



Gladys Richman Wagman



19 September 1921 (Philadelphia) ~ 03 August 2018 (San Francisco)



Gladys Wagman radiated light all her ninety-six years. She listened and learned with passion, expressed exactly what she saw and felt, and prompted others to do the same. Raised in cautious Jewish circles, Gladys nevertheless kept crossing lines and widening her own sphere of diverse relationships. She thought “family” and “planet.”

In 1921 Gladys was born in Philadelphia. Her father's family had fled to the United States from Tsarist Russia when their village's first-born Jews were being killed during the pogroms. Gladys attended Hebrew school and grew up in a traditional, observant Jewish family. After raising their own family, she and her husband, Sidney (1912-1994), a high school teacher and principal, followed their three children and six grandchildren to California.

“My parents, Gladys and Sid, were models for some futuristic-calendar. They were supposed to be the senior-citizens of the future.”

~ Thelma Wagman Weiss



Through the 1990s Gladys was Regional President of ORT -- the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training, initiated by Jewish women to serve both Jewish and non-Jewish boys and girls worldwide. Gladys served on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco.

In 1998 at age 77, Gladys was quick to join the new San Francisco circle of the [Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue of San Mateo County](#). She is remembered for first asking: “Is this a place where I’m safe to say whatever I wish, or do I have to be careful?” Gladys never looked back, and for years she was an inspiring contributor in the monthly in-home Dialogues and as an exemplar of mature spirit and communication excellence during community outreach events for youth and adults.

By 2000 Gladys was [part of an experienced Dialogue panel](#) – two Palestinians, two Jews -- urging young adults at San Francisco’s Jewish Community Center to listen to multiple narratives and not only their inherited one, because “everyone has a story.”



Palestinian-Jewish Dialogue Panel for JCC Youth and ADL Guests (2000)



Dialogue Panel for Lincoln High School Students



Dialogue Panel for Palo Alto High



"I have always admired Aunt Gladys for her open mind and acceptance of others in spite of differences in opinions. I love that she was interested in people from all walks of life and cultures. Aunt Glad has always had a wonderful heart...I have learned acceptance and kindness from my aunt."

~ Toni Blume

U.C. Berkeley Shabbaton Retreat



Mercy High School, San Francisco





Stuart Hall School, San Francisco



"I will always remember Gladys as an extraordinary spirit — the San Francisco Dialogue's authentic Jewish elder who could simultaneously connect us authentically to historic Jewish fears, seek out and dignify others' narratives, and embrace a future that includes everyone. Gladys modeled fully living as an elder but not elderly, and she'll live within me forever."

~ Len Traubman



Celebrating the December
Season of Light Together

Palestinians and Jews
Listening
in Dialogue

"An enemy is one whose story we have not heard." ~ Ms. Gene Knudsen Hoffman



In the living room and in public, Gladys participated passionately in the San Francisco Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue, listening intently to learn, insisting that all narratives be heard and dignified — others' and hers.



A San Francisco Assimilation Evening at St. Mary's Cathedral following the 2005 [Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp](#) at Camp Tawonga near Yosemite National Park.



"I am Gladys's youngest. Everything you wrote is very true and much more. My mother was a most beloved to all who knew her. As a parent she was always available to the three of us to listen. While we were growing up in the tumultuous sixties she was just beginning to understand our rebellion and in the end was a very strong voice for social justice. Her belief in social justice has influenced all of us three children as well as all her grandchildren."

*~ Susan Wagman-Brettschneider
Mt.Kisco, Westchester County, New York*



A San Francisco Jewish-Palestinian Youth Dialogue Evening



"I will miss our dear friend Gladys. As sad as I am about her passing, I will keep celebrating her long, fruitful life. She was so in command of her mental faculties and with an everlasting will to enjoy her time on this earth. May we all be so lucky."

~ Gabriel Sod-Hoffs

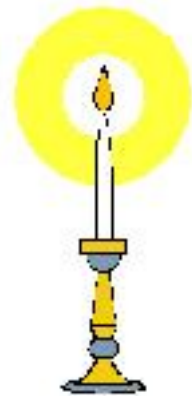


Summer July meetings of the San Francisco and San Mateo groups celebrate the 1992 beginning of the first Living Room Dialogue.



"Joining the Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue at age 77, Gladys convinced me that you're never too old to make a difference. Being legally blind, she amazed me further by never complaining or letting that slow her down or preventing her from walking into the center of a diverse group. Gladys was proud of her Jewish heritage while also intent on learning the Palestinian stories as well. Gladys was a strong woman, natural educator, and life-long learner. She lived Life fully and lovingly. I will miss her cheerful, can-do spirit!"

~ Libby Traubman



*Remembering Gladys Richman Wagman,
let us continue bridging between generations, cultures,
races, religions, genders, neighborhoods, and nations,
inventing our future that includes and benefits all,
living side by side as one — echad, wahad.*

**Stories
welcome**

Add your personal memories with e-mail to LTraubman@igc.org