

Two winners for Rigsby award

Betty Rigsby, former Markham Guild of Village Crafts president, in February. Now the guild has created a new award in her memory.

She contributed the Craftnotes column to the Weekender, and also served on the Economist & Sun's community advisory board.

The Betty Rigsby Memorial Award is a members' choice award. All Guild members present at the June meeting cast their votes for their favourite contest entry.

The award was unveiled by the artist who sculpted it, Dorsey James. Mr. James is a professional sculptor and art teacher at Markham District High School.

He is the resident sculptor at the Guild Inn in Scarborough. His contributions to the world of art in Markham are numerous.

Mr. James designed and won the Markham Achievement and Civic Recognition Award, and created the relief sculpture in the Markham Theatre.

His work also includes the Rena Grunert Memorial for the Markham Aquatic Centre and the Jeff Nihda Memorial Award for Markham District High School.

In unveiling the Betty Rigsby Memorial Award, Dorsey James stated, "Although I was limited in time, the impetus to do the memorial was there."

"I was distressed to learn of her

death," he continued. "There are some people who seem to glow, to radiate who they were, who they are. Betty was one such person."

In describing the award Mr. James said, "The background is a scroll, symbolic of her life experience, symbolizing the everlasting."

"The owl is a symbol of knowledge and wisdom, and through its hunting prowess it is a good omen." The sculpture is constructed from Douglas fir and sugar maple.

Presenting the award were Betty Rigsby's son and daughter, John Rigsby and Margaret Holton. Mrs. Holton thanked Dorsey James for creating the sculpture and noted that, "I'm sure Mom would be thrilled. A part of her will always be in Markham."

The surprise of the evening came when the winners of the award were announced. The votes were evenly split and there was a tie for first place.

The winners of the first Betty Rigsby Memorial Award were Maureen Crompton and Tom Rimmer.

Maureen thanked Mr. Rigsby and Mrs. Holton and said, "Betty came in every day last summer and fall and asked if I was finished yet."

"Because of her, I got my rug completed," Tom stated that "to be connected in any way with Betty Rigsby is a pretty high privilege."



There was a tie for the first winners of the Betty Rigsby memorial award designed by local artist Dorsey James. On the left and right are Margaret Holton and John Rigsby, Betty's daughter and son, and in the centre, the two winners, Maureen Crompton and Tom Rimmer. — Brent Lowery



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