

## **Dr Frances Frohlich – A Woman Ahead of her Time**

Dr Frances Frohlich (nee Hackney) succeeded Lloyd Rees as the second President of the Lane Cove Art Society. Her term of office extended almost two decades from 1988 until 2006. She was a woman with enormous talents across many fields.

In 1982, the Archibald Portrait Exhibition included a portrait of Dr Frances Frohlich painted by the highly acclaimed portrait artist, Joshua Smith. The art teacher had painted one of his students, albeit a very distinguished one. Dr Frohlich had graduated from Sydney University in 1949 with a Doctorate of Science. Botany and zoology were her academic fortes. At one time she was lecturer and tutor at three different academic institutions including Sydney University, the University of New South Wales and Macquarie University. She published numerous scientific papers in this stage of her career.

By the time the Archibald exhibition of 1982 had come around, Dr Frohlich had also amassed recognition for her extensive poetry publications. In 1991 she gained Fellow Membership of the International Poets Society. Her creative pursuits were broad. Formal art lessons commenced in the 1970's with Peter Panow, Bod Baird and Joshua Smith. Not surprisingly flowers done in watercolour were often the subject of her early paintings perhaps being shaped by her profound interest in botany. Landscapes and portraits came later. Apart from taking an active role in the Lane Cove Art Society, Dr Frohlich was also active in the Drummoyne and Ryde Art Societies. Furthermore, she was a foundation member of the Lane Cove Village singers. In addition, she took an interest in the Guide movement, another community organisation.

Among the many awards received along her very luminary life journey was that of the Senior Australian Achiever of the Year in 2000. The Governor, the Hon. Gordon Samuels presented this award. She won the Australia Day Council medal for achievement four times! The Centenary Medal was received in 2001. In 2005, Dr Frohlich at the age of 87 years "young" was awarded the Lane Cove Citizen of the Year award.

In 2006, her passing was sadly observed by the community she had so generously served. Her outstanding career had successfully meshed science

and the arts. She had also excelled in the pledge she had given to Lloyd Rees before his passing in 1988 of taking care of the Lane Cove Art Society which he had founded in the mid 1960's. Amazingly in this very busy life, Dr Frohlich found time to raise six children. She indeed, was a woman ahead of her time.

By Margaret Vickers

Pamela Fairburn was successor to Francis Frolich as President of the Lane Cove Art Society, here are some of her recollections:

"I came onto the Committee in 1980s. I was asked to be Vice President in 2000. Francis ran the Committee meetings from her home in Kenneth Street Longueville... across the road from the tennis club. Her lounge room was full of her portraits and Floral paintings. From this headquarters she steered a course of getting exhibitions and guest speakers for meetings organised!

I think she had painted with John Sangtry, Eve Close, William Pidgeon, Ilma Searle, Joyce Mills, Eva Purnell and Joshua Smith.

My memories of her are of how she had gained great respect in the Lane Cove community. She ran the LC Art Society group with amazing determination and vigour. Her paintings reflect her love of nature and love of living in Lane Cove Area. The LC Art Society today wouldn't exist today without the work of Head Lady ...Frances Frolich!"