

Don Freeman Award 2011

This is an edited extract of the written nominations received for this year's award.

Over many years, Bruce has produced wood-crafted articles to an extraordinary standard, both in his skill in workmanship and in his inventiveness and imagination.

About ten years ago, he was a dairy farmer which required skills of a different type; then on retirement he wanted a hobby and took up woodwork. As you can see by the photos, some of the equipment used in his "real" life provided the patterns he has used to produce the equivalent in wood. The degree to which these products have been precisely replicated has to be seen to be fully appreciated. The hurricane lamp is perfectly precise, the pump, pumps, the cap is finely threaded" the tank is fine, hollow and would hold water (or kerosene). Only the handle and glass are not of wood. When shown the cricket balls, it is difficult to believe they are not leather with true stitching and weight. The drill works precisely as a hand-drill does work. The blowlamp and soldering iron are perfectly accurate to the manufactured article. The rabbit trap snaps shut (but without the pressure of the real thing).

Bruce's favourite timber is Camphor Laurel, but he has used a wide variety as required by the piece.

Much of his work is imaginatively laminated and few of his pieces are not embellished.

Bruce is a quiet achiever, yet always willing and enthusiastic; constantly demonstrating in a quiet way, willing to share his ideas, methods and techniques.

Bruce has been an active member of Murraylands Club for many years and a member of Hills Woodworkers for approximately three years, cheerfully assisting the functioning of the clubs and extra work as required. He imports timber from N.S.W. to be shared among the other members and is present at the working bees when building work is needed.

Bruce would undoubtedly meet all of the criteria for this award. All who have seen his work have been most impressed by all aspects of his involvement with woodworking. He consistently produces articles of the highest quality - in terms of craftsmanship, technique, design and finish - and does so with a unique innovative flair. His individual projects show a standard of creative execution that can only be wondered at by most people.

As a result he has been a very successful exhibitor in a number of competitions and it is only his innate modesty that has prevented him from achieving much wider recognition. Although generally of a quiet, self-effacing manner, Bruce is always ready to share his skills, knowledge and discoveries with other club members and is therefore a frequent 'guest demonstrator' and practical mentor at our club meetings .

On yet another level, Bruce is also the quintessential club member. During our recent (and ongoing) development of our club premises Bruce has been one of the outstandingly active participants in the building and security of our new shed. Here, again, his skills and dedication have been without equal.

Bruce has been an outstanding practitioner in all aspects of wood turning and its associated crafts. He constantly adds to his own skills by reading, observing and experimenting and is always among the first to be ready to demonstrate his adoption of any new materials or practices.

Everything that he produces exhibits excellence in execution and demonstrates the highest standards of technique, creativity, innovation and attention to detail. He is an outstanding exemplar for all who appreciate fine wood crafting and would be a most worthy recipient of this award.