



# Kindertransport

A special interest group of  
The Association of Jewish Refugees



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

## **Dear Kinder and Friends**

Dear Kinder and Friends

It is a pleasure to present another Newsletter, again with a variety of articles, including a report on the KT lunch with the Israel Ambassador, and letters. Though the months have passed, Erich and I met with staff and students from the Leo Baeck School in Haifa. An unusual item is an illustrated report on the ships that brought us here and so be a record for the future, I thank Peter Hederley for his great help. May you dear reader and family have a happy and healthy year. *Shanah Tovah*.

*Bernd.*

Hi Fellow Kinder

Unfortunately I have been away for a while. Mainly due to having a pacemaker inserted to help my ageing heart functioning properly. What can I say, we are all getting a little older. Having said that there is a lot to look forward to. Not least the upcoming high Holy Days. So first and foremost I would like to wish everyone a Chag Sameach and Shanah Tovah, a little in advance of course.

Next year is the 80th anniversary of the first arrival of Kinder in this country. Again something we should celebrate and be very proud of, given the contributions we have made since arriving here as children. At the same time let us not forget those who perished and the parents who let us go.

Again, I wish you and your families a *Shanah Tovah* and a great year ahead.

Erich

Dear Friends

It gives me great pleasure to send you all personal greetings for a very Happy New Year to be filled with good health and happiness .It is a source of ongoing pride that the Kinder continue to be such a prominent and active special interest group of the AJR. The trustees and staff greatly value your involvement in, and support for, our work. As we look ahead, we are mindful that next year marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Kindertransport following the catastrophe of the Kristallnacht. The Reichspogrom precipitated the emigration of the vast majority of the 60,000 refugees, including some 10,000 Kinder, who fled to the United Kingdom, an act of salvation for which, I know, the Kinder will always remain grateful.

As in previous years, it is our great privilege to be planning a series of events that will mark this significant milestone. As well as commemorating the lives of those of our loved ones who perished, these memorial events will also serve to educate the general population about one of the most poignant episodes of the twentieth century and of the prelude to the Second World War and the Holocaust.

As ever, this is coupled with your continued determination to play a direct role in educating future generations by speaking in schools and public events, and, in many cases, returning to your cities and countries of birth. These talks have a profound impact on younger people who have the benefit of hearing, and passing on, eye-witness accounts.

I also want to pay tribute to my fellow trustee and your Chairman, Sir Erich Reich, who continues to be a source of good counsel and sound advice. Erich has been at the forefront of advocating and imploring the government to intervene to protect those fleeing persecution today. Erich has also been part of our discussions with the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation to which we have recommended that the Kindertransport be recognised and portrayed in the Learning Centre that will be installed alongside the new Holocaust memorial in Westminster.

Combining our efforts to build a culture of remembrance of the Holocaust while continuing to deliver our critical social and welfare services is what will occupy our efforts in the coming years. But first and foremost we are a membership association, and it was my great pleasure to be with so many of you at the Kinder lunch in July when we welcomed His Excellency Mark Regev, the Israeli Ambassador. Gatherings such as the lunches are a wonderful opportunity to be together and I look forward to sharing many more happy occasions in the future.

With my very best wishes for a sweet, peaceful and healthy Shanah Tovah,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A C Kaufman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Kaufman  
AJR Chairman

## Why?

There is one word heard from earliest childhood to the end of life. That word is 'Why?' Why can't I go to the cinema? Why am I so ill? Why did the Shoah happen? Why the terrorist acts in Israel and in the UK? Why the fire in the Grenfell Tower? Answers to these sample example questions depend on a variety of factors, e.g. the cinema – easy - 'homework.' The answers to the other sample question may never be answered fully. A false and ludicrous (idiotic?) answer for the Grenfell Tower fire: "One speaker at the Al-Quds demonstration then blamed the devastating In Grenfell Tower fire, which has left at least 58 people dead, on Israel supporters!! (*Times of Israel*, 19<sup>th</sup> June 17) Finally, why apple and honey?

The eating of various foods on Rosh Hashanah, including pumpkin, leek, dates, heart and liver, goes back to early Talmudic times. Some of the vegetables are still used as *simanim* (symbols). In some 'may we increase like fish, the head of a fish, to be at the head and not at the tail, i.e. the top and not sink to the bottom, *tzimmes* (carrots, in Yiddish *meer/meeren*, also meaning *more, increase*). The most widespread symbol is apple and honey. May the year ahead be sweet, in whatever sense we individually understand 'sweet'. Some explain apple and honey as follows: the apple represents the Divine Judge Who hopefully will judge us sweetly. Thus could the apple refer to the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden which brought about judgement on Adam and Eve. Whatever the symbolic food, it is followed by a (prayer - *yehu ratzon...*; 'May it be Your will that year ahead will e.g.be sweet.

The symbolic foods are our expression of hope: may the next year be a better year in the world around us Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur (and even before) is a period during which we must look at ourselves in a 'symbolic' mirror, and examine ourselves very strictly. 'How have we done this last year?' We must then balance up what we have found and as necessary make up our minds to do better, not like January New Year resolutions which often fall by the wayside as the month progresses.

May the Almighty hear and listen to your prayers and hopes for the coming year and that they be fulfilled. I wish you all *shanah tovah* and in the words of our prayers: May the Almighty 'Inscribe us all in the Book of Life'.

שנה טובה

Bernd



Apologies for typos in the March edition: Payers should have read as prayers and NoelOBaker should have been Noel-Baker.

## **An Exciting KT Lunch**

At our July lunch we were honoured to welcome Mr Mark Regev, the Israel Ambassador. It was an occasion not to miss. Andrew Kaufman, Chairman of AJR, welcomed him and gave a brief account of the Ambassador's background. He was born in Australia and eventually moved to Israel, living for a time on Kfar Hanasi. After joining the Israel Foreign Office, he rose through the ranks being posted to various places, then became the (oft heard) spokesman for Israel on Radio and TV until becoming Israel Ambassador to the Court of St. James.



HE The Israel Ambassador at Buckingham Palace

He began by stating that he was also a 'second generation' survivor. His father came from Magdeburg. After the war his parents lived in East Berlin, where they felt life would be better elsewhere and moved to Australia. Thus he felt quite at home with us Kinder. He then commented that this year was a year of anniversaries. That very morning of being with us, he was with the Ambassador of Jordan to mark the 40 years since the signing the peace treaty. The year also marks the peace treaty with Egypt, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Six Day War and reunification of Jerusalem. December will recall General Allenby's entry into Jerusalem, after capturing taking the city from the Turkish forces. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Balfour Declaration will be marked especially by a meeting of Binyamin Netanyahu with Mrs May. Finally, 29<sup>th</sup> November 1947 will be marked when the UN vote for a Jewish State, which, the Ambassador represents.

In the time left, he answered several questions. The reply to one of which he spoke briefly about the general situation in Israel, mentioning contacts with Arab countries who too were also concerned with the issues of Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas. Two states and peace are possible, but that peace must be defensible.

Eve Willman gave the vote of thanks and made a presentation to the Ambassador of a signed copy of Anthony Grenville's book *German and Austrian Refugees in Britain*.



Dear Editor

In your recent Kindertransport supplement to the AJR Journal we see some misconceptions that occur when people express themselves who were not time witnesses. Those of us who were are dying out. I was a Kindertransportee aged 10 when I arrived in England from Mannheim/Frankfurt at the beginning of June 1939. I remember those times very well in spite of my 88 years. On the last but one page entitled "Media", has a sentence that reads "In the 1930's there was no opportunity to go into Germany or the Axis countries and assist the children facing death in concentration camps".

Surely there were no concentration camps in the 30's except in Germany, perhaps also in Austria, and they did not imprison children. In Germany men, if communists (later Jews especially after the Pogromnacht of Nov. 1938), male adults were arrested and imprisoned. It was only in the war and after 1939 that masses of c. camps were erected in Germany and Austria to which men were sent, Communists and later Jews and later than that women too. In the rest of Europe as the Germans spread and invaded, more camps were built and children too were sent, often to be killed immediately as they were no use for the severe forced labour programmes. I am glad that individuals who rescued children on their own initiative were included.

Ruth David

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Dear Editor, I refer to a letter to Bernd from Ray and Jacky Arnold which has just come to my notice. It mentions the hotel in Margate, owned by Mr and Mrs Myers, which they turned into a refugee boys' hostel in 1939. My name is Wolfgang Marc Schatzberger ( I have using my second name, Marc, for the last 8 decades) and the lady on whose behalf the enquiry was made, Pauline Myers (with her friend) accompanied me (and my friend) on our weekly walks to Woolworth's where we spent our weekly pocket money of 6d. I guess we all were about 12-13 at the time, which makes Pauline about 90. I hope she is still well, as I am. My memory for names is very poor, but Pauline's name is loud and clear. I have a photo of a social gathering at the hostel, showing all the boys as well as the staff, with Pauline as well. I am standing quite near her which I believe was not a coincidence.

Please, Ray and Jacky Arnold, convey my greetings and best wishes to Pauline! The 17 year old boy referred to in your letter was the only inmate in possession of a proper suit, which he was kind enough to lend me for my Bar Mitzvah, which took place in Margate Synagogue in July 1939.

Marc ("Wolfi") Schatzberger

Dear Editor

I am doing family research and have uncovered a cousin of my mother that may have been rescued from Berlin via the Kindertransports. I am hoping to find out more information and also if this gentleman is still alive.

Here is some more information:

Name: Heinz Bloch

Birthdate: March 14, 1924 or March 15, 1924 Mother Name: Meta Bloch Last address: Berlin Possible Transport March 22, 1939

Any and all help is very much appreciated.

Thank you very much.

Milton Zweig

(I am in California, USA, so e-mail would be best for correspondence)

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Dear Editor

Melissa Hacker (President KTA) suggested I connect with you. I'm hoping you can help.

I'd love to be in contact with, or have knowledge of anyone who was on the Kindertransport of 1939 (*I think it was September just before war broke out but am not sure.*). I was 13 years old and in the sexte class at the Jawne in Koln, Germany. The transport was facilitated by Dr. Erich Klibansky, headmaster of the Jawne.

It was sponsored by the Cricklewood Synagogue and their congregants who pledged to look after this class of school children, and readied a hostel in Willlesden Lane, London to house these children. The hostel was not ready when we arrived so members of the congregation looked after us in their homes for the first while. I believe the rabbi of the synagogue was Rabbi Rabinovitz, whom I remember as a wonderful fiery speaker. We attended English elementary school in London and when war broke out we were evacuated along with the English children to Northampton in the Midlands.

I am still in touch with Susie Speier-Holstein who became Susie Berber, and lives in Fairlawn, N.J., U.S.A. Several others with whom I had kept in touch are now deceased. I would like to know of any that are still alive and wanting to communicate.

My unmarried name was Eva Meyer. I now live in Toronto, Canada.

Many thanks for your help. Please let me know if you need anything more from me.

Kind regards,  
Eva Kestenberg

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**Leo Baeck Student Delegation to London 2017:  
Following in the Footsteps of Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck and the  
Kindertransports**

Dear Erich and Bernd,

How are you? We all hope that you are in good health. Today is the Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel. I wanted to inform you that our students, who took part in the London delegation, will be leading a workshop to other students as part of the education program on this day. The name we gave to the workshop is "A journey following the Kindertransport story". Your stories that you shared with us last March, will be told by the students to their friends and other teachers who did not join us on our trip to London.

It makes me very proud to see the project that started as a translation of stories expands to new and meaningful directions.

Best regards,

Ruth

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On March thirteen 2017, Leo Baeck high school students travelled to London for an exciting and emotional study tour to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck, in whose honour our school is named, and to follow in the footsteps of the Kindertransport stories. The idea for this journey was conceived by Aner Reiner, student, and Dr. Ruth Ash, history teacher and head of our learning centre, as a natural complement to a school project on the Kindertransports. After receiving the blessing of Dani Fesler, Managing Director of the Leo Baeck Education Centre, the delegation departed, accompanied Dr. Ash and another teacher, Meital Cohen.

Last year the students undertook a project to translate from English to Hebrew stories written by the Kindertransport children that were published in a book entitled *I Came Alone* and also built a website where the stories are posted. In England they had several emotional meetings with some of the persons whose stories they had translated and heard their inspiring stories first hand. The journey became all the more meaningful by providing an opportunity to learn about Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck who, before the outbreak of World War II, accompanied one of the Kindertransports by train to London and returned to Berlin, survived incarceration in the Theresienstadt concentration camp, and then decided to make his home and base in London.

At the head office of the Association of Jewish Refugees, the students met Bernd Koschland and Sir Erich Reich, whose Kindertransport experiences enthralled and

inspired the students, and who, Erich & Bernd, imparted the message to the youth that the future is in their hands for coming generations. The students were impressed by their optimism in spite of the hardships they endured. Sir Reich told the students that he does not remember his parents, a fact that surprised them. They were very touched by Bernd Koschland's story of the events of Kristallnacht and his discovery of his father, whom he had not seen for many years, in a photo from Dachau that he saw in a display during a visit to Yad Vashem.

The students visited the Liverpool Street Station where there is a statue of Kindertransport children, by sculptor Frank Meisler, and another one inside the station created by artist Flor Kent.



At the Hoop Lane Cemetery near Alyth Gardens, where Rabbi Leo Baeck is buried, we held an emotional memorial service. The students were hosted for a Kabbalat Shabbat by the North Western Reform Synagogue (Alyth Gardens) where they met two congregants who arrived in England as refugees.

At the Leo Baeck College, the students viewed a rare handwritten edition by Rabbi Leo Baeck and held books he donated to the College from his private library. In a fascinating meeting with Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg at the Sternberg Centre, the students heard about the current difficulty of coping with the issue of refugees in Britain and the involvement of the Jewish community.

The visit to the Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide included a fascinating meeting with Ruth Schwiening who arrived alone in England in a Kindertransport at age 3. Ruth was very moved to meet Aner Reiner face to face, the student who translated her story in the "I Came Alone" translation project. The students also viewed rare items from the Wiener collection related to the Holocaust and Nazism.



During the stay in London daily sessions were held with the students in which they were able to process the events of the day through discussions and in writing. In addition to relating their connection to historical knowledge, the students were asked to express their insights and meaningful messages learned.

Below are selected student quotes following the various meetings and events of the visit:

- The meetings yesterday with Sir Eric Reich and Bernd Koschland were one of the most meaningful events of this visit. They taught us so much and gave us good advice for life gained from their own life experiences. I was inspired by their continued optimism in spite of the hardships they suffered as children.
- During the meeting with the two witnesses yesterday I was overwhelmed by feelings of longing, sadness, and joy. The longing was for my parents, especially my deceased grandmother. The sadness was because my grandmother is no longer with us and I missed the opportunity to ask her about her Aliyah to Israel and her great story (she was born in 1935). I was joyful because my parents are still with me and our future lies ahead and the story continues.
- I strongly identified with the stories and the people were very inspirational and told us that our future lies ahead of us and depends on us. I was most interested to hear Sir Eric Reich's story. His personal story was very unique because he did not remember his parents or his brother and only after he met his brother did he realize what had happened to him and then began to research and ask questions in order to understand what happened to his family.
- I learned that in Berlin trains of children travelled in two directions – one from which none returned, and another in which they succeeded to survive and to reach England. I learned how children were dependent on fate which determined whether they would be saved or die. I learned how parents had to choose and decide on the spot which of their children should be given priority and be saved. I learned that Leo Baeck, in spite of his position, always was one of the people, and even when he had the opportunity to escape, he did not agree because he wanted to stay with his community.
- I felt that I was suddenly learning about the history of the Holocaust from a new perspective and about things I did not know. From there we visited the area of the monuments and suddenly I felt the emotions expressed through the sculptures and in my opinion it was very meaningful.
- Yesterday in my opinion was a meaningful day because we met amazing people and it was a very emotional experience. The most meaningful was the meeting with the Kindertransport children Erich and Bernd. This was very interesting and the highlight because their stories were amazing and interesting and I thought I would like to make a documentary film about



Erich's life which is so interesting and moving. The fact that he does not remember his parents and the moment he met his brother are so moving, as well as how he coped and continued his life.



On 24th April 2017, the Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel, some of the students who participated in the London delegation, led a workshop entitled "A Journey Following the Kindertransport Story." They prepared an educational activity for their friends and other teachers in order to share with them some of the amazing meetings and stories they experienced in London with Kindertransport children. It is wonderful to see how the project, which began as a translation of Kinder stories from English to Hebrew, expands in new and meaningful directions.

We are continuing with the translation project, adding more and more translated stories from English to Hebrew to the site *I Came Alone*". We wish to add more information and pictures. Family members are most welcome to contact us. We welcome other Kinder, who would like to add their story to the site, although it was not originally in the printed version of the book, to send us their stories.

Please contact Dr. Ruth Ash by email: [ashruth3@leobaeck.net](mailto:ashruth3@leobaeck.net)

- Erich and I met with the students. As they were working to translate into Ivrit items from *I came*, they wanted to meet actual Kinder. . To make them feel at ease, most of our talking was in Ivrit. The youngsters showed great interest in what we had to tell them about arriving as young children in the UK and our life from then on. Several questions were put to us and we hope were answered fully.

Erich and Bernd

## LATE NEWS

As editor of the KT Newsletter, I congratulate Jo Biggs on her appointment as the editor of the AJR Journal and wish her every success, which is already shown by the Journal's new garb.

Bernd



## Reviews

Bernard Wasserstein, *On the Eve: the Jews of Europe, before the Second World War*, Simon & Shuster, 2012

With a great emphasis on Eastern Europe, the author does not ignore other papers of the Continent. Britain gets no mention. I suppose the omission could be due to the destruction of Jewish life-almost- in Continental Europe. The book describes the kaleidoscope of life in all aspects. It goes from *shtetl* to *shtot* (town). One reads of the different types of people, the orthodox Jews and the Holy Men,, the secular ones, the Luftmenschn, the women holy, secular and quite 'unholy' and their role in the society of specially Eastern Europe. Wasserstein speaks of the power of the word, especially the Yiddish press, the spoken word through Yiddish, Polish, Hebrew (old and new), Judeo-Espagnol (e.g. in the Balkans). There were many libraries, some with thousands of volumes, many in Yiddish, some by contemporary writers of that period.

Wasserstein concludes that whilst our brothers and sisters were captains of their souls, they were not masters of their fate. They were not entirely passive seeking ways to obviate what would be their fates. Active resistance could not help against the mighty power of the enemy. Escape was not easy with borders closed.

We mourn of the martyrdom of six million (and never forget) and at the same time also always recall the cultural loss, be it books holy and otherwise, the Yeshivot, the Yiddish literature, the learning of every type and so on.

The author ends on a sad note: "Wholly defenceless (US spelling), largely friendless and more and more hopeless, the European Jews, on the eve of their destruction, waited for their barbarians (p.436)."

The book is a most valuable work giving the background to Jewish life before the 'storm broke' withal its force.

A moving sight whilst I was at Jews' College was the arrival of Hebrew books which arrived in tea crates. Some had the names of owners or where they were from (e.g. a Yeshivah). What happened to their owners? We shall never know.

## SHIPS ON WHICH KINDER CAME



I was picked up together with my parents and aunt by the *SS Apapa* at Port Vendres in June 1940. The *Apapa* was bombed and sunk in November 1940. *Miriam Mark in a letter to Susan Harrod*

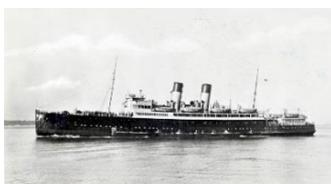


SS Bremen

The Nuremberg Laws made the Swastika the sole national flag in place of the Imperial red, white and black one. Merchant ships had flown both as did the *Bremen* in July 1935. When the ship arrived in New York after the new law, protesters boarded and threw the Swastika into the sea because the Americans did not regard it as the symbol of Germany. The Nazis were angry at the action, especially when the Jewish magistrate did not treat the matter seriously. (Based on Laurence Rees in his book *The Holocaust – new history*, 2017, pp88-89)



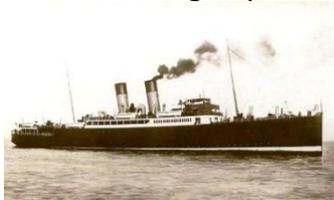
The *SS Bremen* and the *SS Europa* were two sister ships of the Norddeutscher Lloyd, and despite their German ownership are known to have transported some Kinder from Bremerhaven to Southampton, again presumably using “spare berths” that would be occupied on the Trans-Atlantic segment only forward from Southampton or Cherbourg. Kinder disembarked at Southampton.



The SS Vienna (scrapped 1960) *played* a special part in my life. Not only did the ship ferry my sister and me to England. The ship was converted into a troopship, and when I went on leave from Berlin (1946 /48) was astonished to have the SS Vienna taking me once more. Charles Leigh, *Autobiography of a Jewish Refugee*



The SS Prague is documented as having brought the first KT group which arrived in Harwich at 06:00 GMT on 2nd December 1938 with 196 children from Berlin and Hamburg orphanages which were at most risk.

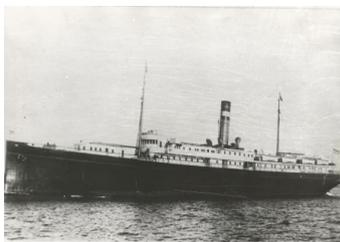


The SS Amsterdam was used for other traffic and for cover on the night service if either of the Vienna or Prague were out of action.

- *The Vienna, Prague & Amsterdam belonged to the LNER (London & North Eastern Railway) plying between The Hook of Holland and Harwich.*



80 Kinder boarded the Shabbat Shalom Manhattan in Hamburg in late March 1939 and arrived in Southampton 3 days later. The list of the 80 exists.



The SS Warszawa was built in 1914 as a cargo/passenger ship and brought Kinder. It was torpedoed near Mersa Matruh (Egypt) in 1941 carrying troops.



The SS Bodegraven was a Dutch freighter of the KNSM (Royal Netherlands Steamship Company) which became embroiled in the KT story as she was the last sea-going vessel to leave the Dutch port of IJmuiden (Amsterdam) around 10 minutes before the Dutch surrender at 20:00 on 14 May 1940. On board were around 245 mostly Jewish refugees including about 75 unaccompanied children from the Burgerweeshuis (Amsterdam Civic Orphanage). She eventually docked in Liverpool after 5 days where her master handed her over to the British Admiralty to assist with the war effort. I went to Holland with the Kindertransport in January 1939 and when Holland capitulated to the German army, I escaped and was a passenger on the SS Bodegraven\* with 80 other children from the Burgerweeshuis in Amsterdam (already a well-known story).

Hans (Levy, KT Newsletter, March 2013)



An archive picture of the "Hook Continental" that the Kinder would have used from Harwich to Liverpool

*Peter Hederley & Bernd*

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With reference to the last letter in your AJR Journal supplement for the Kindertransport regarding the name of ships which brought us to the shores I have the following suggestion.

The authority which keeps records of all shipping - nationality, ownership, homage (?) and ports of call in the UK is The Registrar of Merchant Shipping and Seamen who might have records regarding passengers from Europe in the period 1933 - 1940.

Yours sincerely  
E Kolman