



NEWS

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

VOL. 39, NO. 5 ■ Aug/Sept 2021

Message from
the Board:

We need your help!

Now that pandemic restrictions have eased, we're all looking forward to resuming some meaningful social activities, including our involvement with the Sharpsteen.

There are two areas where the Museum can use your help and involvement right now.

First of all, it's Instant Wine Cellar time again. Now in its 33rd year, the Instant Wine Cellar is the Sharpsteen's major fund-raiser, helping to support the general operations of the entire organization.

In keeping with our community's pandemic cautions, we won't be hosting the large public event held in past years, but we

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Gift opened in 1978

On that auspicious September evening in 1978 when the Sharpsteen Museum officially opened its doors, Ben Sharpsteen gifted his museum to the City of Calistoga. Peter Kagel was Mayor at the time and humbly accepted ownership of the Sharpsteen. The scissors were brought out, the ribbon was cut, and multitudes

graced our threshold for the first time. The following was Ben's speech as transcribed from his hand-written notes:

"The Museum Auxiliary and the Sharpsteen family welcome you here to enjoy our displays. Many years of research and planning, combined with the generous contributions of funds and countless hours of volunteer services have made this possible.

"The result is a re-creation of Calistoga from its humble beginnings to the transition period when automobile replaced the horse.

"I have tried to capture the unique charm of the upper Napa Valley. The majestic Mt. St. Helena with its companion, the Palisades to the north, looking down upon the fertile valley nestling Calistoga- its railroad depot and quaint main street within its embrace, bordered to the south by St. Helena and the beautiful range of fir clad hills and on the west by lofty mountain ranges.

"We are dedicated to a succession of pioneers. This tribute to them was made possible by my grandmother, Katherine Crittenden Sharpsteen, who in 1880 invested a widow's dowry in a fantastic scheme for profit. It ended disastrously but without that mishap I would not have been saturated with Calistoga lore and the desire to preserve for all time my childhood impressions. Pause a moment – reflect upon the past – and join the Sharpsteen Family in its simple enjoyment of a priceless heritage. I welcome you."

As we honor Ben and our 43rd anniversary we need to thank the multitudes of volunteers that made this happen, the volunteers that keep our doors open to this day. Our volunteers past, present and future are what drives Ben's vision, a vision of which we are proud to be a part.



Happy Trails!

PART THREE**SHARPSTEEN MUSEUM STORY TOLD
IN BEN SHARPSTEEN'S OWN WORDS****Ben**

In about 1978, museum member W.S. Fullerton (or "Bud" as we knew him) conducted a lengthy interview and recorded it on tape. It is the only record in Ben Sharpsteen's own voice telling how it all came about. It was later transcribed and included in the booklet "About Ben" which is available in the museum bookstore. This interview will be printed in this and future newsletters as space allows.

After some time passed the Historical Society, a voluntary and a non-profit group, had no funds to provide for these stored things. The idea came up that they might persuade the Board of Directors of the Calistoga Fair Association to give them storage space, enough to improve a token museum.

The Fair Board granted a very small space within a large building, Tubbs Hall at the Fair Grounds, and some volunteer members of the Society improvised displays. The location was not good. There were many people there on special occasions such as during Fair season, but no one would ever think to look at a museum there at any other time of the year.

As a matter of fact, the museum was hardly worthy of the public's acceptance, being so

meager, but there it stayed and endured year after year. Marcella Rice and some of her relatives were probably the only ones that made it possible for those things to stay there. I can't help but feel

a considerable sympathy for her efforts on behalf of this challenge, but the only thing I could think of was to try to provide some means for a building.

It occurred to us, my wife and I, that instead of going around and begging for people to make donations, which was terribly embarrassing to me, we could entirely on our own finance a building. The County Historical Society, headquartered in Napa, felt that a noble and worthwhile idea but admitted they had no funds whatsoever to provide for the upkeep of such a place. They not only had no funds but they could not even

guarantee volunteer help. They could not guarantee that among their membership they would have volunteers who could keep such a thing going.

Then I thought perhaps, we needed very badly a sponsor, but I did not think the City of Calistoga was mature enough to undertake a thing like this even though it would be a gift. So I went to the State of California and suggested that maybe they would like a building under these terms on the site of the Old Mill between St. Helena and Calistoga.

The State Department of Recreation was very

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"Dawn on Jan 6 (1977) found this strange apparition (Sam Brannan Cottage) moving down Lincoln Avenue, headed for the empty lot next to the Sharpsteen Museum." From The Weekly Calistogan, Thursday, January 13, 1977.

BOARD

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are raffling off an “Instant Wine Cellar” of five cases of premium wines from Napa Valley producers and a couple of additional surprises.

You can help by donating wine and buying and/or selling raffle tickets. The actual drawing will be held on August 28 at the Museum. Tickets are \$10 each, or 5 for \$40, and are available at the Museum.

If you would prefer you may fill out the order form included in this newsletter, or you may download a form at www.sharpsteenmuseum.org and return your order either by mail or personal delivery to the Museum.

You may also order



Mark Petersen is congratulated by Dario and Irina Sattui at the 2019 Instant Wine Auction.

tickets by calling or emailing me at (510-410-4558) dirofdev48@gmail.com. Tickets purchased by August 15 will be entered into a pre-drawing for a special prize. Please contact me if you can donate wine or assist with ticket sales.

The second way you can help the Sharpsteen

right now is by becoming a Volunteer Docent.

If you are reading this newsletter, you are obviously interested in local history. How about taking that interest a step further and sharing it with museum visitors? Training is provided, and becoming a docent is an excellent excuse for increasing

your own knowledge of Upper Valley history. Docent Chair Jane Bennett would be delighted to get you started. Contact her at (757) 536-1146 or janemooringbennett@gmail.com.

Thanks for your continued support for our terrific little museum. When I am working as a docent, I am always impressed by the enthusiastic response of our visitors.

Please give us your financial support with the IWC Raffle and by joining the team of delightful local history buffs who have become docents.

Pat Larsen
IWC Chair and
7-year Docent

Scholarship winner to study bioengineering

The Scholarship Committee is glad to announce that Jimena Guerrero is the winner of the Paul Claudon Sharpsteen Scholarship Award of \$2,000.

She is interested in museums, both local and Italian, and understands that we need to know how we got here before we can move forward into the future.

Jimena spent her junior year studying in Italy, where she learned to accept and appreciate other cultures—important in today’s global economy.

She will attend San Jose State

University where she will pursue the field of bioengineering. She became interested in this topic while participating in the Engineering and Robotics Club where she co-captained a group that built a hovercraft; they won a perseverance award for their persistence.

Gracefully vivacious, Jimena appears unstoppable. She is enthusiastic toward life, possessing a zest for it that is amazing. It will take her far. We wish her bon voyage.

Dina Corcoran
Scholarship Chair



Jimena Guerrero

IN HIS OWN WORDS

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favorable toward the idea and were 100% in accord with it. In other words, they would not only accept the building but would accept full participation of maintaining it and keeping it in existence.

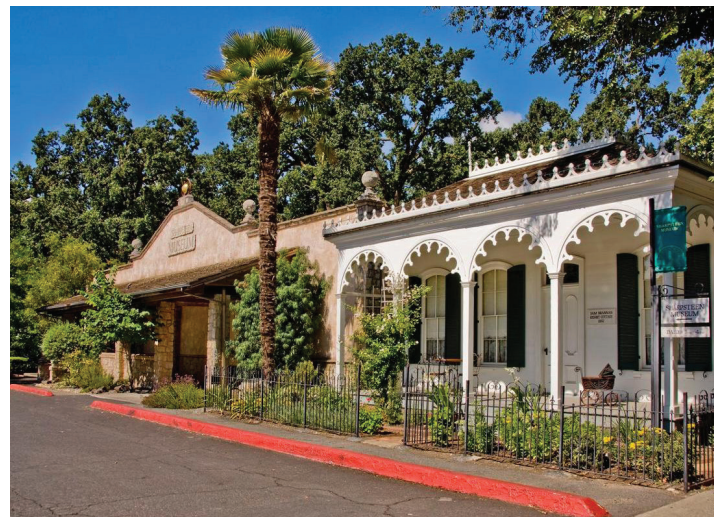
It meant acquiring more property-- there was less than an acre of land on the premises and that was insufficient even for light parking and picnicking. They expected to have a donation of several hundred extra acres there and when that came about they would consider it more closely. In the meantime, the promise of more land had its complications and never went through. It was suggested that perhaps we would accept a place or acreage so to speak and bought it for the Park for such a museum. They were very eager for us to have it and very eager to participate.



Today the Sam Brannan Cottage is an integral part of the historical experience guests enjoy every day.

About that time there were some people in Calistoga who were upset because the last remaining Brannan cottage was fast going to ruin and it would be but a short matter of time before there would be nothing left of it to restore.

TO BE CONTINUED



We are happy to announce that as of August 1st we will again be open 7 days per week. Unfortunately, due to our limited number of docents, we are only able to staff the Museum for 3 hours a day at this time. Our wonderful docents will be there from 12:00 PM until 3:00 PM each day to welcome our visitors. We hope to have more people join our current dedicated crew of docents so that, perhaps by October, we can return to our pre-Pandemic hours of operation.



Earl Thollander print of city hall for sale at Museum Gift Store

We have Earl Thollander prints of the Calistoga City Hall, circa 1976 painted for the 100th anniversary of the original Calistoga incorporation.

Prints include the signature of Earl Thollander. These are printed on heavier stock and suitable for framing (19" w x 13" h including white edge back-ground).

For sale @ \$20.00/each (less 10% for members) plus tax. Shipping is available at additional cost. Visit the museum to purchase or contact us via our web site, contact page. We'll take care of it.

We thank you for your support!

MEMBERSHIP



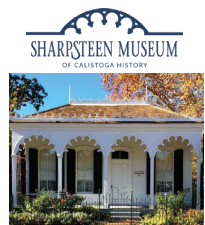
New Business Member
Sofie Contemporary Art

WE CAN SHIP IT!

Is there a book in our store that you would like to purchase and ship home or to a friend? First of all, take your 10% member's discount, add sales tax and \$5 for shipping. Simply give us the particulars and we will do the rest.

Gift Shoppe items can also be mailed; shipping charges will apply de-

pending on the size and weight, \$5 minimum. All you need to do is ask.



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Museum Hours: 11 am-4 pm daily, except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

BOARD MEMBERS:

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Bev Barnes: Collections Chair
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Editor: Shari Hanson

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.

BEST OF THE BEST

Team Docent for May & June

The following dedicated docents greeted visitors during May and June of 2021.

Great job!

Bev Barnes
Kathy Bazzoli
Jane Bennett
Judith Cornils
Lorne Glaim
Marilyn Glaim

Sally Houk
Cathy Keag
Jackie Lang
Pat Larsen
John Rickman
Lauren Thollander

Wendy Watson
Doug Webb
Lamar Webb
Jeannie Williams
Ron Yost



End up exactly where you're meant to be--
Volunteer at the Sharpsteen Museum!



**Learn about Calistoga's past and
 become part of our future.**

Be a Volunteer Docent— Have fun and give back
 to your community. You choose your day(s) and shift(s).

For more information, please contact the Museum Docent Chair Jane
 Bennett at (757) 536-1146, or email her: janemooringbennett@gmail.com

Thank you for your support!!! Happy Trails!!!



1311 Washington St., Calistoga, CA. 94515 • (707) 942-5911 • sharpsteenmuseum.org

Smiles all around!



Visitors from Fremont on July 4th enjoying their tour
 with Docent Doug Webb (second from right). Good
 job, Doug!

Have you purchased your IWC tickets yet?



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