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THE JHAW/CHIC NEWSLETTER

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

Scholarship opportunity!

Scholarship details

The School of Arts, Culture and Language, Bangor University

Application Deadline: 14 July 2025

Start Date: 29 September 2025

Project Description:

Funded by the generosity of the Goodwin Family and in conjunction with the Jewish History Association of Wales, this research studentship will explore the contributions and experiences of Jewish medical practitioners (including but not limited to doctors, dentists, psychologists, psychiatrists, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, etc.) in Wales from the eighteenth century onwards. It will investigate how Jewish immigrants entered the medical professions, examining their professional achievements and the challenges they faced, including issues of discrimination and integration.

By analysing health board and professional bodies' records, personal narratives and professional achievements, the significant impact of Jewish medical practitioners on the development of Welsh healthcare will be highlighted.



CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS:

Scholarship details (cont.)

Additionally, it will explore how cultural and religious identities, as well as waves of immigration, influenced medical practices, community interactions, and healthcare within Welsh Jewish communities, and beyond. The project contributes to a broader understanding of the multicultural dimensions of Welsh medical and social history, providing much-needed insights into the diverse backgrounds that have shaped the Welsh healthcare landscape. The project will be supervised by Professor Nathan Abrams.

The scholarship will cover Home Student fees (including the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland, currently £5,006) with an additional stipend for research activities (travel to conferences, archives, oral histories, etc). The studentship would suit a student with a degree in History, History of Science, Jewish Studies, Social Sciences, or cognate disciplines. The student will conduct qualitative and quantitative research into Welsh medical history as well as the archival holdings spread throughout Wales.

UK students are eligible to apply for the Scholarship. You normally need to have achieved at least a 2.1 or equivalent in your first degree to be eligible. You need to apply to study at Bangor University and be made an offer to study before your fee status can be confirmed.

Please send a CV and cover letter to Nathan Abrams, n.abrams@bangor.ac.uk, who can also be contacted if you have any queries.

The Goodwin Memorial Scholarship: The Jewish Medical Heritage of Wales



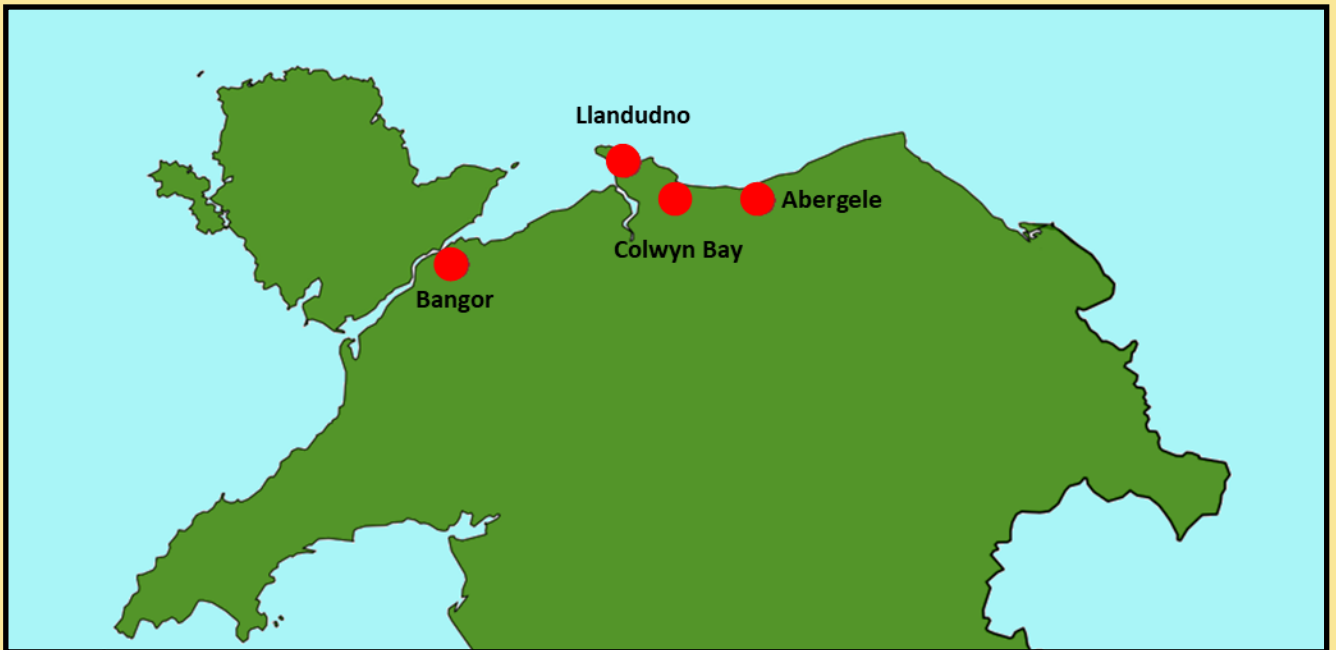
Dr Gerald Goodwin (formerly Gerhard Guttman) was born to Kurt and Helene Guttman (née Cohn) in Beuthen (now Bytom) Upper Silesia, Germany in 1929. With the increasing persecution of Jews in Germany, Kurt and Helene Guttman decided to emigrate. They initially planned to go to Hong Kong but with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war they cancelled their plans and emigrated to England instead in August 1937. They stayed with their friends, Bruno Schindler and his wife Alma and her sister Erna. Bruno and the sisters set up a school for Jewish refugee children (Regents Park School) in Hampstead, London. Gerald and his brother Werner attended this school for a few months to learn English.

The family soon moved to Bristol where Kurt opened a dental practice.

Following the fall of France in 1940, Bristol was declared a "protected area" and the family had to move away as "enemy aliens". They went to a farm near Malmesbury in Wiltshire. Kurt was interned as enemy alien. He was held at a camp near Manchester and later at Lochgilhead, Scotland. He was released in October 1940. The family moved to Porth in the Rhondda valley, South Wales. The brothers went to school in Porth and their father started practising dentistry again. Gerald followed in his father's footsteps, qualified as a dentist and joined the practice.

CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS continued:

In line with our new remit to cover the whole of Wales, we are embarking on a series of projects highlighting the historic Jewish communities in the north.



Jewish Heritage in Abergele: Funded by a grant from the Abergele Town Council, this project is researching Jewish heritage in and around this town in North Wales, including Gwrych Castle which hosted 200 Kindertransport children in the early years of World War 2.



Käthe Kobra, also known as Kate. She was born in Breslau in 1918. Her family were devout Christians, but had converted from Judaism, meaning that they were also singled out for persecution under the Nuremberg Race Laws as "non-Aryan" Christians. Kate came to the UK in 1939, qualified as a teacher of French and German and became a teacher at Clarendon School at Kinmel Hall in Abergele from 1948 until 1975. This image is of Kate at a class picnic on the hockey pitch at Kinmel Hall in 1967.

CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS continued:

The Wartski Memorial and Trail: funded by the Wartski Fund, this project will refurbish the memorial to the Wartski family who were prominent members of the Jewish and business communities in the city.



Founder Morris Wartski standing outside his first shop at 21 High Street, Bangor. Image courtesy of Michael Manson.

Digitisation of the Llandudno and Conwy community archives: funded by the Marc Fitch Fund, this project will continue our previous work on cataloguing the archives by digitising them and making them available for future researchers.

Jewish Heritage in Colwyn Bay: this is a similar project the Abergele project, funded by the Colwyn Bay Town Council.

EVENTS:



Professor Alice Kessler-Harris (image ©Columbia University)

We've been asked to circulate notice of a meeting this month to which all are invited. It's free and there's no need to book.

A Conversation with Professor Alice Kessler-Harris at Cardiff University

10:30am-12:00pm, Friday 18th July

[sbarc | spark building event space \(Room 0.47 at Maindy Road CF24 4HQ\)](#)

We invite you to join us for an intimate and rare conversation with [Alice Kessler-Harris, R. Gordon Hoxie Professor Emerita of American History at Columbia University](#), a leading figure in women's history, labour history, and migration history since the 1970s. She will be ready to speak to her groundbreaking scholarship and activism in these areas, as well as to reflect on her own background growing up in Cardiff in a family of Czech-Hungarian Jewish refugees from Nazism.

Come with curiosity and questions!

Host: Dr Jaclyn Granick, Senior Lecturer in Modern Jewish History, GranickJ@cardiff.ac.uk.

Read highlights from Prof. Kessler-Harris' work:

[Two introductory essays](#) in the 1925 novel *Anzia Yezierska*, Bread Givers, Persea imprint

[A Difficult Woman: The Challenging Life and Times of Lillian Hellman](#)

[An Interview with Alice Kessler-Harris in *Jewish Social Studies*](#) (email Jaclyn for a pdf)

A MESSAGE FROM JHAW/CHIC:



Hello from the Jewish History Association of Wales. You will see that we have changed our name to reflect the fact that we have widened our scope from South Wales to the whole country. We now have several projects underway or lined up which are based in North Wales as well as at least one covering the whole of Wales. A full list of our current and planned work can be found later in the newsletter.

After more than seven years as our Project Manager, Klavdija Erzen has moved on. It is no exaggeration that Klavdija has been the driving force behind the Association's development and we would not have achieved as much as we have without her. We wish her well in the future.

Rob Jones who has managed our digital work and data registration issues remains with us, at the moment on a voluntary basis but soon to begin paid work again. And Laura Henley Harrison, who has been our Project Officer for some time will be stepping up to succeed Klavdija as Project Manager.

As you will know, we had some difficult moments financially over the past year but all these issues have been resolved and we are now back on course, thanks to the generosity of you, our supporters, and Pencare, a local Jewish charity. We look forward to many more years of productive research.

A couple of administrative changes: we now have a role-specific email address for the Treasurer, currently John Minkes, which is treasurer@jhawales.org.uk. This will make the transition simpler when John hands the role on. And we also have a new bank account, with Metro Bank. The account name is JHAW, sort code 23-05-80, account number 56055975.

Trustees - an update

In the closing months of 2024, we appointed three new trustees, Gaby Koppel, Lynda Maddock and Professor Nathan Abrams. We now have six trustees in total but we are always ready to welcome new members of the Board. You don't need to live in Cardiff or even in Wales – our meetings are hybrid, part in person and part on zoom.

Stanley Soffa BEM (Chair) : Stanley was born and educated in Cardiff and worked most of his professional life in the south east of Wales. Upon retirement he became chair of the South Wales Jewish Representative Council and was also a member of the Interfaith Council of Wales , the Welsh Assembly's Faith Community Forum and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Positions he no longer holds.

Stanley was always interested in tracing his family history and the history of the Jewish communities of South Wales so it was inevitable that he was a founder member of JHASW in 2017.

Visiting local schools and community groups to talk about Judaism and the Jews of south Wales and welcoming groups to Cardiff Reform Synagogue and representing his community in local and national events remains an important part of his life.

Stephen Waldek: Stephen is a retired NHS consultant. He was born and brought up in Cardiff and studied at the Welsh National School of Medicine. His parents were immigrants from Vienna and the Sudetenland. In addition to his work as a consultant, he was involved in Medical Management ending up as the executive medical director at Salford Royal Hospitals, and since retiring in 2011, he has continued working part time as a consultant to small and medium sized biopharmaceutical companies helping them with the development of new treatments for rare diseases.

Trustees - an update (cont.)

His family were very much involved with what was then Cardiff New Synagogue where he celebrated his bar mitzvah and where he got married. He has always been interested in the history of the Jewish community and especially the communities in Wales.

Lynda Maddock: Lynda has spent forty years in the service of education and Religious Education in particular. She was an RE teacher in a number of different schools and colleges before moving into Higher Education. She lectured in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Wales, Trinity St. David and was the Course Director of the PGCE in Religious Education. More recently, she was the Subject Officer for GCSE Religious Studies at the WJEC Examination Board. She holds undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Divinity and Theology and is close to submitting her PhD thesis.

Gaby Koppel: Born in Wales to refugees from Eastern Europe, Gaby is a journalist, author and television producer with credits across the range of factual TV from *Crimewatch UK* to *Child of Our Time*. Her print work has appeared in *The Sunday Times*, *The Guardian* and *the Daily Mail*, and she is a regular contributor to *The Jewish Chronicle*, where she often writes about her German, Jewish and Welsh heritage. Her debut novel *Reparation*, inspired by her Hungarian mother and set partly in Cardiff, was runner-up for the Society of Authors' Paul Torday Prize, she subsequently sat on the award's judging panel. She is currently working on a new book - the true story behind the making of Hitchcock's film *Psycho*, due out in 2026.

Trustees - an update (cont.)

Nathan Abrams: Nathan Abrams grew up in North London and moved to Wales in 2006, when he accepted a job at Bangor University, where he is a professor of film. He is interested in uncovering the hidden Jewish history of Wales, which stretches back some 2,000 years. Over the past 19 years, he has been involved in various initiatives to rejuvenate Bangor's Jewish community and raise awareness of the hidden history of Jews in North Wales. He has written about Welsh Jewish history for magazines and newspapers. He has created maps, exhibitions, and led walking tours, all of which have won various awards.

John Minkes (Treasurer): John was born in London and brought up in Birmingham but his parents were both from Cardiff and he spent his childhood visiting relatives there before moving to the city as a postgraduate student in 1988; he has lived permanently in Cardiff since 1990. He has always been interested in his family history and hence the history of the Welsh Jewish communities and has been the treasurer of the JHA(S)W since it was established in 2017.

Project Manager

Laura Henley Harrison: Laura graduated with a BA (Hons) in Religious Studies and Archaeology from Lampeter University. Following her graduation, she helped with the establishment of the Virginia Holocaust Museum at their new premises in Richmond as researcher and signage writer. She has been working with the Jewish History Association since 2019 undertaking research and oral history interviews. She is also currently supporting the Foundation for Jewish Heritage as they transform the disused synagogue in Merthyr Tydfil into the Welsh Jewish Cultural Centre. If you would like to get in touch: Laura.henley.harrison@jhawales.org.uk

And finally...

REMEMBER US!

When people first hear about JHAW/CHIC'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 or photographs which documented the lives of the Jewish communities of 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 preserving and sharing all Welsh Jewish heritage and we need your help to do it!

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

If you appreciate the work we do there are many ways you can help.

- You can support us by donating via our website either [online, or you can donate via cheque or Charity Voucher](#). You can also use [Easyfundraising](#) when you shop online. There's no cost to you, but if the site you're using is part of the scheme, they'll contribute towards our funds. Almost all our projects depend on successful funding applications to various organisations. Any money we make by other means goes towards work which is worthwhile, but may not appeal to funders.
- If you want to get involved in the running of the association then maybe consider becoming a Trustee? We are looking for new trustees now!
- Follow us on social media, like and retweet what we post. Tell people about our work. It all helps!