



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023 | TISHRI/CHESVAN 5784

News and views from  
**Belsize Square Synagogue**

### THE HIGH HOLYDAYS

# The compassion of forgiveness

Why is it so difficult to forgive others? This is a time of year when we are told that we must forgive people if they apologise to us, but sometimes the idea of forgiveness seems too difficult or painful. Besides, we are told that God will forgive someone if they apologise three times, so why open ourselves up to pain by doing something that God will do regardless?

A number of years ago, I was hurt by someone close to me. My entire world was turned upside down by their actions and I felt little but contempt – even hatred – toward them. I went out of my way to avoid this person and was overcome by anger whenever our paths crossed.

At one point, I took a chance and forgave them, only to be hurt once more. And so I decided that no utterance of forgiveness would ever leave my mouth again (at least toward this person). I convinced myself I was taking a stand on moral grounds and that I was doing the right thing by punishing this person for their behaviour.

But the thing is, the only person who was truly punished by my choice was me. I was the one filled with animosity and resentment. I was the one suffering from stress, worrying about when I might run into this person and what I would do or say. I was the one living with the nagging suspicion that maybe I was doing the wrong thing by not forgiving them.

And then one day, the inevitable happened. I was forced yet again to decide between forgiving this person or holding onto this grudge – and I cautiously chose to forgive them. While the process was slow and painful while rebuilding trust and learning anew how to navigate the terrain of our relationship, eventually things began to feel different. I was no longer weighed down by the emotional burden I had been carrying. I actually

could feel a difference in my body as well as in my mind. In the end, I realised it was far easier to forgive someone than to bear a grudge against them.

A while back, I read a news story about someone who, standing outside a criminal court, publicly expressed their forgiveness towards the person who murdered their loved one. I was initially amazed by their willingness to forgive, but I also understood their choice, which they said was rooted deeply in their faith.

During the High Holy Days, we recite numerous times the 13 Attributes of God; invoking God's compassion, patience, love and forgiveness. Imagine if we allowed ourselves truly to internalise these

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words when we say them – if we reassured ourselves that the best way to experience the Divine in our world is by extricating any hatred and resentment from within it. If the family of a murder victim can forgive their loved one’s killer, can’t we forgive those who commit far less severe transgressions against us?

We all agree it would be unthinkable for an adult to condemn a child to a life of punishment for wronging them. Instead through our patience, understanding and forgiveness, we give them another chance, showing the child that we believe they can be better, thereby encouraging their growth and maturation.

And yet, when we hurt others, even intentionally, we are behaving much like children – not fully aware of how our actions may impact those around us. With this in mind, it seems almost cruel to withhold forgiveness from those who wrong us, once we understand that the best motivation for growth is not anger and punishment, but love and forgiveness.

So this year, as we make our way through the High Holydays, I invite us all to embrace the idea of forgiveness. As difficult as it may be, I know it can make us all better people. And that is indeed what this time of year is about.

THANKS FROM ISRAEL CHARITY



The Synagogue has received a letter of appreciation from ASSAF, one of the charities supported by our Israel Charity Dinner in April; edited version below:

The grant provided by the generous Belsize Square Synagogue community will be used to operate ASSAF’s Youth Club. The ASSAF Youth Club operates twice a week in the evenings (with extended activities during the summer), providing asylum seekers aged 12-19 with supportive, safe, holistic activities to integrate them and address their psychosocial needs. We also identify and prevent risky behaviour amongst this very vulnerable demographic. While at the club, the youths receive a hot meal, spend time with their friends, receive help with their studies and take part in group discussions. Main themes include life skills, identity and adolescence, multiculturalism, emotional support, current affairs, democracy and human rights. The Youth Program staff maintains close contact with the youths individually as well as with their parents, teachers, school counsellors, social workers and other caregivers.

There are three additional groups in which some of the young people participate: a leadership group, a girls’ group, and a study group, run by devoted volunteers.

This very generous grant will allow ASSAF to maintain the operation of this project, providing a space for asylum seeker youth to grow, develop and receive the support and care that they need.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a cordial welcome to:  
Gavriel Baruch | Joshua Hurst | Rachel & David Lewis with children Joshua & Amelie | Sivan & Benjamin Gaides Crome with son Aaron | Monefa Walker | Natalie Morris with children Olivia & Noah

BAT MITZVAH

Mazal tov to:  
Richard Sherwood & Fiona Murphy on the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Freddie on 9 September

DEATHS

We regret to announce the passing of:  
Jonathan Aptaker on 31 July  
Cantor Marshall Stone on 13 August  
John Horwitz on 17 August  
Gabriel Sassower on 19 August

EXAM RESULTS

Mazal tov to all of you who have taken GCSEs, A-levels and University finals this summer. News of superb results has been reaching us daily. We are always delighted to hear good news, so please let us know how you’ve done. Whether you are still at school, taking a gap year, going off to university or starting a career, we wish you good luck for a sparkling future and **please keep in touch!**

SYNAGOGUE BOARD

Following the Synagogue’s Annual General Meeting on 15 June 2023, the members of the Board are:

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SYNAGOGUE SNAPSHOTS

Claire Austin

Personal Assistant to Belsize Square’s ministers



How did you come to be involved with Belsize Square?

It was *beshert* (destiny)! I’d been living in California for over 30 years when my mother was given three days to live and I sped back to London. As my heart grew stronger, and, given that *tikkun olam* has always been my key principle for life, I used the eclectic timetable afforded by the probate process to start volunteering.

Through the kindness of Rosalyn Schofield, the daughter of my late mother’s best friend, I joined her for a Shabbat service at Belsize Square. I was impressed. Then it struck me – among my commitments in LA I’d been Executive Assistant to the Rabbi, Cantor and CEO of a social justice synagogue. I could volunteer to help the ministers at Belsize Square as they were entering the busiest time of their year – preparing for the High Holydays. It worked out so well it became my job!

What’s your favourite thing about your work?

The blend of contributions that enrich Belsize and honour how our founders’ courage and vision grew into this intimate spiritual community. It affords each of us opportunity to ‘Be a Blessing’.

What is the hardest part of your job?

My love affair with coffee. It requires immense self-discipline for me to not break sound barriers en route to our coffee machine!

What’s your favourite festival?

Gosh – this question is akin to asking which of your children is your favourite! But, if I must commit to being a ‘failed festival parent’, I’ll choose Yom Kippur. I love how it allows such depth of spiritual connection and being wrapped in the timelessness of our heritage.

If you could do any other job for one day, what would you choose?

To date my work experience has been so varied I’m perfectly content!

In that case, why not tell us about that work experience?

My career started as a criminologist in a Home Office think tank. Experience with publishing its research led to becoming the Managing Editor of a biomedical journal, based at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in LA.

I believe that words can heal. Loving children and with a background in medical publishing, I re-trained in the evaluation of children’s literature. My goal was to curate collections of therapeutic children’s books for paediatric hospitals. I founded a programme called *Literally Healing* at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. This, and similar libraries, are collections of highly specialised children’s books that help patients and their families to better understand and cope with challenges consequent to a child’s serious medical condition. Age-appropriate therapeutic books allow for insights and tender conversations about difficult emotions, loss and death that otherwise might not happen.

MAZAL TOV TO OUR CHATANIM



Our Chatan Torah this year is Peter Strauss. He is a fourth-generation member of Belsize Square. He serves as one of our representatives on the Board of Deputies. He sang with our junior choir from the age of 9, and now regularly davens services and sings with the community and professional choirs. Outside of BSS, he is a systems manager for British Airways.



Our Callah Bereshit is Hilary Solomon, whose parents were founding members of our synagogue. Hilary and her late husband Mike were married at Belsize Square and their children Rosie and Zack were bat/bar mitzvah at the shul too. Hilary is an educator in our acclaimed Holocaust programme for local schools, telling the story of her late father Herbert Levy’s escape from Nazi Germany via the Kindertransport. She is profoundly moved by the students’ reactions to the stories they hear.

Mazal tov to Peter, Hilary and their families.



# Belsize connection at Ben Uri

Sarah MacDougall, Director of the Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, introduces a portrait from the gallery's new exhibition with a fascinating connection to Belsize Square



Adèle Reifenberg Portrait of Elise Reifenberg (Gabriele Tergit)  
Ben Uri Collection ©The Estate of Adèle Reifenberg

This intriguing portrait links the closely intertwined stories of four German-Jewish émigrés who settled in North London. The sitter is Gabriele Tergit – the pen name of Dr. Elise Reifenberg (1894-1982), born Hirschmann, who married the architect Heinz Reifenberg in 1928, the year that the portrait was probably painted. A pioneering woman court reporter in Berlin, where a street now bears her name, Tergit achieved overnight fame in 1931 for her socially critical novel about the late Weimar Republic, *Käsebier Takes Berlin*. Following Hitler's accession in April 1933 and a close brush with the Brownshirts, Elise fled Germany, reuniting with her husband and son in Palestine. Five years later, the family travelled to London by a circuitous route and Elise became secretary of the London PEN Centre of German-speaking Authors Abroad. She continued to write and publish fiction and memoirs for the rest of her life.

The surprising Belsize Square Synagogue connection derives from the fact that her husband Heinz was the architect of the major extension to the original vicarage that is now the synagogue's sanctuary, dedicated in 1958. The modern design and multi-use function of the building were unique at the time. Heinz had been denied a work permit until after the war, but his architectural commissions then included the 1951 Festival of Britain's Power and Production Pavilion (with George Grenfell-Baines) and the Otto Schiff and Heinrich Stahl Houses, Jewish care homes in North London.

The portrait's artist was Elise's sister-in-law, Adèle Reifenberg (1893-1986), who fled Nazi Germany with her husband, fellow painter Julius Rosenbaum. The two couples were reunited in London in 1939. Post-war, the Rosenbaums established a successful painting school, exhibiting alongside their pupils as 'The Belsize Group', until Julius's death in 1956. Afterwards, Adèle Reifenberg continued to paint in a late-Impressionist manner and exhibited frequently with the Ben Uri Gallery. Berlin-based artist Dodi Reifenberg is developing a series of artworks exploring his family's heritage.

The portrait is one of 40 works in Ben Uri's new exhibition, *"Sheer Verve": The Women's International Art Club*, at its St John's Wood gallery, from 13 September to 15 December. The Ben Uri Gallery and Museum was founded in London's Whitechapel in 1915 as a platform for Jewish immigrant artists working outside the mainstream. The collection expanded in 2002 to reflect the wider rich immigrant contribution to British visual culture. Today Ben Uri hosts the first full-scale virtual museum and research centre, attracting diverse audiences through both physical and digital programming including exhibitions, websites, events, films, and podcasts – see [www.benuri.org](http://www.benuri.org)

Gabriele Tergit's novel *Käsebier Takes Berlin* was published in English by the Pushkin Press in 2020

## HOLOCAUST EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

Peter Bohm

Belsize Square Synagogue's Holocaust education programme for schools has had another very successful year, with visits from Hendon School, St Aloysius RC College, St George's Catholic School, UCL Academy and South Hampstead High School.

Each visit to the Synagogue comprises a number of sessions, starting with a brief introduction to key aspects of the Jewish religion and an address by Rabbi Botnick, followed by a short Q&A session, which often produces some interesting and challenging questions. There is then a presentation on the rise of the Nazis, featuring the story of Herbert Levy, who came to England on a Kindertransport before becoming an early member of our Synagogue. The presentation recounts the development of the Holocaust and warns about the continuing dangers of antisemitism and racism. This is followed by an interactive session based around two short films – *Edek*, the story of Janine Webber, who was hidden in Poland by a righteous gentile, told in a novel way by her and a Black hip-hop artist, and *Stand Up!* in which famous footballers give an anti-racism message, by reference to the Holocaust. The penultimate session includes Belsize Square members who lived through the events of 1933-1945, including Peter Summerfield and Paula Zeff, or second-generation speakers including Steven Bruck, Ron Cohen and Steve Kendall. Finally, everyone comes together for a short ceremony featuring the lighting of the Synagogue's six-branched Holocaust Memorial candelabra and a moving prayer sung by Cantor Heller.

I'd like to share two quotations from an article written by a teacher in Hendon School's termly magazine, which give his perspective on their visits: *'Going to school in Hendon, many students' only experience of the Jewish community is the largely Orthodox*

*community which lives in and around Hendon, so this excursion is extremely valuable in helping students achieve a more varied and broader impression of the Jewish community. An essential part of this is a question-and-answer session with the Rabbi at Belsize Square, whose explanations and anecdotes about Judaism and the history of the Jewish people are fascinating and enlightening for all.'*

*'As always, students expressed how valuable they found the experience. Now a regular annual feature of the Humanities curriculum, the experience gives students the opportunity to confront some of the most serious aspects of modern history in a safe environment. The RE and History departments are incredibly indebted to Belsize Square Synagogue for their dedication and hospitality.'*



Sue Leon and Ruth Jacobs with students from Hendon School

In a changing and challenging world, we are constantly striving to make our programme relevant, meaningful and accessible to our visiting pupils, the majority of whom are not Jewish and many of whom come from immigrant families.

If you are interested in being involved in the programme in any capacity, ranging from planning for the future to giving presentations, or simply helping out on the day, I would be very pleased to hear from you at [hmdsynagogue@gmail.com](mailto:hmdsynagogue@gmail.com) or by calling 07734 283461.





SILVIA NACAMULLI'S

# Torta di Miele, Caffè e Noci

HONEY, COFFEE AND WALNUT CAKE

Photo credit Jennifer Balcombe

Honey cake is traditional for Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, as honey is a symbol of a sweet start to the new year. It is traditionally an Ashkenazi cake, though variations also have their place in Italian Jewish cooking. This recipe is inspired by various honey cakes that I've tasted over the years, with my personal twist of added coffee and orange zest which lift and lighten it, as I often find honey cakes too heavy! I roughly chop the walnuts as I prefer them chunky, but you can finely chop them or use ground walnuts, if you prefer.

**Preparation: 15 minutes**  
**Baking: 50 minutes – 1 hour**  
**Serves: 8–10**

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 large eggs
- 200g (7oz/1 cup) caster or granulated sugar
- 200ml (7fl oz/scant 1 cup) runny honey
- 120ml (4fl oz/½ cup) sunflower oil
- 120ml (4fl oz/½ cup) brewed espresso or strong coffee (warm or cold – just not hot)
- 2 tablespoons rum, Cognac or Cointreau
- grated zest of 2 oranges
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- pinch of sea salt
- 300g (10½oz/scant 2½ cups) plain white flour (ideally '00' type)
- 1 x 16g (½oz) sachet of *lievito per dolci* (or 1½ tablespoons baking powder, plus 1 teaspoon vanilla extract)
- 300g (10½oz/3 cups) walnuts, roughly chopped

You will also need a 23cm (9in) round springform baking tin, the base lined with baking parchment (with the parchment held in place using the springform seal).

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan/400°F/gas mark 6). Beat the eggs with the sugar for a couple of minutes until pale and creamy, either in a bowl with an electric hand mixer or in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, then add the honey, oil, coffee, alcohol of your choice, orange zest, cinnamon and salt. Beat well again for another minute, adding the vanilla extract, too (if using baking powder, not *lievito per dolci*).
- 2 Sift in the flour and *lievito per dolci* (or baking powder) and mix again on low speed until just combined. Finally, add the walnuts and fold them in gently with a large metal spoon or spatula.
- 3 Transfer the cake mixture into the prepared baking tin and scatter any remaining walnuts evenly on top (if using). Bake in the oven for 50 minutes–1 hour, or until a skewer or cake tester inserted into the centre of the cake comes out dry. If it comes out wet, put the cake back in the oven and bake for another 5 minutes, then check again.
- 4 Remove the cake from the oven and leave it to cool in the tin on a cooling rack for at least 30 minutes, then remove it from the tin. Serve the cake warm or at room temperature. It keeps well, in an airtight container, at room temperature for 3–4 days.

## THE BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE PRAYER BOOKS

Edited and translated by  
Rabbi Rodney J Mariner

Belsize Square Synagogue is the only Jewish community in this country which has published a collection of prayerbooks for Shabbat, High Holydays and Festivals, specifically designed for worshippers to appreciate all aspects of its religious services.

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## RESOURCES FOR BEREAVEMENT

# What TV can teach us about death

Eve Hersov on the role of television drama in approaching loss and grief

Back in the 1970s when I worked in a forensic psychiatric ward, I used a therapeutic modality called 'Soap Opera Therapy'. Simply stated, this helped people to find a new perspective on their own lives and explore issues via the dissection of characters in soap operas. We may think of TV characters as being sensational and exaggerated, but real life can be dramatic and chaotic, especially at times of loss and grief.

Many once-taboo topics are now explored in TV dramas. These shows demonstrate and normalise the messiness of life, love and death effectively and accessibly. They help us to appreciate the impact of loss on individuals, families, friends and colleagues and show there is no 'right' way to manage loss.

What is *Shtisel* but a perfect example of the impact of a woman's death on her family? Relationships shift for better and worse in the void that opens when a peacekeeping matriarch dies too soon.

*The Kominsky Method* takes us through another death of a woman and the impact on her spouse. It also explores male friendship, ageing, grief, addiction and parenting. As an American with a long-dead New Yorker parent, I was comforted by Alan Arkin's accent. He sounded like my uncles!

Ricky Gervais' *Afterlife* gives us the rage of a man whose life slips from its axis with the death of his wife. Each episode was a glimpse into the raw pain of his loss and its impact on everyone around him, even his dog. Along with shots of NW3, the programme also showed us a man dealing with his father's dementia, how seductive depression and anger can be, and the sheer struggle to change and accept, or engage in, healing.

I am currently watching *One Mississippi* for the third time. A largely autobiographical series, it is co-written by Tig Notaro, a lesbian comedienne who is known for incorporating her relationship with cancer into her stand-up routine. In *One Mississippi*, we meet a family with secrets and past trauma. The storyline covers a mother on life support and a stepfather whose behaviour and need for structure hints at either undiagnosed autism or long buried abuse. Additionally we witness Tig's struggles with



The cast of *Shtisel*. Photo: Yes TV

a mastectomy, the mess of her love life and that of her brother. It tackles the questions of 'home', where we belong, what is a safe distance from our past and our family – and how that changes.

*Virgin River* also looks at ageing and untimely death, as well as addiction, PTSD, and the value of community. It starts with a young widowed nurse and her departure from urban life to a rural community that needs her clinical skills. The scenic backdrop is glorious but small-town life means invasive neighbours, as well as support.

*This is Us* examines the impact of parental death on family life, but also touches on foetal death, ageing, addiction and the impact of war on mental and physical health. The series spans an entire lifetime of a white woman who gives birth to triplets. One dies at birth and she adopts an abandoned black baby brought to the hospital the same day.

Grief is a process that varies from person to person and from moment to moment, perhaps not something we 'manage' at all but from which we may eventually emerge with a sense of compassion for ourselves and others. TV can provide a lens to look at the manner in which we engage with life and the people who share our most painful 'episodes'.

Eve Hersov is Belsize Square Synagogue's Community Care Co-Ordinator and manages our Bereavement Support Service



# The Future of the Jewish Museum London

**Nick Viner, Chair of the Jewish Museum London on the opportunity to re-envision the Museum for the future**

‘Less the curators and guides who endeavour to bring to life the stories of our past...’ Rabbi Geoffrey Shisler, one of the wonderful volunteers at Jewish Museum London, led some beautiful blessings on Sunday 30 July, the day the museum closed its current building to the public. The place was buzzing and our closing ceremony was livestreamed on social media. Holocaust survivors with whom we have the honour to work spoke about their teaching and their interactions with young people.

to come out of a financial crisis but remained vulnerable to any increase in costs. Sadly, the cost-of-living crisis meant it became impossible to fund the huge rise in building-related costs – not just energy, but a swathe of deferred and ever more expensive infrastructure and maintenance needs. The Board realised the only way to save the Museum for future generations was to sell the building and use the proceeds to support a transition model and provide seed money towards a future museum in another location.

conversation. Schools look to us to provide a positive early experience of Judaism and Jewish culture, to help combat prejudice and stereotypes – this includes our long-standing work with Holocaust survivors.

We believe that our task requires scale and prominence. The Jewish Museum in London is the smallest one among those in major European cities, despite hosting the second largest collection, and the UK being home to the second largest Jewish community. Crucially, the vision for a future museum cannot be

In the short term, the bulk of the collection will move into specialist museum storage, and our collections team will continue to digitise the collection – so far, they have covered about 10,000 objects – and we plan to create a new Collections Online in the coming year. Our Inclusive Judaism project, collecting images from all over Britain, is now in our image library and is being used to help educators teach how to deliver Judaism in the classroom in an inclusive way.

In addition, a small part of the collection will be on display in selected venues that are able to provide appropriate quality space, enabling public access to key objects and stories. This will be likely to include the Leon Greenman exhibition, central to our work on Holocaust education, as well as objects in the Judaica collection, our rotating Pitch-Up Community Voices exhibition, and some other displays. We will also continue to loan objects as requested to exhibitions in suitable venues, and plan to expand our award-winning education and learning programme both virtually and in person, using different locations.

As we enter this transition phase towards a museum of the future, we are mindful of the need to develop not just a more sustainable institution, but also one that is better able to deliver on our mission. As we learnt during the pandemic, having to close your premises does not mean having to abandon your mission. At this pivotal moment, it will be crucial that our community is behind the museum. Our decision to sell the building has not been taken lightly, but with your help it provides an extraordinary opportunity to re-envision Jewish Museum London for the future.

You can support the Jewish Museum by becoming a Friend or by making a one-off donation via our website: [www.jewishmuseum.org.uk](http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk)



Curators showing selected objects from the Museum's collection



Survivor, Eve Kugler speaking at the Museum's closing ceremony

It has been a heavy responsibility to close a public building, exercised with great sadness, but the truth is that the Museum in its location on Camden's Albert Street has never achieved financial sustainability. This is perhaps a sign that it never sufficiently managed to capture the imagination of the Jewish community at large, or to generate its widespread support.

When I applied for the role of Chair in July 2020 following a conversation with the Chair of Arts Council England, Sir Nicholas Serota, the Museum was just starting

Simon Schama commented that without the Museum and its collections to show the nuances of our history, 'there is no possibility of that cultural outreach beyond our own community, so we risk becoming misunderstood stereotypes.' Our collections carry community memory – and the Museum not only cares for them but uses them to help illuminate the present. Our ability to welcome people from all backgrounds into dialogue in a non-religious environment is crucial to having a meaningful role in education and in the national

achieved without the support of the community.

Our vision for a Jewish Museum of the future includes continuing to illuminate and celebrate the story of Jews in Britain, with regularly changing state-of-the-art exhibitions in addition to up-to-date permanent displays; accessible stores for audiences to engage more widely with collections; a seamless physical and digital experience; and a much more visible location in an area of high footfall to welcome both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences in greater numbers.

Proudly Representing the  
Community in the centre of the  
international museum sector



Emmanuel Levy, Two Rabbis Carrying the Scrolls of the Law, c. 1943, Oil on canvas, Ben Uri Collection

Our academic, collection and exhibition focus since re-opening in 2002 is the Jewish, Refugee and Immigrant contribution to British art since 1900.

In 2016 we abandoned ambitions for an East or West End prime location as we concluded it would inevitably be unsustainable. In 2018 we published our Sustainability and Public Benefit Strategy switching priority & investment to digital and launched the first full scale virtual museum and research centre in parallel with our physical gallery in Boundary Road.

This year over 750,000 people globally will have sight of [Benuri.org](http://Benuri.org) and we were invited to join the exclusive World Art Foundations alongside the Bacon, Dali,

Guggenheim, Moore and Picasso Foundations. Our hybrid formula is exceeding expectations as we are also lending exhibitions and collection works to five cities in the UK and eight cities across Europe and the USA.

From 13 September we present a 5 star, not to be missed, loan exhibition surveying The Women's International Art Club 'Sheer Verve' every Wednesday to Friday including major works by Hepworth, Frink, Moss, Pissarro, Rego and 25 more.

We wish you all a Shana Tova and if you would like to know more about our intellectual and financial sustainability or/and future plans please contact our Chair, David Glasser, at [davidg@benuri.org](mailto:davidg@benuri.org)

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## BOOK REVIEW

# Why Grandmothers Matter by Naomi Stadlen

Reviewed by Suzanne Goldstein

This new book by Belsize Square member and psychotherapist Naomi Stadlen may be small in size, but it has a big message. The role of grandmother is important, not only as a link with the past, but in the present as well. We should honour the role and appreciate what it has to give to all generations in every family. As a grandmother myself, I can fully relate to the book and it made thought-provoking points.

I found the information about other cultures and their view of being a grandmother informative and relevant. Some communities have a 40-day period set aside for a new mother and baby, with the grandmother and other relatives appointed as carers. Special foods are cooked, and transition from womanhood to motherhood is marked. Naomi points out that this

custom originated in the Biblical period, because the mother was seen as impure after childbirth and her body needed time to recover. I felt this wonderful custom might be difficult to follow now, but as Naomi asks, why couldn't we have grandmother leave as we have paternity and maternity leave?

Today the grandparent's role has altered for many, to include regular childcare to support the adult working child, though some grandmothers are still working too. Naomi recommends that a grandmother sets boundaries to make the experience a good one for all concerned. As she says 'a hardworking grandmother who has given so much has the right to relax'.

There is an interesting chapter about the fact that the loss of their grandmother could be the first experience of death for grandchildren. How to process this is an important lesson in life, and one which may affect adults and the children in a family in different ways.

Finally, Naomi points out how making connections, what she calls 'the threads of time', is so important in the rich history of families. The handing down of stories, recipes, names, objects and traditions all help give grandchildren a sense of their background. Grandmothers' knowledge and experience of life can play a great part in informing a grandchild of their history and in the development of their identity.

*Why Grandmothers Matter* is published by Pinter & Martin

## CANTOR MARSHALL STONE Z"L

Marshall Stone, who died on 13 August at the age of 92, was Belsize Square's Choirmaster in the early 1980s as well as acting as Cantor for Shabbat services when the congregation was between chazanim. He also taught in the Religion School and wrote and produced musical plays at Purim 1984 and 1997 and Chanukah 1994, recalled enthusiastically by the young participants and their audiences. He is remembered as a kind and personable man with a sweet voice, who would take on any role asked of him and do so with dignity and humility.

## SELICHOT SERVICE AND DINNER

Saturday 17 September  
7.45pm for 8pm

Our Selichot evening programme will have a new format this year

Havdallah

Fish & Chip Supper followed by dessert

Followed at 10pm by our traditional musical Selichot Service

Led by Cantor Paul Heller, together with Ben Wolf, Mike Cayton and The Belsize Square Synagogue Choir



## GREETINGS FROM THE EDITORS

Alex Antscherl and David Horwell wish all readers of Our Congregation *l'shana tova and well over the fast.*

Please send us your contributions for future issues – news, reviews and interviews on topics that you care about. We would love to hear from more of you in 5784.

## NEWS FROM ABERNEIN MANSIONS NW.3.

Dear Fellow Members

Now with the summer almost in the distinct past, we go into Autumn with all what this seasoning brings. For us in the Jewish commune it means the Days from Or. I can't help remembering the Roshoshonos of days gone by. Outside the Odeons Haverstock Hill and Swiss Cottage, the pavements were so white there was spass for us to accumulate after the service and shat to our hearts content. Now, of course, four security recruits we have to disburse at once without such socialist intracause. When it comes to Yom Kippur, all from us are only too earnest to get away without a moment's posing to get home to breakfast.

This time of year also brings the falling down from leaves and the need to wear sicker clothes. For us here in Abernein Mansions the prospectus of the coming on from winter is daunting. How will we be able to effort the cost from eating and heating? Still, we have to be thankful that we live here in a temporary climate. Much better than high temperatures that have been among the Mediterranean costlines.

As for Mrs Klopstick, one of the inmates here has been passing away to the shops that she should try Pilatus. My wife is now in the Swiss city off Lucerne preparing to climb all the peaks from Mount Pilatus. I am next to myself with worry. She is already talking about taking a senior mountaineering exhibition to the High Andrews in Suisse America.

There is much contamination here over the Major off London, Sir Dick Karp, imitating this UKIP on older motorists. There are a number off Belsize Square members here who get pigged up on the way to synagogue from their olden relatives who drive in from the outer skins of London. As they will no longer be able to effort their cars, they are outrageous. When she returns Mrs Klopstick intends too persuade these members to become protestant and march with her on Country Hall with blaggards.

With the best of intentions  
Fritz Klopstick

## ASK FRITZ

I have been asked by a lady member for my advice on a quiet personnel matter. For this reason she will remain unknown and the subject will be intently secreted. Surface to say, I did not recommend it in planz as she is well proposterous enough in this aria.



## ROSH HASHANAH GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARIE VAN DER ZYL

For full text of her message, see [synagogue.org.uk/news/board-of-deputies-rosh-hashanah-message](https://synagogue.org.uk/news/board-of-deputies-rosh-hashanah-message)

## SEEING DOUBLE



Twins George and Peter Summerfield celebrated their 90th birthday on 3 June

## CHEDER AND BEIT MITZVAH

Sunday mornings 9.30am–12.30pm  
Enquiries to Head: Caroline Loison  
[caroline@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:caroline@synagogue.org.uk)

Term starts – Sunday 3 September  
Half Term – Sunday 29 October

## ADULT DISCUSSION GROUP

Meetings take place on Sunday mornings in term-time.

Programme and Zoom joining details for each meeting will be in the News from the Square emails every Thursday.

For further information, please contact Claire Walford  
[claire.walford@yahoo.com](mailto:claire.walford@yahoo.com).



## SERVICES

**Friday evenings** at 6.45pm

**Saturday mornings** at 10.00am

### Kikar Kids – Junior Shabbat Service

Saturday 2 September, 7 October, 4 November

11.00am in the crèche for under 5s Service

11.00am in the library for 5–9-year-olds

11.30am Kids Kiddush

Often followed by a potluck lunch

Contact Richard on [rgpollins@gmail.com](mailto:rgpollins@gmail.com) for more information

## HIGH HOLYDAYS 5784 / 2023

### High Holydays and Yomim Tovim Services

#### SELICHOT SERVICE

Saturday 9 September

10.00pm

#### ROSH HASHANAH

##### 1st Eve

Friday 15 September

Service at 6.45pm

##### 1st Day

Saturday 16 September

Service at 9.30am

##### 2nd Eve

Saturday 16 September

Service at 6.45pm

##### 2nd Day

Sunday 17 September

Service at 9.30am

#### KOL NIDREI

Sunday 24 September

Service at 6.45pm (fast commences at 6.37pm)

#### YOM KIPPUR

Monday 25 September

Service at 9.30am (fast ends at 7.47pm)

#### SUCCOT

##### 1st Eve

Friday 29 September

Service at 6.45pm

##### 1st Day

Saturday 30 September

Service at 10.00am

##### 2nd Eve

Saturday 30 September

Service at 6.45pm

##### 2nd Day

Sunday 1 October

Service at 10.00am

#### SHEMINI ATZERET

##### Eve

Friday 6 October

Service at 6.45pm

##### Day

Saturday 7 October

Service at 10.00am

#### SIMCHAT TORAH

##### Eve

Saturday 7 October

Service at 7.00pm

##### Day

Sunday 8 October

Service at 10.00am

## SYNAGOGUE HELP LINES

### BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square,  
London NW3 4HX

020 7794 3949

[office@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:office@synagogue.org.uk)

[www.synagogue.org.uk](http://www.synagogue.org.uk)

### SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Thu: 9.00am–5.30pm

Friday: 9.00am–2.00pm

### The office will be closed from 12.00pm on:

Friday 15 September

Monday 25 September (all day)

Friday 29 September

Friday 6 October

### SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY

Open to members during  
office hours

### RABBI

Rabbi Gabriel Botnick

[rabbi@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:rabbi@synagogue.org.uk)

To book an in-person,  
video or telephone  
appointment with Rabbi  
Botnick, please email his  
PA Claire Austin:  
[claire@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:claire@synagogue.org.uk)

### CANTOR

Dr Paul Heller

[cantor@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:cantor@synagogue.org.uk)

07949 078366

### RABBI EMERITUS

Rabbi Rodney Mariner

[rodmariner@aol.com](mailto:rodmariner@aol.com)

or 07956 352267

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### CHAIRMAN

Jackie Alexander

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[synagogue.org.uk](http://synagogue.org.uk)

### CHEDER AND YOUTH

Caroline Loison

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[synagogue.org.uk](http://synagogue.org.uk)

020 7794 3949w

### COMMUNITY CARE CO-ORDINATOR & BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

Eve Hersov

[eve@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:eve@synagogue.org.uk)

07944 574676

### CHEVRA KADISHA

Helen Grunberg

020 8450 8533

Cantor Dr Paul Heller

### FUNERALS

During Synagogue office  
hours phone Synagogue

Evenings/weekends phone

Calo's (Undertakers)

020 8958 2112

### OUR CONGREGATION

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David Horwell

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the Synagogue office

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## HIGH HOLYDAYS 5784 / 2023

### High Holyday Tickets & Information

Members of the congregation will have received a pack with all the information required for our High Holyday Services. Application for tickets is now only required for non-members.

Application forms for non-members' tickets, prayer books and transport requirements/volunteer provision are all included in the pack.

Please contact the Synagogue Office if you would like to discuss any aspect of these arrangements.

# Shana Tova

*The Rabbi, Cantor, Emeritus Rabbi and  
their families, Honorary Officers,*

*Members of the  
Board and Staff  
extend their  
best wishes  
to all our  
members for  
a healthy  
and peaceful  
New Year.*