



ISSUE 4 • SUMMER 2022

THE JHASW/CHIDC NEWSLETTER

Official Newsletter of the Jewish History Association of South Wales / Cymdeithas Hanes Iddewig De Cymru

A MESSAGE FROM JHASW/CHIDC:

Welcome from the JHASW/CHIDC Treasurer.

I have been JHASW/CHIDC's Treasurer since we first started in November 2017. I was Treasurer of Cardiff Reform Synagogue for four years from 2004 and I'd been a Trustee of other charities so I knew a little about financial statements and the obligations of the Treasurer and the other Trustees.

The obvious responsibility is maintaining the bank account, recording income and making and recording payments. Banking now is almost exclusively online. One recent new experience has been making international payments by electronic transfer; on the whole it's a fairly straightforward process but being required to provide the address of the payee's bank branch in Düsseldorf or wherever has meant a lot of Googling and a bit of guesswork...

My other important task is keeping our accounts up to date and sending them each year to an 'independent examiner'. As a small charity, we must have our accounts reviewed independently and included in an annual report which is uploaded to the Charity Commission website. I provide a spreadsheet and copies of bank statements to the accountant and leave it to them to check that it all balances. I've just sent this year's figures to our accountants so wish me luck!

John, JHASW/CHIDC Treasurer, Board of Trustees

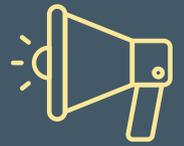
NEW PROJECT STARTING OCTOBER

We are delighted to announce that we have been approved for a grant from the Welsh Government Volunteering Wales Grant Scheme, administered by WCVA Cymru. (Only around 15% of the 163 applicants were successful.) The project aims to get a wider range of people from ethnic minorities into heritage, where they are under-represented. We will enable participants to gain useful skills and experience. The project will start in October and we will be looking for volunteers from ethnic minority communities.

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IN THE NEWS:



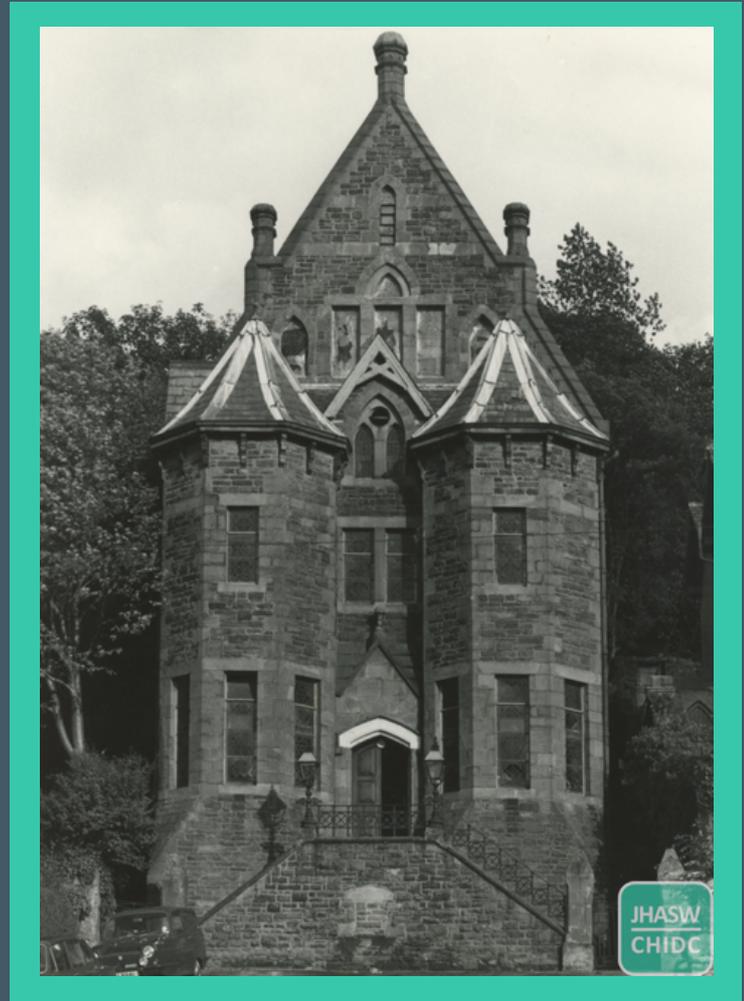
"WELSH JEWISH HERITAGE CENTRE PROJECT AWARDED £500K IN LOTTERY AND GOVERNMENT GRANTS"*

An exciting update from the news section in our spring 2022 [newsletter](#)! The Welsh Jewish Heritage Centre Project has received funding of £500,000 from lottery and government grants.

Having been repurposed in a variety of ways, before finally closing for good in 2004, the former Merthyr Tydfil synagogue, a Grade II listed building, is in the process of being redeveloped by the Foundation for Jewish Heritage into a Heritage Centre. The Heritage Centre aims to highlight the rich Jewish history in the area as well as religious and ethnic diversity.

Funding for the project comes from several organisations including a £400,000 National Lottery Heritage Fund's award which will cover the development phase. Just under £108,000 has been provided by the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Programme and £25,000 from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

The project will be incredibly important in helping preserve this fascinating building and the rich Jewish heritage of Wales.



*Merthyr Synagogue, 1978, shortly before it closed.
Image courtesy of David Jacobs.*

**Source: JC Reporter, 'Welsh Jewish Heritage Center project awarded £500k in lottery and government grants', [The Jewish Chronicle](https://www.thejc.com/news/community/welsh-jewish-heritage-centre-project-awarded-500k-in-lottery-and-government-grants-6rxy2L7wV6xml0VeeoQ0z), (2022), <https://www.thejc.com/news/community/welsh-jewish-heritage-centre-project-awarded-500k-in-lottery-and-government-grants-6rxy2L7wV6xml0VeeoQ0z> [accessed 18 July 2022]*

Welsh News Reporter, 'Historic Synagogue fallen into disrepair to be redeveloped after huge investment', [Welsh News](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/historic-synagogue-fallen-disrepair-redeveloped-24389618), (2022) <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/historic-synagogue-fallen-disrepair-redeveloped-24389618> [accessed 21 July 2022]



OUR PROJECT UPDATES

Swansea & District Heritage Trail

We plan to launch the Heritage Trail in January. There is still time to send us any information about the Jewish communities in Swansea, Neath, Port Talbot, Llanelli and the Swansea valley. We are very grateful for what we have already received. We need more information on the Windsmoor and Louis Marx factories, and the Zion Mule Corps. If you think you can help please e-mail us at heritage.trails@jhasw.org.uk.

Oral History Project

Our oral history project, 'Voices Through Time', has now recorded 44 interviews with people across six different countries. We also aim to include as many different voices as possible, capturing and preserving stories across generations and genders. We have interviewed individuals from the south Wales orthodox and reform communities, and also people who identify strongly with their Jewish heritage but are not affiliated with any synagogue. Through this we are continuing to build a picture of the families who either briefly passed through south Wales, or made it their permanent home. If you have a story to share with us, please contact our Oral History Officer:
Laura.henley.harrison@jhasw.org.uk

The European Network of Testimony-based Digital Education

10 new Holocaust education lesson plans are drafted and in the final design phase. The materials for each lesson are in English and Welsh, using video testimonies from the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive. One of our aims was to produce materials that allowed students to understand the individual stories of the Jewish lives affected by the Holocaust and the historical connections to Wales. They also reflect current reforms in the Welsh curriculum. We are now planning the second phase, involving training and promoting the new resources to teachers and schools.

Côf a lithr, llythyrau a geidw: Creating Holocaust resources for Welsh schools

This project is delivered in partnership with The Centre for the Movement of People (CMOP) at Aberystwyth University and is supported by the Association of Jewish Refugees, Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust, Jewish Historical Society of England, and Garfield Weston Foundation. We have created and published on the People's Collection Wales Learn section and on Hwb, the Welsh Government's educational platform, 12 of the proposed 20 lessons. New topics include the General Paper and Box Manufacturing Company at Treforest Trading Estate, and Internment Parts 1 and 2. The resources are bilingual and locally relevant to teachers and students in Wales.

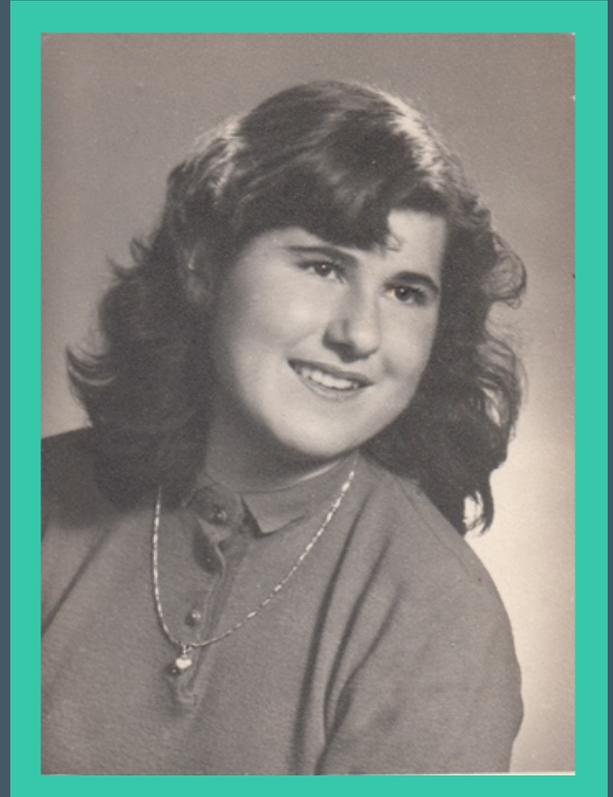
SPOTLIGHT ON: ORAL HISTORY - UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS



During a recent oral history interview, I heard for the first time about a memorial tree in Alexandra Gardens in Cardiff. It was planted in 1985, alongside a stone commemorating the actions of Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Jewish lives in Nazi-occupied Hungary. The memorial was laid by the Cardiff Wallenberg Committee, and Cardiff City Council donated the tree – an Ailanthas Altissima, commonly known as the Tree of Heaven.

So why is there a memorial to Raoul Wallenberg in Cardiff? There were no newspaper articles written about the dedication. However, in the crowd on the day of the dedication was a Hungarian Jewish lady. Z.S's family had owned a dairy business in the centre of Budapest. As the situation for the Jews began to worsen, Wallenberg set up safe houses, hospitals and soup kitchens for them.

Z.S's family moved to a room in one of the safe houses. One morning, uniformed men came to the door and ordered them out at gunpoint. They were marched down to the Danube and suddenly a man approached, spoke with the soldiers and they were returned to their apartment. A few weeks later the soldiers returned, the family were again marched towards the Danube and the same man appeared out of a truck and picked up Z.S. She believes that this man was Raoul Wallenberg. Z.S and her mother went into hiding under the floorboards in a cramped cellar of a local bakery for around two months. Her father helped in the bakery. Occasionally they would take off their yellow stars which identified them as Jews, and cross the river to throw bread to their relatives in safe houses.



*Z.S in Budapest, May 1956
Image courtesy of J.D.*

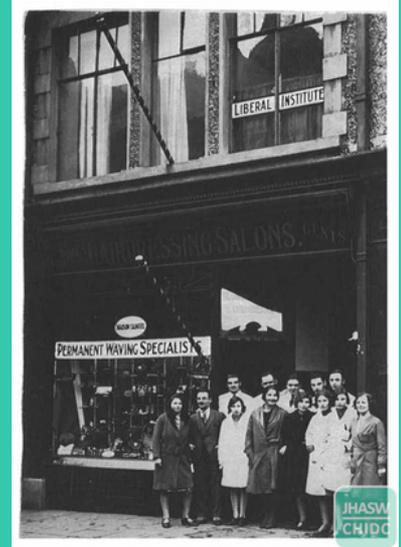
Wallenberg began forging documents to save individuals as they were being marched to the Austrian border before their onward journey to Auschwitz. Tens of thousands of Jews in Budapest had survived because of Wallenberg and his supporters. The family eventually settled in Cardiff. Wallenberg's humanitarian efforts have rippled through the generations. Those who owe their existence to him commemorate his courage.

With thanks to J.D. for sharing their Oral History with the JHASW/CHIDC on 09 May 2022.

APPEALS AND WAYS YOU CAN HELP

PONTYPRIDD APPEAL!

We're in the process of cataloguing some items related to businesses in and around Pontypridd, but we're having trouble finding information on some of them. If anyone out there knows anything about 'Sammy the Barber', or his business at 'Maison Samuel', we'd be delighted to hear from you!



MISSING PAGES

People's Collection Wales has a booklet published in 1980 which contains the history of the Swansea Hebrew Congregation. Pages 56/57 and 64/65 are missing.

Another version of this booklet is on JewishGen, but that shows only pages with the history, and misses out adverts. Page 57 has a photograph of the bombed Goat Street Synagogue. Page 65 has photographs of the inside of that synagogue and the 1768 burial ground lease.

Have you a copy of this booklet and do you know what was on pages 56 and 64?

Incidentally, do you know if there were still any Jewish businesses left in Swansea in 1980? If you have any information, please e-mail us at heritage.trails@jhasw.org.uk.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

As you are all aware, with the exception of your kind donations, we are very dependent on successful grant applications to provide funding for our work.

As an alternative, we propose to fully launch a social enterprise scheme this coming autumn. This scheme will allow us to introduce certain charged-for services, the profits from which will be ploughed back into the charity to provide core-funding which will enable us to continue our work semi-independently of grants.

At the moment, the two most promising areas are providing family history research and providing training in heritage skills.

More to come in the next newsletter!

A THANK YOU

JHASW/CHIDC would like to thank Marilyn Weston and Brian Shane for giving us many volumes of Cajex. This publication started in 1950 as a quarterly magazine of the Association of Jewish Ex-servicemen and Women (Cardiff). It ended in 1994 as the Communal Magazine of South Wales Jewry.

The volumes belonged to their father David Shane. David was born in Brynmawr in 1909. He was a clothing wholesaler and founded the Cardiff Foundation of Jewish Ex-Servicemen, and the local B'nai B'rith. He was also a founding member of the Council of the Christians and Jews. His wife Cornelia was also very involved in WIZO, the women's community organisation. We feel very privileged to have David's Cajex copies.

REMEMBER US!

When people first hear about JHASW/CHIDC's work, we often get told stories about how they, or someone they know, recently had a clear-out and threw out piles of papers/photographs which documented the lives of the Jewish community of south Wales in some way.

If you or someone you know may have such a collection please don't hesitate to reach out to us; we are committed to collecting all south Wales Jewish heritage and we need your help to do it!



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SUPPORT US!

Most of the work that we have accomplished so far has been dependent on grants and support from the community. However, we are acutely aware that there is so much to do that does not fall within the remit of these specific projects and without long-term financial support we will not be able to continue our work preserving and sharing the local Jewish heritage in the way it deserves.

If you would like to help us with our work by making an online donation please click on the link below!

[DONATE!](#)

