

**Londýnský kroužek Ostravák** □  
**Der Londoner-Ostrauerkreis**  
**Our Ostrava Group**

33/35 Uxbridge Road  
Kingston upon  
Thames  
Surrey, KT1 2LL

020 8546 9370

[www.  
Kingston-synagogue.org.uk](http://www.Kingston-synagogue.org.uk)

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## Introduction

It is not so long since we produced Newsletter #5 but a lot has happened since May. One of the exciting things is that we have discovered (or rather you have introduced) new Ostravaks into our Circle. Please do continue to tell us about any other Ostravaks or their families that you know – the more the merrier!

## Birthday Party

Josef (Pepek) Salomonovic celebrated his 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday in July and Judith and I (David Lawson) had the pleasure and honour of joining the family, including Lilly, Pepek and Lisi's grand-daughter:



It is always a delight to celebrate with Ostravaks, rather than dwelling always on the past and the losses.

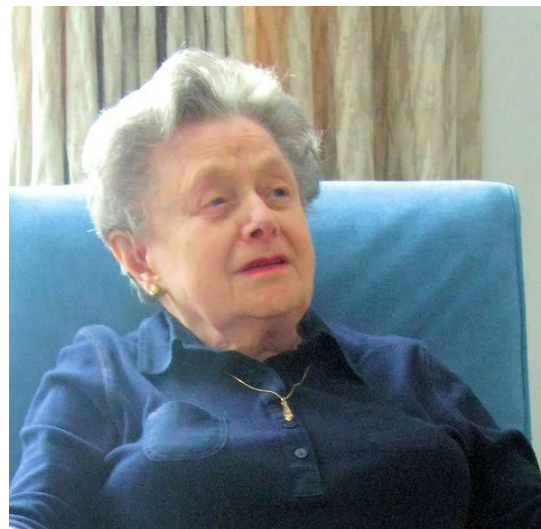
## From Kew Gardens to Moravská Ostrava, by way of East Finchley.

A few weeks ago, Hazel Beiny (AJR Southern Region Outreach Co-ordinator) took a party of AJR members to Kew Gardens. The Garden is a delightful place and the group had a very enjoyable, and quite strenuous, time walking round to see some stunning trees, shrubs and flowers while hearing about the history of Kew and its present day scientific research.

As well as providing a fund of interesting horticultural facts, the guide, Judith Lawson, told Hazel about our synagogue's interest and involvement with Czech refugees. Hazel thought that there were some members of AJR who might originate from or be interested in Ostrava, and she suggested that I contact her. And that is how Heinz Vogel and I came to meet Anna Grant in her beautiful flat in East Finchley, to talk about her family and early memories of Ostrava.



**Anna with Hazel, looking at Anna's Family Tree**



**Anna Grant, née Fink**

Anna was born in 1921 in Moravská Ostrava. Her parents were Salomon Fink and Helena (née Bergofen). Through Libuše Salomonovicová we had prepared family trees for the Fink and Bergofen families and Anna was able to add to (and correct!) them as well as telling Hazel, David and Heinz about her childhood in Ostrava. We all spent a happy hour and plan to meet again to complete the picture.

### **Alice Anson née Gross**

Hazel introduced us (by telephone and email at the moment, although we hope to meet in due course) to another AJR Ostravak, Alice Anson, née Gross. Her father, Otto Gross was born in Ostrava in 1889 (she thinks). His mother, a widow, lived and had a newsagents shop at the corner of Bahnhofstrasse and Maigasse. Her father left Ostrava well before the war (he was an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army during the first War) and lived in Vienna. He came to England, with Alice in 1939.

Her grandmother's maiden name was Irma Zieger and her grandfather's was Jacob Gross born 1862 died 1913. It seems that he ran the Zeitungsverschleiss. Her father's sister was Alice Louise Adler née Gross married Herman Adler and had two daughters- Gerda born 1927 and Eva born 1930. Her father's brother was Fritz (he disappeared in Russia); the others all disappeared and nothing is known about them.

Libuše did her usual, incredible, genealogical work:

Jacob Gross \*24.12.1862 in Dolna Klecza, +18.8.1913 in Moravska Ostrava,  
Wife Irma Zeiger(ova) \*18.2.1866, +21.12.1940 in Moravska Ostrava, in her flat. They lived  
in Ostrava, Stodolní Street 342. Owner of the house was Irma Gross(ova).

Children:

Otto \*1.4.1889 Ostrava-Přivoz **Alice's father**, attended German gymnasium in Moravska Ostrava, then he worked as bank officer. Since 22.12.1921 he resigned on Czech citizenship and took the Austrian one.

Elsa \*14.11.1890 Ostrava-Přivoz – no other information about her fate is known to me.

Bedřich (Fritz) \*22.11.1893 Ostrava-Přivoz – single, attended German gymnasium and commerce school. In 1939 he was deported to Nisko and since then he is missing. In 1948, a person named Edita Gross(ová) (I do not know anything about her), address London N.3,105 Hervey Close, made a proposition to the regional court in Ostrava to declare him as dead.

Luisa Gross(ová) \* 13.2.1903 Ostrava-Přivoz +4.10.1944 C.C. Auschwitz. Husband Herman Adler \*14.2.1896 Nové Klatovy region Nýrsko +29.9.1944 C.C. Auschwitz, children: Gerda Juliána \*12.4.1931 Moravska Ostrava +4.10.1944 C.C. Auschwitz, Eva Marianna \*4.5.1935 Moravska Ostrava, + 4.10.1944 C.C. Auschwitz.

## **AJR (Association of Jewish Refugees)**

See their website: <http://www.ajr.org.uk>

The AJR provides an extensive range of social and welfare services, and grants financial assistance to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution living in Great Britain. Today, membership is extended to all Jewish victims of Nazi persecution - and their spouses - and the AJR counts as its members former refugees from all Nazi-occupied countries. They also welcome membership from the Second and Third Generations, the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and refugees.

Alongside the AJR's homecare programme, which enables members to live in their own homes for as long as possible, they administer funds for the benefit of those survivors and refugees with urgent medical requirements and those in financial need. They also have a network of 42 regional groups that offer Holocaust survivors and refugees a unique opportunity to socialise and enjoy entertainment. It is at such gatherings that many former friends have been re-united after more than 60 years and they would be delighted to welcome new members.

Additionally, AJR members can take advantage of the AJR's Volunteer Department, which can arrange for befrienders and carers, and the services of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), which provides advice, assistance and guidance on all Holocausts era compensation and restitution enquiries. The AJR is also delighted to provide a home for two special interest groups: the Kindertransport and the Child Survivors Association.

For more information about the work of the AJR and details of their services please contact them by telephone on 020 8385 3070, by email at [enquiries@ajr.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ajr.org.uk), or contact Hazel Beiny on 07973 201 621. They would welcome more members.

## **Mirjam Halpern (née Rose) and Edgar Rose**

Our fame is spreading! Mirjam, who lives in Israel, found us on the web. She and her brother, Edgar, who lives in the USA, are planning to visit Ostrava later this year. She has sent us a brief life story:

I was born in Essen, Germany in 1929 as Mirjam Rose. My father had there a furniture store. When the Nazis took over he still hoped that the situation would improve and sent at first only his wife and his two children, Edgar and Mirjam, to what is now Slovakia from where my parents were originally.

As times did not improve he came in 1934 with his family to Ostrava where he found a job in an establishment that bought and sold guts (intestines) that were at that time used for the fabrication of sausages. My brother and I went in Ostrava to the Jewish school. My father was on a business trip in Istanbul, Turkey when Ostrava was occupied and knowing the goal of the Nazis, did not return. My mother with her two children remained in Ostrava until 1940 when she had the brilliant idea of asking the authorities to be deported to Slovakia where her relatives lived. After a few months she could get false papers and we traveled to Turkey. We studied in Istanbul at the American College. My brother after graduating left for the USA where he still lives. I left for Switzerland studied hotel management and got married. My husband, an electrical engineer, was sent to South America, Colombia and Venezuela where we lived for over 40 years. My two children came to Israel more than 30 years ago and we followed them 12 years ago.

Libuše has already worked her magic on the Rose family tree and found that Mirjam and Edgar are related to Bertie Goldberg!

## **Zuzana Crouch (née Deutsch)**

Zuzana, who lives in Bristol, contacted Libuše who put her in touch with us. She writes of herself:

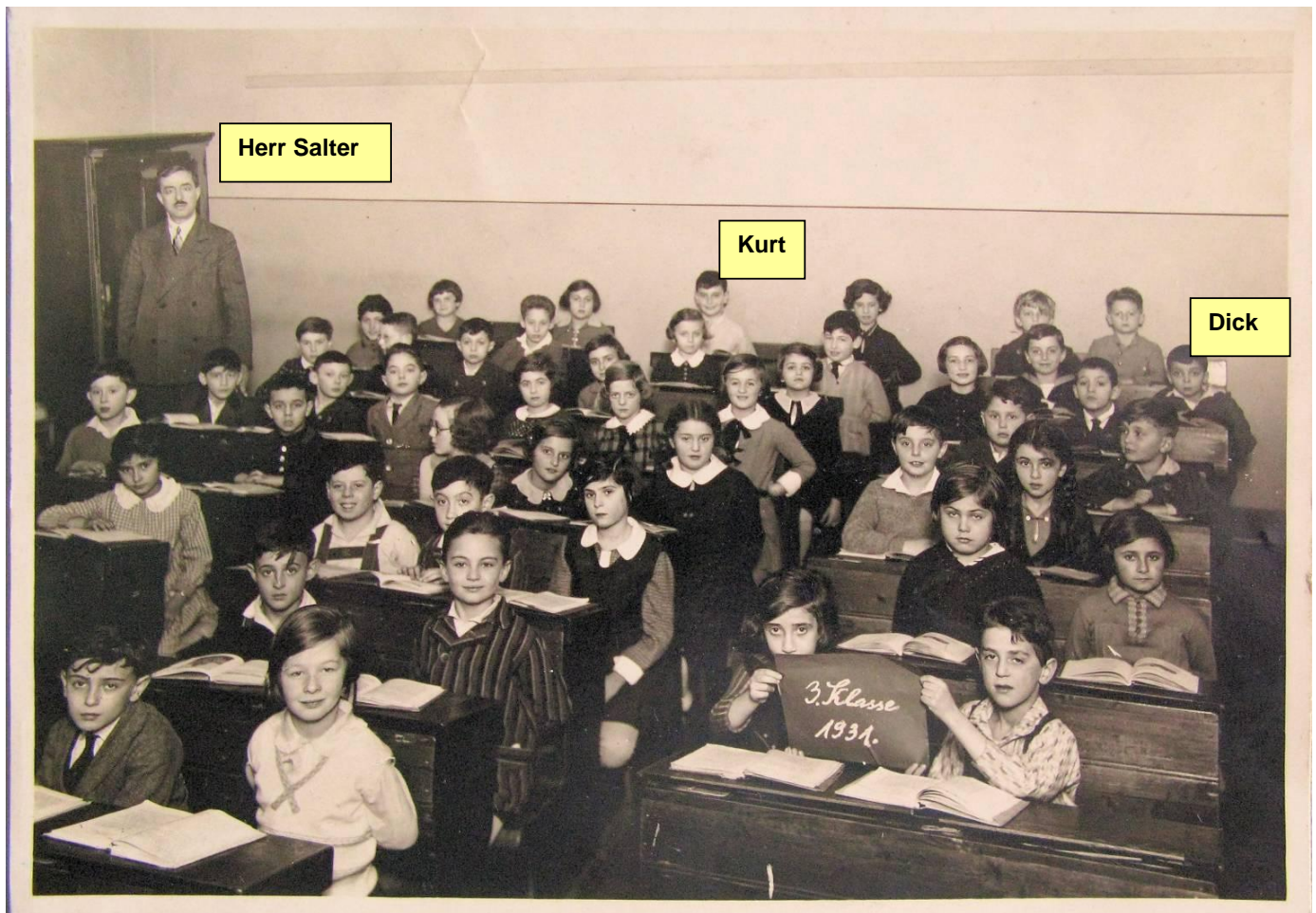
I am the daughter of Otto Deutsch who was from Ostrava where his father ran a toy shop

We hope to meet Zuzana soon and get more information.

## **Kurt Berger**

Kurt and his twin brother Richard (Dick) were born in Ostrava in 1923, where his father was the manager of the Böhmsche Eskomptbank having been promoted from Prague. His mother was English. He remembers visiting the Rothschild's estate, where the gardener was Scottish. Kurt's mother (anxious to find someone in Ostrava who spoke English) had befriended him.

Kurt attended the Jewish primary school and has a photograph of Class 3 in 1931:



**Do you recognize anyone here?**

### **Sigi Toman (né Jachsel)**

Sigi Toman passed away in February this year, from cancer. Before his very sad death he had been preparing his autobiography, in the form of a series of question and answers with two young ladies. It has now been published, in French: *Vous, vous savez, mais moi, je ne sais pas* and is a marvelous book. Sigi's son, Daniel kindly sent me a copy which is now in our archive.

### **Another Ostrava Scroll**

Kingston is not the only synagogue blessed with an Ostrava *sefer torah*. Leicester (UK) Synagogue also has one. Martie Jelinek from Leicester is coming to London to meet us in September and will, I hope, join us in our researches. Watch this space!

### **Velké Dílo – Our Magnum Opus**

It has always been our intention both to make our material accessible to future researchers and also (we hoped) to write up *The Ostrava Story*. The first step is, of course, to organize properly all the material that we have collected – at the moment it is in various files, both paper and electronic, in my office and in book form in the Synagogue. Then we must enter

the important details into an electronic data base and finally to store the material in a suitable location where it can be preserved and be accessible to future researchers.

This is a large task, although we will split it into small pieces; each family, each topic or aspect of Jewish life would be a separate section. All sections then would be put together to form the major information resource, the *Velké Dílo*. We would welcome help in this. If you would like to help, perhaps by organising your own family's section, please get in touch with us.

Kingston University are very interested in this work and we continue to talk to them about how we can collaborate on it.

## Plans

We hope to interview Otto Hornung and Hana Connors (née Oppenheim) next week and, in December, David and Heinz Vogel will be giving a talk to the Kingston Rotary Club.

## Letters

In our next edition, would you like a "Letters" section, where you can have short letters published and circulated to our Ostrava network? Please let us know what you think.

## The next Ostrava Meeting

Our last gathering was so successful and so much (apparently) enjoyed by everyone that we hope to repeat it next year. The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German occupation of Ostrava is 14<sup>th</sup> March 2009, which is a Shabbat. The previous Shabbat is Shabbat *Zachor-Remember!* - so we suggest having the meeting on **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2009**. Please let us know if you would be interested in attending on that day.

This year we received generous sponsorship, which covered most of the costs of the afternoon tea. Please let us know if you would be willing to sponsor next year's tea – the total cost is likely to be about £200.

## Any more Ostravaks?

Please pass the word about our group to any other Ostravaks that you know and let us know about them, as well. Please let us know if you recognise yourself or anyone else from the photograph of Class 3 in 1931. And please let us have any more news of yourself and your family.

Monica Popper  
Ranelagh Cottage  
7 Ailsa Road  
TWICKENHAM  
Middlesex  
TW1 1QJ  
UK

David Lawson  
29 Malcolm drive  
SURBITON  
Surrey  
KT6 6QS  
UK

Tel 00 44 20 8891 3508  
Email: [monsonn@talktalk.net](mailto:monsonn@talktalk.net)

Tel: 00 44 20 8390 8142  
Email: [lawsonassoc@btinternet.com](mailto:lawsonassoc@btinternet.com)