

LLOYD REES CMG AC (1895 – 1988)

The Lane Cove Art Society won the lottery when Lloyd Rees agreed to be its founding President in November 1965. In his artistic prime, highly acclaimed overseas and in Australia, Lloyd Rees' extensive knowledge of the art world was generously shared with fellow artists over the long period of his Presidency from 1965 to 1987.

Upon returning from his European trips Lloyd would often share his overseas artistic adventures. One talk in the early 1970's presented slides showing the church at Vezelay, the sketches of John Constable and a candid talk about the experience of spending five days sketching the world's most beautiful building – the Chartres Cathedral! Before the digital era, word of mouth presentations such as these were vital avenues for informing fellow artists of current artistic trends overseas. *French Art and Architecture* was another topic he presented – an area he knew well as he tutored architecture students at Sydney University for over forty years in drawing, design and art history.

Judging art exhibitions with his friend Guy Warren, donating prize money, supporting fellow artists in opening their shows and writing in their books reflected the very giving nature of this artist. Edmund Capon regarded Lloyd Rees as “one of the finest and most admired of all Australian artists.”

He was awarded the Most Distinguished Order of St Michel and St George CMG in 1977 and obtained a Companion of the Order of Australia AC in 1985. Lloyd's love of light, his attraction to the landscape in all its nuanced forms as well as his mindfulness of the world beyond, underpinned his oeuvre. Twice Lloyd won the Wynne prize, in 1950 for *The Harbour from McMahon's Point* and in 1982 for *Morning on the Derwent* but his drawing talent had long been recognised. In 1917, the NSW Art Gallery purchased three of his five drawings in his first exhibition and in 1937 Lloyd won a silver medal in Paris for *The Bridge, South Coast Landscape*.

The sensuousness of a Lloyd Rees landscape, the harnessing of light in his final abstracted, ethereal works and his genuine passion for creating art injected a life force that reflected the gentleness of this extremely self-effacing, genteel “Old Master” (as described by Michael Brand) who generously led the Lane Cove Art Society for over twenty years from its inception.

By Margaret Vickers