

<http://www.kingston-synagogue.org.uk/index.php/community/ostrava>

Londýnský kroužek Ostraváků
Der Londoner-Ostrauerkreis
Our Ostrava Group

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Stolpersteine and Trip to Ostrava 2015

We have 5 definite requests to lay *Stolpersteine* and a fairly definite commitment from Gunter Demnig to lay them in August 2015. That gives us a little time for anyone else who wishes to sponsor a *Stein*. . **Please let Heinz Vogel know as soon as possible** (heinz@vogel.org.uk tel: +44 1227763343) **if you are interested in having a *Stein* laid for one of your murdered loved ones.** The cost will be £135 each.

That means that our trip to Ostrava will probably be in October, after Yom Tov, when we will be able to see all the *Stolpersteine* in place as well as visiting the sights of Ostrava. . Please let David or Monica know if you are interested in the trip. Further details will follow as soon as we have a definite date.

"Steel and Schnapps, Sausages and Soldiers, Scrolls and Survival - the Story of Ostrava and its Jewish Community"

Our magnum opus or *Velké Dílo* is progressing. The four authors have already met once to make detailed plans for the book and are going to meet again in early January. We have about 50,000 words already written in draft form and we guess that this represents some 20-25% of the total and we expect things to move more rapidly now that the basic work has been done.

News of Ostravaks

Yes, there are still more “undiscovered” Ostravaks out there and we are delighted when they get in touch with us. Please let us know if you know of anyone from Ostrava who is not on our circulation list.

Jane Nevezie

The range of attainments of some of our Ostravaks never ceases to amaze me but I had never expected to find an Australian Amharic speaker among their number! But Jane Nevezie, who was introduced to us by Zuzana Caplova from the Ostrava community is one (modestly, she claims to have forgotten most of it, now). She wrote:

My father was Oskar Chaim Wachsmann. He was born in Ostrava on 27th June, 1901 to Janina (née Gronner, I believe from Auschwitz) and Jindrich Wachsmann. My Wachsmann grandparents were also known as Johanna and Heinrich. At an early age my father and his family went to live in Bielsko-Biala.

Oskar had two younger sisters - Grete and Erna. I do not know which was the older one and where they were born, though if not in Ostrava quite possibly in Bielsko-Biala. After WW1 Oskar went to the Deutsche Hochschule in Brno, from where he obtained a degree in Pure and Applied Chemistry (Chemical Technology). Between 1925 and 1935 he worked as an Industrial Chemist in Poland. In 1936 he began working for Bata (involved in the import/export business), first in Zlin, Czechoslovakia, later in Sweden and finally, just before the outbreak of WW2 in Aden, then a British Colony.

During the war he was attached to the British Ministry of Information in Cairo before returning to Aden and rejoining the Bata organisation in 1946. It was during his time in Cairo that he holidayed in Palestine and met and married my mother in 1942. In 1947 I was born in Aden. In December of 1947 an Arab pogrom against the large community of Yemeni Jews living in Aden forced my parents to flee with me to Africa. While my mother and I took up temporary residence in Asmara, Eritrea, my father left for the UK and USA where he secured a position which took the family to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Here he worked for Bunge & Co. Ltd. (with whom Bata were trading) until 1955, when he resigned and took up a position with the UK company of Messers George Kaufmann (London) Ltd., and we all returned to live in Aden. In 1959 Oskar resigned from George Kaufmann and later that year we migrated to Melbourne, Australia. In Melbourne Oskar returned full circle and ended his career as an examiner of patents in the chemical engineering section in the

Attorney General's Office of the Commonwealth of Australia. Oskar died aged 69 on the first day of Chanukah, 23/12/1970.

While science was the field in which my father was educated, the arts and humanities were his other, equally important interests. Before the war he played violin in an orchestra (don't know which and whether it was in Poland or Czechoslovakia) and so is responsible for my appreciation of classical music. Literature, History and Geography, and World Politics were the subjects of much of his reading material. It would, therefore, seem that I gleaned much information about my father. Unfortunately this is not so. While my mother described in detail what her life was like growing up in Doubrava, my father was quite reticent (at least to me, and what I do know is what little my mother passed on to me).

I do know that one of his sisters, the older of the two, had married a man whose surname was either Offner or Orlan, and that they had a son, name unknown, who was 15yo in 1939. I have photos of my paternal grandmother, two aunts, the uncle and cousin, who may have been living in Bielsko or somewhere in the vicinity until the outbreak of WW2. I believe all perished in the Holocaust. My paternal grandfather passed away before the war. I believe he may have been an insurance salesman. While I believe my paternal grandmother may have been born or came from Auschwitz, Poland (this appears on my father's original birth certificate), I do not know where my grandfather was born or from where he came.

My mother was Edith Glaser, born on 19th December, 1912, in Doubrava. Her parents were Chaim Hirsch (Hermann, birthplace unknown), 16/08/1871-1942, and Hildegarde (Hilda, nee Szczekacz, birthplace unknown), 15/06/1891-1942, Glaser. My maternal grandparents had a mixed business in Doubrava until the early 1930s, after which they moved to Ostrava.

While I believe my father's family were not orthodox Jews my mother's family were. My maternal grandparents ended up in Treblinka, from which they never left. Edith was able to leave Czechoslovakia in late 1939, in an Eichmann approved transport, and migrate to Palestine (and permitted to land unhindered by the British), arriving early 1940. She met my father in 1942 and they were married in November of that year in Tel Aviv.

My mother also had two brothers, Leo (born Ostrava 07/07/1911- died Prague 01/02/1984), who had completed his medical studies by the outbreak of war, only to become a dentist after the war. He lived in Prague on his return from what I think was a labour camp and passed away there. I was able to find his grave in the new cemetery when I visited Prague in July 2013. When the Communists took over in 1949 Leo severed all contact with my mother in the West. Leo never married or had a family.

Edith's younger brother was known as Slavek, born Doubrava 30/01/1914 - died Melbourne 19/12/1993.

As for me, I am a semi-retired secondary school teacher, who does relief teaching when it is available. The rest of my time is spent fussing over my family. I married my husband Kevin in a little synagogue in Hastings, New Zealand, in 1977

		
Jane	Oskar Wachsmann taken about 1920	Edith (Glaser) Wachsmann Ca 1940

If anyone has any information about Jane's family, please get in touch with Monica or David.

Hanni Grünpeter

From Australia to Chile! The Winecki family introduced us to Hanni (Hanne if we are being formal!) Grünpeter

I have just received a mail from Krysia and Otto from Australia and I'm very very excited. My name is Hanne Grunpeter (father's surname) Windholz (mother's surname). We live in Chile. I was born in Cesky Tesin in July 1935 and at the end of 1938 or beginning of 1939 my parents and I "went" to England. Last year I made a trip "to my roots" with great help from our eldest daughter Liliana Seilmann. We visited Cesky Tesin, the street where I was born (the house still exists), Boberhugelstrasse N° 41 (today named Hieronima Przepilinskiego) where my maternal grandparents lived, etc.

I am searching desperately for my cousin VERA WINDHOLZ, the daughter of Wischel Windholz and Lilli. She was one year younger than I. It would be so so wonderful if you could help me and I would be eternally grateful.

Yours very sincerely

Hanne



Lilli and Wirschel or Wishel Windholz (he was my mother's brother) and their daughter Vera



Lilli Windholz and her little daughter Vera (Versuska) together with my mother, Lilli's sister in law (Martha Grunpeter (born Windholz)). July 1936

As always, please let Monica or David know if you recognise anyone or know the family.

Ana Noë

Ana heard about us from Hanni Grunpeter and wrote to us:

I was born in Moravská Ostravá on February 14th, 1934 and fled with my parents, Dr. Arnost Noë (lawyer) and his wife Ruzena Weinmannová to Santiago de Chile in 1939. My parents are no longer alive and I would be interested in getting information about my father's family and its roots. His mother survived the war and she died in Chile; her maiden name was Flora Fassel. It would be great if you could help me to find out something about my family.

Our wonderful genealogist, Libuše has produced a family tree. Ernst Nöc-Noë was born in 1898 in Moravska Ostrava, the son of Eduard and Flora née Fassel. Ana lives in Santiago, Chile.

If you have any information about the family, please let us know.

Paul Reik

When Ralph Altmann went on a cruise recently, he started to chat to Paul who lived quite close to Ralph in London and, more importantly, whose family came from Ostrava!

Paul's father, Walter, was born in Moravská Ostrava on 13/4/07. He studied economics and politics in Frankfurt am Main University, for a PhD. The Reik family moved to Vienna from Ostrava in 1920's. Ludwig (Walter's father) had made a lot of money in Ostrava selling "Speck" – ham, bacon – to the miners and Paul thinks they moved to Vienna because they wanted to mix with the upper classes now they had cash.

Walter married Hertha Gold on 26/6/38 in Vienna and clearly left soon afterwards. Walter says that they were in a theatre during the Anschluss, so they went into the theatre from Austria and came out in Germany!



Paul Reik

The Reik family came originally from Hotzenplotz and Paul has a family tree going back to 1560!

Elizabeth Margoshes (family Winternitz)

Paul introduced us electronically to Elizabeth Margoshes who is a "cousin" of his (a common great-grandfather). We are happy to welcome her to our network and look forward to unravelling the family connections.

Rona Fields

Elizabeth gave us the name and contact details of Rona Fields who lives in Washington D.C., and is an eminent psychologist.

She is Rona M. Fields, Ph.D., and her great-grandparents' surname was Traubmann. She has been to Ostrava a number of times and told me this evening on the telephone that she also had been there on the occasion of the rededication of the Jewish cemetery. Her great-grandmother's maiden name was Krieger, but I'm not sure if she was from Ostrava or Brno.

We hope to receive more information from Rona and welcome her also to our Ostrava network.

Eva Halfon née Kleinberg

We pass on to the Jewish Museum in Prague (JMP) all the material and information that we collect on Ostrava and Ostravaks. They pass on to us any Ostrava contacts that they receive and that is how we heard from Eva Halfon, who wrote:

My father, Dr Ludwig (Ludvik) Kleinberg, after having been imprisoned both by the Gestapo and by the Russians, joined Svoboda's army (p. 311, *Jews in Svoboda's army in the*

Soviet Union, Erich Kukla, 1987). He fought on the eastern front, and is listed on p. 142 of *Hrdinové od Sokilova* by Miroslav Broz.

He was born in Ostrava on May 1, 1904. He got his Doctor of Law degree from the German University in Prague on February 9, 1934.

My mother, his second wife, was from Poland and also was in Svoboda's army (Kukla, p. 339).

I was born in Prague in 1946, and we left following the Communist takeover in 1948.

I was married briefly, and have one daughter and 2 grandchildren. We all live in New York.



Dr Ludvik Kleinberg

We would be very pleased to receive any information about the family.

Wallner Family Reunited!

The JMP has played a key role in reuniting parts of the Wellner family. Julie Jenšovská of the JMP tells the story:

Steven Wallner wrote to me and asked for any information relating to his father Bruno Wallner and his family. Bruno's parents were Isidor and Regina Wallner. I found out that they were relatives of Eva Arend, who donated some photos and text including their family history, to our museum.

We were able to provide Eva Arend's contact details and Eva wrote:

This is unbelievable, I am so excited!!! I was searching for Steven and his Sister Linda Wallner for years and I was not able to find them. The last trace was in 1964 when my mother met Steven, Linda and their Mother Kitty in NYC. Then the Kontakt got lost. Thank you so much and of course I am happy when Steven get my adress. I am looking forward to meet him very much. This is a phantastic news for me.

Steven and his sister (actually Bonita lby Chalson, not Linda. Linda was their mother) are now members of our Ostrava network

Eva and Peter Erben (né Eisenberg)

On 28th September, two days after Rosh Hashannah, Eva wrote:

We have nice days behind us. All the children, big and small, lot of honey -the heat gone. Autumn in the air. Everybody in good health--I am happy. So let's hope that the increasing cruelty around will somehow be knocked down and my World is OK

Apropos, it is exactly 70 years to day that Peter and my Dad went to Auschwitz -not aware how the future will united them ---
love
Eva

Shelly Pomeranz (Zehngut)

Shelly has asked if anyone might have any information on William Seidmann's store or that of Max Borger? If so, please let Monica or David have the information.

Help requested – and Provided!

In Newsletter #37, we appealed for information about a lady called Weinlichová? David Prager, a member of our Ostrava Group, discovered information about her from the UK National Archive in Kew!

Ralph Altmann asked about Emil Brennern who was his father's business partner and we have been able to put him in touch with Susie Ellis who had some information.

Czech Scrolls Exhibition

See the Appendix

The Wild East –Ostrava and its Migrants

On Monday 5th January, David will be giving a talk on the theme of immigrants, emigrants and refugees to and from Ostrava: where they came from, where they went to and how they affected the life and times of Ostrava. We will tell the story of a number of individual families, suggest that Ostrava was unique in some important ways, and draw some tentative conclusions.

It will be given at 1800hrs in the Education Centre of the JMP, Maiselova 15 (3rd floor), 110 00 Prague 1, and you are all invited.

On 26th November, David spoke to the Wembley Section of the Association of Jewish Refugees on "Artists and Ambassadors; Brewers and Bankers; Coal-merchants and a Chanukiah- The ABC of Ostrava"

Circulation List

We have tidied up our circulation list and realized, with horror, that some names had dropped off, over the months. They have, hopefully, all now been reinstated and we apologise for this electronic error. If you are one of those unfortunate people who went missing from our list, you can find all the back copies of the Newsletter on our website;

<http://www.kingston-synagogue.org.uk/index.php/community/ostrava>

Please tell us if you know of any other Ostravaks who are still not on our list.

Happy Chanukah

All of us here in Ostravak Central wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Chanukah.



Chanukah, rescued from the Main Synagogue in Ostrava by Lilly Reiser's father

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Appendix

The Memorial Scrolls Trust invites you to

**THE LAUNCH OF A TRAVELLING EXHIBITION
AND AN EDUCATION PACK BASED ON
THE REMARKABLE STORY OF THE CZECH SCROLLS**



**GUEST OF HONOUR:
THE CHIEF RABBI, EPHRAIM MIRVIS**

SPEAKERS:
MAGDA VESELSKA, HEAD OF DOCUMENTATION AT THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF PRAGUE
RUTH-ANNE LENGA, HEAD OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES, CENTRE FOR
HOLOCAUST EDUCATION, INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, LONDON

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