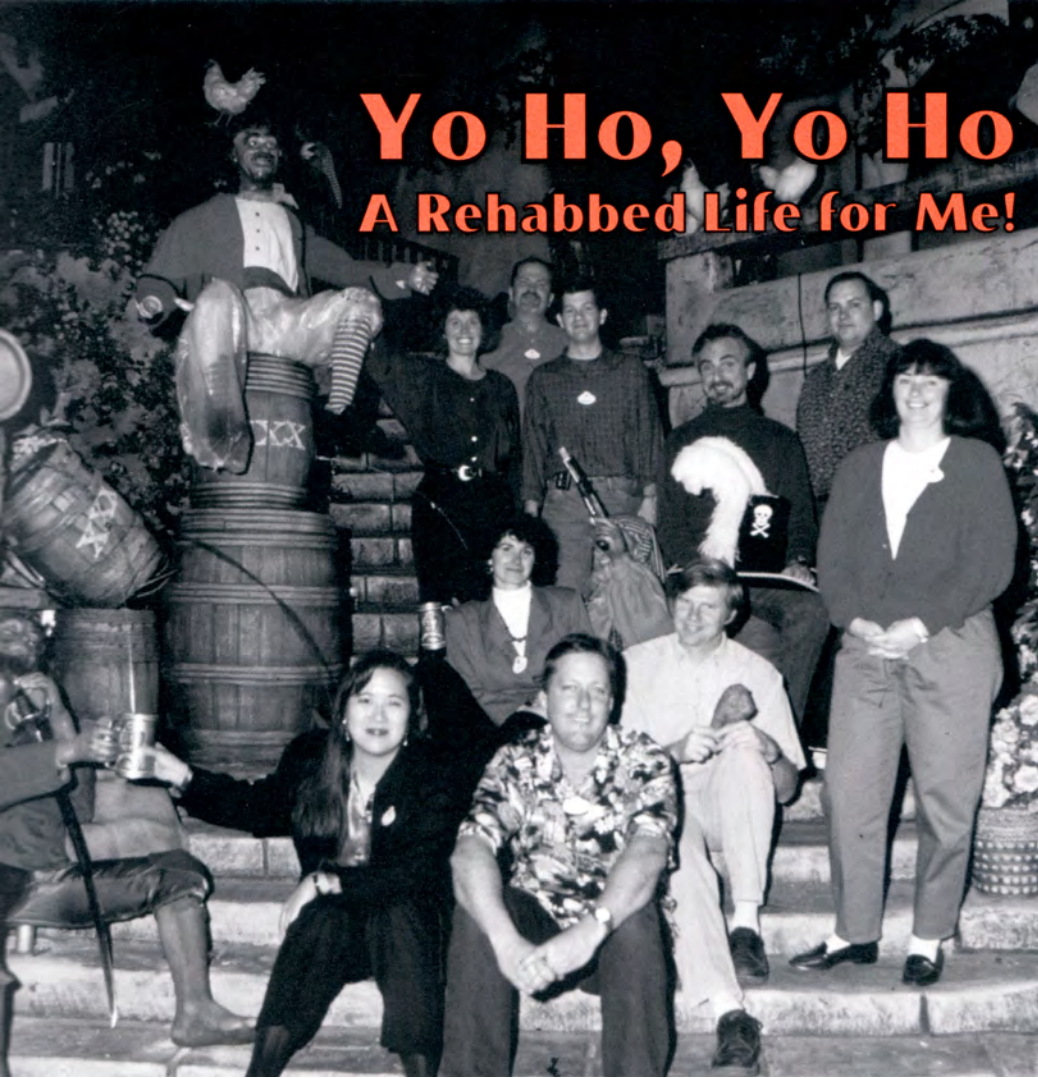


Yo Ho, Yo Ho

A Rehabbed Life for Me!



The Caribbean Crew on the village steps...

Sitting (left to right): Diane [redacted], Barbara [redacted], Bob [redacted], John [redacted]. Standing: Jennifer [redacted], Bill [redacted], Michael [redacted], Richard [redacted], Blake [redacted], Joan [redacted]. Not pictured: Debbie [redacted], Glenn [redacted].

touched,” says Joan [redacted], show program manager. “But it was great.”

So what’s the new attraction really like? “Stow yer weapons,” matey...

First of all, even die-hard fans will find it hard to detect the old from the new. “We did our best to blend it all together,” says art director Bob [redacted]. And, for once, there was time to do it right. They knew Disneyland would be working on the ride control system for nine weeks, giving the Imagineers a crucial six to seven weeks longer than usual to perform their magic.

But the five new human figures (and three new animals) added to the attraction fit right in for another reason: they were salvaged former pirates used, as a cost-saving measure, at the recently-closed *World of Motion* at EPCOT.

While the new blends in, the old reappears. Elements that people haven’t been able to see and hear for a long time stand out now, adds Bob, due to the enhancements throughout the entire attraction—new audio, set painting (those jewels really sparkle!), not to mention better lighting. “The old gels were muddying the lighting,” says project manager Debbie [redacted]. “Now the reds are red instead of brownish orange.” Just check out the wench in the crimson dress.

The now infamous chase scene—center of the controversy and the rehab—didn’t suffer from changing times. It was really the weaker link anyway, according to Bob. The scene is all new, including a man trying in vain to keep his food from hungry horses and, one of Debbie’s favorites, rum barrels realistically spewing liquor. That effect, selected by effects designer Gary [redacted], turned out to be amazingly low-tech. “Just goes to show you that sometimes the most simple technique works the best,” says Debbie.

Pirates of the Caribbean gets a new look—just in time for its 30th anniversary

DON’T WORRY, THEY’RE STILL A BOISTEROUS BUNCH.

In spite of all the media hoopla surrounding the reputed socially motivated changes in *Pirates of the Caribbean* at Disneyland, those looking for a watered-down version of our beloved buccaneers will be disappointed. At the March 7 grand reopening, before a horde of reporters worthy of a presidential visit (President of the United States, that is), Disneyland Resort president Paul [redacted] acknowledged there’s very little that’s PC about the attraction: “In fact, in order to be politically correct we’d probably have to close down the whole ride.”

So fans of battles, boozing, and bawdy yet fun-loving behavior, never fear. It’s in there—just about as Walt envisioned it.

And, in honor of the popular attraction’s 30th anniversary, Marty [redacted] introduced the 19 Imagineers (or their representatives) who originally designed it, calling them “Walt’s buccaneers who made the

pirates sing, swagger and swashbuckle.” The honorees included then art director, now senior vice president John [redacted]. Principal designer Tori [redacted] represented her father, writer and lyricist of the signature theme song, X [redacted]. Marty also called the day a “double-edged pirate sword” since this was the last attraction Walt presided over but, tragically, due to his death in 1966, never saw completed.

At the press conference, Marty noted that the cast of more than 120 human and animal figures is Disney’s “quintessential, signature attraction. We measure everything we do against the *Pirates of the Caribbean*.”

It was a point not lost on the Show Quality Standards group at Disneyland. “We were all a little nervous about working on a ride that had never been





And yes, due to guests' concerns, one pirate pursues a woman solely for a swig of her wine. The other reformed skirt chaser is in hot, hilarious pursuit of two "live" chickens. And the heavy-set woman is after her man, er, *ham*—but, contrary to some media reports, her rolling pin is well in hand.

Other new touches include a completely re-programmed auctioneer whose broad motions are, says Bob, "about as advanced as you can get with *Audio-Animatronics*® technology"; a shadowy scene of pirates fighting during the sea battle (this effect was moved from a less visible spot in the burning city); and the enhancement of the lovable, key-chomping dog's gestures. (He still doesn't give up the goods.)

And what's a story without a great ending? The finale won the consensus vote for favorite new element. "It's rewarding to give a big punch at the end," says Bob.

After relocating the figure on the rum barrel from the finale to the chase scene, the Imagineers filled the spot with a different story line of greedy brigands. "The whole premise here is that there's a cursed treasure that the pirates are looking for but will never find," explains Bob. "Those guys found some of it," he says, pointing to two thieves straining under an impossibly large load of jewels and gold, "but they're too greedy, they'll never succeed." Chances are good the pirates will end up like the cobweb covered skeletons that appear next—forever left underground with gold still gripped in their bony fingers. You could call it the moral of the story. Says Bob, "It's the beginning of the ride coming back around."

And as the story comes full circle, so does the work it took to get it there. "This



The tale of greedy brigands figures prominently in the new finale.

The Way It Used To Be (and almost was)

Could you imagine *walking through Pirates of the Caribbean*?

That was the initial idea: Guests were to venture deep into a dank basement where plans called for an historical perspective on 18th-century buccaneers in the Pirate Wax Museum. It was the late 1950s when New Orleans Square was just a concept and the Swift Chicken Plantation Restaurant—future site of the *Haunted Mansion*—was servin' up homestyle victuals.

The ambitious New Orleans Square construction project, the first new land since Disneyland opened in 1955, began in 1961—and then halted completely for four years. In *Disneyland: The Nickel Tour*, authors (and Imagineers) Bruce [redacted] and David [redacted] call it "the most watched steel in the history of heavy construction," noting how kids would climb the *Swiss Family Treehouse* "just to get a look at the progress (or lack of it)."

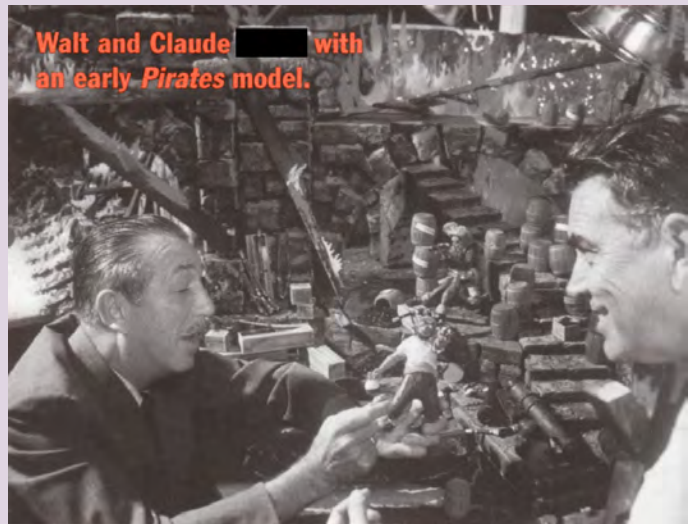
The project didn't come to a standstill for lack of ideas, just change of priorities. It was time for the 1964-65 New York World's Fair and its four new attractions required everyone's attention.

But some things, like a good cabernet, improve with age. New technologies developed during that down time brought the pirates to *Audio-Animatronics*® life and an advanced ride system of swamp-style bateaux developed for *it's a small world* replaced guests' feet as the people-mover of choice.

At a cost of millions, out came the closely watched steel beams and in went the pirates we've come to love. (Well it wasn't that simple, but you get the idea). Oh yes, did you know the original "basement" area wasn't big enough, so they had to tunnel through the earth beneath the Disneyland railroad tracks to get to the new show building?

Who said perfection was easy? Certainly

not the Imagineers who made *Pirates* possible. Those honored at the 30th anniversary ceremony included senior vice president John [redacted] (art direction), X [redacted] (songs and narration), Buddy [redacted] (music), the late Roger [redacted] (*Audio-Animatronics* figures), the late George [redacted] (music), Harriet [redacted] (models), Collin [redacted] (concept sketches and installation),



Walt and Claude [redacted] with an early *Pirates* model.

the late Claude [redacted] (backgrounds, layout and art direction), Marc [redacted] (character design and art direction), Blaine [redacted] (sculpting), the late Yale [redacted] (special effects), Fred [redacted] (models and installation), Bill [redacted] (programming), the late Herb [redacted] (inspirational and atmospheric illustrations of the pirates and New Orleans Square) and the late Leota [redacted] (figure finishing).

You should ask them who's who: It's been written that Imagineers were the models for the original pirates' faces (minus the bucs' hang-over-induced bloodshot eyes, surely).

Three months after the 1966 grand opening of New Orleans Square, the first bateau made its way along the newly-filled, underground *Pirates* river. However, Walt didn't want anyone to see the attraction until it was perfect. He got his wish... but passed away a few months before the first guests experienced his great adventure the following year.

—VIVIEN S. HUGHES

was a huge project effort," says Bob "There was a big team and probably the other half of the credit goes to Disneyland Animation for helping us rebuild the figures."

Just remember, "Dead men tell no tales..." But Imagineers do.

—VIVIEN S. HUGHES

