

FRANK PALMER (1926–2016)



Although Frank lived in Kingham, he was, for almost 40 years, part of the Deddington scene through his involvement with, and subsequent running of, the Deddington Art Group. It is today the most thriving art group in the county.

Frank was there at the beginning when Annabelle Gregory started the group around 1987 and, after the Gregorys moved to Devon, he assumed responsibility for its continuation. Frank's trade had been carpentry but, when he was made redundant, he determined to fulfil his ambition of becoming a full-time painter and pursued this interest with great passion. His forte was landscapes but he also painted sensitive portraits.

Self-taught, he regularly exhibited during art weeks at his home in Kingham and in Stow-on-the-Wold where his paintings sold regularly. He exhibited every year at the Chelsea Art Exhibition in Chelsea Town Hall. He was particularly proud of having his work accepted by the Royal Academy for their Summer Exhibition. Frank was a member of Banbury Art Society for many years and showed his work at their annual exhibition. Typically, he could be found in the locality painting outside or, in bad weather, sitting in his car painting.

Friends recall that in the days before Frank had a car, in order to reach the Art Society's evening meetings in Banbury, he would start from Kingham in the afternoon to get a bus to Stow and then on to Chipping Norton. From there he had a long wait for the bus that finally took him to Banbury. Such was his determination to be involved and share his enthusiasm for painting.

A welcome was always given to newcomers to the group, especially young people. He took great interest in what others were painting, giving encouragement and helpful advice if asked. Blessed with a dry wit, he spoke with slow deliberation in a warm Oxfordshire burr like the kindly countryman he was. After the Thursday painting sessions in the Town Hall he could be found in the Falkland Arms at Great Tew meeting his daughter.

Suzanne Allan