

# obituary

## ELLINOR MARGARET HINKS

Born on February 6th 1912, Ellinor Hinks, former Principal of *Nonington College of Physical Education*, passed away peacefully on January 18th at the age of 92 following a severe stroke. She will be greatly missed as a wise and knowledgeable supporter of many aspects of Laban work.

Trained at *Bedford College of PE* (1930-33) she first taught at *Queenswood* (1933-38) and then at *Harrow County High School* (1939-44). She then became a lecturer at *I M Marsh College of PE* in Liverpool (1944-50). Her main subjects were swimming and Educational Gymnastics. Ellinor was an original thinker, interested in, but not a slavish follower of, other people's ways and creeds. At the time many PE teachers were suspicious of the radical new *Laban* approach to movement education, and on the other hand Gymnastics was despised by many *Laban* devotees. In 1950 Ellinor was appointed as Deputy Principal to *Nonington College of PE* in Kent, and as Principal of the College in 1959.

Ellinor had many gifts: she was a facilitator, instrumental in enabling things to happen - executive and decisive. If she saw value in something she actively supported it and didn't merely think about it. Her breadth of vision encompassed all different aspects of the College as a community, not only students and academic staff, but domestic staff, ground staff, caretaking staff etc. In all areas she encouraged individuals and treated them with concern and dignity, discussing with interest their work and ideas - ready when needed with thoughtful advice.

As Principal, Ellinor also had the necessary dignity, courage and skills to function successfully in the public domain, in relationships with *Kent County Council*, the *Ministry of Education* and the *University of London Institute of Education*. She fought tirelessly for the expansion of the College as a mixed College with new facilities - Gymnasia, Theatres, Swimming Pool, Laboratories, Sports Hall, Library, which opened in 1972. She also fought tirelessly at the University along with other constituent Colleges for acceptance of the concept of the 'Art and Science of Movement' and 'Movement Studies' as degree courses.

Ellinor's deeper interest in 'Laban-based' work and ideas sprang from the time she became Principal of *Nonington* in 1959 when Sally Archbutt and later Hettie Loman were appointed to the staff. They had the broad interest of Laban himself in movement altogether, not only as manifested in dance. Very interested in Ellinor's approach to Gymnastics, in the filming of her work, they encouraged her to continue teaching in spite of her heavy work-load as Principal. Through their work and friendship, Ellinor gradually became deeply involved in assisting the advancement of many aspects of *Laban* work, and 'Laban' people.

At *Nonington* she supported the work of the Dance Department on both the educational and the artistic side from the point of view of time allocation, finance, studio, theatre and library resources. Also in the appointment of staff, not only to the Dance Department but also in Music, Drama, Art and Philosophy. She developed an interest in Laban movement notation and in the 1960s gave support and advice to Valerie Preston-Dunlop in relation to her development of *Beechmont Movement Centre* at Sevenoaks. She enabled Sally to have leave to study *Kinetography* with Albrecht Knust at the *Folkwangschule* in Essen-Werden. The 1973 Biennial Conference of the *International Council of Kinetography Laban* was held at *Nonington*.

Both Lisa Ullmann and Albrecht Knust developed firm friendships with Ellinor. Ellinor became a member of *ICKL*, acted as Chair of Technical discussions at several *ICKL* Conferences, and acted in an advisory capacity in relation to the formulation of the Constitution.

When Lisa and Ellinor had both retired as Principals, Lisa needed



someone to help her with sorting and cataloguing *Laban's Archive*; it was suggested that she should approach Ellinor. They worked together on the *Archive* until Lisa's death in 1985, and after this Ellinor continued for ten years until the work was completed and then became responsible for Lisa's own *Archive*. Both of these are housed in *The National Resource Centre for Dance* in the *University of Surrey* at Guildford.

After Lisa's death, Ellinor (and Athalie Knowles) were responsible for the setting up of the *Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund*. Ellinor served for many years on the *LUTSF* Executive Committee, then as an advisor and Patron. She was also a Patron and member of the *Laban Guild*.

Ellinor was an artist as evidenced in her own photographic work. She photographed and filmed much of Hettie Loman's professional choreographic work and latterly helped Sally with the *Hettie Loman Archive*.

She was a Patron and supporter of many organisations: - the *World Wildlife Fund*, *National Trust*, *Royal Horticultural Society*, *Redwings Horse Sanctuary*, *RSPCA*, *Royal Lifeboat Institution*, *Tollers' Design Centre*, *Croham Hurst School*, *Centre for Dance and Related Arts* and the *Laban Guild*.

Ellinor's last outing was a visit to the new *LABAN* in Deptford, (she was not enamoured of its design or ambience).

*(The Editor is indebted to Sally Archbutt for the detailed background to this tribute to Ellinor Hinks. A Memorial Thanksgiving Service will be held on Saturday June 12th at 12.30pm in the Croydon Parish Church, Church Street, followed by refreshments and reminiscences in the Church Hall).*

## book review

### *Movement and Dance in Early Childhood*

Mollie Davies

Sage (2003), 240pp, £18.99

When I was a naïve student teacher, looking at a time-table for seven year olds, I blanched at the sight of 30 minutes PE (*Physical Education*) every day of the week. I asked the class teacher for help. A whistle was thrust into my hand and I was told to, "Run them round the yard three times, that gets rid of their energy".

I had a lot to learn. The idea of the mind-body separation was