



Madeleine Melling

1943 - 2022

MARGARET HARRIS

Madeleine Melling, who died in December 2022, was one of the Suburb's most loved, respected and committed residents. Although she lived in Ruskin Close for 54 years, Madeleine was actually born in Australia.

Adopted as a baby, she grew up in the suburbs of Sydney but moved with her parents to the UK when she was fourteen years old. The family settled in Hampstead and Madeleine was educated at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Tunbridge Wells and the Sorbonne in Paris. Later she took an Open University BA degree course which provided a springboard to an administrative career in education.

Madeleine married Ronald Patrick Melling in 1965 and in 1968 they moved to Ruskin Close where they brought up their four children in a house that was, in the words of their elder daughter Margaret, "always full of activity – parties, get-togethers and general social hubbub." Through her children, Madeleine made numerous life-long friends and became embedded in Suburb life. Right up to the time of Madeleine's death, her Ruskin Close home remained a focal point for her children and grandchildren, a place in London where they were always sure of a convivial welcome.

After her retirement, Madeleine took on voluntary roles in the Suburb, using her administrative skills to the advantage of the community which meant so much to her. She took on the role of 'Friends Coordinator' for Proms for three years and moved on to membership of the Music Planning Committee in 2017. She chaired that Committee from 2018 to 2021, working alongside Yvonne Baker to ensure well-planned events each year. After she stepped down as chair, she remained a Proms volunteer, stewarding for Lit Fest and stepping in wherever there were gaps in rotas.

Madeleine also involved herself in other local activities and had a wide range of interests including local history, tai-chi and travel. She drew her second husband, David Barker (whom she married in 2004), into the life of the Suburb and they often attended concerts and local events. They travelled extensively, including to New Zealand, the Arctic, Greenland and the North West Passage.

Although she had an extensive network of friends in the Suburb, few were aware of how seriously ill Madeleine had become by the autumn of 2022. Sustained by her strong faith, Madeleine accepted her diagnosis with the same dignity that she had shown throughout

her life. But she leaves many Suburb residents deeply saddened by her passing. In the words of Susie Gregson, "Madeleine was a modest, kind and lovely human being, with a caring generosity of spirit." Her local friends will very much miss her presence.

Philip Okrent

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With the passing of Philip Okrent, who died aged 80 in October 2022, the Suburb has lost a committed member of the HGS Residents Association Council and a staunch guardian of our uneven, tree-damaged pavements.

Philip and his wife, Suzie, moved to Addison Way in the early 2000s. They wanted to be near other family members and, as keen walkers, they were attracted to the Suburb's good access to hiking routes. Walking together became a particular comfort to them during the restricted days of the Covid pandemic when, tragically, their son, Stephen, was one of the early victims of the virus.

Although retired from his work as a property consultant, Philip remained active in community activities during his Suburb years. In addition to his vigilance over

the state of our pavements and his constant lobbying of Barnet Councillors to get improvements in their condition, Philip was an active participant in the South Hampstead Synagogue and a volunteer with Jewish Care. Yet he always found time to help and support his children and grandchildren and to pursue his interests in gardening, sport and travel.

Philip's death in a car crash in Spain in October 2022 was a terrible shock to his family and friends who remember him as not only a devoted family man, but also as a true gentleman and active citizen; somebody who was always happy to pick up quietly whatever family or community activity needed attention. He is survived by his wife Suzie, his children and ten grandchildren.



Thinking about your home's energy efficiency?

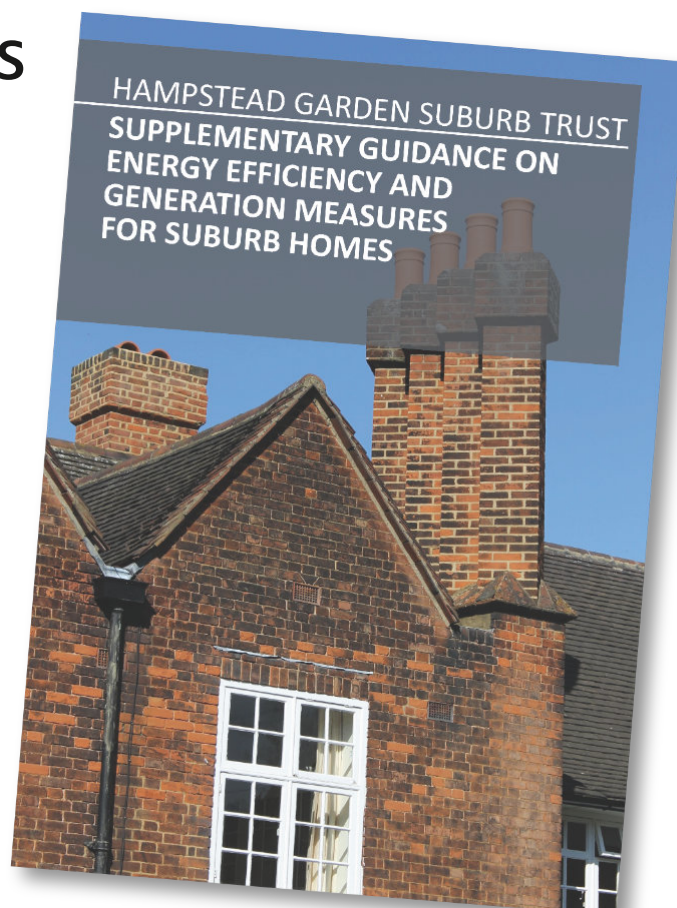
We have produced a guidance document on steps you can take to improve your home's thermal performance without changing its appearance.

The guidance covers:

- ~ Energy efficiency measures including:
 - Insulation (walls, roofs and floors)
 - Windows
 - Doors
- ~ Energy generation measures including:
 - Air and ground source heat pumps
 - Solar panels

Some of these works may require Trust consent, but many do not. We would be happy to offer advice if you would like to contact the office.

Download the Trust's Energy Guidance document today by visiting hgstrust.org then click 'Your Property', then 'Design Guidance'.



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