

PHOTO EXHIBITION BEN SOMSEN

by Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen [53]

Our Foundation advisor Ben Somsen [396] is a gifted photographer. For many years he has been travelling all over the world to take the most beautiful nature pictures in special places.

There was a splendid retrospective exhibition of his work in the local library in Ben's residence Eibergen, Achterhoek, in November 2001. There was great interest on the part of relatives, friends, the press and fellow-townsmen. And with good reason.

'People in the picture just bother me'

Most of all Ben, who is always accompanied by his wife Hannie [397], likes to take pictures of attractive places that radiate a very special atmosphere: the reflection of a fisherman's cottage in the water of a Frisian lake, a Mediterranean window with worm-eaten blinds or a red garden table with a set of four red, slightly rickety chairs. For this last picture Hannie chooses a red frame to match it. Beautiful!

A fellow-photographer of Ben, Sandra Kroonenberg, who is also a good friend of Hannie and Ben, opened a photo exhibition in November 2001 in a very charming way.

She said: 'Half a year ago the three of us were in America to take pictures of the coloured rocks in Arizona. That Ben has been very successful is shown on the walls around you. I know how all this came into being. Ben always looks the way the camera looks. All day long he is busy with cameras, wide-angle lenses and telephoto lenses. And when he finally thinks he is going to take the perfect picture, his wife Hannie, who also has a good eye for photography, says: 'Have you thought of this and have you thought about that?' A very artistic couple indeed.

Ben used to say: 'In pictures people just bother me', but he has taken most pictures of his wife Hannie. Ben cannot deny this. And in a quasi-sad mood Hannie sighs: 'I have been in those pict-

ures from the days I was young till now.'

Travelling, making movies and taking pictures

Ben has made many movies during the trips he made as a video-film producer for travel agencies. The idea is that the touristy attractions are portrayed as well as possible. Besides making movies he also took a lot of pictures in these places. For example in the United States, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Iceland, Jamaica, Turkey.

Because of this Ben and Hannie have seen many countries. 'It looked like a dream-job, but in reality there was a lot of suffering and hard work', Ben says. A hundred kilograms on your back at a temperature of 42 degrees centigrade in the mountains is not very pleasant at all.

But foreign countries are not the only source for all his pictures. There is also a great deal of Dutch landscapes among it.

Many of our readers and visitors of the Reunion know Ben's video-film **Somsen Panorama**.

At the time his video-film was also launched for the American system, so that our American relatives could see it in their homes as well. There are some really beautiful family pictures in it and pictures of Aalten and its surroundings.

'I have taken pictures for over fifty years now', Ben says, 'and though you do need a fairly good camera, it is mainly a question of watching well, looking for a fine composition and don't always keep the horizon in the centre.

Light is also a very important component. I always carry a compass to see where the sun rises.

When the light is not exactly good, I will come back later'.

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There were well over twenty-seven photographs on the walls of the library in Eibergen. All of them with beautiful mounts and frames. All of them made by Ben himself.

Some of the titles: *Coleseed-field*, Groningen, *Fishing nets drying*, Zeeland, *Denali National Park*, Alaska, *Yavapai Point*, Grand Canyon, USA, *Peyto Lake*, Alberta, Canada, *Ram-*



Church on Lanzarote

shackle house on the beach, Spain.



Photo: Wouter Borre

*Ben Somsen [369] and his wife Hannie [397]
fit out the photo exhibition*

Lovely, Ben, that you don't keep your beautiful collection all for yourself, but that all the visitors were given the possibility to enjoy it. There is even more. When you take a look at the back page of this magazine you will see some of his beautiful

pictures in colour. That is a present to all our readers. Thank you for this. ■

Source 'De Gelderlander', Nov.7, 2001



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