



Photo: Family archive

Mary Fraser

1930 - 2021

JEAN & MEGAN FRASER

Our dear Mary sadly died on 9th September aged 91. Mary moved to the Suburb in the mid-eighties and loved its architecture, its abundance of plant life and became well known as a familiar face around the Suburb.

Born in Warwickshire in 1930, Mary was educated at Cheltenham Ladies College and Westfields College where she studied French and Italian. After graduating she worked as personal assistant to the poet Dame Edith Sitwell before teaching English with the British Council in Sweden and Brazil.

In the late sixties Mary was selected to set up and oversee the development of the visionary Unified Language Service (ULS) within the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). Funded by the Home Office, the ULS taught English as a second language, catering primarily to immigrant children. From its initial single centre in Islington, the Service expanded to have centres within the ten divisions of the ILEA and comprised a diverse student body speaking up to 160 first languages.

Contrary to the standards of the time, the ULS taught its students by integrating them into mainstream classrooms; initially concentrating on secondary school pupils, it later extended to primary school children and then advisory services. Colleagues tell how Mary's character was fundamental to the work of the centres – her diplomacy, her kindness and staunch work ethic. In addition to directing the Service, Mary developed a course to train teachers in ULS methods and taught in countries as diverse as Syria, Yugoslavia, Peru, Nigeria and again, Brazil.

The Service's innovative work went beyond language tuition to

including their students' cultural traditions and histories within the syllabus. At a time when the National Front were hosting meetings in London schools, this was particularly progressive and necessary work that effectuated lasting changes to the London curriculum. In 1990 the ILEA was sadly abolished and Mary took early retirement.

The ensuing years were rich and full. With the permission of the local authority, she soon began a long association with a group of Eritrean refugee children who, fleeing war, had arrived in the UK and were living in a church in Hackney. Teaching them English and Maths as children, she mentored them until they were old enough to get first jobs, maintaining contact and developing life-long friendships with many in the group.

In 2010 Mary joined the U3A where she researched and led historic walks for both the North London and Hampstead Garden Suburb groups, as well as contributing talks and articles to the Shape of London architectural group. She also pursued her long-standing love of classical – especially chamber – music avidly, frequently attending The Wigmore Hall and always the Proms at St Jude's.

Mary only disclosed her health situation to closest family and friends; she seldom disclosed her age either and many friends and colleagues had no idea she was 91 nor that she had become so ill. Mary's determination to keep living life as normal is illustrated by the fact that the evening she was discharged after three nights at the Royal Free Hospital, she attended a concert at the Wigmore Hall, travelling on public transport as always. This was the approach Mary brought to everything she did; ill health was not going to get in the way.

Mary will be missed so much by the many people she touched with her loyalty, her friendship and generosity. She lives on in our hearts and memories and stands as a shining example of what we can truly call a life well lived.

Mary Fraser is survived by her sister Jean, her niece Megan, her cousins Anthony, Gaynor and Gaynor's children and grandchildren.

Hugh Hamilton

1937 - 2021

SUE HAMILTON & IAN DAVIDSON

Hugh (proud wearer of his Hamilton tartan tie) and his wife Sue (Susan) came to live in the Suburb – in Chatham Close – in 1971. They moved to Wild Hatch in 1973. He died at Wild Hatch on 2nd May this year.

Born in Nottingham, Hugh was the eldest brother of three and leader of the trio's escapades. The death of his father when he was just eleven was a hammer blow. But it was typical of him and his brothers Julian and Andrew that Johanna Julius, a German au pair who came to help his mother, has remained – along with her family – dear friends of the Hamiltons until this day.

Hugh was awarded a law degree from Nottingham University, joining the Sherwood Foresters for his National Service. In 1968 he married Susan Knight and they had two sons, Ian and Christopher.

He meanwhile had trained as a solicitor and became a partner in Crane and Hawkins, a long-established small Anglo-American firm. Through executing the will of

Anna Freud, Sigmund's daughter, he became a Trustee of the Freud Museum (for 25 years). He was also a Trustee of the Octavia Hill Housing Association. Via a merger, Hugh became Head of Private Clients at Lawrence Graham, a much larger firm. Younger colleagues from those days still say he was the best boss they ever had.

In the Suburb, Hugh served for six years on the Trust and then four years on the HGS Institute Council, trying angrily to preserve the Institute from its miserable relocation and demise. He'd revelled in courses on Photography and the History of Art, enjoyed Pauline Drayson's play readings and the Theatre Club coach trips to the West End. Alas, all gone.

Hugh's sense of fun, like his gift for friendship, was prodigious. One of his many April Fool's jokes

at work – that he (thinly disguised as Alf Porilo) had wangled the entire staff a 10% discount at the Crematorium – became part of the firm's mythology. He was physically boisterous too and his sons – and Sue – remember that trait he had in common with many dads. After a long hard day, he'd come home on the Tube, arriving just as his sleepy sons were being ushered toward bed. In two minutes, he'd have them playing happily again, all thoughts of bedtime erased.

When he became chairman of the Suburb branch of the Historical Association, he was determined there should be more fun. Not only did he pep up the choice of speakers but he made it a one man quest to get a cup of tea or a glass of wine into everyone's hand after a lecture and 'get them talking!' He succeeded.



Photo: Chris Hamilton

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