



NEWS

This Member newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of the SHARPSTEEN MUSEUM ASSOCIATION, a non-profit organization.

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Message from the Board:

We're not being idle

Although COVID-19 has required that the Museum keep its doors closed for these past few months, we have not been idle.

A new special exhibit featuring the art of the late Calistoga resident Earl Thollander has been installed and is ready for visitors to view once we can reopen.

Membership newsletters are produced

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REMINISCENCE, PART 2

Creating pieces for main diorama

"There were times that I would be in tears and wanted to give up the whole project. Ben was such a perfectionist and his approval was so important to me."

-Ruth Durbin

by Ruth Durbin

Requests for more and more buildings were coming so fast that we became completely snowed under. Ben sent his granddaughter Gail, to help us. Gail spent hours on end gluing on the thousands of shingles, the most tedious, boring job imaginable. I shall never



Volunteer Ruth Durbin works on figurines that will populate the streets and sidewalks of the main diorama at the Sharpsteen Museum.

forget her cheerful help. She was such a joy to work with.

About this time, Ben received a full-size rough painting of the mural from Kendall O'Connor, with whom he had worked at Disney Studios. This he affixed to a

wall in his studio. Sheets of plywood were set on sawhorses and pushed against the mural. I, being the youngest and lightest, had the undignified job of climbing up on the shaky platform and on my

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Paul Claudon \$2,000 Scholarship winner chosen

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that Jesus Rojas Mendoza is our choice for the annual Paul Claudon Sharpsteen Museum Scholarship award of \$2,000.

His enthusiasm and can-do attitude will serve him well for the rigors of college. Jesus says the displays in the museum have shown him that if Calistoga

can become a thriving town from a dusty little place, anyone can become anything they desire.

As a young child, Jesus fought conditions that made him different and then suffered the teasing of others because of them. With heroic effort he overcame his

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Jesus Mendoza

WINNER*Continued from page 1*

problems, and today—despite the difficulties—his radiant smile shines.

He acknowledges all the help he has received and has a strong desire to give back, which he's done by volunteering at the UpValley Family Center. Another way

he plans to do this is by becoming a construction manager so he can build quality houses.

Four years in four different sports, soccer, football, basketball and baseball have shown his dedication and provided him an opportunity to show he is a leader who can unify his teams.

Not only did our win-

ner received the Funke Blanket, given to the top male athlete at Calistoga High School, but he has a baseball scholarship to Sacramento State.

Good luck to the “Baby Bull,” as his coach calls him. His tenacity and positive attitude will carry Jesus far in his career.

*Dina Corcoran
Scholarship Committee*

DIORAMA*Continued from page 1*

hands and knees moving the cottages an inch to the left, a quarter to the right, forward, back, to assure the proper perspective with the painting.

The only comforting thought while I crawled around on the shaky plywood sheets was that Bernice (Sharpsteen) would have tea and cake waiting for us in front of their big stone fireplace.

After working with Ben for many months, I felt I really knew just how he pictured the completed project. I thought with his connections he would know just where various items could be found to bring the diorama alive.

I soon discovered that it was up to me to locate the wherewithal to carry out his ideas. He seemed to think that I could produce anything he wanted.

The subject of people and animals came up. I

suppose there are artists who can be commissioned to create these things. Just for fun I made one little lady, making a hand mold from one of my Dresden figurines and a wire body. He (Ben) was intrigued because the figure could be bent in any position. Guess who was “commissioned” to produce the resort population!

I made several latex molds but after pouring the plaster and waiting for it to dry I would come up with possibly one out of three perfect heads. I soon realized that I would still be making little people long after the museum was due to open.

One day while hunting for supplies in a hobby shop in Sacramento I came across little plastic brides and grooms just the right size for the diorama. After cutting off the upper torso and adding arms and legs of wire and florist tape I could

make a figure in about twenty minutes. A little plaster and paint gave them individuality.

Among my acquisitions for the project were many books on costumes and activities of the 1860's. Ben wanted all the figures doing things.

I stayed awake nights thinking up activities for my little people.



My husband thought up having the “fancy” lady being evicted from the hotel, her trunk falling open after being thrown out behind her. The hotel keeper was to be pointing his finger at her as if to say, “We want none of





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MISSION STATEMENT:
The Museum's mission is to preserve and to provide for public exhibitions and study of the history of the community of Calistoga and the upper Napa Valley.

your kind at this resort!”

Ben, who was a very proper gentleman, on seeing the setup, said “Oh, Ruth, we can't have that. Children will be coming to the museum and must not be subjected to anything immoral.”

I loved my little lady trying to put her pantaloons back in her trunk and really felt if a child understood the implication no harm was done. Ben admitted that he liked her but balked at having the hotel keeper pointing his finger at her. I felt it didn't make much sense that way, but who was I to argue?

The only other disagreement we had was over the outhouses. . .

TO BE CONTINUED

Books on history of Suffragette Movement

“We women demand an equal voice, we shall accept nothing less.”

*Carrie Chapman Catt,
Suffragette, 1902*

August 18, 2020 marks the One-Hundred-Year Anniversary of the Ratification of the 19th Amendment to our Constitution giving all women the right to vote.

This hard fought endeavor took over 100 years to achieve. The first rumblings began as early as the American Revolution. Thomas Jefferson penned the first draft of the Declaration of Independence, in part stating “...all men are created equal.” When future President John Adams tells his wife Abigail of the phrase, she replied “don’t forget the ladies.” At this point in history, some women of the 13 colonies had limited voting rights. Ultimately,



The museum’s 1995 4th of July parade entry celebrating the 75th anniversary of Women’s Right to Vote.

“the ladies” were forgotten.

This led to the Suffragette Movement. Many of the suffragettes began as abolitionists during the Civil War and from there the struggle for equal rights for all grew. As part of reconstruction, the 15th Amendment made it illegal for the Federal or State Government to deny any US citizen the right to vote. This amendment was specific to black men. Women again were excluded.

Suffrage movements spread throughout the country due to the determination of women such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Carrie Chapman Catt, Ida B. Wells, Lucretia Mott & Alice Paul. Yet as they would gain momentum with some individual states and territories granting suffrage, the Supreme Court would intervene and strike down the law.

Suffragettes marched, protested, and carried

signs for decades while speaking to the crowds.

One of the most effective orators was Carrie Chapman Catt with her rallying cry “To the wrongs that need resistance, to the right that needs assistance, to the future in the distance, Give Yourselfes!”

Note: in 1919 the National American Woman Suffrage Association holds its convention in St. Louis, MO where Catt rallies to transform the association into the League of Women Voters. She succeeds in 1920, six months before the 19th Amendment was ratified.

Suffragettes were often beaten in the street, clothes torn from their bodies, arms broken, arrested and incarcerated. Not to be deterred, in 1913 Alice Paul organizes the Woman’s Suffrage Procession, the largest parade to date, in Washington, DC on the eve of Woodrow Wilson’s Inauguration. In January 1919, the National Women’s Party lights and guards a “Watchfire for Freedom.” It is maintained until the 19th Amendment to the Constitution passes the US Senate on June 4th.

Suffrage was not limited to the United States;

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MESSAGE

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every two months, book sales continue online and by appointment, the Board responds to requests for information and comment on public issues related to history and historic preservation, and we have set up a raffle to substitute for the annual Instant Wine Cellar fund-raising event. We are working with the City on a plan for safely reopening and look forward

to the time when, once again, we can begin sharing our “little gem of a museum” with the public. All of these behind-the-scenes activities require financial support, so now is the time for you to renew your annual membership. Letters will go out to those members who need to renew annually. Mail your dues payment in the return envelope enclosed in the letter, or by going to our website at www.sharpsteenmuseum.org

BOOKSTORE*Continued from page 3*

it took Great Britain's suffragettes about 50 years to convince Parliament to grant the voting privilege.

Three books are recommended, on our shelves and available for purchase. Use our website to send us a message of your title choice; we will contact you to arrange payment, etc.

1. *Woman Suffrage & Politics: the Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement* by author Carrie Chapman Catt. 512 pgs., \$16.95

2. *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* by author Rosalyn Terborg-Penn. 220 pgs., \$22.95

3. *The Suffragette, History of the Women's Militant Suffrage Movement* by author Sylvia Pankhurst. (specific to the suffrage movement of Great Britain). 505 pgs., \$15.95

Members receive 10% discount. Sales tax applies & \$3.50 media mail (if we ship).

Kathy Bazzoli,
Book Store Chair
Lorne Glaim,
Co-Chair

Special Wine Raffle

The Instant Wine Cellar Event may be cancelled for this year, but you still have an opportunity to win some premium Napa Valley wine. Instead, thanks to last year's generous wine donors, we are able to raffle one mixed case of premium Napa Valley wines and a wonderful second prize of a 6-liter bottle of Robert Pecota 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, thanks to the generosity of the late vintner's family.

Consider purchasing tickets for this year's raffle: tickets are \$10 each or 5 for \$40. Simply send a check payable to SMA to PO Box 573, Calistoga 94515. Be sure to note it is a donation for this raffle and include your telephone number. Drawing will take place Aug. 29. As in the past, we will take care of filling out your tickets and depositing them for the drawing.

Pat Larsen, Ways & Means Chair

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