



# e-news

from the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain

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## Judith Parry DPAGB EFIAP HonPAGB

It's time to remember Judith Parry, to recall her presence, and that unwavering sense of purpose she held that ricocheted through so many people. Now is the time for that sorrow that comes with passing, that feeling of being lost on that border between the future without her and the slowly fading past. Time to applaud her life within the photographic world and give thought and solace to Roger and Diane. Eighty years Judith was with us, sixty married to Roger. In her later years she became more reliant, less mobile and dealt with some serious health issues, but she continued to take pictures, albeit in a more limited space.



All of us in Smethwick Photographic Society, the London Salon or the Midland Counties Federation and beyond in the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain will feel that loss and recollect that Judith was one of photography's most enduring and committed servants.

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Judith's life began in Bloxwich, she adored her father and was coaxed into photography by her grandfather, gaining her 'A' levels at King's Norton Girls' High School. Roger and Judith lived in Harborne, staying true to their Midlands roots. There was joy in family life, Judith giving up work to bring up their daughter Diane. Then there was her love of words, of music, a rich pageant of local knowledge and an ability to talk to an audience. Her working life involved various administrative roles, most notably with the National Assistance Board, and later with an Engineering firm and helping an accountant in the music business. But her real epitaph is a photographic one.

Judith was a matriarchal figure, resourceful, charismatic. Involved since 1965, when the club met in Bearwood, together with Roger she steered Smethwick Photographic Society into its considerable status, anchoring it in high regard and years of success. It was their second home. Within the walls at Cooper's Lane and later The Old School House she held significant court, organising speakers from all corners of the UK and sometimes Europe. Her coordination of exhibitions was the stuff of legend, not least 40 plus years involved with Smethwick International. She templated layouts, managed framing and positioning on the walls to create the flow with a 'tuned' visual balance.

Unfortunately, the club was forced to move location when the building in Cooper's Lane collapsed in an undignified heap, back in 1998. Judith was in the forefront of finding a new home for the club, also working on charitable status to gain funding.

Smethwick's new home was purposely re-built into a premier resource for its 250 plus members and UK photography in general, just as Judith and Roger envisaged.

What of her own photography? Many of her refined images were studio based, depicting beautiful, often unclothed models in glamorous interior settings. She had a sense of theatre with regard to costume, and loved photographing in a seductive higher key that suited both colour and monochrome, giving each picture a hushed and focused lustre. That diaphanous light in those pictures celebrated feminine form, their porcelain skin tones, their serenity, radiant allure and poise. None of her work was severe, dark or angry. Judith caressed her exhibition pictures into shape, carrying her 'autograph' in style, adorning her models with jewellery, chiffon and so on, making use of both bold reds or at times mellow pastels. They offer a diffused, softened romantic air, with an eloquently choreographed approach. She favoured contra-jour lighting, courting a gentle expressive mood in faces and posing, instinctively feeling the vulnerability of those she portrayed. There were also wistful still life studies, eloquent fashion pictures, and gracious portraits within her portfolio.

Judith judged on the international circuit - twice in The Algarve Salon, also in Malta and throughout the UK. She accompanied Roger everywhere from Trade shows to PAGB annual events and at lectures, tutorial studio sessions and the unheralded 'wonder' of committee meetings!!! Although not a chaser of 'photographic' letters, she was recognised as an AFIAP also at DPAGB level and was an elected member of the London Salon

Judith faithfully served the photographic community for many years in trusted and demanding positions for which she was recognised in the roll of honour as an APAGB. Those roles include President of Smethwick, Chairman of the London Salon, MCPF President not once but twice, an Honorary Life member of the RPS. She was awarded the PAGB's JS Lancaster Medal in 2006, for all her merited commitment.

In all this she smiled, cajoled, commanded, and steered. There will never be another like her, you could not colour her up as a saint, everyone knew Judith as decisively purposeful, steadfast and certainly in charge! Smethwick PS has lost its greatest servant and defender.

We will miss that refined tone of expression, that specific assignment of necessary tasks, that front row chair, that welcoming "Good Evening Smethwick" in her cadent voice, those cardigans, her renowned catering skills for the club and its visitors. Mention must be made of her lucid recall of funnier moments in Smethwick's rich history, but above all else, that unforgettable, seated, indomitable assertion and the persuasive 'director' role she played.

Time now to unpack the memories, the treasures revealed in Judith's past. Today we are faced with an enigmatic sadness, left with a far emptier room, and the silent space her voice once occupied in the echoing shadowed days to come. She richly deserves her space carved on the honours board!

Eighty years were given to her and my oh my did she make her mark.

Leigh Preston





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# THE LONDON SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Judith served ably as Chairman of The London Salon of Photography for several years and these pictures are from her gallery on their website















We have received this note from Roger.

***“As both Judith’s and our small families wishes we will not be having a standard funeral. Instead, we will be holding a celebration of Judith’s Life at Smethwick Clubrooms on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July where an exhibition of her prints will be on display.***

***We will be providing a full buffet at the event so please could you e-mail me if it is your intention to attend so that we can ensure that there is sufficient food and drink available*** ***Roger Parry”***

There is no doubt that this event will be very well attended but, if you knew Judith well and wish to attend, please let Roger know as soon as possible.



