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# 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 to the JHASW/CHIDC newsletter.

Despite the restrictions of Covid-19, JHASW/CHIDC has had a productive year. Examples of projects completed in 2021 include the Cardiff Jewish Heritage Trail, which was officially launched on 8 July, and the JHASW/CHIDC Memorial Tablet website, which presents the results of our research into the 102 Holocaust victims named on the Memorial Tablet in Cardiff Reform Synagogue.

Also completed in 2021 was our project with the Rhondda Cynon Taf museums. We managed to identify, catalogue, and digitise a significant amount of material, which we have uploaded to People's Collection Wales.

New projects started in 2021 include our ENTDE project, which in collaboration with institutions in Hungary, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic, will create digital educational materials using video testimonies of the Shoah to help combat current trends of racism and violence.

More locally, we have begun a project in partnership with Aberystwyth University to develop bilingual, locally relevant Holocaust educational resources for Key Stages 3 and 4 for teachers and students in Wales.

All the above projects were/are funded by grants from major funding bodies and these grants must be spent solely on the related project. However, there remains much to do that falls outside these projects' remits. To help with this work we ran a crowdfunding campaign in 2021 which raised over £5,000.

We are looking forward to continuing success next year.

David Cohen, Trustee

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

After the great success of the digital [Cardiff Jewish Heritage Trail](#), the volunteers at JHASW / CHIDC are next embarking on a Swansea and District Jewish Heritage Trail.

We would therefore love to hear from anyone who has images or stories of Jewish life in Swansea, Port Talbot, Neath or Llanelli.

We are particularly interested in any information about Jewish shops, businesses, personalities or social activities, as well as synagogues and cemeteries.

If you think you can help, please contact us via e-mail at [heritage.trails@jhasw.org.uk](mailto:heritage.trails@jhasw.org.uk)

Please note that any images may be published on the internet, so we will need to know where they are from, so that we can identify any rights holders.

JHASW  
CHIDC



# JHASW / CHIDC PRESENTS: THE CARDIFF REFORM SYNAGOGUE MEMORIAL TABLET PROJECT!

On 9 November, after over two years of arduous research, we launched our Memorial Tablet website featuring the life stories of 102 people who were murdered in the Holocaust and are named on the Cardiff Reform Synagogue Memorial Tablet.

The Tablet was erected in 1954 in memory of the relatives of Synagogue members who had perished in the Nazi terror, and whose last resting place is unknown. Initially, there were 54 names, but in 1999 the Tablet was renovated and a further 48 names were added. The aim of our project was to research and make publicly available the life stories of the people named on the Tablet.

In total, 17 volunteers and two members of staff worked on researching, writing, editing, and proofreading the narratives, translating documents from German, editing the images, clearing copyright, creating captions and citing sources, creating the website and formatting and uploading the material. It was a huge enterprise, and we would have been unable to complete it without our dedicated volunteers. They were absolutely brilliant, and we are immensely grateful for their help.

This work forms part of the *Framing Jewish Histories: towards best practice in rescuing a fragile heritage* project. It was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Jewish Historical Society of England, Cardiff University, and Jewish Memorial Council.



<https://www.jhasw.com/holocaust-memorial-tablet>



## THE VOLUNTEER'S EXPERIENCE:

JHASW/CHIDC volunteer Krista Benedikz, who took part in editing and proofreading the Memorial Tablet stories stated: "It was really interesting reading the stories as they came through and looking at the different approaches people took to researching and writing them. One story which stood out was the Tina Schnabel narrative. It was written from an interesting perspective, exploring change and continuity in the Jewish community by looking at topics such as music and musical education.

The Jacob Kotlan narrative was also interesting. I found editing the opening extract fascinating, as it explores how material and evidence relating to the Kotlan family survived. I found this information invaluable in looking at the lives of the individual people mentioned, be they mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, sisters, brothers, sons, or daughters.

Editing and proofreading the stories developed so many skills, in particular, attention to detail, referencing and teamwork to help edit the material for the Memorial Tablet website."

# OUR PROJECT UPDATES

## Social Enterprise:

We continue to make progress towards generating income by developing training and consultancy packages for small and medium-sized Jewish organisations and communities, to help them preserve and share their heritage. We have put together a 'menu' of the services we feel we are qualified to offer. The next step will be to identify a small number of communities to whom we can make an initial approach to gauge their reaction and incorporate their suggestions into our future programme.

## Oral History Project:

After a successful Crowdfunder campaign, we are beginning to capture the stories of 70 members of the south Wales Jewish community. This oral history project is quite different from the one undertaken back in 2018/19. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, interviews are now being conducted via Zoom, which has enabled us to speak to people who live outside the UK, and we have traced prospective interviewees in Israel and Australia.

We have already recorded three interviews, which have provided invaluable material, helping us to build a picture of the Jewish heritage of south Wales.

Every month on our website, we will be sharing a new story that has been uncovered during the project. We are still looking for more people to contribute, so if you would like to be involved, please email our Oral History Officer: [Laura.henley.harrison@jhasw.org.uk](mailto:Laura.henley.harrison@jhasw.org.uk)

## The European Network of Testimony-based Digital Education:

We are working on creating meaningful and engaging bilingual educational resources for use in Welsh schools, using the digital video testimony from Holocaust survivors, which is featured on the Shoah Foundation's IWitness platform.

To date, we have completed three draft activities on the topic of Kindertransport and Child Refugees, which complement each other and can be used as a module. The activities aim to explore the history of the Kindertransport: why the children were forced to leave their home countries, their journey to Wales and the difficulties they faced when they arrived.

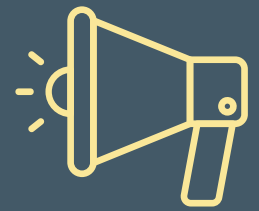
## Pears Foundation's Action Learning Fund:

This programme is part of a **Community Foundation Wales** (CFW) Trust and Foundation Project to increase the amount of UK funding coming into Wales and build connections between the Welsh third sector, and trusts and foundations outside of Wales.

We identified five funders outside Wales, which we had not applied to in the past but are interested in pursuing and then met with Andrea Powell and Yvonne Pillinger from CFW to discuss our governance documentation and processes. The next step is to start conversations with the selected funders to establish if they are interested in supporting our work.

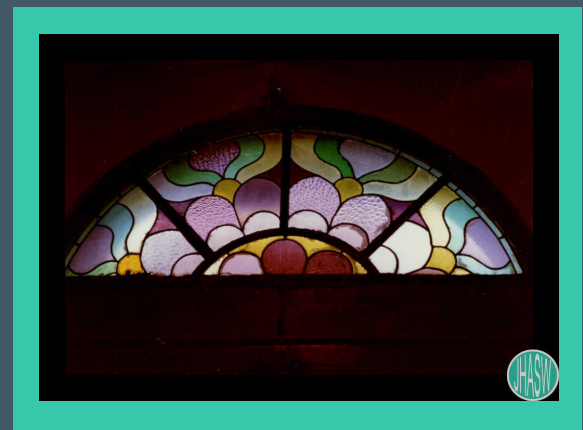
We very much look forward to working with CFW over the coming weeks and months.

# IN THE NEWS:

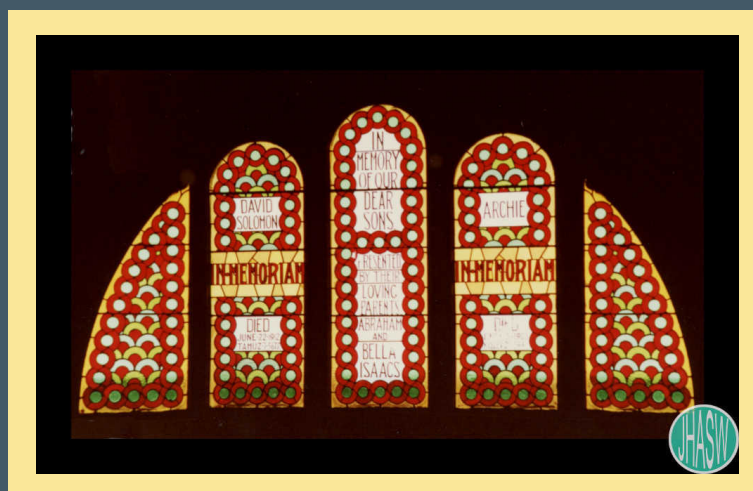


## "WALES SYNAGOGUE'S STAINED GLASS WINDOWS TURN UP IN AWARD-WINNING CHICKEN COOP"\*

The below are photographs of the stained-glass windows of the Cathedral Road Synagogue in Cardiff, which were taken prior to its closure in 1989. After the Synagogue's closure, a local museum stored the windows until 2013. At that time, a representative of the Synagogue's former members offered the windows to relatives of those who had paid for them. No one accepted the offer, so the windows were sold to a salvage firm, and the local community lost track of them.



Somewhere along the way the windows ended up on eBay, where they were purchased by Les Rowe, who, years after purchasing them, used them in a backyard chicken-coop renovation. Rowe's seven-sided "Tranquillity Base," was named Cuprinol's best budget shed of 2021. It featured a wooden floor reclaimed from a local church and at least five stained glass panels, several of which say, "In Memoriam."



\*Source: Philissa Cramer, 'Wales synagogue's stained glass windows turn up in award-winning chicken coop', *The Times of Israel*, (2021), <https://www.timesofisrael.com/wales-synagogues-missing-stained-glass-windows-turn-up-in-chicken-coop/> [accessed 18 August 2021]



# READING RECOMMENDATIONS:

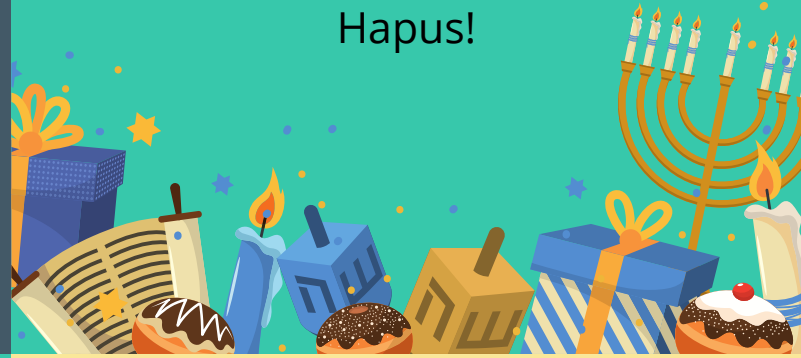
In light of the release of our CRS Holocaust Memorial Tablet Narratives, this month's book recommendation is a source which was utilized a number of times by our volunteers in the research of some of the narratives;  
Hineni: Life Portraits from a Jewish Community.

Hineni (Hebrew for "Here I am") was a collaborative project between the Cardiff Reform Synagogue and the Butetown History & Arts Centre, which offers an insight into the Jewish community in Cardiff. The book includes personal interviews with members of the community, along with 59 photographic portraits of members of the Cardiff Reform Synagogue.



# HAPPY HANUKKAH!

This year Hanukkah or Chanukah began on 28th November and ends during the evening of 6th December. All of us at JHASW / CHIDC would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our subscribers and supporters a very Happy Hanukkah! / Hanukkah Hapus!



# 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!



# 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!](#)

