

# WIENER LIBRARY NEWS

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## FROM WIENER TO VIENNA

**I**n November 2005 the Library will hold a special gala fundraising event.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Austria has most generously offered his London Residence as the venue. The evening will comprise a reception, a recital by the renowned bass-baritone Gidon Saks and conclude with a buffet supper. This promises to be a very special occasion indeed and a rare opportunity to be entertained in such marvellous and exclusive surroundings – while helping the Library to raise funds for its vital mission.

As the Library continues its preparations to move to new premises no later than 2009, funds are urgently needed to help with this enormously challenging project. At the same time, we have a pressing need to boost the Endowment Fund, which generates the income that allows the Library to fulfil its mission (an annual grant from the German Foreign Office is another vital plank in supporting our work).

There are many ways of helping the Library carry on its work:

- Join our new Friends scheme
- Consider leaving a legacy
- Make a one-off donation
- Introduce new friends to the Library
- Support our fundraising events
- Donate relevant books and documents.

Over the last 18 months we have held a series of early evening events which have helped us to make contact

*(Continued on page 2)*

## RECORD OPEN DAY



*Director Ben Barkow chatting with Ludwig Spiro, one of our highly valued volunteers.*

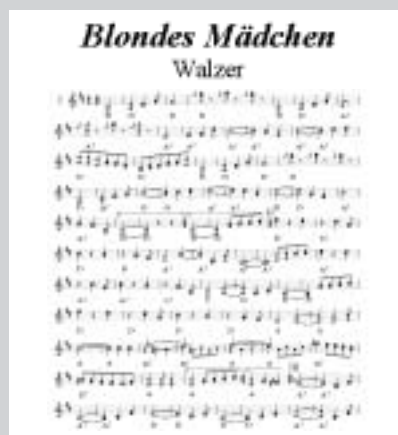
**R**ecord crowds attended the Wiener Library's Open Day on 8 May 2005, a date expressly chosen to coincide with the 60th anniversary commemoration events held across Europe.

The day provided an opportunity for many new people to visit the Library, as well as welcoming old friends and supporters. In an introductory session, Ben Barkow, Director, Kat Hübschmann, Senior Librarian, and Katherine Klinger, Education and Outreach, described the daily work of the Library and our ongoing educational work. Jeannette Rosenberg, Jewish Genealogical Society, continued by giving a brief overview of how to trace relatives, particularly from Central and Eastern Europe. Visitors were then invited to tour the Library, including the archive in the basement.

In each room of the Library, members of staff were on hand, giving advice and answering questions. Georgia Vossou's expert team of NADFAS conservators patiently demonstrated conservation techniques, meticulously working on faded and fraying documents throughout the afternoon. Howard Falksohn, our Archivist, answered many questions about documents and showed

some of the Library's most interesting collections, often donated by the public. And Marek Jaros, our Photographic Archivist, displayed many of our unique photographs and encouraged visitors to bring photos often left discarded at home, but of great interest to us. The Library staff had also produced an illustrated display of the history of the Library, with a time-line reflecting some of the high, as well as low, points in our long and distinguished history. It is hoped that this will be transferred onto cd-rom, as well as our website, so that visitors and readers will be able to access this information from across the world.

Up to 150 people crowded into the Library during the afternoon and it was particularly encouraging to hear that many had finally crossed the threshold, after many years of intending to visit. The last Open Day was held four years ago, but the next Open Day will definitely take place sooner: one simple reason for this is that in four years time we will no longer be in Devonshire Street, as our lease runs out. Thus, the next Open Day will also be a farewell to the 50-year history of our time in this special and atmospheric building, and mark the beginning of our next phase.



(Continued from first page)

with a range of people willing to help us raise the funds we need. Most had not been familiar with the Library before their visit but found the experience of seeing our collections and hearing about our work so moving that they wish to become further involved. These new allies are enormously important to us and we hope that they will enjoy their association with the Library for many years to come.

Tickets for *From Wiener to Vienna* will be available from September onwards. Places are limited and demand is expected to be great.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Rod Digges at the Library to reserve a place.

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# NEW ACQUISITION:

**T**he Wiener Library has acquired a copy of the famous and very rare *Anti-Nazi*, a handbook for the fight against the NSDAP. This is an important addition to our collection particularly since it was produced by the forerunner of the Wiener Library – the so-called Büro Wilhelmstrasse, a department of the Centralverein.

The Centralverein Deutscher Staatsbürger Jüdischen Glaubens (Central Union of German Citizens of Jewish Faith) was the largest and most significant German-Jewish organisation of its time. Founded in 1893 it had ca. 60,000 members in 555 local chapters in 1933. Its mission was to safeguard the civil and social equality of the Jews in Germany while fostering their German identity.

Alfred Wiener joined the Berlin section of the CV in 1919 and rose to become Deputy Director of the national organisation from 1923 to 1933. Eva Reichmann, later Director of Research at the Wiener Library, worked for the CV from 1924 until 1939. Her portfolio included culture, education and social problems, and from 1933 she edited its monthly magazine *Der Morgen*. Hans Reichmann, who later headed the United Restitution Fund in London and was a close personal friend of Wiener's, was involved in the local chapter at Breslau before he moved to Berlin and worked in the legal department from 1927 to 1939. He was the contact for the Büro Wilhelmstrasse.

These younger leaders of the CV became increasingly concerned about the election successes of the NSDAP in the later 1920s. However, the CV did not want to commit itself to any political wing and it was thought that criticism of the Nazis by a Jewish organisation would be counter-productive. So it was that in 1929, the CV established a clandestine office to produce counter-propaganda against the NSDAP. This office was known as "Büro Wilhelmstrasse" due to its location in Berlin.

The main driving force behind the BW was Walter Gysling, a non-Jewish journalist. Gysling recognised that the NSDAP was an entirely new type of political movement and party which had to be systematically analysed and new methods to fight it had to be devised. As a first step the BW collected all the material about, by and against the Nazis they could get their hands on. For example a volunteer, a PE and shorthand teacher named Fedderer, regularly visited both large and small Nazi public meetings. It was forbidden to take notes at these gatherings but Fedderer was able to scribble quotes on his cuffs.

The material from this ever-growing archive was used to produce leaflets and posters countering Nazi claims and refuting misinformation. Regular reports were distributed to newspapers, and party and trade union officials to aid their fight against the Nazis.

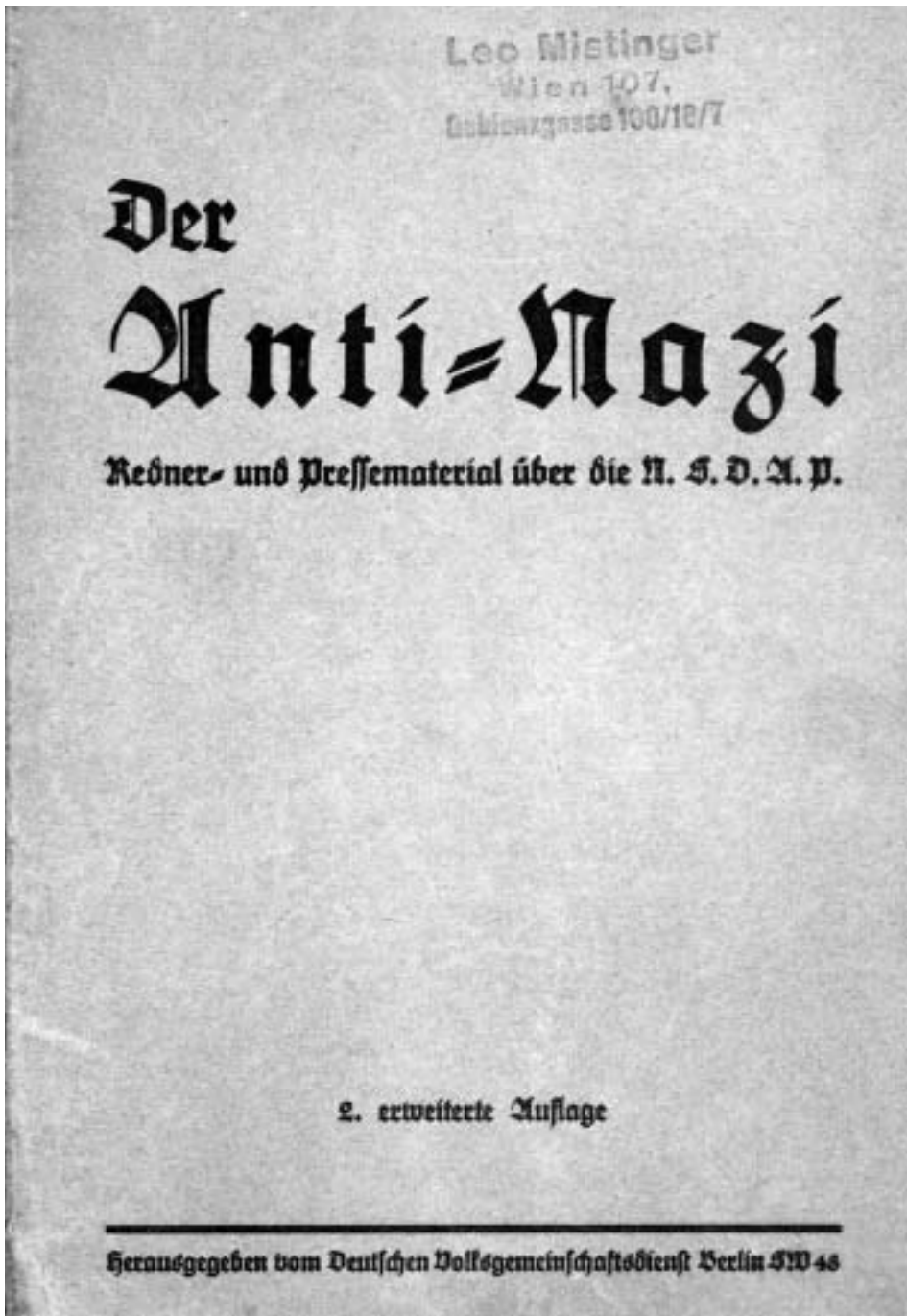
The most famous of all their publications is the *Anti-Nazi*. The first edition was probably dictated by Gysling in May 1930 and published as a booklet containing 32 pages. Before the election in September 1930, two more editions of 180,000 copies each, with more than 100 pages, were published. By 1932 the *Anti-Nazi* had grown to 189 pages.

These later editions were published as a collection of loose leaves in a cardboard folder, ca. A5 sized. The texts consist of summaries of Nazi policies and ideological ideas each of which is juxtaposed by dispassionate counter-arguments and facts. This format was copied from a CV publication called the *Anti-Anti : Blätter zur Abwehr, Tatsachen zur Judenfrage*, a collection of material countering antisemitism. (We have two editions in our collection.)

The reason for this peculiar format was its flexibility and ease of use during public meetings. The second revised edition, published in 1932, includes some tips on how to use it to build an argument against a Nazi speaker.

- One should focus on one or two topics, choose the corresponding pages from the *Anti-Nazi* and thus be able to disseminate and refute any Nazi arguments.

# DER ANTI-NAZI



- It is not advisable to let others see the *Anti-Nazi*.
- Rather than cite the *Anti-Nazi* as the source one should always refer to the original source of a quote or fact, which is cited in the *Anti-Nazi*.

Our copy of the *Anti-Nazi* comes from the collection of Leo Mistingner, 1904-2001, an Austrian anti-fascist. Born in Vienna to a working-class family he grew up in Wien-Rudolfsheim and was a committed socialist. A member of the SAJ (Sozialistische Arbeiterjugend) from 1918 and involved in anti-fascist activities from 1934, Mistingner was arrested by the Gestapo in 1943. After months in prison he was deported to Flossenbürg where he was liberated by Americans troops. Mistingner returned to Vienna, joined the Socialist Party of Austria (SPÖ) and became very active in educating young socialists in the post-War period.

## SIMPLIFYING THE SEARCH

Howard Falksohn, the Wiener Library Archivist, is a member of a network consisting of archivists from a number of institutions with similar collections, including Yad Vashem, the Central Archives of the History of the Jewish People, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, and the Central Zionist Archives, amongst others.

The purpose of this group is to provide a forum in which archivists are able to exchange and discuss information and ideas about the management of their collections. A dedicated listserv has been created for this purpose, which enables e-mails to be sent to all members of the group. The group also has its own website.

The International Shoah Archivists' Working Forum (ISAWF), as it is called, has been specifically working towards the creation of a database that will enable researchers to search at collection level across the hundreds of institutions worldwide which hold Holocaust and Nazi-era archives and document collections. A final draft version of the data input form has been agreed upon so that institutions can now begin to submit collection level information for inclusion on the database.

There is no date set for the fully completed database, but it should be an excellent resource for researchers when it is finished.

Meanwhile the retrospective cataloguing of the Wiener Library document collections is completed. Descriptions of the following collections are now accessible via our online document database at [www.wienerlibrary.co.uk](http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk): Comité voor Joodsche Vluchtelingen, Amsterdam, 1933-1939; Far Eastern Jewish Central Information Bureau, 1938-1939; Committee for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes in Baltic Countries, 1948-1971; Boris Tödtli and "Weltendienst", 1934-1938; and Jüdische Kulturbund, 1933-1939.

## WEB NEWS

The Wiener Library website, now in its third incarnation, continues to be a great success with an average of 5,000 hits per week. The site is proving very effective in serving those who may find it difficult to make regular visits to us. Additionally, analysis of the statistics recorded by our servers provides valuable information about the interests of users both in the UK and around the world.

Prior to the use of the internet, the kind of information gained from web usage records would have had to be gathered by expensive and often extended research using focus groups, customer questionnaires and the like, activities that are usually well beyond the financial and human resources of small charitable organisations.

“Web stats” from the current site allow us to build an accurate picture of visitors’ interests; this in turn allows the Library to be more confident that decisions regarding site development are based firmly on user interests and needs.

One example of how the web is now shaping developments is our response to the fact that a large proportion of visitors are drawn to the photo archive section of the site. While this already provides valuable information regarding use of images from our archive, figures suggest that further work in this area would be fruitful. Work is already underway to make a large selection of our images searchable directly from the website.

As the use of the site increases and more information is gathered, Library staff will continue to look for patterns of usage that help us respond more quickly and effectively to our users.

## IMAGES FROM THE ARCHIVES

# GERMAN BEACHES – “JUDENFREI!”

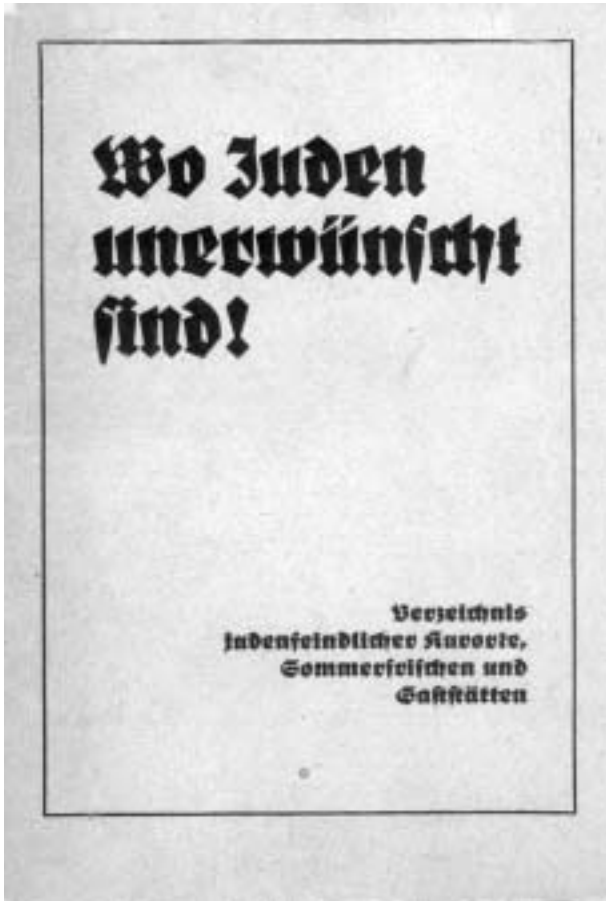


*Expulsion of Jewish children from public swimming baths in Mannheim, documented in the Nazi paper Der Stürmer, 1935.*

In April 1933 the newly established Nazi government took the first official steps to deprive the Jewish population of all means to make a living, in the form of a boycott of Jewish shops and a law to remove Jews from the civil service. The destruction of the economic existence of the Jews was complemented by their successive exclusion from spheres of leisure and recreation. That month also saw the expulsion of Jews from all sports clubs, from August they were barred from using the Strandbad Wannsee in Berlin, and subsequently from all public swimming baths. However, this antisemitic ostracism had already begun years prior to the Nazi takeover. Since the end of the 1920s a growing number of pubs, hotels and in some cases entire tourist resorts took an openly anti-Jewish attitude.



*Bathing fun in 1920s Germany and Czechoslovakia. From the Neumann photo collections. Karel and Ludwig Neumann were Jews who just a few years later were forced out of their countries.*



"Where Jews are unwelcome!" Brochure, published in 1931 by a Jewish journal, listing antisemitic pubs, hotels and tourist resorts in Germany and Austria.



"Norderney is free of Jews." Promotional sign from the 1930s.



The Strandbad Wannsee in Berlin ca. 1930, then the largest public swimming baths in Central Europe.

## PRESERVING THE UNPUBLISHED

In the March edition of the *AJR Journal* Professor Edward Timms outlined the project of the Centre for German Jewish Studies at Sussex University to document the existence and location of unpublished materials relating to German-Jewish refugees in Britain.

Professor Timms mentioned in his article that although the Centre seeks to locate such collections, the University of Sussex is unable to receive and preserve the documents itself.

Potential contributors to the database project might like to know that the Wiener Library, apart from being one of the major sources whose holdings will be recorded by the project, is actively seeking to take in these kinds of papers.

We have a particular interest in family papers and private correspondence recording the experiences and fate of individuals – although we also have a significant amount of institutional archives including that of the “Reunion of the Kindertransport” (given by Bertha Leverton).

We are often asked to take in papers, photos and “memorabilia” after a refugee or survivor has died, because his or her family cannot read German and have little interest in the detailed history of their family. In one notable case recently the Library acquired a collection of private documentation only because our Librarian, Katharina Hübschmann, gave up her Sunday to rescue 12 boxes of letters and photographs from a skip.

If you have any papers you think might be of interest to the Wiener Library, please contact us. We can also offer advice on the best ways of storing documentation for long-term preservation.

*If you have any enquiries please contact Howard Falksohn, our Archivist, at the Wiener Library.*

## MEET THE STAFF

# MIRIAM HAARDT

**M**iriam Haardt joined the staff here in 2003 as the Cataloguer of the Wiener Library and at the beginning of this year was promoted to Deputy Senior Librarian.

Miriam grew up in Moringen, Germany, a small town in Lower Saxony, which had had one of the earliest concentration camps, situated in the town's centre. In the early 1980s, in common with similar sites in Germany, a number of conflicts arose about how to deal with the past and the present. One result of these conflicts was the founding of a group that fought for a memorial site to be established and invited former camp inmates to visit. She met a number of survivors and listened to their stories when they came to

visit the town that many of them had vowed they would never set foot in again.

After working in a bookshop in Göttingen between 1990 and 1993, Miriam started her university studies in Bremen: *Kulturwissenschaft* (Cultural Studies), English and German. Here, she concentrated on Nazi Germany and how German society has dealt with its past. Her dissertation about the debate on the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe was published: *Zwischen Schandmal und nationaler Sinnstiftung : die Debatte um das Holocaust-Mahnmal in Berlin* (Bremen 2001). The Library holds a copy.

After university, Miriam moved to Berlin and did a two-year postgraduate training course as a *Wissenschaftliche Dokumentarin* (Information Specialist), which included work practice and internships in newspapers, multimedia institutions and libraries. During this time she worked for the Library of the German Institute for Human Rights and the Library of the House of the Wannsee Conference. Here she decided that the field of Holocaust memorial site education centres and libraries was the field in which she would like to use her experiences and skills. When she saw the advert for a cataloguer in the Wiener Library in London, she immediately knew that this was the job for her!

She enjoys working at the Wiener Library in a small but dedicated team of librarians, an archivist and volunteers. Miriam catalogues, classifies and indexes books, pamphlets, tapes and videos on the computer to make the material searchable. She also maintains and develops the in-house thesaurus (a finding aid), supervises the volunteers from *Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste* (Action Reconciliation Service for Peace), interns and Austrian *Gedenkdiener*, answers readers' enquiries and is involved in various Library projects. You can find her on the enquiry desk in the Reading Room one day a week.

And, as there is more to life than work, you might meet her in cinemas, theatres, or lindy-hopping (swing-dancing) wherever and whenever possible.



*Miriam Haardt.*

## EDUCATION REPORT

The early evening lectures have continued to attract large audiences, with an overflow room serving as the only option for many of those registering late. The undoubted success of the lecture series is due not only to a superb programme of speakers, but the quality of the ongoing intellectual relationship between ourselves, the Leo Baeck Institute and the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University.

### Highly subscribed

Lectures during the first part of the year included the annual Hilde and Max Kochmann Memorial lecture, given by Professor Edward Timms on Karl Kraus, and a lecture on revenge, or more accurately post-Holocaust “revenge restraint”, given by Dr Jael Geis. Possibly the most over-subscribed lecture we have ever had was given by Professor John Rohl who spoke on the Kaiser and the Jews, a subject clearly touching an audience determined to try to understand the roots of antisemitism and the origins of the Holocaust.

### Complementary lectures

Later in the first half of the year, Dr Cynthia Hooper, a Fraenkel prizewinner, delivered a lecture on the Stalinist era and the role of the ordinary citizen in denunciation and surveillance. The lecture was complemented three weeks later by Professor Richard Evans’ 60th anniversary commemoration lecture on coercion and consent among ordinary people in Nazi Germany. Our final lecture of the series was delivered by Nikolaus Wachsmann, Birkbeck College, another previous Fraenkel prizewinner. His topic, “Prisons and Camps: Terror and Confinement in Nazi Germany” lucidly clarified the differences between the two types of incarceration leading up to the outbreak of war.



Registration of an inmate at Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

## THE PRESS ARCHIVE

Since its beginnings in 1934 the Wiener Library has collected and classified press cuttings from newspapers all over the world. During the Second World War these cuttings and information from other sources were published in two periodicals which were distributed to government departments, the BBC and Jewish organisations worldwide. Now they are a wonderful resource for readers who can access material on certain subjects from over 20 newspapers.

Over the years the focus of the collection has evolved significantly. The first press cuttings classification schedule covers the years 1933-1945 and concentrates very much on the crimes of the Nazis and the international response. The second schedule was drawn up during the late 1940s and by now covers material from 1946 to 2004. It includes very important cuttings on war crimes trials, the growth of German-Jewish communities post-1945, and the development of museums on the location of the facilities of persecution as well as the beginnings of the Cold War.

This year we have drawn up a new classification schedule which focuses on the causes and legacies of the Holocaust. The schedule makes modern subjects such as the second generation, public memory and comparative genocide studies more accessible to readers.

The press cuttings archive is run almost exclusively by volunteers and the Library and its readers owe them a big thank you.

**SPECIAL THANKS** for donating books, documents and other items to the Library go to:

Gerhard Langlois, Alastair Davidson, Renate Gallop, John H. Higgs, Harold Jarvis, Michael Kean, C.T. Marx, Arnost Polak, Thomas Rahe, Maria Ross, Kurt Treitel and Renée Tyack.

# PICTURES FROM THE OPEN DAY



*The Library's Conservationist and the NADFAS volunteers explaining their work.*



*Archivist Howard Falksohn talking to visitors about the Library's document collection.*



*A record crowd was welcomed at the Open Day.*



*Our Accessions Librarian Michaela Meiser discussing her work outside the Reading Room...*



*...where Jeannette Rosenberg introduces the crowd to genealogical research.*