

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

When Irish eyes weren't smiling

The ninetieth anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin, in the crucible of whose bloodstained suppression modern Irish nationalism was largely forged, raises the somewhat neglected subject of Irish attitudes to the Jews - neglected because Jews in Ireland were so few. In the most famous Irish text of the twentieth century, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Mr Deasy asks Stephen Dedalus if he knows why Ireland has 'the honour of being the only country which never persecuted the Jews', then answers his own question: 'Because she never let them in.'

For a century and a half after the great famine of the 1840s, Ireland was a poverty-stricken land that could not support even its existing population, as the vast emigration from its shores demonstrated. It was also sunk in deeply conservative Catholicism (or, in the north, Protestant bigotry). Both factors made it unattractive to Jews. After Ireland won independence from Britain in 1921-22, its inward-looking conservatism intensified as the government, especially under Eamon De Valera, deployed an obsessive nationalism and hostility to external cultural influences.

Consequently, Ireland played host to very few of the Jews fleeing Nazism after 1933. One of the handful who did gain admission was Hans Reiss, who arrived as war broke out, studied at Trinity College Dublin, and went on to enrich British academic life as Professor of German at the University of Bristol for over 20 years. But Reiss's entry into Ireland was perhaps smoothed by having the backing of a priest, Dekan Hermann Maas of Heidelberg, who was deported to a forced labour camp in France by the Nazis for aiding Jews and after the war was the first German to be officially welcomed to Israel by the Israeli government. Otherwise, those admitted were mostly people who brought capital with them and could benefit the country's economy.

The Irish policy of neutrality during the



Italo Svevo (Ettore Schmitz), 1861-1928, the Italian-Jewish writer and model for Joyce's Leopold Bloom

war - quaintly dubbed 'the Emergency' in Ireland - reflected the ambivalence of its attitude to Nazi Germany. Though Ireland's neutrality in practice tended to favour the Allies, the very fact of its neutrality, behind the shield of the British war effort (as the British saw it), counted against it, as did its refusal to allow the British to use on its Western coast the strategically valuable Treaty Ports, which had been British until 1938; they could have saved Allied ships and lives from German submarines. In Jewish eyes, neutrality towards Auschwitz was indefensible. This was compounded by Prime Minister De Valera's bizarre decision to express his condolences to the German minister in Dublin on the occasion of Hitler's death in April 1945, just as the horrors of the camps were being revealed to a shocked world.

It is now known that important people in the Irish political establishment were pro-German - and not just out of an ingrained hostility to Britain that proclaimed Britain's enemies the friends of Ireland. For the Irish nationalism that emerged from the Easter Rising was not without ideological elements uncomfortably close to National Socialism. Pádraig Pearse, who with James Connolly led the uprising,

spoke of the sacred Irish soil that could be liberated by Irish blood - terms reminiscent of Nazi 'Blut und Boden' ideology; and the doomed Rising itself, whose leaders were executed by the British with wholly counter-productive brutality, was stylised into an act of martyrdom in the national cause, in form (though not in substance) similar to the mythologisation of those Nazis who fell in Hitler's failed beer-hall *putsch* in Munich in November 1923.

The Easter Rising and its aftermath also permanently advanced the cause of the extremists in Irish politics, for they allowed the men of violence to parade as the purest defenders of the Irish national cause, a tactic employed *ad nauseam* by the Provisional IRA, a paramilitary, proto-fascist organisation whose 'revolutionary' nationalistic aims are propagated by its political wing, Sinn Féin. The most famous line in the most famous of all Irish poems, 'A terrible beauty is born', from W. B. Yeats's *Easter, 1916*, reflects precisely the powerful but ambivalent attraction that violence in the struggle for national liberation has exercised over Irish politics for nearly a century.

The dangers of that ideology were apparent to James Joyce well before the Rising: he made the representative of extreme Irish nationalism in *Ulysses*, the Citizen, his equivalent of the one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus, who held Ulysses captive in his cave and devoured his men. Brutal, intolerant and ideologically blind to all but his own one-eyed perspective, the Citizen is also the natural spokesman for Irish antisemitism. Leopold Bloom encounters him in Barney Kiernan's bar and has the temerity to state that Christ was a Jew: 'By Jesus', roars the Citizen, 'I'll brain that bloody jewman for using the holy name. By Jesus, I'll crucify him so I will', and he hurls a biscuit tin after Bloom, as Polyphemus flung a rock at the escaping Ulysses.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Irish nationalism grew out of a small nation's struggle for freedom from a powerful, oppressive neighbour. Irish nationhood, achieved as late as 1922, was insecure, aware of the shallowness of its historical roots when compared to the more settled national identity of the British. That insecurity led it to emphasise national and ethnic homogeneity, inevitably diminishing its tolerance of 'non-Irish' minorities like Jews. Those still in

thrall to the seductive myth of the Easter Rising, with its call to violence in the name of nationally exclusive extremism, should contemplate other lines by Yeats:

Out of Ireland have we come,
Great hatred, little room,
Maimed us at the start.
I carry from my mother's womb
A fanatic heart.

(from *Remorse for Intemperate Speech*)

Anthony Grenville

The doll and the hidden child

When the parents of Berthe Suzanne Rappaport Ripton were taken from their Paris apartment and deported to Auschwitz, Suzanne began a new life as a hidden child in the medieval French village of Mondoubleau. Here she was taken in by the family Guillon, who had two daughters: Alice, who died at the age of 26, and Paulette. One day in 1944 Suzanne 'disappeared' from her new French home, taken away by two men. But Paulette held on to Suzanne's beloved doll. She wrote a note about Suzanne's background on a piece of paper and hid it in one of the doll's shoes.

Last year Paulette finally tracked down Suzanne, now a member of the Leeds and Harrogate Continental Friends groups. As soon as the two



women were reunited, Paulette returned the doll, which she had kept all this time. Shortly Paulette is to receive in Paris a medal from Yad Vashem on behalf of her parents; a reception will be held by the mayor. 'Hitler didn't win it all!', says Suzanne.

HS

Notarisation of German life certificates

With effect from this July, the AJR will be recognised as an 'official British office' and will be able to notarise for AJR members life certificates issued by the German pension authority, the Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund, for social security and Altersrente pensions.

In order to avoid complications and delays with payments, members wishing to have their life certificates notarised by the AJR must present themselves, together with their passport (or some widely accepted form of identification), at AJR Head Office, at our Day Centre in Cleve Road, or at a regional group meeting. Home visits can also be arranged by contacting Head Office.

Please note that an AJR representative will be unable to sign the life certificate

without the necessary paperwork and identification.

For the purpose of having their forms legalised, members can continue to visit the German embassy as well as police stations, financial institutions, physicians, rabbinate and notaries public.

In addition to all lump sum payments and pensions from Austria, the AJR is authorised to sign life certificates issued by the Düsseldorf and Hesse German compensation authorities and the Hamburg social security office. The AJR is further recognised by the Claims Conference as authorised to notarise life certificates and applications to the Article II and Hardship Funds.

Michael Newman

Beyond camps and forced labour

Current research on survivors of Nazi persecution

A major international conference on Current International Research on Survivors of Nazi Persecution, organised by Johannes-Dieter Steinert (University of Wolverhampton) and Inge Weber-Newth (London Metropolitan University), has been held at the Imperial War Museum. It was a follow-up to the successful conference which took place in 2003, also at the Imperial War Museum.

The conference brought together scholars from a variety of disciplines. Twenty-eight panels ran in parallel sessions, providing over 100 established and young academics with a platform to present their results and research projects.

The thematic focus of the conference was the 'life after', ranging from experiences of displacement and uprooting, the reception and resettlement process of survivors in different countries, to testimonies of survivors and issues of memory and identity.

The conference was academically supported by an international advisory board of renowned scholars, and financially supported by the Koerber Foundation (Hamburg), the British Academy, the German Embassy, the Austrian Cultural Forum, the German Historical Institute and Renovabis, a Catholic foundation based in Freising.

Feedback from participants and sponsors was highly positive. In his closing address, Professor David Cesarani remarked: 'Three years ago you tapped into an emerging subject and now it is taking a definite shape. It will be fascinating to see the landscape at the next conference in three years' time.'

Johannes-Dieter Steinert and
Inge Weber-Newth

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES

Tuesday 27 June 2006 at 11.30 pm
at

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, London NW6

For further details please telephone
020 8385 3070

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Who is our enemy now?



'My love-hate relationship with Vienna', my piece in the March issue, told how I felt about that city. Yes, I was only three when we were forced to leave. Yes, my father, a doctor, had had his teeth kicked in while doing a visit. Yes, but for a loyal patient, he would have been sent to Dachau. But I don't hate Vienna. And that's where the trouble began. I had four letters condemning me for my love-hate relationship with Vienna. 'It should only be hate', one writer said.

Let me make it quite clear. The Holocaust must never be forgotten. I am very proud that in my neck of the woods, each year, on Holocaust Memorial Day, Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue get together with Northwood United Synagogue to teach the schoolchildren in our area about the Holocaust (we had 2,000 pupils this year). However, *Ezekiel 18:20* states that 'the son shall not bear the indignity of the father'. All those who were Nazis - and there were many - are now well into their eighties. I agree with Goldhagen that they were 'Hitler's Willing Executioners'. So, if you want, let's hate them - but don't let's hate their children too. David Irving has just been imprisoned in Austria for Holocaust denial. I doubt whether the English would have given him such a penalty. In Germany, impersonating Hitler is punishable by a heavy fine or imprisonment. Prince Harry, over here, was merely considered a bit of an idiot. Ken Livingstone and George Galloway have been allowed to get away with defamation of Israel and Jews in general such as would never be allowed in Germany or Austria. Should I now hate the English? And what about the French? According to the *Jewish Chronicle*, the country in Europe with

the highest number of antisemitic incidents is France. Shall I hate the French too?

Angela Merkel of Germany and Heinz Fischer of Austria have not, to the best of my knowledge, ever uttered one word against the Jews or Israel. But theirs are the countries some of you still want me to hate. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran denies the Holocaust and wants to wipe Israel off the face of the map. So does Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas. So do the leaders of Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad. And so does Bashar al-Assad of Syria. Not forgetting, of course, the worst enemy of them all: Osama bin Laden of al-Qaeda. Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, Goering - they are all long dead. It's the Islamic fundamentalists who are the danger now. *They* are the murderers. It's Abu Hamza and Omar Bakri - not Julius Streicher and Alfred Rosenberg.

I have a certain sympathy with Daniel Barenboim. Of course, Wagner was a rabid antisemite but should we not be allowed the pleasure of the *Ring* cycle? I become sentimental when listening to the Vienna New Year's Day Concert. Should I feel guilty? And, oh dear, I prefer wiener schnitzel to falafel. Perhaps I'm committing yet another sin?

I apologise to those I offended by admitting that I have some love for Vienna. But surely you must realise that the enemy today is Islamic fundamentalism, not National Socialism. And, on a controversial note, I haven't heard many of you condemn Stalin and the Communists. Under Stalin, millions of Jews were killed too. How come your silence about him? Some of you didn't support Communism before the Second World War, did you?!

Peter Phillips

Hardship Fund

The AJR has received the following announcement from the Claims Conference. We understand that Holocaust survivors and refugees from Austria are included in this definition of 'Western persecutees':

'Western persecutees' - Nazi victims who were citizens of certain western [west European] countries at the time of persecution and when

post-war agreements were reached between that country and Germany - are not currently receiving payments from the Hardship Fund. The German government is not making funding available at present for such payments. Applications from such western persecutees are not therefore being processed at this time. Announcements in the future regarding new developments will be posted on our website at www.claimscon.org

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Anne Frank and AJR behind bars

Since 2002 the Anne Frank Trust, the British sister organisation of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, has been taking its exhibition *Anne Frank, A History for Today* into British prisons. This has been a remarkably successful venture, offering prisoners and young offenders the opportunity of learning about Anne Frank's life and times and reflecting on their own attitudes towards others.

The exhibition visits each prison for one week and the prison education team and the Anne Frank Trust work together to create a programme of activities to maximise the impact of the visit. Teams of prisoners are trained to be exhibition guides, which not only raises their self-esteem and imparts communication skills but remains a memorable experience for them.

Herbert Levy has trained prisoners to be Anne Frank exhibition guides around the country. By relating the exhibition to his own experiences in Berlin and then as a child on the Kindertransport, he thoroughly engages the attention of his trainees.

More recently, the Trust's Prison Tour



The AJR's Mark Goldfinger, seated, in conversation with Barry Greenberry, Governor of Guys Marsh Prison, Dorset

Manager, Steve Gadd, and AJR's Head of Social Services, Marcia Goodman, have been seeking to match prisons with AJR members in the vicinity who will go 'inside' to speak about their experiences to prisoners. Constant evaluation has found that these talks give offenders a sense of perspective about their own grievances and difficulties and challenge their prejudices.

In recent weeks Dr Kurt Schapira has been to HMP Acklington and Simon

Winston has been to HMP Foston Hall and Nottingham.

Acklington Prison Officer Simon Ripon wrote: 'The importance of Dr Kurt Schapira's visit cannot be overstated; it was the highlight of the exhibition and provided a focus for all who attended it. Dr Schapira's message that democracy, tolerance, economic stability, truth and justice must prevail in society was warmly received and applauded by all.'

Other AJR members who have visited prisons are Mark Goldfinger, Arek Hersh, Freddie Knoller, Steve Mendelsohn, Paul Koppel, Ludwig Simonson, Rosie Schatzberger and Alfred Huberman.

The AJR speakers have made a significant contribution to the Trust's mission to make our society a better and safer place. For more information about the Anne Frank prison tour and other Anne Frank Trust events and initiatives, including those supported by the AJR, please call Gillian Walnes on 020 7284 5858, email info@annefrank.org.uk or visit www.annefrank.org.uk.

Gillian Walnes

The White Rose Project

On 5 May Austria commemorated the National Day of Remembrance in Memory of the Victims of National Socialism. For the last three years this event has included the participation of schoolchildren from all parts of Austria who were encouraged to find out something about the individuals who were so brutally removed from their homes and murdered. So far, about 25,000 pupils have researched biographies both of victims and survivors. The programme first attracted attention in 2003 when 80,000 white balloons with 'letters from the present to the past and from the future' were released in the Heldenplatz.

This year, the event centred on St Stephen's Square, where 80,000 white roses were mounted on a large structure designed by the University of Applied Arts. These represent the Austrian victims of Nazism, of whom 65,000 were Jewish. Following a memorial service attended by survivors, political dignitaries and representatives of the main religions, the roses were taken by individual schoolchildren to the last known

addresses where victims had lived before being deported. The roses were then placed on walls, pavements and front doors, and each with the name of the previous resident attached. The list of names and addresses was compiled through the Jewish Welcome Service and the Jewish Community in Vienna.

In the previous two months, schools had been able to register their interest online and pupils were linked to individual names. From the web page of the project it was also possible for students to see if any Jewish people previously lived at their address and, if so, their families were asked to offer a sign of reconciliation by allowing the previous occupants or their descendants to visit their old home.

The project is not limited to Vienna and pupils from schools throughout Austria participated. Austrian Railways provided free travel for participants.

The project and its history are described more fully on the website www.lettertothestars.at, which also has several useful links, including an English summary.

On a more local level, residents in the 9th District, with the support of the local Alsergrund Museum, are carrying out a project to trace the history of the Jews who used to live in Servitengasse, a road which was a centre of Jewish life before the war. Information on this is available at www.servitengasse1938.at.

The Documentation Centre of the Austrian Resistance has a great deal of information on the fate of the community both before and during the war. As well as a museum and permanent exhibition in the Old Town Hall in Wipplingerstrasse, there is a comprehensive website www.doew.at, which includes a list of the names and dates of deportation of 62,000 Austrian Jews.

While the crimes of many Austrians before and during the war must never be forgotten, it is encouraging that today's young Austrians fully acknowledge what happened and are doing their best to keep the memories of the victims alive.

George Vulkan

How did you escape from Nazi Europe?

Peter F. Kurer

The Society of Friends rescued thousands of Jews from Nazi Europe. The Society does not seek publicity, but this is no reason why people like myself - whose family and life it saved - should be content with the minimum recognition it has received from us Jews.

The Quakers gave guarantees - the life line essential for Jews to obtain visas to move to England - not knowing in most cases the people for whom they were providing guarantees but aware that help was needed.

My brother and I were provided with two free years in a Quaker boarding school in Cumberland to ensure our safety and to enable our parents to look after their other relations. Of the school's less than 150 pupils, five were refugees.

More than 10,000 Jewish children

were rescued from Germany and Austria by the Society and enabled to come to England. They played an important role in the Kindertransport movement.

That Quakers were among the most active groups of rescuers of Jews from the Holocaust was recognised by the award in 1949 of a Nobel Peace Prize for humanitarian efforts to both the British Friends Service Committee and its American counterpart.

In 2001 a sculpture of a leader of the Quaker movement was installed and dedicated in the courtyard of Friends' House, London. The sculpture was made by Naomi Blake, herself a Kindertransport member. Its plaque reads: 'To honour Bertha Bracey (1893-1989) who gave practical leadership to Quakers in quietly rescuing and resettling thousands of Nazi victims and

lone children between 1922-1938.'

Today, the question is: what have the beneficiaries of the Society's work and dedication done to ensure that we, and future generations, are aware of its actions to save us in our hour of need and to ensure that its unique, inspired help will never be forgotten?

With the support and assistance of the Association of Jewish Refugees, I would ask all those who were helped in any way by the Society of Friends - or who have a friend, acquaintance or relative who might have received help - to forward to me their names and addresses so that I can send them a form for completion and initiate the project We Must Never Forget. Please contact me at: 7 Bruntwood Lane, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1HS, tel 0161 428 5080, email peter@kurer.co.uk.

A school which no longer exists

We now have the story of the Jews in North Devon (Helen P. Fry, *Jews in North Devon during the Second World War*, reviewed in the April issue), but there is also a story of a small group of child refugees from North Cornwall. My story is about a school which no longer exists.

Kingsley School, founded in 1915 (?) by four forward-thinking ladies - the Principals - occupied three houses in Belsize Park. In 1939 the school was evacuated to Tintagel in North Cornwall, where it remained throughout the war. Its buildings in London were damaged by bombing and the school did not return to London but continued in Horley, Surrey, probably until the 1970s.

As part of the Principals' humanitarian activities, five refugee children aged from 10 to 14 were taken as full boarders (as well as being looked after in the holidays) without any payment throughout the war. Four of the children were from Germany and, I believe, were initially at Hoddesdon Manor, being cared for by the Rothschilds. There were two sisters - Steffi and Reni Birnbaum - Vera Baer and Ilse Solomon. I, the fifth, came from Czechoslovakia and



Taken probably in 1942, this photo shows four of the five refugees at Kingsley School. Front row left, Steffi (with hair ribbon), then Reni Birnbaum; back row right, Trude Silman, then Vera Baer

joined the school in December 1940, leaving in December 1944. We received an excellent education and were taught high moral principles. We proceeded to make our own lives and lost touch. The four years I spent in Cornwall were a most formative period of my life and I am eternally grateful to the school for supporting a lonely child without family (my parents perished in the Holocaust).

The existence of a correspondence course, possibly organised by the Liberal

Synagogue in St John's Wood, needs mentioning too. On Sunday mornings the school went to church, but we five refugees stayed behind in the library and worked at our correspondence course on Jewish studies. Unfortunately, I remember nothing more. (Several years ago I contacted the Liberal Synagogue about this matter but nobody knew anything about it.)

One year, all five of us were invited to spend a Jewish holiday in Par, South Cornwall with a Professor (?) and Mrs Singer. It would be nice to be able to say 'thank you' to the present-day generation of the Singer family. I remember Mrs Singer as a pleasant, small, plump lady who wore a large hearing aid on the front of her dress. It would be wonderful if more information surfaced to flesh out my memories.

In conclusion, I wish to state my gratitude to the late Principals of Kingsley School and to say how much else they did for people and the war effort throughout the war - on which subject an entire book could be written.

Trude Silman



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

ideological end to the conflict instead of pursuing a pragmatic, humanitarian one based on social justice?

Inge Trott
Cheam, Surrey

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Sir - I fully agree with every word Bertha Leverton writes (May issue). But even if Dorothea Shefer-Vanson thinks that most of the matters Bertha mentions are brought to us by the daily newspapers and television, surely there must be more interesting events happening daily in Israel than the banalities she reports. At present, her column is a waste of valuable space in an otherwise excellent journal.

O. Findling
London NW4

Sir - Whenever I visit Israel, I never fail to bump into someone I know: it's part of the excitement of the holiday fabric. It is a delight, therefore, to read Dorothea Shefer-Vanson's experience as related in her Letter from Israel column. Her articles are always of interest as they are almost personal communications from an old friend which I read with pleasure as they are so well written. Ms Shefer-Vanson is obviously a successful immigrant to Israel from these shores.

Marcel Ladenheim
Surbiton, Surrey

Sir - I like to read the Letter from Israel and I am sure I am not the only one. It is a comforting thought that the Israelis can still laugh and chat about photographs and be thrilled because they met somebody who used to be a schoolmate in far-away England years ago. It reminds me of the Londoners who, during the Blitz, would emerge after a night of hell from their air-raid shelters to carry on with their usual jobs. Let us be grateful that it is not all grief and doom in Israel.

Julie Franks
Westcliffe-on-Sea

ANTI-ZIONISTS AND ANTISEMITES

Sir - Antisemitism is a word that should be used sparingly, begins Bryan Reuben's thought-provoking article (April). It is, in fact, a word that should not be used at all. It derives from the Greek 'anti' and 'Semite' and was first coined in 1879 by the founder of the League of Antisemites, Wilhelm Marr, to designate the then current anti-Jewish campaign in Europe. Clothed in the pseudo-scientific, academic-sounding newspeak of the day, the word lends undeserved respectability to the idea hiding behind it - pure and simple hatred of Jews. It may be too late to

ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS

Sir - Inge Trott's letter, like the many reports in the media, has confused me. Many speak of the illegal occupation by Israel of some of the West Bank and some parts of Jerusalem. I am 85 years old and I have witnessed many events. I remember the '67 war and the admiration of the UK press and others for the way the plucky Israelis resisted their neighbours, who swore to drive them into the sea. Israel captured large tracts of its neighbours' land, only to give it back - the last piece of land being the Gaza Strip - leaving some areas in Israeli hands.

I found an article by Robert Fisk in *The Independent* (1 April 2006) very disturbing. He wrote, *inter alia*, about the massacre of Sabra and Chatila supposedly by Israeli troops. Similarly, the unlawful killing (inquest result) of the British journalist James Miller needs answering. I also do not like to see pictures of Arab homes being destroyed, allegedly to root out terrorists and to pay for suicide attacks. On the other hand, seeing Arab children provoking Israeli troops by throwing stones at them is not a very sensible thing to do.

Recently a reporter on the Radio 4 programme 'From Our Own Correspondent' talked about the Palestinians in their newly acquired Gaza Strip - how they fired mortar shells into Israeli territory, hitting schools, houses, killing children and their parents. I did not see this reported anywhere else. It does not encourage Israel to make concessions! I was heartened, however, by the Chief Rabbi's Thought for the Day on 4 April when he talked about Daniel Barenboim's efforts to bridge the divide with music.

I feel too little attention is paid to the atrocities of others, whereas the Jews of Israel are singled out for condemnation. This does not excuse wrongdoing by Jews. It does, however, show that anti-Israel feelings are beginning to descend into growing antisemitism. We have all been here before!

Alex Lawrence
Marlow

Sir - Inge Trott's constant pro-Palestinian diatribe reminds one of a body of German Jews in the aftermath of Hitler's accession to power known as the *Auerbachjuden*. Their credo was that the Nazis' anti-Jewish ravings were in reality aimed not at German Jews, but at the despised *Ostjuden*. We all remember the error of that concept.

Herbert Haberberg
Barnet, Herts

Sir - Gisela Feldman and Henry Schragenheim (May issue), and others, give the impression that the entire readership of the *AJR Journal* is against my stance on the Israel/Palestine conflict. However, I am heartened by the fact that I am certainly not alone in my criticism of Israel.

I wonder if your readers listened to Daniel Barenboim's Reith Lectures, broadcast on Radio 4 in April and May. Together with the Palestinian Edward Said, Barenboim founded the West Eastern Divan Orchestra, made up of young Israeli and Arab musicians. They have been performing with great success. Making music together encourages a greater understanding of each other's culture. Translated into political reality, it could put an end to the never-ending killings.

I cannot do better than quote from the address Barenboim gave to the Knesset in May 2004 when he received Israel's prestigious Wolf Prize, awarded to artists and scientists who have contributed notably to the benefit of mankind:

Can we, despite all our achievements, ignore the intolerable gap between what the Declaration of Independence promised and what was fulfilled, the gap between the idea and the realities of Israel? Does the condition of occupation and domination over another people fit the Declaration of Independence? Is there any sense in the independence of one at the expense of the fundamental rights of the other? Can the Jewish people, whose history is a record of continuous suffering and relentless persecution, allow themselves to be indifferent to the rights and suffering of a neighbouring people? Can the State of Israel allow itself an unrealistic dream of an

eradicate the misnomer, but we can make a start by using the expression Jew-hatred or similar instead of antisemitism. Many hitherto acceptable words have disappeared in the last 50 years. Antisemitism, in time, may be one more.

*Walter Goddard
Stanmore, Middx*

POLES, JEWS AND ANTISEMITES

Sir - Further to Professor Brent's and Peter Fraenkel's letters (April issue), perhaps the two gentlemen are not sufficiently acquainted with Poland, or perhaps they only attend organised events in the company of the intellectual elite. Had they visited the provinces and met up with ordinary people, they would no doubt modify their views.

I turned my back on that unhappy country - or rather it would be more correct to say that Poland spurned me, as manifested by the brutal attacks against the pitiful remnant after the liberation, including my hometown of Ostrowiec, where five survivors were cruelly done to death.

On a visit to Poland in the nineties, I found that little had changed. I encountered mostly hostility wherever I went. One may not sense this, keeping to the well-trodden path leading to the camps, or attending the Cracow Festival of Jewish Music and Culture, which, incidentally, the Poles never acclaimed when the Jews were around.

Professor Brent suggests that one should not dwell on the past. On the contrary, it is incumbent on us to honour the memory of the countless victims betrayed and murdered by Poles. Those 'passing' for non-Jews like my sister and I were, ironically, more afraid of Poles than Germans. The latter were gullible enough to believe in their own infallibility - that Jews were only to be found inside ghettos and camps.

Eva Hoffman, whom Professor Brent quotes, is a gifted writer and a good 'ambassador' for Poland. She even disputes the figure of 1,600 Jews burnt alive by their neighbours in Jedwabne, based on the exhaustive study by Professor Jan T. Gross, and prefers to rely on a Polish source that came up with a figure of between 250 and 400. The Poles I have spoken to, both here and in Poland, conveniently blame it all on the Germans, and everything since the war on the Communists, as if the latter were not Poles. They remain adamant that they have nothing to answer for, as they themselves were victims of the Nazis.

*Rubin Katz
London NW11*

A QUESTION OF NATURALISATION

Sir - My naturalisation was completely different from Francis Deutsch's (May issue). I was *not* a minor (over 21) when I applied. It took a full two years before it was processed. I had a stringent interview at the Home Office, including a means test to prove I was not bankrupt. Twice I had to go to a Justice of the Peace - and had to pay £10, which was a fortune for me in those days, for the naturalisation. The letter accompanying the application form clearly stated that we had to be able to read and write English as well as speak it. Evidently they were satisfied with my knowledge of English and did not actually test it. The majority of us were 21 and over when we went through the process of naturalisation. We had no help with completing the forms.

*(Mrs) A. Saville
London NW4*

WIENER LIBRARY PROJECT

From September 2006, the Wiener Library will be offering up to 15 persons a unique opportunity to explore their family history and develop an in-depth understanding of the Holocaust. It is the first time in this country that a project specifically aimed at the 'Third Generation' - the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and refugees - has been undertaken.

The project will offer a series of linked seminars. Through using some of the specialist material available at the Wiener Library, the 15 participants will gain a clearer understanding of their families' past, the ongoing generational effects of exile and genocide, an understanding of where and how to access historical and genealogical information, and develop a sense of community with other members of the group.

If you know, or are aware of, any 'Third Generation' members who might be interested to find out more about this project, please ask them to contact me at the Wiener Library on 020 7636 7247 or email me at Lowenberg@WienerLibrary.co.uk.

We anticipate that the time commitment for the project will be up to six one-day meetings from September 2006 to February 2007. All reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed and lunch and refreshments provided.

*Monica Lowenberg
Third Generation Project Coordinator
Wiener Library, London W1*

ARE YOU ON A LOW INCOME AND IN NEED OF HOMECARE HELP?

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler



Sebastiano Novelli *The Kiss* Oil on canvas

The opening of **Gallery Dikowski** in Belsize Terrace, Hampstead is the fulfilment of a dream for art aficionado **Peter Ross**. The 40 years he spent trawling antique shops and local auctions for Victoriana has finally paid off, yielding an astounding 400 paintings for his gallery, which is named after his pianist wife Susan's Polish grandparents. The Barnet businessman, himself a gifted violinist, is currently showing the European rural and industrial scenes that represent the fruits of his research. There are some Mediterranean scenes by artists like **Miles Stuart Gibson**, such as **James Salt's** *Venice Idyll* and **Jan van Couver's** *Dutch Waterway*. The new gallery features delicate, filmy landscapes like **John Ottewell's** *Winter Smiles* and **Robert Edward Morrison's** mysterious *Lady in Mantilla*, in which the subject's perfect profile is covered in fine black voile. Ross claims that **Louis van Staaten's** *Maaren* is arguably the best watercolour by the artist he has ever encountered.

Ross was particularly attracted to **William Bradley's** *Haymaking*, which he identifies as Box Hill in Surrey, where he grew up. But the romantic touch is

given by the Italian **Sebastiano Novelli's** *The Kiss*, in which a girl holding a long bunch of flowers approaches a sleeping boy. The strewn flowers convey the lushness of summer and the passion of youth.

At 93, veteran photographer, filmmaker and self-described humanist **Wolf Suschitzky** publishes his book *Wolf Suschitzky: Photos* this month. A retrospective of 70 years' work, it follows his spring exhibition at Newport Street's **Photographers Gallery**, which featured his view of 1930s-40s London's East End, its life and vanishing street trades.

Icons and Idols celebrates 25 years of celebrity portraits commissioned by the **National Portrait Gallery**, which number 140 portraits, sculptures and mixed media works and 120 photographs. One somehow expects the portrait of the well-known to convey everything we know about them; it's much harder to hint at something undiscovered. **John Keene's** reflective portrait of the late politician *Mo Mowlam* is an example. **Paula Regan's** intelligent depiction of feminist philosopher *Germaine Greer* in a red dress has her poised on the brink of an argument. **Yolanda Sonnabend's** painting of *Stephen Hawking* has a touching liquidity: his misty eyes look out where no one else can see.

A. S. Byatt preferred not to see her own face so **Patrick Heron's** charcoal abstract swirl conveys her hesitation in facing the blank page. **Alan Bennett** also preferred to be conveyed through his writing than his physical presence. But he comes alive in a lightning, almost sketchy illustration by **Tom Wood** which renders him entirely in monochromatic beige.

Kazuo Ishigoro said of his prize-winning yellow and orange impasto portrait by **Peter Edwards** that it was 'very hard to see yourself in the picture.' **Roger Fry** agreed: 'I cannot see the man for the likeness.' And when **Paula Rego's** full-sized portrait of *David Hare* was unveiled later, complete with Renaissance symbolism, Hare responded: 'I look mad as a hatter.'

Perhaps the comatose are best served. Famous sleeping beauty *David Beckham* gracefully snoozes through **Sam Taylor-Wood's** 67-minute video of recorded slumber. The exhibition ends on 18 June.

REVIEWS

A new publication from an old friend

WHO'S NOT WHO AND OTHER MATTERS

by Carl F. Flesch

Cambridge: Vanguard Press, 2006, 227pp., £7.99

There are not many authors still turning out books at the age of 95, so it is a particular pleasure to review this volume by an old friend of the AJR. Carl Flesch, son of the legendary violinist of the same name, came to Britain as a refugee from Germany in 1933 and settled into a career as an insurance broker, specialising in the musical field. His firm, Leroi, Flesch & Co., was among the earliest to advertise in *AJR Information*, where one can track its rising fortunes. Carl Flesch was elected onto AJR's Executive in 1965, in which capacity he served our Association for a number of years, and was a member of the management committee of the Old Age Homes. He was also a member of the committee that organised the 'Thank-You Britain' Fund, the joint brainchild of the AJR and Victor Ross, another of our distinguished senior members, which raised the then considerable sum of £95,000 in 1965 and donated it to the British Academy for academic research.

Those familiar with the author's previous publications, *And Do You Also Play the Violin?* and *Where Do You Come From?* will recognise his playful, self-mocking style and his sometimes mildly rueful sense of humour. This book follows a similar pattern, combining memories from the pre-war years of settlement in Britain with observations culled from many years of acquaintance with a wide range of people, both British and refugees, and with reflections on contemporary issues

like the monarchy and the punishment of criminals.

Among the most interesting sections are Flesch's pen portraits of friends and acquaintances like the impresario Victor Hochhauser, the cartoonist Vicky (Victor Weisz), the sculptor Benno Elkan (a Jewish refugee two of whose candelabra, inspired by the Old and New Testaments, are in Westminster Abbey), and Kurt Hahn, his headmaster at the school of Salem in Germany, who later founded Gordonstoun, where he numbered both Prince Philip and Prince Charles among his pupils. Flesch even dared to stand up to the formidable Hans Keller, musicologist and arbiter of BBC Radio 3's classical music output, backing his late father's adverse judgment of the violinist Huberman in the face of Keller's more favourable view; we then learn about Keller's successes with the football pools, a piece of inside information surely available nowhere else. Keller's widow, the artist Milein Cosman, remains one of the author's close friends.

It is not every day that one reads a book by a living author who numbered among his schoolmates Thomas Mann's son Golo, a distinguished writer and historian in his own right, with an acclaimed history of Germany and a book on the seventeenth-century general Wallenstein to his credit. Carl Flesch's book is a living link with the high days of pre-Hitler German culture, when families like the Manns rubbed shoulders with Jewish friends like the conductor Bruno Walter, part of the pre-Nazi cultural golden age to which Germany's Jews contributed so prominently.

For my taste, the author's memories of eminent acquaintances and his vivid recollections of the early years of refugee settlement in Britain are the

best parts of this book. His observations on subjects like paedophilia - the public's reaction to certain forms of 'paedophile' behaviour is, he believes, hysterical and excessive - and the death penalty - the 'only suitable punishment' for certain classes of murder - carry less conviction with me, but his positive remarks on the British monarchy and class system accurately mirror the opinions formed by many refugees in the post-war period, as they came to understand the country in which they settled.

Anthony Grenville

Setting the record straight

**DRESDNER LISTE - MUSIKSTADT
DRESDEN IN
NATIONALSOZIALISTISCHER
JUDENVERFOLGUNG 1933-1945
IN WORT UND BILD: EIN BEITRAG
ZUR DRESDNER
MUSIKGESCHICHTE**

by Agata Schindler

*Dresden: Prohliser Str. 24, 01237,
2003, €15,00 + p&p; email: agata-
achim@t-online.de*

Dresden, who were flattened by the RAF and the USAAF in February 1945, have been sorry for themselves ever since and the world seems to feel sorry for them. But what about the Jews? What Jews? Well, the thousands of Jews whom the good burghers of Dresden hounded out of their jobs and homes from January 1933 onwards, reducing them to penury before they sent them to Riga and Auschwitz. The Frauenkirche became a symbol for Goebbels, neo-Nazis, Communists and useful Western idiots, but the Semper Synagogue, burnt like all the others by keen Dresdeners in November 1938, got no mention. It is an outsider who has made it her business to throw light into this murky corner of Dresden, which claimed to be cultured but

burnt books and killed with malice aforethought the very people who had given this city its reputation as an artistic jewel in the first place.

Agata Schindler, a Slovak Doctor of Music who moved to Dresden in 1981, has since the mid-1990s made it her business to carry out research into Dresden musicians condemned because of their race. She has revealed to us, factually and sympathetically, the pre-1933 elation and success of 12 musicians - performers, conductors, composers or promoters - who had lived for their art and had elevated Dresden, and their post-1933 anguish and despair when their efforts were rewarded with disdain. There are also short notes on 151 musicians who were Dresden-born and performed there in the 1920s and early 1930s and were persecuted because they were Jews, half-Jews or quarter-Jews. Among them are cited 84 musicians who were excluded from all public, musical and cultural life between 1933 and 1938 and had given performances sponsored by the Israelitische Religionsgemeinde, which gave them an outlet for their talent and subsistence since they had lost all income, had been dismissed on the spot, and had been denied pension or compensation. Dr Schindler deals thoroughly with the question of why everybody kept quiet for so long, giving a blow-by-blow chronological account of musical events held in private, on ever-tightening restrictions on life, on the race to escape, on diminishing opportunities, on help from abroad and, finally, on deportations.

This book needs to be translated from German to give it a wider audience. Also typically - because it tells it as it was, and still is - the author has failed to find a German publisher, but the book can be obtained directly from her. It is profusely illustrated.

Frank Bright

THEATRE

A dark, dark tale

THE DEAD FIDDLER

by Isaac Bashevis Singer
adapted and directed by David
Zoob; musical director Roderick
Skeaping

New End Theatre, Hampstead,
North London

Take a small *shtetl* where religious fervour is expressed in Hasidic dancing and singing, where the old way of life is challenged by the new modernism. Add a soupçon of Jewish folkloric mysticism - and what do you get? A journey into the unknown. This is the theme that so fascinated Singer, a Jewish writer from that very era which saw the concepts of Zionism and Socialism rise up in the face of the old, rustic ways. How does a writer on the cusp of two great traditions reconcile these conflicts in his own life? The question troubled Singer, who grew up in a Polish village where his father was a deeply humanistic rabbi. The result is a dark, dark tale: a ghost story with not one ghost but two, which must be laid to rest. The story is the classic tale of a young girl whose body is inhabited by a spirit on the eve of her wedding.

Other Jewish writers too have been attracted to the theme of the *dybbuk*, a spirit whose presence shocks the community into a rude awakening. In most cases, the possession idea has deep political and historical roots, and hints at the Cabbalism which often determines the essence of Jewish thought.

In S. Ansky's 1914 play, the *dybbuk* refers to the broken promise of a love match between a young and gifted Cabbalistic scholar and his fiancée. Ansky's play, written in Russian, impressed Konstantin Stanislavsky, the director of the Moscow Art Theatre, but the author died virtually on the eve of its production and it was performed by a Vilna troupe of players. In Julia Pascale's *Dybbuk*, the place is modern Germany, which the

author considers so utterly *judenrein* as to suggest that Hitler won.

But the original context is restored to the play in this current New End production in which live Klezmer music interweaves with the action as eight musician-actors leap to their feet with their instruments, and stamp out the rhythms of the dying *shtetl*. Lydia Baksh, also on guitar, fervently portrays the hapless young bride, Liebe Yentl, in an acrobatic performance which is as supple as it is soulful. Her desperate family can only watch and pray as the town's assembly of Hasids, rabbis and exorcists attempts to drive out the intrepid spirit of the gypsy musician. And, as suddenly, the rude guy is taken over by a prostitute who makes her own take-over-bid for the soul of poor, innocent Liebe Yentl.

David Zoob, with composer and first violinist Roderick Skeaping of the Jewish Music ensemble The Burning Bush, generates plenty of electricity as well as musical talent, but this subject arguably calls for more passion and depth than can be accommodated on the small stage. There is a hint - but a very subtle one - of Singer's perception of the 'fragile transition' between tradition and modernity.

Gloria Tessler

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Letter
from
Israel

Israel's relations with the Diaspora have always been ambivalent, if not fraught. It is hard to imagine one without the other, though in the 2,000 years of the latter's existence without the former things were not always rosy. In fact, they seem to need one another.

The prominent Israeli writer A. B. Yehoshua recently angered his American hosts when he proclaimed that as an Israeli he did not feel he had much in common with them. He did not go so far as to negate the Diaspora's existence, but his intention was clearly to dissociate Israel from Jews who choose to live outside the country.

The image of Israel that emerges from the media is unavoidably distorted. The items that reach the headlines invariably concern bloody attacks or the antics of a misguided minority which regards it as its inalienable right to exert material and emotional blackmail on a society which adheres to democratic values.

The daily life of the vast majority of Israelis is not one of bloodshed and suffering. Zionism may or may not be a factor, but life on the whole is pleasant for the masses. No one has an hour-long commute to work in overcrowded underground trains. People do not have to endure so-called summers of grey skies and rain. The sun shines here every day for most of the year. There is a plethora of fresh fruit and vegetables, almost universal access to kosher food, and the freedom to adhere to whichever dictates of one's religion one prefers. And best of all, since Israel is a small country, it does not take more than a couple of hours to get together with friends and family.

There are plenty of media reporting the newsworthy aspects of life in Israel. This column seeks to redress that imbalance.

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

A mile or two from the beautiful cathedral town of Wells in Somerset, deep set in lush farmland, lies the tiny village of Wookey - not to be confused with the nearby touristy cave complex of Wookey Hole. Not perhaps the most auspicious area for locating a German Jewish refugee, one might think. Yet it is precisely at this spot where, following their retirement in the mid-1990s, Marianne Parkes and her genial husband Bruce 'landed in the middle of a field'.

Marianne Grünbaum was born in Berlin in 1925, her brother Thomas a year later. Marianne's father was in the clothing industry; her mother was a psychologist, an unusual occupation for a woman of the time. Following the divorce of their parents, the children moved with their mother to the south of Germany, from one place to another as she sought work.

Marianne was sent to a Jewish boarding school in the lovely village of Herrlingen near Ulm. Having been brought up in a 'free-spirited' manner, she found life at the school difficult to fit into. Marianne remembers a garden close by where they lived with a small boy playing in it - she is convinced this was Field Marshal Rommel's son Manfred.

Herrlingen's Burgermeister, an ardent Nazi, made life difficult for the Grünbaum family, who were lodging in a house belonging to a retired landlord and his daughter, both civil servants. Their landlord was told his pension would be stopped and his daughter lose her job if they didn't evict their tenants. It was essential to get back to Berlin to look into the possibility of emigrating. One morning in the early hours the landlord's daughter appeared. Without a word she picked up their suitcases and took them to the station - one of many personal kindnesses Marianne recalls during the family's stay in Herrlingen.

In Berlin railway station, on a dark, wet morning in March 1939, Marianne and her brother's names were called out

PROFILE

Howard Spier

Marianne Parkes 'The past cannot be altered'



by the Kindertransport organisers. She remembers the shock as Thomas's was the first name to be called. There were no long goodbyes.

Marianne and her brother were exceptionally fortunate. Years earlier, Marianne's mother had spent some time at an English school and had become particularly friendly with a pupil there. Though they hadn't been in touch since, the friend offered to take the two children in immediately. The friend who went out of her way to help Marianne and her brother was a relative of Lord Herschell, Britain's Lord Chancellor under Gladstone.

The children were sent to the best schools. Thomas joined the army, married and eventually went to Australia, becoming an engineer. Marianne was keen to study medicine but, other considerations apart, was classed as 'a friendly enemy alien'. She took up nursing children, general nursing and midwifery instead. At the end of the war, Marianne joined the

army too, ending up in the Far East. Back in England again, she trained as a health visitor. But, having, as she puts it, reached the conclusion that nobody actually dropped dead in the street from hunger or disease here, she joined the Colonial Service and spent a number of years in Tanganyika and then Kenya - one of the most fascinating periods of her life. There she met her husband-to-be Bruce - previously a soldier in the British army in Palestine - and they married in Dar es Salaam. When East Africa gained its independence, they returned to England, where they had a son and a daughter, who are now married with their own children.

None of Marianne's family married Jews: it just didn't happen that way, she points out. Yet all of them are aware of their background. Otherwise, 'I wouldn't be a member of the AJR (Bristol group) and other groups.'

A few years ago Marianne heard of a scheme of short visits to Berlin offered by the municipality to Holocaust survivors born in the city. Despite her reservations about digging up the past, Marianne found the Berlin visit she undertook a hugely worthwhile experience. Her observations on the diversity of those she met in her visitors' group are typically humorous. One Kindertransport member, who lived in Peru, 'looked like something out of *Star Wars* with huge pleated shoulders on her jackets. She only spoke Spanish and hardly spoke at all until I dropped a small bag on her nose by mistake. She never stopped after that.' Another visitor looked like 'a faded 1930s film star. She had tufts of brilliant red hair, a sort of Barbara Cartland make-up and more costume jewellery than I have ever seen in one place outside a shop window.'

Marianne is nonetheless at pains to point out that the Berliners who organised these trips were 'of the next generation. They had read the right books and done their research but they were not here in 1939. The past cannot be altered...'

INSIDE the AJR

South-West Midlands and the friendly ghost

We had a delightful meeting at the home of Margaret Conu and Bruce Heywood. The house is said to be haunted by a friendly ghost of indeterminate sex known as Fred or Freda. It was the best attended meeting we have had and an outstanding social gathering.

Richard Neubauer

Next meeting: Sun 16 July at home of Richard and Wendy Neubauer in Forest of Dean. Followed by a boat trip on the River Wye

Brighton & Hove Sarid talk on Papua New Guinea

Economist and social anthropologist Professor Scarlett Epstein spoke to us about her experiences in Papua New Guinea, where she had been teaching at Madang Catholic University. We enjoyed looking at vivid images of folklore on campus on DVD and there were several questions from the audience.

Fausta Shelton

Next meeting: Mon 19 June. Writers' contributions

Liverpool speaker's unconventional life

Dr Max Block told us about his unusual life - from his scramble to the UK from Germany up to his time on a kibbutz. Here he lived in tents, in an atmosphere of religious socialism, with people who, having survived the war, had various peculiarities. Friendly Arab neighbours, new Jewish immigrants from Iran, Iraq and Kurdistan - he met them all. Dr Block ended up as a financial advisor - and he plays in the Wimbledon veterans tennis championship.

Gerald Jayson

Pinner: touring with Lady Montefiore

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, who has made a special study of the Montefiore nineteenth-century travels to the Holy Land, described the problems facing the intrepid Lady Montefiore travelling by horse-drawn carriage with or without her illustrious husband, meeting famous people and doing good works. Prone to sea sickness, Lady Montefiore carried aboard ship Passover *afikomans* to

sprinkle over tempestuous waves in order to calm them.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thur 8 June, 2.00 pm. Michael Newman, Central Office for Holocaust Claims

Enjoyable afternoon in Hull

Keen interest among members in the Imre Kertesz film *Fateless* is to be pursued by arranging a viewing. Veronica Keczkas and Susanne Green told us about the unveiling of the Leeds Holocaust Memorial Book. Support for joining an AJR 'London Day Out' with an overnight stay was expressed. Finally, we discussed efforts by Peter Kurer to obtain recognition for the Quakers, who rescued many Jews from the Nazis. A most enjoyable afternoon's fellowship at Harold Rose's home.

Bob Rosner

Next meeting: Sun 23 July at home of Bob Rosner

Fighting crime in Oxford

Graham Milne, a civilian Crime Reduction officer, advised an attentive audience on aspects of improving the community's safety. Myrna Glass thanked the speaker for his timely comments.

Jussi Brainin

Next meeting: Tues 20 June. Eli Benson of Magen David Adom

Essex miracle

We had a social get-together in Fay Sober's beautiful home. She catered everything herself, including baking the bread. A member read us a true story about the miraculous re-encounter of a mother with her long-lost son under the Nazis.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tues 13 June. HGS visit and lunch

Thorny subject tackled in Ilford

Consultant solicitor Raymond Rudie enlightened over 25 of us on making wills and on how essential this was. He also explained the intricacies of inheritance tax and gave us a few ideas on how to minimise it. He answered our many questions patiently and we all learned a great deal on this thorny subject

Meta Roseneil

Next meeting: Wed 7 June. Katharina Hübschmann on the Wiener Library

North London 'Any Questions' session

Our advertised speaker having had to cancel for family reasons, the indomitable Walter Woyda once again stepped into the breach. Walter had prepared a number of

questions on issues such as the NHS, the local elections, and the future of the AJR - which were discussed, sometimes with considerable passion.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thur 29 June. Slide show by Clement Kryslar on 'Gemstone and Minerals'

Leeds HSFA and the Austria patent

Dr Nina Collins gave a very interesting account of a patent granted in Austria shortly before WWII. Ostensibly, the purpose of the patent was to enhance the appearance of Jewish cemeteries. But on closer inspection, it was evident that the real purpose was to interfere with the Jewish tradition of visitors leaving small stones on graves.

Martin Kapel

Pinner talk on refugees in uniform

Some 60 people heard Helen Fry speak about 'Refugees in Uniform in WW2'. About 25 per cent of us had either been involved or had relatives who were. Helen traced the aliens in the Pioneer Corps from Kitchener Camp to its move to Ilfracombe. There are few records of women in uniform but we had one in the audience! There was a lively exchange of reminiscences.

Paul Samet

Next meeting: Thur 6 July. Neville Nagler on his work at the Sternberg Foundation

Manchester lecture on post-Holocaust theology

Over 40 members heard Dr Daniel Langton, from Manchester University's Centre of Jewish Studies, give a brilliant lecture on post-Holocaust theology. It became apparent that responses to the question 'Why was this allowed to happen?' were varied and even contradictory, but none could be simply disregarded.

Werner Lachs

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Herts 8 June Social get-together at home of Monica Rosenbaum

Cardiff 12 June Lunchtime social get-together (tbc)

Oxford 20 June Eli Benson of Magen David Adom

East Midlands (Nottingham) 21 June Lunchtime social get-together at home of Ruth and Jürgen Schwiening

Cambridge 22 June Details to follow

Hendon 26 June Inaugural meeting. Details from Head Office

Wessex 27 June Outing to Isle of Wight

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Northern Second Generation gathering

Our fifth meeting, in Leeds, was attended by people from, among other places, Manchester, York and the Lake District. Among subjects discussed were identity and how we view our 'legacy'. We propose to visit Beth Shalom Centre in September and to meet again in Leeds in November. For further information, contact Barbara Dresner Dorrity on 0161 368 5088 or at barbara@ajr.org.uk.



Over 130 people witnessed the unveiling of the Leeds, Bradford and Harrogate Continental Friends Holocaust Memorial in Leeds (a full story of the event will appear in the next issue of the Journal)



Hermann Hirschberger led this year's Yom Hashoah prayers at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre (see p.16)

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KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, London, NW6
Tel: 020 7328 0208

AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

Wednesday 21 June 2006

Alf Keiles

'The Jewish Influence on Jazz'

**KT-AJR Kindertransport
special interest group**

Monday 5 June 2006

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Karl A. Bettelheim

will speak about his experiences in
Shanghai

Reservations required

Please telephone 020 7328 0208

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
9.30 am - 3.30 pm

June	Afternoon Entertainment
Thur 1	Ronnie Goldberg
Sun 4	CLOSED
Mon 5	KT LUNCH Kards & Games Klub
Tue 6	CLOSED
Wed 7	Jenny Kossew
Thur 8	Simon Gilbert
Sun 11	CLOSED
Mon 12	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 13	CLOSED
Wed 14	Katinka Seiner
Thur 15	Madeleine Whitson
Sun 18	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon 19	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 20	CLOSED
Wed 21	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 22	Geoffrey Strum
Sun 25	CLOSED
Mon 26	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 27	CLOSED
Wed 28	Jack Davidoff
Thur 29	Margaret Opdahl

DIARY DATES

June 7	Visit to Cabinet War Rooms with Lunch
June 11-18	Eastbourne holiday
June 27	AGM
July 9-16	Lytham St Annes holiday
July 11	Day trip to Brighton
August 23	Lunch at Day Centre, afternoon trip to Tiptree for Cream Tea
September 10	Annual Tea at the Watford Hilton
Oct 29-Nov 5	Bournemouth holiday

For further information about any of these events, please call us on 020 8385 3070.

'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

Editorials and articles published, and opinions expressed, in the *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations

Congratulations to my grandchildren Laura and Philip Godfrey on the arrival of Isabel Kate, a sister for Alexander and another grandchild for Marion and Anthony Godfrey and Vicki and Ronald Rosenblatt. Proud great-grandma Gerda Wiener.

Kadisich, Debora. I wish my mother mazeltov on the occasion of her 99th birthday on 8 June 2006. With all my love. Margaret Mager.

Kadisich, Debora. Happy birthday, darling Debby. Keep smiling. Love, Lore.

Deaths

Glaser, Jacob (Jack). Much loved husband, father and grandfather, passed away on 28 April after a lengthy illness. May his soul rest in peace. Ruth, Paul, Miriam and Mark.

Levy, Dr Werner. Born in Berlin, son of Ernst and Betty (née Bradt) Levy, brother of Margot (Hirst) and Ursula (Neville); died 5 April 2006 at the Royal Free Hospital aged 89. Educated at Friedrich-Werdersches Gymnasium, Berlin; qualified as a doctor in Glasgow. Was a veteran of internment in the Isle of Man and Canada, and of the British, Australian and New Zealand Armies' Medical Corps, serving in Somaliland, Kenya, Japan and New Zealand. Set up medical practice in Canfield Gardens, NW6, which he ran, single-handed, from the 50's to the 80's, becoming well respected in the community and loved by his patients. He never married and is survived by two nephews. It was his express request that he be cremated without ceremony or anyone in attendance. The cremation took place at Knebworth on 21 April.

Day Centre

Chiropodist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre 14 June between 10 and 11.30 am.

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North of England Social Worker

The AJR is now recruiting for a second social worker in the North of England, preferably based in the Yorkshire or North-East area, to assist our members in the North-East of England.

To apply for this rewarding full-time post (30 hours per week), you must be a qualified social worker, be able to work on your own initiative, and computer-literate. You must also hold a full driving license and be willing to travel as required.

For further details, please email your CV to Carol Rossen at carol@ajr.org.uk.



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Belsize Under 3's: 9.30 am - 11.30 am

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HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

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Obituary

Sir Hans Singer, Development Economist

The passing of Professor Sir Hans Singer is a sad event not only for his close kin and friends but for the entire world. I am privileged to have been able to spend many hours with him discussing all sorts of problems. In our talks, he bridged the gap that so often exists between macro-development economists and micro-social anthropologists.

I not only learned a great deal from his wide-ranging wisdom but also came to appreciate what a kind and modest man he was. He repeatedly told me he could not understand why people thought so highly of him and all he had done: he himself saw nothing extraordinary in any of it.

In reply to my many questions about what had made him so concerned about inequality and poverty, Hans's answer was: 'I consider myself extremely lucky compared with the millions of my fellow German Jews and other persecuted minorities, who perished in concentration camps.'

Hans became my role model and mentor. I am grateful for all he taught me and the courage he gave me to continue fighting for the better world he envisaged.

Professor T. Scarlett Epstein
(extracts from eulogy)

Arts & Events Diary - June

To mid-July Holocaust Memorial Photographic Exhibition 'Absence and Loss' at Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre, Notts Tel Marion Davies on 01623 836627

Mon 5 No lecture (Bank Holiday) Club 43

Thur 8 Roman Halter in Conversation with Fergal Keane London Jewish Cultural Centre, 7.30 pm. Tel 020 8457 5000

Mon 12 Dr Nicholas Worrall, 'The Influence of Russian Avant-garde Artists on Soviet Theatre Production' Club 43

Mon 19 Prof Susan Neiman, 'Natural and Unnatural Evils' Venue: Wiener Library, 7.00 pm. Tel Leo Baeck Institute on 020 7580 3493

Mon 19 Dr E. M. Batley, 'Mozart and Schikaneder's *Magic Flute*: Fusion, Profusion or Confusion?' Club 43

Thur-Fri 22-23 'Teaching and Researching the Politics of Mass Murder' Two-day international conference. Kingston University, London. Contact Penny Tribe on 020 8547 7884

Mon 26 AGM Club 43

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

Search Notices

Anspacher - Bernd (or Bernhard), later changed to Anson, and Gunther Weiss, who became Joe White. Bernd lived in Dewsbury, Yorks; Gunther lived in London. Info pls to James Schultz, 275 Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11205, USA or jamesjschultz@verizon.net

Army interrogators in WW2 - For Channel 4 TV programme we are looking for people who worked in places like The London Cage and Bad Nenndorf. Call Liz Webster at Guardian Films on 020 7886 9799

Bratz, Hilda - b. Poland 1914, daughter of shirt tailor Josef Bratz. Married Victor Smith, my father, in London in 1948. Died Hampstead 2001. Info pls to Jenny Ciampa, 4 Cholmeley Park, London N6 5EU jennyciampa@hotmail.co.uk

Buchdahl, Werner - from Wiesbaden. Came to London 1939 to join army. Was friend of my father Otto Hess. Info pls to johnskinner6@aol.com

Co-ed Jewish school in Poland - evacuated to Denmark then Wales 1939. When the teachers were interned in 1940 some or all of the pupils were temporarily housed with Quaker Walter Birmingham near Dorking, Surrey. Info pls to Mark Bridge, 10 Torriano Cottages, London NW5 2TA; tel 020 7267; M.D.P. M.D.P.Bridge@city.ac.uk

Glaser, Edith and her mother Mitli (Marianne) - emigrated from Vienna to UK in 1938. Info pls to Jussi Brainin, 13 High Street, Ascott-U-Wychwood, Oxfordshire OX7 6AW or tel 01993 830 725. Acting on behalf of Dr Gustav Beck, residing in USA

Love during WW2 - Were you a German refugee who had a love affair with a British person during the war? Testimony Films is making a series for UK TV History. Contact Lisa Lipman on 0117 925 8589

Millisle Farm Belfast - Anyone who went there on Kindertransport, or knows anyone who did, pls contact me re novel I am writing. Ruth Tobin at rtobin55@hotmail.com

Rosenberg, Hans - I am seeking proof my father was deprived of German citizenship. He came to South Africa in 1939. Info pls to Hans Rosenberg at hans@capehols.co.za

Winter, Dr Pavel - b. 1904 Straznice. Parents were Moric and Ruzena. Younger sister Nelly was a pharmacist in Uhersky Hradiste. He studied law. In 1941 joined Czech Army in exile in Palestine. Mid-1943 left for England on *Mauretania*. In 1949 was registered with 'Joint' in Paris as staying with 'A. Waldmann' in London W6. Naturalised in 1950 as Paul Winter. Became known as biblical scholar with 1961 book *The Trial of Jesus*. Died October 1969 when living in NW6. I'd like to find his grave. Pls contact Daniela Torsh, 15 William Street, Balmain, NSW, 2041 danielat1@bigpond.com

Central Office for Holocaust Claims Michael Newman

Extension of Belgian scheme

The deadline of the Solidarité 3000 compensation programme, previously featured in the *AJR Journal*, has been extended to **30 June 2006**.

The Solidarité 3000 initiative entitles Holocaust survivors who lived in Belgium between 1 May 1940 (beginning of the German occupation) and September 1944 (the liberation) to a minimum of 3,000 euros in reparations. Holocaust victims who have previously received less than 3,000 euros in compensation are eligible for the difference up to that amount. *Shoah* victims who have never applied for compensation for lost or stolen assets or previously been ineligible to apply are now entitled to claim.

Application forms together with an English translation are available from the AJR and, once completed, should be sent by post to the Fondation du Judaïsme de Belgique, Avenue Ducpetiaux 68, 1060 Brussels, Belgium.

Netherlands art restitution

Following a recommendation from the Ekkart Committee, the Dutch government has announced a new deadline - **4 April 2007** - for applications to the NK collection of artworks.

The NK collection comprises 4,217 works of art - including 1,750 paintings - many of which were owned by Jews before the Second World War but were confiscated or purchased illegally by members of the German occupying force.

Information about the NK collection and applications for restitution should be sent to: The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Attn State Secretary for Culture, Postbus 16375, 2500 BJ Den Haag, The Netherlands.

Further details of this scheme and the efforts made by the Dutch state to return looted art are available at www.originsunknown.org and www.restitutiecommissie.nl

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

Remarkable Israel

It is always a special pleasure to celebrate a *simcha* in Israel, especially among my Israeli wife Sima's close family, where the warmth, vitality and Jewish milieu come guaranteed - not to mention fine weather and unimaginably large banquets. Last year, it was the wedding of our elder daughter Joanna to Dan in Eilat. This year, it was the nuptials of Dana, daughter of her youngest brother Yitzhaac and his wife Batsheva. At the wedding garden near Kibbutz Naan, little more than a stone's throw from Moshav Yashresh, where the whole family were nurtured and our own wedding reception was held nearly 34 years ago, a large outdoor reception area was entirely surrounded by stalls with an amazing variety of *Vorspeizers*, more than enough to keep all the guests replete.

With the arrival of the beautiful bride and her beau, Shahar, together they ascended the steps to a floodlit *chupah*. Though the decorum is not quite St Johns Wood, and the inevitable photographers blocked our lines of sight, the traditional vows were recited and the groom proclaimed 'Be thou my wife according to the laws of Moses and Israel' and pledged to be a good Jewish husband - only in our ancient-modern tongue, *Ivrit*. His traditional stamping on a glass, which of course alludes to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, was greeted with enthusiastic cries of *mazaltov*. Nothing now prevented us from entering the banquetting suite seating 500 guests for a long evening of celebration with music and dancing, eating and drinking, and hope for the newlyweds and the family with which, in time, it was anticipated they would be blessed.

Will they and their children be left in peace to prosper in this remarkable and incredibly successful country, little more than half a century old and utterly unique in the history of the world, with Jews originating from more than 70 countries? Not 60 years after the European Holocaust, will threats to Israel's very

existence cease from non-rational atavistic leaders who substitute glorification of death for the progress to which their own youth are entitled?

Our time in Israel followed immediately upon the general election at which the incumbent prime minister was a comatose non-participant and the party he had recently formed, *Kadimah* (Forward), with which to fight the election on policies to withdraw from most of the West Bank, secured a qualified mandate. For the first time, a pensioners' party is to be represented in the government and, in another first step, neither the incoming prime minister nor his defence minister will have been serving generals.

Yom Hashoah commemorations

With the introduction of Holocaust Memorial Day as an annual national event, some confusion was perhaps inevitable. For the Jews, however, there is no doubt that *Yom Hashoah* is the day on which we commemorate the Nazi genocide against our coreligionists, all too many of whom were the close relatives of AJR members.

Having been honoured to lead prayers for the six million victims at the service held at the AJR Paul Balint Centre in West Hampstead, I called upon the generous participation of Herman Hirschberger, chairman of our Kindertransport planning group, who gave a moving address and recited the *Kaddish*. Similar *Yom Hashoah* commemorations have increasingly become a part of the programmes of synagogues throughout the country. I attended my local service at Radlett US, where Mala Tribich's account of her immense hardships and losses could not fail to move. At Pinner Synagogue, Gaby Glassman presented Daniel Finkelstein, Associate Editor of *The Times*, and his mother Mirjam, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen and daughter of the late Dr Alfred Wiener, the founder of the Wiener Library.

Newsround

Austrian President admits popular support for Anschluss

Austria's President, Heinz Fischer, has become the country's first head of state to admit that a large number of its citizens welcomed Adolf Hitler with open arms when he annexed the country. President Fischer said he also regretted that Austria had not reached out at the end of the war to Jews who had fled because of the Anschluss.

Rise in convictions of Nazi war criminals

Convictions of Nazi war criminals rose more than threefold in the past year, challenging conventional wisdom that suspects are now too old to be prosecuted, the Simon Wiesenthal Center (SWC) says. The Center stated that most fresh investigations and convictions occurred in Italy, Poland, Germany and the USA. Austria was singled out for 'consistent failure' to prosecute Milivoj Asner, a police chief under Croatia's pro-Nazi Ustase regime who, the Center said, had been living in Klagenfurt.

Racism in Russia

According to a report into violent racism by Amnesty International, racist killings in Russia are 'out of control'. In 2005, the report shows, at least 28 people were killed and 366 were assaulted. An Amnesty International spokesperson said that the Russian government should adopt a comprehensive 'plan of action' to combat racism and antisemitism.

NatWest swastikas to remain

Following a complaint from a customer, the NatWest Bank has refused to get rid of two swastikas from a branch floor mosaic. The swastikas can be seen in the tiled floor of the foyer of the branch in Bolton, near Manchester. NatWest said the symbols were an original feature of the branch and predated Hitler's rise to power.

Umlaut victorious

Moben, the kitchen furniture company, has won a five-year battle for the right to use an umlaut in its name. The Advertising Standards Authority has concluded that use of the spelling Möben does not imply that the company's kitchens were made in Germany.