

*The Belsize Society is a Registered Charity (number 1180842), continuing the work of the Belsize Residents Association.*

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

## Notes from your Chair

Welcome to the November BelSoc Newsletter.

It was nice to see many of you at the Society's historic walk in October, with Averil Nottage leading the walk. We had a fascinating stroll into Chalk Farm, finding out more about the Eton College Estate.

The Society's members have been busy book writing. We cover Ranee Barr's novel set in Belsize and Sri Lanka, and are also pleased to report former BelSoc committee member Pat Holden's new book.

The Newsletter also includes news from the Globe Tennis Club, which has been the home of a rising tennis star. The Newsletter has a piece about the new walk-in centre for cancer advice at Maggie's at the Royal Free.

There is a lot going on in the area over the coming months. We describe what's on at the Hampstead Theatre. We cover seasonal events, such as one by Belsize Community Choir and the annual concert for the homeless. The latter is organised by Matthew Watts, who will be leading our carol singing in a few weeks time.

This Newsletter covers a number of planning matters. We hear about the listing of a local building designed in the modernist style by architect Georgina Cheeseman. There is also news of the outcome of the latest planning application for Howitt Close. The rejection of the proposal was welcomed.

During the recent Open House, 8/8a Belsize Court Garages received numerous visitors, keen to see the award-winning retrofit. The Newsletter covers this, as well as recent incentives to retrofit.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter.

### CONTENTS

Grade 2 listing in Belsize Park - 2

Howitt Close; Carols this year - 3

Finding Comfort Among Strangers - 4

Library events, Neil Harris' books - 4

Open House, Retrofit, Historic Walk - 5

What's on at Hampstead Theatre - 6

Belsize Tennis Champion - 6

Maggie's at the Royal Free - 7

Concert for Homeless, Spotted in Belsize - 7

Dates for Your Diary - 8



## ***BELSOC CAROL SINGING 2023***

***Belsize Terrace,  
Saturday, 16 December  
from 4:30pm  
Mince pies, singing and great  
company!***

*Donations to Marie Curie Hospice*



### 34 Belsize Lane receives Grade 2 Listing

*Historic England has let us know the details and background of a new listing of a Belsize house designed by architect Georgie Wolton*

No. 34 Belsize Lane, designed by Georgie Wolton (1934-2021), has been listed at Grade 2 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, on the advice of Historic England. It is the first building by Wolton on the National Heritage List for England - the official record of all buildings and structures of national architectural and historic interest. The listing includes the boundary wall to Belsize Lane.

34 Belsize Lane was designed by Georgie Wolton as a home and studio for herself and her family in 1975-1976. It remains a private house. It is one of a small number of buildings by the architect, who increasingly specialised in landscape design as her career progressed. Wolton had a pivotal, though short-lived role in the formation of the architectural practice, Team 4 in the early 1960s. She went on to work in independent practice, one of few women architects in the post-war period to do so.



Georgie Wolton's buildings are little known, but she made an important contribution to post-war Modernism in England. 34 Belsize Lane is a very personal work which has survived remarkably intact. There is no street frontage. Behind an unassuming boundary wall (which you will have passed many times going into or out of Belsize Village) lies a small masterpiece - a house she called the "last of the English follies", one totally in touch with the exciting architectural zeitgeist of its day, but also unique and uncompromising.

34 Belsize Lane captures many of the ideas which influenced her practice as well as her skill as a designer. Bomb-damaged sites and the subdivision of large houses and their gardens offered challenging but affordable plots for young architects after the Second World War. Wolton chose to create a single-

storey house almost completely hidden from view, shielded behind the old brick boundary wall which extends along Belsize Lane. Behind the wall, the brick and glass building sits nestled amongst greenery with three distinct courtyard gardens created around it so that every room feels connected to the outdoors.

Wolton was interested in creating a strong relationship between inside and outside and needed plenty of wall space to display her personal collection of Turkish kelim rugs. She introduced rooflights, bespoke sliding timber shutters and conservatory-like antechambers into her design - these areas illustrated the concept of what she called "pause" spaces separating the living and working parts of the house.

Wolton had a longstanding interest in buildings designed to function as both domestic and work spaces. Two of her three key buildings were designed as working houses: Cliff Road Studios and 34 Belsize Lane, both in Camden.

The following biographical details have been supplied by Historic England. Georgina Cheesman attended Epsom School of Art before studying architecture at the Architectural Association, London

between 1955 and 1960. She married publisher David Wolton in 1962 and had their daughter, Suke, the same year.

In 1963, after a brief stint working for Middlesex County Council, she formed the architectural firm Team 4 with Richard Rogers, Su Rogers, Norman Foster and her younger sister Wendy Cheesman (later Foster). It was Wolton who allowed the practice to function, being the only member of the group who was at that time a fully qualified architect. She moved on very swiftly however, partnering for a short time with Adrian Gale, formerly of Mies van der Rohe's studio, before spending the rest of her career as a sole practitioner.

Her Fieldhouse in East Horsley, Surrey (now demolished) was built in 1968 with a corten (weathered) steel frame. It is amongst the first domestic uses of corten steel in the UK. It was one of several of the houses designed by British architects in the 1960s and '70s which were heavily influenced by Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House in Illinois.

Wolton's Cliff Road Studios, Phase I (1969) and II (1971-2), are her best-known work. The scheme drew admiration in architectural circles for its reference to early European modernism and Parisian studio houses of the 1920s.

As a landscape designer Wolton worked for private, public and commercial clients. She completed many schemes for her longstanding friend, Richard Rogers, as well as others at Dartington Hall, Devon and The River Café, Hammersmith.

### Howitt Close application refused

Developer Freshwater's second planning application for permission for seven flats under a new mansard roof on the block in Howitt Close was refused by the Council on 10 October. The refusal notes that "the proposed roof extension, by reason of its height, massing, design and undue prominence, would visually overwhelm features that are an integral part of the host building's design and significance, namely the flat roof with its deep eaves".

This follows an earlier similar application being refused and that refusal being unsuccessfully challenged by the developer. The inspector used words such as "bulky", describing as "overly large" the proposed dormer windows which would make the proposed mansard "dominant and 'top heavy'". This chimed with BelSoc's own submissions, with Tom Symes appearing at the hearing.

The 1930s block, off Howitt Road, was designed by architects Henry F Webb and Ash, and past Newsletters have featured some of the history and architectural features of the building.

### Belsize Community Choir in 2023



Belsize Community Choir was founded in 2010, and we embrace a blend of eclectic music from secular and sacred traditions worldwide that captures a broad spectrum, with around 30+ members, and is a non-auditioned choir so anyone can join us. We are an inclusive, fun and engaging community that values the playful and relaxed pursuit of choral excellence.

The Choir rehearses at St Peter's Church on Thursday evenings from 7 pm - 9 pm. There is a break during rehearsal for a drink (or two) for nibbles and socialising. Concessions to the subscription are available. See [belsizecommunitychoir.wordpress.com](https://belsizecommunitychoir.wordpress.com) for further details.

Our Christmas event this year is "Music and Words?" on Sunday, December 17th at 7:30 pm, led by our Musical Director Ezra Burke and our Accompanist Dimitri Kennaway.

Admission is free, refreshments are available, and donations appreciated. All proceeds go to St Peter's Church



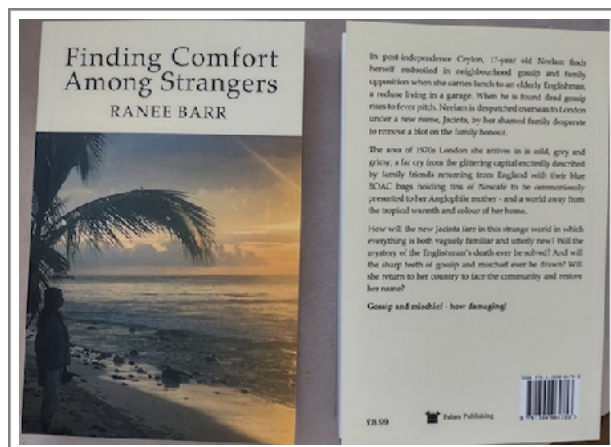
**BELSIZE  
COMMUNITY  
CHOIR**



# Finding Comfort Among Strangers

## *A new novel from Belsize resident Ranee Barr*

In Ranee's recently published novel "Finding Comfort Among Strangers", set in 1970s Belsize Park and surrounding areas of London, many of you will recognise places and landmarks which are no longer there, and a way of life which no longer exists. Writing this novel, a work of fiction which draws on her own experiences, has also given Ranee the opportunity to weave into the narrative the social history of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), where she was born and raised.



The novel began as a short story when Ranee was studying creative writing at City Lit, London many years ago. It only began to take shape after she retired from her day job and after publishing the book "Belsize Remembered". She is currently working on her second novel, a psychological thriller set in Mexico, where she spends several months during the winter.

Finding Comfort Among Strangers is available at Daunt bookshop Belsize Park, from Amazon and as an ebook on Kindle.

Belsize Remembered (Compiled by Ranee Barr and David S Percy; edited by F Peter Woodford; photographs by David S Percy) is also available at Daunts.

## ***MORE NEWS ON BOOKS AND LIBRARY EVENTS***

Members may be interested to know that, following the death of our Treasurer Neil Harris, the BelSoc Committee donated the collection of his books to the Oxfam Bookshop in Hampstead. Oxfam has expressed its deep gratitude at receiving books of such quality. New readers will benefit from Neil's outstanding collection.

We are looking forward to Martin Sheppard's talk at Belsize Community Library on the subject of Belsize Park, England's Lane and Primrose Hill in the Second World War. When and where did the bombs, and the V1s and V2s, fall in Belsize Park, England's Lane and Primrose Hill? Who was killed and what was destroyed or damaged? Where were the bomb shelters and what happened to local men, women and children? What guns were on Primrose Hill? What happened to the Zoo? Martin is a leading historian of the area. He will describe the experience of living in the area between 1939 and 1945.



Martin's talk is **Thursday, 7.30pm 18 January 2024**  
**Belsize Community Library,**  
**Antrim Grove NW3 4XN.**

This is a joint event brought to you by Belsize Society and the Friends of the Library.

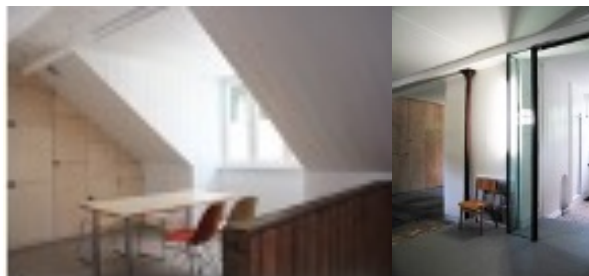


Also, the Library is the venue for the book launch of Pat Holden's debut novel, Paradise and Pink Plastic Shoes (Set in Uganda in 1972). The launch will be on Wednesday, December 6th at 5.30 to 7. All welcome.

# OPEN HOUSE FESTIVAL



## Belsize Court Garages



*Belsize Society committee member and architect Sanya Polescuk writes:*

On 31 September, Open House Festival took place all over London. It was a great opportunity to step into and see many amazing buildings, usually not open to public. As every year for the last decade, following the project's win of Architects Journal's Retrofit Award 2013, Sanya Polescuk Architects opened the doors to their studio and the HMO flat above at 8 Belsize Court Garages.

Over 100 visitors came during the weekend of 9 and 10 September. With the help of four wonderful volunteers organised by the Open House Team, the practice's architects conducted a tour, sharing knowledge of the building including its and the local area's history. The talk illustrated various stages of design and construction which turned the original 19th century horse stables with coachman's living quarters into the architects' studio with the flat above.

The Open House atmosphere never disappoints. Visitors engage in conversations and ask questions about this and other similar projects of the practice. They all tend to be in conservation areas or are listed buildings so complex planning process is the norm. Questions about the challenges of working with existing buildings and details of sustainable solutions are typical. This year however it was particularly encouraging to see an increase in the interest in technical matters of retrofit such as types of sustainable insulation, carbon-reducing design and modern ways of on-site energy generation.

If you missed your chance to visit 8 & 8a Belsize Court Garages this year don't worry, we will welcome the visitors next September again.

## Retrofit news

Grants towards the installation of an air or ground source heat pump have been increased to £7,500. This is intended to bring the cost below that of replacing the average gas boiler.

The phasing out of gas boilers by 2035 has been delayed. In a previous Newsletter we described Energy Performance Certificates and the legal requirement to have a rating of E or above before you can rent out your property. The Prime Minister has recently announced that landlords will no longer be required to upgrade their properties to level C.

Camden Council has a useful page on its website called "Save energy and keep warm", showing how you can make your home warmer and more energy efficient. Visit <https://www.camden.gov.uk/energysavingtips>. Please let us know what you think of it.

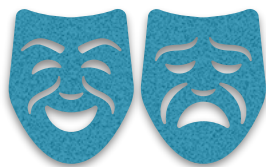
Stay in touch with the BelSoc retrofit team on [retrofit@belsize.org.uk](mailto:retrofit@belsize.org.uk).

## Society's Historical Walk

This year's walk saw Averil Nottage take us on a tour of the Eton College estate, starting with us imagining the area owned by Eton in south Belsize as fields where duels took place, through its development as housing, and exploring the influence of the railways.

It was a pleasant day for a walk and we had 40 individuals in each of the two sessions guided to around 10 locations, with Averil connecting together fascinating glimpses into the history,





## What's coming up at Hampstead Theatre?

### **On the main stage - *Rock 'N'Roll* - 6 December – 27 January**

1968: Russian tanks have rolled into Czechoslovakia, and Syd Barrett has been dumped by Pink Floyd. Jan, a visiting postgrad at Cambridge, breaks with his old professor Max, a Marxist philosopher, and heads home to Prague with his suitcase full of “socially negative music”. Rock 'n' Roll covers the ensuing 21 years in the lives of three generations of Max's family while Jan is caught in the spiral of dissidence in a Communist police state. But it's a love story too - and then there's the music...

Tom Stoppard returns to Hampstead after the triumphant revival of Hapgood (2015). Director Nina Raine also returns to Hampstead where her directing credits include her own play Tiger Country (2011 & 2014) and William Boyd's Longing (2013).

### **Downstairs - *Nineteen Gardens* - until 9 December**

Nearly two years after the end of their affair, John and Aga meet once more. Each has filled the void left by the other: he has withdrawn into his world of wealth and privilege; she has found herself working as a chambermaid to support her family. Both recognise that the spark between them is still there. Will they rekindle what they had, or is an altogether darker game about to be played out...?

### **Downstairs - *This Much I Know* - 13 December – 27 January**

A tenured professor of psychology, Lukesh enjoys a life as organised and logical as his mind. But then his wife vanishes, sending only a text message by way of explanation and leaving him to re-evaluate their relationship. He discovers she has embarked on an epic odyssey, crossing and recrossing Russia and delving deep into Soviet history on a quest to unravel a family mystery of which he was unaware – one in which Josef Stalin himself may be involved.

Jonathan Spector's play is at once a love story and a kaleidoscopic primer in psychology, history, and the use and abuse of power.

To find out more and buy tickets, visit <https://www.hampsteadtheatre.com/whats-on/main-stage/> or phone 020 7722 9301.

---

## BELSIZE TENNIS CHAMPION: AN OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT



We are proud to announce that Globe Lawn Tennis Club member Naqi Rizvi, 32, has become the world's top-ranked tennis player in international competition for the visually impaired.

His story is an inspiring example of perseverance. Diagnosed with congenital glaucoma as a child, he lost all sight by age seven. He came to the UK in 2015 to pursue a postgraduate degree from UCL, was introduced to tennis for the visually impaired in 2016, and began competing internationally two years later.

Naqi, a product manager in financial services, achieved the top ranking this year in the B1 visually impaired category after victories at the International Blind Sports Association World Games in Birmingham; the International Blind Tennis Association World Championships in Krakow, Poland; and United Kingdom national competitions at Wimbledon. He is next scheduled to compete at the UK nationals in November, where he will be defending the title he has twice won previously.

*“The past seven years have been some of the happiest years of my life,” he said. “If you’d asked me in 2016 when I started blind tennis if I’d ever be world No. 1, I would have laughed at you.”*





# MAGGIE'S

Everyone's home of cancer care

Opening soon within the grounds of the Royal Free Hospital is a new Maggie's walk-in centre offering free advice and help for cancer sufferers, their families and friends.

The centre's aim is to provide a very personal service, said a spokeswoman, where a person living with cancer can meet expert staff who understand what they're going through. The charity will offer free psychological and emotional support and be open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. No referrals will be required.

Practical support has also been a feature of the Maggie's charity since it was founded by the late writer and artist Maggie Keswick Jencks in 1996 with assistance ranging from possible claims for extra benefit payments to parking permits.

Access to the eye-catching new centre, designed by renowned international architect Daniel Libeskind (see photo above), will be via Rowland Hill Street off Haverstock Hill. The team hope to be supporting cancer sufferers by the end of November.

A **Community Open Day** is planned for early 2024. More information can be found online at [www.maggies.org/royalfree](http://www.maggies.org/royalfree).



London Classical Choir & Orchestra  
& Peterborough Choir

clarinet Jonathan Purkin, soprano Elinor Popnam, mezzo Noemie Jones  
tenor Andreas Bigom, bass Lawrence Broomfield  
leader Regan Crowley, livestream Benjamin Humphries  
conductor Matthew Watts

## MOZART FOR THE HOMELESS

### Requiem & Clarinet Concerto

**Sunday 26th November 2023, 7-9pm**

*Classical masterpieces, world-class soloists, helping homeless people*

**ATTEND IN PERSON:**  
St Mary's Church,  
London NW3 3DJ  
(enter via Elsworth Rd)

Tickets £13 (concs £10) in advance\*  
or £16 (£10) on door

**OR WATCH LIVESTREAM\***  
(available for three weeks  
on YouTube)

\*LINKS for advance tickets,  
livestream & donations  
at [londonclassicalchoir.com](http://londonclassicalchoir.com)

Proceeds to C4WS Homeless Project,  
St Mary's Cold Weather Shelter  
& Light Project Peterborough

### *Mozart for the Homeless*

As in previous years, Matthew Watts is hosting our carol singing in Belsize Terrace on 16 December.

Also like previous years, he is conducting the London Classical Choir and Orchestra with the Peterborough Choir in a concert of classical masterpieces

with proceeds to C4WS Homeless Charity and others. It takes place at St Mary's Church, on Sunday 26 November, 7pm. Tickets are £16 on the door with online options at [londonclassicalchoir.com](http://londonclassicalchoir.com).

### Spotted in Belsize....

A 1950s police car outside the Magdala pub opposite Hampstead Heath railway station. Yes, it's another film about the life and times of Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in the UK.

It's an ITV production starring Lucy Boynton as Ruth Ellis and takes a fresh look at her chaotic life that ended in her execution after being convicted of shooting dead her former boyfriend outside the pub. Due on screen next year.



# Dates for your diary

## Belsize Society Carol Singing

Saturday, 16 December, 4:30pm, Carol Singing, Belsize Terrace. Donations to Marie Curie Hospice.

## Belsize Community Library, Antrim Road, NW3

Thursday 16 Nov, 7.30pm. Who was William Camden? An illustrated talk by Lester Hillman at the 400th year anniversary of William Camden's death. £5 suggested donation to include refreshments.

Wednesday 6 Dec, 5.30-7pm. Book Launch: Pat Holden invites you to the launch of her novel Paradise and Pink Plastic Shoes (Set in Uganda in 1972 ). All Welcome.

Thursday 14 December, 7.30pm. The Blue Hour: Painting the North. Romantic Nationalism and Nordic Artists c. 1880-1900. An illustrated talk by Karin Fernald. £5 suggested donation to include refreshments.

Thursday 18 January, 7.30pm. The War in Belsize Park. A talk by Martin Sheppard and Martin Nelson. £5 suggested donation to include refreshments.

## Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Wednesday, 22 Nov, 7pm. The Hampstead Spies - Dave Springhall, The Hampstead Revolutionary. Part of a series of talks. £10. bookings on eventbrite.co.uk..

Friday, 8 December, 7pm. Vermeer Chamber Concerts - Impressionism Meets Tango. Iñigo Mikeleiz Berrade, Sijie Chen explore the diverse musical landscape of Paris in the 1950s. £10-£30.

Sunday, 10 December, 3pm. Schubert at Burgh House - A Concert for Ukraine. Works performed by Nicola Meecham, Penny Driver & Alexander Kirk.

## St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, NW3

Sunday 10 December, 6.30pm: Belsize Baroque with the Amici e Voice choir perform Bach Christmas Oratorio. Tickets £15, at [www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk).

## St Mary's Church, Elsworth Rd, NW3 3DJ

Sunday 26 November, 7pm. London Classical Choir and Orchestra with the Peterborough Choir in a concert of classical masterpieces with proceeds to C4WS Homeless Charity, St Mary's Cold Weather Shelter and Light Project Peterborough. Tickets are £16 on the door.

## Contact Us

For membership and general enquiries:  
Anne Stevens  
020 7794 0874

[info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)

Prabhat Vaze (Chair)  
07930 406230  
[chair@belsize.org.uk](mailto:chair@belsize.org.uk)

Secretary  
[secretary@belsize.org.uk](mailto:secretary@belsize.org.uk)

For Newsletter submissions and letters:  
[info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk). Deadline for next issue is: **23 January 2024**

To send posters for noticeboards:  
[haverstockboard@belsize.org.uk](mailto:haverstockboard@belsize.org.uk)  
[villageboard@belsize.org.uk](mailto:villageboard@belsize.org.uk)

To send details for Tradesmen You Can Trust:  
[TYCT@belsize.org.uk](mailto:TYCT@belsize.org.uk)

For planning matters: [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)

Interested in keeping up with Belsize news and events? If you wish to receive occasional emails from us with news about Belsize and BelSoc and are not already on our list, please send your email address to [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)

To find out the latest about Camden Planning:  
<https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigationenvironment/planning-and-built-environment/>

Would you like to join our committee and/or help with events, distribution and other tasks? If so, please email [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk)

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