



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:

On Friday the 13th

We are sure you have all been wondering “what the heck is going on with the Museum?” We are here to let you know, so read on.

It was Friday, March 13th at 2:00 PM that the decision was made to close the Museum. Due to the threat of the coronavirus, our concern was for the safety of our docents and volunteers.

The original closure was to be through March, obviously things changed. The Sharpsteen will open soon following mandates established by the State of California and County of Napa. We will post updates to our website as soon as we can so keep checking.

The Preview Party

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REMINISCENCE, PART 1

Ben wanted to see my dollhouse!

by Ruth Durbin

Upon retiring in 1971, with time on my hands, I enrolled in Dave Huddleston’s oil painting class. I had been an art major in college but had never pursued my education. (My other interest on retirement was building and furnishing a doll house.)

One night after class Dave told me that Ben Sharpsteen wanted to meet me. What an honor to have someone of Ben Sharpsteen’s caliber interested in my paintings! I hadn’t realized, I “modestly” thought, that I was that talented!

Ben and his wife, Bernice, arrived at our home at the appointed time. I had spent much time arranging and rearranging my paintings for advantageous lighting. His first words were: “I came to see your dollhouse. “ Pouf! so much for my ego!

Ben told us his dream of building a museum in Calistoga in memory of the early settlers. He explained that he was looking for someone to do the

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“When Ben Sharpsteen saw a four-story Victorian doll house, complete with all furnishings and a family of four, plus three servants which was made by Mr. and Mrs. Bob Durbin of Diamond Mt. Rd., he engaged them to make the miniatures of Sam Brannan’s buildings for his museum.”

—The Weekly Calistogan, Feb. 19, 1976

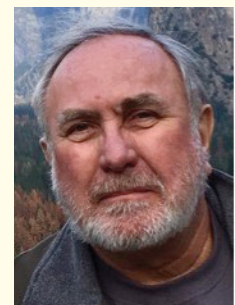
In 1993, Ruth Durbin compiled all of her memories of constructing the miniature displays with her husband Bob, and of working with Ben and other artists on the museum in the 1970’s.

We present her story entitled “Reminiscence” along with photos from the archives in installments as space allows beginning with this newsletter.

Voting results are in for 2020-2021

Thank you to all members who sent in your ballots for the new Board of Directors for fiscal year June 1, 2020-2021.

Many of you included encouraging comments such as “Go Team Sharpsteen!”, “Thank You to all who keep Ben & Bernice’s museum going for us” and “Thank You for your hard work!”



Alan Rogers

See VOTE COUNT pg 2