2011 Michael W. Teitelman Leadership Award
Kelley Lowe
Visual Arts Faculty 1975 – 2009

"Art is a form of communication that works well for me. I discovered that I could say more through my art than in any other way," says Kelley Lowe, an icon in the Bishop’s community of budding artists.

With a master’s degree in painting, drawing and sculpture from San Diego State University, Kelly was teaching art orientation at Mesa College when one of his students brought him to the attention of The Bishop’s School. She was the wife of the School’s chaplain and knew that Bishop’s was looking for an art teacher. Kelley was hired by former Head of School Dorothy Williams in 1975 and began a teaching career at Bishop’s that would span 34 years until his retirement in 2009.

When Kelley joined the faculty the current art department in Gilman Hall was a holdover from boarding days and looked nothing like it does today. Without plans and money to remodel the small dorm rooms, Kelley put his carpentry skills to good use and won approval from the School to take on the task himself. He drew up plans and, along with two friends, knocked down walls and built out the entire art department space that students and teachers still use today. He even hired the contractors to put in carpet, plumbing and electrical wiring. Years later, when the ceramics studio became too crowded, Kelley proposed a plan to take over a vacated chemistry laboratory in lower Gilman Hall. He oversaw the space conversion into a much larger, more efficient and spacious studio.

Mr. Lowe’s classes are legendary in their popularity among Bishop’s students. Although he is an extraordinary artist whose work is on permanent display at the Contemporary Fine Arts Gallery in La Jolla and the winner of the prestigious National Art Education Association Award for Art School Excellence, Kelley’s hopes for his students were of self-discovery.

“Perhaps I could get students in my classes to realize that art is something that would allow them the opportunity to present thoughts and feelings that they had been unable to get across to others in any other way.” Kelley is the first teacher at Bishop’s to reach the level of Master Teacher.

Kelley and his wife, Linda, have been married for forty-three years and they have three grown and married children: Traci, Jodie and Scott. Besides maintaining his own active art career including ceramics, woodworking and painting, he surfs several times a week, works on his three classic cars, and takes day trips with Linda on his motorcycle.
For his 32-years of dedication to the Bishop’s Visual Arts Program and his students, we are honored to present the Michael W. Teitelman Leadership Award to Kelley Lowe.