

**Londýnský kroužek Ostraváků**  
**Der Londoner-Ostrauerkreis**  
**Our Ostrava Group**

**Number 29: Pesach 2013**

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**Eva Erben at the LJCC and Wiener Library**

Petr Erben (né Eisenberg) is now unwilling to travel, so Eva flew alone to Prague for the launch of her new book of memoirs, (*Životy Evy L*, ISBN 9788086911397). You will remember that David wrote an English language version of Eva’s story, *Escape Story: How a young girl survived the holocaust*, (ISBN 978-0957047709: great book, available from Amazon or from David at GBP8.99 plus p&p) and Eva agreed to come to London to talk about her life, if David went to Prague to fetch her.

So that is how she answered questions and talked about her life at the London Jewish Cultural Centre on 8<sup>th</sup> March and at the Wiener Library on 9<sup>th</sup>. The latter was so popular, that people had to be turned away, as the meeting room was totally full! However, many Ostravaks were able to hear her, including Fred Austin (né Alfred Stiller, whose sister was a pre-war girl-friend of Petr’s) and Leo Wiener, a cousin of Petr’s. A group of 15 13 year old schoolboys also came especially to hear her.

## Zachor –Remember

Each year, CET in America arranges for a group of students to spend a term in Prague, studying European Jewish History. Michal Frankl teaches a session each week on the theme of “Holocaust and its Legacy in Central Europe” and he took advantage of David’s visit to Prague to invite him to talk to the students.

  <p>Remember</p> <p>Dr David Lawson 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013</p> 	 <b>Remember</b> what Amalek did unto thee by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt; how he ... smote the hindmost of thee, all that were enfeebled in thy rear, when thou wast faint and weary... <b>thou shalt not forget.</b> <small>Deuteronomy XXV, 17-19,</small>
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So, under the title “Zachor-Remember” (it was just after Purim and Shabbat Zachor) David talked about Ostrava and its Jewish history and then Tom Kolisch (see later in this Newsletter) spoke about his family and his search for more of their story.

We did not forget!

## Jewish Ostrava at the Jagiellonian University of Krakow

Katarzyna Adamek wrote to us, through our website:

I'm a Polish student, currently on Judaic studies at Jagiellonian University. I am writing the thesis for bachelor's degree. As the subject of it I have chosen the history of Jews in Ostrava.

We were able to give her access to our information on the website of the Jewish Museum in Prague and she came to Prague to meet David during his recent visit. She is in email contact with Heinz Vogel, and the Jurkowski and Auber families. She has promise dot let us have a copy of her thesis – in Polish – in due course. So the fame of Ostrava is spreading and the material we have collected is, indeed, being used by researchers so the memory of Ostrava is kept alive.

## News of Ostravaks

### Dani Kinrot (Né Brauner)

Dani has a collection of family photographs and documents which he has donated to the Jewish Museum in Prague. He and his wife, Ruth, came to



Prague at the same time as David in order to make the donation in person. They then went on to Ostrava where the indefatigable Salomonovič family guided them round the sights and sites of their family history.

Dani and Ruth with Mischa Salomonovič

### Tom Kolisch

Tom also has an impressive and fascinating collection of family photographs and documents. He, too, came to Prague to arrange the donation of the collection to the Jewish Museum and, with his Czech cousin Irena Brichta, went to Ostrava to search for more family background. Before leaving for Ostrava, Tom shared some of his passion for family history with the CET students.

Tom has written about his family for this Newsletter:

My mother, Emilie Morgenstern, lived her early life in Morovska Ostrava. She was one of the lucky ones in that she married Ernst Kolisch in the New Town Hall in Ostrava in December 1936 and in September 1938 fled to England. Many of my family were sent to Terezín and onward to Auschwitz and Maly Trostinec. When my mother died in Coventry in 1993 she left a number of photographs and documents about that period.

My father was born in Žatec in 1907, my mother in 1910 in Olomouc. Using the various Czech and Jewish archives and some valuable help from the Kingston Ostrava Group and my Czech speaking cousin, Irena Brichtová, I have established a reasonably accurate family tree numbering some 110 people. I have now donated the photographs and documents to the Jewish Museum in Prague.

The first three are school photos of my mother and her classmates.





Can you recognise anyone or any location?

### David Friedmann

Miriam Friedman Morris, David's daughter, has sent us a copy of the first part memoirs which David wrote, *Trieb zur Kunst*. In it, he describes his early drawing lessons with Ferdinand Folkart, who had a business producing advertisements etc. He was the grandfather of Lydia and Ruth. Lydia writes:

We know so little of the life of our grandparents. By the time we were on the scene my father was in charge of the workshop and it had moved to another part of Ostrava. My grandfather had a reputation of a somewhat stubborn man and what I learnt from my father after I joined him in England after the war, he took over the workshop at a very early age probably because my grandfather could not cope? It was gratifying to read that my father was such a good teacher. As a child I spent many a happy hour in this workshop watching him mixing paints and drawing and painting his advertisements. He was blind in one eye and had the most amazingly steady hand when drawing and painting.

## Kurt Karol Šmulovič

Šmulovič family stories say that Kurt Karol led the victory parade in Ostrava at the end of the war and have a photograph, apparently of the event:



Unfortunately, Ostrava records do not mention him at the time and we have been unable to identify the location in the photograph.

Can you recognise the place or the event?

However, the Military Archive in Prague confirms that he did take part in the battle of Dukla Pass and was in Ostrava by the end of the war. He received „The Czechoslovak Military Cross 39“ and Memory medal with label F-GB (in original F-VB) and reached the rank of Major.

## George and Edith Löwy

George has written his life story and published it. His wife, Edith (née Picková) has written and published her story also.

Edith starts her story:

### MY PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS

My paternal grandparents were Samuel Pick and Sara/Sally Picková, born Kohnova (female names ended with ova.) They had nine children. One daughter died. Beside my father there were uncles Morris, Julius, Leopold and Otto. My father's sisters were aunts Helene, Sofie and Frieda. My grandparents Pick lived in Strážnice, okres (district) Javorník, in Moravia. My grandfather was in the small tannery business. I remember skins hanging on the line by their house to dry. From what I have heard in my later years, from my cousin Ernie, who was my father brother's son and a few years older than I, my grandfather, was not an easy man. He was in charge of the nearby synagogue. Each morning, before going to the synagogue he supposedly had to have a *Stamperl* shot of drink. The most memorable thing about my grandfather was his enormously long pipe. He could be seldom seen without it.

*The Story Of My Life* is the autobiography of George Wolf Löwy, who was born in 1926 in Ostrava, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic). In 1938, at age 12, he immigrated with his parents to Palestine, avoiding the horrors of the Holocaust in Europe. After a total of nine years of formal education, Löwy went through a four-year apprenticeship in optical instrumentation. He was a member of the underground Haganah organization and participated in Israel's War of Independence. In 1958, he immigrated with his wife, Edith, and daughter, Orit, to the United States. One year after arriving in the States, his wife gave birth to a second daughter, Nomi. The family settled in Silver Spring, Maryland, where Löwy worked as a scientific instrument maker at the American Instrument Company (Aminco). While working full time, he enrolled at George Washington University and Maryland University, where he received a degree in physics. In 1981, Löwy became vice president of Varex, a new company specializing in the development and marketing of instruments for chromatography. He retired in 1993 at age 67. George Löwy lives with his wife in Leisure World, Silver Spring, Maryland. He has 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren. Löwy says, "The years after retirement are the happiest in my life."

*The Story Of My Life, 1926 -*

*By George Wolf Löwy*

*The Story Of My Life*  
1926 -  
By George Wolf Löwy






We have copies of both books in our Ostrava Archive.

### **Karen Liebreich**

Karen Liebreich is the daughter of Kitty, née Borger. Kitty Liebreich was born to Alfred (b. 1898) and Erna (b. 1918) Borger (formerly Jellinek) in Ostrava in 1931. She lived at 25 Gottwaldova with her parents and sister.

Karen was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours list this year, for services to horticulture and Education.

### **Stepan Körner**

Ann Altman found our website (the internet is fantastic. Almost none of our work would have happened without it!) and wrote:

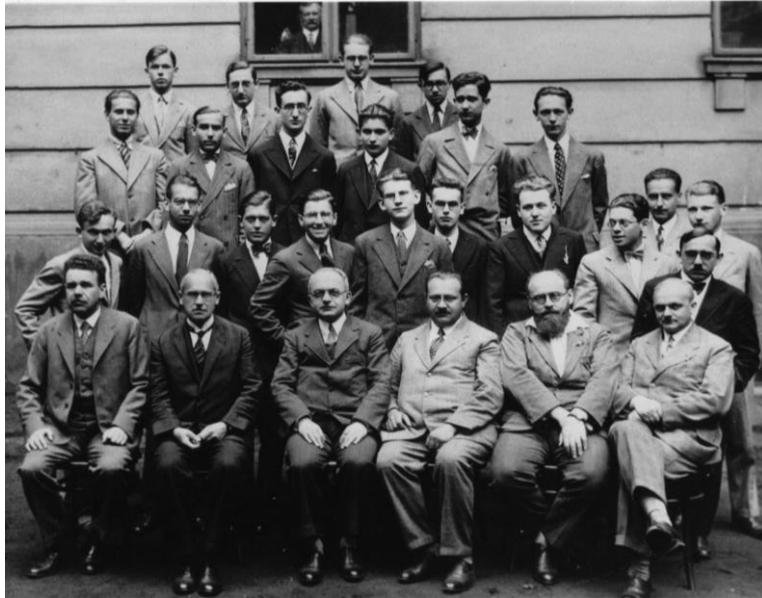
I was very interested to read that your synagogue is involved in a project related to the Jewish community in Ostrava. My father, Stepan Körner, was born in Ostrava in 1913 and left just before he would have been deported. I've attached a photo of my father at the time of his high school/gymnasium graduation. He is the suave young man, third from the left in the second row, with a bow tie.

His parents, Erna and Emil Körner, perished but he escaped to England and eventually became Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Bristol. You can read about him at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephan\\_K%C3%B6rner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephan_K%C3%B6rner)

If your research has uncovered any information about the Körner family in Ostrava (it was quite large), I would be grateful if you would share it with me.

Thank you for all your efforts to keep alive the memory of the Jews of Ostrava who perished.

Warmest regards, Ann M. Altman (née Körner)



Do you know the family? If so, please let Monica or David know.

When David was in Prague, he met Vilem Reinöhl, a distant cousin of Ann's on her mother's side. He, too has a fascinating family history, although not connected to Ostrava. However, the Jewish Museum is now in touch with him, also!

### **Stamberger family**

Tom Auber and Wieslaw Jurkowski write:

We're arranging to have our Stamberger (Auber, Jurkowski) family gathering this year in Krakow in August: probably at least 30, with some from Sweden and Israel this time.

We hope the idea of family reunions – especially in Ostrava – spreads!

### **Leo Seifter and a mystery woman!**

Madeleine Isenberg, who found and let us have the score for Uncle Dolek's Tango, has further information about her uncle Leo:

Frank Gumpert is an attorney and was the executor of the estates of the Seifters and of course my aunt who was married to Dolek. (Frank's mother was actually related to Hilda Seifter's first husband.) He told me a story about Leo Seifter and his supposed engagement to a woman, who somehow broke his heart, and as a consequence he never married. Frank had a photo of Leo, probably pre-World War II, with an attractive unnamed, blonde woman. Frank wondered if this might have been the "mysterious woman."



Can you recognise her or throw any further light on the mystery?

### **Karel Rix**

We have been approached by Martin Smok, seeking information about JUDr. Karel Rix, the last president of Vinohrady Jewish Community. Martin thought he was related to “our” Rixes, but they do not think so. Do you know anything about him? If so, please let Monica or David know.

### **Bob Kingsley (né Robert Kohn)**

Bob passed away on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011, after a long illness and we send Bernice and all the family our deepest sympathy.

The Czech Philatelic Society of Great Britain printed a lengthy obituary in their March journal.

### **Otto Hornung**

We are sorry to announce the death of Otto Hornung on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013 and we send our sympathy to Chi Chi and all the family.

You can find a biography of Otto on <http://expo-net.blogspot.cz/2013/01/zemrel-otto-hornung-1920-2013.html>

### **Jewish Museum in Prague (JMP)**

## Presentation on the Goldberg Archive

A report of the seminar (see also Newsletter # 27) can be found on page 5 of <http://www.terezinstudies.cz/pdfs/newsletter63.pdf>

Felix Winkler has kindly provided a translation of an article in *Obecni Noviny*:

Translation of an article from the Czech language published in 'Obecni Noviny', year 10, No 1, by the Jewish community in Prague

Documents of the fate of Jews from Ostrava.

The Jewish Museum in Prague publishes for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the transport of Jews from Ostrava to Terezin a collection of personal and family documents which describe the daily life of the Jews in Ostrava before WW2, their fate during the Holocaust and the fate of those who survived. About 2000 letters, photographs and official documents will be accessible to the public in the museum, the address is

<http://collections.jewishmuseum.cz>

The collection is the result of many years of activities of volunteers at The Kingston Synagogue in South West London who got a Torah Scroll which used to belong to the prewar community in Ostrava. A big part of these Scrolls were confiscated by the Nazis and brought to the Jewish Museum in Prague. In the years 1960' they were confiscated by the communists and later sold to Great Britain from where The Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust lend them to Jewish communities all over the world.

The Jewish Museum in Prague joined 2 years ago the activities of the Ostrava group of the Kingston Synagogue for a joined project to ensure a proper publication of this collection

## History of the Jewish Museum

Magda Veselska writes that her history of the JMP has finally been published:

As announced, it is in Czech. The title in English would be „The Ark of Memory. The Journey of the Prague Jewish Museum Through the Turbulent 20th Century“. The book is divided into four chapters (prewar, war, after the war and state museum) with extensive footnotes. The latest events are described in the Epilogue by Leo Pavlat. The book also includes app. 230 images, an English and German summary, list of archival sources and bibliography, name index and institution index, copyrights.

It is available for 600CzKr through the website of the JMP.

## Original Archive Material donated to JMP

As we have already noted, Tom Kolisch and Dani Kinrot have given their original family materials to the JMP. If you have original photographs, documents or artefacts that you are willing to donate to the JMP, before they disappear or are destroyed, please let Monica, David or Pavla Neuner of the JMP know ([pavla.neuner@jewishmuseum.cz](mailto:pavla.neuner@jewishmuseum.cz)).

## Another Ostrava sefer

The Gross Schechter Day School in Pepper Pike, Ohio, USA has a Ostrava sefer. It is apparently not in a good condition and is not usable. Daniel Weiss, the Middle School Judaic Studies Principal/K-8 Judaica Program Coordinator has contacted us for information about Ostrava, and he is now on our circulation list. We hope to hear more about them in the near future.

## The History of Ostrava and its Jewish Community

People frequently ask us, what we plan to do with all the information and material that we are collecting. There are two answers:

- All the information we have collected is being organised and entered into the data base of the Jewish Museum in Prague (JMP). This is almost complete and it will be available to future researchers, so the memory of Ostrava and its Jewish community will be kept alive.
- We will write a book, in English, of the history of Ostrava and its Jews, which we have called our *Magnum Opus* or *Velké Dílo*, in Czech.

This will take quite some time to write, but we have started! There is now a trio of distinguished authors and the JMP have promised their support:

- Mrs Libuše Salomonovičová, who is well known to all of you
- Magdaléna Stárková, a historian specialising in Jewish and Central European history. She speaks Czech, English, German and some Polish and Ivrit and has the inestimable advantage of being Libuše's grand-daughter. She is studying for a PhD degree at the University of Olomouc.
- David Lawson

The rough outline for the book is:

1. A general not an academic book for the general English-speaking reader but one that has at least some academic and intellectual validity, covering the history of (Greater) Ostrava and its Jewish community
2. An initial chapter setting Ostrava in its geographical, political and social background from pre-history to say mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century.
3. The rise of industrialisation and economic development in Ostrava, Austro-Hungary and the growth of population, especially Jewish. Effect of Edict of Tolerance, immigration.
4. Later development of real toleration and acceptance by society, anti-Semitism, Czech Nationalism.
5. Stories of growth of industries, businesses, individual families to illustrate the story
6. 1930's, Munich, invasion, persecution and murder. Nice Nazis, survival.

7. Story of escapees and survivors.
8. Story of our sefer and the Kingston Group.
9. Lessons from the story

## Appeal for Funds

In previous Newsletters, we appealed for funding to enable Dr Jiří Jung to continue with his work of organising our material and entering it into the data base of the Jewish Museum. Thanks to a generous donation from Evelyn McGilloway (née Rix) and Sir Bernard Rix from the Otto and Sadie Rix Memorial Trust we should now have sufficient funding to complete the entry of our material into the JMP data base, so the first and major objective of the Ostrava Group will have been achieved.

However, there will inevitably be some significant travel and other costs associated with the preparation and writing of our Velké Dílo, and we therefore appeal for funding support.

Please make cheques payable to Kingston Surbiton and District Synagogue Trust or make a direct payment to:

KSDS Cultural and Education Committee, Account Number 70853909  
Barclays Bank plc  
2, Kingston Business Centre  
6 Clarence Street  
KINGSTON UPON THAMES  
Surrey KT1 1NY  
UK  
Sort Code 20-46-76

**IBAN:** IBANGB56BARC20467670853909  
**BIC or SWIFT:** BARCGB22

**Routing Code** (For US only) 026002574

## New Jewish Museum in Warsaw

Peter Gordy has written to tell us about a new Jewish Museum which will open shortly in Warsaw. There is an interesting clip on YouTube about it.

[Click here: Museum of the History of Polish Jews - YouTube](#)

We wish all our readers a Happy Pesach



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