



# Known for her kindness: Majjo Ashraf, 1937 - 2025

By Raphael Abedi

**Majjo Ashraf, founder of the long-standing Majjo's Foods on Fortis Green, N2, passed away in her home on the morning of Friday 14 November. Majjo was a keystone of an expansive yet close family, and she is survived by her many siblings, cousins, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and a multitude of friends.**



Majjo Ashraf

Majjo moved to London from Pakistan in 1964 with her sons Imran and Shezad, later giving birth to her daughter Mariam in the UK. Living in various places around Finchley and Muswell Hill, she quickly became committed to sharing her love throughout the local community.

In aid of this, she opened East Finchley's popular Majjo's Foods in 1984, bringing fresh, home-cooked South Asian meals to her family and the neighbourhood from her always busy kitchen. She served everyone who came to her shop with her signature cheer, comple-

menting her samosas, thalis and lassi with her unforgettable joy.

The happiness she brought to all of those around her fuelled her daily hard work, and this drive continued throughout her life. Even after retiring from her management of Majjo's Foods, she would always use her time to help and care for those close to her, cooking meals daily for friends and family.

Despite giving such support to all of these people, Majjo held a fierce independence throughout. She could be found running errands and visiting friends almost daily, seemingly with no limit to her energy. Her frequency of hosting dinner parties was unparalleled, even putting the social lives of her teenage grandchildren to shame.

Majjo was a woman who greatly impacted all the lives she touched with such love, kindness and generosity. Her presence brought comfort, joy and strength to everyone who knew her, and she will be remembered as a truly lovely and remarkable woman.

She has given her surviving family and friends an example upon which to model themselves and provides inspiration to all that anything is achievable if you do so with love and hard work. She will be missed terribly.

## Cllr John Marshall

**Tributes have been paid to former Garden Suburb Ward councillor John Marhsall, who died on Monday 3 November. Mr Marshall represented the ward from 1998 to 2022 and held the position of Mayor of Barnet in 2008-2009.**

He had previously been Member of the European Parliament for London North from 1979 to 1989 and represented Hendon South as a Member of Parliament from 1987 to 1997.

Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Danny Rich, said: "John was a distinguished public servant whom I met on being elected. Although we came from different political parties, his courtesy and capacity to make a new councillor

feel at home was a reflection of his inherent decency and fine humanity."

Barnet Council Leader, Cllr Barry Rawlings, added: "John Marshall's life was one of service, dedication, and commitment to the people of Barnet. His work touched every level of public life, from Europe to Westminster to our local council and he leaves a legacy that will long be remembered."



Dr Veronica Hearn

**Dr Veronica ('Von') Hearn, a long-time resident of Leopold Road, N2, passed away peacefully at Whittington Hospital on 28 October 2025, aged 86.**

Born in Dundalk, Ireland, she settled in London after an early academic journey that took her across Europe and the United States, studying and working in Munich, Grenoble, and Ithaca, New York, and earning three degrees along the way. A highly regarded scientist in the field of medical mycology,

# Hygiene scientist and arts champion: Dr Veronica Hearn

Von spent over three decades researching how the human immune system recognises fungal infections. Her work at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and later with the Public Health Laboratory Service in Leeds contributed to tests still used in hospitals today.

But to her East Finchley neighbours, she was simply Von, a lively, cultured friend and neighbour with a sharp mind, a dry wit and a lifelong love of the arts. She was a long-standing member of the National Trust, reflecting her enduring interest in history, gardens, and the preservation of Britain's natural and cultural heritage. She was also an active member of The Georgian Group, the national charity for the preservation of Georgian architecture and heritage, and a passionate

music lover, a regular at Covent Garden and the Proms.

For many years she was a loyal supporter and regular attendee of the Phoenix Cinema, where she relished independent film, lively post-screening debates, and the familiar comfort of her local community.

A passionate traveller and great conversationalist, with a fondness for cats, she filled her home with books, film posters, art and memories from her many journeys. She was also a devoted aunt to her nieces, nephews and grand-nieces and nephews, all of whom remember her warmth and curiosity.

Predeceased by her partner Roy Salter, and by her sisters Mona and Marie and brother Jim, she leaves behind a legacy of kindness, intelligence and cultural engagement that made her a true East Finchley original.

# Bill Westgate, 1960-2025

By Tristan Westgate

**With a profound sense of loss, the Westgate family announces the unexpected passing of Bill Westgate on 29 September. Bill was a truly magnetic personality and the loss of his pull has left many untethered.**

Born in Vancouver in 1960, the youngest of four, Bill's warm and sociable nature was evident from his earliest days. Graduating high school in 1978, he spent a year logging, a humbling experience that shaped him deeply.

Following graduation, Bill moved to Paris where he began his life-long love affair with European life and culture. He completed an MA at the Sorbonne before settling in the UK, his adopted home of 40 years, 25 of those in Church Vale, East Finchley.

His family meant everything to Bill, and Bill everything to his family. He and his wife Joanne had celebrated their 35-year wedding anniversary just two weeks before his passing. Together they raised three bright, successful children of whom Bill was immeasurably proud. He showed them a wonderful, generous life, with spectacular holidays around the world.

After 20 fruitful years working in finance, in 2005, Bill was ready for a new challenge and transitioned into teaching economics at Woodhouse College, North Finchley. Such an impact he had on his students that many stayed in contact, seeking his wise counsel until his final days. Always an intrepid traveller, Bill then took his love for

teaching to Dhaka, Bangladesh, for several years.

Eventually he and Joanne relocated to south Devon. His final years were some of his happiest. Never one for boredom, Bill filled his days with constant visits, long spirited phone calls, building their beautiful home, and spending time with his cherished Joanne.

Bill truly lived every one of his 65-years to the fullest. He leaves behind no regrets (except perhaps a bit more time to enjoy it all). He will be missed, he will be adored, and he will never leave us.



Bill Westgate

**St Mary's Catholic Church  
279 High Road N2 8HG**



**CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

*Christmas Eve*

Children's Mass 6 pm  
Mass for Midnight: 10 pm

*Christmas Day*

Dawn Mass 8:30 am  
Christmas Day Mass at 11 am