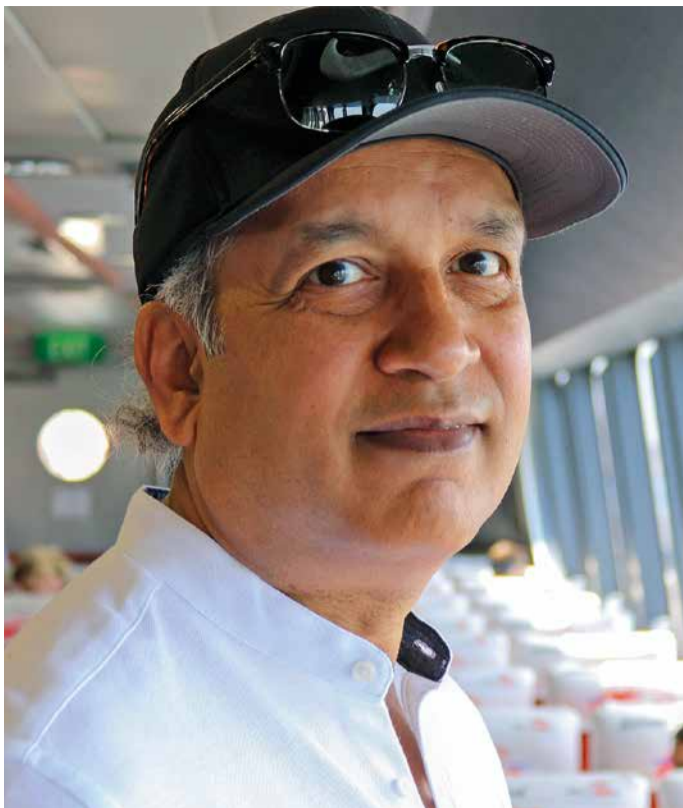


# Arif Hussein 1957-2021



Arif Hussein, Summer 2019

Where do you begin? Empathy, generosity, warmth, utter devotion to our two children, and eternal love as a husband. 'Can do' attitude, popular chef and host, first and last on the dance floor, charming smile.

Multi-talented actor, director, screen writer/film producer. Elegant, handsome, a true gentleman. The witty raconteur, unconditional good deeds for others.

Arif made people feel special. So many have told me that Arif was their best friend. He was my best friend, and my husband for 24 years, by my side for 29 years. His achievements could fill a book, but here is a brief snapshot.

Arif was born in Singapore but young Arif, his mother and his siblings were caught in border fighting near their home-town of Lahore and placed in Shalamar Gardens refugee camp for six months in 1965. The family were reunited with his father in April 1969 in the UK when Arif was 11.

These early experiences of being displaced, fatherless and homeless never left Arif, and become a crucial part of his work in later life.

The expectation at his Wolverhampton school was that pupils would become locksmiths at 16 years. Arif gained academic qualifications and spent two years travelling the world. He attended Mountview Theatre School, and in 1984 founded the Alma Mater Theatre Company touring UK, Europe and USA for six years.

In 2001 Arif set up Kaos Films, a film production company based

at Pinewood Studios. 'Kaos' was a combination of the initials of my name, his name and the names of our children, Omar and Soraya.

Arif wanted to give new writers a chance and created the British Short Screenplay Competition described as "the best and the most prestigious screenplay competition in the world" by Sir Kenneth Branagh. It was the only screenplay competition that made the winning screenplay into a 35mm short film, and Arif won dozens of international film awards for those he produced.

Arif was particularly affected by news stories about refugees. He researched families who suffered a terrible fate in the Mediterranean where out of 500 refugees all but 10 drowned. Arif tracked down the survivors scattered across the world, met with them, and contacted Hollywood producers. He wanted to give the survivors a voice. This resulted in Arif being signed up as Executive Producer with Steven Spielberg and JJ Abrams on a joint feature film project to be produced by Paramount. We hope this film will be his legacy.

In October 1998 we moved to the Suburb and spent 23 happy years in Erskine Hill bringing up Omar and Soraya.

Arif quickly established himself as the hospitable and helpful neighbour. When our next door neighbour fell over in her house and was unable to open the door, Arif climbed in through a very small window and carried our neighbour safely to

her chair – despite being bitten by her two dachshunds.

Every Christmas, for years, Arif delivered a full Christmas dinner to a close friend's daughter whose parents were vegetarians, just so she could have her meat dishes. He wouldn't sit down to eat with us until he had delivered it to her.

In March 2020 when the first lockdown was announced, Arif delivered homemade pakoras to 25 HGS isolating households. And again in April, and May. Each time the list grew bigger. The May delivery coincided with Ramadan yet Arif still spent the day cooking and distributing food to others whilst fasting.

In October 2020 Arif and I sold our beloved Apple Tree Cottage and temporarily rented a house in Edmunds Walk, N2. Within days Arif had made firm friends with our new neighbours, cooking pakoras for them.

Tragically, Arif passed away from Covid-19 in January before we could choose our new home together.

KATHRYN WOLFE

*The family have set up a fund-raising site in Arif's name supporting the construction of a series of water wells in countries where they are desperately needed, something which was close to Arif's heart.*

[www.gofundme.com/f/the-arif-hussein-project](http://www.gofundme.com/f/the-arif-hussein-project)

*The full obituary is held in the HGS Heritage Virtual Museum, visit: [hgsra.uk/vm/arifhussein](http://hgsra.uk/vm/arifhussein).*

## Noah's Ark Children's Hospice

(continued from page 1)

more can still be done to support these children and their carers. The hospice needs funding to complete and fit out a hydrotherapy pool for these ill children to enjoy in the presence of their families and a professional staff member. It is humbling to think that these ill children are often unable to enjoy the simple pleasure of child's bath time as most domestic accommodation is not geared up to providing this for a child with acute physical needs. We are therefore fundraising towards the cost of a hydrotherapy pool at the Hospice to allow children, many physically disabled and in chronic pain, to enjoy the relieving and liberating benefits that hydrotherapy offers.

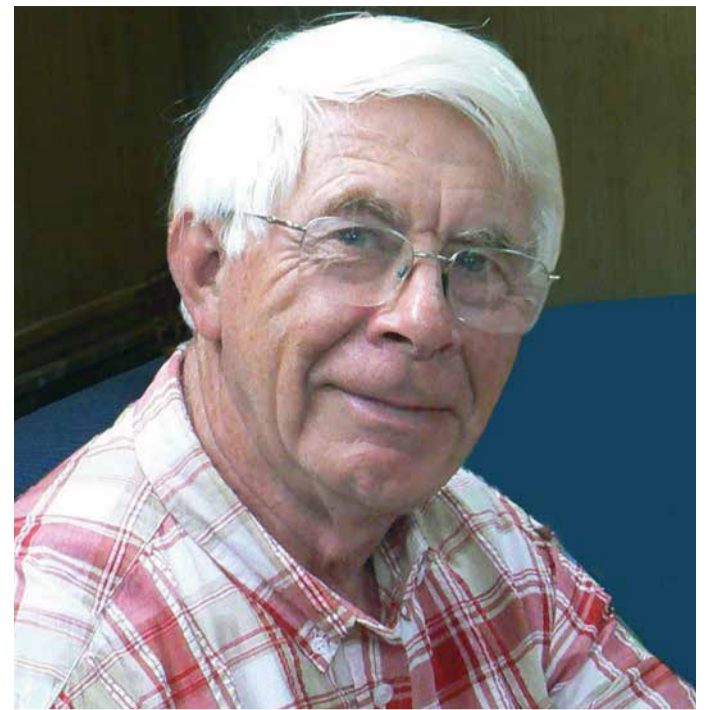
We are looking for support from the Suburb community to help fund the hydrotherapy pool which will cost around £50,000 to complete and equip.

Every donation made will be matched by the RA to a maximum of £10,000, meaning that at least £20,000 would be raised for the charity. Please give generously via [www.charityextra.com/hgsra](http://www.charityextra.com/hgsra).

You can give via credit or debit card. For those wishing to give money by CAF, bank transfer or other charitable trust funds, please click on the DONATE button which will offer you the chance of giving via 'Other Donation Methods' and someone from the Hospice team will ring you back to discuss. For those needing help please contact me on 8458 3883 or [chair@hgsra.uk](mailto:chair@hgsra.uk).

EMMA HOWARD

# John Mathias 1935 - 2021



When the universal reaction to news of someone's death is: 'he was such a lovely man', you know that man was someone very special. John Mathias was someone very special and, although he had been suffering from ill health for some time, it came as a shock that Covid-19 ended his life on 11th January.

A proud Welshman, John was born in Gorseinon, South West Wales. He studied at University College London and did his medical training at University College Hospital. His long career as an anaesthetist began at UCH, during which time he was called up for National Service. After UCH he moved on via the Whittington to St Thomas's Hospital, where his career ranged from Senior House Officer to Consultant Anaesthetist. He and Sonia, a nurse, met over coffee in the Casualty kitchen at UCH and were married in 1960. They lived in Mill Hill before moving to the Suburb in 1994; quickly putting down roots and making many friends. John loved sailing, cricket and travelling and was an accomplished water-colourist. He left the gardening to Sonia.

I first met John when I was out canvassing as a Lib Dem for Barnet Council. After knocking on his door with no reply, we were moving on when a silver-haired gentleman with a big smile came rushing out of his house after us saying he had a particular question that needed a particular answer if he was to vote for me! We met again when he and Sonia joined the Horticultural Society, later becoming joint membership secretaries. Even after retiring from Hort Soc, John helped keep the Hort Soc show on the road in so many ways.

John was Chair of Fellowship House from 2015-2020. He was a very practical man, who could fix anything for anyone and freely

gave his time, advice and loyalty to help friends and neighbours. He had a great sense of fun and will be sadly missed.

MARJORIE HARRIS

John was a great character with a marvellous sense of humour and always at the forefront of our events and shows – he was the best roadie when it came to the audio/visual system. He was a constant source of information and always willing to share his incredible knowledge and experience with a huge smile and never a negative thought or backward glance. We will miss him terribly and he will be a hard act to follow at our HGS Horticultural Society events. A real bloke and irreplaceable.

DAVID BROOME

I was really saddened to hear the news of John's death. I really didn't know very much about John or his earlier professional life until we approached him after strong recommendations from all sides in 2015 to step in

as Chair of Fellowship House. Although it was a no risk step for Fellowship, it was a surprising and courageous move for John to agree to be inserted at the top of an organisation he knew little about. Added to that, we were right in the middle of the expansion project.

On the Committee he was a beacon of calm and gentle humour. He skilfully kept everyone together especially when feelings ran a bit high, at times. John was never afraid to roll up his sleeves and he managed to master the labyrinthine mysteries of the audio visual system with the ease of a professional. People will remember his approach to everything – unflustered and self-effacing, his inability to speak ill of anyone and most of all, his great sense of humour. A good man who will be much missed by all.

ANDREW BOTTERILL

*The full obituary is held in the HGS Heritage Virtual Museum, visit: [hgsra.uk/vm/johnmathias](http://hgsra.uk/vm/johnmathias).*

## Lest We Forget... Holocaust Memorial Day

On 27 January 2021 candles were lit to commemorate the 76th Year of the liberation of Auschwitz. 'Be the light in the darkness' was the theme for the day which was organised by The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust of which His Royal Highness

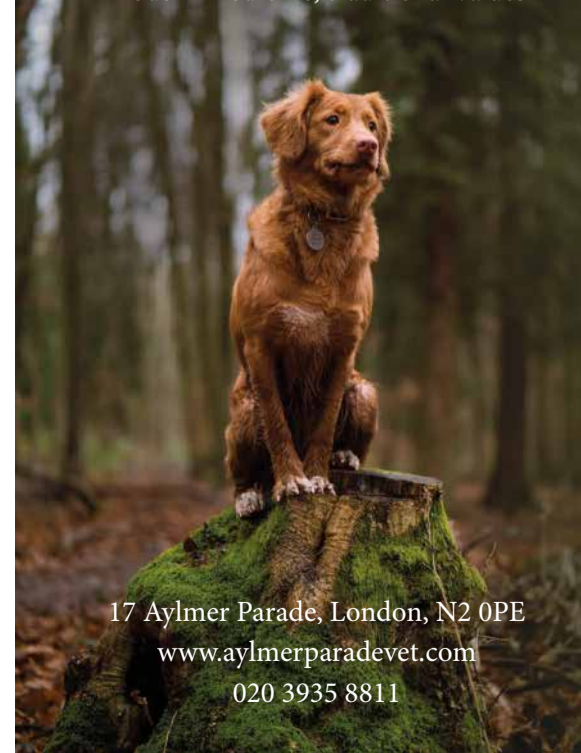
The Prince of Wales is a patron. Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27 January each year and is a time to remember the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution as well as the people killed in the genocides



in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. [www.hmd.org.uk/](http://www.hmd.org.uk/).

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