

Francis (Frank) Robert Lewis

1932 – 2013.

Died peacefully in Victoria, BC, on March 6, 2013 with his wife Margaret holding his hand. Frank was born in Winnipeg on December 21, 1932 and moved to Victoria when he was fourteen. He graduated from Oak Bay High School in 1952 and celebrated sixty years later at a happy reunion with his classmates. He studied at the Vancouver School of Art (now Emily Carr University of Art and Design). His work there led to a career in commercial art as an illustrator in Toronto and Vancouver. He took some time off from the visual arts to act in *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, in a tour which ended in Ottawa for the opening of the National Arts Centre in 1969. He returned to Vancouver to freelance and work for the CBC.

Later Frank moved back to Vancouver Island, and began to take on big projects. He painted the first two murals in Chemainus, BC. Some of his other major local works were for the Maritime Museum in Vancouver, the XV Commonwealth Games in 1994 and two murals on the Galloping Goose Trail at Cecilia Park. Of his many murals, one is in Kenora, Ontario and another in the entrance to the Canadian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. His works all feature Canadians at work and play or Canadian wildlife and plants. He continued the theme in the canvases of his later years.

He traces his ancestors back seven generations to the adventurous young men who came from the Orkney Islands, Scotland and England in the 1700's to work for the Hudson's Bay Company. They were boatmen, fur traders and interpreters who survived the hazards of their new land with the help of their Cree wives who provided local knowledge and extended family support.

Fittingly, his last public painting, produced in his eightieth

year, hangs in the Healing Centre in the Royal Jubilee Hospital. It is called Honour Creation and is full of symbolism from his Metis heritage. With his wife Margaret he travelled on projects to Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. They completed some of his largest murals working together for over twenty years.

He was moved by music of all genres. He told many stories of Canadian Jazz artists he had known. He supported the Victoria Symphony and the Pacific Opera. He admired the artistry of Glenn Gould, P.J. Perry and Ann Mortiffee. Frank was creative, inquiring, intelligent and deeply spiritual. He believed in trust and respect as the basis for any strong relationship.

He was predeceased by his brother Al Lewis of Victoria. He leaves his loving and beloved wife Margaret Parker in Victoria and her family, his daughter Marin Solange (Mia) Lewis Hunt, her three daughters Deana, Zoe and Wagilla, and four great grandchildren, all of Vancouver, BC, and his brother, Jack Lewis Smith of Manitoba.

A celebration of Frank's life will be held at McCall's Funeral Home in Victoria on Friday, March 22, 2013 at 2:00 pm. A reception will follow in the McCall's Family Centre. A service will also be held in Vancouver at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Pacific Opera Victoria, 500 – 1815 Blanshard Street, Victoria, BC V8T 5A4. Condolences for the family may be offered below.

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