

THE GUY MASON AWARD 2022 — KEN MASON —



When the Friends Committee met to decide who should be the recipient of the 2022 Guy Mason Award, there was only one name on our lips – Ken Mason.

I first met Ken in 2012. His response to the tragic death of his son Guy in New York was to row a double marathon in 24 hours to raise money for The Connection – aged 75. I was one of scores of friends and relatives who went to watch this feat. While we were treated to a sumptuous lunch and tea provided by Hazel and her friends, Ken slogged away in the garage – with us offering advice and support – while sipping our Sauvignon Blanc! Through sponsorship of Ken and donations to thank Hazel for the wonderful food, over £11,000 was raised for the Connection.

The following year the Friends committee decided to create the Guy Mason award to recognise exceptional support by Friends, and Ken and Hazel were the first recipients. Since then Ken and Hazel have been regular supporters of Friends – here in The Connection, attending events – also donation of high quality suits and towels. They and their friends have been the life and soul of the party carol singing in Charing Cross station.

Their daughter Juliet was instrumental in having a painting done by Rosa Branson to illustrate the work of the Connection. Many of us bought the tea towels and jigsaws – using that picture – as Christmas presents for friends and family. But quite what triggered in his mind undertaking his most recent challenge – well only Ken will know.

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In 2021 Ken decided to cycle 1,000 plus 1,000 miles on his static bike in their spare bedroom to raise money for The Connection. He started – appropriately – on 1st April last year. His target was 10 miles a day. Then he decided that 2,000 miles was not sufficiently ambitious so he amended the target to 3,650 miles. He achieved this amazing feat on 27 March – which just happened to be his 85th birthday! In doing this he has raised £8,704 for the Friends of the Connection.

Ken is no stranger to physical challenges – he is a past winner of both the Stock Exchange and the National London to Brighton race-walking competitions. He is also a “Centurion” – that is someone who has race walked 100 miles in under 24 hours.

Ken you have single handed removed any excuse that any of us might have for being “too old” to undertake fresh challenges. You have demonstrated just what Friendship of The Connection means. Thank you for your magnificent contribution to support the work of the Connection. You are a most worthy recipient of the Guy Mason Award 2022.

Charles Wood

24 September 2022