



LIFE MEMBERSHIP – CHRIS O'BRIEN

Our second nominee for Life Membership tonight joined the Guild in March 1986 and began her service to the Guild in 1987 when she was Committee Hostess and looked after the Newsletter. The following year she was Workshop convenor, both years the late Josie Fradd was President.

After a break of ten years, in 1999 she spent a year as Social Secretary and Membership Secretary when Mary Heard was President.

Following another break, this time of thirteen years, in 2012 she joined Festival of Quilts, a committee she is still a member of today, ten years later. During this time, she has handled on-line entries, sponsorship, special exhibits, the quilting bee, the raffle and the opening ceremony. There are very few roles she has not filled on this committee. In 2021 she, along with Heather Hopkins as quilter, made and donated the raffle quilt. She has always been totally dedicated to Festival of Quilts activities, going above and beyond expectations.

If you haven't worked out by now, I am speaking of none other than Chris O'Brien. 2016 saw Chris join the Executive Committee, for a five-year term, taking on the role of Membership Secretary and Vice President until 2018 when she assumed the role of President. Chris is our immediate past President, an inspirational leader, and thoroughly beautiful soul. Amongst other things she oversaw a significant change to the Executive Committee when the Team Structure for the Guild was introduced, a highly successful innovation moving the Guild forward.

In 2020, with the covid-19 pandemic overtaking our lives it was a particularly challenging time to be "the boss." From the other side of the world in Spain, Chris's first thought was how can we keep our members interested, connected and yes entertained, when we cannot meet face to face. "*Casa Felix*" her first on-line mystery quilt was designed, closely followed by a second quilt and this year a third, all highly successful and enjoyed by hundreds of quilters worldwide.

2020 saw the necessary change to the way we keep our members informed of Guild activities. Chris took on the huge task, with the help of Kathleen Rossini, of turning I-Patch, which was then one page of information, into a 20 plus page digital newsletter, much to the delight of members. All this while still performing her duties as President. Chris continues to serve on the Communications Team and I-Patch has continued to inform and entertain us.

2021 saw Chris join the Meetings Team and also take over the Flinders Kids Quilts programme, spending untold hours quilting tops provided by others. She continues to serve on both of these teams today.

Congratulations Chris, another record of exceptional service to the Guild and a very deserving recipient of Life Membership of the Quilters' Guild of SA Incorporated.

Heather Ford
President, SA Quilters
5 May 2022