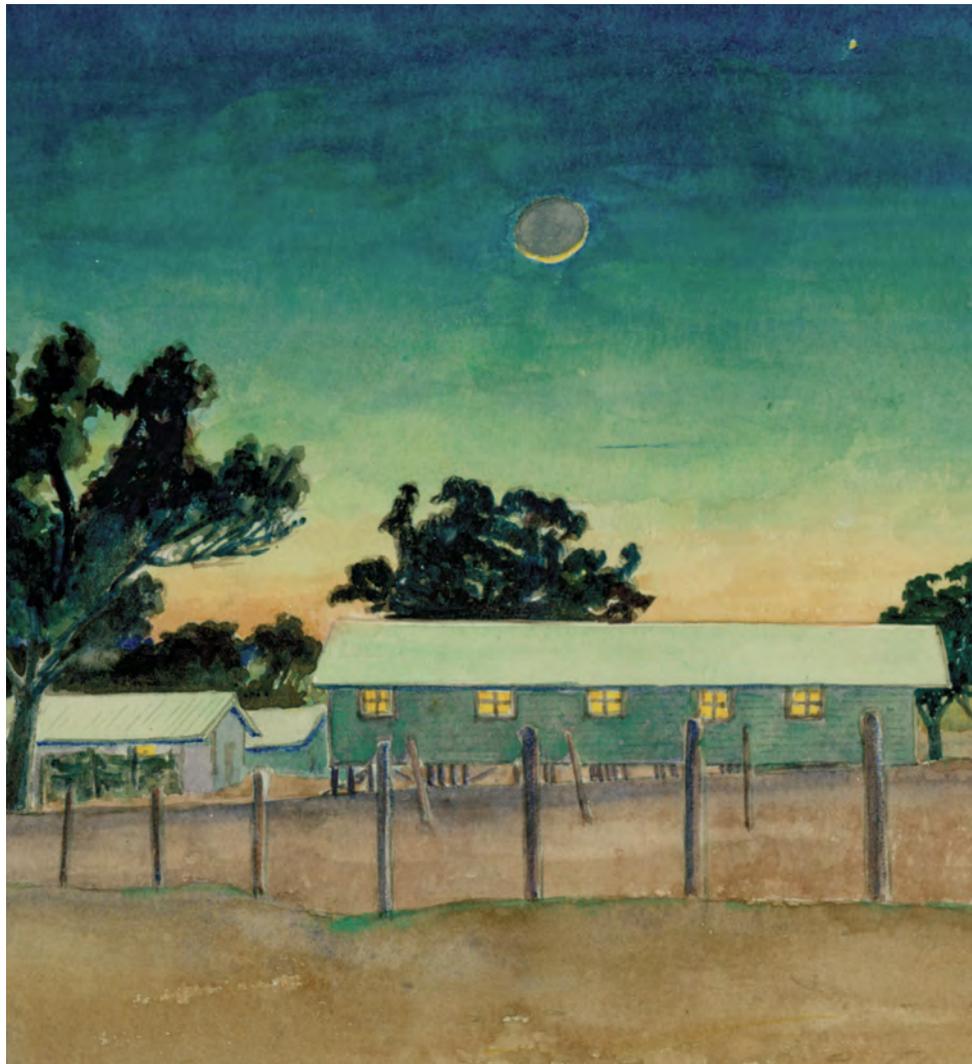


Dunera News



A publication for former refugees from Nazi and Fascist persecution (mistakenly shipped to and interned in Australia at Hay and Tatura, many later serving with the Allied Forces), their relatives and their friends.

No. 87 March 2013



Foundation Editor:

The late Henry Lippmann OAM

Editorial responsibility:

The Committee of the Dunera Association

Dunera Association on facebook

– Friends of the Dunera Boys

Letters and articles for publication are welcome.

Email: secretary@enqyr.com.au

Next material closing date: XXXXX, 2013



Cover image:
Painting by Dr Leonhard Adam
Camp 2, Victoria, Australia, 1942



Rebecca Silk
President
Dunera Association

From the President

Welcome to the 87th Dunera News. In this issue we focus on the wartime internment experience at Tatura in rural Victoria.

Between 1939 and 1947 the Australian government constructed and operated a network of camps housing “enemy alien” internees and prisoners of war. The largest complex of these camps was around Tatura where a total of 15,000 internees experienced the camp system.

The Dunera’s first port of call in Australia was Port Melbourne. From there some 350 internees (as well as German and Italian POWs) were taken straight from the ship to fledgling camps near Tatura while the rest travelled to Hay after disembarking at Sydney. Later on, most of the Hay internees were also transferred to Tatura. As well as Dunera Boys there were other groups held at the eight camps. They included the Singapore Group – Jewish families who had escaped from Europe via Singapore and who were placed in Camp 3, a family camp between Tatura and Rushworth.

Although behind barbed wire, the Tatura camps (like Hay) operated as communities and incorporated canteens, hospitals, dental and recreational facilities, schools, music, theatre and artistic activities. Many Dunera Boys have talk about the improved accommodation, facilities and weather.

In this issue we showcase some stories from Tatura and encourage all our members and friends in Australia to join us for an event at Tatura on Sunday, 17 March 2013. If you have been previously, please join us and renew old friendships. If you have not visited before, you will be surprised at how much there is to see!

My thanks to our contributors and to Arthur and Lurline Knee from Tatura for their tireless support. Happy reading.

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Many thanks to all the contributors.

Visit Tatura

Sunday, 17 March 2013

**Tatura Wartime Camps Museum
49 Hogan Street, Tatura**



PROGRAM

- 1.00-2.30pm Viewing of museum exhibits
Welcome and introduction to the camps
Afternoon refreshments
- 2.45pm Driving tour of the camps
- 4.30pm Finish

A great opportunity to see locations and remains of the camps, understand the mixture of internees who were there, connect with Dunera and Singapore group families and friends and enjoy Tatura's country hospitality.
(Tatura is a 2-hour drive from Melbourne. It is near Shepparton.)

Please RSVP by 14 March for catering purposes – dunera@enqyr.com.au



Short History of the Internment Camps in Tatura, Victoria

In September 1939, Great Britain and France declared war on Nazi Germany. Commonwealth countries immediately followed suit with Australia's prime minister Robert Menzies also declaring war. For some time prior to this date Australian Army Intelligence had been keeping an eye on German nationals living mainly in Sydney and Melbourne. Germans considered a security risk were picked up for future internment. But where?

In Victoria, the unoccupied property Dhurringile Mansion was commandeered by the government. It was an imposing brick building comprising 65 rooms and a tower. Located 9 kilometres from Tatura it was relatively isolated, yet on a rail line, and with small town infrastructure for food and water supplies, tradesmen, doctor, dentist, pharmacist, a butter factory and general stores. Barbed-wire fencing was erected around Dhurringile, and the first 42 internees brought in. In 1941, it housed German officer POWs.

The authorities then decided to construct purpose built internment camps. For the most part, local labour was used for the construction. The first of these was known as Camp 1, comprising 320 acres, 15 kilometres south of Tatura. The camp consisted of timber-framed huts with corrugated iron cladding and roofs. Each hut accommodated, barrack style, 24 single male internees, mostly German and Italian civilians. The camp housed 1,000 internees in total, in two adjoining compounds.

Camp 1 had a well equipped hospital, was seweraged, and had the longest life of any of the Tatura camps. The internees there developed tennis courts, a soccer field, workshops, flower and vegetable gardens, and published an illegal newspaper. The camp was closed in 1947 and the land returned to its pre-war owner.

After the fall of France, and with the escalation of the war in 1940, Britain asked Australia to take prisoners of war and civilian enemy aliens. Additional camps were therefore required, so Camp 2 was built one kilometre north of Camp 1 and opened in September 1940. Camps 1 and 2 were known as the Tatura Group of camps, and soon Camps 3 and 4 were included. At different times German and Austrian Jewish internees were held in Camps 2, 3 and 4.

The internees in Camp 2 were housed in galvanised iron huts (barracks). Ablution blocks with showers were clean but only one section had hot showers. Food was adequate, and a Kosher kitchen was established for the Jewish internees. One hut was also converted into a synagogue. The Tatura camps were self sufficient in many ways, with diesel powered generators for external lighting, and mains power for internal purposes. There were also kitchens and mess huts, large recreation huts, and sports grounds. Camp 2 was closed in 1946.



Camps 3 and 4, referred to as the Rushworth Camps, were built on the western side of the Waranga Basin located 11 kilometres to the west of Camp 1. Camp 3, made up of 4 compounds, had partitioned rooms for families, and the Singapore group were housed in one compound there. The Singapore group consisted of Jewish refugee families, including children, who were arrested in Singapore where they had sought refuge in 1938, and in September 1940 transported (in great comfort) on the Queen Mary to Sydney. They travelled to Tatura Camp 3 and were dismayed to find the basic galvanised iron huts as accommodation. However, they made the best of it, combined their energies, arranged play areas, workshops for carpentry and handcrafts, as well as vegetable gardens. A camp school run by internee teachers was set up for the children.

In common with some Dunera Boys, many of the Singapore Group were accepted by the Australian Army and joined the 8th Employment Company. This guaranteed their wives and children to be released and move out of Camp 3 once housing was found for them in Melbourne. Camp 3 was closed in late 1946.

Camp 4 held single male internees for some months, and after the last of the Dunera men moved out in 1942, Japanese families were brought in.

POW Camp 13 was built in 1941. It was the largest camp and it held 4,000 prisoners of war. Each camp had a garrison where the Australian Army guards

were housed. As well as German and Austrian residents from Australia and Britain, and the Axis prisoners of war, the Tatura camps also contained German “Templers” from Palestine, Lutheran missionaries from New Guinea, and unattached German men who had been interned in Persia.

While a small number of Dunera Boys went directly from the ship to Tatura, most Boys spent 8-10 months interned in Hay and were gradually moved to the greener landscape of Tatura in 1941.

They were housed mainly in Camps 2 and 3. Once there, they continued a range of educational and cultural activities including the “Collegium Taturensis”, where prominent artists,

musicians, scholars and educators shared their skills and passions with fellow inmates. Prior to their release to join the Army some internees saw more of the local countryside when they volunteered to pick fruit from local orchards.

There are many interesting things about the camps at Tatura. The first is the remains, such as ruins of buildings and large amounts of now rusted barbed wire. The second is the geography which gives us an idea of the sheer scale of the wartime undertaking – approximately 12,000 internees and POWs, the Army garrisons and hospital, and associated local infrastructure to support them. The third is the magnificent WWII Wartime Camps Collection at the Tatura Museum including photographs, intelligence reports, artefacts, newspaper articles, art and craft works, memorabilia and reconstructions of the huts.

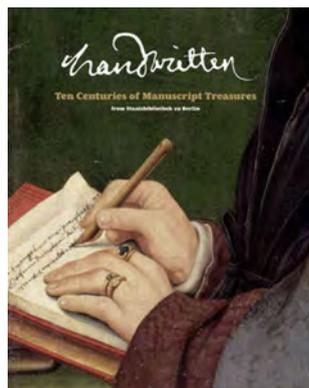
If you want to gain a real picture of what internment life was like for the Dunera Boys and the Singapore group in the 1940s please join us on March 17 in Tatura. If you know the particular Camp number that is of interest to your family, the experience will be even richer.



References: Knee, Lurline and Arthur *Marched In: Seven Internment and Prisoner of War Camps in the Tatura area during World War 2*: Tatura and District Historical Society, 2008.
National Archives of Australia *Internment Camps Tatura – Rushworth, Victoria 1940-47*.
www.naa.gov.au/collection/snapshots/internment-camps/WWII/tatura.aspx

Handwritten

Ten Centuries of Manuscript Treasures
from Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin



This exhibition was held at the National Library of Australia, 26 November 2011 – 18 March 2012

This extraordinary exhibition featured 100 unique manuscript treasures from the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Berlin State Library). Spanning more than 1000 years of history, the exhibition includes exquisite illuminated manuscripts, rare letters, sketches and documents and priceless musical scores, each handwritten by major figures in literature, religion, science, music, exploration and philosophy. Beethoven, Galileo, Goethe, Kafka, Michelangelo and Napoleon are just some of the many names represented in this exhibition.

The exhibition was shown only in Canberra.

Walter Kaufmann

Miss Arthur in *Collection of short stories*, beginning 1943

Original language

English

Source

National Library of Australia

Miss Arthur

The train rolls along, jolts to a halt and the pushes(sic) on again. A woman has come in and sat down in the corner by the door. The young man sits in the seat opposite. His hands are deep in his coatpockets (sic). It is cold, but it's a fine morning, cold but fine. He is feeling pretty good. He is whistling to himself. The woman is stamping her feet on the floor. And exclaims 'Brr, brr' etc. Not in an exasperated way. 'It's cold,' she says, 'brr.' She grins at him. An ugly grin. She has a hare lip. Her nose is cut in an ugly way, with a scar reaching down to her lip. The grin is kind of deformed. She keeps on grinning, about to speak to him. 'Nah' he thinks and looks away. The grin drops away and a hurt, self conscious look travels over her face. Poor, scrappy cat he thinks. He tries to smile back. Now she is looking out of the window and humming to herself. She is humming a song by Schubert. The man looks about him. A rolling train, a second class compartment, the woman with a hare lip, a song by Schubert.

Walter Kaufmann

German writer

From the recent exhibition *Ten Centuries of Manuscript Treasures* at the National Library of Australia, Canberra

Short Stories by a Dunera Boy

Walter Kaufmann was born in Berlin in 1924. He arrived in London at the age of 15 in one of the last Kindertransport to arrive in Britain, a rescue operation that evacuated Jewish children from Germany and occupied countries. Kaufmann attended a boarding school in London for a short time, was interned as an 'enemy alien' and, with about 2500 others, boarded the HMT Dunera, bound for Australia in July 1940. For 18 months he was interned in the camps in Hay, New South Wales, and Tatura, Victoria.

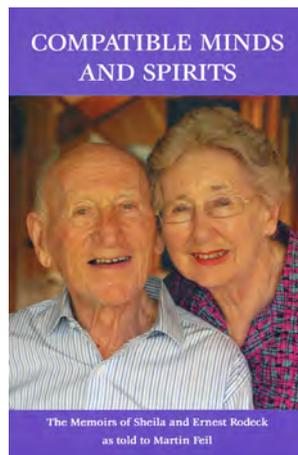
Kaufmann began writing a series of short stories in 1943 while serving as a soldier in the 8th Employment Company in the Australian Military Forces. Since his time in the camps, Kaufmann kept with him a worn black notebook, which has only now been returned to Australia.

His early literary works were written in pencil in a strong and even hand. The collection contains a number of Kaufmann's early short stories, which were first published in Melbourne in 1953 under the title *Voices in the Storm*. The first version of his 10-page story *Miss Arthur* (extract on page 6), which begins with the words 'The train rolls along', was slightly revised before publication. The story tells of a conversation between two train travellers, a young male photographer and a thin, hare-lipped woman, who had been sacked from her job that day.

After working as a fruit picker, soldier, wedding photographer, sailor and dock worker, Kaufmann returned to Europe in 1955. He settled in East Germany and worked as a writer. A collection of his short stories was published in 1959 under the title *The Curse of Maralinga and Other Stories*. His novels, short stories and travelogues were reprinted many times in East Germany.

Kaufmann's autobiography *Im Fluss der Zeit: Auf Drei Kontinenten (In the Flow of Time, On Three Continents)* was published in German in 2010 by Dittrich Verlag, Berlin. Kaufmann now lives in Berlin and Kleinmachnow, and is currently writing a second autobiographical work.

Compatible Minds and Spirits



The Memoirs of Sheila and Ernest Rodeck, as told to Martin Feil. HighHorse Books, Melbourne 2012.

This fascinating book is about the separate and interwoven lives of Dunera Boy Ernest Rodeck and his wife Sheila, as told to their long-time colleague and friend Martin Feil. It is told in a series of chapters beginning with their early separate lives, then the time of the famous Fler furniture company, followed by Ernest's time at public companies and his crusade to make Australia a better place.

Ernest spent his early years in an affluent, educated, assimilated family in Vienna. His childhood was about school, skiing, learning French and English and preparing to live the life of a sophisticated European professional in a world where, like his father, engineers were valued highly. His sister Melita had a similarly happy time.

As Ernest and Melita had two Jewish grandparents, the family knew that after the Anschluss on 12 March 1938 they had to flee. The family fled to Italy and soon after, the parents and Ernest's sister sailed for America. By a stroke of luck and scouting contacts, Ernest gained a visa and work permit for Britain and arrived there "an unwelcome stranger in a strange land". Ernest managed to get a job as an engineering draftsman. It did not last long as Ernest was rounded up by police a week after Dunkirk and found himself on the Dunera on 10 July 1940.

While Ernest's memories as a 20-year-old on the Dunera include the poor treatment by the British, his is an optimistic story. He speaks of the lifelong friendships forged during the "boring, uncomfortable 57 days on the Dunera" and the warmth and open-mindedness of the Australian guards enroute to and at Hay. His attitude was that the trip on the Dunera was a reprieve because, had the Germans invaded Britain, he would have been killed. From the time of arrival in Australia, Ernest recalls, he began to feel that Australia was home.

Ernest studied mathematics and engineering from some excellent tutors while in the camp at Hay for 9 months. It was also in the camp that he met his friend and

later business partner Fred Lowen. Ernest was determined to achieve his knowledge and technical goals and was released on 9 March 1942 to be employed as a tool maker at F. R. Swinburne and Co.

After the end of the war, Ernest and Fred began Fler, an entrepreneurial partnership with very humble beginnings. Fler, according to Martin Feil, is still an iconic name in the furniture industry and represents a quality of craftsmanship melded to large scale production, that has never been replicated. After Fler was taken over, Ernest took on a series of directorships including positions at Pacific Dunlop and Brashes.

The book tells the parallel story of Sheila Thonemann, who grew up in Melbourne and was the daughter of a wealthy stockbroker/cattle station owner. She studied science at university and met Ernest through family friends. As well as bringing up the children, Sheila also had diverse occupations during her life. Instead of the society hostess she could have been, Sheila enjoyed several varied and successful careers including accounting and teaching business skills.

The last third of the memoir is about the life of Ernest and Sheila together. Martin Feil describes them as social service zealots due to their service in an enormous number of unpaid, major roles in a huge number of associations designed to help, nurture and grow Australian business and assist the less fortunate.

Ernest Rodeck says that he chose to remain in Australia rather than join his parents in the United States because fairness here was the rule and, in Australia, "Jack is as good as his master".

Ernest imparts some of his "Life Lessons" in chapter 5 of the book. They include: enjoy yourself; never stop learning; trust and help people; work hard; join, communicate, contribute and participate. It has been Australia's immense good fortune to have the Rodecks making their unique contributions to the community in Melbourne. I commend *Compatible Minds and Spirits* as a truly inspiring memoir.

—Rebecca Silk

Available at Readings Books Carlton. Price \$30.00

The Duldig Studio – a history

by Helen Kiddell

Notification that the Duldigs would have to leave Singapore was thrust upon them in July 1940. The memorandum left no room for sentimentality, and despite the Duldigs' protest through their close friend John Eber's legal firm, they had no choice but to obey the British command to report at 8.00 am on the 18th of September 1940 "ready to proceed to internment". The Queen Mary, an armed merchant cruiser on its way to Australia from the Middle East collected all of Singapore's 'Enemy Aliens' after a deal was brokered between the two governments. The Queen Mary navigated the perilous ocean voyage safely, but the Duldigs' arrival in Sydney did not mark the end of their ordeal. After alighting from the ship, the 'Enemy Aliens' were herded onto a train to remote Tatura, in Victoria's north, where Karl, Slawa and Eva were interned.

The Duldigs were interned at Tatura on the 28th of September 1940, and remained in camp 3D for the next 18 months. There is no doubt that Karl was frustrated at his imprisonment. In 1941 he picked up Slawa's green ink pen and sketched a portrait of himself and his hurried strokes reveal the darkness of his situation. His face is half in shadow, but there is a strength in his eyes and the set of his mouth, that shows a determination to regain his freedom. Although they had the same status as 'Enemy Aliens' in Singapore after the outbreak of war, Karl and Slawa's parole documents dated December 1939 show they were free to live their lives without too much restriction. Karl struggled to comprehend the injustice of his internment in Australia. He and his family were Jewish, and had become stateless after the Nazi's occupied Austria. Furthermore, both Slawa and Karl were born in Poland, an allied State. What is more, they had the wellbeing of their two year old daughter to consider. Karl began petitioning the authorities for release immediately.

The internees who arrived on the Queen Mary from Singapore were joined in Tatura by the Germans, Austrians and Italians deported from England who had arrived in Australia on the infamous HMT Dunera. The 2542 'Enemy Aliens' on board the Dunera were predominately Jewish refugees, and all male. Cyril Pearl's history called *The Dunera Scandal* recounts the cramped and squalid conditions which the 'Dunera Boys' were subject to on their nightmarish sea voyage to Australia. Most of



Karl Duldig, Self-portrait, 1941
Pen and Ink on paper

their number were detained at Hay in New South Wales initially, but many eventually came to be interned at Tatura alongside the Singapore group of internees.

While interned, with only limited materials or tools available to practise sculpture, Karl turned to sketching as a means of occupying his creative mind. He drew on anything and everything he could lay his hands on, he would cover envelopes with designs for sculptures, he would make use of any scrap of paper, he even used toilet paper when nothing else was available to him. His sketches were characterised by the use of strong lines and naïve stylised images. He used Indian ink, a medium he discovered in Singapore, to great effect in many drawings of camp life behind barbed wire. During the period of his internment Karl sketched a scene of an exotic woman balancing a jug on her head, standing in a pose reminiscent of classical Egyptian figures, with a pyramid-shaped mountain in the background, and a ship on the horizon. Karl returned to this scene again and again during his internment, which speaks volumes about his sense of loss at being dragged from his paradise in Singapore. The ship is a foreboding presence in the landscape, lying in wait on the horizon, it is indicative of Karl's lack of control over his own life.

As part of his daily routine in the camp, Duldig had the responsibility of chopping the wood for the kitchen ovens. It was this chore which led him to creating his first two Australian sculptures. Duldig demonstrated his resourcefulness by turning his hand to carving, although his



Slawa, Eva and Karl outside their hut at Tatura. In the foreground is Karl's sculpture *Mother & Child*.

only tool was the axe he used to chop the firewood. One of the sculptures, *Fragment*, survives today and is in the collection of the Newcastle Region Art Gallery, but the second, *Mother and Child*, a large sculpture carved from the trunk of a Red Gum, was used for firewood by a later group of internees.

In April 1942 Karl was released from Tatura when at Slawa's encouragement, he volunteered to join the Australian Military Forces Eighth Employment Company (8th AEC).



Good bye Malaya, Karl Duldig, Tatura, 1941
Pencil and Indian ink on paper

© The Duldig Studio, Melbourne

An edited extract from the book *The Duldig Studio – a history* by Helen Kiddell (2011). Copies of which are available from The Duldig Studio – donna@duldig.org.au

Max Naumburger

23 January 2013



Jewish News – February 4, 2013

Driving force at Moriah mourned Max Naumburger

MORIAH College life patron and community stalwart Max Naumburger passed away at the age of 90 last week.

Naumburger was on the school's board from 1953-1981 and was vice-president during that time for eight years.

"Max's unfaltering commitment to Jewish education and to Moriah College was reflected in his continued involvement with the school over a number of decades," Moriah College president Giora Friede said.

"He was part of the second generation (post-Rabinowitz) leadership of the college and was astute and uncompromising, and long after his active involvement [he] remained interested in all that the college achieved

Naumburger was born in Fuerth, Germany, but at the age of 16 his parents sent him to England, alone, for his safety before the Holocaust began. The rest of his family was not as lucky and he never saw them again.

From England he was sent to Australia, on the Dunera, and after several years in his new country he married Ingrid and moved from Melbourne to Sydney.

"Max was passionate about Jewish day school education, with a fundamental belief that a sound secular and Jewish education should go hand in hand," Naumburger's family said in a statement this week.

"Max was actively involved in raising funds for the school's growth and in encouraging other families to enrol their children at the fledgling Moriah College.

"This culminated in elevating Moriah in the minds of Sydney Jewish families as a worthy alternative to other private schools."

They said Naumburger was known for his sharp intellect, dress sense, lateral mind and integrity.

"Max had a strong presence and wasn't afraid to speak his mind, even when his opinions were unpopular. Yet he remained modest and approachable to all.

"He had a love for Israel and was a proud Australian, but his greatest joy was participating in his grandchildren's lives."

Rabbi Selwyn Franklin delivered the eulogy at the funeral, and said that Naumburger was a legend and an unforgettable character.

"I commented on the fact that most of the 200-300 people present at the funeral were able to read a Jewish text, and that was only because of people like Max who

valued Jewish education so highly," Rabbi Franklin said.

Naumburger's success wasn't limited to the Jewish community.

He was also a successful businessman.

The Coffs Coast Advocate, which is the local newspaper in Coffs Harbour, said last week that Naumburger will always be remembered as the man who helped to transform Coffs Harbour from a fishing and banana-growing town into a major regional centre.

As the managing director of Bachrach Naumburger Group, Naumburger saw the Park Beach Plaza become the most dominant retail shopping centre between Newcastle and the Gold Coast.

Naumburger is survived by his wife Ingrid, two children and seven grandchildren.

— Joshua Levi

Hans Simenauer

22 November 2008

Washington Post Nov. 24, 2008

Hans Simenauer, 85, a retired owner of stores in the Washington area that sold and serviced consumer electronic equipment, died Nov 22, of complications of a hematoma at Washington Hospice Centre. He was a Silver Spring resident.

Mr. Simenauer was born in the Westphalia region of Germany and during World War II spent time in an internment camp in England with other German Jewish refugees. They were held because of concerns they might be agents of the Nazi government.

At 17, he was sent to Australia on the ship HMT Dunera along with more than 2,000 other German Jewish refugees from Austria and Germany despite a maximum capacity of 1,500. He was the second youngest passenger on the ship.

Mr Simenauer settled in Silver Spring after the war. He played the violin with the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra and was a member of Jewish War Veterans.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Murllele of Silver Spring, three children, David Simenauer and Eric Simenauer, both of Herndon, and Pauline Barnes of Glenburnie, four grandchildren, and a great-grandson.

From the Diary of Ludwig Baruch



Born in Hamburg in 1917 Ludwig and his family migrated to England in 1930 where Ludwig continued his schooling and later became a member of the Youth Communist League. Soon after the outbreak of war he was classified as an “A” category enemy alien and interned. He survived the Arandora Star and was then put on board HMT Dunera. Excerpts from his frank and

interesting diary were first published in Dunera News number 39 in June 1997. Here we reproduce part of Chapter Seven, Ludwig’s experiences in camp 2 at Tatura.

We arrived at Tatura (camp) 11 on 3rd September 1940 under friendly escort. Tatura is a village with a railway station about 100 miles north of Melbourne in the bush. The camp with barbed wire was miles from anywhere, even from Tatura station. Only typical Australian bushland with eucalyptus trees as far as the eye could see, sparse rough grass, a few shops and a few kangaroos, no sign of human habitation and dirt tracks serving as roads. We were a few hundred prisoners, not all from the same part of the ship, and including a group of Nazis and their sympathisers, “A” category internees mostly, 224 men. The “left” represented a coherent group of 112 men. A trade union group was formed and I became the elected secretary.

Conditions were at first very primitive. We had no paper or ink. I only managed to write my first letter on 9th September after receiving paper and ink from the Catholic Welfare Organisation of Australia. We immediately contacted Australian organisations especially trade unions for assistance. We particularly wanted to be separated from the Nazis and their sympathisers. We were labelled in the Australian newspapers “prisoners of war” and even “parachutists”. When I spoke to Australian intelligence officers and police officials who came to the camp to learn what was going on, they were astounded on discovering the truth and soon acted accordingly and had us separated.

In a letter dated 17th September 1940 I described Tatura camp 11:

“The camp consists of a stretch of bushland enclosed by barbed wire entanglements. It is divided into two equal halves, one for Italians and one for Germans including Austrians (Germans and Austrians were always treated the same). Both sections are separated by a barbed wire fence and have their own kitchens, mess rooms, lavatories and shower baths, but a common hospital is inside the German enclosure. On one side are nineteen sleeping huts for 28 men each, of which twelve are occupied, eight by Nazis (and people under their

influence) and four by us. The others are empty so far. The huts are all made of tin walls, asbestos roofs, wooden frames and floors, with many small windows and eighteen inch wire netting between the top of the wall and roof so as to allow a continuous circulation of fresh air. The beds consist of two rows of bunks side by side, seven pairs on top of each other, fixed between floor and ceiling running along the centre of the hut.

Along the walls between the windows are hooks to hang those clothes we are not wearing. Electric light is fitted throughout the camp. Everything is quite new and clean, appears efficient and practical but terribly ugly. The space within the enclosure does not permit any games. The guards live in similar huts outside the enclosure; they have no sport facilities either as yet.”

Those of us from the Arandora Star were still clothed in dirty army rags on arrival. Much to our relief the Australian authorities immediately issued us with a blue cotton uniform, shirts, underwear, socks, lovely comfortable boots, sun hats and army overcoats dyed red – all clean and in perfect condition.

The Australians carried out the 1929 convention in regards to the rations for prisoners of war to the letter. Hence I wrote “The food is excellent, only fresh butter, milk, fresh vegetables and fruit, marmalade, jam, eggs, only fresh meat are included in our rations. Of course, we all have enormous appetites and can’t get enough, because we have been fed on rubbish for the last year” (from letter of 17th September 1940)

The Australian military guards made a very good impression on us, especially their officers. The internal running of the camp was organised by the internees and the ‘left’ group made proposals which were accepted by everyone. The chief of the kitchen was Meierhoefer a Viennese chef who had worked in the best hotels in Vienna. I was designated to the kitchen to wash up and make tea.

The Australian army used horse drawn vehicles for transport especially for delivery of food to the camps as petrol was very scarce. One day I was brewing tea, taking boiling water from a field kitchen, heated by burning wood, when one of the delivery vehicles reversed, scaring the horses and tipping up the field kitchen, pouring boiling water over my legs. The incident landed me in the camp hospital for a month. The medical treatment was very good, the young army doctor was excellent, the nurses were male prisoners and most competent. I spent my time reading, had daily visitors from the camp and managed to write letters. The Jewish community in Melbourne sent a representative and promised some comforts and a suit of civilian clothes.

By 25th September all my fellow anti Nazis were taken to a separate camp and I was left with the pro Nazis as my doctor wanted me quite recovered before I left. I was thankfully transferred to Tatura camp 11 on 2nd October 1940 after spending a week with about 200 Nazis.

News & Views

Dear Members of the Dunera Family!

When I asked for your help and information in the August issue of the “Dunera News” I did not expect so many kind emails offering documents, interviews and help of any kind. And when I came to Australia last spring and summer it became even more. Thanks to Rebecca and Mike I had the pleasure to attend the Reunion in Melbourne; afterwards I visited Hay and enjoyed David Houston’s hospitality.

Many thanks to all three of them! I visited the libraries and archives in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra and found lots of documents which will keep me busy for the next months. But much more important were the personal contacts with the “Boys” and their families. So I would like to thank you all for your help and your great understanding. It was a marvellous experience. And I would also like to apologise to all whom I could not contact as my time in Down Under was expiring. Cheers from Austria and I hope we will meet again!

Elisabeth

Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Lebensaft – elisabeth.lebensaft@chello.at
A-1120 Vienna, Zeleborgase 4, Austria



Dunera Boy **Gerald May** recently celebrated his 90th birthday with family, and long-time friend, fellow Dunera Boy Ernst Wolf.

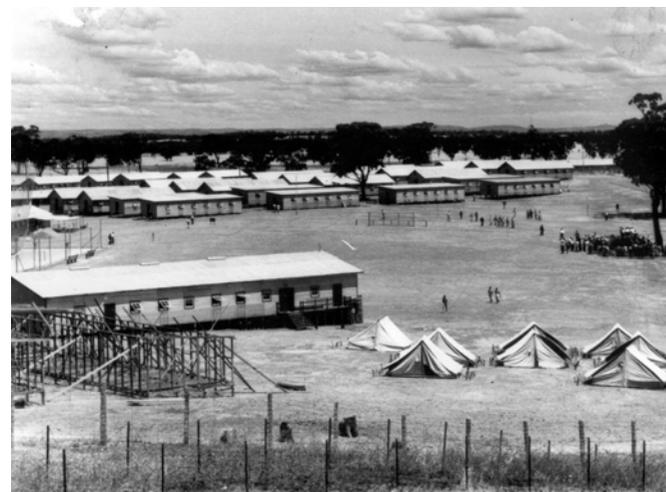


Correction – Dunera News No. 86

The appeal for funds for the restoration of the 3rd carriage at the Dunera Museum at Hay Railway Station is being made by the Dunera Museum Committee NOT by the Hay Historical Society as reported in our last issue. The two are completely separate entities.
Apologies to all concerned.

Rebecca Silk
President, Dunera Association

The Enemy Within



Camp 13 January 1943
Murchison, Victoria
Photographer unknown
Reproduced courtesy of
Tatura Wartime Camps
Museum collection

Internment and Prisoner of War Camps in Victoria 1939-47

Shrine of Remembrance

22 February – 28 July 2013

www.shrine.org.au/Exhibitions/Temporary-Exhibitions/The-Enemy-Within

Learn about the experiences of prisoners of war and civilian internees in Victoria during the Second World War (1939-45) and discover a little known aspect of Australia’s history. This exhibition explores the impacts on prisoners of war and internees who lived and worked in camps. Between 1939 and 1947 rural Victoria hosted eight internment and prisoner of war camps from the network that was scattered across Australia. The camps operated as communities and incorporated canteens, hospitals, dental and recreational facilities and schools.

By 1947 almost 26,000 prisoners of war and 15,000 internees had experienced the camp system, living in tin huts behind barbed wire. They were known as the ‘enemy’ or ‘enemy aliens’. The notion of nationality became a divisive issue of war on the home front and the experience of internment would have a lasting impact on Australia’s migrant and wider community.

IN MEMORY

Max Naumburger January 2013

*Our very sincerest sympathies
to their families and friends.*

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