

THE

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# BELGRAVIA SOCIETY MAGAZINE

THE ONLY  
INDEPENDENT  
VOICE FOR  
BELGRAVIA



## QUEEN ELIZABETH II



SPECIAL ISSUE



Registered Charity No: 1168619  
Patron: Lord Fellows of West Stafford DL

# Welcome to The Belgravia Society magazine, covering all aspects of village life in Belgravia and beyond.

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George Waite

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This magazine has been independently produced by the Committee of The Belgravia Society on a voluntary basis with regular contributions from local residents and other authors in and around Belgravia.

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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



**George Waite**  
Chairman of  
The Belgravia Society  
and ESRA

**T**he period of mourning is over, and we are moving forward with our daily lives. There is a gap, still a sense of great loss, of things being different now our Great Queen has gone. We think of her 70 years of service, her commitment to us. She has signed herself not just Elizabeth R, but 'your servant, Elizabeth R', and so she was. She will always be with us. So much missed by those of us who lived in the second Elizabethan age.

The seamless way in which the Crown passed to Charles, now our King, is to be celebrated. In accordance with our constitution, he became King as soon as his mother died. It was confirmed by the Succession Council and the King said there:

"I am deeply aware of this great inheritance and of the duties and heavy responsibilities of sovereignty which have now passed to me. In taking up these responsibilities, I shall strive to follow the inspiring example I have been set in upholding constitutional government and to seek the peace, harmony and prosperity of the peoples of these Islands and of the Commonwealth Realms and Territories throughout the world.

"I take this opportunity to confirm my willingness and intention to continue the tradition of surrendering the hereditary revenues, including the Crown Estate, to my Government for the benefit of all, in return for the Sovereign Grant, which supports my official duties as head of state and head of

nation. And in carrying out the heavy task that has been laid upon me, and to which I now dedicate what remains to me of my life, I pray for the guidance and help of Almighty God."

The Queen had dedicated herself to the service of her people. In so doing she acquired a lifetime of knowledge. She was above politics. That enabled her to be the Head of State for all people. Everyone could respect and support a person who has no political views, no allegiance to a particular ideology. She had her deep faith; on the matter of faith, like her son, she supported and engaged with others of many faiths.

This is the beauty of the constitutional monarchy passing by birth to the first born heir. The new King will have learnt so much in the last 50 years from his mother and understands well the nature of constitutional monarchy.

As a nation we are spared the politics of an elected Head of State and innumerable elections. We are saved from people who have been politicians, and the fact they represent not the people but only the politics they have served. Any elected Head of State can never have the time to gain experience of a constitutional monarch. We would not have the benefit from a successor who understands the office and its responsibilities. An elected Head of State will never achieve a sense of love and of loss from the people.

Contrast that with the sorrow and mourning of our late Queen by so many people of different political views, ideologies, backgrounds, races and religions, and none.

God save the King. ▲

# NICKIE AIKEN MP REFLECTS ON THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II



**W**estminster and the City of London were the vessels from which Her Majesty ruled, advised and steered our nation. Indeed, it is our home to so many of the physical monuments of her reign. There is Buckingham Palace, which became the epicentre of the nation's grief. There is The Mall, the national stage for the pomp and ceremony that binds us to our past and our future. It has seen coronation processions, the daily routes of the Queen's Guard, and the celebrations we saw in the summer for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

There's Bruton Street where the Queen was born. St James's Palace and Clarence House, where the Queen spent much of her youth and raised her young family before she ascended the throne in 1952. And, of course, Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral. The former was so pivotal in her life, from her marriage to her coronation and now, sadly, her funeral. The latter played an integral role in marking her extraordinary reign, especially with the services celebrating her Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees and, only a few months ago, her Platinum Jubilee, which I was honoured to attend. St Paul's Cathedral also led the first of many services of thanksgiving to our late Sovereign.

When thinking about the Queen, I think of her role as the Head of State. For me,

one of her everlasting legacies will be how she brought together the Commonwealth nations, growing their union from eight countries to 56 collective nations together under her stewardship. I often think how unappreciated Her Majesty's skills in diplomacy were. Just think about what our world looked like at the beginning of her reign, and what it is now. By sheer force of character, she healed a deeply fractured





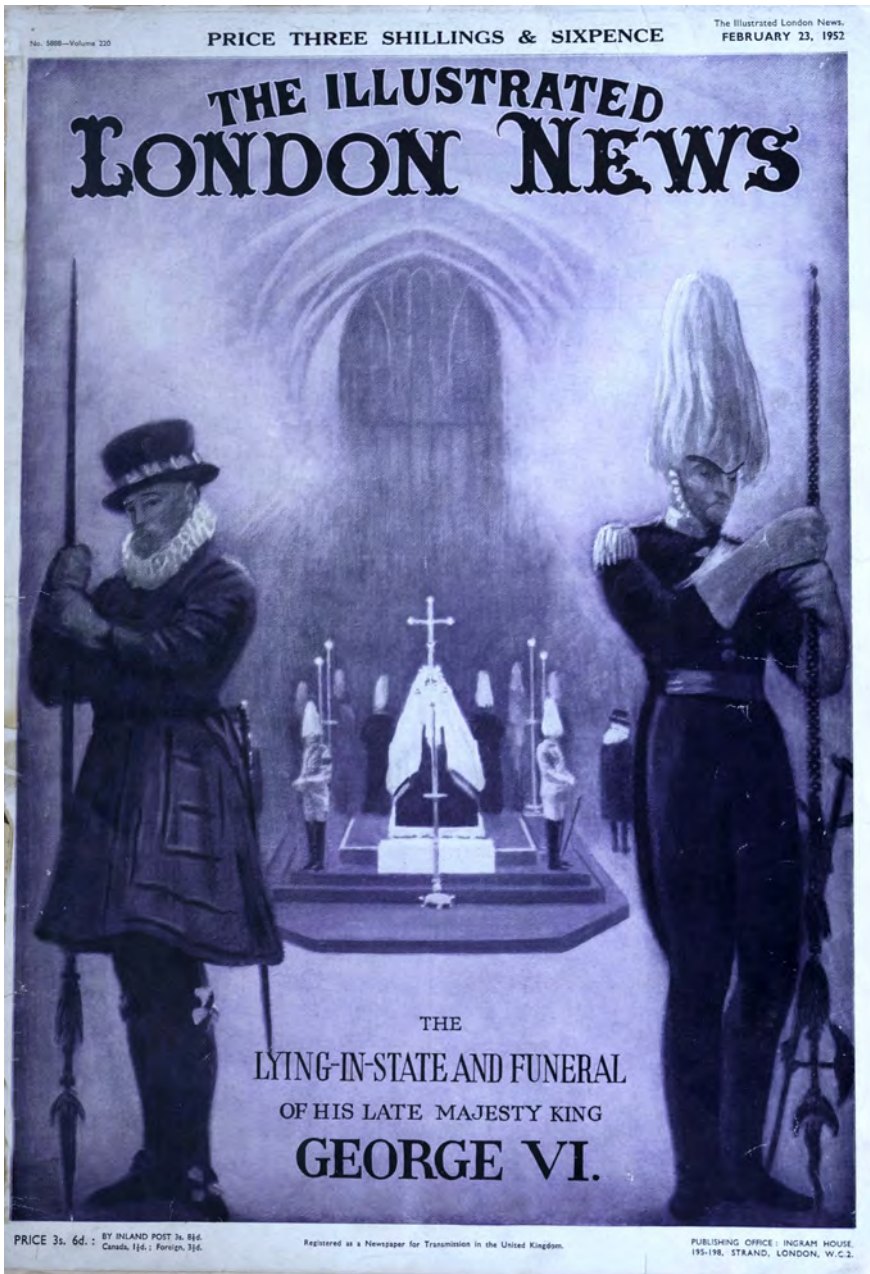
world post-Empire. She fostered a family of nations that bore no resemblance to the Empire of the past and that was instead built on the values of friendship, freedom and peace. Looking at the Cities of London and Westminster, I see the epitome of the Commonwealth's legacy in both people and values, and we have the late Queen to thank for that.

Like everyone else, when we heard the news of the late Queen's passing, it hit us personally, because she had been such a constant throughout our lives and we have all shared in the celebrations of her life. Her Majesty touched the hearts of so many people. As Head of the Commonwealth, Head of the Armed Forces and Patron to hundreds of charities, groups and organisations, including British Red Cross, Friends of the Elderly, Girlguiding, Royal Society for Blind Children, and Royal



Society of Portrait Painters, all based in the Two Cities, she empowered everyone she met to make a real difference and to have an impact on their community.

Her sense of duty and devotion to our nation, the Commonwealth and the world will be an everlasting legacy, one that spans generations and leaves a mark on the hearts of many across the world. I am extremely proud of how Westminster City Council played its part in the Lying-In-State and funeral arrangements. ▲



I remember Princess Elizabeth. She was often pictured in the press. I remember when the King died. It was sudden and unexpected. So began the workings of the institution of the hereditary constitutional monarchy. The Queen was in Kenya and flew back home to fulfil her destiny. We did not have a television then and relied on the radio, newspapers and magazines for information and pictures. I still have many of them now, 70 years old and showing signs of their age too. I also have copies of the Illustrated London News. For those of you who do not remember it, it was a magazine that relished photos and illustrations.

Looking today at these mementos, I see the mourning and the funeral we saw for our Queen with the people of the time. We saw the gun carriage, the mourners, the queues for the lying-in-state and many of those we saw in the funeral of the Queen were the children and grandchildren of those we

saw in the 1952 processions. We saw it in black and white or sepia. Some items were drawings only, no doubt because cameras were not allowed in Westminster Hall. This likeness and remembrance reminds us of the continuity and stability of the nation.

I cannot find the words to express my sense of loss. I remember life before Elizabeth became Queen and now, after 70 years she has left us. When Elizabeth became Queen, it was not long since the end of the Second World War. There was still rationing, shortages and tax rates which were unbelievably high.

# REMEMBERING THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

BY MARY  
REGNIER-LEIGH

However, there was such a feeling of hope, knowledge of how things would change for the better and how our nation would prosper, which it did. Things were so different 70 years ago and they seem to have slipped by so quickly.

The State funeral given to her late Majesty was symbolic of the tradition of the constitutional monarchy but also of the affection and love we felt for her. It was truly magnificent, and we must thank those who planned it and those who executed it. The plans had been in hand for many years, no doubt updated regularly. The Queen herself was involved in the planning. She was involved in the design of the state hearse, and it was the Queen who suggested having lights to illuminate the coffin if the hearse was to move in the dark.



Collage from *The Illustrated London News*, February 1952



Queen Mary with her 11 month old granddaughter, Princess Elizabeth

I have the photographs of the Queen at Paddington Station with her mother, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, and Queen Mary to see the King's coffin on his last journey.

Thanks to the television we were able to follow the Queen's funeral every step of the way. We saw the massed bands, the 200 pipers, the soldiers, sailors, airmen, others and her family to see the Queen to the end of her final journey.

We thank her. We will never forget her. May she rest in peace.

God save the King. ▲

# A REFLECTION ON QUEEN ELIZABETH II



**BY  
COUNCILLOR  
RACHAEL  
ROBATHAN**

**H**ow can we conceive that we will never again see those bright, colourful outfits with hats designed to not cover any of her face? Never changing, always devoted, always faithful, always interested. The Queen shared the joys and triumphs of the nation – the 1966 World Cup, the 2012 Olympics, the Jubilees, the small, the funny things, and the tragedies – Aberfan, Dunblane, Grenfell. She personified our entire nation’s grief and, in doing so, helped to provide some measure of solace.

She was a Queen for everyone. My son, serving in the Household Division, mounted the vigil through that first night. Later, when I filed past the catafalque, it struck me that in that small casket was contained the embodiment of so many things which make this nation great.

For us, of course, she was our Queen, but for the rest of the world she was simply ‘The Queen’. She was probably the most famous person in the world. No matter whether or not you supported Monarchy, you could not help but recognise the lifetime of dedication and devotion she gave.

Unchanging she may have been, but she presided over a country which has changed profoundly since she ascended the throne in 1952. Our social mores, the make up of society, our cultural and industrial references have changed markedly over the 70 years of her reign.





*His Majesty King Charles III*



*Queen's Company, Grenadier Guards carrying out their proud duty*

The Queen had a profound faith, which helped her to deal with her personal tragedies, which she still endured as she had vowed she would. She revelled in the joy of the nation at her Platinum Jubilee. She had served all her people well and we were grateful and loved her for the service she gave to us. As Paddington Bear said, 'Thank you, Ma'am... for everything.'

In Westminster, we are incredibly proud of our role as home to Buckingham Palace and the great ceremonial events of the State. So many momentous occasions happen in our churches, streets and Royal Parks. The Queen was patron of London Zoo, first visiting in 1938 and regularly thereafter. She also made a total of 33 visits to Lord's Cricket Ground, often with the Duke of Edinburgh.

We will never forget her words delivered on her 21st birthday: 'I declare before you all, that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service.'

Our greatest Monarch. We mourn her loss, but she will live on in the hearts of a very grateful nation.

We also rejoice in our new King, His Majesty Charles III, who has also served this country alongside his mother for over 50 years and done so much for causes close to his heart. We know he will not fail us.

We anticipate the new Carolean Era with optimism and confidence but, for now, we simply say to our recently departed Sovereign Lady... Thank you for your sacrifice, thank you for your devotion, thank you for always embodying best qualities of service to others, constancy and selflessness. We are so very grateful to have had you as our Queen and we will forever be in your debt. ▲



**Editor's Note:** *Cllr Robathan's son is Lt Kit Robathan, Queen's Company, Coldstream Guards, front left in the photo above.*



*Beautiful floral tributes to the late Queen Elizabeth in Green Park*

# A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND HER LOVE OF NATURE

**W**e were devastated to learn of the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II – our Great Queen. We miss her so much. God save King Charles III and his Queen Consort Camilla. Long may they reign.

Early autumn has set in motion the gentle fall of leaves and cooler, fresher weather after the oppressive heatwave of summer. I was so taken by the floral tributes when I visited Green Park during the time of mourning Queen Elizabeth. I understand these tributes will be composted, and I thought about posting a nature gallery on

our website with lovely lasting tributes from local schools:

- Create a piece of art dedicated to our Queen, imagining your playground as a nature board, a banner or even using a picnic blanket, during autumn.
- Dedicate a classroom board to sticking photos and creating a story map, imagining a meadow as a playground. For example, your banner, wall board or picnic blanket could be covered in drawings, recycled objects, mini tapestries or needlework of wildlife and wildflowers, depicting an invigorating place to be enjoyed by all.



Nature board illustration by Caroline Oliver

- Brighten the day, creating meadows for wildlife and plant images, exploring amongst the buzzing bees and dragonflies. Illuminate overlooked small plants and wildflowers by switching dimensions, making yourselves look tiny, and the meadow plants become giants in a magical meadowland.
- Find inspiration from ‘plant life’ resources, cut out pictures of wildflowers, meadow grass, and your favourite animals grazing and enjoying tranquil wild habitats.

We want children to celebrate biodiversity in their surroundings by observing what is on their doorstep and recording what they would like to see in their playground and neighbourhood. Paint, sketch, draw, stick or stitch artwork showing the joys of

## EVERY LITTLE HELPS –

If any of our readers are Amazon customers and have not signed up yet to their charitable “Smile” scheme you should note that The Belgravia Society is now a member. Amazon will contribute 0.5% out of any purchase you make. It may not be a lot on its own, but little sums add up and we need donations to fund our magazine and other activities.

All you need to do to join the scheme is go to [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk). You can then put our full name – “The Belgravia Society” – in the search box and confirm. That’s all there is to it. When you next go into Amazon, type in “smile.amazon” instead of just “Amazon”, then just carry on as normal. Nothing else is necessary. The donation is automatic on completion of any purchase.

plants, wildlife and meadows. A theme fit for a Queen or a King to admire!

Please send jpeg images to [hello@rewildingbelgravalondon.com](mailto:hello@rewildingbelgravalondon.com) and we will dedicate a gallery to your schools’ creativity. ▲

Email [hello@rewildingbelgravalondon.com](mailto:hello@rewildingbelgravalondon.com) quoting ‘RP school projects’ for further information and to post your projects.

For further resources, visit

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

[www.rewildingbelgravalondon.com/news](http://www.rewildingbelgravalondon.com/news)

### ERROR IN LAST MONTH’S ISSUE:

“[www.britishhedges.org.uk](http://www.britishhedges.org.uk)” should have been [www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk](http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk)



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63 Belgravia Court, 33 Ebury Street  
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# HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II 1926 – 2022









A portrait of Mary Shelley, a young woman with dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark dress with a decorative, floral-patterned collar and a necklace. She is looking slightly to the right of the viewer.

# MARY SHELLEY

## 1797-1851

BY PETER WYETH

*Mary Shelley*

**M**ary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein* (1818), spent the last six years of her life at 24 Chester Square (1846-51), dying of a brain tumour at the age of 53.

Her mother, the early feminist, Mary Wolstonecraft, died of puerperal fever twelve days after Mary's birth, and her father, the philosopher, William Godwin, brought her up to cherish her mother's memory and raised her using ideas based on his anarchist theories.

In 1814, aged sixteen, she had come to detest her quarrelsome stepmother of twelve years, and began an affair with the poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of her father's followers, and already married. Returning from a continental tour after

secretly eloping with him, she had fallen pregnant. Both she and Shelley had to face ostracism, constant debt and the premature birth and death of their baby daughter. In 1816, Shelley's wife drowned herself in the Serpentine and, late in the year they married, having spent the summer near Geneva, with their friend Byron, where she conceived *Frankenstein*.

In 1818, the Shelleys left Britain for Italy, where their second and third children also died, before Shelley gave birth to her last and only surviving child. Then, in 1822, her husband drowned when his sailing boat sank during a storm near Viareggio.

A year later, Mary returned to England, where she devoted herself to her son, publishing Shelley's poetry, and a career as



a professional author. Sadly, the last decade of her life, including the period in Chester Square, was dogged by illness, probably arising from the brain tumour which finally killed her in 1851.

Until the 1970s, her later work, including five more novels, received little attention. Recent scholarship has yielded a more rounded view of her achievements. Scholars have shown increasing interest in her literary output, particularly in her novels, including the historical novels *Valperga* (1823) and *Perkin Warbeck* (1830), the apocalyptic novel, *The Last Man* (1826) and her final two novels, *Lodore* (1835) and *Falkner* (1837). Studies of her lesser-known works, such as the travel book *Rambles in Germany and Italy* (1844) and the biographical articles for *Cabinet Cyclopaedia* (1829–1846), support the view that Shelley remained a political radical throughout her life, often arguing that cooperation and sympathy, particularly of the kind practised by women in the family, were the best ways to reform civil society.

Those sentiments were a direct challenge to both the individualistic Romantic ethos of Percy Shelley, and the Enlightenment political theories that had been articulated by her father. Already, when she was 15, he had described her as “singularly bold, somewhat imperious, and active of mind. Her desire of knowledge is great, and her perseverance in everything she undertakes almost invincible.”



Percy Bysshe Shelley

In 1845, Mary was the target of three separate blackmailers, two about her unconventional life (she was a life-long advocate and practitioner of free love), and the other an unauthorised biography of Shelley, whose disapproving father’s death finally brought her financial independence and those six years in Chester Square. ▲

### INVITATION TO THE NEXT SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING

We would be delighted for you to join our video meeting. Please let us know by email if you wish to be linked in  
[info@thebelgraviasociety.com](mailto:info@thebelgraviasociety.com).

We can only accept a limited number, so first come, first served.

**Our next meeting is on 11th October 2022**



If you have a CAF account, IT is an easy way to donate to the Society.

Please do help us to maintain our work for Belgravia, and our community magazine.

# GET HELP WITH THE COST OF LIVING

**BY NICKIE AIKEN MP**



Equally, I absolutely welcome the Government's action to back our small, family-run, independent businesses.

The Chancellor's statement on 23rd September also set out further measures to support you and grow the economy. Read more about what his plans mean for you at [nickie.news/FE22](https://www.nickie.news/FE22).

Support is available now. I have launched my Cost of Living Help Hub to help you find the resources and information you need on how the Government, organisations, energy companies and banks and building societies can support you.

Please do not suffer in silence. Find out what support you may be eligible for at [nickie.news/CostOfLiving](https://www.nickie.news/CostOfLiving) and if you have any questions that the Hub does not answer, please get in touch.

If I can be of help on any local, national or international issue, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Send me an email to [nickie.aiken.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:nickie.aiken.mp@parliament.uk)

and keep up to date on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube @TwoCitiesNickie. ▲

**O**ur new Prime Minister, Liz Truss, has set out her immediate plan to cut the cost of energy. The new Energy Price Guarantee means the average bill will be capped at £2,500 for two years. This is in addition to the Energy Bills Support Scheme for all households and other targeted measures set out earlier this year and will be paid automatically.

Following my extensive lobbying, I am particularly pleased that households and families who receive their energy from heat networks will benefit from a special fund of equivalent support. I have heard horror stories from local people about how their energy bills have sky-rocketed purely because their building has one communal heat source. I am relieved the Government listened to my calls and brought in protection which I know will benefit so many households across Belgravia.

# WHAT TIME IS IT?

BY MARY REGNIER-LEIGH

The Earth spins, as we know, however, its spinning is not constant. We know that in order to correct time we need Leap days, so that the seasons do not get out of sync with the time. The Egyptians calculated there were 365 days in the year. While they were surprisingly accurate in the number of days, they did not realise it was actually 364 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  days. As the years went by, the time and the seasons did not coincide. The Romans put that right but, again, the calculation was still not correct. They changed it again but it was still incorrect so by the 17th Century it was out again – by 10 days.

This was corrected once more by changing the Calendars. Also, the need for a Leap year was agreed internationally and it became universal. We still have the Leap year which adds an extra day every four years, making up a whole day from the lost quarters over the previous four years.

However, the Earth is not a very accurate time keeper and follows its own pattern. It can slow down or speed up but only by milliseconds. These changes are unpredictable. In reality, this represents milliseconds which can accumulate into seconds. So the question is, does it matter?



*Atomic Clock*

Well, in years gone by, keeping the season and time synchronised were important. Today we have overcome the problem, but how can milliseconds really matter, especially as the Earth sometimes speeds up and then slows down by milliseconds? The answer is that it does affect the telecommunications industry. Atomic clocks (which are accurate to about a billionth of a second per day) track all of



*National Physical Laboratory*

this to an extremely high precision. So will they be adjusted? The atomic clock housed in Britain's National Physical Laboratory (NPL) is the world's most accurate, according to new research.

The International Telecommunications Union, a United Nations body that governs some global issues related to time, has been contemplating Leap seconds for some time. They considered abolishing the practice, but in November 2015 – with delegates from more than 150 nations meeting in Geneva – the ITU announced it had decided not to dump the Leap second, at least not yet.

If you have a radio clock that takes its time from an atomic clock you can be sure it is accurate for all your needs, all the time. If you have a mechanical watch (if you remember to wind it) or a battery watch, it will get you there on time too.

Some of us are fascinated by the Earth and its movements and our need to understand how it affects us and our endeavours. It is also good to reflect that the UK has the world's most accurate atomic clock. ▲



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## A Note from Opera Prelude

Dear Opera Friends

Thank you for your patience! We now have a new date for our auditions which are to be held on Friday 7th October and we very much hope that you are free to join us that day.

Unfortunately, as The Princes Foundation is still observing the Royal period of mourning we do not yet have confirmation that we can hold them there, but we wanted to share the date with you so you are able to keep it free if possible.

Should we find that The Garrison Chapel is unavailable, we do have a provisional booking at the Chelsea Theatre and we will confirm the venue as soon as we know.

Apologies for any inconvenience this has caused and thank you for your understanding.

With warmest best wishes,

**Sarah Barry  
and the Opera Prelude Team**

[www.operaprelude.org](http://www.operaprelude.org)



# SILVER SUNDAY

BY MARINA KALOGHIROU

**S**ilver Sunday is the brainchild of Lady Christabel Flight. She started it with a simple tea dance a few short years ago but with ambition to create a day in the nation's hearts when older people are celebrated for their contributions to our communities. It makes them feel valued by giving them opportunities, helping them to get out of the house and make new friends, helping them cut out loneliness.

In the words of Her Majesty the Queen Consort, a Silver Sunday supporter herself: "Silver Sunday is a day that offers us all the opportunity to focus on older people's contributions to our communities and our society." A time to show our appreciation.

We at the Belgravia Society have been supporting Silver Sunday since its inception. Our committee member, Marina Kaloghirou, in memory of her late mother Galateia



Kaloghirou, with help from Open Age who handle the guest lists, offers afternoon tea to guests at the beautiful gardens at Eaton Square, whilst they are serenaded by the music of the Tom Halpenny Jazz duo.

This year Silver Sunday is celebrated on 2nd October. ▲



HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II  
1926 – 2022



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# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership is open to residents and non-residents and is free

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