

Elizabeth Monkhouse



Elizabeth Margaret Monkhouse, who died on 27 December in her hundredth year, was born on 8 August 1912, in the Cheshire village of Disley. She was the youngest child of the playwright, novelist and 'Manchester Guardian' journalist Allan Monkhouse and his wife Dorothy.

After attending Somerville College, Oxford in the early 1930s where she read Modern Languages, she spent a year in France at the University of Poitiers where she obtained a doctorate for her thesis on Proust.

For many years Elizabeth taught French language and literature before joining the Workers' Educational Association in 1941 and she spent the rest of her career in adult education, with a particular focus on international affairs.

Her pupils ranged from navvies building quarters for

the RAF in wartime Scotland to ambassadors' wives in the 1960s who needed a crash course on international politics; this included a briefing on Marxism until one of the wives said "You'd better stop this, I'm beginning to believe it."

Elizabeth spent much of her life in the Labour Party, and in 1955 she fought Hendon North, falling just 4,000 votes short of unseating Ian Orr-Ewing. She did not stand again having been advised that, although she was ministerial material, time was against her. In the 1980s, she joined the SDP and eventually the Liberal Democrats.

From 1947 until her retirement in 1978 she worked at the University of London's Department of Extra-Mural Studies becoming a tutor in international affairs, and later senior lecturer in charge of the diploma in adult education. During that time her roles included serving on the Russell Committee on Adult Education and being sent to the Soviet Union by the British Council to investigate a scheme to teach languages to adults.

Elizabeth undoubtedly had one of the sharpest minds I have ever encountered. I remember going to one meeting where a set of financial accounts were being discussed and Elizabeth noticed the smallest of discrepancies in a flash. When I became Treasurer my mantra was always "what would Elizabeth say about this?"

DEBORAH WARLAND

One of her neighbours in Hampstead Way, Jane Epstein, recalls that Elizabeth was thrilled to discover that her gardener had read Proust and that consequently there was a lack of gardening but much cerebral debating. She also likened Jane's garden to Arlington Cemetery because of all the labels on the plants. She loved crosswords too.

Another neighbour, David Heard, said that for him Elizabeth moved from stranger to neighbour to friend to confidante and she had an amazing ability to be interesting, witty and entertaining to all age groups. Even in her 90s she would say to David "oh my dear, I'm just going up the road to look after the old lady."

Though Elizabeth gradually grew frailer, she remained a lively and intelligent force and offered help and support to all those on the Suburb who were privileged to know her. In so many ways she was the ideal lunch or dinner guest. Very well read on seemingly every topic but always keen to hear the views and often challenge the thoughts of others. I, for one, am extremely grateful for having known and much admired a wonderful lady who is already greatly missed. Thanks to the devoted help of her carer, Patsy McCalden, Elizabeth was able to remain in her own home until her death.



Sunshine Corner did not live up to its name when Trust members and friends gathered to inaugurate its new restoration and made a presentation to the skilled craftsmen whose work lived up to tradition.

Sunshine Corner finishes – gas main starts!

Designed by Charles Paget Wade during the earliest stages of development of the Suburb in the early 1900s, Sunshine Corner overlooks the Heath Extension. It is the most high profile, and most used, of all 49 communal areas owned and managed by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust.

After a three year period of repair and conservation work to the boundary walls, steps, buttresses, York stone path and soft landscaping, the Trust

recently celebrated completing the renovation works with a planting ceremony.

The upper lawns of Sunshine Corner will suffer disruption later this summer, as National Grid are to undertake an essential overhaul of the major gas main which runs across the Heath and along Heathgate.

The six week project will take place during August and September 2012, and is part of an on-going project to reline pipes carrying natural gas below Hampstead Heath, Kenwood and Parliament Hill.

In March 2011, the Trust's three year programme of restoration works was disrupted when a car accident resulted in damage to the on-going repairs to the brick piers and part of the newly completed wall. This was quickly repaired under the Trust's insurance policy, but caused a delay in completion.

National Grid has assured the Trust, the City of London and the Heath & Hampstead Society

that disruption will be minimal and underground, protected by hoardings and with footpaths safely diverted. They will be covering the costs of carefully reinstating the path and lawn at Sunshine Corner once the works are completed and will be keeping residents informed by regularly updating information posters.

The National Grid enquiries line is 01753 803642.



Hampstead Heath Croquet Club

Are you a croquet player – or would you like to learn? The Hampstead Heath Croquet Club is looking for new members. Why not come along to our Annual Open Day from 2-4pm on Sunday 13 May in Golders Hill Park and see what we have to offer?

If you haven't played before, croquet is a fun and exciting game, best summed up as being a cross between chess, snooker and golf. All you need to enjoy it is a sense of fun, a pair of soft shoes and an interest in games of strategy.

The HHCC was founded in 2008 and has two half-size lawns next to the tennis courts in Golders Hill Park. Amazingly, these are the only fully public lawns in North London, but joining the Club entitles you to make advance bookings and to pay a significantly lower fee: £4 per hour, as against £7.50 for

non-members, including in both cases the hire of all equipment.

We run regular Club Sessions (normally 2-4pm on alternate Saturdays and 6-8pm on alternate Mondays), with informal games (both Association and Golf Croquet) which non-members are most welcome to join in. Basic coaching is provided for those who don't know (or can't remember!) how to play.

Since 2011 we have also had shared use of the Parliament Hill Bowling Green, which has given us an excellent full-size lawn; under our agreement with the Bowls Club, however, this is for experienced players only, and so is not open for public use.

For more information you can visit our website at www.hampsteadheathcroquetclub.org.co.uk, email enquiries@hampsteadheathcroquetclub.co.uk, or leave a voicemail on 07943 658 242.

Public Service on the Brink

This is Jenny Manson's second collection of essays by various hands. The eleven contributors offer some answers to the question posed in her introductory piece: why do we now have a crisis of confidence in the public services, with demoralisation within and mistrust from without? Four contributors, like Jenny, are retired public servants; all have knowledge and/or experience in their fields. Most are left wing and their conclusions are generally political. The essays are presented under five headings concluding with 'The Public Debate' in which a working journalist, Dan Carrier, gives examples of the routine Press denigration of unions and their leaders.

It is impossible in a short review to deal fairly with the various arguments given. Two stand out for their clarity and focus. Sir Rodric Braithwaite, a retired career civil servant, notes the damaging

effects of the imposition of inappropriate business models and argues for the preservation of an elite body of senior civil servants. An equally forceful case is made by David Wiggins, retired Professor of Logic, against the imposition of performance management and the Research Assessment Exercise at the expense of teaching – the true business of a university.

Further essays on Local Government, Education, Legal Aid and the Railways are both interesting and relevant. There is also a somewhat gleeful demolition of the Private Finance Initiative. All write from a conviction that most public servants are hard working and devoted to the public good. They deserve respect rather than denigration. This book should be read, and not only by those who agree with its thesis.

Public Service on the Brink is published by Inprint Academic.

Now in our 23rd year!

It's that time of year again when the HGS Theatre Club open their membership to new applicants. Would you like your visit to the theatre to be hassle-free? The HGS Theatre Club can offer just that!

Once a month we take our members by coach from two pick-up points (North Square and Barclays Bank, Temple Fortune) to the West End, Richmond or the Hampstead Theatre and return them to their starting point.

We get good senior citizens discounted tickets in the stalls or circle for all performances. For example, our all-day summer outing to the Watermill in Newbury which includes coach, theatre ticket, lunch and afternoon tea is cheaper than a West End ticket! As you can imagine, this is the highlight of our year.

April/May is the time of year when we take on new members. Our annual subscription is £14 and you must be a member of the HGS Residents Association.

Forthcoming outings will include: *Barefoot in the Park* by Neil Simon at the Richmond Theatre with Maureen Lipman; *The Browning Version* by Terence Rattigan and South Downs, a new play by David Hare, both performed at the Harold Pinter Theatre by Anna Chancellor and Nicholas Farrell; *Top Hat*, our Xmas treat on 6 December at the Aldwych Theatre, a spectacular musical event.

Please do come and join us. Further enquiries from Elaine Grays, Membership Secretary on 8442 0096.

VALERIE R. CODRON

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