



John Armstrong Guild Service Award

OWEN STEWART

Statements supporting this nomination and including specific references to the nature of the nominee's service, the duration and diversity of the service to achieving Guild objectives are summarised below:

Owen is one of the "unsung heroes" of the Guild, in that his extensive contributions to the smooth functioning of the organization are rarely seen, or appreciated, by ordinary members.

Owen has served for a number of years as the Guild's "Quartermaster", taking responsibility for regularly checking and replenishing stocks of Shed consumables, including milk, tea, coffee, biscuits, soft drinks, light beer, paper towels, toilet paper, garbage bags and cleaning products. The majority of members expect to readily find and use these products as an integral part of their "Shed experience", but are unaware of Owen's dedicated service in making sure they are always available, especially for monthly Guild meeting nights.

Furthermore, aided by his wife Margaret, Owen has for many years organized the logistics of the Guild's Annual Christmas BBQ, providing not only the basic comestibles, but also the crockery, cutlery and table settings, transforming the Shed into a welcoming party venue. Similarly, he has provided refreshments for members engaged in Guild community activities, such as the National Folk Festival, Timber & Working with Wood Show, Home & Leisure Show, and the Royal Canberra Show.

Owen has served with distinction as Coordinator of the Toy SIG, and has been the driving force behind the SIG's production and assembly of what must by now be thousands of toys annually donated to charity. He has taken annual responsibility for the organization of the Guild's fund-raising stand at the Marymead charity fete. Owen has personally produced hundreds of kit toys for children to assemble in the National Folk Festival's Community Arts Program (a major factor in the Guild receiving space at the NFF at little or no cost).

As a Guild Committee member, Owen has also been responsible for organizing the Guild's annual Calendar, and ensuring that the days and times for open days, SIG meetings, Guild meetings, workshops and courses are recorded in the Shed Attendance Book. Related to this, he acts as the Guild "doorman" at monthly meetings, collecting member contributions on entry and issuing door-prize tickets, as well as ensuring the regular supply of those prizes for members' enjoyment.

Owen and Margaret are soon relocating their primary home, and his workshop, to the South Coast, though he will continue as a Guild Member and to support many Guild activities. In the New Year a number of his current support activities will be passed to other Guild Members.

Owen has given years of dedicated service as a member of the Guild Committee, and his quiet, but well-considered, counsel is always valued highly by his colleagues. His unassuming and self-effacing character is such that he will probably be embarrassed by this Award, but in every way, Owen is the epitome of someone who is "diligent, skilful and selfless" in their vital service to the Guild. I cannot think of anyone more deserving as the recipient of the John Armstrong Service Award, and I am confident John would have heartily agreed.