

# 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. 93 February 2015



PHOTO: JUNE ORFORD

## Dunera Boys at the Melbourne Reunion Lunch 2014

Back row, left to right: Walter Benedikt, Harry Unger, Heinz Hirsch, Martin Moore  
Front row, left to right: Albert Meyer, Herbert Baer, Bernard Rothschild, Ernst Wolf

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Letters and articles for publication are welcome.

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*Many thanks to all the contributors.*

**Conversations on facebook**

We invite you to take a look at our facebook page to see regular updates on events and news from the Dunera community in Australia and around the globe.

**From: Carolyn Buchanan Blacking**

Does anyone know what happened to the German Jewish prisoners/ refugees on the first 3 ships that left England for Canada before the Arandora Star was torpedoed en route to Canada and the Dunera left for Australia? Were they placed in refugee camps? Given freedom? What were the names of the ships? Any history on this?

**From: Rhiannon Tanner**

Hi, My partner Seumas is an historian looking for information on a Dunera boy, Gert/Gerd Salli Sostheim. Born 1923. Was from Dusseldorf. Interned at Hay and then Tatura. Served in the 8th Employment Company, discharged in 1943. Spent the rest of his life in Australia. ... If you knew Gert/Gerd or have any information about him, Seumas would love to be contacted by email: [seumasspark@hotmail.com](mailto:seumasspark@hotmail.com) or I'm happy for you to send information through me. Thank you.

**From: John Ebert**

Today is 29 October 2014. It was on this day 72 years ago that the Abosso was sunk after being struck by 2 torpedoes fired by U Boat U 575. On board, were 390 passengers and crew of whom 44 were Dunera Boys returning to England after choosing to go back following internment in Hay and Tatura.

 **Friends of Dunera Boys**



Rebecca Silk  
President  
Dunera Association

# From the President

Happy New Year! I hope you are enjoying the summer (or perhaps winter!) break with family and friends.

2015 is a very exciting year for us as we plan some major events in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Dunera internees, and in early 2016 the arrival of the Singapore Group.

Please mark on your calendar the main dates – reunion in Hay 5 and 6 September; Sydney reunion 9 September and the annual luncheon in Melbourne is 10 November. There will also be our annual visit to the Tatura museum and campsites on 19 April, 2015 as well as a special exhibition at the Jewish Museum of Australia



in Melbourne, dates to be advised. If you have never been to Hay, or not recently, for our reunions, this is the year to go. We will be joined by several Dunera descendants and their families from overseas. It is sure to be a memorable time so please consider it.

In this edition of the newsletter we have a report on last year's successful Luncheon in Melbourne, as well as a wonderful tribute to Dunera Boy Barney Barnett. We also continue our series on Dunera Boys of Renown with some Canberra connections.

Please send items or feedback that you think may be of interest to readers to – [duneraboys@gmail.com](mailto:duneraboys@gmail.com)

I wish you happy reading and happy reminiscing!



# Dunera Association 74th anniversary reunion in Melbourne

11 November 2014

Remembrance Day, 11 November 2014, was not only the day of remembering those who served and died in World War I, but was also the day that the Dunera Association held its annual general meeting and reunion lunch in Melbourne.

In attendance were eight of the Dunera Boys and some 70 descendants, family members, friends and supporters. Once again people renewed acquaintances and shared stories and connections that go back over 70 years.

Guest speaker Sally McLean talked about the film she is in the process of making about the life of Dunera Boy Franz Stampfl. Franz's is an inspirational story of an artist turned athletics coach who motivated and coached to success many athletes in Britain and Australia, including Roger Bannister who ran the first sub-four-minute mile. For more information go to the website – [alifeunexpected.com](http://alifeunexpected.com)

The audience was impressed not only by the story but also by Sally's motivation. Her mother Marg Woodlock McLean was an Olympic athlete who competed in 1956 and was coached by Franz Stampfl. Amazingly, at the lunch, Marg renewed her acquaintance with Eva de Jong-Duldig, a fellow athlete from the 1950s.

The other guest speaker was Danny Lamm who spoke about the internment experiences of his late father Erwin Lamm. It seemed that Erwin remembered the events more as an adventure than as adversity. Indeed, Danny recounted that Erwin's experience of being a hut captain in camp seemed to have equipped him extremely well for his life in business and later serving on many Jewish communal organisations.

David Houston from Hay, NSW told the gathering about a major project to expand the Dunera Museum in Hay. Currently, the exhibition is housed in two restored railway carriages and the Dunera Museum Committee, in partnership with the Dunera Association, has plans to restore a third carriage so that the collection can be expanded. Major fundraising will be required.

The Dunera Association is grateful to all speakers and to June Orford and Francis Reiss for their efforts in photo documenting the event. And thanks goes to Quest Kimberley Gardens for their care and attention to the needs of everyone on the day.

— Rebecca Silk



PHOTOS: JUNE ORFORD AND FRANCIS REISS









# Farewelling Erwin Lamm, communal stalwart

1921–2014

By Peter Kohn

Reproduced through the courtesy of *The Australian Jewish News* – Friday, August 29, 2014



Ilse and Erwin Lamm

ERWIN Lamm, communal veteran, staunch supporter of Israel, and Dunera internee, has passed away, aged 93.

Lamm, who died on August 21, was remembered this week for his vigorous involvement with the Jewish community and Zionist politics, setting an example for his son Danny Lamm.

The grandfather and great-grandfather was laid to rest at the Chevra Kadisha cemetery in Springvale. He is survived by his wife Ilse, and by Danny, his daughter Gilda and their families.

At 17, Erwin Lamm was confronted by Nazi terror in his native Vienna, when he was ordered to his hands and knees with other Jews to scrub pavements.

Arriving in Australia from Britain in 1940 aboard the *Dunera*, on which Jewish “enemy aliens” were famously mistreated, Lamm was interned at Hay, NSW, but was visited by his sister Emmy, who had arrived earlier in Australia.

Aged 21, he was released and joined the Australian Army before the end of World War II. He was reunited with his older brother Herbert, who migrated from Czechoslovakia where he had been in hiding during the Holocaust. Their parents and younger brother Felix had perished in Auschwitz.

Inspired by Ze’ev Jabotinsky, Lamm began a longstanding involvement with the United Zionist Revisionist Organisation and later Friends of Likud. He joined the Jewish Board of Deputies (now the Jewish Community Council of Victoria) and the Zionist Council of Victoria (ZCV) in the late 1940s. He was a ZCV vice-president and life member.

Danny Lamm, Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) president, who has also been president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and ZCV, told *The AJN* this week: “Everything he did, I learned. He passed the mantle of leadership on to me.”

An avid networker, Erwin Lamm helped pioneer tourism to Israel. He was a staunch supporter of the Liberal Party but had ties with Australian leaders of all stripes. He was friends with Israeli Prime Minister and Likud leader Menachem Begin, who dined at the Lamms’ home in Melbourne in 1963.

Lamm was awarded the Weizmann Prize for his work for Zionism in 1986. On being honoured in 2002 at the 34th World Zionist Congress for a lifetime of

achievements, Lamm told *The AJN* at the time: “Any honour that comes your way, you’re pleased with it and hope you’re worthy of it. After many years of activities ... it means you share company with people who have put in decades of endeavour for Zionism.”

In 2011, Friends of Likud Australia honoured Lamm with an award marking 60 years of service to Israel, the Revisionists and Friends of Likud.

A profound Torah scholar, Lamm helped found Mizrahi in 1949. For more than four decades. He was gabbai of the Gold Coast Hebrew Congregation, where he spent a part of each winter.

The shul’s Rabbi Nir Gurevitch paid tribute to Lamm: “His respect to Torah and its students was legendary. Although I could have been his grandson in years, he treated me with tremendous esteem and would attend the shiurim and drashahs I delivered as if he was my young student. This left such an indelible impression, not only on me but on many members and visitors.”

Jewish Community Council of Victoria executive director David Marlow described him as “a stalwart of the community, a passionate Zionist and a proud Dunera Boy”.

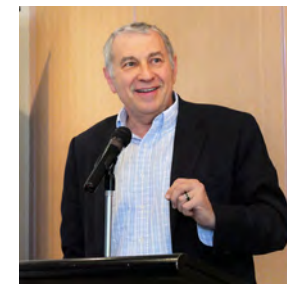
ZFA executive director Ginette Searle said: “Erwin’s commitment went beyond the expected requirements of a volunteer leader. He created projects, he monitored and responded to the media, he developed deep and lasting relationships with people who could assist the Zionist cause within and outside of the community.”

ZCV president Sam Tatarka portrayed Lamm as “one of life’s gentlemen – a mensch who gave tirelessly to Israel and the Jewish community. He took great pride in the naming of the Lamm Jewish Library of Australia, funded in part by a generous donation by his family.”

Friends of Likud Australia president Alex Goodman said much of Lamm’s energies went into helping Betar youth. “He put his heart and soul into finding the new Betar home, Maoz.”

Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council national chairman Mark Leibler and executive director Dr Colin Rubenstein jointly stated: “Erwin Lamm was staunchly, persistently proactive in promoting Israel’s just case to the broader community, and was always a constant source of advice and encouragement for all of us who joined him in this cause.”

Tributes flowed from the World Zionist Organisation, the Dunera Association and a plethora of communal organisations.



Danny Lamm



## The Typewriter Mystery

My father, Ernst Winter, was interned at Huyton (near Liverpool) in the UK prior to boarding the Dunera on 10 July 1940, without many possessions, or so it seemed! He, like many of the internees, had their personal possessions confiscated. In his case, a gold watch, presumably stolen by the guards and a suitcase of clothes which was thrown overboard. He never mentioned anything else, but we were told that sets of crockery we had in our family home were the only “compensation” for his losses and persecution.

In 2012, I went to see the exhibition *A to Z: Robert Messenger's Typewriters* at the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG). A senior journalist from the *Canberra Times*, Robert Messenger is an avid collector of typewriters and has a collection of over 1000 different models. There was a selection of 100 typewriters which he had been invited to put on display at CMAG.

It was a very interesting exhibition, and it made me remember that I had the old family typewriter in storage, as modern technology had made it (very!) obsolete. My father had used it frequently, as he could not write clearly for an extended period of time. He had from birth a withered right arm and webbed fingers on his right hand and consequently had to adapt from being a natural right-hander to being left-handed. However, my father never mentioned the origins of his typewriter (he died in 1984). So I contacted Mr Messenger and we met for a coffee at the CMAG and I brought with me this old typewriter.

He had never seen my model before – it was an “Astoria”, and he was very interested in it and was most delighted to receive it as a gift for his collection. He examined it carefully and identified that it was Austrian and a pre-WWII model. It had the German alphabet for keys, including the letters with umlauts. In an article about the exhibition, which Mr Messenger wrote for the *Canberra Times*, he mentioned our meeting and about the typewriter brought over by my father on the Dunera.

Soon after the article appeared, Mr Messenger was contacted by a reader who claimed that his father was also transported here on the Dunera, and his father had mentioned that any typewriters on board must have belonged to the internees, as the staff on board did not have any typewriters (this deficiency was reported back to the authorities in England on 12 September 1940 by Captain A.R. Heighway, Australian officer in charge of the disembarkation of the Dunera internees in Australia). At the time, Mr Messenger did not have this reader's full details but told me about it, and naturally I was interested in getting in contact with this man.



Mr Messenger tried by various means to get this man to identify himself, etc., and after several months he did “come forward”. It turned out that he is Alan Morgenroth, a member of the Dunera Association living in England! Alan's father was Kurt Morgenroth. He has contacted Mr Messenger recently about another typewriter owned by internees.

Reinhold Eckfeld, a Dunera Boy who lives in Melbourne, was one of my father's hutmates in Hay (Camp 8, Hut 29) and remained close friends. Reinhold claims he didn't see any typewriters in their hut. He doubts that my father ever had it there as he would have had to carry the typewriter with him on to the Dunera (secretly?) and keep it in their hut.

As my father had written letters using this typewriter while in Hay (I have his carbon copies), and he was Secretary of the Camp School in Hay, Reinhold suggests that maybe one of the guards lent it to him for use in one of the guard posts or “offices”, but how would it have ended up in my father's possession? And given that he had had this typewriter in England, prior to boarding the Dunera, maybe he did have it on board. And the typewriter being useful to the orderlies, it was not confiscated but kept by them in their office. All a bit of a mystery! My father was not physically abused on board as so many Dunera Boys were, perhaps because he provided this very useful item to the staff.

We would be most interested if any readers have any further information about this mystery typewriter!

—Geoff Winter  
gjw396@hotmail.com

### Excerpt from Mr Messenger's article in the *Canberra Times* – 7 Sept 2012

.... A few days later Geoff contacted me and we met at CMAG, where Geoff gave me his father's exceedingly rare Astoria. Geoff went on to tell me his father had been a Dunera boy. He had bought the typewriter in Vienna just before escaping Nazi persecution and reaching London in 1939. Somehow the Astoria survived the horror voyage on the Dunera in 1940. After I had told this story, Alan, another son of a Dunera boy, emailed me to say an inquiry into the voyage had reported “orderly room staff on board had no typewriters for their use, those used being the property of the internees”. There is a pencil and crayon caricature, drawn by Fred Lowen at the internment camp at Tatura in Victoria in 1941, showing a man called Rosenbaum typing. I've allowed myself to think it may well be the Astoria that Rosenbaum is using.



<http://oztypewriter.blogspot.com.au/2012/08/the-amazing-story-of-astoria-rare-and.html>

## Churchill – An Alternate View

### Dear Dunera News Readers,

As a Dunera Boy in Canberra I have attended Dunera reunions in Melbourne and Sydney irregularly. But when I do, I am irritated by some sentiments that should not be allowed to become established unchallenged. One of them is the view that our internment was uncalled for, a disgrace, and a blot on British justice. Invariably Churchill is the chief villain of the piece.

Such sentiments ignore the historical setting of the time – May-June-July 1940. For Britain and France it had been a “Phoney War”. France was defeated decisively, very quickly, and so was the bulk of the British Army. Most of the British soldiers escaped at Dunkirk but they left all their equipment behind and the dismal defeat could not be denied.

The British press looked for a culprit. That the German army had shown itself to be superior – after all the Nazis had prepared for war for years – was not particularly palatable. The Fascists in Spain had won their war and had boasted about their “Fifth Column”. There had been four columns advancing on Madrid with a fifth column inside the city.

There were tens of thousands of Germans and Austrians in Britain, those who had received a B and C classification from tribunals at the beginning of the war. Most of them were Jewish refugees – many of them in the country for less than 18 months – but not all. There were political refugees. There were homosexuals. There were others who claimed to be sympathetic to the Allied cause. Some had lived in Britain for decades.

All these people were on the loose in a Britain suddenly threatened with invasion. It was not an empty threat. Had not the RAF defeated the Luftwaffe in the months to come – and it was a very close thing – it would have happened.

Chamberlain abdicated and Churchill became prime minister. Today Churchill is acknowledged as Britain’s saviour but Churchill’s hold on the prime ministership in May-June was precarious. The king had preferred Halifax, the Foreign Secretary.

In April, Germany had successfully invaded Norway. The Phoney War was well and truly over when Germany also invaded and occupied Holland, Denmark and Belgium and attacked France. After three days of desperate political manoeuvring and turmoil against the background of the military catastrophe, Churchill became P.M. It was then that he addressed Parliament: “I have nothing to offer but blood, tears and sweat”.

By the end of that month, May, Churchill had decided to intern not only Sir Oswald Mosley and 33 other fascists and fascist sympathisers, but also M. Ramsay, a Conservative M.P. since 1931, and not a member of the Fascist Party.

These people were not foreign nationals like us – some of them were members of the British establishment. It required real political courage to do what Churchill did.

The following month, the French surrendered and before the Dunera sailed, Churchill had seen to it that a major part of the French navy was destroyed in North Africa to prevent it falling into German hands. In a ten-minute attack by air and sea over 1000 French sailors lost their lives. Would the French Fleet have fallen into German hands? We will never know. But Churchill was not prepared to take any chances.

So, personally, I cannot get all upset about Churchill advocating, among all the many vital matters he had to face day by day, ‘intern the lot’. The intention had always been to sort us out in the fullness of time. Had I been in his shoes, I would have advocated the same. Who could be sure that Hitler had not sent a hundred determined agents to Britain in the guise of refugees, Jewish or otherwise?

Yes, the sorting out took too long and, yes, dispatching us to the Dominions was a mistake. But these were unusual times when everything was done on the gallop. There would have been no submissions to cabinet to be discussed and debated. No inter-departmental meetings to consider the issue. Senior officers would have had more important things to do and the actual execution of internment and transportation overseas would have been undertaken by relatively junior officers with lots of other matters to attend to.

When the Dunera was at sea, the Battle of Britain was in full swing. On 7 September, when we disembarked in Sydney Harbour, 300 German bombers accompanied by more than twice as many fighters appeared over London. German pilots reported the city a sea of flames. Many English people were bombed out, among them the chairman of the committee that had organised and financed the refugee hostel that looked after me as a sixteen and seventeen old boy. He and his family perished when a bomb hit their house.

I am a Churchill fan and this D.N. contribution will hopefully curtail the denigration that appears to be inevitable whenever his name crops up at Dunera reunions.



*Your Country needs YOU!:*  
*Join the A.I.F. NOW!*  
Ternes 1940–1942  
lithograph on paper;  
75.5 x 50.3 cm  
PICTURES COLLECTION, NLA

— Bern Brent



# Horace Abraham “Barney” Barnett

1920–2014

Barney’s life journey began on 27 June, 1920 in Rudow, a suburb of Berlin, Germany, born into a reasonably well-to-do patriotic German family of the Jewish faith. His birth name was Horst Adolf Blumenthal.



His father Herbert, owned a very successful comb factory in Rudow. Because of the worldwide economic crisis in the 1930s, Herbert relocated the family to Tartu in Estonia where he had a branch factory, and also manufactured pots and pans. They intended to return to Berlin in 1934 but that was impossible because of Hitler’s rise to power in 1933.

So Barney attended high school in Tartu, graduated in 1938 then enrolled at Tartu university. It was here that he became a lover of vodka. For university orientation, he had to scull a 700ml bottle! Sadly at 18 years of age he was forced to leave university and join his father’s business because of Herbert’s ailing health.

In 1939, just two months before the outbreak of WWII, his father sent Barney, together with his aunt and uncle, to England to set up a new comb and kitchen utensil factory. He was never to see his father again. (Herbert perished on the way to Siberia.)

In May 1940, Barney and his uncle were arrested in London as “enemy aliens” and sent to the Isle of Man. Barney was shoved aboard the HMT Dunera on July 10, 1940. After three days at sea he noticed the guard troops were in tropical uniforms; certainly not dressed for Canada as the internees thought but for Australia. After six horrendous weeks he arrived in Sydney and the internees were sent by train to internment camp in Hay, western NSW.

At the end of November 1941, Barney arrived back in England after volunteering to join the British Army to fight the Nazis. He had to change his name in case of capture, so he went through the London telephone book and chose the name Barnett, he also changed Horst to Horace and Adolf to Abraham.

In 1943, Barney joined the Royal Armoured Corps – 8th King’s Royal Irish Hussars which became the Armoured Reconnaissance regiment of the 7th Armoured Division – “The Desert Rats”. He was a wireless operator and gunner on a Cromwell tank.

On 7 June, 1944, his regiment landed in Normandy (D+1) operating behind German lines. In October 1944, he was taken prisoner and sent to Stalag 7A after his tank was shot up. Whilst a POW, he made his mind up that if he survived he would emigrate to Australia. Barney and fellow prisoners were liberated by General Patton’s troops then flown from France to England by none other than the RAAF in a Lancaster. He always talked about having the best seat on the flight in the rear gunners bay where he had the best view flying over London’s VE day celebrations.

Next he was posted to a war crimes investigation section of the Foreign Office in Downing Street, London, working on documents for the War Crimes Trials in Nuremburg. He then had further military government postings in Germany as an interrogator.

In 1947, his life changed. Now a civilian, Barney got his first job through a friend in London who was in the button business, of which he knew nothing. At the same time he received notice from the Home Office that his British naturalisation had been granted. So, he decided to go out and celebrate at the Astoria Ballroom – where he used to meet some nice girls when he was in uniform. He spotted two attractive ladies – one blond, blue eyed, voluptuous, the other with long black hair, dark eyes, lovely figure. The latter he asked for a dance. Whilst dancing, he said to her, “I see you’re here with your shikse girlfriend”. She cracked up laughing and said, “she is the yiddishkeit I’m the shikse!”. Well, she was to become his wife – Irene.

Seven months later they were married and 61 years of married bliss ensued – despite the hardships and sacrifices. Barney and Irene arrived in Sydney in September 1948 with a baby on the way and two pounds of money between them. Barney took whatever work he could until he landed his first job in the button business which he learned in England. Over many years he established himself as a formidable and highly ethical businessman in the haberdashery industry, holding down several managerial positions. Today his name is well known throughout Australia and New Zealand. The business is now run by his daughter, Sharon.

Barney was an amazing provider for his family often working two jobs and always striving to improve their living standard. So, from 1948, in a two-room flat in Ashfield, Sydney to 1999, when the family moved to a beautiful home in Robina, Queensland, he achieved yet another life goal – a home of his dreams. Although he worked hard, Barney was devoted to his family (nursing Irene at home when she had TB in 1953) and finding time for his hobbies of photography and fishing.

As a family unit, the Barnetts did an enormous amount of overseas travel, which Barney loved. Until about 18 months before his passing, Barney and Sharon still travelled together on business. They felt so fortunate to be working partners. Barney loved visiting his customers and suppliers – he was in his element. He often joked with them saying, “how many business associates visit you at the age of 92?”.

Barney’s business associates from around the world described him as a pillar of business, an icon in the business he loved, and an amazing survivor with a beautiful, impressive character who brought warmth and encouragement to all who knew him.

To Sharon he was the most amazing, wonderful, remarkable, incredible, unbelievable, exceptional, intelligent, wise, courageous, tolerant, kind, gentle, warm, caring, compassionate, considerate human being and yet so humble. At times cantankerous, but always fair and the best father anyone could ever have. He was adorable – a legend. And sadly, the end of an era.

—Sharon Barnett



## DUNERA BOYS OF RENOWN

### Ernst F. Frohlich

1917–2008

Lawyer Ernst F. Frohlich was born in Vienna in 1917. He was deported to Australia on the HMT Dunera and detained in the Hay and Tatura Internment Camps from 1940 until his release in August 1941 to work at the Mount Stromlo observatory in the Australian Capital Territory.

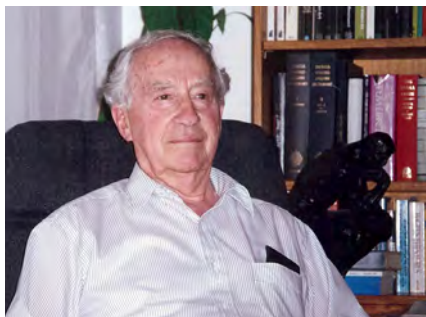
As one of a dozen young bachelors employed at Mount Stromlo, he quickly made friends, working there for the remainder of the war. He went on to teach physics at Canberra Grammar School, but teaching was not a life-long career option, and he was more interested in setting up some sort of commercial enterprise.

A Sydney friend in the rag trade who had started importing prefabricated houses from Sweden enlisted Frohlich as a business partner. With no experience in the housing industry, Frohlich nevertheless recognised that the Canberra population, in the austere postwar years, was crying out for housing. Ernst went on to set up Ernst Frohlich & Co., providing supplies to the building industry.

He was always a lawyer at heart. His father had been a lawyer and he had begun a law degree in Vienna before the war. So in 1970, at the age of 45, he enrolled in law at the Australian National University, graduated and completed an articulated clerkship, before becoming Canberra's first barrister of non British/Irish descent.

Although he practised at the bar until close to the end of his life, a colleague recalls that he was less involved in advocacy, and instead became well regarded as a reporter of law cases for the legal publication service Butterworths.

In 2000, Frohlich featured in an ABC documentary on Canberra pioneers. He had a long and happy marriage to Catherine, and shared a wide circle of friends.



Ernst Frohlich. 1995.



Ernst and Catherine Frohlich. c.1950.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MICHAEL AND DIANA LAVERTY.  
DIANA IS RELATED TO ERNST FROHLICH BY MARRIAGE.

Sources: Carol Bunyan Researcher.  
Dunera News no. 28, October 1993.

Following is an extract from Ernst Frohlich's writings that was published in Dunera News no. 28, October 1993.

### Canberra and I

I was born in Vienna around the time of World War I, and my childhood and adolescent experiences were inflation, unemployment and political unrest in my family, and all around me. Despite that, my life was, luckily, fairly tranquil albeit on a frugal budget, until the Anschluss in March 1938.

Although my parents had been baptised (as Christians) before my birth, it made no difference to the Nazis. Emigration was our only hope of survival. I was lucky enough to obtain one entry visa into England with the help of the Society of Friends, and left Vienna on 6 November 1938. I arrived with 20 pounds and my suitcase. I found shelter in a hostel for refugee students. A short while later my sister and my mother managed to follow me to England. I attended an engineering college, and was busy at nights learning BBC English, as spoken by radio announcers.

Then came the War, later internment and "being volunteered" to go overseas on the Dunera. Like some other young and single volunteers, I was quite glad about this, because the prospect of victory by the Nazis, and them being in charge of my camp, did not seem at all attractive to me.

Our assisted passage to Australia and our stay in Hay and Tatura have been extensively written about so I shall jump to mid 1941 when I got lucky again. I got a chance in the camp to sit a sort of examination, testing my knowledge of optical systems. This was a rare skill at the time and much sought after by the director of the Commonwealth Solar Observatory at Mount Stromlo, ACT. The director planned to convert the observatory into a factory manufacturing optical instruments for the forces.

I must have done alright in my tests because the director applied for my release with a view to employing me at Mount Stromlo. Long months of waiting passed until eventually government approval was given for my release. So, on 10 August, 1941 I left Tatura internment camp, guarded by a burly detective, on my journey to Canberra. Dutifully, the detective delivered me to the observatory director, leaving only after the director had signed for my 'delivery', and becoming my boss in every sense of the word.

I shall never forget the day of my arrival in Canberra! A chilly but clear morning, a radiantly blue sky, and warming sunshine. I was captivated by the scenery and the views of the mountains. I was in love with Canberra from the moment I saw it.

—Ernst F. Frohlich

## The Commonwealth Solar Laboratory at Mount Stromlo – Optical Munitions Panel

In 1941, five Dunera Internees were released to work for Dr Richard van der Riet Woolley, Director of the Commonwealth Solar Observatory (CSO) to assist in the work of the Optical Munitions Panel.

The CSO was established in 1924, it switched from Astronomy to war work in July 1940, becoming an optical munitions factory making lenses for binoculars, gun sights and bomb sights for aircraft, employing about 60 workers. By the end of the war, the observatory was known as a centre for pioneering optical techniques. The CSO later became the Mount Stromlo Observatory and is part of the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics at the Australian National University.



Solar Tower, Observatory offices and buildings, six-inch Farnham Telescope, Mount Stromlo Observatory. Circa Jan 1921–Dec 1935.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM JAMES (JACK) MILDENHALL

Name	Date Released	Occupation given on arrival in Australia	Notes
Georg Hans FROEHLICH	Jun 41	Optician	Died February 1942 in Canberra.
Hans Joachim MEYER	Jun 41	Optician	Sydney after war. Record shows he attended a function re war-time work in 1997.
Ernst Friedrich FROEHLICH	Aug 41	Student	Remained in Canberra.
Gustav Friedrich Karl KRENTLER	Oct 41	Fitter	Died 1944 – accidental poisoning – Sydney hotel. Buried in Canberra.
Erwin Gustav FREYE	Dec 41	Tool turner	Married 1942 or 1943. Died QLD 1977.

– Information gathered by Carol Bunyan

Sources:  
[www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/salute/war/stromlo/](http://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/salute/war/stromlo/)  
[www.mso.anu.edu.au/TourDeStromlo/1941/stibbs.html](http://www.mso.anu.edu.au/TourDeStromlo/1941/stibbs.html)  
[www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/exhib/omp/launch/launch\\_photos.htm](http://www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/exhib/omp/launch/launch_photos.htm)

## Visit to the Duldig Studio Exhibition – Art Behind the Wire

Recently, along with approximately 25 members of the Dunera/Singapore internee community I had the pleasure to attend Duldig Studio's *Art Behind the Wire* exhibition. The Duldig family home has been turned into a public museum

and art gallery recognised by the Victorian cultural community and partially supported by the State Government and many generous donors and benefactors.

This is an exhibition, as the name suggests, of the artwork from within the internee camp at Tatura, mainly by Karl Duldig (1902-1975) who was a world renowned sculptor and artist and an internee. He was transported to Australia, along with other families, on the converted troop ship the Queen Mary. The exhibition has won the Victorian Community History award and has been co-curated by Melinda Mockridge and Stefan Damschke and supported by a grant from the Besen family.



Ron Reichwald and Euan Walmsley with sculpture of Captain Broughton.



Right to left: Frank Jackson, Ron Reichwald, Selma Seknow, Sharon Arthur, Susie Reichwald and Stefan Damschke.

We were welcomed by the new gallery curator Stefan and Melinda, and Eva De Jong-Duldig, Karl's daughter who, as a child was an internee in the Tatura camp with her parents. The drawings of life inside 'the wire' were amongst the first created by Karl in Australia. They were amazing in their detail and made one pause and reflect on the experiences of these families in the camp. We also marvelled at the artistry in the sculpting of Karl Duldig as well as the many amazing

stories emanating from this art work, as told by Eva, Melinda and Stefan.

Another highlight were the rooms of original furniture and artefacts which were somehow transported from Austria and France during World War II and the fascinating story around these events.

This is a most worthwhile exhibition to visit and a testament to the dedication and professionalism of the Duldig Studio staff. We thank Eva and Melinda for making this visit possible.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DULDIG STUDIO

– Ron Reichwald



## SAVE THE DATES 2015

Tatura Museum and campsite visit:  
April 19

Hay Reunion and 75th Anniversary  
commemoration: September 5 and 6

Sydney Reunion and 75th anniversary  
commemoration: September 9

Melbourne Reunion Luncheon:  
November 10

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News and information on events will  
be updated on our Dunera Association  
facebook page

 **Friends of the Dunera Boys**

### Dunera Museum at Hay

Carol Bunyan – Volunteer Researcher  
lcb5@bigpond.com

(NOTE: the first letter is a lowercase “L”)

### Dunera Hay tours

David Houston – President  
Hay Historical Society  
davidhouston23@bigpond.com

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## IN MEMORY

### *Barney Barnett*

26 September 2014. Gold Coast, QLD

### *Gerald May*

26 November 2014. Melbourne

### *Walter Fuerst*

21 January 2015. Melbourne

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

## Committee members 2013–14

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