



Down Under Disneyana Club Meeting Report - 24th February 2007

(Editors: Wayne Godfrey and Keith Simpson)

Hello everyone and welcome to our first meeting report for 2007 – the editors hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and New Year, and we look forward to having a great time at all our meetings in 2007.

This year kicked off on the 24th February, with a book and paper theme – so let us begin!

Introductions

“It was a wild and stormy night, lightning flashed and thunder split the humid air in a tremendous crescendo, punctuated only by the sound of torrential rain...” No, not the opening lines of a new horror novel – this is what greeted us on Saturday night in Yagoona! But that didn’t deter us from a well attended first meeting of the year (although it did delay us plugging in the DVD player and projector!)

To start the meeting we welcomed our special guest, Maynard Smith from the US. He has been a Disneyland cast member for the last 13 years and is a great character who has a fun philosophy on life. Apart from being a great cast member, Maynard (and his alter-egos) have been involved in cartoon voice acting, motion capture acting, and writing children’s books. If you want to check out Maynard’s personal website, just go visit him at <http://www.maynardland.com/>



(Club President Wayne Godfrey with special guest Maynard Smith)

Following the introductions, we jumped straight into our traditional round of True and False Trivia Knockout, which was won by Nicole. She picked up a special colour edition of the cast-only publication, Eyes and Ears, featuring Pirates of the Caribbean.

Australian Disney News

This was followed by the latest Australian Disney News with updates on the Disney movies being released this year. Put these dates in your calendar:

- Meet the Robinsons – 29 March
- Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End – 24 May
- Bridge to Terabithia – 21 June
- Ratatouille – 30 August
- The Game Plan – 14 November
- Enchanted – 20 December

Remember to look for new Australian Disney news items for the next meeting, or post them on our website!

Books and Paper

As our theme for the meeting was Disney books, magazines, and other paper products, we had a number of members bring along items from their collections including:

- Two of our younger members showed us a Disney novel about going back in time to help Disney with comic books, as well as an old Disney story book.
- Della showed us an old Disneyland Park guide from her first visit in 1983, along with a pictorial souvenir booklet from the same era.
- Barry showed us an old copy of "Post" magazine from the early 1950's with great photos of the Disney family (Maynard suggested that he keep it nicely stored in a protective bag as it was quite a collector's item).
- Keith showed us The Art of Disneyland 2nd Edition, the 2007 Annual Report, and his collection of park maps from around the world.
- Wayne showed us a compilation of items including some of the tiny "Art of Disney" books, as well as the magazines "E-Ticket", "Laughingplace" and "Tomarts Disneyana Update".

Hong Kong Disneyland Update

Nicole and Matthew had just returned from their first trip to Hong Kong Disneyland via Beijing, Xian and Shanghai. They showed us some of the new Chinese New Year themed plush that they brought back from Hong Kong Disneyland. These were Piglet, Pooh and Tigger in their Chinese clothing.

Nicole also spoke of the new Disney Stores that have opened all over mainland China – she was able to visit two of these in Xian (the city of the entombed warriors) and picked up some exclusive merchandise there.

What have you found since last meeting?

We always have a section for people to bring in Disney items that they have come across since the last meeting. This meeting featured:

- Della had found a beautiful lady's Minnie Mouse themed Disney compact/powder case in Patty's Gift Shop in Hurstville. She also bought in the Hong Kong Disneyland 1st Anniversary limited edition pin set (that was picked up during the world tour but hadn't been seen at the club until this meeting.)
- Julie had found a classic Goofy plush in a Teddy Bear Shop in the Blue Mountains.

Maynard takes control!

Our very special guest Maynard took to the stage and shared a number of stories from working at Disneyland. He began with stories of encounters with Tom Hanks, Robin Williams, and their children.

He shared experiences in crowd control looking after strollers – including the songs and movements he used to entertain the crowds during the Festival of Fools.

He also shared a story of a lady from Australia who he had heard was asking for him all around the park and who finally met him at the end of Honey I Shrunk the Audience to get his autograph. She had apparently read all about him on the internet - we were surprised when our very own Sandie in the audience admitted that it was her!

He told us stories about the antics that his “evil twin” got up to whilst working on the Haunted Mansion and Jungle Cruise, including how he scared a gang member who was acting tough in the Mansion.

Finally he took numerous questions from the audience.

We'd like to thank Maynard very much for taking the time to visit Sydney and coming along to our meeting and sharing these wonderful experiences with us.

Closing

Sandie led our Group Trivia which was one of the toughest ever, and included questions like: What was the name of the elevators in the Living Seas Pavilion at Epcot and how far did they move? (Answer: Hydrolators and they moved 1mm).

We had a call for volunteers for the next meeting which is a theme park information night on Saturday 21st April. Anyone who would like to contribute by manning a desk associated to a particular Disney theme park should contact Wayne.

We are also looking for anyone who'd like to contribute articles to the website from an Australian perspective, or to help with the Halloween Meeting in October.

Wayne mentioned that the Disney Cruise Line is to launch two new ships in 2011 and 2012. See the website forum article titled “Two New Ships for Disney Cruise Line” in the “Disney News” section for artist's impressions and the full press release.

Creative Holidays have just released a new Disney Theme Park brochure that features all the parks except Tokyo. These were available for collection on the night and it is a credit to Creative that they have produced this – it is long overdue!

Anthony shared with us details of a business he has started, where he puts together DVD photo albums of people's holidays. He demonstrated the one he put together from his recent trip to Disneyland. The DVDs are themed with music and are menu driven. More details can be found in the “Classifieds” section of the Club's website.

The evening concluded with an encore screening of the DVD from the Ultimate Disney Theme Park trip that club members took last year, and a group photo of everyone at the meeting with Maynard!



(Group photo of club members and Maynard! Thanks to Matt who sacrificed his image to take the photo!)

Remember – the next club function is a screening of **Meet the Robinsons - 3D** at the Greater Union Cinema Complex, George St Sydney on **Saturday, 31st March**. We will advise a meeting point and time closer to the event. Depending on session times, it is likely we will adjourn for lunch immediately after the screening. All members, friends and family are welcome to attend.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at our special Disney Theme Park information night on Saturday 21st April 2007.

Wayne