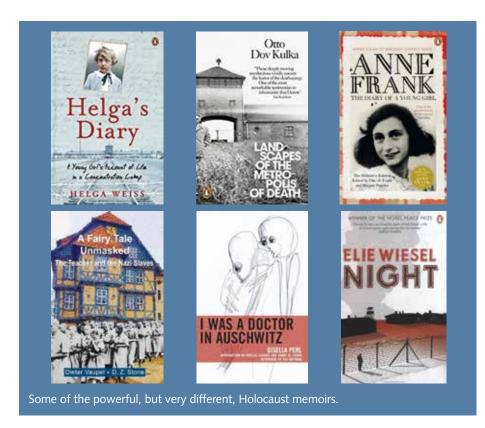


AJR JOURNAL

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Two ways of writing about the Holocaust

The distinguished Israeli historian, Otto Dov Kulka, died at the end of January. He had an astonishing range of interests and taught for many years at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. But he will be remembered for his masterpiece, *Landscapes of the Metropolis of Death* (2013), one of the great Holocaust memoirs which raises fascinating questions about how differently people have written about the Holocaust.



To appreciate what is so special about Kulka's remarkable book we should compare it with a very different Holocaust memoir, *Helga's Diary*. Kulka and Helga Weiss were both Czech Jews

from Prague who were sent to Terezin (Theresienstadt) and then to Auschwitz as children. Kulka was ten when he arrived at Auschwitz. Weiss was fifteen. Continued on page 2

SPRINGING FORWARD

This month we are delighted to bring you the second of our new Next Generations features, alongside a fascinating contrast of opinions between one of our longstanding members, Peter Phillips, and his granddaughter Lara.

We are inviting members of the second and third generation to save the date for our Next Generations Virtual Conference in October, which promises to be a very interesting and informative event. Meanwhile our first generation members may be interested in applying to be part of a special project which will mark the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference next January. See the article WE! ARE! HERE! on page 14.

We hope you enjoy this issue and the greater freedom of movement that this month is bringing and wish you a happy and kosher Pesach.

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

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Two ways of writing about the Holocaust (cont.)

Fewer than a hundred of the Terezin children deported to Auschwitz survived. Both Kulka and Weiss survived and published powerful accounts of their experiences. However, it is hard to imagine two more different books.

Weiss's account is written in a clear, accessible prose. At Terezin she sees a group of children who have just arrived:

"They look awful. It's not even possible to guess their age. They all have old, worn-down faces and tiny little bodies. Most of them have no stockings and only a few of them have shoes. ... They all have terrified eyes and resisted fearfully when shown to the baths. Were they afraid it was gas?"

Small things matter. At Auschwitz there are no spoons, she has to eat 'soup' with her hands – "Rotten turnip, corn cobs, bits of frozen marrow, stalks and beetroot..." If the guards haven't stirred the cauldron, you end up with "a plate of water skimmed off the top". The guards' favourites will get "the solid bits" underneath. On her feet she wears clogs: "sometimes only one clog, if you're not clever and energetic enough to clamber down from the bunk in time and there aren't enough to go round."

Weiss's account is clear, readable, moving. She has no doubts about how easily she can remember and describe what she has lived through, even though much of the book was written and then re-written after the events she describes in her "diary". For most readers, Helga's Diary will be an easy read in the same way Anne Frank's The Diary of a Young Girl and Elie Wiesel's Night are so accessible.

Kulka's writing could not be more different. He constantly reminds us how difficult it is to remember, to keep hold of the past. "What do I remember from that block?" he asks. "First, what I do not remember." His account circles around, trying to recall the past, to find meaning in his experience. Neither memory nor meaning are taken as self-evident.

Both books are illustrated but these

too are very different. Weiss's pictures are in colour, pretty, well observed, like something from a children's book. The forty-eight illustrations in Kulka's book are all black and white, blurred, ambiguous, hard to make out, like the famous images from WG Sebald's great works, The Emigrants and Austerlitz; indeed, one of Kulka's illustrations is taken from Austerlitz. Throughout the book, the illustrations are hard to decipher: objects like a piece of a brick from the ruins of Crematorium No. II at Auschwitz-Birkenau, landscapes of ruins at Auschwitz-Birkenau, a grey landscape photo of the estuary mouth of the River Vistula, desolate images of the ruins of a barn in Mikoszewo and part of a former graveyard in the same village.

The structure of the two books is just as different. Weiss's book is a straight line, from Prague in 1939 to Mauthausen in 1945. Her account ends with her return to Prague in May 1945, less than two weeks after VE-Day. She has come full circle. She has returned to Prague, the city where she was born and grew up, and where she will live the rest of her life. "Finally home," are her last words.

Kulka's book begins in 1978. He is a distinguished historian at a conference in Poland. He then recalls leaving Auschwitz in January 1945. Only later do we meet Kulka the young boy who arrived at Auschwitz. His book is about time and memory, moving backwards and forwards between the present and the past. Helga Weiss's book is an account by a young schoolgirl. His is by an old man, trying to make sense of a faraway past.

It is clear that Helga Weiss's memoir belongs to a particular way of writing about the Holocaust, with Wiesel's Night or Anne Frank's diary. They are clear, accessible, easy for a child to understand. This largely explains their huge popularity.

Kulka's book belongs to a very different tradition of writing and making films about the Holocaust. We could compare it with Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah* or WG Sebald's stories in *The Emigrants* and his novel, *Austerlitz*. Like Kulka's set of meditations, these are all dark, difficult works, exploring the distance between the remembered past and the remembering present. The key words in *Austerlitz*, which moves towards

Terezin, are memory and forgetting, along with a recurring language of darkness, uncertainty, ambiguity. Again and again, objects are "half-obscured", memory is difficult ("I don't remember now"), "everything is constantly lapsing into oblivion." All these works circle around painful memories, emphasise the difficulty of remembering clearly, where objects are fragmentary, landscapes are full of ruins and images are hard to decipher. Memory is far from straightforward. Writing about the traumatic past is difficult. What seems easy and straightforward, Kulka, Lanzmann and Sebald say, is far from it. It is hard to remember the past, difficult to write about it.

Anne Frank's diary was originally in Dutch in 1947 and was published in Britain and America in 1952. Elie Wiesel's *La Nuit* was published in French in 1958 and translated into English in 1960. Both within fifteen years of the war. What is interesting is that the very different tradition comes much later. *Shoah* appeared in 1985, Sebald's *The Emigrants* was published in 1992 and *Austerlitz* in 2001, and Kulka's book came out in 2013, all in the last thirty or so years.

It's as if we have developed a darker taste, we are more ready to appreciate a more difficult, elusive kind of writing and filmmaking about the Holocaust. We accept that talking about history and catastrophe is not as easy or straightforward as it once seemed.

Or perhaps we shouldn't see it as one kind of book or film followed by another. What's happened is that there are two very different kinds of audience who want different kinds of books and films about the Holocaust. After all, Helga Weiss's book came out in 2013, the same year as Kulka's. In the last year I have read two very moving Holocaust memoirs: Gisella Perl's I Was a Doctor in Auschwitz and A Fairy Tale Unmasked, which includes the testimony of a woman who worked as a slave labourer in a German munitions plant during the war. Both are very similar in style to Helga Weiss's diary. We are fortunate to be able to choose the books and history we prefer and we are lucky that there are so many powerful and moving books to choose from.

David Herman

NEW FINANCE DIRECTOR

The AJR has a new Finance
Director following the
announcement that David Kaye
is to retire later this month after
almost 10 years in the post.

During his tenure David has overseen the disbursal of more than tens of millions of pounds of social welfare assistance to those of our members, as well as clients of Umbrella Group agencies, with the greatest needs. He diligently strengthened our organisation so that the AJR is best positioned to award monies appropriately, both to individuals and institutions we support. Thanks to David's sound financial management, the AJR has also been able to extract the maximum possible benefit from our Claims Conference grant while ensuring we remain compliant with its demanding terms and grappling with its ever-increasing complexities.

David's successor, Adam Daniels, joined us in early March, having most recently held the position of Finance Director at JW3, the Jewish community centre on the Finchley Road. Adam also has commercial experience from his finance roles at the Booker Group Plc, Pizza Hut UK and Camelot.

"David has achieved so much during his tenure and leaves the organisation in a strong position. I feel privileged and excited to join the AJR and look forward to playing my part in supporting our members as well as clients of the Umbrella Group agencies in the years to come," said Adam.



OUR WINNING VOLUNTEERS



During a year when the world was turned upside down and everyone had to adapt to new ways of living, we at the AJR give thanks to our incredible cohort of volunteers who rose to the challenge to ensure that AJR members feel included and cared for.

We were delighted to be able to publicly recognise some of these during the recent Jewish Volunteer Network (JVN) Celebration of Volunteering Awards 2020.

Steve Newton is AJR's Volunteer of the Year. Since the beginning of the pandemic Steve has offered countless hours of technical support to our members as well as running weekly tech classes on subjects such as safe online shopping and avoiding scams. When it became apparent that

Zoom was a lifeline, Steve became part of the Zoom task force to help members get on to meetings and attend events.

Eleanor Angel is AJR's Lifetime Volunteer. Eleanor has been a part of AJR since 1986, and is now a Trustee, sharing her knowledge and setting our organisation's policies and strategies. She is also a Trustee of Nightingale Hammerson, Lifetime Vice President of West London Synagogue, and Trustee of Women of the Year Foundation.

AJR's Zoom Team was also nominated for the JVN's special award for innovation during the Covid era. Since the pandemic began the team has run over 200 Zoom events, ranging from seated yoga to book talks with award-winning authors, Kristallnacht ceremonies to poetry workshops, with even a guest appearance from Sir David Attenborough. Zoom has also been used for dementia-friendly groups and to offer support to carers.





SIZING UP YOUR OPPONENTS

This starts well before I was born:
Three friends in a small Upper
Silesian market town, Gleiwitz:
Lothar Bolz, Rudolf Herrnstadt and
my uncle Friedrich Weissenberg.
All three were members of the
Social Democratic party. Worrying
times: Hitler's Nazi Party was
making ever greater gains. How
best to counteract them....to stop
them getting into power? Should
one join the fervently anti-Nazi
KPD – the Communist Party of
Germany? Was that the most
effective way of stopping them?

Friedrich decided against it and – so far as he knew – so did his two friends.

In 1933 the Nazis became the ruling party. Friedrich, then a lawyer at the Breslau law courts, was beaten, in the court premises, by a gang of brownshirted Nazis who had had the Jewish lawyers pointed out to them. Friedrich suffered some blows, fled the building and announced to his family that he was emigrating. Germany was no longer a country he wanted to live in. The family thought he was overreacting: All this Nazi business would blow over in a week or two.

It didn't.

Friedrich and his wife Gerda, my mother's sister, emigrated to South Africa where he struggled to make a living as a manufacturer of soaps and perfumes.

Not until after the end of WW2 did he come back to Europe on vacation. He had, by then, discovered that his friends Bolz and Herrnstadt had spent the missing years in the Soviet Union and had returned to Berlin in one of the first planes that brought back the Communist leadership. Friedrich realised that, back in '30 or '31, they must have joined the KPD but had been ordered to do it secretly.



Bolz and Friedrich exchanged news of their families and Friedrich mentioned that his nephew Peter (that's me!) was head of the BBC's European Services.

"Formidable adversaries of ours," said Bolz. "Does he ever come to Berlin? If he does, tell him to come and have a cup of coffee. I like to size up my adversaries."

And that was how I came to take the underground to East Berlin. I passed through the barrier of the Wall that divided East and West Berlin. He had told me on the phone that his house was immediately opposite a certain underground station. I emerged and looked puzzled. I was facing a complex of military barracks surrounded by a wall. I stopped a passing lady.

"Bolz? Bolz?" she wondered. "Is that the one who came with the Russians?"

"Yes," I said, "I think he did."

She pointed to a guardhouse in the wall around the barracks.

"Identity papers?" demanded the Volkspolizeiman on duty. I handed over my passport. He glanced at a clipboard. "You're expected".

A passage led to a large villa, three or four stories high. A young lady greeted me: "My father is expecting you."

A very grand villa. Bolz explained later that, back in the Kaiser's days, this had been the residence of the garrison commander.

He introduced his wife. She spoke German fluently but with an accent I could not place. He explained to me later she came

from a German community which had settled on the Volga in an earlier century. She was a pleasant lady who served coffee and jam-filled biscuits. She reminded me of my grandmother and so did her biscuits.

I complimented her: "My grandmother back in Johannesburg bakes similar biscuits. They're good – but yours are even better." I had made a friend. When I left an hour-and-a-half later she gave me a bag of biscuits to take home.

My hours' conversation with her husband left me puzzled. He raged against the aggressive tactics of the Americans. They were preparing to attack the Soviet Union and East Germany. I protested the Americans were not mad. Nobody wanted another world war.

He insisted America did have aggressive intentions. An attack on the East might happen any moment. I thought his views crazy, though later as I got to know some American generals I was no longer quite so certain. They did talk about preemptive strikes.

Wiser councils prevailed, thank God.

When I got back West I was much in demand to report on my conversations. Few ventured East in those days. Frau Bolz' biscuits were widely appreciated.

Surprise, surprise, they were not poisoned!

Peter Fraenkel (born Breslau 1926) is the retired controller of BBC European Services. Details can be found at: www.peterfraenkel.co.uk

LETTER FROM ISRAEL BY DOROTHEA SHEFER-VANSON



GLAD TO BE ALIVE



Peter Gumbel's article *Proud* to be German in the February edition of the AJR Journal gave me much

food for thought. I agree that Brexit was a mistake and is having disastrous consequences for the UK, though I cannot help remembering a friend's argument for supporting it (the idea of Britain being in thrall to various eastern European countries was anathema to her).

Like Mr. Gumbel, my parents fled Germany and found refuge in England just before war broke out, and I was born at a time when the future of civilisation seemed precarious at best. Yet the forces of evil were defeated, albeit at great cost, and the forces of good prevailed.

Like him, I grew up in an England that was impoverished and obliged to rely on its own diminished resources. As I had never known anything else, I took the situation for granted, and accepted life in a draughty, unheated house, wearing hand-me-downs from friends of my parents, eating food that my mother prepared from the cheaper cuts of meat, inexpensive vegetables, and enjoying very few luxuries.

My memory might be playing tricks on me, but I have little personal recollection of the 'openness and tolerance' that Gumbel remembers as being prevalent in England and is now being supplanted by a surge of xenophobia and prejudice. I remember non-Jewish girls in my grammar school cursing one another for being 'Jewy,' I remember being referred to as 'you people' by my headmistress at that school, and I know for a fact that every effort was made to exclude me and other Jewish girls from gaining access to the examinations for entry to Oxford and Cambridge. It was some consolation to find that one of the two girls who was given access to that procedure ended up in the year after me at the LSE, while the other one became pregnant and dropped out of school altogether.

I find it strange to encounter the polyglot and cosmopolitan place that England, and London in particular, has become today, but I suppose that that is an inevitable and natural consequence of this era of relatively easy travel (excluding Coronavirus times) and a world that has become more accessible to ever-growing numbers of people.

When I first moved to Israel in 1964 the country was minuscule and surrounded by enemies who had sworn to wipe it off the face of the earth and drive its inhabitants into the sea. Jewish Jerusalem was a small town,

with a wall cutting it off from its eastern, Arab part. Already then I was told that the atmosphere in the country had changed for the worse, and that formerly there had been a greater sense of fellowship. I had no way of judging the truth of this, but I encountered at least as many helping hands as grudging officials and bureaucratic difficulties.

Israel today is a very different place from the one I first came to, and in many respects it may not be quite as warm and welcoming as it once was. Perhaps back then I was not as aware as I am today of the faults of its politicians, the ugliness of some of its buildings, or the general sense of impatience and intolerance displayed by its population. However, I cannot complain, as I have been blessed with the love of friends and family and have been able to attain a standard of living that is comparable to anything I might have aspired to in England.

Yes, like Peter Gumbel, I'm British by birth and European by heritage, though unlike him I'm also Israeli by adoption. I'm still undecided about applying for German citizenship, but if I know anything for certain it's that things change, countries change, people change, and what seems good today may well become grim tomorrow, and vice versa. We just have to get used to the idea of being ready to cope with change.

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Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication and respectfully points out that the views expressed in the letters published are not necessarily the views of the AJR.

We were delighted to receive a record number of letters last month. It is impossible to reproduce all of them in full, we read and appreciate every letter and have tried to reflect as many of your varied comments as possible here.

HMD & OTHER GENOCIDES

Like Frank Bright (February) I find it irritating and unacceptable that our Jewish Genocide should be equated to the ones suffered by other peoples.

Throughout history there have been massacres and terrible slaughters, but never on an industrial scale and none that have been premeditated and planned so efficiently. I get extremely irritated when, having told my story, I am then followed by someone who speaks at great length about the plight of Gypsies (Roma and Sinti). Let them all be remembered, but not equated with the genocide of the Jews. *Bronia Zelenka Snow, Esher, Surrey*

Full marks to Martin Stern for his excellent article (March). He could not have presented the case for genocide awareness more cogently.

The Holocaust might well have been prevented had the perpetrators of the prior Ottoman genocide (regarding which Raphael Lemkin coined the word genocide) against Armenians and other Christians been brought to justice. Also it is not enough to include Cambodian, Rwandan, Bosnian and Darfurian genocides in Holocaust education and commemoration without including ongoing or developing genocides being currently inflicted on Uyghurs, Rohingyas, Yazidis, Kurds and others.

Genocide should be history but it patently is not. A civilised human race would not allow genocide and would have superseded war too.

Ruth Barnett MBE, London NW6

ANTISEMITISM IN EUROPE

I cannot agree with Peter Gumbel (February). The extremism spreading across Europe has caused at least 50,000 French Jews to leave France, many for the UK. The shrinking remnant of European Jewry is now less than 10% of world Jewry. A recent ADL survey found that inter alia 48% Poles hold antisemitic attitudes and 42% Germans believe that Jews talk too much about the Holocaust. Poland is also intolerant of gays, Muslims, migrants, freedom of the press and judiciary, and has refused for 75 years to address the issue of Jewish property restitution. The EU has been powerless to stop this or the growth of authoritarian attitudes in many other of its states such as Hungary, while the European Court of Justice recently held that it was legal to ban shechita. I could never be proud to be a citizen of the EU - let alone of Germany or Poland. I am proud however to be British and that my family found sanctuary here.

Baroness Ruth Deech, London SW1

Peter Gumbel certainly has rose tinted glasses in celebrating his Europeanism, as the current EU vaccine fiasco confirms. How much longer will it take for other European countries to realise the price they pay for fake European unity and the European inability to be flexible?

I too am first generation born Brit but do not feel proud of that fact. What has made me prouder than anything else as a Jew is making Aliyah to Israel 15 years ago. But what a shame that Trump's efforts in the Middle East, culminating in the Abraham Accords, is – unlike Brexit – not immutable.

Peter Simpson, Jerusalem

Before the Brexit referendum, leaving the EU was not a "thing" in the minds of most of the UK population. It was advanced by a faction of the Conservative party appealing to the very worst aspects of grievance, racism, xenophobia and nationalism.

The UK has always had control of its own borders but chose not to exercise those powers. It has always controlled the majority of its laws. It has always been in charge of most fiscal measures. It was part of the largest trading block in the world on very favourable terms. It has for me been grim seeing facts crushed by misinformation and manipulation of the public (who can forget Cambridge Analytica?).

My late father too would have wept to see the tolerant country he came to in 1939 in such a divided state.

Simon Leo James, Edinburgh

People are kidding themselves if they think that the UK is immune to antisemitism. For example, Cheltenham's Online Act of Remembrance for HMD 2021 included a video showing horrible antisemitic graffiti around our refined Spa town to remind people that the fight against antisemitism is one of the present not just the past.

The most disturbing aspect of Brexit for me, is that it threatened to cut off freedom of movement to 27 other countries (which is why I am glad that I asserted my right to German Citizenship). The ability to move countries with speed and ease is one that would have been invaluable to members of my family – had it been that way last century, perhaps more of my family would have survived. Simon Burne, Cheltenham

THE SS ST. LOUIS

The SS St. Louis (March) did not sail back to Germany straight away. The Captain sailed along the Florida coast, allowing time for the American Joint to negotiate with Britain, France, Belgium and Holland to let us in. I know, because I was one of the passengers, then aged 12. Sonja Sternberg, Manchester

SOVIET SPIES IN THE WEST

Mr Mauthner's statement (Deeds or Misdeeds, March) that [in the early 1930s] "the only power standing up to Hitler was the Soviet Union" is simply untrue. Even then, Stalin was already putting out feelers to Germany for the

rapprochement which eventually became the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact.

There is also little evidence to support his claim that Soviet spies in the West were unaware of Stalin's plans to dominate post-war Europe until the 1956 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. All that changed after the Congress was that the loyal Western lickers of Soviet boots were told to interpret history differently – and duly did so.

The article speaks of "Stalin's 'friends'" among fellow-travelling foreigners. A more appropriate description was given rather earlier by Lenin: – "useful idiots". *Richard S. Henderson, Isle of Arran*

BLOODY FOREIGNERS

Like Derek Demant (*Letters*, March), my father was also a doctor in Germany. In 1933 one of his patients, a Nazi, advised him to leave. Sponsored by relatives in the UK we moved to Edinburgh where my father re-graduated and then secured a job at the Jewish Hospital in Leeds. He heard later that a member of the hospital committee, a pillar of Leeds Jewish society, said, "We don't want these bloody foreigners coming here and taking our jobs".

Every society has its quota of racists and bigots but I would have thought Jews, with their history of persecution and suffering would know better.

Jon Rumney, London N20

NAZI HUMAN EXPERIMENTS

The Lancet has commendably instigated a Commission on Medicine and the Holocaust. It is dominated by seven Germans whose work focuses on nazification of medicine rather than killings in extermination camps and in the east. They have blacked out names of murdered patients and depersonalised the record by statistically analysing, rather than reconstructing the murdered and dismembered person. Recognition of each victim as the person they were, and the often remote places of deaths, is not a

LOOKING FOR? Q

JUTA RUBEN (OR RUEBEN) FORMERLY KRICKSTANSKY

Harry Ross is hoping to find the family of Juta Krickstansky, who arrived via Kindertransport and stayed with his grandparents, Rose and Sam Miller of Hull. Juta later married a man from Bradford with the surname Rubin (or perhaps Rueben).

harry@rosstax.co.uk

HERMANN SIEGISMUND COHN

Mrs Hilda Tichauer (née Matzdorf) is searching for descendants of Hermann Cohn, born 1874 in Briesen and killed in Theresienstadt in January 1945. Prewar he had been a chemist in Breslau. His children (Gordon? and Hanne?) went to Palestine via Brindisi port to Haifa in the 1930s.

lydiatichauer@gmail.com

priority for the Commission.

As an older, male, UK-based Jew with a parental (actually medical) generation of survivors and killed, I fear I was at a disadvantage in becoming a "commissioner". I am concerned that age and gender discrimination for an academic commission does not conform to the UK's ethical standards. *Professor Paul Weindling, Oxford*

ALL JEWISH REFUGEES

I believe there is a gap in the AJR as its membership consists almost exclusively of Jews, or their recent ancestors, who hail from Europe. But surely we should always open our hands and our hearts to our brothers and sisters who escaped from other countries because of religious persecution, particularly severe in the Middle East?

I feel all our kith and kin who are refugees, or their offspring, should be able to benefit from AJR's know-how and facilities. Now is the time to establish a large umbrella grouping to work for the wellbeing of all Jewish refugees. We must always remember that we are one people and responsible for each other. *Dr. Henry Garfinkel, London, N3*

SINGLE-SEX EDUCATION

Those in Israel who attend single-sex schools are mainly from the religious sector of society (*Letter from Israel*, March). But even here, in "secular England", single sex education is as popular as ever.

My mother, on her return to Hungary after liberation from Theresienstadt, attended a highly regarded girls' school in Debrecen. More recently, my sister and my wife went to girls' schools in North London and my daughter currently attends a girls' school in Hertfordshire. And for good measure, my son is at an all-boys school in Central London.

None of them have been "restricted" and deprived "of the ability to cope with real life" because of their schooling. Education can work equally well in single sex and co-educational settings.

Jonathan Weissbart, London NW11

THANK YOU, AJR

I am 97 years old and have been a member of AJR for many years. I would like to thank all the staff for all their kindness and being so helpful on many occasions over the years, like helping to get a restitution pension from Austria and more recently helping me to stay in my own home rather than go into a care home

Marianne Gregory, Wallington

Over the last year AJR has put on so many brilliant webinars. We are second generation members, so much younger than primary members, but I have health issues, and to sit in the comfort of my own home and join more than 100 screens listening to a talk, without having to travel in the cold, is amazing. Thank you so much. Do please carry on in the future even if things get back to normal. *Helen Simpson*

ART NOTES: by Gloria Tessler

With the help of a mathematician, David Hockney, one of the most influential British artists of the 20th century, has spent much of last year creating art on his ipad. The maths expert updated the 'brushes' app on the latest model, shaping it and developing its features in response to Hockney's needs. During lockdown this enabled the artist to capture fleeting images of his subjects, free of the painstaking tools he normally uses for painting and drawing.

As a result of changes to its schedules the Royal Academy plans to present David Hockney: The Arrival of Spring, Normandy, 2020 in its Main Galleries on 23 May 2021. The exhibition will reflect a period of intense activity for the artist, who spends much of his time in Normandy, and in 100 new works he captures the season's rapidly changing features using the latest technology. It is a sheer celebration of life and nature, Hockney style. The gallery will print the works in large scale and hang them throughout the three Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries, offering the immersive experience of walking through Hockney's Normandy.

Hockney is said to be influenced by the Bayeux Tapestry which is in the Musée de la Tapisserie near his Normandy home. Perhaps what he sees in the tapestry is its quality of innocence and darting movement, and there is a certain fragility in these latest works – it is impossible to call them paintings – which contrast with the earlier spring works he created in his native Yorkshire between 2003-2013.

He describes his Normandy spring: "When the lockdown came...we were in a house in the middle of a four-acre field full of fruit trees – I kept drawing the winter trees, and then the small buds that became the by David Hockney

blossom, and then the full blossom. Then the leaves started, and eventually the blossom fell off leaving a small fruit and leaves, this process took about two weeks, all the time I was getting better at my mark making on the screen, eventually doing, à la Monet, the water lilies in the pond."

The colour green is spread like a lush canopy over the work. His own simplified version of a lily pond reflects the plants and seeds around it. A manicured lawn, delicate trees burgeoning with white blossom or coming into bloom with what appears a desperate. anguished plea. The sly trickle of daffodils, and perhaps most interesting of all, a white half moon glimpsed in the darkness of threatening clouds. But nothing really threatens in these works; they are innocent and childlike. The absence of paint, texture or shadow is what makes them disturbing but then of course no brush ever touched the canvas, no finger ever dipped into these dark shadows to create a hint of impasto.

These graphics are a contemporary way to convey what art can mean in the technosavvy world of 2021. And perhaps, after a year of lockdown, such deceptively simple

landscape pleasures are just the right thing to cheer up a depressed society.

The Arrival of Spring, Normandy 2020,

It is a world away from the Bradford-born artist's sharp portrait studies, wry, closely observed and often unforgiving. These were shown at the RA in 2016 and betray his acute grasp of the interior mood of his subjects. Hockney is celebrated in many mixed-media formats; as a painter, draughtsman, printmaker, stage designer, and photographer. He made an important contribution to the pop art movement of the 1960s. His most famous 1972 Portrait of an Artist (Pool with two figures) sold at New York's Christie's auction house on November 15. 2018 for a record £70 million. Throughout a very long career evidence suggests he may be more avantgarde than many younger artists in using the full range of technology available to him. The show ends on August 22.

Annely Juda Fine Art

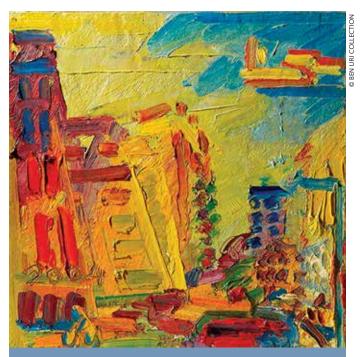
23 Dering Street (off New Bond Street) Tel: 020 7629 7578 Fax: 020 7491 2139

CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

FRANK AUERBACH TURNS NINETY

Widely hailed as 'arguably Britain's greatest living artist', Berlin-born Frank Auerbach turned ninety on 29 March.

His tragic background is well-known: in 1939 his parents arranged for him to leave the capital for Hamburg, from where he travelled to England. He never saw his parents again; the Nazis deported them and they died in 1943. Today, two Stolpersteine – small square brass plates set in a pavement – mark the site of their home in Berlin's Wilmersdorf district. Like other refugee children such as the late immunologist Leslie Brent and Henry Kissinger's adviser, the late Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Auerbach attended Bunce Court School, which the Quaker German-Jewish refugee educator, Anna Essinger, had originally run in southern Germany. After studying art in London, he began painting, notably his landscapes of postwar London building sites. For a long time he relied on teaching for a living. He rose to eminence as a major British Expressionist in his fifties. Besides his many representations of the Camden Town/Primrose Hill area where he has his studio, there are his darker portraits, often of the same person, and sometimes thought 'difficult' to recognise



Mornington Crescent Summer Morning II by Frank Auerbach 2004, Oil on board, 69x69cm

as such. In both cases, his thickly-layered canvases make his oeuvre recognisable. Auerbach's filmmaker son, Jake, has produced a documentary about his relatively reclusive father, while his friend and model, the curator Catherine Lampert, has published a biography.

CALLING ALL 'DOMESTICS'

My mother came to England in 1939 on a Domestic Service Visa. I am sure that some of the readers of the AJR Journal will have heard Jennifer Craig-Norton's excellent presentation on this subject and I was wondering what interest there would be in establishing a "Domestics" group?

The aim would be to create a website where descendants could share their relatives' stories and relevant historical documents, letters and photos which would bring this remarkable British rescue story to a wider audience and in so doing, commemorate and educate about these domestic workers.

In the first instance I would be



Notices for domestic vacancies were posted at the Jewish Refugees Committee offices in London's Woburn House in the late 1930s

delighted to hear from anyone who is a descendant of a Domestic, with a view to forming a network and, with any luck, there may even be somebody who has the expertise to create such a website.

Many of us are holding on to precious documents, letters and photographs, wondering where to place them, so this material could be uploaded onto such a website. I don't know how others would feel but if my mother's

documents were to be on a website, I would feel less anxious about having the originals in my possession and maybe, in the future, I would be happy to hand them over to an organisation which could store them permanently.

If you are interested, please email me at: daviv30@virginmedia.com

Vivien Harris



NEXT GENERATIONS

The Association of Jewish Refugees

AJR now has a special section on its website dedicated to members of the second and third generations.

Catering especially for the 44% of AJR members who fall into the category of 'descendant of a Holocaust survivor or refugee', the webpage provides information about particularly relevant events and activities.

The webpage – which can be found at www.ajr. org.uk/special-interest/next-generations/ – also has details of all the members of AJR's special Next Generations committee, chaired by Danny Kalman. Danny of course featured in last month's Journal, when he introduced this new feature.

It also lists some of the planned initiatives, such as creating a special collection of recorded messages from second and third generation members, sharing their thoughts about what being a descendant means to them. This new *Next Generation Voices* project will be led by Dr Bea Lewkowicz, Director of AJR's *Refugee Voices* testimony archive.

Another exciting plan is our dedicated *Next Generations Virtual Conference 2021*, which is due to take place on 3 & 4 October 2021. We are putting together an informative and engaging programme which will be of particular interest to second and third generations, so please do save the



If you are interested in meeting other members of the first, second and third generations in the meantime, you might like to register for **Liberation** 75, which aims to be the

world's largest international event to mark the 75th anniversary of liberation from the Holocaust. It is being held in the form of a virtual conference from 4-9 May 2021 and attendance is free.

With more than 200 participating organisations Liberation 75 will remember the victims, honour the survivors, showcase the future of Holocaust education and remembrance, reflect on antisemitism in the world, celebrate the role of the liberators and commit to protecting freedom, diversity, human rights and inclusion. See the full programme and register to attend on www.liberation75.org

MY HERITAGE

Avital Menahem, Generation 2 Generation's first third generation speaker, considers some key questions about her family background.

Who within your family was a Holocaust survivor or refugee?

My grandfather Yisrael Abelesz was born in Kapuvar, Hungary to an Orthodox, middle-class and loving family. In 1944, when he was 14, the Nazis occupied Hungary and his family was deported to Auschwitz, where his parents and younger brother were gassed on arrival. He survived the selections and a death march and was reunited with the remaining members of the family after the war.

How old were you when you learned about your heritage?

My family often spoke about the camps when I was young but I remember becoming aware that my grandfather was a concentration camp survivor following a discussion about the Holocaust and faith in my later years of primary school. I felt proud of my grandfather for retaining his faith despite his suffering.

How has it affected you personally?

My grandfather was younger than the average person in the camp and he was not physically strong. However, he survived and after the war thrived and built a life and family. He says of his life that he is 'surrounded by love.' This is a positivity that we can all be inspired by.

What is the most important message you want to pass on to your own children?

I am proud of my grandfather's positive attitude and appreciation for life and these are values I hope to pass on to my own children. By telling his story, I believe I am continuing his legacy: to educate as well as to encourage meaningful discussion about how we relate to others.

Generation 2 Generation (G2G) helps the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors tell their family stories. It supports them every step of the way so that their presentations to schools and community organisations are of high quality, historically accurate and have lasting impact. By telling the stories of their parents, grandparents and close relatives, using their testimonies wherever possible, G2G's speakers capture the attention and empathy of their audiences – young and old. In this way, they aim to promote and inspire tolerance and understanding in society.

www.generation2generation.org.uk



SEEN THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES

Peter Phillips was born in Leopoldstadt, Vienna in June 1935. Together with his parents, Dr and Mrs Marcus Pfeffer, they had to flee Vienna in February 1939 as the Nazis had already singled Dr Pfeffer out for Dachau Concentration Camp. Now aged 85, Peter - who studied Law at Oxford in the 1950s - shares his views on Austria. Vienna and the Viennese with his granddaughter, Lara Maher, 18. Her A level predictions "were brilliant" says her proud grandfather, and she is planning to study History of Art at Edinburgh.

Peter:

I openly admit that my attitude towards my country of birth is totally schizophrenic. The crimes that the Austrians perpetrated against my fellow Jews, and my family in particular, are unforgivable.

My father was a GP in Vienna's Jewish district and until March 1938 we led a comfortable middle-class life enjoying Vienna's rich culture. Even after the Anschluss life could have been worse as my father was one of a minority of Jewish doctors allowed to continue to practise medicine.

Then, in early November, my father received a telephone call. It was a loyal female patient whose child my father had successfully treated. "I must tell you, Dr Pfeffer, that my husband is a member of the SS and you are due to be arrested on 9 November to be taken to Dachau. Go into hiding so that they cannot find you". My father hid during Kristallnacht but if there had been any previous doubts about our safety in Vienna, there were none now. Luckily, we had sponsors in both London and Chicago. Every day my father queued at one of the embassies in the hope of obtaining a visa. Every other day he was beaten up. On 21 February 1939 we



arrived at Croydon Airport via Zurich.

In 1945 the Germans surrendered and, comparatively quickly, admitted their guilt for the Holocaust. Konrad Adenauer, the German Chancellor, was a pragmatist. His reparation offers were fair although he had no choice. Contrast this with Austria. Until the 1990s Austria maintained that they had been victims of Germany's Nazis and that they were in no way to blame for what happened to their Jews. The fact that 99% of Austrians had voted for the Anschluss was conveniently swept aside. Under the leadership of AJR CEO, Michael Newman, a small group was set up in London to fight this injustice. The Austrians fought back, and it was not until the exposure of their Chancellor, Kurt Waldheim, as a Nazi that we glimpsed victory, however slender. In comparison to what Adenauer had offered its German Jews, the Austrian offer was derisory but it was a moral victory.

I accused myself of suffering from schizophrenia. Here's why. I accepted the Austrian offer of the return of my nationality which they stole from me in 1939. I love going to Vienna. I adore going to Salzburg. Wiener schnitzel, apfel strudel, Sacher torte – my mouth is watering. The Heurigens? What fun! The Vienna Staatoper? How grand! The Belvedere with its Klimts and Schieles. The Blue Danube? See what I mean!

Lara

I am a European. I am entitled to have an Austrian passport. I want one.

Learning about German Nationalism at A level, and the tensions between Austria and Prussia prior to German unification,

demonstrated to me how intertwined these two countries were. In some ways Austria was autonomous, but in others they had little choice but to welcome in the Germans at the March 1938 Anschluss. No country would have accepted the tough Treaty of Versailles quietly. However, I feel that Austria has changed since WW2. It now grants freedom of expression to all sorts – the contemporary, the reactionary, the conservatives, the revolutionary – which creates a special atmosphere reflected in the arts.

I have always loved hearing Grandpa's stories about life in Vienna. It was very much the European cultural centre then. And what about those cafés where, it seems, people just sat around all day drinking coffee and discussing the arts world?

I love art with my coffee! Gustav Klimt is my favourite painter; I just have to look at the bold and striking *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer*, cascaded in golds and silvers, or the work of modern artists like Lukas Gansterer to feel thrilled. The combination of new and old doesn't just lie within the pure arts, but in fashion, the mannerisms of the people, and the whole aesthetic of Vienna. The juxtaposition is what I love.

I have left till last the Austrian murder of their Jews. The Holocaust must never be forgotten but perhaps it is time for some forgiveness. The murderers have long been dead. Is it fair to blame their grandchildren for the sins of their ancestors? After all, I would not like to be blamed for any misdeed of my grandfather! Not that there would ever have been one, would there, Grandpa?

Saving the 'last million' displaced persons

Martin Mauthner discusses an impressive account by David Nasaw (formerly professor of History at Columbia University) of the complexities of rescuing the 'last million' displaced persons after WW2: those who refused repatriation, generally to eastern Europe, and those, particularly the Jews, who no longer had a home.

As the western Allies occupied parts of Germany and Austria in 1945, they came across some five million 'DPs' – displaced persons from other parts of Europe. They were prisoners of war; civilian 'slave labourers'; those, mainly from the former Baltic states and Ukraine, who had sided with the Reich's occupying forces and fled as the Red Army approached; and around 250,000 Jews – those who had survived the death camps and, later, those Polish Jews abandoning an antisemitic Poland, having returned 'home' from refuge under Soviet rule.

As early as 1943 the Allies had set up UNRRA, a United Nations administration to provide the DPs with 'relief' and 'rehabilitation'. Meeting at Yalta at the beginning of 1945, they agreed to repatriate the DPs. And less than six months after V-E Day, millions of DPs had been sent home – to the Soviet Union, and to Germany's neighbours.

The international community struggled into the early 1950s to close this sorry chapter in working together. Some believed the Jews deserved preferential treatment, but there was no way a UN body or governments would agree to that. The obvious solution would have Washington letting DPs come to America, with London allowing Jewish DPs to go to Palestine. US liberals wanted to ease the restrictive quotas enacted in 1924 – 6,500



Poles a year, for example. But Midwest Republicans and Southern Democrats fiercely opposed that, not least where DPs from southern and eastern Europe were concerned.

Washington, instead, called on London to let 100,000 Jewish DPs enter the Holy Land immediately. Both major political parties at Westminster adamantly refused. They feared such a step would provoke greater Arab unrest, threaten the Middle East oilfields and encourage Soviet meddling in the region. For the UK, repatriation was the solution.

As soft-hearted humanitarianism wasn't working, UNRRA gave way to the International Refugee Organisation. Tasked with resettlement, it rebranded the DPs. The undernourished survivors deserving everyone's sympathy became skilled, able-bodied labourers. With economic recovery under way, that produced results. Recruiting teams from Australia, Western Europe and the Americas came to inspect, and hired. Their guidelines gave priority to skills farming, for example – that favoured Protestant DPs from the Baltic states and the Ukraine. The US also recruited DPs qualified to combat Soviet 'subversion'.

Decades later it emerged that lax screening had allowed many war criminals and collaborators to slip into the US and other welcoming countries.

Nobody wanted the Jews, suspected of being 'Reds'; they were left to linger. Britain struggled to control increasing clandestine immigration and violence in Palestine. It shocked the world when it sent back Jews on the DP ship, *Exodus 1947*, and interned them in Germany. After Britain handed back the mandate, the state of Israel was declared, and the gates finally opened.

What, if an Angela Merkel had been US president at the time? What, if she had proclaimed 'Wir schaffen das' ('we'll sort it'), and let the Statue of Liberty welcome the desperate Jews who ended up in Palestine. Perhaps there would have been no Israel.

SAVING THE 'LAST MILLION'
DISPLACED PERSONS The Last Million
by David Nasaw is published by Penguin
Press, New York.

Prof. David Nasaw will be in discussion with Martin Mauthner – via Zoom on 12th May at 6 pm.

NO SINGLE LOYALTY

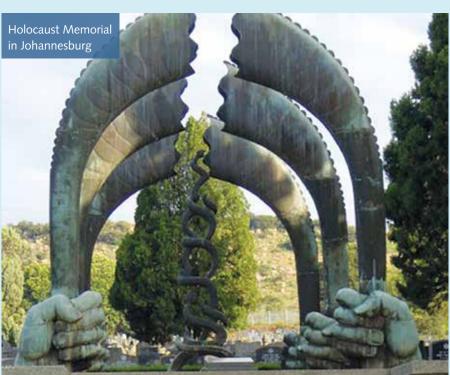
While studying cultural history in Pretoria in 2011, Augsburgborn Sarah Schwab heard about the German-Jewish refugees who emigrated to South Africa in the 1930s. Despite having no personal links to either South Africa or to Jewish refugees she became very interested in the story.

Sarah went on to author a learned article on the topic, which is included in the recently published book, *Refugees from Nazi-Occupied Europe in British Overseas Territories* (see below for details). And although Sarah is still completing her doctorate in history at the nearby university of Konstanz, she has left academia, to take up a job at the Jewish museum in the small town of Gailingen (www.jm-gailingen.de), near Lake Constance (Bodensee).

Sarah's article points out that South Africa looked like a perfect destination for Germans forced to emigrate in the mid-1930s. Besides its benign climate, it had a comparatively large 'European' population and a standard of living – for the 'whites' – comparable to that in Germany. With its extensive mineral resources such as gold and coal driving industrial expansion, economic and professional prospects were good in the two cities where most would settle, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Sarah notes, however, that soon after the immigrants' arrival – an estimated four to six thousand from Germany, though there were also immigrants from other countries in Central Europe – they encountered widespread antisemitism. This was especially marked among the racially sensitive, right-wing 'Afrikaners'; descendants of Dutch-speaking settlers, they resented their subjugation by Britain and, in some cases, supported the Nazi ideology. Neo-fascist Afrikaner associations held torch-lit marches, wore uniforms and organised mass protests against Jewish immigration.

Under pressure from a basically whitesonly electorate, the country had already in 1930 stemmed the flow of East European Jews, especially from Lithuania, who had arrived in the 1920s and earlier. By the mid-1930s the government feared it would lose voters to the extreme right, if it did not curb the inflow of Hitler refugees. A £100 guarantee (around £7,100





today) was imposed on immigrants – a substantial sum for those who had lost their assets. In any case, Berlin prohibited emigrants from taking out foreign currency. In 1937 the Aliens Act exacerbated the hostile environment. While it did not specify Jews, it set up a board tasked with deciding whether applicants for a visa were assimilable. The measure effectively throttled immigration.

South Africa's Jewish Board of Deputies did not publicly oppose restrictions on the entry of German-Jewish refugees. It did, however, help refugees find jobs and housing. Sarah says the country's culturally different 'Ostjuden' were 'not very welcoming towards the new immigrants,' who spoke little English or Yiddish.

And there was also hostility from gentile settlers from Germany, some open supporters of the Nazis.

The 'shocking realisation' that they were not welcome made it hard for the refugees to integrate and identify with South Africa; in a country riven between the British crown and the German swastika, there was 'no single loyalty', she concludes.

Sarah Schwab's article, 'No Single Loyalty': Processes of Identification among German-Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany in South Africa, appears in Refugees from Nazi-Occupied Europe in British Overseas Territories, edited by Swen Steinberg and Anthony Grenville, and published by Brill Rodopi.

Martin Mauthner

WE! ARE! HERE!

- A PHOTOGRAPHIC 'DESPITE IT ALL!'

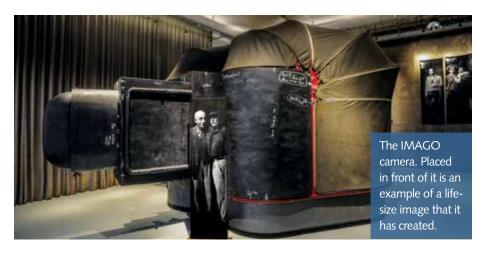
A very special artistic commemoration project is currently being prepared in Berlin to mark the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, and its organisers are hoping that a small number of AJR members can get involved.

On 20 January 1942 fifteen men met in a villa on Berlin's Wannsee Lake for a working breakfast. They belonged to various ministries, NSDAP and governmental divisions and their aim was to design the Nazi regime's strategy to murder eleven million Jews in Europe. The plans agreed at Wannsee ultimately led to the murder of six million Jews, the greatest crime in human history. The survivors, on the other hand, were able to escape the extermination plans. These survivors and their descendants are here among us.

The visual images of the fifteen criminal masterminds have now faded from public consciousness. Nonetheless, if you search for them, you will find their biographies, with their lives described in books and on the internet. Their victims, however, including the survivors, are mostly depersonalised in the public consciousness. They are known as "the victims" or "the victims and their descendants."

This lack of personal identity is now being countered by a commemorative project entitled "WE! ARE! HERE!" using the world's only IMAGO camera. This unique, walkin camera is 7m long, 3.5m wide and 4m high and utilises a high intensity 1:1 optical system that projects an incredibly realistic life-size image directly onto photographic paper without the need for a negative. Just ten minutes after the shutter is released the high-quality, black and white, full-size portrait is ready.

Using this special camera, fifteen Holocaust survivors will be portrayed, together with a grandchild or great-grandchild. Each of the



fifteen portraits will aim to unite the past, the present and the future. There will be no background or spatial relationship, simply two people standing together in a narrow, tall format, giving their viewers a startling new perspective and helping to make the enormity of the Nazis' crimes tangible. Had the perpetrators fully executed their plan, the viewer would never have been able to stand in front of the photo of a survivor. The child in the photo would not be with us today either.

Each of the life-size portraits will be mounted alongside two columns. On one column, the portrayed survivor and their descendant will describe their life, family, and expectations for the future, as well as his or her thoughts on the Wannsee Conference. On the other column, there will be a small faded photo of one of the fifteen perpetrators. The fifteen portraits and their fifteen respective columns will be exhibited in a circle around a symbolic conference table which has fifteen empty chairs – the scene of the crime. On the table are the minutes of the Wannsee Conference. The perpetrators are dead, their chairs are empty. The survivors view the crime scene. The startling immediacy of their presence in the room through the IMAGO technique shows: WE! ARE! HERE!

These pictures are not only meant to focus on the survival and unimaginable suffering of the survivors, but to point to the future. They are a photographic 'Despite it All!'.

The concept is the brainchild of Dr. Julien Reitzenstein, an historian and lecturer who lives in Ireland, and has a particular emphasis on works of art and properties looted by the Nazi regime. He has been involved with several other Shoah memorial initiatives, for example a display in front of the German Federal President's official villa that commemorates its murdered Jewish previous owner.

His idea for WE! ARE! HERE! came from his research for his book series *Steinerne Zeugen* (Witnesses of Stone) about looted villas in Germany, when he repeatedly came across photos of former Jewish residents. The imminent 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference inspired him to connect with the Berlin-based artist Susanna Kraus, who is renowned for her work with the IMAGO camera. Together they created the concept for the exhibition, which will open in Berlin on 20 January 2022, exactly 80 years to the day after the Wannsee Conference, before being taken on tour to other cities and countries.

The organisers will soon be deciding the names of the first fifteen survivors who will be featured in the opening exhibition and are hoping that some of these will come from Britain. The selected survivors will be invited to fly to Berlin along with a relative, as soon as the pandemic allows. As well as standing for their IMAGO portrait and being interviewed for the exhibition catalogue they will have the opportunity to visit several historical sites.

If you are interested in taking part in this important project you can find more details on www.wsh2022.de, where you will also find a contact form.

Missing from the Handbook

Several years ago, I was invited to contribute to *The Palgrave Handbook of Britain and the Holocaust* writes Anthony

Grenville. I wrote a chapter on the arrival of the Jewish refugees from the Third Reich and their settlement in Britain, 1933-1939. The book has now been published.

In it, the pre-war and wartime periods are covered by seven chapters, where the refugees from Nazism feature prominently. In the fifteen chapters devoted to the post-war period, however, I was surprised to see that the refugees were completely absent. Not a single chapter focuses on the history and experience of the Jewish refugees in Britain over the next 75 years, though they formed the largest group of victims of Nazi persecution on British soil and the most significant living testimony in this country to the historical experience of the Jews of Europe under Nazi rule. After the war, the Jewish refugees became painfully aware of their status as victims of the Holocaust; there was hardly a refugee who did not suffer the loss of family members, friends and community. The only chapter in the book to take a victim of Nazi persecution as its subject deals with the memoirs and testimony of a single individual, Kitty Hart-Moxon, a camp survivor who came to Britain after the war.

The book's chapters concentrate on the reactions to the Holocaust of the British government and British institutions, such as the BBC, the Imperial War Museum and the United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation, as well as the representation of the Holocaust in the arts. British and Anglo-Jewish sources are employed in profusion, but refugee sources are notable only by their absence. In these

post-1945 chapters, one can find references to a great variety of names, from Tasmania to Tony Blair, but the AJR is never mentioned. It is almost as if the Jewish refugees from Hitler had been airbrushed out of the record.

In 1959/60, a rash of swastikas appeared on synagogues and other buildings in West Germany. One

chapter in the book deals with this daubing, relying on British and Anglo-Jewish sources. The 'Schmierepidemie' of 1959/60 was very fully covered in AJR Information, which kept its readers better informed about political developments in West Germany than most of the British press; but the chapter relegates that coverage to a single one-line footnote reference. The refugees from Germany in Britain were clearly better placed than most to assess the significance of this outbreak of antisemitic graffiti: they were more familiar with German conditions and, most importantly, they had direct experience of the pre-war years and of what the daubing of swastikas could mean for Jews. It amazes me that a scholarly article on the reception of the 'Schmierepidemie' in Britain can ignore the group which was closest to that event and whose reactions to it were both significant and well informed.

Another chapter takes as its starting point the murder committed in 1734 by a Jew in the Sussex village of Ditchling and traces a pattern of British antisemitism lurking below the picture-postcard image of the village. The chapter is full of detail, but none of it comes from Jewish refugee sources. Yet a search of the back issues of the *AJR Journal* reveals a couple of items that tell a quite different story. A letter to the editor in 2001 expresses thanks to the 'unsung hero' from Ditchling whose humanitarian instincts enabled the letterwriter and his parents to escape from Nazi Germany to Britain in 1939. Another

refers to an exhibition in Ditchling devoted to the noted refugee designer and typographer Elizabeth Friedlander, best known for her designs of Penguin book covers. An online search like this takes only a few minutes. Its results would have filled a gap in the chapter.

The volume devotes many pages to British fascism, but nothing is said of the actual confrontations between the victims of the Holocaust and those fascists active after 1945. The most notable of these confrontations was the 'anti-alien' petition that was launched in Hampstead in October 1945; this gained considerable support before collapsing ignominiously. Oswald Mosley's Union Movement campaigned vigorously in the Borough of Hampstead before the London County Council elections of 1949: but at the elections. Mosley's candidate secured all of 81 votes (0.3%). These developments are discussed in my book, Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain, 1933-1970, the only substantial historical study of the refugees, as far as I know, that goes well beyond 1945.

Readers tempted to buy *The Palgrave Guide to Britain and the Holocaust* should be warned that, if they are hoping to read about the Jewish refugees from Nazism, they are likely to be disappointed.



REVIEWS

ESCAPING NAZI GERMANY: ONE WOMAN'S EMIGRATION FROM HEILBRONN TO ENGLAND Joachim Schlör Bloomsbury Academic

When Alice "Liesel" Rosenthal left the hostile regime in Germany for a domestic post in England she could never have imagined her invaluable role in helping other persecuted Jews to come here.

Liesel was born in Heilbronn where her father Ludwig was a wine merchant and her mother Hermine a member of the Rothschild family. Although her first career choice was to train as an artist, family funds were drying up with increased Nazi persecution and she became a bookseller.

Shortly after her 22nd birthday, as life became more difficult, she settled for a role working for a Quaker family in Birmingham. But being independent of spirit she soon came to London, taking a job at Marks and Spencer and making intellectual and helpful friends along the way. Her parents and younger brother Helmut remained in Germany but as life became increasingly restrictive they sent her ever more desperate pleas for help with emigration.

Author Joachim Schlör, himself from Heilbronn, has pieced together the story from hundreds of postcards and letters Liesel received which were given to him by her daughter, Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE. The book follows the story of Liesel and her demanding parents, who never hesitated to nag, judge and cajole, believing that the most important thing for their daughter was to get married. Liesel continued to mix in Jewish refugee circles, including suitors, and even set off to Bombay as late as 1938 to marry one. To her parents' dismay, nothing came of it and she continued a love affair with a married man she originally met working in Frankfurt.

The letters Liesel herself wrote have not survived so we don't know her side of the story, nor how she felt about demanding requests to help more or provide more money. All at a time when she worked long hours in a shop, was helping out in the Blitz, or assisting an increasingly long list of people to escape. Friends her parents originally told her to avoid were to prove extremely important. Ludwig found it easier to adapt but Hermine adopted an exasperatingly "hither and thither" approach, wanting to go to Uruguay – which never came off – and was continually on about "things", such as furniture and suitcases. Correspondence is often guarded to escape the censor and it is very interesting to learn how people actually thought at the time, without the perspective of history.

Eventually her parents' dreams came true and Liesel married Walter Schwab, son of a key refugee committee worker, in January 1942. Later, the dreadful fate of other family members and friends became known.

The book is especially good at exploring changing family relationships during emigration and the difficulties German Jews faced leaving and coming to the UK, Palestine, USA or further afield. It is particularly strong on tying up loose ends and explores at length the situation in Heilbronn (devastatingly bombed in December 1944) as well as relationships developed and ambivalence when former residents visited.

It is much easier to read than one imagines by glancing at the close type. Research is detailed but the work is put together with a light touch. Liesel later, as Alice Schwab, worked for the AJR including as longstanding arts correspondent and when she died aged 86 in 2001 the *Journal*'s obituary sang her praises. *Janet Weston*

A FAIRY TALE UNMASKED. THE TEACHER AND THE NAZI SLAVES D.Z.Stone and Dieter Vaupel Vallentine Mitchell, London

Not far from Kassel is the small German town of Hessisch Lichtenau of which almost all of us are unlikely to have heard; 'great for legends and fairytales' according to one website, and associated with the stories collected by the brothers Grimm. However the town also has less pleasant associations. This became clear when in 1983 local teacher Dieter Vaupel got

fifteen of his pupils to investigate 'What happened in our town during the Nazi era?' This created some tensions at the pupils' homes as some parents preferred not to talk about it. What they were hiding was the conveniently suppressed fact that the town had a slave labour camp that during the Second World War formed one of Europe's largest munitions factories. By August 1944 there were over 8,000 workers at the site. This book focuses on the fate of the 1,000 Hungarian Jewish women and girls who, due to labour shortages, were sent there from Auschwitz. They were, unsurprisingly, given the most dangerous jobs; working with acid that made them sick and turned their skin yellow or green and risking explosions that tore their bodies apart. They were fed very little, beaten by sadistic guards, both male and female, and slowly poisoned by the chemicals. Inevitably many of them got ill. Those that found the work too hard were told they could have an easier job in a cardboard box factory. Those who volunteered for this were sent back to Auschwitz and death.

In the second part of the book Dieter Vaupel tells the story, based on reports and interviews with a remarkable survivor, of Blanka Pudler. Her account starts with the German occupation of Hungary in March 1944. At the age of fourteen she endured deportation to Auschwitz in cattle wagons and then final separation from her parents. Luckily she found her sister, which was massively important for both in maintaining their morale and determination to survive. They slept on the floor in barracks that had no furniture at all, but six weeks later were sent to work at Hessisch Lichtenau. Among many deprivations she reported that 'even our food is covered with bugs and by now I not only know what a bug looks like but also what it tastes like'. In April 1945 she and the other enslaved victims were rescued by the American army. Blanka eventually got back to Hungary only to find that her home had been taken over by strangers. Luckily she was found by her brother who took her to live with another sister in Budapest. All in all, this is a story of terrible deprivation that is vivid, detailed and powerful. It merits a significant place among the many reports of Nazi horrors. Michael Levin

NEW BOOKS

BERLIN TO BRADFORD By Dr Rudi Leavor BEM Words by Design

A beautifully produced memoir in which Rudi recounts his early childhood in Berlin, his family's flight to the UK, their 'accidental' arrival in Bradford and his many years of service to his local and wider communities. Rudi, as many of our readers may know, is also a keen composer and the book contains details of, and even a score for, some of his compositions as well as chapters

on his interfaith work, his involvement in local politics and his retirement, providing a wonderful keepsake for future generations.

WHEN THE WORLD WAS OURS By Liz Kessler Simon and Schuster

Inspired by a true story, this is a life–affirming novel that tells the story of three Viennese children – Leo, Elsa and Max – who have been best friends for years, but whose lives, once so tightly woven together, take very different paths with the arrival of the Nazis.

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Contact Alf Buechler at alf@buechler.org or tel 020 8554 5635 or 07488 774 414

A SELF-HELP GROUP FOR SPOUSES

AJR is setting up a new support group especially for any spouses who are caring for a husband or wife living with dementia.

The group, which will meet online on alternate Wednesday afternoons at 2.30pm for an hour, will be led by Caryn Bentley, coordinator of AJR's Family Carers Service, and Trevor Salomon, an AJR member whose wife was diagnosed with early-onset dementia. Trevor is an ambassador for a leading Alzheimer's charity and works tirelessly to champion the cause.

AJR recognises that many family carers may be feeling isolated, especially because of the pandemic. It seems that in caring for another, there's the risk of one's own needs going ignored. So whether you are a wife caring for a



husband with dementia, or a husband caring for a wife, you are most welcome to be part of this group and share similar experiences with, offer support to and seek help from others, It will also provide a good opportunity to discuss pressing issues that may arise and hear from professionals who work in this complex field.

For more information please contact Caryn at caryn@ajr.org.uk or 07951 796 202.

www.fishburnbooks.com

Jonathan Fishburn

buys and sells Jewish and Hebrew books, ephemera and items of Jewish interest.

He is a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association

Contact Jonathan on 020 8455 9139 or 07813 803 889 for more information

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MODERN AND OLD

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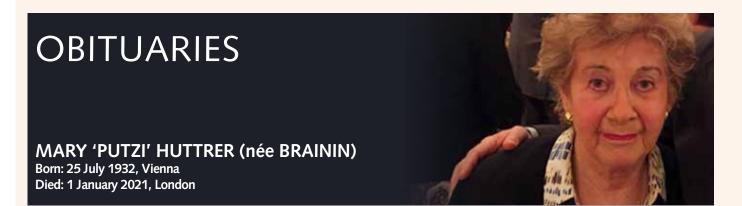
DISCOVER

40 exhibitions including features on Auerbach, Bloch, Bomberg, Chagall, Epstein and Gertler at **benuri.org**

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The youngest of four children, Mary was born in Vienna. Her father Salamon Brainin had made his way to Vienna from Lyady, a town split across what is now the Belarus-Russian border. Her mother Sophie was Polish As the baby of the family, Mary was much indulged and her childhood nickname – Putzi (little one) – stayed with her for life.

Thanks to Salamon establishing a branch of their Vienna furriers in London's New Bond Street, the entire family was able to emigrate to London in December 1938. This included three orphaned cousins, one of whom – Norbert – went on to form the world renowned Amadeus String Quartet.

The Brainin family settled in Kingsley Way in Hampstead Garden Suburb where their home was a magnet for family and friends. The children attended Clark's College in Finchley, albeit intermittently. The older siblings later all married and moved away – to New York, Bern, and indeed one back to Vienna. This proved very hard for Putzi given how close they all were, and having together experienced Kristallnacht first hand, the fraught sudden move to England, and the war years there.

Putzi meanwhile had many suitors but eventually accepted a proposal of marriage from a Kindertransportee, Felix Huttrer, and they were married in Norrice Lea Synagogue in 1954. Felix worked as a radio and TV engineer in Golders Green and eventually the couple saved enough to afford a mortgage on a small house in Finchley, where they raised my sister Caroline and myself. Through a family connection, they then established a medical supplies business, initially from home. I'm grateful and proud to have had the opportunity to keep that business going up to the present day.

Putzi was a firm follower of Transcendental Meditation which helped her cope with raising her family, running a home, and the loss of her beloved mother (father Salamon having passed away before she was married).

Eventually in 1970 we moved back into Kingsley Way, which once again became the centre of all family events. Putzi took over the roles of matriarch and hostess with the mostess – roles which she carried out with adroitness and verve. Our family also loved to travel. Having family spread so far and wide gave an excuse for regular trips to the Continent and the USA. In my early childhood years I recall wonderful reunions with Putzi's siblings and their families in Italian beach resorts, Bern, the Austrian lakes and of course Vienna, which was perhaps the most emotionally charged all round.

In her spare time Putzi honed her literary skills. Her first poetry book – *New World For Old* – was self-published and at the age of 80 she published her first novel – *Elsa*.

The AJR was an important part of her life. She loved attending the local meetings and was a regular contributor to the *Journal*. Each month when it popped through her letterbox she would excitedly open it to read all the news and look out for items based on her input. Another highlight for mum was meeting HRH Prince Charles at AJR's Kindertransport 75th anniversary event. Educating the next generations

about the Holocaust, and the message of "never again" became one of Putzi's lifelong priorities.

One of the last proper outings with my mum was just before the first lockdown when we joined with a group of other AJR members to see Tom Stoppard's *Leopoldstadt* – the play based in the district of Vienna where mum had lived before leaving for a new life in London aged 6. We managed to arrange a private audience with Tom Stoppard and I have wonderful photos to treasure.

Mum taught us all the value of family, friendship, and looking out for those in need. She spent her life honouring the traditions from her own mother, Sophie, of having a warm open home and of looking after people, being the glue in the family and indeed beyond the family to an extended collection of people across the globe who all appreciated her unique brand of compassion, understanding and advice for their own individual situations.

Paul Huttrer



Putzi meeting HRH Prince Charles on the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport



One of the last of the generation of adult Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany, Anneliese Goldstein's life encapsulates the resilience and adaptability that enabled them to survive and thrive. Blessed with charm and good looks, she was 20 when she escaped with her newly-wed husband Hans to Malaya in spring 1939.

Her father, Richard Schlesinger, a clothing factory owner, was uninterested in girls' education so she left school at 16 to learn dressmaking. At 15 she met her husband at a Jewish cultural society. They married in October 1938, after he qualified as a civil engineer. Only by displaying his late father's WW1 medals was he allowed to complete his course. Refused entry to Britain, the US and Palestine, they sailed penniless to the Far East. Hans found work with a Danish firm in Singapore and they were joined a month later by Hans' widowed mother. In fact, all their close relatives escaped the Nazis.

In late 1940 they were rounded up as enemy aliens by the British and shipped to internment in Australia. Released after a 7-month bout of meningitis, Hans joined the Australian army. They took Australian citizenship and had two sons, Robert and Clive. But Hans felt his qualifications were unappreciated

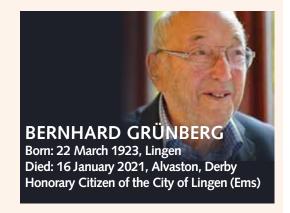
and re-joined the Danish firm in Singapore in 1948. Their daughter Catherine was born in 1953. All three children were sent to boarding school in England, later entering professional careers.

In 1964, the couple moved to London, where Hans opened a branch of the Danish firm – and left Anneliese for his secretary. After years of his promises to return, she divorced him in 1976. The secretary later left him and Anneliese looked after him in his final illness in 1985. When Hans had left her she was 46, with minimal education and no work experience but, resilient as ever, she became an accounts clerk at a nearby confectionery factory and finally ended up in the offices of the diamond world of Hatton Garden. She retired in her mid-80s, by which time she lived in a Hampstead Garden Suburb cottage near her sons. Twice a week she played bridge to international standard, having learned it in Singapore.

Self-sufficient, shrewd, economical, resolute and highly active, she did her own cleaning and gardening for as long as she was able and had an excellent live-in carer for her last 12 years. She made jams and jellies from her fruit, enjoyed theatre and opera, learned Chinese calligraphy and visited museums. She always looked on the bright side, never complained of her disabilities and refused to dwell on the past.

She is survived by her two sons and daughter, seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Clive Goldstein



Bernhard Grünberg's happy childhood came to an abrupt end in 1938 when he left Germany via Kindertransport. He was the only one in his family to survive the Holocaust.

In 1986 the city of Lingen (Ems) discovered that Bernhard Grünberg was alive and invited him to take part in the unveiling of a memorial stone in memory of the murdered Jewish families from the Emsstadt. This first visit was followed by many more, often with his wife Daisy, who died in 2001, to help teach young people that the Holocaust should never be repeated.

Despite his immeasurable suffering, he showed the citizens of Lingen great understanding and, in 1993, Bernhard Grünberg paid them the special honour of accepting honorary citizenship. In 1998 he took part in the unveiling of a memorial stone in honour of his family and the inauguration of the Jewish school with great joy. Since 2000, a gate forged by Bernhard Grünberg himself has adorned the entrance of this learning and memorial site and one of the streets in Emsauenpark bears the name Berhnard-Grünberg-Straße.

The honorary citizen of Lingen was also involved in the fight against antisemitism in his new home, England. including giving weekly lectures at the National Holocaust Museum in Nottinghamshire.

We are very grateful for his reconciling work for our city. With great respect we will keep the memory of him alive and pass it on.

On behalf of the city of Lingen (Ems) and the Forum Juden-Christen Altkreis Lingen e. V.

Dieter Krone Gernot Wilke-Ewert Lord Mayor Chairman

Thursday 29 April @ 2.00pm

ZOOMS AHEA	Details of all meetings and the links to join will appear in the e-newsletter each Monday.
Tuesday 6 April @ 2.00pm	Philip Heyman – Principal Viola Player for Welsh National Opera https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/83429832885
Wednesday 7 April @ 7.30pm	National Yom HaShoah Event
Thursday 8 April @ 2.00pm	Ed Horwich – From Cotton to Couture: a family journey from Aleppo to the Lancashire Seaside https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88984078022
Monday 12 April @ 2.00pm	AJR BOOK CLUB: Silvia Goldbaum Tarabini Fracapane – <i>The Jews in Denmark in the Holocaust: Life and Death in Theresienstadt Ghetto</i> https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ajr-book-club-with-the-author-of-the-jews-in-denmark-in-the-holocaust-tickets-141695953411
Tuesday 13 April @ 2.00pm	Nick Lander (owner of L'Escargot Restaurant) – My family's refugee guests and lifelong friends https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/84921642137
Wednesday 14 April @ 2.00pm	AJR Book Discussion – American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/84787212339
Thursday 15 April @ 2.00pm	Michael Zimmerman, Ambassador of the Republic of Austria – Austria's strategy against antisemitism https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86451584334
Sunday 18 April @ 6.00pm	Yom Hashoah event Canada – DETAILS TO FOLLOW
Monday 19 April @ 2.00 pm	Dr Kenneth Collins, author of <i>Two Hundred Years of Scottish Jewry</i> and <i>Zev's Children</i> https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/81225478041
Tuesday 20 April @ 2.00pm	Bob Sinfield – The Gag Trade: misadventures in TV & Radio Comedy https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86942921584
Wednesday 21 April @ 2.00pm	David Barnett – Daniel Mendoza: the English prizefighter https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/86723333791
Thursday 22 April @ 2.00pm	Silvia Nacamulli – Cooking for the Soul (demo and talk) https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/89988914343
Tuesday 27 April @ 2.00pm	Stephen Horne – Life is too serious to be taken seriously! https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/82411616121
Wednesday 28 April @ 2.00pm	Saul Marks – Jewish Genealogy and helping the 'Heir Hunters' https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88611250219



John Cooper - The history of Kenwood House

https://ajr-org-uk.zoom.us/j/88001287941

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