



# The Easel

Newsletter of Rugby & District Art Society

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## From the editor

Since the last Easel in May, Society news has been overshadowed by the death of our much respected President, Paul Torr, on 28 June.

Paul wrote most of the newsletters and I only put his copy together and mailed out the final product. With the blessing of the committee I will carry on doing that but do the writing also.

In Paul's last message to us he expressed concern about the Society's future and urged us to come together, possibly volunteer to serve on the committee and encourage interested non-members to join.

The Easel is a record of our Wednesday meetings and news of coming events, but it can also be a venue for opinion, questions, hints or to just to share whatever you're doing in the artworld. Please email me some words and if possible photos at jimartwatson@btinternet.com.

The final line of Paul's message said, "if you value the Society, don't leave it to everyone else! Thank you."

Jim Watson

Editor: The Easel

## September meeting

The next monthly meeting will be our Annual General Meeting. In view of current events important decisions have to be made and all members are urged to attend and vote.

A change in fees has already been announced. Subscription for individual members will stay the same at £30 per year and £27 for concessions but the joint/couple membership will rise from £45 to £50 p.a. and from £40 to £45 for concessions.

Members are also reminded to PLEASE change their standing orders as discrepancies in fees and then subsequent amendments are a nightmare for our hardworking treasurer to deal with.

There will be a speaker at the AGM – Helena Verrill who will be showing us the secrets of origami paper magic.

The funeral of Paul Arthur Torr took place on 28 July at Rainsbrook Crematorium, Rugby. There was a good turnout of Society members and we were taken on a journey through his remarkable, and in some ways surprisingly, life.

A teacher, academic and artist, he was also a dedicated family man, one of four brothers brought up at Silverstone and father of two children, Rohanna and Rod, who spoke movingly at the service. As did two of his brothers and an old family friend, Robert Meiller, who had travelled from his home in France.

Paul was 80 years old and was variously described as a 'true gentleman', 'a soft-centred sweetie' and a 'creative, sensitive, something to give kind of dad'. The interval music of 'Bridge over Troubled Waters' seemed to sum him up perfectly.

To us in the Society he will be remembered for his tireless quest to find interesting speakers and demonstrators who we could learn from, his taste in silly hats, his problems with modern technology (especially microphones!) and above all his always friendly interest in whatever you were doing, with that gentle smile and a ready twinkle in his eye. His Christmas cards were legendary, with the 2023 design already drawn and found on his desk.



Paul in a pensive mood ... and silly hat.



Paul in 2010 & his 2023 Xmas card

**Here is the tribute by John Lines to our late president which was unfortunately missed out of Paul's funeral service:**

## PAUL TORR, PRESIDENT.

A man of quiet dignity, Paul led the Art Society in a very positive but sincere way. He was always eager to promote art for everyone, travelling many miles to find interesting people who would talk and demonstrate at our monthly meetings and guide us along the road to art fulfilment. Paul held the position of Society President for 15 years, always with a knowing smile and a nod, seeing us through many difficult decisions.

Proudly born and bred at Silverstone, the sign he designed for the village is a true and fitting tribute to him and will remain so for many years. Thank's for everything, Paul.





*Early promise...*

## June Meeting

As the scheduled guest for our June meeting had to cancel, John Lines agreed to do one of his painting demos.

The meeting had begun with the distressing letter from Paul, read out with impressive composure by Margaret Linnett, so it wasn't the best way to start the evening. However, despite the pressure of unfortunately circumstances, ever-reliable John lifted the mood and delivered one of his vintage masterclasses with style, inspiration and trademark humour.



*Two hours later!*



*Up the Hill by Roger Griffith*



*Xmas dec & Bethany at work*



## July Meeting

Sadly our guest speaker for the July meeting also had to cancel but local stitcher Bethany Hughes came along to impress and amaze us.

Bethany is an expert at counted cross-stitch and embroidery, inspired by the English countryside, stately homes and a lifetime spent in art galleries and museums. Her designs are highly detailed and expressed in tiny stitches that almost defy belief if like me you wear glasses. Bethany says she never uses a magnifying glass and stitches at every opportunity, even watching TV with the dog on her lap!

After the tea break her demo stitching was equally impressive as she produced a miniature hanging motif with hardly a break in her running commentary. A most impressive and enjoyable evening.

Be inspired by Bethany's website, [bluecoppice.com](http://bluecoppice.com), where you can buy a variety of products, designs and beginner kits to start yourself stitching.



*Bethany's stall at the meeting*

## Roger Griffith Workshop

Titled 'Abstracted Landscape' Roger's workshop will be held on Saturday 4th November, at Leamington Hastings Village Hall, 10am - 4pm.

£30 for members £35 for guests. There will be sign up sheet at the AGM. To secure your place you can also email Gill at [martinandgilld@gmail.com](mailto:martinandgilld@gmail.com) or Jan at [janwatts1@me.com](mailto:janwatts1@me.com)

Roger says "we will start with sketches, from nearby outside if weather allows, or photos, develop composition and paint expressive landscapes in watercolour. In the afternoon we'll sketch again, prepare collages and develop more abstract landscapes in acrylic and mixed media."



*Busy, busy, busy!*

## August Meeting

For the now traditional free for all 'fun' evening, Leslie Reed challenged us to paint anything we liked, using only three colours, though they could be mixed to produce more. With a good turn out of 24 members the result was a great array of paintings, colours and subjects.

The hall was surprisingly quiet throughout, everyone concentrating on their efforts. Mediums used were pastels, oil pastels, watercolour, oil, oil mixed with beeswax, acrylic, coloured pencils, painting on silk, and papercuts. Ever the individual, Joe Douse even engraved etchings!

Abbeycraft brought along their pop up shop, bringing a varied supply of interesting products for sale at discount prices. We welcome them back again in November.

*Jan Watts*



*Inspecting the results!*



*Some of the results!*