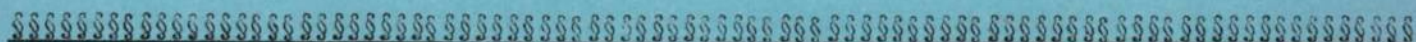


R A B A N O S

NO 63

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Len Bailes got his introduction to Disneyland this last Sunday. Or possibly "underwent his baptism of fire at" would be a better way of putting it; it was a more adventuresome trip than any other that I can remember for a long while.

We were at the Trimblehaus Xmas Party the day before, and simply slept over, as we didn't see any point in driving 30 miles back to L.A. and then the same distance again the following morning, when the Trimbles' is only a couple of miles from Disneyland as it is. So early Sunday morning, the four of us who were going -- Len, Greg Shaw, Tom Gilbert, & myself -- roused up, let ourselves out, and set out for the day. We arrived at Disneyland just as it was opening at 9:00, pulling into the parking lot just in time to catch Dan Alderson as he was strolling toward the entrance gates. Our party thus united without a hitch, and we all went into the park together to start the day. Tom and I are frequent visitors at Disneyland; Greg hadn't been there in several years; and this was Len's first trip, of course. To some extent, though, there was something new for all of us.

We hit the newest exhibit as soon as we entered the Main Street Town Square, in fact. This is the "Great Moments With Mr. Lincoln" attraction, lately of the New York World's Fair, now reposing in the former Mickey Mouse Club Theatre (the one that wouldn't let Fred Lerner join). It's very impressive, and is well worth seeing. I couldn't shake off the impression, though, that it was out of place where it was. Possibly it's because it's so new, but as 1860-period as it is, it's too automated to be really at home with the rest of the Main Street, U.S.A. section, which is all (except for Mr. Lincoln) designed as a series of static sets which the visitor can enter and examine at his leisure. I really feel that Mr. Lincoln would be more at home in Frontierland. However, this is a minor quibble, and shouldn't stop anybody from seeing the show.

As we walked down Main Street, we could see that the current new movie which Disneyland is heralding/advertising is "Walt Disney's Winnie-the-Pooh". Pooh dolls filled the Emporium windows; Pooh hats, dishes, and other whatnot filled each souvenir stand; the bookstores were all loaded with Pooh books ranging from the legitimate Milne volumes through the Little and Big Golden Books to the multitude of Whitman productions -- Disney W-t-P abridgements, coloring books, jigsaw puzzles, etc. One thing struck my attention; whereas the usual Disney treatment is to take a classic and completely mutilate it in simplifying it for the cheap 29¢ and \$1 childrens' "book" versions, the cheap Pooh books consisted of one complete story by Milne taken from one or another of the legitimate Pooh books -- only a small portion of the whole work, of course, but the untouched Milne text of the particular chapter. (I mention this as a book collector and an enthusiast of children's literature; while I ordinarily wouldn't touch a Disney

simplification with Boardman's 11-foot poll, he hasn't harmed this text any, and for only 29¢ you might be interested in picking up one of these chapters for its variant illustrations.) The artwork is the usual Disney brand, of course, bearing virtually no relation to Shepard's familiar characterization. According to one of the salesgirls, Disney's Winnie-the-Pooh is not a full-length cartoon feature, but only a 26-minute featurette, shown in conjunction with Disney's new live-action comedy/adventure, "That Darn Cat". If so, I may go to see "That Darn Cat" after all; something I'd been intending to avoid -- Disney's live-action films starring/for teenagers don't interest me at all. Incidentally, I notice there's been a bit of expurgation done to the original story behind "That Darn Cat". When I read it about a year or so ago in its original form, as a Doubleday mystery titled Undercover Cat, by Mildred and Gordon Gordon, DC stood for Damn Cat. But now, in the inevitable paperback reprinting of the original book in connection with its motion picture release, the Damn has been changed to Darn throughout.

Well, I'm wandering away from the trip report. Though our main purpose was to make sure that Len got a good introduction to Disneyland, and Len wanted to try out all of the rides and exhibits at least once, we were still unable to make a complete tour of the park before it closed at 10:00 p.m., missing most of Frontierland, plus various smaller rides and exhibits in each of the other lands. Disneyland has simply grown too large to be covered in one day -- unless you go through with a planned schedule at a dead run, not stopping to take things leisurely; and that kind of trip usually isn't worth making at all. Most of this is due to the profusion of new shops and attractions, rather than waiting in line, too, though a half-hour wait at the more popular features, such as the Matterhorn Bobsleds, is still standard (despite a price rise to 60¢ at each such attraction to discourage long lines). And new attractions are still going up all the time. The time is rapidly approaching when we're going to have to tell visiting fens who want to see Disneyland to allot two full days for the trip, unless they want to leave about half of the good attractions and all of the minor ones unsampled.

Len started out the day on a tower of sophistication. "You talk a lot about how great Disneyland is," he implied in his manner; "but I've been to Freedomland and the World's Fair. This is gonna have to be really something to impress me." By the end of the day, he was impressed. One of our harder jobs at first was to persuade him that the Tiki Room was worth 75¢ -- in fact, it took Tom's offer to personally refund him his money if he didn't agree it was worth it before he went in. Afterwards, we asked him what he thought of it. "Oh -- all right, it was worth 75¢ to see it once", he agreed in an offhand manner. By the end of the day, he was no longer making any pretense about not enjoying himself thoroughly. As an old-timer, it always gives me a sense of satisfaction to demonstrate to a newcomer that Disneyland is really as good as the Chamber of Commerce publicity says it is.

A mishap, and our biggest adventure, came when we were going through Sleeping Beauty's Castle, which is a walkthrough beginning at the right side of the castle facing from Fantasyland toward the Plaza, climbing up and passing through the castle over the entrance to the "courtyard", then down again and exiting from the left side of the castle. We had just reached the top of the walkthrough and were heading for the left-hand staircase when all the lights abruptly went out, leaving us in pitch blackness at the top of a couple of fairly steep staircases, in a layout in which we weren't at all familiar. After discussing what to do, we decided it would be best to work our way back down the way we'd come, where we had a general idea of where each landing and turn in the staircase was; groping our way along the wall. We did so, renaming the attraction the Mines of Moria, and agreeing that we were getting a lot more out of our admission than the regular attraction was worth. An added bonus was that Dan got separated from us momentarily at the top of the staircase and blundered through a curtained passageway that led out onto the battlements of the castle, an off-limits area that it's interesting to know about. We finally made our way to the entrance again, and the ticket-taker told us to come back in about five minutes for a free pass, as soon as the electrician had the lights working again. So we eventually went through the attraction again in the normal manner, though it seemed tame after our previous experience.

Among the geegaws in the Fantasyland toyshops is a new one that took my fancy: a plush warthog. However, it didn't take my fancy \$11 worth, which is what the thing was priced at.

Len's big moment came on the Storybook Land Canal Boat ride. The five of us were the first ones on to the boat that pulled up as we came to the head of the line, and we were followed immediately by a large Mexican family of about eight. As the boats will only seat twelve or so people, this left things slightly overcrowded. So, turning to Len, the guide asked in honeyed tones if little Prince Charming would care to sit on the prow of the boat and be our lookout against any ferocious whales that might attack us during our voyage? Red-faced, Len clambered up on the prow, as the rest of us agreed that it was a good thing that it hadn't been Harlan Ellison who had been so addressed. We suggested to Len that he claim another free trip around Storybook Land as his ship's wages for acting as lookout, but he wasn't having any of it. Part of the attraction of the Storybook Land ride is a perverse fascination with the cloyingly sweet monologue of the guides, but this time our guide surpassed all our expectations. I don't think Len appreciated it, though.

The 9:00 p.m. fireworks display had been cancelled during the winter months; in its place was an hour-long Christmas Parade, which was basically an old-time circus parade with everybody in Disney costumes. Following that, we strolled leisurely back down Main Street, making one last turn through the various shops, and finally leaving the park about ten minutes before closing time, so as to beat the homegoing traffic rush. This concluded what I believe was the first fannish Disneyland trip since the WesterCon, which is about the proper timing: a trip every six months is about as often as one can go for a full day's enjoyment, when one has been to Disneyland as many times as most L.A. fans have. This should set the next trip about next WesterCon time, which will be fine with all of us. Disneyland is currently in the process of moving all the Disney exhibits from the World's Fair out here; the Mr. Lincoln exhibit is already open, and the dinosaurs and the Small World animated dolls are being installed now. In addition, the New Orleans Square and Haunted Mansion are being rushed to completion for the coming Summer season. Hopefully, everything will be operational by July, when we once more make our semi-annual pilgrimage to show Andy Porter and our other WesterCon visitors around.

IZANAHORIAS ELECTRONICAS!

-- BEING COMMENTS ON LAST WEEK'S DISTRIBUTION

Bjo Trimble -- Most of the objections I've heard to the use of "Xmas" haven't been on grounds of laziness, but on grounds of language purity. The language purists feel that it's a bastardization, plastering the Greek "X" onto the English "mas", which really shouldn't be done, you know. The X in Xmas is the Greek letter usually translated as "Chi", and pronounced more like "ki". The Greek missionary St. Cyril introduced it into Russia, where it remains in the Cyrillic alphabet as the "kh" sound; Khrushchev spells his name, in the original Russian, beginning with that same X (Xpyp6 is about the closest I can come to it in the Latin alphabet). ## You mean that Len thought that the Coxes' party was dull, what with Len Moffatt doing a strip tease and Fred Gerap cursing me out via the Ouija Board, and all? What's he used to; a full-scale orgy? ## Thanks for a wonderful Xmas Party, to you and Katya.

Jack Harness -- A very humorous conclusion (I hope) to all this American Nazi junk. It's been fascinating so far as an example of sick humor, and as a glimpse into an extremist political cult that I suppose we should really be Aware Of, but more than three of those leaflets would be laying the sickness on a bit too thick. ## If you liked that brochure on the stamps commemorating the 5,726th anniversary of the Creation of the Universe, wait'll you see some of the ones I have coming up. None that can top that one, I'm afraid, but commemorating some pretty weird things. I find much of the information on these leaflets quite fascinating -- did you know, for example, that the Magus Kaspar may have really been the Indo-Parthian King Gondophares? (Astound your friends with your vast store of historical trivia!)