

# Carl Barks

## FAN CLUB NEWSLETTER

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IN REMEMBRANCE OF CARL BARKS • 27 MARCH 1901 - 25 AUGUST 2000

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## Was the Leonardo DiCaprio film “Inception” inspired by a Donald Duck comic book story?



COMPOSITE IMAGE BY JOSEPH COWLES

In the 2004 Disney comic book story, “Uncle Scrooge: The Dream of a Lifetime,” the infamous Beagle Boys employ a special machine to enter old Scrooge’s dreams in an attempt to pilfer the combination to his Oso Safe. Donald must enter the dream to foil

the plot of these dastardly villains. When someone falls in the dream, they awaken immediately . . . and if old Scrooge wakes before the Beagle Boys, all will be “doomed”!

In INCEPTION, Leonardo Di Caprio is the leader of a team that, likewise, enters dreams

to pilfer information. These “dream thieves” can only be abruptly awakened by a fall called, in the film, a “kick” to the body!

Again, another example of how the Disney duck characters—some created, and others “honed” by Carl Barks in his iconic comic book stories—continue to enter our contemporary pop culture to provide “substance” for current story lines.

Do you remember when, some years ago, someone actually used a Carl Barks idea to attempt to re-float his sunken boat using ping-pong balls? And when he tried to patent the idea, he was denied the patent because the idea had already been suggested (by Carl) in a Donald Duck comic book story! Ah, the power of GREAT story-telling . . . and Carl had it down to a “science,” don’t you think?

Here’s a link to the *CNN.com* article about Scrooge, Don and the boys, and INCEPTION:

[www.cnn.com/2010/TECH/web/08/10/inception.donald.duck/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2010/TECH/web/08/10/inception.donald.duck/index.html)

(We extend respectful apologies to Leonardo DiCaprio, Warner Bros. and The Walt Disney Company for our modification of the promotional image shown here.)

## Kerby Confer Carl Barks oil painting sales begin.

The first Heritage auction of Kerby Confer’s Barks oil painting collection took place on August 5-6, 2010. Offered with no reserves, Kerby’s Barks items realized some impressive prices. Here are a few examples of the amounts realized for a portion of the oil painting collection (more to be offered in future Heritage auctions over this next year) as well as some other important items from Kerby’s Barks holdings:

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### 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, Jim Zambon, Don Gaul, Tom Neis, Jim Schaid, Dave Waggoner.

**CBFC Newsletter Staff:** Peter Stumpf, Webmaster; Sue Scherer, Administrative Assistant; Joseph Cowles, Special Projects Coordinator.

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*All Board Members and assistants serve without remuneration!*

## Kerby Confer Collection

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### Oil Paintings:

“Golden Fleece” (1972) .....	\$62,737.50
“Time Wasters” (Money Bin, 1975) .....	\$83,650.00
“Flubby Dubby Duffer” (1972) .....	\$35,850.00
“Luck of the North” (1973) .....	\$89,625.00
“Always Another Rainbow” (1974) .....	\$38,837.50
“The Expert” (1975) .....	\$38,837.50
“Dangerous Discovery” (1974) .....	\$89,625.00
“Far Out Safari” (1975) .....	\$50,787.50
“Embarrassment of Riches” (Money Bin, 1983) .....	\$161,325.00
“The Makings of a Fish Story” (1988) .....	\$38,837.50

### Other Barks items:

Uncle Scrooge #1 (Four Color #386 - 9.4) .....	\$13,145.00
“Sailing The Spanish Main” lithograph (77/245) .....	\$2,270.50
Carl Barks Library, Sets 1-10 .....	\$2,748.50

We hope all of you were able to follow this auction. The next installment of the Confer Collection will be offered by Heritage in mid November. Please contact Heritage Auctions in Dallas ([www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)) for the upcoming catalogue for this auction scheduled for just before Thanksgiving. We plan to report on the next auction results for these significant Carl Barks collectibles in our December newsletter.

## Barks Philatelic Collectibles included in Disney First Day of Issue cover exhibit.

*by Ed Bergen*

**Some of my Carl Barks First Day Covers** for the 1968 Walt Disney commemorative stamp helped me achieve a silver medal in my first-ever exhibit at a philatelic event, in Chicago last August. Exhibited at the Americover First Day Cover Convention in Oakbrook, Illinois, the exhibit not only achieved a silver medal but also, by vote of convention attendees, the designation of

“most popular exhibit” among the 15 or so other exhibits of First Day Covers for other U.S. and foreign stamp issues.

The Disney topic is a popular one across many categories of collectibles, and Disney stamps and covers are no exception. Achieving the “most popular” designation will allow me to enter my Walt Disney commemorative First Day Cover exhibit in the “Most Popular

Championship” category at the AmeriStamp Convention in Charleston, South Carolina, next February.

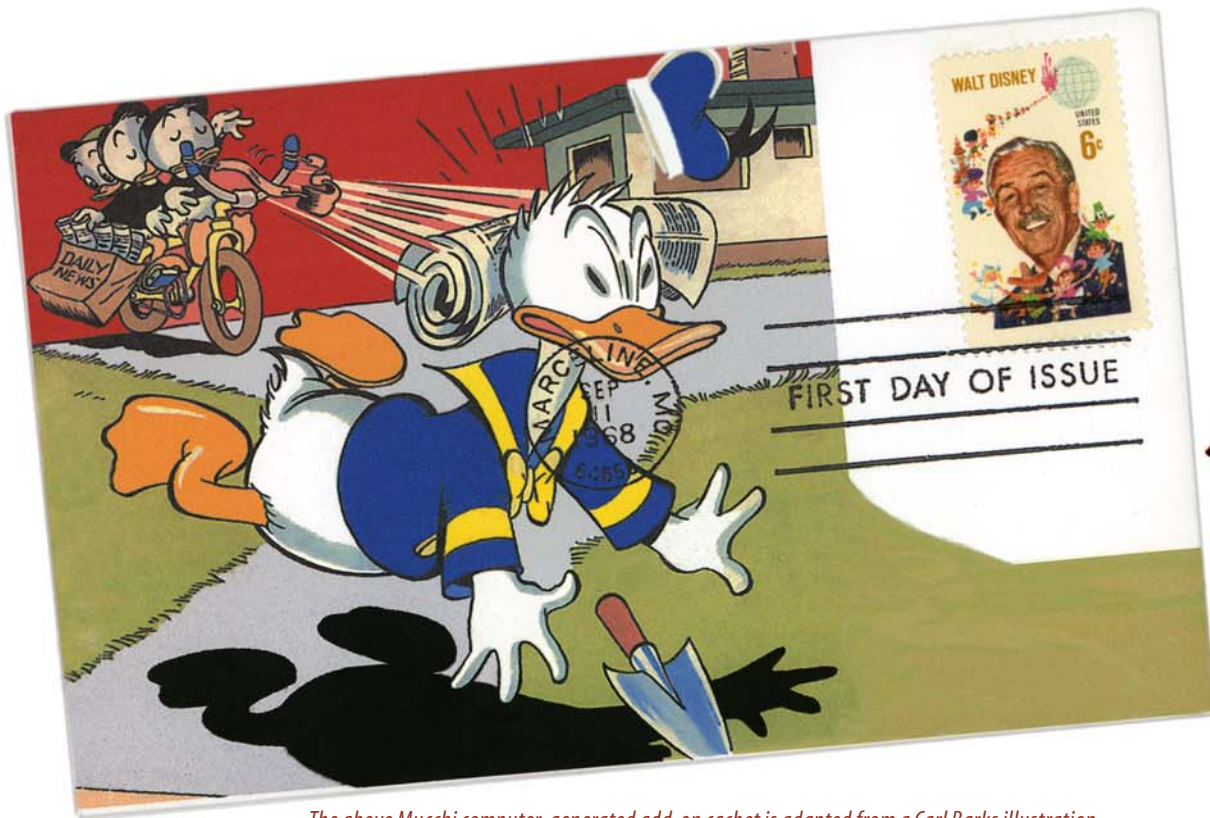
At this convention, the “most popular” exhibits from sanctioned stamp shows around the country during 2010 will compete “head to head” to determine the entire year’s “most popular” exhibit from philatelic events nationwide.

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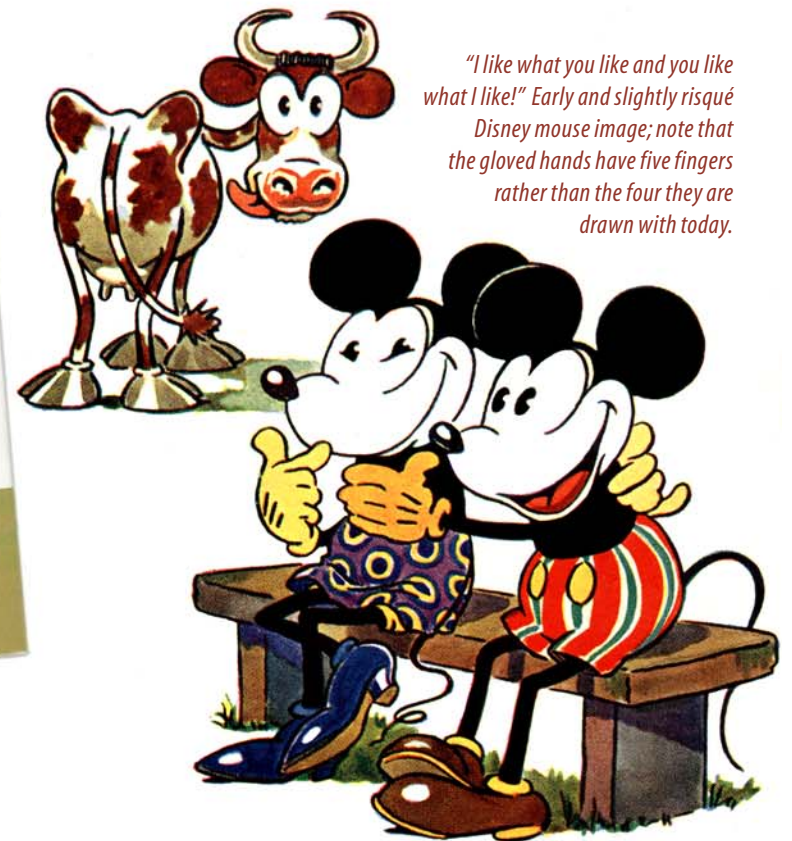


Above, Bonnie Fuson's photocopy cachet with a California Gold Rush commemorative stamp. This First Day of Issue cover with the Walt Disney stamp was cancelled in Sacramento, California, on 18 June 1999. This cachet features the Carl Barks oil painting image, "EUREKA! A Goose Egg Nugget," and has been signed by Carl Barks. At right, A similar Carl Barks signed cover appeared in Ken Lawrence's article on Disney philately in the January 2006 issue of SCOTT STAMP MONTHLY, with the Gold Rush First Day of Issue cachet also appearing on the magazine's cover!





*The above Mucchi computer-generated add-on cachet is adapted from a Carl Barks illustration of Donald Duck being hit by a newspaper "delivered" by his nephews.*



*"I like what you like and you like what I like!" Early and slightly risqué Disney mouse image; note that the gloved hands have five fingers rather than the four they are drawn with today.*

My Disney-topical exhibit should at least be in the running, again featuring some of my Carl Barks artwork. Carl gladly acknowledged that Walt Disney had provided both him and all the other animators and artists with a "stage to present our little morality plays for all the world to see."

The process of putting together this 10-frame (160 page) exhibit was extensive. In February I began organizing my Disney philatelic material which I have been collecting and assembling over the last 20 years. One of the main reasons for exhibiting any collection is taking the opportunity to organize one's holdings, and this was one of

the chief reasons for me to "take a deep breath" and begin the extensive and time-consuming process of organizing and then writing up what I felt were some significant philatelic collectibles.

In addition to the 1968 Walt Disney First Day Covers, included in the final 16-page frame are early images of Mickey Mouse from the 1930s which originally appeared on European postcards, pictorial postage meter cancellations, and an early Mickey Mouse pictured in the Disney Studio "return address" on envelopes just after Mickey's debut in 1928. Some of these early images depicted a pie-eyed Mickey as an "Every-

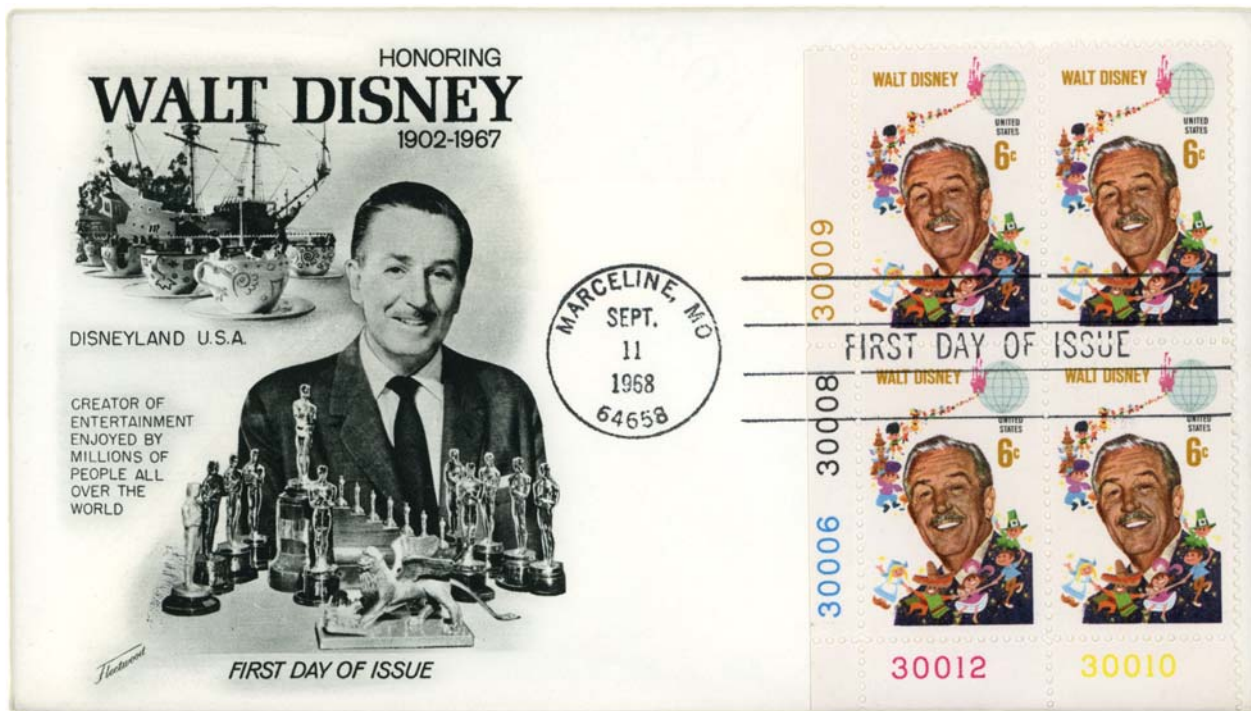
man"—smoking, drinking, and making slightly racy comments to his beloved Minnie, images that became "sanitized" after Kay Kamen came on as the Disney licensing guru in 1933. Walt Disney always said, "We have to remember one thing: it all started with a Mouse." The frame depicting the early Mickey images was a BIG HIT with convention attendees, as these images are not the Mickey we are used to seeing today!

I am indebted to Joseph Cowles, our club's Special Events Coordinator, who designed the pages for my Disney exhibit. Joseph professionally formatted the pages, placing the captions and images where they

needed to be, prior to my mounting the actual material on the pages. A rule of philatelic exhibiting dictates that the actual items must be physically exhibited so the judges know that exhibitor actually owns the material being exhibited . . . and an eye-catching format for the materials is crucial to properly showcase the exhibit.

There are other exhibiting challenges as well: one needs to plan the exhibit to tell a story in the flow of the frames, each of which contains space for sixteen 8 1/2" x 11" pages. To properly showcase some of my larger items, several 17" X 11" panels were also

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*Fleetwood printed cachet depicting Walt Disney and his Oscars on hand-cancelled First Day of Issue Cover with Disney stamp Plate Block.*

included in the exhibit. Making sure the page configuration “fits” each frame is crucial; the judges insist each frame be filled completely or they “dock” the exhibitor accordingly, as to the medal awarded.

During the Americover Convention, I met two BIG collectors of the 1968 Walt Disney commemorative issue: Steve Ripley and Larry Kohn, both from Florida. Another big collector is Frank Faustino of Pennsylvania, with whom I have been in correspondence over the years. We discussed the possibility of reproducing our combined Disney collections in a book. Steve Ripley pointed out that we each have “Wow!” items from this Disney issue, which could form the basis for a publication about this first-ever U.S. Disney postage stamp.

In preparation for including my Disney exhibit in the “Most Popular Championship” in Charleston next February, I plan to “tweak” the exhibit by adding some of the materials I chose not to include at Americover.

Unlike most U.S. postage stamps, which are printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the 1968 Disney stamps were printed by an outside firm. As a result, there are more “errors” for this Disney issue than there are with conventional stamp issues.

The Americover judges mentioned that I should exhibit some of these materials if I wish to “move up” in the medal categories. I believe this is a good suggestion given the ultimate goal I have for this Disney postage stamp and First Day Cover exhibit along with that early Mickey Mouse material!

And that FINAL GOAL? As my exhibit “develops,” I hope to be in contact with Walt Disney’s daughter, Diane Disney Miller, who opened the Disney Family Museum in San Francisco last October. The museum has ten fabulous “galleries” showcasing Walt’s life as a family man and the challenges—personal and corporate—that he faced in bringing Mickey Mouse and company to the world stage from 1928 until his death in 1966. One gallery displays many of the tributes and accolades Walt and his work received following his death—from royalty, world leaders, and editorial cartoonists from around the globe. Notable by its absence is any reference, that I could see, to the ultimate tribute a postage stamp issue represents for any individual life and legacy! The Walt

## SCROOGE'S KLONDIKE KORNER



One of our members has a **Carl Barks-signed Klondike Treasure Map** to sell. It is one of the “regular” edition (100 produced). Please contact ED Bergen if you have an interest.



If you have Disney Duck/Carl Barks items you would like to buy, sell or trade, please let ED Bergen know and he can include your item in an upcoming newsletter!

Disney commemorative stamp is the most profound accolade which Disney’s home country of the United States could bestow, and deserves a presence in that final gallery of the Walt Disney Family Museum. My ultimate goal is to present this proposal to Walt’s daughter after the exhibit “develops” into a more worthy showcase of this landmark Walt Disney tribute. Hopefully, I will soon have more to share regarding this dream, and also in continuing to highlight the significant contributions of Carl Barks to the Disney legacy, as illustrated and documented in my Walt Disney philatelic exhibit. —E.B



# The first Disney Duck oil paintings of Carl Barks.

by Glenn Bray

**My first visit with Carl Barks** took place in 1971, at his home in Goleta, California. I went with a carload of comic-book friends: Bill Spicer of *Graphic Story Magazine*, Michael Barrier of *Funnyworld*, his wife Phyllis, and Bob Foster, creator of *Myron Moose* and later a scripter on the *Donald Duck* newspaper strip. Mike took along a recorder and taped an interview with Carl and his wife Garé that he later printed in *Funnyworld*.

We chatted with the Barkses and were shown around their house, where we saw beautiful landscape paintings by Garé hanging in every room. Carl showed us some of his work along the same lines. Garé was already a master of the brush, and Carl was exploring his own talent with oil paints. He mentioned that he had been exhibiting at a few local art shows. At that time his prices ranged from \$15 to \$50, depending on the size and complexity of each painting.

Later, I spoke with Carl privately in his studio and mentioned my idea of his doing an oil painting of Donald Duck. He didn't feel the cartoon image could be brought over in oils. I said that if he would at least *try* to do a duck painting, I would pay \$150 for it, no matter how it came out. We shook hands on the deal, and to make it easier for his first attempt, we settled on him re-creating one of my favorite drawings—the cover of the September 1949 issue of *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* (No. 108).

Handshake or not, it wasn't a sure thing. There was a nagging consideration that the Disney Studio might not give him permission to paint the duck and make money from their copyrighted character. During the several weeks he was working on the canvas, Carl was also writing letters to George Sherman, head of Disney's Publications Department. He didn't receive the formal okay until after completing the canvas; but when he did, he immediately called

Left—Carl's first Disney oil painting was based on a 1949 WDC&S cover.







## Before painting Donald and Bombie, Carl tried his hand at another subject.

by Joseph Cowles

**Retirement was not a path Carl Barks was fully prepared for.** Although his work was a major force in keeping Western Printing afloat for more than a quarter century, compared to the returns he generated for the publishing firm, Carl had received peanuts for his sterling work. Lifetime fans like Glenn Bray could easily spot the work of “The Good Artist” and seldom missed buying a comic

book featuring Carl’s version of the Disney ducks. Born in 1948, Glenn was part of the Golden Age of comic book readers whose ten-cent purchases added up to annual gross sales in the millions of dollars.

Laying aside his pens and ink wasn’t going to mean Carl could slow down—just that he would no longer be dealing with deadline pressures and the nattering second-guessing

me to come up and see it. Meanwhile, other visiting fans had begun a waiting list for future paintings.

As word got out, the law of supply and demand took over. Soon duck paintings were selling for \$200, \$250, \$500 . . . then somebody offered *a thousand dollars!* I was able to afford only one other Disney canvas, which also happens to be the only non-duck oil Carl did during that period, a portrait of Bombie the Zombie trudging through a swamp. He told me many times afterward that this was the most difficult painting for him, because of all the work he had to put into the swamp foliage.

A natural cartoonist, Carl loved drawing.

Sooner or later, even without Donald and Bombie, he would have tried his hand at cartoon-like paintings of his own. In 1976, when the Studio cancelled his license to use Disney characters, he turned out a number of non-Disney waterfowl and scenes from mythology.

The Studio might not have called a halt to the duck oils if things hadn’t grown out of hand; but with prices escalating, pirated Uncle Scrooge prints circulating, and the wrong people horning in on the craze, I can understand their legal concerns. I’m just happy for what Carl managed to produce in those first years, and honored to have been part of the phenomenon. — G.B.



Above left—Carl Barks and Glenn Bray with the first of Carl’s oil paintings featuring Disney themes. Above—Bombie the Zombie slowly makes his way through Carl’s painstakingly drawn swamp scene.




of Western's editorial staff. Garé told me the company had made no provision for Carl to receive Social Security benefits, as all those years he was considered an independent supplier submitting "piece work." Generating new income would take some doing.

In a handwritten letter Carl sent me in the summer of 1967, the two passages shown here disclose that both he and Garé were trying their luck at selling paintings, and had been giving some thought to opening a small gallery featuring her landscapes.

In what may have been a flashback to his *Calgary Eye-Opener* days of drawing girly cartoons, Carl declared that he was "wasting time painting arty-looking girls." Clearly, the master cartoonist still had no idea of his enormous company of devoted fans, nor does it appear that until Glenn Bray posed the question four years later, would Carl give serious thought to painting Disney subjects.

July 11, 1967  
Dear Joe: Sorry I've taken so long to answer your epistle of June 30. I've been wasting my time painting arty looking girls. This sort of thing. Maybe they'll sell for a few farthings to people who need a splash of pretty color on their wall. I do the backgrounds in layered colors, real sparkly, then paint the girl head on in smooth satiny colors.



Garé now has pictures in two galleries in Laguna Beach. Since you haven't been to Laguna for several years, you probably don't know that there are almost as many art galleries on its streets as navel. Every artist of even mediocre ability has his own gallery. Maybe some day we will rent a hole in the wall somewhere along the main artery and hang out a shingle saying GARE'. Fastest way ever invented to reach pauperdom.

Not convinced his duck images would carry over well in oils, but willing to take a stab at a painting with Glenn's \$150 offer hanging like a carrot before his nose (no doubt with artistic encouragement from technique-savvy Garé), Carl put brush to canvas without waiting to break through the red tape of permission from the Disney studio. He clearly figured he had nothing to lose; if the painting turned out awful, or if Disney turned thumbs down on the idea, Carl could incinerate the canvas and that would be the end of it.

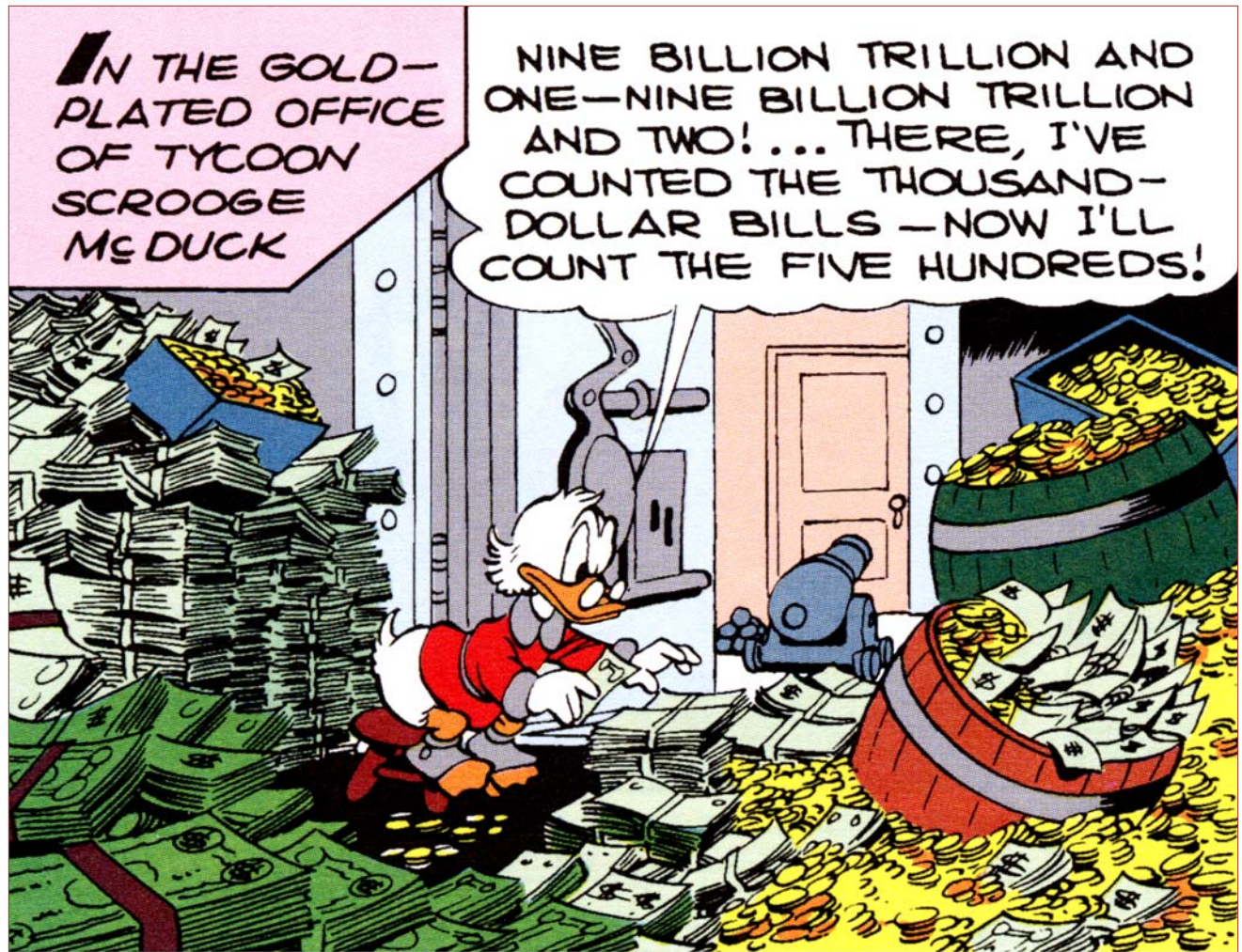
As you see, his first painting turned out just ducky, and Glenn's suggestion ultimately eliminated Carl's hardscrabble financial situation for the rest of his life. —J.C.



## CBFC Member Commissions Disney Duck Characers During Africa Visit.

**Lifetime member** Carl-Fredrick Sand-berg, made a journey to Africa this summer, prior to entering college in Norway this Fall. On safari in Tanzania, his group was introduced to some woodcarvers. Carl met with one of the artists and commissioned carvings of Scrooge, Donald, and the boys as seen through the eyes of this African craftsman.

Although the figures look a little unusual, they are definitely Disney Ducks with an African flair! The artist had never heard of Donald Duck but was willing to make the attempt to carve the characters after seeing a Disney comic book Carl had brought along on the trip! Quite the UNIQUE Disney Duck collectibles, Carl! Our CBFC hats are off to you for creative thinking during your African adventure!



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## McDuck Listed as Number One in Forbes Fictional Fifteen.

**Prestigious FORBES Magazine** has noted that “soaring gold prices vault penny-pinching poultry to top slot: first non-mammal to rank as fiction’s richest character.” The article by Matthew Herper goes on to describe Uncle Scrooge as keeping “the majority of [his] fortune in bullion” while also investing “in pearls, gems, other ‘hoardables’ [and] literally swims in gold coins for exercise.” Scrooge’s fortune is listed as \$28.8 billion

from mining and treasure hunting. His age is 80, he’s single, and lives in Duckburg, U.S.A. His education is listed as a “Cluck U dropout”!

Its always amazing how Carl Barks’ Uncle Scrooge character surfaces from time to time in our contemporary culture. Some years ago, one of our members sent in an Italian cartoon showing Scrooge standing, like the Pope, on a balcony and lauding the merits of

the euro to the thousands below as that currency was about to make its way into the financial system of the EU. Carl’s premier character creation seems to have many applications to some of the hot button issues of our day.

[www.forbes.com/2007/12/11/scrooge-mcduck-money-oped-booksx\\_mh\\_fict1507\\_1211scrooge.html](http://www.forbes.com/2007/12/11/scrooge-mcduck-money-oped-booksx_mh_fict1507_1211scrooge.html)