



Newsletter.

Issue 34

July 2003

Inside The Newsletter

Saturday 9th August 7:30pm Meeting

Join us at this special meeting as we take a closer look at The Lion King coming to the Capital Theatre in Sydney and a look at Walt Disney Parks & Resorts from our two special guests.

Come and join us for this exciting meeting.

Location:

St. Marks Anglican Church Hall.
Cnr. Auburn Rd and Hume Hwy Yagoona. (Near Bankstown.) Just 150m from the Yagoona Railway Station.

The Down Under Disneyana Newsletter is a publication of the Down Under Disneyana Club. The newsletter is published quarterly and distributed to members. Contributions to our newsletter are welcome.

The club address is:
Down Under Disneyana Club.
PO Box 502
Regents Park, NSW 2143.
Australia.

Down Under Disneyana Club is the Australian Chapter of the National Fantasy Fan Club of the USA, and our club is not associated with The Walt Disney Company in any way. **Ph: (02) 9644-1034**

Email: wfgodfrey@ozemail.com.au

Welcome to Issue 34 of the club newsletter.

Latest Australian Disney News

The Lion King – Broadway show coming to Sydney on October 16th this year. Look for an amazing show coming later in the year.

Finding Nemo – the new movie from Pixar opening August 28th. This is the top grossing movie in the USA this year having already passed US \$300M. **Opportunity to win tickets to a special preview at the meeting.**

Pirates of the Caribbean opens on September 11th.

Brother Bear – an all new animated feature opening on Boxing Day.

Upcoming Club Events

August 9th 7.30pm Meeting

Join us at this special meeting as we look at The Lion King the musical and hear the latest from Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. Now at our **new meeting location:-**

St Marks Anglican Church hall

Cnr Auburn Rd and Hume Hwy Yagoona only 1km along Auburn Rd from our old meeting location.

Lion King – at IMAX

Before I can begin on a review of The Lion King at IMAX, I must first indulge myself in a bit of history from my perspective regarding this movie.

Let us go back to 1994 - I had never seen a Disney movie at a cinema before - that's right, not ever. Even when I was a young bloke, I never went with my mum and sister when they went to see Disney films. I'd always stay behind with my dad as he worked on the car or watched sport on the TV. I'd always thought going to see Disney films was, well - a bit girly.

That all changed for me by accident - thanks to Beauty and the Beast. I was fortunate enough to watch the making of Beauty and the Beast on Channel 7, and so, entranced by that, I purchased the soundtrack. When the video finally arrived, I bought it, and this became the first Disney animated movie I ever watched. Aladdin came next, and once again it was CD then video.

So what has all this to do with The Lion King? Well, my interest in Disney was now well established, people at work were lending me their old Disney videos such as The Little Mermaid and The Jungle Book. In early 1994, The Jungle Book was a new release to video and it had a (very) short trailer to The Lion King - ooohhhh...aaahhhh....I had a feeling that this movie was going to be special.

Disney had just come off two huge radio hits with their previous two movies - Beauty and the Beast and A Whole New World - I was sure The Lion King would produce something similar, especially with Elton John and Tim Rice on the project. So I began listening to the American Top 40 radio show, knowing that the movie would be released over there some months before Australia. Sure enough, sometime around June I caught "Can You Feel The Love Tonight." I had to get this CD - I had to see this movie.

There followed a period of twice weekly trips to CD shops awaiting for the CD to appear - finally, the single appeared, and two weeks later, the full CD - I still have both. I listened to those two CD's so many times, that I knew all the songs by heart before I'd seen the movie!

On Friday, 28 August 1994 - I went and saw my first Disney production on the big screen. A week later, I went and saw it again. My third viewing was in January 1995 - the movie had been released in Australia for the Christmas holidays by popular request - and yes, I still have all the tickets!

On Saturday, 19 April 2003, I saw it for the fourth time - at IMAX.

Everyone has seen The Lion King, I don't have to go over the story again, it is a timeless piece of cinema. Let's just look at what it means on IMAX. I suppose the first thing I'll say about this is that it is not an alternative version of the original movie - unlike Beauty and the Beast, there are no

new scenes. Later this year, a special edition release of The Lion King will be available on DVD with a new scene added. It seems to me unusual that a scene was added only for video and not the special large format cinema. I can only assume the new scene was commissioned for the IMAX

release but was not completed in time - but at least we will get it on DVD.

Also, there was no trailer attached. When we saw Beauty and the Beast, a trailer for The Lion King was attached. Aladdin is due to be the next IMAX re-released film on the 1st January 2004 - I know that I can't wait for that!

So how does the movie stack up on IMAX? Brilliant! Those of you who saw Beauty and the Beast or Fantasia 2000 will know what a great showcase IMAX is for Disney movies, but The Lion King feels like a movie that was designed

for just such a showing. The wide sweeping landscapes of Africa, the hauntingly beautiful musical score, and the special effects that capture the naturalism of wind and rain and dust, come alive in this presentation.

You can see how far Disney Animation came in the period between Beauty & the Beast and The Lion King. There are no static backgrounds in this film - even in the far distance, animals can be seen to move across the plain, while giraffes stand and munch on trees at the waterhole - this is especially noticeable when Mufasa is giving Simba his "Circle of Life" speech. As for the wildebeest stampede, it is a gut-wrenching assault on the senses - it is a visual feast, the sound is a physical presence, and the zoom-in shot of Simba's face as the stampede comes over the hill packs an emotional punch. This is cinema greatness - sublime storytelling and the stuff that separates Disney movies from the rest.

I've been to other IMAX movies where fast action seems to blur and makes it difficult to see - The Lion King has very little of this, either the original movie was better produced, or the experts at Disney's Large Format team have made a special effort to reduce this. The effect is a clear image throughout the film and gives a much better "being there" feeling. For a movie I have seen countless times, I felt that I was watching a new movie again.

The Lion King is a special kind of film, it has grossed \$790 million US dollars in its release, making it the largest grossing animated film of all time - considering that a lot of those tickets were purchased at children's prices, this is a remarkable feat and testimony to a fabulous original story. It is a great film on video, a fabulous film on 35mm cinema, but IMAX will just blow you away. I recommend everyone to catch Disney's IMAX releases when they are made available. It is like watching your favourite film again, for the first time.

By Keith Simpson

The Disney Cruise Line

On Sunday the 18th May we had the privilege of enjoying a 4 night cruise on the Disney Wonder. We had booked a 7 day package which included 3 nights at Port Orleans – Riverside (Walt Disney World) and 4 nights cruise package. The cruise can be booked separately or with a land component depending on the prices it could be cheaper to book the cruise separately. Both of us had never been on a cruise before and we did not know what to expect. On the first morning was an optional breakfast at Restaurantaurus at Disney's Animal Kingdom. A breakfast which includes the Disney characters; We packed our bags and left them just inside our door at Disney's Port Orleans – Riverside. They were collected and delivered inside our stateroom on the Disney Wonder later that day. We enjoyed breakfast which cost \$15. When we arrived at Disney's Animal Kingdom we were able to check our bags in and we did not have to carry them around the park all morning. At 12.45pm we were taken by the Disney Cruise line bus to Port Canaveral (on the back of the coach are the words "Discover Uncharted Magic"). On the way a video was played about the ship and what type of things you can do onboard as well as in the ports of call. The time had arrived and as we drove across a large bridge into Port Canaveral there is was the Disney Wonder – an amazing sight all 964 feet of ship and approx 83,000 tonnes, comprising 11 decks to explore.

The coach pulled in at the boarding building. As non-US citizens we checked-in in a separate area and they held our passports while we were onboard the ship (it is important that you have another type of photo ID i.e. Drivers licence with photo issued by Government so you can get off the ship at Ports of Call). Inside the building on the floor were inlaid the islands of the Bahamas. In the middle of the floor was a model of the ship and in front of the model Mickey Mouse in his special Cruise Line uniform. We had our photo with Minnie Mouse as we just missed Mickey. At the end of the room is the top of Mickey's Ears corridor to board the ship. You enter through the ears to begin your discovery of uncharted Magic.

As we boarded we had our photo taken with a sign that read Disney Wonder 18th May 2003. You enter into the central part of the ship on deck 3. In this central lobby is an atrium which covers deck 3, 4, 5. In front of you is a statue of Ariel at the entrance to Tritons restaurant. The restaurant where we were to have our first evening meal. The Disney characters were also on hand to welcome you. We walked down one deck to our stateroom and entered and we had a king size bed, a large table and a very large port hole to look out. A separate shower and toilet and basin room. We had ordered a Mickey Hanging and a Bob Voyage sign and they were hanging from the ceiling when we arrived. You need to order these at least 2 days before you sail. You can also order fruit bowls, cheese platters and many other items to be waiting when you board. Up on deck nine they had a buffet lunch for us. It was very nice with a choice of many entrees (mains) and desserts. (The start of my extra few kilo's). The food on board was wonderful. After lunch we wondered along the pool area and had a non-alcoholic cocktail served to us by an Australian crew member. She was from the Gold Coast. Amazing to meet an Australian crew member and we had only just got on board.

Apparently in the children's area on the ship many Australians work in this area. At 5pm we set sail to the opening bars of When You Wish Upon a Star. From the left side of the ship you can see the launch towers at Cape Canaveral and in the distance the NASA vehicle assembly building and launch tower 39A and 39B. We then left port and we were at sea. Because the ship is so large you feel very little or any movement. As well during our cruise the seas were very small 1.5 – 2 metre swells.

We had dinner at Tritons which has a Little Mermaid theme, and met our servers Gabor and Agnes who would be our servers at our four dinners on the cruise. They were excellent and much fun as we got to know them both. Some of the items on the menu included:-

Deep-Fried Camembert with a Marinara Sauce
Cauliflower Soup
Garlic-roasted Beef tenderloin with Mashed Potatoes and a Green Peppercorn Sauce
Chocolate Mousse Cake served with Rum-Caramel Sauce

After dinner we bought some pins from the pin trading area and went to The Walt Disney Theatre (a Broadway size theatre) for the evening show. The show opened with the managers from each area of the ship doing a "Be Our Guest – sequence from Beauty and the Beast and then Captain John came up through the floor of the stage in a whoosh of smoke. He welcomed everyone and said on what other cruise line than Disney can you see this. After this short show an excellent comedian came on to complete the evening. After the show at 9.30pm you could shop and go to various nightclubs with different music from various decades of the 20th century each evening. Wavebands were off an area called Route 66. A long corridor themed with road signs from the actual Route 66.

Early the next morning the ship docked at Nassau. Here we had a full day to explore the island as well as other activities on the ship. On Deck 3 aft was an excellent restaurant called Parrot Cay. Each morning we ate a wonderful buffet breakfast which we really enjoyed. We did a historical city tour which was an optional you could book. We visited two forts from which you got great views as well as learned the history of the island. The first fort which was near the Queens steps had great views of the harbour The Disney Wonder and the Atlantis Resort. We had lunch after the tour back on the boat in Tritons. Here we met another Australian Crew member he was head waiter at the restaurant.

After lunch we got a cab to the Atlantis Resort. This resort is an amazingly themed resort and casino with a wonderful pool area and Aquarium which included the Dig themed as if you were in the lost city of Atlantis.

That evening Dinner was at Animators Palette which is a not to be missed experience. All around the walls of the restaurant are pictures of your favourite Disney animated characters. During dinner the animated pictures in black and white start turning into colour. Also the jackets worn by your servers also change into colour.

The menu for Animators Palette included-

Smoked Salmon served on a crisp Potato Cake

Creamy Butternut Squash Soup
Grilled Sirloin Steak with Glazed Carrots and Broccoli
Boston Cream Pie – Light Sponge Cake filled with Vanilla Pastry Cream

Throughout the ship is amazing Disney artwork. On the landings of the 3 sets of staircases in the ship is artwork. Also in our stateroom we had a drawing by Mark Davis of a Pirates of the Caribbean character and a photo of Walt & Lillian taken in 1934 on the deck of a ship on holidays.

After dinner we went to The Walt Disney Theatre for the show Who Wants to be a Mousketeer and the top prize was a 7 night cruise on Disney Cruise Line. The show was run like Who Wants to be a Millionaire with appropriate sets. There were three life lines 50:50; Ask the Audience; Ask the Panel. They selected six members of the audience to be on the panel and I was lucky enough to be selected. Contestants were selected by computer at random with row and seat number.

The second contestant a four year old girl and her father stole the show. When told about the grand prize of a 7 night Disney Cruise she said she would like a barbie, everyone laughed. She was then asked if she knew how the show worked she said she had been practicing since she was born.

The last contestant happened to be the son of a person on the panel. He made it all the way to one question away from the cruise and was stumped by this question:-

“In which state were Walt & Lillian Married?”

- A) New York
- B) California
- C) Florida
- D) Idaho

He used his 50:50 which eliminated New York and Florida. We chose B while the answer was D Idaho. It was a fun evening. After the show on deck 9 was a sail off party to celebrate sailing again. The Fab 5 characters and Chip & Dale joined a band in the celebrations and we departed Nassau at 10.30pm.

Next morning we arrived at Freeport. Each evening while you were at dinner your bed is turned down and a different animal is left on the end of your bed made out of towels. During the afternoon while we were docked at Freeport we attended a class run by housekeeping on how to make the animals. It showed us how to make a lobster and bull dog. We also attended a Island show in the Buena Vista Theatre with all your favourite Disney characters to get us excited about our upcoming visit to Castaway Cay Disney's own private island. In the morning we did an optional which was a glass bottomed boat ride across coral reefs and saw hundreds of fish, sharks and even divers.

Other things on the boat were how to draw Mickey Mouse by a cast member from the Studios in Paris and Bingo. We went to play a game and ended up winning twice. Dinner tonight was at Parrot Cay very nice some of the entrees included:-

Glazed Chicken Wings with Pomegranate Barbecue Sauce

Cream of Sweet Onion Soup with a Cheese Crouton
Roasted Beef Prime Rib or Grilled Rib-Eye Steak
Crème Broulee Cheesecake

After dinner this evening the stage show in the Walt Disney Theatre was Hercules a musical based on the movie it was very good. With the characters from the movie. This evening we sailed from Freeport @5.30pm on our way to Castaway Cay. Early the next day we arrived at Castaway Cay. An oasis in the Bahamas a beautiful island with a wonderful family beach, and an exclusive adults only beach called Solitary Bay. We stepped off the ship onto the Island and you could do the thing that was on the funny clip that we saw on the video on the way to the ship, one leg on Castaway Cay the other on the island. You can walk to the family beach or catch the tram. The tram is like the tram's that take guests from the car parks to the entrance to the parks at Disney theme parks.

We caught the tram and had our photo taken with Mickey and Goofy as we walked to have a look at the family beach. We caught another tram (approx. 20 minute walk) to Solitary Bay the Adults only beach, very nice. With deck chairs and umbrella's set out along the beach. The water is amazingly clear and fish and stingray's swim right up to the sand around you it is magic. Be careful and put on lots of sunscreen as we both got burnt that day. They also have a fun games building with table tennis, pool tables and many other games. Also bicycles can be rented on the island.

Dinner for our last evening was back at Tritons and the menu was a compilation of the best dishes from the 3 previous evenings. They even had a procession of flags and cast members at the restaurant and we were excited when we saw the Australian flag. Our departure from Castaway Cay was held up as a passenger was very sick and a coast guard helicopter was dispatched to medivac the patient. The Broadway show tonight was Disney Dreams the Disney Cruise lines award winning show and oh what an amazing show. It brings together classic Disney moments. It starts in a girls bedroom as she wishes and Peter Pan and Tinkerbell lead us through moments from The Little Mermaid, Cinderella and The Lion King to name a few. At 10.30pm I went to the lobby for a farewell to the Disney characters and they had the Mickey Mouse club song at the end it was very moving.

We had to have our main bags packed and outside our stateroom by 11.00pm and as non-US citizens we had to be in Wavebands at 6.00am to go through immigration check. We had breakfast in Tritons where we ate the evening before and said a sad goodbye to our servers and the group from the Goldengate Chapter of the NFFC we had spent the last few days with.

Departing was very easy. We were assisted with our luggage and taken to our shuttle van to our resort at Walt Disney World. We were staying at Disney's Animal Kingdom lodge for the last section of our holiday. What an amazing resort it is. with it's amazing African theming. We walked up the Kudu trail to our room past viewing areas where we looked out and saw zebra's, wildebeest, giraffes, and other African animals.

We opened the door to our room and through our balcony which overlooked part of the savannah that surrounds this resort were two giraffes eating branches. Amazing!

Due to Port Orleans French Quarter going down for refurbishment we were lucky enough to get an upgrade to this wonderful resort. Staying here topped off a wonderful holiday.

Finding Nemo - A review

We were fortunate enough to be in Orlando at Walt Disney World on the day that Finding Nemo opened. The top grossing movie at the box office in the USA this year. We bought tickets to see the movie at the AMC theatres in Downtown Disney and specifically asked for a ticket to cinema 19 which is there only DLP (Digital Projection) cinema. It was an amazing co-incidence, friends of ours had brought tickets to the same session we had without each of us knowing. The session opened with previews including The Incredibles (the next movie from Pixar set for release 5th November 2004). Then a wonderful preview for Brother Bear Walt Disney Feature Animations next movie set for release in the USA in November and here on boxing day. The preview was great but the two moose stole the show at the end of the preview they can on again and said "If you only see one movie this year this should be the one. What are you still doing in the theatre please leave now" This was hilarious and everyone in the theatre could not stop laughing.

Finding Nemo commenced and it is amazing rich in colour and characters and many classic scenes during the movie. Ellen Degeneres as Dory steals the show as does Barry Humphries as the voice of Bruce the Shark (a classic comment by Bruce Fish are friends not food). The scenes in Sydney harbour are depicted very well and the dentist surgery brings back memories of your worst nightmares of going to the dentist.

Definitely a must see movie and when it comes out on video and DVD definitely one to add to your collection. Make sure when you see the movie you stay all the way through the credits do not leave as some excellent things occur that you should not miss.

Some of the characters in the movie are:-

Marlin – voiced by Albert Brooks, is a clown fish who must face his fear and distrust of the sea to find his son Nemo and bring him home.

Dory – voiced by Ellen DeGeneres, is a regal blue tang. She's a forgetful but optimistic companion who Marlin meets in his travels.

Nemo – voiced by Alexander Gould, is a six year old clown fish who lives alone with his over-protective, single parent father and yearns to explore the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef.

Bruce – voiced by Barry Humphries, is a great white shark who's the jolly leader of the unpopular shark pack.

Gill – a Moorish idol fish voiced by Willem Dafoe is a tough-talking maverick that befriends and looks after Nemo.

Nigel – voiced by Geoffrey Rush, is a peculiar brown pelican with a soft spot for all species except sea gulls.

Crush – voiced by director Andrew Stanton, is a 150 year old green sea turtle with a laid back, surfer attitude. He helps Marlin and Dory find their way.

I did not want to give too much more away. It opens in cinemas across Australia on August 28th.

New Hotels at Disneyland Resort Paris

Disneyland Resort Paris has recently opened three new hotels to Val de France, the resort's new hotel district.

The My Travel's Explorers Hotel, a 400-room, adventure-themed hotel, opened on March 31.

The Hotel Kyriad, a 300-room hotel built in the style of the French Brie region.

Holiday Inn, a 396-room hotel built in the style of elegant French manor houses.

These non-Disney-owned hotels offer free shuttles to the Disneyland Resort Paris theme parks and other special benefits.

The Lion King Tickets on sale NOW

On Monday the 16th June four months from opening day tickets to The Lion King went on sale. A special launch was held at the Capital Theatre where the show is going to be held early in the morning. Arriving at the theatre at 4.30am I found I was by myself and the satellite van man who was setting up the audio links for the live radio show on Sydney radio station 2GB. At 5.00am another intrepid person arrived and we talked until 5.30am when we were let into the theatre out of the cold. Around 40 winners of a 2B competition came in and were seated. They had stayed the night overnight at a Sofitel hotel. Alan Jones began his radio show from a sound proof booth set up inside the theatre. Every half hour during news breaks they drew prizes for people in the audience in the theatre. Including prize bags and preview tickets to the show. At 7.00am Jay Laga'ala who plays Mufasa in the show was interviewed by the Sunrise show on channel 7. At 7.15am Thomas Schumacher President of Disney Theatrical was interviewed by Alan Jones. He talked about the show and how it started and how successful it has been. Earlier at 6.00am individual tickets went on sale and I was first in line and obtained tickets to a session that I was after.

The day before on Sunday 15th June the cast for the show was announced and it is as follows:-

Jay Laga'ala Mufasa

- he also starred in Star Wars Episode 2

Vincent Harder Simba

It took 14 months to whittle down the Sydney production cast from 4,000 actors, singers and dancers auditioned in Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, the Phillipines, South Africa and the Caribbean.

It will be an amazing show when it opens here in Sydney in October. We have a lot to be excited about later in the year.

Disney Cruise Line Continues to Expand Itineraries With Series of Special Caribbean Cruise Vacations in 2004

PORT CANAVERAL, Fla. -- For the first time ever, *Disney Cruise Line* plans to include St. Lucia, Antigua and San Juan as scheduled ports of call on select sailings. In another first, Disney plans to embark on a 10-night holiday

cruise vacation from Port Canaveral Dec. 18, 2004. Plus, shore excursions for these and all other Disney Cruise Line vacations can now be reserved within 60 days prior to sailing.

NEW 2004 ITINERARIES

Aug. 7, 21 & Sept. 4, 2004

Saturday - *Port Canaveral
Sunday - At Sea
Monday - At Sea
Tuesday - St. Thomas
Wednesday - SAN JUAN
Thursday - At Sea
Friday - *Castaway Cay*

Sept. 18 & Oct. 2, 2004

Saturday - *Port Canaveral
Sunday - At Sea
Monday - At Sea
Tuesday - ANTIGUA
Wednesday - St. Thomas
Thursday - At Sea
Friday - *Castaway Cay*

Dec. 18, 2004 10-NIGHT CRUISE

Saturday - *Port Canaveral
Sunday - Key West
Monday - At Sea
Tuesday - At Sea
Wednesday - St. Maarten
Thursday - ST. LUCIA
Friday - ANTIGUA
Saturday - St. Thomas
Sunday - At Sea
Monday - *Castaway Cay*

* indicates port of embarkation

St. Lucia is a small, lush tropical island located between Martinique and St. Vincent, north of Barbados. Its eastern shore hugs the Atlantic Ocean, while its west coast borders the Caribbean Sea. Its dramatic twin coastal peaks soar 2,000 feet up from the sea, sheltering magnificent rain forests. It's dotted with aged fortresses, small villages and open-air markets, and popular among snorkelers, scuba divers, hikers and bird-watchers.

Antigua is the largest of the British Leeward islands. Located just 17 degrees north of the equator and south and east of Nevis, St. Kitts, St. Barts and St. Martin, Antigua is best known for its magnificent coral reef, beautiful harbour, winding coastline and powdery soft beaches.

San Juan is the second oldest city in the Americas and the oldest under the U.S. flag. Old San Juan is a 465-year-old neighbourhood that has evolved into a charming residential and commercial district. San Juan's beach & resort area is dotted with hotels, casinos, nightclubs, restaurants and boutiques.

Disney Cruise Line vacations feature magical entertainment, age-specific programming and unique dining experiences. Disney's seven-night vacations begin at \$829, while the 10-night holiday cruise starts at \$1,899. Rates are per person, based on double occupancy, with discounted fares available to additional guests in each stateroom and guests under the age of 13. Government taxes and fees are not included.

Disney Cruise Line offers seven-night eastern and western Caribbean vacations, three- and four-night cruises to the

Bahamas, and land/sea packages that combine the fun and excitement of the Walt Disney World Resort with the enchantment of a Disney Cruise Line voyage to the Bahamas.

Eastern Caribbean

Saturday - *Port Canaveral
Sunday - At Sea
Monday - At Sea
Tuesday - St. Maarten
Wednesday - St. Thomas
Thursday - At Sea
Friday - *Castaway Cay*

Western Caribbean

Saturday - *Port Canaveral
Sunday - Key West
Monday - At Sea
Tuesday - Grand Cayman
Wednesday - Cozumel
Thursday - At Sea
Friday - *Castaway Cay*

4-Night Cruise

Sunday - *Port Canaveral
Monday - Nassau
Tuesday - Grand Bahama Island or At Sea
Wednesday - *Castaway Cay*

3-Night Cruise

Thursday - *Port Canaveral
Friday - Nassau
Saturday - *Castaway Cay*

* indicates port of embarkation

Shore excursions can now be booked in advance by calling (877) 566-0968, e-mailing requests along with the guest's name and reservation number to dcl.shore.excursions@disneycruise.com or faxing a shore excursion request form to (407) 566-7031. Forms can be downloaded from disneycruise.com. Guests who do not pre-reserve excursions can visit the Shore Excursions desk on their day of embarkation to check availability and make reservations.

To learn more about *Disney Cruise Line* or to book a Disney Cruise Line vacation, guests can contact their travel agent, visit disneycruise.com or call *Disney Cruise Line* at (888) DCL-2500 or (888) 325-2500.

Disney Cruise Line Fact Sheet

Disney Magic

Birthplace: Fincantieri Shipyards, Marghera & Ancona, Italy

Maiden voyage: July 30, 1998

Crew: 950

Tonnage: 83,000

Length: 964 feet

Speed: 21.5 knots

Capacity: 2,400 passengers

Home Port: Port Canaveral, Fla.

Disney Wonder

Birthplace: Fincantieri Shipyard, Marghera, Italy

Maiden voyage: August 15, 1999

Crew: 950

Tonnage: 83,000

Length: 964 feet

Speed: 21.5 knots
Capacity: 2,400 passengers
Home Port: Port Canaveral, Fla.

Western Caribbean Itinerary:

- Saturday - Depart from Port Canaveral
- Sunday - Key West
- Monday - Day at Sea
- Tuesday - Grand Cayman
- Wednesday - Cozumel
- Thursday - Day at Sea
- Friday - Castaway Cay
- Saturday - Return to Port Canaveral

Eastern Caribbean Itinerary:

- Saturday - Depart from Port Canaveral
- Sunday - Day at Sea
- Monday - Day at Sea
- Tuesday - St. Maarten
- Wednesday - St. Thomas, with excursions to St. John
- Thursday - Day at Sea
- Friday - Castaway Cay
- Saturday - Return to Port Canaveral

4-night Bahamas Itinerary:

- Sunday - Depart from Port Canaveral
- Monday - Nassau
- Tuesday - Castaway Cay
- Wednesday - Day at Sea
- Thursday - Return to Port Canaveral
- Every Other 4-night Itinerary:
- Sunday - Depart from Port Canaveral
- Monday - Nassau
- Tuesday - Grand Bahama Island
- Wednesday - Castaway Cay
- Thursday - Return to Port Canaveral

3-night Bahamas Itinerary:

- Thursday - Depart from Port Canaveral
- Friday - Nassau
- Saturday - Castaway Cay
- Sunday - Return to Port Canaveral

Nearly an entire deck (15,000 sq. ft.) of children's programming:
Areas and activities to meet the unique vacation needs
of every member of the family:

- Flounder's Reef Nursery - Ages 3 mos. to 3 years
- Disney's Oceaneer Club - Ages 3-7
- Disney's Oceaneer Lab - Ages 8-12
- Common Grounds - Ages 13-18

Original Disney musicals performed on stage:

- Welcome Aboard Variety Show
- TROPICALifragilisticexpialidocious! Deck party
- Disney-themed trivia game show
- Disney Dreams
Hercules-The MUSE-ical
- MEXICALifragilisticexpialidocious! Deck party
- Morty the Magnificent
- Magical Farewell Variety Show

Get ready for all Disney, all the time

The Disney Channel will become available in Japan from Nov. 18, Mickey Mouse's 75th birthday. Those interested in subscribing to the 24-hour, 365-day Disney Channel should contact their local cable TV company or purchase a satellite dish and tuner and subscribe to SkyPerfectTV.

According to Disney Television International, the Disney Channel is subscribed to by more than 100 million households in 62 countries.

Disney starts treasure hunt

The company's motion-picture arm plundered the theme park for a movie based on the Pirates of the Caribbean ride.

ANAHEIM Theme parks are the Walt Disney Co.'s treasure trove in Anaheim. The studio in Burbank controls Disney's motion-picture empire. A clear "X" marks both spots within the company and the boundaries rarely blur.

But the kingdoms will share the spotlight Saturday night as Hollywood invades Orange County and Walt Disney Pictures throws a gala party at Disneyland to premiere its new movie, "Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl."

This time the movie studio plundered the theme parks for an idea, turning one of the most successful attractions of all time into a film about rogues, curses and stolen treasures set in the 17th century. Fifty years ago it was the other way around, as classic Disney movies such as "Peter Pan" and "Snow White" inspired the first Disneyland attractions.

The Pirates movie is bound to evoke nostalgia for those who have ridden the attraction, which opened in Anaheim in 1967. Both mediums tell a strong story and that's what makes them so entertaining, said Jay Rasulo, head of Disney's Parks and Resorts.

"Pirates of the Caribbean is an iconic classic," Rasulo said. "And when people see a film with this quality, it reminds them of the attraction and how they liked the swashbuckling buccaneers. So they're likely to say 'I want to go ride it again.'"

"That's what this decision by the studios can do for us."

The same synergy is happening with the Haunted Mansion. The attraction, which opened in 1969, inspired a movie that will debut in the fall with Eddie Murphy as a father who moves his family into a haunted house. Another film, "Country Bears" in 2002, was based on Disney's Country Bear Jamboree attraction.

"One thing we need to always think about in our business is how we can continue to be relevant to our guests in their lives," Rasulo said. "Filmmaking is another way to tell our great stories."

The Pirates film opens July 9, with the first PG-13 rating at Walt Disney Pictures. Meanwhile, Disneyland officials are scrambling to accommodate the premiere party and still serve customers during their peak summer season.

Park officials have been spreading the word to nearby hotels and travel planners that Disneyland will close at 6 p.m. Saturday, on a summer night that typically could draw 60,000 visitors. Instead, a VIP crowd will enter Main Street at 6:30 p.m. for the premiere, as Disney invites visitors with dual-park tickets to walk across the plaza to its second park. California Adventure will stay open until midnight.

GRAND GALA PLANNED

The premiere is the first in Disneyland's 48-year history and possibly the first grand movie gala ever in Orange County. Officials at Disney and the Orange County Film Commission couldn't recall Hollywood staging a big film party here in the past 15 years.

The first screening of "Terminator 3" debuted at Irvine Spectrum Wednesday, in conjunction with the film school at Chapman University. And two years ago, "Spy Kids" premiered at California Adventure. But neither event had the scope of what's planned for Saturday.

Guests will step onto a 900-foot long red carpet on Main Street and follow its path to New Orleans Square. Pirates of the Caribbean and two other rides will be open for guests, which include the film's stars - Johnny Depp, Geoffrey Rush and Keira Knightley - and producer Jerry Bruckheimer. Other invitees include Nicolas Cage, Drew Carey, Phil Collins, Cuba Gooding Jr. and Andy Garcia.

After dinner, they'll watch the film on a massive 90x40-foot screen that came in by helicopter this week and was set up on Tom Sawyer's Island. Eighty television crews from around the world are expected to cover the event.

PURPOSE OF A PREMIERE

Sid Graumann, the famed Hollywood cinema owner, is said to have started the premiere tradition in the 1920s. It began as a publicity stunt to draw attention to his third movie house, the Egyptian.

Today's premieres are still all about publicity, but they focus on the film and its stars. Studios hope that plenty of photos and video from the premiere get splashed in media around the world, creating demand and possibly legitimizing the film as a Hollywood hit.

Typically, premiere parties - which date back to the 1920s - are lavish productions with bills starting at \$250,000. For the premiere of "Pearl Harbor," Disney's Touchstone Pictures rented an aircraft carrier in Honolulu for a shindig that reportedly cost \$5 million. And Disney invited 110,000

people to Central Park for the premiere of its animated feature, "Pocahontas." Disney's "Hunchback of Notre Dame" debuted at a party in the Superdome in New Orleans.

FILM IMITATES ATTRACTION

Eric Jacobson plans to see the Pirates movie with mixed feelings. In 27 years as a Walt Disney Imagineer, he can't recall anyone suggesting that Pirates be made into a movie. But now that it's done, he says, "it's kind of like, why didn't we think of this before?"

Pirates is a busy attraction, with many elements vying for attention, from the sound of Pirates singing "Yo ho, Yo ho," to visual details on the moving figures to a splash of water from the make-believe bayou. The movie is a step back to a flat screen that focuses viewers on straightforward action.

Both experiences can give you the sense of being swept into another place and time. That was the magic of the attraction when it opened in 1967, with imaginative fireflies blinking in the New Orleans moonlight and pirates plundering a waterfront town. Walt Disney, who died before the attraction opened, had pushed his staff to blend a movie set's sound and lighting techniques with their new audio-animatronics figures to create the attraction.

"Usually a movie is a Cinemax version of a book," Jacobson said. "And then a theme park attraction might be based on the movie. So this is an interesting reversal."

"I think of Pirates like a popular novel that has been around a long time and now we're offering it to a broader audience, with a new way to experience the storytelling."

Like the pirates in the Disneyland ride, expect mayhem, arson and other dastardly deeds from those on the screen. If you aren't invited to the premiere, go to [the picture's Web site](#) and click, if ye dare.

DisneyToon Studios Builds Slate Under New Name and Homes for Needy June 16, 2003

The animation unit responsible for Disney's DVD-premiere movies such as THE LION KING 2: SIMBA'S PRIDE has been renamed DisneyToon Studios. The new name and logo were officially unveiled on June 5, 2003, at an internal event held at the Alex Theatre in Glendale. The new division, which split from Walt Disney Television Animation in January, is overseen by Executive Vice President Sharon Morrill, in charge of all aspects of production and development for the Disney Video Premieres and MovieToons produced by DisneyToon Studios. She reports to David Stainton, president, Walt Disney Feature Animation.

Barry Blumberg continues to serve as president, Walt Disney Television Animation, reporting to Anne Sweeney, president at ABC Cable Networks.

Morrill supervised the launch of the first Disney Video Premiere in 1994 (THE RETURN OF JAFAR) and has been a driving force in developing the market for animated films made exclusively for home entertainment distribution. Under her leadership, the group has generated \$2.8 billion in revenue from video/DVD premiere movies. In addition, Morrill's group produces MovieToon theatrical releases, including the successful RETURN TO NEVERLAND, THE JUNGLE BOOK 2 and PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE.

DisneyToon Studios' upcoming release schedule includes: THE LION KING 1-1/2 - on video and DVD, February 2004

WINNIE THE POOH'S SPRINGTIME WITH ROO on video and DVD in spring 2004

MICKEY, DONALD AND GOOFY IN THE THREE MUSKETEERS on video and DVD in summer 2004.

MULAN II on video and DVD - fall 2004

MICKEY'S TWICE UPON A CHRISTMAS - on video and DVD in holiday 2004

In addition to its busy production slate, DisneyToon Studios is teaming with Habitat for Humanity to help build homes for needy families June 17-19. About 120 volunteers will "donate sweat" at a construction site in Glendale. The volunteer endeavour is the brainchild of Morrill who encouraged the unique team building effort. Additional volunteer opportunities will follow throughout the year.

2003 new releases Coming from Buena Vista Home Entertainment!

V = Video; D = DVD

Note USA release dates:-

May 2003

5/20/03 The Love Bug

June 2003

6/3/03 Rolie Polie Olie: The Baby Bot Chase V/D

6/24/03 Air Bud Spikes Back V/D

6/10/03 The Jungle Book 2 V/D

July 2003

7/01/03 Gangs of New York

7/29/03 Piglet's Big Movie

August 2003

8/12/03 The Lizzie McGuire Movie

8/19/03 Chicago

8/26/03 Stitch! The Movie V/D

September 2003

9/02/03 Kim Possible

9/9/03 Sleeping Beauty: Special Edition V/D

October 2003

10/07/03 The Lion King - Platinum Edition

10/21/03 George of the Jungle 2

November 2003

11/04/03 Finding Nemo

11/11/03 Eloise at the Plaza

11/18/03 Brother Bear Sing-Along-Song

December 2003

12/02/03 Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl

12/02/03 Walt Disney Treasures, Wave 3

12/09/03 Lizzie TV Series

12/09/03 Recess: 5th Grade

12/09/03 Recess: All Growned Down

January 2004

01/27/04 Pocahontas - Special Edition

01/27/04 Alice in Wonderland - Special Edition

01/27/04 Lilo & Stitch - Special Edition

February 2004

2/13/04 Lion King 1 1/2
2/24/04 Winnie the Pooh: Springtime with
Roo

March 2004

3/02/04 Spy Kids 3D

3/30/04 Brother Bear

April 2004

4/20/04 Haunted Mansion

June 2004

6/01/04 Pocahontas II - Special Edition

6/15/04 Teacher's Pet

August 2004

8/03/04 Mickey's 3 Musketeers

8/17/04 Mary Poppins - Special Edition

8/17/04 Recess: 1st Day of School

8/31/04 The Lion King 2: Simba's Pride -
Special Edition

September 2004

9/14/04 Mulan

October 2004

10/05/04 Aladdin - Special Edition

November 2004

11/09/04 Mickey's Twice Upon a Christmas

Now for some DVD Rumours and News.....

On the Walt Disney Treasures front, word is there will be three DVD releases this December: a 2nd Volume of *Mickey Mouse in Living Colour*, a Donald Duck cartoon collection, and a Wartime Cartoons set. Already being discussed for the fourth wave of Treasure releases are DVD sets of Walt Disney's True Life Adventures, The Mickey

Mouse Club, and the 1950s "Zorro" television series. These are still rumours at this point, but we've been hearing about some of these sets again and again.

Disney's video website lists the following extras for the long-awaited Region 1 DVD of *The Rescuers*, the 23rd animated classic: "The Ultimate Case" set-top detective game, "Water Birds" True-Life Adventure, "The Rescuers Scrapbook", "Under the Hat" Villains, the "Three Blind Mouseketeers" Silly Symphony short, and a sing-along for "Someone's Waiting For You"! The website also lists a "1.33:1 Aspect Ratio", but the website has known to be wrong in the past. We should be getting a 1.66:1 anamorphic widescreen DVD like the parts of the world that have already gotten *The Rescuers* on DVD. Street Date is May 20, and Suggested Retail Price is \$29.99.

The May 20 DVD release of *The Love Bug* is both to be WIDESCREEN and a Special Edition!

The finishing touches Walt Disney Concert Hall

An inside peek at Disney Concert Hall, which formally opens in five months.

Do not attempt to adjust your newspaper, or your bifocals. That strange gleam around Grand Avenue and 1st Street is Walt Disney Concert Hall, the \$274-million project that has loomed over downtown Los Angeles for 15 years, first as an idea in need of donor dollars, then as a bona fide construction project.

With five months to go before its formal unveiling, the auditorium at the heart of the hall is finished except for the smallest of details.

And throughout the 3.6-acre site, more than 9,000 panes of stainless-steel sheathing are in place, including a pair of doubly reflective, highly polished patches: the Founders Room at the north end and the W.M. Keck Foundation Children's Amphitheater at the south. Inside, work on the organ continues. but carpets have been laid, veneers of vertical-grain Douglas fir are in place, and 2,265 seats with boldly colored upholstery designed, like virtually everything else, by architect Frank O. Gehry await their first occupants.

Officials at the Music Center of Los Angeles County (which will operate the hall) and the Los Angeles Philharmonic (which will be its principal tenant) say the construction schedule and budget are proceeding as planned.

In anticipation of the series of galas that will formally open the building Oct. 23-25, Philharmonic musicians plan to begin rehearsals in the auditorium on June 30. But acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota has already begun tuning the space; the first echo tests with percussion and brass instruments began May 12.

Disney 'Wild About Safety'

Disney officials on Thursday unveiled a safety education program that will use collector pins, illustrated books and cartoon stickers to teach children at its theme parks to remain seated on rides and to keep their hands inside vehicles.

The "Wild About Safety" campaign is the latest measure by Disney to raise the visibility of its safety efforts at its parks in Florida and California.

Last year, the company named its first-ever chief safety officer to oversee safety at the parks, issued a report outlining its safety measures, placed thousands of signs warning visitors to keep their hands and legs inside of rides and trained employees how to use automatic defibrillators.

"Safety comes first in everything we do," said Al Weiss, president of Walt Disney World. "By using Disney's characters and storytelling, we'll engage our guests and present a fun way to focus on this very important topic."

Since November 2001, Disney and other companies that operate theme parks in Florida, have agreed to report all ride accidents to the state, even though theme parks in Florida are still exempt from any direct state oversight. The state, however, strictly regulates rides from travelling carnivals and small amusement parks. New laws in California require state inspections of all parks and mandatory accident reporting.

During the first three months of 2003, the most recent reporting period, Disney reported two accidents to the state, according to Florida's Bureau of Fair Rides Inspection.

The first involved a 75-year-old woman who claimed having memory loss after riding on the Space Mountain ride in the Magic Kingdom in February. The second involved an 81-year-old woman who had a heart attack while on the Universe of Energy ride at Epcot. She later died at a hospital.

"It wasn't ride-related. It was a natural cause," said Disney spokeswoman Jacquie Polak. "Just like every other city, we have everyday occurrences here."

Other accidents at the theme park resort pop up at unexpected times.

A tire blew out on a monorail train going from the Contemporary Hotel to the Magic Kingdom on Monday, stranding about 100 passengers for more than an hour. No one was injured, and the train was towed back for maintenance.

More than two years ago, a St. Petersburg man who had climbed out of his boat was killed after being struck by another boat on the Splash Mountain ride at Walt Disney World.

"Keeping our property safe has always been our top priority," said Jay Rasulo, president of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. "But even with a cast of thousands working around the clock, we can't do it alone."

The "Wild About Safety" uses two characters from "The Lion King," Timon and Pumbaa, to push the safety messages on collector pins, stickers and colorful cards. One card shows Timon, a cartoon meerkat, and Pumbaa, a warthog, with bandages on their tails above the message "Keep arms, hooves, tusks and tails inside the vehicle."

The safety messages also will be available in five languages on headphones and in hand-held captioning devices for the deaf. The 12 collector pins won't be for sale.

"You can collect them by convincing one of our cast members to part with one," said Greg Hale, the Disney parks' chief safety officer.

Disney announces new coaster, opening dates for resort, space ride

Walt Disney World officials marked the fifth anniversary of Animal Kingdom on Tuesday by announcing plans to build a new coaster-like ride for the park, which has lagged behind its sister parks in attendance. The "Expedition Everest" ride will open in 2006.

Disney officials also announced that its NASA-inspired "Mission: Space" ride would open Aug. 15 and that the much-delayed opening of the first phase of the Pop Century Resort would be Dec. 14.

"We remain upbeat about the future and are moving forward with determined momentum," said Al Weiss, Walt Disney World's president.

Animal Kingdom opened in 1998 to much hoopla. At 500 acres, it is Disney's largest park and boasted a large menagerie of exotic animals. Despite beating rival parks at Universal Orlando and SeaWorld, Animal Kingdom was never able to match the attendance of the other Disney parks in Florida: Magic Kingdom, Epcot and Disney-MGM Studios.

Magic Kingdom, for instance, had an estimated attendance of 14 million visitors last year, making it the most visited park in the world, according to Amusement Business. Animal Kingdom had an estimated 7.3 million visitors last

year, making it the 11th most visited, according to the trade magazine.

The storyline of the 200-foot Expedition Everest has riders boarding a fake mountain railway destined for the foot of Mount Everest. The train rolls through thick bamboo forests and waterfalls until the track ends in a mass of twisted metal. The train then shoots through mountain caverns and canyons until the riders meet an abominable snowman.

Mission: Space will allow visitors to board a four-person simulator where they will be flat on their backs for liftoff. Using hydraulic lifts, the ride will create the feeling of intense G-forces as a spacecraft escapes Earth's atmosphere. Disney has a lot riding on the \$150-million ride, as it is only one of two new attractions opening this year at the resort. The other is a much less ambitious 3-D film, Mickey's PhilHarmagic.

Disney postponed the opening of the 5,760-room Pop Century Resort in the wake of the tourism slowdown caused by the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. The \$460-million resort showcases pop icons such as the Big Wheel and Rubik's Cube. It is divided between the Legendary Years, featuring relics between 1900 and 1940, and the Classic Years, featuring icons between the 1950s and 1990s.

The first phase, with 2,880 rooms, had been scheduled to open in March 2002.

Walt Disney World Press Release

Walt Disney World Resort Announces New Mountain of Thrills, Sets Opening Date for Space Attraction and Value Resort

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (April 22, 2003) -- With an eye-popping celebration fit for a lion king, Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park marked its fifth anniversary today -- and announced plans for Expedition EVEREST, a mammoth new E-ticket thrill attraction to open for Walt Disney World guests in 2006.

At the same time, Disney officials announced an Aug. 15 preview opening for Epcot's Mission: SPACE, a one-of-a-kind thrill that will rocket guests to the galaxies in an out-of-this-world space adventure. Mission: SPACE officially launches in October. Presented by HP and featuring breakthrough technology that creates an unforgettable launch sequence and interplanetary journey, Mission: SPACE will take amazed riders straight up into space and on to Mars.

Officials also announced an opening date of Dec. 14 for Disney's Pop Century Resort, which will add 2,880 value-priced rooms to Walt Disney World Resort in its first phase. Guests may now begin booking rooms at the resort, which celebrates the toys, fads, fashions, crazes and phrases of the 20th century.

The opening plans for Mission: SPACE and Pop Century and the construction of Expedition EVEREST are good news for our guests and good news for tourism, said Al Weiss, president of Walt Disney World Resort. We remain upbeat about the future and are moving forward with determined momentum.

To pounding African drums and surrounded by dancers and puppets, Weiss and park vice president Beth Stevens led ceremonies Tuesday as Disney's Animal Kingdom celebrated five years of growth since its Earth Day opening in 1998. Then howling winds, a rising mountain, billowing snow and a parka-clad Goofy heralded the surprise announcement:

Expedition EVEREST is coming.

Set to rise on the eastern range of the 500-acre park, Expedition EVEREST will be a high-speed train adventure among the glaciers, canyons and caverns of the snowy Himalayas. The old mountain railway will follow a perilous course and -- in a first for Walt Disney World Resort -- send riders both forward and backward to an eventual encounter with the yeti, the feared creature guarding the route to Mount Everest.

At nearly 200 feet, Expedition EVEREST will be the tallest mountain in Florida and will rise in the Asia section of the park. When it opens in 2006, guests will be able to conquer the thrills and chills of Expedition EVEREST as it climbs and careens among the mountain slopes.

Starting in mid-August, Mission: SPACE guests will lift off on an almost inconceivable adventure into outer space. From the countdown on Earth to touchdown on Mars, Mission: SPACE will scrape the heavens -- and throw Epcot guests some pulse-racing surprises along the way. Mission: SPACE is located in the Future World section of Epcot.

Larger-than-life pop icons such as a Big Wheel, Rubik's Cube, Duncan Yo-Yo and Play-Doh anchor the first phase of Disney's Pop Century Resort, opening in December. Pools shaped like a flower and a bowling pin evoke way-back-when memories, and features include a food court, lounge and arcade.

Rates start at \$77 per night. For reservations and more information, guests can call 407/W-DISNEY.

Walt Disney World Press Release

Thrilling New Adventure at Disney's Animal Kingdom Brings the Legend of Yeti to Life

Disney Announces Expedition EVEREST

Lake Buena Vista, Fla. (April 22, 2003) -- Legend holds that high in the Himalayan Mountains lives an enormous creature that fiercely guards the route to Mount Everest.

Now that legend comes dramatically to life at Disney's Animal Kingdom in a new high-speed train adventure that combines coaster-like thrills with the excitement of a close encounter of the hairy kind.

Walt Disney World guests will discover for themselves the fearsome legend of the yeti when Expedition EVEREST opens in 2006 at Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park. The new thrill attraction was announced today during the park's 5th anniversary festivities at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida.

Expedition EVEREST adds a new dimension to our storytelling in Disney's Animal Kingdom, said Joe Rohde, executive designer at Walt Disney Imagineering and lead designer of the park. It's a thrilling adventure themed to the folklore of the mysterious yeti.

In Expedition EVEREST, guests board an old mountain railway destined for the foot of Mount Everest. The train rolls through thick bamboo forests, past thundering waterfalls, along shimmering glacier fields and climbs higher and higher through the snow-capped peaks.

But suddenly the track ends in a gnarled mass of twisted metal and the thrills intensify as the train races both forward and backward through mountain caverns and icy canyons and guests head for an inevitable face-to-muzzle showdown with the mysterious yeti -- known to some as the abominable snowman.

Expedition EVEREST will be located in the Asia section of the theme park. At nearly 200 feet high, it will be the tallest mountain in Florida. Expedition EVEREST will feature Disney's FASTPASS, an innovative system -- offered at no charge to park guests -- designed to reduce wait times at popular attractions in all four Walt Disney World theme parks.

Disney's Animal Kingdom is a 500-acre theme park where the exciting worlds of wild and whimsical creatures come to life on an authentic African safari, in an Asian rain forest, on a trip back in time to the age of the dinosaurs and in other attractions and shows brimming with stories about animals and encounters with favourite Disney characters.

Walt Disney World Press Release

Mission: SPACE at Epcot Set to Send Guests Out of This World

Launch Date is Aug. 15

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. -- The excitement, the thrill and the rush of rocketing into outer space is coming soon to Walt Disney World Resort.

Mission: SPACE, presented by HP -- the next awesome adventure at Epcot -- will send guests on an out-of-this-world journey they never thought possible.

The attraction launches Aug. 15.

Guests who accept the mission will engage in a one-of-a-kind astronaut experience that launches them into a simulated space adventure -- from pulse-racing liftoff to the sensations of travelling though outer space on a mission to Mars.

The combination of creative and entertainment magic of Disney and the technology of HP will create an experience that our guests can get nowhere else in the world, said Al Weiss, president of Walt Disney World Resort. Epcot is the perfect setting, continuing the parks dedication to the explorer in all of us.

The new attraction is the most technologically advanced ever created by Disney. In association with former NASA advisors, astronauts and scientists, Walt Disney Imagineering developed Mission: SPACE as the first ride system ever created to take guests straight up in simulated flight.

Pre-Show

The setting for the attraction is several decades into the future at the International Space Training Center. As the crew selected for this ultimate space mission, guests head to the dispatch area and then move to the Ready Room where they receive a history of astronaut training and are given the role they will assume during the mission -- as the commander, pilot, navigator or engineer.

Countdown & Liftoff

Then it's on to the pre-flight corridor to load into the spacecraft, receive final briefings from CapCom and buckle in for liftoff. When the countdown reaches zero, the most unique and exhilarating ride experience ever begins. The earth begins to rumble, white clouds of exhaust start to stir as the ascent toward the sky starts and guests are rocketed into the galaxies. Guests hear from CapCom and are asked

to perform vital tasks that will land their spacecraft safely on Mars. Each guest will assume the role of Commander, Pilot, Navigator or Engineer. But there is no mission without surprise as guests encounter unexpected twists, turns and other challenges that test every astronaut. Quick thinking and fast reactions are needed by each guest to successfully complete the mission.

Its an amazing experience. Its out of this world, said Bob Zalk, Walt Disney Imagineer and co-producer of Mission: SPACE. Guests will certainly say this ride is unlike any other experience they have had before.

The realism of the experience adds to its uniqueness, said Susan Bryan, Walt Disney Imagineer and co-producer of Mission: SPACE.

Mission: SPACE is very much based in reality. Its a mix of real science and thrill, Bryan said. The sensations are what the astronauts actually experience, but its accessible to everyone.

Post Show

Training is not complete when the capsule lands. Guests can proceed to the Mission: SPACE Post Show, powered by HP. In this Advanced Training Lab, guests of all ages have an opportunity to explore interactive space experiences, which include:

Space Race -- Two teams compete against each other in a race to send their rocket from Mars back to Earth. Nearly 60 people can play the high-energy game at one time.

Space Base -- For junior astronauts, Space Base provides a fun, interactive crawl space for exploration.

Expedition: Mars -- A joystick and a jet pack button help guests explore the surface of Mars.

Postcards from Space -- Guests can e-mail a video of themselves with one of the space-themed backgrounds and create a great souvenir of their Mission: SPACE experience.

Epcot is the Walt Disney World Resort discovery park, where guests are immersed in a celebration of both technological accomplishments and international cultural achievements. The 300-acre theme park features two unique worlds -- Future World and World Showcase -- with attractions, shows, interactive presentations, dining, shopping and architectural wonders. Epcot is part of the 30,500-acre Walt Disney World Resort, near Orlando, Fla.

For more information, call 407/824-4321 or visit www.disneyworld.com.

Disney Channel Celebrates 20 Years in the Business

Sun April 20, 2003 03:31 PM ET
By Dylan Callaghan

LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter) - It took a 12-year-old girl to transform Disney Channel -- the mighty Walt Disney Co.'s long-struggling maiden cable TV enterprise -- into the powerhouse it has become today.

The girl, as nearly every junior high schooler now knows, is a character named Lizzie McGuire. In January 2001, her eponymous TV series began to chronicle the crushes and crises of a typical seventh-grader. Shortly after its bow, "Lizzie McGuire" became a monster hit with the burgeoning 9- to 14-year-old tween market. This programming jackpot finally vindicated a Disney Channel reinvention strategy begun in the mid-1990s -- a game plan aimed at making the channel a truly relevant entertainment source for a modern generation of kids that Disney hadn't reached before.

"Over the past 10 years, Disney Channel has gone from practically being ignored on the playground circuit to actually setting the agenda for kids' lives," says Gary Marsh, executive vp original programming and production, who has been with the network since 1988.

Marsh agrees that "Lizzie" was exactly what the network desperately needed, but he also insists that the channel's overall strategy -- spearheaded by Anne Sweeney, president of ABC Cable Networks Group and Disney Channel Worldwide, and Disney Channel president Rich Ross -- is what put the network on the path to its current success.

Referring to shows such as "The Famous Jett Jackson," which premiered in 1998, and the hit tween sitcom "Even Stevens," which launched in 2000, Marsh says those earlier shows, as well as newer series such as the animated action-comedy "Kim Possible" and the live-action sitcom "That's So Raven" (which, according to Nielsen Media Research figures, is already outstripping expectations, tying "Lizzie" with kids ages 6-11 and averaging a 4.8 rating since its debut in January), have helped do more than score a one-off hit: They've redefined the credibility of the network.

Targeting the tween market is just one aspect of the network's programming strategy. Just as important to the channel are a pair of younger demographics: 6-11 and 2- to 5-year-old preschoolers. The latter group is offered, among others, "The Wiggles," "Stanley" and "Rolie Polie Olie" in the Playhouse Disney block of programming.

Original movies make up the third significant facet of the Disney Channel programming assault. Last year's debut film "Cadet Kelly" scored the highest marks for any 2002 cable telecast with ages 6-14. The network found similar success last year with "Gotta Kick It Up" and "The Scream Team."

But this cable Cinderella story came from inauspicious beginnings. With slightly more than 700,000 subscribers during its first year, the newly hatched network was little

more than a storefront where viewers could pay to view mostly classic Disney movie fare. Even a decade after its April 1983 launch, things had not improved much. Nickelodeon, which had a four-year jump on Disney in entering the cable market, was leaving other kids' programmers in the dust with fresh, soon-to-be franchises such as "The Ren and Stimpy Show" and "Rugrats." With a basic-cable, commercial-supported approach, Nick had already penetrated a staggering 60 million households in 1993 compared to the tepid 4 million homes carrying Disney Channel, which was still primarily a premium, commercial-free service. Although Disney Channel's then-president, John Cooke, saw the writing on the wall and implemented a switch from premium to basic-cable status, the network was still casting about for an overall strategy to make the switch work.

At the time, no one would have guessed that Disney Channel would go on to give Nick a run for its money in many day parts and beat Cartoon Network overall with an arsenal of wildly popular shows -- shows that were not only true to Disney but considered genuinely cool across America.

But, thanks in large part to Sweeney and Ross -- both brought onboard in 1996 -- the network has done just that. Today, its aggressive affiliate sales campaign has ballooned subscriptions to a critical mass level of 81 million -- more than 20 times the 1993 figure.

"They've done a pretty remarkable job of making the switch to basic cable," Kagan World Media senior analyst Derek Baine says.

According to Baine, Disney Channel has more than tripled its revenue from \$240 million in 1993 to \$736 million in 2002, all while remaining the only commercial-free basic cable network for children. With \$411 million in cash flow, it has also managed to maintain a sky-high cash-flow margin of 56%, well beyond most outlets that run in the 30% range.

One key to such healthy numbers is the king-sized subscription fees the channel charges carriers -- in the 75 cents per subscriber range -- well over the industry average of about 25 cents and the rates commanded by chief competitors Cartoon Network (13 cents) and Nickelodeon (33 cents).

"They're providing more value to their cable customers by not being ad-supported," says Baine, explaining part of the network's ability to command such large fees. "Disney's always had the programming power and the brand power. The only question was how many eyeballs could they get, and would they be able to get in that many homes?" he says.

Disney Channel senior vp affiliate sales Ben Pyne credits the winning subscription growth to customer response. "Cable operators not only noted a real competitive edge but also saw their subscriber base grow at a faster rate than

competitors that had not yet launched Disney Channel on basic," he says.

According to Baine, the current level of success wasn't such a sure thing back in the early 1990s. "There certainly was a lot of scepticism: The prediction was that there was going to be more backlash response to the high sub fees," he says, adding that it's ultimately the popularity of Disney Channel's new programming blocks that has supported subscription success. "If you don't have programming, and you go ask a cable operator for carriage renewal at a higher sub rate, the cable operator isn't going to go for it."

According to Ross, penetration has no value without ratings. "It's not how many people you reach, it's how many people you get to watch," he says, crediting Sweeney for "really putting the pedal to the metal" on growing households as well as ratings. The numbers speak for themselves: At the end of February, Disney Channel was No. 1 in primetime for nine consecutive months among kids ages 9-14. Also that month, Disney Channel overtook Cartoon Network in overall daytime viewers with a 1.1 rating, nearly a 20% boost from last year.

With its strong revenue and expansive popularity, Disney Channel has surged in importance within the larger Disney empire. Recognizing a natural when it sees it, Disney's feature film division hopped on the "Lizzie" juggernaut. In May, it will release a feature film based on the show, starring Hilary Duff as its beloved 15-year-old heroine. It's the first feature film Disney has released based on a live-action TV show since the 1950s.

Movies are hardly the end of the story. With the massive breadth of its multidivisional corporation at its disposal, Disney has released two "Lizzie" novels, a clutch of episode novelizations through its book division and two albums through its music label -- not to mention dolls, clothing lines and 50 million packages of Disney-themed Oscar Mayer Lunchables. Preschool shows have also joined in: A straight-to-video "Rolie Polie Olie" movie was released last summer, in addition to repurposed video episodes, books, clothing and plush toys, as well as two Playhouse Disney compilation records.

"A major initiative of Disney Consumer Products is to work more closely with Disney Channel to develop merchandise for some of its popular programming," says Bob Iger, president and chief operating officer of the Walt Disney Co. "One of the important benefits of this strategy is that successful TV shows are sustainable properties that last for years and therefore offer long life cycles for associated merchandise."

Behind all of the merchandising and subscription penetration is a winning programming strategy that Ross describes as "a hammock."

"The master plan was to create a hammock with those two pillars," he says, referring to 2- to 5-year-olds on one side and 9- to 14-year-olds on the other. "We wanted kids (to

grow up) being fans of the Disney Channel from the 2-5 group into the 6-9 group, which is the 'hammock' between the two pillars."

Says John Wagner, media director and lead kids negotiator for media buyer Starcom Worldwide: "Anne and Rich have really focused on the programming blocks -- making toddlers and tweens a priority -- and then going out there to get the programming that works. It's reflected in the numbers."

"You take what you know is a clear programming strategy and critical mass, and that's how you make a successful cable network," adds Wagner, who helped negotiate a seven-figure, PBS-style sponsorship deal between McDonald's and Playhouse Disney. An added benefit, he says, is that hot ratings among those age groups have given Disney a "testing ground for programming they might want to bring onto network, where you need to go big from the get-go or go home."

Ross says Disney Channel is not slowing down. According to Nielsen/EDI, the channel's average household rating in 2003 is 0.8, up from 0.6 in 2002. Meanwhile, the indomitable Nickelodeon boasts a 1.3 average household rating, up slightly from 1.2 last year.

"Obviously, I think the goal was to get Disney in the No. 1 slot and make it a 24-7 destination brand," he says, "but we've had success by focusing on what we do, not what others are doing."

Pal Mickey

In early May this year Walt Disney World unveiled a completely new collectible called Pal Mickey. Pal Mickey as you walk through the parks and resorts suddenly vibrates telling you he has something to say. You press his hand or stomach and the 10 and a half inch tall Pal Mickey delivers messages from show details to Disney trivia to attraction height requirements, in all four theme parks, focusing on the unique aspects of each park. Pal Mickey will relieve stories at the Magic Kingdom Park, share travel tips and fun facts during a tour of Epcot, be a star-struck Hollywood insider at the Disney-MGM Studios and play up the feeling of adventure while sharing safari secrets at Disney's Animal Kingdom. You have the opportunity to rent Pal Mickey for US\$8 a day (including tax) with a US\$50 credit card deposit. If you decide to take Pal Mickey home, the US\$50 deposited with be deducted from you credit card. You can also buy Pal Mickey for US\$50 (including tax) instead of renting one and paying a deposit.

Pal Mickey works all over the Walt Disney World resort and we saw many people carrying him over the resort while we were there. Apparently he also is interactive when you bring him home.

For sale - Three framed Limited Edition (SOLD OUT) cels with authenticity certificates. The items are :

- * "Happily Ever After" from Snow White. Price - \$7500 ono
- * "Tea Party" from Alice In Wonderland. Price - \$4500 ono
- * "Together Again - from Pinocchio. Price - \$4900 ono

For further details, contact Norris on 0411 248 055.

The Lion King

Platinum Edition coming October 7, 2003

DISC ONE

- Two Versions of the Film - Original Theatrical Release & Special Edition (with the new Elton John/Tim Rice song "The Morning Report")
- 1.66:1 Anamorphic Widescreen
- 5.1 Dolby Digital and Dolby Digital with Enhanced Home Theatre (EHT)
- Audio Commentary (probably ported from the laserdisc)
- "The Making of The Morning Report"
- Three Games: The Lion King Personality Profile Game (discover which character you're most like), Pumbaa's Sound Sensations (5.1 Sound-Matching Game) and Timon's Grab-a-Grub (featuring 2-Player Mode)
- Three Deleted Scenes: Bug Football, Warthog Rhapsody, and Hakuna Matata
- Abandoned Concept: Can You Feel the Love Tonight
- All-New Music Video of "Circle of Life" Featuring Disney Channel 'Stars' Hilary Duff, Raven, Christy Romano, Tahj Mowry, A.J. Trauth & more
- Sing-Along Track
- 3D animation created for DVD menus and games

DISC TWO

- Timon & Pumbaa's Virtual Safari - Timon & Pumbaa are your Tour Guides to an action-packed blast through the wilds of Africa
- Animal Journey - learn how real animals inspired the animated Lion King characters hosted by Roy Disney
- Storymaking Magic - the fascinating origin and influences behind the story of The Lion King
- Stage Journey - Behind the scenes of the award-winning Broadway hit musical, including exclusive interviews with writer/artist/director Julie Taymor
- Film Journey - Behind-the-scenes footage, Character design, computer animation, African art inspiration (explore masks, costumes, people and puppets)
- Music Journey - Exclusive interviews with Sir Elton John and Tim Rice and Lion King music videos
- Much, much more!

COLLECTOR'S GIFT SET FEATURES

- 5 exclusive character portrait drawings, signed and sketched by the original animators

-The Lion King Special Edition hardcover book
...plus, of course, the 2-disc Platinum Edition DVD

FACT or FICTION?

The version of the film playing in IMAX theatres is identical to the 1994 theatrical release.

FICTION - For the 2002 IMAX re-release of The Lion King, animators redrew background elements and character details to make for a sharper, more detailed image when blown up to the large dimensions of IMAX theatres.

Other changes include a remixed soundtrack, different opening studio logos, and modified special effects shots, including Mufasa's appearance in the clouds and the dust flying off the cliff scene.

The Lion King is the all-time #1-selling movie on videocassette.

FACT - To date, The Lion King has sold over 55 million videocassettes, more than any other title. It is also the highest-grossing animated film of all-time by all accounts (domestically, overseas, and worldwide).

The Lion King was originally supposed to come to DVD in October 2004.

FACT - The original order of the Platinum releases called for Aladdin to be released in 2003, and The Lion King in 2004. The order was switched sometime in late 2001 and Aladdin will debut on DVD in the fall of 2004.