

24 Rare Photos From Mister Rogers' Neighborhood

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In the years I have spent researching *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* from a pop culture perspective and building the [Neighborhood Archive](#)—an online resource for all things Mister Rogers—I have always enjoyed hearing from former cast and crew members who contributed to the Neighborhood in their own unique ways.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet David Smith—*Neighborhood's* Assistant Art Director throughout the early 1970s. While Mr. Smith had my full attention as he shared stories of living in Pittsburgh and working on the set of the *Neighborhood* during its "vintage" days (a time he shared with fellow crew member and future Hollywood star, Michael Keaton), he absolutely caught me off-guard when he sent me home with a collection of approximately 100 photographs and 35mm slides in addition to some of his original artwork used as props over four decades ago. Although a few of the photographs were eventually used for promotional purposes, a good majority were behind-the-scenes snapshots likely not seen in decades.



Here are 24 of the best shots from this collection.



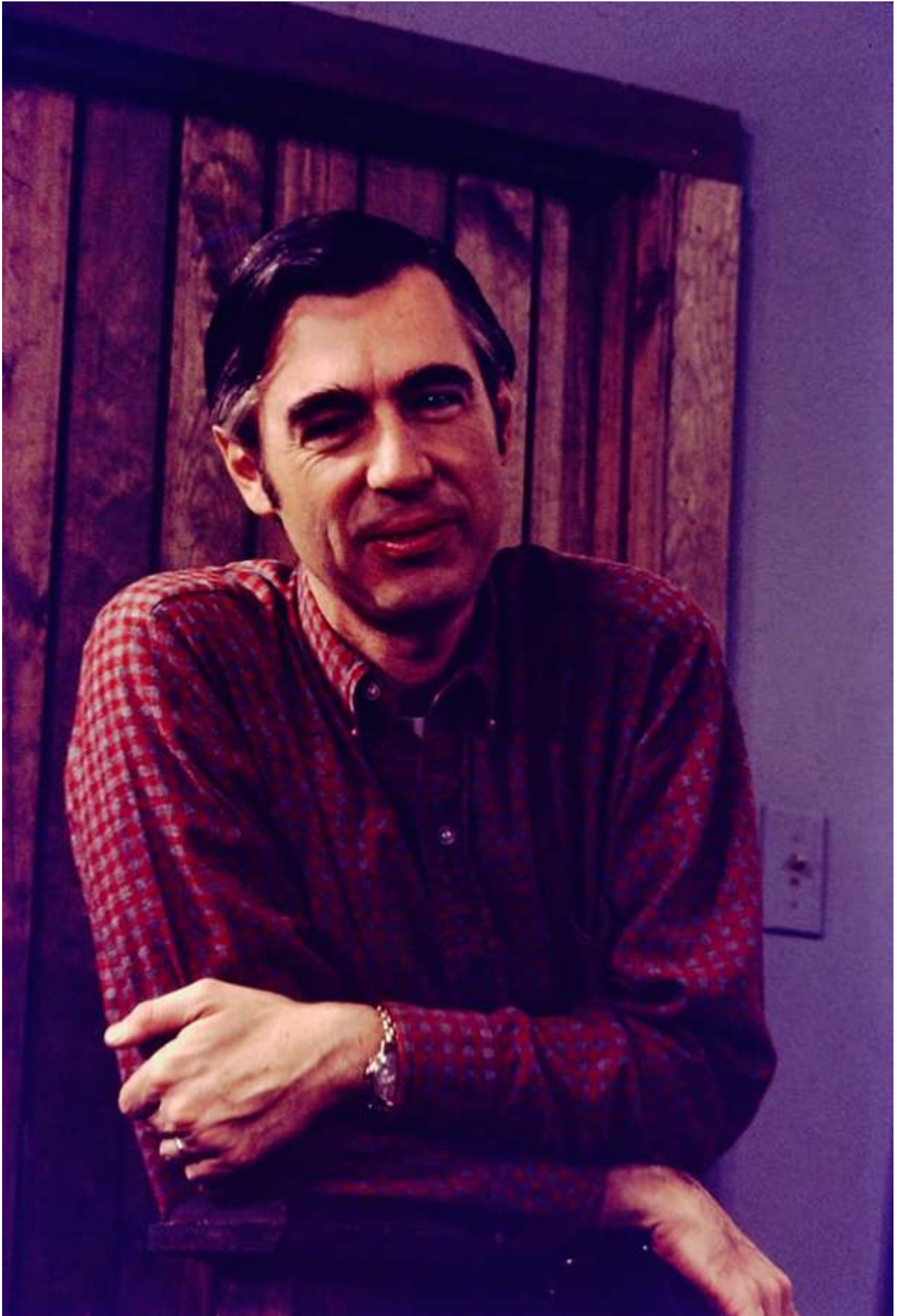
Lady Aberlin (Betty Aberlin), Daniel Striped Tiger, and Fred Rogers



Don Brockett and Fred Rogers. "Potato Bugs and Cows" - *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - [Episode 1300](#) (1973). Photo by Sandy Speiser.



David Smith (right) working on the model *Neighborhood* used during each episode's opening, closing, and transitions.



Fred Rogers. Photo by Sandy Speiser.



Bill "W.P." Barker with Dr. Bill and Elsie Jean Platypus.



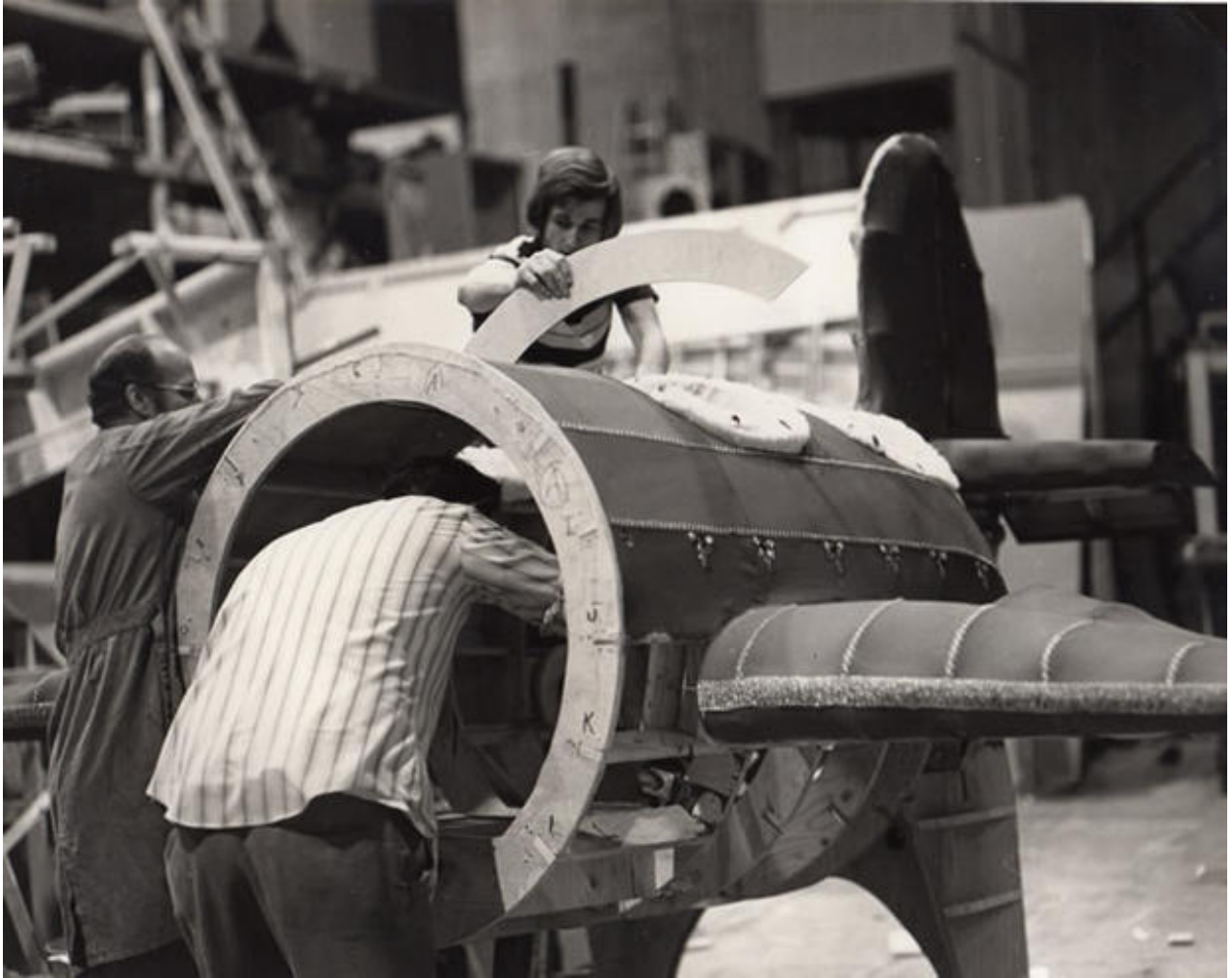
Cast and Crew. "Potato Bugs and Cows" - *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - Episode 1300 (1973).



Fred Rogers with his son. Photo by Sandy Speiser.



Mrs. McFeely (Betsy Nadas) and Mr. McFeely (David Newell) in the *Neighborhood of Make-Believe*.



Jack Guest (Art Director), David Smith, and a carpenter working on King Friday's royal plane.



Betty Aberlin.



Lady Aberlin (Betty Aberlin), Mr. McFeely (David Newell), and Francois Clemmons.



Fred Rogers with Barry and Garry Nelson in the *Neighborhood of Make-Believe*. The Nelsons played basketball for Pittsburgh's Duquesne University from 1968-1971. *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - Episode 1173 (1971).



Fred Rogers. Photo by Sandy Speiser.



David Smith under the "potato washer-dryer-sorter-dumper" prop.



Cast and Crew. "The Snow People" - *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - Episode 1245 (1972).



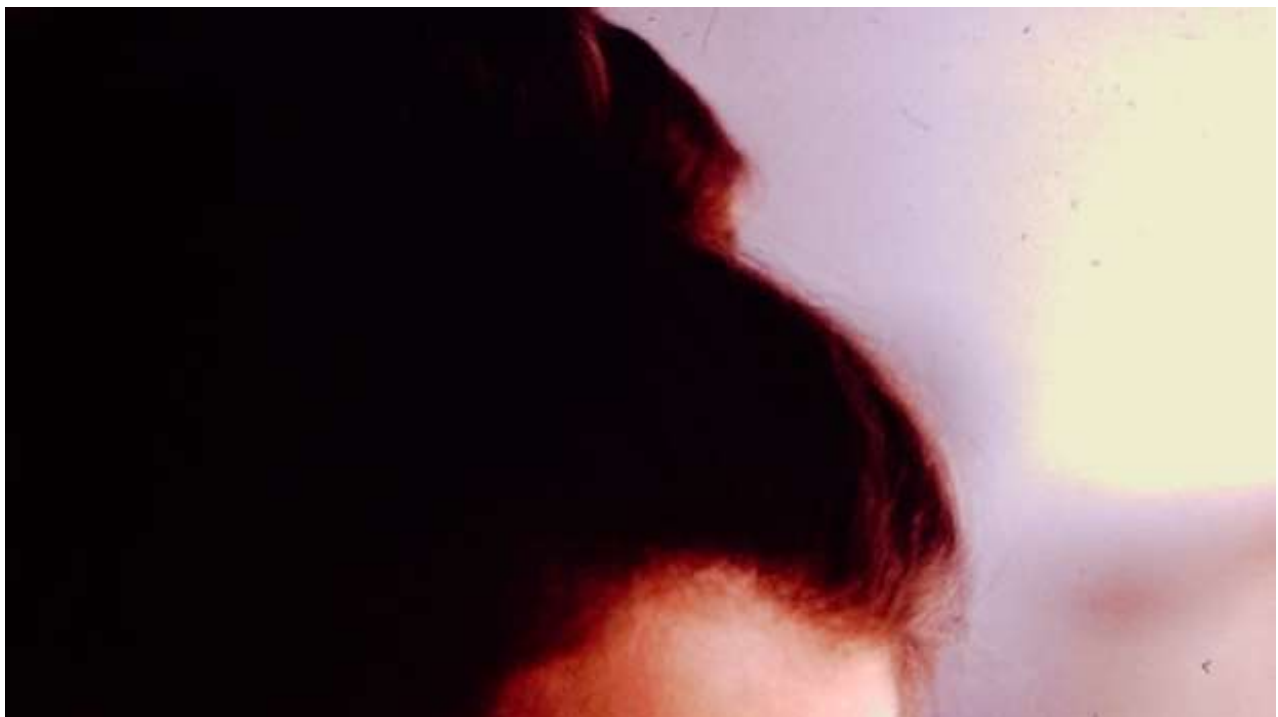
Francois Clemmons and Betty Aberlin.



Crew members including David Smith (center, right) and Michael Keaton (center, left). "Potato Bugs and Cows"- *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - Episode 1300 (1973). Photo by Sandy Speiser.



Yoshi Ito and Francois Clemmons. "The Snow People" - *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - Episode 1245 (1972).





Betty Aberlin.



Robert Troll (Bob Trow) and Mr. McFeely (David Newell). Photo by Sandy Speiser.



Johnny Costa (Music Director), Betty Aberlin, and Audrey Roth. "Potato Bugs and Cows" - *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* - Episode 1300 (1973). Photo by Sandy Speiser.



The Flying Zookeni Brothers Daredevil Circus comprised of crew members such as David Smith (far right) and Michael Keaton (third from right).



The Neighborhood of Make-Believe set.



The set of Mister Rogers' television house.

For a full summary of my conversation with David M. Smith—including the complete collection of photographs, details on his artistic props, and a recorded interview—visit the [Neighborhood Archive](#).

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