



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION TO HONOR THE CAREER OF ESTHER JACOBSEN BATES AT THE ELVERHØJ MUSEUM UPON HER RETIREMENT

WHEREAS, Esther Jacobsen Bates served as Executive Director of the Elverhøj Museum of History and Art in Solvang, California, beginning in 2003; and

WHEREAS, during her time as Executive Director, Esther guided the museum through a period of significant growth and expanded public engagement; and

WHEREAS, Esther was instrumental in the transfer of ownership of the museum from the City of Solvang (after being gifted by the Brandt-Erichsen family) to a nonprofit organization known as Solvang Heritage Associates; and

WHEREAS, Esther worked tirelessly through grant-writing, outreach to donors, planning of events to fund-raise for the museum, and building a community of supporters of the Elverhøj, to bring the museum to improved fiscal wellbeing and long-term sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Esther led the effort to renovate and update all interior and exterior spaces at the museum, and brought new life to the museum's art gallery, having curated many exhibitions ranging from local artists to national and international artists and renowned historical artists, including Rembrandt; and

WHEREAS, Esther built cultural bridges working with the Embassy of Denmark in Washington, D.C., bringing ambassadors, musicians, performers, athletes, educators, and members of Denmark's royal family to Solvang; and

WHEREAS, Esther displayed total commitment to the museum, making herself available for museum activities and support at all times, and treating all visitors to the museum as she would guests in her own home; and

WHEREAS, Esther guided the museum during the COVID-19 pandemic, projecting a calm positivity that kept museum staff and volunteers engaged, exhibiting a nimble responsiveness to ever-changing conditions, and collaborating with other local museums to find solutions to challenges, which allowed the museum to continue to thrive; and

WHEREAS, Esther worked with Santa Ynez Valley native Ann Dittmer to co-author "The Spirit of Solvang", a comprehensive book documenting the history and evolution of the Danish town; and

WHEREAS, Esther retired from the Elverhøj Museum on June 30, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Barbara recognizes and appreciates Esther's nearly 20 years of dedicated service to the Elverhøj Museum, the City of Solvang, and Danish-American culture and history in the Santa Ynez Valley.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED AND RESOLVED that this Board of Supervisors honors Esther Jacobsen Bates for her exceptional career and recent retirement from the Elverhøj Museum.

PASSED and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of Santa Barbara County, State of California, on this 22nd day of August 2023.



ATTEST:

Sharon Reyes
Clerk of the Board

Paul Hillman

Supervisor - 1st District

Laurel Crow

Supervisor - 2nd District

Joan Hartman

Supervisor - 3rd District

Bob Weber

Supervisor - 4th District

Ed Swain

Supervisor - 5th District