

Ben Sharpsteen's Speech at the Museum Opening- September 30, 1978  
Transcribed from handwritten notes (possibly a draft of the actual speech)

"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 the 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 1890 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."

-Ben Sharpsteen

