



## Dedicated follower of The Kinks

*The Clissold Arms pub on Fortis Green is designated one of only 14 Pubs in Time in Britain by the Campaign for Real Ale, thanks to its historic connection with Ray and Dave Davies from The Kinks. Here Sippy Azizollah remembers her own encounters with the 1960s band.*



**At the tender age of 13, I first saw The Kinks on *Ready Steady Go*. I fell madly in love with Dave and Ray Davies.**

I bought all the band's singles, LPs and EPs as they were released. In my bedroom at my parents' house in Cockfosters, with my old tennis racquet for a guitar and my reel-to-reel tape recorder as an amplifier, I imagined I could play as brilliantly as Dave.

All my school books were plastered with scribbles of 'Sip luvs Dave' and 'Kinkettes Rule'. Every word that started with the letter C, I'd replace with a K. I was Completely and utterly Kinks Krazy. I'd have given anything to see them in concert.

Two years later, my friend Jo told me that Dave Davies lived just down the road and, if we could think of a good excuse, she'd take me to meet him. We bought a sponge and bucket, and knocked on his door supposedly to wash his car. My hero opened the door and my knees turned to jelly. I was speechless.

Jo asked him if he'd like his car washed. With a wry smile



1965: Dave with my schoolfriend Yvonne Lawrence

he pointed to a new, navy blue E-type Jaguar no more than two feet away from us. He thanked us for asking and said maybe another day.

While I was still trying to locate my voice Jo told him I was a songwriter. He asked me to bring a demo tape and he'd listen to it and tell us what he thought. A week later, having given Dave a cassette of three of my compositions, we returned. He said they were good and that if I was serious about my songs, I should never give up, no matter how many rejections I received.

I clung to those words

through my teens and twenties and, on the strength of them, carved out a successful career as a singer/songwriter, session singer and performer.

In 1993 I moved to a disabled-friendly flat in East Finchley due to ill health, and became a regular at the Five Bells pub across the road. Who did I spy sitting no more than three feet away from me in the pub? You guessed it, Dave, the guy who'd encouraged me all those years ago, was once more just down the road.

I've yet to meet Ray but who knows, maybe I'll meet him one day too, just down the road.

## Keeping memories alive

**Many people must have memories of the Finchley and Friern Barnet area in times past and the Finchley Society is keen to capture them for posterity.**

What was your life like in Finchley between the 1920s and 1970s, your schools, your shops, your workplace and homes?

The Finchley Society's history group is appealing for anyone with memories to get in touch so that they can be permanently recorded for the society's archives.

Spokesman Robert Winton said they would welcome any recollections that add to the picture of Finchley as it was.

He said: "Maybe people ran a shop or worked in one of the local industries, or on the local trams and trolleybuses. It could be anything to do with Finchley life up to the 1970s. We are very keen that we don't lose these

precious memories."

Anyone who can help would have their memories recorded on audio tape. Photographs, postcards and historical documents would also be welcome.

The Finchley Society has already published the popular book *Finchley Remembered* drawing on its archives. Any new material could potentially be used for a future publication.

If you would like to record your memories for posterity, please contact Robert on 020 8883 2633.

The society would also welcome new members on to its committee to help with projects of historical or local interest.

## A very Welsh singer

By Daphne Chamberlain

**"I'll walk beside you", sang this beautiful voice, and in the register office near Swansea there was hardly a dry eye. We were listening to the recorded voice of David Hughes, 1950s pop star turned opera singer, but this wasn't a fan club convention. It was a family wedding, and across the aisle was his sister, Mary, who keeps his memory alive.**

As a boy of 18, David Hughes had sung that same song at Mary's wedding, and now his voice was accompanying her granddaughter, Bethan, as she prepared to make her vows.

How did I, with no Welsh connections, come to be there? Bethan was marrying my nephew, Geoff. Coincidentally, David Hughes, often called "Mr Heart Throb", was christened Geoffrey Paddison, a Birmingham boy from a very Welsh, music-loving family. Whether working as a railway goods clerk or serving in the RAF, he just carried on singing, eventually studying at the Wigmore Hall and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

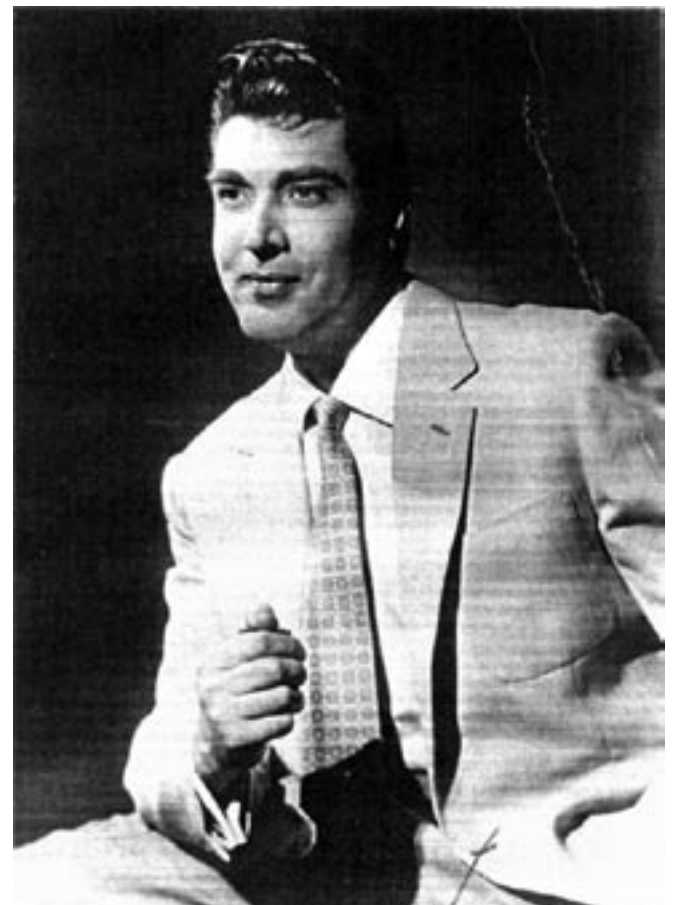
It was in 1951, when appearing on the radio programme, Henry Hall's Guest Night, that Geoffrey became David Hughes, his late father's first two names.

Then came a record contract, an enormous fan club, West End musical leads, and his own television show, "Make Mine Music". He appeared opposite Ginger Rogers, and topped variety bills which included Roy Castle and Morecambe and Wise.

### His kind of music

The first of several heart attacks gave him other priorities. Deciding to spend the rest of his life "singing the kind of music I always set out to", he became an opera singer, making his debut at Glyndebourne in 1964 with the young Pavarotti.

In 1972, David became ill while singing as Pinkerton in 'Madam Butterfly', at



David Hughes. Photo courtesy of Mary Wothers

the London Coliseum. Knowing that this time it was "the big one", he somehow sang through the final act. That night, Pinkerton's collapse over Butterfly's body at the end was all too real. David died the following day, at the age of 47.

Over 30 years after his death, the music of David Hughes is still available. It certainly helped to make one wedding day especially memorable. You can find out more on [www.davidhughesnor.co.uk](http://www.davidhughesnor.co.uk).

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