



# RETRO FAN

Let's roll, Kato!



Spring 2019  
No. 4 \$8.95

The Green Hornet in Hollywood

## Thunderbirds Are GO!

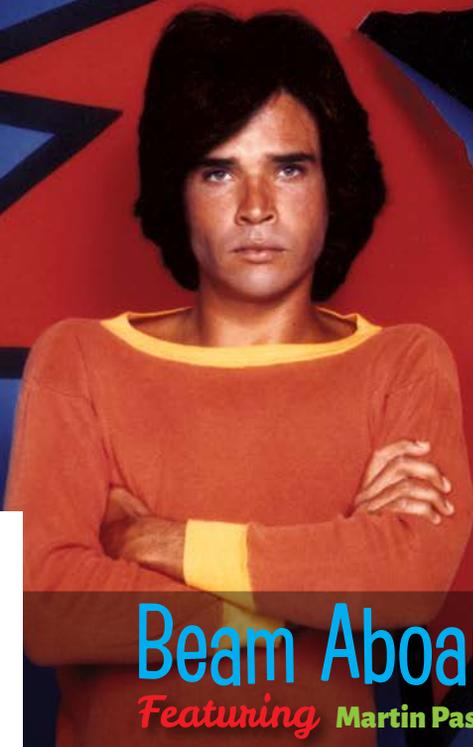
Creature Creator RAY HARRYHAUSEN

SAM J. JONES Brings The Spirit to Life



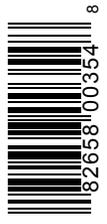
Saturday Morning's

# SHAZAM!



## Beam Aboard the Star Trek™ Set Tour!

Featuring Martin Pasko • Andy Mangels • Scott Saavedra • and the Oddball World of Scott Shaw!





THE CRAZY COOL CULTURE WE GREW UP WITH

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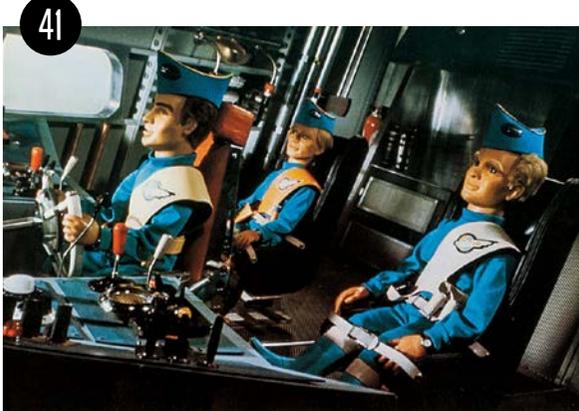
**ReJECTED**  
*RetroFan* fantasy cover by Scott Saavedra



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# Hornet, Where is Thy Sting?

(From Trendle to Treacle: Part I)

By Martin Pasko

"He's baaaaaaaack..." And, man, is his face red!

My last column, about the early superhero the Phantom, was entitled "The Ghost Who Stumbles." In retrospect, that title was both ironic and prophetic, as I've been a mere "ghost" in these pages for two issues, having stumbled off into a world of circumstances beyond my control. I'll leave it at that, because my esteemed editor has already accounted for my temporary absence in better language than I myself could craft.

Suffice to give a huge and grateful shout-out to the wonderful writers who filled in: Dan Johnson, Mark Vogel, and editor Michael Eury himself. So if you've missed *RetroFan* #2 or 3, check out the back-number order page elsewhere in this issue, or go to [www.twomorrow.com](http://www.twomorrow.com). Otherwise, you're missing out on a lot of fun—and certainly not just from *this* column, either, LOL.

My previous pesky screed was an (I hope entertainingly snarky) analysis of the Phantom that tracked the character's development from its debut through recent efforts to reboot it. The evidence begged the conclusion that the first Spandex-ed superhero is an unsalvageable product of its time; a character whose appeal to contemporary audiences is limited by its lack of relevance to the modern world. In this issue, I'll be returning to that theme, having found that a similar problem besets my current subject, the *Green Hornet* franchise. But first...

I don't want this column to be just a collation of data you can just as easily Google for yourselves. Why would you need me for that? I'd much rather make these columns ever more personal, and in the course of that, I hope to sneak in some thought-provoking critical analysis.

I've gone on record that I'm suspicious of nostalgia because I think indulging in it impairs objectivity and helpful analysis. But this magazine is called *RetroFan*, after all. So, rather than try to swim *totally* against the tide, I'll personalize this column by connecting my subjects,



**Hang on, Green Hornet! It's Kato we're really watching. Van Williams and Bruce Lee as producer William Dozier's other dynamic duo in a 1966 photo.** The Green Hornet and Kato TM & © The Green Hornet, Inc. Photo by Roger Davidson. Courtesy of Heritage Auctions.



Trading card-sized stickers sold alongside bubble-gum cards in 1966 featured photos from TV's *Green Hornet*, including images of Wende Wagner as Lenore Case. © The Green Hornet, Inc./Greenway Productions, Inc./20th Century Fox Television, Inc. Courtesy of Heritage.

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such as Stanley Ralph Ross and Lorenzo Semple, Jr., and directors such as Leslie H. Martinson, were adept at comedy, the *Hornet* is largely the work of seasoned dramatic action-adventure pros. Though some of the

Axford, the bodyguard-turned-reporter of the radio series, is now solely a police reporter for the *Sentinel*, and in making him eager to the point of mania, Lloyd Gough plays him for comedy. At one point in the pilot, Britt even gives him the gas to keep his investigative reporting from blowing a, well, sting operation.

There were also visual differences from the serials, in which the Hornet wore a full-face mask with eyeholes and Kato wore goggles. Here, both men wear masks that cover only the upper portions of their faces.

TV also drew upon technological innovations to provide new weapons for the duo: now the Hornet wielded a telescoping device called the Hornet's Sting, which emitted ultrasonic sound waves. He usually used it to open locked doors, set things on fire (?), and to scare the heavies into confessions. The series also gave Kato his own weapons: green "sleeve darts" that allowed him to engage opponents at a distance and in closer combat.

But the main factor that probably best accounts for why the show lasted only a season is because it wasn't a *Batman*-esque campfest, as ABC had misled viewers to expect, both in promoting it as such and reinforcing that impression with a *Batman/Green Hornet* crossover. But apparently, Dozier and the network elected to play it relatively straight. Unlike *Batman*, whose staff writers,

*Batman* crew contributed, Dozier relied on producer Richard (*Police Woman*) Bluel, directors like Seymour (*Mission: Impossible*) Robbie, and writers like Ken (*Mission: Impossible*) Pettus.

Matters probably weren't helped by the facts that the *Hornet* had an unusual format, a half-hour action adventure show when most such shows were hours; and that it aired on a Friday when, back in those days before VCRs, most people weren't watching Friday-night programming because they weren't home.

And so, after that Friday night, I enjoyed the *Hornet* for the rest of the season, and Cousin Mike and I never spoke of it again, not even after interest in it was briefly renewed in the early Seventies. Bruce Lee had distinguished himself as an international martial-arts star with *Enter the Dragon*, and his untimely death turned him into a cult figure on the order of James Dean. A film compilation of the TV episodes in which Kato had a prominent role was released in 1974, entitled *The Green Hornet*. Without it, the property would have been forgotten, as it was by 1990. Significantly, once again it was *Kato*, not the Hornet himself, that was keeping the property alive.

In the Nineties, however, there was renewed interest in reviving the *Hornet* for feature films, after the success of 1989's *Batman*. The ardor cooled somewhat after the box-office failure of a film based on another radio show, 1994's *The Shadow* starring Alec Baldwin. Over the next 17 years, the property bounced around Hollywood, with speculation at one time attaching Eddie Murphy to the project, and at another point, there was a proposed film with Jet Li as Kato. Somehow, the *Hornet* fell into Columbia Pictures' hands, and it got made. By the man who swatted it to death.

Which brings us to the last *Hornet* in filmed media, the theatrical feature finally released by Columbia in 2011, which probably had both Trendle and Striker spinning in their graves. This, thanks to its star, co-executive producer, and co-screenwriter Seth Rogen, who arguably destroyed whatever commercial viability the *Hornet* franchise may have had, and turned it "radioactive."

Why allow the title role—a supposedly athletic, smart, daring hero in the classic manner—to be played by a dull, awkward, pudgy, and clearly out-of-shape former stand-up comedian? This is mystifying enough, considering that at that time, Rogen's feature



The other star of TV's *Green Hornet*—the *Black Beauty*, designed and built by car customizer Dean Jeffries—was licensed as a model kit (shown here, from Aurora) as well as a Corgi miniature. © The Green Hornet, Inc./Greenway Productions, Inc./20th Century Fox Television, Inc. Courtesy of Heritage.



Jan and Dean's Dean Torrence Says,

# “Comedy is Not Pretty”



by Michael Eury



**Dean Torrence and Jan Berry** met in high school in Los Angeles and gigged together in doo-wop groups until finding fame as the surf-music duo Jan and Dean. Their mid-Sixties' hits included “Surf City,” “Little Old Lady from Pasadena,” “Dead Man’s Curve,” “Ride the Wild Surf,” and the comedy concept album, *Jan and Dean Meet Batman*.

Jan and Dean's popularity led to their co-headlining their own comedy movie, *Easy Come, Easy Go*, and a weekly comedy-variety television series, *Jan and Dean on the Road*, both of which were beset by problems and scrapped. The TV series—and Jan and Dean's partnership—was derailed on April 12, 1966, when an auto accident nearly took Jan's life. Berry took years to recuperate, during which time Torrence re-established himself as a successful graphic designer, designing Grammy-nominated and Grammy-winning album covers for numerous successful acts through his company, Kitty Hawk Graphics.

**Then and now: Detail from one of Jan and Dean's most popular LPs, and Dean Torrence today.** LP © Jan and Dean.

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“I got a Grammy, in the graphic design category,” Torrence told me in 2015. “And I got three nominations... I never got a Grammy or any nominations for any music. So maybe they were telling me something.”

Flip through your record collection and you'll no doubt discover the design handiwork of Dean Torrence on album covers for the Turtles, Diana Ross and the Supremes, the Temptations, Chicago Transit Authority, Captain & Tennille, and many other artists. But very little for his own band. “I instinctively kind of knew how to *brand* somebody,” Torrence says, “[but] I didn't get to do much of it with Jan and Dean [aside from a couple of compilation albums]. But I was able to then do it full time for other artists, and it seemed to work out.”

One of those “other artists” was Steve Martin, whose “King Tut” tune is stuck in your head if you're reading this on the heels of our accompanying RetroFad



**Steve Martin's first three comedy albums, released between 1977 and 1979, with cover designs by Dean Torrence and Kitty Hawk Graphics.** © Warner Bros. Records.

# SHAZAM!

By Andy Mangels

**Welcome back to** *Andy Mangels' Retro Saturday Morning*. Since 1989, I have been writing columns for magazines in the U.S. and foreign countries, all examining the intersection of comic books and Hollywood, whether animation or live-action. *Andy Mangels Backstage*, *Andy Mangels' Reel Marvel*, *Andy Mangels' Hollywood Heroes*, *Andy Mangels Behind the Camera*... nearly three decades of reporting on animation and live-action—in addition to writing many books and producing around 40 DVD sets—and I'm still enthusiastic. In this new *RetroFan* column, I will examine shows that thrilled us from yesteryear, exciting our imaginations and capturing our memories. Grab some milk and cereal, sit cross-legged leaning against the couch, and dig in to *Retro Saturday Morning!*

**In the mid-**Seventies, live-action superheroes on television were almost non-existent. Common reruns of the Fifties *The Adventures of Superman* or late Sixties *Batman* series were the only choices for kids and comic-book fans outside the realm of animation. But on September 7, 1974, all of that changed, when lightning struck...

Over an image of swirling clouds, the announcer—ironically, the voice of an uncredited *Batman* star Adam West—stoically intoned, “Chosen from among all others by the immortal elders—Solomon, Hercules, Atlas, Zeus, Achilles, Mercury—Billy Batson and his mentor travel the

highways and byways of the land on a never-ending mission: to right wrongs, to develop understanding, and to seek justice for all. In time of dire need, young Billy has been granted the power by the immortals to summon awesome forces at the utterance of a single word: Shazam! A word which transforms him in a flash into the mightiest of mortals... Captain Marvel!”

Viewers were riveted to the opening visual of Billy Batson—played by Michael Gray—shouting “Shazam!” before lightning struck him and he magically transformed into the red-suited Captain Marvel—played by the strong-jawed Jackson Bostwick. The show would become a hit on Saturday mornings, inspiring a spin-off series, changes to the comic books that had inspired it, and mentoring young viewers with moral lessons. But behind the scenes, ominous thunder rumbled...

Now, let's take a drive down the highways and byways of memory to the days when *Shazam!* flew high!

## The Old Wizard Beckons

In the pulpy newsprint pages of comics, superheroes were still in their toddler days in 1939; Superman had only first appeared in April 1938, followed by Batman, Blue Beetle, Human Torch, and the Sub-Mariner. During the summer of that year, Fawcett Comics staff writer Bill Parker was tasked with creating superheroes for the popular company, and he devised six characters



think we bought it at first," said Scheimer, "but they got a credit." Ironically for a superhero show that was supposed to include a character hiding their secret identity, Mentor's motor home was emblazoned with a red square and yellow lightning bolt symbol on its front... basically screaming to the world that Captain Marvel had something to do with the vehicle!

"One time, it was so hot that the windshield in the motor home cracked," Gray recalls. "We were inside shooting a scene and Les and I were trying to get the point across to the producers how hot and uncomfortable it was out there. Les would ad-lib something in the middle of the scene. As we were supposedly driving and we'd be jumping and bobbing up and down and looking at the scenery, Les would say things like, 'You know, Billy, it's so hot in here my eyeballs are about ready to fall out of my head. I can hear them drying up and the powder falling out of my nose.' It was miserable sometimes."

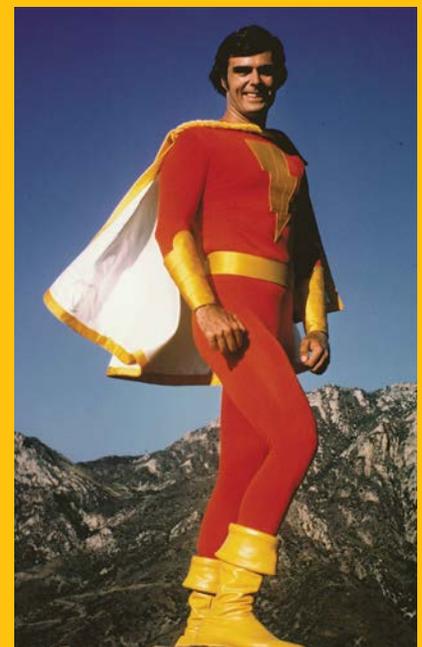
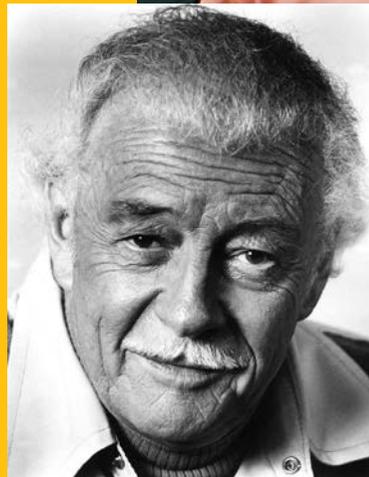
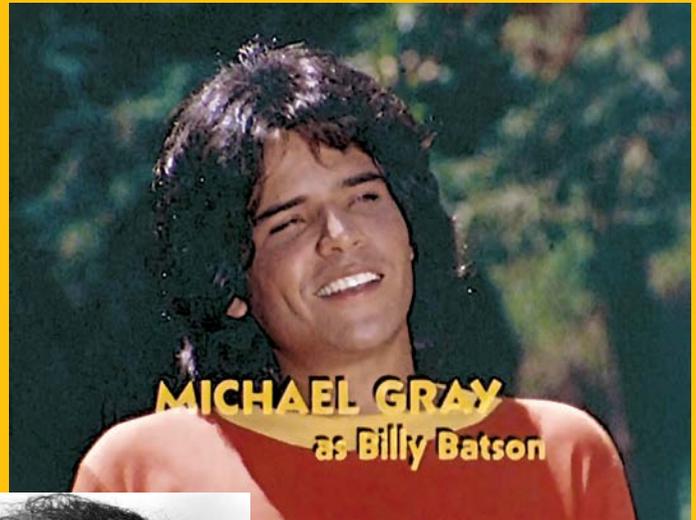
Although Tremayne recalled that he "sheared off the side lights one time," Gray says that he caused far worse damage once. "One day, I tore the roof off. After lunch I was asked to drive the motor home back to the location. On the way back, there was a limb I didn't see. I peeled the top back like a sardine can."

A Honda motorcycle factored into the series early on as well. Gray recalls, "I had a motorcycle the first year, and they took it away from me. The bike was supposedly hooked to the back of the motor home. During lunch I would take it and go off into the hills. Insurance wouldn't cover it, so they took it away." Tremayne recalled of the same bike that "Years ago, when I was 16, I was riding a Harley-Davidson and it went right through a brick wall and I went over the top of it. I never got into one of those things again until *Shazam!* They had to teach me how to start it and everything. Then the damn thing fell over and burned my leg, so they kind of weaned us away from the stunts."

The vehicle was hot because the producers couldn't install an air conditioner because it would be too noisy for the dialogue. Tremayne noted that lines were never looped, while Gray says that "we had a guy on the floor between the seats in the motor home to hold the mic underneath us." In some shots, the motor home was actually driven by Tremayne, but for any close-ups, Gray says that "they'd bounce it up and down. A big guy, named 'Big' John Carroll. 6' 9". 250 pounds. He'd take a big stick and move it." Carroll was both a second grip on the series and one of the stuntmen... when he wasn't singlehandedly jostling the enormous motor home.

### The Transformation and Superpowers

A stock shot was created of Billy Batson changing into Captain Marvel via lightning strike for the opening credits. The transformation sequence was done by Joe Westheimer's people at the Westheimer Company, for whom Filmation had done movie titles. "We did the stock material shots of Billy in front of a blue screen—it wasn't a green screen back then—and they put together the matte and animated opticals of him changing



(TOP) Michael Gray was Billy Batson. (MIDDLE) Les Tremayne was Mr. Mentor. (RIGHT) Jackson Bostwick stands tall as Captain Marvel.

with the lightning bolt," said Scheimer. "The transformation was exciting and well rendered, and would inspire some of our later animated-hero transformations at Filmation." That included *He-Man* and *She-Ra* in popular mid-Eighties cartoons, who were also transformed by lightning.

Many of the shots of Billy saying "Shazam!" were done live, with some smoke coming in to make it look realistic. Gray recalls, "In the first season, every time we did a transformation we used a gunpowder flash. There were a couple of times I came out smoking, soot on my nose, my eyebrows smoldering. I'm sitting there, smoke coming out of my hair. 'You used too much dynamite, I think, guys.'" Only a handful of episodes showcased Captain Marvel shouting "Shazam!" to return to the form of Billy Batson.

The Captain Marvel costume was a direct ringer for its comic-book counterpart. "Everything that wasn't a red leotard was made of silk, and it cost about \$750, including \$250 for the yellow boots," said Scheimer. Billy, meanwhile, always wore the exact same

size and look to fit the costume," said Scheimer. "The agent called Davey, and Davey apparently tried to call his wife to consult with her, but couldn't reach her, so he asked his eight-year-old son, Tommy, what he thought of the idea. When his son exploded with excitement, Davey called back and took the job."

Davey had a few credits to his name, but was originally a Marine and a boxer. "When you're any kind of athlete in Hollywood you get Hollywood types inviting you to be an actor," Davey says. "So I accepted the invitation and hung up the gloves. I'd done stunt work for a couple of years, then I decided that wasn't much better than boxing as far as self-preservation! So I started doing theater, acting workshops, and stuff, got an agent. Then *Shazam!* came along. I was living in Culver City at the time. The phone rang and it was my agent, Ivan Green. I'd heard of Captain Marvel but I had not heard of the show. I was a little bit reluctant. Not that I was Robert DeNiro, but it was still a little bit scary to think of doing this costume show. I said, 'Ivan, let think about it.' He said, 'You can't think about it. They're waiting for you on the set!'"

As with Scheimer, Davey credits his son for clinching the job. "He was eight years old then, and he was excited about Captain Marvel! So I called back: I said, 'I'll do it.' His eyes lit up. My son went home and told his mother, 'My dad is Captain Marvel. The real Captain Marvel got fired!'"

Scheimer noted that, "I remember that, after I first spoke with the agent and gave him the deal and the address, I called him back and said, 'If he's got a moustache, tell him to shave it before he gets there.' Wouldn't you know it, Davey had a moustache." Davey concurs, saying, "I had a moustache but had just shaved it for the show, so I had a tan with a white splash! They had to cover that. I get into costume, then I'm standing on a ladder with a pad underneath. The guy says, 'Jump down from the ladder. What we are trying to do is create the effect of you landing from a flight.' Then, within three minutes I get these two guys [Gray and Tremayne]!"

Gray remembers meeting the new Captain Marvel on location in Topanga Canyon well. "As Captain Marvel, John had a new hairstyle, he had a pot belly, he had a little bit of cauliflower ears from getting hit in his fighting days, and his nose was a little smashed. He looked like Captain Marvel had hit a bus or something! 'What happened to Captain Marvel?' 'Oh, he had a rough night.' The first couple of hours John was on the set, they wanted to get stock footage of him running. They strapped him to a slant board in front of the camera car to look like he was flying. He was a little bit out of shape, and his belly was hanging over the slant board. About two in the afternoon, Les and I were talking and John came in, out of

breath, and said, 'Jeez! You guys didn't tell me I was going to do all this running!'"

Of seeing their new hero two hours after the frantic phone calls, Scheimer said, "I think that Norm and I drove out to go look at him in costume to make sure he looked right. He was a good guy, and he looked great in the role, though he was a bit rougher looking than Jackson. He had to lose a little bit of weight, too, because the costume didn't really forgive a belly. But he got along with the cast and crew really well, and everybody liked him."

Tremayne really appreciated Davey's friendlier attitude on-set. "It was such a contrast because he was such a willing guy, ready to work with you. I'm sorry to say that we didn't have that with Jackson. He was a nice guy, but you could not get close to him. When he started hanging on the runners on the bottom of a helicopter and going up a hundred feet and he wouldn't let them tape his hands to it... He was a nice guy. He was just not in the groove somewhere."

Davey admits that he wasn't terribly keen on doing many of the dangerous stunts, unlike his predecessor. "They didn't have that problem with me at all. In fact, they tried to get me to do something similar—it was a crane they were going to carry me up. They were going to have me go up like, 20 feet. I said, 'I was in the ring with Joe Frazier, so I've got nothing to prove!' I'm not going to let them tape me onto something and dangle me out in the air and have me fall off and get paralyzed so you can have the next Captain Marvel in here the next day! So I hung onto the balloon and they lifted me about two feet. The camera guy just had to get down a little lower!"

In another episode, Davey was supposed to encounter a shark while out in the ocean. "We did an episode in which there was a shark in the water. This was right about the time that *Jaws* came out, and I'd been deathly afraid of sharks. One of the directors said, 'We can't use [stuntman] John Carroll] on these; we have to see your face.' I said, 'I'm not going in the water!' There were great white sightings out there, big ones. I wasn't going in that water with these yum-yum boots on. They'd tested colors on sharks, and the naval pilots jokingly called these yellow life vests 'yum-yum yellow.' It was the same color as these damn boots! Nobody realized how scared I was! These monsters down there, and here I am, bobbing around like a red fishing lure." Carroll donned the suit, and performed the stunt.

Davey also recalls that filming the studio insert shots of flying was a bit uncomfortable. "They were doing these flight sequences. They had me all cinched up, hanging on wires so that the harness was cutting in. My gut was... it was very funny



**John Davey as the new Captain Marvel.**

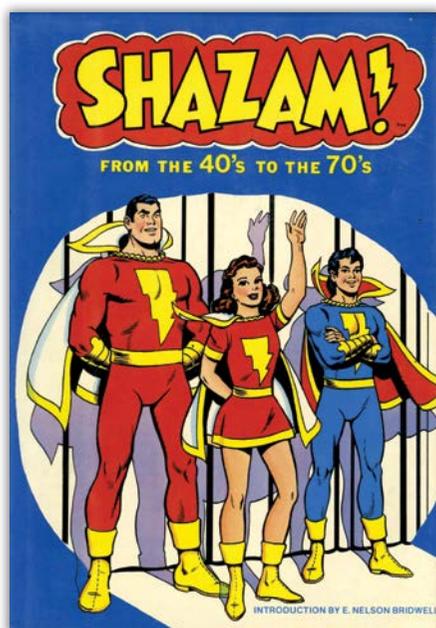
# The Definitive Guide of SHAZAM! Seventies Merchandise

By P.C. Hamerlinck

**SHAZAM!** After nearly a 20-year absence from public conscience, the original Captain Marvel returned to a new world just ten days shy of Christmas Day, 1972. DC Comics actively acclimated the World's Mightiest Mortal into Seventies pop culture with his own comic book (drawn by Cap's co-creator, artist C. C. Beck)... a Saturday morning live-action television series... and an abundance of licensed products that brought a beloved character that had long ago outsold Superman into prominence once again.

Almost two decades before all that transpired, a settlement had finally been reached with the prolonged *National Comics (DC Comics) v. Fawcett Publications* copyright infringement litigation, on August 14, 1953. The agreement stated that Fawcett discontinue publication of all "Captain Marvel" and related comic magazines and cease all commercial activity associated therewith. It specifically stated that *Captain Marvel Adventures* #150 and *Marvel Family* #89 were to be the two last issues published by Fawcett. With no admission of guilt that Captain Marvel had imitated Superman in any way, the '53 agreement mandated that Fawcett was permanently prohibited from producing anything involving Captain Marvel without DC's consent... until DC itself brought Cap back in the Seventies! (As explained in this issue's editorial, the usage of the Captain Marvel name was never on the table, as Marvel had snapped up the rights to it during the Sixties.)

However, prior to purchasing the rights to Captain Marvel and family outright in 1991, DC Comics had made an agreement



with Fawcett back on June 16, 1972, where DC would pay a royalty to Cap's former publisher for each usage of the Captain and related characters in all media, according to the late DC associate editor, E. Nelson Bridwell. It joyously set the stage for copious amounts of Shazam! commodities to be produced during those initial years of Cap's return.

## Books

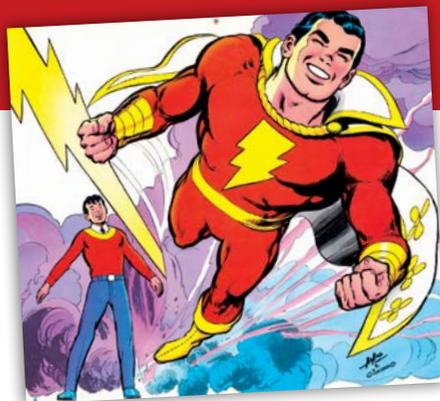
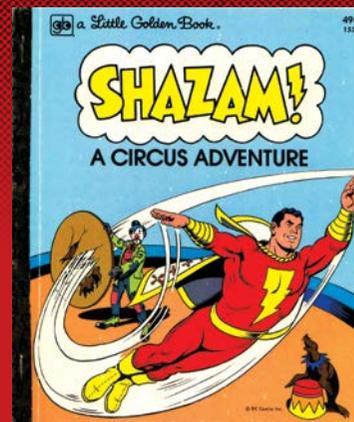
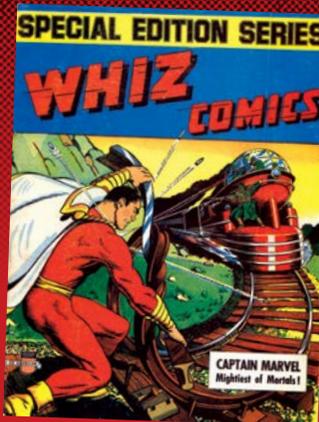
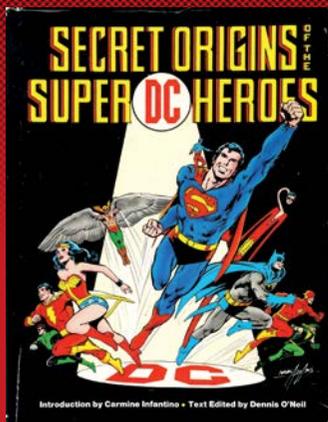
Books and related items published in the Seventies with Captain Marvel's participation were integral in heightening the public's awareness of the World's Mightiest Mortal by introducing (or re-acquainting) the character to the general public beyond the comic-book spin racks and television screens and into malls, bookstores, and local libraries. These tomes helped to quickly establish Captain Marvel,

after years lost in superhero limbo, as an important inclusion to DC's enduring pantheon of heroes.

Captain Marvel's 1940 debut tale reprinted in Harmony Books' 1976 *Secret Origins of the Super DC Heroes* trade paperback furthered the cause to assimilate the hero with the rest of the DC gang. Edited by E. Nelson Bridwell, the book was made available in both hardback and softcover editions. For many readers it was their first exposure to the original Captain Marvel.

Even more impactful was the Bridwell-edited *Shazam! From the 40s to the 70s* (Harmony Books, 1977), a hardcover compilation of some of the greatest Marvel Family tales from the Fawcett era to the new stories by DC. Most importantly, it firmly situated

(TOP) Detail from official DC merchandising art circa 1975. (INSET) *Shazam! From the 40s to the 70s* could be an eye-opening introduction or welcome reunion. TM & © DC Comics.



Captain Marvel on bookshelves right beside similar hardback anthologies of the day for Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman.

Besides presenting Captain Marvel with DC's big guns, another notable aspect of Warner Books' 1976 and 1977 editions of the *Super DC Calendar* was Neal Adams' skillful interpretation of Captain Marvel and Billy Batson (inset), where the artist successfully retained the pragmatic purity of the characters while imbuing his own dynamic, realistic rendering to them. It was the work of magic and, unsurprisingly, the image (drawn in 1975) lent itself well to future merchandising endeavors. The Captain and family were also represented in the 1978 *DC Super Heroes Poster Book* published by Harmony Books.

Between 1974 and 1975, in those pre-DC Archives days, Alan Light's Dyna-Pubs issued two thick softcover collections of black-and-white reprints from the Golden Age of Comics in his *Special Edition Series* vol. 1 (Captain Marvel) and vol. 3 (Captain Marvel, Jr.).

Two widely distributed items were Whitman's *Shazam!* coloring book entitled "Double Trouble" - *Giant Comics To Color* from 1975 with artwork by Teny Henson and featuring a story co-starring Dr. Sivana and his daughter, Beautia; and the 1977 Little Golden Book: *Shazam! A Circus Adventure* starring Captain Marvel and Mary Marvel. The latter's story was written by Bob Ottum and marvelously illustrated by longtime Marvel Family artist Kurt Schaffenberger. The artist's work radiated on this project, particularly on the double-page layouts. When I met with Schaffenberger I asked him about the book. He merely chuckled and said, "Well, they misspelled my name [as] SchaffenBURGER!"

### Figures

The pinnacle of all Shazam! Seventies collectibles is undoubtedly the 8-inch Shazam! action figure from Mego's highly regarded "World's Greatest Super-Heroes" line; no respectable Shazam!

### Shazam! in print. TM & © DC Comics.

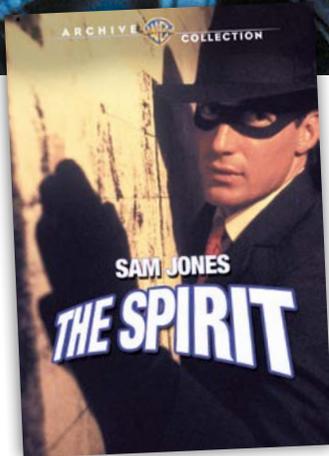
display is complete without it. The boxed Shazam! figure first appeared in stores on July 31, 1974, and continued being sold on assorted carded packaging designs up until 1977. The World's Mightiest Mortal's head resulted from Mego reusing the sculpt mold of Peter Parker

(you know, the amazing Spider-Man) from their previous Montgomery Ward-exclusive "Secret Identity" series and modifying the paint job on it to give our hero a more-pointed, widow's-peak hairline that he's known for, as well as blue eyes. The happy accident that resulted from it is that, much more so than the comic-book version, the figure actually ended up resembling TV's first Captain Marvel, Jackson Bostwick, from the Saturday morning CBS *Shazam!* series which debuted just five weeks *after* the release of the Mego Shazam! figure. As with many of the other action figures in this particular line, their presentations were not always entirely accurate when compared to their counterparts from the comics. For example, in Cap's case, the sometimes-vinyl, sometimes-nylon cape wasn't even the right color (yellow instead of white)... and Cap's familiar cuffed boots were now wider and longer, utilized from an pre-existing mold. Yet, when all was said and done, none of it mattered because the look Mego had established still flowed together nicely. The company's mostly minimal, cost-effective alterations didn't make their high-quality products any less endearing to those of us who bought them when they first appeared in stores... or to the future generations of collectors where the figures continue to withstand the test of time.

Previously, Mego had released the rubbery Shazam! Bend 'n Flex 5-inch figure in 1973. It had an amusing, rushed-looking paint job to it and, well, you remember the drill: the more you bend and flexed the arms and legs, its interior wires eventually gave way and all the fun you were having with it came to a screeching halt. It was then handed down to your pet dog as a chew toy.

# Getting into The Spirit

By Dan Johnson



I discovered Will Eisner's *The Spirit* in 1985. I had just started frequenting my local comic-book shop that year and the two guys who worked there, Jim Amash and John Hitchcock, helped turn me on to Eisner's work (as well as EC Comics and the terrific artists behind those books, but that is another story for another time). For the record, Eisner's *The Spirit* first

(LEFT) The telefilm starring one-time "Savior of the Universe" Sam Jones as Will Eisner's seminal masked man is available via Warner Bros.' Archive Collection.

© Warner Bros. The Spirit © Will Eisner Studios, Inc.

saw print in 1940 as a comic-book insert that was distributed in Sunday editions of major metropolitan newspapers.

As soon as I got into the character, I was hooked. I enjoyed Eisner's O. Henry-style stories, creative page layouts, and his luscious artwork. And then there were his even more luscious women. For a teenage kid who loved comic books, finding Eisner was a major awakening. For the first time, I knew just how powerful comic books could be as a storytelling medium.

As soon as I got into *The Spirit*, I started hearing rumors that there was a television movie in the works. I thought that was amazing. Then I heard Sam Jones, the star of *Flash Gordon*, was going to star as Denny Colt, a.k.a. the Spirit, and I knew I had to see this. Sadly, while the film was touted in magazines like *Starlog*, it never showed up on the television schedule, and trust me, I looked at the entire television schedule of 1986 hoping to see that it would be airing soon.

As it turned out, the movie was an intended pilot for a television series for ABC which would have aired during the 1986–1987 season had it been picked up. Sadly, it wasn't, and the *Spirit* pilot might have become a shelved project, forgotten to time like so many other failed pilots. But fandom stepped in, and, thanks to the efforts of other folks eager to see it, a petition to broadcast *The Spirit* made the rounds at the San Diego Comic-Con. It was signed by convention attendees as well as a number of comic-

book industry pros. With so much support, ABC-TV relented and decided to put the movie on the air.

Fast-forward to Friday, July 31, 1987. Finally! After all the waiting and hoping, *The Spirit* was scheduled to air as a movie of the week. I remember we had a huge thunderstorm that came through the night it premiered and the picture would flicker in and out a few times (this is before my family had cable and my television set had long lost its rabbit ears and "graduated" to an old clothes hanger). But, by gosh, I got to see Eisner's crimebuster in action! And it was great. The pilot was a fun, family-friendly story that set up the Spirit's origin and established a number of major characters from the comics.

Just recently, I got to talk to the star of *The Spirit*, Sam Jones, and he shared some memories of working on this movie, beginning with the story of how he landed the part to begin with. "It was an audition, if I remember correctly," recalls Jones. "I had a lot of fun doing [that pilot]. [I wasn't that familiar with the character,] but I studied it and researched it. And, of course, Will Eisner came on the set and he pretty much endorsed it. He was a nice man."

The movie had an impressive crew behind it. The script was written by Steven E. de Souza, whose credits before *The Spirit* included scripts for television's *The Six Million Dollar Man* and *V* and the film *48 Hours*. After *The Spirit*, de Souza went on to write such blockbusters as *Die Hard* and Sylvester Stallone's version of *Judge Dredd*.

The director of the film, Michael Schultz, had previously directed such classics as *Car Wash*, *Greased Lightning*, and, a personal favorite of mine, *The Last Dragon*. In recent years, Schultz



# Thunderbirds Are Still Go!

by Bill Spangler

**Back in the** late Sixties, there was fab, and there was F.A.B.

“Fab” was short for fabulous, a common piece of counterculture slang. F.A.B. was slang, too, but it was used by a very different group: the cast of *Thunderbirds*, an unusual science-fiction TV show that is still attracting fans more than 50 years after its debut.

*Thunderbirds*, a creation of Gerry and Sylvia Anderson (who were, at the time, married), originated in Great Britain. One of the things that made it unusual was that it was produced with a combination of elaborate sets and sophisticated marionettes, a process the Andersons dubbed “Supermarination.”

According to a behind-the-scenes featurette made at the time, the average Supermarination puppet was roughly one-third life-size. The head of each puppet contained switches that enabled

the mouth movements to be synchronized with pre-recorded dialogue.

The Andersons produced Supermarination series both before and after *Thunderbirds*. Some of them—most notably *Supercar*, *Fireball XL-5*, and *Stingray*—received exposure here in America. However, *Thunderbirds* was probably the most popular of the shows; many consider it the best. It inspired toys, movies, and a

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**Gerry and Sylvia Anderson’s enduring Supermarination sci-fi classic *Thunderbirds* made its television debut in 1965, followed in 1966 by this theatrical movie, *Thunderbirds Are Go*.** © ITV Studios Limited. Movie poster courtesy of Heritage Auctions.



**Thunderbirds and Captain Scarlet Supermarionation puppets by Gerry and Sylvia Anderson, on exhibition at the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford, West Yorkshire, England.** Chemical Engineer/Wikimedia Commons.

well-received revival that started in 2015 and as of this writing has completed its third season. Moreover, elements of the original show have become part of the British pop-culture vocabulary.

Why did this show have such an impact? Glad you asked...

**Welcome to Tracy Island**

*Thunderbirds* chronicled the adventures of International Rescue, a private organization that used advanced vehicles and technology to... well, rescue people. (Gerry Anderson, who died in 2012, said he was inspired by a high-tech mine rescue in Europe.) The original show was set in 2065 A.D., which, when it premiered, put it a full 100 years in the future.

The title characters were, in fact, the primary vehicles that International Rescue used. *Thunderbird 1* was a high-speed jet that was usually the first on the scene of a disaster. *Thunderbird 2* was a huge cargo plane that could carry any one of a number of pods containing specialized equipment. *Thunderbird 3* was a spaceship. *Thunderbird 4* was a small submersible that was usually brought to the danger zone in one of *Thunderbird 2*'s pods. *Thunderbird 5* was an orbiting space station monitoring the world's communications, looking for possible trouble.

A manned drilling machine that could burrow beneath the surface was used more than once, but, for some reason, it never reached *Thunderbird* status.

International Rescue was created and run by retired astronaut Jeff Tracy, who used his family fortune to build the *Thunderbirds* and a secret base for them on a South Pacific island. The *Thunderbirds* themselves were created by Tracy's scientist, a man known only as "Brains." By the time the show begins, Jeff is a widower, but he has five adult sons who operate the various ships. Scott is the pilot of *Thunderbird 1*, Virgil commands *Thunderbird 2*, Alan pilots *Thunderbird 3*, Gordon is in charge of *Thunderbird 4*, and John is the primary resident of *Thunderbird 5* (although the other Tracys also do take shifts there).

Despite what that line-up suggests, International Rescue was not entirely a family business. Two other major characters were Lady Penelope Creighton-Ward, and her chauffeur Parker, a reformed safecracker (well... almost reformed). They usually handled security-related issues. Parker took Lady Penelope around in F.A.B. 1, a pink, six-wheeled Rolls Royce, loaded with gadgets and weapons, that became as iconic as the *Thunderbirds* themselves.

Other residents of Tracy Island who appeared regularly were Kyrano, Jeff Tracy's major domo; his daughter Tin-Tin; and Grandma Tracy, who was apparently Jeff's mother.

Some of the disasters that International Rescue faced were relatively mundane, like cave-ins. Others were more exotic, like rescuing a manned space probe from falling into the sun. Often, these missions were complicated by the presence of the Hood, an Evil Oriental Mastermind who wanted to steal the organization's secret technology. Sometimes, the Hood seemed to be working on his own; other times, he was working for some foreign power. It seems that even Evil Masterminds have bills to pay.

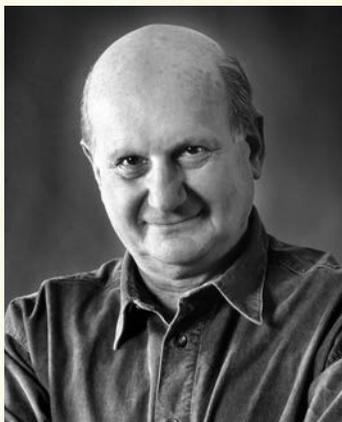
If this sounds like a lot for a TV show, that's because it is. But the people who made *Thunderbirds* made it work.

One of the attractions of all the Supermarionation shows was simply to see how elaborate the puppets, vehicles, and sets could get. *Thunderbirds* took this element to new levels, with distinctive and detailed vehicles and sets. In addition, the launching bays for *Thunderbirds 1, 2, and 3* contained ornate, almost Rube Goldberg-style ways of transporting each pilot to his ship.

The model work for this show, and other Supermarionation projects, were supervised by Derek Meddings. He told an interviewer that he liked to keep track of small details, like making sure that a model boat was leaving a wake in the water. Viewers knew when a scene was wrong, he said, even when they couldn't recognize what was bothering them immediately.

Here's another example of the sort of details that Meddings and the others kept track of: video phones were common in this world, but there were still times that the plot demanded that an anonymous call be made. When that happened, the same graphic, with the same notation, SOUND ONLY SELECTED, would appear.

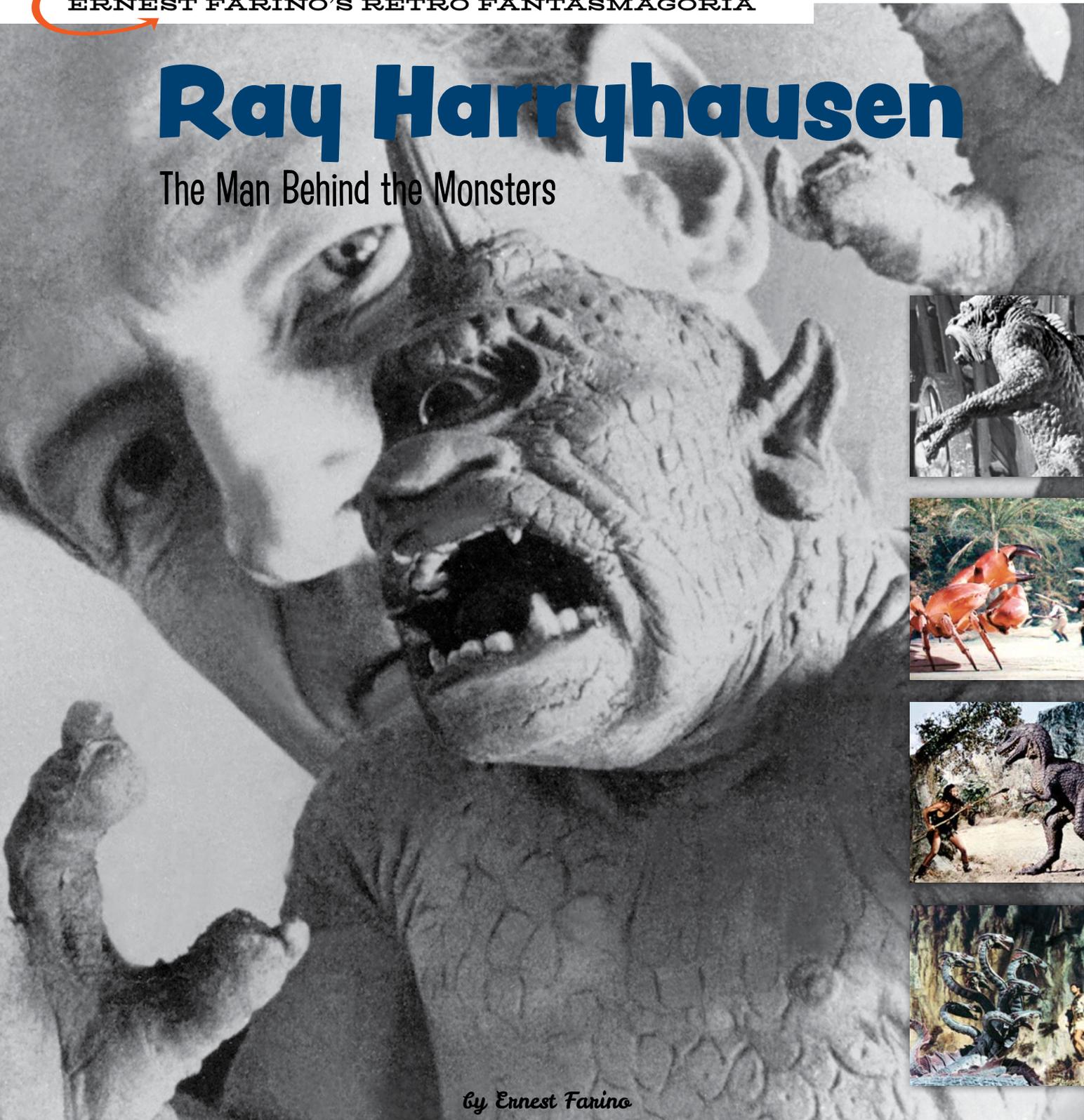
The *Thunderbirds* crew also made sure vehicles that were used regularly looked



**1996 promotional photo of Gerry Anderson.** Photo © David Finchett, 1996.

# Ray Harryhausen

The Man Behind the Monsters



By Ernest Farino

Most *RetroFan* readers know the name Ray Harryhausen (1920–2013)—the cinema magician and stop-motion animator who gave us such unforgettable fantasy films as *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, *20 Million Miles to Earth*, *Mysterious Island*, *First Men “in” the Moon*, *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, and the original 1981 *Clash of the Titans*. Ray’s fantastic imagery is at once seared into the viewer’s brain—the Cyclops thundering out of the cave at the beginning of

*The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*, an Allosaurus attacking the cave people in *One Million Years B.C.*, and the charge of seven sword-wielding skeletons in Ray’s own personal favorite and arguably his magnum opus, *Jason and the Argonauts*.

It is significant—and highly unusual, in the history of movies—that in the same way we can identify “a Hitchcock film” or a “Sergio Leone Western,” we refer to any of these movies



(LEFT) Ray Harryhausen (in white hat, looking through camera) lines up a shot for *The Valley of Gwangi* in Spain in 1967. (RIGHT) Ray Harryhausen with one of the four identical ape models made by Marcel Delgado for *Mighty Joe Young*. (INSET) *Famous Monsters* #20 (Nov. 1962): “The Man Who Saw King Kong 90 Times” was Ray Harryhausen.

as “a Harryhausen film,” such was his personal style, structure, tone, and distinct artistry. When filming *The Valley of Gwangi* in 1967 on location in Spain, director James O’Connolly was apparently unfamiliar with Ray’s previous films and did not understand the nature and degree of Ray’s involvement with the live-action filming. Ray’s longtime producer, Charles Schnee, told author Mike Hankin in 1992 that, “On location, Ray was doing his usual task of getting the actors to go through certain motions for his later animation work, while an increasingly irate James O’Connolly was standing on the sidelines. Eventually, O’Connolly came running up to me and began complaining about this ‘special effects man’ who was trying to take over his job. ‘I want him off of the picture!’ he said. Trying my best to diffuse the moment, I could only reply, ‘But, Jim, Ray is the picture.’”

But who was this guy, this maker of magic, this alchemist of artificial life? Was he “real” like the rest of us, or imbued with some supernatural power infused by a heavenly bolt of lightning or a pact with the Devil?

Ray became interested in movies and animation in the Forties and his experiments with his own stop-motion dinosaurs led to working on his first feature film in 1949, *Mighty Joe Young*. During those early days of the film industry, special effects were, for the most part, kept secret from the general public; the special-effects artist, whether animator or matte painter or optical wizard, was literally “the man behind the curtain.” Any such artist was the embodiment of the Great and Powerful Oz, and the studios—still in full sway over the industry—made a concentrated and



coordinated, if unwritten, effort to keep the magic a mystery. The thinking was that “if you know how the trick is done, you won’t be interested any more.”

As a result, throughout most of his career, Ray kept a lid on it, politely declining to discuss how he managed to do his cleverest of shots. This reputation for tight-lipped secrecy and evasion caused anyone attempting to pull back the curtain or peek under the hood to be met with a silent “Cheshire Cat grin,” as *Famous Monsters* magazine editor (and lifelong friend) Forrest Ackerman described Ray’s reaction.

As a result, an aura of mystery arose around Ray along with the general impression that he was private, secretive, shy, and reticent to talk about his work. Mind you, this was during the Fifties and Sixties when Ray was still working, so playing his cards close to the vest came partly from professional concerns: let’s not give the competition—scant as it was—a leg up. Also, until he retired in 1981 and started attending sci-fi conventions and film festivals with greater regularity, Ray’s public appearances were very limited, even rare. That he was living in England since 1959 and thus separated by an entire ocean from a majority of his fan base in the U.S. also contributed to an arm’s-length distance from fans and the general public. Not exactly a recluse to the degree of,

say, a Howard Hughes, but combined with the celebrity status that gradually built up around Ray by his fans, this glass tower existence only fueled the intrigue about “Ray, the Man.”

However, once he retired in 1981 and for over 20 years after that, Ray attended hundreds of conventions, film festivals, and other events, and was honored with many awards and other accolades, not the least of which were the Gordon E. Sawyer Lifetime Achievement Oscar® and a “star” on the Hollywood Walk of Fame



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**First Men “in” the Moon (gag photo with Harryhausen and his moonbeast).**

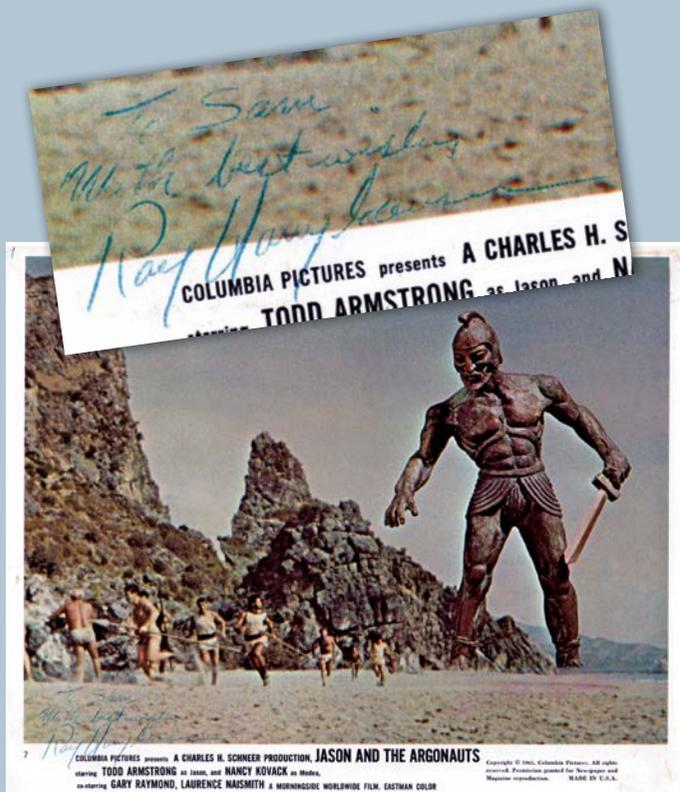
Los Angeles. The Masquers Club was a dramatic acting group that would occasionally present plays in the school and despite excessive opening-night jitters, Ray found himself with a major role in the senior play *Shadow of the Rockies*. At the end of the play he uncharacteristically performed a song and dance act with the play's student director, Virginia Weddle, giving his own unique rendition of *In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia*, a song sung by Laurel and Hardy in their film *Way Out West*. And only recently I found out that Ray was utterly addicted to the Angela Lansbury TV series *Murder, She Wrote*, and harbored a permanent yearning for a Big Mac hamburger.

Anyway, I knew that Ray had things to do at around 4:00 and it was getting to be that time, so I asked him if he'd sign some autographs. He smiled and said, "Of course," and took a seat at his desk. I pulled out a color still of Talos from *Jason and the Argonauts* and explained that Sam had forgotten to ask for it. Well, he signed it with the felt-tip pen but the photo had a strange, glossy emulsion because all it did was bead up and wipe off! Ray said, "Uh-oh. That'll never do..." He tried writing over it, but no results. I suggested wiping it off and using an ink pen, and I pulled out my handkerchief. Ray jumped up and said, "Oh, no. Don't use your handkerchief. I have some cotton downstairs." And so he dashed downstairs and soon returned with some cotton. He dipped it in some solution that was over with his art supplies and carefully wiped it off. He then said, "Now, I had a bigger marker somewhere around here that might work..." and he proceeded to scrounge around his desk and tables for it for five minutes ("Oh, good heavens! What did I do with it...?!"), finally producing a red felt marker with a rather thick tip. He tried that but it reacted the same way, so he wiped it off, too, but it did stain a bit (lower right

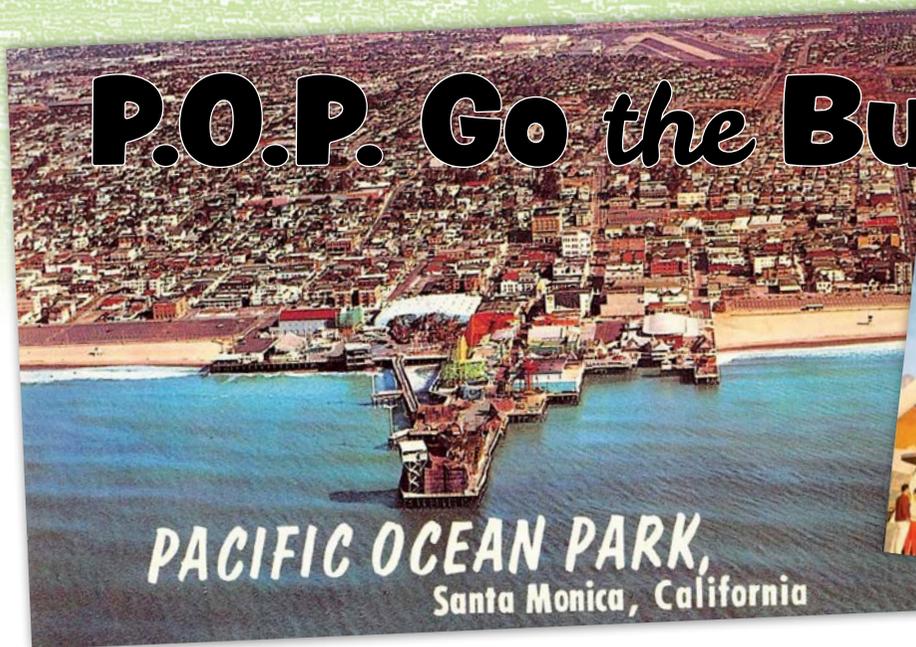
corner). "Oh, no. Now it has a red spot..." I assured him that I didn't think you'd mind about the use of a red-colored marker. We finally decided to try an ink pen, so I pulled out mine and, pressing hard, he produced the autograph. I said, "Sam's going to die with I tell him *Ray Harryhausen* ran all over his house for ten minutes to get a decent autograph!" Ray laughed and said, "Oh, no, it's quite all right."

Then I pulled out a still of the Cyclops from *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* and explained that since we included an actual 8x10 still with every copy of *FXRH*, the idea of the 8x10 still for issue #3 was to have Ray sign it, "To another reader of *FXRH*, Best wishes, Ray Harryhausen." He said, "Fine." ("*FXRH*...?"—he seemed a bit puzzled at our acronym, but smiled when I explained that it meant FX—"effects"—and his initials, RH). He then placed the slip of paper on the still using its edge as a guide to keep his writing straight (previously he took his cotton, dipped in the liquid—I think maybe alcohol—and wiped clean the corner he was going to write on), and carefully wrote out the autograph. He then examined it very closely to see if it was dry, and blew on it a number of times. While he was signing, after he had written "Best wishes," he stopped, looked up at me, smiled, and said, "They'll think all I do is read my own magazine!" and we both cracked up.

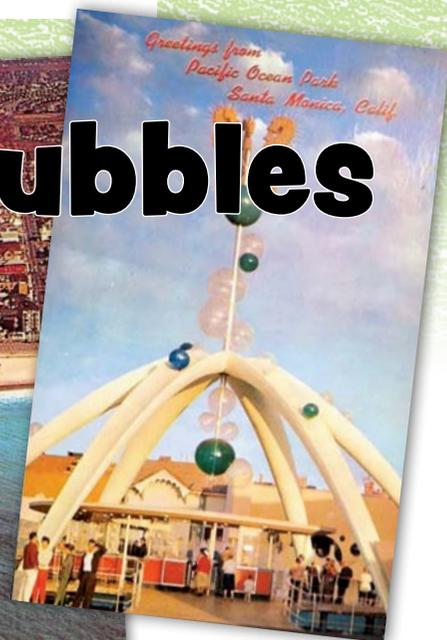
Following that meeting, I don't think my feet touched ground again for days. Like others before and since, meeting Ray was better than one could ever imagine, and that first encounter will always remain a cherished memory. In the years following we met numerous times, exchanged letters and Christmas cards, and spoke on the phone. He was very encouraging about my own burgeoning career, as he was with many other fans that were trying their hands at stop motion. Over the span of several years I



**(BOTTOM LEFT)** The color still of Talos that Ray signed for Calvin. **(INSET)** Detail of Ray's signature. © 1963 Columbia Pictures. **(BOTTOM RIGHT)** The 8x10 still that Ray autographed "to another reader of *FXRH*." An 8x10 negative was made of the original and bulk copies printed to include with each copy of issue #3 of the magazine.



# P.O.P. Go the Bubbles



PACIFIC OCEAN PARK,  
Santa Monica, California

## at... Pacific Ocean Park!

By Scott Shaw!

**Growing up in** Southern California is a unique experience. And having done so in the Fifties and Sixties, I can report that it was particularly unique.

I was too young to appreciate the fact that SoCal was a national tourist destination. San Diego had the wonders of the former site of a World's Fair, Balboa Park (which held a number of museums), art galleries, and the world-famous San Diego Zoo. We also had the Wild Animal Park (now known as "Safari Park"), Sea World, Belmont Park, the Scripps Aquarium, and, for a few years, Dinosaur Land (see *RetroFan* #2). But, as late night infomercial announcers intone, "that's not all...!"

About a fourth of a tank of gas further north in SoCal, there was Orange County. Knotts' Berry Farm and its neighbor, an alligator farm, were the first tourist attractions. In 1955, Disneyland opened in Anaheim, and that was enough to qualify Orange County as the amusement capital of America. There were also museums dedicated to waxen depictions of celebrities, cars known for their cinematic appearances, and even "planes of fame."

An hour further north would take you to Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. That's where Marineland, Universal Studios, the Ripley's Believe It Or Not Museum, the Hollywood Wax Museum, Busch Gardens, the Museum of Natural History, the Museum of Science and Technology, and the infamous Old Trapper's Lodge were located. (And then there were a handful

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**(ABOVE) Move over, Disneyland! These Sixties postcards reveal an aerial view of Pacific Ocean Park and its breathtaking waterfront, and the park's entrance.**

of newly opened retail stores in Hollywood in the mid-Sixties that sold nothing but vintage comic books? Hmmm...)

Therefore, if your parents could afford tickets and fuel to any of these attractive destinations, you had your pick of some of the most memorable childhood experiences available in post-war America. Kids, adolescents, and tourists were offered a ridiculously wide range of places to have fun.

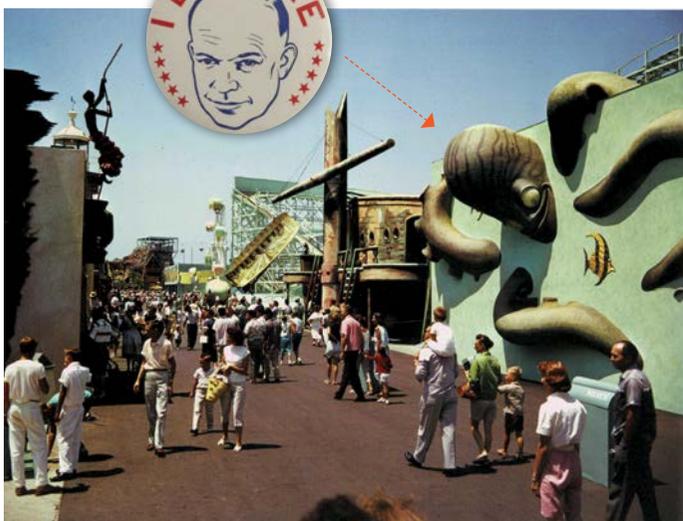
But *none* of them were as uniquely and memorably *weird* as Santa Monica's Pacific Ocean Park, or as it became known, "P.O.P."

### Worth a Trip to L.A.

You may have even heard a reference to "P.O.P." on the Beach Boys' *Summer Days (and Summer Nights!!!)* LP (1965). In the song "Amusement Parks U.S.A." there's a line that goes, "Disneyland and P.O.P. are worth a trip to L.A." And if you never realized what those letters referred to, I can assure you that it *definitely* was worth a trek to Los Angeles to experience P.O.P. for yourself.

But decades before Pacific Ocean Park was a glimmer in its creators' eyes, Santa Monica was a very popular destination for Angelenos and tourists to enjoy a day—or night—at the beach. The beachfront area itself had a long history of amusement parks. In 1905, developer Abbot Kinney created "Venice of America," based on the shoreline exposition of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. The innovations included a Spanish galleon, fun zones, a scenic railway ride, two lagoons, ballrooms, canals navigated by authentic Italian gondoliers, and a "pleasure pier." It became known as "The Coney Island of the Pacific."

Nearby was the "Ocean Park Pier," a similar but far less spectacular amusement endeavor. Kinney had once co-owned



(TOP) A postcard revealing the park's midway, a.k.a. Ports O'Call. Wikimedia Commons. (BOTTOM) We like Ike, but designer Jim Casey so liked the general-turned-U.S. president (INSET) that he modeled the octopus head of the Sea Tub Adventure's exterior after him. Political button courtesy of Heritage.

**The Sea Tub Adventure** was my favorite aspect of Pacific Ocean Park. Its exterior prominently featured a gigantic *bas relief* cartoon octopus surrounded by transparent plastic bubbles half-sunken into the wall around the looming cephalopod. (The sculptor, Jim Casey, admitted that he based the design of the octopus' face on that of President Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower!) Inside, visitors riding in large wooden tubs would be swept through a watery adventure that included a giant octopuppet that was decidedly less friendly than the one outside.

**Davy Jones' Locker** was a creepy funhouse that allowed visitors to stroll through the rotting hull of a shipwreck.

**The Flying Dutchman** was a two-story scare-in-the-dark ride dressed as a ghost ship, with rolling treasure chests as vehicles through the wild ride.

**The Flying Fish** was a "wild mouse"-style mini-roller coaster—actually, the first of its type—with the cars painted to resemble silly fish.

**Fisherman's Cove** was an area of snack bars, informal restaurants and shops designed to evoke a New England fishing village.

**The Shell Spin** was a reworked Tilt-A-Whirl (a fiendish county fair standard that made my dad blow chunks like a seasoned pro).

**The Fish Net** was a rotating cylinder full of people lifted vertically by a mechanized arm.

**The Whirlpool** was a centrifuge that pinned riders to the walls as the floor slowly lowered beneath them.

**The Sea Bird** was a kiddie ride with baby birds subbing for tiny airplanes.

**Around the World in 80 Turns** was a dark ride with pretzel-shaped cars that took visitors on a jerky tour through a world of poorly painted "flats" populated by crudely made locals. The theme was eventually altered to a faux-Dogpatch one, with your car threatening to crash into hillbillies, government revenueurs, moonshine-makers, and farm animals, and received a new name, **Fun in the Dark**.

**Mystic Isles** was a section of the park with a Polynesian theme, including thatched huts, outrigger canoes, and massive sculptured tikis.

**Mr. Dolphin** (later the called **The Mahi-Mahi**) was a massive tower with rotating arms ending in jet-style cars, each of which held eight passengers.

**The Dancing Flowers**, a.k.a. **The Jungle Whip**, was a "Scrambler" ride.

**Mr. Octopus** was a standard Eyerly Octopus ride with eight tubs.

**Mrs. Squid**—later renamed **The Ahuna Thrill Ride**—was an Eyerly Dual Tub Octopus ride with a squid decor in the center. The ride had 16 tubs, each carrying two passengers.

**The Deepest Deep** simulated a voyage via submarine. Unlike Disneyland's Submarine Voyage, attraction, it took place above water. The high point of the ride featured the massive mollusk prop that starred in the 1957 film *The Monster That Challenged the World*, starring Tim Holt, Audrey Dalton, and Hans Conried.

**The Mystery Island Banana Train** was considered by many to be Pacific Ocean Park's best ride. Passengers were treated to a trip aboard a tropical banana plantation train out to Mystery Island and back, complete with a simulated volcano, lava geysers, a pack of audio-animatronic chimpanzees, simulated earthquakes, and giant goony-bird chicks.

**The U.S.S. Nautilus** walk-through exhibit featured a 150-foot replica of the atomic reactor section of a submarine.

**The House of Tomorrow** was a walk-through exhibit displaying innovations for the domestic life that were supposedly looming in the near-future.

**The Pirate's Maze** was a standard house-of-mirrors attraction.

**The Safari** was an interactive dark ride in which children in miniature Jeeps used electronic rifles to "hunt" artificial animals in an "African jungle."

**The Sea Ram** featured bumper cars with sculpted rams' heads attached to their hoods.

**The Carousel** was a vintage leftover "Looft" merry-go-round from the original pier, dating back to 1926.



# STAR TREK

## Set Tour



by Robert Greenberger

**Star Trek** changed the pop-culture landscape in many ways during the turbulent go-go Sixties. The science-fiction series was the first significant subgenre to split away from science-fiction fandom, producing its own fanzines and conventions. Additionally, more than a few fans turned their basements and backyards into crude recreations of the starship *Enterprise*, making 8mm films, graduating to Super8 and then early videotape.

Among that first generation of fans was James Cawley, a native of Ticonderoga, New York. He was a child of the era, born nine months after the series debuted, growing up in adoration of Adam West's Batman, William Shatner's James T. Kirk, and Elvis Presley. "I think I just absorbed all of that stuff growing up," Cawley, 51, said from the captain's chair aboard his recreation of the *Enterprise* Bridge.

"That's your childhood. I had a dad who graduated high school in '57, so he always played that kind of music in the house. I picked up all that music. And he was an MP [Military Police], so we weren't allowed to stay up late at night. So, the things that I watched in the reruns from the Sixties on, TV and read books about, were my totem."

Cawley went on to become an award-winning Elvis impersonator, touring the country and making a nice living. He indulged that interest by collecting whatever memorabilia

from *Star Trek* he could find. When he was 17, Cawley wanted to fabricate his own Kirk uniform so he called Paramount Pictures, asking to speak with William Ware Theiss, who had designed the remarkable costumes for the original show. Delighted to help, Theiss sent a pattern and the two struck up a friendship, resulting in an internship for Cawley on the first season of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. "He was very private and sometimes you didn't know how to take him in. He could be he could be kind of abrasive," Cawley notes. "I got a package in the mail, probably a month before he died, and the blueprints were one of the things in there and there were badges and some odds and ends of different things from the *Star Treks* he worked on." The blueprints to Desilu Sound Stage 9, where the permanent sets for the series were constructed in the Sixties, along with costume patterns were more than a gift—they were a summons.

Cawley wanted to make fan films based on Gene Roddenberry's now-classic science-fiction series. However, he

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**(ABOVE LEFT)** While the overhead displays are computer-generated loops, the remainder of the Bridge is an almost-exact replica of the 1966 set. **(INSET)** What was once a grocery store is now a portal to the days of Hollywood past.



(LEFT) The highlight is, of course, the Bridge, with working controls, continuous sound effects, and a changing array of images on the high-definition main viewscreen. (ABOVE) In the lobby there are numerous display cases with genuine props, replicas, and assorted merchandise showing the series' enduring appeal.

work, lights flare, and they're labeled so you know not to jettison the recording pod. This is where visitor photos are taken in copious amounts.

The Bridge is also where there have been proposals, group shots, and more than a few people indulging in wish fulfillment.

The whole tour takes between 45–60 minutes, but for that length of time you don't feel like you're touring sets. You're on the *Enterprise*—you're part of the crew—and it feels fantastic. James Cawley doesn't want you feeling any other way.

The docents have to be vigilant, as some fans want souvenirs and have pried off control-panel buttons or lifted one of the computer disks.

"This Bridge is probably the third incarnation of the Bridge," Cawley says, considering the relocations and attention to detail. "We'll take the step to pull something out. We've done it often in the last year since I was here."

As for rebuilding the Helm, he explains, "Well, the original Helm still survives. It's in Paul Allen's collection and some friends got to go out and measure it and document it because there were no drawings for the Helm. There's just been some rough outlines of the thing. They did a beautiful job documenting that and taking photographs of it and graciously, you know, gave me access to all that stuff. So, again, you have the information. What's the best way to share? Build it and include it here."

Similarly, they have found a way to add in a permanent Auxiliary Control set even though it was merely a redressed set during the original production. That should be built in 2019. "We're putting the ceiling beams in Engineering and that pretty much finishes the standing sets. We are going to

add Auxiliary Control and the interior of the [shuttlecraft] *Galileo* behind the corridor where we have a space that used to be our lighting section."

It's expensive to run the tour, considering the electric bill alone is four figures a month. Tiny Ticonderoga is a two-hour drive from the Albany airport, making the site an out-of-the-way gem. Cawley is fortunate that most of the staff are volunteers who love him and/or *Star Trek*, believing in his vision and giving of their time and sweat equity.

Throughout the year, Cawley has created theme weekends to entice visitors from around the country. Each August hosts Trekonderoga, a weekend-long celebration with celebrities and special events. In 2018, Karl Urban and Gates McFadden, better known respectively as Dr. McCoy and Dr. Crusher, appeared along with Michael and Denise Okuda. The biggest thrill, though, was the May 2018 "Captain on the Bridge" with William Shatner, which brought tons of media attention. Shatner himself was genuinely

affected by walking the set, memories and phantoms of the past filling his vision. Seeing him in the captain's chair was Cawley's biggest moment. "Meeting Bill—I can now call him that, as he told me to—was the culmination of my life's work and passion for the sets and for *Star Trek*," he told the local media. "To walk on

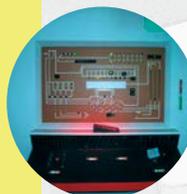
them with your hero is, quite frankly, mind-blowing and -numbing at the same time. We spoke about *Trek*, the sets, and his grandkids and he made me eat apple pie with him."

The actor had such a good time, he agreed to return in December 2018 for another event. Twice, a gaggle of *Star Trek*

## FAST FACTS

### *Star Trek*

- ▶ **No. of seasons:** 3
- ▶ **Original run:** September 6, 1966–June 3, 1969
- ▶ **Network:** NBC
- ▶ **Creator/Executive Producer:** Gene Roddenberry
- ▶ **Emmy Awards won:** none (nominated 13 times)
- ▶ **Spin-offs:** *Star Trek* (animated), *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Star Trek: Enterprise*, *Star Trek: Discovery*





# The Road to HARVEYANA

## One Collector's Journey to Find Purpose

By Jonathan Stennfeld

I have been a collector for as long as I have been able to grasp things in my hands. My earliest collection that I can remember was bottle caps that I found on the street. They used to be plentiful, and I liked their bright colors. This collection ended abruptly when I tried to pick up a cork from a liquor bottle smashed in the gutter. After that it was business cards. From dry cleaners to restaurants, it used to be much more common for businesses to have a card holder near the cash register, and I would try to get cards everywhere my parents took me.

One day, while leaving the supermarket, I noticed the rack of gumball machines. While the stale candy was of no interest to me, the little toys inside some of the machines were absolute wonders, treasures beyond compare to my young mind. This was the first change in my collecting habits, from items that were free to items that cost money. And while I made some efforts to get complete sets of some of the toys, I ended up with duplicates of some items while still missing others.

At some point I had a small collection of baseball cards. I do not remember asking for them or going shopping for them, and I was never much of a baseball fan. I do remember trading cards

with a neighbor boy. Since I knew little about the teams or players, I probably gave away good cards while getting junk in return. This was the only time in my collecting life that I traded any part of my collections.

As I got a little older, we started going on family vacations. I loved touristy gift shops and souvenirs and started collecting postcards. Going to places like Florida and Hawaii, I also started collecting seashells. Most of the shells were ones I picked up for free on the beach, but I do remember buying one basket of shells wrapped in cellophane because the shells in it were interesting and unbroken.

The year 1977 saw the release of the movie *Star Wars*, and I was hooked. I started asking for both the *Star Wars* Kenner toys and Topps trading cards. While I tried to get one of each of the vehicles, and one or more of the action figures, I considered them toys, not

.....  
 (ABOVE) An assortment of games featuring Harvey characters. All photos accompanying this article are courtesy of and from the collection of Jonathan Stennfeld. Characters © Universal Studios/DreamWorks Animation.

I was not satisfied with any of the pre-databases and decided to write my own and based on the *Overstreet* price guide notebook was.

I bought the most recent copy of *C* and looked at all the advertisements. I visited several of the dealers, cover pages attached to a list. Soon I was sending checks and received my first eBay order. When eBay launched in 1995, but I did not join until a world of possibilities, and over the years I found most of what I needed, then again found nothing but having exhausted what was available.

During this time, my wife and I continued to appear on mineral shows with our collection primarily for the price to have the actual database at the shows, but carrying a laptop was impractical and the PalmPilot did not have enough memory to run the database.

My wife and I fell in love with travel and bought an SLR camera to take pictures of our trips. It was another hobby of mine.

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that a definitive, up-to-date list of merchandise was known that one did not exist, and I knew that no one was going to make one, so it was up to me. Thinking about *Overstreet* price guides, I considered writing a book about the subject. Since pictures were more important to me than text, I also considered a coffee-table book format. I was willing to spend the money and effort, but thought about that fourth year and realized that any book I could write would be long before it was printed. I thought about my comic-book database and added a table to track what merchandise I owned. Microsoft Access databases are easy to update, and reports when printed, they are difficult to share. I wanted some way to interact with my fellow collectors. This is when I started thinking about creating a website. While the internet was starting to take off, what it is today, it was not quite there yet. Personal databases were mostly limited to pages on sites like Myspace, and bandwidth, and storage were quite limited. I had the idea and continued buying whatever merchandise I could find.

Over the next few years, and the rise of shared server hosting and the WordPress content management system made

**Getting Rich (Richie, that is)**

Non-sport card shows became popular in our area, and we started collecting several new sets each. We also started collecting other comic-book titles. These additional collections kept me searching eBay, and one day I found a Richie Rich toy instead of a comic book. It was a die-cast car in a blister pack, and I bought it. Little did I know what an effect this little car would have on my collecting! Since I thought of myself as a thorough and well-connected collector, and I had not known of any Richie Rich toys before, I figured there could not be that many out there. I thought I would buy these couple of toys and be done. But the more I searched, the more I found. My ability to find new toys quickly outstripped my ability to buy them. I started wondering if anyone knew what had been made, hoping to turn what was becoming an open-ended collection back into a checklist collection. Once again turning to technology, I tried to enlist the aid of the Richie Rich Yahoo Group in building a list of merchandise people knew about or owned. I only got one response, but that one response mentioned my little car, and said there were three variants. Searching eBay, I found two other cars, then found a third I did not have, making four variants, not just three.

**(ABOVE RIGHT) Harvey character merchandise spans many decades. (RIGHT) Back to school with Casper and Richie Rich.**

Characters © Universal Studios/DreamWorks Animation.

