlier into four dwellings and the couple occupying the middle section (Julia and George Miller) had embraced Ernst's suggestion that the bell be returned to its original home. We were given a warm welcome by Julia Miller; Graham Galer, another resident, recounted the history of the old building; Hans Meyer, a former teacher, described the now symbolic significance of the bell; and Ernst Weinberg related how he had restored the bell to its old home. Two teachers from the Anna Essinger-Schulen in Ulm presented us with a photographic record of her former buildings in and near Ulm, and tours of the virtually unrecognisable large estate, which now sports five town houses with magnificent lawns and flower beds and tennis courts, were undertaken by the more able-bodied. A suitably nostalgic occasion.

Leslie Baruch Brent

### 'ENEMY ALIENS' cont. from page 5

amenities. After all, we were in a holiday camp! I rubbed shoulders with Kaiser Wilhelm's grandson looking for firewood.

The jolly atmosphere was abruptly ended when we suffered what we called the 'black hole of Calcutta' in Liverpool. From there we went to the Isle of Man, where we were to live in houses along the Douglas promenade. A barbed-wire fence limited our movement but we were allowed to swim, while soldiers stood in the water with their rifles above their heads. Every day we were subjected to a roll call. Each house had a 'father' who was responsible for us. Two very old brothers in the house who were also interned in the first war had never become naturalised.

One day in July, we were offered the choice of being sent to Australia or Canada. I opted for the latter because it was not as far from England and from friends who lived in New York. We were told we were to be interned as 'enemy aliens' for the duration of the war, which we expected to be over in a year.

It is worth recording the events that decided my fate. Along with the other

boys in the hostel, I was requested to go to the police station with all my documentation. There I was questioned as to why and how I had come to England. Irrespectively, we were all assessed as a risk to the security of the country as we might have been members of the Hitler youth and spied on our parents! We were awarded a Category B, which presaged internment. On that occasion, I had my Austrian passport, bearing a large red 'J' and 'Israel' added to my name, impounded by the police. Even had they noticed these accolades in my passport, it would not have altered their preconceived decision. My father was classed as a C since he was not considered as high a risk, but he was later also interned as the war progressed, arriving in Douglas just after I left. Male and some female refugees in this country were interned, particularly those living in certain coastal areas. The whole affair was disorganisation on a grand scale.

We boarded the *Sobieski* and sailed for Canada in a convoy, but soon lost the power of an engine and had to slow down. We were left alone except for a destroyer which guarded us from a U-boat. From the start, we found that half the ship was

partitioned off and occupied by German PoWs. Evidently, the authorities recognised that we were a different sort of alien. Eating at long trestle tables, we soon noticed the soup slopping about in the plate and the horizon moving up and down in sympathy. This proved too much for most of us and we scrambled up to the deck. Old soldiers were guarding us along the rails as if we were likely to escape! They were just as seasick as we were. One of them asked me to hold his bayoneted rifle while he kept the seagulls happy. In the bowels of the ship we slept in hammocks. I can't recall how we kept clean, but we survived. I don't remember being scared, trusting the protection afforded us. Somehow, with much daily sickness and in rude health, we crossed the Atlantic to Newfoundland after ten days at sea and sailed up the St Lawrence to Quebec. Welcome to Canada!

The second and concluding part of this article will appear in the November issue.

In Fred Stern's article 'Cultural legacy: some reflections', which appeared in the August issue, the final sentence of the fourth paragraph should have read: 'Nevertheless, I managed to entertain the members on a further occasion - in German.'

# INSIDE the AJR

## News and views at Wembley Continental Friends

Our meeting, attended by over 20 Wembley-ites under Myrna's guidance, took place at the pleasant Harris Court. We exchanged news and views, including Fred Stern's views on the loss of our cultural legacy as outlined in the Journal in August.

*Tom Heinemann*

**Next meeting: 17 Oct. Social Get-together**

## 'Boat to Nowhere': annual Liverpool lunch

Liverpool and Manchester members enjoyed meeting at the annual Liverpool lunch, where Gisela Feldman gave a most interesting talk about her experiences on the SS *St Louis* entitled 'Boat to Nowhere'. Also present were Councillor Tina Gould and Phillip Parr, who are heading the arrangements for next year's National Holocaust Memorial Day, which is to be held in Liverpool.

*Susanne Green*

## Happy Birthday, Ilford

Thirty-seven of us turned up for our 4th birthday party. Alf Keiles gave us a superb morning of jazz. We enjoyed a delicious birthday cake and sang 'Happy Birthday' to our Group.

*Meta Roseneil*

**Next meeting: 10 Oct. Leslie Hutton, 'The Nuremberg Trials'**

## Pinner 'Garden Viewing Party'

Due to the weather, our meeting became an indoor 'Garden Viewing Party'. Not that this stopped us talking or drinking tea/ coffee, or eating scones, cakes and strawberries in quantities I daren't reveal. Thank you, Vera and Robert, for your hospitality.

*Paul Samet*

**Next meetings: 2 Oct. Outing to Foundling Museum; 11 Oct. Alan Cohen, 'What is Art?'**

## Middle East update for Hendon

The Israeli Embassy's Robin Hamilton-Taylor gave us an optimistic view of the current situation in the Middle East despite the current turmoil in Gaza and the nuclear threat from Iran.

*Annette Saville*

**Next meeting: 1 Oct. Social in Succah**

## Essex's 'Chacun à son goût'

Hazel Beiny organised 'Chacun à son goût', an exhilarating concert performance by Naomi Hyamson, splendidly accompanied by Jenny Gould on piano. The programme included various operatic pieces as well as pieces by Schubert, Elgar, Gershwin, Noel Coward and many more.

*Ken Ward*

**Next meeting: 9 Oct. Dr A. Crystal, former Mayor of Westcliff**

## Cambridge and green issues

Another excellent presentation of a topical subject was given by Shilpa Shah of the Cambridge Carbon Footprint Organisation. The talk covered the wide range of environmental problems facing us today.

*Keith Lawson*

**Next meeting: 18 Oct. Dr Sheila Marshal, 'The Jews of South Africa'**

## Friendly atmosphere at Brighton & Hove Sarid

The friendly atmosphere at our social Get-together contributed to reminiscences and an exchange of experiences. Trudy spoke of her recent visit to her birthplace in Germany, while Alfred read out a letter from Canada, whose sender was from his hometown in Poland.

*Ceska Abrahams*

**Next meeting: 15 Oct. Claire Ungerson, 'Kitchener Camp'**

## Bradford informative meeting

A well-attended and informative meeting. Ibi Ginsburg, a Holocaust survivor, talked about her life and experiences. Susanne arranged that the Yorkshire Chanukah Party will be held in Bradford in December. Meetings, held in Bradford about every two months, are for members in the Bradford, Batley, Cleckheaton, Shipley, Bingley, Dewsbury, Huddersfield, Elland, Hebden Bridge and surrounding areas.

*Albert Waxman*

**Next meeting: 15 Nov at Salts Mill**

## MDA presentation at Cleve Road

David Grossman, Administration Director of the MDA, Israel's Medical Emergency Service, gave us an insight into his work. MDA have ambulance stations throughout Israel; the first in an Israeli Arab town is to be dedicated very shortly.

*David Lang*

**Next meetings: 16 Oct. Susannah Alexander, 'The Jews of England'; Outing: 24 Oct. Fiddler on the Roof (Savoy Theatre)**

## Edgware food for thought

The subject of Michael Anvoner's talk concerns us all: a will and, possibly, the power of attorney. While we all wish to leave our possessions to our children and grandchildren, part of them inevitably goes to the state. The talk gave us much food for thought.

*Felix Winkler*

**Next meeting: 16 Oct. Elkan Levy, 'They Got Off the Boat Too Soon'**

## Lively conversation in East Midlands

Unlike in previous years, our summer meeting was, due to the weather, held indoors at Gerry and Bob Norton's home. As usual, we enjoyed a lively conversation over an excellent lunch.

*Bob Norton*

**Next meeting: 27 Nov**

## We Norfolk determined few

Eight of us turned up from far and wide. As though anticipating the next issue of the Journal, we exchanged experiences on being baffled by the simple language known as English, in which the pronounced version is so different from the written one.

*Frank Bright*

**Next meeting: 13 Nov. Usual venue**

## Kingston Continental Friends

In addition to introductions and chat we discussed possible outings and whether we should continue to meet in homes or move to a synagogue meeting room. The possibilities of local get-togethers were appreciated - we asked Head Office to get back to us with suggestions for what these might contain beside fellowship.

*Edith Jayne*

## Harrogate Get-together

We gathered at Rosl and Marc Schatzberger's lovely house in York for a Get-together. Having welcomed two new friends - Ruth from York and Arek from Harewood - animated conversation followed reports of recent events. We enjoyed delicious home-baked cakes and home-grown strawberries.

*Inge Little*

**Next meeting: 24 Oct in Harrogate**

## Kent overview of Jewish history

One of our members, Frank Miller, presented *The Fall of Jerusalem*, a BBC film showing how divisions among the Jewish people 2,000 years ago were instrumental in their downfall. Myrna, thank you for your hard work, and Janet Weston, thank you for providing refreshments.

*Inge Ball*

**Next meeting: 23 Oct. Claire Ungerson, 'Kitchener Camp'**

## North London's 6th birthday

We celebrated our 6th birthday in true style with lots of nosh and musical entertainment by Robert accompanied on the piano by Anthony. We cut down on the nostalgia, but this was made up by the congenial company.

*Herbert Haberberg*

**Next meeting: 25 Oct. Frank Miller, 'The Story of the Bagel'**

## Glasgow/ Edinburgh Get-together

Yet another mesmerising talk by Michael Tobias of jewishgen.org. Michael's main message was: delve into the past using the jewishgen.org database with confidence, cast the net wide and, if stuck, call on him for expert help. Thanks also to our wonderful volunteers, who provided a delicious tea and jolly good company.

*Jonathan Kish*

## Herts membership still growing

We enjoyed a lively discussion meeting at the home of Margot Boon. As we approach our second birthday, our membership is still growing and the subject of a more localised name was suggested given that another group is

being formed around Watford. Also debated was the idea of more frequent meetings.  
*Monica Rosenbaum*

#### FURTHER MEETINGS

**Surrey 11 Oct. Social Get-together at Portners**

**Radlett 17 Oct. Inaugural**

**meeting. Details from Head Office**

**Cardiff 22 Oct. Lunchtime.**

**Speaker: Bertha Leverton**

**Bristol/Bath 30 Oct, tbc**

#### 'Agony Aunt' Anna Raeburn to speak at Belsize Square Synagogue dinner

We are delighted to announce that the broadcaster, journalist and 'Agony Aunt' Anna Raeburn will be our guest speaker at a dinner on Wednesday 7 November at Belsize Square Synagogue. The evening will begin at 6.30 pm.

The dinner will be part of a visit to London by AJR members from Scotland and the North of England and will be an opportunity for members from across the country to enjoy an evening's entertainment and socialising.

To reserve a ticket for the dinner, at a cost of approximately £20 per head (price to be confirmed), please contact Susan Harrod by telephone on 020 8385 3078 or by email at [susan@ajr.org.uk](mailto:susan@ajr.org.uk)

Please note that places can be reserved only by payment in advance and are offered on a strictly first-come first-served basis.

*Michael Newman*

#### AJR GROUP CONTACTS

**Bradford Continental Friends**  
Lilly and Albert Waxman 01274 581189

**Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)**  
Fausta Shelton 01273 734 648

**Bristol/Bath**  
Kitty Balint-Kurti 0117 973 1150

**Cambridge**  
Anne Bender 01223 276 999

**Cardiff**  
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

**Cleve Road, AJR Centre**  
Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

**Dundee**  
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

**East Midlands (Nottingham)**  
Bob Norton 01159 212 494

**Edgware**  
Ruth Urban 020 8931 2542

**Edinburgh**  
Françoise Robertson 0131 337 3406

**Essex (Westcliff)**  
Larry Lisner 01702 300812

**Glasgow**  
Claire Singerman 0141 649 4620

**Harrogate**  
Inge Little 01423 886254

**Hendon**  
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3070

**Hertfordshire**  
Hazel Beiny 020 8385 3070

**HGS**  
Gerda Torrence 020 8883 9425

**Hull**  
Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

**Ilford**  
Meta Rosenell 020 8505 0063

**Leeds HSFA**  
Trude Silman 0113 2251628

#### Northern Get-together proves a huge success

Over 100 of us enjoyed a summer reunion in Leeds, where we met kinsmen and explored a variety of issues in workshops.

Michael Newman from Head Office paid tribute to Marcia Goodman, who was attending her last Northern Get-together prior to her retirement in October.

Guest speaker Stephen Smith MBE, co-founder of Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottingham, presented a synopsis of the Centre's origins and discussed his role in the International Task Force on Remembering the Holocaust established in 2000.

The day was a huge success, thanks mainly to the organisational skills of Susanne Green, our Northern Groups Co-ordinator.  
*Tania Nelson*



Inge Little from Harrogate and Henry Grunfeld from Manchester, both originally from Dortmund, meet up for the first time at Northern Get-together

#### DIARY DATES

**26 November-**

**3 December Eastbourne holiday**

For further information about this event, please call us on 020 8385 3070.

#### Liverpool

Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

#### Manchester

Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091

#### Newcastle

Walter Knoblauch 0191 2855339

#### Norfolk (Norwich)

Myrna Glass 020 8385 3077

#### North London

Jenny Zundel 020 8882 4033

#### Oxford

Susie Bates 01235 526 702

#### Pinner (HA Postal District)

Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833

#### Sheffield

Steve Mendelsson 0114 2630666

#### South London

Lore Robinson 020 8670 7926

#### South West Midlands (Worcester area)

Myrna Glass 020 8385 3070

#### Surrey

Edmée Barta 01372 727 412

#### Weald of Kent

Max and Jane Dickson  
01892 541026

#### Wembley

Laura Levy 020 8904 5527

#### Wessex (Bournemouth)

Mark Goldfinger 01202 552 434

#### West Midlands (Birmingham)

Ernest Aris 0121 353 1437

#### Paul Balint AJR Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6

Tel: 020 7328 0208

#### AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

**Wednesday 17 October 2007**

**11.45 am for 12.15 pm**

**Rabbi Stephen Katz**

Hendon Reform Synagogue

Please be aware that members should not automatically assume that they are on the Luncheon Club list. It is now necessary, on receipt of your copy of the *AJR Journal*, to phone the Centre on 020 7328 0208 to book your place.

#### KT-AJR

**Kindertransport special interest group**

**Monday 8 October 2007**

**11.45 am for 12.15 pm**

**Bettine Le Beau**

**'THE JOYS OF YIDDISH'**

Reservations required

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday

9.30 am - 3.30 pm

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

#### October Afternoon Entertainment

Mon	1	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	2	CLOSED
Wed	3	Norman Hoskins
Thur	4	CLOSED - SHEMINI ATZERET
Mon	8	KT LUNCH
Tue	9	CLOSED
Wed	10	Sergeant Steve Hayes - Safety Talk
Thur	11	Guyathrie Peiris & Bill Patrick
Mon	15	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	16	CLOSED
Wed	17	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	18	Michael Heaton
Mon	22	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	23	CLOSED
Wed	24	Madeleine Whiteson
Thur	25	Jen Gould
Mon	29	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	30	CLOSED
Wed	31	BINGO

#### 'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

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

Hazel Beiny, Southern Groups Co-ordinator  
020 8385 3070

Myrna Glass, London South and Midlands Groups Co-ordinator  
020 8385 3077

Susanne Green, Northern Groups Co-ordinator  
0151 291 5734

Susan Harrod, Groups' Administrator  
020 8385 3070

KT-AJR (Kindertransport)  
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

Child Survivors Association-AJR  
Henri Obstfeld 020 8954 5298

**FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Births**

Congratulations to Linda Kasmir on the birth of a second grandson, Yoni.

**Deaths**

It is with much regret that I inform you of the sudden death of Hanus Weisl. Mr Weisl was always keen to receive news/information from the AJR and especially interested in the Kindertransport Newsletter. He came over on the last train to leave Czechoslovakia in 1939 before the borders were closed and he and his parents spent the first few months here in a refugee hostel. He became an eminent orthopaedic surgeon and worked in Cardiff's University Hospital of Wales and Prince of Wales Hospital until his retirement in 1991-92. He will be sadly missed by all privileged to know him. Lynne Davies, Secretary to the late Hanus Weisl, Cardiff.

**Classified**

An AJR member offers an **electric scooter** to someone who would benefit from it, at no cost. Please telephone 0208 346 3852.

**Paul Balint AJR Centre**

**Pamela Bloch** Clothes sale, separates etc. Thursday 18 October, 9.30-11.45 am.

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**MANCHESTER HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL BOOK**

The Manchester AJR Group are collating a register of names of people in the North and South Manchester areas whose family members perished in the Holocaust.

The names, together where possible with photographs and brief histories, will be included in a Memorial Book which will be on permanent display in Manchester. Copies of the book will be distributed to members and used for educational purposes, ensuring that those who perished will not be forgotten.

The Imperial War Museum considers the AJR Memorial Books to be 'important historical records'. Yad Vashem and other museums have requested copies of the Memorial Books for their archives.

If you would like your family names to be included in the Manchester Memorial Book, please contact Ruth Lachs on 0161 773 4091, Tania Nelson on 0161 795 0731, or Angella Carne on 0161 928 8722.

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Monday 26 November - Monday 3 December 2007

Price £420

If you wish to book a superior room, there will be a further supplement. Price includes Dinner, Bed & Breakfast, transport from, and returning to, the AJR Centre in Cleve Road, lunch on journey to Eastbourne, entertainment in the hotel

**Book early to avoid disappointment**  
Call Lorna on 020 8385 3072 or Carol on 020 8385 3085

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## Obituary

### Gertie Fürst

**B**orn in Vienna in November 1915, Gertie went to art school there at a time when the influence of the Art Deco movement (with its applied version in the Wiener Werkstätten/Vienna workshops) was still prominent. When she came to England in August 1938, with her younger sister Elfie, her first job was as a cook but she could speak no English. She quickly learned the language and found work in fashion and design, at first with handbags.

With her obvious talent and Viennese education, Gertie was very successful. She eventually became director at Paris House for leather accessories and was instrumental in the firm's receiving the Royal Warrant. She presented her own collection twice a year in Paris and had many distinguished customers. On her 80th birthday she received a card with special good wishes

from the Queen Mother.

Gertie also taught at various colleges - Hornsey in North London and Birmingham - and the students loved her charming way of teaching. She never married, but kept in close touch with her sister's family and had a circle of friends from all ethnic and social backgrounds, including her school friend Bruno Kreisky, at one time Austrian Chancellor, and Richard Hauser, also an Austrian refugee who later married Hephzibah Menuhin.

Gertie was small and delicate in figure but strong in character and determination. We will especially miss her great sense of humour - and her apple strudel, which she prepared with the same skill and perfection as the royal belts and buttons. She is survived by two nephews and two great-nephews.

**Christine Herxheimer, friend**

**Anthony Lister, nephew**

## Search Notices

**Ilse Cohn** - Born 1924, she came from Essener str., NW Berlin to London in May 1939. Attended New Herrlingen School in Faversham, Kent from October 1939. Any info pls to Stanley Hillel, 96 Bethlehem Street, Haifa 35568, Israel, hillel@matav.net.il

**Joseph Folger** - I was with Joseph at Whittinghame Farm School in 1939-41 and with many other Kindertransportees. My name was Sonja Ibermann, but I am now married as Sonja Cowan. I was his first girlfriend in Berlin, where we went to kindergarten together. We met up in Glasgow after Whittinghame, but lost touch in 1946. Any info about him pls to Sonja (Ibermann) Cowan at sonlora@yahoo.com

I am drawing up a Roll of Honour of **Jews who served in the Fire Service or as Firewatchers in WW2** or since. Please send any names, photos and details to Martin Sugarman, Archivist, AJEX Jewish Military Museum, daytime tel 0207 963 4123, evening tel 0208 986 4868 (after 7 pm), email martin.sugarman@westking.ac.uk

**Henriette Rosa Koch** - my mother, born 28 July 1922, in Rodalben, Germany, came to England on a Kindertransport in December 1938 or January 1939. She remained in and around London until 1950, training and

working as a children's nurse. Any info pls to Michael Zank, Associate Professor of Religion, 147 BSR, Room 407, Boston University, 145 Bay State Road, Boston MA 02130, USA, tel 001 617 353 4434

**Walter Mittler** - Born in Vienna. His English home was in Birmingham, where he was a watch repairer. Early 1950s he emigrated to Canada. Any info on his whereabouts pls to Len Terry (RAF 1943-47), 23 Abingdon Avenue, Doddington Park, Lincoln LN6 3LB, tel 01522 691591

**Herr und Frau Perlefter** left Vienna in the late 1930s, possibly with other families, and settled in the London area. **Hella Damisch** disappeared from Vienna in 1938, along with her daughter, who would have been my aunt. Any info on these three persons pls to rebecca@scotnet.co.uk

**Kathrina Selkowitz** - As a WWII veteran stationed in Swiss Cottage, I met my lost love Kathrina Selkowitz, a refugee from Vienna, who lived at 96 Goldhurst Terrace, London NW6. My dream would be fulfilled if I could find her. Pls contact me, Morey Schartz (Maurice), at 4646 Carambola Cir. N. Pompano Beach, Florida 33066, USA, tel 954-970-4603, cell phone 954-449-3020

## Central Office for Holocaust Claims Michael Newman

### Life certificates

Members are reminded that the AJR is able to notarise life certificates for all pensions from Austria and most pensions from Germany. Please contact us if you would like a representative from the AJR to sign your certificate. Please note also that members can continue to visit the relevant embassy or consulate.

### Israel property list

Approximately 7,000 names of owners of bank accounts and other properties in Israel that were not claimed after the Second World War have been listed on the website of Hashava, the Company for Location and Restitution of Holocaust Victims' Assets Ltd. Hashava was established in Israel in 2006 by the Holocaust Victims Assets Law.

The list of names was cross-checked with the list of victims at Yad Vashem, and only their heirs or other designated persons can apply. The committee's charge will last 15 years, and it will assist in searching for heirs and other beneficiaries.

Any person who thinks they may be entitled to make a claim as an heir of a Holocaust victim, regardless of whether or not the assets in question are listed, should contact the organisation via its website. Please note that this list does not deal with persons or properties and accounts outside Israel.

The list and application form to register a claim for restitution are available at [www.hashava.org.il/eng](http://www.hashava.org.il/eng) and completed forms can also be returned by post to **PO BOX 927, B'NAI BRAK, 51108, ISRAEL.**

**Applications for names that do not appear on the list will be accepted.**

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL, by fax to 020 8385 3075, or by email to [mnewman@ajr.org.uk](mailto:mnewman@ajr.org.uk)

## Two lives assayed

As, among many, the Jewish refugee community has recently lost two exceptional contributors: the publisher Frank Cass and the concert pianist Natalia Karp. Each in their own field actively contributed to the continuance of that rich cultural heritage involuntarily carried to Britain from Germany and Austria as a consequence of Nazi persecution.

Frank Cass is the more unlikely candidate, having been born 77 years ago in north London's Stamford Hill to parents of Polish origin, though into a houseful of books supplemented by two or three weekly visits to the local library. In the succeeding half-century, under the imprint of Vallentine Mitchell, he became British Jewry's leading publisher of books on Jewish subjects and Israel.

In 1993, at the request of Lord (Greville) Janner and Ben Helfgott, he launched his Library of Holocaust Testimonies series, which now numbers over 50. Among these volumes, many of them well-known to AJR members, are Trudi Levi's *A Cat Called Adolf*, Martha Blend's *A Child Alone* (on the Kindertransport), Janina Fischler-Martinho's *Have You Seen my Little Sister?*, and Leon Greenman's *An Englishman in Auschwitz*. Other favourites on the list are Muriel Emanuel and Vera Gissing's *Nicholas Winton and the Saved Generation*, T. Scarlett Epstein's *Swimming Upstream*, and Gloria Tessler's biography of Lady Jacobovits, *Amélie*.

After leaving the Grocers' Company school in Hackney, Frank Cass took up his first job with the Economist Book Shop adjacent to the London School of Economics, and in 1953, at the age of just 22 and with very limited capital, he opened his own bookshop in tiny premises on Southampton Row. In 1957 he began publishing under his own name, with books on politics, history, military affairs, Middle Eastern studies, and biography. In 1971 he obtained control of Vallentine Mitchell from the *Jewish Chronicle*.

Frank always had time for everyone and I valued his warm personal greeting though

a diminutive player in his wide world of anxious authors and demanding members of the Jewish community, the community to which he was so totally committed.

Cracow-born pianist Natalia Weissman Karp, who has died at the age of 96, survived Plaszow concentration camp by playing Chopin, in December 1943, for the birthday of the camp's notorious commandant, Amon Goeth, thereby saving her own life and that of her sister. She later survived incarceration in Auschwitz. She had begun playing at the age of four and was later tutored by the brother-in-law of Chopin specialist Artur Rubinstein, attending the Hebrew school at 13. In 1927, with the help of Stefan Zweig's cousin Maria, Natalia was taken on by Artur Schnabel in Berlin. In 1929, aged 18, she performed to great acclaim with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Returning to Poland shortly before the death of her mother, she married in 1933 Julius Hubler, lawyer, pianist and music critic.

When the Germans bombed Cracow on 1 September 1939, Natalia's father, husband and brother left, never to be seen again. She and her sister went into hiding, but were eventually captured.

With the liberation of the camps she resumed her career, playing again the demanding Tchaikovsky B flat minor piano concerto with the Cracow Philharmonic. She married her second husband, Joseph Karpf, and moved to London, where he worked in the Polish embassy. There she brought up a family while furthering her career, encouraged by her husband, and made several tours of Germany. Natalia Karp, a woman of proven courage and affection, and of beauty, continued to play publicly through the 1950s to the 1970s, performing with leading orchestras in Britain and Europe, with appearances at the Proms and countless broadcasts for the BBC.

Her daughter, the writer and journalist Anne Karpf, told the story of her parents' lives as Holocaust survivors and of her own struggle to come to terms with her inheritance in *The War After*, published in 1996.

## Newsround

### Largest synagogue in Germany reopens

Germany's largest synagogue has reopened following extensive restoration. The Rykestrasse Synagogue in Berlin was built in 1904 but set on fire on Kristallnacht, although it was not destroyed. Today, Berlin has the biggest Jewish community in Germany with 12,000 registered members and eight synagogues. According to the Central Council of Jews in Germany, some 250,000 Jews now live in the country, with around 110,000 of them registered religious community members.

### German government holds exhibition on antisemitism

A German government exhibition on contemporary antisemitism, a collaborative effort between Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum and the Berlin-based Centre for Research on Antisemitism, has opened in the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. A principal theme of the exhibition is: when does criticism of Israel cross the border of legitimacy?

### Austrian chancellor visits Israel

Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer has become the first Austrian head of state to visit Israel in nearly a decade. 'It's true that the relationship between Austria and Israel has not always been an easy one, but I think we are embarking on a new initiative,' he said.

### Far-right violence on rise in Holland

Far-right violence in Holland rose by 75 per cent last year, according to the annual Anne Frank Foundation report on extremism. In a joint report with Leiden University, the Foundation counted 67 incidents of far-right violence compared with 38 reported the previous year. According to Willem Wagenaar, an expert on the extreme right in the Netherlands, the year 2006 saw 35 antisemitic instances out of a total of 265 hate crimes.

### Charges over Austria Nazi salutes

The Austrian army has charged three conscripts in connection with a YouTube video showing young soldiers exchanging Nazi salutes. The footage is said to have been filmed in an army barracks in Salzburg. The men face up to 10 years in jail if found guilty.

### Desecrated Jewish cemetery cleaned up

Local Polish officials and teenagers have joined members of the Jewish community in cleaning up one of the biggest cemetery desecrations in postwar Polish history. Some 100 graves in the Jewish cemetery in the southern town of Czestochowa were covered with antisemitic graffiti.