



SONYA HILTON

Member of Roehampton Club 2004-2023

Photo of Sonya on her 100th Birthday

It is with immense sadness that we announce the recent death of a long-standing Member, Sonya Hilton. Her funeral took place on 7th September 2023. Her daughter, Janice Savundra, has kindly written the following:

“My mother was an amazing, driven person. She was a teacher, an entrepreneur, a politician and a mother. She was born on 20th June 1921 and died on 7th September 2023 at 102 years old. She achieved a lot in her long life. She was brought up as an Armenian and grew up in Calcutta India where she excelled at the University of Calcutta earning 2 First Class degrees and 2 gold medals for coming first in botany and zoology. Her first job was teaching biology at the New School in Darjeeling and then she went to Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University graduating in Anthropology. She loved her time there. She returned to Calcutta after finishing her degree and met my father Harry Hilton, a Hurricane pilot in the RAF on the ship home and they married in 1948 eventually settling in Bombay where my father was managing director of a large British company that manufactured cigarettes. They had two children, Richard and Janice, and we had a wonderful childhood with trips to the beach every weekend and swimming lessons after school. Not one satisfied with being a wife and mother, she started a business manufacturing plastic flowers employing people with disabilities to assemble the flowers. My father retired from his job in 1969 and he and my mother returned to the UK.

As energetic as ever into her 70's she became a Councillor in Hammersmith & Fulham and served for 12 years as a Conservative in a Labour Borough. In her early 80's she moved to Barnes to be near us and immediately signed up to join the Roehampton Club. She adored the club playing bridge, backgammon and swimming. She made lovely friends there including Danit Birn and Arnold Tunbridge. My husband and I loved going up to have the Roehampton Club's famous Sunday lunch buffet. My Mum was most proud to have reached 100 and receiving Honorary Membership at a most special lunch honouring all those who were Honorary Members”.