

Pauline Rothschild (21May 1916 - June 2008) and Henry Rothschild (21 Nov 1913 –27 May 2009)

Pauline, the daughter of an Anglican vicar, became a Quaker after she and Henry moved to Cambridge from London in 1959, where Henry opened a branch of the Primavera Gallery and Pauline continued to provide administrative assistance. They also worked together resourcing the best designs for furnishing students' rooms in the new universities which were springing up in the 60s and 70s. Pauline attended Jesus Lane Meeting and made a huge contribution to Fig Trees (Quaker) Residential Home, efficiently chairing the management committee for many years and being very disappointed when new regulations made it impossible to continue the project. Pauline's work in this area was, incidentally, the closest she got to an early dream of being a housing officer. Her other significant work involved working for the (Henry) Morris Trust. Both Henry and Pauline were centrally involved in setting up Wintercomfort, the first project in Cambridge for housing the homeless.

In 2003 they moved to St. John's Home, Oxford, primarily to be closer to the family of their only child, Liz, an Attender at Faringdon Meeting. Although Pauline by then was in advanced years, her warmth, sense of humour and interest in the outside world remained –in her eighties she returned to playing the piano and was helping in a local primary school. Her marriage to Henry was wonderfully close and harmonious, cemented by their long professional work together where, as one observer said at her Memorial Celebration, Henry was the rocket but Pauline was the launch pad.

Henry regularly accompanied Pauline to Meeting, and attended Oxford and then Headington Meeting even after her death, finding it a more congenial place of worship than the Synagogue. Obituaries in the national press underlined his leading role in the promotion and collection of British crafts and design. To the end he retained great astuteness of mind, humour and openness to new aesthetic and spiritual experiences.

Stewart Jeffrey and Sarah Lasenby

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