



A TRIBUTE TO DR JACKIE LUKES

This tribute was written following her funeral which took place on 21st October 2026

Yesterday family, friends and former colleagues gathered together to say goodbye and pay tribute to Jackie Lukes at a service conducted by Sarita from the synagogue community Jackie attended for many years and included tributes from her family, and longtime neighbours and friends Ella and Sheila that offered different glimpses of a life that meant so much to so many.

Jackie was a remarkable woman whose commitment to community left a lasting mark in her adopted home of Hull. Fiercely independent and sharp-minded, she had a strong sense of justice, a lively intellect and a determination to make a difference wherever she could.

Jackie, a retired academic, taught for many years in the Sociology Department at the University of Hull. She tutored many students from overseas, helping them settle into their studies and make the most of their time in Hull. This commitment to inclusion also extended to Jackie finding ways to provide accessible tuition for women whose cultural circumstances did not allow them to attend lectures alongside men.

Her interest in society, equality and the way people lived together extended well beyond the university. She also helped establish a Latin programme for children from state schools, where the subject was not readily available, opening up opportunities to experience a subject and qualification that might otherwise have been beyond their reach.

A longstanding member of Hull Reform Synagogue, Jackie's Jewish identity and her commitment to building bridges between people were reflected in her contribution to the wider community. One of Jackie's significant achievements was her crucial role in the founding and developing of HERI — Hull and East Riding Interfaith. Working alongside RE Advisers and members of SACRE, she helped establish an initiative at a time when questions about diversity, racial hostility and community relations within newly arrived ethnic populations were becoming increasingly important in the local area. This was typical of Jackie: she recognised a need and was prepared to do something practical to address it. Jackie understood that interfaith work had to be about more than words and needed to create genuine opportunities for people from different backgrounds to meet, share experiences and develop mutual respect. She was determined that HERI should be a place where people from different backgrounds were not simply welcomed but actively encouraged to participate and lead, demonstrating her belief that leadership should reflect the diversity of the communities it served. Meetings were held at the Guildhall, providing a neutral civic space where everyone could feel welcome. As HERI's secretary, she developed the meetings, brought a wide range of speakers to its events and helped secure grants to support its work. Jackie's dedication was perhaps never clearer than when she drove

overnight to Cambridge to submit a grant application for HERI! She was determined to give the group every chance of success and was willing to go to considerable lengths to make things happen.

Yet Jackie's life was about much more than her professional and community commitments. She had a great love of art and was a talented artist herself. Wherever she went, she could often be found sketching, capturing the people, places and atmosphere around her. Her sketches were a personal record of the world as she saw it, reflecting her sharp eye, curiosity and appreciation of detail.

Her love of connecting with people also found expression in her postcards. Wherever in the world her travels took her, friends and family could expect a postcard crammed with information, observations and news. These were never merely brief greetings; they were little windows into her experiences, generously shared with those she cared about. Jackie was also a wonderful gift giver, someone who and clearly enjoyed finding something special for others.

These personal qualities — her independence, intellect, creativity, generosity, sense of humour and interest in people — were part of what made Jackie so distinctive and she brought that same determination and individuality to everything she cared about.

Jackie's legacy lives on in the students whose horizons she helped broaden, the people she brought together through interfaith work, the voices she encouraged to be heard, the newcomers she welcomed, and the relationships she helped build across communities. Her life demonstrated a belief that education, cultural understanding and human connection could make society fairer and more welcoming.

We remember Jackie with gratitude and affection: as a committed champion of equality and interfaith harmony but also for her individuality, her creativity, her friendship and the many ways she enriched the lives of those around her.

