

Carl Barks

Issue Number 54

FAN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Summer 2013

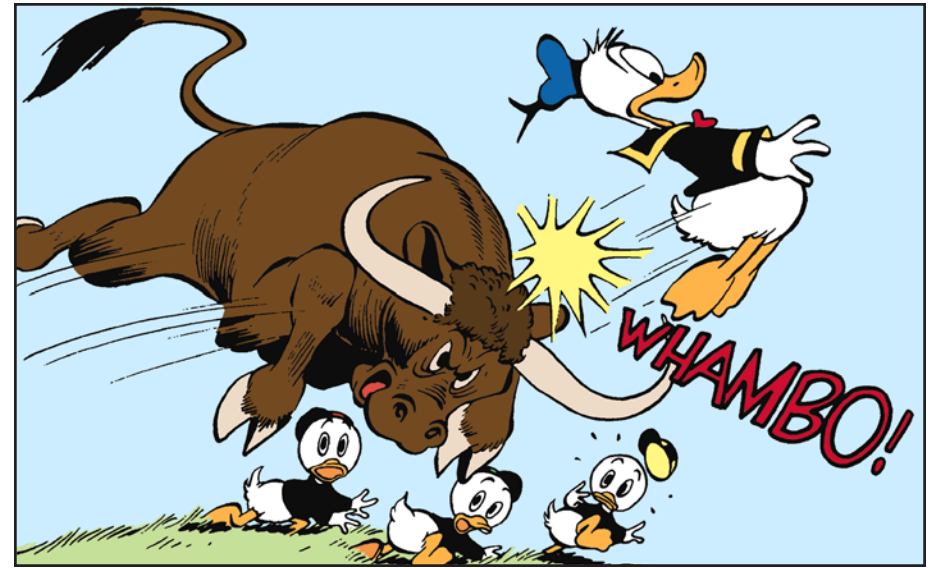
RECOLORING CARL:

Beyond the Pinnacles Where the Condors Fly.

by Joseph Robert Cowles, CBFC Special Projects Coordinator

TWO SUMMERS AGO we reported that Fantagraphics Books was preparing to introduce a new series of hardcover reproductions of Disney comic book stories by The Good Artist. The first three titles in this collection, *Lost in the Andes*, *Only a Poor Old Man*, and *A Christmas for Shacktown*, proudly reside in my library, along with *The Old Castle's Secret*, the latest Fantagraphics offering. Now I'm eagerly awaiting *Christmas on Bear Mountain* (scheduled to be published 10 November 2013, in time for holiday gifting). Each of these collections takes the title of its lead tale and is packed with well more than 200 pages of stories, commentary and art.

As a hard-core, demanding, lifetime fan of Carl's work (who became literate while sitting on his sainted Myther's lap as she read aloud from *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* and other wholesome funnies, pointing to each word in the dialogue balloons as she spoke it), I tended to disdain the trimmed-down Gold Key "Reprinted by Popular Demand" comic book editions that began appearing in the early 1960s. Although printing technologies had greatly advanced in the two-plus decades I'd been a faithful follower of D. Duck and his cohorts, the printed quality of the slimmed-down reproductions wasn't particularly good and I felt somehow cheated. But that's



The ducks discover that their dream of being in Old California is filled with many dangers.

the way things were in those days and I was grateful to occasionally come across a reprint that filled an empty spot in my not particularly pristine stack of Barks books. (By that time I'd learned his name, we had met, and we'd developed a friendship that included his talented wife, Garé.)

ONE OF THE EARLIEST discussions I was privileged to share with Carl concerned the

matter of quality. The conversation opened with a comment by Garé that Carl was almost always disappointed in how his work appeared in the books. He'd of course drawn the pictures much larger than they were printed, and as I've reported in previous CBFC newsletters, his original art was crisp and clean and truly masterful. When reduced to forty percent

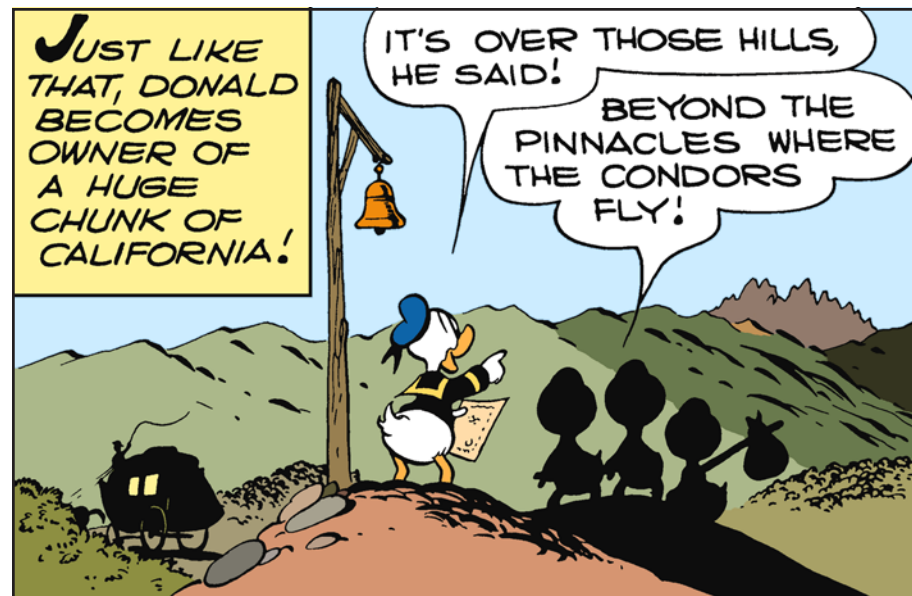
of the size at which Carl drew them, fine details could become lost. And then there was the problem of coloring.

“The damned colors are supposed to *enhance* the art, not overpower and obscure it,” Carl exclaimed. “Even when the printers accidentally get the plates in register, the coloring still looks as if it was done by a kid with a box of eight bright crayons. Except the kid would have done a better job.”

So it was with some trepidation that I opened the Fantagraphics version of “Lost in the Andes.” I’d known in advance that the publishers were planning to follow the color scheme employed in the original comic books, but exactly how the black lines of the artwork would turn out was a major concern.

What a refreshing relief! Although I might have preferred a slightly less vibrant color palette, the crisp printing and spot-on registration certainly brought Carl’s details to life. I’m sure he would be quite delighted to see the care Fantagraphics has taken in republishing his work.

THIS SET ME TO hearkening back to the above conversation with Carl, which concerned his story “In Old California.” His rant was a discussion of the problems inherent in having someone unfamiliar with California architecture and scenery apply colors to his work. Rather than depict the tile roofs of the Gaspar family’s



Selecting colors for the “Pinnacles” panel was done by sampling and cloning pixels from a photo of the Monument.

hacienda as terra-cotta (to resemble the handmade tiles produced for California Mission Padres by native peoples, and which decorate homes throughout the state), the colorists made them bright blue.

A second problem Carl pointed out (not particularly significant to my teenage understanding of things in those days, but which Carl considered a major blunder), was the coloring of a panel identifying the location of the Land Grant given to Donald by the Alcalde.

To one unfamiliar with California, the drawing might have little meaning. To Carl, who was very much in the know regarding the state’s history and culture, the blunder was monumental.

The publication of “Donald Duck In Old California” made news in the San Jacinto Valley—the setting for the first part of the tale and where the resident cartoonist was known and his work enjoyed. On 6 April 1951, a front page report in *The Hemet News*, headlined “Comic Strip Artist Uses Valley Color,” went into extensive detail about the artist and his work.

Carl evidently grouched a little to the reporter who covered the story, in the way he would complain to me nearly a decade later, as one paragraph of the news article read, “Coloring of the panels by persons unfamiliar with the places in the pictures sometimes brings strange results. Mr. Barks points to two such occurrences in

his “Old California” story. The tile roofs of the Spanish-style houses all turned out blue, and Pinnacles Monument was transformed into a clump of bright green shrubbery.”

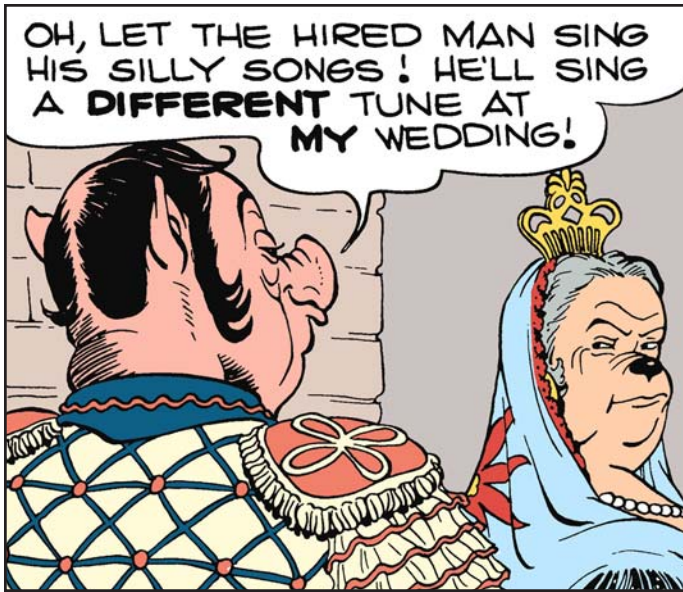
FAST-FORWARD another five decades to the announcement of a new library of Carl’s work about to be launched. I thought it might be interesting to volunteer to do the coloring of the Old California story, as a sort of tribute to Carl’s work, as well as to include in my dissertation, *Recalling Carl*.

I really had no idea what I was letting myself in for when I fired off an email to Fantagraphics’ head honcho Gary Groth, proposing to do the work. No doubt he thought, “Sure, yeah, why not? Let the geezer have his fun. If it turns out terrible we can always reject it and do our own version.”

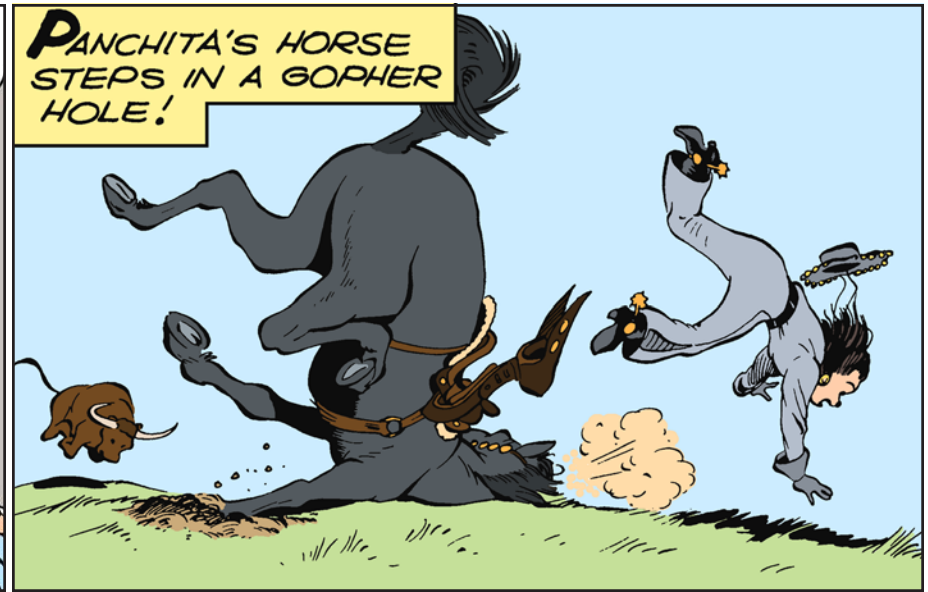
Remind me, please, not to be quite so eager to volunteer for things I’m unfamiliar with. Yes, I’ve had a lifetime of design and graphic arts experience, but found the task of coloring 212 separate drawings by my favorite cartoonist to be daunting. Still, I’ll tackle anything for the CBFC cause of preserving the Carl Barks legacy of stories and art for future generations.

ONE OF THE BEST things about doing this work was getting to study each individual drawing on the monitor, blown up to huge proportions much larger than Carl had drawn them. It’s amazing to see details

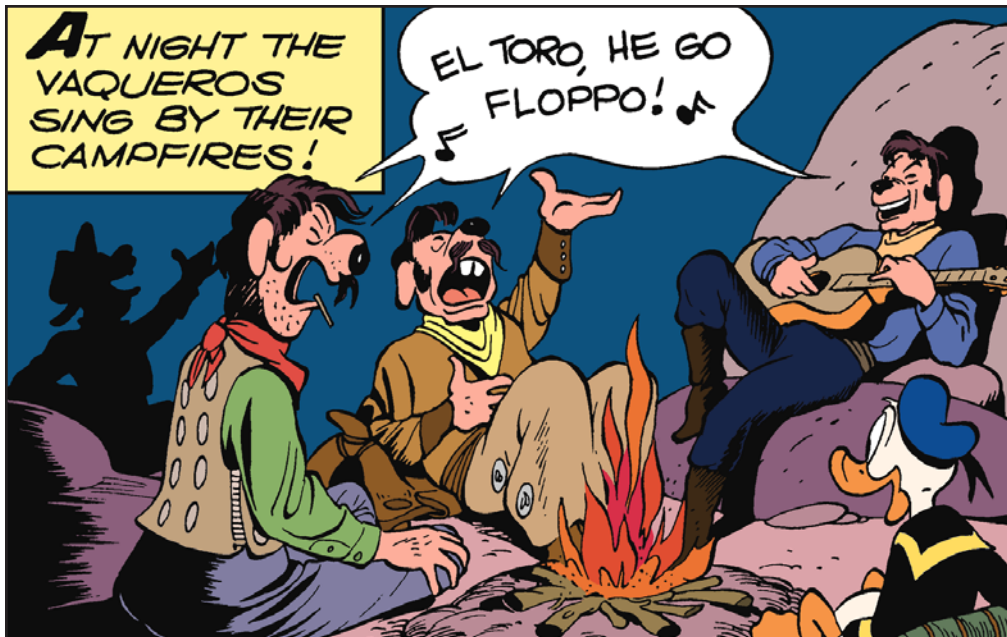
**Action,
Adventure
and
Romance
in the
California
of
1848.**



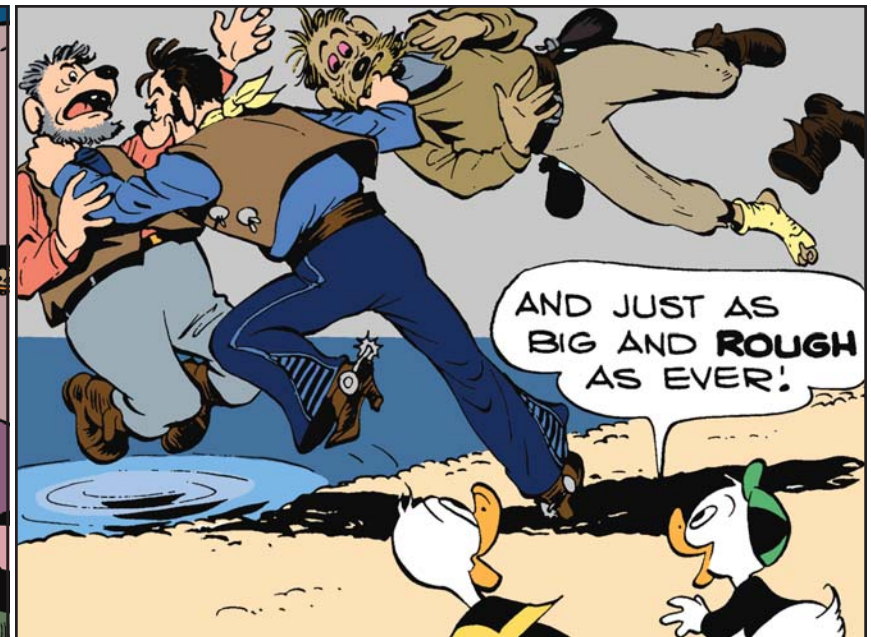
Don Porko de Lardo is such a swine!



Have you ever wondered what a horse looks like upside-down?



Comb his hair and he'd make a fortune in Hollywood.

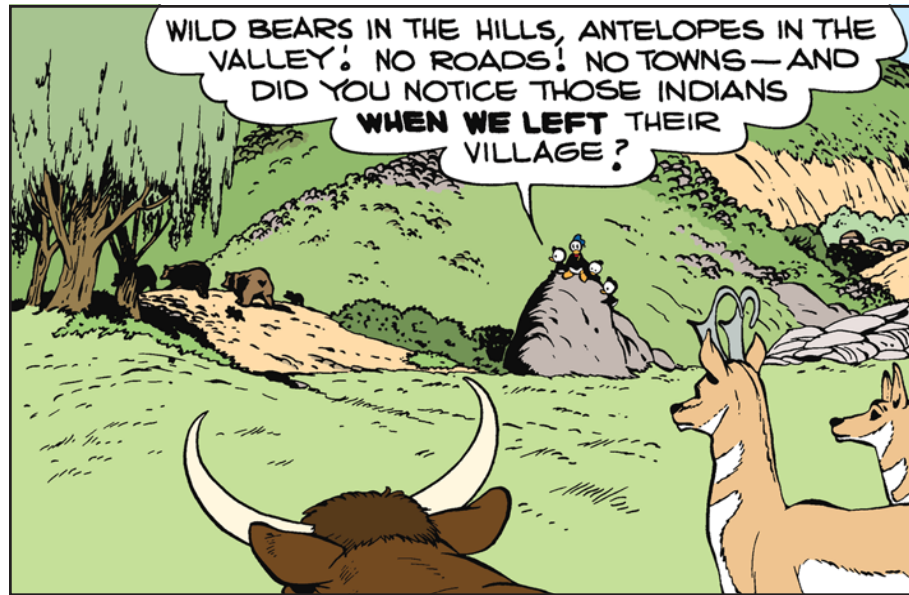


Rolando fights with fists, guns and knees.

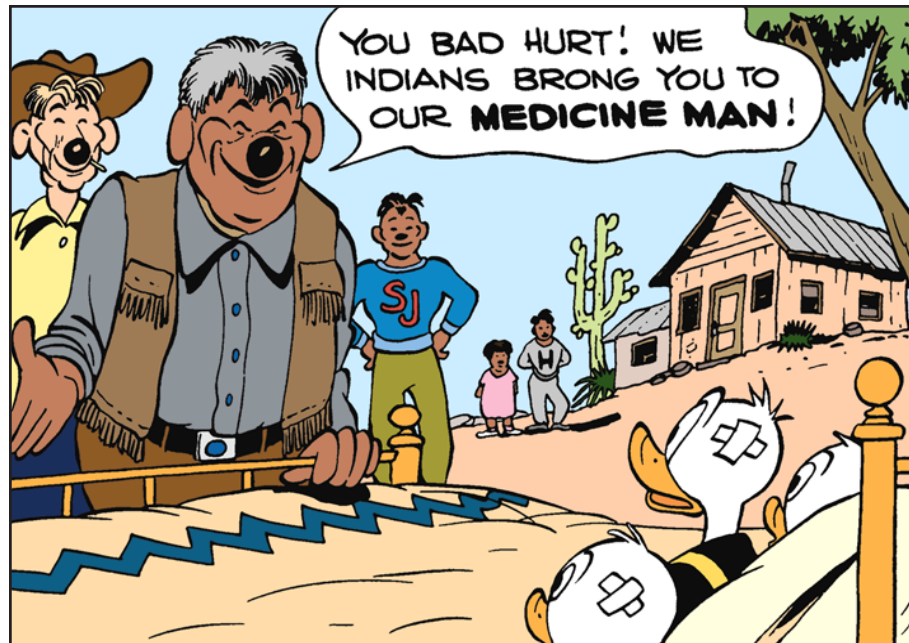
of which I'd never been aware. The panel at right is an example. In the comic book it appears at the top of page six. (I've cropped it to fit our newsletter format.) In the far right, about a third of the way down, Carl has included a Luiseño Indian village! There can't have been one reader in a hundred zillion who noticed this in the comic book version. And look at the amazing depth he's included in this little drawing. This is a complete work of art, folks, as seen through the eyes of our favorite cartoonist.

The coloring I've used here is based on pictures taken in the hills above San Jacinto Valley. The antelope tones are also based on photos. I've used flat colors in traditional comic book style, in keeping with other Fantagraphics reproductions.

ONE LAST SHARE and then I'll let someone else have the floor. In the panel at right, it's often been noted by comics fans and probably Rhodes scholars alike that the initials on the sweatshirts the two lads in the background are wearing represent San Jacinto and Hemet. What few fans know (and I certainly didn't until Garé Barks clued me in), is that the gentleman in the buckskin vest is a caricature of the humorist Will Rogers, and the gentleman in the cowboy hat standing behind him is a self-caricature of Mr. Barks, who wasn't allowed to sign his work so often devised other ways to leave his mark. —JRC



Luiseño Indian Village in panoramic vista of bears, antelope, and a wild bull.



A couple of dignitaries sneak into the scene.

MISSION STATEMENT



THE CARL BARKS FAN CLUB has been formed to help preserve the Carl Barks legacy of stories and art for future generations and to promote that legacy to an ever-widening global audience!

Carl Barks Fan Club Board of Directors: Ed Bergen, Don Gaul, Tom Neis, Jim Schaid and Sue Scherer.

CBFC Newsletter Staff: Sue Scherer, Treasurer and Administrative Assistant; Peter Stumpf, Webmaster; Barbora Cowles, Acting Webmaster, Joseph Cowles, Special Projects Coordinator.

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All Board Members and assistants serve without remuneration.

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A few words on the recent passing of some friends.

IN PAST MONTHS, BARKS FANS and Disney fans and comic book fans have said goodbye to three good people. We may not have known them personally, but each contributed to our lives and is missed.



MARY ELLEN WHITNEY, author and historian, died at age 80 on March 5, 2013, of complications following surgery.

A longtime member of the Hemet Public Library Board of Trustees and a docent for the Hemet Museum, Mary was a constant source of reference information for researchers in the field of local history.

When they began researching the years Carl and Garé Barks lived in the San Jacinto

and Hemet communities, it was Mary who arranged for Joseph and Barb Cowles to meet people in the San Jacinto Valley who'd been friends with or had memories of the cartoonist and his fine artist wife. She also assisted the couple in gaining access to local library and museum archives. Mary spent long hours tirelessly sorting through microfilm records and old newspaper files to uncover leads that would help the team discover previously unknown information and images, which eventually became included in Egmont's 30-volume *Carl Barks Collection* edited by Geoff Blum.

ANNETTE JOANNE FUNICELLO, beloved "mouseketeer" star of Walt Disney's wildly popular afternoon television series for youngsters of the 1950s, died April 8, 2013, from complications of multiple sclerosis, a condition with which she had lived for more than 25 years. She was 70.

Annette was a teen-idol crush for



millions of adolescent lads who rushed home from school each weekday afternoon to watch *The Mickey Mouse Club* broadcasts in black and white, in an era when little more than half the homes in America had television sets. Her weekly fan mail amounted to thousands of letters—not just from youngsters, but also from parents applauding her "girl next door" wholesomeness.

It has been reported that it was Walt Disney who discovered Annette at a ballet recital of "Swan Lake" and immediately determined that she should be made part of the Mouse Club cast.

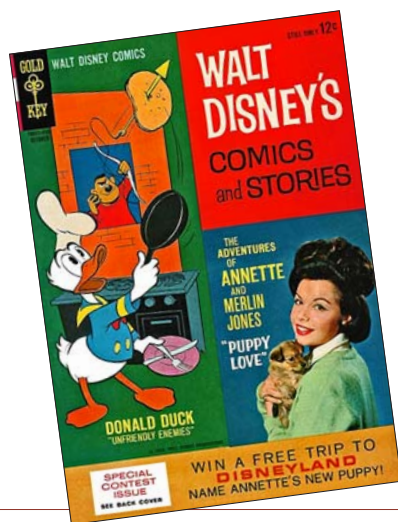
It's doubtful that Annette and Carl Barks ever met, but we do know she and Donald were a double feature in at least one issue of *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*.

Although she was the final Mouseketeer cast member to be hired, Annette quickly became the most popular of Disney's cast of child stars.



KIM THOMPSON, FANTAGRAPHICS co-publisher of the acclaimed series of Donald Duck stories, died at age 56, on June 19, 2013, of lung cancer. Born in Denmark, Kim moved to the United States about 35 years ago. Upon meeting Fantagraphics founders Gary Groth and Michael Catron, Thompson and Groth became leaders in bringing adult themes and diverse characters into comics. Together they pioneered comic stories with themes and ideas representing people of different nationalities, genders, sexual orientation, and race—including a set of books with characters who look like waterfowl and were drawn by Carl Barks.

Rest in peace, dear ones.





Newly Published Book of Carl Barks Disney Oil Paintings.

News Updates from CBFC President Ed Bergen

EGMONT EHAPA, the European publisher who recently produced the 30-volume *Carl Barks Collection* in several European languages, has now released a volume showcasing the entire body of Carl's paintings featuring the Disney Ducks.

Only 122 of Carl's Disney oil paintings existed in the 1980s when Gladstone published *The Fine Art of Walt Disney's Donald Duck* as a limited edition of 1875 copies.

Following publication of that sumptuous volume (which occasionally appears for sale on eBay), Carl produced some 25-30 additional oils—primarily for Another Rainbow's two lithograph series published in the 1980s and 1990s—plus about 80 "watercolor pencil" drawings, which he created for his 96th birthday celebration in 1997, held at the Walt Disney World Contemporary Hotel in Florida.

Egmont Ehapa's new "oil paintings" volume includes that "pencil watercolor art" even though they aren't "oils." With this publication, Carl's finished paintings now have been gathered together into a single book.

THIS NEW VOLUME has been released in several languages, as were the 30 volumes of the *Carl Barks Collection*. My copy, acquired through Amazon, is a German edition. Versions listed on Amazon ranged from \$93 to \$1300+. I opted, Scroogily, for the \$93 copy, which was listed as "used" but arrived at my door shrink-wrapped and appearing new. I was happy to get any copy at this price as I understand some of the editions were only available to buyers of the entire 30-volume set of the Collection.

Not all of the "Birthday Paintings" appeared in a 1997 volume entitled *The Carl Barks Treasury*, which was available at Carl's 96th birthday party in an edition of a thousand copies. A second volume to include the remainder of the images was planned but never published. To have the entire collection of the "Birthday Paintings" now available to collectors is a significant development.

WITH THE AVAILABILITY of the Kerby Confer collection at several Heritage auctions over the past few years, many of Carl's earlier oil paintings have been available for public viewing—if not actual purchase, as some exceeded the \$100,000 auction threshold.

The 75-80 "Birthday Paintings" have rarely become available on the open market. Perhaps original purchasers of those paintings (mostly at the 1997 party)

consider these works as direct connections to The Good Artist and rarely offer them for sale. And with the second *Treasury* book failing to see publication, the images of the second set of the paintings have been rarely seen and are little known.

ALTHOUGH THE BOOK may seem pricey, Egmont Ehapa's coffee table volume is worth acquiring. Less than \$100 (when one can find it at that price) is a modest amount to pay for the entire Barks paintings collection in a single volume.

If one is unwilling and/or unable to come up with the Scroogian sum to acquire an original Barks oil, this book should

provide a more reasonable alternative for enjoying the Duck Master's work. Few Barks collectors seem to be willing to part with the books at this point!

George Lucas: Fan of Barks and Scrooge.

WITH DISNEY'S PURCHASE of the *Star Wars* franchise, George Lucas, of LucasFilm, Ltd., has formally entered the Disney "fold." However, Lucas has been a Disney and Carl Barks "fan" for years as evidenced by his "Appreciation Page" which graced one of the first Carl Barks tribute publi-

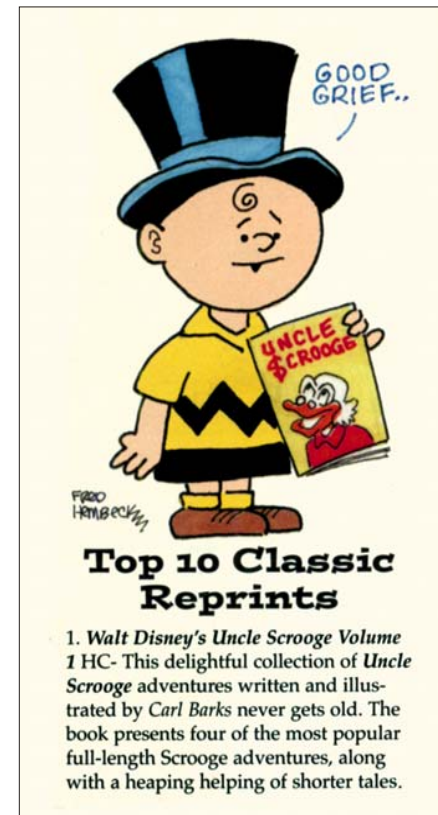
cations, *Uncle Scrooge McDuck: His Life and Times*, which was edited by Edward Summer—first published as a sumptuous, leather-bound volume in an edition of 5000 copies, in commemoration of Carl's 80th birthday in 1981.

IN 1983 I WROTE TO LucasFilm, asking if George would be willing to autograph that page for me. His executive assistant, Jane Bay, kindly indicated that Mr. Lucas would "be delighted to autograph" my Scrooge volume. As you can see at left, his actual signature does look very much like the smaller facsimile signature that appears on this page in each of the 5000 limited edition, leather-bound books.

The closing paragraph of George's tribute to Carl and the Uncle Scrooge stories is reprinted here. Lucas looks back to the significance of Carl and his storytelling acumen as inspiration for his own cinematic contributions, which of course have also brought monumental changes to pop culture!

New Club Member wishes to exchange emails with others.

One of our newest members, Christian Pfeiler, would like to share his e-mail address and invites any of our members to contact him regarding their interest in Carl Barks and the Disney Ducks. Here it is: snowls@t-online.de



Top 10 Classic Reprints

1. *Walt Disney's Uncle Scrooge Volume 1 HC*- This delightful collection of *Uncle Scrooge* adventures written and illustrated by *Carl Barks* never gets old. The book presents four of the most popular full-length Scrooge adventures, along with a heaping helping of shorter tales.

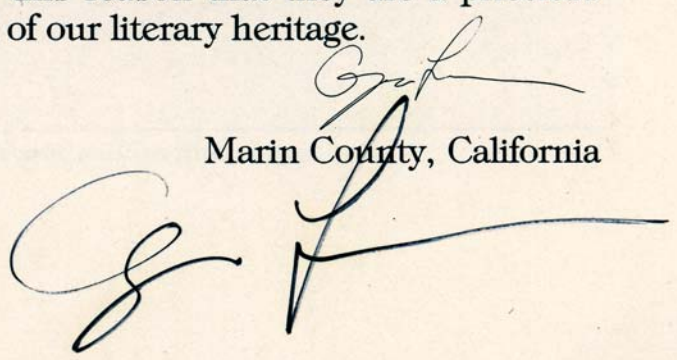
CBFC MEMBER Joe Thompson sent the above article from the *Baltimore Sun* listing the Top 10 Classic Reprints, with *Uncle Scrooge* listed as Number One!

Thanks for your frequent "sendings" Joe—many of which I'm happy to share with our members. If any member discovers any news reports surrounding anything related to Carl's work and/or characters please let me know; I'll be happy to report your significant findings to the rest of our Club.

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Barks's, comic art has something to say about the culture that produces it.

What I think I enjoy most about Uncle Scrooge is that he is so American in his attitude. These comics are one of the few things you can point to that say: like it or not, this is what America is. And it is for just this reason that they are a priceless part of our literary heritage.



Marin County, California

Vienna Collector Acquires Barks Oils.

AS REPORTED in previous CBFC newsletters, I have become sort of a “fan” of Rick Steves’ European tours as essentially inexpensive ways to see the continent “through the back door” (Rick’s description of his European journeys).

Recently I took one of Rick’s tours to the Czech Republic and Hungary. During the trip I was able to visit with a collector in

Vienna who acquired several of Carl’s oils from the Kerby Confer Heritage auctions.

It is always a treat to be able to see any of Carl’s magnificent oils in person, and to see firsthand the love which this collector and his fiancée have for Carl’s oils of the Disney Ducks was gratifying indeed.

Their paintings each have personal meaning and significance for them. Like



SHERIFF OF BULLET VALLEY

One of Carl’s “pencil watercolor art” drawings included in the Egmont/Ehapa volume.



THREE OIL PAINTINGS BY CARL BARKS, from the Kerby Confer Heritage Auction collection, are now happily residing in Vienna, Austria. Above—“This Dollar Saved My Life At Whitehorse;” and on page 9—“The Expert” and “The Stone That Turns All Metals Gold.”



many of us, they remember reading Carl's duck stories we enjoyed as kids. While this perspective isn't unusual, to meet a collector for whom the Barks paintings are his adult "introduction" to the larger Barks universe is unique indeed.

The love he and his fiancée share for the paintings' images is obvious, as they passionately described how each of these recently acquired treasures has somehow touched their souls.

These Barks paintings have found a fine new home! —EB



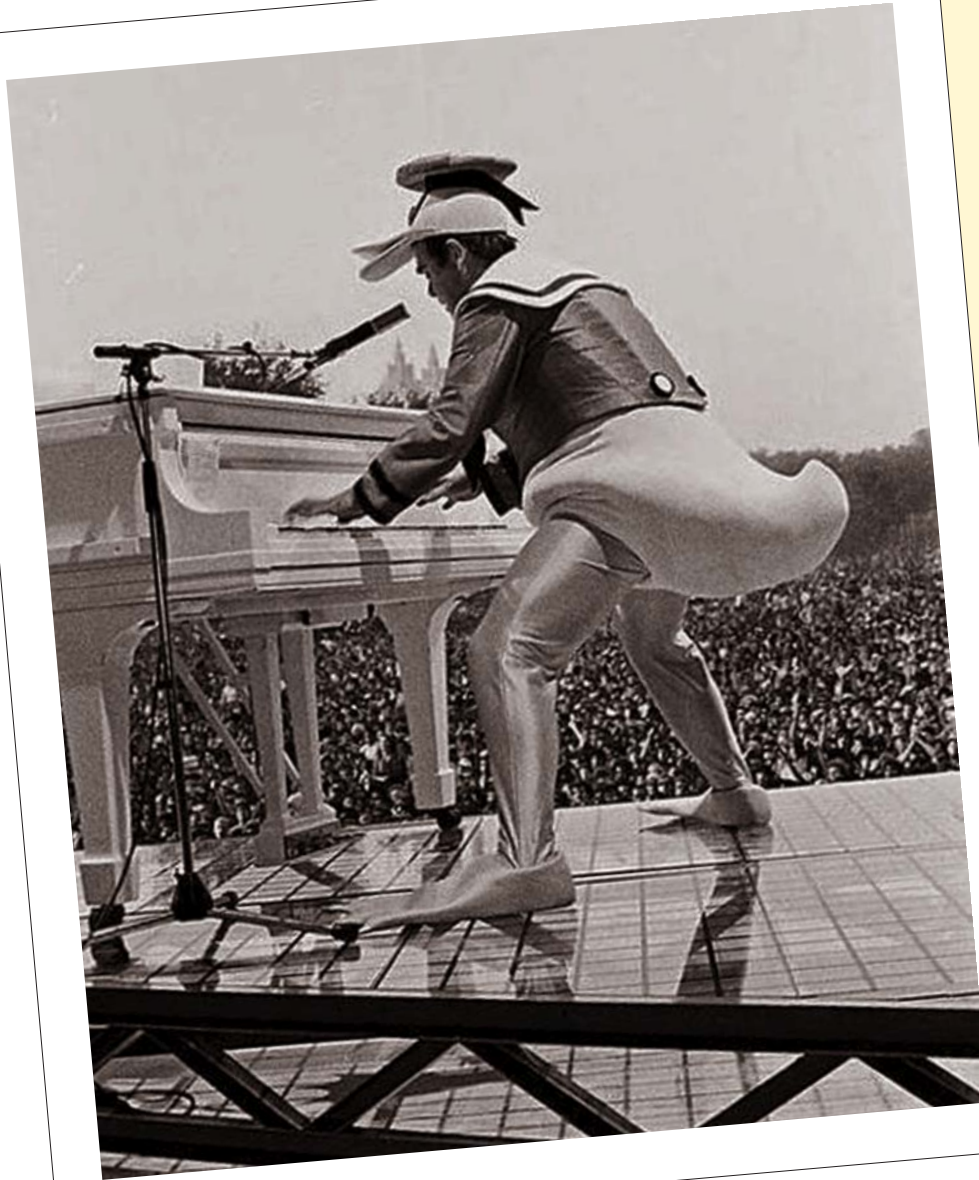
Now there are four and soon there will be five.

Treat yourself and your loved ones to the pleasure of lots of great reading! These four titles are already available for immediate shipment and the fifth book in The Complete Barks Disney Library, *Walt Disney's Donald Duck: Christmas on Bear Mountain*, will be

available to preorder soon, for shipment in November. Order directly from the FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKSTORE AND GALLERY by calling toll-free: **1-800-657-1100** Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time, or online at: www.fantagraphics.com



Ducks on the keys?



*We get letters!
(And pictures!)*



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Carl Barks Fan Club
Post Office Box 444
Crystal Lake IL 60039-0444
U.S.A.



When Dick Krinker sent us a photo of Sir Elton John all dressed up in a Donald Duck outfit, performing outdoors before a huge audience, it was only natural to wonder how Donald might look dressed in Sir Elton garb. *(With sincere apologies to C.B.)*



Is it Scrooge? And why is she wet?

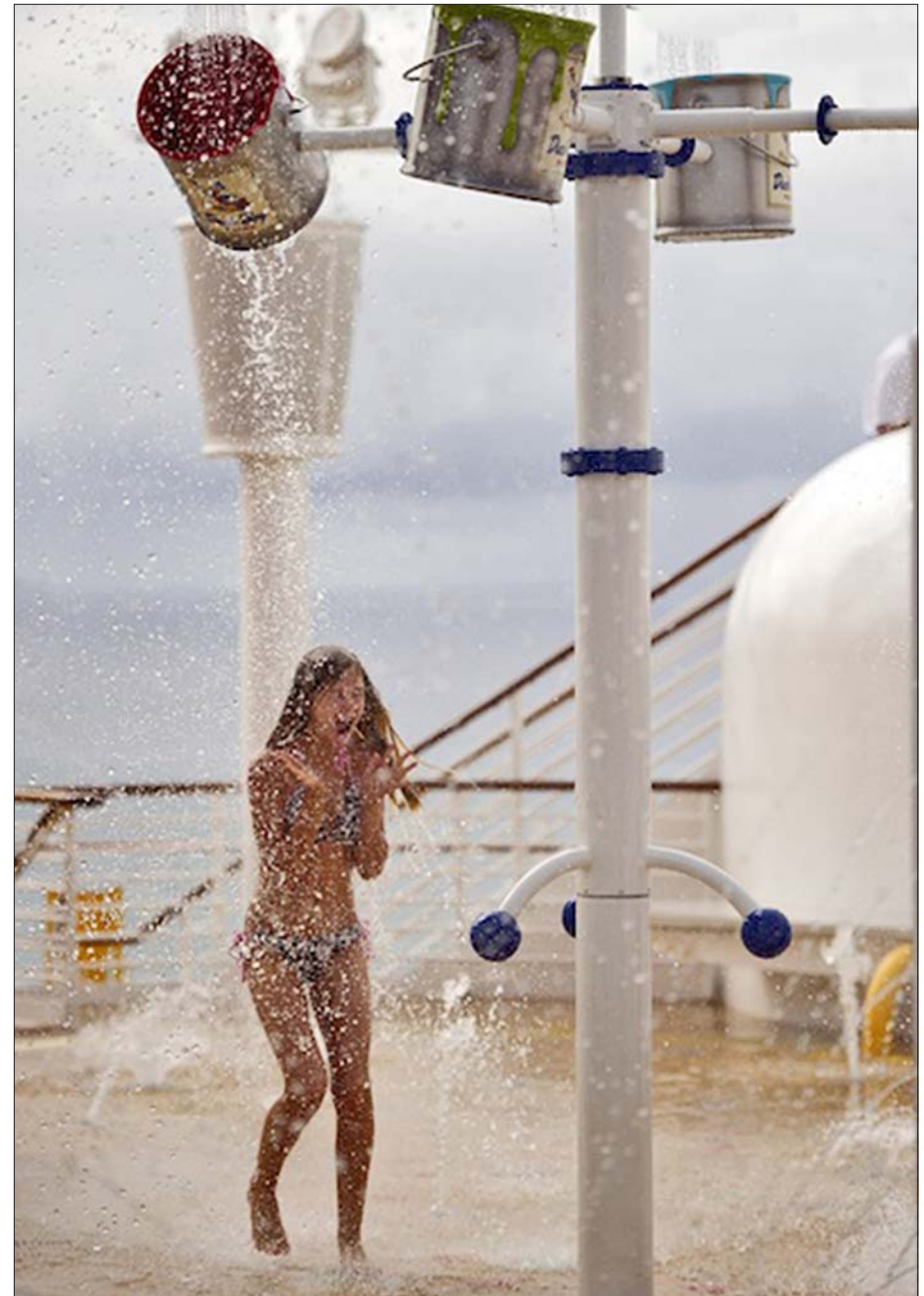
ALLEN AND SANDY GOOKIN, CBFC Members in Scottsdale, Arizona, sent the above image of a Disney character that was “briefly flashed on a Travel Channel show about Disney Cruise Lines.” They say they have no idea what cartoon it may have come from, and suggested we “quiz the membership.”

Well, Allen and Sandy, we’re eager to do that, as we haven’t a clue either. If it’s Uncle Scrooge, he’s lost his pince-nez glasses or is wearing contacts.

BUT THE QUESTION got us thinking about Disney Cruise Lines and wondering what’s happening in that realm these days. We googled around and came up with some interesting revelations, pictured here and on the following pages.

Here’s a hint: what we found has a lot to do with Donald’s nephews, Huey, Dewey and Louie Duck—and with water! Lots and lots and lots of water! And of course, in true Disney fashion, it’s all good clean fun.

Have a closer look on the next page...





Donald's nephews and the AquaLab:

(This article has been lifted nearly verbatim and without shame from a blog posting that was too well written to tear apart and rewrite.)

AquaLab add-on to the AquaDuck water coaster offers a splash-tacular time aboard the *Disney Fantasy* cruise ship by Ricky Brigante

One of the most fun experiences on the *Disney Dream* cruise ship has been expanded aboard the new *Disney Fantasy*. The world's first water-coaster-at-sea, the AquaDuck, debuted in 2011 on the *Disney Dream*, featuring twists and turns above the high seas. But on the *Fantasy*, not only is Disney Cruise Line duplicating this high-sliding ride, but also adding the AquaLab, a drenching water play area that ties in to the AquaDuck fun.

As the attraction's story goes, Huey, Dewey, and Louie built the AquaDuck for their own amusement, but their Uncle Donald hopped on before it was ready, sending him soaring into one of the ship's nearby smokestacks. On the *Disney Fantasy*, that story is taken a step further with the Aqua-Lab serving as the workshop where the young trio created the AquaDuck. Of course, not all is perfect in a workshop, with leaky pipes and squirting water jets around every turn.



The 1,800-square-foot AquaLab water play area is located on Deck 12 of the *Disney Fantasy* and includes 24 pop-jets and countless other geysers, bubblers, and other water features designed to douse all who enter, with around 900 gallons of water pumping through per minute.

Okay, this doesn't answer the question of whether it's Uncle Scrooge or someone else dancing a jig in that photo, but isn't the duckling's AquaLab article interesting? Junior Woodchucks can do *anything!*



Remastered DuckTales Games.

Here's news sent from CFBC Members Brian and Jeanne Koukol, adapted from an article written by blogger Joe Donuts.

UPROARIOUS CHEERS and impromptu DuckTales theme song sing-a-longs indicate that Capcom has made the right move by bringing back this beloved NES platformer. The remastered version of the game, developed by the 2D design wizards at WayForward, brings on a ton of smiles.



I've already heard it countless times: "DuckTales is my favorite NES game ever." There's a lot of love for this game, but I don't think anyone saw this announcement coming. DuckTales Remastered earns its name, with lovingly crafted sprites for Scrooge and gang, and fresh 3D backdrops.

The game features a remastered

soundtrack by Jay Kaufman, the composer at WayForward responsible for the excellent Double Dragon Neon soundtrack. On top of that, Capcom has worked close with Disney to bring back all the original voices for a fully-voiced storyline.

While the game preserves the vast majority of the NES original's gameplay and level design, it isn't afraid to update things where appropriate. A mine cart section is much smoother than the one in the original game. It feels like a realization of the idea the original game may have had, rather than a pure departure. DuckTales carries that undeniable 8-bit charm through its fancy new graphics and animation.

There's a museum, and Scrooge's money bin, which will give you the chance to swim around in a giant pile of money just like the original cartoon.

The remastered backgrounds also take a page or two from the cartoon, with a lot more depth and detail than the original game, while still remaining entirely old school. For a game that came out of nowhere, based on an NES game from 1990, it's looking and playing pretty sharp. Pogo'ing around as Scrooge is still a lot of fun after all this time. Attacking enemies with a well-timed landing is still satisfying.

The bottom line: it's totally crazy that this game is getting such a glorious revival. WayForward has done an amazing visual overhaul of the game, and Capcom should be commended for digging so deeply into the past.

Now I guess I can start asking for a Chip 'n Dales Rescue Rangers revival. (*Follow JoeDonuts for movie reviews, game industry musings, and funny pictures.*)



One more image from Allen and Sandy Gookin.

"WE SAW THIS SHIRT on a large boy at *California Adventure*. We found out the parents had just bought it at a Kmart, and managed to find one in Young Men. We haven't found it on the Kmart website so far."



Don't miss Dan Cunningham's excellent, historically amazing and exciting Blogspot with original art, comics, pop culture and more. The current issue features The Disneyland Comic Art of Carl Barks! Visit: icanbreakaway.blogspot.com

...and then this cruise line photograph:



"I'll never forget the time I accidentally lit the fireworks and set the Space Needle spinning."

