

# VIRGINIA JAHN

## TRIBUTES



## **Rachel Alberti**

I am so grateful for Virginia's life, and for her being part of our Church fellowship. She was always so caring, encouraging, and interested in others. She was an example in her walk with Jesus, trusting in Him, and faithfully following him!

**Jesus:** I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of. **John 10:10 The Message, Bible**

## **Aussie & Joleen Austin** 😊

Both Joleen and I were sad to learn of the passing of Virginia recently. Virginia and Lois were some of the first to befriend, help, and pray for our family before and during our somewhat traumatic migration from Zimbabwe to the UK in the 1980's. I will always remember Virginia as a steadfast committed member of God's family with an unswerving faith which was an example to many who knew her, including me.

Safe at home with our Lord now, she will be missed, nonetheless. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family as they mourn her passing. An extra comforting hug for her daughter Lois, my commuter buddy on the Metropolitan line out of Northwood Hills for many years. Our sincere condolences to all the extended family.

## **Angie Brown**

Her name is written in the Lamb's book of ordinary, extraordinary persons He will own before the angels.

## **Linda Burrows**

My first recollection of Virginia is when she served refreshments to mums and toddlers at Tiddlywinks, forty years ago! I was not a churchgoer and I remember her kindness, especially when I did tentatively start attending Fairfield. I got to know her much better in her later years after I retired and was able to take her to medical appointments. She was always cheerful and good company, very interested in news of our family and I know she regularly prayed for us and many others. She had an incredibly good memory for every detail of whatever we talked about and was mentally very sharp and aware when we were out together, often more on the ball than me! She was a remarkable lady with a deep sustaining faith that brought her through much loss and tragedy in life and kept her smiling and thinking of others. I used to think "If I get to grow old, that's the sort of person I want to be- an encouragement and a blessing to others." She loved and knew her Bible and even very recently, when she was weak and failing, the offer to read some scripture to her brought visible joy to her face.. .. Dear Virginia, thank you for your company and loving support and in many ways for being a Christian role model for me. I am comforted in the knowledge that you are with your Saviour Jesus now and for you the suffering and the limitations are over. My heartfelt condolences go out to Rosemary, Lois and the rest of the family, may you be comforted in your loss.

## **Paul and Sue Carey**

In the 25 years we have known her, Virginia never failed to come across as a lady strong in her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Outliving not one, but several members of her immediate family by many years, and living a life of many challenges besides, her "keep on keeping on" attitude was remarkable.

Right up to the last time we saw her, Virginia was still asking after our own family with genuine interest - and that 'hallmark' smile!

We really thank God for her life of commitment and service, and rejoice that she is now released from all the agonies of old age to be with the Lord she loved.

She will be sorely missed at Fairfield.

## **Anne and Richard Carter**

Virginia was always so warm and interested in us and the family as Rachel and Phil were growing up. We remember her with affection and also admiration for her life of self-giving. She was a role model of a woman of faith. We remember Virginia with great thankfulness for her life and love for God and for people.

## **Debbie Crossan**

I have fond memories of Virginia as she was one of the first 'older' ladies that I met at NHEC when I started to attend the Sunday services some 30 years ago. She was very friendly and caring and always wanted to know how my children were doing (now grown up of course). The photo above is how I remember her - a lovely smiling face. I lost contact with her during the latter years of her life but always asked after her. I am glad that she is no longer suffering with old age and has gone to be with her Lord.

## **Ian and Susan Fitz-Gerald**

Our Appreciation and Memories take us back to 1967/68; we had just started in 'Membership' at Windsor Hall after our Wedding!

One Sunday we welcomed Virginia [known in those days as just *Mrs Jahn*] to the 'Breaking of Bread' - and this explained the arrival of the 'new' Family, including four lovely well-presented children. From then, Virginia continued as a faithful and busy and exemplary Mother/Church Member/Servant/ Missionary/Friend & Encourager - her Children practiced and radiated those qualities; her close walk with God enabled her to endure some tough suffering.

We were blessed in knowing Virginia and sharing her company until we moved away in 1990.

## **Avril Howe**

I have many good memories of Virginia.

Now in heaven hearing her Father saying "well done good and faithful servant"

## **Chris Jones**

It was always good to see Virginia's smile and warm greeting every time I saw her. This could be in the same street where I once lived or in church. She was always chatty with a good memory and sharp mind, interested in the well-being of others more than herself. Sometimes I used to pop in for a chat and to say 'Hi', pick her up for a lift to church on occasions. A wonderful Christian lady and will surely will be greatly missed. I thank God for so very many special and indeed fantastic memories of her.

## **Anne Howcroft**

Virginia – a gentle but determined lady.

Virginia – her ready smile lit up her whole face. And the whole room too.

Virginia – followed her Lord every step of the way and I suspect had a special hotline to Him too.

Virginia – I'll miss you.

## **Nicki and Philip Hunt**

Virginia is someone we will never forget. She loved her Lord Jesus passionately and had a big heart for mission. We remember her travelling weekly to Southall which was her mission field for many years. Nicki has Virginia to thank for her years at Lukolwe in Zambia. In 1983 Virginia attended a Christian Brethren Research Fellowship event at the London Bible College. It was at that conference that young Nicki spoke with Virginia about her interest in short term mission. Virginia was quick to introduce Nicki to Derek Beckwith of Elmfield Chapel who was there that day. He was able to guide Nicki to Medical Missionary News which led to her years of work in Zambia. Virginia was warm and friendly, she was interested in other people and a good listener. We will miss her lovely smiling face.

## **Gill and Mark Newham**

Virginia inspired in us a deeper love for Jesus. She lived a life that was touched by both suffering and joy. Yet the suffering she had faced never crushed her or love for God, and her desire to see His gospel go forth.

There were many times when Virginia encouraged us to keep on going, keep on loving, to keep on serving even when things got difficult. She was interested in our ministry but more than that, she was interested in us and often inquired about personal wellbeing.

She spoke words of courage, words that picked us up and pushed us forward. There was gentle grace in her that came from submitting her life to Christ and allowing His Cross to work beauty in her. We will miss her, but are thankful that she is with the Saviour she loved so dearly.

It was our privilege to know Virginia. Thank you Jesus.

## **Olive Newham**

Virginia was a lovely person to chat with, she had a beautiful smile and was very interesting to talk to especially about her time in India. She always asked about my family taking a special interest particularly in Mark and Gill and Paul and Amia as missionaries. I loved spending time with her, she was a dear lady and it was a real joy to know her, I will always remember her and miss her.

## **Rogers and Frances Pearce**

Virginia was wonderful in her adaptation to contrasting worlds through her lifetime. She grew up among Presbyterians in the USA, served the Lord in India with the Brethren, and loyally shared in the life of the church in Northwood Hills through all the changes from Windsor Hall to Fairfield. When we came in 1980, we enjoyed getting to know Virginia with Max, Ruth, Rosemary & Lois. She knew rich blessing and difficult sadnesses in her family experience. Virginia went off to Southall on the bus week by week to be with people from India teaching English but also in evangelism & pastoral care. At NHEC, and then Fairfield, a special part of her service was in the whole story of the Wednesday Fellowship, contributing to the programme, playing the piano, and caring for many. She became a 'Mum' for Andrew Thompson in his early bachelor years with us, especially during the time he lodged with her. Virginia encouraged him in pioneering one of the first home groups in the church which she hosted. We give thanks for Virginia's bright upbeat spirit, her simplicity of life, her straightforwardness in faith, her interest in the world around her, and the enjoyment of visits to her home.

## **Chris and Neville Pearson**

We remember Virginia as a very thankful and praying lady. She was always grateful for small jobs or kindnesses done for her. Whenever we gave her a lift, she was always very appreciative [though we had to follow her instructions to the letter] and always asked how **we** were, directing attention away from herself.

She was a great prayer warrior and especially in later years when her health failed, spent much time talking to her Lord and petitioning Him on others behalf. She didn't have an easy life but is now with her Lord and all her struggles have ended.

## **Derek and Roxana Peters**

Dear Virginia, how we are going to miss her loving, prayerful, indomitable spirit. Her determination to be out at meetings, whatever the time, only wavered in the last weeks as her body failed, because she so loved being with her church family and many times in evening House Group she would make an observation or comment that was full of biblical wisdom and perception. She was a mighty prayer warrior with an unfailing memory for facts and family names and histories. Her pride in her family knew no bounds and we would regularly exchange news of her grandchildren and my children. Conversations with Virginia could be guaranteed to be lacking self-pity or complaint as she always had something positive to say or share about others, or she could gently draw attention to a need in the fellowship. Her example over many years of travelling to Southall to minister to the ladies

there in the Indian language she learnt from her missionary years in India was truly inspiring, though never lauded by her. We have to say goodbye to a wonderful, prayer-filled friend and be glad she is in heaven with her Lord and Saviour, who she has served so faithfully on this earth.

## **Chris Reveley**

Virginia was one of the strongest characters I have ever met. I got to know her over the last eight or so years and was amazed as little by little I pieced together something of her life story (which I'm sure will be covered elsewhere in these tributes) and I started to get a glimpse of her faith in the goodness and love of God despite some of the challenges and tragedies she herself had gone through. She was truly strong in the Lord and her life experience had driven her into a closer and stronger relationship with Jesus than most other people I have met. She got such delight in listening to God's word and in praying and she was someone who knew what it was to 'take it to the Lord in prayer'. As a missionary herself she was especially good at praying for our many Mission Partners and her knowledge of them, their families and their situations showed how faithful she was in doing this.

Until the last couple of years, Virginia was always at Fairfield on Sunday for the service and Wednesday for Wednesday Fellowship and she so valued times spent with other Christians. Virginia loved her home in Middleton Drive and was determined to stay there till the end – in which she almost succeeded. She wanted her own space and a place where people could visit her, and she accepted that this meant some personal inconvenience and a whole host of people coming into her home using the key-safe key. I know many people cared for her, but I would especially mention Les, Anne and Catherine as some who gave so much time and love to Virginia and she was so grateful for their love and care. Over the years Virginia had a number of stays in hospital and, as her hearing deteriorated, these became great evangelistic opportunities. She would insist that one read the scriptures and prayed very loudly so she (and all the rest of the ward) could properly hear what was being said!

I confess that when I heard that Virginia had died I had a surge of delight and excitement on her behalf. She had known for most of her life that she would one day be going to be with Jesus and, over the last few years, she and I had discussed how she was looking forward to going and was ready. As her earthly body was giving up, she had that strong faith in her Saviour who is the Resurrection and the Life and has a home and a new body prepared for her and she anticipated this with joy. Good night, Virginia, see you in the morning!

## **Doreen Roberts (Green)**

I remember the first time I met Virginia. It was at Famie and Bill Spedding's house and she, with her children had just returned from India. Although things must have been difficult for her at that time because of losing her husband she showed great strength and determination to just get on with her life.

## **Pat Robson**

I always loved Virginia. Such a beautiful and amazing woman. It was a blessing to know her. May the peace and comfort of the Lord Jesus Christ be with her family.

## **Angela Rogers**

I have had the privilege of knowing Virginia and the family for 40+ years and the joy of knowing Max, Ruth, Rosemary and Lois as they grew up. She came to our ladies' group at the church a few years ago. It was fascinating to hear her life's journey and testimony of God's care in her life. Virginia would always ask about our children and followed their progress, always caring for others. I saw her last year when I visited her at home in Middleton Drive. After chatting for a while, she asked me to read her Bible and reading notes and was so grateful. I came away that day feeling totally blessed. I remember when I used to help at Tiddlywinks (baby and toddler group) on a Wednesday. As we were clearing up Virginia used to come down early to practice playing the piano for the Wednesday Fellowship. A favourite would be "Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son, endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won."

## **Rachie Ross**

Virginia will be forever remembered by me with a smile on her pretty face. She had such a gently loving way about her, always happy to be spoken with, always kind. Whenever I spoke with her, she would hold my hand and her skin was soft, I will remember that too. But what stands out to me with such clarity is her love for God and church family, and that the depth of character she possessed came through real suffering. She was widowed before I was even born and weathered the loss of children, yet not a bitter bone on her body. This inspires me deeply, a soft heart and strong faith, what a lovely lady.

## **Meg Savage**

Virginia was an amazing, remarkable lady. She was loved by so many, which was demonstrated as she celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday a few years ago at Fairfield. I remember she used to pass on "Gospel Gems Calendars." These had a beautiful image for each month and a poignant Bible verse to meditate upon each day, to discover a little more of God's Word. I have two on my wall in my home.

## **Catherine Staff**

My first memory of Virginia is from over twenty-five years ago when she gave her testimony at our women's fellowship. I was greatly moved to hear of the difficulties she had faced in life but always held firmly to her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I saw first hand how she continued to contend with adversity as further tragedy struck. In the last decade I came to know her more deeply as she joined the house group that met in my home. Even though her sight and hearing were not good she was always an eager participant with much godly wisdom in her words. Virginia was always full of gratitude for even the smallest thing that

was done for her. As she became more feeble and could no longer leave the house, she enjoyed being visited so she could tell of the latest news of her family and have her bible notes read to her, have prayer and a weekly communion service. When her strength was almost gone and chat was too tiring, she would ask "Are we going to have a service?" as soon as I arrived. Even the last time I saw her, the day lock down began, she was too weak for a service, but nodded when I asked if she would like me to pray. As I closed with the Lord's prayer, her lips moved forming the words she loved. Virginia was an amazing Godly woman, who taught me much about living a Godly life in the midst of sorrow and hardship.

## **Andrew Thompson**

It was through my parents that I came in contact with Virginia. They had been in India as missionaries and knew Virginia and family. On being posted up to Northwood and looking for a church to attend my parents put me in contact with Virginia. The result was due to not having found accommodation I ended living for a while at 8 Middleton drive and becoming an active member of Northwood Hills Evangelical Church.

For me Virginia was always cheerful and positive in her attitude which was incredible considering some very hard blows that life had given her. Her faith in Christ was the supreme thing that drove her, along with a huge love for India, the church and sharing the gospel. She loved a good chat and one of her highlights was visiting her Indian ladies in Southall to chat the gospel to them. She was always busy with helping out in the church and other Christian things. Virginia was not a type of church member who sat on the side-lines rather she got involved in things. Her home was always open and welcoming. I started a bible study group for the church with Virginia's house as venue. There was no problem on her part regarding the flow of people coming she loved it because she loved people. In all the time I lived at Middleton Drive I never heard Virginia grumble or complain or say harsh things about people. She certainly was a lovely lady who will be really missed.

## **Philip Watson**

Looking back to the late 1960's when I was learning to drive, I had the Beatles style haircut and was in my last year at school, I attended a little Church in Windsor Close in Northwood Hills. The church was delighted to welcome a new family who had come back from missionary work in North India. The mother (Virginia) and her 4 teenage children, Max, Ruth, Rosemary and Lois.

We soon got to know the 'Jahns' and each of the children were very competitive and had their own distinct characters. Virginia would have needed a firm hand, but even I could see from early days, there was a presence of the Lord in her life, walking daily with her that shone, as an example to her children and to us all.

She had a wonderful smile, always had time to chat and led conversations which were full of encouragement and challenge. When she gave her opinion on something, she would so often back up her opinion with her well used Bible.

Many of us will know that Virginia had a number of highs and particularly lows. She had lost two sons and a daughter and of course her husband. I don't think I ever heard her complain



or moan over these tragedies or indeed anything. She knew and trusted her Lord for EVERYTHING and would so often turn things back in to praise.

She stayed active all her life and was so eager to serve in her many different ministries. Even when confined to a wheelchair which I think she must have found so hard, she often didn't say a lot, but whenever she did speak, she always brought blessing.

Virginia was indeed a channel of God's Peace, Hope, Joy, Light and a channel of God's Love to her family and friends, to her community both locally and beyond.

I will so much enjoy reading all the tributes to this very precious lady because there will be so much that I wish I would have known.

Philippians 2 v 15 Virginia - A child of God who shone like a Star!

## **Vivian Watson**

The Jahn family came into our lives when they returned from India in the late 1960s. There were some at Windsor Hall in those days who had known Mr Jahn and the family before they went overseas as missionaries. Virginia had a great passion for the Gospel and used to visit the parts of London where there were communities of Indian people. Her ability to speak Urdu would have opened many doors.

My enduring memory is of Virginia's smiling face and the encouragement she gave to me and others as we led services or spoke from the platform. If ever nerves were getting the better of you, a quick look at Virginia would give you comfort.

## **Stuart and Lynne Weir**

Virginia was one of the most Godly people we have ever known. She had so many really hard things to bear in life, but her faith held steadfastly firm and sure throughout. She was always so gracious and cheerfully uncomplaining, so concerned about others, wholeheartedly committed to sharing the good news of Jesus. She spent her life serving the Lord and will have amassed great treasure in heaven. She was an amazing example to us of faithful discipleship. It was a great privilege to have known her.

## **Chris and Susanne Wigram**

When I was a student at LBC (now LST) in 1987 I jumped on a 282 bus and sat down right next to Virginia! She was on one her regular trips to Southall and so we talked about her life in India, mission and our hopes of returning to the majority world in the near future. She said that she would pray for us and that is exactly what she did up until a few weeks ago. She always asked for our newsletter and when we saw each other showed that she had been praying through it regularly. In 1989, just before we left for the Philippines, she opened up her house to us all to stay for a few days. When we were back in Northwood Hills, she was always eager to chat and to find out how we were doing. Faithful to the end. We will meet again.

## **Sara Wilcox**

I had the pleasure to meet Virginia at church and then the opportunity was given to me to help her around the house.

I really enjoyed having conversations with her. She used to tell me all about her life as a missionary. I loved her enthusiasm and humility.

When asked, she talked about her family a lot; she was proud to show me each member of her family in the photos around her house.

When I was with her, I always felt surrounded by a calm spirit, a deep and thoughtful woman who was also very strong, considering what she went through in her life.

It was a real privilege to get to know Virginia and I will truly miss her.

## **Jeffery and Lise Wilson**

Together, we thank God for the privilege of knowing Virginia. Such wonderful memories come flooding back as we remember her.

Our earliest memory of the Jahn family was back in the days, over 60 years ago, when the family was in India and they were Mission partners with us at Windsor Hall, and every weekend prayers were made for 'Max Jahn (senior), his wife and family'. Then, on their return to this country it wasn't long before each of the children grew up through Adventurers (Sunday School), through to Covenanters and then the Youth Fellowship.

Following that all the children then became teachers and leaders themselves, with Virginia leading other groups in the church.

Others will recall and write of Virginia's years of work and ministry in Southall, but at NHEC/Fairfield she never stopped giving her time and energy in care, support and prayer for the elderly, lonely and most vulnerable amongst us. She was always up to date with everyone's family news. In the Wednesday Fellowship, as one of the leaders, she made sure everyone felt welcome, especially those who came to speak, and week by week she played the piano for the Hymns of people's choice.

Virginia's prayer list must have been endless, because she never failed to ask us, and everyone else she met, all about our children and grandchildren, remembering to ask us of course to update her the next time our paths crossed. What a wonderful example for us all to follow!

We've loved being in fellowship with Virginia through all these years, and we, with the rest of the Fairfield family, will miss her greatly.

## **Sylvia Young**

Virginia was a sincere, nice mannered, friendly, helpful and very gentle lady.

She was the first person who approached me when I came to Fairfield in 26 years ago. And she made me very welcome. Every Sunday she loved to give me a lovely smile and gentle voice to say "Hello, how are you?"

One summer afternoon, I had a walk with my sister without knowing that I was passing her house. She just happened to be standing at the front of her own house. She was so happy and insisted we have a tea at her house. We had a wonderful chat together. I remember she

told us that she was American and told a story of herself too. She was such a lovely lady I will never forget her.

### **Hedy Zdankowicz**

Virginia was a very nice lady. I always sat with her at the Wednesday Fellowship. She always had interesting stories to tell. I will miss her.