

JOURNAL

**HOLOCAUST
SURVIVORS**

45

AID SOCIETY

INDEX

Page 4	SECTION I CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE
Page 5	THE PRIME MINISTER
Page 6	SECTION II PAST AND PRESENT CHANGING OF THE GUARD
Page 6	Robert Sherman
Page 7-8	SHOA PRESENTATION
	Judith Sherman
Page 8-12	RACHEL LEVY RETURNS TO HER VILLAGE OF BHUTZ
Page 12-14	THREE MIRACLES THAT HAPPENED TO PINHAS DURING THE WAR
Page 14-19	LIBERTY FRATERNITY
	Erica Wagner
Page 19-22	BERKOVICH DIARY C.B.E D. Univ
Page 22-24	THERE IS NO WINSTON CHURCHILL
	Aubrey Rose
Page 25-26	MEMORIES
	Aubrey Rose
Page 26-28	MONIEK JOSEPH GOLDBERG
	Fay Goldberg
Page 28-29	REMEMBER
	Maureen Hecht
Page 29-32	AT THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR YIDDISH AND JEWISH CULTURE IN LONDON
	Avroham Kwaterko
Page 32-33	AUSCHWITZ 70TH ANNIVERSARY: ONE SURVIVOR GOES BACK TO CAMP
	Darren Richman

Page 34-35	WINDERMERE 1945 'THE BOYS'
	Mala Tribich and David Zuck
Page 35	A TRIBUTE TO MY UNCLE MEYER BRZEZINSKI
	Sam Freiman
Page 35-36	KOPEL KENDALL'S STORY
	Vivienne Kendall
Page 37	RESEARCHING INDIVIDUAL FATES AT THE WEINER LIBRARY
	Dr Christine Schmidt
Page 38	COLETTE LITTMAN
	Judith Sherman
Page 38-39	REMEMBERING BRITISH HEROES OF THE HOLOCAUST
	Eric Pickles
Page 40	POEMS
	Michael Etkind
Page 41	SECTION III SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION
Page 41-45	DR BONNIE CHANDLER
Page 45	ABE WERTMAN
	Debbie Pottins
Page 46	SHLOMO RAZ
Page 47	SHELLEY SIMONS
Page 48-50	WALKING THE SAME PATH, MY VISIT TO POLAND
	Chloe Kaye
Page 50	MY JOURNEY WITH HOLOCAUST ECHOES
	Ilana Gelb
Page 51-53	70TH ANNIVERSARY OF AUSCHWITZ LIBERATION
	Simmy Richman

Page 53-54	GRYN-ING ALL THE WAY
	Suzanne Baum
Page 54-56	'45 AID SOCIETY AND SECOND GENERATION SUBMISSION
	Maurice Helfgott
Page 56-57	CRAIG RINDER
Page 57	SECTION IV ANNUAL MEMORIAL MONTEFORE LECTURE
	William Tyler
Page 57-59	1943: THE TIDE TURNS
Page 59-61	1944: HOPE AMIDST THE GLOOM
Page 61-62	1945: 70 YEARS ON
Page 63-64	SECTION V CLAIMS CONFERENCE
Page 64	SECTION VI OBITUARIES
Page 64-66	STANLEY FAUL
Page 67	MANNA FRIEDMAN
	Zdenka Husserl
Page 67-68	MANNA FRIEDMAN
	Judith Sherman
Page 68-69	ALFRED HUBERMAN
Page 69-71	BOB OBUCHOWSKI
	Sue Bermange
Page 71-72	YISROEL RUDZINSKI
	Written by a grandchild
Page 72-74	MICHAEL BANDEL – EULOGY
	Martin Bandel
Page 74-75	MAYER CORNELL
	Marilyn Cornell
Page 76	SECTION VII NEWS FROM MANCHESTER
Page 77-79	SECTION VIII THE QUILT

'45 AID SOCIETY

CHAIRMAN
BEN HELFGOTT

VICE CHAIRMAN
ANGELA COHEN

TREASURER
ALAN GREENBERG

SECRETARY
KIM STERN

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
V GREENBERG, S IRVING, H OLMER, H SPIRO, D PETERSON

SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Philip Burton, Julia Burton, Ros Gelbart, Maurice Helfgott, Michael Helfgott,
Gary Spiro, Sue Bermange, Jamie Beale, Jonathan Kingsley, Amy Stern

SECRETARY (MANCHESTER)
MRS LOUISE ELLIOT

JOURNAL OF THE '45 AID SOCIETY
EDITOR
BEN HELFGOTT

All submissions for publication in the next issue (including letters to the Editor
and Members' News Items) should be sent to:

KIM STERN, 10 YORK HOUSE, ROYAL CONNAUGHT PARK,
BUSHEY, HERTS WD23 2RF
Email: max.kim@hotmail.co.uk

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

ARZA HELFGOTT for her kind assistance.
PEGGY LUCAS for the typing of the Journal.
ANGELA COHEN (daughter of Lottie and Moishe Malenicky)
for facilitating the printing of the Journal.

Design by **DOUGLAS & LEE**

SECTION I CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Ben Helfgott

This year marks the 70th anniversary of our liberation and the start of the arrival of our members in Britain.

You will notice that this year's journal has an increased number of contributions from the 2nd and 3rd Generation. The commitment and participation of the 2nd and 3rd Generation to the work and goals of our Society are indeed very gratifying.

In this connection, I want to mention the Memorial Quilt Project. The project is the brainchild of Julia Burton daughter of Olive and the late David Herman. The project has resulted in the formation of many new friendships between the 2nd and 3rd Generation members and the working together of survivors and the next generations. The quilt is a memorial to our loved ones and plans are afoot for it to go on display in museums and exhibitions and I have no doubt it will serve as an invaluable learning tool. Our thanks go to Julia and her team for the many hours they put in to bring the idea to fruition. . (See cover).

We are proud too of the stance the 2nd and 3rd Generation took towards the UK Holocaust Commission 2014. They were proactive in debating among themselves and submitting their thoughts to the Prime Minister's Commission for consideration.

As yet another example of the active involvement of the next generations, I quote from an article by Kalia Pissarro-Stern. Kalia is the granddaughter of Meir and Marion Stern. In 2012 Meir took his children and grandchildren to his hometown of Munkacs and on her return Kalia shared this thought with us in an article she sent in to the Journal "Having the good fortune to have grandparents who can share their stories, it feels that the least I can do to honour and carry out our piece of history, will be to provide my own children in turn with a solid understanding of where they came from, and why we are all so lucky to be here at all..."

It is indeed very encouraging that our children and grandchildren - the 2nd and 3rd Generation are active as a cohesive unit and we take pride in their involvement with the '45 Aid Society and its legacy.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

29 March 2015

Dear Ben,

I wanted to write to you and all the members of the '45 Aid Society in this special anniversary year, as you mark 70 years since your incredible journey to Britain.

In 1945 our country committed to taking in one thousand young survivors of the Holocaust. Seventy years on it is no less shocking to remember that only 732 could be found.

On flights from Prague and Munich you came to Windermere, Southampton, Scotland and Northern Ireland. You were children but you had already witnessed unspeakable horrors - ghettos, concentration camps, slave labour camps, death marches and, for many of you, the murder of your parents, brothers and sisters.

In this anniversary year, I know there will be times of great sadness and reflection as you remember the families, homes and childhoods so brutally taken from you as well as society members who have passed away in more recent years.

But we should also celebrate the remarkable lives you have lived and I want you to know just how proud we are of all that you have given to this country, your adopted home.

Since the creation of the '45 Aid Society in 1963 you have worked together to support good causes and to educate young people about the Holocaust. You have shown the most extraordinary courage to share your testimony so that we should never forget.

Now, in 2015, many of your children and grandchildren are active members of the Second and Third Generation, dedicating themselves to keeping your stories alive and ensuring the lessons of the Holocaust continue to be learnt. But we must all join with them in sharing this sacred responsibility. That is why the Government is giving £50 million to kick start a society wide fundraising effort for a proper national memorial to the Holocaust, together with a world class learning centre, an urgent programme to record and preserve survivor testimony and an endowment fund to protect Holocaust education for ever.

This vital work is being taken forward by the new UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, chaired by Sir Peter Bazalgette, and I know the '45 Aid Society will play a crucial role in ensuring we get this right.

Together we will keep your memory safe - today, tomorrow and for every generation to come.

With all good wishes,

*Yours,
David*

The changing of the guard

Robert Sherman

We commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps and the end of World War II and the founding of the 45 Aid Society. That is seventy years of growth and strong actions taken; 70 years of successful actions on behalf of remembrance and fighting against hatred; 70 years of increasing efforts to build tolerance and peace among the broad diversity of mankind ~ a seemingly impossible, but absolutely necessary mission. Your mission. Not alone, but in concert with as many allies as can be gathered. Indeed, a reaching out to the world.

The 2nd and 3rd generation of survivors have been enlisted in this mission of remembrance and peace. And they are assuming greater and greater responsibilities. We are fortunate that the succeeding generations are stepping forward. Almost all the officers of the Society are now 2nd generation members. We are in good hands. All honour to them. May the 2nd and 3rd generations yield "geborim", heroes, like Ben Helfgott and his companions who put forth tremendous efforts to pursue the mission.

Our marvellous leaders pass one by one to their eternal home. They do so normally and naturally, not as the Nazis would have wished. We can mark their graves, honour their achievements and celebrate their lives. May those who are still with us live long and fulfilling lives and continue to make each day count as they always have.

Robert is married to Judith (nee Stern) who lived with her younger sister Miriam in West Courtney. She studied Social Science at the L.S.E. Both of them, with their daughter and grandchildren, are regular contributors to our Journal.

Passing the responsibility to the next generations is a complicated process. The next generation did not personally witness or experience the Holocaust. Bearing second hand witness is not the same as experiencing it. They have to find the words and the images and set the terms of the argument to their contemporaries so the message can be conveyed and received and acted upon to create a better world. They must also generate the powerful motivation and energy to urge them forward. Fortunately, there are still some survivors remaining who inspire and help. The emphasis remains to remember in order to create a better world.

Holocaust deniers will have a new weapon. Today's newspaper carries a story of how the mind can distort or even create memories that never existed in fact with the person's firm conviction that they are real. The deniers will claim that the eye witnesses either distorted or engaged in the mass production of faulty memories that never existed in fact. Never mind the multitude of documents and films that portray the truth.

As always the future is

uncertain. But the mission is in good hands. The Holocaust will be remembered and its message of destruction will be used to build tolerance, respect, and peace in place of the destruction wrought by the Holocaust. Our great grandchildren and their descendants will know a better world. This can only be accomplished by connecting to others in general and our own future generations in particular.

We train our children in tolerance and respect, to move up and out. Therefore, many are leaving Judaism to join other secularists or other faith traditions or enter into intermarriages. We have strong motivation to connect strongly and Judaically to our own future generations and show them the beauty and power of being Jewish. We must teach that our destiny is to be a light unto the other nations of the world, to embrace God and co-create a better world for all. We do this not just to engender fear as through the Holocaust, but by providing a positive image for the world. Look what the survivor's achieved! Look what Jews have achieved over generations! But we must do it both together and individually. Hillel got it right: "If am not for me, who will be for me? If I am only for me, who am I? If not now, then when?"

We thank our future generations for accepting the responsibilities and leadership of the Society and its mission.

19.02.2015

Shoa presentation, Ricklis Memorial Committee - April 2013

Judith Sherman

What we know today: We know our today is of yesterday and of today. We are Holocaust Survivors.

We know, in the morning, at breakfast we know, that daily bread daily had is as good as it gets.

We know every day words in their terror and normalcy: hair, shower, gas, trains, selections - we remember the terror and cherish the normalcy.

We know that our wrinkles and grey hair are a badge of life - age allowed to happen. Age allowed to happen.

Children. We give the names to our children of murdered loved ones but want the legacy to be of people who lived and danced and prayed and baked bread - people of life. People of life... of life

Families. We are mothers mothering. Fathers protecting. Children who outgrow their shoes. Grandparents holding children's hands. And we want our Jewishness to be so light, so safe, so kol b'seder.

Today, no matter how Italian the restaurant, I do not order pasta I order potatoes. In Ravensbruck a potato is a promise fulfilled. Another day's future assured. Today when I visit my grandchildren in Westchester I bring them home-fried potatoes. Not cake, not treats. Potatoes. The ultimate gift.

America, to you we give thanks for our good life here. Israel - Israel is in our DNA. Israel for historical, spiritual

Judith (nee Stern) lived with her younger sister Miriam in Weir Courtney. She studied Social Science at the L.S.E. and later emigrated to the USA where she lives with her husband Reuben in New Jersey. Both of them are regular contributors to our Journal.

and human connections. Israel for safety. For Joy. World, yes to Israel! Yes to Israel!

We relish options. We own sturdy shoes and say; feet you now have options to roam in all directions. We relish options. Words like yes, words like no. We remember that choiceless universe. We know the value of a toothbrush, a book, photograph, prayer book, aspirin, songs. Friendships. Community.

Today when I pass a forest, the inevitable question is still. Is this forest dark enough, deep enough to hide me? Today in this good life I have metamorphosised into visibility. Today I have no fear lest a human should appear. In Camp gallows are the only trees. Today we say lucky trees we do not have to eat your leaves.

Today - Cemeteries. Ground. A tombstone. Rituals. Sadness, but a marker of civilization. A marker of existence. Today: my husband and I have 12 cemetery plots reserved just for the two of us. Twelve plots for the two of us. On a hill under a poplar tree. Ground

and concreteness. An un-Auschwitz funeral.

God, we say, our memories will forever embody Auschwitz and yours should too. And we say also, God, let us, our children, our children's children be your witness through awe, appreciation and joy. The challenge of our experience and the essence of our faith.

Today we know that during the Holocaust no one could have survived without the help of someone - in or out of the camp. And today we know that in normal times too connections with others are essential. The Ricklis Memorial Committee has since its inception in 1984 celebrated our existence and added a valued dimension to our existence... witnessing. Ricklis members stand by survivor members and together we reach out to give meaning to "never again". Our Tikun Olam muscles are strengthened by each other. By Each Other.

Yes, we are witnesses. We speak out loud. With tears or dryness, confidence or shyness, we speak. We say - where you are make goodness happen. We say - you must be more than law abiding - you must stretch your responsibility. We say: this time let us be on time - not echoes of past silences nobly moaning ignorance. This time, with bread in hand, on time. On time. On time.

To teachers we say "Math, science and literacy compute into monstrosity if not anchored in morality. To the

world we say "Your brother's keeper be but do not make a list of who the brother is. No list. No list. No list. "

We know now that we are owned by a past we cannot abandon. It is in our pores - in our soles. In memories of day - in dreams of night. We know that we can choose a life of despair rooted in our Holocaust past but we choose renewal of life. We chose life.

We are not heroes. We are not more heroic than our murdered parents, sisters, brothers, friends, We are not better, only more fortunate. Yes, we live on two tracks. In our daily lives - in our yearly events - into our old age - there is nothing that does not connect us to the past. Nothing is not a trigger. We note the star is in heaven, and on the flag of Israel, we

note the stars not branding our chest.

Our today is of yesterday and today. We have the connections and we have the determination and muscles to - live - here - today. Two track living is work, hard work but worthy work. We do it. We choose to do it.

- and let us say Amen

Rachel Levy returns to her village of Bhutz, Ukraine - May 2013

It began in March 2004 when I spent the evening at home in the company of my good friend, Rabbi Mark Daniels. We talked about my mother, Rachel Levy, born Ruzena Slomovic, and how during the spring of 1944 at the age of 14 she, along with her mother, her elder brother Chaskel and three younger siblings, were forced by the Nazis to leave their home in the tiny Czech village of Bhutz deep in the Carpathian Mountains. They were first sent to a ghetto near the Romanian border at Solotnva and, after about one month, they were forced on to trains and transported to the death camp at Auschwitz. This was the last time my mother saw my grandmother, Shlima, and the younger siblings as they were sent on arrival directly to the gas chambers. My Uncle Chaskel was separated from my mother and they were not reunited until after liberation when miraculously he tracked her down on a farm near Bratislava. These heart wrenching stories are thankfully well documented

elsewhere but the purpose of this synopsis provides a little background.

The most poignant aspect of their story, and that which relates to our journey, was that Uncle Chaskel had returned to Bhutz after the war. He had been shocked and fainted when he saw his family home taken over by others who had adorned the once orthodox Jewish home with Christian icons. After finding my mother he refused to take her back to Bhutz to spare her the same shock - their home was no longer theirs. Later it was rumoured that the village had flooded and no longer existed.

Rabbi Daniels and I tried to find the village of Bhutz using the very few clues I had. From my mother's verbal accounts it was within walking distance of the small town known in Yiddish as Unter (Lower) Apsha. There was also a Mittel (Middle) and Ober (Higher) Apsha not too far away and with the limited internet resources available to us in 2004 we discovered, from what amounted to no more than

hearsay, that Bhutz would be roughly located within this 9km triangle and was no longer Czech but in Ukraine. To further complicate matters it had been Hungarian, Romanian and the locals considered themselves to be sub-Carpathian Ruthenian. This meant villages and towns had names in up to five different languages.

By 3:00am the following morning we had found multiple scanned pages of an old 1925 map which we were able to print and stick together. For the first time we had a useful map of the border areas of Ukraine, Romania and the Carpathian Mountains and the triangle of the three Apshas was clearly shown as it had been during my mother's time. There was no place called Bhutz but we knew it was somewhere nestled in those mountains! This was a very exciting outcome.

Fast forward eight years during which time much research had taken place. Thanks to the Jewish Genealogy website and the

collection of related material and modern day maps by my Hungarian sister-in-law we had acquired a lot of information. My husband David and I had our first serious discussion about attempting a trip to try and find Bhutz and we broached the subject with my mother. For absolutely obvious emotional and practical reasons she was only lukewarm about returning to her place of birth. It would be a long, complicated journey to an inaccessible region to try and find a village that was virtually undocumented. For a woman in her 80s, having survived the horrors of the Holocaust, undertaking this journey could be unimaginably frightening. The churning up of unwelcome thoughts and images was a disturbing possibility. Nevertheless, my mother was very brave and agreed to make the journey.

Some months later during a wedding in Israel David first mentioned the idea of the trip to one of my mother's Israeli cousins, one of four Steinmetz brothers. The idea was instantly adopted with much enthusiasm from all the brothers and their wives. The caveat was that my mother had to be on the trip too for many obvious reasons but also to represent their mother Rivka Steinmetz, her aunt, who had died only recently and who had told her sons that she regretted not making the trip herself when she had an opportunity. It was my grandmother Shlima's sister, Rivka, who had told us the tales of Ternova, their birthplace. This is a larger town in the Carpathians and is featured on maps on a main road. In

my mother's day it was a long journey over the mountains by horse, taking two days and an overnight stay in the forest when she, as a child, was allowed to go on this exciting trip from Bhutz to see her grandparents and family.

The enthusiasm of our family to join this journey into the unknown escalated at quite a pace; from the USA, my brother Martin and his children Hannah and Michael. Three of the four Israeli cousins and their wives, Danny and Daphna, Asher and Shlomit together with Alon, Rotem and Omer the children of Igal and Anat. My Uncle Chaskel had survived the Holocaust but the effects had damaged his health and he tragically died in his 40s. His two daughters, the last remaining Slomovics, Fiona from London and Sarah who is living in the USA, decided to join the trip. This was truly a great delight to the whole family and especially my mother, having her children, grandchildren, cousins and now her nieces by her side. In total seventeen people, three generations from three continents.

Emails flew across the planet and finally, after many months of discussing logistics, the family was to meet up and stay at the Kempinski Hotel in Budapest and then early the next morning take a contracted 41-seater coach with two drivers and a Jewish Ukrainian guide to the town of Tychiv, Ukraine.

We had been given lots of advice and warned constantly that the part of Ukraine we were visiting would be akin to the "wild west". The roads would be

impassable, the toilets would be lacking toilet paper, the food would be inedible, nobody would understand us and we might even be robbed! It was not all true!

On the morning we departed the Hungarian/Ukrainian border was suffering from computer problems and delays were reported to be worse than ever - it could take six hours to cross. Our guide, Bela Huber, knew this in advance so he instructed our drivers to take a 50km detour through Slovakia and enter Ukraine on a quieter border crossing. This worked very well indeed and we crossed both borders in less than two hours with no doubt a little help from the nice lady border guard who just happened to be on very friendly terms with one of our drivers!

We headed through Uzhhorod on a fine motorway but once we had crossed the city it was very different indeed. The roads we suddenly encountered were far worse than anything we could have imagined. There were enormous pot holes everywhere, forcing the traffic on both sides of the road to zig-zag to find the best route. We were in a large coach and came face-to-face with oncoming traffic far too many times for comfort. Our drivers being local Ukrainians thankfully knew the roads very well and they proved to be excellent at keeping us and the vehicle safe.

When we weren't dodging gaping holes we encountered numerous horses and carts and plenty of cows wandering in great herds in the middle of the road right in front of

us. This was local life, it was unusual and fascinating and it was not going to be a quick journey! However, we were able to take in the scenery all around us, the Carpathian Mountains are beautiful and the sun was shining. My mother sat at the front of the coach and using the microphone, told us all about her memories of a very happy childhood before the war and commented on what we were seeing along the way. At other times we moved around the coach chatting and taking it in turns to listen to my mother recollect. It was a very special time for the whole family.

After a nearly twelve hour journey we finally arrived at our destination, the Hotel Oksana in Tychiv. We had all kept our expectations of our accommodation for the next three nights as low as possible. However, once we got past the unsmiling Ukrainian cleaner who greeted us, we all found our rooms to be surprisingly spacious, nicely furnished, spotlessly clean and unexpectedly stocked with toilet paper! In fact the towels and bed linen was so well laundered they could have stood up unaided. We had never encountered such crispness and in such contrast to the fluffy luxury at the Kempinski in Budapest!

It was quite late in the evening when we arrived but the hotel staff produced copious amounts of soup and chicken, even two loaves of bread that vaguely resembled challah and along with some wine, Asher the eldest of the Steinmetz brothers led us in the brachot and Shabbat dinner was served.

We ate in an atmosphere of wonderful togetherness and, still for me, amazement that we had all managed to get this trip off the ground and had made it all the way to Ukraine. The evening continued with us all sitting around in a circle and talking about what motivated us as individuals to come on this long journey. It was moving, emotional, insightful and at times uncomfortable to verbalise our feelings about family history, but by being all together there was a feeling of genuine empathy and understanding. We went to bed exhausted but full of anticipation about what we'd discover over the next couple of days.

The following morning we enjoyed a breakfast full of mainly unidentifiable Ukrainian goodies. Pancakes and pastries featured heavily and so did the dairy products that were so gloriously rich and fresh. The milk was raw with so much cream floating on top, a really delicious treat compared to our usual semi-skimmed obsession! Later it was discovered that the hotel owner's cow lived in the back garden and was a well fed and busy beast!

Our first stop of the day was to visit the market. It was not to purchase goods as one might expect, but to exchange money. We had been warned that getting hold of Ukrainian currency would not be easy. The banks and the ATMs were not reliable. Much effort had been made before our trip to buy currency but it had not been possible. Even in Hungary we had no success and here we were with no local money at all.

The market itself was quite

a poor affair mainly made up of individuals selling their own fresh milk, dried mushrooms, a few herbs, homemade wine and an array of already sprouting potatoes. However, the "money men" were found and in a not particularly discreet corner bundles of cash came out of their pockets and exchanges were made. It was a very peculiar feeling and did not feel entirely secure but we were assured by Bela that it was all fine. When we were back on the coach and worked out the exchange rates and commissions, it proved that we had been given excellent rates and charged a very low commission. Another Ukrainian surprise.

That day we were going to look for Bhutz and we set off in the coach to the town of Lower Apsha, only about 30 minutes away and climbing into the mountains. Along the way and in the town itself we were astounded at the size and diversity of the houses. The area was mainly inhabited by Romanians and we learnt that members of these families spent much of the year working hard overseas and away from their loved ones. The reward was that they came back each year with money that they used to build the most ostentatious properties. Some looked like fairytale castles befitting a Disney movie. Many were unfinished and the remaining members of these families, mostly the elderly and young parents, lived in one or two rooms. Each year more money would be available and more of the house would be finished. It was a long term investment for the next generation. The competition was evident by

the size of the gates and railings installed and their pride was apparent from the care that was taken to keep the gardens and outside features looking pristine. If you have ever wondered where all the garden gnomes go when they disappear, we found them in abundance adorning the front gardens in these areas - quite a bizarre and amusing discovery. Such is the distrust of the banks due to corruption and inflation in Ukraine, the locals had another way of keeping their assets safe and that was by investing in gold. This precious metal was evidently kept close at hand as we had never seen so many people with mouths full of gold teeth.

Lower Apsha was a revelation with its fantasy houses and was unrecognisable when compared to old photographs we had found of the area. The further into the mountains we went the more evidence we saw of the traditional wooden one storey houses that were familiar to my mother. Many of them still existed, scattered amongst the more modern alternatives. Our guide, Bela, informed us that he had managed to glean some local knowledge and had an idea where we might find the village of Bhutz. We slowly continued our climb through the mountains, the roads became very rough and narrow and we headed into areas that were sparsely populated and not on any map.

Stopping frequently along the way to let traffic pass, Bela took advantage and talked to the local people, asking about Bhutz. They kept pointing further up the

mountainous road and on and on we cautiously travelled. At one point Bela stopped the coach and went to talk to a young lady. When asked about Bhutz she confirmed she knew it and was heading that way. She boarded our coach and chatted to our guide who translated what she told us about the locality, her life in the mountains and her family.

We came to a sign on the side of the road in Cyrillic BEHMKHtf BOYI4 / MA/1MM BOyiJ. Translated and transliterated it said Great Bouts and Small Bouts (pronounced Bo'uts) 2km away. The spelling of my mother's village, Bhutz, was taken from the Yiddish spoken as their first language. Many variations are possible including Bahutz and Berhuts. We clambered out of the coach and took photographs, not quite believing what we were seeing. Could it really be that we were just 2km away from actually being in my mother's village?

When it was explained that my mother was Dudy's granddaughter she cried out and took my mother's hand in hers. We all had tears in our eyes and the impact of this moment was immense. Maria's nieces and neighbours had brought out all the available chairs and when they ran out we were offered very comfortable logs with cushions on top. Our whole group sat with Maria and her family outside her house for a very long time, everybody was introduced and Maria was overwhelmed, as were we, when she met my mother's children, grandchildren, nieces and cousins. It did feel like a miracle at this

moment that we had so little expectation of even finding the village and here we were in Bhutz talking to a woman who had known our family and sharing the one photograph we have of our family and my mother and Uncle Chaskel as a young girl and boy.

Old she may have been, a bit deaf and blind, but she was sharp and had a great sense of humour. During the time we spent with Maria she made a comment to a neighbour that my mother picked up on instantly. It was not very polite but it was hilarious and to our utter surprise it was in Yiddish. My mother made her repeat it to make sure she had heard correctly, she did, she had and we all laughed like drains! This was yet another totally unexpected remnant of life in and around a Jewish village where the local Romanians were employed, traded and integrated with the Yiddish speaking population. It was a very reassuring feeling to know that such a strong culture was still imbedded in the area. We said farewell to Maria and her family knowing that we would never forget the day we met her and how central she would become in our collective memories. I hope that at this late stage in her life she takes comfort from knowing that, despite the anguish of witnessing the deportation of her Jewish neighbours, some did survive and they went on to have good lives and families.

During the time we were in Bhutz some of the younger and fitter members of the group climbed the mountains at the back of the village and made their way to where we

were told the Jewish cemetery had been. It had been demolished during the communist regime but it was important that we recognised the importance of the place and a yahrzeit candle was lit and kaddish was said.

The Carpathian Mountains are absolutely stunning. The scenery around Bhutz is lush, green and magnificent. I can now see why my mother enjoyed her childhood growing up in such a setting. They lived a comfortable life with family, good food and religion at the centre of their world. They were employers, successful and well respected in the community. Life was good for the Slomovics of Bhutz.

Before we left Bhutz we visited the small shop and made every effort to boost the local economy. Water, soft drinks, ice creams and sweets were purchased in abundance. It wasn't until we were on the coach again that I discovered the enormous bag of chocolate covered toffees I had bought was not only made in Ukraine but were kosher and the packet was covered in hechshers to prove it! Who would have believed that Kosher food would still be found in a village where no Jews had lived for decades. I found this very amusing and from then on, every time the big bag of sweets came out on the coach, they were known as the

"kosher toffees from Bhutz" and in my opinion tasted all the better for it!

The next stop on our journey was back down the mountains to Solotnva where the ghetto was located near to the Romanian border. My mother has no recollection of how she got to the ghetto, such was the shock of being captured by the Nazis and being deported from her home. Was she made to walk or was there transport? The ghetto was no longer visible but there was a plaque commemorating it on the wall of a building. We were able to light a yahrzeit candle and say kaddish together. It was an exhausting yet most uplifting day.

Three miracles that happened to Pinchas Gutter during the war

When I was in Majdanek there were selections for the gas chamber on a daily basis, even after the original selection upon arrival. The Nazis played games. Suddenly we would have a roll call, either a couple of barracks, or a single barrack, and they would ask for artisans, plumbers, electricians, tailors. More often than not the people that stepped out and others that were taken out of the "appel" (roll call) would be sent to the gas chambers. So, we were warned not to volunteer. After being in Majdanek from the second week in May of '43 till the end of July/beginning of August '43, there was a roll call of our barrack and again they asked for artisans. I stepped out. Some other people also stepped out and

Pinchas came to England with the Windermere group. He first went to live in South Africa. He moved to Ontario, Canada, where he now lives.

then the SS men went and asked people what kind of trade they had and pulled them out of the "appel". The same was happening in other barracks. We were then marched to a barrack and told to undress naked. And most of us began to say Shma Yisrael because we prepared ourselves for the gas chamber. However, once we were undressed, doctors came in with stethoscopes and examined each one of us carefully. Some of us were chosen and others rejected. I was chosen and told to get dressed again and I was then shipped to Skarzysko.

Had I remained in Majdanek I would not have been writing to you now. When I stepped out, this was the first Providential miracle.

The second miracle happened in Skarzysko. When typhoid became rampant I became ill and for as long as I could I went to work because if you went to the Kranken shtubbe, and you did not recover quickly, a truck would come, take all the ill people to the forest to shoot them. So I did not want to go to the Kranken Shtubbe. Spotted typhoid has a crisis day where you have a very high fever and you either get over it or you don't. And I was unable to walk or move. My friends and I decided to put me on the top bunk in our barrack and cover me with straw. We had

night shift and day shift of twelve hours each. When night shift returned in the morning, they went to their barracks and the day shift left for work and the barracks were supposed to be empty. The barracks were inspected by the Jewish police and the Ukrainian werk shutz. After a few hours the Jewish policeman came into the barrack, stood on the bottom bunk and inspected the upper bunks. He came to my bunk, and saw me, looked into my eyes, and shouted to the Ukrainian guard, "Reiner da!" No one is here! He risked himself and saved me. The next day I was changed to night shift, working with the women inside, much lighter work and I recovered. And the thing that really stays in my memory, one of the women gave me an apple.

The third miracle happened on the eve of Tisha B'Av in '44. We came back from our labour. The camp was surrounded not only by the Ukrainian Werk Shutz but also by SS. As soon as we arrived the Jewish police told us that we must go to the office of the Austrian Commander of the camp. He sat in his office at the window and as we arrived at the window he asked our names and I saw him make a tick. After everyone had their names taken we were back in the barracks as usual, except the camp was heavily guarded. More so than usual. When we woke up in the morning to go to work we were told to stay behind. Nobody was going to work. The Jewish police rounded us up and made us stand on an appel and we were told that the Commander is going to come and talk to us. Schultz,

the Austrian Commander of our camp, came a couple of hours later and told us that he is going to call out names. Those people whose names were called out had to stand on the other side and as the camp is being closed down, we are going to be shipped by rail to the next camp. The ones whose names were not called out would have to walk as there were not enough rail wagons for everyone. He started calling out names, my name, my best friend's name, and we went to stand on the other side. The Jewish administration of the camp, which we called the Prominente, had special privileges and their lives were quite different from us. The Jewish police and the Jewish Camp Commander, who was a woman, the doctors, and the rest of the administration could even have their families with them. One of the women doctors, who was on good terms with Schultz, had her elderly mother with her in the camp. He called out the mother's name but did not call out the doctor's. She ran up to Schultz, pulled on his shirt sleeve and obviously begged him to let her go with her mother. He wouldn't agree and as she continued to pull at his sleeve, he lost his temper, took out his revolver and shot both her and her mother. We looked around ourselves and we saw that most of us whose names were called were either in rags or yellow from working from picric acid. We realized that this was a selection and we started running. I first hid in a chest with dead bodies and then I jumped out and hid underneath the barrack which was built on stilts and

tried to burrow myself like an animal to hide.

As soon as this happened everybody in the camp was running and the Jewish Commander and the police and the Werk Shutz started rounding everybody up and looking for those who were hiding. Fortunately for me the person that found me was a Jewish policeman, called Katz. I had been working in his commando all the time I was in Skarzysko. In the beginning when I arrived in Skarzysko, when I was assigned to his command, he found out that I was from Lodz as was he and he knew my family. He had his wife living in the police barrack but unfortunately she was ill with TB and slowly dying. He asked me that I should become her nurse, wash her and clean her and do whatever I could for her after coming back from work. I did that for several months and after she died Katz still kept an eye on me and gave me some extra food. When he found me under the barrack, he said, "I will help you" He took me to the police barrack, took all the rags off me. I had paper on my feet instead of shoes and he washed me, combed my hair, gave me completely new clothes, police boots, rubbed lipstick, left over from his wife, into my cheeks, and he said, "There is going to be a new appel and Schultz is now going to choose those that are going to be murdered. With G-d's help you will survive." We were mustered into a new roll call and Shultz went from row to row pulling out people that he felt were not able to work any longer. He came to my row where I stood right in front. My best friend stood

next to me on my right hand side. Shultz stopped in front of me, looked at me and without looking at my best friend, pulled him out and threw him into the ring of condemned people surrounded by Jewish police and Werk Shutz. I grieved for this friend for years as I felt that he was a sacrificial lamb on my behalf. Shultz looked at me but took him. But there is a happy ending to this story. Years later, in one of the '45 Aid journals, I read a story about a boy who was in some of the camps where I had been and also had been liberated in Terezin. He did not come with us as he smuggled himself back to Poland, hoping to find his father and uncle who had run away to Russia. He found his uncle but unfortunately his father

had died in Russia. He stayed on in Poland, became an academic in the Warsaw University. As I returned to Poland in 2002 with my family, I decided to contact this man, Jacob Gutenbaum. We met in Warsaw and had tea together. He asked me how I survived the last selection in Skarzysko and I told him. I then asked him how HE survived and he told me that he was actually taken by Shultz to be murdered but when he stood in the ring where the Jewish police and the Werk Shutz were holding hands to keep everybody in, he bit the hand of one of the guards and he started running. They shot after him but he wasn't hit. He hid and the next day or so was shipped to Shlieben. I was sent to Chestohowa

Zelazna Chuta camp. When he got up to say good-bye, I noticed that the shoe on his right foot was built up and he limped slightly, which I did not notice when he arrived. I realized then that this was Yacov, my best friend in Skarzysko, who was the only one who limped because his right foot was slightly shorter. We of course did not recognize each other as we were both old men when we met in Warsaw.

Ben, of course, you knew Jacob Gutenbaum because he was in Shlieben and if you hadn't published his story in the journal I would still be grieving for him. There is the possibility that I might also send you an article about my involvement with the New Dimensions in Testimony, the hologram.

Liberty Fraternity

Erica Wagner

Reprinted from The Times Magazine January 11 1997

At the end of the Second World War, 732 orphaned concentration camp survivors were sent to start a new life in Britain. And together they found the strength to make a triumph of survival. Erica Wagner meets the boys.

Number 27 Belsize Park Road is an ordinary house on an ordinary street. A very nice house on a very nice street. In point of fact, but not one that seems distinguished in any particular way from its neighbours. But that's not quite true.

In 1947, 27 Belsize Park Road, in north-west London, was first a hostel for 32 boys and then the home of the Primrose Club. Kopel Kendall's eyes are lit with delight when he recalls the place that was so much more than just another youth club.

"The club wasn't just a club; it was a home. We used to meet there six days a week, a lot of us coming straight from work. We had the finest instructors, in ballroom dancing up to the standard of silver and gold, five football teams..."

"Table tennis," interjects Harry Balsam. "Do you remember? We had a national champion to teach us table tennis, and speakers every Friday night. Moshe Sharett (Prime Minister of Israel, 1954-55) came to speak to us."

"We were so keen," says Kendall. "If you played football for Primrose and you lost a game, you wouldn't show your face on a Sunday night because you'd let the club down. It was really something wonderful."

Kendall and Balsam are in their late sixties. Both greying, both a little balding, but both full of an energy that fills the small library of the synagogue across the street from the old Primrose Club. I met them, and two more old members. Ben Helfgott and Harry Spiro, on

the street corner just across from No. 27; I arrived early and watched these four men meet and embrace with the kind of warmth, affection - and remorseless teasing - seen only between the closest of brothers. And brothers, despite their lack of blood relation, is what these men truly are.

Helfgott, Kendall, Balsam and Spiro are four of "The Boys" - as they still call themselves. They make up a group of Holocaust survivors who came to this country in the immediate aftermath of the war, brought on the initiative of Leonard Montefiore, chairman of the Committee for the Care of children from the Concentration Camps, an arm of the Central British Fund (now World Jewish Relief).

As the Second World War ended, the Central British Fund had sought permission from the Home Office to bring some of the orphaned children who had been in concentration camps to Britain. The Home Office gave its consent for 1,000 children under the age of 16 to be granted entry, although only 732 could be found. Britain was to be a stepping stone to lives farther afield; most, it was assumed, would move on, perhaps to Palestine.

As it happened, nearly half the number remained in this country, becoming pillars of the Jewish community; the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn was one of their number. The Primrose club was but one of the schemes devised by Montefiore and others involved with the Fund to help the Boys adjust to their new lives.

Sir Martin Gilbert has now

told their story in his book *The Boys: Triumph Over Adversity*. Friendly with Gryn for more than 20 years, Gilbert has been attending the Boys' reunions for the past 18 and has been President of their association, the '45 Aid Society, since 1988. His book is a labour of love.

Recounted through the vivid testimony of the Boys themselves - there were girls among them, but not many, as they less likely to survive the camps - the book is a remarkable account of much more than the horror of the Holocaust.

The Boys' accounts bring to life the vanished world of Polish and Hungarian Jewry before the war; a world of close communities, happy families and great learning. They make real the struggle to come to terms with a new life in a strange country, to succeed against the greatest of odds.

Although the book's author is Gilbert, its true genesis lies with Helfgott. Born in Pabjanice, Poland, in 1929, when war came he, along with his parents and his sisters Mala and Lusja, was confined in the Piotrkow ghetto. His mother and Lusja were executed in 1942 in Buchenwald, he was sent to Schlieben slave-labour camp. Only he and Mala survived the war.

Helfgott is the chairman of the '45 Aid Society. He is a small, thickset man - it is no surprise to learn he was a British weightlifting champion, competing in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, the 1960 Rome Olympics and the Commonwealth Games in Cardiff in 1958 - whose cheerful demeanour and seemingly inexhaustible fund

of energy belie an innate seriousness.

He is, says Balsam, "a walking encyclopaedia" on the Boys, and all agree that it was his urging, his desire to have the Boys tell their stories, that brought the book into being. But it wasn't easy to get them to tell their tales; the book's existence is testimony to his persistence.

"It's one thing when you meet someone and you're confronted with questions that you have to answer," Helfgott says. "It's another thing to be able to collect one's thoughts and then to write. The majority of us had stopped our education when war broke out in 1939; we lost six years of schooling. When we came to England, we learnt some English and some maths and history, but very soon we went out to work. We wanted to be independent. Most thought it was beyond them, but I knew this was not the case, that everybody can write, especially if he has a story to tell."

Lack of education, however, wasn't the only obstacle. "It's the same as going back to Poland," Helfgott continues. He has been back a number of times. "One is so far away from it. It's been so many years. One is afraid of what one is going to find there."

"But once one has returned, one discovers that the anxiety was unfounded and wonders why one was waiting so many years to face the past. Because one learns a great deal about oneself if one is confronted with reality of where one comes from."

"Those who thought they'd never be able to write anything suddenly discovered that they could do so - it was

quite an exciting revelation. They are all intelligent people. If the war hadn't broken out, they would have had a very good education – one more thing that was lost because of the war.”

Kendall nods. He was born in Bialobrzegi, Poland, in 1928 as Kopel Kandelcukier. Along with 300 other Boys, at the end of the war he was evacuated from a displaced-persons camp in Theresienstadt to Prague and then finally, in August 1945, to Britain.

These first Boys were taken initially to Windermere in the Lake District; Kendall took his new name from nearby Kendal. Married for 40 years to Vivienne and about to retire from a successful clothing business, he shakes his head as he recalls trying to get his story down on paper.

“My wife helped me to write it, and every time we sat down, after five minutes were nearly had a divorce because it's not easy to put down what you've gone through.

“And so to make up, I'd have to buy Vivienne either a mink coat or a diamond ring, and Martin Gilbert wrote me back a lovely letter when I finally sent him my story. He wrote: “Thank you very much, Kopel – but at least now Vivienne is very well kitted out!”

The Boys is Gilbert's fiftieth book and it is, he says, very different from all the others. It is a “collective biography”, written from the accounts the Boys themselves sent him, and supplemented by correspondence. He eventually built up a collection of about 500 letters.

“Their stories were their

stories,” he says, “I tried to encourage them to fill the gaps. What was quite unusual was that there really wasn't much need to – there were none that couldn't be published because they might be in any way embarrassing to the people concerned, although some are very personal.

“It is their story in the raw. I felt my main task was to encourage them to tell their stories without feeling any inhibitions; because very few of them had written anything before, I felt they did that. They weren't writing with a view to it being published; I was amazed at how open and direct some of the things were that they wrote.”

It is a little wonder that the stories were not easy to tell. Most of the Boys were imprisoned in slave-labour camps such as Schlieben in Germany and Skarzysko-Kamienna in Poland. Skarzysko-Kamienna, one of the most notorious camps, was an armaments factory run throughout the war by a German company based in Leipzig. Hugo Schneider Aktiengesellschaft. About 24,000 Jews were sent there during the war; more than two-thirds of the total population – up to 17,000 people – perished there. Balsam, who arrived at the camp in 1943 from Plaszow, survived and it was there that he encountered Kendall.

“When I arrived at Skarzysko-Kamienna, I saw a person sitting in a corner with a little fire and two bricks, and I'm looking at the person and I can't see anybody,” Balsam recalls, laughing. Born in Gorlice in 1929, he was separated from his mother, sister and one of his brothers during one of the

ghetto deportations in August 1942; he never saw them again. After the war, he began in the menswear business with Spiro but soon branched out on his own, at one time running 11 shops in and around London.

“Kendall was black, filthy dirty black; I thought he was a black man, and I'd never seen one before. But he was black from the soot, sitting making coffee and selling it for a piece of bread. I went over to him and I said, ‘Will you sell me some coffee?’ And he said, ‘What will you give me for it?’ I said, ‘I've got nothing to give you.’ And he said, ‘You can't get any coffee, then.’”

Hearing the story again, Kendall laughs too, rocking back in his chair and wiping his eyes – but his tears, it is plain, are not from laughter alone. “My God,” he says, “I'm nearly crying – it's so strange - Harry thought I was a black man when he met me; when I met Ben (Helfgott) in 1945, he saw me as a Chinese – because I was yellow.”

Helfgott had arrived at Schlieben from Buchenwald in 1944. Schlieben, too, was an armaments factory, and Kendall had been working there making anti-tank weapons; the poisonous chemicals had turned his skin yellow. “The Germans wore protective clothing, but we didn't, so we were yellow and the food tasted bitter. The first time I saw Ben, he asked me how long I had been in the camp and I said, three years – and he's saying to himself, well, if you could survive...”

“When we arrived from Buchenwald in December 1944 and we saw these people, we almost passed

out,” says Helfgott. “I’ve never seen human beings in such an appalling state.”

“When they arrived,” says Kendall in his deliberate, matter-of-fact way – his voice, like the voices of all of them, is still accented by his native Polish, “it was soup time, and soup time was a gamble every day. Sometimes the *kapo* who was dishing it out gave someone a full ladle and the others a little bit less – there were usually two or three people at the end shouting and screaming and crying. Some soup spilled on the floor and we were licking it up. And this young man,” he says, grinning at Helfgott, “was looking at us and thinking, ‘How can people live like that?’”

But strong bonds are formed in such awful conditions. Balsam and Spiro’s business partnership had its beginnings on the 1945 death march from Rehmsdorf to Theresienstadt. Three thousand set off, only 600 arrived.

Taking cover from an Allied air raid in a field, Spiro found some beetroot, which he hid in his shirt. But he was spotted by another boy, who threatened to reveal his secret if he didn’t get a share; it was only when Spiro threatened the boy with a knife that he was left alone. Balsam was the boy, and that encounter was the unlikely start of a 50-year friendship.

It seems extraordinary that tales like this can be told with laughter, even with joy. Joy suffuses the room during our conversation, almost palpable in the air as the glad shouts of children in a nearby schoolyard drift in through the open window.

It is a feeling that seems only to be made stronger by the sorrow of loss that underlies it. What makes the stories of these men remarkable is the strength that they were able to draw from each other, both in the camps and then later in England.

All four of these Boys lived together in a hostel in Loughton. In the initial evacuations, some of the boys had been flown to Windermere, where they were housed in accommodation built by the Ministry of Aircraft Productions; hundreds of other Boys flew from Munich, in November 1945, to Southampton, where they were housed in Wintershill Hall, a lovely old house lent for the purpose by its owner. But these were temporary arrangements for the Boys’ gradual introduction to a “normal” life; by the early days of 1946, the Boys had been scattered throughout the country in hostels to continue their education and learn a trade.

That they should be kept together in hostels was the notion of Dr. Oscar Friedmann. A pre-war refugee from Germany, Friedmann had been sent to an orphanage in Berlin at the age of ten, and knew first-hand the perils of life in institutions.

In 1938, he brought a large number of German Jewish children to Britain, where he remained, committing himself to caring for the mental health of wartime refugees. The hostels made for a “family life” that supported the Boys far better than the real family they sometimes found.

“After two years, I found

family in this country I never knew I had,” says Balsam. “At the time, I was living in the hostel in Loughton. They were very excited because I was the only member of the family who had survived the concentration camps in Poland and they immediately wanted to take me into their house. And I went there – for one night. I ran away. I came back to the hostel.”

“Most probably they didn’t want him,” Spiro says slyly.

“That’s correct,” Balsam jokes. “But you see what I’m getting at. As much as they wanted me, I wasn’t happy with the family. I wanted to come back to the hostel.”

But hostel accommodation could not be provided forever. Friedmann knew that the Boys had to move on. “He knew that he had to be kind and that he had to be hard,” says Helfgott. “He knew that in the initial stages, food and education had to be provided, but the next step in our rehabilitation was to learn a trade.

“He didn’t want us to stay too long in the hostels because then we would become institutionalised. But he was also aware that once we lived in digs, we would lost contact with each other and this would result in a kind of loneliness, and loneliness could lead to depression. That is how the idea of the club came about.”

The club’s great success was due in large part – almost entirely, if you listen to the Boys, although he himself is more modest – to the involvement of Paul Yogi Mayer, a prewar refugee youth leader from Germany who had served in the Special Operations Executive during the war. Mayer had gone on to work with the Brady Boys’

Club in the East End of London, and was brought in to help the Boys by Friedmann and his committee. Mayer's approach was caring but briskly practical.

"I never spoke to the boys about their pasts, and they didn't want to talk about their pasts," Mayer says now. At 84 he seems as vigorous as ever, and the Boys confirm he has hardly changed since they first knew him.

"I was only interested to link them up with the normal life of young people in this country. At first the committee wanted their money only to be spent on the Boys and not on other children, but I said if I don't get other youngsters to come in, I cannot do the job. We need other young people to give them a normal life."

As a consequence, other boys and, importantly, girls – hence the dancing lessons – were brought into the club. Helfgott points proudly to at least 20 marriages that resulted from this.

The club opened formally on July 6, 1947, and ran until the mid-Fifties, later in a house in Finchley Road owned by the Jewish Youth Fund. "It was a normal kind of club," Mayer says. "You could come and sit and read the paper, have a meal." He laughs. "You should have seen the size of the portions."

"Ben was from the beginning the leader. He's remained the leader for over 40 years."

"The Primrose Club was terribly important to them," Gilbert says. Mayer's work, he adds, was invaluable. "He pushed them forward into a competitive world, as sportsmen, as competitors, to be equal to their equivalents in the world of football or

fencing or swimming. That was a very remarkable psychological insight.

"He understood that one had to build a new life, in part because he had himself been a refugee from Nazism, but more I think because of his own character. Of course they had counsellors they could speak to, to deal with their past, but he said 'try and do it this way' – out on the sports field. And that really did work."

Mayer stresses the fine behaviour of the boys. The title of my piece, he says, should be "Boys became Men". "They were anxious to build up a decent life; and they rejected anything they felt was indecent, of that world they had seen – that was the darkness. And that is quite amazing."

"The only fighting we ever had was when we played football on Hampstead Heath and they lost. They beat up the other team. I was furious about it; and they said to me, 'We can't take any losses any more.' But that was the last of the fighting." Mayer is still deeply involved with the Boys, and still calls Helfgott "Benjamin my son".

It is impossible to pretend that the experiences of the Boys – in the ghettos, in the labour camps, on the death marches – haven't left marks. "Outwardly, we are very happy people," says Kendall. "But even after all these years, when you see a film or read the paper – you get the odd nightmare. Now and again you get to a point where you feel you want to die, you feel very emotional. I don't think anything will ever cure me of that."

And yet the story of the Boys is one not only of survival and success but of the

ability of the human spirit to remain magnanimous in the most awful of circumstances. As the war ended, many of the boys were given the opportunity to take revenge on their tormentors; none of them, so far as anyone knows, took it. Survival – not revenge, not despair – was all that was important to these children during the long years of their suffering.

Harry Spiro was the only one of his family to survive the war. His mother, father and sister were deported from Piotrkow in October, 1942, and he never saw them again. Just before the deportations began, his mother pushed him from the house with the words, "At least let one of our family survive." Spiro is still in awe of her strength of will, and sees his family – three children and nine grandchildren – as his victory over Hitler.

Recently he returned to Prague with a group of survivors who were liberated from Theresienstadt; a few Jews who had been born in England came along on the trip. "At one place, the guide showed us a gas chamber, and told everyone what had happened – to us, the survivors, it didn't mean much, but the English people, they were crying with the trauma. One of them came over to me and said, 'Tell me, Harry – you were there; did you ever think of committing suicide?' And I looked at him and said, 'What are you talking about? It never entered my mind.' He couldn't understand it, and said, 'Oh, you must have seen the light at the end of the tunnel.' I said, 'No, I didn't even know what that meant at the time. It was just a matter of another day, and

another fight to survive.”

Evil, Helfgott says, did not infect them. “We had a taste of what a normal life was. We had wonderful parents who cared for us, we lived in a wonderful atmosphere full of love for one another – it was really a beautiful life. When the war came, all we saw around us was evil; we were repelled by it.”

This family life, lost forever in the war, was in a sense reconstructed by the Boys among themselves and their new families, a bulwark of strength and happiness in a new world. Rabbi Hugo Gryn’s daughter Naomi says that growing up with the Boys was like “growing up with the most phenomenal collection of uncles – the bond between us is so strong you can’t imagine it. They reconstituted a family between them and they are the most zestful, life-affirming people on the planet. They aren’t victims – my father brought his seed to this country and met my wonderful mother to replant his tree. The victims are those who have died; we

are not victims.”

And indeed, attending a party held at King’s College, London, to celebrate the book’s publication was like taking part in a stupendous family reunion. About 150 of the Boys were there, along with their wives, their children and grandchildren – Hugo Gryn was much missed, but his widow Jaqui and his son David and daughter Rachelle were there; Yogi Mayer was there, as was Thelma Marcus, who, with her late husband Solly, took over from him as club leader.

The speeches started late because so many books had been presold that Gilbert was about two hours signing them all. The room was filled with warmth and light and embracing; with love for dear ones seen often and love that comes at reunion.

Three Boys – Menachem Waksztok, Menachem Silberstein and Chaim Liss, with their wives ñ made the trip from Israel to be there. It was a gathering that spanned years and generations, and drew into its joy

even outsiders like myself.

The story of the Holocaust is a story of horror and terror, of man’s inhumanity to man on such a scale as to dwarf the imagination. But here was the evidence that this story had another side, not merely of survival but of triumph. Harry Spiro’s mother, deported and destroyed 54 years ago, has surely won her battle.

“Few people have endured as much as we did,” Helfgott said to his devoted audience that night. “But we have not allowed Hitler to have a posthumous victory.”

“The book, our story, is *pour encourager les autres*. People need to read it, because every day there is someone who feels helpless, feels a need for support. The best way to do it is to find out how other people coped. Now, if we, who have experienced such terrible atrocities, were able to cope and come out of it with an increased zest for life, then anybody else should be able to do it, too. I hope that this is the message that comes over in this book.”

Berkovich Diary

Berkovich Binye

Kaf Tet in the month of Nisan in the year Taf Shin Bet (April 16th 1942)

1. This is twentieth week since the big slaughter and the second since the killing of the Judenrat. The pain did not ease, not a bit. On the contrary, the beautiful days of the early spring increase the darkness and deep sorrow of the wounded heart. Mixed emotions overwhelm my brain: what if it was like this or like that then perhaps we could be saved. The most

difficult and oppressive moments start at dawn. All the efforts to change my thoughts are to no avail. On the one hand starting work late is good for me simply because the day is too long. The people are on the move from dawn. The “world” prepares itself for the day of work. It is impossible to think of anything other than of the big slaughter. The days are

getting longer, but nobody notices that.

Twenty-two days following the outbreak of war on the 27th of Tamuz taf shin alef (June 22nd 1941) until 18th of Kislev taf shin bet (December 8th 1941): very long weeks and an eventful period. No moment passes without some news e.g. an edict the Jews are forbidden to walk outside the town or

leave their homes without their "badge of shame" - the yellow star. Each edict ended with the threat of death for not abiding by the rules. On top of that we had to work beyond our strength supplying the "Komendantura" with furniture, utensils etc. from the Jewish assets. One could feel the poison in the air, something unknown was approaching, the remnants of naked bodies... On Wednesday, Friday and Sunday in the month of July a number of people were picked out under the pretext of being taken to work, but they were murdered instead. Fifty Jews lost their lives by the order of the "good" komendant.

This was only a short interval, but it was rich in events. This was going on until those horrific days of December. One was under the impression that all the previous threats and tortures were a prologue to a bigger and more horrifying drama.

The period after the slaughter, twenty weeks to date, could be considered as usual, if one neglects to think of the constant pressure on the heart. The little slaughters are usual occurrences, small things, there is no time to stop and think about them.

Even the dates of the deaths are forgotten by all except the living relatives of the victims. For example, the shooting of three women after the slaughter, on Friday the December 14th. If you wish, it was not an unusual or different slaughter; it was just an epilogue of the former. On the other hand it could be considered to be their own fault: could you imagine three women have decided to walk to their own houses to

bring back to the Ghetto some food that was left there such as some flour. They have forgotten that the houses were not theirs. Jews don't own any property. And also another slaughter, 40 people arrested on the way to a village, without the "badges of shame" and not hiding in dugouts and caves.

2. On another occasion four Jews were caught: three were on guard duty, one was from the Karelích Judenrat. Three were shot and burned in the middle of the night; the fourth was miraculously left alive. All these slaughters did not cause great excitement. However, the next incident of "Harugei Malchut" (slaughter of the royal rulers - ironically), when twelve members of the Judenrat were killed, shattered everyone in the Ghetto. It was an attack on the right to life of the members of the administration.

Ideas dart through my head: it is absurd to continue my life. Indeed what hope could I have? There is not a ray of light penetrating the dark clouds that cover our sky. All my family: my wife and two dear sons, my sister and her husband, my father - all of them were brutally killed by the murderers who are building a "new Europe".

But on the other hand I am gripped by another idea. I must live to be able to take part in the Day of Judgment which must come, a day of revenge and retribution. I must live in spite of my will so that when I will taste the blood of the killers of innocent children on the lap of their mothers and in front of their parents, it may be possible to sooth my wounded heart. Those thoughts don't

leave me. Ideas and feelings pile up in my head and disperse, the brain weakens and the heart breaks and there is no escape, no relief.

The 22nd week. The spring is at its height. The hills are green around the Ghetto as if to highlight the separation between us and the free world. The sun is shining as it did last year, as if to show that nothing happened to it, as if it says: "I am not to blame". Unlike the poet who called it "the deceiving sun".

3. But on the other hand there are the words of the Russian author Dostoyevsky "the world will be destroyed (in order) to save a child from tears".

And a thought troubles my heart: thousands of children are slaughtered in horrific cruelty under the same sun, their screams pierce the sky, but the sun continues to shine as before in a perfect regularity...

However, if you think about it, there is no base for such complaints, even those people who by some luck stayed alive after the murderer's sword was lying on their thoughts, even those forgot already everything. Life goes on, the same laugh and wit. This is for me so shocking and infuriating.

The justification of the known adage: "Eat and drink for tomorrow we will die" cannot sooth my irritated nerves.

The 25th week (since the first slaughter).

Till now there was no obvious change in the life of the Ghetto. The monotonous life crawls slowly. The news about the slaughters in Lida, ?, Ivia, ? and the burning alive of the Jews of ? don't freeze the blood of the Ghetto Jews. Their hair doesn't

stand on end, as it would have happened before the slaughter in Novogrudok.

I try to explain that reaction to myself and I think that the reason is the egotism of the human being; before the slaughter each feared that it would be his fate too. But when the slaughter was over and by miracle or by bribing a gendarme one was saved from death, one knows that in the meantime, as long as there is no other slaughter, his hope to live strengthens again and he rejects any frightening thoughts.

I think that it is worthwhile to write down the approximate numbers of those slaughtered. In Lida - 5500, ? - 1200, Ivia - 2400, Volozin - 1300. The brutality is unlimited, even Stalin could not invent such methods, such as making the victims to undress near the trenches, throwing in toddlers and babies alive in front of their parents. It is certain that to hear things like that breaks everyone's heart, sorrow overwhelms you, yet after a day or two those feelings disperse.

Sometimes some moaning or a belated tear from the eye of an old woman as she is peeling potatoes...

4. The 30th week.

The head cools down; the ideas are fewer and concentrated. There is the feeling that it is possible already to create a complete picture of all that happened till today. It does not mean that it is the final account of the slaughters of the multitude or of a few, because every week something happens. A fortnight ago a young man, Binyamin Kushchinski was killed. He finished his day's work and

wanted to get some milk and a piece of bread from his gentile acquaintance when he was shot. Another two fellows who went with him managed to escape. A week ago a 17-year-old girl was killed, a woman who walked beside her was wounded; they were shot "without intention" only because a militiaman wanted to practise his "sacred" profession of shooting. This happened on their way back from work. This is the situation in the Ghetto now, life goes on as normal, as before.

When the month of Av (July) comes "one reduces one's festive activities".

The horrifying rumours from Slonim have been confirmed, a real slaughter of Jews in all details. Of the approximate 10,000 people who were alive after the first slaughter in the winter, approximately 7,000 people were killed in this second slaughter (a small slaughter of about a dozen Jews is not included in this account). Approximately 2,500 Jews were left. There is a rumour passed on in whispers of a slaughter in Molchad. According to that rumour everyone was slaughtered, no-one was left. The aim in Molchad had been achieved: it is clean of Jews; no one will disrupt its future development.

The impression is that those rumours did not impact heavily on the life of the Ghetto. One starts to get used to the idea of death. And really, why should we expect different things from those who are already asleep eternally underground.

The 9th in the month of Av (July 23rd 1942) the religious Jews study on this day the book of Job. I, though I am not religious, would like very

much to study that book. Though Job's grievance is directed towards the divine leadership, meaning world order in general, this is the old problem of the tragic fate on earth of the humans. But there is nothing in his grievance regarding social injustice and human relationships. This could be because in Job's generation there wasn't yet a developed culture and the wonderful invention of the "cultured" German people; people of visionaries, thinkers, philosophers and poets; the racial theory. Then, in the ancient days, people understood that German blood is no better than Jewish blood.

5. Saturday (August 1st) Parshat Ekev (Deut. 7:12 - 11:25)

There is restlessness in the Ghetto. Today all tradesmen were called to the court house. The Judenrat was ordered to select 150 people to act as the service people in the Ghetto: the Judenrat, police, bakers, hospital attendance and the kitchen. The others are to go to work outside the Ghetto. A fear of the unknown prevails. Hearts hammer in fear with the events in Slonim fresh in mind... no one wants to put in words what is felt inside.

Tuesday (August 4th) Parashat Ra'eh (Deut. 11:26-16:17)

Yesterday late at night Hauptmann (captain) ? visited the hospital, the residence of the Jewish doctors and a few other houses. A watchtower was built opposite the Ghetto and machine guns were mounted there. An electric light was installed on the watch tower and in the night the Ghetto was illuminated.

All that means something. Those are preparations for the second slaughter.

Friday, the 15th in the month of Elul, taf shin bet (August 28th 1942)

Today is the third week since the second mass slaughter. Three weeks ago at this hour I was lying in a hole above the Ghetto hospital. The hole was dug in the wall. No, I don't want to think again of the events. The voices of the babies, toddlers and children, who should be going to a school, they are going to the slaughter, their screams and cries: "mummy,... me". No, no. I have to stop writing, I am choked by tears. Why didn't I come out of my hiding place approach a gendarme and ask him to shoot me in my heart? But before that I would like to ask him a simple question in a resigned voice: "My dear Mr. German, You are a son of the nation of writers and thinkers, why do you kill small children? You too must have small children in Germany and they must be basking now in the beauty of nature". And then getting or expecting an answer I would

go to my grave, having crossed over from life to a void.

The mood is depressed. The issue is clear. Europe will be cleaned out of Jews. We will all die; our fate is death.

The execution of the rest was postponed only for a short time.

Victor Hugo wrote a whole book "The Last Day of a Condemned Man" about the thoughts of a man who was condemned to death and was waiting to be executed within an hour or two. There is no need to write a book about our secrets and thoughts, resignation.

6. There are rumours about a third slaughter in Slonim.

Perhaps I should not write anymore. The Byelorussians and the Poles know all the details of the tortures and slaughters. I have no strength left to write anymore. I noted only a few psychological moments and mentioned a few events.

My name is Binye (B"R) Yehuda Berkovich. My father was (a cook?). I still hope to stay alive. My only sister lives in Bialystok with her

family (she is still alive). I ask the person who will find these notes to try to establish if my sister, brother-in-law or any of the children are still alive and if he will find them to give them these last pages of mine. This is my last testimony: Jews! A people who live alone among nations (am la'vadad ishkon) remain like that, don't act for other people, and don't work other people's fields! In one hand hold the hoe and in the other the sword of revenge. Revenge our blood and the spilled blood of our children!

The name of my sister, who lives in Bialystok, is Bluma (Alter?), her husband's name is Meir Itzchak. Pre-war they lived in ? Street 48, flat No 8.

I forgot to add a small note: a week after the slaughter I met two young women, their husbands were taken with the "third party" last year. I asked them what they did with their babies (the women survived by bribing??). Their answer was short: they cried so the mothers strangled them. The mothers did not cry. Now they are waiting. Their turn will come. There is no salvation.

There is no Winston Churchill

Aubrey Rose C.B.E. D.Univ.

Aubrey is a lawyer of great distinction and has played an active role in many fields. He was a senior Vice-President of the Board of Deputies; he was an original member of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative; he set up and chaired a working party on environment which led to his book "Judaism and Ecology". He spent five years as a Commissioner of the Commission for Racial Equality. He is a Co-Chairman of the Indian Jewish Association; a Trustee of various charitable trusts and is Deputy Chairman of the British Caribbean Association. He has written many books, including his autobiography "The Rainbow Never Ends".

A short time before the Second World War erupted in 1939 there sat in Berlin the Mufti of Jerusalem, a prominent Muslim cleric, advising

Hitler and his colleagues and also receiving advice. One thing he learned from Goebbels was the vital importance of propaganda. It didn't matter if you told the truth or

not. Both a big lie or a small lie was in order.

The descendants of the Mufti learned that lesson well, exceptionally well. Whether in the 1940s or now

in the 2010s they are quite brilliant at it. By contrast, the Israelis have no idea how to project their case, and that case is a strong one. Just imagine what Muslim Jihadis, terrorists, would do with the following:

1. Israel, concerned about human life, has abolished the death penalty, even for terrorists and murderers.
2. In the last 60 years Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has changed its government peacefully through the ballot box and the Democratic process.
3. Israel is the only country in the area that has voluntarily given up land, the self-same Gaza, and more, for peace. Indeed, Israel is the only country in the world that has given up oil wells (Sinai) in pursuit of peace.

There is no other country that has done so much in the *cause of peace*, but the story is not told.

There is no Israeli Winston Churchill.

He would have a few things to say about rockets and missiles. When in 1944/5 the Mufti's Nazi friends sent hundreds of missiles to attack London and England, Britain responded as Israel has responded. Britain sought the launching sites and attacked them wherever they were. For the people of London it was a question of life or death. So it was for Israel, except that the Hamas criminals sent far more missiles than were ever sent against Britain, bombing

Israel's towns and villages, whilst cynically placing the launching sites in schools, hospitals, amongst people, caring not a fig about the people.

Hence the deaths and injuries. Indeed, these would have been far greater had Israel not shown compassion by alerting Gaza's civilians in advance of the attacks.

Britain, in 1944/5, continued to bomb German cities. Deaths resulted. Britain had sought not war, just as Israel sought no war. Every missile and rocket sent by Hamas was an act of war. The world media showed the distress of Gaza, but no equivalent concern about women and children in Israel's air-raid shelters and the effects on them. There were no eloquent words from an Israeli equivalent of Winston Churchill.

He would have had much to say about the United Nations. What are they doing in Gaza when there are Arab/Muslim countries with unlimited funds to help their brethren? Indeed Churchill would have upbraided the U.N. for its hypocrisy and racism. He would have asked the U.N., "What did you do for the 850,000 Jewish refugees in 1948/9 who fled for their lives because of Arab racism, at least 200,000 more than the Palestinian refugees?"

He would have asked what has the U.N. done to help resettle those people and what has the U.N. done to help them to obtain compensation for their property left behind in a dozen countries? Churchill would have barked, "Nothing, nothing."

The Palestinians refer to the *nakba*, their 'catastro-

phe.' Their catastrophe was to show utter contempt for the U.N. by engaging in a war, an illegal war, a criminal war, alongside four Arab armies, to destroy a State recognized by the U.N.

The catastrophe was not abiding by the U.N.'s lawful decision. They could have had a State over 60 years ago and worked alongside Israel peacefully in Agriculture. Science, Education. Instead, they instilled hatred into the young, encouraged the blasphemy of suicide bombers, self-destruction contrary to their Prophet's injunction.

Tiny Israel defended herself, did her best for her Arab citizens too. All religions are practised in her land. Israel even provided Nobel Prize Winners. But Israel has no idea how to tell her story. She needed and needs a Winston Churchill. But there is no Winston Churchill. Yet, being the man he was, he would have looked at a far wider picture than just Israel and *Gaza*. For years he was almost the sole voice warning of the World dangers of Nazism. Today he would have warned of the World crisis in and from the Arab/Muslim world. This is immensely sad for peace-loving Arabs and Muslims, for those Arabs who sought human rights, democracy, just as Nazism was tragic for peace-loving Germans.

He would have been horrified by the attacks on Christians, on Hindus, on Yazidis, on fellow-Arabs, by the human disasters that are Iraq and Syria. Imagine his eloquence at the million dead in the pointless Iran/Iraq war. And his concern would be even wider, as Muslim

minorities have created problems in China, Burma, Thailand, Philippines, Africa and elsewhere. He would have seen that *Gaza* was just one element in a world threat to freedom and democracy, as were the Nazis.

Imagine his eloquence at the proposed killing of a person just for changing his or her religion. Brunei still has death by stoning. Most of the Western leaders, for various reasons, do not speak

out what they know. It happened just the same in the 1930s. Churchill spoke out. but today there is no Winston Churchill.

Are we to have, with modern weapons, another forty or fifty million deaths, even while the terrible loss of human life in 1914-1918 is now recalled?

Are there enough voices in the-Arab/Muslim world who can see the dangers, who are prepared to condemn

the return of a Medieval, barbaric code of conduct? Is there an Arab Churchill, a Muslim Churchill, who can overcome prejudice, who has the courage to speak out? I doubt it.

Sadly, there is nowhere another Winston Churchill.

Aubrey Rose

Churchill knew it before anyone else...

This amazing. Even more amazing is that this hasn't been published long before now.

CHURCHILL ON ISLAM: Unbelievable, but the speech below was written in 1899...(check Wikipedia - The River War).

The attached short speech from Winston Churchill, was delivered by him in 1899 when he was a young soldier and journalist. It probably sets out the current views of many, but expresses in the wonderful Churchillian turn of phrase and use of the English language, of which he was a past master. Sir Winston Churchill was, without doubt, one of the greatest men of the late 19th and 20th centuries.

He was a brave young soldier, a brilliant journalist, an extraordinary politician and statesman, a great war leader and British Prime Minister, to whom the Western world must be forever in his debt. He was a prophet in his own time. He died on 24th January 1965, at the grand old age of 90

and, after a lifetime of service to his country, was accorded a State funeral.

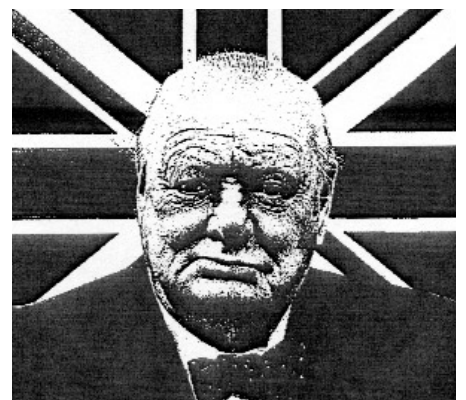
HERE IS THE SPEECH:

"How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy. The effects are apparent in many countries, improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce, and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live. A degraded sensualist deprives this life of its grace and refinement, the next of its dignity and sanctity. The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property, either as a child, a wife, or a concubine, must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men.

Individual Muslims may show splendid qualities, but the influence of the

religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step; and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science, the science against which it had vainly struggled, the civilization of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilization of ancient Rome ..."

Sir Winston Churchill;
(Source: *The River War*, first edition, Vol II, pages 248-250 London).



Memories

Aubrey Rose C.B.E. D.Univ.

We all live with memories, memories of people, of experiences, of our early years. I cast my mind back. My parents came to Britain from East Europe and retained vivid memories of their young days, but very different recollections. My father remembered "Der Heim", the large growing family, the parents and grandparents. My mother recalled only the anti-Jewish expressions and acts and had no wish to recall that period.

She was sixteen when she came in 1902. My father came in 1897, at the very time Queen Victoria celebrated her diamond jubilee, just as our present Queen will shortly celebrate hers.

I remember vividly my upbringing in London's East End, but even more vividly the nightly bombing of London, sleeping on underground train platforms, diving to the ground when the V1 engine cut out before its descent. Yet, despite all this, there can be no memories in any way comparable to those of members of the '45 Aid Society.

How can we, ensconced in safe England, project ourselves into the hearts and minds of those who experienced the bestial horrors of Nazi Germany. I am amazed how survivors have overcome their past and the mental pictures that the past evoked. Not least in the curative process was the welcome from Jews in Britain, such as Leonard Montefiore, the constructive

efforts of people like Arie Handler, but, above all, by forming a common bond in associations of which the '45 is so notable.

What is equally remarkable is how those same youngsters grew to adulthood, achieved so much in daily work, created families, sons, daughters, grandchildren, second and third generations who maintain their witness to the events of the past.

Yet the memory of events, of individuals, especially of names, often becomes hazy as time passes, the present young generation cannot, despite all the films and books, begin to appreciate the courage of Winston Churchill and the British people, the degrading evil of Nazism, or even the terrible experiences of those in the camps. Perhaps that is why older generations give grateful thanks to be living in a free, democratic country, and why younger generations take so much for granted, are full of the dogmas of rights so often bereft of the elements of duty.

Like many others my memories of London's East End is always with me. They are happy memories, unlike others who had a hard time. I had no worries about money, sweets were a penny a bag. Every Sunday a mass of uncles, aunts and cousins, assembled at my cake-making, cholent-making, strudel-making grandma. I felt immensely secure, though unaware of this at the time.

A contrast were the men who lodged at Smith Street

School nearby. They had marched all the way from Jarrow in the north; protesting about poverty and unemployment. I often spoke to them. They were the best behaved band of working men I have ever seen. What a contrast to some recent parades and marches!

Yet another aspect on which I ponder is the shortness of our memories, sending into obscurity members of our community who have done so much for us. I remember Sammy Fisher, a twinkle in his eye, Barney and Elsie Janner, Frances Rubens, Zena Cohen and Eva Mitchell, Chief Rabbis Hertz and Jakobvits, and others who toiled for our community. There may still be a word about Rabbi Hugo Gryn, and there certainly is about Lady Jakobovitz, a lovely soul, who passed from us far too soon.

When I chaired the Board's Defence Committee I marvelled at the energy and dedication of Ajax members and of men like Dr Jack Gewirtz and Martin Savitt, year in, year out, combating anti-Semitism wherever it raised its head. Who talks of them now? Who, outside of their families, remembers them?

For three years I worked closely with Israel Finestein in Communal Affairs. I met with him every week, sometimes every few days. He was a Q.C., a distinguished Judge, a splendid historian, a fluent speaker blessed with a never-failing memory; above all, an upright man of worth. I think of him often. He is among my memories, yet who

else remembers him, refers to his work, writes about him?

These are but a few examples. The passage of time can close down the past so effectively. There is something strange and profound about memories. The strangest reflects

our despatching events, personalities, names, from our minds. The profundity is when we remember those we loved and respected, held in high regard, not merely those close to us in our families and friendships, but those who made such efforts for our

communal safety, education, care and well-being.

I do hope we can repeat, in memory of those who have gone before, the words expressed in the Cenatoph service, "We Will Remember Them".

Moniek Joseph Goldberg

Fay Goldberg

I first met Moniek in October of 1945 at the Loughton Hostel. We were asked by our Madrich from Habonim to visit the Boys and welcome them. About five girls, me included, went for an Oneg Shabbat.

We did not know what to expect. We were greeted very nicely by about 30 boys nearly all wearing caps and led into a large room with chairs set up in a circle. They spoke very little English so we conversed in Yiddish. Given that my parents came from Lithuania, my accent gave them all a very good laugh. We sat and sang songs. When it was time to go home we found that we had missed the last bus and had to walk quite a distance to the train station in the pouring rain, arriving thoroughly soaked.

Some of the boys in our Chevra joined us in later visits. They even brought bicycles for some of the Boys, which were gratefully received. After a while some of us paired off. Moniek and I started to go out and meet away from Loughton.

After a period of time the hostel was closed down and the boys went into separate lodgings (arranged by the Committee), found employment, or went to school or



Goldberg family.

ORT for training. Moniek roomed with Janek Goldberger and found a job in a fur factory.

When the Primrose Club opened up the Boys always had somewhere to meet. It had a small restaurant in the basement. A committee was also formed and Moniek and I were both members.

As our relationship became more serious, Moniek moved to Upper Clapton to be nearer to where I lived. In the meantime, notices were published in Jewish newspapers all over the world by survivors in search of relatives. Moniek had an uncle, his

mother's brother, who left Poland before WWI and had settled in Toronto. He was married with grown children. A neighbour of his saw the ad and brought it to his attention. One of his sons, who lived in Detroit, Michigan, had a brother-in-law going to London on business. He looked for Moniek and found him queuing up for a picture show.

Moniek had always wanted to emigrate to Palestine and I was to go with him but as it was so difficult to smuggle in people the only women they would take at that time were nurses, for which I had no training. Moniek went up to Bloomsbury House to speak to Mr. Freedman who advised him to go to Canada and reunite with the remnant of his family; if he did not like it, he could always go on to Palestine later.

We were engaged by now and I had an aunt living in Montreal. So he went to Toronto and three months later I left to go to Montreal where we married shortly afterward.

In October, 1950 our papers came through permitting us to emigrate to the United States. In December, 1950 I arrived with our son Philip in Detroit. Moniek had left two weeks earlier to find

a flat. He then went to work for his cousin who manufactured ladies suits and coats where Moniek trained as a cloth cutter.

After a couple of years his cousin went out of business and Moniek went to work at Ford Motor Co. as a cutter. Our family grew to four children; three sons and a daughter. Moniek went into business with a partner, a fellow survivor, making coats and suits in Detroit. Years later, Moniek bought him out.

Running a small factory in Detroit became harder and harder. As soon as operators became good at the machine they left to work for the car companies where they made more money.

Towards the end of 1975 we made our first trip to Costa Rica, (a country we knew very little about) to explore the possibilities of relocating the business in a favourable labour market. Moniek liked what he saw. We trusted his instincts; closed up the shop in Detroit; sold our home; and set up a base in Hialeah, Florida. In January, 1977 he opened a small sewing factory, aptly named Industrias Goldberg S.A. with four employees in a very small town called Barrio San Jose de Alajuela. It was love at first sight.

Describing the first two years there as a struggle is a gross understatement. Despite the advice of his accountant, suppliers, bankers and others, to give up the ghost, Moniek ploughed on. He never lost faith in his idea or in his "Gente" (the Spanish word for people and used to describe our employees). He knew that sooner or later we would get over the HUMP.

Learning Spanish on the fly, he quickly established a loyal work force and by default became a father figure to many of his Gente. Feared, loved, and respected, he was referred to as Mr. Joe and several mispronounced versions of the same. Mothers asked him for domestic and financial advice. Sons-in-law who were drinking too much were brought before him and inevitably received the upbraiding they deserved. Babies were named after him. One of the younger mothers, Seidi, one of the favourites, approached Stephen when she was far along in her pregnancy and asked him to write down on a piece of paper J-O-S-E-P-H or S-T-E-P-H-E-N.

Towards the end of 1978 we became contractors. The worst was over, there was light at the end of the tunnel and we were over the HUMP. By April, 1979 we had 55 employees in Costa Rica and had emerged from two years of being in non-stop panic mode.

The business established a well-earned reputation for customer service and excellent labour relations. By the end of 1980 we had more than 100 employees and purchased some property to build our own factory. The new factory was ready at the end of 1981 and we had grown so fast that by the time it was ready for occupancy it was too small and we had to continue renting another installation. Mr. Joe maintained cordial relations with the local priest who was happy to bless our building with prayers and holy water at our ceremonial opening.

After a number of years the

business grew as a family partnership with our sons, Philip and Stephen in Costa Rica. David and I ran the Hialeah factory and Moniek shuttled back and forth. Our daughter, Karen was also nearby in the Miami area. Our family grew to include 10 grandchildren, five girls, five boys and one great-grandson.

We now had over 400 employees. We established a full time on-site medical clinic that provided periodic dental checkups. Our clients still wanted more work. So, Mr. Joe went partners (this time not with a fellow survivor) in another factory to handle the new business. They purchased a building on the other side of town. Two years later, much to the relief of the rest of the family he bought out the partner. We now had a payroll approaching a thousand employees.

In 1990 we bought an adjacent property next to "La Goldberg" (that's how the locals referred to our factory) and built another factory. Approaching 70, Mr. Joe sold the business in 1997 to one of our customers.

Throughout the more than 20 years in Costa Rica, Industrias Goldberg S.A. contributed to the growth of El Barrio San Jose de Alajuela. A backwater town when Mr. Joe arrived at the junction of 2 secondary roads, with no park, one stop sign, a corner store, a couple of cantinas and one restaurant, the Barrio now has a gymnasium, numerous restaurants, a park, a pharmacy, a used car lot where our first rented building stood, two traffic lights and daily traffic jams.

Besides contributing to the economic growth of the

Barrio, Mr. Joe gave a great deal to the community. He donated the land for a water treatment plant, created a pension plan for his employees, made numerous personal non-interest loans, paid off mortgages in the form of spontaneous bonuses, created scholarships, and contributed to road pavement projects. Besides a yearly Christmas party for our employees we also had a matinee affair for their children with clowns, Santa, ice cream, gifts and pinata.

He continuously attracted business investors to Costa Rica, never entertaining and often turning down offers of a commission. He became a key figure in the clothing industry respected by his peers and consulted by government officials.

Years after having left Costa Rica he remained an important influence in the life of his Gente. When word reached el Barrio that Mr.

Joe was ill, a large group of our former employees organized prayer groups and sent a collection of letters and best wishes.

We always suspected that his affection towards Costa Rica was some form of nostalgia for the Poland he grew up in, but with a twist. When asked before his passing if Costa Rica in general and El Barrio in particular reminded him of Poland without the anti-Semitism? Without hesitation he replied, "yes, a lot like that".

Moniek, was a maker, not a taker. He was a giver - not a taker.

After he retired, he continued to work as a consultant for the company that bought the business and helped David with the Hialeah cutting room that was not part of the sale.

He became very active with our Shul where he held an honoured position as a lay

stand-in for the Cantor, given the honour of Baal Shacharit on the Yom Tovim and sat on the Board of Directors as the Ritual Committee Chair. He loved to chant Haftorah and besides working with his grandchildren he helped many of the Shul's children prepare for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. His dedication to family never ceased to be his *raison d'être*. Success in the family business was a means to a better life for the family.

One of his proudest moments came as a result of a chance reunion in Israel with a lady who credited her survival to Moniek's having shared his bread with her. He asked for no recompense, which was rare under the depraved conditions of the camps. He helped. He gave because that is who he was - his parent's son. And that is who he remained his entire life: a helper, a giver, a maker.

Remember

Maureen Hecht

Maureen is the wife of Jack Hecht.

This was written after the funeral of one of the
'The Boys'

smell prevailing on the still air.

It was only a bonfire, composed of autumn leaves, not rare.

But we looked at each other as if to say 'Remember?' Too soon the earth was ceremoniously shovelled on to his last resting place. A new place for him but for us

the memories still linger.

Everyone has a story to tell from WW2 and this is one of mine. It concerns one of Jack's cousins who lived in Czechoslovakia. She had beautiful blonde hair and could easily pass as a non-Jew. The Nazis were everywhere, nowhere was safe. Her mother told her to go in the city and get a job. She followed her mother's advice and soon found a job with an elderly lady. She was a very hard worker and her employer was pleased to have her.

Life went on in this mode until at last the Allies began

The October mist parted as we walked between the granite stones and marble. Our feet scrunched on the muddy sandstone path leading to a hole in the green covered earth.

The cloth fell away as the box was lowered.

No flags of glory here to see yet still with dignity and respect and prayers to send him on his way.

How different from his sisters, parents, brothers and our families too, whose lives were cut short, without warning, in ghastly design. The memories were heightened by a burning

a relentless bombing campaign. The two women had to run for the shelter each night. There was only one problem. In the dark would be sitting a Nazi who screamed out each time a bomb fell "go on - kill more Jews". The cousin went to bed with a heavy heart and cried herself to sleep. She wondered about her family and whether she would ever see them again.

At last the war was over but now she was faced with

another problem. She had to leave the kind lady because of the threat of reprisals if she was found to have harboured a Jew. So she packed her bag and left without trace.

Eventually she met her husband and they began a successful business making children's wear in Melbourne Australia, which is still in operation.

Picture the scene. Two men are sitting on a bench in a

small village called Roscova in the Carpathian mountains in Romania. They are crying - one because he had had to leave Israel to settle his affairs, the other because he had never been there. The first man was Jack's father, the other a friend. They were unaware then of the terrible fate which awaited them. Jack's father would be killed in Auschwitz, his friend would live to tell the tale. What a cruel world we live in.

At the fifth session of the World Council for Yiddish and Jewish Culture in London

Reports from a delegate Avroham Kwaterko

I will warn you straight away that I'm not writing an accurate report of what actually happened ~ the World Council will surely provide this ~ but I will merely limit myself to my impressions of the proceedings, meetings, discussions, and particular conversations.

My British Airways plane was two hours late in London. Whilst in Warsaw, the weather was sunny, but the British capital was clouded. It was a cold and rainy day, making people depressed. Amongst those waiting for the arrivals, I noticed a medium-built Jew in his early 60s, with a round and smiling face, holding a placard on which my name was written in large letters. A friendship was established straight away, even though we had never met before. He was Shloyme Freiman, originally from the shtetle Jeziorna-Konstancin, the

famous spa town near Warsaw. He drove me to his house – for hotels in London are very expensive – introducing me to his pleasant wife, born in Vienna, and his son. After we finished the fulsome evening meal we had a long and interesting conversation.

Shloyme Freiman is a warm-hearted Polish Jew born, as I said, in Jeziorna, of petty-merchant parents who sold leather goods, haberdashery and food to the visitors at the spa. 3000 families lived in Jeziorna until the outbreak of the war, making a living from trade and crafts. In the shtetl there was one large paper factory, still working today. Jews were not allowed to work there, so they had small cobbler and tailor, cap-maker and gaiter-maker workshops. They would sell their products in the marketplace on market day, or go round the surrounding villages.

As in the other Polish Jewish shtetls, the children went to heders and schools, and the youth went to the big cities to seek their fortune. They lived there until Hitler's murderous troops attacked Poland in September 1939.

When the Nazis took Jeziorna, Shloyme Freiman was only 13 years old, and now felt the taste of hunger and poverty, oppression and humiliation. The murderers shamelessly and openly robbed Jews, taking anything of worth, beating up their victims. Shloyme Freiman went to peasants who had dealt with his father, to beg for some bread, for which he had to work as a shepherd and do different and difficult work in the fields. He was later in the ghetto and was deported to various concentration camps, including Skarzysko, Buchenwald, Sulijow and Schlieben, where he went through all the

circles of hell. More than once, he would fall into despair, seeing no way out of the camp, and wanted to end his life. This was when he was seriously ill, but his fellow inmates, boys of his age, stopped him from taking the fatal step. He was freed from the Teresienstadt camp by the Red Army. He and several hundred youths were settled throughout Britain, with the majority remaining in London.

This group of ex-inmates of the Nazi camps set up the '45 Society – they had come in the year 1945 – and were later pioneers of the revival of Yiddish cultural life in London. It is noteworthy to mention some of them: Ben Helfgott (Pietrkow), Dovid Turek (Warsaw) Shloyme Freiman (Jeziorna) Hershl Balzam (Krakow), Koppel Kendelzucker (Bialobrzegi) Moyshe Nurtman (Warka-on-the-Vistula), Khayim Kon, Khayim Orman and others, refugees from Poland, all people who still remember the beautiful Yiddish language, the way of life, the wonderful Yiddish folklore from their former home and all who have a love of Yiddish culture.

London, as we know, was 45-50 years ago a major centre of Yiddish culture. They had Yiddish daily newspapers, magazines and books. There were Yiddish theatres and a Writers' Union and a Yivo centre. Whitechapel was particularly known as pulsating with Jewish life, where one heard mame-loshn in the streets and in the clubs. From all this, nothing remains today, and even though there are a quarter of a million Jews here in London, no one knows

about Yiddish culture.

In the effort to spread the Yiddish activities to new areas, the World Council turned to the survivor group headed by Ben Helfgott to renew Yiddish cultural work in London, and it received a positive answer. The few hundred in the '45 group not only provided the initiative, but also provided the financial means to realise this important undertaking. Thus, London was the site of the fifth session of the world Council of Yiddish and Jewish Culture.

One should also mention that this group has kept together since 1945, when they came to London. They would gather on various occasions and would remember the tragic experiences of the Hitler era, they would help each other through difficulties, offer advice at significant moments, and they formed a harmonious family. Recently, some of the 45s came to Warsaw to participate in the ghetto commemoration (Ben Helfgott, Shloyme Freiman) and visited Treblinka. Shloyme Freiman also visited his old home in Jeziorna near Warsaw.

The Festive Opening

The festive opening session of the World Conference for Yiddish and Jewish culture was on 5 July at 4pm, but I arrived an hour earlier. The beautiful bright-blue Beit Hillel Hall and B'nai Brit house, began to fill up with a large public, men and women all dressed smartly, always smiling faces. They were delegations from 12 countries throughout the world, even from as far as Australia and

South Africa, Brazil and Argentina, not to mention the European countries; France, Belgium, but only one representative from Poland, and a large group came from the United States. The greatest surprise came from the youth group of 20, who irradiated the celebration, not only with their external appearance ó attractive and slim young men and women ~ but also with their rich and fluent Yiddish. Together with the chairman of the "Yunge Dor" (Young Generation) there were educationalists and professors, and on their breasts shone white badges with "Yiddish" written on them.

I knew some of those who were present from previous congresses and deliberations, but many I saw the first time. I met here my old childhood friend, Yossel Mlotek. We both spent some time at the world-famous Medem sanatorium in Miedzeszyn "on the Otwock line", where poor Jewish children from all over Poland were able to rest and recover their health. I remember that at that time, in the 30s, he already manifested his poetic talents. Together with the teacher Notke Gilinsky, he wrote a children's play "Lialkes", which was a very successful. He also worked as a capable reporter on the Folkstsaytung. The last time we saw each other was on 1 September 1939, the day of Hitler's attack on Poland, on Smocza St. and we sadly pointed our hats to the blue sky, from where the aeroplanes with the black cross threw bombs on the peaceful Polish capital. Later, the tempests of war drove him to distant Shanghai. Today, he

is a notable figure in Yiddish life in the United States, holding responsible posts, including educational director of the Arbeter Ring schools and Vice-President of the World Council for Yiddish and Jewish Culture. It is a joy to the heart when one sees such a rapid advance of a close and warm human being.

I saw Professor Yitskhok Warszawski, also a warm human being, who was an activist in the "Union of Polish Patriots" in Moscow, which helped students. In liberated Poland, he worked in the Youth Section of the Central Committee of Polish Jews. Together, we organised hostels for the surviving Jewish children of Poland and published a monthly Journal Oyfgang (Sunrise). Later, Yitskhok Warszawski was the secretary of the first Yiddish newspaper in (post war) Poland with the symbolic name Dos Naye Lebn (New Life). Since 1949, he has been abroad, in France and then Israel, where he held important posts in Yiddish institutions, including executive director of the world Council for Yiddish and Jewish Culture.

Amongst those gathered, one could see that great Polish Jew Dr Heszl Klepfisz, troubadour of the destroyed Jewish community of the Vistula Land, the spirited essayists and author of the book Echoes of a Lost Time, in which he expressed the spiritual and cultural life of Polish Jews before the Shoah, and of many other literary and historical items. One of his books did, indeed, appear with the assistance of the World Council for Yiddish.

Next to him was sitting the

world famous artist David Tuszynski, born in Poland, who studied sculpture in Plock and in Lodz. When Hitler fell upon Poland, Tuszynski took part in the heroic defence of Warsaw and survived the German occupation in various camps. In 1948 he left for Paris to further his studies in the French Art Academy and became a teacher in a school. With his miniature drawing, book illustrations, posters, theatre designs and costumes, the artist joined the great masters of the past. David Tuszynski exhibited his work in Paris, Monaco, Israel, Belgium, Holland, England, South Africa and the United States. In coming, together with his wife, to the sessions of the World Council for Yiddish in London, he manifested his love for Yiddish culture.

There appeared in the hall my long-standing friend from the Warsaw years, Yitskhok Kom the tailor from Twarda St. and later heroic ghetto fighter who, on the Aryan side, took the pseudonym Wlaciaw Jablonski. Indeed, because of his Aryan looks, he was able to smuggle arms to the Jewish fighting organisation into the ghetto. He came here with his wife from Australia (Melbourne) where he is an activist in the movement for Yiddish and Jewish Culture.

I also saw Khayelee Ash, actress in the Yiddish theatre, living today and active in Philadelphia. She recited and sang in Yiddish. At the end of the 1940s, she lived in Walbrzych in Lower Silesia, where she performed in Yiddish theatre.

Limitations of space don't allow me to mention other

friends I encountered in the hall of Beit Hillel of B'nai Brit House in London. These are not only lovers of, but also fighters for Yiddish, stubborn the builders of Yiddish culture.

The festive opening was conducted by Ben Helfgott, chairman of the Yiddish committee in London and one of the above mentioned '45 group. He said that it was for him a profound experience to be given such a great honour.

A greeting in the name of the Board of Deputies was given by its general secretary, Hayim Pinner who, though born in London, spoke a fine Yiddish he had learnt from his grandmother.

"The fifth session of the world Council for Yiddish and Jewish culture" ~ he said — "was a significant event for the Board of Deputies and for him personally and it was a great joy that the executive of the movement for Yiddish had chosen London for the meeting. This was probably because London had played such a significant role in Yiddish life. Here, there were published Yiddish newspapers and Yiddish books, there were Yiddish schools and Yiddish theatres."

"Whitechapel, where I come from," said the speaker, "has to this very day a reputation throughout the Yiddish world. Unfortunately, many Yiddish positions have now disappeared, though this is not the time to analyse the reasons for this. It is, however, the fact that the draw of assimilation was powerful in Jewish society, and that the rich English culture was victorious with us to a great extent. Recently, it must be said, there has been a certain

revival of Yiddish, and the academic activities in both Oxford and London are most significant. If new winds are blowing in the Jewish Street in London, it is to a great extent because of the efforts of the Chairman of the World Council, Itzhak Korn, who has made great efforts in this direction, and therefore deserves congratulations as is manifested by the applause in this hall”.

Yes, it is true. Itzhak Korn is a great figure in the Yiddish world. He is a dynamic activist, an energetic organiser, a tireless builder of Yiddish culture, a person of many initiatives and of inventiveness for the spread of this significant movement, with him at its head. We heard, indeed, much praise for his address

in the greetings of other speakers. All place high value on his useful work and we wish him a long life.

One after the other, speakers expressed their warm feelings for Yiddish and Jewish culture. Dr Yehuda Avner, the Israeli ambassador in London, Yosef Mlotek, Vice-President of the World Council, Dr Dovid Katz, director of the Oxford Yiddish programme and Dr S Levenberg, Chairman of the Jewish Agency.

The official part of the assembly closed with a lecture by Itzhak Korn entitled “The Yiddish Question in Our Times”. All listened with rapt attention.

In a further article, we will return to the problems discussed in the lecture.

Artistic Literary programme

This part involved the well-known Yiddish actress Anna Tzelniker. Yiddish theatre goes in pre-war Poland remember her theatre appearances. Anna Tzelniker told us of the former Yiddish theatre, of the beautiful artistic family, of her father the famous actor. She told us of interesting episodes, and it was a pleasure to listen to her, indeed, piece of theatre history. She then recited fragments from Jacob Gordin’s immortal work, “Mirele Efros”, which was received by the audience with warm and prolonged applause.

Auschwitz 70th Anniversary: one survivor goes back to the camp

Darren Richman

Darren Richman joins his grandfather, Zigi Shipper, on his journey back to Auschwitz.

6:54PM GMT 23 Jan 2015

It starts with a number and that number is 84303.

My grandfather, Zigi Shipper, often uses the word “lucky” in relation to his life; an interesting attitude towards enduring the hell on earth that was Auschwitz. However, one way in which he is fortunate is that he does not have the number tattooed on his person, unlike so many who were interned in the concentration camp; for reasons he still doesn’t quite understand.

I once asked him how he

can remember the number, a lifetime after these things occurred.

He said: “The question should not be how can I remember but how can I forget?” He explained that, more often than not, he will think 84303 is his PIN, and begin to type it into the card machine when paying for his shopping at a supermarket. He usually ends up having to call my grandmother for a reminder.

The horrors he witnessed remain his first thought when he wakes, his last before falling asleep.

Zigi was born in 1930 in Lodz, Poland. He was thirteen when he arrived in Auschwitz, in 1944. After years in the ghetto, he was so hungry that when he arrived and saw smoke rising from the chimneys, he instantly assumed fresh bread was being baked. It is a memory that will never leave him.

Nevertheless, at the end of the last year, my grandfather, now 85, went back to Auschwitz. I went with him, along with several other members of my family. After the horrors he witnessed there, it would be under-

standable if he never wanted to set foot in the place again. But instead, this man, who spends his days talking about his experiences in schools for the sole purpose of educating and inspiring young people, wanted to go, and encouraged us to join him.

I had been to the camps before, as a teenager, a day that I spent quoting TV shows with a friend in a bid to shield ourselves from it all. This trip was very different, and its intensity never let up. My overwhelming sensation, for most of the day, was a desire to hold someone.

Inside Auschwitz-Birkenau it rained constantly, which seemed completely appropriate; somehow you can't imagine the sun ever shining in that place, even if logic suggests otherwise.

Anything one might associate with everyday life seemed incongruous; even the existence of restaurants in Krakow seemed wrong. The silence was uncanny. It was as if the birds knew better than to sing in such a place.

My grandfather, just about the most optimistic and good-humoured man on Earth, was uncharacteristically quiet and withdrawn. None of us had ever seen him like this, but he wasn't the only one struggling to cope. Most of us broke down at some point or other, the death and destruction overwhelming.

There was so much it was impossible to fathom, from the mounds of human hair to the enormous pile of shoes. Among the latter, I spotted a can of shoe polish, and silently despaired for the optimistic soul who had thought such a thing might

be useful where he was going.

For days afterwards, simply the sight of everyday objects, such as hairbrushes and glasses, which had been preserved behind glass at Auschwitz, was enough to provoke extreme emotions.

In Birkenau, we concluded our trip by reciting the mourner's Kaddish while sheltering from the unrelenting rain under an arch. Mourners say Kaddish to show that despite the loss they still praise God. Regardless of one's religious beliefs, the scene was devastating. My uncle, an atheist, was in tears. We all were.

The following week, when we reconvened for Shabbat dinner and made the traditional Hebrew toast, l'chaim, it really meant something to us. To life.

A few weeks after the trip, we were reunited in synagogue for Zigi's bar mitzvah - the day when Jewish boys achieve manhood - usually at age 13. Zigi was in Auschwitz aged 13, but at 84, his time had finally come.

Some would see him having this momentous occasion, after all these years, as the perfect riposte to the Nazis. Zigi didn't; he said our family was already the perfect riposte.

The first time he returned to Auschwitz, with his two daughters, he held them in his arms at the exact spot where the dreaded selection process took place, when men chose who would live and who would die. Zigi looked to the sky that day and said: "Hitler did not succeed."

Perhaps it is the vitality of

the man, but Zigi does not seem old to me. I find it peculiar that the Holocaust is considered textbook history by some when it is a living memory for a man I see so often.

My grandfather likes to boast that "we're not like other families" and that might be stretching the truth a little, but he is certainly not like other men. To hear him speak for upwards of an hour, without a trace of bitterness, about the things he experienced is to be in the presence of greatness.

Zigi with his grandson Darren.

My own visit to Auschwitz proved an amazing experience, but there are still many things I struggle to make sense of.

Should Auschwitz continue to exist as a memorial? How is it that I heard people chanting about the concentration camps in north London just a few months ago, and when I approached the police, they refused to help? How could students at my university sing, "One man went to gas, went to gas a Yiddo", when Tottenham Hotspur were on television?

I don't know what to make of the fact that my grandfather receives compensation from the German government for what he went through, and I cannot work out why I, a third-generation survivor, should have nightmares about the camps fairly frequently.

But one thing I know is that my grandfather is no longer a number.

And I also know that if I ever have a son, his name will be Zigi.

Windermere 1945 - 'The Boys'

by Mala Tribich and
David Zuck

As we were to attend a meeting in Kendal at the beginning of July 2013 we did a Web search for other events of interest, and were delighted to find that an exhibition about 'The Boys,' was about to open in the Windermere Library. Even better, we were introduced to the organizer, Trevor Avery, at the annual reunion of the adult version of the boys, the '45 Aid Society, where he and his wife were among the guests, and were promised a personally conducted tour. So at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday 4th July Trevor called for us at our hotel and drove us through the confusing one-way system in Kendal to Windermere.

The exhibition, 'From Auschwitz to Ambleside,' is mounted by 'Another Space,' a registered charity of which Trevor is the Director, which has produced a number of exhibitions, static and travelling, concerned with education about topics of communal interest. These are listed on its web site. For the current project it has received support from the Arts Council, the Big Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Cumbria County Council, the Imperial War Museum, the Getty Library, HET, and a number of local organizations. It is an extension of the Lake District Holocaust Project, a travelling educational exhibition which started in 2005, and now runs education workshops and study days. We were greatly impressed by Trevor's travels to Thereisinstadt, Auschwitz-Birkenau, and

other concentration camps and extermination centres, and his detailed knowledge of the Holocaust and of the individual survivors; and were greatly surprised to find that a region about as far as one can get from the main Jewish communities in this country is an active thriving centre of Holocaust education.

After the end of World War Two the Home Office gave permission for one thousand child survivors from concentration camps to be brought to the U.K. for rehabilitation, provided that they were no expense to the Government, and did not stay permanently. The responsibility and the administrative arrangements were undertaken by the Jewish Refugee Committee of the Central British Fund. In the event only 732 children could be found, 80 of them girls. Groups of them were taken to several centres in the British Isles, and detailed information can be found in the book of their experiences, 'The Boys,' edited by Sir Martin Gilbert. This exhibition is concerned only with the children who were taken to Windermere.

Large posters with contemporary photographs and newspaper reports illustrate the stages of the project. 'The Journey' shows how by 11th August the children, liberated from Thereisinstadt, were assembled in Prague. The following day ten modified Stirling bombers set off, and returned from

Prague on 15th, landing at Carlisle airfield at 5 p.m. with thirty children and three or four accompanying adult survivors on each. Accommodation had been prepared on the Calgarth Estate, a prefabricated enclave previously occupied by the families of aircraft engineers who had been building the now redundant Sunderland Flying Boats which had played such an important part in defeating the u-Boat menace which during 1942 and '43 had come near to bringing Britain to its knees. The history of the Calgarth Estate is a topic of local interest also, strangely fused with the story of 'The Boys.'

'The Arrival' tells of the early days, the problems of adjustment to plenty, of dispelling the need to hoard food, bowls and cutlery. It quotes the first reactions of the children to the luxury of individual clean comfortable beds, of baths, regular ample meals, and the kindness that surrounded them.

'When this man woke me up I must have talked to him for about ten minutes about the pleasure of sleeping in a bed by myself with this clean, clean linen...' (Ben Helfgott). 'I was reborn in Windermere in 1945. The promise of England was a dream to a teenage boy who no longer believed he could believe in dreams.' (Michael Perlmutter). 'It felt like heaven.' (David Hirszfeld).

They enjoyed the country and lakeside environment, walking and swimming, and forged links with one another that have survived

ever since. Next came 'Adaptation,' the learning the language, for which they were encouraged to watch English films, and the search for the names of family survivors on the lists published by the Red Cross. Once acclimatized and literate the children were transferred in smaller groups

to hostels in different parts of the country, from where they were able to attend school and catch up with their education before training for an occupation.

To us it was wonderful that local people, non-Jewish, some who were children and now as old as the 'Boys' themselves, should cherish

the memory of the young foreigners who were planted in their midst, and seek to incorporate them into their local history by means of this permanent exhibition. We have to thank Trevor Avery and his colleagues for a memorable and heart-warming day.

His last slice of bread

I am writing this as there is no-one left to remember my uncle Meyer or his family. They were all murdered in Treblinka.

Meyer was my mother's sister's husband and so not a blood relative. I loved him!

He and his family were constant visitors in our home, as were we in his.

Meyer and his family were deported from the Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka. His 10-year-old beloved daughter was taken away from him in Radom and he was sent to Skarzisko.

He was sent to Werk A at the same time that I was in Skarzisko in Werk B.

A Tribute to my Uncle – Meyer Brzezinski

Sam Frieman

Sam came to England with the Windermere group. He lives in London and has for many years been a member of the '45 Aid Committee.

I would see him once a week in the showers in Werk A. He was heartbroken with grief and had lost the will to live.

He was always waiting and looking out for me to give me his bread ration. He said he wanted me to live.

My uncle perished of starvation. I am the only one left who remembers him.

Before the war he was a baker and shopkeeper. He taught me to ride a bike so that I could deliver chollas and rolls for Shabbat to visitors who came to our town – Konstantin – Jeziorno – a holiday resort near Warsaw.

Meyer was such a kind, happy person and I long to cherish the good memories I have of him.

My name is Solomon Frajman but my mother called me "Schlomole". To my friends I am "Dundela" – but that's another story!

Kopel Kendall's story

Vivienne Kendall

My husband, Kopel was born on the 7th March 1928 in a little town called Bialobzgi in Poland. He lived with his father, mother and two sisters. He went to a Catholic school till 3pm and then he went to a Jewish school. His father was a religious man and Kopel went with him every Saturday to Synagogue for Shabbat.

Germany invaded Poland

on Friday 1st September 1939, and life changed dramatically for Kopel.

Transports of German soldiers arrived in his town. There were no more schools for Jewish children and all Jewish businesses were closed down, including Kopel's father's business.

Life became more difficult.

In 1940 the Germans set up an office in the town and

that's when real trouble began. All the Jews had to wear the Yellow Star on their arms to indicate that they were Jewish. Half the town was turned into a ghetto by the putting up of fences. They then had to share their home with other families and live in cramped conditions. There was no food so they had to sell their possessions to the Polish people to get money to buy food.

His father disappeared (and they never saw him again) so Kopel had to look after the family.

He was friends with the local commandant's sons who fortunately helped him by giving them some food. In the Ghetto many Jews got typhus and died as there was no proper medication or sanitation.

In the summer of 1942, the deportations started. The people in the ghetto were given five minutes to get to the town square. Kopel, his mother and his sisters got there safely as the SS were shooting all the time. Kopel was hit on the head and pulled away by his friendly policeman and was put in a working column. Kopel found out later that his mother and sisters were sent straight to Treblinka, an extermination camp where Jewish people were killed on arrival.

In 1942, Kopel was told that he was going to be sent to work in a camp called Skarzysko Kamienna, a forced labour camp for Jews to work in an armament factory, making war heads. The conditions were terrible in the camp as it was still being built.

Kopel was only 14 years old, but he was told to say he was 16 and a carpenter.

By 1943 the camp was finished, there were bunks stacked up one on top of the other. Kopel decided to sleep on the top bunk as it was the driest place as inmates would urinate during the night where they slept.

Every so often there was a selection where he had to pass in front of the SS guards for them to see who was still fit to work. Kopel was terrified but tried to walk upright

with shoulders back.

Unfortunately, Kopel caught typhus, but he was one of the lucky ones as a nurse took pity on him and hid him in a corner when the SS came to take the sick away. If you were taken away, you were never seen again.

In the summer of 1941, Kopel was sent to Buchenwald Concentration Camp. It was whilst he was there that he met some of the boys who also ended up in England with him after liberation.

He then worked in a quarry carrying rocks up and down.

He was then sent to Schlieben in Germany where he worked in another armament factory called Hasag. Again, they asked his age and he said 16 and a half. He had very little food and conditions were terrible. The slave labourers were making warheads for the Panzerfaust, an anti-tank gun. They had to use chemicals like liquid mustard for the warheads and being exposed to poisonous gases made them all turn yellow and everything tasted bitter. The German SS wore protective clothing, but the prisoners just wore their pyjama-like stripey uniform.

Later some prisoners sabotaged the factory which was inside a forest. The factory was badly burnt and the forest was on fire. They ran away and it took the SS guards some time to round them up. Unfortunately, they had nowhere to hide.

By now Kopel was getting very weak and he had to work hard to rebuild the factory.

Towards the end of February, the prisoners were put into wagons, about 40 prisoners per wagon, and two old guards. This was where Kopel met his friends Jan Goldberger and Simka Lieberman. The three of them found a little corner together. The journey should have taken about eight hours but, in fact, lasted fourteen days, during which time they were given no food.

The Allies kept bombing the track, so every time the train stopped the guards would let a few prisoners out to find food as the guards didn't have any food.

Kopel and his friends were thrilled to see Allied planes and they thought maybe the Allies were winning the war.

Finally, they arrived in Theresienstadt. They were in Czechoslovakia. Not many survived the journey and they were finally liberated on 8th May 1945.

Kopel arrived in Windermere on the 13th August 1945 with some other survivors. He came with 732 child survivors, including a few girls. They had all lost their families and they all became a new family. Even today, they are still one big family. They really needed each to talk to as they understood each other, having lived through similar experiences.

I met Kopel at a dance in 1955. We noticed each other straight away. We married in 1956 and have three lovely children and six grandchildren. We had a lovely life together. I miss him but it is important to keep his memory and his story alive, which is why I told his story in our Synagogue. Since then it has changed my life and given me so much confidence.

Researching individual fates at the Wiener Library, London

Dr Christine Schmidt
International Tracing Service Archive Researcher

“Your search revelations came as quite a shock...after years of speculation about the fate of family members.”

“My mother was very emotional to realize that some formal traces of her war experience are not vanished. Thank you for your tremendous efforts in finding what you have found.”

“Thank you for taking the time and making the effort to make these historical materials relating to my relative’s personal history readily accessible.”

These humbling messages of gratitude peppering my e-mail inbox make the work that I do at the Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide worthwhile and fulfilling. As the International Tracing Service Archive Researcher at the Library, I have the privilege of helping survivors, refugees, and their descendants navigate the depths of the vast digital archive of the International Tracing Service (ITS), often to find the last remnants of documentary evidence of their families’ lives.

The collections of the ITS constitute over 100 million pages of Holocaust-era

documentation related to the fates of over 17.5 million people who were subject to incarceration, forced labour, and displacement during and after World War II. Opened for research only in 2007, the collection is a relatively recent addition to the growing reservoir of declassified sources now available to historians examining this period and its aftermath.

The original paper archive is located in Bad Arolsen, Germany, where post-war efforts to trace and reunite families torn apart by the war centralised. The digital ITS archive includes Nazi-created and other wartime documentation that was repurposed for tracing after the war, as well as millions of pages on displaced persons, relief and rehabilitation, and emigration. Tracing the fate of one individual within the digital archive enables us to witness through a multitude of documents the far-reaching and persistent impact of the war.

Among the most rewarding and important tasks I have is helping Holocaust survivors, their families and descendants in recovering

documentation from the archive about the fate of family members. For one enquirer, who had been separated from his father as a child in 1944, finding evidence of his father’s whereabouts on a death march from a concentration camp the following year enabled him to narrow down the geographic location of where his father had likely perished. The document we found was not only a significant historical source, but also a profound and irreplaceable connection to the enquirer’s personal history.

The Wiener Library is the only access point in the UK to the ITS digital collection. Since we launched the digital copy in late 2013, we have received more than 500 requests for information, most of which have focused on tracing individual fates of Holocaust victims but include many academic research enquiries as well. For those researching their own or their family’s history, we conduct the research on their behalf. The Library also works to promote the archive for use in Holocaust research and education.

To submit an enquiry and for further information, please visit
<http://wienerlibrary.co.uk/International-Tracing-Service>.

Dr Christine Schmidt
International Tracing Service Archive Researcher

Colette Littman

Colette has for many years been a staunch supporter of our Society.

While I was in Israel, I was invited to dinner for the Sabbath eve at a home for mentally handicapped adults. I was so moved that I wrote a poem. It was my most beautiful Sabbath eve for a long time.

Waiting for the Sabbath

They waited huddled together
Some unable to stand
They waited quietly
For the special meal maybe
Or for the songs perhaps
No matter they waited confident.

They sat around the table
Some needed help
The desert was ablaze outside.
They showed no impatience
Perhaps they remembered
Only birdsí songs were heard.

They sipped their grape juice
They ate their morsel of chollal

Their brain did not process the prayers' words
All the same they knew now
Yes they unmistakably knew
They knew that IT had arrived.

In a country threatened on all sides
Cared by those respectful of life
They rejoiced, they laughed
Justified in their trust
In the peace of the Sabbath evening
For IT was among them
For It had come for the love of them.

29/06/2013
Colette Littman.

Kafr Raphael. Home for mentally
handicapped adults. Negev, Israel.

Remembering British Heroes of the Holocaust

Eric Pickles

*Eric Pickles, M.P., is the
Communities Secretary*

We're here today to recognise British heroes of the Holocaust – brave men who risked their lives to save a helpless victim of Nazi brutality and barbarism.

The story of Hannah Sarah Rigler's survival is truly extraordinary. Every time I hear it, I marvel at this young girl's survival.

By January 1945 she was only 16 years old, but had suffered unspeakable hardships.

Her father was one of the first Jews to be taken by the Nazis in her home town in Lithuania. He was sadly never seen again.

She had survived three years in the ghetto before

being moved to Stutthof concentration camp.

As the Red Army approached, the inmates were driven on a merciless death march towards the Baltic coast.

Against all the odds she managed to escape from the SS guards and hide in a barn, where she was found by a British soldier – Stan Wells.

Hannah later recalled his greeting: "Don't move. I am English. Don't be afraid."

Hannah said at that point "I knew I was saved".

But her fate was still uncertain, because Stan was a prisoner of war, captured in France in 1940 and now forced to work on a local farm.

Together with their fellow prisoners, and at great risk to their lives, they conspired to save her.

Hannah was hidden in a hayloft, right in the middle of their prisoner camp.

They nursed her back to health, and ensured she was safely transferred to advancing Soviet troops.

Today we are honouring three of these heroes.

And I'm delighted that the families of William Ernest Fisher, Edwin Alan

Hambling and Bill Keeble are here today to accept their medals.

But their bravery and compassion 70 years ago are only well-known today because of Hannah Rigler, and her dedication to be re-united with her saviours and tell their story.

It is a powerful reminder: that as the Holocaust fades from living memory, we cannot rely on survivors to preserve its memory.

This was clear when I attended the 70th anniversary commemoration of the liberation of Auschwitz. The incredibly moving ceremony was all the more poignant, because it's likely to be the last significant anniversary attended by survivors.

It's now vital we take steps to ensure the next generation never forgets the horrors caused by anti-Semitism.

That means building on the good work of tireless campaigners like Grand Rabbi Elyakim Schlesinger.

For years you have been at the forefront of saving and preserving Jewish Cemeteries and mass graves all over Europe, and we're honoured you have joined us today.

This Government is doing its part committing £50 million to support a new National Memorial to the Holocaust...

...a world class learning centre...

...and an endowment fund to secure the future of Holocaust education for ever

The new UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation set up by the Prime Minister and Chaired by Sir Peter Bazalgette is also taking forwards incredibly important work on recording and preserving the testimony of

British Holocaust survivors.

I come with money!

Today I can announce we're providing £1.5 million of new money to fund a number of important projects.

This will include:

Over £1 million for the filming of survivor testimonies in ultra-high definition, to ensure their stories are enshrined in history

A world-leading interactive testimony project at the National Holocaust Centre in Newark...

...allowing children to question survivors, even once those survivors are no longer with us.

And Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Culture, is today providing £100,000 for the translation and digitisation of written Holocaust survivor testimony held in Britain's Wiener Library – one of the world's most extensive collections which for too long has been left inaccessible.

We are also using groundbreaking British technology to complete the first ever complete 3D scan of Bergen-Belsen, liberated by the British 70 years ago next month. This technique has uncovered new facts about heritage sites all over the world – from the pyramids to St Paul's cathedral. Goodness knows what we will learn from this – but it's absolutely right that we do it.

I also welcome the project by From the Depths, which will enable Holocaust survivors to complete a Torah scroll saved from the Nazis in 1939, so it can be used and cherished by future generations of Jewish people.

Its restoration after 70 years is another way in which we mark the defeat of

Nazism, and serves as a powerful symbol of renewal and hope for the future.

And I just want to make my true feelings about this clear.

The key thing about the Nazi killing spree – they didn't just want to kill Jews, they wanted to wipe the memory of Jews from the face of the earth. They wanted to destroy family memories, photographs and religious objects.

So every time a letter is completed on that scroll, it's another victory against Nazism and fascism. This Government is dedicated to preserving the memory and lessons of the Holocaust.

But we all have a duty to guard against this hatred, as well as the different kinds of hatreds that have driven different kinds of genocides, although none on the industrial scale of the Holocaust

Extremist behaviour has no place in modern Britain.

Constant vigilance is required, so we are determined to never let the smallest bit of hatred take root.

That requires the personal acceptance that discrimination and persecution are always wrong, and should always be confronted.

Today we can draw inspiration from those who saved Hannah Rigler.

They didn't turn away. They didn't leave it to others to do the right thing.

They all took personal responsibility to protect her.

I really hope these medals will ensure their acts of bravery are never forgotten, and inspire countless generations to confront injustice and hatred.

Thank you

SENTENCED TO DEATH

'Life' Under the Nazis

Michael Etkind

Sentenced to die
Today
Tomorrow
In a month...?

By bullet or by rope
Starvation
Loss of hope

By gas...?

In bed
In your own home
Upon a bunk

Or in a wood
A field
A yard

The street

The time and place.... unknown.

AND YET ... WE MUST

Michael Etkind

A thousand deaths
We die each time
We catch
A glimpse and see a fragment
Of the Holocaust.

A thousand deaths

The train arriving at the ramp –
The barking dogs ...
The capos and the SS guards.

The mothers with their children
urged to hurry up.

And yet ... we must
Relive the past
And feel the pain ...
And keep the outrage live

And never let it fade and vanish from
the psyche of Mankind.

THE PAIN WILL LAST

Michael Etkind

The pain will last so long
As dust and ashes last
The gas
The smoke the crematoria fire

The dead will drift until the world
Will end
And even then
The pain will stay behind

And fill the emptiness
With cries
So long as winds will blow
And afterwards

When silence will descend.

THE LONGEST HATRED ANTI-SEMITISM

Now changing to ANTI-ZIONISM

Michael Etkind

In spite of Hitler
And his entourage
In spite of Auschwitz
And that poison gas
That hate ... lives on

That hate is like a snake
From time to time
It sheds its skin
But cannot lose
Its venom and its spleen

In spite of Hitler
And his spite
In spite of
Our darkest 'Night and Fog'
That hate ... lives on.

Dr. Bonnie Hayward

Just one week before Rosh Hashanah 5775, I had the privilege of accompanying my parents, Howard and Elsa Chandler, to Poland. We were travelling for a specific purpose - to attend the long-awaited placement of a memorial plaque in the town square (the "rynek") in my Father's home town of Wierzbni/Starachowice.

It was a memorial that was a long time coming, but, the local government was finally commemorating the 4500 murdered Jews of Wierzbni and some of the surrounding towns. On October 27, 1942, 4500 Jews were herded into the town square of Wierzbni and deported to Treblinka, where they were all killed. Another 200 Jews were shot on the spot. As a 13 year-old boy, my father was a witness to this. His life, and those of his brother Harry and his father Leibke Wajchandler and another two thousand Jewish people were temporarily spared because they were already working in the town's ammunition factory. But two years later, when they were no longer needed, they were transported to Auschwitz/Birkenau.

Despite the horrors that fell on Wierzbni's Jewish community on that day in 1942, or perhaps because of those very horrors, my father has never severed his ties to his home town of Wierzbni.

In addition to being an active member of the Wierzbni Mutual Benefit Society in Toronto, Dad has

Bonnie is the daughter of Howard and Elsa Chandler. Howard came to England with the Windermere group and now lives in Ontario, Canada.

been back to Wierzbni on many occasions.

In 1988 Dad and his childhood friend Martin Baranek first went to visit their home town. They were a little scared and apprehensive since many unpleasant things transpired there after the war. They found the town was virtually the same, nothing changed and they were surprised and happy to see that the Jewish cemetery was still there, but unfortunately, badly neglected. Upon returning home they reported their findings to the membership of the Toronto Wierzbni Mutual Benefit Society.

In 1989 my parents and I, with my uncle Harry z"l and Aunt Doreen Wajchandler, visited Wierzbni, and of course other memorial sites from the Shoah. Poland was politically changing, and grocery stores were empty. This time we visited a non-Jewish resident whom my Dad remembered from before the war. We also went inside his home, and the new "owners" invited us inside so I was able to see, in person, the home he described in many of the childhood stories he told the four of us children during Shabbat dinners. We saw the ammunition factory which was still standing but empty. The Jewish cemetery

was badly neglected, there were chickens and garbage there and it looked like the town might destroy it to build some homes.

Somehow, with courage, we went to speak to the Priest in the church with a request that the Jewish Cemetery should be preserved and cared for. He was pleasant, but we doubted that he would change anything. Instead, my Dad and the Wierzbni society worked hard to make sure the Cemetery was kept up, they hired a man to take care of it, arranged for a proper fence to be erected and each of the stones were catalogued, photographed and mapped.

But my Dad's mission was not complete yet! The visits to Wierzbni continued, and in fact became even more frequent.

In addition to his many trips to Poland as a "Survivor" with the March of the Living, my father also led three trips to Poland with an organization called "Classrooms Without Borders", taking Jewish and non-Jewish students and educators from the US on visits that always included a stop in Wierzbni. On these trips he was always, always accompanied by some of his children and grandchildren. Each visit was an opportunity to ensure that the memory of the town's former Jewish community and its inhabitants will live on, and that the Jewish cemetery is properly cared for. As well, each trip also





included a meeting with the Mayor of Wierzbniak, with whom Dad remained in contact between visits, too.

It has taken him several years to convince the municipal authorities to place a memorial plaque in the town square. Adding to my father's frustration was the fact that a monument had been erected in memory of Poles who were killed by the Germans, but nothing was in place to remember the destroyed Jewish Community.

Finally, last month, after several delays, and many emails to develop and agree on the wording, we received an invitation to attend the official unveiling of the plaque!.

There, on the very square where, as a young boy he watched the community destruction 72 years ago, my father stood again, to address the town's officials, guests and the citizens of the town and we received a very warm and cordial reception by the authorities and the population.

My father made the following remarks to those present:

"Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.

This is a very emotional, yet, meaningful day for me.

Seventy-two years ago on October 27, 1942 the Jewish community who lived around this square numbered about 4500 people before the World War II. During the German occupation an additional 3500 Jewish people were forcibly moved into Wierzbniak from surrounding towns, including Lodz and Plock. On that day all the Jews were forced by the Germans to

gather in this Rynek (town square) under the most terrible and brutal conditions.

Over 200 Jewish people were shot and murdered immediately, then about 4500 people were marched to the railway station and taken by awaiting freight train to what we now know was Treblinka, the extermination camp.

They were murdered on arrival, including my mother, my older sister and my younger brother. The 2500 remaining able bodied Jews that already worked in the ammunition factory were temporarily spared their fate.

These are the people for whom this memorial is being commemorated.

Wierzbniak was my family's home. My grandfather built this house across the street and I lived there until the Germans took over when I was 13 years old.

We were a community that contributed to society in many ways. We were shopkeepers, doctors, artisans, manufactures... families. In addition we served in the armed forces, making supreme sacrifices, together with our fellow citizens. We celebrated with our neighbours no matter what their beliefs were. We were like everyone else, except we prayed in the synagogue and not the church.

I would like to emphasize to the younger generation that tolerance, understanding and respect for your fellow human being is imperative. Ignorance breeds hate.

I am one of the very few who stood on this very place and experienced the trauma witnessing the destruction of the very vibrant Jewish community of Starachowice, Wierzbniak.

In the Jewish religion, remembering is a commandment, and that is what I do every day. I can see in my mind those thousands of innocent murdered souls hovering over us being thankful that their lives were not forgotten.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the honourable Mr. President, Sylwester Kwiecien and his council on their leadership in this very important and meaningful memorial.

It took great courage and conviction to do this and the former Jewish citizens from Starachowice, Wierzbniak thank you for doing the right and proper thing, and for this we are extremely appreciative to you.

People have the gift of memory, this allows us to remember not only the past but also what happened here. Those who did not study the past are bound to repeat it and something like this should never happen to anybody.

Ladies and gentlemen I would ask that you join me for a minute of silence in remembrance of the murdered people of Wierzbniak".

It was a touching ceremony, complete with a red carpet, the presence of local officials, an honour guard, flowers, and even a local choir. But most importantly, there it was, the plaque: A small memorial in a little-known Polish town, but an official and public acknowledgement of the tragedy that befell the Jews of Wierzbniak.

Even the press took notice of this moment in the local papers.

At the end of our trip we went to visit the new

Holocaust Museum in Warsaw. It is a beautiful building built on the property where the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto is. While we were there, there was a group of grade 12 Israeli students touring. They heard that there were two survivors there and asked my father to

address the group. The students treated my parents like celebrities, and gathered around them to talk to them. That's when I broke down and cried. It was so touching to see these kids surround my parents and offer them so much respect. This was evidence that all of the effort

done by my parents and other survivors to retell their story is not in vain. The next generation will remember. At the end Dad sang Hatikvah for them as we all hugged together as family.

It was a fitting end to our journey and a good beginning for Rosh Hashanah.

Abe Wertman

Debbie Pottins

He was born in the town of Gora Kalwaria in Poland and studied under the famous Gere Rabbi before the war broke out. His parents and three sisters all perished in the war. He was the only son and the only survivor of his family. I believe that when he came to England he went to the Yeshiva for a short while hoping to fulfil his father's wishes of becoming a Rabbi but he did not stay. Instead he learned watch-making. He came to Canada in 1948. At first he worked repairing watches. A few years later he opened his own store and not only repaired watches but sold jewellery and gift-ware. He had a very successful business and owned his store until 1980, at which time he became a builder. As it was, I'm sure, with most of you, he had a limited formal education but that never stopped him from learning. He really knew nothing about the building business but he was determined to learn

Abe came to England with the Windermere group where he was subsequently taken with a group of survivors to Ontario, Canada.

everything and in doing so became successful at that as well.

He met and married my mom, Sarah, in 1953 and they had four children - my older brother Joel, myself, my younger brother Mark and my younger sister Risa. Between us there are ten grandchildren.

At one time or another throughout the years, each of our children have made my dad the subject of a school report regarding the Holocaust - his life story made such an impact on us all. He once told me that when he was liberated from the concentration camp he heard the Russian soldiers who liberated them yelling over and over again "go forward" as they approached

the camp. He never forgot that and adopted it as a philosophy for life. He never believed in looking back and lived life to the fullest without any bitterness. He was truly an inspiration.

He had a passion for long distance running and participated in many marathons. He and my mother were married almost 61 years. They had a wonderful life and travelled the world together. He has been described by everyone who met him as having a charismatic smile and a twinkle in his eye and he is profoundly missed.

He is survived by my mom Sarah, my brother Joel, his wife Liza and their children Ethan and Shane, myself, my husband Stephen, our sons, Jonathan, Harlan and Mathew, my brother Mark, his wife Sarah, their children Gabriella, her husband Eric, Daniel, Rebecca and Yoni, my sister Risa, her husband David and their sons Zachary and Michael.

Shlomo Raz

Kibbutz Kiryat-Anavim is located by the highway to Jerusalem, about 10 km. from the city. Kiryat Anavim was a landmark during the battle for independence of the State of Israel - the Jewish State. The kibbutz, established in 1920, in an area surrounded by arab villages, was an important base for the Hagana, its combat units - the Palmach and the I.D.F.- Zhahal in the heroic struggle in 1948 during the War of Independence, just off the highway to the isolated City Of Jerusalem, which was under a siege, cut off from the rest of the Jewish territory.

The headquarters of the Palmach brigade-Harel (Hativat Harel), under the command of Yitzhak Rabin, was based in Kiryat-Anavim. The battles in the area were very hard, and the number of the dead and the wounded was extremely high. During the day the warriors themselves dug holes for graves before going out to the battlefields at night.

At the edge of Kiryat-Anavim, nowadays a thriving and tranquil kibbutz, is a small graveyard where many of the victims from the battles over the highway to Jerusalem are buried.

The inscriptions on the silent

Shlomo is the son of Moishe and the late Steffa Rosenberg.

white square tombstones tell the story of many of the brave fallen. Among them:

Shalom (Shalomke) Finkelstien born in Poland, immigrated in 1947, died at the age of 16

Shlomo Mandel born in Czechoslovakia, immigrated in 1947, died at the age of 24

Peretz (Gerhard) Ritrich born in Germany, immigrated in 1948, died at the age of 21

The moment they were liberated from the camps or the ghettos or came out from the forests, the survivors were determined to go to Palestine in order to build their lives in the Jewish State. They disembarked from the ships, many of them as illegal immigrants, and were taken directly to the combat units. Many of them were last scion to their family - all alone in the world, with no mother, no father, no brothers, no sisters.

In 1947 and 1948, half of the combat force of the Hagana, and later the I.D.F, were Holocaust survivors.

Moreover, after the summer of 1948, survivors in the combat units were of vital importance, despite the fact that many of them were sent to the battlefields without adequate training. They didn't even know Hebrew, so the authorities had to publish information and instruction booklets in Yiddish, Polish, Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Arabic.

The new immigrants, the survivors, became the dominant factor in combat brigades like Hativat Harel. Their lack of military and combat experience was made up for by their determination, self-sacrifice and bravery. The figures of the dead and of the casualties speak for themselves.

Half of the soldiers who died in the War of Independence were Holocaust survivors.

In recent years, awareness of the vital role Holocaust survivors played in building the State of Israel has increased.

They literally played and still play a major roll in every field - economy, culture, art, science, education, academia, politics, security and more.

We, the second and the third generation, are honoured to follow you and wish to salute you thank you for all you have done!

Shelly Simons

Shelly is the daughter of Gina and the late David Schwarzmann.

I am the third child of four and the only girl. I think if any of my brothers had been asked to write this article, their experiences and memories would be markedly different to mine. I believe that not only because I am the only female sibling but as the only daughter of a child survivor. Mum was seven years old when she last saw her own mother before being taken into hiding in July 1942. My mum had been banished from Janusz Korzchak multi-faith kindergarten (for Christians and Jewish) a few weeks after starting there at the age of five. I think from the day I started school, my life must have been a constant reminder of all the things mum never had the opportunity to do. In me, growing up in a safe and easy world, she would have identified with the little girl she was forbidden to be.

There is no doubt that mum did so much for the four of us. My mum and I did not have the easiest of relationships for many years but that does not take away from her my acknowledgment that she did her very best for us. She fought our corner and wanted the best for us. After attending the local primary comprehensive, where I do not recollect knowing much about being Jewish, she sacrificed a lot to send the four of us to Carmel College, a Jewish boarding school that is sadly now no longer. For me it was a life saviour. I loved boarding, having friends and discovering what being Jewish meant.

My very earliest memories though, are ones of feeling different. I don't remember much laughter around the house. There weren't many friends. Life in hindsight was quite intense around the

six of us. Meal times were challenging, constantly presenting me with regular battles as I could not finish everything on my plate. Friends at school would talk about getting together with grandparents and cousins, aunts and uncles and I would wonder why life centred just around the six of us. I had a grandfather in America who occasionally we would see and another in Israel who we rarely saw at all. There was always a sense that we could never trust anyone outside the family, that I didn't need friends as I had my brothers.

Although I don't carry the happiest of memories from my very early childhood, I learnt much later on that the confusion, upset and loneliness I felt, is in fact totally understandable and rational to those in any way affected like me by the Holocaust or to those who have made learning about the Holocaust their cause. With this mixture of emotions, an additional complexity was added in later years, in the shape of guilt. Not a survivor guilt as I understand survivor guilt but a guilt for not having the tools to understand sooner the world my mother was born into. It's a guilt for feeling sorry for myself that I did not have it as easy as my friends who I saw growing up carefree and with easy straightforward social lives and family dynamics. There was also guilt about my feelings that I too in my own way felt like I too was a survivor. Of course, I did not bear anything of the sort of hardships my mother endured but whilst I was born into a free world, I felt

burdened and consequently guilty for daring to feel that burden.

I believe the ramifications of my earliest emotions manifested itself in the ways my own life has played out. I don't feel my own journey has always been a straightforward one. I ended up marrying very late in life. Yet I was blessed to have four children of my own and I think it is no coincidence that I too gave birth to three sons and a daughter (in the same order). When I was quite young, around six years old, I think, I distinctly remember asking my mother why she had children at all - a question that I must have asked in response to her melancholy that day. She answered 'to laugh in Hitler's face'. At that age, I didn't know who Hitler was.

So in our way, I suppose you can say we are laughing. Alongside my own four children, there are seven more grandchildren. My mother is the sweetest, most thoughtful, loving grandmother. She brings so much joy to her grandchildren and I can see they do to her too. Life has been hard and cruel for her but she has eleven sparkling jewels, who engulf her with their smiles and hugs whenever they are with her. We survived, we are surviving and as our children grow up and PG go on to have their own, they will be in an emotional place to live life to its full.

As for being a mother myself? I too am trying my best. I wish for my kids, who are my absolute life, a fun loving, carefree environment where they grow up proud of their Jewish identity, confident in themselves and surrounded by a wonderful extended family and friends. So far, so hopeful!

Walking the same path, my visit to Poland

Chlie Kaye

My Grandpa is a spectacular man whose history has always enthralled me. He has a dark past, being part of the biggest persecution of the Jews in the Holocaust but even the darkest memories need to be explored. My Grandpa had a mission - to take all his children and grandchildren to witness the horrors he experienced in Poland from 1942-45, and as one of the youngest grandchildren, I was in the third trip he had taken.

Many of my friends will discover Poland through organised trips run by schools or youth organisations, but I was in a unique position, with a trip that was personal to my family. I needed to hear from my Grandpa the horrors he had endured in Plaszow, Skarzysko, Buchenwald and Thereisenstat concentration camps to fully understand my history.

I flew to Warsaw along with my parents, brother, sister, cousin, uncle and of course my Grandpa. The first stop was the Warsaw Ghetto memorial; a communist monument that although beautifully designed could not justify the 400,000 Jews living in terrible conditions as prisoners in their own country. The Jewish museum, which was not yet open, was positioned next to the monument; the outside of the building was made to look like the splitting of the Red Sea. To me, this seems ironic - the passing through the Red Sea represents to a Jew awaited freedom, but in a museum in the heart of The Warsaw Ghetto none of the Jewish people felt freedom so how could this relate? Despite this, when walking

Chloe is the granddaughter of Harry and Margaret Omer.

through 'the parted sea' I started to understand the meaning; I am a Jew and although we have been persecuted in abhorrent ways- the Nazis did not win and we can pass through to freedom.

The long journey to Skarzysko was next, a bomb making factory where my Grandpa was forced to work left me pondering what would be there today. There was a monument standing there where the ammunitions factory was. While my Grandpa was translating the writing from Polish to English all of our jaws instantaneously dropped. It read that 35,000 people had given their lives so that others could live, it did not mention Jews and referred to them as 'people'. As a matter of fact, those 35,000 dead were all Jews and had not decided to give up their lives, they were forced to in conditions described by my Grandpa as "hell on earth". Not only was there no mention of the Jews but the monument had a cross on it. Where was the Magen David? This is not what my Grandpa deserved after almost dying from constant explosions and deadly diseases for six months; there was no recognition, just a Christian monument to 35,000 dead 'people' instead of a Jewish monument for 35,000 dead Jews.

Nothing could have prepared me for the next part of our journey; it was not a concentration camp and would have been meaningless

to any other Jew who stumbled across the little village. It was Charshninza, my Grandpa's childhood home - a village full of Jews seventy-five years ago and now it was home to Poles and memories. As we stood opposite the sight where my Great Grandma's house once stood, we came across an old man. It turned out that the old man remembered my Grandpa and could even recite the names of his family, in ten minutes everyone in the village was out of their homes and watching us. We were the tourist attraction - the 'one's that survived the ultimate atrocity'. The Poles who lived in the Charsznica seemed polite, however something that surprised me was when my Grandpa understatedly said "Terrible times". The old man just shrugged his shoulders and replied, "History". How could someone who witnessed seventy years ago Jews being rounded up and shot give a reply like that? He showed no sympathy and I realised the perpetrators of these acts against humanity were ordinary people. The dilapidated shuls in the village were still covered in swastika graffiti; no one had thought to remove it in all these years. I couldn't have been happier when we left Charsznica, which surprisingly still seemed full of racism.

We stayed the night in Krakow, in the Jewish quarter which was re-built for the film set of 'Schindler's List'. It all felt slightly surreal. They were selling Hassidic Jewish fridge magnets and commercialising the Jews in a way I had never seen. We travelled the surprisingly short distance to

Poland's number one tourist attraction - Auschwitz. It was heaving with people, and our tour had around fifty people on it. Although my Grandpa did not go to Auschwitz in the years 1942-45, his sister did and survived it, and for that reason it felt more personal than just a museum. Auschwitz-Birkenau was a place where people of all different races mourned the dead, as we walked along the iconic railway track line leading out the camp we remembered those 1.2 million who could not make that journey out.

That evening it was Shabbat and we went to the main Shul in the centre of the Jewish quarter in Krakow, I was expecting a little Shul with just a few people in it and not a proper service going on. To my surprise the Shul was so busy; as we danced and sung familiar songs I felt a sense of pride. Jews dancing, dancing in a Shul in a town where Hitler tried to wipe us all out - and it had not worked evidently as there were no seats left in the ladies section to sit on during the service.

The next part of our journey was crucial for my Grandpa and for us to see; it was 20km from the Ukrainian border and was the Extermination Camp called Belzec. Belzec was not like Auschwitz, you went to Belzec - for the purpose of death. 500,000 Jewish people had been murdered there in nine months and this included my Grandpa's mother, two sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins. I knew that it would be an emotional day. The museum at Belzec is a fairly new museum which opened in 2004; before then my Grandpa said there was just a small memorial enveloped with overgrowing trees and dogs digging up

bones. The new memorial was a breath-taking sight, something that dwarfs even Yad Vashem. A sea of rocks covered the entire sight of the former camp, darker rocks represented where the mass graves were. The Curator of the museum explained how when the Nazis were finished murdering all the Jews from southern Poland, they planted hundreds of trees to cover the evidence. Only ten years ago those trees were cut down. However, when walking round the memorial I saw a few lone trees - I was confused as to why these trees had not been cut down. I later found out that those few trees had been planted in the 1920's - they were the only living things that survived from the camp and had borne witness to what the Nazis did. The trees had seen how in true Nazi 'efficiency' they would have gassed 1,000 Jews at a time and buried them within two hours.

We walked down the long tunnel; surrounded on either side by mass graves and even though you couldn't see the gas chambers we knew underneath the rocks there were 500,000 people with 500,000 stories. At the end of the tunnel there was an imposing memorial, my Grandpa recited Yizkor and Kaddish - and we remembered my family and how the Nazis stole their precious lives. We were the only people walking around the massive memorial, Belzec does not tend to be part of the Jewish Poland tours - this is somehow shocking as it is a place so many lives were lost and pure death camps like Belzec need to be remembered.

After the emotional walk around the memorial, we went into the museum and we were greeted by the

Curator standing there holding a massive board. On the board was the story of my Great Grandmother who unfortunately lost her life at Belzec. The board was part of the exhibition. I expected my Grandpa to look sad as it was his mother's story and how she died so young; but when looking at his face I noticed he looked proud and grateful, people from all over the world will read the story of his mother and he couldn't have been happier to keep the memories of her alive. My Grandpa now has a close relationship with the Curator of the museum, and consequently she took us on an insightful tour around the museum. The tour ended with us entering a massive, empty, dark room it was at least 200m long and the room was just empty; there was no information in there... just emptiness. There did not need to be any information though, it was self-explanatory. The massive emptiness represented the huge emptiness in our hearts and as a nation because of the Holocaust.

All together, I think Belzec was a part of my trip I will never forget, it was close to our hearts and very powerful. I also realised there why my Grandpa wanted to go back to Poland and visit where he lived, worked and lost his family. It's not that he wanted to - it's that he had to. Without him going to visit where he lost his family, the story of his mother which is on a board in the centre of the museum would not be there. They only have 2,000 names of those who died in Belzec because whole towns were wiped out, but my Grandpa going back to visit gave twenty untold names of people he knew who died in Belzec. Sometimes we have to revisit the past to keep the

memories of our loved ones alive.

On our last day we visited Majdenek concentration camp. This was a true representation of the Holocaust as nothing had been destroyed - everything was intact as if it was in 1944. We stood at the top of the steps of the open round mausoleum which housed the ashes of 18,000 Jews - but it wasn't just ashes it was a representation of the six million Jewish men, women and children who were completely annihilated. It was a boiling hot day and as we entered the old barracks the stench of wood hit me, not only was the smell too strong but the heat engulfed me and I had to leave as soon as possible. It was too hot and the smell too bad for me to

spend more than five minutes in the barracks; I could not imagine how people lived in there on boiling hot days packed in with 300 other people.

Walking through the gas chambers which were unchanged was extremely powerful, the walls were still covered in blue which was caused by the excessive use of Zyklon B. I could still smell the pungent gas; this reminded me that seventy years is just a small time- not long enough to remove the smell of death. There was also a barrack completely full of rotting leather shoes, the stench was overpowering but we stayed in there and looked at them. A lot of the shoes were toddler's shoes, there were no words to describe how we felt.

My visit to Poland with my Grandpa was one my family and I will remember forever. To be able to have had my Grandpa as a guide who witnessed the anti-Semitism and evil caused by the Nazis was extremely special. It is up to us as the Third Generation to keep the stories alive when the Holocaust survivors are no longer around. Even in the face of evil itself you must show and tell so people can learn from it. This is why my Grandpa is so incredible. He re-lives the evil every time he goes to tell his story to a school, a shul, a church and when he visits Poland to give tours. You have to re-live evil in order to make the world a better place.

My journey with Holocaust echoes

Ilana Gelb

2000 eyes stare at me, anticipating heartbreak. I stand at the podium in the school auditorium with my grandmother. My grandma begins, "Sixty-five years ago I do not die, though my death sentence is proclaimed in Ravensbruck Concentration Camp. I am witness to that time of terror and death and today my granddaughter, Ilana, is witness to my survival and my life." I continue, "I know the immorality that the world is capable of and feel that I must gird and guard against it. In this Holocaust presentation, I am a witness; but in my life, I am an activist." My grandma and I speak of death, slavery, starvation, and torture. We tell of the continuation of these horrors today. Then we talk about hope and survival, and transformation of trauma into

Ilana is the granddaughter of Judith and Reuven Sherman. Due to her global human interests, she spends much of her time studying and volunteering around the world.

empowerment. My grandma has taught me that survival means creating a life in which music, laughter, and joy are plentiful. By day I intern in refugee resettlement, and by night I sashay across my jazz funk dance class. Between chapters of my human rights textbook, I play Mumford and Sons songs on my ukulele. After racial equality protests in New York, I indulge in homemade feasts with friends. My grandma's description of the Holocaust has shown me incomprehen-

sible inhumanity, and is the origin of my desire to understand and prevent human violence. This quest has taken me to the red light district of Varanasi, India; the slums of Thika, Kenya; the crematorium of Auschwitz, Poland. In each place I find much hurt and much heart. In Varanasi, I traded jovial dance lessons with the girls. In Kenya, I sang around campfires with the farmers' families. In Poland, I laughed for hours with my family over pierogi dinners. These joyous memories give me optimism, and the memories of human suffering I witnessed motivate me to continue the fight towards equality and peace. As much as the Holocaust haunts me, it has fostered my drive to participate actively in lessening hardships and spreading joy.

70th Anniversary of Auschwitz Liberation: 'Why I had to visit this Monstrous Memorial'

Simmy Richman

Simmy Richman, who had long believed that visits to the concentration camp were little more than macabre tourism, took a journey that he never thought he'd take.

In the late 1970s, two American television series were shown in the UK. One was called *The Holocaust*, the other was called *Roots*. As an impressionable 13-year-old boy living in what was then a predominantly Jewish north London suburb, one of these shows was to have a deep and lasting effect on me. Over the following decades, I would read everything I could lay my hands on related to the subject. From the horrors of the Middle Passage to the bruised optimism of the civil rights movement to the art of the Harlem Renaissance... no aspect of the African-American experience would escape my attention.

Psychologists call this "displacement" (loosely, the redirecting of thoughts and feelings about one subject on to another) and, though I didn't know it back then, I was a classic case. The intended genocide of the Jewish people in the Second World War was too close to home to deal with. How close? My father was born in Frankfurt, his father in a Polish shtetl (small town). The Rajchmans' – my father changed the name just before I was born – eventual escape was a subject we never spoke about, but through whispers and guarded answers to insistent questions, it seems that my grandfather paid his immediate family's way out with the judicious help of diamonds from his gem-cutting business.

According to one version of events, once my grandfather had put his wife and two children on a plane to England, he remained in Frankfurt to tie up some loose ends and was taken to an internment camp and detained until further payments were made. Whatever it is that actually happened back then, it's safe to say that things could have turned out differently for me and my family.

The concentration camps were literally the stuff of childhood nightmares and my younger years were haunted by a succession of what-ifs; what if I had been born a mere 20 years earlier? What if my father had not escaped? What if I had grown up surrounded by some or all of the many Rajchmans left behind?

As I got older and ventured out into the world away from that Jewish suburb, I came to the conclusion that religion was not a pick-and-choose pastime. You were either in it, or you were out. So while I've always strived to be a good person, I have always been a terrible Jew (I was the first Richman, or Rajchman to my knowledge, to "Marry out"). Consequently, the idea of ever returning to any of the scenes of the Nazis' crimes never particularly appealed. The very thought of visiting the concentration camps themselves felt positively macabre. I have known many Jewish people who have done this as a rite of

passage. But, I reasoned, there are also those who jump at the chance to visit any site of historic evil – Ground Zero, the killing fields of war, the trails of serial killers and so on. Why didn't they just tear Auschwitz down after the war, I would ask whenever the subject came up. Who needs to see such monstrosity in person, and why?

Meantime, when I was about six years old, one of my brothers started dating a girl, Michelle, who is now his wife of some 37 years. Michelle's father quickly became part of our expanding family. I called him "uncle" and have always thought of him as such. I knew, too, that Uncle Ziggy was a "survivor", though he had steadfastly refused to speak of his wartime experiences for some 50 years.

The breakthrough came when Ziggy Shipper was interviewed by the historian Martin Gilbert for a book called *'The Boys'* in the mid-1990s. Once he had told his story to Gilbert, it was difficult to stop him and, ever since, Ziggy has been speaking tirelessly on behalf of the Holocaust Education Trust (HET) up and down the country. He has told his story to prime ministers, politicians, schoolchildren and the England football team. His central message is that once you let hate into your heart, it can lead

anywhere. When people tell Ziggy, as they do frequently, that he is an “inspiration” for his HET work, he tells them that his wife of 60 years is more of a survivor than he is. In this way he deflects the glare.

A few months ago, I was talking to Ziggy at one family event or another. I don’t understand, I said to him, why anyone would want to visit Auschwitz. His response was brief and brooked no argument: “Everybody should.”

And so it is that I find myself on a coach trip in Poland ñ organised with some degree of excellence by a man called Chuni Kahan – to visit the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau (Auschwitz II). Ziggy is the guest of honour and there are about a dozen members of his family and mine on board. For me, it is an excuse to spend some time with Ziggy (neither of us is getting any younger) but the trip is also a chance to see first-hand whether there might be anything to learn from something I have spent my whole life trying to shut out.

Ziggy has, of course, made this trip more times than he cares to count. He speaks often about the first time he did so with his two daughters; he remembers standing at the end of the train track that leads into Birkenau, at the precise point where the dreaded “selection” processes occurred, looking towards the sky and telling Michelle and her sister Lu that they were the living proof that Hitler did not win.

It is a phrase that has complicated echoes for me. As Jewish kids, we were

constantly being told to stick with our own. If you marry non-Jewish partners, parents and teachers would tell you frequently, you would be doing Hitler’s work for him. If all Jews were to marry out, Hitler would have won. It is a heavy burden to put on young shoulders. Many carry it around with them for the rest of their lives. Others, myself included, not only reject such responsibility, but actively believe in assimilation – the melting pot, multiculturalism, the mixing up of gene pools. This way, too, surely blurs Hitler’s vision of “racial purity”.

The grim horror of the preserved concentration camps is unrelenting. Now a vast “museum”, there is much to support my initial reticence to visit (the selfies at the gates aspect of the “tourist” experience, the bizarre selling of items such as a postcard with a picture of empty Zyklon B canisters in the shop etc) and much that offers the opposite view. Throughout, there is an obsession with numbers that serves only to numb. Thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions... Soviets, Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals... The statistics become impossible to digest. The sheer scale of the camps themselves is unimaginable.

Auschwitz and – when that was no longer big enough – its nearby annexe Birkenau, were nothing less than vast murder factories; slaughter on an industrial scale. Those who were permitted to live were largely allowed to do so to keep the factories and surrounding fields manned. Ziggy spent much of the war in the Lodz ghetto, in Poland, but was transported to Birkenau in 1944. “Have you

been to see my bedroom?” he jokes at one stage, pointing to one of the grim wooden barracks that were originally horse stables.

There are sights and stories so horrific that the gloom can only be lifted by such attempts at humour. Human beings have a limited vocabulary to describe what they are seeing. Words such as “Terrible” and “unbelievable” will be heard many times throughout the day. And the permanent “exhibits” are, of course, unforgettable; the piles of shoes, suitcases and human hair can hardly fail to evoke a response. The mere sight of a barbed-wire fence has stung me ever since.

Finally, in a room near the end of the tour, is The Book of Names, a document painstakingly compiled that aims to preserve the identities of as many of the people killed by the Nazis as is possible. The Book of Names is about the length of a bus and each page is approximately three feet high. I find two pages full of the Rajchmans I will never know.

It is no surprise to be moved by these things but it is left to chance exactly what will get you and when. For me, it is the room with wall-to-wall projections of black and white films of Jewish families going about their day-to-day business before the war.

The contrast of these scenes of bustling life against a backdrop of a place like this hits with some force. And though the Nazis were keen not to document the actual gas chambers, there are photographs, from something known as The Auschwitz Album, of people from

Hungary and Lodz straight out of the cattle cars, waiting on a grass verge for their turn in the “shower”. The look of hope on their faces is devastating.

Could they really not have known what was about to happen? I ask Ziggy what he had thought the giant chimney stacks were for. He tells me that when he stepped off the train and saw them in the distance, he felt relieved that at last he had arrived at a place where they were baking fresh bread. He was 13 years old, starving hungry and hardened by what he had seen. Even he could not begin to imagine....

Outside, I ask a group of German school kids what they have made of their own visit. They repeat the now familiar words: “terrible”, “unbelievable”. I tell them that I am Jewish and ask them how the experience feels to them as Germans. It is the same, they say, wherever you are from. And

anyway, many of them want me to know that their families are not originally from Germany.

A few weeks ago, David Cameron made his own way along the same paths we did and talked about his “overwhelming sense of grief”. Later this month, Ziggy will be going back once more to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the camps’ liberation. As to why Auschwitz and Birkenau have been preserved, well, if you learn nothing else from visiting these places it is that the majority of Polish people want it to be known that while their country undoubtedly had (and has) its share of anti-Semites, the atrocities committed here were nothing to do with them.

In fact, there is a determined effort on the part of many young Poles to celebrate their country’s Jewish heritage. There are klezmer (Jewish music)

festivals attended almost entirely by Roman Catholics. There is a newly opened Museum of the History of Polish Jews. The Polish government continues to fund the Auschwitz Museum and is determined to keep the visitors coming (in record numbers) to learn about the evils of the Nazi invaders in their country.

And so we come, finally, to the point at which any writer worth their salt would reach a satisfying conclusion on the question of whether or not people should go to see these landmarks of lunacy for themselves. Perhaps, after decades of avoiding the subject as much as is possible, I can finally report that my mind has been changed, my eyes have been opened and that I, too, like Ziggy, now believe that everybody should visit these miserable memorials. I only wish it were that simple.

Gryn-ing all the way

Suzanne Baum

Just like the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn, his grandson Isaac hopes to be loved and respected for his work in the same way he believes his grandfather was. However, rather than a pulpit, it is the stage where Isaac is already making a name for himself as he pursues a career in acting.

Having already appeared in a number of musicals, including the West End production of Billy Elliot, 16-year-old Gryn is very much at home in musical theatre.

“I absolutely love performing. I come alive when I am on stage and am

The grandson of the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn has embraced the world of theatre. Suzanne Baum chats to Isaac Gryn about making a name for himself in Billy Elliot and his next steps.

at my happiest,” enthused Gryn, who lives in Highgate.

“I am proud of knowing who my grandfather was and what role he played within the Jewish community. My dream is to be as successful an actor as he was a rabbi.”

As the son of two artists,

Gryn grew up in a very creative family and became interested in acting at a very young age.

“I went to Akiva Primary School and we had a fantastic and inspiring ex-Ballet Rambert Dance Company teacher called Mari Mackenzie who gave dance and musical theatre classes. “She inspired me to perform and take an interest in theatre and we still remain close family friends.”

Having played all the lead roles in his school plays, as well as performing in a local theatre production of the musical Oliver, Gryn’s big

break came when he got the role of Tall Boy in Billy Elliot – a part he played for a year in 2010. (Tall Boy is the son of a miner who crosses the picket line to work. He appears in the opening scene and later in the boxing scene with Billy and Michael doing push-ups – a part that required Gryn to do many push-ups on stage and additional ones during rehearsals).

“One of the most exciting parts of being involved with the show was the fact I got to work with some of the best directors in the industry,” explained Gryn.

“The whole experience of being in such an amazing musical was a great learning curve for me.

“I realised very quickly that it was not at all as glamorous a job as it looks. It was, in fact, hard and repetitive work. I had no compensation from my school for the fact that I was working many nights until 11pm and then was still

having to get up at 6am in order to get ready for school.

“What it made me realise is that I loved the work and I also loved my school and so to maintain a school life and work balance, I had to become very self-disciplined, diligent and focused – qualities which have remained pretty strong within me every since.”

More recently, Gryn performed in the National Youth Musical Theatre’s production of West Side Story, a musical which happens to be his favourite.

“My agent is Curtis Brown and they have been absolutely fantastic. I have been put up by them for many auditions for major film, theatre and TV roles over the last few years and they have helped guide my career.

“Even if I don’t get the parts, I always relish the challenge and see auditions as a great learning experience.”

Now attending the Arts

Educational School in Chiswick, Gryn intends to get as much experience as possible.

“I’m doing everything I can right now to enhance my chances of making a name for myself as a professional actor.

“My goal is to one day have leading roles in film, TV, dance, musical theatre and traditional theatre.”

As for the future, Gryn hopes to move abroad and try and make a name for himself in America. Should he find fame, he is adamant it won’t go to his head.

“If I follow my dreams and my career takes off my family will ensure I remain grounded. “They have always supported me as they know how alive I feel when I am on stage.”

In the same way that Rabbi Hugo Gryn was deeply admired for his work, it seems his grandson may soon be following in his grandfather’s footsteps.

’45 Aid Society and Second Generation our submission to the UK Holocaust Commission 2014

In 2014 Prime Minister David Cameron established a Commission, Chaired by Mick Davis to determine the best way for the UK to commemorate the Holocaust for future generations. In January 2015 the recommendations of the cross-party Holocaust Commission were accepted. Mr Cameron said:

“Today we stand together - whatever our faith, whatever our creed, whatever our politics. We stand in remembrance of those who were murdered in the darkest hour

of human history, we stand in admiration of what our Holocaust survivors have given to our country and we stand united in our resolve to fight prejudice and discrimination in all its forms.”

Prime Minister Pledges Prominent Holocaust Memorial for Britain

The ’45 Aid Society and Second Generation have been at the heart of the campaign for remembrance and education for over 50 years. Two of our members,

Ben Helfgott and **Jack Kagan**, participated actively as Commissioners, and following consultation with members, **Maurice Helfgott** wrote this submission on our behalf.

The result of the Commission’s work, including the setting up of a new permanent UK Holocaust Memorial Authority Chaired by Sir Peter Bazalgette, and a £50m commitment to kick-start plans to establish a National Memorial/Learning Centre with on-going education.

**Response from '45 Aid
Society Holocaust
Survivors and
Second & Third
Generation**

May, 2014

**BACKGROUND TO '45
AID SOCIETY/SECOND
GENERATION:**

<http://www.2ndgeneration.org.uk/>

Of the very few Jews that survived the death camps, slave camps and death marches of Hitler's Reich, sixty nine years ago, 732 of those survivors, most of them boys, about eighty of them girls, made the journey to Britain. They travelled under the auspices of the Central British Fund, a Jewish organisation that had been active in helping refugees since the rise of Hitler in 1933.

What this particular group of orphan refugees had in common, apart from their wartime experiences, was the journey they made together. In the months and years that followed other Holocaust survivors joined them from across Europe, all needing a new start to life.

In 1963, the 'Boys' set up their own '45 Aid Society - Holocaust Survivors' - a charitable organisation, named after the year they first came to Britain. Their mission has been to remember those who were lost; to help their members who needed help; to teach the lessons of the Holocaust; to spread the message of tolerance; and to help others more widely.

The '45 Aid Society has remained proudly independent, operating solely as a voluntary organisation without professional administration

As second and third generation we have joined with our parents and grandparents to continue their mission today and into the future.

**RESPONSE TO THE
COMMISSION - SOME
SUGGESTED
PRINCIPLES:**

We have respect for, and gratitude to, the Prime Minister and HM Government for taking Holocaust teaching and commemoration seriously, and for establishing this Commission. We are proud citizens - proud of Britain's long history as a liberal, democratic nation, that courageously fought the Nazis and champions tolerance and the rule of law - and proud Jews, following in our traditions, close to our community and integrated in society.

We fully endorse the importance of the Prime Minister's goal for the Commission: "to make sure we learn the lessons of the dreadful events that happened" and to ensure that "in 50 years' time, in 2064, when a young British Christian child or a young British Muslim child or a young British Jewish child wants to learn about the Holocaust, and we as a country want them to learn about the Holocaust... it is as vibrant and strong a memory as it is today, with all of you 'Survivors' standing here in this room".

We are familiar with much of the material the experts will submit to the Commission and therefore will not repeat in this submission, offering, instead, a number of principles we hold dear that we would ask the Commission to consider:

Suggested Principles for Consideration:

1. Please don't confuse the 'universal' and the 'particular'. The Holocaust was a unique historical event in a particular place and time. It has universal and timeless lessons for humanity. Historical and other comparisons made to illustrate universal lessons - or still less, to score political points - denigrate the memory of the victims, as well as undermine the message.

2. Take the long view. The Commission might study the historiography of the Holocaust before finalising its conclusions. The way the history of the Holocaust has been studied and taught, and the attitudes toward it, have evolved rapidly over just 70 years, and inevitably will continue to do so. Accuracy and integrity must take priority over empathy and engagement: because only truth can last.

3. Personal stories can bridge the gap between history and statistics - and engagement and understanding. Testimonies of the victims of Nazi persecution can and should be brought to life. Specifically we, as Holocaust survivors and second and third generation, can play a role in contributing to understanding. Explaining: "this happened to me/to my mother/to my grandfather" can be powerful and persuasive.

4. Teaching teachers and society's role models is a priority. The Holocaust and its meaning is not a superficial subject. Teachers should benefit from the

continual preparation and depth of understanding required to teach and answer questions from a position of knowledge and confidence.

5. Great Britain played a vital role in defeating Nazism, and, led by its Jewish community, welcomed Jewish refugees before the war, and survivors after it. Without propaganda or bombast, Britain's role and values should be positively recognised.

6. Grass roots initiatives are important as well as centralised ones. A balanced spread of Holocaust education, commemorative events, memorials and museums, should continue to develop. Top down AND bottom up. Just one example, close to our particular hearts, is the wonderful exhibition that has captured local imagination in the Windermere Public Library. Originated and staffed by local volunteers, it tells the story of 300 of the "the Boys" who came to the "paradise" that was the Lake District after their liberation in 1945

(<http://www.anotherspace.org.uk/a2a/>).

7. There is already a lot going on - increased transparency and communication, as well as co-operation. An independent, comprehensive, dedicated and well resourced website, mapping and helping access all resources and activities should come up first for online search

8. Mind our Language. We should take care not to forget that the victims of Nazi persecution that suffered the greatest loss were those who did not survive. In recent times the term "Survivor" has evolved from applying to those who were caught up in Nazi-occupied Europe after September 1st 1939, to a looser definition, for example including refugees who left before the beginning of the war and, sometimes, modern Jewish communities in this generation who assert "we are all survivors too".

As Holocaust survivors who endured the death camps, slave labour camps and death

marches of Hitler's Reich, we respectfully ask that the term 'survivor' be used carefully and appropriately. This is not because we believe that the term should imply 'automatic status' or 'the pinnacle in a hierarchal classification of suffering'. The losses and suffering of each victim of Nazi persecution is individual and not for comparison. Each testimony is valid and equally valued. We do, however, believe that for our great grandchildren to remember the victims and learn the lessons in 2064, and 2164, and 2264, historical accuracy and careful use of language must prevail.

For the record, as children and grandchildren of survivors, the second and third generation, we categorically do not regard ourselves as survivors and we reject absolutely the notion that we are victims.

Maurice Helfgott
On behalf of the '45 Aid Society Holocaust Survivors/Second & Third Generation

London, May 2014

Craig Rinder

Mum is the daughter of Moshe Malenicky, one of the Boys who were liberated from Theresienstadt and settled here nearly 70 years ago. Zaida Morry, as he was known to me, and his four other grandchildren, was very much the dominant figure in our family. He passed away in 2001.

In 1998 I went with Zaida and some of the Boys to Piotrkow Trybunalski in

Craig is the elder son of Angela Cohen, who is the Vice-Chairman of the '45 Aid Society, and the grandson of Moishe Malenicky.

Poland, where he was born and lived with his parents, younger brother and three younger sisters. Zaida was the only survivor. Piotrkow felt like a town that stopped when the war commenced in 1939, and had yet to re-start. We spent a day there and I

felt relieved to leave. The next day we went on to Auschwitz. Despite this trip being nearly 17 years ago, I can remember every detail as if it was yesterday. It was a very emotional, tough few days and yet one of the most memorable moments was witnessing the bond between my Zaida and a number of his contemporaries. I had never seen him in this environment before and the closeness

between the men and women was something to behold. For all the horror that these people had been through, they all retained their human traits. There were tears, but there was also laughter and joking. The one feeling that I can't remember was hatred. None of these men or women, and my Zaida in particular, never hated.

To hate.... To dislike intensely or passionately. To feel extreme hostility or aversion toward something or someone.'

In 2014 the CST recorded 1,168 anti-Semitic incidents worldwide. This was more than double the previous year's figure. In January the terror attacks at the Hyper Cacher Supermarket in Paris shocked much of the civilised world. However, another issue these attacks brought

to the fore was the large increase in French Jews emigrating to Israel. During the last six years there has been a significant rise in support for far right parties across Europe. A number of people would say many of these incidents are a direct result of Israel and the conflict in the Middle East, and I think it is fair to attribute some of these incidents to that. Nonetheless it appears that Israel has become something of a convenient camouflage as Anti-Semitism comes to the fore again. 2008 saw the onset of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. It doesn't appear a huge co-incidence that in such an age of economic hardship 'the hatred' has come to the surface again.

My Zaida was a man of the world, interested in other cultures and religions. A proud observant Jew, he respected everyone's right to live how they wished. He loved Britain and the fact he had built a wonderful life here. Indeed his story of success is something of a metaphor for a number of 'the Boys' who have prospered here over the last 70 years. It is a story we must embrace and never forget. As the third generation I see it as my responsibility to educate and remind. The annual reunion must be celebrated so that the 5th and 6th generations continue it for their children and grandchildren. The 'hate' is still there ...The 'Boys' never hated, they remembered but never hated. We must do the same.

SECTION IV THE ANNUAL LEONARD G. MONTEFIORE LECTURE

William Tyler

To some it may seem like only yesterday, to others as remote as 1066.

1943: The Tide Turns

William Tyler

As 1942 turned into 1943, the tipping point of the war was being battled out at Stalingrad. The Russian victory at Stalingrad in early 1943 was, in hindsight at least, the beginning of the end - although Stalin recognised this at the time when he remarked, 'The cause of German fascism is lost'. The tide is turning.

The Nazis themselves realised this in February in Goebbels' so-called 'Total War' Speech. The speech was delivered in Berlin, following

the defeat at Stalingrad, before a specially selected audience, and broadcast across the nation. Goebbels ended with this peroration, 'Now, people rise up and let the storm break loose!'

As for Hitler, by 1943 he was taking a concoction of at least twenty-eight different drugs - and he was becoming more dependent on them. His mental and physical decline is becoming increasingly evident. The tide is turning.

By 1943 the world war has been global for over a year,

since Japan's attack on the American fleet in Pearl Harbour. There are in fact in 1943 two great wars being fought, the war in Asia and the war in North Africa and in Europe.

But let me turn first to the situation in Germany itself. German home-grown resistance to the regime was beginning to make itself heard in 1943. Sophie Scholl, her brother and a third colleague were executed by guillotine for distributing anti-war literature at the

University of Munich. Her own motivation was her strong Catholic faith. She is reported to have said at her trial, 'Somebody, after all, had to make a start. What we wrote and said is also believed by many others. They just didn't dare express themselves as we did'.

As she went to her execution in Munich's Prison she added, 'How can we expect righteousness to prevail when there is hardly anyone willing to give themselves up individually to a righteous cause. Such a fine, sunny day, and I have to go, but what does my death matter if through us thousands of people are awakened and stirred to action?' The tide is turning, if by very slow degrees.

But the war is to run for a further two horrendously murderous years, and although other Germans were indeed stirred to action; in the following year we have for example the Von Stauffenberg Plot, yet Hitler is destined to die not at an assassin's hand but at his own, his whole world having come crashing down around him.

In Britain, on The Home Front, some people were growing tired of this constant and draining war. A war that was now clearly going to be longer even than the First War; and American Servicemen added a *je ne sais quoi* to wartime life.

In December the first of forty-eight thousand Bevin Boys were called up for the first time to go and work in the coal mines to boost production levels for the war effort. The boys themselves were selected by lot, and most were none too pleased, especially as many thought of

them as conscientious objectors. After the war they were denied a war pension. They have been described as 'Britain's Forgotten Secret Army'. Their service wasn't officially recognised until 2008.

As for the war Britain and its Western Allies, the Free French of General De Gaulle and the Americans, were fighting, the scene in 1943 moves from North Africa to the European mainland in Italy. In May of '43 Rommel's Afrika Corps finally surrendered at Tunis. A total of a hundred and fifty thousand Germans and Italians were taken Prisoners of War. Two months later Allied Forces landed on the island of Sicily, and the Italian King, Victor Emmanuel, dismissed his Chief Minister and the Fascist and real leader of the country, Benito Mussolini. The new Prime Minister, Marshal Badoglio, and the king, hesitated for six weeks before declaring for The Allies and breaking their alliance with Nazi Germany. Of course by then The Allies had landed in Italy itself, at Salerno, and offered the Italian Government an armistice. The Germans flooded into Italy as far south as Naples in order to stem the Allied advance, whilst Victor Emmanuel and Marshal Badoglio abandoned their positions. The tide is turning.

Mussolini himself was rescued from imprisonment by the Germans and installed as a puppet leader of Italy.

During the year Free French forces liberated the first part of European France, the island of Corsica. The tide is turning.

To the East the Soviet

juggernaut is moving slowly, but inexorably, towards its target of Berlin. And as I noted at the beginning it was the Russian victory at Stalingrad that began the process that is to end in Hitler's Berlin bunker itself. On the last day of January 1943, Von Paulus surrendered at Stalingrad and ninety thousand Germans were taken prisoner by the Russians. All this despite Hitler's order that they should fight on to the last man: 'Forbid surrender. The army will hold its position to the last soldier and the last cartridge, and by its heroic endurance will make an unforgettable contribution to the building of the defensive front and the salvation of Western civilisation.'

In July the great tank battle of Kursk was fought and won by The Red Army, thus turning back the German counter attack on The Eastern Front, spear-headed by a million men and three thousand tanks with Moscow as their objective. The tide IS turning.

The RAF and The USAAF are now targeting German cities. On 19th August Brendan Bracken, the British Minister of Information said, 'Plans are now being made to bomb and burn and ruthlessly destroy in every way available to us the people responsible for this war'.

In the month of November, for example, two thousand tons of bombs were dropped on the city of Dusseldorf in less than half an hour of aerial bombardment. It is also the year that saw the famous Dambuster Raid. The tide is turning.

The tide is turning and the Allied Leaders are looking

towards the ending of this war.

In November Churchill and Roosevelt met in Cairo with Chiang Kai-Shek and agreed on fighting for the unconditional surrender of Japan, and putting the clock back, in terms of territory, to the pre Japanese conquests of 1894. The two Western Leaders also discussed the next Conference, which was duly held in Teheran at the end of the month. This conference was attended by Stalin and marks the moment when Churchill, and Britain, are clearly seen as playing second figure to The USSR and The USA. Among what is agreed are plans for D-Day and for the post war peace. Stalin, however, refuses to budge on the question of declaring war on Japan.

The USA and Britain fight on in The East without Russian support. The Americans continue with their policy of island hopping closer and closer to Japan. 1943 sees the battle of Guadalcanal won by the Americans. In Burma, the charismatic and mercurial

Orde Wingate leads his Chindit force behind enemy lines.

And where we ended last year's talk, with the unspeakable horror of The Final Solution, so we turn again this evening to The Holocaust which was now reaching truly horrendous levels across Europe.

On 29th July 1969 Josef Bloch was executed in Leipzig, East Germany. He was shot through the neck. He had been a member of The SS. To the Jews of The Warsaw Ghetto he was known as 'Frankenstein'. He was found guilty of the multiple rape of women in the Ghetto and then of their subsequent murder. For his actions in Warsaw he had been awarded The War Merit Cross. He remained undetected for twenty years, until 1967.

The Ghetto Uprising took place during April and May.

By January 1941 eighty thousand Gentile Poles had been removed and one hundred and fifty thousand Jewish Poles forcibly moved in. 350k in a 3.5 sq. m.

area. Up to summer 1942 estimated one hundred thousand died of starvation, disease, or were executed.

In July 1942 300k were sent to camps, most to Treblinka.

In 1943 Himmler ordered an end to the Jews of Warsaw.

There was resistance as the Germans moved in at 6am on the 19th April.

In a month of fighting 60k inhabitants of the Ghetto died. Estimated only 100 Jews survived the uprising. The horror goes on, but the tide has begun slowly to turn against Nazi Germany.

There is light ahead but it would not have seemed so in the POW camps and least of all in the camps of the Holocaust.

I therefore end on a positive note as the year 1943 turns into 1944, by quoting from a speech given by Winston Churchill in 1954 at The Lord Mayor's Banquet: 'For myself I am an optimist - it does not seem much use being anything else'.

Europe in 1994

Hope Amidst The Gloom

New Year 1944.

We here in Britain have been at war for over four years, since September 1939.

The Americans have been in the war for two years, since the bombing of Pearl Harbour in December 1941. In both the war with Japan, and the war with Germany, the tide is turning in the Allies' favour.

The Americans in The Far

East are making slow, but methodical, progress towards the main Japanese islands themselves.

In Europe, the Allies are forcing their way up the Italian peninsula, despite heavy German resistance. Plans for an amphibious landing in Northern France, to strike at the heart of Germany, are well advanced.

We might here in Britain feel war weary but at least

now there is some light at the end of the tunnel. Some hope amidst the gloom.

As for the Germans, 1944 was the year when the war really did come to their country. 1943 had seen serious German reverses on The Eastern Front (at Stalingrad and Kursk) and total defeat in North Africa, culminating in The Allied invasion of Sicily, then of the Italian mainland, and finally

of the collapse of Hitler's ally, Mussolini, and his Fascist regime.

In October 1943 the new Italian Government declared war on Germany. Many Italians continued to fight with German forces and in effect an Italian civil war raged within the greater European conflict. Many Germans, including high ranking Nazis, failed to realise, however, that the war had now turned against them. Others became critically aware that the victories of The Wehrmacht were things of the past. By the end of 1944, for example, the food situation was becoming a serious problem across Germany.

From an Allied point of view the year 1944 can perhaps best be summed up in the message sent by General Eisenhower to his troops just prior to the D-Day landings in Normandy on 6th June: "You are about to embark upon the great crusade, toward which we have striven for many months". Even so a successful outcome still could not be taken for granted, and Eisenhower had in his pocket a second message, never issued, in case D-Day had turned out to be a failure.

In January 1944, The Red Army crossed into German occupied Poland.

Hard fighting faced the British at Monte Cassino in Italy.

On the 20th February the RAF dropped 2,300 tons of bombs on Berlin. The war has been taken to the enemy now with a vengeance.

The Allies create a bridgehead in Italy at Anzio, when the fighting is particularly tough.

The Russians pressed

towards the occupied Baltic States, and in February took prisoner two German Army Corps south of Kiev in Ukraine.

On the 8th February plans for Operation Overlord, the Normandy landings, are approved, quickly followed by the setting up of SHAEF (Supreme HQ Allied Expeditionary Force) here in Britain under the American command of General Eisenhower. American GIs were everywhere in Britain.

On the 19th February, a week of heavy bombardment by RAF and USAAF aircraft is targeted at industrial cities, beginning with two nights of bombing of the eastern German city of Leipzig.

In March Major-General Bill Slim and the 14th Army halt the projected Japanese invasion of India at Imphal for four hard months of fighting before the Japanese retreat. Giving rise to the famous Kohima epitaph: "When you go home, tell them of us and say, For their tomorrow we gave our today".

There are of course setbacks still to come - in March 1944 the eccentric, yet successful, Orde Wingate is killed in an air crash; and right at the end of the same month the RAF suffered heavy losses in a bombing raid on Nuremberg.

As spring comes the Americans bomb Romanian oil fields, a vital German resource and then the German Army is forced out of The Crimea by the advancing Russians. The 27th April sees a dress rehearsal for D-Day go horribly wrong in Devon at Slapton Sands when at least 946 American troops are killed.

Shortly before D-Day itself

(6th June) the Allies secured victory at Monte Cassino and they also broke out of the Anzio bridgehead to link up with troops advancing from the south. They still faced stiff German opposition in Northern Italy; but the tide has turned. Finally, in India Slim had forced the Japanese to abandon their invasion plans for India.

The scene is now set for the great set-piece - The invasion of occupied France. D-Day 6th June 1944.

D-Day was but the beginning of a long hard fight to cross The Rhine, enter Germany and defeat Hitler. The Russians continued to advance from the east.

Other events also took place in the second half of 1944. German atrocities continued. In June at Oradour sur Glane near Limoges 642 men, women and children were killed in barbaric fashion, shot and then burnt alive by the Germans as they destroyed the town and its people in reprisal for actions of The French Resistance. France has left the village just as the Germans had left it as a forceful reminder of such barbarism.

In August Warsaw rose in anticipation of the Russian advance. For two months and a day the Polish Resistance held out against ferocious German counter attack. It is estimated that between 150 thousand and 200 thousand civilians died in The Uprising, in addition to 16 thousand members of The Polish resistance with a further 6 thousand badly wounded. 25% of Warsaw's buildings were destroyed, and having won the Germans demolished another 35% of the city. By the war's end 85%

of Warsaw had been destroyed.

In between these two events occurred the plot against Hitler. Had it succeeded in killing him then the war might, but only might, have come to a swifter close. By the summer of 1944 a number of senior military figures had come to the realisation that Germany would not win the war and that Hitler would drag them all down with him in a hopeless fight to the death. The key figure was Von Stauffenberg, a member of Hitler's staff.

The horror of The Holocaust continues across Europe throughout 1944. There seemed no end to it. On 7th March 3,860 Jews were gassed at Birkenau, in August 835 Jews were deported from Italy to Birkenau and 559 were gassed immediately upon

arrival. In the same month 67,000 Jews were sent from the Lodz Ghetto to Birkenau. On the final day of October the Germans began dismantling Birkenau to hide the evidence of their barbarism.

The end of the war may be in sight, but there is still a long way yet to go. VI rockets hit Southern Britain, but by September the blackout is replaced by a dim out. Surely this war can't go on for much longer? And on 25th August, De Gaulle marches down The Champs Elysee in personal triumph.

In September the first Allied troops enter Germany from the west at Aachen. But September witnessed also the dreadful defeat of British airborne forces at Arnhem. Two thousand killed, seven thousand captured or listed as missing and only four thousand returned. General

Frost was taken prisoner.

V2 rockets hit Britain before the year's end, but the war IS being won. Hitler calls up all men between the ages of 16 and 60 to fight.

Allied political leaders are now thinking seriously about the post war world. In August at Dumbarton Oaks in USA, it is agreed to establish a UN. Here in Britain Butler's Education Act becomes law - secondary education for all in post war Britain.

1944 ends but the war is to drag on for months yet as the sobering words uttered by Hitler in 1939 come to mind, "We may be destroyed, but if we are, we shall drag a world with us - a world in flames". Chilling words on which to end the story of 1944. Yet hope, real hope, is stronger on New Year's Day 1945 than it had been twelve months previously. The Allies hold the initiative.

1945: 70 Years On

1945.

The Year the war ended. Twice.

VE Day on 8th May and VJ Day on 2nd September.

But 1945 is a lot more than just the coming of peace.

The full horror of The Holocaust was brought into the searing light of day as the camps were liberated by Allied Forces, beginning with Auschwitz on 26th January by Soviet Forces of The Red Army, and for us in Britain the horror becomes very real with the BBC reports from Bergen-Belsen from April 15th. But the horror had not ended before the Nazis attempted to obliterate any

evidence of the camps as the Allies advanced.

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, following the first successful explosion of an atomic bomb by the Americans in New Mexico on 16th July.

The firebombing of Dresden by The RAF in February. Nearly sixty thousand are killed. On 28th March, Churchill tells Harris in a memorandum that "It seems to me that the moment has come when the questions of bombing of German cities simply for the sake of increasing the terror, though under other pretexts, should be reviewed."

Hitler committed suicide

on 30th April. Two days before Mussolini was shot and strung up with his mistress in Milan. Eighteen days previously President Roosevelt had died of a brain haemorrhage.

And the future shape of our own country, of Europe, and of the wider world begins to be drawn.

Here in Britain Churchill loses the General Election in July and Labour, under Clement Attlee, forms a Government, committed to the implementation of The Beveridge Report, commissioned by Churchill's Government as the war still raged. The Welfare State is about to be born.

In Europe the outlines of

The Cold War start to form, with Stalin announcing at the Conference at Yalta in February that at the war's end will come a difficult time as The Allies will then be divided by what Stalin euphemistically called 'diverse interests'. In December US Senator James Eastland is already warning of the dangers of The USSR following the conclusion of the war in Europe.

In March Marshall Tito had proclaimed a Federal Republic in Yugoslavia.

In August Sukarno declared Indonesia independent of its former colonial masters, the Dutch, and in Vietnam the French begin a futile war to hold the country within its empire, whereas in Korea the country is divided between the Allies, Russia, and The United States. The days of European Empires is coming to an end, the days of The Cold War are beginning.

In The Middle East on 29th May French troops shoot at demonstrators in Damascus who are protesting at the continuing French presence in Syria.

The dreadful horrors of Japanese POW Camps gradually filters through to the world as prisoners are released by advancing Allied Forces.

On 20th November the trials in Nuremberg begin.

1945 marks a line drawn in the sand, but it does not usher in a new Utopia, far from it.

Now 75 years on from 1945 how do we view this seminal year and its events?

Firstly, we remain relieved that our country survived when it could so easily have followed France into the realms of defeat and

surrender in the dark days of 1940; and had Britain fallen then the light of democracy and freedom itself would have been extinguished in Europe for an unknown period of time, and many of you who are Jews simply wouldn't be here at all.

We have in recent days been reminded of all this as we commemorated the 50th anniversary of Winston Churchill's death and funeral in 1965. The man whom above everyone symbolised our stand for freedom and right and led us finally to victory just 75 years ago, even though he himself on VE Day, speaking from the balcony of The Ministry of Health in Whitehall, claimed that the victory was the peoples. His voice was temporarily drowned out as the crowd roared, 'No, it's yours'.

Many ordinary Britons turned out in London last week's for the commemorations to mark Churchill's funeral, as they had done for the funeral itself fifty years ago.

Secondly, we remain deeply scarred by the horrors of The Nazi Regime, above all else and overshadowing every other horror, The Holocaust, that saw so many millions of European Jews murdered in the most gruesome and inhumane ways.

After those two points our views may begin to diverge one from the other.

We wonder, thirdly, whether we could have done anything to have prevented the years of The Cold War, and, fourthly whether the manufacture, and subsequent use, of atomic weapons has made our world a more fragile one than ever? The

end of The Cold War has done little, if anything, to lessen the prospect of another bomb being dropped some day by some Power (in our Post-Cold War World, Power may mean not a nation state, even a rogue one, like Iran or North Korea, but by a non-State body of some group of terrorists, at the moment the most likely being fundamentalist Muslims).

We also live in a new Europe in which the leading Power within The European Union, which we ourselves joined late and have remained semi-detached members of ever since, is a re-united and vibrant Germany; but Germany itself, along with France, have sizeable and growing Fascist Parties; And Greece seems anxious, under its new Left Government, to deal with Putin's Russia. The world, even the European world (with violence continuing, as we meet tonight, in Ukraine) is perhaps a less peaceful and calm place following the end of The Cold War even than it was in those years when we all felt we lived in the shadow of the bomb.

History never ends, and History never repeats itself. But all the old issues continue to re-surface because humankind never changes its spots.

Democracy which this country defended during the war, carrying high the torch of freedom to hand on to new generations is still a challenge for us today. Democracy, the rule of law, freedom itself has always to be guarded, defended against those who would wish to destroy it and us.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

AID TO HOLOCAUST VICTIMS IN UK TO INCREASE IN 2015; CLAIMS CONFERENCE ALLOCATING €3.75 MILLION FOR HOMECARE, OTHER SERVICES

Negotiations with German Government Led to Sizeable Funding Increase Worldwide

NEW YORK, NY - December 15, 2014 - Elderly Jewish Holocaust victims in the UK, the last of their generation to have endured the horrors of the Nazi genocide, will receive significantly more aid in 2015, announced Julius Berman, President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference).

In 2015, the Claims Conference allocation to the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain will be €3.75 million, an increase of more than €1 million over 2014 funding, with most of the increase earmarked for homecare, the top social welfare priority for these survivors.

The Claims Conference is the only organization assisting Holocaust survivors worldwide by supporting homecare and other vital services specifically for Nazi victims.

“All Shoah victims should be able to receive the help and support that they need to live the rest of their lives in dignity, after having endured indescribable suffering in their youth,” said Claims Conference President Julius Berman. “This tremendous increase in funding will directly help many survivors, including those who need

more help at home than they currently receive as well as those needing care for the first time. Abandoned by the world in their youths, Holocaust victims deserve all the aid and comfort that it is possible to give them in the twilight of their lives.”

“As Holocaust victims in the UK continue to age, their needs are growing. For more than a decade, the Claims Conference has been pressing the government of Germany about its obligation to help care for the survivors who want to remain living in their own homes. We are pleased that this increased funding will help make that possible for additional survivors in the UK,” said Ben Helfgott, a survivor leader in the UK and a member of the Claims Conference Board of Directors and its negotiating delegation.

EMBARGOED UNTIL DECEMBER 15, 2014

The increase stems from Claims Conference negotiations with Germany, where support for homecare has been an urgent priority for more than a decade. With this substantial increase in allocations, the Claims Conference will be able to provide more help for the essential and special needs of Holocaust victims, which

continue to increase as they age.

In 2015, total Claims Conference allocations to social service organizations around the world will total USD \$365 million, a 21 percent increase over the 2014 amount, and will aid Holocaust victims in 47 countries. The allocations derive from German government funding, proceeds from recovering Jewish properties in the former East Germany, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the Austrian government and the Swiss Banks Settlement. With this substantial increase in allocations, the Claims Conference will be able to provide more help for the urgent, essential and special needs of Holocaust victims.

These allocations are entirely separate from the individual compensation payments also distributed by the Claims Conference to Holocaust victims.

Ironically, while the number of Jewish victims of Nazism dwindles every year, the day-to-day needs of the aging and ever frailer victims continue to increase. In 2013, the Claims Conference brought this message to its annual negotiations with the German government. The resulting agreement yielded a landmark USD \$1 billion

sum to be allocated by the Claims Conference through 2017. "This agreement was finalized in 2013, a time of budget austerity in Germany, making it all the more significant," said Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat, Claims Conference Special Negotiator. "We thank Germany for recognizing and continuing to address its historic obligation to Holocaust victims."

Home care funded by Claims Conference allocations encompasses a wide variety of services, intrinsic to enabling survivors to remain living in their own homes, in familiar surroundings, affording them a sense of safety, security, comfort and community. Some survivors need assis-

tance such as light housekeeping and cooking, while others, more infirm, require help with the basic activities of daily living, such as dressing and hygiene. The additional funding for 2015 will be used for all of these purposes.

This remarkable increase in funding will enable Jewish social service agencies to continue to support those survivors already receiving home care assistance, as well as survivors who find themselves in need, for the first time, of home care help. Funding for 2015, to social service organizations working with survivors, is based on the projected unmet needs that such organizations have reported to the Claims Conference.

About the Claims Conference

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) represents world Jewry in negotiating for compensation and restitution for Jewish victims of Nazi persecution and their heirs. The Claims Conference administers compensation funds, recovers unclaimed Jewish property, and allocates funds to institutions that provide social welfare services to Holocaust victims and preserve the memory and lessons of the Holocaust. For more information: www.claimscon.org.

SECTION VI OBITUARIES

Stanley Faull

Stanley Faull (died peacefully at home on 11th May 2014 aged 84) (Full Version of Eulogy by his eldest son Steven Faull)

My wonderful father was a true Mensch in every meaning of the word - a fantastic husband to my mother Dian, for almost 60 years of marriage, and a brilliant role model to myself and my two brothers, Maurice and Ashley. He was an inspirational presence to us and to his four grandchildren, Matthew, Emily, Harrison and Mackenzie. He was also a pillar of the community - generous and caring to all who knew him. He had that rare trait in an individual - real humanity.

Many of you here today

have been kind enough to share with myself and my family your own personal examples of what my Dad meant to you individually. We all appreciate that and thank you for your support. We know how lucky we were to have had him in our family. You have told us how he was so kind, generous, charming, humorous and incredibly thoughtful. Ironically, he dubbed himself "the wicked uncle" to his nephews Jonathan and David and his five nieces, because of course the exact opposite was true. He was hugely proud of his extended family and all their children as well. His great gift was to be able to connect with people of all ages and backgrounds no matter what

their circumstances.

To me, this is particularly amazing given his tragic start in life. I would like you to hear part of his testimony given in "Portraits for Posterity", a project conceived by Steven Spielberg for capturing Holocaust Survivors first-hand testimonies. It speaks of his early years far more eloquently than I ever could:

"I was born Salek Falinower on 29th October 1929 in Warsaw, Poland, to a loving, middle class family who owned a metal foundry. I was not quite ten when the war broke out and we were all crowded into the Warsaw Ghetto living in squalid conditions for

almost four years until the Warsaw uprising in 1943. My sister Henia had left home to join the Resistance and was never heard from again. My father was killed in a bunker in the Ghetto. After the Warsaw uprising was brutally suppressed, my mother and I were taken as prisoners to Majdanek concentration camp, where my mother was murdered in the gas chambers, whereas I was put to work as a slave labourer.

So here I was at the age of 13½, having never spent a day away from my loving parents, suddenly alone in terrible circumstances and having to fend for myself. I witnessed some horrific scenes (beatings, torture, murder by the guards was commonplace and death by starvation, exhaustion or disease was rife), but somehow I survived.

I recall my first job as a slave labourer was in an ammunition factory, boiling soap for machine lubrication. Late in 1944, I was taken to Buchenwald concentration camp to help clear the damage caused by Allied bombing in the streets in Weimar. However, the worst was yet to come.

In March 1945, I was among 1300 people loaded into open cattle trucks for a journey known as the infamous Death Train. It was a horrific journey into the unknown, lasting about two weeks. It was freezing. There was no food and little water. Very few survived. On arrival at Theresenstadt

Concentration Camp, a miracle occurred. Suddenly all the SS guards disappeared and we were liberated by the Soviet Army on 5th May 1945.

Over 90 family members in Warsaw perished. However, my elder brother Cheil (Gerald) had been sent by the family before the war to join an uncle in Brighton. When the war broke out, he immediately enlisted in the RAF and became a Lancaster Bomber pilot. I arrived in Britain with "the Boys" in August 1945. After recuperating in Windermere, I was reunited with my brother and uncle in Brighton and my life began again".

All this happened before his 16th birthday.

My father mentioned "the Boys". These were a group of boys and girls who had survived the concentration camps. The Home Office agreed to allow a maximum 1000 of these children under 16 to come to Britain. However, only 732 were found alive. Sir Martin Gilbert in his book: "The Boys - the story of 732 young concentration camp survivors", used the subtitle: "Triumph over Adversity". My father's subsequent life totally epitomised that phrase. He was always incredibly positive, happy and forward looking, never seeking to look back or to dwell on his horrific experiences.

Most of the Boys had nicknames among themselves. My father's nickname was "The Philosopher". Even as a teenager, his peers recognised that my father had a

wise head, strong intellect and a forensic curiosity about everything. In addition, he had a powerful determination to succeed, which was probably the single defining thread running throughout his life.

In business, from the humblest of beginnings, he rose to the absolute pinnacle. Even here, family ties were incredibly important to him. He set up a scrap metal business in Maidstone with his brother Gerald, who had been an RAF pilot during the war. The business succeeded in no small part due to the extra special support they received from his wonderful sister-in-law, my lovely Auntie June, who offered her engagement ring to be pawned for additional seed capital for the fledgling company.

From this small operation, my father was immensely proud to have risen to become a Director of a major British public company, quoted on the London Stock Exchange. The family connection continued: Gerald was its Chairman and their cousin, Philip Freeman, was also a Director. British Anzani was an engineering company famous, among other things, for producing the aircraft engine for Louis Bleriot's first ever flight over the English Channel. My father, together with Gerald and Philip, significantly diversified the company into one that could properly claim to be one of the earliest "environmentally aware" organisations in the UK. The company's activities included metal re-cycling, hessian bag repair and reuse, as well as paper pulping and reprocessing. In the engineering field, Anzani

produced one of the first ride-on lawnmowers - "The Lawnrider" - and its range of outboard motors included the innovative Jet, which won safety awards for being a non-propeller outboard engine and therefore suitable for use amongst swimmers and children in the sea.

In property, Anzani transformed a 90-acre disused stone quarry into the thriving Quarrywood Industrial Estate in Aylesford, Kent. The company was also one of the pioneers in reclaiming land from the sea in order to build the first commercial buildings for the Port Authority in the container port of Felixstowe.

In later years, and for many years, my father ran a successful property business in the Brighton area, with Philip, who has been a rock of support to my father throughout his life.

Despite his many business successes, though, I am sure that if you were to have asked my father, he would have said that his greatest achievement in life was his family.

He met my mother in Brighton and they married in Middle Street shul in October 1954, nearly 60 years ago. Throughout the whole of that time they were virtually inseparable. He was the yin to her yang. They formed a formidable loving partnership - I hardly remember a cross word being spoken between them in all that time. My mother was particularly heroic in the final few months of my father's life - demonstrating the meaning of true love in its purest form. Together, they created a happy, safe, Jewish home for

myself and my two brothers. They were wonderfully supportive, both of each other and of their three sons.

Having lost the vast majority of his family at an early age, my father positively kvelled in the achievements of his children and, more recently, his grandchildren. The one thing he always impressed on us all when we were away at school or university was only to talk about successes once they had actually been achieved, rather than speculate on what might be. This was shortened in family folklore to the phrase:

Don't want to hear "am going to"; want to hear "have done".

The achievements of his offspring are too many and varied to be listed in full here, but include two Cambridge University degrees, an LLB from Kings College, London followed by an MBA in Business, a Chartered Surveyor, a Forensic Accountant and a successful businessman.

His grandchildren ensured the nuchas kept coming for him:

A triple-scholar at Brighton College (academic, sport and music), a three-times-running National Champion (who is still undefeated) in powerboat rib racing, rugby honours with Harlequins youth team, achieving a merit in high-level drama exams, footballing achievements with Southampton and Bournemouth academies, brown belt in karate by the age of ten, 10 A*s at GCSE, horse-riding awards, members of touring Swing Bands, cricketing centuries and so on.

Each and every one of these successes thrilled my father - probably more so than if he had achieved them himself. He was immeasurably proud of all our achievements - as we were proud of him for setting such a wonderful example throughout his life.

My father provided evidence to Lynne Smith for her book "Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust". He survived what he called "some very terrible years" and believed that his parents and sister were watching over him and protecting him throughout his life. He believed the purpose of his survival was so that he would have the opportunity to go on and found his own personal dynasty. My father was particularly delighted to have recently received a handwritten letter from the former Chief Rabbi, Lord Sachs, describing my father as "a role model of courage".

There is no doubt in my mind that there is no-one more deserving to go to heaven than my father for having suffered, lost, survived, and then thrived and contributed immensely in his lifetime. He deserves his eternal rest and to be reunited with his parents, brother and sister in the life everlasting. I am sure I speak for everyone here when I say, Dad, you certainly "have done". Your work here in this world is complete.

I am sure my father would appreciate it if I thanked you all for coming and ended with one of his favourite expressions by wishing you all: "Zei mir gezint".

Manna Friedmann

‘A VERY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

Zdenka Husserl

I first met Manna in spring 1946 when I moved to Weir Courtney, Lingfield, Surrey, with a group of child survivors from the concentration camps. We came via Windermere, our first rehabilitation centre under the care of ‘Alice Goldberger’.

For over sixty years, I

remain in close contact with Manna, she lived in Israel for some time, came back to England.

In 2001 she moved to the U.S.A. to a beautiful retirement home. Her niece Helen lives there and can keep an eye on here.

I visit her annually, so does her niece and nephew from

Israel. Also, I ‘phone her every week. Manna, you have taught me so much in my life, which I cannot thank you enough for everyone who knew Manna is enriched by Manna. I will think of you always, and miss you.

Manna died 16th November 2013 age 98.

Manna Friedmann

Judith Sherman

Manna, I am saying these words on behalf of the Lingfield House Children. November 23, 2013

Manna, you came to England in 1939 from Cologne, Germany, not by choice - by necessity. You came at the beginning of the war. We, the children of Lingfield House, came in 1946 at the end of the war. You and we share the commonality of these involuntary journeys - the commonality of the Holocaust. Upon arrival in England we range in ages 3-16. We speak various languages- Czech, Hungarian, Italian, French, Yiddish, German - but not English. Alice, and you and the staff speak to us in German. That harsh language of terror and torture now has warm sounds of caring and support and laughter. We come from a universe of atrocity and murder into a life-affirming world. From deprivation into generosity and sharing. We are suddenly surrounded by

adults who want to provide not only necessities but gladness and pleasure. And have the energy to do so. Alice sets the tone, the goals, obtains the means and you are there by her side. You are there. Manna, every bit the Biblical Manna and more - providing sustenance for both body and soul.

We wake to the sounds of “Eine Kleine Nacht Music” - you are practising for your violin lesson. You comb our hair and add colourful ribbons. Those with Auschwitz shorn heads get bright clips and head bands. You ring the brass gong for breakfast- A meal of firsts - sliced bread, peanut butter, corn flakes, marmite, Sophie’s pastries. We learn not to hoard food. There will be food tomorrow. Breakfasts of plenty.

You teach us dances - the Hora and folk dances and approximations of the minuet. We make costumes for the dances and under your direction perform

Haydn’s Toy Symphony.

Shabbat. The tables put together, white tablecloth, flowers, candle-lighting, Shabbat prayers (taught by you) Sophie’s traditional Shabbat dinner. Shabbat - such a new experience for the youngest and good, back-home memory connections for the older. For some, a first positive experience of Jewishness, for others an affirmation of continuity.

Your brother, Salo, his wife Carol and six year old Helen, visit in summer. A vision of an intact family. None of the Lingfield twenty-four children have intact families. The Weindling family a vision of normalcy. Of possibility.

We sit in the garden on the stone fence and learn your many, many songs, English, Hebrew, German, Yiddish - Alice on the harmonica and you are always in tune. We sing along and are awed by this world where songs can be sung. When you leave for Israel our bond to Israel is

strengthened and remains strong.

And later, when I am in Israel, you help me choose the fabric for my wedding dress and together at the dressmakers we decide on the style. You treat me to my wedding dress. You also approve of my choice of husband. And during these almost sixty years you have continued to approve.

When you return to England to marry Oscar Friedman, those training analysts at the Freud institute learn about child development from an expert - by watching you in action at the clinic. Anna Freud leaves you her treasured possession - the weaving loom. Our house today is witness to the

many beautiful works you produced.

Your flat in Goldhurst Terrace, London, is a place for tea and talk and music and celebration. Your phone-line is ever open, your guest room ever occupied... by Lingfield connections and newer and older connections. When you come to America, at Helen's suggestion, her "take-no-for-an answer" suggestion our family is in luck. An hour away from Twining Village we visit back and forth. When son David visits from Milwaukee or Allen from Arkansas the question always "When do we see Manna?" And they do. As does Mirjam from Arizona and her son Joshua from California. Zdenka comes

from England and Vicky's family from Seattle. Our daughter Ora and her children Ilana, Sara, and Michael are here today and are here frequently. Their rooms are decorated with Manna made needlepoint, their hearts filled with love for Manna - a most treasured person in their life.

We, the Lingfield Children - survivors of the Holocaust, live on two tracks always, the past and the present. Lingfield House provides us with the healthy building blocks for a new life. Manna, you are there to help build this foundation upon which we continue to build. This legacy remains. This legacy moves us in the direction "where songs can be sung."

Alfred Huberman

Shirley Huberman

My thoughts on my very special husband - Alfred (Abram) Huberman

Alfred came to England with the first group of 'The Boys' in August 1945, from Theresienstadt. There was no counselling at that time but despite losing everything, suffering terrible hardship and degradation and still in his teens, Alfred emerged without bitterness but as a perfect individual - I know because I was privileged to have been his wife for more than half a century. He was good to be with, never complained and just enjoyed life.

When we first married he said it was not necessary for partners to tell each other "I love you", it should be felt - there was a lot of love in our home. The saying to know

him is to love him is certainly true.

He said he had no education - just three years. Despite this he spoke several languages. He loved sport, won a medal for table tennis, played tennis (it was good to see him beat his much bigger opponents) he enjoyed swimming, cycling and passed his driving test after just five lessons. He enjoyed walking on the seafront and adored our garden, the flowers he planted shortly before he died made a wonderful display - a truly beautiful legacy.

He just liked and understood people, was humble but wise, he taught me so much. He enjoyed his work as a tailor, mainly because he met so many different people, they appreciated his interest

and care, we often thought they came to see him to talk and on occasion for counselling. I don't think many tailors are remembered in a customer's will - he was! The bequest went to Yad Vashem and was used to help teachers educate students about the Holocaust. To him people were important and family the most important. He gently guided our children and grandchildren with love and non-judgemental support.

Alfred arrived in this country, ill and with nothing - a pair of shorts and a ladies jacket. He worked to provide for me and our family, when I said it wasn't fair that he had two jobs - tailoring during the day and a GPO telephonist at weekends and evenings (yes, his English was so good they

accepted him for training) - he told me "it doesn't matter who earns the money, so long as it comes in". He bought our house and we raised our children.

The owners of Hanningtons, Brighton's largest department store, suggested he should have a workroom in the shop - he was an asset to the store and did their alterations. When they closed, he continued working from home, many of his customers stayed with him and still I receive 'phone calls, asking if he will see them and so many wrote sending sympathy messages

and commenting on his work, care and how they enjoyed talking with him and what a lovely man he was.

Alfred had a terrific sense of humour, a lovely smile and a delightful personality, warm, caring and friendly. I feel that the help and support we received when he died, for which we are so grateful. Was a reflection of the way people felt about him.

He was concerned about anti-Semitism and racism because he knew what that could cause. He found it very hard to talk about his

experiences but if he was asked to speak he never refused, speaking at Sussex University. Ford Open Prison. Hillel House The Catholic Mothers' Union and many local schools as he said, "if I don't speak who will?" He was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum, a DVD was made of him telling his war experiences, a copy which is now housed at Sussex University and the Weiner Library.

This unassuming man was truly remarkable. As Thomas Campbell wrote - To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die.

Bob Obuchowski

Sue Bermange

Dad was born in Ozorkov, Poland on the 28 April 1928. He lived a normal, traditional Jewish family life with his parents, grandpa, two sisters and a brother. His whole life changed, aged 11½, when the Nazis entered his town. His brother ran away, but never survived and his whole family, with the exception of his sister, Gittel, were taken away and gassed to death. During the war he lived under terrible conditions in the Lodz Ghetto with Gittel, he endured transportation by cattle truck to Birkenau-Auschwitz, which is where he was separated from Gittel, never to see her again. Now he was alone, roughly aged fourteen, but he survived death marches to other concentration camps, endured the horrors of these camps and was finally liberated in Thereisenstadt, Czechoslovakia.

He made the journey to England, one of 732 kids, known as The Boys. He was on the first transport out of Prague in a Lancaster Bomber, which arrived in Carlisle. They were taken to Windermere in the Lake District. In his words, he went "from hell to paradise". Dad always said he will never forget his first days in the UK. They had beds, fresh sheets and pillows and it was very strange to sleep on bed linen. Most importantly, they were given food. When they got up on the first morning and were given white bread and marmalade, they had never seen it before. Every day since then, for almost 70 years, dad had toast and marmalade for breakfast. He cut the toast in half, ate one half and wrapped the other to save and have with a cup of tea in the evening. Some of the kids hid the food, because they didn't realise they would

be fed again.

The Northern community was very kind. These kids arrived uneducated, quite wild and were hard work. The Boys started to learn English; they rode bicycles and went to the cinema. They loved the cinema. My dad told the story of how one of the boys would pay for a ticket and then open the back door of the cinema so they could all sneak in to watch the films. We found out on our recent trip back to Windermere that, in fact, the leaders who looked after them at the hostel would ask at the cinema how many boys slipped in and would then pay for them. The Boys never knew and it was felt important to let them be mischievous! They stayed in Windermere for three months and were then dispersed. Dad chose to go to Gateshead to learn more about Judaism. He never lost his faith. He

also trained to become an upholsterer and then moved to London.

He met mum on a blind date. He says it was love at first sight, but she denies this. Mum, a Holocaust Survivor herself, remembers very little about her experiences during the war and has always appeared to be in the background. Dad devoted much of his later life to Holocaust Education, which he was very passionate about. However, mum has always organised every aspect of dad's life and in these last difficult months, she has been amazing, caring for his every need. In his words, his little treasure. Mum, thank you for always being there for dad and for us.

Together they raised a family, me and my brother, Ivor. We both went on to marry and he loved my husband, David, and Ivor's wife, Lori, as his own. He became a grandpa to Louise, Josh, Katie, Jeni and Joe and Zaida to Amelie and Freya. He was involved in our lives and loved us all so much. He and mum attended every grandchild's graduation ceremony as there was no way he was going to miss out on these events. He loved Louise's husband, Ben, and was particularly proud when Ben recited the Haftorah at dad's first Barmitzvah when he was 83. This year we had our family Seder at mum and dad and he was so happy that we were all together, including Katie's fiancé Rikki and Jeni's partner Neil.

My dad always says his achievement in life is his family and he will be remembered and sorely missed at all the forthcoming simchas.

A few years ago, dad took us back to Poland. There were nine of us on the trip. It was the most amazing experience. We visited dad's home town, Ozorkov and went to his street, although his house is no longer standing. We went to Chelmno, where his parents and sister, Malka, arrived dead in the gas lorries. We visited the Lodz Ghetto and saw the street in which he lived, and we went to Auschwitz, where he last saw his sister, Gittel. We all stood together in the gas chamber and dad quietly said "I hope my sister didn't die in here". This was the saddest part of the trip. At Auschwitz we said Kaddish for his family and, as you can imagine, it was a very emotional experience. We then left and went back to Krakow, where we were staying. We went for a pizza and did some shopping there. It was a very bizarre experience, having been to the concentration camp just a couple of hours earlier. The fact that we could be normal tourists, following this harrowing visit, shows you what an amazing man my dad was. He said to us, "The Nazis didn't win. I did, because here is my beautiful family and we are all here together".

- Dad was an extremely warm and affectionate man with a positive attitude and he always saw the best in everything and everyone.

- When Josh graduated from university, he told me "if someone had said I'd be here today watching my grandson graduate from university, I'd never have believed it".

- When Louise got married, after her Jewish

wedding ceremony he said, "I now feel like I've achieved everything in life"

- When dad was 80, his first great grandchild, Amelie was born, the fourth generation in a family that was nearly lost forever

- Dad was a perfect example of how one should live their life. I have so much respect for him, for the way he managed to pick himself up and get on with his life, despite going through the most horrific experience imaginable and losing his entire family, at such a young age

- He came to the UK as a refugee and has really made a positive contribution to society

- He was kind, generous, cared for people and didn't hate anyone.

Dad would chat to anyone and everyone in any language. He made friends wherever he went. He once had a spell in hospital a few years ago. He was in a ward with several men who looked a little rough. They all had tattoos and had probably never mixed with anyone quite like dad before. The next time we visited, one of them called over to dad and said "Bob, shall we play another game of Kalooki when visiting is over?"

He also had a fixation with food. Whenever he went anywhere with mum, he would tell us exactly what he had eaten and give us a rundown of the entire menu. Every time someone came to visit him during his illness, he would try and get mum to feed them. When we said goodbye at the end of our visits, he would ask

if we were taking any food home.

Dad loved going to Shul and he was so highly thought of by the congregation. We would like to thank you all for your love and support. He also loved the Turkish baths and always had a good schmeiss and a game of cards. He stopped going to the baths quite a while ago and he really missed his weekly visit and all his friends. David took him for the first time a few months ago and dad was so touched that everyone made such a fuss of him.

I mentioned The Boys.

They have been friends since arriving in the UK and are rather like a family. They are together in times of joy and sorrow and have formed an independent committee, the '45 Aid Society, a charitable organisation, named after the year they first came to Britain. Amongst other activities, they raise funds, enabling them to give back to society. We are so sad that dad didn't make it to the 70th Anniversary of Liberation Reunion. One of The Boys, Ziggy Shipper, said to me "If, at the age of 15, when we were in the camps, someone would have given us a

contract to 85 years, we would have grabbed it". Dad made it to 86.

I have one more thing to say. I worked with dad in recent years introducing him at schools and Holocaust Memorial Day events with a visual presentation, helping him in telling his story. We called ourselves a double act and this is the last time he will be here with me physically, but he will always be in my heart. Dad, I promise you I will continue with Holocaust Education and I will always speak on your behalf as a witness for the living and the dead.

A tribute to Reb Yisroel Rudzinski

Written by a grandson

Reb Yisroel Rudzinski o.b.m. was born in 1927, in the town of Piotrkow, Poland. In his youth Yisroel was greatly cherished by his parents, Reb Chaim and Chana Rochel Hy"d. He clearly recalled learning in the local cheder and going to his grandfather, Reb Moshe Yidel for Seder night. These idyllic years were shattered forever by the terrors that engulfed them during the Second World War. Yisroel celebrated his Bar Mitzvah amidst all the troubles and suffering by putting on tefillin in the ghetto that was established in his town. Tragically, his father was cruelly beaten when he was trying to save sifrei kodesh (holy books) from desecration, and died soon afterwards. The orphaned boy managed to find employment in a nearby glass factory. Later, he was taken away to be used for forced labour in an ammunition factory.

Yisroel suffered indescribable torments during the ensuing years, and was imprisoned in various concentration camps, including the infamous Buchenwald. At one point in 1943, he suffered from typhus and miraculously escaped being killed when he was warned about his impending doom, by a Jewish kapo. In his later years, Reb Yisroel felt that it was his responsibility to speak about his wartime experiences. He was often invited to speak in schools in Stamford Hill and Golders Green, and always amazed his listeners with a display of indomitable faith and trust in the Hand of Hashem that guided and looked after him. He displayed an invincible strength of faith in Divine Providence that accompanied him through the whole of his life. He was inspired with the will to survive through the words of the holy Rabbi of Radoshitz who was

incarcerated with him.

At the end of the war, Yisroel was liberated from the Theresienstadt camp, and was part of a group of a few hundred children who were taken from Prague to England. The group remained in Windermere, in the Lake District, for some time. The group was a diverse group of survivors from various countries who were united in their desire to recover from the ravages of the war. Yisroel was then sent to a hostel in Gateshead, where he was assured of being able to achieve his desire to keep Torah. There, the saintly Rabbi Moshe Schwab o.b.m., took Yisroel under his wing, and cared for him, as well as the other survivors, like his own children.

With great foresight, Rabbi Schwab also helped them learn a trade in order to support themselves. The 20-year old Yisroel was taught

tailoring, that would stand him in good stead through his life. From Gateshead Yisroel travelled to London where he met his future wife. She was born into the Sonnenschein family in Vienna, and was brought to England before the war by Rabbi Doctor Solomon Schonfeld. Yisroel was 22 years when he married his devoted wife Thea. They lived in a small flat in Evering Road, and he worked at first in employment in the West End of London as a tailor, and later as an independent tailor working from his own home.

All his customers were treated with the greatest respect. He formed a personal friendship with everyone who had come to have a suit made to measure. They were not considered in his eyes as mere clients - he always asked how they and their families were keeping. He had a natural positive demeanour and was always ready to do a kind deed for anyone. His car was always used for mitzvahs. His non-Jewish acquaintances were also saddened to hear that he passed away, as they, too valued his friendship.

As part of his concern for

others, Reb Yisroel kept in contact with the other BOYS that stayed together with him in Windermere after the war. Together they formed the '45 Aid Society. They would have a reunion once a year to reminisce and to strengthen each other. Reb Yisroel was part of the committee who would have a meeting once a month. At one meeting when they were discussing what to do for the 50th anniversary since the liberation, Yisroel suggested that all the "boys" join together and have a sefer torah written in memory of their parents.

Together Yisroel and his devoted wife, Thea, worked tirelessly on this project. Letters were written and mailed to all the "boys" over the world. To their excitement the money came flowing in. Reb Yisroel and Thea went to Israel to have a look at some sifrei torah. They settled on one Sefer Torah, and to the excitement of all, it was later discovered that this sefer torah had actually been written by a son of one of the "boys". (Mr Kuszmiersky)

The procession was planned and the excitement was felt in the air. Finally the big day arrived. The sefer

torah was taken to the Borehamwood and Elstree Synagogue accompanied by singing and dancing. For many of the "boys" this was the happiest day in their lives since the liberation. A beautiful plaque was made engraved with all the names in whose memory the sefer torah was written. Since many of the "boys" unfortunately have no graves to visit (they do not know where their parents are buried), they gather at this plaque once a year where they daven mincha and recite Kaddish.

Yisroel had the opportunity to meet Her Majesty The Queen, where he personally expressed his gratitude to her for allowing the European survivors entry to the country.

Yisroel's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren were his pride and joy. He loved each and every one of them dearly and they, too, adored him in return.

Yisroel leaves behind his loyal wife who was his faithful support in all his endeavours, together with his son, daughter, daughters - in-law, grandchildren and great grandchildren who are all following in his wonderful legacy of honesty, kindness and faith in Hashem.

Michael Bandel – Eulogy

Martin Bandel

Michael was a special, unique and unconventional person and he would want us to do nothing but celebrate his life. After all, he did that every day - and never let us forget it.

Michael was born in 1928 in Yasina, a small Shtetl in Carpathia, Czechoslovakia,

on the Polish border. He compared it with the town of Anatevka from Fiddler On The Roof and, indeed, when I went back with him in 1994 it still looked the same. Dad used to quote the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn, one of The Boys who came from that region, who often said "when G-d

gave out poverty he gave 9/10 to Carpathia".

Dad was the second of four children, Vishnitzer Chasids, of which he was always very proud. He was brought up in a strictly orthodox household with Yiddish as his mother tongue and which he always spoke far better than English

even though he had convinced himself, but no one else, that he had no accent at all! He attended Cheder at three, only learning Czech at seven, when he had to go to the local school - but still do half a day at Yeshiva right up until 1944 when the family were deported to the camps. He was liberated by the Americans in May 1945 and considered himself lucky that he was only in the camps for a year when some of his friends had suffered many more. From what was once a large family he was left with very few but was fortunate enough to meet up with his mother and eldest sister in Prague a few weeks after the war. He was always perplexed, to say the least, about many events surrounding the Holocaust and would invariably pose unanswerable questions to numerous Rabbis.

He arrived in England in 1946, one of the 732 child survivors that were brought here by the Central British Fund. Those 732 children, whether male or female, became known as "The Boys", the £45 Aid Society, and they became a very large family indeed from then on up until today. They were almost more important to him than anything else. He was on the first committee and soon after became Treasurer, a post he held for many years. More latterly he became the Welfare Officer and there were many times that we would visit him and Mum where he spent more time on the phone to a list of unwell members than he spent with us. Paradoxically, when he himself became unwell we were under strict instructions to tell no one as he couldn't bear the fuss.

He always impressed on

us the importance of remembering who you are and where you've come from. He conducted himself both morally and ethically to an exceptionally high standard and expected us all to follow suit. He learnt from his parents, amongst many things, the mitzvah of giving - without seeking acknowledgement or praise.

His parents had a small grocery/general store and although they, themselves, had very little his father would always provide food for Shabbat to those families who couldn't afford it. He was taught to always think of others before himself which he did all his life. He became a Samaritan volunteer which he did for 15 years and I remember his Samaritan name very well - Michael 248 - as the Samaritans never use surnames. He volunteered at Ravenswood helping with disturbed children. He also volunteered at the Jewish Care stroke club for 18 years.

He delivered meals on wheels with his friend Lolek. They would joke that they were the perfect team. Lolek could drive but barely walk whereas Michael could walk but didn't drive.

Before embarking on his "second career" as a volunteer, he was a furrier where he would pride himself on his handiwork, matching up the backs or fronts of musquash so that you could never tell where the seams were. His trade slowly disintegrated due - he would say - to Linda McCartney's ceaseless campaign against wearing fur. She was definitely not his favourite person.

As well as Michael having four different names - Mikulas - the Czech name for Nicholas - Misha, Yechiel

Mechael Tzvi and Michael, he also managed to acquire five nationalities - Czech, Hungarian, Russian, Ukrainian and British - having only officially moved countries once! He also had three different birth years. First, his "real" year 1928, secondly the year he gave when he was taken to the camps, 1926, to make himself two years older to avoid being sent straight to the gas chambers and thirdly after the war he gave his birth year as 1929 to make himself younger so as to be eligible to come to the UK with the Central British Fund. This never really caused a major issue until it was time to draw his pension!

Having survived, he would always say that every day was his birthday, driving us crazy by never wanting to plan anything and living in the moment with his stock response being "it's a long time till tomorrow". Not only would he never celebrate his birthday - anyone else's, more particularly ours, were purely incidental - I don't think that he even remembered the dates!

Gaynor & I have never met someone with such humility as Dad yet he had a great influence on so many people.

He was the least materialistic person we've ever met. Possessions meant nothing to him so long as he had his health. Whenever Gaynor or I showed him something that we'd bought he would invariably say "it's ok" in a fairly dismissive way, making it clear that he wasn't particularly impressed or interested.

He and Mum met in 1956 when he was drinking coffee in a bar in Baker Street and Mum was downstairs dancing. He hated dancing

and she didn't do coffee so they got married in 1958. They say opposites attract and they were certainly proof of that!

To him a good name was supreme, and he reinforced this to us, and his grandchildren repeatedly. His face would always light up when he saw Lauren Alana Sabrina and Marc and he was so engaged with everything that they were doing. He would always be keen to talk to Lauren about the surgery that she witnessed as part of her training, in minute detail, and when I next saw him he would tell me about this and always follow by saying "I don't know how she can do it, I couldn't - I take my hat off to her"! He was so proud that Alana was training to become a teacher. Uniquely she was also able to find out from Grandpa what was actually happening in what has been described as

our highly secretive family. Sabrina would always impress him with her sense of determination to succeed and get to where she wants which he felt she had inherited from him. Dad always had strong political views and Marc, whose ambition is to study politics at uni next year, would enjoy endless lengthy conversations or perhaps heated discussions with him on a whole range of historical and political topics.

Dad and many of his friends loved playing poker and, I am told, Dad was difficult to beat. There would be many evenings where a group of friends would meet in each other's houses for the men to play poker and where the women would while away the time playing kalooki until well into the early hours when the women would get thoroughly fed up and elect for Mum to go tell the guys

they had to pack up or else! When he retired he and Mum learnt to play Bridge which he loved.

Dad and his generation of survivors knew more than any other in history the tragedies that befell the Jewish people. They believed things would have been quite different if we'd have had a home land at the time. Their generation was so key in fighting for the creation of Eretz Yisrael - and sacrificing so much to establish it with strong foundations for future generations to build upon. All the survivors are staunch supporters of Israel and whilst they may debate long and hard many of its rights and wrongs were always steadfast and united to the outside world. This is their greatest gift and our greatest legacy. They, literally, turned a hope into a reality. Am Yisrael Chai.

Mayer Cornell

Marilyn Cornell

Mayer Cornell, Majer Kochen who passed away unexpectedly on January 8th 2015 was a wonderful, much loved husband, father and grandfather. He was born in Kielce, Poland, on 10th March 1927 into a warm, close knit Chasidic family.

His early childhood was very happy as the middle child of Yehaskiel and Chaya Rifkah. He had an older sister Rosa and a younger brother Yisroel Bear. They were far from rich but managed, through the cabinet making business his father owned. Mayer's maternal grandfather was revered by all as the

patriarch of the family. His wife died in childbirth, as well as his adored aunt Tauba (his mother's sister) Mayer also had seven young aunts and uncles from his grandfather's second marriage who were as close to him as siblings. Additionally there was also a healthy extended family. It typified many families in pre-war Poland. Sadly, with the exception of Mayer, none of them survived.

Aged just eleven, Mayer's life was turned upside down by the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939. Life as he had known it ceased to exist. He and his brother would do what they could to get

extra rations for the family either by volunteering for additional work shifts or by sneaking out of the ghetto, in the dead of the night, on pain of death, to barter for food.

The odds were stacked against the family and when in 1942 the Kielce ghetto was liquidated, Mayer found himself utterly alone, aged fifteen. He only avoided his family's fate because he was outside the ghetto laying cables for the German railway, as a slave labourer. After that followed a familiar tale of horror. Mayer developed a canny ability to read a situation quickly and accurately and that secured his survival.

Despite the horror, degradation and dehumanisation, Mayer never lost his humanity. At considerable risk to himself he would intercede on behalf of other prisoners and do what he could to keep them safe. This is beautifully illustrated by a story told to the family by his dear friend and fellow 'boy' Aran (Zylberszac). He credited Mayer with saving his life during the 'Death March' to Theresienstadt, in 1945. Though both were weak and ill, Aron was more severely afflicted. Mayer carried him when necessary because he knew that had Aron faltered he would have been shot. Mayer made light of this, saying anyone would have done what he had done. That was the kind of man he was.

He hated to dwell on the horrors that ended with his liberation from Theresienstadt on the 8th May 1945. His life recommenced on August 15th 1945 when, together with other members of The Boys, he boarded a Lancaster bomber from an airfield in Prague and flew to Crosby in the Lake District. Mayer chose to travel to England for one reason; as an ardent and lifelong Zionist, Britain held the mandate for Palestine. His intended destination on the card he carried with him from Prague was 'Palestina'.

Once in Britain, first in Windermere and then Cardross in Scotland, life improved greatly. The warmth and generosity of those caring for Mayer and the other young men, together with good food and a secure environment worked miracles. Whilst recuperating from chronic illness, Mayer learnt English and eagerly resumed

the education he had been denied during the war years.

Chronic TB dogged him constantly. In Glasgow Mayer started an engineering apprenticeship but was forced to leave because of a flare-up. It also prevented him from realising his dream of making aliya and fighting alongside others of The Boys in the 1948 War of Independence.

So it was, that four years after liberation, Mayer found himself still troubled by active TB and quarantined in Quare Mead near Saffron Walden, with ten or eleven other boys similarly afflicted. It was a particularly challenging time for him; Mayer was exceedingly frustrated by the limitation his health was placing on his ability to secure a future.

On one very ordinary day in October 1949, life began to look up for Mayer. He was asked to meet a young woman, Tauba Tenenbaum, from the London train who was going to join 'the boys' in the hostel. It was virtually love at first sight. They soon became an item and subsequently a couple. Going against the advice of the medical staff, they married on March 15, 1953. Mayer endured several more ups and downs in his attempts to find a suitable career path. With a return to better health and a new wife, Mayer yearned only for a degree of normality. To this end he changed the spelling of Majer to Mayer and adopted the more English sounding 'Cornell' as a surname. He proceeded to seek a job rather than a career. Mayer and Tauba retained active links with 'The Boys' throughout their marriage. Mayer was elected Secretary of

the '45 Aid Society when a committee was first formed and among other things was responsible for organising the reunions whilst in post.

They set up home in London, establishing a warm, loving unit in Kenton. Mayer worked and Tauba (Tauby) was a traditional stay-at-home mum. They were totally devoted to each other and to their children, Marilyn born in 1955 and Cherry in 1959. Mayer was exceedingly proud that both his girls graduated from university and have pursued their careers whilst raising families of their own. Their happiness and pride swelled with the arrival of each of their seven adored grandchildren.

Mayer's character was forged in the flames of the Holocaust and it made him the man he was, utterly devoted to his family and to the people who were important to him, as well as giving him a lifelong passion for justice and what is right. He was a fiercely proud, independent yet gentle man. He had charm and tremendous strength of character. To actively re-establish a strong, solid vibrant family after it was so very nearly extinguished, was Mayer's greatest achievement; it is his legacy.

Mayer is survived by his beloved Tauby, his soulmate of sixty-one years; daughters Marilyn and Cherry; sons-in-law Martin and Sheldon and his precious grandchildren: Paul, Gilad, Victoria and her husband Dov (to whom he proudly gave Birchat Cohanin at their wedding) Liat, Talia, Shani and Tanya. He is our hero and an inspiration to us all.

SECTION VII NEWS FROM MANCHESTER

26TH SEPT 2013 - Mazeltov to Tania and Simon Nelson on their daughter Dalia's marriage to Alan. A wonderful wedding at Mere Spa and Golf Club and, fortunately, beautiful weather.

SEPT 2013 - Mazeltov to Estelle and Clive Fisher (the late Sam Gardner's daughter) on Rochelle being appointed Consultant Paediatrician at Leeds Infirmary.

SEPT 2013 - News has been passed to me that there has been a Barmitzvah to Darren Walshaw's son - grandson of the late Sam and Elaine Walshaw. Mazeltov to all the family.

OCT 2013 - Sadly our member, Dorka Samson, died and we send Long Life to her daughter Helen and Son Harvey and their respective families.

NOV 6TH 2013 - I went to the AJR 75th Anniversary of Kristallnacht at the Imperial War Museum North. Professor David Cesarani OBE was the guest speaker and he held the audience spellbound about events leading up to this terrible event. Chazan Michael Isdale, as usual, rendered the Memorial Prayer and Reverend Gabriel Brodie said Kaddish, joined in by the congregation. It is a shame that only a few of our members attended.

JAN 3RD 2014 - We heard the sad news that Nan Ferster, the wife of Chaim, had died and she was buried that day in sufficient time for the mourners to return to their homes in South Manchester before Shabbos. As well as Chaim, she left three sons and the magnitude of the crowd who attended the funeral was a fitting tribute to her.

JAN 11TH 2014 - Israel (Ivor) Weissbaum was found dead at home and after I had a very frustrating time with the Coroner and eventually a scan, the Coroner gave the cause of death as heart failure and we were able to carry out the burial on the 15th Jan 2014. He had no family and I had been looking after his affairs for many years. He had appointed my boss (a solicitor) and I to be the executors.

27TH Jan 2014 - Bury Council arrange a Holocaust Memorial Service each year and this year the presentation was excellent. The performance by students of various schools (both Jewish and non-Jewish) was excellent and, as usual, Rabbi Guttentag sang the Memorial Prayer. Representatives of the

Christian, Muslim and Reform faiths were present and each lit a Memorial Candle, as well as Mayer Hersh and the Mayor of Bury.

27TH APRIL 2014 - Yom Hashoah 2014 - The presentation was exceptionally good and so very well attended by members of every religion. A lot of hard work was put into the presentation which this year was "Children of the Holocaust". There were stories of survivors who rebuilt their lives in Manchester and whose experiences as children were told by their children, the 2nd generation.

SEPT 2014 - The annual Memorial Service at Agecroft Cemetery was well attended although Reverend Brodie and Dayen Berger did not turn up. It transpired that Reverend Brodie and his son "forgot" the date and Dayen Berger had moved and my letter evidently did not reach him. Fortunately, Rabbi Saunders was present and he very ably took over and was later assisted by Rabbi Groundland. Chaim Ferster's Eulogy was responded to by his grandson.

The Memorial stone and surrounds have been very well cleaned and all the pebbles renewed by the stonemasons - quite an expensive item but well worth it.

DEC 2ND 2014 - Some of our members were invited by the Home Office to the Lowry Centre and some the previous day to Manchester Town Hall where there were representatives of all religions to discuss keeping the Holocaust alive. Lord Ahmad was one of the speakers who was very involved in the project, as also was Miss Cohen, a 17 year old student who gave a very good speech. Drinks and food were provided for all participants. It was good to see Ben Helfgott from London and members of AJR from south Manchester. It is understood that at least 30 different countries were represented at this gathering.

MARCH 8TH 2015 - The unveiling of a memorial stone for the late Israel (Ivor) Weissbaum took place, followed by a Memorial plaque at the Cheetham Hebrew Congregation and a La' Chaim. Unfortunately there were only a few of our members present but 2nd Generations made sure that we had a Minion.

Unfortunately, as I was not well, I was not able to go to the yearly Memorial Service arranged by the Local Authority but I understand it was well attended and presented.

SECTION VIII THE QUILT

The idea of creating a Memory Quilt to commemorate The Boys, was first considered at a Second Generation meeting in 2013 after I was inspired by a quilt I'd seen made by the talented Sheree Charalampous. Today the Memory Quilt is complete. It has proven to be a massive project - both rewarding and emotionally exhausting at the same time. The Memory Quilt contains the names of all 732 members of The Boys and more than 150 quilt squares representing individual Survivors. It will be unveiled at the 45 Aid Society Annual Reunion in May 2015.

Julia Burton explains how the amazing Memory Quilt has been a project which has surpassed all expectations – and particularly her own.

It has been a real privilege for me to work on the Memory Quilt. Of the many aspects of this enormous project, probably the most memorable and significant for me has been talking to survivors and their families and hearing their stories first hand and their views on life, past and present. The uplifting, positive stories I have heard show how the survivors have celebrated life, creating families, friendships, careers and communities whilst never forgetting those who were lost.

I also spoke to many Second Generation who explained how producing their quilt square had been an emotional journey for them. For some, it was an opportunity to tell their own children stories about their parents that they had not told before. For others it made them think about their backgrounds and what their parents had been through and, I believe, has been a cathartic process. Some told me how every stitch was sewn with love, others told me about their sleepless nights, about poring over old photographs and piecing stories together. And so their quilt squares were born.

Alongside the quilt came the Memory Quilt book with photographs and stories about every square. Collecting all the stories to go with the squares took a while, but seeing them all together is quite amazing.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible help from numerous creative volunteers and the Second Generation team. Today the Second Generation have created a tangible testimony to their remarkable parents, The Boys. The Memory quilt is a celebration of life and a wonderful tribute to all of us. I am so pleased that so many people came forward and submitted their squares for the quilt and I am excited to say that the quilt and its stories will be shared with many others as it starts its journey to museums first around the UK and then hopefully beyond.

To know more about the quilt please see the Memory Quilt book and
www.2ndgeneration.org.uk

Memories of the volunteers for The Quilt

Three years ago, as a volunteer for Jewish Care, I created a collaborative memory quilt project for the Sam Beckman day centre that celebrated the lives of people living with dementia and resulted in a lasting legacy for the centre.

The project required patience, immeasurable powers of persuasion and the creative skills to sew together 42 squares made of 42 different fabrics that fought against each other under the sewing machine needle. After completion, I sighed with pride and relief and had no intention of repeating the project. THEN, I received a phone call from Julia.

Having seen the memory quilt at a presentation I made, she contacted me and asked if I would consider helping her create a similar project for the 45 Aid Society.

Without hesitation, I jumped at the chance and for the past many months I have been a proud part of the team that have created the four quilts.

I am deeply honoured to be involved in this amazing project celebrating “The Boys” who through unthinkable adversity, went on to build wonderful, inspirational, productive lives.

I have no doubt that these quilts and the stories behind each square will touch the hearts of whoever sees them.

Sheree Charalampous.

It has been my privilege to be involved in the Memory Quilt project and to meet some of the people whose stories have been summarised in these 28cm squares.

Several years back I worked at the Holocaust centre and felt how special it was to work with the survivors. I valued my relationships and friendships and admired their strength of character, the great personalities and their amazing history.

The experience of designing, capturing and sewing a life story lived over several decades has been extremely challenging. I realised how hard and emotional it has been for people to work on, both survivors and subsequent generations have invested so much time and thought to this challenge. So many of the Boys made a success of their lives, learning new skills, making a livelihood and building family life. The strong message was that from one survivor whole new generations emerged, this being the ultimate victory - triumph over adversity.

I have loved working on the quilt both in paint and stitch and hope the end result will be source of inspiration to many future generations to come.

Joan Noble (quilt volunteer).

.....

My experience as a volunteer for The Memory Quilt: The memory quilt project was created to mark the 70th anniversary since the Liberation. As a second generation of refugee parents from Hungary and Germany I felt moved to be part of this historical project.

Every Tuesday I would pop into the Shalvata Centre in Hendon and meet with other volunteers involved in some way in the making of the Memory Quilt. It was so interesting to also meet relations and members of the 45 group. Their creativity in ideas for making up the 'memory square' was inspiring. Some of the people needed quite a lot of help whilst others were confident about what they were doing. It didn't matter at all. Help was always at hand led by the talented and inspirational leadership of Julia Burton. The comradery and warmth of those weekly workshops spurred me on.

I never realised that quite so much time would be taken into researching the correct historical maps for Hungary, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Romania. I learnt a lot about how the borders have changed since 1937. It was important to be accurate so that the survivor's place of birth were placed in the correct country.

I enjoyed making the maps look old and as far as possible, in keeping with the period. I was given lists of the people who lived in each country and the place they came from. Writing the names around the country I felt a connection... what was that person like, their family, their journey...

The other part of helping was embroidering some of the names of the child camp survivors who were brought to England in 1945. There was quite a bit of experimentation to explore the size of letters, type of stitch and colour until a good sample was produced.

I can't wait to see the finished quilt hanging. It will be an emotional experience for everyone and most especially the members of the 45 group and their families.

As a volunteer who has played a very small part in helping this project I am reminded of the text we chant in the AMIDAH – L'Dor Vador.... From generation to generation...

Barbara Burman (quilt volunteer)

Last December I received an email asking for volunteers with sewing skills to help construct a memory quilt for holocaust survivors. I have been sewing since my teenage years, encouraged and enabled by a local fabric shop owner, a Jewish woman from Germany and survivor of Auschwitz. It took me just a minute to decide that I wanted to help with this project. It was, as they say, 'no brainer'.

I grew up in America so this may partly explain why I had never heard of the Boys. My husband on the other hand is originally from Manchester but he too had never been aware of this particular group of survivors until I began to litter the house with fabric, thread and sewing tools.

One day Julia Burton received a partially completed quilt square from America and by chance asked me to add the names of Berek and Bluma Wurzel, the boy and girl in the photograph stitched to the square. I immediately recognized the name Wurzel as the surname of a family who had been dear friends with my husband's family. My husband then showed me photographs of the man he called "Uncle Berek" taken years ago.

Bluma meanwhile had emigrated to America. I will never forget the torrential rain that came down on my wedding day nearly 30 years ago. It put us all off course. The ceremony was delayed because my father had forgotten to collect a guest of the groom from her hotel and bring her to the wedding venue. My brother was elected to fetch her. Fearing he would miss the ceremony he very reluctantly complied. That guest, the last to sign my wedding book, was none other than Bluma, the young girl depicted in the square I was asked to complete.

I have since read an article where Berek was mentioned. The article described how young people were taken to Windermere and given cupboards to store their possessions yet they had no possessions other than the clothes they wore. Berek, Bluma and others may have accepted support initially but they gave back so much more to their family, friends and community throughout their lives. It's been an honour for me to honour them.

Sara Taylor (quilt volunteer)

.....

I became involved in the creation of the Holocaust Survivors Memory Quilt by sheer chance and it turned out to be one of the most meaningful, emotional and rewarding experiences of my life. It has been a great honour to be associated with the making of the Quilt.

Initially I was asked to work with Zdenka Husserl who was born in Czechoslovakia. She was an only child who lost all her family during the war and came, alone in the world, to this country aged only 6. Together, we created a square full of symbolism incorporating a photo of herself with her mother which took her over 50 years to find. Zdenka, who in her working life had been a couture seamstress, did much of the work on the square herself and seemed delighted with the finished product.

I thought my work was done but Julia had other ideas and I worked on four more squares. I also embroidered many names of survivors to go round the edge of the quilt and strangely it was these which had the greatest impact on me. When our children are born we give so much thought to the names we give them. So much love goes into the choice of these names and we look forward to a lifetime of joy watching these beloved children grow and mature and, in turn, give carefully chosen names to their children. With each name I embroidered I thought of the parents who did not survive to see these children thrive, and the children who were so cruelly deprived of their parents' love and nurturing.

These names are not just individual names. Each has a story which should never have been and by embroidering every name on the Quilt we are paying homage to these parents, grandparents and all their families. They should never be forgotten.

Michal Mankin

Abisch Henry
Adler David
Adler Idel
Aron Ralph
Balsam Harry
Banach Jack
Bandel Michael
Baker Sid (Canada)
Bart Yankel
Baum Issac
Beale Mendel
Beil Adek
Becher Roman
Belmont John
Benedict Salek
Besserman Moshe
Binki Sam
Blobstein Lou
Bomsztyk Mayer
Borgenicht David
Brafman Harry
Brandstein Peter
Bresskin Nat
Broch Avraham
Brunstein Sztasiek
Buki Martin (Moniek)
Bulka Jack
Burgerman Esther
Burgerman Monty
Carver Joe
Clara Miss (Madricha)
Cliffe Max

Cohen Eli
Condon Eva
Cooper Sam
Cornell Meyer
Denderowicz David
Dessau Kopel
Deutsch Eugene
Deutsch Ignatz
Deutsch Zolly
Diamond Moishe
Diamond Sam
Dichter Abe
Dreihorn Bernard
Dzialowski Fievel
Elkeinbaum Abe
Ellen Henry (Ellenbaum)
Elliott Herbert
Engel Hersh
Erreich Sol
Farkas Frank
Farkas Sidney
Falkner Daniel
Falinower Salek
Faull Stanley
Fein Jack (Australia)
Finkelstein Issy
Fisch Jurek
Fixler Adolf
Flash Michael
Frankel Morris
Freikorn Menachem
Frenkel Esther

Forever in our thoughts

Fridel Edzia nee (Warszawska)
Frei Moshe
Friedman Gershon
Friedman Muriel
Friedman Norman
Fischler Joseph
Frischman Leo
Fox Harry
Fox Johnny (USA)
Fruhman Mark
Frydman Doris
Frydman Edith
Fryenberger Leo
Galka
Geddy Leo
Geller Chaim
Gerry E.
Gilbert Simon
Glickson Jack
Glazier Henry
Goldfinger Mark
Golan Chaim (Heini)
Goldberg Moniek
Golding M. - Manchester
Goldman Freddy
Goldman Johnny
Goldman Rushka
Goodman Leah
Gottlieb Guta
Graham Eva
Graham Monty
Green Henry
Gross Sam

Grossman Leon
Gryn Hugo Rabbi
Guterman Majer
Halter, Roman
Herman Abe
Herman David
Hershelowich Moishe
Herszberg Jerzy
Heymann Freddy
Holt Freddy
Hilton Jack
Himmel Jack
Himmelfarb Willy (USA)
Hirschberg Munek
Honey Michael
Huberman Alf
Huberman Nadia
Iglieman Charlie
Jackson Izak
Jakob I.
Jayson Ariata
Jonisz David
Kadasiewicz Alek
Kahan Jack
Kaminska Motel
Kampel Fiszel
Katz Bernard
Kaufman Jadzia (Balzam)
Kaye Henry
Kaye Henry (USA)
Kaye Sala
Kendall Kopel
Kirsberg Alf

Forever in our thoughts

Klotz Marcus
Klappholtz Kurt
Klyn Shimon
Kohn Chaim
Korman S.
Krowicky Jack
Kurtz Jaszek
Kuszer Benim
Kusmierski Moshe
Kutner David
Kutner Itzchak
Lampert Martin
Lazar Helen
Lebovic Shoshana
Lee Micheal
Lenczner David
Levenstein Mordechai (Israel)
Levine Guta nee Davidowicz
Lewkowicz Betty
Lewkowicz Charlie
Lieberman Simcha
Light Issy
Lipman Jack
Lister Oscar
Lister Rene
Mahrer Julie
Malenicki Moishe
Manders Leon
Manski Henry
Margulies Clara
Margulies Menek
Meier Bruno
Mendelson Yitzchak

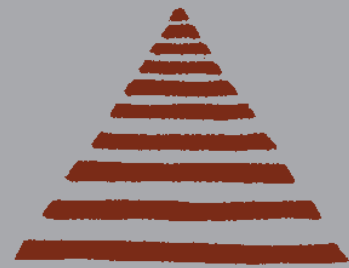
Montarz Jack
Moskowitz Joe
Moss Johnny
Muench Danny
Neuman Hans
Newton Benny
Obouhoski Bob
Obuchowski Bob (Berek)
Oppenheimer Paul
Orenstein Salek
Orzech Charlie
Orzech Rubin
Pantoffelmacher Shloimo
Parker Jerry
Perl Alec
Pivnik Nat
Platt Masza nee Dobrowolska
Pollack Baruch
Pomeranc Yitzchak (Pom)
Posnanski Jerzyk
Poznanski Arthur
Putermilch Mietek
Radzinski Kopel
Rand M.
Rapp Robert
Riseman Yitchok
Robeson Leo
Rosenblatt Selig (Jimmy)
Rosenblum Chaskel
Rosenberg Leon
Rosenberg Willie
Rosenblatt Herman
Rosenblatt Sam

Forever in our thoughts

Ross Mike (Moneik Rotenstajn)
Rozenblatt I.
Rubinstein Joe
Rudzinski Yisroel
Salamon Abe
Salt Charles
Satz Yaakov
Schwartzberg Zenek
Schwimmer Jack
Seligfeld Moniek
Shane Chaim (Charlie)
Shapiro Moniek
Sheinberger Eliash
Shepson Yankel
Shiffron Israel
Simmons Eddie
Singer Mark
Singer Hela
Sindler
Singer Lothar
Slomovic Chaskiel
Smith Edyta
Sobov Moriz (USA)
Sommer David
Spiegel G. (USA)
Spiegel Eugene (USA)
Stein Emil
Stein Icky
Stobiecki I.
Stone Joe
Swimer Sam
Sunog Ernest
Szternfeld Mietek

Szenkier. R.
Targo Lola nee Goldherst
Tabacznik Motel
Tenenbaum Sam
Tepper Lipa
Turek David
Urbas Bluma
Van der Velde Joe
Wajchender Harry
Wald Nat
Walshaw Sam
Walters Alec
Wegier Jerry
Weinberger Sam
Weinstock Ella
Weinstock Romek
Weissbaum Ivor
Wheeler Alan
Wiernik Danny
Wilder Krulik
Wino Sheila
Winogrodzki Ray
Wolreich Alfie
Wurtziel Berel
Wurzel Carol
Zabialek Rene
Zwirek Ida
Zylbergerg Peretz
Zylberger Julius
Zylberszac Aron
Zeiring Hermann
Zwirek Mick

Forever in our thoughts



**S E C O N D
G E N E R A T I O N**