



Nina Schaffer

1933 -2022

*I'm 46 years old and I still remember how passionate, caring and kind Nina was... She loved her role and her pupils, and you felt it. She inspired me, she challenged me and made me believe in myself. I remember going to her house to celebrate finishing A Levels with lots of other pupils. She opened her home and her heart to us. Teachers like Nina do not come along often, but when they do they make a lifelong impact. What a very sad loss. Never forgotten. **Victoria (class of 1994)***

*I have wonderful memories... She was so passionate about her subject and always so engaging and cheerful. She was so pleased to hear of my continued involvement with the school and wanted to hear all my news. She hadn't changed when I met up with her recently - still so vibrant and intellectually curious, such a wonderful role model for us all. **Amanda (class of 1982)***

*I have lovely fond memories of my Geography lessons with Mrs Schaffer. I left school 30 years ago and the memories of her kind nature are still with me. More recently, I used to sit by her at synagogue where we'd catch up with a little chat. My thoughts are with her family at this sad time. **Nicole (class of 1992)***

*I am so very sorry to hear the sad news about Mrs Schaffer. Her energy and effervescence are a big part of my memories of school. I remember one particular occasion when we were away on a Geography field trip. The day had been long and we were all tired and starting to flag, backpacks feeling heavier and heavier every step. I remember Mrs Schaffer fixing us with her direct, twinkling expression and saying, 'Girls, my motto is - keep walking!' I've thought of that moment so many times over the years, and when I'm having a tough time in my life and need a boost, I can still picture her saying it, clear as day. Keep walking! It always helps. **Beatrix (class of 1991)***

*I was so delighted to connect with her last year on Zoom and I couldn't believe how well she looked. Her intellect was as sharp as ever despite her advanced years and she was, as always, engaging and fun. The Geography lessons I enjoyed with her in the 1970s were definitely one of my highlights of any week at school. **Caroline (class of 1981)***

*Nina Schaffer was one of my favourite teachers when I was at South Hampstead in the 1970s - always engaging and full of energy. A delight. **Judy (class of 1981)***

*It was wonderful that Mrs Schaffer was able to join us for our Class of 1981 Zoom reunion last year. **Jill (class of 1981)***

*I was really saddened to hear of the death of Mrs Schaffer. I left South Hampstead in 1994 having been through Juniors and Seniors and was lucky enough to have seen Mrs Schaffer at a reunion held a few years back. It was so lovely to see her and she really hadn't changed. She was vibrant and full of life, but above everything she remained the warm lady that had inspired us all those years before. I remember when asking us questions in class, she would perch her glasses on the end of her nose, looking over them and then take them off and would say "go for it girls!" I can still hear her! I also remember her telling us about a field trip she went on in the summer of 1976 (the year I was born) - it was one of the hottest summers on record and she told us with humour how they all had to take off their shirts and walk through the fields in their bras! She (and we) all thought this was hysterical. She was such a fun teacher, always with a twinkle in her eye - I loved her lessons! I hope that in their time of immense sadness, her family may take some comfort in the stories of her old students, and the knowledge that she is remembered so fondly by so many of us. Wishing them long life. **Jo (class of 1994)***

*Nina was such an engaging and gifted teacher and so personable. I looked forward to her lessons unequivocally. I also admired how she clacked confidently along the corridors in her sling-back shoes (we could hear her coming from a long way off while waiting for our lesson at our desks in room 24/25). She cut a fabulous figure in her vivid print dresses and indomitable bouffant hair do. There were only three of us doing Geography in my year. How lucky we were to have her (and Miss Smith) to open our minds and really get to know us as students. I felt very much 'seen' by her. When we met again at the reunion 3 or 4 years ago, our class of '79 was happily reunited. I talked about a few things with Nina, including, as you do, relationships – and how so much of what the world tells us is important in life doesn't actually matter. She said that being clever and successful is much less important than being a good person and that she felt lucky to have found a good person to share her life with. I couldn't agree more. **Naomi (class of 1979)***

*Mrs Schaffer was an inspiring teacher, a warm and motherly person, and always made us strive for the best. There were only three of us doing Geography A Level in my year, so we had a very intimate and warm relationship with her. She made each of us feel important and that she cared about our futures. So sorry to hear she's gone, but so grateful to have had her amazing, inspirational teaching. **Sarah (class of 1980)***

*Mrs Schaffer was the most wonderful, kind human being and a fabulous teacher. She really touched my heart and I have only the fondest memories of her. Condolences to her family. **Rachel (class of 1993)***

*Together with Mrs Lee (Lesley), Mrs Schaffer inspired me to take Geography A Level. She appeared to have a relaxed method of teaching, but nevertheless expected every student to attend fully in lessons and certainly encouraged us to go and find out more - all in the days before the internet or Google, of course. I will always remember her as a statuesque and elegant lady, softly spoken but with a deep and passionate commitment to her subject. **Alison (class of 1973)***

*She was so vibrant, inspiring, friendly and enthusiastic - all the girls loved her. She was particularly encouraging with the work she did for the Jewish assembly to the Jewish community at the school. We will all miss her. **Tanya (class of 1988)***

*It was so lovely to see Mrs Schaffer at the Zoom alumnae event last May. She was as vibrant and warm as ever. She taught me Geography in the 1970s and was a lively, inspiring teacher. She led wonderful Jewish assemblies in the library which I used to prefer to go to than the hall assemblies. She made learning and school fun. **Sarah (class of 1981)***

*So sorry to hear of the news of Mrs Schaffer. She has had an enduring impact on my life and my love of long-distance walking and map reading. I have such clear memories of her teaching of Geography, and in particular map reading in the mid 1970s at South Hampstead. I have a very distinct memory of an occasion, probably in June 1975, when we were pouring over maps, calculating distances and heights, when the weather changed. In an instant, there was a change from a warm sunny day, to hail thundering out of the sky. Mrs Schaffer went to the window and we all gawped in silence watching the storm until it passed and then all returned to our map reading. Every time I go to my map cupboard pictured to pull out a map and to carry on with my walk around coastal Britain, this memory of her comes instantly back. Great teachers have a significant impact on their pupils. **Lisa (class of 1978)***

*Mrs Schaffer and Mrs Baker both made my time at South Hampstead wonderful. Much love for both these wonderful women. **Joyti (class of 1987)***

*There has been a huge outpouring of grief on my ex-South Hampstead Facebook and WhatsApp group. Mrs Schaffer was really loved. She was the reason that I did Geography GCSE. She was a truly inspiring teacher, and a warm and loving human being. **Toni (class of 1994)***

*Mrs Schaffer taught me A Level Geography in 1974 – 6. There were only four pupils in our class who were taking Human Geography (the other class was doing a different syllabus and was a much larger group). My abiding memory is when Mrs Schaffer took us on a 'field trip' one day. As we were such a small group, we went in her car - a mini, I seem to remember (though I may be wrong). We drove up the M1 and as we went, Mrs Schaffer enthusiastically waved her arms pointing out all the geographical features we passed, both human and physical. At times, it seemed like she was pointing out things on both sides of the road, with no hands on the wheel, though I'm sure that wasn't the case! I enjoyed the course a great deal and, in large part, that was due to Mrs Schaffer's passion for the subject, and her enthusiasm and dedication to her students. We all did well and two of the group went on to study Geography at university, which seems like a great legacy. I occasionally saw Mrs Schaffer at Jewish events and she always greeted me with warmth and friendliness. **Nicky (class of 1976)***

I am so sorry to hear of the death of Nina Schaffer. Mrs Schaffer was my Geography teacher for several years and she was a brilliant teacher. She was also a lovely, kind and inspirational person. I will always remember her so fondly. One of her favourite phrases was "Go for it girls, just go for it" and I think of her practically every week when I am facing a difficult decision or about to deal with a challenging meeting or court hearing (I am a barrister) - she really encouraged all of us to try, to take the plunge and not to be scared to fail – and I really do try and "go for it" as often as I can. It was so lovely to see her a few

years ago at a school reunion and I am so pleased I got to see her and tell her how important she was to me. Please do pass on my deepest sympathies to her family, she was a wonderful teacher and we will all miss her so. **Iona (class of 1994)**

It was so lovely to see Mrs Schaffer at the online reunion still with all the infectious enthusiasm I remember from her lessons, and I am very sorry to hear we have lost her. She helped spark my lifelong interest in geology and was always so kind. May her memory be a blessing. **Lucy (class of 1981)**

I was Head of Geography at South Hampstead from 1968 to 1973 and loved working with Nina. We shared many opinions and were both passionate about the importance of Geography in education. A memorable time was the Devon field course when she brought her children too, which livened up the experience and showed her loyalty and dedication. We were still in touch right up to pre-Covid days, when our lunch meetings were inevitably curtailed. Nina had a rich and individual character which I loved. The world has been a better place with Nina and I feel privileged to have known her and to count her as a friend. **Lesley Lee (former colleague)**

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I remember Mrs Schaffer as one of my absolute favourite teachers. She was so charismatic and funny, and taught with a passion both for the subject and her work. When I met up with her in later life, and did a sponsored bike ride, she sent me a glorious and hugely touching "hello" video message wishing me luck for the long ride, and reminding me, with her characteristic humour, that I still owed her homework from 1980! **Belinda**

How sad to hear of Nina's passing, Nina accompanied me on some of the Art Trips to Italy in the 1990s. She was a great companion and a real support both to myself and the girls who she cared deeply for. Sensitive to the needs of an Art trip but always willing to share her knowledge and her expertise, for example on the geography of the Amalfi Coast and Naples area when we visited Pompeii and Herculaneum. I have the fondest memories of Nina on this trip. We all loved Nina. **Martyn Bivand, former Head of Art**

When I arrived at South Hampstead High School, I was a young teacher only one year out of college. Nina, along with my Head of Department, Catherine Mulgan, gave me some amazing guidance; I felt she always looked out for the younger staff. She had an infectious enthusiasm and always had the ability to turn a difficult situation into something positive - she would accompany her words with a smile or cheerful comment that was reflected back by the recipient of her words. Observing her chatting to the girls around the school, one couldn't fail to see their admiration and affection for her. After I left South Hampstead High School, I continued to bump into Nina on various occasions and she continued to give me sound advice. She guided without ever being judgmental or patronising. I feel so fortunate to have known and worked with such a kind and generous lady. May her memory be a blessing. **Nicola Garcia (aka Miss Musikant), former History teacher**