



Clissold Arms landlord George Karageorgis, left, with Ray Davies, centre, and Mick Avory of The Kinks.

## Thank you for the days, George

We are very sad to report that George Karageorgis, the popular owner of the Clissold Arms in Fortis Green, died suddenly on 7 January at the age of 57.

Born in Muswell Hill, George established the Clissold Arms as a popular family venue, fulfilling a boyhood dream of running his own restaurant in the heart of the community he loved so much.

The pub was already known as the place where The Kinks played their first and, years later, their last performance, but it was only when George took over in 2009 that their legacy was cemented. With help from fans, George established the Kinks Room, officially opened by Ray Davies and Mick Avory, which still attracts visitors from all over the world.

From this base George established the reputation of the Clissold Arms as a place for good food, a warm welcome and live entertainment. George proudly employed local people, particularly those who shared his passion of "doing what you love and feeling good about

it" and was pleased that The Clissold team were voted The Best Family Pub in London and the South East in 2014-15 and 2015-16 and were finalists for best pub in the UK.

### 'Fantastic boss'

Sonia Pereira, manager of the pub from when George took over, told *The Archer*: "He was a fantastic boss and host and was loved by all those who knew him. Some of his happiest times were on Sundays when he would welcome everyone, making sure they all had a good time, even dancing on the tables on occasion!"

With the news of his death, tributes for George poured in, including hundreds of comments on the Clissold Facebook page echoing the sentiments of Kinks guitarist Dave Davies, also born in Fortis Green, who tweeted: "My deepest sympathies to his family. Rest in Peace, Love Dave".

One customer said George was a "warm, kind and caring gentleman" while another said he "gave a masterclass in how to make a pub the centre of a community".

East Finchley local and *EastEnders* and *Coronation Street* actor Michelle Collins posted a photograph of herself with George taken on Christmas Day tweeting "Our wonderful @george\_clissold owner of @clissoldarms who died yesterday! With him for Xmas day, wonderful man!"

His funeral was held on 21 January after a procession past the Clissold on the way to New Southgate Cemetery. A memorial event will be arranged at the Clissold later in the year and a Virgin Money Giving page has been set up in George's memory for his favourite charities, Mind and The Harrington Centre.

## A relationship based on a lie

Jessica Holt had plenty of dramatic family history to draw on when it came to writing her first novel. Her mother was one of 13 children in a very poor family; she was in the Land Army in Wales during the war before travelling to Cairo where she met Jessica's father.

He was Jewish but claimed to be French Catholic during the war years. When he came to England he changed his name. As Jessica says: "Their whole relationship was based on a lie."

For the purposes of her thriller *The Man Who Changed His Name*, Jessica's dad becomes a spy working at the London telephone exchange. She has changed the names of everyone involved and imagined an exciting story around her parents.

"It's about my mum and dad but because that generation seemed to speak very little about what happened to them in the



New release: Jessica's book is available to buy on Amazon



Signed copy: Jessica, right, with a fan at the Black Gull

war I have made a lot up. The only parts that are true are the bits about me," says Jessica, of

Chamberlain Road, N2.

The author found that ideas came to her easily after her years as an English and drama teacher at Fortismere School. Writing was never a chore and an old friend acted as her creative writing buddy, meaning they could share their latest chapters and spur each other on.

Jessica launched her book in a special evening at the Black Gull Bookshop in the High Road. It features a cover based on a design by local artist John Featherstone.



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