



# Kindertransport

A special interest group of

**The Association of Jewish Refugees**  
SERVING HOLOCAUST REFUGEES AND SURVIVORS NATIONWIDE



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[www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport.htm](http://www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport.htm)**

**Dear Kinder and Friends**



***From the Editor's Desk***

Since the last edition of the Newsletter, it has been an exciting time. 23rd June saw a most successful Reunion with some 600 attending not only from the UK but from USA, Canada, Israel and various parts of Europe. Thanks must go to all those involved in its organisation. On 24th June, HRH Prince Charles welcomed us warmly to St James's Palace. Other events will follow in this 75th anniversary year of the Kindertransport. More than ever, we received a lot of coverage from the media, the papers, TV, radio.

Contents in this issue cover a variety of material, both national and international. The sad item is the report of Inge, Bertha's sister. Our deepest sympathies and condolences go to her family.

Shanah Tovah – may this year be a healthy and peaceful one for you dear readers and your families.

*Bernd.*

Dear Fellow Kinder

I hope those who managed to participate in our celebrations enjoyed and were proud of the occasions. The 75th anniversary certainly raised our profile considerably with in the British public. I was particularly happy that so many of you and your off spring participated. There were just under 600 at JFS and about 400 at St James's Palace. Well done to you all! There are still of course a couple of events to come The House of Lords in November and the occasion of the first group arriving at Liverpool Street Station in early December.

I assume you enjoyed the wonderful sunshine this summer. Just in case the opportunity does not present itself later I wish you and your families an early Shanah Tovah and Chag Sameach.

From your



Chairman

## **Reality of Symbols**

Scales are the symbol for the month of Tishri, as in this month our actions are 'weighed' by God and on the result our future is decided. The Festivals during this month help us, so that hopefully, the scales tip in our favour, for a year of blessing and good. Each of the three Festivals have their specific rituals or symbolic ceremonies.

Rosh Hashanah demands that we hear the Shofar as stated in the blessing recited before the Shofar is blown. There are several explanations for the Shofar, but I have chosen just two. The sound of the notes should stir us to look at ourselves, to see what we have achieved in the past year and how we may correct our faults. The other explanation refers to the Akedah, the Binding of Isaac, which teaches us obedience to Divine commands and is also interpreted as a forerunner of martyrdom; thus it makes us aware that being Jewish can place heavy demands on us. Apple and honey, as well as other dishes, symbolise the hope of a 'sweet' and pleasant year and to be 'on top of things.' The final verses of the book of Micah, especially 7:19, form the basis of Tashlich ('casting') introduced in 14th century and represents the casting away of our sins into the depths, water cleansing us of them.

As Yom Kippur begins, we declare with a short formula, dating from the Middle Ages, our intent to pray with Avaryanim, whatever their religious standing. This term means 'transgressors' and refers to the ordinary sinners, to those who have been excommunicated or perhaps to those who returned to Judaism after forced

conversion to Christianity. The soul-stirring melody of Kol Nidrei, perhaps more so than the words, sets the tone for the day as a whole. The legalistic terms Kol Nidrei ask for vows to be absolved. During Musaf, we recall the Temple ritual for the day. On the whole, the only 'ritual' is prayer and reflection, deepened by the fasting as well as resolutely pleading for Divine forgiveness for our sins, both as an individual and as part of the entity of Jewry (hence ashamnu, etc, meaning 'we have sinned, etc).

Sukkot we look to the harvest which is so dependent on rain as well as on our obedience to the word of God - ("And it shall be if you indeed heed my commandments...then I will provide rain in your land in its due season...." – second paragraph of the Shema). Harvest and rain are symbolised by the Four Species (Lulav, etc.) Waving the Lulav in six directions represents the abundance obtained from above (heaven), below (earth, from under and above the ground) and the four directions. The Sukkah, (like the guardian hut in the vineyard – Isaiah 1:8) recalls Divine protection, be it in general terms or for the harvest as well. Of the harvest one had to give tithes, to share with others, so that the Sukkah with Ushpisin (the invited guests, Abraham, Isaac, etc.), one each day, enjoins us to be hospitable and share with others that they too have food.

The seventh day, Hoshana Rabbah, is a final appeal for forgiveness, before God closes the Books. The beating of the willows, among other reasons, displays the shedding of any sins. Finally, Shemini Atzeret invokes rain through our prayers and is followed by Simchat Torah (in Israel the two days are 'one') when we rejoice with and in the Torah and really hope all our prayers have been accepted, as we finish and restart the reading of the Torah. In Jewish life, as we finish one mitzvah, we immediately start on the next. Examples are: beginning work on the Sukkah as Yom Kippur finishes, or as we finish one section of the Talmud we immediately start on the next one.

Shanah Tovah and Chag Sameach - May the joy of the Chaggim (Festivals), dear readers, extend for you and yours into the year ahead and after.

*Bernd Koschland*



## HRH Prince Charles with William Kaczynski



*Photograph by Paul Burns*

The picture shows William presenting his book 'Fleeing from the Führer' to His Royal Highness at the Kindertransport reunion in June.

William, aged 3, came with his parents from Berlin. His father was interned on the Isle of Man. Eventually he worked with his father in the hat trade. Later William became Director of Production for Jane Colletts Hats.

His interest in the subject of his book was roused when he came across an envelope from his cousin who was in a camp sent to William's mother on the Isle of Man. Thus he started to collect material and gave talks on the subject. The British Library heard of his talk and asked him to put it in book form. This he did with his co-author Charmian Brinson, Professor of German Studies at Imperial College, who was a hard taskmaster to ensure absolute historical correctness.

### Short review of the book

At the time of writing this short paragraph, I am only a short way through this fascinating book, so beautifully illustrated. Whilst the book may appear depicting postal history from a certain slant, that slant adds much important material to an aspect of the Shoah as a whole. Chapter 10 is a vital section of the story; one can read the book in any order!

## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET**

At a recent meeting of the Borough Council, the following motion was put by Councillor John Marshall:

"Council notes that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport programme, which saw 10 000 Jewish children rescued from the perils of the Third Reich and brought to safety in the United Kingdom. Swiftly mobilised in the

aftermath of Kristallnacht the scheme saw the British Government waive immigration requirements in order to allow an unlimited number of children to enter the country unaccompanied.

This was a uniquely British programme of which as a country we should be proud. Council would therefore like to extend its thanks to all those who enabled, Organised and delivered this scheme, from the Government of the day and World Jewish Relief to the individuals who helped arrange the transports and the families and institutions who cared for the children on arrival.

Council further notes that many of the Kindertransport children came to settle in Barnet. Council wishes to thank them for their excellent contributions to the local community and those of the wider Kindertransport group to British society.”

(The above motion was passed unanimously, and as Councillor Marshall commented to me, a rare event in Council meetings! BK)

## **AN AMERICAN KIND-SECOND GENERATION**

I grew up knowing bits and pieces of my mother's past, but never the whole story. My sister and I knew that she had been born in Austria and that our grandparents had sent her on a train to England when she was 13 years old, but I didn't find out that other children had gone too, that she was rescued by the Kindertransport movement, until I was in my twenties.

I always knew my mother was different. Different from the American mothers of the kids I grew up with in New York. She had an accent, and when my mother and grandmother were together, they quickly shifted from speaking English to German. But my mother did not want my sister and myself to learn German. My mother and grandmother spoke of Vienna, of my grandfather's business, the Apotheke Schutzengel on Meidlinger Hauptstrasse, of the apartment in Hitzing where my mother had a little garden in the backyard, but it was clear that my sister and I could not ask any questions. There were photo albums filled with pictures of unidentifiable relatives, and once I saw the page on which my grandfather had scrawled in red ink "Mein bruder Sigmund gemordat in Hitler's konzentrations lager Dachau and mein bruder Max vergast mit tochter und enkelkind vom Hitler gas Auschwitz."

In 1938 my mother was an upper middle class Jewish child assimilated into Viennese. Her parents like so many others could not believe that what was happening in Germany would ever happen in Austria. My aunt Lilly even told me her memory of being at the opera on the eve of the Anschluss: she remembered a big commotion at intermission, and it was not clear to me if the audience left before the final curtain. My grandfather, though born in pre WWI Austria, was on the Polish quota, and, though he applied to many countries, none would take him. My grandmother would not leave Vienna without him. So in January 1939, they put their daughter on a train carrying 200 children away, to safety. My mother waved good-bye, excited by this

great adventure, only to realize hours later that she was truly alone, going to a strange country. And that she might never see her parents again.

I grew up with a mother afraid, afraid of crowds and men in uniform, anxious that the world was not a safe place, that conditions could change and danger suddenly arise. Don't misunderstand, my mother was a highly successful and accomplished woman. My mother, Ruth Morley, nee Birnholz, was an Academy Award nominated costume designer for her work on *The Miracle Worker*. She also designed costumes for *Annie Hall*, *Taxi Driver*, *The Hustler*, *Tootsie* and other American films. Yet there was a fragility I felt but couldn't comprehend. It wasn't until I was in college and studying documentary film that I was able to ask my mother explicit questions about her past, and that she was able to sit down and talk to me, to share her difficult memories in a clear and linear manner. When she saw that I was serious in wanting to know, and when I had filled her apartment with a small film crew and large equipment she was able to open up. And I was able to learn and to make a film.

I travelled throughout the US and Europe, to film festivals, cinemas, museums, and universities, with *My Knees Were Jumping; Remembering the Kindertransports*, the film I made. And the most memorable screenings were those after which members of the second generation spoke with me about how seeing the film made them determined to speak with their parents, to break through the protective barricades we've put up on both sides: our parents not wanting to speak with us about their past as they don't want to cause us pain, and, as they are not sure that we really are interested and want to listen – why should they open themselves up to share their intimate sorrows with people who are not interested; and our fear of intruding, of pushing or damaging our parents with our questions, which can easily be interpreted as disinterest. We, in the next generations, do want to know. We want to know our parents' and grandparents' life-stories, so that we can understand our family histories, and so that we can share the Kindertransport story with others, so that it is not forgotten.

As the first member of the second generation to be elected President of the Kindertransport Association I am charged with creative thinking about how we, the second, third, and fourth generations, will continue to share the history and lessons of the Kindertransport. And I have questions:

How do we best incorporate the lessons of the Kindertransports into our lives today?

How do we manage the transition as we move from our parents sharing their stories by speaking in schools and other venues, to being ourselves responsible for sharing their stories and continuing to increase public awareness of the Kindertransports?

How do we build on the community created by Kindertransport reunions, so that we can support each other and share ideas and resources more easily?

I invite all the generations to contact me to brainstorm, plan, and create, together.

*Melissa Hacker*

[info@kindertransport.org](mailto:info@kindertransport.org)

## **‘UPSTAIRS AND DOWNSTAIRS’ – IN SUNDERLAND!**

On 5th June 1939 I left Berlin on a Kindertransport. Only 2 adults were allowed to see us off; we had to say goodbye in a special waiting room. The scene remains in my memory to this day. We older ones had to keep a ‘stiff upper lip.’ The volunteers who accompanied us, asked the older ones - I was 12 – to look after the younger ones. On the platform SA and Police surrounded us; a few policemen called out “Gute Reise,” as we boarded the train, with our small suitcase and a small bag; round our necks hung an identification label with name and destination. We were welcomed once we had crossed into Holland with food, drink and toys for the younger ones. We eventually boarded a ferry, for many the first sight of the sea.

We disembarked in Harwich next day and entrained for Liverpool Street Station. On arrival, we were taken to a large hall where we were sorted out as to where and to whom we would be going. With a new identity label with name and destination, I was put in charge of two smaller girls. We were also given a ten shilling note – a lot of money in those days. Next we travelled on the Flying Scotsman in charge of the guard. He sat us in the dining car, where some passengers ordered food and drink for us, refugees – this was the first time I heard that word. I could only smile in thanks, as I knew no English.

We were met in Newcastle by two ladies and driven to Sunderland to reach what was to be our new home, 2 Kensington Esplanade, which was a four-storey, double-fronted upper middle class Victorian mansion. Miss Schlüssel, the matron, Miss Rosenberg the cook and the maids, Rose and Maud waited to receive us and show us to our rooms. After a bath and snacks they sent us straight to bed.

Next morning, Regina the oldest girl, showed us round the house. All 27 of us girls were divided into three groups, little, middle and big ones. (the original text then follows with a detailed description of the house, redolent of olden times, laundry room, laundry-drying pulleys, dressers along walls. Mostly six girls slept in a room.) As usual in those old houses, there was just one small coal fireplace. It was always cold – even in the summer. Anyone who has seen the television programme ‘Upstairs and Downstairs@ would be able to visualise our new home.

After two weeks in local schools, the committee decided that priority was English lessons. To that end they hired a delightful retired teacher, Miss Robinson, who looked and dressed like Mary Poppins. She really cared for us. For her birthday, each girl received a photo album with a loving greeting on the front page. The postman’s arrival was an eagerly awaited event. He would arrive waving a handful of letters from afar.

The summer of 1939 was hot and sunny and we would go down to the beach, two by two in crocodile fashion. People would stop us with good wishes, money for ice-

cream and even cinema tickets. I remember seeing *The Great Dictator* with Charlie Chaplin. On Shabbat we alternated between two Shuls, the 'Englishe Shul' with Rabbi Toperoff (who conducted the Seder for us) and also the 'Beis Hamidrash' where Rabbi Rabinowitz was Rabbi. [I have changed the Shul names by what they were known. Ed.]

September 3rd brought a change when the matron assembled us in the playroom and asked us to sit quietly on the floor and listen to Mr Chamberlain declaring war; I understood very little of his speech. Then the air-raid siren wailed for the first time. We took our gas-masks off our numbered towel hooks and together with our most valued possessions proceeded down into the cellar, into the wine-cellar section, now empty, which served as an air-raid shelter. After the 'All Clear,' we went back upstairs.

As war progressed air-raid wardens would check us. We were near one of the main targets of the area, the entrance to a railway tunnel. There were many raids and houses were destroyed. The beaches were closed with barbed wire. Fewer and fewer letters had arrived, till they stopped altogether. Blackout, food rationing and clothing coupons were introduced. Many nights we had to spend in the shelter.

The Refugee Hostel for Girls in Sunderland was one of the best in the UK. Despite scarcities we were never short of anything. A few of us 'girls', now scattered world-wide, are in regular contact. We shall always remember the kindness and care we received from the Sunderland Community. Whilst many of the girls never saw their parents, I was a lucky one who did.

*Daisy Roessler-Rubin*

I would like to hear from anyone on the 5th June Transport or was a 'Hostel Girl.' My address is 23'8 Akiva Street, Raanana 43261, Israel.

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### **Inge Sedan, 1930 - 2013**

The news of Inge Sedan's passing in July this year, after a brief illness, saddened many people, friends and relatives alike.

Inge (née Engelhard) was one of the Kindertransport children, and arrived in England at the age of nine. She was first sent to Dovercourt, and then joined her older sister, Bertha with a family in Coventry. Bertha Leverton, was the driving force and instigator of the first reunion of former Kindertransportees held in London in 1989, and Inge was active in organizing reunions of the 'Kinder' in Israel, where she immigrated a few years back. She also produced the newsletter that kept the



Kindertransportees in Israel in touch with one another, and managed to get then President, Ezer Weizmann, to speak at the 1994 Kindertransport reunion in Israel.

In her contribution to the collection of memoirs *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports*, edited by Bertha Leverton, Inge tells of the efforts young Bertha made to get Inge accepted into the household where she was staying, and the father's horror upon Inge's arrival to find that the younger sister possessed the terrible blemish of...red hair! She also produced and edited a book entitled *No Longer a Stranger*, containing memoirs written by 'Kinder' in Israel. She also recounted her experiences in the documentary film, 'Into the Arms of Strangers.'

Bertha and Inge were fortunate in that their parents managed to escape from Germany and, aided by the underground movement, make their way through war-stricken Europe to Portugal, and eventually to England, where they were reunited with their daughters. Inge writes very touchingly of the day of her parents' arrival, after many years of separation from their children, and the sense of alienation that the two girls, who were more English than German by then, felt towards them at first.

Inge was born in Munich in 1930 and spent her formative and early adult years in England. In 1957 she married Lesley Sedan. They had two daughters. In 1968 Inge immigrated to Israel. Both her daughters are married and live in Israel.

Inge worked at the head office of Bachad/Bnei Akiva in London and at the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, but devoted a large part of her not inconsiderable energy to her art work, primarily painting on glass.

Inge was also an active member of Bnai Brith during her years in Israel, participating in the meetings of the English-language Albert Einstein Lodge (now defunct), and helping to give it the atmosphere of conviviality and mutual support from which so many of its members, among them my late parents, benefited.

Inge bore her final illness with her customary stoic good humour, and will be missed by all those who knew her. She is survived by her two daughters, Vivian Sedan and Mickey Tokatly, and numerous grandchildren in Israel.

*Dorothea Shefer-Vanson*

## **AN OSCAR IN SIGHT?**

On a sunny June day, BBC came to interview me regarding Kindertransport and my part in it. The interview would be a part of a programme for *Newsnight* on the subject of the Kindertransport on its 75th anniversary.

The phone rang: “Maria (Senior Producer, BBC Newsnight) and John (cameraman) are here. “ I went out to welcome them and bring them in with all the clobber needed. We had not met before, but it was the beginning of, I hope, a good friendship (possibly also a useful one in the future?). I invited them for coffee as after all nothing can be done without such a starter. John set up the equipment and in doing so somewhat re-arranged the lounge and study to obtain the best position for the interview.

Introductory chats and coffee over and done with, the interview began. Maria put questions or short lead-in comments to me. She wanted not so much a straight question with answer, but rather some reflections from me. Maria as an interviewer is an old hand, and a very experienced journalist who travels the world. I am told that I acquitted myself well. John took shots of family photos and especially two items, my travel document and Chumash. I explained the significance of the name Israel on the document and how eventually I had it removed when I received my Alien’s Pass at 16. My reunion with the well-used Chumash was a bit emotional; it contained the short but memorable inscription in Hebrew in my father’s beautiful hand; I explained the wording.

Time to pack up for lunch! The three of us went up the road to eat and then moved on to Tylers Green for a further session. That’s where my acting ‘ability (ability? I await my call to Hollywood any day now!) came in as we filmed outside the area where the hostel was once situated. The church was still there, but the adjacent Old Vicarage (the hostel I was in was in that building) had gone and in its place stood a small housing estate. Standing there brought back many memories as I walked several times, for various shots, towards the Churchyard gate. Where was the gate for the short-cut to the hostel? Taking it was a punishable offence in hostel terms, as I found out on a birthday of mine. I was caught because I had dropped my yarmulke in the churchyard! Gone were the thick bushes along the wall adjoining the church (good for hide-and-seek). I did not recognise the pub opposite – as a young teenager it had made no impression on me. We then moved on to the village green in adjoining Penn – Penn and Tylers Green run into each other. Some more acting by the pond, distracted as we all were by the mother duck and ducklings swimming in it. The scene was delightful in the bright sunlight. Shooting over, we adjourned to the pub nearby, sat in the late afternoon sun enjoying a drink, in my case a half pint of local bitter. As I was going to the car, I heard “Shalom,” and turned to the speaker. She asked whether there was a Jewish Community in the area and a synagogue. I replied that the last service in Tylers Green, to my knowledge, was in July 1945 when the hostel closed. The lady was not Jewish. Looking back at the whole day, I found it a wonderful experience, both the interview bits and also especially talking to Maria and John. Both had worked together on various areas abroad. It was interesting and informative to listen to Maria’s accounts of her various visits to Israel and to Gaza. This was the first time that I had actually spoken with a reporter who had been in Gaza and it was interesting and fascinating to listen.

My most heartfelt thanks go to my newly-found friends, Maria and John. However there was another part: a teaching session on the Kindertransport in the Torriano

Primary School, near my old stamping ground for 24 years, the former site of the JFS School.

Typing must wait – the phone is ringing – could it be that my acting has been noted? – no, it isn't;: “Do you have a claim....?” Yes, caller, for wasting my time.

\* Newsnight on 24th June showed some of the work described above.



### **AN HONORARY Ph.D FOR A KIND**

In 2012 an Honorary Ph.D was awarded to Chanita Rodney by the Hebrew University for the founding of ENOSH (Israel Mental Health Association) and for establishing a fund for brain research at the University in the name of Doris (Dolly) Levy.

Chanita, née Anelise (Liesel) Lowi, was born in Berlin on 14th July 1929 and came to Liverpool with the Kindertransport in July 1939, to stay with childless foster parents Dolly & Leo Levy. She eventually made aliyah in 1949.

She was a stalwart worker for WIZO-Israel, working with Moshavim. She founded ENOSH in 1977, triggered by the mental health problems of the eldest of her 4 children, Rina. Enosh is first mentioned in the Bible as an offspring of Adam and Eve; the Hebrew enosh also means “humanity.” Chanita believed that Eve (Chavah) was the mother of all humanity and thus every individual should be treated as a human being despite any handicap. Unfortunately not everyone complies with this. Hence the significance of ENOSH which is a haven for the mentally afflicted. Chanita’s initiative and dedicated and determined volunteerism brought public recognition that mental illnesses deserve as much attention as physical ones.

She remains Life President of ENOSH. Over the years Chanita and the organisation have received many honours for the volunteer efforts on behalf of mental health. Her most cherished award became the title of her biography *Life is a Gift* (published in 2003). The title refers to what she considered three gifts of life: surviving her 13 week premature birth, her beloved brother Hans who protected her, especially from Hitler Youth; he died in Dachau just before liberation. The third gift was her escape from Germany in 1939.

Dolly (her foster mother) died in 1991 and Chanita implemented the stipulations in Dolly’s will by donating two similar vast sums to the Faculty of Medicine at the Hebrew University and WIZO. The donation to the University was split between renovating the Chemistry Research Centre and the Doris Cecilia Levy Memorial Seminars on Brain Research. Its aim is to attract younger students into research, especially Alzheimer’s disease (from which Leo suffered), Schizophrenia (from which Rina suffers) and Parkinson’s.

Chanita now lives in Kfar Saba. The First Lady of Israel, Reuma Weitzmann summed up Chanita so well: “A gift to Israel society in general and to the mentally ill in particular.”

Chanita and her daughter Rina will be coming to Liverpool later in the year.

*Johnny Cohen*

### **YOM HASHOAH - Hyde Park 2013**

Seventy Years ago Jews once again took up arms against their oppressors –the previous time was during the battles of Bar Kochba against the might of Rome. Now it was in Warsaw; regrettably the revolt ended in tragedy, a tragedy which we commemorate today. Only Divine intervention could have averted the deaths of the gibborim, and kedoshim, the mighty warriors and martyrs. These latter gibborim give full meaning to the actual name of this day, Yom Hashoah veHagvurah, of Whirlwind destruction and Might. Shoah and gevurah reflect the deeper message of the day. Within that destruction, which we also term the Holocaust, there was strength and might in the gibborim, the fighters, to fight against a superior force, in a battle to survive as Jews.

Survive is the key word in this commemoration. Survive is also the motif of another commemoration. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Kindertransport, the first of which arrived on 2nd December 1938 from Vienna. Around 9-10 000 of us Kinder eventually arrived on these shores till the outbreak of war. We are thankful to the British Government for giving us safety and security and enable us to survive as Jews, whereas other countries did little or nothing until it was too late. A million other children went through Hell and did not survive; may their dear souls rest in peace.

The Talmud (Megillah7a) touches on the questions voiced by some to this day: “Why commemorate the past at all? The present is the important thing! Others feel that somehow our memory should really live in that tragic past. In a conversation with the scholars of her time, Esther said that she wanted to be commemorated for future generations. The scholars replied, “You will invite the ill-will of the nations against us.” She answered that she was already inscribed in the chronicles of Media and Persia.

Likewise the events we recall today are inscribed in the chronicles of time and history; they cannot be obliterated or denied. Moses said: “Remember the days of old.” Thus our duty is to recall, commemorate, consider and reflect the events of the Shoah, the Warsaw Ghetto and the traumas of the Kindertransport and the parents of Kinder. Survivors of both these happenings still bear the scars of the past, scars that will never disappear, but urge us on to, hopefully, prevent similar events – something regarded as a vain and naive hope - but a hope that should inspire the individual to do something to make this world a better place, where each can live under their vine and fig-tree without ever being made afraid again.

[My address at Hyde Park representing Kindertransport. B. Koschland]

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## SEARCHES



### Where are you?

I'm not sure if you're the right person to help me, but I believe my grandparents took in an Austrian boy in 1938 and I've always wanted to find out what happened to him. It's all a bit vague, because my dad never really spoke about it and now he's not really compos mentis, and my grandmother died when I was little and my grandfather long before I was born. But I believe his name was Gottfried, changed to Godfrey and that he settled in the Cotswolds or somewhere in the south of England. And as far as I know he was still alive a few years ago, would be mid-80s or so now. I've only really got the story through my mum, who's a bit vague about it. My grandparents were called Douglas and Katharine (Kitty) West and I think they took him in for a year or so before he moved on, I'm not sure whether to his folks, if they got out, or relatives or someone else. I've made enquires but his name didn't match anyone, so it's possible the name was wrong; is there a record of the foster parents who took them in?

*Ed West [mailto:edjameswest@gmail.com]*

Two German writers are looking to find original letters, postcards or diaries written by "Kinder" and their families during the time of the transports and after for a book project aimed at young adults. If you have documents of this time that you would be willing to share please get in touch with either Elisabeth Scheder-Bieschin [elisabeth@esbphotography.com](mailto:elisabeth@esbphotography.com) or Julia Albrecht [julialbrecht@gmail.com](mailto:julialbrecht@gmail.com)

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I discovered this picture among my late step father's photographs... it has presented me with a bit of a puzzle. I know that the diminutive gentleman



on the right is Benno Joseph who was a very well known barrister, but the Nazis would only allow him to work as a solicitor. It is my understanding that Benno and his wife Margarete remained in Darmstadt in order to help get children out of the country via the Kindertransport... and am sure he had a British contact who helped him do it. I am wondering if the Gentleman on the left is this contact. The picture was taken in Darmstadt (I think by my stepfather Walter Joseph). Is there anyone out there who can identify the mystery man?

My name is Sonia Lichtenstein, I can be contacted at [nanpixie@gmail.com](mailto:nanpixie@gmail.com)

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In the January edition, there was a search notice regarding David Summerfield from the Whitley Bay Hostel (later transferred to Windermere. Where was no contact details given. I am willing to pass on any information that is needed and I know.

Alisa Tennenbaum (Head of Israel Kindertransport) , [lezie@smile.net.il](mailto:lezie@smile.net.il)

[Aliza was in the Whitley Bay hostel from 24th August 1939 and then Windermere, looked after in both places by David Summerfield; she left Windermere in December 1945.]

## LETTERS



Dear All

I am writing to tell you that my mother's sister. Inge Sedan, has passed away after illness. She was 83 and her story is in the book I came alone and also she was part of Into the film Arms of Strangers.....The theatre production Kindertransport about the difficulty of re-establishing communication with parents who survived and reclaimed their children after the five years of separation was based on my aunt's personal story. Inge lived back and forth in England and Israel, but did settle in Israel the last 50 years. She lived in Jerusalem near her two daughters and grandchildren.....If you publish this letter in your Newsletter, please, I ask, not to make any condolence calls to my mother, Bertha Leverton, as due to her health situation we have not told her yet [ at the time this email was sent. Ed.]

Best wishes

*Mirry Reich* [<mailto:mirry25@gmail.com>]

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Dear Bernd,

Without prejudice! Finally, I made it to a Kindertransport reunion and what a special celebration it was, being the 75th anniversary. At my age it may be the one and only one. Coming from Toronto, Canada I am very grateful I could fit it into my plans. The organization and punctuality was fantastic. The speakers were well chosen and their content most applicable and informative. Having 2nd and 3rd generation of Kinder survivors were very appropriate as it helps the theme of the affair, to pass our experiences on to prevent such a holocaust ever to appear again. It must not be forgotten! Through the hospitality of this great country – England – we were spared a lot of horrors other survivors endured. True, adjustment was not easy but we all managed and many Kinder achieved great heights. I was happy to hear from various speakers the acknowledgement of the heroism of our dear parents to part with us, younger and older ones. To this day, I asked myself every time a child or grandchild reached the age of eight, would I have been as selfless and heroic as my parents to part with an offspring at the age of 8. I was already a teenager, nowadays they often leave home but not like us never to see our dear ones again.

The students from JFS performed superbly. The debate (re-enactment of House of Commons, October 1938) was a wonderful take off from the actual one taking place in the government in 1938. The talented vocalists were very enjoyable and the boy who played Tevye could have been his son. He acted so well. By including the students in the programme we showed them the way to pass on history. The actress, Maureen Lipman, spoke very much to the point in her serious part.

Refreshments during the afternoon and the dinner at the end were very welcome and appropriate. All in all it was a very successful and emotional event. We all came away having met old friends and with a reminder that there are many refugees in the world now-a-days which need help.

The meeting the next day with His Royal Highness Prince Charles was a tremendous experience and very successful. I consider it “the cherry on top” of the anniversary.

I know you are very involved with the running of the affairs of the Kindertransport in conjunction with the Association of Jewish Refugees and wish you good luck for the future. Sincerely,

*Ruth Neuburger, Toronto, Canada*

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Dear Sir Erich,

Thank you for your letter of January 2013. Unfortunately we, my son Robert and I, have decided not to attend the reunion in June. We made plans to attend, but I feel it would be too strenuous for me, in my physical health, the long hours of air travel, the few days in London. In short I don't think I can face it. I doubt there will be people I know, the Harris House girls (Southport) or friends from the hostel in Manchester.

In the year 1985 a film was made about the Harris House girls and I was invited to come to London, but then at the same time my sister Hedwig, who was on the transport with me on December 1938, became gravely ill and I went to Los Angeles to take care of her. She passed away on December 1985. There is only my older sister Erika who lives in Los Angeles.

After serving three and half years in the army, Hedy and I went to Chile to be with our sister Erika. There I met my future husband, a refugee from Berlin, who brought me to Rio de Janeiro in 1951 and have lived here ever since. My life is a long story, I would have loved to come to London, but decided I cannot do it.

I would like to know if Margot Barnes is still alive and also, Clare Karp (who lived in London) or any of the Harris House girls in the Southport or Manchester hostels.

I regret I cannot take part of this very important event that changed our lives. My years in England are unforgettable. Anyone who wants to contact me personally, please contact me by phone or e-mail

Thank you again, please send me all the news about the events.

Sincerely yours,

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Dear Michael Newman

I fell ill on my return from the Reunion and I had no chance of writing or thanking anybody for the magnificent organisaiton. I am writing to you now to thank you, also in the name of my daughter Franziska, for the great, great deal of work you and your colleagues put in to make the reunion such a success: the organising of finding a venue and seats for us all, the lunch and later the dinner, the excellent speakers, the brochure (what a document!) and later the reception at St. James' Palace - it all went so smoothly. I am most impressed and I want to thank you and the many others. It was a great experience and I am most grateful. With many good wishes for your further work. Gratefully yours,

*Elisabeth Reinhuber-Adorno [mailto:EKReinhuber@t-online.de]*

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Dear Editor

'They owe their lives...' You enumerate various benefactors but fail to mention the many individual British sponsors and guarantors who saved a child - sight unseen, of a different race, religion, culture. It is perhaps an uncomfortable thought that most of those sponsors were Christians.

*Gerda Mayer [mailto:gerda27@hotmail.co.uk]*

\*Many of the articles that have appeared in the Newsletters do refer to Chrisitans and others, e.g. Quakers, Christadelphians. A full list would take a book. *Editor*



Sir,

It is to my great disappointment that no-where in the letters , commemorations etc of the Kinder transport meetings etc do I find any debt of gratitude to the Allied servicemen who were involved in the conflict between 1939 and 1945 apart from the plaque in London to the then government.

From the contacts I have had (albeit somewhat ---- limited) with Kinder transportees I find absolutely no recognition whatsoever of what is owed to the Allied forces personnel or others who contributed towards , and enabled the freedom that this country and the major parts of Europe enjoy today. I would ask whether there is ever any contributions financial or otherwise to ex-army families who devoted themselves to our present democracy made by and on behalf of the Kindertransport organisations.

I also ask how many of the Kindertransport children when they became of the age even repaid the country which gave them safety and asylum , (after hostilities had long ceased), by serving in the countries armed forces as an acknowledgement of the what previous Allied personnel had achieved during the years of conflict.

I ask how many the direct relatives such as husbands (of serviceable age ) of Kindertransport children and who have been granted citizenship of this country actually served in the countries forces -even at peacetime, as a recognition and some sort of repayment for the granting of their citizenship.

The overriding message from the Kinder transport "children" seems to me an abhorrence of the military that protected this country from invasion and an abhorrence of even buying a poppy on Remembrance Day.

There seems to me to be no acknowledgement by Kindertransport children that Allied forces prevented invasion of the country, and indeed the very freedom the Kindertransport children now enjoy.

By all means remember, but do not be so selective in remembering so as to exclude the very section that has enabled and enables one to remember. If every person is a pacifist and only bought a white poppy whilst finding a red poppy disgusting ,as many of the "ex - Kindertransport children" seem me to do, where would, and will , the future safety of this country to which the Kindertransportees have been given asylum, lay ?

Do the Kindertransport meetings ever have collections for Help the Heroes or such ? I would naturally be pleased if someone could , and would , be able to show me that I am completely mistaken in my understanding of this issue.

*Mike Auerbach [mailto:mark.marke1@virginmedia.com]*

Dear Mr Auerbach

I thank you for your interesting letter re Kinder in the Armed Services. A number served during and after the war – some died on active service. It is difficult to quantify numbers – some 9-10000 children up to the age of 17 came to the UK. Unless individuals somehow come forward with information, there is no way of recording. I know of a few who served during and after the war, including my sister.

But let us not forget that many have served this country in their own way also, recognised by Honours, peerage, Knighthood, CBE, OBE, MBE, etc.. Kind regards

*Bernd Koschland*

Dear Mr Koschland

Thank you for your reply. I am not relating to the period of the 39 to 45 conflict. I am relating to the period after that, when hostilities had long ceased and the times when the Kindertransportees became of conscription age. I need, however, to reiterate the last approx. 3 paragraphs section of my letter

*Regards Mr Auerbach*

P.S And ..... Yes, I did -----

Dear KT Newsletter,

I must have asked this question of you about 3 times in the past. The wonderful Sir Nicholas Winton and his doings still get repeated mention in the Journal and KT Newsletters in connection with Kindertransports from Czechoslovakia and Austria.

By comparison, I have never come across any credit given or mention of the just as wonderful people who must have organised and worked at the Kindertransports from Berlin, and presumably northern Germany, to whom ( and of course my parents) I owe my life, and being saved from a horrific end like them.

To my knowledge, my query about any information about the Berlin KT Organisation has never appeared in the AJR Journal or KT Newsletters, and consequently there has been no response from anybody on the subject.

*Werner Conn (formerly Cohn) , KT from Berlin to Harwich, 20-21 June 1939  
Lytham St Annes, 20 FY8 4BG 01253 737853*

## **SPEAKER FOR KT LUNCHES**

The speaker for **3 September** is Pamela Amdurer from WJR and the title of her talk is 'From past to present celebrating 80 years of WJR assisting those in need'.

**1 October** is Robert Habermann Singer and entertainer with celebrated pianist Trevor Brown performing great old songs from Hollywood.

Please remember to phone the Day Centre on **0207 431 2744**

***Views expressed in the Kindertransport Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Kindertransport Special Interest Group or of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.***