

Londýnský kroužek Ostraváků
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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Contents

Ostravak Meeting	1
Follow-up to our Ostrava Trip in July	1
Plaques in the Ohel and Stolpersteine	3
Search for Heirs	3
More Ostravaks	3
City of Culture 2015	6
Our Archive	6
Matters Financial	6
More Ostravaks	6

Ostravak Meeting

We are delighted to give you lots of advance notice that the next meeting of Ostravaks will take place on **Sunday May 15th 2011** and that our Guest of Honour will be H. E. The Czech Ambassador, Mr Michael Žantovský. Make a note in your diary!

As usual, there will be an exhibition of photographs and documents from our collection and a short presentation of some of the interesting and exciting things we have found. There will be afternoon tea and lots of time to chat. And, as usual, we are looking for sponsors to cover the costs of the tea. Please contact Monica or David about this (cheques payable to KSDS Trust, please).

Follow-up to our Ostrava Trip in July

In Newsletter #16 we gave a lengthy report of our very exciting and emotional trip to Ostrava and also mentioned some of the articles that had appeared in the local press and radio/TV about us. Michal and Libuše Salomonovic have kept a complete list of articles in the Czech media. Here is an article that appeared in the magazine of the British Czech and Slovak Association.

Stumbling blocks will remind citizens of the families who disappeared

In June, 27 Stolpersteine (stumbling blocks) were laid in Ostrava in the Czech Republic, in memory of Jewish people who were murdered in the Holocaust, reports David Lawson of the Kingston *Sacháton & Dáček* Synagogue.

These cobblestone-sized brass plates were laid in the pavement outside the houses in which the people lived before being sent off to the concentration camps and death. The stones record the name of each resident, their date of birth, where they were deported to and the date of their death.



Stolpersteine for the Slatner family

Mr Lawson commented that the preparation and laying of the plaques was the easy part. Much more testing was the checking of names, dates and actual locations for the plaques.

Street names and indeed positions have changed over the past 70 years and it has proved very difficult in some cases to identify the correct location," he said.

"Fortunately, we had the full co-operation of the Ostrava City authorities and the help of the Salomonovič family in Ostrava, who did a huge amount of research on our behalf. Without all this help, the project would not have succeeded."

Kingston Synagogue has a sefer torah on loan from the Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust which came from Ostrava and a small group from the synagogue has been researching the history of Ostrava and its Jewish Community. They have now made contact with well over 100 Ostravaks worldwide and have amassed a significant archive of material. It will be kept in the Jewish Museum in Prague and electronic copies will be available through the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Members of the Ostrava network wanted to commemorate their loved ones by laying the Stolpersteine.

We were contacted by Aleš Hanek of the Czech Stolperstein Association, who sent an email:

From: Stolpersteine CZ
To: monsonn@talktalk.net ; lawsonassoc@btinternet.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2010 1:20 PM
Subject: Ostrava Stolpersteine

Dear Monica, dear David,

in case I am writing to completely wrong people, I apologize. Having found your community newsletter, I was hoping you could help me get in touch with the people behind the Stolpersteine-laying in Ostrava last June.

I am with the association Stolpersteine CZ o.s., we are very small (just three volunteers), based in Prague and it's actually us who started the Stolpersteine in the Czech Republic three years ago. Since then, we have somewhat expanded, we emancipated ourselves from the Czech Union of Jewish Students, where we originally launched the project. Nowadays, we are doing the Stolpersteine in Prague and some smaller locations which do not have the capacity to organize it for themselves. We cooperate with other teams – in Teplice, Olomouc and Brno.

We are also running a website at www.stolpersteine.cz which contains, among other things and somewhat hidden, the profiles of the victims for whom the stones were laid in CZ. (The profiles so far are only in Czech but we are slowly translating them into English and German as well. See some of them here: <http://www.stolpersteine.cz/en/about-project/stolpersteine-in-prague/placed-stones>.) Each profile contains the information on: address, name, inscription on the stone, some additional data from the online database of the Czech victims, pictures of the stone. But most importantly, we are gradually adding a certain "personalizing" element to it, contained mainly in the pictures of the victim, where they exist and are available, and a brief paragraph about the victim (best when put together by living relatives or anyone else who knew the victim). I am attaching such a complete profile translated into English.

I would like to add the Ostrava Stolpersteine to our website as well. I already have a list of names but I would like to get the: (i) permission of the relatives to publish the profiles, (ii) where available, some photos of the victims, and (iii) personal info on the victims.

I would be very grateful if you can direct me to the right people who were behind Ostrava Stolpersteine endeavor.

All the best,
Ales Hanek
Stolpersteine CZ o.s.

Plaques in the Ohel and Stolpersteine

Some Ostravaks have already asked if it is possible to install further Memorial plaques in the hall (*Ohel*) in the cemetery in Sleská Ostrava. This can be organized, with the agreement of the Jewish Community, and the only restriction is that we need to wait until there is a requirement for at least 6 plaques to make it worthwhile to set up the manufacture. Please let Heinz Vogel (Heinz@vogel.org.uk; telephone:01932 849 405) know if you would like to install a plaque. He will keep a note of all the details and make the necessary arrangements as soon as 6 plaques have been ordered. They will cost about £120 each, installed.

It is also possible to arrange for the laying of *Stolpersteine* but they are more complicated and at least 10 are needed before it is worthwhile to arrange for Demnig to come from Germany to lay them. Again, Heinz Vogel is the contact point.

Search for Heirs

Once again, David Lewin has found some property and is looking for the heirs, so that they can receive it. He writes:

Oskar Herrmann, merchant in Vratislav (in German Breslau - town in Poland - before WW2 it was part of Germany) was the owner of some lands in Pelhrimov. He bought the lands in 1932 from Ms. Bedřiška Herrmann (also merchant), nee. Lüftschnitzova. In 1932 she was residing in Breslau, Opitzstrasse 21, where her signature was verified by notary Mr. Kurt Weis.

Oskar Herrmann was definitely a son of Bedřiška Herrmann, they could live together. Bedřiška Herrmann inherited this (and also another property) on basis of testament from Barbora Herrmann, residing in Pelhrimov (it was in 1900). Brother of Bedřiška Herrmann was probably Karel Lüftschnitz residing in 1900 in Prague.

The whole family was probably Jewish, and left a part of property to Synagogue in Pelhrimov

If you know anything about the family or can help in any way, please contact Monica or David Lawson who will pass on the information to David Lewin.

More Ostravaks

Our network continues to grow!

Peter Barber writes:

I am just writing to let you know that my father Dr Fred (Fritz) Barber (1905-2000) came from Brno and together we visited his childhood home (Bahnhofstrasse/Nádražní 15) in 1986 and again ten years later. I have photos of him in the Jewish secondary school including some pupils who eventually ended up in London - e.g. Otto Rosenberg and Edith Rosenberg née Loewi and Bruno Goldmann. My grandfather, Moritz Barber (1872-1937) moved to Ostrava with his parents Salomon (1829-1896) and Helene/Lea Barber (1841-1899) in about 1890. Helene was a born Feiner and her brother David Feiner also lived in Ostrava for a long period, as did their brother (?) Adolf Feiner. There were various other Barbers - apparently relatives - in Ostrava too.

Peter sent us two wonderful school photographs:



Deutsches Gymnasium ca 1922



Jewish School ca 1910

Peter's father is fourth from the right, third row, standing next to Ernst Reicher. The teachers are Herr Hahn and Fräulein Überall.

Do you recognize anyone in these photos and can you identify them?

Mirjam Halpern recognized the story of the Gordy (Goldberger) family from Newsletter #16. When Mirjam's father was forced to flee from Germany, he came to Ostrava and worked for Peter Gordy's grandfather, Ferdinand, dealing in sausage skins. Mirjam's

father was out of the country on business, in Turkey) when the Germans invaded. His wife and children were later able to join him and they were all saved, by a sausage skin!

George Tyrell's grandfather, Samuel Ambor, was a butcher and made sausages. He was almost certainly a customer of the Goldbergers! Samuel was also a member of the Zabřeh shul, where Ruth Portnoy's grandfather was the Rabbi.

Madeleine Isenberg, who helped with the new layout of this Newsletter, believes that her Goldmann Grandfather, who was a butcher in Ostrava, was also a customer of the Goldberger sausage-skin business!

Bob Wright (geb. Weisz) has written to us from Crete (our fame really is spreading!)

My grandfather Arthur Wohl came from the Sudetenland, and left as a young man for Vienna. He subsequently worked for the Länderbank of Austria, but I know very little of his origins and my mother passed away many years ago. Does this family name ring any bells?

Does anyone have any information?

We have found, through the Ostrava City Archive, a wonderful photograph of Hermann Brodavka, the great grandfather of Naomi Finkelstein. We also have an article (in translation) about Hermann, the inn he ran and the story about his trial for murder! Apparently, he was found guilty but served only 6 weeks in prison so there must have been more to the story. Watch this space!



Hanna Adar writes from Israel:

Dear David

Many thanks for the rich information you gave me in the Newsletter. I am asking you to make a request among the Ostravaks, whether there is someone who remembers the Jewish Elementary School (Juedische Volksschule) or the holiday home for children in Ostravice in the Beskydy. My parents were leading this home in the summer vacation for many years. I would love to hear from them.

Hanna's father was Herr Krauss, who was the Headmaster of the Jewish School. Hanna's email address is: hanaadar@yifat.org.il and she would love to hear from you. Please copy David with your email, as he likes to keep the archive up to date.

Hanna celebrated her 95th birthday a few days ago.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Hanna!

City of Culture 2015

Yehuda Bakon sent us a reference to a website: <http://vimeo.com/14855627> promoting Ostrava as European capital of Culture for 2015. There is a powerful introduction by Vaclav Havel. Unfortunately, despite all of this, and the fact that Ostrava is a wonderful place, the decision went to Plsen. But the video is definitely worth watching.

Our Archive

Jiří Jung continues with organising and cataloguing our archive. He has found several documents where the scan is not of high enough resolution (600 dpi) or where the photograph is distorted or out of focus. David will try and arrange to rescan or re-photograph them.

If you have any photographs or documents that relate to Ostrava and/or your family, please let David have high resolution copies or, if you are willing, send him the originals and he will arrange to copy them and return the originals safely to you.

Meanwhile, you can access some back copies of the Newsletter on our website, which is still under construction:

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

Matters Financial

Perry Gold, the Financial Representative on the Synagogue Board has kindly looked at the accounts for the Group, following our trip to Ostrava.

He confirms that there was a profit from the trip to Ostrava, the *Stolpersteine* and the plaques in the *Ohel* of just over £1500 in total. He also confirms that the correct amount is in the Group bank account, corresponding to the amount shown in our accounts! This amount is available to support the ongoing archiving work.

More Ostravaks

Do you know of any other Ostravaks or their families who are not already on our circulation list? If you do, please give their details to David or Monica.

Monica Popper
Ranelagh Cottage
7 Ailsa Road
TWICKENHAM
Middlesex
TW1 1QJ
UK
Tel 00 44 20 8891 3508
Email: monsonn@talktalk.net

David Lawson
29 Malcolm Drive
SURBITON
Surrey
KT6 6QS
UK
Tel: 00 44 20 8390 8142
Email: lawsonassoc@btinternet.com

Let us end with a New Year Greeting from the Salomonovič Clan:

