

Art world mourns the loss of Lady Page

THE death of Kathleen Page, a talented artist and former exhibition secretary of Farnham Art Society, has been keenly felt in the local art world.

Lady Page died at her home in Waverley Lane, Farnham, on May 8th, after a long illness. Her funeral took place at Guildford Crematorium on Thursday last week.

Lady Page's active contribution and commitment to local art societies has been acknowledged in the many tributes paid by fellow members and friends.

Eric Buesnel, chairman of Farnham Art Society from 1983 to 1989, remembered her as a "very talented amateur painter and as a supremely competent organiser of our big annual exhibition at the James Hockey Gallery at West Surrey College of Art and Design."

"She was asked last summer to become the society's chairman and she agreed much to everyone's pleasure. Sadly her illness came soon after and it was not to be. Everyone in the art society who knew her will miss her dreadfully."

Mr Buesnel's sentiments were echoed by another former chairman, Daphne Ashwood, who first worked with Lady Page on the committee in 1979.

She said: "Through her personality, insistence on quality and the attention to detail, Kathleen did much to maintain the high artistic standards which have become a hallmark of the society."

"She was untiring in her work for the society and the committee benefited greatly from her thoughtful approach to any problem that arose and the meticulous way in which she sought solutions."

Maltings Forum

And she added: "One of Kathleen's pictures, entitled Miss Nellie Down, now hangs in the Maltings Forum where it provides a permanent reminder of her talent as an artist."

During her long association with Farnham Art Society, Lady Page worked for more than ten years with Les Hutchings, who was chairman from 1976 to 1979 and 1982 to 1983.

She succeeded him as exhibition secretary in 1976 and he has paid tribute to her "admirable and untiring work" in that role.

In 1982 Lady Page became a founder member of an art group, which was formed in Farnham by Dorothy Dean, now vice-president of Alton Art Society.

She said this week: "The group of some 15 members continued for eight years and we all enjoyed Kathleen's cheerful and helpful presence."

"Here in Alton we were delighted when she joined our society and her work enhanced our annual exhibitions for a number of years."

Lady Page, who was born in Wimbledon, trained in both drawing and painting. A competent artist, she earned her living in a studio in London.

In 1940 she married Frederick Page, who received a knighthood in 1979 for his outstanding work in aeronautics.

During the war Lady Page continued with her art training at Kingston School of Art. She also worked on the synthetic navigation maps for Bomber Command - a vital wartime project organised by the art school.

As her husband's career progressed, the couple moved after the war to the north of England where they lived in Preston and Lytham St Anne's.

Lady Page carried on with her painting and exhibited in several galleries, including Preston, Blackpool and Liverpool.

She was exhibition secretary of Lytham St Anne's Art Society and took a lively interest in the development of the group.

The couple moved to Farnham 20 years ago and became actively involved in the local community.

Lady Page joined Farnham Art Society and was exhibition secretary for 10 years until 1986. She then continued to serve as a committee member.

Her pictures, together with others by Will and Helen Anderson, formed the inaugural exhibition at the Kiln Gallery, which opened on November 28th, 1980.

An exhibiting member of Farnham, Guildford and Alton Art Societies, her work also appeared in exhibitions at the

Mall Galleries in London and Westminster Hall.

Lady Page helped to establish the annual art exhibition at Bordon REME Officers Mess.

Both she and her husband were keen supporters of Farnham Maltings and the Farnham and

Bourne Music Society.

Lady Page's wide variety of interests also included travelling and visiting new places.

She had a great love of family and combined her busy life as an artist with her equally fulfilling role as the mother of four chil-

dren.

Lady Page also provided tremendous support for her husband - who survives her - throughout his distinguished career in the aerospace industry.

She leaves three sons, one daughter and 11 grandchildren.

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