



NEWS

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

VOL. 39, NO. 4 ■ June/July 2021

Message from
the Board:

Doors are open again!

The day was Friday, April 16th, 2021 - the Sharpsteen reopens its doors after a long thirteen months of closure.

Even though our current operating hours are restricted to Fri-Sun, 12-3, we are happy to tell you the visitor count is over 130 (Apr. 16-May 1) and growing!

Once COVID is better contained with more people being vaccinated and we achieve a safer environment, we plan to go back to our regular operating hours of 7 days a week, 11-4. Keep your fingers crossed.

June 1st begins our new fiscal year 2021-2022. Membership renewal letters will be mailed to all members

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Return of the CHAMP

It was Calistoga in April of 1955 when Rocky Marciano rolled into town. Rocky, the undisputed heavyweight Champion of the World was here to spend six weeks training for a fight at Kezar Stadium against contender Don Cockell. Rocky won that fight as well as other bouts against the likes of Ezzard Charles, Artie Donato, Joe Louis, Jersey Joe Wolcott and Archie Moore. He ended his career with 49 wins and zero losses.

Fast forward to April 16, 2021. The phone rings at the Sharpsteen and Docent Lauren Thollander answers.

"Hello," the caller says. "This is Perry Marciano, Rocky's nephew, and I was wondering if you had any history on his visit to Calistoga in 1955?"

Dutiful Docent Lauren took his name and phone number and passed on the information. The call was,



Dan Bazzoli and Nick Triglia bookend Perry Marciano, the nephew of fighter Rocky Marciano, during his visit to Calistoga and the Sharpsteen Museum on April 30.

of course, returned and then another and another. What a great guy.

We knew we had something precious in our hands, a piece of Calistoga history wanting to visit. He was invited to the museum and on Friday, April 30 at 11:50 a.m. he walked through our doors.

To prepare for Perry's visit we had invited local historian Nick Triglia (his father Al was instrumen-

tal in bringing Rocky to town), publisher of the Calistoga Tribune Pat Hampton, photographer Clark Mishler, editor of The Weekly Calistogan Cynthia Sweeney, and local Dan Bazzoli with a photo showing his father Nilo with Rocky. Nick brought photos from Rocky's time here in 1955. We sat and shared stories, a lot of stories, and learned a much more

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in a few weeks. If you would prefer not to mail a check, please use our website.

In our last newsletter we included the annual ballots for our members to vote on the SMA & SMF Board of Directors for 2021-2022. Many of you responded by returning the ballots and, for that, we thank you.

Now that the Sharpsteen is back up and running we have much to

accomplish in the coming months (depending on COVID, of course). As soon as it is possible you will again be able to enjoy our special guest lectures, Meet the Author Days, Instant Wine Cellar, other events and celebrations. Please continue to access our website for more information and announcements @ www.sharpsteenmuseum.org.

We look forward to seeing you all again very soon, and we thank you for your ongoing support.



Docent John Rickman shares stories of Calistoga's history with visitors to the museum.



Some of our visitors stopped to check out the offerings in our Book Store.

MEMBERSHIP**New Members**

John Schaad
Pete Fullerton
Linda Moulton

**General Donation**

St. Helena Montessori School

Memorial Donations

In Memory of Sandy Herlihy
In Memory of Ray Breitenstein

In Memoriam

Dieter Deiss

Instant Wine Cellar Celebration set for Aug. 28

We are delighted that the Museum has re-opened on a limited basis after so many shuttered months during the pandemic.

Along with the limited opening hours and safety precautions, we've also had to make some adjustments to how we will celebrate our annual Instant Wine Cellar fund-raiser.

This year we will postpone the accompanying event we've enjoyed for so many years and hold just a raffle. One Grand Prize of 5 cases of premium wines from Napa Valley producers will be awarded, as well as a few extra surprise items.

The drawing will take place on

Saturday, Aug. 28 at the Museum. Prize winners will be notified by telephone or email.

Tickets are \$10 each or 5 for \$40. You may purchase your tickets at the Museum during normal opening hours (currently noon-3pm, Friday-Sunday), use the enclosed form to order them, or visit the Museum website www.sharpsteenmuseum.org to download an order form.

Raffle tickets ordered via the form will be filled out for the purchaser and deposited directly into the raffle drum. If using the form to order, please complete all blanks (including winner information, payment method, credit card info,

etc.). Include your payment (check or credit card information) and mail to or drop off at the Museum located at 1311 Washington St., Calistoga CA 94515.

Buy as many tickets as you wish, then invite family, friends and neighbors to try their luck. All proceeds from this fundraiser benefit programs and projects at our all-volunteer museum.

If you are available to help with wine donation solicitation, mailings or ticket sales, please contact us. We'd love your help.

Pat & Dave Larsen
IWC Chairs

510-410-4558 phone/text or
email dirofdev48@gmail.com

CHAMP

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personal aspect of Rocky the man, and Perry the man.

For instance, Rocky was a focused, methodical, well trained mad-dog in the ring. In his personal life he was humble and caring, always showing respect to anyone that approached him. He came from a close-knit Italian family and tended them all carefully and lovingly.

It was obvious that Perry carries those same attributes. Proud of his family legacy but speaking only with humility and heart, he is in keeping with his family's

sentiment. Perry also explained that the family surname is actually "Marchegiano", apparently it was too hard for people to pronounce so Rocky made the change to "Marciano".

Perry told us how he had boxed when he was younger, as did his father. At this point in Perry's life he is wanting to travel and walk the footsteps of his beloved Uncle Rocky, hence the visit to Calistoga.

The 90-minute visit flew by. Dan Bazzoli took Perry to lunch at the Hydro (Perry said it was the best Rueben sandwich he's ever had) and from there they drove up to



Rocky Marciano, Heavyweight Champion of the world.

Hanly's on the mountain (the road Rocky would run every morning), down

again past the Calistoga Motor Lodge (in 1955 was Silverado Motel owned by Mel Avila) where Rocky and his entourage stayed gratis, through town and out to the fairgrounds where Rocky trained during those historic six weeks in 1955.

Dan says that Perry was taking pictures the entire way.

It's been 66 years since that historic event and we're still talking about it and remembering.

The Sharpsteen is proud to have hosted Perry, proud that he chose to call us, and prouder still that we met this great man.

PART TWO

SHARPSTEEN MUSEUM STORY TOLD IN BEN SHARPSTEEN'S OWN WORDS

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.



Ben

It was during my earlier acquaintance with Ivy Loeber after I had retired and moved here that she proposed I serve on a committee to seriously consider the rebuilding of the old Brannan stables that were still intact. In the interval it had been a winery but at this time it was just an empty building that was owned by Walter Fox. Ivy Loeber had gone to Walter Fox to ask if he wouldn't donate the one remaining cottage that was unused, there in its original place.

He replied that the cottage was too small to serve the purpose of a museum but that he would agree to let her have the big old stables on a nominal lease basis if the society would refurbish it and put in displays. He would retain the privileges of any sales from the gift shop which she proposed to have within the building. I got hold of acquaintances, old time friends, and we drew up plans for how this building could be put into service to make an interesting museum.

However, as attractive as the plans looked in pencil sketches, the whole thing would have required a great deal of money. The plans needed specialized artwork and designing, and the cost estimate was quite high; this in spite of the fact that the building was there, was empty, and had a roof.

Somebody had to raise the money, a new experience to me. I didn't relish it and stated I did not consider myself qualified to undertake something like that. However, we did present the plans to everybody that we thought would be interested but to my shocked surprise we found people were suddenly 100% dis-



Ivy Loeber

Photo courtesy Napa Historical Society

interested when it meant reaching in their pockets and pulling out some money. In other words, I was shocked by the tightwads in the community who were willing to talk about a museum but not willing to put up anything for it.

Ivy Loeber herself was a gifted evangelist and an organizer and a preacher, so to speak, but she had no abilities whatsoever for getting down to the hard problem of getting funds. So the whole thing was abandoned. However, it left a terrific impression upon me because I could see great possibilities and I loved the whole idea of preserving heritage.

As I said, I came by it honestly from my parents who had spoken eloquently of the old days, and I hoped that something could be done to retain some semblance of them. As time went on, in spite of the fact that Ivy Loeber still had this great ambition, she had acquired very little in the way of artifacts for the museum. She had, however, gained a number of assurances and promises from others that such things would be forthcoming in the event we ever could provide a building.

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Light it up!



We've been busy while we were closed during the Pandemic. The diorama has been refurbished and a team of electricians has installed a special new lighting system to enhance our visitors' experience. Stop by and see how wonderful it looks in person and then be sure to check out the Thollander Exhibit, too.

Death overcame Ivy Loeber very suddenly. She lived alone in St. Helena and she had developed a very close friend, a young woman who was helpful to her and dedicated to the cause, a Marcella Rice. Marcella was shocked to find an apparent relative of Ivy Loeber's claiming many of the things that she had held for the museum, so she, in a last-minute rush, took hold of everything she could get her hands on and put them in storage with the consent of the Historical Society.

BEST OF THE BEST

Team Docent for April

The following dedicated docents greeted visitors during April of 2021.

Great job!

Bev Barnes
Jane Bennett
Judith Cornils
Lorne Glaim
Marilyn Glaim
Sally Houk
Cathy Keag
Jackie Lang
Pat Larsen
John Rickman

Lauren Thollander
Bill Thomas
Doug Webb
Lamar Webb
Jeannie Williams



Thollander exhibit open to public

Our newest exhibit, "A Retrospective of Earl Thollander – Recording Life Through Art" is now open to the public.

This family exhibit, spearheaded by Lauren Thollander, has virtually taken months to complete. To get final approval, we asked Lauren to bring her mother-in-law Janet to view the five display cases filled with their shared memories. Luckily for us, Janet gave us the Thumbs-up we were hoping for.

Come, enjoy it!



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Email: info@sharpsteenmuseum.org
Museum House Tel: 942-5916
Museum Hours: 11 am-4 pm daily, except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Alan Rogers: President
Kathy Bazzoli: First VP
Marcia Ciarlo: Second VP
Peggy Berlin: Recording Secretary
Barbara Lencioni: Treasurer
Jane Bennett: Docent Chair
Jackie Lang: Education Chair
Bev Barnes: Collections Chair
Pat Larsen: Ways & Means Chair

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.



Are you looking for something interesting to fill some of your days? We can help!

The Museum is in need of more docents and we would love to have you join us. Call Docent Chair Jane Bennett at (757) 536-1146 to arrange for training.



Election Results:

Election Results for the Museum Association board of directors were:

President

Alan Rogers

1st Vice-Pres.

Kathy Bazzoli

2nd Vice-Pres.

Marcia Ciarlo

Recording Sec'y

Peggy Berlin

Treasurer

Barbara Lencioni

Docent Chair

Jane Bennett

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Jackie Lang

Ways & Means Chair

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Collections Chair

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Leonard LeBranche

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