

# 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.110 June 2021



**Tatura Reunion**

**April 2021**

**Foundation Editor:**

The late Henry Lippmann OAM

**Editorial responsibility:**

The Committee of the Dunera Association

The views expressed by writers of particular articles in this publication are the responsibility of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Dunera Association.

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**Cover illustration:**

**Attendees at the 2021 Tatura event.**

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*Many thanks to all the contributors*

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**Ron Reichwald**  
President  
Dunera Association

## From the President

Welcome to issue 110 of Dunera News. We are excitedly preparing for the resumption of our traditional face-to-face events in Sydney, Hay and Melbourne. Please see the Save the Dates information in this issue.

Since the last issue, we held the consecration of the tombstone of Dunera Boy, the late Kurt Kriszhaber. This event was a great success and significant media publicity was generated. See our report in this issue. We also have held our first physical event since COVID in Tatura, being the 81st anniversary of the arrival of the Dunera Boys and the Queen Mary Internees. (See article)

Also in this issue, you will read excerpts from the memoirs of Dunera Boy Kurt Krenn, the fascinating story of Tom Wolf's creation of the model of the HMT Dunera and Remembering Willich Lion's family – from committee member Alan Lion. We are also presenting a segment containing articles reproduced from Dunera News' 30 years ago, commencing with a letter from Hay's then Mayor, Mick Beckwith. We hope this feature will be included in future issues.

We have just held our 3rd virtual event, being the webinar titled The Bauhaus Comes to the Riverina – Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack, Internee at Hay. This was an event with high quality content presented renowned by experts in the fields of Bauhaus art and Hay/ Dunera history. For those who could not view the event, you will be able to access a recording on our Facebook page, Friends of the Dunera Boys. A report on this event will be in the next issue of Dunera News.

Our event in Sydney this year takes place on Sunday 29 August. This is an important and significant event combining the cancelled 80th commemorations planned for last year with the 81st anniversary of the arrival of the Dunera in Australia September 1940. We do hope that you will be able to attend and meet and share stories and experiences with other Dunera descendants and friends .

We are always on the lookout for articles for future issues, so please do not hesitate to send your contributions to the editor c/o [duneraboys@gmail.com](mailto:duneraboys@gmail.com)

Although in Australia we are almost free of COVID-19 in the community, I am aware that members in Europe and USA are experiencing great difficulties, so I wish you all good health and stay safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ron Reichwald'.

# Tatura 2021 Event

By Robyn Fuerst

Daughter of Dunera Boy  
Walter Fuerst

On Sunday 18 April, families and friends of Dunera and Queen Mary internees met at the Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum to celebrate the 81st anniversary of their arrival in Tatura. On this occasion over 70 people attended, a great attendance for the Association especially with the cancellation of in-person events due to Covid last year. As often happens, descendants and friends reconnected and discovered new links with other internees and their families.

Adjunct Fellow Seumas Spark from Monash University opened the proceedings and Ann Holloway, Manager of Special Collections at Monash University, was the guest speaker.

In addition a plaque was unveiled by Kim O’Keeffe, Mayor of Greater Shepparton City Council, acknowledging the generous support of the Grumett family that enabled the creation of the recently completed Camps’ Mural on the outside of the museum extension. The extension has changed the face of the museum, and the curating within this new space is to be commended.

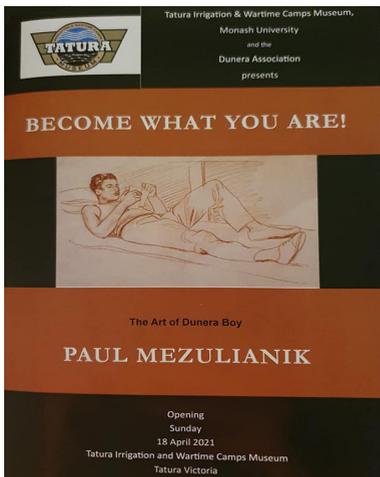


For me It is always a mix of sadness and joy to attend the Dunera functions, along with a desire to find out more of their history. When I learnt of this artist’s story, it reminded me once again of the secrets, including secret art work of Holocaust survivors and how these may only be discovered years later.

Finally it is always wonderful to hear and read how these groups of internees created such an amazing community of arts, crafts, learning and camaraderie while in camp at Tatura.

# Paul Mezulianik Become What You Are!

The event saw the opening of an exhibition of sketches by Dunera artist Paul Mezulianik titled *Become What You Are!* Before he died aged 97 in the United Kingdom, Mezulianik's stepdaughter Aeone Shrimpton found a trunk in the attic of his house containing a collection of sketches, never before shared, from his period of internment at the camps in Hay and Tatura.



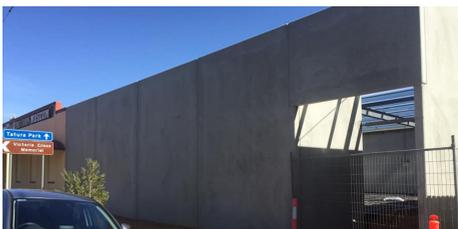
# Tatura 2021 Event

1. Unveiling of the plaque for the new Camp's mural
2. Ron Reichwald introducing guest speakers Seumas Spark and Ann Holloway
3. Tea and cake and time for Dunera freinds and families to catch up



# Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum New Extension and Camps' Mural

The Camps' Mural transitions from a monotone watchtower and bank of accommodation huts behind barbed wire, to a colourful depiction of a family internment hut surrounded by well-tended gardens with the tower of Dhurringile Mansion' (POW Officer's Camp) appearing on the horizon above the gum trees. There is a family of internees and a nurse from the No. 28 Camp Hospital and on close inspection you can see a POW appearing from an escape tunnel. There were several escape attempts from internment Camp 1, POW Camp 13 and Dhurringile Mansion. Completing the work there is one of the specially minted internment camp tokens which were used as currency within internment and POW camps in both Australia and New Zealand from February 1943. The denominations were 5/-, 2/-, 1/-, 3d and 1d. On the 1st May this year the mural won an award for 'Interpretive Signage' from the Greater Shepparton Cultural Heritage.



# More Than a Bauhaus Artist

New Publication on  
Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack

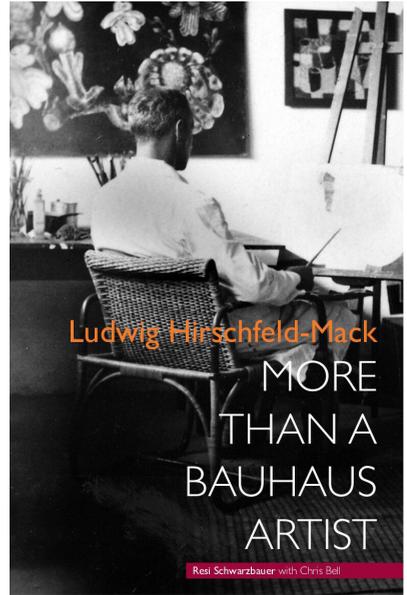
**Resi Schwarzbauer with Chris Bell**  
**392pp, Hardback with 280 illustrations**  
**Available from:**  
**historysmiths.com.au/shop**

Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack was among the first students of the Weimar Bauhaus in 1919. He thrived in the atmosphere of creative freedom and artistic experimentation but fell victim to the suppression of such ideals with the rise of Nazi Germany and the closure of the Bauhaus

He fled Nazi Germany to the UK in 1936 and was interned and deported to Australia aboard the Dunera. He was interned in Hay Camp 8, Orange and Tatura 2 before being released in Australia in 1942 to teach at the Geelong Grammar School.

Riveting, inspiring and deeply moving, this book is a culmination of two decades of research, drawing on extensive private family archives and oral histories. For the first time, it reveals the full details of Hirschfeld-Mack's extraordinary life as so much more than a Bauhaus artist - teacher, musician, inventor, performer, pacifist - a man of compassion and resilience. Ultimately, his story is a plea for creativity and enterprise, and a stirring testament to our common humanity

Resi Schwarzbauer has an affiliation with Hirschfeld-Mack as she was born in Tatura Camp 3 while her parents were interned, while Chris Bell is Hirschfeld-Mack's grandson and custodian of his grandfather's legacy and he is the curator of the extensive private family archive.

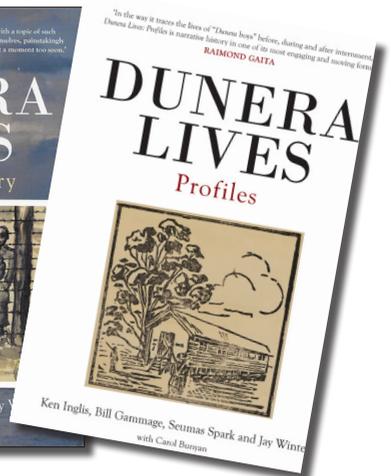
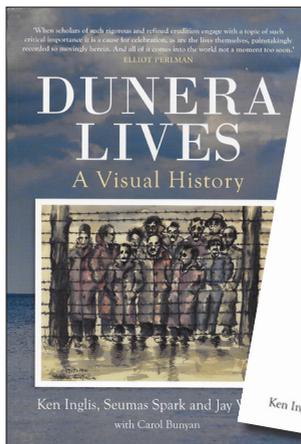


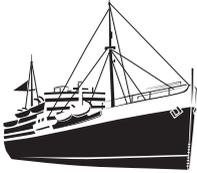
## Dunera Lives

**Volumes 1 & 2**  
**Ken Inglis, Bill Gammage,**  
**Seumas Spark**  
**and Jay Winter**  
**with Carol Bunyan**

These books are available  
from Monash University  
Publishing.

[www.publishing.monash.edu](http://www.publishing.monash.edu)





## Major Event - Save the Date!

### DUNERA ASSOCIATION - 2021 SYDNEY EVENT

Sunday August 29 from 12.30pm

80/81ST Anniversary of the Arrival of HMT Dunera

at JONES BAY WHARF the new Heritage Room

This is scheduled to be a significant event in this newly refurbished and accessible venue, with lunch provided in the newly opened Tribute Museum. There will be a full program, including unveiling of a plaque and model of the HMT Dunera and a chance to meet Dunera descendants and friends and be part of history.

Transport via Sydney PT ferry from Circular Quay or by bus or car.

Further details will be emailed and posted on our Facebook Group Page

**2021 DUNERA HAY WEEKEND 3-5 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**DUNERA MELBOURNE EVENT SUNDAY 7 NOVEMBER**

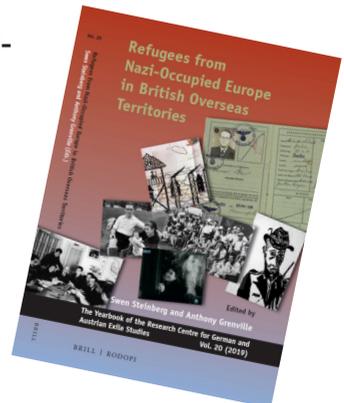
Werner Baer's activities in Singapore 1939-1940.

by Albrecht Duemling

This is a chapter in the latest Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies vol 20.

Available from Brill:

<https://brill.com/view/title/54869>



# Dunera Model

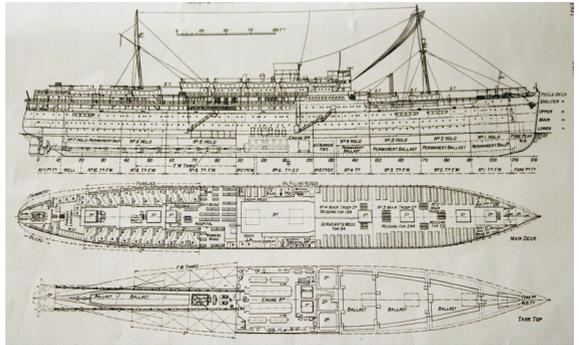
## Created by Tom Wolf

Tom Wolf undertook a project to build a scale model of the HMT Dunera in loving memory of all Dunera Boys, but in particular his Father-in-law Alfred Felix Katz, and Eric Strauss, his wife's brother in law. Tom's wife Sandra (nee Katz) presented the model to the Dunera Association in 2020 marking the 80th anniversary of the Dunera Boys' arrival in Australia. Below are Tom's notes on his 7 year labour of love to create this magnificent model.



I decided to make the model at the scale of 1:350, and to make the model as she was on 6 September 1940, the date when the German and Austrian internees arrived in Sydney. Fortunately both the Dunera and her sister ships the Dilwara, the Ettrick and the Devonshire are well documented in the Shipbuilding and Shipping Records for the time of their respective completion between 1936 and 1939 and non-specific but detailed plans are readily available.

Whilst the hull is of a relatively simple shape, there are many recessed and enclosed well decks which need to be incorporated into the build. I compared the plans for Dunera and Dilwara, and finding them identical, I used the Dilwara plans as they were more detailed. Using the side and front elevations of the plan,



Hired Military Transport  
**HMT DUNERA**

Launched in 1937, built  
by Barclay, Curle & Co. Ltd.,  
Glasgow for the British  
India Steam Navigation Co.

This model at the scale of 1:350 was built by Tom Wolf (Sydney)  
in loving memory of Alfred (Fred) Felix Katz (1923-1978) and  
Erich (Eric) Strauss (1913-1990) and honouring "THE DUNERA BOYS"

This model was presented to the Dunera Association in 2020  
by Sandra Wolf (nee Katz) to commemorate the 80th anniversary  
of the arrival of HMT Dunera at Pyrmont on 6 September 1940

I made a jig for the hull project. By laying the decks one on top of the other from the keel up as a sandwich, the jig assisted to make the hull true to the plans. I then made the 13 "ribs".



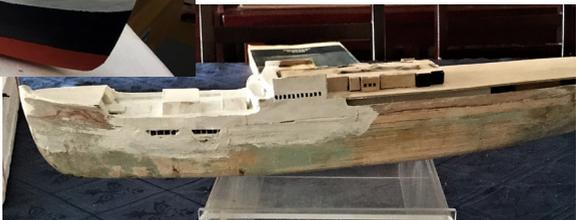
This model at the scale of 1:350 was built by Tom Wolf (Sydney) in loving memory of Alfred (Fred) Felix Katz (1923-1978) and Erich (Eric) Strauss (1913-1990) and honouring "THE DUNERA BOYS"

Each deck was carefully measured and shaped in accordance with the plans and trimmed to fit into the jig. Once every deck of the hull was made and trimmed, a “dry” trial was made and when everything fitted, the hull pieces were glued together - just like a sandwich. The first 2 floors of the superstructure were built the same way, except the floors were glued as they were made, with window recesses pre-cut



The build then continued floor by floor... Time to install:

- Railings,
- Anchors and winch,
- Propellers,
- Funnel
- Air vents,
- Davits and Lifeboats,
- Masts and Cranes



Pictures courtesy of Tom Wolf

## From the Archives: Dunera News

The first Dunera News was published in September 1984. The Dunera Association Website has pdf copies of all the back issues which contain a unique wealth of information on the internees brought to Australia on HMT Dunera and RMS Queen Mary in 1940 and also how the Association has lead the memory of these events, intially for those involved but now for their descendants.

Here we reproduce an extract from Dunera News 21 published in July 1991. The letter congratulates the Committee on the Dunera Reunion which was named 'Community Event of the Year'. The commemorative plaque was pictured on the cover.



218 William Street,  
HAY. 2711

12 FEB 1991

Dear Mike and the rest of the "Dunera Boys",

Congratulations on the Dunera Re-union being named Community Event of the Year at our Australia Day celebrations on that National Day .

The overall success of the event and the tremendous educational and emotional experience that it was ensured that it was a sure winner. This is the first time such an award has been made and as it also had such an international flavour it meant it was a certainty.

I enclose the award plaque for your display at some appropriate occasion and hope that your members derive as much pleasure from it as we do in awarding it.

I am sorry we could not divulge it before the event but that is the way these awards are done.

I am very proud to have ben associated with the whole experience and look forward to our next meeting.

The local community event award went to the Triathlon club which organises the annual Australia Day "surf Carnival" at the river.

Kindest regards.

Mick Beckwith  
Shire President and Chairman  
Australia Day Committee.

# The Perfect Migrant

Exhibition at Monash University.



Today the Dunera and Queen Mary internees are held up as examples of 'perfect' migrants for their contributions to Australian society and culture, although their position post war was ambiguous and vulnerable; shifting between refugee, enemy alien, citizen, migrant and foreigner.

The Perfect Migrant is a meditation on the universality and diversity of the refugee experience. It draws its inspiration from the artwork of visual artist and sculptor, Erwin Fabian (1915-2020), exploring his creative and emotional response to forced migration. The artworks range from his personal experience as an internee in Tatura, to his life as a new migrant, and his responses to images of the men, women and children incarcerated on Manus Island and Nauru. Included in the exhibition is the Karl Duldig 'Portrait of Captain Broughton' courtesy of the Duldig Studio.

# Kurt Kriszhaber

## Consecration of Tomb Stone

by Ron Reichwald -

This event was a continuation of our 80th anniversary commemorations. The Consecration of the Late Kurt Kriszhaber's tomb stone, took place in front of a small gathering of people in the Jewish A section of Fawkner Memorial Park on 21st March 2021 and was live-streamed on our Facebook page. This was an historical event for the Dunera Association in honouring a Dunera Boy, whose grave until this day was not marked with a tombstone.

The day also happened to be the 100th anniversary of Kurt Kriszhaber's birth. The project to place a monument on the unmarked grave of Kurt Kriszhaber derived from an exhibition at the Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Naples, Florida. In that exhibition a letter was shown which had been written by Kurt Kriszhaber from his internment camp in Tatura, Australia.

David Nelson, a former BBC television producer who worked at the museum and who had an interest in family history started to look for more information about the people mentioned in the letter. He discovered that Kurt's grave did not have a tombstone.





David launched a crowd funding page in August 2018. About 100 individual people contributed – members of David’s Genealogical Society, visitors to the Museum, David’s family and friends, contacts of the USC Shoah Institute in Los Angeles, individual members of the Dunera Association, and a final \$500 from the Mosaica Organization in Jerusalem – and by March 2019 the target was reached.

Kurt was born on 21st March 1921 in Vienna. He came to England in May 1939 and initially worked on a farm in Northamptonshire before being transferred to another in Staffordshire. After Churchill’s “Collar the Lot” order in June 1940, Kurt was arrested as an enemy alien and ended up aboard the HMT Dunera en route to Australia in July 1940. He disembarked at Sydney, sent on a train to Hay and then ended up in a Tatura Internment Camp. He wrote the letter from there in November 1941. He then joined the ADF 8th Employment Company, and at the end of the war applied for Australian citizenship which he got in July 1946. The official announcement was in the government gazette on 5th September, but on 7th September Kurt was dead, gassed in a bathroom in Alma Road, Melbourne.

Although Kurt’s passing was a tragic event, the Dunera Association, as a custodian of the Dunera community, acted in a way that honoured a Dunera Boy whose passing could not be dealt with in a fully dignified way. I found this whole event most heart-warming and in my acknowledgements I thanked David Nelson, without whom this event would not have taken place.

Follow this link to view the video of the consecration:

<https://www.facebook.com/chaim.mehlman.9/videos/256783162747088>

# Against Forgetting

## Commemorating the Lion Family, Willich Germany

by Alan Lion.

Rheinische Post, March 15 2021, local pages Willich/Tönisvorst

WILLICH Germany: Red roses, a burning candle and a photo of young Ernst Lion decorated the Stolpersteine in front of Bahnstrasse 9 in Willich. If Lion were still alive, he would celebrate his 100th birthday today. But the Jewish man who was born in Willich died at the age of 91 in England. The Heimatfreunde Willich [the Friends of the Home Region] and the Willich Archive took the occasion of this 'round' birthday to commemorate the Lion family, which operated its butcher shop where now the Bierhaus Alt Willich is located. "On March 12, 100 years ago to the day, Ernst Lion was born on Bahstrasse. He survived the Holocaust, as did his sister Ruth, by fleeing to England. Their parents, who were deported to Riga, did not survive." With these words, Bernd-Dieter Röhrscheid of the Heimatfrunde introduced the commemorative ceremony. He presented Lion's biography in alternating reading with the city archivist Udo Holzenthal. Lion began his apprenticeship to become a butcher in his parents' butcher shop in 1935. In 1937 his father had to bow to the pressure of the Nazi authorities to close the butcher shop. Lion completed his apprenticeship in Rheydt, but was not able to find employment and worked as a farm worker, first in Willich, then in Büttgen. In 1939, the 18-year-old was able to emigrate to England where his sister Ruth had found refuge. When the war broke out, he was declared an "enemy alien," as were all German immigrants. In May 1940, England interned all German immigrants. After his time in Australia, he returned to England in 1941, then served in the British Army until the end of the war, and opened a kosher butcher shop in the London borough of Clapton in 1950.



[Photos: Commemorating the Lion Family in Willich Germany (Photo Credit: Norbert Pümen)]



Willich's mayor, Christian Pakusch admonished listeners of the importance and necessity of taking a stand against forgetting. Tim Krebs, who was also present, pointed out that the topic has reached younger people. The upper level high school student at the Robert Schuman Europe School wrote his graduation paper on this Jewish family. And the former St. Bernhard School student, Thomas Beschoten, was in email contact with Lion until the end of 2011, who died in spring 2012. Lion's son Alan sent a video message from England, in which he expressed gratitude for the commemoration of his father.



# Kurt Krenn

## Excerpts from a Dunera Boy Memoir

*The genesis for the discovery of Kurt Krenn's diary happened in 2018 when my wife and I embarked on a world and family discovery trip, following genealogical research by us. I contacted various archives overseas in search of the family histories of both myself and my wife Susie. As a result, I wrote to the Jewish archives in Leipzig Germany where my late Father was born. I received replies from Klaudia Krenn, and Incredibly, I discovered that Claudia's father and uncle were both Dunera Boys. We subsequently met her in Leipzig and it was there Klaudia revealed the existence of her father's diary.*

Ron Reichwald



Kurt Krenn was the father of Klaudia Krenn, Secretary of the Israelitische Religionsgemeinde, Leipzig Germany, who has kindly allowed this memoir to be published in Dunera News. The memoir was translated by Carole Adams and original spelling and punctuation is shown. At times the translator had difficulty deciphering the original notes and this is also shown. The excerpts hereunder are relevant to the writer's experiences as a Dunera internee and have been chosen for publication accordingly. The reader should keep in mind the context in which this memoir was written; by an anti-Nazi refugee whose hatred of Fascism was countered by his Communist ideologies. Mis-Spelling and incorrect words have been noted as [sic] and editorial notes and corrections of a factual nature been shown as {editorial notes}.

Editorial Team

I can only state my birth date and place via my memories. The only things remaining are a few photographs that come from my childhood. In brief, I was born on September 29 1906 in Vienna, supposedly on a high-holy Jewish holiday, Yom Kippur, which in Jewish circles means that particular happiness follows. The neighbourhood was given as the 8th district of Vienna, that is, in the Joseph Town, 9 which was the Jewish Quarter of the city; CEA. Twenty-seven years later, I visited the spot, but could not find any trace.

We came to Australia under the strangest and most humiliating conditions. As we arrived on the Isle of Man, marching to the quay along with numerous friends, including Wilhelm Koehner and Jossi Zimmering, we {they} were to be sent to Canada on the 'Celltic' {Ettrick}. Koehner had looked after the line: 'Outa the British Empire, OK to the USA', which lay closer than Canada. We later learned that the leaders among the group, who sat [stayed} in the camps in Huyton, near Liverpool, refused to leave England, but came to show solidarity.

One week later, we were listed for transport and left Liverpool to go aboard the Dunera. Our suitcases lay in great numbers on the quay, broken open and plundered; English police and military officers rooted around in them and chose. It was humiliating. Most people lost their passports and other papers, money and pens, and other things that were lost by their rightful owners. We could see much of what was happening on the quay.

We set ourselves up into groups of five: Max Berger; Max Stanko, who was a miner from Upper Silesia, who lost his life on the way back to England when his ship was torpedoed on the South West coast of Africa. Schumann, (forgot his first name); Emil Lange, a mason from Leipzig who came to us 'illegally'. We were a tight-knit group and 'getting entrée' to the ship we were no longer bothered, and thanks to 'Alex' Valentin, who suddenly showed up, we quickly go through to the lower deck, whilst most of the men were searched once again on the deck and were thoroughly relieved of the things in their pockets. With 'Alex' were Ludwig Baruch, Kurt Regner and Mayerhofer – the last two both Austrians – and they joined us and we stayed together during the less than cheerful voyage to Melbourne, with intermediate stops at Sierra Leone, Freetown harbour, Takotrade, Lagos, Capetown (South Africa) and Fremnatle [sic] (Western Australia).

The trip in this ship provided material for artistic presentations of our experiences. Max Zimmering wrote about it in his novel, the English (AUSTRALIANS) (sic) made a TV film. Thus a short account here. Once on the ship we quickly came up with various nicknames in English: Pickpocket Battleship, Luggage Destroyer give the general impression. Shortly after getting underway, we saw our empty suitcases bobbing in the water. In return, once we were close to arriving in Australia we were offered heaps of underwear, and we could choose the things we needed. During the journey we were searched repeatedly, and asked in particular whether we had watches. I was able to hide my wristwatch well and carry it all the way to Australia.

My luggage consisted only of a backpack, which was not searched except for the outer pocket. We could request replacements for our lost things once we were in camp, and the military officials actually honored this. ...but the captain liked his ship and thus he was successful in avoiding a direct hit by the German torpedoes by taking a zigzag route for 2 days. We were spared but frightened although a bit of shooting took place when some of the internees tried to push through the barbed wire in order to/thinking to save lives. I can see Max Berger before me, the way he climbed on top of the hole that had been created and was then pushed back onto an armed guard.

Life in the camps of Tatura, numbered 1 to 4, was an excellent school for us. In Melbourne the true civilian internees {Arandora Star survivors}, mostly active Nazis, were landed/set down. With them came a number of refugees – about 100 – and we were among them. We had no idea why we all were selected.

We were placed in a train, at/on the window seats were Australian soldiers, most of them older men, and we were between them. In Murchison East we were let out. We were placed in autos and driven to Tatura 2. Soon there was a great to-do: some men were missing. They had counted wrong. The sergeant in the intelligence unit spoke the best German, which he had learned in Potsdam. Immediately we began to campaign for separation from the Nazis, which took place after about two weeks. We agitated as union men and brought disquiet to the Nazi group. Many German sailors were among them who wanted nothing to do with the Nazis, but rather had sought to reach their German homes via ships - mostly foreign – which were available to them. They sought to contact us and snuck into a corner as we held the meeting we had called. We were soon successful; a number of these internees, truly civilians, wanted to be separated from us; among them were a marine officer; a Catholic abbot. Also joining us was a member of the board of the mineral company Kali-GmbH, who had been interned by the English in Africa while he was hunting lions and was saved after the Arandora was sunk – no doubt thinking that he had better chances for life in English prison.

After a short time we were transferred to the camp in Tatura 3. We lived in 9 barracks, each with 24 men. Soon after, a group of German refugees joined us, having been promised freedom/release in Australian. In our area were single men, while in the neighbouring area were married couples with children (especially Italians, Japanese). Out of the nine barrack team leaders/heads, four of them came from our group. We organised the necessary work around the camp as paid work, for the bourgeois elements were well provided for, and this way the workers with nothing were provided for. Since every inmate in the camp administration could open an account, many of the camp workers and those in the workshops that were slowly created could finance their personal needs. Among the workshop were the carpenters who made/crafted our lounge chairs, armchairs, suitcases out of wood provided to us by the camp administrators, the same for the tools. Plumbers used tin cans to cobble small ovens together. In a tailor shop Ludwig Baruch, a master tailor, sewed along with Max Berger and an Austrian monk, in contrast with/to the abbot from Cologne, who had nothing to do with us and stayed with the rich inmates. Paid work included kitchen duty, bathroom maintenance, and street cleaning undertaken by Comrade Schumann, whose occupation that had been...

A lucrative occupation was undertaken by a one-time pastry chef from Dobrin, who baked wonderful cakes daily and even served cream when he'd saved up milk. The barrack leaders took a certain commission for things sold at the canteen [sic]... At one point we were switched over to the camp Tatura 1, where we became acquainted with the 'Gauleiter' or Party chief of the Nazis for Australia, who had...

Towards the end of our internment we were once again settled in Tatura 4, and from there our Sydney transport took place. During the time that we spent in Tatura, a powerful alteration took place in world politics. We were bounced around by imperialist politics. We had this pronounced feeling when we were loaded into the Dunera. We had arrived in England as poor pitiful victims of the Nazis, even though the victimization of Czechoslovakia at the hands of the Munich Pact clearly brought the actions of imperialist forces to light. Hitler's switching his policy towards the Soviet Union cost a state's existence. That was no great upheaval for the sharks. Thus we came to England. When this chess move did not bring the desired result and Hitler's policies for the moment turned westward, the situation of the British Empire turned precarious. When the war in the west began, we became Hitler's Fifth Column and after the West Front was opened in May 1940, we were suddenly transformed into potential (Nazi) accomplices and were put into camps, the men removed/taken away from England – Canada, Australia – even when at least two ships with refugees were sunk by doing so through this policy.

The Australian military officials were extremely taken aback when they hear of the various places where we had been quartered in England. The attempt to make us seem like submarine crewmen by taking away our suitcases and clothing had not been enough; none of us could shave would give proof that we were Hitler's tools. Even the soldiers set to guard us in the train in Melbourne were amazed at how well many of us spoke English.

But the command at the camps in Australia tried to maintain this illusion. It was comic to see how the English Major Leyton, even though a Jew, tried to win the men for the so-called Pioneer Corps – a sort of C-soldier, (who would carry out particular tasks under the command of an officer), which was practically scorned. His success

was scant with the men, about 5,000 {2,100} refugees, who had been brought to Australia, and the 300 or so (who joined up) wanted to get out of the camp. Our oppositional propaganda was successful among the young people more than we expected. We arrived in September 1940 and in November F D Roosevelt was elected to his second {third} term. In the Spring an attempt was made to provoke the Soviet Union directly via the Mannerheim {Line} in Finland. But the expectation came to nothing. Hitler believed himself so strong to finish up [sic] the Soviet Union once he had occupied Europe and divided it up. Only after he had broken his treaty with the Soviet Union and invaded on July 22 1941, did Churchill decide to work with his previous arch enemy, Bolshevism.

It was clear to us after this assault that we had to bring every force to bear against the Hitler coalition, and it became a question of becoming active as soon as possible. We did that in the camps by taking up a collection for the Red Cross of the Soviet Union, with the result that we were able to donate – I think it was 52 Australian pounds – to the Australian consul. [Sic]

In the camp, we openly declared our resignation from the positions of barrack team leader/barrack heads, and stated that our duty lay outside the camp, with the judgement that we should be freed as soon as possible to participate in the 'war effort'. If we could not be freed immediately, a group of us were ready to return to England together with those who had signed up to be Pioneers. Transport ships were soon found, although one was tragically sunk. Hitler's submarines were still active. Japan joined the running, as the attack on Pearl Harbour in December showed.

Our trip back was less dramatic. In general the Australians were happy to get rid of us since we had been presented to them as prisoners of war. They had expected no problems from them, for they were covered by the international laws of war. We were first transported by car to Seymour from Tatura 4, and then we boarded a train from there to Albury, where we had to switch trains because of the variation in gage [sic], and then on to Sydney. There we spent 8 days outside the city in a transit camp. Here we encountered two Australian communists who had become widely known because of their hunger strike, and also met Thomas, a Greek sailor who had been interned because he had given an anti-war sermon in a Greek church; he was now to be released.

Our stay on land ended with a trip through the city of Sydney to the harbor [sic]. There we transferred to a harbour ferry which brought us right under the Sydney Harbor [sic] Bridge. We climbed over a pontoon to a large barge at anchor that brought us up to our ship, the Stirling Castle, where we embarked via a gangway that was rather long. It was a transport for bananas with a blue stripe because of its speed; it served in the war as a support transport at the La-Plata-Basin, where the Graf Spee sank. 10,000 frozen mutton {sheep} accompanied us to England, which were located on board in New Zealand over ten days, at the northern part of the Northern [sic] Island, at Auckland. From there we took a detour to Wellington, where a sailor with a broken leg was loaded over board like a package, swinging down, in order to receive medical treatment. We sailed very slowly for two or three days in a convoy of freighters and then journeyed unaccompanied from the Pacific Harbor at Balboa. There we had to wait 24 hours until we could enter the locks of the Panama Canal; the sailors called this 'capture nets of the shark'. {The Stirling Castle arrived in Liverpool on 28 November 1941 and Kurt Krenn was released from internment on 23 January 1942.}

## In Memory

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of four more Dunera Boys, but at the same time rejoice in their long and eventful lives. Our sincere condolences are offered to their families. The very few surviving members of this illustrious group are now at least 97 years old and we congratulate Wilhelm (Willy) Ungar on reaching 100 on 13 January and George Lederer on reaching his 101st birthday on 21 March. 2021.

### Fritz Sternhell

born Vienna 22 April 1924 - died Oxford UK 29 December 2020

Fritz was born in Vienna and escaped to the UK on a Kindertransport arriving on 25th March 1939. He worked at a leather factory and on a farm before being interned and then embarked on the Dunera to Australia. Initially he was too young to join the Pioneer Corps and remained interned in Australia until July 1942 when he returned to the UK and worked in agriculture until he was old enough to join the British Army in 1943. Despite serving in the British Army he chose not to anglicise his name opting to remain as Fritz Sternhell throughout his life.

These details have been extracted from a talk given by Fritz to the Oxford Chabad in 2012. To listen to his talk follow this link.

[https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video\\_cdo/aid/1780766/jewish/A-Child-of-the-Kindertransport.htm](https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/1780766/jewish/A-Child-of-the-Kindertransport.htm)



Photo Courtesy of  
The Oxford Chabad

### Walter Kaufmann

born Berlin 15 January 1924 - died Berlin 15 April 2021

Sent by his adoptive parents to the UK to study at the New Herrlingen School (Bunce Court) in January 1939 on a Kindertransport, he was interned on 12 May 1940 and sent to Australia on the Dunera. He was released in Australia in 1942 to join the Australian Labour Battalion. During his time in the Army he started to write short stories and in 1944, the year he married his Australian wife he won his first literary prize. He joined the left wing Melbourne Realist Writers Group and the Australian Communist Party. He became a naturalised Australian after the war.

In the 1950's he returned to East Germany to live and write, however he kept his Australian passport to facilitate worldwide travel. He wrote more than 12 books. Karin Kaper and Dirk Szuszie have completed feature-length documentary *Walter Kaufmann: Welch ein Leben!* (Walter Kaufmann: What a Life!) which will soon be released in cinemas in Germany

Walter Kaufmann was interviewed on Late Night Live in 2014, by Phillip Adams which is available on-line at

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/walter-kaufmann2c-dunera-boy/5736970>



## Peter Eden (Werner Adolf Engel)

born Breslau 27 June 1921 - died London 22 December 2020

Born in Breslau Peter fled to England as a Jewish refugee in 1939 and was interned on 16 May 1940 before being deported on the Dunera to Australia. During his internment in Australia he was in Hay Camp 7, Tatura 4 and Loveday 10 camps before being returned to the UK on the SS Stirling Castle to join the Pioneer Corps at the end of 1941. Peter served as sapper with the Royal Engineers in North Africa and Palestine, and as NCO with Intelligence Corps in Germany post war until he was demobbed in 1947.

He then opened a restaurant which developed into a chain after which he opened his first hotel. A London Dunera Boy reunion took place at his hotel, The Eden Plaza, in Kensington on 30 May 1987 (pictured above).

He recorded a biographical interview with the Imperial War Museum in 1998 which can be accessed online using the following link:

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80017195>

## Gerry Moore (Gerhard Arnold Moses)

born Berlin 5 March 1923 - died France February 2021

Born in Berlin Gerry had escaped to England and was a student at Harlow College when he was interned on 12 May 1940 before being sent to Australia. He was in Hay Camp 8, Tatura 4 and Loveday 10, returning to the UK to join the Pioneer Corps on the SS Stirling Castle. In 1943 he joined the Royal Amoured Corps and saw active service with the 22nd Armoured Brigade. Post war he worked in exports before entering the metal trade. In later life he moved to Paris but always kept in touch with his best friend, fellow Dunera Boy and Arsenal supporter Willy Field.

Reference: Willy Field's biography "Dachau to D-Day" by Helen Fry. The History Press 2009.



Dunera Boys, Peter Eden, Willy Field and Gerry Moore at Willy's 90th Birthday party in 2010  
Photo Anthony Field, Dunera News 80.

# The Dunera Association Inc

Visit our website: [www.duneraassociation.com](http://www.duneraassociation.com)

All correspondence to: The secretary - Dunera Association

## NEW ADDRESS

**PO Box 4104, Frankston Heights,  
Victoria 3199 Australia**

**Email: [duneraboys@gmail.com](mailto:duneraboys@gmail.com)**

**Dunera  
News** 

First published in 1984 this is a unique resource of information relating to the internment of refugees from Nazi oppression deported to Australia from Britain and Singapore in 1940.

PDFs of all 109 back issues can be found on the Dunera Association website.

The association welcomes contributions of letters or articles for future issues of Dunera News: Please email [duneraboys@gmail.com](mailto:duneraboys@gmail.com)



## Facebook

**Friends of the Dunera Boys  
Public group · 480 members**

Admin and Moderators: Nathan Oppy & Michelle Frenkel

This group is an international forum for discussing all things Dunera. The group would love to hear your stories or associations with the Dunera or Queen Mary internees. If you have any questions about your families' connections to this subject then this is the place to post your query; the group members have an unequalled knowledge between them.

## USEFUL CONTACTS/LINKS

**Dunera Museum at Hay**  
Carol Bunyan (Canberra)  
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[lcb5@bigpond.com](mailto:lcb5@bigpond.com)

**Duldig Studio**  
[www.duldig.org.au](http://www.duldig.org.au)

**TATURA IRRIGATION &  
WARTIME CAMPS MUSEUM**  
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**Dunera Stories**  
Online resource for stories and artwork of the  
Dunera and Queen Mary Internees  
[www.dunerastories.monash.edu](http://www.dunerastories.monash.edu)