



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
FUNERAL HISTORY™
1992-2017

[National Museum of Funeral History](http://NationalMuseumofFuneralHistory.org)
415 Barren Springs Drive
Houston, Texas 77090
281-876-3063

MEDIA CONTACT:
Lydia Baehr
Lydia@LTBaehr.com
713-208-3421

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**National Museum of Funeral History
Thanks for the Memories Exhibit
A Visitor Favorite**



HOUSTON – *Thanks for the Memories*, one of the most popular exhibits at the National Museum of Funeral History in Houston, Texas, provides an up-close and personal look at the grand farewells of some of the world's most iconic figures.

See authentic printed memorial folders—the program of services handed out at the funeral—and memorabilia used in the funeral services and burials of Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Elizabeth Taylor, John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe and others.

<http://nmfh.org/exhibits/permanent-exhibits/thanks-for-the-memories>

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photo of George Barris and the Batmobile

Celebrating its 25th Anniversary, the National Museum of Funeral History is proud to present a new exhibit, **A Tribute to George Barris**, through Dec. 31, 2017.

<http://nmfh.org/exhibits/rotating-exhibits/a-tribute-to-george-barris>

George Barris, known throughout the world as the 'original' King of Kustomizers, created iconic automobiles including the original 1966 Batmobile, the "Beverly Hillbillies" jalopy, the Munster Koach and casket turned dragster (the "Drag-U-La") for "The Munsters," and KITTs, the short name of two fictional characters from the adventure television series "Knight Rider."

The Museum will display a replica of the 1966 Batmobile, a replica of the casket Barris was buried in, a memorial folder from Barris' funeral along with other personal memorabilia.

President of the National Museum of Funeral History Genevieve Keeney stated, "We have a wonderful gentleman who is on our board, Buck Kamphausen, who collects cars. He has fascinating hearses that are on exhibition in the museum and an outstanding private collection of unique automobiles. Mr. Kamphausen owns the replica of the 1966 Batmobile and the replica of the casket in which Barris was buried. It is a unique opportunity to display these items in **A Tribute to George Barris.**"

Richie Valles, owner of Unique Twist Celebrity Caskets in Burbank, CA, and George Barris, were close friends. Upon George's passing, Richie designed and created the casket Barris was buried in, which is bright yellow and embellished with Bat-wing style fins. Richie also created a replica of the casket on display in the Tribute to George Barris exhibit. More about Rickie Valles on www.uniquetwist.net

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photo of Richie Valles, creator of George Barris casket and the replica on display at the Museum

Born in Chicago in the mid-twenties, Barris moved to Roseville California with relatives after his parents died in 1928. He pursued a passion for building scratch-built model airplanes and model cars that resulted in winning competitions for construction and design.

His interest in cars intensified during his teenage years as he discovered "the black art" of body work by hanging out after school at local body shops.

Barris created his first full custom car from a used 1936 Ford convertible before he graduated from high school that led to his first commercial customer.

Shortly after, Barris formed a club called Kustoms Car Club where the first use of "K" for kustoms appeared.

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He later moved to Los Angeles where his talents began to flourish. Barris opened his first shop in Bell, a Los Angeles suburb in late 1944.

As movie studios took note of Barris kustoms on the streets and at races, the studios and came to George for cars for their films. This included customizing the personal cars of the stars as well.

As the sixties began, George shifted gears and bought a new shop in North Hollywood where he designed and built award-winning cars.

Kamphausen, who is a funeral director, stated that he had attended the funeral for Barris. “It was a WOW! I knew he would have something different. I have fond memories of George. He was a great part of the automobile world.”

About the [National Museum of Funeral History](#)

The National Museum of Funeral History houses the country's largest collection of funeral service artifacts and features renowned exhibits on one of man's oldest cultural customs. Visitors can discover the mourning rituals of ancient civilizations, see up-close the authentic items used in the funerals of U.S. presidents and popes and explore the rich heritage of the industry that cares for the dead. The museum is located at 415 Barren Springs Dr., Houston, Texas 77090 and is open Monday – Friday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday from 12– 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors and veterans; \$7 for children 6 – 11 years old; and free for children age 5 and younger. For more information, visit www.nmfh.org, like us on [Facebook](#) or call 281.876.3063.