

# Capturing the Moment

11th March - 1st April 2012

Paintings by

Ann Manly  
and  
Dennis Harrison

West Ox Arts Gallery

[www.westoxarts.com](http://www.westoxarts.com) /01993 850137/ [gallery@westoxarts.com](mailto:gallery@westoxarts.com)

Town Hall, Market Square, Bampton, Oxfordshire, OX18 2JH

OPEN TUES - SAT 10.30AM -4.30PM, SUN 2 -4PM

FREE ENTRY





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March 28<sup>th</sup> 2012[witneygazette.co.uk/news](http://witneygazette.co.uk/news)

# What's On

[witneygazette.co.uk/leisure](http://witneygazette.co.uk/leisure)

## Pick of the week:

## A couple's European journey in art

A COUPLE who have travelled the world painting together are displaying their work at the Bampton art gallery where they first met.

Ann Manly, 75, and Dennis Harrison, 94, *pictured*, have travelled to Venice, France, Greece and around the UK to paint their watercolours.

The Bampton couple first met at West Ox Arts, in the village, 32 years ago, when Mr Harrison took a painting class taught by Mrs Manly.

Mrs Manly, who helped set up the gallery in the 1970s, said: "I was running a painting course and Dennis turned up and that was it – we fell for each other.

"We managed to get together and have spent the rest of our lives painting. We have had the most wonderful life. We love painting and we love travelling and, despite being quite ancient, we have managed to get around."

The exhibition features about 90 pictures which have all been painted in the last year or so. All the pieces were painted at the location and the aim was to capture the moment and the feeling of their subjects at that moment in time.

The exhibition runs until Sunday.





Ann Manly was born in Kashmir 76 years ago, when her father was in the army and her mother; a nurse also ran a guest house. Ann's father died when Ann was 5 years old and in 1946 at the end of the war, Ann returned with her mother to England to start her education.

Realising her growing artistic talent with which she wanted to make a contribution; Ann trained as an Occupational Physiotherapist in Oxford at what is now Oxford Brookes University. Once her training was complete, Ann's diabetes made it difficult to gain employment and life became more difficult when she sadly divorced the father of her two children. Ann and the children moved to Bampton where they settled.

In 1973, John Birkhead set up WOA and Ann became its first secretary. Judith Warwick became the first paid employee around 1985. WOA's first structure was based upon different panels; Music, Art, Drama and Photography, each with their own organising committee, all co-ordinated by Ann.

Ann helped to organise many events, including painting courses, held in the upstairs room of the town hall, now WOA gallery.

It was on a week long course in 1980 that Ann met Dennis. They married, and in Dennis's words, Ann mentored him to reach a good level of artistic skill.

Wherever possible they spent their holidays painting *en plein air* (that is painting outside on location). Their watercolours depict the places that they loved to visit together, namely the Lake District, the Cotswolds, Venice, Greece and the Lot and Dordogne valleys in France. Ann and Dennis spent every morning working together in their studio at home in Bampton, completing the paintings begun on holiday. It was Sally Proctor as curator who first persuaded them to exhibit in the gallery. In the 1980s and 90s they held several very successful exhibitions. The commission generated for the gallery was significant in helping ensure the gallery remained financially viable.

In 2011 the gallery at last had a lift installed to make life easier for everyone. Ann was delighted to be asked to cut the ribbon to mark its opening and to be able to visit the gallery for the first time for many years. In March 2012, Ann and Dennis once again held a show, the most successful WOA exhibition for many years.

Ann's work has been exhibited in shows in London including at the Royal Watercolour Society, the Mall Galleries and the "Venice in Peril" exhibition. Her work is represented in many private collections throughout the world.

In the last few years, Ann had continued to paint despite failing eyesight and very sadly died just before Christmas 2012.

Ann will be remembered for her great love and enthusiasm for painting and her life of close togetherness with Dennis.

Mike Jones/Esther Hepworth



# ART SHOW AT BAMPTON



SYNDICATE members from the West Oxford shire Arts Association are currently holding an exhibition of their work in the Bampton Arts Centre until September 28. Local artist Mrs. Ann Manley with one of her exhibits on show.





The late Ann Manly with her husband, Dennis Harrison, at their exhibition *Capturing the Moment* which was held at the West Ox Arts Gallery in March 2012.





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