

Walt Disney World Hidden History - Remnants of Former Attractions and Other Tributes by Kevin Yee: A Disney Book Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

I have a confession. I am totally a Disney geek when it comes to attractions that have come and gone at Disney parks.

To me, there's something even more magical about those long-lost attractions now that you can no longer enjoy them. I still have very vague childhood recollections in my head of mythical rides such as 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea, World of Motion, and Horizons, so when I saw that Kevin Yee's book, "Walt Disney World Hidden History: Remnants of Former Attractions and Other Tributes," was about the remnants of old rides, I was sold.

As the full title suggests, this book is about a lot more than old rides. The book also highlights things like tributes to ride designers, and even historic references such as opening dates for particular parks. It really is a Disney geek's book, and if you like to hunt down things like this, you'll love it.

□ The book's chapters take you through each of the parks in turn, before devoting a chapter to Walt Disney World in general. Logically, we start in the Magic Kingdom, although it's important to note that if you want to learn more about perhaps the most prominent hidden tributes, the windows along Main Street, there is another chapter at the end of the book devoted to this. I feel this makes sense, as it allows the author to give readers a complete listing along both sides of the street.

□ Throughout the book, I found that there were references that I was aware of, such as the posters for individual attractions, dating from the days when you had to buy tickets for every ride you wanted to go on, and the tunnel in Epcot's The Seas with Nemo and Friends, with now-hidden windows out on to the aquarium that date from the original Living Seas pavilion. Nowadays, it's the part of the ride where you surf the East Australian Current (dude!) with Crush and his son Squirt, and you can't look out, but from above, from one of the aquarium viewing areas, you can see where riders once got a view of the aquarium outside. It's these sort of little things that the book sets out to explore.

However, what I love more about the book are the things I didn't know about, like the tributes to the Adventurers' Club in the queue for the

Jungle Cruise, the Pharaoh Mickey in the Great Movie Ride (honestly!) and the previous life of the puppets used in Festival of the Lion King.

□ There are also some neat stories woven into the various chapters, including how Disney helped to inspire Michael Jackson's Thriller video and how toasters played a role in helping to create Dinosaurℳ; and I promise that I'm not making that up!

□ If you ever wanted to know where the hidden tributes are to the various Imagineers, then this is the book for you. From the mentions in the Aliens sequence of the Great Movie Ride to the note and billboard in Carousel of Progress and the mention of the chief designer of Animal Kingdom, it's all covered here. It's the sort of thing you either want to commit to memory (and you'd have to have a better memory than I do to do that!) or bring with you to the parks, so you can seek them out on your next vacation.

□ One downside to this book is its layout. Maybe it's just me, but I prefer all the pages to be filled top to bottom with text and/or photos, but here it's not, and it feels odd and clumsy. When the description is done, there may be a photo included, but the rest of the page is left blank, something I'm just not used to, and it did detract from my reading enjoyment to a certain extent, especially as it's such an easy thing to correct.

□ The other problem with it is that I found myself getting caught up in the stories, most of which are only a short paragraph or two, and then wanting to know more, particularly when they related to attractions that I struggle to remember now. A bit more detail wouldn't have gone amiss for me, although I can understand that, with a huge variety of information to impart, to do that for everything, you'd have been left with something the size of an encyclopaedia.

□ If, like me, you're fascinated by where you can see remnants of Walt Disney World gone by, this is the book for you, and because the sections are so short, it's the sort of thing you can easily pick up, and put down, rather than having to read it in one go. There are quite a few things I've now taken note of that I'll be checking out on our next visit to the "World," so it's certainly helped to enrich my future Disney vacations.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo

Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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