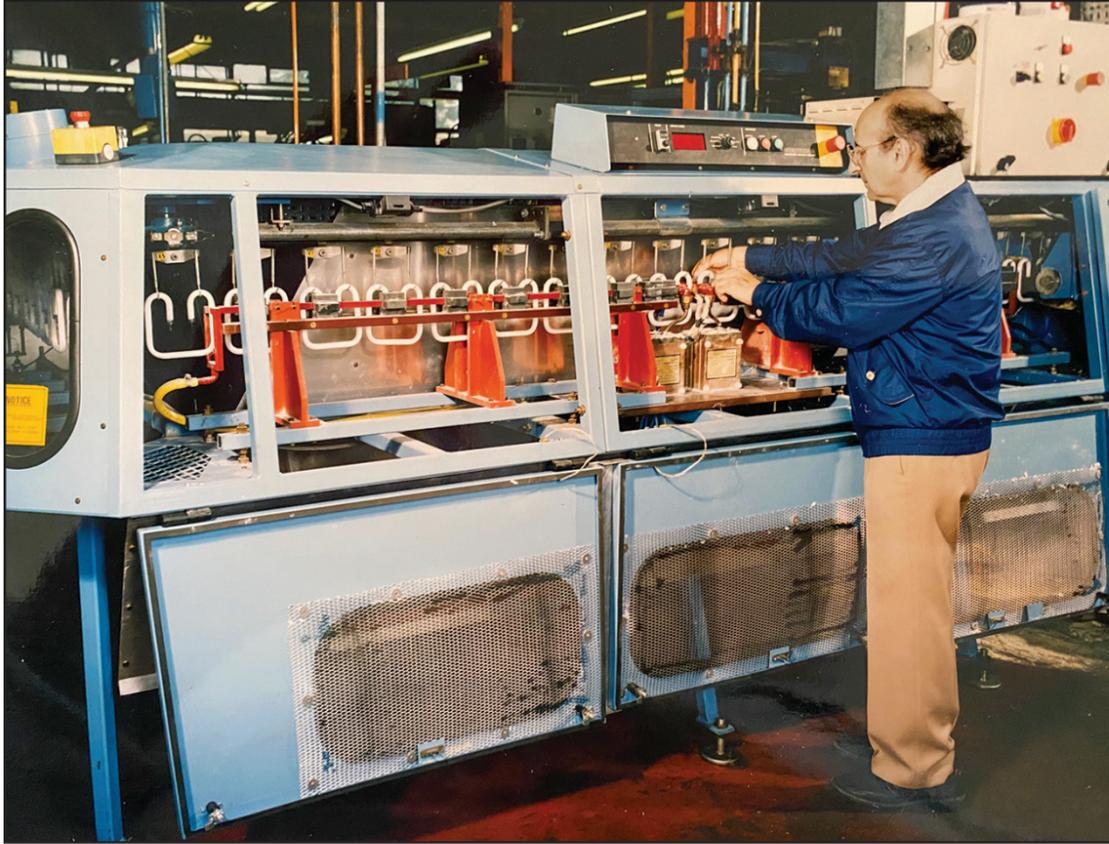




Inventor of a lighting revolution

By Geoffrey Davies

In what is surely the definition of a lightbulb moment, Basil Antonis woke up at 4am with the idea for a new form of fluorescent lighting that was rapidly recognised as a revolution in its field.



Tube line: Basil Antonis stands at a machine to test and manufacture his revolutionary 2D lightbulb

Basil shared his idea with a colleague at Thorn Lighting in Enfield and together they invented the 2D lightbulb, named from the shape of its lighting tubes.

Being flat and consuming less energy than traditional bulbs, it became a popular

choice for fitting in offices or homes where space was limited and is credited with reducing electricity costs for millions of people worldwide.

His daughter Marianne remembered that, at dinner after a day's work, her father could seem very preoccupied and that it was

the early hours of the morning when the idea the idea for the lightbulb came to him. "But Basil, the long-time resident of Fortis Green Avenue who died in December, never really felt appreciated for his co-invention that was put into production in 1980.

Although he was recognised as the inventor on the patent, he felt he should have been given some financial recognition," says Marianne. "He was a very generous man, and he would have passed the money onto others."

He was a local resident for many years, having moved to Fortis Green Avenue with his wife and two daughters in 1960. Basil was politically active in the anti-apartheid movement in the UK, with several of his relatives in Johannesburg being imprisoned. He was involved with The Movement for a Democracy of Content, a revolutionary group that believed technology made human drudgery unnecessary.

Born in South Africa, Basil Antonis came to London in 1949 and studied physics and maths at London University before working for Thorn Lighting. The company's patent for the 2D lightbulb was granted in March 1980 and production began in the UK but moved to Hungary and later China.

Even at the age of 88 he was still politically active, being part of the Put it to the People campaign in 2019, calling for a second referendum on Brexit. "At work he was very much involved with his colleagues

and defending their rights," says Marianne. Retiring in 1993, he was for several years a consultant to what was then General Electric until 2000 when he devoted himself to caring for his wife, who died in 2019. When he left, colleagues presented him with a mounted 2D bulb, which Marianne admits nearly got thrown in a skip, during house clearance.

"I have never met anyone as modest and unmaterialistic as Basil," says Marianne's husband, the painter Anthony Parké-Antonis. Although a non-believer, Basil was buried at the Jewish Cemetery in Waltham Abbey, along with his corduroy flat cap.



Basil Antonis's daughter Marianne with the gift presented to her father on his retirement. Photo Geoffrey Davies

Drop in for a cuppa chai

An East Finchley business is throwing open its doors for a community event it's calling 'Chai, Chat and Curtains'.



Open door: Pristine is ready to welcome customers

Pristine, in the High Road, N2, is known for its dry-cleaning services but it also offers made-to-measure curtains and blinds, upholstery and wooden shutters, plus fabrics and linings. Owners Krishna and Hema Pattani say they are grateful for years of support from the

community in East Finchley and surrounding areas and the drop-in event is their way of saying thank you face to face.

Customers are welcome to pop in for a cup of chai and a relaxed chat on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 March between 9am and 6pm.

Careers fair opens doors

Bishop Douglass School in Hamilton Road, N2, hosted its annual Future Pathways Evening last month, welcoming hundreds of students from across the borough to what has become one of the largest careers fairs in Barnet.



The Bishop Douglass careers fair

With more than 65 exhibitors, representing 20 universities and 45 different industries, the event provided students with an opportunity to explore a wide range of academic and professional pathways.

The evening reflects Bishop Douglass' commitment to ensuring that every student is equipped with the knowledge, confidence and ambition to pursue their chosen path. Headteacher Michelle Henderson said: "Future Pathways Evening is about opening doors. We believe every young person has unique gifts and talents and it is our responsibility to help them recognise and develop these."

For further information about the careers fair or the opportunities available at Bishop Douglass, email the school office at schooladmin@bishopdouglass.barnet.sch.uk or follow Bishop Douglass on Instagram @bdfinchley.

Dearest uncle: Gholam Muhith

Gholam Muhith passed away on 29 January peacefully in bed at his home in Leslie Road, N2. He was 91 and had lived in the same house since 1969.

Originally from Bangladesh, he was a curious, worldly, independent, very knowledgeable and well-informed person. He travelled throughout Europe, the US, Asia and South America and also obtained a pilot's licence at an early age.

In 2002 he mourned the loss of his partner and love of his life Irena Friedman, who also passed away in their home in Leslie Road. He had a younger brother who is currently living in Bangladesh, the father of his niece who was with him in his final hours.

His nephew currently lives in Virginia, USA, with his family including a four-month-old son. Gholam spoke to them via video call which gave him immense joy. While he didn't have any children, he was very caring and generous towards



Independent: Gholam Muhith his siblings and their children. He will be missed as their dearest uncle and not forgotten. An Islamic prayer, Janazah, was held on Wednesday 4 February at North Finchley Mosque and his resting place is in Mill Hill Cemetery.