



Trek fans watch the launch of the rocket bearing James Doohan's ashes.

Scotty's ashes proving difficult to locate after space launch

After nearly a year's wait, the ashes of Jimmy Doohan, who played Scotty in *Star Trek*, were launched into space on Saturday, April 22, from the new spaceport in New Mexico.

But the story doesn't end there. Since the ashes returned to Earth after a sub-orbital flight, they've gone missing.

"The steep canyons and mountain terrain reflects the radio frequency making directional finding almost impossible," explained UP Aerospace President Jerry Larson at Live Science Blogs. He said that rough terrain and high winds in the mountainous region of the White Sands Missile Range where the ashes of more than 200 individuals parachuted down after the launch.

After reports that the booster portion had been tracked and recovered, despite multiple transmitters, the payload has eluded search teams.

StarTrek.com has video of the launch, where Doohan's widow, Wende, pushed the button to ignite the rocket. The site also has video of the memorial that took place to celebrate those whose ashes were launched along with Doohan's, including astronaut Gordon Cooper and writer John Meredyth Lucas.

Hundreds of spectators watched the launch, including family and friends, news reporters and fans.

▲ With a communicator, cloaking device, transporter and phaser already in the works, it was only a matter of time before someone made a breakthrough in replicator technology. Desktop Factory will soon begin selling a "3-D printer" to produce solid objects based on electronic plans.

Desktop Factory will begin selling a three-dimensional printer for about \$5,000 this year, according to *TrekToday.com*. Bill Gross, the chairman of IdeaLab, said that by developing technology that uses a halogen bulb to melt nylon powder, the company expects prices to fall to \$1,000 in four years. "We are Easy-Bake Ovening a 3-D model ... the fundamental engineering allows us to make it for \$300 in materials," he explained.

Cornell University professor Hod Lipson said he believed that in the future, such printers will be common, and that people would be able to reproduce "a toothbrush, a fork, a shoe. Who knows where it will go from here?" The devices are referred to as printers because they assemble objects from specks of material in a manner similar to the way traditional printers create images out of dots of ink or toner.

Desktop Factory's version is expected to be 25 by 20 by 20 inches and weigh less than 100 pounds, making it easy to use in a home office. About 10 printers have been made so far. ■

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It's Hard Times for the May club meeting!

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, May 19, at the Hard Times Cafe in College Park, Maryland.

We'll gather at 5:00 p.m. for our dinner, followed by our club meeting, which will begin no later than 7:00 p.m. We'll talk about upcoming science-fiction conventions, find

out what fellow club members are up to and hear the latest news about *Star Trek* and other sci-fi television shows and movies.

Do you need to get directions in order for you to make it to the May meeting? Then be sure that you download this month's insert, which you can now find in our online Yahoo! Group. ■

CAPTAIN'S LOG: *Trek's* greatest special effect

On May 11, the Visual Effects Society announced the 50 "Most Influential Visual Effects Films of All Time," as determined by a vote of society members, most of whom live in Los Angeles.

As you might expect, many of the movies were science-fiction or fantasy pictures, with 1997's *The Fifth Element* squeaking onto the list in a tie with *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* from 1958.

In fact, many of the winners were older films. Disney's 1937 animated classic *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* worked its way in at number 45, one lower than the high-flying *Superman the Movie* from 1978.

With a little effort, 1966's *Fantastic Voyage* hit number 40, just below *Planet of the Apes*, which monkeyed around in 1968. Tied for 36th place were *The Day the Earth Stood Still* in 1951 and *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (2002).

I was a bit surprised by some of the films on the list. *Aliens* from 1986 just beat out 1964's *Mary Poppins* to come in at number 31, while *The Ten Commandments* (1956) washed away 1953's *The War of the Worlds* for movie number 24.

Raiders of the Lost Ark from 1981 whipped into the 17th spot as *Titanic* (1997) sank to number 18, and *The Wizard of Oz* from 1939 blew in as number 15, just ahead of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* in 16th place.

The top 10 was a sci-fi festival, working up from 1989's *The Abyss* to *Alien* in 1979, then *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* from 1977, 1933's classic *King Kong*, *Tron* from 1982, *Jurassic Park* in 1993, 1999's *The Matrix*, 2001: *A Space Odyssey* from 1968, 1982's *Blade Runner* and at the top of the hill was the 1977 blockbuster, the first *Star Wars*.

Two other *Star Wars* movies, *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and 1983's *Return of the Jedi*, made the list, at number 11 and a tie for number 46, respectively.

As you can imagine, the "Warsies" were exuberant in online message boards over the weekend, and some were quick to point out that another sci-fi franchise didn't even make the list: *Star Trek*.

"You see?" one fan posted eagerly. "*Star Wars* IS better than *Star Trek*, and this definitely proves it!"

Naturally, as the captain of a predomi-

nantly *Star Trek* club, I felt the need to respond. First, though, I agreed with what made the top of the list. Without a doubt, the first *Star Wars* was a huge influence on the movies that came after it.

However, *Star Trek* was originally realized as a TV show in the 1960s, with all the related budget limitations. Nevertheless, as Lorenzo will quickly tell you, *Trek* scored several Emmy Awards for what were ground-breaking special effects at the time.

In fact, creator George Lucas has acknowledged that the cantina bar scene in the first *Star Wars* was greatly influenced by what he'd seen on *Trek* years earlier.

The flow worked the other way after *Star Wars'* incredible box office success. As a result, Paramount ditched its plans to return *Trek* as a syndicated TV series and focused its efforts on what eventually became *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.

Granted, I would have liked to see one of the *Trek* movies on that list, particularly *TMP* with its cinematic scope and spectacular space effects. But does it really bother me that none of the *Trek* flicks made the list? Nope, and here's why.

I've stated often that a hit television series or movie franchise is the result of a combination of a number of elements: the writers, the actors, the directors, the designers, the readiness of the audience to accept the project and, in most instances, a tremendous amount of luck.

Trek has had an incredible convergence of these items, and that's a big reason we're still talking about it more than 40 years after the *Enterprise* was launched on September 8, 1966.

But in my mind, *Star Trek* still remains head and shoulders above other science-fiction franchises due to what I consider a *truly* special effect: the ability to make us think.

Certainly, a lot of TV shows and movies now consider a variety of social and philosophical issues, but that's because *Trek* led the way, first on the small screen, then in the theaters.

This was particularly true in *Classic Trek*, and while some of that was lost during *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine* picked up the torch and took a whole new look at things

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Exploding starships are great, but *Trek's* greatest special effect is the ability to make us think.

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SCIENCE *TREK*: New and notable

A lot has been happening in the universe lately, or rather, we've been seeing it for the first time. This month, I'll give a rundown of the latest news: interplanetary to intergalactic and every rest stop in between.

Many of these you might have seen on the telly, heard about on the radio or even read in one of those old-fashioned newspapers. These are "links" you can look up on the "World Wide Web." It's easy. You'll figure it out. My grandmother did.

This month's column reads like a giant Web Notes, but like the man said, "There's good stuff here, okay?" (I don't know which man said that, but I know two things: He was a man, and he said it.) (Yeah, I know what you're thinking. I'm just stalling for space ... think again ... no, really, think again.)

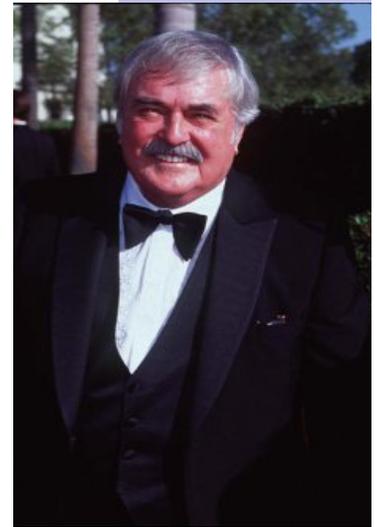
Hold onto your britches, 'cause here we go: ■

Web Notes:

- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18594384/> (Scotty's space ashes still lost on Earth);
- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18601771/> (Hubble's heir on track for 2013 launch);
- <http://spaceflightnow.com/news/n0705/10wildfire/> (Transcontinental wildfire emissions seen from space);
- <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/space/05/07/women.in.space.ap/index.html> (Women would-be astronauts to get honorary doctorates);
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Schirra (Mercury 7 astronaut Wally Schirra dies.);
- http://www.gpsdaily.com/reports/Hyper_Accurate_Clocks_The_Beating_Heart_Of_Galileo_999.html (Hyper-accurate clocks — the beating heart of Galileo);
- <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/space/05/09/mars.probe.reut/index.html> (Probe to dig for past life on Mars);
- <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/space/05/07/mercury.core.reut/index.html> (Mercury's spin reveals molten core);



- <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/space/05/02/jupiter.rings.reut/index.html> (Probe shows Jupiter up close and personal);
- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18557139/> (Old rockets carry bacteria to the stars);
- http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/24apr_hubble4sun.htm (A massive explosion on the sun);
- <http://spaceflightnow.com/news/n0705/06sohoripples/> (Has SOHO ended a 30-year quest for solar ripples?);
- <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/space/05/10/hot.exoplanet.reut/index.html> (Scientists: Gassy planet a real scorcher);
- <http://spaceflightnow.com/news/0705/03hiddenstars/> (Spitzer digs up hidden stars);
- <http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewpr.html?pid=22613> (First map of an extrasolar planet);
- http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Missing_Mass_Found_In_Recycled_Dwarf_Galaxies_999.html (Missing mass found in recycled dwarf galaxies);
- <http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewpr.html?pid=22625> (A galactic fossil — star is found to be 13.2 billion years old);
- <http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewpr.html?pid=22602> (X-rays provide a new way to investigate exploding stars);
- <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/space/05/07/supernova/index.html> (Giant exploding star outshines previous supernovas);
- <http://www.universetoday.com/2007/05/10/when-our-galaxy-smashes-into-andromeda-what-happens-to-the-sun/> (When our galaxy smashes into Andromeda, what happens to the sun?); and
- <http://www.universetoday.com/2007/05/10/maximizing-survival-time-inside-the-event-horizon-of-a-black-hole/> (Maximizing survival time inside the event horizon of a black hole.)
Second Officer Phil Margolies



Will Doohan's ashes be sold on eBay?

ART CREDITS:
startrek.com 1, 2, 3, 6
images.google.com 4
dccomics.com 5
scifi.com Insert front
W&R Graphics Insert back

REFLECTIONS: “Hobbes, Bobby Hobbes” — 2

The American model of a secret agent is one of a man (Americans almost NEVER think of a woman secret agent!) who is suave, debonair, cool under pressure, immaculately dressed and strikingly handsome.

There was a television show on UPN in early 1999 called *Secret Agent Man* (Yes, it was a sequel to the '60's classic starring Patrick McGoochan), their contribution to TV's spy mythology. The main character, Mister Monk, was played by Costas Mandylor (of *Picket Fences* fame), also starred Paul Guilfoyle, Brass from *CSI*), and was supposed to be the epitome of the espionage agent.

It wasn't a terrible show, but Monk came off as a tad on the prissy side, like he couldn't make up his mind whether he wanted to be John Steed, Sean Connery or Julio Iglesias.

Which brings me to Bobby Hobbes.

Occasionally disheveled, bald, immature (only with Fawlkes) and somewhat insecure, Bobby Hobbes at first glance seemed to be the exact opposite of America's perception of what a spy was supposed to look like.

“I'm not a pretty boy,” Paul Ben-Victor told *Starlog* magazine, “so I don't get those leading man roles where the toughest thing I

have to do is get the girl. I've only died horrible deaths. I've had pencils pushed into my head, been shot, had my stomach eaten out (as Doctor Monte on *The X-Files*) and been tossed off a roof. Which is why *The Invisible Man* is such a gas. It's a pleasure not to die.”

You only had to listen to Bobby Hobbes' constant bragging about what he was capable of to realize that this was a man who perceived himself as a super spy. Then you witnessed him complaining about the size of his paycheck to further realize that he was the only person who rated his abilities so high.

Obviously, there was some ability to the man, since he'd worked for the CIA, the FBI, the NSA, the CDC, pretty much every set of initials with the exception of the MOUSE. These agencies would not have given him a second look if he didn't have something going for him. Then again, he'd also been fired from all of those agencies, which may further explain his years of therapy.

Bobby Hobbes was a good agent, which in itself played against type. In most shows, a person with Paul Ben-Victor's appearance would have been written as somewhat of a buffoon, more akin to Maxwell Smart than James Bond, adhering to that old Hollywood adage of judging a book by its cover.

Fortunately, the producers strove for something different and wrote against type, allowing Bobby Hobbes to be neurotic, insecure and childish, but still a resourceful government agent. And Bobby Hobbes was genuinely funny! That came from the story and the characters and not some dumb, outlandish and totally implausible situation the characters found themselves in, which seems to be the staple of humor in television today (see last month's rant).

Even more impressive was the chemistry between all of the characters, but especially Fawlkes and Hobbes. These guys were hilarious together, and their friendship seemed genuine and sincere. It was the most satisfying friendship since Bashir and O'Brien on *DS9*.

This theme was picked up on very early into the show by the writers, and they expounded on it as the seasons went on. It was sheer poetry as attempted by many but accomplished by few.

Next month: The razzle-dazzle wrap-up. ■
Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard



Paul Ben-Victor, who played Bobby Hobbes on *The Invisible Man*.

WAYNE'S WORLDS: Images of Batman — 3

Last time, Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* had rocked the comics industry and led to a hit feature film.

During the early '90s, I used to comb the Internet looking for any news on *Star Trek* for the COMSTAR. I'd print every credible item I could find about the franchise in the newsletter. Of course, while I searched for *Trek* news, I'd look up other topics of interest, including Batman.

After the *Batman* movie had earned a huge take, word came across the web that Fox was going to air a new animated series for the Caped Crusader.

As a long-time Batman fan, I've seen pretty much every animated show based on the character. And it hasn't been pretty.

The popularity of the ABC television show, which began in 1966, had spawned a superhero revolution in animation, particularly on Saturday mornings.

CBS brought in Filmation to bring the other member of the World's Finest team, Superman, to animated life. Not long after that, Aquaman joined him.

After *Batman* was cancelled in 1969, CBS added the Dark Knight to the Saturday morning line-up to air with Superman. Like the other Filmation shows, the cartoon had some aspects I really didn't like.

Chief among them was the endless recycling of certain animated sequences. When Batman and Robin talked, their heads turned with the same movements each time. When Batman and Robin would swing on their Bat-ropes, it was the same animation time and again. The stories greatly resembled the ABC show, kind of silly, including the Joker being a kooky *maitre d* who was not very dangerous.

Even the *Batman* craze had to end, and a few years later, the Filmation shows were off the air.

Batman made a few other appearances in cartoons, including a television movie based on the popular kids' show, *Scooby Doo*. Maybe it's because I didn't like that series, but I found that crossover to be lackluster.

In 1973, the *Super Friends* began. This cartoon featured the "big guns" of the Justice League, the main superhero team in DC Comics. It had Batman and Robin, Superman, Aquaman and Wonder Woman. From the start, I had problems with this show. First

off, just the title bothered me. *Super Friends* sounds so condescending compared to Justice League to me. But at that time, cartoons existed to be non-violent (and some would say, non-interesting).

The only season I liked was the last one, subtitled *Galactic Guardians*. Adult stories, albeit with crappy animation, but they were interesting. And it was nice to hear Adam West again provide the Dark Knight's voice. In one, for example, Batman and Wonder Woman actually went back to Crime Alley to discuss the Caped Crusader's origin. Pretty scary stuff compared to the previous seasons. The best episode was "The Death of Superman," in which Firestorm believes he's caused the death of the Man of Steel. (Batman did have a hand in the solution to that one.)

Which brings us back to Fox's new animated show.

I guess my biggest fear is that Batman will always be seen in terms of the 1960s ABC show. While I admit I like West's voicing of the Caped Crusader, the silly stories just turn me off. So, the slightest hint of "silly" in the mix can freak me out.

I did some research on the show, and found that the guy in charge, someone named Bruce Timm, last worked on *Tiny Toon Adventures*, specifically aimed at the young'uns. I was distraught. *Anything* but that!

But I heard that DC Comics Editor Bob Greenberger was visiting *Star Trek* conventions, showing the first episode of the Fox series. I attended a *Trek* con in Rockville, Maryland, specifically to see it.

I went into the assigned room and sat in the front row as Greenberger prepared to show the episode. Before he could start, a guy walked into the room, saying, "I don't know why we're wasting our time! Cartoons based on comic book characters ALWAYS SUCK!" Greenberger smiled and asked the guy to take a seat. He sat in the back, and the episode began.

Without the title sequence, we saw "On Leather Wings," in which Batman fought Man-Bat, a recent addition to the Dark Knight's rogues gallery. That bad guy took a chemical to become a huge bat with very little "man." The characters were interesting, the art stylish and Batman was dragged through the city, even ending up with blood on his face. Wow!

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Batman may have been smart to stand in the back of a picture of the *Super Friends*.

COMING EVENTS

MAY

May 19 It “May” be time for the next monthly club meeting! We’ll gather at the Hard Times Cafe in College Park, Maryland. We’ll meet at 5 p.m. for dinner, then the meeting will begin no later than 7 p.m. For directions, check out the insert in our Yahoo! group!

CAPTAIN’S LOG: *Trek’s* greatest effect ... concluded

Continued from page 2
from an updated perspective. That continued during the later years of *Voyager* and the last seasons of *Enterprise*.

That’s not to put down any of the terrific visual FX we’ve been treated to over the years on *Trek*, but what comes first in the universe Gene Roddenberry created is the story.

Let me illustrate this point by restating my feelings on the very first *DS9* episode, “Emissary.” I was certainly dazzled by the starship battle at Wolf 359, the space station, the wormhole and the alien races we encountered during that premier.

But the part of the show I’ve carried with me ever since was that in trying to teach the

wormhole aliens about linear time, Sisko arrived at a life-changing moment when he realized that he had not moved on from his wife’s death at the hands of the Borg.

Those earlier elements made that program great science-fiction, but the teacher becoming the student made it great *Star Trek*.

Maybe that won’t ever make a list of great visual effects, but it’s right up there with the death of Spock in *The Wrath of Khan* and many other *Trek* moments that have made a lasting impression on me.

As long as *Star Trek* continues to make us think, I’m convinced our favorite sci-fi franchise will live long and prosper! ■

Captain Randy Hall

WAYNE’S WORLDS: Images of Batman — 3 ... continued

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When it was finished, Greenberger asked, “What do you think?” We all replied, “That was great! Terrific!”

Greenberger then specifically asked the

guy in the back what he thought.

A meek voice answered, “That didn’t suck.”

Next time: Fox begins *Batman: The Animated Series* by screwing the fans. ■

Chief of Security Wayne Hall

PHASERS ON FUN: THE TREK LIFE



Neither starships nor space stations are *Trek's* greatest special effect.