



## Far Western District

### Hall of Fame

#### Owen Edwards (posthumously) - 2005

*Owen Edwards, FWD Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony*

Owen Edwards was born in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, in 1921. Of course we all know that the Bartlesville Barflies became the first Quartet Champion of the Society in 1939. But ... Owen was not a part of that quartet.

Owen grew up mostly in western Kansas, attended 17 grade schools and graduated from high school in Ashland, Kansas. He joined the Navy in 1941 and was on the battleship West Virginia at Pearl Harbor. Also in the Navy during the Korean War, the ship he was on got sunk. Think about that!

After the wars, Owen went to Washington, D.C. to work for the Department of the Army. During that time he joined the Washington Chapter of the SPEBSQSA in 1960, and later the Prince George's County Chapter in Maryland.

One of Owen's proudest moments was the Society's Midwinter Convention which was held in Washington as part of our Nation's 1976 Bicentennial. Owen was an organizer of the "Salute to America" program, which was held at the Kennedy Center and featured 225 barbershoppers from the Washington, D.C. area as the "Chorus of the Potomac." Freddy King and Bob Johnson led the chorus, and were most grateful to Owen.

He retired in 1980 and headed to Carlsbad, New Mexico. While visiting family in Texas, his wife became ill and passed away. Owen stayed in Texas with his daughter and son and soon joined the Arlington Chapter.

But ... retirement wasn't suitable. He went to Kenosha and met with then Executive Director Hugh Ingraham. That meeting resulted in a volunteer corps of membership ambassadors for the Society and Owen became the first International Membership Counselor. A man of action, he visited over 100 chapters in 42 states and five provinces of Canada in three years. It is a matter of record that the Society reached its all-time high in membership during those years.

While visiting the San Luis Obispo Chapter in 1984, Owen met legendary barbershopper Howard Scanlon and his daughter Kathie. That led to marriage in April, and from then on they were together essentially "24/7." They settled in Reseda in the San Fernando Valley. After directing the Santa Clarita Valley Chapter for a while, he joined the Valleyaires and stayed. He continued to be active with Society COTS faculties, teaching membership classes through the late 80s.

District President Lloyd Steinkamp appointed Owen *Westunes* Editor in 1990 and with Kathie as office manager, they produced and mailed *Westunes* for over a decade. Few know just how big that task is.

Owen and Kathie are famous for the Howard Scanlon Afterglow Without A Show and Woodshed Contest. Following Owen's death, Kathie established the Chapter of the Year Award from the Owen Edwards family.

As Chairman of the Hall of Fame Committee, it is my honor to induct **Owen Edwards** into the FWD Hall of Fame.