

Madeleine Alice Thérèse Inglehearn

16.05.1932 - 24.01.2025

RIP

A letter to Mady

Dear Mady,

(Because to the family you were always Mady.) You said you didn't want a big production at your funeral, but we can't let you go without reminding you of how much you made your mark on all our lives, more so than you would probably ever have acknowledged.

To the world passing by you were gentle, kind and unassuming. All of these were true but inside was a passionate and determined person, who loved and was fascinated by music, dance and history, who stood up for what you believed was right, and who loved deeply those closest to you.

You were born at a time when it was harder for women to follow a dream but you pursued yours as a dancer and dance historian. You enabled and inspired many others to enjoy and value the history of dance, as you did too. You weren't one for the limelight, yet so much of your life was about the stage.

You made your own opportunities even when life wasn't easy. To us as children you were quite a dashing figure - living in London and zooming around in a little white mini. You learned to sail, bought a boat and had

so many wonderful times with Ron aboard the Patricia Maude, watching the winds and the tides - with Ron at the helm and you as the navigator. You started your own historical dance group, The Companie of Dancers, and performed and taught all over the country, as well as in Italy, Finland, Germany and elsewhere, and eventually at the Guildhall School of Music too.

And then in retirement you decided you would finally have that university education that earlier hadn't been possible. When you graduated with a bachelors degree, we were so proud of you, especially Dad, and no doubt Michel and Grandmère would have been too. But that wasn't enough for you and you went on to earn a PhD and become Dr Madeleine Inglehearn at the age of 82. I've named you so many times as a fine example of life-long learning.

Mady, you gave so much of yourself to others. After Ron died of Motor Neurone disease, it felt right to you to remember him by helping others suffering from MND. You spent many years supporting the MND Association and I know you were very much appreciated by those you visited.

You lived your life to the very end, still enjoying dance sessions, helping out with teas and coffees at Homecross House, and right up to the last organising the U3A speaker programme for the coming year. Just in December you took part in the Early Dance Association conference up in Edinburgh. It was only recently that you'd decided the trips into London to concerts or exhibitions might have become a bit much.

But there was so much more to you. There was the Mady with a sharp sense of mischief and humour, who challenged the Yorkshire Tea company to restore the full number of biscuits to a packet when their reduction didn't suit your morning coffee regime. There was the Mady who bucked the trend and never owned a TV but appeared once on the Generation Game long ago, teaching Bruce Forsyth to dance. There was the Mady who enjoyed the finer things in life - while shopping for you I discovered that your essentials were red wine, Roquefort cheese (and Liquorice Allsorts).

I'm telling everyone this because I want them to have a fuller picture of who you were. But each of us will have our own memories of you. It's hard for me to know where to start, but in more recent years I'll hold on to our trips to hear The Messiah at Cadogan Hall, or the beautiful carol concerts in aid of The Passage charity. I'll especially treasure listening to your lifetime of memories while we sat in the gardens at Homecross House or our distanced dancing together there during COVID.

It's fitting now that we're saying goodbye in the Church of Our Lady of Grace and St Edward where you made your peace with God and where the community has been such an important part of your last decade. We're close to your favourite cafe, Chateau, which was part of your rhythm and where you had your favourite spot for coffee and sometimes a glass of wine. We're close to Homecross House where you're leaving some good friends.

So, Mady, it's time for us to let you go. The leaves of the silver birch tree you enjoyed at your window will keep on dancing without you. We'll

all carry on our lives, but we won't forget you. For such a modest soul, you've brought a lot of us together to celebrate you and to remember that mark that you've left on our lives.

Dear Mady, you lived your life so well and so fully. You loved and you were greatly loved.

Now may you rest in peace.