



## **Anahid Gorgodian, 28.07.1920 – 8.03.2017**

Anahid Gorgodian was born in Istanbul to Siranoush and Bedros Sarafian.

Her older brother Diran was a brilliant scholar who was sent at a young age to the Mchitarian school in Venice and Anahid sacrificed her own education in order to work to support her parents. In her spare time she wrote for Jamanak, the oldest Armenian daily newspaper in Istanbul.

In late September 1946, Diran, by then a mathematician studying in France, came to Manchester to sell an invention for printing patterns on textile, and with the proceeds, bought a ticket for her to join him in England. He enrolled her in a college to learn English so that she could eventually join him when he moved to America to pursue his career.

She got a job with Dunlop and did very well – she was a wizard with figures and they appreciated her knowledge of geography and four languages – so eventually when she decided to move to London, they relocated her to their office there.

She met her future husband, Dr Krikor Gorgodian, when she developed toothache and was advised to go to the Armenian dentist. Eventually she chose to stay in London with him. After their marriage, she ran his surgery while bringing up their three daughters, Anna, Sonia and Michèle, and they soon brought her parents over from Istanbul to their home in Kensington.

They became very involved in the London Armenian community and even hosted Sunday School for the community's children in their home. In 1962, her husband Krikor and a few other prominent London Armenians came together to organise the purchase of the first Armenian cultural centre in London, and a house was chosen two doors away from his own home and surgery. The Armenian House – Hai Doon - became Anahid's and Krikor's passion.

She formed the Armenian House Ladies' Committee, and as its chairman for several decades, organized fundraising banquets, concerts, exhibitions, coach trips to places of historical and cultural importance around the UK, and the tradition of First Thursday coffee mornings in the Armenian House. After her husband's death in 1980, she was asked to take his place as a Trustee of the Armenian House. She was

also on the executive committee of the former St Peter's Church Council and of the London Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU).

The Armenian community meant the world to her and she wanted nothing more than to serve it. She was loved and respected by her colleagues on all the committees she was part of for her kind, loving heart, her sharp mind and integrity, her dynamism and her total dedication. May she rest in peace.