

child survivors of the holocaust

CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 15 NO 2

MARCH 2026



Dear Child Survivors,
We trust that you and yours are well.
Only a few months have passed since
our January edition of **Connections**
and once again we find ourselves
consumed by another war involving
Israel. These are extremely difficult

times for all of us, especially survivors and we are hopeful
that this latest conflict will end speedily and soon.

In the meantime, we are flying our new first ever Child
Survivor banner proudly.

The first occasion was at the newly formed **CSH Coffee
Club**, (there is a full report plus photos below) where CSH
met up with old friends and made new ones. We look
forward to you joining us whenever you are able. It is a
free event and the venue at the RSL is St Georges Rd is
really lovely. **FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH!**

Time: 10.30 til 12 noon.

Please phone **Claude Sanicki** on **0411 594 672** with any
questions. Generous car park at the rear.

The second event we flew our banner at was at the **IN
ONE VOICE festival** March 15th (see photos below)

Kindertransport: Dr. Amy Williams:

We are grateful to **Dr Amy Williams**, global expert on
the *Kindertransport* for writing about her experience

in finding the Kindertransport lists at
Yad Vashem. Amy has sent out over
700 detailed excerpts from the Lists
to Kinder who wanted to verify what
happened to them including dates of
departure and arrival. Some Kinder
have been reunited with other Kinder
travelling on the same train, Amy has enthusiastically
agreed to write Part 2 of this story in the next edition of
Connections. If you would like to contact Amy her details
are provided with the article.



Andre Dubrowin has written about his child survivor
experience. We are very grateful to Andre for sharing his
story with us, we understand this is not always an easy
task.

Melbourne Holocaust Museum CEO Dr. Breann Fallon
shares her thoughts before Passover and sends greetings
to CSH.

We hope that you will enjoy this edition of **Connections**
and look forward to seeing you soon.

On behalf of Viv, Lena and Claude: Chag Sameah!

Viv Parry & Lena Fizman
Co-Presidents

From Lena's Desk: Honouring a Holocaust hero



**Lena with her late father
Moshe Fizman.**

I want to share a story
about my late father,
Moshe Fizman and his
determination to have the
woman who saved his
life, be honoured by Yad
Vashem.
While Yad Vashem applies
strict criteria to accord the
title of *Righteous Among
the Nations*, there were
countless other non-Jews,
as many Holocaust survivors

will affirm, whose acts of self-
sacrifice were responsible for
saving Jewish lives during the
war.

She may not have the official
title but Jewish Holocaust
Centre (JHC) survivor guide
Moshe Fizman attributes
his survival, and that of many
other inmates of the Vaihingen
am Enz (Wiesengrund)
concentration camp in
Germany, to the late **Baroness**



**Baroness Irmgard von
Neurath**

Irmgard von Neurath.

Baroness von Neurath died in 1965, her courage never having been formally acknowledged, much to the dismay of Fiszman. Given his close association with the JHC, the museum decided to honour the late Baroness on behalf of Fiszman, writing to her daughter, **Wendergard von Staden**, who still lives in the German town where the concentration camp stood.

"The JHC in Melbourne, Australia wishes to place on record its gratitude and indebtedness to your late mother, Baroness Irmgard von Neurath, whose courage and compassion proved instrumental in saving lives of Jews incarcerated in the **Vaihingen am Enz concentration camp** during the Nazi-perpetrated Holocaust," the letter, signed by JHC president **Pauline Rockman**, read. "We have been told of the care and humanity which your mother showed during that dark period of history by a Holocaust survivor, Mr Moshe Fiszman, who has served as a volunteer guide at our centre and Holocaust museum

for several years ... While the memories of starvation, brutality, ruthlessness, disease and the deaths of scores of people on a daily basis remain with Mr Fiszman, his indebtedness to your mother, which he shares with many others who may not have survived but for her, has endured, despite the passage of time."

Enclosed along with the letter was a certificate of appreciation that stated the Talmudic passage about the importance of saving a life.

Shortly after sending off the package, the centre received a note from von Staden.

"It is with great emotion that I read your letter of September 20, which the mail brought this morning — and opened the envelope with the framed certificate of recognition dedicated to my late mother," she wrote.

"I wish I could tell her about the Jewish Holocaust Centre at the other end of the world — and of Mr Fiszman who, after so many years, still remembers her.

Reprinted by the Australian Jewish News

Amy Williams: Finding the Kindertransport lists



Amy Williams

For over 80 years the **Kindertransport** lists which documented mainly Jewish children who fled Nazism to Britain and many other countries between 1938-1940 were presumed to have been lost to history. In October 2024 though when I had just begun my fellowship at Yad Vashem, I came across Dutch transfer lists of children fleeing Germany,

Austria, Czechoslovakia, and the Free City of Danzig to the Netherlands and Britain. These were the missing **Kindertransport** lists. I was also able to access Austrian documents at the National Library of Israel. In these files were **Kindertransport** lists to America, Australia, Belgium, Britain, Sweden, and many other nations as well as the Kinder's case files and letters from parents and the refugee organisations. These files also show how the **Kindertransports** beyond British shores continued into 1942. For example, at Yad Vashem there are lists of **Croatian Kindertransports** to British Mandate Palestine dated between 1941-1942.

A year before I moved to Israel, I had a fellowship at the **Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility**, The New School in New York. While I was in New York, I was able to spend time researching at the **Center for Jewish**

History where I found the **Danzig Kindertransport** lists to Britain. Thanks also to this fellowship I was able to visit the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's** archives (USHMM) and with the help of archivists there I was given access to information about the children who escaped to Switzerland. Also, at the USHMM I accessed material held in the National Archives, UK which we here in the UK cannot access at the moment as some of the files are redacted. Since returning to Britain from Israel, I joined the **Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR)** as the new **Kindertransport Scholar in Residence**. Thanks to the AJR I have subsequently been able to visit the national archives in Prague and Belgium where I also saw yet more **Kindertransport** lists. By travelling to all these different countries and collecting the material from the archives we can now for the first time see all the different **Kindertransport** lists in relation to one another. With the help of friends, colleagues, and **Kindertransport** families themselves I have recently received information about the ferries the Kinder boarded between June and the start of the war (sadly information before this has been destroyed), and some early Harwich arrival lists. At the **Wiener Library, UK** I also found other British arrival lists. There are a lot more documents out there than I think many of us had realised, and I was lucky enough to have the support to bring this information to the survivors and their families. Now I want to reach out to the community in Australia.

Many Kinder did not know who they journeyed with on the **Kindertransport** unless they were sent with their

siblings. Yet siblings did not always travel together. Some also did not know their *Kindertransport* number, who the adult chaperones were, the date the transport left and arrived, which ferry they boarded, and the route the transport took. Now we can relay this information back to the Kinder. In some cases where Kinder know all or some of these details we can confirm that their memories, diaries, and letters do indeed match the historical record. For so long we have needed to rely upon the Kinder's writings from the time (diaries and letters) which document their journeys because the lists weren't known. But now we can see this material in relation. The emotional story can be told alongside the historical facts and statistics. We'll be able to reflect upon how many children left from Berlin, how many girls and boys there were, how many babies even were placed on the transports. For example, we now definitely know that at least 23 children born in 1938 left on *Kindertransports* for Britain in 1939. I'm sure there will be many more. The lists not only name the children, they also reveal details such as their home addresses, their transport numbers, their birth dates, and where they were born. Their parents' names are sometimes listed too. The names and addresses of the chaperones, the



Amy Williams being filed at Yad Vashem.

Kindertransport numbers, and the carriage numbers are also given. Each list comes with a letter to the Dutch border guards which tells us when and where the train will cross on the Dutch German border. Sometimes these letters discuss individual cases of children who are waiting for their permits to arrive. A myth has persisted that the chaperones needed to return to Greater Germany, otherwise the transports would have come to a halt. But the *Kindertransport* did save the lives of some adults because they had visas to remain in Britain. We sometimes see evidence of this in the lists themselves when they state where the accompanying adult will be staying.

There are also lists of potential *Kindertransports*. For example, there is a list of 75 children who could have



The Children's Memorial at Yad Vashem which I walked past every day to my desk.

left Danzig for Britain on a fifth transport. However, this transport never left. In the Austrian files there are similar lists of children who were hoping to make their journeys to freedom, but also never escaped. In addition, there are lists of children whose fathers are in concentration camps after *Kristallnacht* as well as lists of children whose fathers have escaped to Britain and are in Kitchener Camp. The children's fathers are desperately trying to get their children out. While some succeed, there are many who, tragically, are not reunited with their children. A striking discovery was that there were children bound for the Youth Aliyah scheme (Zionist youth transports to British Mandate Palestine) who end up on *Kindertransports* because the refugee organisations are trying to get the children out as quickly as possible. These two movements are intertwined through the lists. There is so much more to tell you about the lists and the application files! For example, how they survived and how they are helping us to recognise the complex transnational history of the *Kindertransport* so many years on. But what I want to ensure is that the survivors, the families, and the community know about these files and can actually see them. If you are a survivor or family



The National Library of Israel where the Austrian lists

member please feel free to contact me so that I can help. My email is: amy@ajr.org.uk. I think we have connected with some 700 families so far. The information I would need from you to find the files is: Name of the child, date of birth, country of origin, host nation, and the date of departure or arrival. I would also recommend you contact **World Jewish Relief, UK (WJR)**. This was the **Central British Fund** in the 1930s which was responsible for bringing the children to Britain. They have the children's case files and reception files. Not all of them have survived, but many of them have, and they help me locate other files. WJR is aware that *Kindertransport* families are contacting them about these files in connection to the lists.

At the AJR we are aiming to create new exhibitions and a *Kindertransport* database for the 90th anniversary in 2028. Before that I and my co-author **Prof. Bill Niven** will be sharing our findings in a new book on the history of the *Kindertransport* for Yale University Press which we hope will be coming out in 2027. In terms of the database, we are aiming to create an online portal which will showcase the Kinder's archival material alongside their testimonies. We hope to move beyond national and transnational memories of the *Kindertransport* to present both the statistical and emotional histories of



The Hostages and Missing Square near to where I lived in Frischmann. I walked past the memorial square every day on my way to Yad Vashem

this international rescue operation. We also hope that school children from Germany and Britain, for example, will be able to research the stories of local Kinder and chaperones. We'll then be able to add their work to the database so that we can create a fuller picture of the individual. For more information about the lists please see: <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/author/amy-williams/>

My Life... My Story Andre Dubrowin



Andre in 1941 in Brussels, Belgium.

I was born Andre Tchegan in Brussels the capitol of Belgium in December 1939. Both my mother, 'Rosalie' and father, 'Chaca' came to Belgium much earlier while in their late teens with their parents. My mother was born in Poland and my father was born in Rumania. They met and married in Belgium. I was their only child.

My parents were Jewish but not religious, and each had a number of siblings.

At the start of the war

my parents were well established in Belgium with a successful business and they had a wide variety of friends both Jewish and non-Jewish.

War commenced three months before my birth, when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, and invaded Belgium in May, 1940.

My parents soon realised Belgium was no longer safe and decided to leave their country and flee to France. My



Andre in 1941 in Brussels, Belgium.

mother, father, his younger brother and myself (I was about 2 years old), were packed into the family car along with the few precious belongings we had room for.

Our fate was sealed when we were arrested while crossing the French border. We were taken to Drancy, an internment assembly camp in France.

The Drancy Camp built in 1941 was made up of a "U" shaped group of small apartments blocks.



Andre with his mother

Drancy became the major transit camp for deportation of Jews to Auschwitz. 70,000 to 80,000 Jews went through the camp between 1941 and 1944. Only 2,000 survived. The camp was overcrowded and the conditions were awful.

The only positive things about the camp were; it was run by the French police and therefore not so strict and letters could be sent out by bribing agents. Red Cross representatives visited the Camp occasionally. It didn't take long in those terrible conditions for me at such a young age, to become seriously ill.

My mother in desperation bravely decided to bribe a French policeman to release me to the Red Cross as a "Seriously ill child". The Red Cross representatives took me to the hospital for treatment.

When I recovered, I was placed in a Catholic orphanage nearby that was run by nuns.

It was at the orphanage I learned to be a "good Catholic child". Conditions, although safe were always cold and I was constantly hungry. Fortunately, I was only there for a short time.

My new life on the move started. I was about three years old and needed to be in hiding to stay safe and survive.

About this time, a non-Jewish business friend of my father, learning of my whereabouts, decided to take me in with his family including his wife and three children.

The children had a lot of toys that I desperately wanted to play with. Disputes and fights occurred and I caused a lot of household disruptions. Reluctantly the family decided they had to find another place for me to stay. They turned to a solicitor friend and his wife, an elderly couple.

Reflecting back now I see my parents had a lot of foresight when they escaped Belgium. They had been

very comfortable in their home in Brussels. They had a successful leather tannery business. They owned property, a modern car and other assets. Not knowing what would lie ahead for them, my father appointed his non-Jewish solicitor friend, to take charge of his business, possessions and affairs. Also requesting him to help the family should they get into difficulty or if they required assistance.

The solicitor and his wife became the pivotal contact who I refer to as "the elderly couple". When his business friend needed to find someone to continue to look after me, he contacted the solicitor.

The solicitor, unable at the time to find anyone to take me, decided to look after me with the help of his wife. They lived in a first-floor apartment block in Brussels. They took a great personal risk hiding me, discovery would mean certain death for them both.

The problem for me was I had to stay in the apartment at all times and be very quiet. I was unable to go out and play outside. I could not be seen or heard by any neighbours. The heavy blinds were closed during the day. The only time the blinds could be opened was at night time when I would see search lights in the sky looking for enemy fighter planes flying towards Germany loaded with bombs, and occasionally flashes of lights in the distance. Due to the shortage of food our diet was poor. The lack of sunlight and the type of exercise required to strengthen young bones, caused me to develop a condition called "Rickets". This disease caused softening of the bones and affected healthy normal growth in young developing children. Bone deformity was a real possibility. The elderly couple reluctantly realised I could not continue living this way because it could permanently affect my growth.

The elderly couple managed to find a mature lady who was living with her elderly father and a young farmhand on a small farm, who was prepared to take me in and look after me. She was going to be paid. I was approximately 4 years of age and I was very excited at the thought I could run around freely alongside the farmhand. The elderly couple explained there would be lots of farm animals and plenty of fresh food.

The farm lady, Juliette, kept true to her word and looked after me well, occasionally taking me to the hospital for development problems and childhood sicknesses. I became very attached to Juliette.

Sometime after the war ended (May, 1945) a man came to the farm and told Juliette I had to go with him back to Brussels. I had become very fond of Juliette. I was almost six years old and I did not want to go with him. He was a complete stranger to me. Sadly, Juliette had no choice. I had to leave.

It turned out that the man was my uncle, my mother's brother, who I did not recognise from my life before the war when I was only two years old. He lived in a first-floor apartment in Brussels with his wife and daughter. I was very upset when I arrived to stay with my uncle's family. I wanted to go back to Juliette. I cried a lot hoping she would come to pick me up. She had become my mother figure.

Another upsetting problem was that I couldn't communicate with my uncle and his family. There are two languages spoken in Belgium; Flemish and French. I only spoke Flemish after living in the country for some time in hiding. My uncle's family only spoke French.

I had a different surname to them. I had my father's surname which I legally had to use. It was difficult explaining to people the reason for the different name.

At school I had to use my birth name. At home I was introduced as their son with their name.

I found it troubling and difficult at school when teachers spoke about the Holocaust and survivors. I was very young and no one had explained to me where my parents were and what had happened to our family.

Time passed, the war ended and plans were being made to leave the horrors of the Holocaust behind and make a fresh start in a country as far as possible away from Europe. My aunt had a sister and family who had moved to Australia prior to the war, her only known living relative at the time. She was prepared to sponsor our family to Australia.

When I heard the news, I was most excited. The little I had heard about Australia was that it had beautiful warm weather, unique animals and fruit, it had animals hopping down the main street and importantly the family believed there was hope for a fresh start for all of us.

The trip to Australia took much longer than usual because a Stevedore strike at the port of Marseilles, France around September 1948, delayed our voyage.

We took a semi cargo ship, the "*MV Eridan*" a French passenger and cargo liner. Once a WW II troopship the *Eridan* sailed from Marseilles from 1948 to 1949 transporting immigrants to Australia. This was a longer route, sailing through the Panama Canal enabled the drop off of cargo at the French Colonies e.g. Tahiti and New Caledonia in the South Pacific, arriving in Australia in January 1949.

In Sydney we were greeted by the aunt and family who then took us to Melbourne where they lived.

Soon after arrival I had to start attending school in Australia and I commenced third grade at Caulfield North Central school not knowing a word of English. I was nine years old.



Andre with his grandchildren.

I soon found I was able to assimilate well in my new environment by easily joining in the children's sporting activities.

Many years after my arrival, I was adopted by my uncle and my name was officially changed by Deed poll. When I eventually became naturalised my original birth name was used.

My adopted parents never spoke about the war having lost their parents and siblings in the Holocaust.

Time passed and years later I was able to find out what happened to my parents. My parents were sent from Drancy Internment camp to Auschwitz, in September 1942.

I believe my mother was murdered soon after she arrived at the Concentration camp.

No further records or mention of her exists after her arrival.

Father and his brother were selected for slave labour on arrival in Auschwitz. They remained there miraculously surviving until almost the end of the war.

The Auschwitz records show both my father and his brother died of general "Sepsis" an infection of the blood brought about by their terrible living conditions in Auschwitz. Untreated, they died two weeks apart in March, 1945. A matter of weeks before the war ended, May 7th, 1945.

I did not discover till I was in my older age that some of my family had in fact survived in the Soviet Union.

I was grateful to learn that, for my parents' sake.

Communication, again because of yet another language has been difficult.

Looking back, I can truly say that Australia offered us new opportunities and real hope for the future.

I was very fortunate to be given another chance at life with my adopted family. Eventually I married and had a family of my own, now including nine grandchildren!

Andre Dubrowin.

CSH Coffee Club: First meet up. March 2026 plus photos

The new **CSH Coffee Club** had its first meeting **Thursday March 5th**.



CSH Coffee Club

The **Caulfield RSL** St Georges Road Elsternwick provided a wonderful space on the ground floor not far from the entry. The RSL has agreed to provide complimentary tea, coffee, etc. on the first Wednesday of every month. We are providing the cake and biscuits.

Claude Sanicki hosted the event and presented JNF diaries to each guest to write the dates for the CSH Coffee club future meetings.

Some of the child survivors who joined us were:



CSH Coffee Club



Katherine Blecher & Andre Dubrowin

Katherine Blecher, Suzi Varti, Henry Buch, Bernadette Polak with Alex Safran, Andre Dubrowin, Dita Gould. (see photos)

A number of child survivors asked if we would consider changing the meet up date to the first Wednesday each month, the RSL has confirmed this is fine - so we are making the change.

We look forward to meeting up again **WEDNESDAY April 1st 10.30 til 12 noon**.

Please feel free to invite a family member, friend or visitor who might drive you. Please note: there is excellent parking at the rear of the RSL building.

In One Voice Festival plus photos

Another first! The CSH proudly displayed our banner at the **In One Voice** event Sunday 15th march. We had our own marquee and displayed all the CSH anthologies plus copies of *Connections* and our invitation to CSH to join the CSH Coffee Club. **Claude Sanicki** was the team captain and in charge of the stand.

Dita Gould, Paul Valent, Henry Buch, Lena and myself spent time chatting to those who wanted to learn more about who the Child Survivors are. We are very grateful to our volunteers who showed up on the day and to Claude for his great contribution.



Claude Sanicki and Lena Fiszman at the In One Voice festival Child Survivor stand.



Claude Sanicki talking to a member of the public at the In One Voice



Dita Gould and Dr Paul Valent talking to the public at the In One Voice festival Child Survivor stand.



Viv Parry and Dita Gould at the In One Voice festival Child Survivor stand.

Submission for Royal Commission into Anti-Semitism and Social Cohesion

CSH will be making a submission to the Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion. Dr. Paul Valent will be writing the submission on behalf

of the CSH Melbourne group. We will publish the submission in **Connections**. If you wish to get in touch with Paul: p.valent@bigpond.net.au

Film Screening: The Hunt for the Last Nazis



There will be a special screening of the new Australian documentary: ***The Hunt for the Last Nazis*** by **Dan Goldberg**.

The Hunt for the Last Nazis is a 2026 SBS documentary investigating how postwar Australian migration allowed hundreds of alleged Nazi war criminals to settle and evade justice. The film uses never-before-seen files and recordings to follow investigations into figures like **Konrad Kalejs** and **Karlis Ozols**, highlighting a

government-level cover-up and failed prosecution. Thank you Rysia and Richard Rozen AOMs for letting us know.

Date: Sunday 19 April at 4.00pm

Venue: Classic Cinema

Address: 9 Gordon Street, Elsternwick

Booking: <https://www.classiccinemas.com.au/movies/the-hunt-for-the-last-nazis>

Pesach Message from MHM CEO: Dr Breann Fallon



Dr Breann Fallon

Dear all,
As Passover approaches, I want to pause to recognise the weight and relevance of this time. Passover asks us to engage not only with a historical narrative, but with enduring questions about responsibility, memory, and what it means to sustain a free and ethical society. It is

a story that resists simplification. It invites reflection on vulnerability, on power, and on the obligations, we hold toward one another.

This year, those questions feel especially immediate. In the wake of the Bondi attack, we are reminded that violence and antisemitism are not abstract or distant concerns. They require clarity, vigilance, and a willingness to respond with both moral seriousness and collective resolve.

As the Passover story is retold, it offers a framework for thinking about the present as much as the past. It asks us to consider how memory informs action, and how communities choose to uphold dignity and safety in uncertain times.

Wishing you and yours *Chag Sameach*,

Dr Breann Fallon
CEO

Melbourne Holocaust Museum



Calendar of Events

Every first Wednesday of each month
 Venue: RSL Club
 Address: St Georges Road, Elsternwick
 Date: April 1st
 Time: 10.30 – 12 noon

Dr Paul Valent book launch
 Date: Sunday March 29th

Venue: Melbourne Holocaust Museum
 13 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick
 2.00pm til 3.30pm

“The Hunt for the last Nazis”
 Date: Sunday April 19th
 Time: 4.00pm
 Venue: Classic Cinema



You are cordially invited to the launch of

Know Thyself
Our Hidden Selves in a Precarious World
 by **PAUL VALENT**

The book will be launched by

Viv Parry, co-president
Melbourne Child Survivors of the Holocaust

Guest speaker: Dr. Daniel Heller
Co-director Monash University Lab for Brave
Conversations.

at the Melbourne Holocaust Museum
 13 Selwyn St, Elsternwick

on

Sunday 29 March 2026 at 2 pm

Please RSVP by Monday 23 March

Bookings: <https://events.humanitix.com/book-launch-know-thyself-by-paul-valent>