

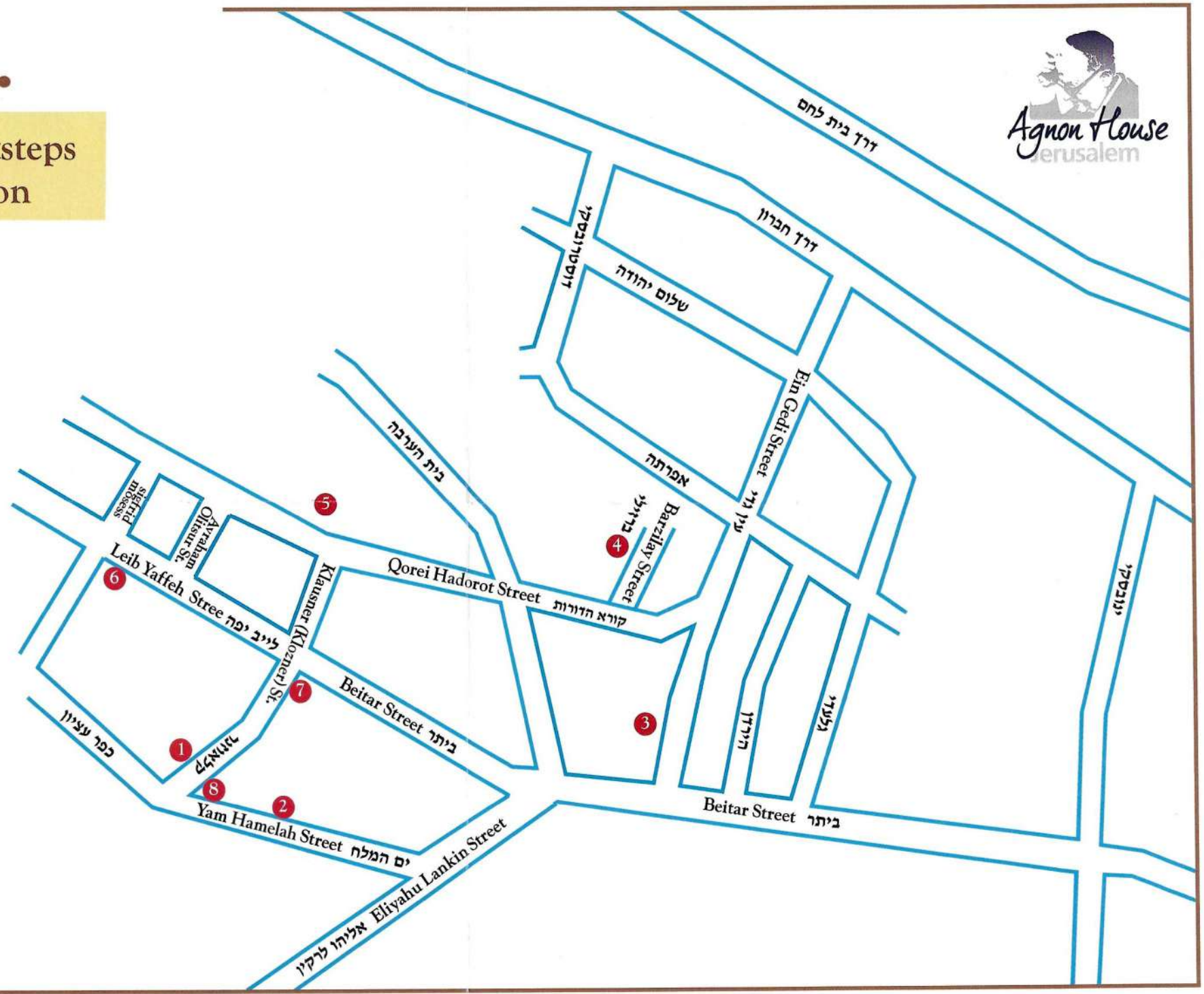


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## Treasure Trail In The Footsteps of S.Y. Agnon



In The Footsteps  
of S.Y. Agnon







We begin our trail outside the home of S.Y. Agnon, Nobel Prize Laureate for literature. Each station on our trail will bring us one step closer to discovering how S.Y. Agnon and other Zionist pioneers lived, worked and built the neighborhood surrounding us.

To discover Agnon's love for this neighborhood follow the trail and answer the questions. At most sites there will be a treasure question. Answer the treasure question and put the first letter of your answer in the space provided on the last page. ▶



## Station 1

Look at S.Y. Agnon's home built in 1931. Notice it is covered with plaster unlike the stone houses surrounding it. Did you know that this was once the outskirts of Jerusalem and an isolated area? What part of the house reminds you of a fortress? How would that have made the people living here feel?



**"I stood before my house and saw that the entire land was barren, no tree and no garden, nothing but dust and stones."**

S.Y. Agnon, "Foe to Friend"



**"I built a house and planted a garden. In this place from which the enemy tried to defeat us, I built a home... facing the Temple Mount to always keep upon my heart our beloved dwelling which was destroyed."**

S.Y. Agnon, "The Sign"



Treasure Question:

**Look at the picture of Agnon in this spot. What surrounded him in the picture that we can see still surrounding us today?**



Let's walk with S.Y. Agnon around the neighborhood. Leave Agnon's house and turn right till you reach the corner of Klausner (Klozner) Street and Yam Hamelah Street. Turn left on Yam Hamelah Street and look towards the direction of the Judean Desert and Dead Sea. Read the quote that follows to discover what else Agnon could see from this spot. Why do you think he wanted to live here? ▶

## Station 2



**"Once I chanced upon the place and I saw that the spot was pleasant and the air clear and the sky pure blue and the earth broad and smiling, so I strolled there at my ease."**

S.Y. Agnon, "Foe to Friend"



**"He looked out and saw the Dead Sea here, the site of our Temple (Har Habayit) there, clean winds blowing and good pleasant air from everywhere in the land."**

S.Y. Agnon, "The Sign"



Treasure Question:

**What is the name of the Temple Mount in Hebrew?**



Walk to the end of Yam Hamelah Street, turn left on Eliyahu Lankin Street until you get to Beitar Street. Turn right and you will see apartment buildings, previously apple orchards of Kibbutz Ramat Rahel.

Read the quote that follows to discover the exciting event that took place at the far end of this street in 1914. ▶



**"It was a wondrous sight when the airplane circled above the city of Jerusalem.. Yesterday, in the early morning almost all of the city's streets emptied. Thousands of men, women and children came either by foot, in carriage or by horseback to see the pilots as they left our city."**

Quoted by Zev Vilnay, *New Jerusalem*, 1V pp 91-92

The first airfield in Jerusalem was established by the Ottomans in World War 1. After the British conquered Jerusalem the British continued to use the airfield until the founders of the new neighborhood of Talpiot requested that the airfield be moved away!



Cross the road and continue walking on Beitar Street until you reach Ein Gedi Street. Find number 28 Ein Gedi Street. ▶



### Station 3

The person who built the house at 28 Ein Gedi Street is known as the Father of Modern Hebrew. While this house was being built he would observe the work of the Jewish Labor Brigade and make sure they were speaking Hebrew. Why do you think this was important to him? Do you think he would have approved of a treasure trail in English?



Eliezer Ben Yehuda watching members of the Jewish Labor Brigade build his house





**"Before Ben Yehuda, Jews could speak Hebrew, after him they did."**

Cecil Roth, Jewish historian in Oxford/Great Britain



**Treasure Question:**  
**What was his first name?**



Walk a little further down the road; look at the bus stop on the opposite side of the road and at the following picture ▶



First bus in Talpiot 1925



**"From the very beginning, one of the four founders (of Talpiot) took it upon himself to attend to community business: .... and to see that the bus would come and go on schedule, four times a day. What would he do if he had to consult his neighbors? There was no telephone as yet. He would take a shofar and go up on his roof and blow. His neighbors would hear him and come."**

S.Y. Agnon, "The Fire and the Trees"



Continue walking on Ein Gedi Street till you reach the corner of Qorei Hadorot Street. Turn left up Qorei Hadorot Street until you reach a small alleyway on your right hand side called Barzilay Street. Walk through this narrow passage to get to the first park in Talpiot. Cut through the park and stop when you pass the ping pong tables. Look straight ahead at the building with the green railings. ▶



#### Station 4

Can you find any signs of the original wooden structure known as the "tzrif" (shack) that stood here and was the first synagogue in Talpiot built next to the first playground in Talpiot?

Read S. Y. Agnon's comments about the shack/synagogue and discuss whether Agnon would be happy or sad to know the original wooden shack was destroyed to make way for a new structure. What do you feel?



**"Our forefathers, who saw their dwelling in this world as temporary and that of Synagogues and Talmudic schoolhouses as permanent, built large and good houses for Torah and prayer. We, with our principal worldview in this world, build ourselves large and pleasant homes and settle for Torah and prayer in small houses and huts."**

S.Y. Agnon, "The Sign"

**?** Treasure Question:  
**On which Jewish Festival do we build a temporary building to live in?**



Pass the synagogue and turn left up the path to get out of the park and you will find yourself in Bet Ha-aravah Street. Turn left to return to Qorei Hadorot Street. Turn right and continue to walk up the road till you reach a gated, grassy area with railings and two prominent tombstones. ▶



Qorei Hadorot, 1920'S

## Station 5



Look through the railings at the cemetery and the memorial inscriptions written in different languages. Look at the back of the first tombstone you see as you approach the park. ▶

At the end of WW1, 290 Turkish soldiers were buried here in a common grave. Later the British buried Indian soldiers that had fought in the British army in two common graves, one for the Muslim soldiers and the other for Hindu and Sikh soldiers.



**"If I should die, think only this of me:  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is for ever England."**

Rupert Brooke, "The Soldier"

**?** Treasure question:  
**The languages in the inscriptions are Arabic,  
Sanskrit, English and....**



Continue to walk up Qorei Hadorot Street till you reach building number 35. Turn left through a short path called Avraham Olitsur Street. You are now in Leib Yaffeh Street. Diagonally opposite you on the right hand side you will see the Tifferet Yisrael S.Y. Agnon Synagogue which has a Hannukiah above the entrance. ▶



## Station 6

Although this synagogue was dedicated in 1924 by Rav Kook the community could not afford to complete the building and so they prayed in the Tzrif (the shack that you visited earlier on your trail.) In 1939 The British confiscated the property and used it as an ammunition depot. Look at the picture of Jewish policeman Nathan Glass guarding the synagogue during the British Mandate period. When the British left in 1948 the Hebrew University used this property as a warehouse.



Nathan Glass 1940s

As you stand outside this synagogue imagine how Agnon and his friends felt when they saw that it was not being used as a place of worship. Agnon and his community were so upset that they went to court to get the property returned to the neighborhood as a synagogue. They were successful and the community honored Agnon after his death by adding his name to this building. The Tiferet Yisrael S.Y. Agnon Synagogue was renovated in the 1970s and the stunning silver doors of the Ark were brought to Israel after the Holocaust from Livorno, Italy and donated by David Cassuto.



**"Dressed in a new summer suit and new light shoes, I went to the house of prayer. Thus my mother, may she rest in peace, taught me: if a man gets new clothes or new shoes, he wears them first to honor the holiday, and goes to the synagogue in them."**

S.Y. Agnon, "The Sign"



Treasure question:

**Look at the roof of the Synagogue. Fill in the second letter of the Festival in which we use this object.**



Walk past the front of the Synagogue and continue on Leib Yaffe Street till you reach the corner of Leib Yaffe and Klausner Street. You are standing outside the former home of Professor Hannah Safrai and her father Professor Shmuel Safrai who were both exceptional scholars and teachers. ▶

## Station 7

The building opposite you was where Professor Yosef Klausner, professor of Jewish history, religion and Modern Hebrew, lived. Read the quote below to find out about the relationship between Yosef Klausner and his neighbor S.Y. Agnon!



"We would sneak, as it were, to the Agnons' house, without telling Uncle and Auntie (Klausner) where we were going, so as not to upset them."

Amos Oz, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*

? Treasure Question:  
Amos Oz recalls his visits to this neighborhood with his parents when he was a \_\_\_\_\_



Turn right into Klausner Street and walk to the far end of the street and look at the corner house opposite Agnon's house. ▶

## Station 8

The last house on our trail is the house of the renowned architect Fritz Kornberg, who built S.Y. Agnon's home. Looking at the original house on the corner of Klausner Street and Yam Hamelah Street, what are the similarities and differences that you find between this house and the Agnon House?



"Kornberg, may his name be blessed was a pioneer. Even before there was a Zionist pioneer movement he was a pioneer."

S. Y. Agnon, "Myself to Myself"





Treasure Question:

**Whose house no longer exists even though this street bears his name?**

**What have you discovered at the end of the treasure trail? Read the quote below and enter Agnon's house to check if your answer is correct.**

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8



"There was nobody in the shack; I sat in the shack alone... A wind blew through the shack and caused the leaves and flowers and blossoms to sway and the house was filled with a goodly smell; the memorial candles gave their light to the building. I sat there and read the holy words G-d put into the hands of the poet, to glorify the commandments he gave to his people Israel."

S.Y. Agnon, "The Sign"

