

Joan Belasco

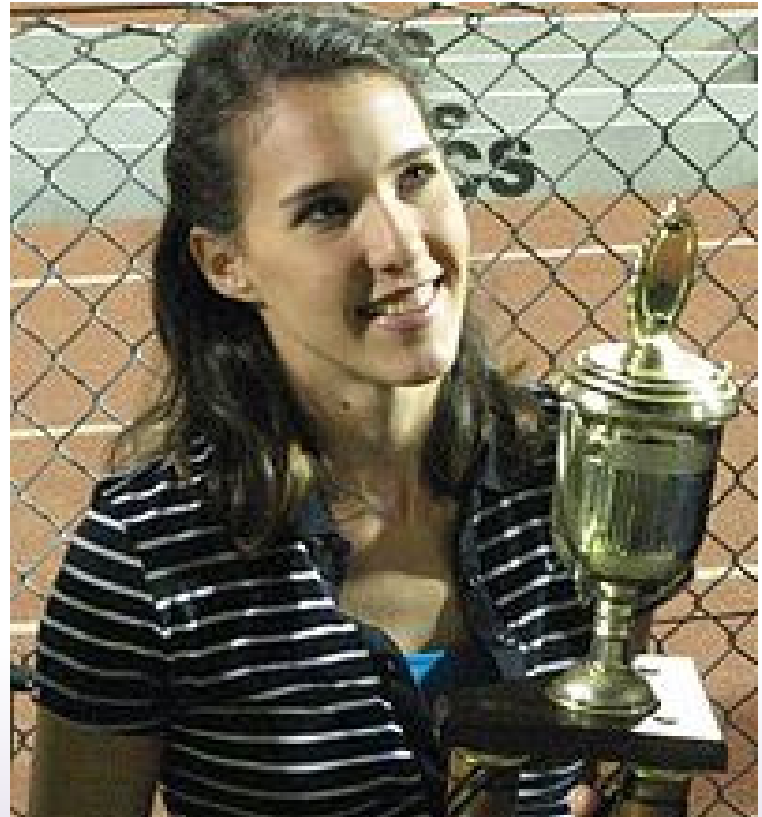
1901 - 1986



*County School for Girls, Ramsgate.
October, 1920.*

Women's High Jump Now

- Possibly the finest Jewish athlete competing today: Danielle Frenkel
- Jumped 1.94 in 2011 European Indoor Championships



.... and then

- Before Dick Fosbury
- Before soft, raised landing areas
- Technique constrained by need to land safely on one's feet



World List 1966

Mary Rand (GB) '40	10.9	(3)	Paris	9.6
Ann Wilson (GB) '49	10.9	(p)	Beverwijk	16.7
Patricia Jones (GB) '42	10.9	(1)	Edinburgh	20.8

100 METRES HURDLES

Valentina Bolshova (SU) '37	13.0	(1)	Leninakan	3.10
Lidia Alfeyeva (SU) '47	13.4	(2)	Leninakan	3.10
Lia Khitrina (SU) '41	13.5	(1)	Volgograd	20.5
Nilla Kulkova (SU) '35	13.5	(3)	Leninakan	3.10
Mary Rand (GB) '40	13.7	(1)	London	1.7
Irena Tamburga (SU) '39	13.7	(4)	Leninakan	3.10
Vyera Korsakova (SU) '41	13.8	(1)	Frunze	13.7
Tatyana Antaryan (SU) '44	13.8	(1)h	Minsk	1.8
Lidia Vasilyeva (SU) '32	13.8	(2)	Minsk	1.8
Galina Nyesteryenko (SU) '45	13.8	(1)h	Leninakan	3.10

200 METRES HURDLES

Pat Van Wolvelaere (USA) '50	27.4	(1)	Frederick	1.7
Kathy Carlson (USA)	27.7	(1)	Wilmington	15.6
Patricia Jones (GB) '43	27.7	(1)	Watford	16.7
Mammie Rallius (USA) '41	27.9	(2)	Frederick	1.7
Cherrie Sherrard (USA) '38	28.4	(1)	Lemoore	18.6

HIGH JUMP

IOLANDA BALAS (Rum) '36	1.84	6' 0 1/2"	(1)	Cluj	7.8
Balas	1.83	6' 0"	(1)	Bucharest	15.5
Balas	1.80	5' 11"	(1)	Haifa	8.5
Balas	1.80	5' 11"	(1)	Bucharest	17.7
Balas	1.77	5' 9 3/4"	(1)	Frechen	12.6
MARIA FAITHOVA (CS) '46	1.77	5' 9 3/4"	(1)	Trinec	7.8
Balas	1.76b	5' 9 1/4"	(1)	Dortmund	27.3
ANTONINA OKOROKOVA (SU) '41	1.76	5' 9 3/4"	(1)	Nizhniy Tagil	26.8
Faithova	1.76	5' 9 3/4"	(1)	Nove Mesto	9.10
MICHELE BROWN (Aus) '39	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Sydney	12.3
Balas	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Tel Aviv	2.5
KLARA PUSHKARYEVA (SU) '41	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Moscow	3.6
Okorokova	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Jaroslavi	.6
VALENTINA KOZYR (SU) '50	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Chernovtsi	14.6
Balas	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Siena	25.6
Balas	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Grosseto	29.6
TAISIA CHENCHIK (SU) '36	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Odessa	3.7
Brown	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Los Angeles	23.7
ROBYN WOODHOUSE (Aus) '43	1.75	5' 9"	(2)	Los Angeles	23.7
Chenchik	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Budapest	4.9
Faithova	1.75	5' 9"	(1)	Bratislava	20.10
— (21 performances)					
Eleanor Montgomery (USA) '46	1.745b	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Los Angeles	12.2
Ludmila Komlyeva (SU) '43	1.74	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Leselidze	15.5
Olga Pulic (Yug) '42	1.73b	5' 8 3/4"	(2)	Dortmund	27.3
Jaroslawa Bieda (Pol) '37	1.73	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Krakow	8.5
Gabrielle Thiele (E Ger) '48	1.73	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Wielmar	15.5
Rita Gildemeister (E Ger) '47	1.73	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Leipzig	15.5
Marijana Thomas (Hol) '42	1.73	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Beverwijk	31.7
Galina Kostyenko (SU) '38	1.73	5' 8 3/4"	(1)	Moscow	6.8
Cheng Feng-yung (China) '37	1.73	5' 8 3/4"	(1)		.9
Estelle Baskerville (USA) '46	1.725	5' 8"	(1)	Berkeley	16.7
Dagmar Melzer (E Ger) '45	1.72	5' 7 3/4"	(1)	Cottbus	30.5
Alevtina Golovacheva (SU) '44	1.72	5' 7 3/4"	(1)	Chelyabinsk	31.5
Wu Fu-shan (China) '43	1.72	5' 7 3/4"	(1)	Tirana	.7
Alexandrina Stoicescu (Rum) '49	1.71	5' 7 3/4"	(2)	Bucharest	15.5
Galina Kirichenko (SY) '42	1.71	5' 7 3/4"	(1)	Volgograd	28.5
Barbel Graf (E Ger) '49	1.71	5' 7 3/4"	(1)	Jena	24.7
Olga Shurepova (SU) '47	1.70d	5' 7"	(1)	Khabarovsk	29.1
Susan Nigh (Can) '47	1.70b	5' 7"	(1)	Vancouver	18.2
Nevenka Mrnjek (Yug) '47	1.70b	5' 7"	(2)	Belgrade	26.2

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Carolyn Wright (Aus) '46	1.70	5' 7"	(1)	Sydney	26.3
Natalia Martinyenko (SU) '38	1.70	5' 7"	(1)	Moscow	14.5
Dorothy Shirley (GB) '39	1.70	5' 7"	(1)	London	2.7
Vera Bernardova (CS) '47	1.70	5' 7"	(2)	Prague	9.7
Radmila Huskova (CS) '44	1.70	5' 7"	(2)	Trinec	9.7
Galina Gumenovskaya (SU) '39	1.70	5' 7"	(2)	Leninakan	2.10
Susan Greenwald (SA) '44	1.70	5' 7"	(1)	Pretoria	29.10
Nina Bryntseva (50) 'SU	1.70	5' 7"	(1)	Baku	17.12
Jarmila Zivotska (CS) '46	1.69b	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Vizovice	6.3
Lolita Lagrosas (Phil) '38	1.69	5' 6 1/2"	(p)	Bangkok	14.12
Tatyana Smirnova (SU) '48	1.68d	5' 6 1/2"	(2)	Leningrad	29.1
Tatyana Noskova (SU) '39	1.68d	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Tula	18.2
Valentina Andreyeva (SU) '41	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Leselidze	17.4
Larisa Bragantsova (SU) '40	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(2)	Yalta	12.5
Jaroslava Králova (CS) '45	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Prague	22.5
Alena Proskova (CS) '48	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(2)	Jena	28.5
Mary Rand (GB) '40	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Paris	8.6
Tatyana Kachanova (SU) '46	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Leningrad	9.6
Yelena Komarova (SU) '46	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Odessa	11.6
Gwenda Hurst (GB) '44	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(4)	London	17.6
Valentina Tkhomirova (SU) '41	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(p)	L'vov	28.7

Solveig Langkilde Rasmussen (Den) '50	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Odense	7.8
Iloa Majdan (Austria) '47	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Klangfurt	20.8
Rita Schmidt (E Ger) '50	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Leipzig	11.9
Irena Krizenstein (Pol) '46	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Bari	11.9
Valentina Moskayeva (SU) '47	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Pyatigorsk	15.9

Best outdoor performances:

Pulic	1.73	5' 8 1/4"	(1)	Sarajevo	7.8
Montgomery	1.70	5' 7"	(1)	Frederick	2.7
Zivotska	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(1)	Otrokovice	3.7
Smirnova	1.68	5' 6 1/2"	(2)	Yalta	30.10

Hurst formerly Matthews. Brown formerly Mason.

LONG JUMP

TATYANA SHCHELKANOVA (SU) '37	6.73b	22' 1"	(1)	Dortmund	27.3
Shchelkanova	6.73	22' 1"	(tp)	Dnyepropetrovsk	14.8
Shchelkanova	6.70	21' 11 3/4"	(1)	Dnyepropetrovsk	12.8
Shchelkanova	6.60b	21' 7 1/2"	(q)	Dortmund	27.3
VIORICA VISCOPLEANU (Rum) '39	6.59	21' 7 1/2"	(1)	Bucharest	16.7
Shchelkanova	6.58	21' 7"	(1)	Leselidze	23.4
Shchelkanova	6.57	21' 6 3/4"	(1)	Odessa	2.7
Shchelkanova	6.55	21' 6 1/2"	(1)	Minsk	26.7
IRENA KIRSZENSTEIN (Pol) '46	6.55	21' 6"	(2)	Minsk	26.7
Kirszenstein	6.55	21' 6"	(1)	Budapest	3.9
Shchelkanova	6.54	21' 5 1/2"	(1)	New York	18.2
Shchelkanova	6.53	21' 5"	(1)	Baltimore	26.2
MARY RAND (GB) '40	6.53b	21' 5"	(2)	Dortmund	27.3
HEIDI ROSENDAHL (W Ger) '47	6.49b	21' 3 3/4"	(3)	Dortmund	27.3
Shchelkanova	6.49	21' 3 3/4"	(t)	London	17.6
Shchelkanova	6.48	21' 3 1/4"	(1)	Moscow	29.5
Kirszenstein	6.48	21' 3 1/4"	(1)	Zielona Gora	2.7
DEANA PRODANOVA (Bul) '42	6.47	21' 2 3/4"	(1)	Sofia	26.6
Talisheva	6.45	21' 2"	(2)	Dnyepropetrovsk	12.8
Prodanova	6.45	21' 2"	(2)	Budapest	3.9
Shchelkanova	6.43d	21' 1 1/4"	(1)	Leningrad	20.3
Rand	6.42	21' 0 3/4"	(2)	London	17.6
Rand	6.39	20' 11 1/2"	(1)	Pretoria	6.4
BERIT BERTHESEN (Nor) '44	6.39	20' 11"	(1)	Oslo	1.6
Shchelkanova	6.39	20' 11"	(1)	Torino	2.6
Kirszenstein	6.39	20' 11"	(1)	Krakow	5.6
MARIA VITTORIA TRIO (Ita) '47	6.39	20' 11"	(1)	Macerata	31.7

— (28 performances)

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Continued overleaf.

A question of history: Who was the first woman to clear 5ft (1.525) in the high jump?



JEWISH HERITAGE UK
Registered Charity
No. 1118174

Jewish Heritage UK cares for the historic synagogues, cemeteries and other sites of Britain's Jewish community. Jewish Heritage works nationally with English Heritage and other official conservation agencies, statutory amenity societies and local planning authorities to protect and preserve Jewish sites. Jewish Heritage promotes the Jewish architectural heritage in the UK through education and encouraging managed public access.

The European Routes of Jewish Culture link landmark sites in an international Jewish Heritage Trail as part of the Council of Europe's cultural programme 'Europe – A Common Heritage'. This initiative is the result of the success of the European Days of Jewish Culture and Heritage launched by B'nai B'rith in Strasbourg in 1996 and in the UK in 2000 with assistance from the organisation that became Jewish Heritage UK in 2004. Jewish Heritage Days attract about 10,000 visitors in Britain and up to 200,000 across Europe annually.



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Information for Visitors

Call the individual synagogues (not Friday or Saturday) for times of services or to make appointments for visits. All of these synagogues and some others are usually open to visitors during the annual European Days of Jewish Culture and Heritage and/or National Heritage Open Days that take place every September.

Download a free *Guide to Visiting a Synagogue* at www.jewish-heritage-uk.org

Front Cover

LIVERPOOL

Princes Road Synagogue

The most lavish High Victorian Oriental synagogue in England, older sister of London's New West End and designed by the same architect, George Audsley. Opened 1874 and Grade I Listed despite losing its turrets in the 1960s. Gorgeous mint green, stencilled and gilded décor contrasting with the rich jewel colours of the domed and turreted Ark.

Tel: 0151 709 3431

www.princesroad.org



ENGLISH HERITAGE



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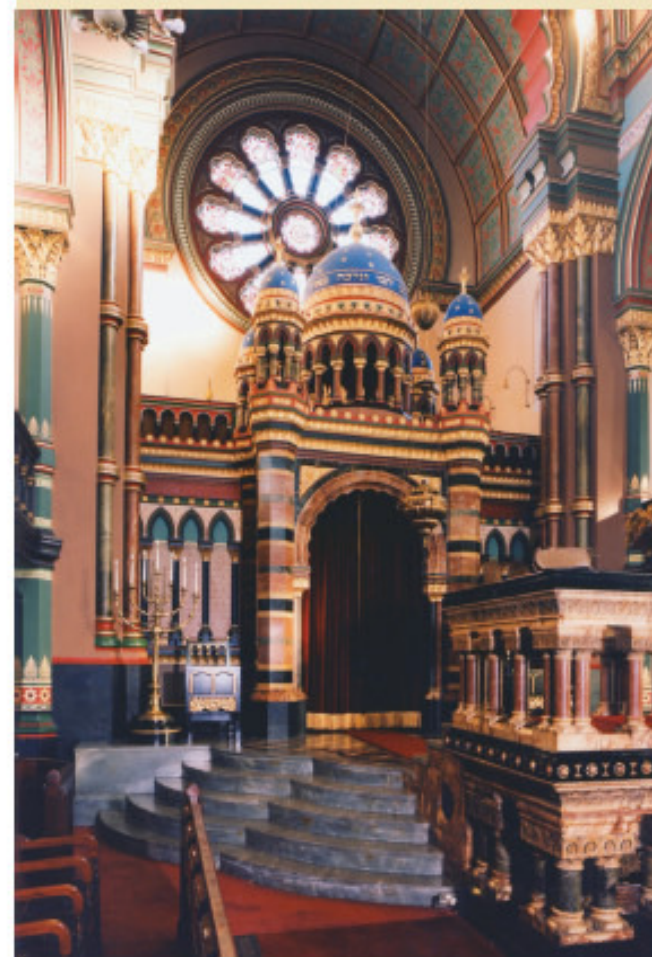
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Visit Britain's Top Ten Historic Synagogues



*Nominated for the European
Routes of Jewish Heritage*

JEWISH HERITAGE UK



www.jewish-heritage-uk.org



LONDON **Bevis Marks Synagogue**

Britain's oldest synagogue, opened 1701. A hidden gem in the City of London. Designed by master builder Joseph Avis, the style was influenced both by Wren City churches and the Portuguese Great Synagogue of Amsterdam, the parent congregation of the English Sephardim.

Tel: 020 7626 1274
www.bevismarks.org.uk



LONDON **The New West End Synagogue**

London's most splendid synagogue interior. Opened in 1879, and designed in High Victorian Oriental style by Liverpool-based Scottish architect George Audsley, for the social élite of Anglo-Jewry. Has much in common, both inside and out, with its 'older sister', Liverpool's Princes Road Synagogue (see over page) - designed by the same architect.

Tel: 020 7229 2631
www.newwestend.org.uk



BRIGHTON **Middle Street Synagogue**

Opulent jewel in the crown of the South Coast's most elegant Regency resort. Opened in 1875 to serve the spiritual needs of holiday-making Goldsmids, Rothschilds and Sassoons. By Thomas Lainson with a lavish interior to rival the splendour of the Prince Regent's Royal Pavilion.

Tel: 01273 888 855 (West Hove Synagogue)
www.bhhc-shul.org/middlestreet



RAMSGATE **The Montefiore Synagogue and Mausoleum**

Regency style synagogue of 1833 designed by the first Anglo-Jewish architect David Mocatta, and the curious last resting place of Sir Moses and Lady Judith Montefiore, built in 1862, modelled on Rachel's Tomb outside Bethlehem.

Tel: 020 7289 2573 (Spanish & Portuguese Jews' Congregation)
www.montefioreendowment.org.uk/sirmoses/ramsgate



PLYMOUTH **Plymouth Synagogue**

Oldest Ashkenazi synagogue in Britain and oldest in the English-speaking world. Built in 1762-3, a year before Exeter Synagogue (1763-4), both now 250 years old. Rare Georgian synagogues designed in low-key fashion like non-conformist chapels in the era before Jewish emancipation in Britain (1858), with gilded Baroque Arks.

Plymouth: Tel: 01752 263 162
www.plymouthsynagogue.com
Exeter: Tel: 01392 251 529
www.exetersynagogue.org.uk



BIRMINGHAM **Singers Hill Synagogue**

Over 150 years old, the earliest functioning 'cathedral synagogue' built in the era of Jewish emancipation in Britain, now over 150 years old. Designed in 1855-6 by leading civic architect Henry Yeoville Thomason who was responsible for Birmingham's Council House and Art Gallery, also in Italian Renaissance style.

Tel: 0121 643 0884
www.singershill.com



BRADFORD **Bradford Synagogue**

Oriental gem of 1880-1, in the heart of Yorkshire, built for the German Reform community of woollen merchants, who predated the Orthodox in the city. By local church architects the Healey Brothers, featuring such exotic touches as striped brickwork, horseshoe arches and a decorative cornice, inspired by a mixture of Mamluk Egypt, Moorish Spain and Mogul India.

Tel: 01274 728 925
www.bradfordsynagogue.co.uk



MANCHESTER **Manchester Jewish Museum**

Housed in the former Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue of 1874 in Cheetham, once the hub of Manchester Jewish life. Built in Moorish style, the architect was Edward Salomons who was of German Ashkenazi background. Permanent collection documents the history of Manchester Jewry, while special exhibitions often focus on the cultural diversity of present day Cheetham.

Tel: 0161 834 9879
www.mjm.org.uk



GLASGOW **Garnethill Synagogue**

The A-Listed 'cathedral synagogue' of Scotland, located in the heart of the city close to Charles Rennie Mackintosh's famous Glasgow School of Art. By John McLeod, 1881, and now home to the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre - a must for family history buffs with roots north of the border.

Tel: 0141 332 4151; 0141 332 4911 (Archives)
www.sjac.org.uk/archives/garnethill.html

The Belasco Family

- Rev George Simmons Belasco (1868 – 1929) was appointed Hazan of the Ramsgate Montefiore Synagogue in 1888, and led the community from then until his death
- Rev. Belasco, and wife Cordelia had three sons and four daughters
- Daughters:
 - Dorothy (born 5.6.93)
 - Margaret (10.8.98)
 - Eleanor (2.9.00)
 - Joan (21.8.01)
- And now a story that could be titled “Born too soon”



Jewish Chronicle June 11th 1926

NAHON: BELASCO.—On the 20th of Sivan, at the Synagogue, Lauderdale-road, by the Rev. G. S. Belasco, of Ramsgate (father of the bride), and the Revs. D. Bueno de Mesquita and J. Gomez de Mesquita, Raphael Nahon, of 71, Queensborough-terrace, W., to Dorothy Sarah Belasco.

BELASCO.—On Friday night, the 12th of February, 1932, at Ramsgate, after an operation, Cordelia Jane, wife of the late Rev. G. S. Belasco, in her 66th year. May her dear soul rest in peace. Deeply mourned by her children Dorothy, James, Harry, Eleanor, Joan and Philip, and by her daughters-in-law Dora and Madge.

BELASCO.—On the 12th of October, 1933, at “Wolstanton,” Harry George Belasco, B.Sc., A.I.C., aged 37, Principal of Longton Technical School, second son of the late Rev. G. S. and Mrs. Belasco, of Ramsgate. Deeply mourned.

The beginnings of Women's Athletics

“The first marks of note occurred just before the First World War. Margaret Belasco, the 15 year-old daughter of a rabbi, high jumped 4ft 10 in (1.47m) at the Inter-Kent School Sports at Chatham on 6 June 1914, a height she replicated in the Ramsgate County School for Girls Sports 12 days later, although it is probable that she jumped over a rope rather than a bar. Margaret died aged only 21, after a brief illness, in May 1920. Later that month her 18 year-old sister Joan Belasco was reported to have cleared the remarkable height of 5ft 4in (1.62m) in the Inter-Kent School Sports at Ramsgate over a rope weighted at both ends with sand ballast. That jump, although not acceptable for any category of official record, was not bettered in competition until 1932.”

"The Official History of the Women's AAA"
Mel Watman, to be published 2012

The Belasco Girls

- Dorothy, Margaret, Eleanor and Joan all attended the Ramsgate County School for Girls (now Clarendon House School). The school held an annual sports day
- The Belasco name first featured in the results for 1913:
 - Winner of the over 14 High Jump was Margaret Belasco, age 15, at 4'8" (1.42)
 - Under 12 high and long jumps won by Joan Belasco at 4'0" and 12'3" respectively
- At the Inter-Kent School Sports at Chatham on June 6th 1914, Margaret jumped a world's best of 4'10" (1.47)
- At the 1914 Ramsgate County School on June 18th, Margaret repeated her 4'10" clearance while her sister Eleanor won the under 14 title with 4'4" (1.32)
- Joan's progress in 1914-15 is unknown, although she did win the under 14 event with an unrecorded height in 1915. Eleanor won the over 14 title at 4'8" (1.42).

Scaling new heights

- During World War 1 the annual sports was the only competitive event available. Despite constant interruption of the air raid siren during competitions Joan continued to improve, clearing 4'7" in 1916 and 4'9" in 1917
- In 1918, Joan again cleared 4'9" to win the school over 14 title, but earlier in the year she had already raised the school record to 5'2" - the first known 5ft clearance by a woman
- On May 1st 1920, Margaret died aged 21. Later that month, at the newly-revived Inter-Kent County Sports, Joan leapt to her greatest performance – 5'4" (1.625)
- This mark was unsurpassed until the 1932 Olympics.

How good was Joan Belasco?

- The Belasco girls competed before women's athletics had been organised on a national basis
- The girls were limited to school competitions and the occasional inter-school event
- Eric Cowe traced her games teacher (aged 96!) and many surviving fellow pupils in the 1980's. Her fellow pupils remembered her jumping prowess with awe
- Her games mistress, Miss Clarice Rayner was able to provide detailed information:
 - She was 5'9" tall, and long legged
 - When jumping she seemed to amble up and effortlessly jump over
 - At school the girls jumped from the level asphalt surface of the tennis court
 - Before Miss Rayner joined the staff, the girls jumped over a rope, but later a bamboo cane was used
 - The 5'4" jump was achieved during the Inter-School competition at the St. Lawrence playing fields in Ramsgate. Miss Rayner remembered the occasion clearly, confirmed that the ground was level and that Joan jumped over either a weighted taut rope or a bamboo cane
- Her former classmates told of impromptu competitions where Joan jumped even higher
- Much credit must go to Clarice Rayner, in her first teaching job, bringing the latest theories on the development of physical education for girls

Life after Ramsgate

- In September 1920, Joan Belasco began a teacher training course. Her jumping career came to an end
- She later taught general subjects in East End schools
- By the mid-1960's, she had returned to Ramsgate in retirement, now Mrs Belasco-Davies, a widow
 - “perfectly hale and hearty” (Miriam Rodriguez-Pereira)
- She was ‘rediscovered’ in the mid-80's by author Eric Cowe
 - frail and poorly, living alone in a basement flat, closest relative a nephew
- Cowe arranged her move to a Birchington nursing home
- She died, aged 85, on September 12, 1986

County School for Girls

School

No. 236.

Surname

Relesco

Christian
Names

Joan Rachel

Sex

Name of Father
or Guardian

Rev. G.S. Relesco

Postal Address

Temple Cottage - Ramsgate.

1. Date of Birth.			8. Place of Residence.		9. Occupation of Father.	10. Place or places of previous education during the two years preceding admission.	
Day	Month	Year	County Borough or County Kent and (a) Borough Ramsgate or (b) Urban District or (c) Rural Parish		Jewish Minister	Lillian R ^d Elementary School. Ramsgate. 2 yrs.	
21	8	'81					
2. Date of Admission.							
Day	Month	Year					
14	1	13					
3. Date of Leaving.							
Day	Month	Year					
28	7	20					
4. Position on Admission.			11. Particulars of any exemption from Tuition fees.		12. Particulars of any Public Examinations passed or Certificates obtained while in the School, with dates.		13. Date of Recognition as Bursar or P.T. in the School.
L.P. II			(a) Total exemption. Granted from (Date). September 1913 Granted by (Body awarding). Kent Education Committee Tenable for School Life		(b) Partial exemption. Granted from (Date). Granted by (Body awarding). Annual Amount Tenable for		Royal Draught Society. Prep? Div: Hon. July 1913 " " " " I " " 1914 London General School certificate, 1921 - credit in English, History, Geography, Arithmetic, Geology. Pupil-Teacher.
5. Position on Leaving.							
6. Boarder or Day-Scholar.							
Day Scholar							
7. Terms kept.							
Autumn	Spring	Summer	14. Scholarships or Exhibitions for further education.		15. Place of further education.		16. Occupation taken up after leaving.
1913	1913	1913					Teaching in Elementary School.
1914	1914	1914					Reason for leaving - over 16
1915	1915	1915					
1916	1916	1916					
1917	1917	1917					
1918	1918	1918					
1919	1919	1919					
1920	1920	1920					