

BETTY HILL (1928–2010)



Betty was born in Harrow and studied architecture at Liverpool University, graduating in 1950. She then joined Buckingham County Council Architecture Department and subsequently Oxford Regional Health Authority where she worked on the plans for the Horton Maternity Unit and a new ward at Bicester Hospital. After a spell at the University of Virginia, USA, she became a Senior Lecturer at the School of Architecture at Oxford Polytechnic. She was an active and prominent member of the Doric Club, the founding institution of the Oxford School of Architecture.

In 1965 Betty and her mother moved to Leadenporch House Deddington where, as well as continuing with her successful career, she contributed hugely to the community. Betty served on the Parish Council for 12 years, where her qualifications and knowledge made her invaluable, especially on the planning group. Betty also participated enthusiastically in many other aspects of village life: she designed the Holly Tree Cottages, organised a voluntary group in 1978 to paint the Town Hall, led the campaign against the OCC plan for motorway lighting on New Street/High Street, was a founding member of the gardening club and regularly helped paint the scenery for the pantomime – to name just a few.

Betty was an accomplished potter and the diversity of her work reflected her character in that she loved experimenting with a wide range of clays and mixing her own glazes to see whether she could produce something individual. Many people within the parish have a garden pot or one of her smoked shapes inspired by pebbles on a beach. She also was a very keen and able tennis player. Her grass court was an integral part of the garden she loved; but most of all she enjoyed her dogs and cats who were her constant companions and was a familiar figure on the Castle Grounds amongst the dog walkers.

Betty will be well remembered by several generations of international architects as well as by so many friends in Deddington whose lives have been enriched by knowing her. There was no part of the village that her friendship did not reach at some stage.

Friends of Betty