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Going Head to Head

with Russ Raney & Jim Phillips

The talent behind our cover image of “The King” interviewed by Dave Ballard

Take a look through our back issues and you will soon notice that there is something about POTA and modelmaking that goes together like Comic books and Jack Kirby.

In the past we’ve briefly covered how to build and paint these wonderful kits but let’s now take one step backwards and speak to the people that actually conceive of, sculpt, cast and market them.

It is with great pleasure that Simian Scrolls presents an audience with Russ Raney of Model Prisoners and Jim Phillips of Independence Productions - two of the nicest and most talented guys in the biz... and they’re ape fans too!

Perhaps you could tell us a little about yourselves... Who are Model prisoners?

R: I started Model Prisoners after attending shows and finding myself being too financially challenged to buy much! So I found as many discounted and discontinued kits as I could and peddled them at shows to raise the cash to buy the kits I wanted for myself!

And Independence Productions?

J: Independence Productions is a company that I started back in 1998. I had been doing sculpts for other companies and eventually decided why not run my own? All of the sculpts are done by myself and I market the resultant kits as well.

If you didn’t need to work for a living what would you be doing with yourselves?

R: I’d probably be buying more kits! Or maybe building some of the over 200 hundred I already have in my collection!

J: A pretty good question and one that I have pondered many times before. I am lucky in that I like my job - but a job is a job isn’t it? - I suppose if I didn’t have to pay any bills or if I won a major lottery I would like to run a stripper joint... No, I’m just kidding. I love wildlife, so maybe something along the lines of preservation?

The Escape-O-Nauts - The King - Statue of Liberty diorama - POTA Nameplate... This is a long shot but I’m guessing that at least one of you is a POTA fan? So fess up, which one and why?

R: Actually the Liberty (though I tried to buy it) isn’t mine, nor is the nameplate! They went well as companion pieces with our other kits! But to answer the question, we are BOTH fans! My mother took me along with my brothers and sisters to a dusty to dawn show at the drive-in in the 70’s. We watched all five movies back to back to back... I’ve been hooked ever since!

J: Yeah, we’re both "apes" fans...not sure which one is more so...but I suppose with me an amazing impression was made on me as a child because Planet Of The Apes was my very first movie going experience (I’m giving away my age here!) Also, I was fascinated with the television series in the mid-seven ties. I really feel that some of the most iconic science fiction images occur within the apes films. For the most part these films are very well scripted and acted. I am an Apes fan for sure, but also am a fan of many other avenues of science fiction, horror, etc.

Did you feel POTA had been somewhat neglected in the kit market?

J: I suppose that the series had been a little neglected and this is what spurred Russ and I to make our first venture together along the lines of something from the Apes films.

R: The only kits produced to that point had a really poor likeness - if any resemblance at all - to the actual characters and even these were just a handful.

I understand that my version of “The King” is actually a re-release? How, if at all, does it differ from the original?

J: Probably better quality (obligatory laughter here)! Russ had a devil of a time getting decent castings from the original manufacturer, and as hard as he tried the said manufacturer (who will remain name less) wasn’t forthcoming. To his credit Russ took a little bit of a loss and sought out a different manufacturer for his line of kits, and this re-release is the result.

R: The original design had the same figure you have but there was also a Deluxe limited Edition featuring an auction scene, sand textured ground work, tapered pillar with white metal neck shackles, real metal chain and mounting eyelets. Also a resin 70’s M-16 with a strip of brass and eyelets for the strap! Finally there was a brass engraved numbered plate on the back from 001 - 050 and corresponding certificates signed by Jim!

How do you choose a subject? How do you get the balance right between what you would like and what might sell?

R: I personally will not do a kit just because it will sell! I remember why I got into the business in the first place was to get kits I wanted! And if no one is making a subject I want then I’ll try to get it produced! Basically if I wouldn’t buy it I’m not going to go through all the crap it takes to produce it! This is probably not the healthiest business attitude to have but if I like it and I sell just a couple then at least I got one!

J: I typically make the first criteria for my next kit to be something that I really want that nobody else is making. Luckily this has panned out in the sales department as well...but it is definitely treading a fine line determining what is marketable as well as...
sparkling my interest. I’ve discovered that movie-oriented pieces seem to be the really marketable items, mostly I suppose due to the fact that movies reach the greatest levels of exposure to the public.

So how does it work? Does Jim say “Russ, I’ve sculpted a kit based on POTRA you wanna market it?” Or does Russ say, “Jim, I need a kit based on POTRA will you sculpt one for me?.”

A: In the case of the KING Jim one day brought me a roughed out head he wanted to show me! It was Roddy as an ape! He wanted to do an ape kit and suggested I produce it! I then explained I’d never produced a kit before! To cut a long story short, his argument was, “Who better to do justice to the subject than two fans who happened to live in the same town?” TADAH! That project was a complete collaboration! - The conversation went something like this “Caesar in the jump suit, yeah!” “What scene?” “Running with M-16?” “How ‘bout the auction?” It basically developed from there.

J: With the “King” kit I approached Russ sometime in Fall of ’97 with a quick “sketch” bust done in clay which depicted Cornelius from the original POTR (I believe Russ still has this sketch). I remember it pretty fondly as I used the photo of Corny from the box photo which is on the Hasbro 12” figure released sometime in ’97. Russ seemed gung-ho to go for a full figure, so we started to plan something in kit form. We always had it in mind to do a representation of something that had not been done in the Apes icons before, so Caesar quickly came to mind (with the knowledge that we would also be tackling the Escapeonauts at some point). We’ve been friends for quite a long time so this process is quite enjoyable for me and in my opinion nobody works harder than Russ does in the entire package approach to his kit releases. He’s very professional about the whole thing, and I’ve never felt that I had to guess as to what he’s wanting in a piece. Also, I hope that the kit buyer stops at a second and looks at the whole approach that Russ encompasses the kits in: everything from the box art to the instructions is carefully considered by him. I feel he does my sculptures a great service.

J: I have to say I’m really impressed by the way you’ve captured Caesar’s likeness on “The King”. You can actually see Roddy McDowall below the surface. What kind of reference material did you use?

A: Thank you very much for the compliment! I use every type of reference material I can find and with the advent of DVD being able to print directly from a film with high resolution has been invaluable. This is another area that Russ excels in...I get top-notch reference material from him when we’re working on a piece together. Also, I concentrate as much as possible on the little discrepancies of the actual appliances that the individual actor was fitted with; this is especially apparent when I was working on the three likenesses for the Escapeonauts (Corny, Ziro, and Milo). I knew that if I didn’t capture the appliance likeness of Roddy, Kim Hunter and Sai Mineo then the kit would fall on its ears.

J: How interested in the subject do you have to be in order to turn out a good job?

A: VERY. At this point I have never taken on a job that I wasn’t interested in. Since I don’t have to do sculpting for a living it’s a convenience I am able to enjoy.

J: Does one of you have a soft spot for Chimpanzee characters? I’ve always been disappointed there’s never been a really good Orangutan kit released.

A: Not so much a soft spot as a matter of thinking what kits would have the most powerful impact. But, I’ve always thought the John Huston Orang would be a kick to make!

A: If Simian Scrolls were to conduct a poll to discover which Ape related character we’d most like to see produced in kit form would you be interested in our results? (provided the winner wasn’t ‘Naked, Nubile Novels’)

J: I suppose you’re right in that the big ol’ green jump suit is a whole lotto green! But I also think that the essence of the King Kit is that powerful speech scene towards the end of the film from where the kit derived. Oddly enough, I primarily remember fire when thinking of that scene.

A: Are the kits still available?

A: The KING is still available - The Escapeonauts are sold out!

J: So how many are out there in total?

A: We produced about thirty ‘Escapes’.

J: And that’s... no more... Ever?

A: If I can get this kit produced more reasonably, it will be back! But now the production costs and casting molding issues make it very difficult!

J: How did it feel seeing “The King” grace the cover of Amazing Figure Modeller?

A: In a word, ECSTRITIC. You must remember that Russ and I are first and foremost fans and kitbuilders ourselves. A year earlier when the Escapeonauts appeared on the cover of Kitbuilders magazine we were thrilled beyond belief. Then when I heard that they were considering the Caesar kit for AFM’s cover, I tried to keep a “poker face” about the whole situation, trying not
to set myself up for a fall. Then one momentous night I got this e-mail with an attachment from David Fisher, the editor of RAM, and appearing on my computer screen is this glorious full blown cover featuring the King. What an honour and a surprise!!

When I first saw "The Escape-o-nauts" I did wonder if perhaps you'd shot yourselves in the foot. Basically what we have is three very similar figures - I'm very glad the kit sold out for you but did you ever have doubts - did you ever perhaps consider releasing them as separate figures or a multi- pose kit with a choice of heads?

R: The original concept was to make three separate kits. Then offer a special full set price. But I saw getting stuck with a bunch of the lesser known M-lo parts! The Male bodies are the same. Zira and Cornelius have the same arms. Zira is 1/2 shorter and slightly different stances. All the helmets are the same! It would have been cheaper for me to make one body, two sets of arms and all three heads in one box! But the head moulds would have to be re-done three times as often as all the other parts and they already wear out faster!

J: Russ and actually decided very early on that the Escaponoauts would be one of our favourite pieces and that we would definitely do it (we briefly considered it being our first release). In all actuality, the kit is based on a definitive photo from the filming, and the figs are sculpted as they appear in the photo. I too am glad that they sold out...it can be a dice roll sometimes!

Are there any other POTR related projects on the table?

J: I'll take the "5th amendment" on this question... maybe a surprise is in store?

Can you give us a sneak peak then on what we can expect form you in future?

R: Currently there's no Monkey business in the works! But who knows, that, like everything else could change!

J: I'm currently working on a 1/6 Panzercrop from the movie Straw Dog and will follow that up with a Jonathan Frid version of Barnebas Collins in 1/6 scale and then perhaps a nice little surprise.

What is your ultimate ambition from a kit producing point of view?

R: The goal for my company is to be able to improve the quality of our products! Keep new ideas coming! Expand the hobby to more mainstream acceptance and markets! And to have fun doing it!

J: From my perspective, that the kit is popular enough to support the business enough to bankroll the next project. The compliments and accolades are nice, but if the kit doesn't sell then all of that other stuff won't pay the bills to get the next new piece made.

And finally that old chestnut... Do you have any tips or advice for budding model makers? (We have two resident geniuses who create their own models from scratch).

R: If you want to make a business out of your hobby, be prepared! Your gonna build less and sell less! If you sculpt learn how to cast! if you cast learn how to market! The more you do yourself the less you have to depend on others and the happier you'll eventually be! Oh and don't quit your day job! You ain't gonna get rich doing this!

J: As a sculptor, I can't emphasize enough the study of good ol' anatomy. It's the basis for everything; and also to soak up like a sponge everything you can learn about technique, materials, etc.

As a producer, it's to stay true to yourself and to treat the customer as truly the individual who let's the model-maker exist in the first place. Also, really try to have a little fun with this whole carnivale of kit production and the hobby overall...I've met the greatest people, and have made a lot of friends through this wonderful venture!
Michael Whitty, an Apes fan of long standing, has undertaken the monumental task of starting a new International Planet of the Apes Fan Club. You may well ask why?. The reason is purely Ape-tristic.

The PotA 2001 film has created new fans and rekindled nostalgic interest in the original franchise for us older fans, but due to our diversity and the lack of an over-arching authority, no one knows how many fans there are...or how to reach them. And it’s important to do so, if we want to have a voice in Fox’s decision-making regarding the future of the Apes franchise.

Michael has therefore taken it upon himself to try his hand at finally, once and for all, organising the rag-tag legions out there into one group, so that Fox will have no doubt of our numbers - or the strength of our buying power.

The new club is still very much in the early, formative stages, but it is hoped that a special Fan Club Kit and regular newsletter will become part of the package. Other projects are planned or already well underway - including the club’s first ever project, “Beware the Beast” an all-new comic strip based upon ‘classic’ apes.

Michael has already contacted Fox’s Retail arm to see what temptations they might be willing to provide. He says, ‘[Fox] have...assured me that a “Fan Club” might be able to buy a “Special License” to produce limited copies of the alternate Conquest or Battle [deleted scenes/extended version] as a “Fan Club Exclusive” (yet to determine COST). The Fan Club might also get a limited license for toys (e.g. do a “Fan Club Exclusive” Medicom, much as the Star Wars Fan Club does limited action figures).’

Of course, all of this requires members! As of right now, Michael is taking the names and addresses of those who are interested in joining. Membership is free and with it comes the opportunity to help shape the future of Apes. To sign up, e-mail your name and postal address to either:

Michael at: whitty@cyberone.com.au.
Or
Simian Scrolls at: mail@mediationhouse.com

Alternatively you can write to Simian Scrolls and we will ensure your information is passed along.
The Sacred Scrolls suggest that no place on Earth, however remote, is ever truly silent. For always, there is the sound of Nature. Be it in the soothing measure of raindrops falling upon the earth or in the relentless fury of waves crashing against a shore.

Everything makes a sound.

But the Forbidden Zone stands apart from this rule — the Forbidden Zone is not of Nature.

For centuries, it has stood silent for nothing lives upon its surface, not even the wind. It wasn’t always this way. The Sacred Scrolls suggest that the Forbidden Zone was once a paradise — Until Man made a desolate.

After nearly two thousand years of isolation things have begun to change. Living things at last venture back into this desolate place. Witness then the cry of the leopard, the jangle of the monkey, the snorts of the horse, the dull trud of hooves on sand and perhaps, most startling of all... Conversation.

"Damn, it’s getting even hotter. I swear it is," grumbled Damien, drooling a hairy paw across his chest, sweaty brow. He reached down, grabbed his water pouch and raised it to his ear. He shook it, changed his mind and replaced it most carefully.

"You should put your tunic back on," suggested Joshuo, his friend and companion. "You’re gonna burn."

Damien grinned, his fangs contrasting a startling white against his jet black skin. "Nah, I’m too damn hairy."

Both riders were gorillas and both were soldiers of the Ape Firm. Although of equal rank Damien had somehow managed to assume command. He put this down to his natural possession of leadership skills but in truth it was only because the more eaguying Joshuo had allowed him to. He was currently riding bare chested due to the excessive heat of the sun. A few hours earlier it had been almost pleasant but then it had been a damn sight cooler too.

The more disciplined Joshuo sweated profusely in his heavy leather coat but didn’t seem to be overly uncomfortable. He was a little smaller than Damien and sometimes, in bright sunlight, his hair betrayed a reddish tinge that had prompted many jokes about his being descended from orang-utans.

"Kindly remind me," he pleaded. "Three days in this accursed heat seems to have somewhat scrunched my sense of duty... Just what are we doing so far from home again?"

Damien chuckled, Joshuo’s unconvincing imitation of Dr. Zoius and his pompous way with words made it sound like the high and mighty Orang-utan rode right beside him. "We’re looking," he said simply. "Find, what is there in this forsaken place that motivates two fine fellows such as you and I to look for anything?"

Damien reined in his horse to a halt and threw a look of irritation toward his partner.

"Six missing comrades... including our old classmate, Bartholomew... I wish to find them," he answered in his own voice.

"Right then, grumbled Damien. "General Ursus wishes it - Haau's that for motivation?"

That silenced Joshuo. General Ursus wishes it. Nothing more need be said. Unsuspectingly he reminded himself that he and Damien were actually the fourth pair of scouts to be sent into the Zone. The previous three expeditions had all failed to return, fuelling rumours that it was indeed inhabited by vengeful ghosts and demons.

But these were urgent times. The Ape population was growing swiftly, faster than could be safely provided for. Larger corn fields had been planted, more fruit trees had been sown but nine times out of ten the vermin ruined them all.

The solution was the introduction of two joint projects. One, the systematic extermination of the parasitic humans and two, the expansion of the boundaries of Ape territories. On one side they were surrounded by the sea, not much hope of expansion there, but on the other... The Forbidden Zone.

It had been rumoured for centuries that a bountiful jungle lay on the other side of the Zone and now for the first time in Ape history permission had finally been granted to discover if these rumours might be true.

Damien glanced at the Sun, it’s position in the sky told him they were approaching the end of their third day. He then scanned the horizon finding no break in the monotonous, desolate landscape. It looked like they were in for another night under the open sky, shivering within their blankets.

"We better start looking for somewhere to camp," he informed Joshuo who had fallen silent. Roused from his musings Joshuo studied their surroundings. "How about we make for those caves, yonder?" He suggested pointing ahead.

Damien turned. Sure enough some rocky outcrops lay ahead. Perhaps on hillsides, maybe two, it was so hard to tell in this barren place. He shook his shaggy head wondering why he’d missed them in the first place. Joshuo may have been right, perhaps he had been out in the sun too long.

When night fell upon the Forbidden Zone it fell swiftly. Joshuo and Damien lit torches to light their way for a few yards in all directions. Occasionally a soundless flash of lightning would, for a fraction of a second, light up all around.

"We must have wandered somehow," insisted Joshuo. "Or we’d be there already."

Damien grunted, he didn’t think they’d strayed too far but agreed that they should have reached the caves hours ago. Instead only harsh landscapes greeted them in whatever direction they dared to look.

"We could be right on top of them, but in this light we’d never know," he said, convincing not even himself. "Okay, that’s it for tonight." He dismounted from his horse and began to unpack his bedroll.

Joshuo groaned, he’d been looking forward to the relative shelter the caves would have offered from the bitter cold. Reluctantly, he too dismounted and methodically made camp while Damien saw to the horses. All day he’d been collecting sparse twigs and dry bush and now had enough for a reasonable sized, cooking fire.

He breasted some tea mobs from the leaves of a plant that grew on the borders of Ape City, while Damien selected ration from their dwindling supply. The two Apes dined in silence, the knowledge that their mission looked to be no more successful than the others had dulled their spirits.

"What was that?" asked Joshuo suddenly. Damien stopped chewing and listened. "What was that?" he asked at length, hearing nothing. "Shhh! Listen," whispered Joshuo. Damien sniffed the mouthful and held his breath, listening carefully.

"There! said Joshuo urgently. "Did you hear it that time?"

Damien stood up turning his head this way and that. "Sound like someone calling for help."

"One of the other scouts?" Suggested Joshuo excitedly.

"Who else can it be?" Joshuo thought he could tell from which direction the cries for help were coming from but each time he heard them again he changed his mind. "Shall I answer them?" he asked.

Damien scratched his beard. A single good reason as to why they shouldn’t elude him but his instincts told him to remain silent. "We’ll never find them at night," he stated, changing the subject. "We’ll search at first light."

The Apes continued to listen but the cries had stopped.

Damien did not recall at which point he had fallen asleep but Joshuo was now shaming him abruptly urgently.
Joshua regained his balance and froze. Ahead of them, fifty or sixty yards away was a rabbit. He heard Domien click off the safety of his pistol and watched him take aim.

The majority of Apes were vegetationals although some, on occasion, chose to supplement their diet with meat, especially since the food crisis. Joshua, who, until now had limited himself to only chicken found his mouth watering at the size of the skinny and mangy looking animal. He licked his lips in anticipation of an easy meal.

Domien’s pistol cracked, echoing across the wasteland. The rabbit looked over its shoulder at them with idle curiosity, unconcerned.

“You missed!” yelled Joshua.

Domien stared at the pistol in incredulity and pointed it again. He fired.

A puff of dust flew up six feet to the left of the rabbit who this time decided to run.

“What’s the matter with you?” exclaimed Joshua. “Give me the damn gun!” He snatched the pistol from the stunned Domien’s fingers and trained it on the receding rabbit. He closed one eye, aimed, took a deep breath and squeezed the trigger. The pistol bucked in his hand and the rabbit sped on.

“Seems” snapped Domien. “It’s not me, it’s the untrained gun!” Joshua examined the pistol. It looked okay. He raised it again and this time emptied the entire clip at the receding rabbit.

Night had descended and the two apes were wrapped up, almost warm in their bedrolls, without the comfort of a fire. The rabbit had escaped—despite having twelve rounds fired in its direction. Each and every one had somehow missed. After ditching the obviously faulty firearm they were left with one pistol and twelve rounds, between them.

By the time it grew too dark to continue they had still not yet reached the water. Domien suggested that maybe they should travel at night when it was cooler but with nothing to guide them in the darkness they were forced to stick with daylight hours. Neither spoke much. A sense of foreboding had now settled over them. Too much seemed to be going wrong and both were certain they were now merely echoing the footsteps of the previous doomed missions.

They both jerked, startled out of their dark broodings as an eerie cry for help floated across the night.

“Here we go again,” grumbled Domien, kicking off his blankets and rising to his feet. “WHERE ARE YOU?” He shouted into the night. Both apes listened carefully but there was no answer. Suddenly a new sound caught their attention.

“The horses!” gasped Joshua. He stood up and lit a torch peering this way and that. “Where are they? Do you see them?” He span round as the sound of hooves came clearly from behind but he could see nothing.

“Stand still – Be quiet!” snapped Domien. There was a commotion in the darkness off to their left. “Over there!” shouted Joshua. “I saw one!”

“Joshua wait!” Domien called urgently as he watched his partner run to retrieve the lost horse. Pulling the one remaining pistol from the holster at his hip he advanced more warily, looking left and right but already had lost sight of his partner.

“Joshua?” he called. Receiving no answer he pointed his pistol at the sky and fired a single shot.

“Joshua!”

A sound of footsteps came from behind and he whirled around training the gun in that direction. His finger tightened on the trigger. “Joshua?” He asked, squatting at a vogue shapeless form at the edge of the camp. The figure took another step forward into the small circle of light thrown by the torch and Domien could see it wasn’t his partner.

“Joshua!”
"Bartholomew?" He exclaimed, recognising his old friend from Boot camp and leader of the previous expedition.

"This is no place for Apes," said Bartholomew. "You shouldn't have come." He raised his hand and dug his fingers into the flesh above his left brow. He pulled down, peeling off his face the way that Damien had often torn the scalp from a human and then held it out for him to see.

Damien's mouth worked silently. He gazed in horror at the dripping red flaps of skin held out for his inspection. He looked up at his old friend, now unrecognisable. Tendons, muscles and veins all throbbed, pulsing wildly. Bartholomew's eyes, brilliant white against the dark red and blues of his innards stared madly. Blood oozed and trickled into his hairy neck.

Damien screamed and back pedalled furiously, turning mid flight to run blindly into the darkness.

The Forbidden Zone settled once more into a blanket of silence.

Morning came and Damien was alone.

Mercifully there was no sign of Bartholomew with his terrible face, something for which Damien was truly grateful - Unfortunately Joshua was gone too.

**Vanished. Just like the horses.**

On the edge of exhaustion, Damien continued to march. He hadn't been able to find his way back to the camp they had made the night before and without the telescope was no longer sure in which direction he forced himself. He tipped his container to his mouth then cast it over his shoulder, empty. He had covered less than a quarter of the distance he had travelled the day before. The far off body of water still twinkled, miles away but Damien knew that he could never reach it.

He was dying.

He pulled off his leather tunic and purple shirt, casting them aside without a thought. General Ursus would bawl him out should he ever discover what he'd done but he doubted that day would ever come.

He had hoped he might see the rabbit today, it would quite literally save his life. He had even rehearsed a story for his comrades, for when he would return to Apes City, a hero.

"A rabbit saved my life once," he would tell his crowd of worshippers, gathered to buy him ice cold drinks.

"How? They would demand as one. "I dined upon it."

Then they would cheer and laugh and lift Damien high on their shoulders and march him through the streets of Apes City.

Damien sank to his knees in the burning dust of the Forbidden Zone. "I dined upon it." he whispered and then pitched forward onto his face.

*When he awoke, all was dark. He blinked, not sure at first if his eyes were really open but by waving his hand before them he could tell they were. He sat up slowly, surprised to find that he was still alive."

A voice called for help somewhere in the distance. Damien smiled and chuckled recognising it as Joshua's.

He tried to shout but his voice was just a croaked harsh whisper. He reached into his bandooleer and found a match, struck it on his belt and held it high. After tonight the matches would be gone. He shrugged - after tonight he doubted that it would matter. He held the match above his head and peered into the night. "I'm over here," he called, still weak but at least audible. He decided he would lay back down and have a little nap. He closed his eyes and felt himself drifting away.

Am I falling asleep - or dying? he wondered, knowing the latter to be true.
began to laugh as he potted out the tiny fire. "Whatever's so amusing?"

"Mummy's on fire... Remember? you said I'd burn if I took off my shirt."

Joshua looked confused then changed the subject. "How many others of you... our... kind, are here?"

"I don't understand why your friend was asking so many stupid questions."

"Just me and you... At least until Ursus sends others looking for us."

"Is that likely?"

"I don't know. Joshua's mouth wasn't moving when he spoke... Wasn't that amazing? It was funny how things like that didn't bother you when you were on the brink of death. A sound-like the whine of a predatory insect filled Domains' head, perhaps the sight of the faceless Bartholomeu had driven him mad?... Yes that sounded likely.

"I said, is that likely?" Joshua asked again.

"Likely? No, yes I think it is." answered Damien, unsure as to which question he was answering.

A look of concern crossed Joshua's face and his uniform wavered, magically transforming into strange robes.

"How did you do that?" asked Damien.

Joshua smiled. "Mere illusion," he explained. "Just like the lake, the caves, the horses... Like all our weapons... mere illusion."

"Did you do that?" asked Damien.

Joshua nodded, pretending to understand. "The rabbit?" he asked. "I couldn't hit it. My aim was off!"

"Your aim was true," Joshua reassured him. "The rabbit was never there to begin with. Nothing can live upon the surface." Joshua looked down upon Damien meaningfully. "That is... not far."

"Did you feel his head grow heavy. He thought about another match, his last and struck it. "I think I would like to die now," he announced softly.

"Do you require assistance? Are you able to reveal your innards self?"

Damien shook his head, not understanding and closed his eyes allowing all his being to drain away.

The last match fluttered and winked out.

Standing over the dead body, Vasolli XCI allowed the illusion of Joshua the gorilla to fade away. Now in human form he drew an inverted cross with his hand... the sign of the Holy Bomb. He'd been told that the Ape's were his enemy but found them fascinating and regretted his part in the death of yet another. Of course it had been the Zone, not the Children of the Almighty, that had killed him - the Children of the Almighty never killed their enemies. The Gorilla had been a casualty of war and Vasolli XCI had no doubt that soon there would be many more.

He looked over the silent, barren landscape of the Forbidden Zone, just beginning to be revealed in the light of a fine, new day. A fine powder, composed from the ashen, pulverised remains of human civilisation blew around in puffs and whirls, while squat, ugly shrubs clung tenaciously to fragile life in poisoned soil.

So beautiful, thought Vasolli XCI. God had truly blessed them.

The sound of boots on the hard packed earth brought him back from the brink and he struggled to sit up again, staring in the direction of the sound. He reached for his pistol, fumbled at an empty holster and realised it was gone.

The footsteps drew closer and Damien waited, curious to see who it might be. A sudden vision of the faceless Bartholomeu sprang into his mind and he shuddered. A dim shape appeared at the borders of his vision and formed into the familiar and welcome sight of Joshua.

Damien lit another match and held it up. "Joshua," he breathed with relief. "Where have you been?"

"Just for a bit of a wonder old boy," said Joshua, doing his Dr. Zalus act again. Damien chuckled and burst into a fit of coughing.

Joshua settled down on his hounches.

"How are you doing dear chap?" he asked.

"Not so good. I think... that is, I'm pretty sure I'm dying," confessed Damien.

Joshua nodded in agreement. Evidently he thought so too. "And what is a fine fellow like yourself doing in such a forsaken place as this anyhow?"

"You already know."

"Remind me, for old time's sake."

Damien shook his shaggy head wearily. "I'm scouting, looking for new territories, Ape City needs to expand... Don't you remember?" He lit another match and as it flared the head broke off, falling into the hair on his bare arm. Damien
The front cover featured a toppled Statue of Liberty. A cataclysm had devastated the world, radiation produced strange mutants and gorillas became intelligent armed warriors. Mankind was no better than a frightened herd of animals, incapable of rational speech or thought. All this sound familiar?

Jack Kirby's new masterpiece for DC Comics in the 70s owed more than a little to Planet of the Apes. In the early letters columns, reader after reader pointed out the similarities to the first Apes movie and Beneath. One fan even cheekily commented that all that was missing was Charlton Heston. After all there were even intelligent animals worshiping the Bomb and sympathetic animal scientist Dr. Canus befriends this comic's Taylor, the young Kamandi.

But in Kamandi, Kirby took things a lot further. There were talking tigers, lions, wolves, rats, bears, leopards, dolphins, barracudas, the whole blamed menagerie in fact. After Kamandi's world's disaster - apparently a natural one - they left the Ark two legs by two legs. Yet if you sense the pessimism of the Apes movies or Orwell's Animal Farm, you would be wrong. Despite his predicament Kamandi is surprisingly optimistic about finding that he is not "the last boy on earth", as the comic's sub-title states. Being a tolerant sort, despite his quick temper, he befriends the go Dr. Canus, the lion Sultan, the tiger Prince Tuftan, the mutant Ben Boxer and others of difference species. And no matter how many times he is knocked down, shot at, tied up, imprisoned or chased, he comes back for more.

The irrepressible nature of the human spirit is personified in Kamandi. Kirby seems to be saying there is always hope because whatever crisis the future throws at us, mankind will adapt. He said he had no time for the post-nuclear apocalyptic doom-mongers and in fact Kirby only watched the first 45 minutes of the first Apes movie. That was probably deliberate because Kirby had a powerful imagination and boundless creative energy. He would certainly not have wanted another man's ideas to too strongly influence his own central concept, probably a source of tension between former Marvel partner Stan Lee and himself. Of course, throughout his career Kirby was strongly influenced by what he read, heard and saw - he sucked in ideas like a cosmic black hole and with a big bang made them his own unique creations. Some fans criticised him for the POTA movie influence and he may have been having a sly dig back at them by putting a giant gorilla who takes a fancy to Kamandi before being gunned down by planes from a high building in issue no. 7. The planes this time are piloted by lions, not men! King Kirby enjoys aping King Kong in this story and ironically enough this take was itself lambasted in the letters page. The ape theme did not stop there with Kamandi - the star himself was often compared to Tarzan by readers.
The apes, prominent in the first handful of issues, bow out of the saga to let other animals take centre stage until a powerful story in issues no. 15 and 16. Based in Washington, it features a strange group of gorillas (for some reason chimps and orangutans never appear in Kamandi) who worship the Watergate Tapes, which brought President Nixon down. They live in fear of "break-ins" and burglars in a delightfully satirical story. Kamandi No. 16 in particular is recommended to POTA fans - it features a powerful story about apes experimenting on animals (humans). The cover with the savage humans thrusting out of their cages and two menacing gorillas in the foreground is one of Kirby's best. But it is topped by an even more impressive double-page splash scene inside.

Kirby was often criticised for his writing. However this is a wonderfully written and complex comic, featuring a parallel between a human scientist during the time before the great disaster and an ape scientist of the present. There is a strange symmetry between the human scientist's diary and his description of what happens to an intelligent ape specimen and the captured Kamandi. All this is being played out at a higher level while Great Caesar's (interesting name that, eh?) warlike tigers engage the apes in battle. As the fight comes to a climax, readers learn what happened years before when the great cataclysm struck. The human scientist's chemical compound Cortexin had spilled out into the flooded basement and bathed the captured apes. He wrote in his diary: "Cortexin acts lightning swift... there is a shock to the brain... Then, a strange calm and expansion of thought." Well, it's as good as all the cats and dogs dying out and humans keeping apes as pets, I suppose! The scientist continues: "Cortexin... the animals will carry it within them. They will pass it on to offspring. It's all there, in a cold little stream, which runs from a shattered sewer... the gift!... my fit... there are zoos nearby. Animals will feel the disaster. They too will stop to drink from this stream...."

The gorillas also feature in the next four issues. Kamandi finds the remains of a factory, with a huge machine maintained by strange gophers who the gorillas want to wipe out for raiding their supplies. Kamandi wonders why they have to keep this machine running. He finds out. When the machine stops, a high living earthworm eats everything in its path (yes, honestly). As always in this series, Kirby has a satirical eye fixed on today's world - or at least the world of the 1970s. In this the comic is similar to the Apes films concept and the original novel.

Kamandi next meets a horde of gorillas who become involved in battle with prohibition era American gangsters and cops (in reality robots). Sergeant Ugash, a brutal gorilla with a grudge against Kamandi (think Urko, Ursus or Aldo), becomes something of a supporting cast member. Surprisingly when the Police robots are about to execute Ugash, Kamandi saves him from the chair. It is typical of Kamandi's ambivalent nature towards the animals he meets. However he ends the storyline in despair when he discovers Chicago is now a huge deadly theme park run by machines (Kirby's film influence again - Westworld).
The next important apes story in the comic was the intriguing No. 29. This involved Kamandi reuniting with his mutant friend Ben Boxer and coming across a strange tribe of gorillas who worship Superman, who had apparently died in the great disaster. The apes believe that Ben, who has the power to turn his body into steel, is "the Mighty One" returned to reclaim his famous red and blue costume, the apes' most sacred possession. Issue No. 32 is another good buy for Simian Scrolls readers - it reprints the first Statue of Liberty scene issue, has a map of the world after the great disaster, a photo feature on Jack Kirby at work and a new story pitting our hero against gorilla commandos! This double-sized special also features the introduction of an alien to the series.

*Kamandi* lasted for 59 issues and was never anything short of entertaining even when Kirby left with No. 40. In fact writers after Kirby filled in more details on the great disaster and established that Kamandi (his name comes from Command D, the bunker complex he was brought up in) had been in the care of OMAC, another Kirby hero who had a short-lived comic. OMAC, it was revealed, was Kamandi's Grandfather, who was killed off in the first issue.

The difference between Kirby's *Kamandi* and *POTA* is that between someone content with one slice and someone who wants the whole cake. As with so many of Kirby's concepts, the ideas and themes come thick and fast. He mixes horror, science fiction, movies, history, superheroes, fantasy and crime thriller in the same paint pots and then splashes them all over his comic. Someone said that genius doesn't need a second take and so you get naked creativity here. Whether it's *The Exorcist* or *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, all culture finds its place in Kirby's tapestry. Kirby's view was: why be content with gorillas, orangutans and chimps when you can have the whole animal kingdom? *Kamandi* is a comic that many seem to have forgotten but if you have never read it before, I strongly recommend you give it a try.

*John Fennessy*
'Bill, it's terrible. What can we do?' *

(* Judy panics during a bat attack, in the Return to the Planet of the Apes adventure 'Trail to the Unknown'...)

As the production of the series got underway in the summer of 1975, US publishers Ballantine Books secured the contract to produce a series of bi-monthly Return to the Planet of the Apes novelisations — set for release in the spring of 1976, once the thirteen episode season had aired on the NBC network. Given the thinness of the source material on which Ballantine had to rely, the quality of the finished adaptations is frequently surprising.

In contrast to the tidal wave of toys and collectibles launched to profit from the popularity of the Apes movies and live-action TV show, these novelisations are unique in being the only 'merchandise' generated by the animated series.

Ballantine's three Return books were all authored by 'William Arrow'. In fact, Arrow was a company pseudonym, and work on the novelisations was shared by two authors already under contract to the publishers. The use of a house 'pen name' allowed Ballantine to give the series a consistent identity, while at the same time protecting the creative reputations of the real authors. Neither writer would have been particularly keen to include the 'adaptation of a Saturday-morning science-fiction cartoon series' on their résumés so early on in their careers.

The first and third works in the series, Visions from Nowhere and Man, the Hunted Animal, were penned by William (Bill) Rotsler; while the second, Escape from Terror Lagoon, was written by Donald J Pfeil. Rotsler and Pfeil were both up-and-coming sci-fi authors, and had collaborated on other writing projects previously.

In the mid-1970s, Pfeil was editor of Vertex: The Magazine of Science Fiction, for which Rotsler was a regular contributor. Rotsler's own first novel Patron of the Arts had been published by Ballantine in 1974. His second original work To the Land of the Electric Angel was completed the same year as the Return novelisations. In 1975, Ballantine had published Pfeil's own first novel Voyage to a Forgotten Sun (which Rotsler had reviewed in April's Vertex). The following year, Through the Reality Warp, Pfeil's second novel, appeared, also under the Ballantine imprint.

Printed and published only in the United States, each Return novelisation retailed for $1.50. Visions from Nowhere offered adaptations of Return episodes 1-3 (Flames of Doom, Escape from Ape City, and The Unearthly Prophecy). Escape from Terror Lagoon covered episodes 4-6 (Tunnel of Fear, Lagoon of Peril and Terror on Ice Mountain). Man, the Hunted Animal focused on episodes 7-9 (River of Flames,
Screaming Wings and Trail to the Unknown). All three volumes were briefly available in UK shops 'on import' at various premium prices.

All of those involved with the Return novelisations knew that this was production-line fiction with a short shelf-life. What was required from the authors was the quick turnaround of serviceable prose, faithfully recounting the episodes' plots and 'filling in the blanks' as necessary to reach the contracted page-count. All three Return books fulfill this task — but often exceed it, as the authors make greater efforts than were expected of them to immerse themselves in this reimagined future world.

In many respects, Rotsler and Pfeil had little choice other than to extend their dramatic horizons. Literal screen-to-page translations of Return stories would not have stretched beyond a few pages of basic storytelling. On screen, the frequent recourse to 'padding' is painfully evident throughout the Return adventures — looped animation; never-ending chase sequences; and lengthy 'pans' across static backgrounds. At their best, the novelisations take a different approach to developing the Return storylines — expanding the interchanges between characters; building tension into our heroes' plight; pausing to reflect on simian society and culture. The fact that the history and evolution of this animated Ape planet was so under-written in the series scripts gave the novelisation authors considerable freedom to explore and invent.

As is often the case with the novelisation of screen scripts, it is clear that the Return authors worked with early drafts of the teleplays, which underwent considerable changes as the TV production was finalised. This is evident from the fact that the Visions from Nowhere back cover gives an earlier, provisional title — 'A Date with Judy' — for the third episode The Unearthly Prophecy, but it's also abundantly clear from the text itself. (The retitling of episode three has led to the common misconception that 'A Date with Judy' is an 'unfilmed' fourteenth episode of the show).

The Return books' status as works of 'pulp fiction' was enhanced by Ballantine's decision over the cover design for the series. The cover of Visions from Nowhere offered a publicity still of General Aldo from Battle for the Planet of the Apes. In contrast, the covers of Escape from Terror Lagoon and Man, the Hunted Animal both used promo shots from the live-action Apes TV series, featuring Zaius and Urko (who bore no relation to their animated namesakes) and Galen (who, like Aldo, was not in the programme at all).

It was not much of an endorsement for the series that the publishers could not find a single animated frame from any one of the thirteen episodes strong enough to 'sell' the novelisations to the casual browser. Opinions differ as to whether Ballantine's decision was a deliberate effort to misrepresent their product; or simply reflected a lack of interest on their part in the 'complexities' of the Ape universe.

Despite the shared pseudonym, the writing styles of Rotsler and Pfeil are very different. In the first and third novels, Rotsler faithfully follows the plot structure of the on-screen episodes, matching them scene-for-scene. Pfeil's approach is more fluid, keeping to the general trajectory of the adventures, but mixing up the plot sequence and inserting new scenes as his own story requires.

Both authors darken the sanitised Saturday morning atmosphere of the cartoon. In this version of the Return adventures, gorillas are scythed in two by lazer gun; humans are brutally mown down by ape soliders; fugitives Bill and Jeff fight mean and dirty — battering gorillas to death and popping their eye sockets; children fall from rafts to be eaten by crocodiles; apes are crushed by rock landslides and engulflled in lava flows. Pfeil and Rotsler both opt to name and characterise the anonymous soldiers of Urko's army, agreeing to introduce the recurring figure of Mungwort — an intriguing 'sensitive' gorilla solidier who is part-chimp, and repulsed by the bloodlust and bluster of his general. The presence of such interesting simian characters helps to compensate for the blandness of both the human heroes which permeates the series.

There are major specific plot differences between the screen and print versions of each of the nine episodes. In Screaming Wings for example, the on screen version includes a three-minute dialogue between an ape guard and his corporal about Urko's plans for 'flying vehicles' (which has clearly been added to stretch out the episode late on in the production), that does not appear in the novelisation. Conversely, the novelisation
includes numerous moments — such as Zaius's revelation of the existence of tyrannical gorilla despots earlier in ape history — which are absent from the TV programme. In *Tunnel of Fear*, Bill and Jeff spend a large part of the episode travelling to Zira and Cornelius's laboratory — but their ride on a hay lorry, and battle with a giant spider in the city's drain system, only appear in the animated version. In *Terror on Ice Mountain*, the journey by hot-air balloon that makes up most of the episode barely last six pages in the novelisation. On screen, in the same episode, there are several sequences involving a gorilla radio signals unit which are entirely absent from the book.

But these, and dozens of other similar examples that could be cited, cannot, on their own, fully convey how different the two versions of the *Return* stories are. At every twist and turn of the plot in the novelisations, there are lengthier descriptions, more sophisticated dialogue, interesting asides and snippets of simian trivia — and greater efforts to ensnare and engage the reader.

The first two novels had concluded with a teaser for the next instalment 'coming soon', but there was no such enticement in the third, which brought the series to a premature end. A fourth novelisation could have covered the remaining four episodes of the run, but either Ballantine or NBC had decided to call a halt. With all the necessary arrangements in place to produce a final volume, the decision can only have been taken for commercial reasons in response to falling sales.

The comparative rarity of the third volume *Man, the Hunted Animal* strongly suggests that the print run had already been sharply cut back before its release. There is no way of knowing if Rotsler or Pfeil had been commissioned to begin work on the 'missing' concluding volume before the series was dropped.


The incomplete 'Return' trilogy did not represent some great literary landmark in the *Ape* canon. But all three works are a creditable attempt to populate and colour an animated simian world that is often hard to believe in or connect with in its cartoon form. There's little doubt that the pictures conjured up in the pages of the *Return* novelisations are sharper, richer and more convincing than those visible on screen. So marked are the differences between the visual and textual *Return* adventures that the novelisations should really be seen as parallel and complementary works of *Ape* fiction — and not simply as workmanlike reproductions of other people's simian scripts.

**Rich Cross**

For more on the *Return* adventures, see the interview with Austin Stoker — who provided the voice for astronaut Jeff Carter in the series — beginning on page 21 of this issue.
A GREAT BIG HAIRY THANK YOU TO OUR FRIENDS IN THE SMALL PRESS AND NOT SO SMALL PRESS WORLD!

Over the years Simian Scrolls has had tremendous help from other Fanzines and, indeed, professional magazines. It is only fair that they all get a mention now, because all have done their bit to spread the Simian sermon for us. Simian Scrolls can not recommend highly enough the publications set out below and strongly encourages everybody to get in touch and have a look. There is a whole world of genuine, non-corporate, enthusiasm out there and the following are some of the best examples.

COMICS INTERNATIONAL - This is a professional magazine and is THE magazine to read if you want to know about comics, old and new. Comics International has been fantastic in its support of Scrolls and many readers first heard about us within its pages. You can visit their website by hitting www.comicsinternational.com and their address is 345, Ditchling Road, Brighton, BN1 6JJ. The Editor is that comics God, Dez Skinn which tells you, without knowing more, that it is a superb publication.

FROM THE TOMB - This absolutely stunning publication is published by Peter Normanton of 619, Whitworth Road, Lower Healey, Rochdale, Lancs, England, OL12 0TB. Peter can be e-mailed at Peter.Normanton@btinternet.com. From the Tomb looks at all things horror and the latest issue has a tremendous article on the history of that well-loved publication The House of Hammer. Simply superb and definitely worth a look.

THE DOCTOR'S RECORDER - This Doctor Who fanzine is, we like to think, a sister publication to Scrolls. The two publications are very similar and, for all things connected with out time travelling Doctor you cannot do better than pick up the Recorder. The Editor is Andrew Hardstaffe and he can be contacted at Flat 42, Rosebank House, 217, Belle Vue Road, Leeds, LS3 1HG.

FAX AND FIGURES - Action figure newsletter. This is a tremendous resource for all things connected with action figures and is put out by the Swansea Valley Sci-Fi Association. You can contact them at First Contact, Swansea Valley Sci-Fi Association, 49, High Street, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4JH. Tell them Scrolls sent you!

POPSICLE - Our very own Roy Mitchell (also known as Urko Unsworth in his saner moments) puts out the truly excellent Popsicle, which is the UK Lemon Popsicle Fanzine. Popsicle is the absolute definition of the dedicated fan publication and is a joy to read. Popsicle now has a website, so you can find out more online by pointing your browser in the direction of http://members.lycos.co.uk/eddiemitch/

SPOOKY - Last, but certainly not least, there is a new Fanzine put out by Piers Casimir, a Scrolls stalwart, looking at the history of Warren Publications. The Fanzine is Spooky and the quality is simply amazing. As first issues go, I have never seen a better one and I can only recommend that you get in quickly to buy issue 1 as I know it will become a collectors item before too much longer. Piers can be contacted at piers@spookyfanzine.com

SIMIAN SCROLLS IS SINCERELY GRATEFUL TO ALL OF THE ABOVE AND THEIR CREATORS FOR THEIR UN-STINTING AND READY HELP OVER THE YEARS. LET THE FUN CONTINUE FOR A GOOD MANY MORE YEARS YET!
COMING SOON!
SIMIAN SOUNDS PRESENTS THE GROUNDBREAKING NEW APES AUDIO

PLANET OF THE APES: VALUES

Featuring the acting talents of Mark Donovan as Galen, Peter Hinchman as Alan Virdon and Thomas Himeñez as Pete Burke, Values is an all new audio adventure scripted by Dave Ballard and produced by Argolis. CD cover sleeve and internal art work by Neil Foster.

With a running time of approximately 60 minutes, Values is the episode 15 we have all been waiting for for over a quarter of a century.

All profits from the sale of Values will be donated to a Charity in connection with September 11. No other individual or organisation will make any profit whatsoever from Values which is an entirely charitable production.

VALUES – IT'S BEYOND YOUR WILDEST IMAGINATION!
"But you said humans treated apes like pets."
"They did, in the beginning."
"They've made slaves of them!"
(Exchange between Caesar and Armando in Conquest Of The Planet Of The Apes)

The opening of the fourth film in the Planet Of The Apes saga sees a future society in which chimpanzees and gorillas are being trained to perform menial work - washing floors and windows, waiting tables, shining shoes, painting walls. The methods of control are brutal, the message very clear: you know all that stuff in the Sacred Scrolls about the "beast man" being the "Devil's pawn"? Well, it wasn't a joke.

Of course, Conquest is fiction, the work of writer Paul Dehn. In these supposedly enlightened times, with ongoing ethical debates about apes' status and rights on this planet, and welfare organisations looking after the animals' well-being, it's hard to imagine a situation as nightmarish as that depicted in the film. But that's not to say there isn't a large, and very real, problem with the abuse of apes. Don't believe me? Then take a trip to Monkey World.

Set in 65 acres of lush, green woodland, about a mile from Wool train station in Dorset, Monkey World is home to over 150 primates - from chimpanzees, orang-utans and gibbons to macaques, capuchins and lemurs.

It was set up in 1987 by American primatologists Jim and Alison Cronin as a rehabilitation centre and retirement home for abused monkeys and apes. The Cronins seek out animals in distress, wherever in the world they might be, and set about rescuing them. They work with both governments and individuals, and they have a healthy success rate.

Many of the primates at Monkey World - particularly chimps - have been rescued from Spanish beach photographers. These hucksters try to charm tourists into spending their money on photos of themselves with a baby chimp. It might seem like harmless fun, but the truth behind those supposedly cute pictures is anything but.

The apes are dressed in human clothes and often work for up to 16 hours a day. They're drugged to make them docile and induced to behave with beatings. When they start to lose their 'baby' status at around four or five years old, they're often killed, to be replaced with a younger, cuter, more manageable animal. And the cycle starts again.

My fourth visit to Monkey World takes place at the end of July 2002. My first, in 1998, was a revelation. I'd seen apes before, in zoos and safari parks, but I'd always found their existence in those places to be quite sad. True, a lot of zoos are big on conservation, but it doesn't stop many of them feeling like animal prisons, rather than celebrations of the world's wildlife.

For instance, a few years ago, I visited a theme park in the US, and was horrified to see a keeper getting one of the orang-utans to do tricks - the pulling on and taking off of a T-shirt - by giving him rewards.

Thankfully, there are no circus acts at Monkey World. Everything that goes on inside its fences is geared towards:
1) looking after its simian residents, and
2) educating its human visitors - which is why it isn't billed as a zoo or a park, instead calling itself an "Ape Rescue Centre". And though its popularity has steadily increased over the last five years - no doubt aided by the Monkey Business TV programme (a documentary following the centre's fortunes, now in its fifth series - available to buy on video from Monkey World) and the high-profile Mary Chipperfield abuse case - reassuringly, the only concession to entertainment is an old-fashioned kids' playground. And best of all, visitors to Monkey World seem to appreciate this.

Waiting for keepers' talks to begin, I tune into other people's conversations and hear them wondering about the well-being of their favourite chimps and orangs. They've followed these characters' stories through the years, and seem to show genuine concern for their welfare.

The centre runs a primate adoption scheme, where, for £25 a year, it's possible to 'adopt' an ape. Having paid up, the adoptive parent gets a photo of, plus regular updates on, their chimp of choice (and I'd imagine that the chimps are the most popular adoptions - call it a hunch), plus a year's free entry to Monkey World. As incentives go, it works a treat, encouraging an interest and involvement that can become quite addictive. If you visit Monkey World once, you'll return year after year. The lure of the place is simply too great to resist.

The male star of Monkey World, and my adopted primate, is Charlie, a 23-year-old beach chimp who was rescued at the age of three. A mainstay of the Monkey Business TV series, Charlie has captured the
hearts of viewers with his quirky ways and sympathetic character.

He was in a seriously bad way when he was rescued: as well as being a drug addict, he suffered from cataracts, and his jaw was broken. Now, of course, he can live the rest of his days free from fear or distress. (And with chimps in captivity typically reaching the age of at least 50, the chances are he's not even halfway through.)

Today, unusually, Charlie is in an enclosure round the back, out of the public gaze. The centre currently has seven orang-utans, and Charlie and chums have had to move out of their usual home while some shuffling and building work takes place. It's disappointing not to be able to see Charlie, but of course, the apes' welfare has to come first.

As luck would have it, though, Charlie comes to see me.

At the top of the park, near the pavilions housing the baby chimps Ben and Pip, there's a small metal 'rat run' - a mesh corridor leading off from Charlie's current, private enclosure. It has walls on either side of it, and a low fence in front. The visible clearance is only about two metres wide, but that's big enough for an inquisitive chimpanzee to gawp at his adoring public through.

Believe it or not, recognising the different chimps in Monkey World is actually quite easy. Once you learn to look for the distinguishing features - which, in Charlie's case, are pointy ears, a long face, and a general weather-beaten look - referring to the apes by name becomes second nature.

I stand watching Charlie for a good five minutes. A few people lean over the fence and take pictures. Charlie seems to relish the attention. It feels like a personal appearance. Of course, we're honoured.

Charlie eventually decides that enough is enough, though, sticking his tongue out as a parting gesture before wandering back to his enclosure.

Monkey World is home to four groups of chimpanzees, each with their own hierarchies and leaders. As well as Butch's group (to which Charlie belongs), there's Paddy's, who live in the middle of Monkey World; the nursery chimps, who (under the ever-watchful eye of leader Sally) occupy the old orang-utans' enclosure at the bottom of the compound; and finally, there's Rodney's group, who live in a large enclosure next to the centre's entrance and gift shop.

The latter chimps also get the use of Charlie's House, an indoor complex hosting bedrooms and play areas that was originally built in honour of you-know-who (though, due to circumstance, you-know-who has barely spent any time there). Each of the outdoor enclosures is at least one hectare in size, and contains climbing and swinging apparatus, plus pipes to crawl through and a pond for those hot summer days.

The indoor rooms are filled with straw and paper (for bedding) and, again, all manner of wooden and rubber stimulation. There's absolutely no chance of any of the animals suffering from clausrophobia here. In fact, it's easy to lose sight of them, as they wander off for time on their own. In that respect, I'm actually quite jealous. Compared to my pokey flat, this is luxury.

The other big 'star' of Monkey World is Trudy, the young chimp who was at the centre of a widely reported court case in 1999, when circus trainer Mary Chipperfield was accused of animal abuse. Chipperfield was eventually convicted on 12 counts of cruelty against the chimp, and Trudy got to make a new life for herself at Monkey World.

Who says happy endings are a thing of the past?

During today's keeper talks, I learn about Trudy's special way with humans. Apparently, she thinks that we're here for her entertainment, and finds it most amusing to make us do tricks. Her favourite pastime is sitting by the fence looking sad, trying to attract an audience of concerned well-wishers. When she thinks that the crowd is big enough, she suddenly starts clapping. And, of course, everyone watching starts to clap, too. You know what they say: human see, human do.

It's stories like this that drive home to me just how closely related we humans are to these animals. Reading the Monkey World residents' histories - the tales of drug abuse, violence, contamination and neglect - it's not hard to empathise, and on a very human level too, once you get to know the chimps' characters.

While mankind is searching the galaxy in an attempt to communicate with any intelligent life forms that might be out there, it's important that we don't overlook our next-door neighbours here on Earth - the other Great Apes. They too may have a lot to tell us, about ourselves as well as them - providing we're willing to listen.

Pay Monkey World a visit as soon as you can - or at least catch a series or two of Monkey Business - and see Jim and Alison Cronin's remarkable work for yourself. Who knows - in some parallel, even future, universe, there might be a pair of chimpanzee scientists doing their darndest to help humans escape the clutches of their simian oppressors.

It would make a great movie, don't you think?

Address
Monkey World, Longthorns
Wareham, Dorset, BH20 6HH

Opening Times
Open daily, 10am to 5pm (6pm Jul/Aug)

Admission Prices
Adult - £7
Child - £5.50
Special family rates are available

Visit Monkey World on the Web
www.monkeyworld.co.uk
(Video are available by mail order)
Austin Stoker
International Man of Mystery

Austin Stoker’s career has taken in more than his fair share of landmarks and cult status roles. To many, he is Lt. Ethan Bishop from John Carpenter’s ‘Assault on Precinct 13’. To others he is Virgil from the landmark television series ‘Roots’. Apes fans had the good fortune to have had Austin Stoker play two major roles in the Apes pantheon, MacDonald in ‘Battle for the Planet of the Apes’ and Jeff Allen in ‘Return to the Planet of the Apes’.

Earlier this year, Austin took the time out from his hectic schedule to answer some questions for Simian Scrolls. Scrolls is now delighted to share the results with Apesdom and is sincerely grateful to Austin Stoker for the time, thought and effort clearly in evidence from his thought provoking and interesting replies.

‘Assault on Precinct 13’ (1976) is a cult classic. How do you feel about Lt. Ethan Bishop possibly being a career defining role?

I would definitely say “Ethan Bishop” was a career-defining role for me - so far. I say ‘so far’ because I always look forward to future roles that will also be distinguished by creative, defining moments.

What are your recollections of John Carpenter?

It was an absolute joy to work with John. What I remember mostly about him was how he always kept a cool head and focused on the work, despite certain hardships that may exist in making a feature motion picture on an ‘independent’ basis.

This is something all involved appreciate because it is not always so easy to get. Although he was also the writer and understood the material better than anyone else, he was always open to discussing any ideas.

We filmed an interview together in January, 2002, which has been included in the new DVD version of ‘Assault’. I can still remember the events of practically each day we worked, that’s how much I enjoyed it and would welcome the opportunity to work with him again, anytime.

Another legendary movie director, J. Lee Thompson, sadly passed away last year. Can you share any of your memories of Mr. Thompson with us?

He was a wonderful director. I was still in acting school in New York when The Guns Of Navarone came out and of course, we can’t forget his Cape Fear with Bob Mitchum and Gregory Peck the following year.

Con can you tell us what it was like working with him on ‘Battle’?

Unfortunately, I did not get to know him too well when we did Battle. That was a far different experience and relationship, compared with Carpenter. Perhaps the age difference, and reputation, too, may have had something to do with it.

Battle was on a far bigger scale, of course, in every way. We come onto the set each morning and the work was always “criticial”. I mean, that in the sense that it was not a commonplace genre. There was so much “detail” to deal with, I was certainly in awe.

Thompson had his hands full and was mostly quite serious so that you could almost “see” his brain working all of the time. He called me Austin (Oss-s-tin) and I called him Sir.

You were described as ‘co star’ in ‘Battle’. Seeing as your role stretches virtually from start to finish and was pivotal in carrying much of the plot, do you think it was a little unfair that you didn’t get ‘star’ billing?

It definitely would’ve been wonderful to have had ‘star’ billing. as any performer in a similar situation would agree, and needless to say I would’ve proven myself worthy of it. Unfortunately it has nothing to do with fairness but rather how much one can bargain, which was not in my favour at the time.

It is strictly a matter of “salability”, regardless of talent. Also called “track record”, “marquee value”, or “TV-Q”, all of which spells “popularity”. That is what gives your agent, or whoever negotiates for you (nowadays it often includes a manager as well) the bargaining power.

How did you get the part in ‘Battle’?

Simply by auditioning for it. When I arrived for the audition I was introduced, by an assistant, to Mr. Thompson, Mr. Arthur Jacobs, the producer and another gentleman, all of whom were completely unknown to me at the time.

The reading took about three or four minutes. they thanked me and I thanked them, turned and started to leave. Before I got to the door,
Were you already aware of the Apes phenomenon?

No. I had not been aware of the Apes series as a “phenomenon”. The fact is, I had not seen any of the previous films. But my agent called and told me they were getting ready to do another one and that I was submitted for a part. So I went over to the office to pick up a script in order to look at the scene I was expected to read for the audition the very next day, which was a Saturday at 11:00 a.m., at Twentieth-Century Fox Studios.

Are there any difficulties for an actor in relating to other actors wearing appliances?

I really couldn’t speak for anyone else but for me, personally, there was no difficulty at all.

In ‘acting’ terms, it was just one more ‘adjustment’, that had to be made. Of course, I know it is Roddy dressed and made up as an ape – to suggest otherwise would be insane. Or, the wonderful, beloved Claude Akins (God rest his beautiful soul) as the evil, volatile, obnoxious “Rito”, (whom I used to call “Pussycat” off camera), but, to use an old cliché, it’s my job... from the creative standpoint, to accept and believe to the circumstances of the story as they relate to my character. Add to that, the convincing performances of Claude, Paul, Roddy and all the others, and it becomes easy to feel that you’re dealing with gorillas, orang-utans and chimps who have intelligence and can talk.

It also has to do with having an ability which children can so easily command: of suspending their disbelief so that they can accept the idea of monsters and cartoons, etc., as ‘real’. If we don’t suspend our disbelief, then we won’t get the audience to suspend theirs.

Here’s another interesting point: Every single day we worked together, my call-time was always 7, 8 or 9 a.m. while theirs, because of the complicated appliance makeup was always 4:00 a.m. And at the end of the day I always went home at least an hour before they did, because it took that long to remove the staff. Even at meal times, they had to take their nourishment through a straw. I almost forgot what Roddy, Paul and all the others actually looked like.

Can you tell us anything about what it was like to work with Roddy McDowall?

There isn’t really much to tell. He was friendly, very quiet, but everyone stayed more or less in their own “space”.

The work was so concentrated and often demanding, so it was important to conserve energy and stay focused all of the time. For that reason there really was no occasion for socialising, except for when we all attended the “wrap party” (at a house in Malibu) after filming was completed.

Mention of Paul Williams as Virgil brings us neatly to another character who shares the very same name – How do you look back on your role in Roots? Lynn Moody (Irene Harvey in “Roots”) has commented on the special anniversary DVD release of the programme that she didn’t know how important Roots was, or was going to be, when you were actually making the programme. Was it the same for you?
Eric Greene, in his thought-provoking book "Planet of the Apes as American Myth - Race, Politics and Popular Culture", has seen in the series a possible commentary on the US involvement in Vietnam - (for example the astronauts, as outsiders, intervene on behalf of the weaker humans against Apes and ultimately, with superior technology, triumph). It is also suggested that the character of Urko, at times, was used as a parody of President Nixon, even to the point of having facial characteristics such as eyebrow droop in a similar way. Were you at all aware of any of this political commentary?

Eric Greene and I met and became friends after his book on the subject came out. We have discussed the subject as it is addressed in the book and I can clearly see, as a kind of allegorical approach, how parallels to real-life aspects can be drawn. However, while working (strictly as an actor) on both projects, it was natural to sense, in every scene - and I am sure all of us could - 'similarities' that would call for analysis, or commentary, if you will, on real-life politics. But it was always subliminal...

Let me try to explain this if I may, so bear with me; the only way, in the 'acting' process, that we could use such subliminal commentary - which is not quite the same as 'subtext' - is to recognise it, acknowledge it, and then immediately ignore it. We couldn't dwell on it because it would get in the way, since our obligation is to "be" and not "to analyse".

Did you have a 'feel' for the character of 'Jeff' and, for an actor, did he feel as 'rounded' as a normal role?

I suppose I did have some sort of 'feel' for 'Jeff', but no, I don't think it was quite as rounded as a normal role since it was a vocal characterisation without a physical or any substantively visual side. But sometimes you just have to strive as much as you can for that "truth," and do the best you can.

Was the look of 'Jeff' in any way based upon your own appearance?

I don't know for sure, but I would tend to guess that it was not.

When recording your lines for 'Return', were you acting alongside the other actors or were lines recorded individually?

There were instances in which I worked alongside other actors and once or twice I was alone. But as "voice (over) acting" it’s a different set of dynamics, up to a point, compared to acting together physically.

What are your memories of co-stars, Claudette Nevins (Judy) & Tom Williams (Bill)?

We worked on separate mics, often separated behind a screen or sound baffles and didn’t even get to see one another. Plus it was, as voice jobs usually are, fairly short-term so that we hardly got to know each other. For that reason, I’m sorry to say, I cannot recall any memories of the other actors. It is much more impersonal than film.

Did you speak lines when looking at images or were the images created around the lines?

We had no images to look at while recording - which would otherwise be known as looping or RDR (Additional Dialogue Replacement) - which means the images were created to fit the lines.

Do you have any memories of working with Doug Willey, supervising Director for 'Return'?

Doug Willey was one of those recording industry directors who could hear a pin dropping to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. I don’t know if he’s still around, but I haven’t seen him in many, many years.

We had met on more than one occasion and spoken at length before the work actually started, but once it did he seldom, if ever, came within reach as he had to communicate with us from inside a control booth.

I never forgot what he said to me the very first day I went in to record. I was by myself that day and I asked him to let me know if he ever hears my West Indian accent (Caribbean) coming in too strongly, so that I can ‘adjust’ it. He knew that I was born and raised in Trinidad. He told me that he wouldn’t say I had an accent. He said, "What you have is a cadence - and that’s fine."

Did you get a chance to see Tim Burton's 'Re-Imagining' of Planet of the Apes in 2001 and if so, what did you think of it?

I only caught a glimpse of the remake while someone was watching it on TV here at home, so I’ve yet to see it in its entirety. But from the little I saw, I felt that the apes were portrayed as too ‘underworld’, Savages. So scary and menacing that they evoked no empathy as did those in the original.

Was there ever talk on set of a 6th movie?

It’s not that I was deliberately sowing-dropping, but I once overheard, while within earshot of a conversation Arthur Jacobs was having on the set one day. Reference was made to the possibility of a sixth movie but due to his untimely death, unfortunately, it never materialised.

Can you recall any off-camera practical jokes going on? It seems to be that the ‘Battle’ set was a pretty happy place to be - what were your recollections?

As I said before, the work on Battle was serious and concentrated, but that is not to
It's a moment-to-moment process... in which we have to "live" in the "present". In other words, the actor certainly may be aware, intellectually, of "underlying themes", but the approach has to be that the character being portrayed certainly will not be.

Having said that, however, I also embrace the position that no, absolutely no, I do not think people are reading too much into the movie. If you can't find significant, contextual meaning to read into a movie, then what's the story? What is there to hold it up? Being able to read so much into a movie means two important things: One, there's some depth and substance there. Two, it's people making THINK.

My only "criticism" - and I'm not sure if that's the proper word - is that the actor, as I've said before, cannot, in the process, be concerned with that.

What is Austin Stoker doing nowadays and how do you relax?

Well, I have a confession to make. I haven't yet told anyone, but I'm telling you: I'm a workaholic. There, I've said it!

Without going into any lengthy details, suffice to say there's a penchant for "good" film work, even what goes to a select handful. But I keep quite busy because I enjoy working.

I do much writing and have been working on two scripts which I hope to get on screen some day. I work on stage extensively - theatre, that is - which is my background and still my first love - acting, directing and producing.

I also teach Chekhovian Technique of acting and I'm the dramaturge of Caribbean-American Repertory Theatre. I've been collaborating, since August of last year, as story consultant, with a young director on his script for his next film, with freedom to critique all his reunites and make suggestions for improvement as I am to play the lead role, possibly some time this year. I think he has a good future ahead of him, so keep in mind the name, David Tyson.

I relax by spending time with my family and close friends here as well as in New York. I try to get down to Trinidad once in a blue moon, but not as often as I would like.

One of my (two) favourite sports is soccer, which I played (sweeper, or "center-half") 'way back when'. Next is Track (S & Field), having been a runner as well (200m) back in my football (soccer) days. I do not play golf, which surprises some people. Running, and generally staying shape, is my golf. But I am happiest and most relaxed when I am working.

Finally, do you have any thoughts on why 'Ape's' has proved to be so enduring? Is there a central message or theme that you think sums it up?

The reason why the phenomenon of the Apees has lasted so long, to me, is very clear: No other animal but the Ape - theory of Evolution aside - so closely resembles MAN.

Which means, the stories sprang from that basic premise of Man-comparo to-Ape-comparo to-Man. Now, insert in that comparison the notion of a conflict. A conflict to the death, which never existed in the "basic premise". In real-life that conflict becomes the contrivance, if you will, which drives the stories. But since it is Man who is concerned about origins and that resemblance, while Ape couldn't care less about why we look and behave like him - and could be counted on to maintain that attitude for yet another billion years, if this thing they're living on with us lasts that long - the stories set out to explore the 'vice versa' possibility... by changing the words "comparer" to the foreign word, "versus"; and therein lies a tale...

Add to that, the fact that practically every human alive has pondered the burning question, 'Where did we come from, how did it all begin?'

Then finally there comes to the screen this group of stories that just burst right out of that 'basic premise' and go right to the heart of that persistent question. They do not supply the answer, but they take us on a most engrossing fantasy journey of phenomenal worldwide appeal - whether one holds to Darwin's theory or the Biblical accounting - chronicling a "history", not of one man, or one family or one group to the easy exclusion of the rest of us, but of ALL humanity facing aggression, and we end up liking the aggressor(s).

That I believe, is the reason... And is there a central message that sums it up? Definitely: They're warning us to curb our greed, celebrate each other's differences or 'this thing they're living on with us' will not survive the lunacy at the rate we're going... even as we speak.

So there you have it. Am I an coward, or what?...

* Austin Stoker, Thank you very much indeed. 

Hey, thanks, guys. Your interest and your caring make my work worthwhile. This was fun and I enjoyed it. Bless you and much love to all of you.
Return To The Planet Of The Apes

Developed for Television by: David H. DePatie & Friz Freleng

Based on Characters Created by: Pierre Boulle

Animation Director: Cullen Houghtaling

Storyboard Directors: Morris Gollub, Doug Wildey, Jan Green

Graphic Design: Moe Gollub, Leo Swenson, Tony Sgroi, George Wheeler, Zyamond Jablecki, Hak Ficq, Norley Paal, Earl Martin, John Dorman, John Messina

Animation: Kebden Timmins, Ed Aardal, Lee Halpern, Bob Kirk, Jim Brummett, Joe Roman Jr, Jack Foster, Janice Stocks

Backgrounds Supervised by: Richard H. Thomas

Backgrounds: Mary O'Loughlin, Don Watson

Ink and Paint Supervision: Gertrude Timmins

Xerography: Greg Marshall

Film Editing Supervised by: Bob Gillis

Film Editors: Alan Potter, Rick Steward

Voices: Austin Stoker, Henry Corden, Edwin Mills, Phillippa Harris, Richard Blackburn, Claudette Nevin, Tom Williams

Music by: Dean Elliott

Conducted by: Eric Rogers

Music Editor: Joe Siracusa

Anthropological Dialogue Researched by: MacDonald Stearns, PHD, UCLA, Department of Germanic Languages

In Charge of Production: Lee Gunther

Camera by: Ray Lee, Larry Hogan, John Burton Jr

Production Mixer: Steve Orr

Music Mixer: Eric Tomlinson

Sound by: Producers' Sound Services, Inc

Supervising Director and Associate Producer: Doug Wildey

Produced by: David H. DePatie - Friz Freleng in Association With Twentieth Century-Fox Television
BILL AND JEFF'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

Just nine months after the demise of the live-action TV series, the apes are back in 'toon. Monkey business is back on the menu as many old favourites, such as Zaius and Urko, Return To The Planet Of The Apes. Darren Stockford goes down with a bad case of Saturday morning fever...

If writer Pierre Bouille had gone to a fortune teller in 1963 and been told that his new book, La Planete Des Singes - a novel that asked some uncomfortable questions about humanity - would end up 12 years later forming the basis of a Saturday morning cartoon series, chances are he'd have laughed in disbelief and asked for his money back.

After all, Monkey Planet (to use the book's English title), though science fiction, was no heroic adventure story. Flash Gordon didn't save the day. There were chills, rather than cheers, as the lead character's sense of self was peeled away, layer by layer - a companion's descent into a brutalising mental illness a constant reminder that this would be his destiny, too, if he were to give up the fight.

You've got to admit, as a pitch for a children's TV show, its chances look slim.

But, of course, by 1975, Apes wasn't a new product. It was tried and tested, and firmly established as a kids' fave - not bad going for a movie series that begins with a lobotomy, continues through the graphic killing of two of its best-loved characters, and finishes with a spot of murderous vengeance.

Sure, the cancellation of the previous year's live-action TV series was a major blow to the franchise, but the characters were still very popular. US TV network NBC must have thought there was still some mileage in this thing, as they commissioned an animated Apes series. Return To The Planet Of The Apes made its US debut on Saturday 6 September 1975. Though the title suggests a continuation, of either the movies or the live-action TV series, this wasn't the case. Instead, viewers were introduced to three more unwitting adventurers - Jeff Allen (voiced by Austin Stoker), Bill Hudson (Tom Williams) and Judy Franklin (Candiette Nevins).

Travelling through space in a small capsule (the Venturer), testing "Doctor Stanton's theory of time thrust", the astronauts propel themselves 105 years, 8 months, 5 weeks, 4 days and 11 hours into their own future. Having satisfied themselves that the doctor's theory is correct, something goes horribly wrong with their craft, and they find themselves plummeting planetward at an alarming speed.

Meanwhile, a bloodthirsty gorilla general is putting the case for waging war against the planet's 'humanoids' to an ape council. A chimpanzee scientist stands in opposition, proposing preservation and study.

A high-ranking orang-utan, quoting from "Oracle 18 of the Book of Simian Prophecy", decrees that, without proof that humanoids have the power of speech, they may be hunted and captured for study, and used as labourers or kept as pets. However, if it's proved that they can talk... well, that'd be a different matter.

The astronauts, having survived a watery crash-landing, find themselves on what they assume is an alien world. There are no signs of civilisation - just miles and miles of rock-filled desert. A glance at their watches tells them they've travelled two millennia into the future. They have just two days' rations left, and set off in search of food and water.

What they find is beyond their wildest nightmares: a civilisation where apes are the dominant species, and humanoids (actually humans, but as the show insists on humanoids, I'll be sticking with that here) are hunted for sport, kept as slaves and pets, and used for medical experiments, while a (literally) underground society of mutated, telepathic beings struggles for survival...

Sound familiar? That's the idea, and to aid the process, there's a glut of recognisable character names: Nova, Brent, Zaius, Urko, Cornelius and Zira. At first glance, with the inclusion of so many 'old faves', it's tempting to try to fit the cartoon series into the same 'universe' as the movies. But it doesn't take long to realise that it was designed as a standalone piece.
For a start, Ape City is depicted as a huge, sprawling, historic-looking metropolis, complete with 20th century-style comforts such as cars and TV. The year of the astronauts' crash-landing is said to be 3979-24 years after George Taylor detonated the Alpha-Omega bomb in Beneath, destroying the planet. And the bombworshipping mutants from that same movie have been replaced by Judy-fixed underdwellers, in thrall to a mythical 'Oosa' (don't worry, it will be explained later in the episode guide).

Of course, links could be made using a 'multiple timelines' theory, but this should only be attempted if you enjoy S&M, or at least have a degree in escapology, as you're likely to tie yourself in serious knots.

It's more likely that characters from each of the previous Ape Incarnations were brought back for reasons of familiarity and popularity, rather than to tie the new series into any previous narrative.

Besides, it's hard to square Return's jokey incidentalities with the movie's more serious treatment of the apes' world. Sure, there are gags in the films - 'human see, human do', and the infamous 'three wise monkeys' skit - but there's nothing as blatant as a farmer ape driving through the countryside with a song called 'I'm Going Humanoid Over You' playing on the stereo. This happens in Return's fourth episode, Tunnel Of Fear.

Episode 12, Invasion Of The Underdwellers, sees Ape City's treasures being stolen, among them a famous painting called the 'Ape-a Lisa'. In the same episode, Urko compliments his stooges, telling them that their performances in court were 'worthy of an Academ-ape Award' ('Ape-cademy Award', surely?). And with references to playwright 'William Apespeare' and gangster movie 'The Apefather' (in episode 7, River Of Flames), it's obvious that Return doesn't take itself too seriously. Even the most dedicated keeper of the canon would have a hard time explaining why art in the apes' world is one long pun on 20th century popular culture.

Return also diverges from Apes' movie world in its use of monsters. It just about gets away with Kygoor, a King Kong-like protector that looks after a secluded settlement of mountain apes - you've heard of Bigfoot, well meet really Bigfoot! But the giant 'monster bird' - a dragon-type beast that makes a horrendous screeching noise - feels like it's been shoehorned in to give the humanoids something to worry about in the absence of ape attacks.

Its first appearance - in episode 5, Lagoon Of Peril - serves a narrative purpose (Zaius uses it to dismiss the claims of a soldier who's reported a crashed space ship in the lagoon). But in later stories - such as episode 10, Attack From The Clouds, and episode 13, Battle Of The Titans - it seems to have been hired from Rent-A-Monster, as it simply attacks on cue and disappears once it's delivered the required amount of suspense. (Brent: "I wonder what kind of creature it really was." Jeff: "Well, I guess we'll never have the chance to know...") Ditto the giant spider in episode 4, Tunnel Of Fear.

Himm, what's the opposite of deus ex machina?

Another area in which Return flounders is animation.

With Looney Tunes legend Friz Freleng as co-producer (alongside David H. DePatie), viewers could be forgiven for expecting a high-quality toon, but alas, it was not to be. Ape characters aren't always drawn consistently - their look changes from scene to scene, and sometimes from shot to shot. Movement is limited and somewhat less than fluid. Generally speaking, if something doesn't have to move, it won't, bar the blinking of a character's eyes. Because of this, at times, the show has a 'storyboardy' kind of feel.

That said, there are some neat visual flourishes. In the opening episode, Flames Of Doom, Bill and Jeff grow beards, starting with a stubbly
look in the ‘wandering fire’ sequence, and progressing to borderline bushes when they stumble on the humanoid settlement. (Intriguingly, having been fed and watered, they appear cleanlinessed again - in sharp contrast to the other humanoids, none of whom have been anywhere near a razor in their lives.)

And the astronauts’ desert trek - a montage that sees our heroes braving two days of blistering sunshine, fork lighting and fatigue - is a pleasing way to kick the series off, owing much to the ‘68 movie. The most impressive aspect of this sequence is that it plays for over four minutes without dialogue. It’s hard to imagine any cartoon series being this bold nowadays.

Another moment in Flames Of Doom likely to cause fans’ eyes to pop out is when they first see apes driving vehicles. Do these apes live in a technologically advanced society as a respectful nod to Pierre Boulle’s Les Planet Des Singes, or because wheels are a lot quicker and easier to animate than herds of galloping horses?

Whatever the motive, it works well. The military hardware gives Return’s apes an obvious advantage over their live-action cousins when it comes to tackling the human(oid) problem, and gives us the unique thrill of seeing an airborne ape.

One of the least commented-on aspects of Return is its music, which is a shame as it’s also one of its most striking features. The title theme is fast, exciting and memorable - the kind of tune that would, I’d imagine, have had kids tripping over themselves to secure their place on the sofa of a Saturday morning. Married to the frenetic title sequence, it ensures the show makes an impressive entrance. By the time a foreboding voice announces “Return To The Planet Of The Apes!”, whatever you were doing 60 seconds ago is history.

Incidental music is used to great effect, too. One theme in particular sounds like an attempt to ape Jerry Goldsmith’s sparse, tribal soundscape from the original movie. And there’s the occasional hint of the live-action series, too (most notably in Battle Of The Titans, as the balloon is heading for the mountain peak). With each episode full to the brim with music - there’s no such thing as ‘dead air’ in Return; themes are always playing - the series is crying out for a soundtrack album.

The acting performances in Return range from solid to functional. Philippa Harris as Zira sounds, at times, uncannily like Kim Hunter. Richard Blackburn gives a pleasing performance as Zaius, effortlessly blending intellectual weight with a civic burden; and Henry Corden as Urko is a delight, capturing much of the original character’s brash bull-headedness (Corden has also voiced Fred Flintstone, a character with similar traits).

The rest of the characters are a bit hit and miss, though. Edwin Mills as Cornelius comes across as believable and likeable, but it’s hard to love the character as much as the Roddy McDowall original. (Granted, this isn’t entirely the actor’s fault as a big part of Roddy’s performance was physical.)

Considering that Roddy played such a large part in Apes’ success, starring in all but one film and standing tall as the live-action TV show’s figurehead, it does seem a bit strange that his name is absent from Return’s cast list. But, of course, there is a link back to the movies in the shape (or rather the voice) of Austin Stoker, who played MacDonald in Battle For The Planet Of The Apes. Stoker, as Jeff, gets top billing in Return - which might explain why he hogs the series’ only futuristic weapon, the legendary laser drill.

As much as I enjoy Austin’s performance in Battle (and as a huge John Carpenter fan, I wouldn’t be doing my job if I failed to sneak in a mention for Assault On Precinct 13, too), he often seems to be struggling in Return to make the unnatural-sounding, exposition-drenched dialogue seem believable - a problem with all of the human(oid) characters, and which even affects the apes to a certain extent.

In episode 11, Mission Of Mercy, there’s a ‘ticking clock’ montage, to show the passing of time while Cornelius is hard at work in his lab. In certain shots, the art is very different to the show’s usual style, appearing photo-like, with more facial detail. Two shots in particular stand out: one of Cornelius looking very much like Roddy McDowall, and another of Zira looking like Kim Hunter. The ‘Roddy’ one is reproduced above, while a more typical shot of Cornelius, from the same episode, is below. What do you reckon? I mean, it is, isn’t it?
With each episode lasting an average of just 24 minutes, and the animation not up to the task of depicting subtle facial expressions or bodily movement, the characters have to explain their motivations at nearly every junction, in the simplest way possible. And even when it is obvious what's happening, characters inexplicably 'narrate' it. The humanoids' burdens are possibly the heaviest of all because, unlike the apes, they don't have a can full of character traits they can use to oil the creaky scripts.

Still, what the series lacks in the dialogue department, it makes up for in its scope. Plot-wise, the 13-part series is quite ambitious, boasting a sweeping story arc that means it plays like a serial (note those episode titles - all but two shows use the classic 'of', 'on', 'from', 'to' structure, harking back to the world of '50s sci-fi). Each episode is a self-contained adventure that forms part of a much larger story - a tradition started by the Apes films, though one which was, for the most part, neglected for the live-action TV show, which, after its establishing episodes, could have been transmitted out of sequence without anyone noticing.

While Virdon, Burke and Galen make their mark on plenty of individuals in their 14-episode run, societal change remains a long way off. Not so in Return, where Bill, Jeff, Judy, Cornelius and Zira make some serious progress: the human settlement is moved to a safer place, a fortress is built, and Zalus realises that Urko has his own agenda and relieves him of his command.

By the final episode, Battle Of The Titans, hope is in sight for the humanoids, with Cornelius about to reveal their secret history in the hope that it will end the war - a little knowledge, hopefully, going a long way.

Though three more episodes were mooted - in which the humanoids kicked ape butt, leading to what supervising director/associate producer Doug Wildey describes in Joe Russo's book Planet Of The Apes Revisited (Thomas Dunne Books, 2001) as an "uneasy truce" - they were never made, and Return ends with a 'who knows?' - an equally satisfying way to finish, considering the Planet Of The Apes legacy.

Return has garnered very few critiques or notices over the last 28 years. It certainly lacks the wealth of professional reviews that the movies and live-action TV show picked up. Could this be because it's a cartoon, and therefore "kids' stuff"? Or is it because it's thought of as the last gasp of a dying franchise, and therefore not worthy of the attention?

One possibility is that, with TV screenings being so rare, and no official video release, hardly anyone's seen the show. Mostly watched these days on fourth-generation VHS tapes, Return appears to have fallen down the back of Planet Of The Apes' sofa. Which is a shame as, despite the flaws and limitations, it's an enjoyable five hours. With Apes fandom at its highest peak since the '70s, now would be an ideal time to issue the series on DVD, perhaps with a commentary by its stars (hey, Austin Stoker says he'd be up for it - see this issue's interview, starting on page 21).

As things stand, the best 'commentary' on the series can be found in Eric Greene's highly regarded Apes book, Planet Of The Apes As American Myth: Race, Politics And Popular Culture (Wesleyan University Press, 1996), in which the author draws parallels between Return's story and characters and the events of, and players in, the Vietnam war - only this time, Uncle Sam comes out the other side with his head held high.

Greene builds a convincing and detailed argument - even suggesting that Urko was drawn with big bushy eyebrows in some scenes to make him look more like President Nixon.

Even Doug Wildey can't deny the strength of Greene's case. Though he claims not to have made the series with Vietnam in mind, he admits that the war might have been working away on his subconscious: "In retrospect, you know, strangely, I never thought of it that way but... for what it's worth, that's what it was all about."

Of course, for most viewers glued to their TV sets on Saturday mornings, 'what it's all about' was humans battling for freedom and survival against their would-be masters or murderers. It was another opportunity to see Urko's brawn doing battle with Zalus's brain; another chance to spend some time with Cornelius and Zira; another ticket to ride into the Forbidden Zone and brave some scary illusions.

These reasons alone will ensure that the show continues to attract the attention of curious Apes fans.

After all, who wouldn't sell a couple of their non-essential organs to see a cartoon Urko working himself into a stupour over a humanoid called 'Blue Eyes'?
Return To The Planet Of The Apes: A Guide to the Guide

Objective
My aim here is to outline the series' storyline, and tell you what, I think, are the peaks and troughs of each episode. There are also choice quotes, plus a few notes on things to look for, or listen out for, such as continuity errors (the ones I've noticed, anyway - I'm sure that this is by no means a definitive list) and intriguing or amusing trivia.

Running Order
There seems to be some confusion over the correct order of Return's 13 episodes. Different sources list different running orders. The order I've used here is the one given in the book Planet Of The Apes As American Myth: Race, Politics And Popular Culture, by Eric Greene.

Watching the shows in this order, I can't find any discrepancies (except for perhaps the dead laser drill springing back to life for reasons unexplained, but this looks more like a continuity error than a misplaced episode). And I'm told that the Sci-Fi Channel has shown the episodes in this sequence:

1. Flames Of Doom
2. Escape From Ape City
3. The Unearthly Prophecy
4. Tunnel Of Fear
5. Lagoon Of Peril
6. Terror On Ice Mountain
7. River Of Flames
8. Screaming Wings
9. Trail To The Unknown
10. Attack From The Clouds
11. Mission Of Mercy
12. Invasion Of The Underdwellers
13. Battle Of The Titans

Air Dates
I've not been able to find a definitive set of original air dates, either for the US or UK. The first episode was shown in the States on 6 September 1975. I assumed that NBC screened one a week for 13 weeks - until 29 November. But Eric Greene's book gives the air dates for episodes 3 and 4 as 20 September, and has the series ending on 22 November.

Were two episodes really shown on one day, or is this an accidental duplication? In the absence of any definitive source, I've chosen not to list any air dates. If you can shed some light on the mystery, please get in touch.

Episode #1: Flames Of Doom
Written by Larry Spiegel

Plot
Three astronauts - Bill Hudson, Jeff Allen and Judy Franklin - crash-land on a mysterious planet. While trekking through the desert, they experience strange phenomena: a wandering fire that destroys their possessions, and a terrifying earthquake that swallows Judy whole.

Bill and Jeff eventually come across a 'humanoid' settlement. There, they meet a young woman called Nova, who, though physically capable of speech, doesn't seem to know many words - of any language. She's wearing military dog tags bearing the name Ronald Brent, an astronaut born in the year 2079.

Suddenly, a horn sounds and the humanoids scatter. A convoy of military vehicles is approaching, led by a gorilla general, Urko. Jeff manages to escape with Nova, but most of the humanoids - and Bill - are knocked unconscious, thrown into cages and carted off to Ape City. There, an orang-utan called Zalus tells a chimp scientist, Cornelius, and his wife Zira that they have permission to select some specimens from Urko's catch, to use in their experiments.

Quotes
Jeff: "Someone is already here who wasn't even born when we left Earth!"

Jeff: "They're apes! They can speak!"

Good Bits
The four-minute montage of the astronauts travelling through the desert. It's the series' first real 'moment', feeling like an homage, and therefore a link back to the '68 movie. "Yeah, this is Planet Of The Apes. Let's go!"

Bill and Jeff, still oblivious to the true nature of their surroundings, stumble upon four ape heads carved into the side of a mountain. If those alarm bells aren't ringing now, someone's obviously nicked the battery.

Not-So-Good Bit
The space capsule plummeting through the star field - the first scene that makes you go 'blimey, the animation's not that great, is it?'.

Look Out For...
Bill's magical backpack. In the rockfall sequence, it seems to have a mind, and perhaps even legs, of its own. It appears on his back when he sweeps Judy away, only to vanish again in the next shot.

Near the end of the episode, a gorilla soldier says: "We got all of them, Urko!" Why doesn't he address his superior by rank?
Episode #2: Escape From Ape City
Written by Larry Spiegel

Plot
The convoy returns to Ape City, to be met by a cheering crowd. Zira seems quite taken with Bill, calling him 'Blue Eyes'. Cornelius suggests "a probing operation on his brain centres". Bill is horrified, and cries out. The scientists are taken aback - they've never heard a human speak before. Bill explains that he's from a planet called Earth, but is overheard by a gorilla soldier, who immediately reports the conversation to Zalus and the Council of Elders.

Zalus isn't pleased. He speaks of a secret history where humans were the dominant species, until they destroyed themselves in a cataclysmic war. Aware of the threat that talking humans pose, Zalus orders the entire species destroyed. Cornelius and Zira help Bill to escape. On his way out of the city, he meets Jeff and Nova, who were on their way to rescue him. Freeing some captured humans, they steal a wagon cage and make their escape. Is there anything else they can do to help the humans? They remember the laser drill that sank with their space capsule, and begin hatching a plan...

Quotes
Urko: "The only good humanoid are caged ones... or better yet, dead ones."

Zira: "What a thick-brained lout that General Urko is."

Good Bits
Bill crying out, Taylor-style: "You're crazy! Operate on my brain!?" He's having none of this 'humanoid' lark either. Zira: "A talking humanoid!?" Bill: "A talking human, whose world has been turned upside down - but a talking, reasoning human being, nevertheless!"

Urko berating his soldiers for being a bit thick when they do exactly as he says - i.e. join in the search for the escaped Bill. Really, if he didn't want them to leave the rest of the captured humanoid unguarded, he should've said so!

Not-So-Good Bits
The closing scene, with Bill and Jeff discussing ways to help the humanoid - a prime example of the series' clumsy scripting. The characters are noticeably explaining things for the audience's benefit, rather than their own. Jeff: "It went down in the lake with our spaceship, remember?" Bill: "Sure I remember."

Look Out For...
The three fluttering flags in the foreground when the camera pans over Ape City. Intriguingly, three different flags can be seen in a similar pan in Flames Of Doom. What do these designs represent - countries, states, or something else?

Episode #3: The Unearthly Prophecy
Written by Jack Kaplan and John Barrett

Plot
Bill and Jeff are hiding from the apes when mountains spring up from nowhere, and a door slides open in the ground. The astronauts jump inside, and find a power plant, along with the ruins of an ancient civilisation. The penny finally drops: they've travelled to Earth's future. Following some robed figures, they stumble upon a ceremony in which hordes of people are chanting the word 'oosa'. At the front of the congregation is Judy, who appears to be in some kind of trance.

Captured by 'Krador, leader of the underdwellers(569,467),(880,688), Bill and Jeff learn the history of this strange civilisation. They're told that Judy's coming has fulfilled a prophecy. It all starts to make sense when the astronauts see an ancient stone bust of Judy, with the engraving: 'Lost USA'. Judy comes out of her trance and helps her friends to escape. The trio jump on a railroad cart. Bill and Jeff make it back to the surface, but Judy is spirited away at the last minute by Krador.

Quotes
Bill: "Jeff, this is Earth! We've come 2,000 years into our own future. This ancient civilisation... it's ours!"

Zira: "Cornelius, could it be that our concern for the humanoid goes beyond science?"

Good Bits
Bill and Jeff realising that the underdwellers had taken USA - or 'Oosa' - as the name of their lost saviour. A very satisfying piece of plotting.

The final shot of a partially buried, 20th century parking meter running out of time.

Not-So-Good Bits
Jeff interrupting the ceremony with a loud, echoey cry of: "Hey, Judy, it's us, Bill and Jeff!" Has he never heard of rescue by stealth?

The underdwellers' chant of 'Oosa Oosa'. I know I've been spoilt with the unsettling discordance of the mutants' songs in Beneath. But, c'mon, Return's underdwellers sound like a railway station full of football fans after a home win. I keep expecting them to strike up an 'oggy, oggy, oggy'.

Look Out For...
Bill's disappearing backpack straps. In the opening scenes, he's wearing a pack with over-the-shoulder straps, visible from the front. When he says the line "Not without a fight", the straps are gone. In his next close-up ("I'm the only one they've seen"), they're back. Still, as the packs were destroyed by fire in Flames Of Doom, this is the least of this episode's continuity problems...
Episode #4: Tunnel Of Fear
Written by Larry Spiegel

Plot
Bill and Jeff hatch a plan to move the humans to a safer place, somewhere they can fortify. They travel back to Ape City to ask for Cornelius and Zira's help. The simian scientists are pleased to see the astronauts. Cornelius has an idea for a location - an unexplored, hard-to-reach valley to the south of his current archaeological dig. After wrestling with his conscience and loyalties, he agrees to provide a map and start the humans off on their journey.

At the dig site, Bill and Jeff set off down an underground river. Paddling on a log, they're pulled over a steep waterfall, and eventually washed up back at the humanoid settlement. Once again, they start planning to retrieve the lost laser drill...

Quotes
Gorilla soldier: "[The new wagon cages'] construction has just been completed, sir. They'll be stronger and more uncomfortable than ever."

Urho: "History will remember this attack of mine as military genius."

Good Bit
The exchange between Cornelius and the "gorilla desert patrol" near the end of the episode, when Cornelius is challenged outside the caves. It's my favourite moment of the entire series - I love the way that the gorilla goes from bravado to dopiness in just four words (the last line, below).

Cornellius: "What are you doing here?"
Gorilla: "Working."
Gorilla: "What kind of work?"
Cornellius: "I'm an archaeologist."
Gorilla: "Oh yeah? What's that?"

Not-So-Good Bit
Bill and Jeff suddenly finding themselves stuck into a giant spider's web. In one shot, they're backing away from the spider; in the next, they're trapped in the web. It feels like some shots are missing.

The number of coincidences that this episode's story relies on stretches the boundaries of credibility, too. When Bill and Jeff need to escape the web, they find a sharp piece of tin. When they have to cross a river, they find a boat. Then they open a manhole cover to find themselves slap-bang outside Cornelius and Zira's lab. Okay, hands up, who's got the four-leaf clover?

Episode #5: Lagoon Of Peril
Written by J.C. Strong

Plot
A newspaper reports that intelligent humans have been discovered, after a gorilla soldier returns from the Forbidden Zone babbling about a space ship and talking men. Ape City goes wild. Zaius and Urko visit the Forbidden Zone to seek the truth. Cornelius and Zira warn Bill and Jeff, and the astronauts decide to destroy the space capsule.

Braving the undergrounds' illusions, the astronauts outrun the apes' expedition and reach the capsule. Bill dives inside the wreckage to retrieve the laser drill and prime the ship's self-destruct sequence. With the ship set to blow, he's chased by a strange serpent-like monster. Jeff dives in with the laser drill and shoots it, allowing the pair to escape.

The astronauts watch as the capsule explodes, destroying the damning evidence. Zaius and Urko arrive to see nothing but a monster leaping around in the lagoon. "Well, General Urko," says Zaius. "There's your space ship."

Quotes
Zaius: "On this great day, we venture forth on the most important expedition in simian history. Forward, for the good of apekind!"
Zaius: "For history's sake, I hope we don't find anything."

Good Bits
Cornelius and Zira bidding farewell to Bill and Jeff, and Zira admitting that she's become "awfully fond" of them. Cornelius: "Come now, Zira dearest. That's no way for a behavioural scientist to act." Zira: "Right now, all I want to be is a female." It's the closest the series gets to the famous Taylor/Zira kiss.

The screaming, firebreathing skull conjured up by the undergrounders during the violent storm - a genuinely dark and scary moment.

Not-So-Good Bit
The gaggle of apes with their mouths hanging open at the council meetings. In theory, they're fun shots. In practice, they're static pictures. A few blinking eyes would have helped.

Look Out For...
The two newspaper headlines: 'Intelligent Humanoids Invade Planet Of The Apes?' (in the Ape City Tabloid, pictured) and 'Planet Of The Apes Safe!' (in the Ape City Bugle). Urko and Zaius also say 'planet of the apes' during council meetings, and an orang TV newscaster slips it into two different news reports, suggesting that: a) the apes don't have a formal name for their home world, and b) the writer was trying to cram in as many mentions of 'POTA' as possible.
Episode #6: Terror On Ice Mountain
Written by Bruce Shelly

Plot
Cornelius finds a 2,000-year-old book called A Day At The Zoo. It depicts a society where apes were caged and humans walked freely. Realising that it could inflame General Urko, he decides it's best hidden away for the time being. He enlists the help of Bill and Jeff, and sets about building a hot-air balloon, using some blueprints he (accidentally) brought home from an archaeological dig.

Cornelius and Bill use the balloon to travel to Mount Garr, where they'll hide the book. They're blown off course by a severe snowstorm, and crash-hand next to an ice sculpture of a giant gorilla. Trekking on, they collapse with the cold, but are rescued by a wise, old, oriental-sounding ape who welcomes them to the "Temple of Kygoor." Bill asks him to help find their balloon so they can return home.

Climbing the mountainside in a cable car, the trio head towards Kygoor, the ice sculpture, but nearly come a cropper when Urko's troops try to cut the cable. Thankfully, Kygoor protects them; a real giant gorilla bursts free from the statue, sending the troops plummeting. The book is left with the mountain apes, for safe-keeping, and Bill and Cornelius head for home in their repaired balloon, Kygoor lending a hand with their take-off.

Quotes
Zira: "Gondola. What a beautiful name. Was it a scientist who thought of that, or a poet?"

Cornelius: "I have made a very important scientific discovery... When one is flying, it is best not to look down."

Good Bits
The gorilla ski patrol (gorillas on skis) and the mountain apes. Dig those furry-headed jackets. I demand action figures.

Kygoor busting free of his ice 'chains'. As a King Kong fan, I can't help but smile at the homage.

Not-So-Good Bit
The snowstorm seems to last an age (though it must be said, those sound effects work a treat - I feel cold watching this episode). When the crash finally comes, it's a relief. Phew, the plot can get moving again...

Look Out For...
The condition of the book. Considering its age, it's remarkably well preserved. The edges might be a bit jagged, but the pages are clean, and the pictures brightly coloured. Oh, and be sure to study that cover. You will be tested later...

Episode #7: River Of Flames
Written by John Barrett and Jack Kaplan

Plot
Bill and Jeff are visited by a vision of Judy, who urges them to visit the 'below world' with their laser drill. If they don't, the underdwellers, and possibly the entire planet, will be destroyed. The astronauts, taking no chances in case it's a trick, hide the drill before heading underground. But it's true. Krador tells them that a once dormant volcano has started bubbling to life, its molten lava threatening the underdwellers' caverns, one of which is directly beneath their power supply.

Krador asks Bill and Jeff to cut a new path through the mountain using their laser drill, so that the lava can escape. Bill tries to bargain with Krador: if they do as he asks, will he release Judy? At first, Krador says no, but Judy promises to return when needed, so Krador reluctantly agrees.

Bill and Jeff return to the cave to collect the laser drill, but find it missing - it's now in Urko's hands. They set about retrieving it. Unfortunately, when they do, Jeff discovers that it's missing one of its power cells. The hole it burns in the mountainside is too small to do any real good. Luckily, Urko and his army decide to attack, and unwittingly help the underdwellers' cause. Krador frees Judy, who promises to return when called.

Quotes
Urko: "Research? Ha! We need arms. What borders does research protect?"

Jeff: "That's no earthquake, that's a Howitzer!"

Good Bits
The lava bursting out of the mountainside, and gorilla soldiers running for their lives. As they watch from higher ground, a doppy-sounding soldier says: "We blow up a volcano!"

Urko being berated by Zalus: "According to the report, General Urko, you not only allowed the talking humanoid to escape, but you fired on an active volcano, destroying all of your military equipment." Urko shrugs: "But... But how was I to know?" Cue much simian laughter.

Not-So-Good Bits
"But Judy, we'll have to know more. Thank goodness you're here to tell us," Tom Williams battles with a bad line, and loses. As Harrison Ford famously said to George Lucas, "You can type this shit, but you sure can't say it."

Judy displaying an alarming lack of basic maths skills: "Our home is 3,000 years away. I wonder if we'll ever see it again..."
Episode #8: Screaming Wings
Written by John Barrett and Jack Kaplan

Plot
The astronauts, a trio once again, see an ape flying a WWII fighter plane, firing a large net at a pair of humanoid dummies being used for target practice. Urko, pleased with his new toy, gives Zaius the good news. Zaius is wary, calling the plane "a link to a past best forgotten," and orders him to destroy it. Urko, however, is having none of it: "From now on, I give the orders, Dr. Zaius."

Bill, Jeff and Judy, aware of the danger that the plane poses, plan to steal it. They locate the hangar and discover an aircraft factory, making copies of parts from the fighter. It soon becomes obvious that the apes don't yet know how the machine works; they're still studying the fighter. The astronauts decide that the best way to stop the production would be to destroy the one working plane.

Urko, keen to show off the new weapon, stages a public display, using live humanoids as targets. Before any damage can be done, though, Bill and Jeff tie up the pilot and substitute one of their own - Judy - and ram a steam train into the aircraft factory. Zaius, having watched the disaster unfold, publicly announces his doubts about Urko's ability to lead the military, to many cheers.

Quotes
Zaius: "You will learn, Urko, that true leadership cannot be taken. It must be earned."

Gorilla solider (having been netted, along with Urko): "Oh, no."

Good Bits
Urko standing defiant in front of Zaius, unwittingly sowing the seeds of his downfall.

The ape pilot, Wing Commander Largo, appearing behind Urko as he's radicling the plane an order. Largo: "I can't!" Urko: "Why can't you?"
Largo: "Because I'm here."

Zaius airing his doubts about Urko. Let the power struggle begin.

Not-So-Good Bit
Bill, high up on a mountainside, using a mirror to signal his presence to Cornelius and Zira in their lab in Ape City, when they're not even expecting a call. As Judy says, "I hope they're the only ones who see it." What luck, they are!

Look Out For...
The oil drums rolling down the hill - four on the bottom row, two on the top, all rolling clockwise. Fiction says it's an impossible formation. (Go on, try it with some empty loo rolls.)

Episode #9: Trail To The Unknown
Written by Larry Spiegel

Plot
Zaius believes that Cornelius and Zira stole the aircraft, but rather than taking them to task, he thanks them. Whoever stole the aircraft, he says, has saved akind from being taken over by Urko's military dictatorship. To keep Urko busy, Zaius grants him permission to mount a reconnaissance mission to the humanoid caves.

However, the humanoids are moving to New Valley. On the way, they find the ruins of a space ship, where they meet a US astronaut called Ronald Brent, who crash-landed there some 15 to 20 years before. He tells a tale of meeting primitive humans. He says that he knew Nova as a child, but became separated from her and her tribe during a sandstorm, and hasn't seen a living soul since. He has no idea that apes inhabit the planet. He does, however, know the way to New Valley.

Urko arrives at the caves to find them deserted, but he soon picks up the humanoids' trail. By the time he reaches New Valley, the humanoids have built a stone fortress. The apes attack with gas bombs, but end up gassing themselves when they don't penetrate the humanoids' defence. Realising that the army will return with heavier firepower, the humanoids use the self-destruct mechanism from Brent's ship to blow up the bridge into the valley.

Quotes
Jeff: "I can't believe it! Bill, it's a... it's a space ship! An American space ship!"

Bill: "Well, Ron, on behalf of all of us, welcome back to the human race."

Good Bits
A raging Urko referring to the Council of Elders as "nothing but a bunch of old creaking apes."

The discovery of a hairy, loinclothed Brent. Remember Nova's dog tags?

Not-So-Good Bit
Jeff using the laser drill to cut thousands of bricks from rock. Er, didn't its power cell conk out in River Of Flames?

Look Out For...
Urko promising a reward of "one thousand pieces of siimian silver" to the ape who tracks down the plane thief. Ah, so that's their currency! There's gotta be a Trivial Pursuit question in that...

Brent's crashed ship, which brings to mind the buried Oberon from Tim Burton's film (check out those skeletal sections).
Episode #10: Attack From The Clouds
Written by Larry Spiegel

Plot
A giant 'monster bird' is terrorising Ape City. The army is powerless, and a paranoid Urko wonders if it's part of a plot to undermine his military leadership. However, the beast eventually disappears of its own accord, and the government focuses its attention back on 'Blue Eyes'. Zalus gives Urko one last chance to track down Bill. If he fails, says Zalus, he'll be dealt with "in the appropriate way".

Bill and Judy set off to retrieve the stolen plane, in case Urko finds it. While they're gone, New Valley is attacked by the monster bird, which chases the humanoids' cattle into a cave. Jeff uses the laser drill to cut a hole in the mountainside, so that food and water for the herd can be taken in. The monster bird sees them and swoops down to attack, eventually setting its sights on the humanoid fortress. Bill and Judy return with the plane, and manage to clip one of the creature's wings, sending it plummeting into a lake.

Quotes
Zalus: "This is to be the general's final opportunity. He has pledged not to fail, no matter what the cost."

Urko: "They're out to get me, I know it! They want me out and are turning everyone against me!"

Good Bit
An increasingly desperate and paranoid Urko berating his troops for the umpteenth time that day: "Do you realise I'm the laughing stock of the city?" Urko's always good value for money, even in middle episodes such as this.

Not-So-Good Bits
The sudden appearance of grazing cow-like creatures. "New Valley pastures seem perfect for the herd," says Brent, as if the animals had been part of the humanoids' luggage all along.

Nova falling over and seemingly waiting to be trampled by rampaging cattle.

Brent stating the obvious and appearing to narrate the action: "Jeff, the monster bird is taking off!" He knows - he's there with you watching the damned thing.

Look Out For...
A misplaced shoulder strap. Around eight minutes in, when the two gorilla soldiers are discussing Urko, both have straps over their left shoulders. When it cuts to a long shot ("I've never seen the general so scared"), one of the soldiers is seen from the back, the strap now sitting on his right shoulder.

Episode #11: Mission Of Mercy
Written by Larry Spiegel

Plot
With the plane nearly out of fuel, Bill and Jeff drive to Ape City in the hope of finding some. While they're gone, Nova becomes ill. Brent says that, unless medication is administered, the disease will become highly infectious within 48 hours; in another 24, it'll be fatal.

Judy takes the plane and flies to Ape City to ask for Cornelius and Zira's help, planning to refuel for the return journey. She doesn't make it, but manages to find Bill and Jeff hiding out at an abandoned farmhouse. When the trio eventually arrive at Ape City, Judy convinces Cornelius to make the serum, while Bill and Jeff head straight for the ruins of the aircraft factory to collect fuel.

As time is short, Cornelius and Zira drive Judy back to the plane in an ambulance, speeding through the streets. After a spot of trouble with an overheated truck and a gorilla patrol, Bill and Jeff return with the fuel. Judy makes it back to New Valley in the nick of time, saving Nova's life and ensuring that the infection doesn't spread.

Quotes
Brent: "These symptoms are clear cut, Judy. I've seen them before. It's a chronic case of acute infectious streptococcus."

Urko: "Hope to find it! I'm not interested in hope, soldier!"

Good Bits
The shot of the New Valley fortress from the air. It's the first real chance we've had to see it in all its glory and it looks magnificent, set in the side of a rock face like that.

Cornelius and Zira being doornstepped by a pair of white-haired gorillas collecting for the "Gorilla Veterans Relief Fund".

The 'ticking clock' montage, one of the series' best-looking moments. When Return tries to do something different visually, it usually comes up trumps. It's just a shame it doesn't try more often.

Not-So-Good Bits
The astronauts' luck starting to stack a bit too high. How will they get to Ape City? They'll use a truck left behind in New Valley by the gorillas. How will they know where they're going? They'll use a map that the gorillas left in the truck...

Brent spelling out his friend's fate in very specific terms: "Poor Nova won't last more than another few minutes; then we'll all be infected." Does this virus work to an exact schedule? And even if it does, how does Brent know the exact time of Nova's infection? Come to think of it, without a watch, how does he keep track of time at all?
Episode #12: Invasion Of The Underdwellers
Written by J.C. Strong

Plot
Ape City's treasures are being stolen. The finger of suspicion points to the underdwellers. But the real culprits are Urko and a band of gorilla soldiers, who are dressing up in robes and going thieving to convince Zalus to declare war on the below world. Krador learns of the plot and asks for the astronauts' help. They agree, and Krador takes them to the Tomb of the Unknown Ape, where they discover a wealth of stolen goods, along with a collection of robes.

Urko hatches a scheme to use a barge packed with explosives to blow up a section of tunnel, flooding the underdwellers' home - an action that, unbeknown to Urko, would also cause Ape City's destruction. The general's plans are foiled, though, when Bill and Jeff board the barge and put it into reverse. Urko's scheme has, literally, backfired. Zalus relieves the general of his command.

Quotes
Urko: "Gentle simians, senators, members of the council: I ask you, I plead with you, nay I beg you, for a declaration of war!"

Cornelius: "Urko? No! I just can't believe an ape would do such a thing."

Good Bits
Urko and Zalus questioning witnesses to the robberies, including an elderly lady ape called Mrs Von Gruen and a gorilla guard called Captain Greylaw (it's nice to see the smaller characters given names) - both of whom turn out to be Urko's stooges.

The pan around the horde of stolen treasures, our first glimpse of the legendary 'Ape-a Lisa' - yes, it's the Mona Lisa with simian features.

Zalus: "You're the general. Do something."
Urko: "I intend to... Run for it! Every ape for himself!"

Not-So-Good Bit
Jeff once again using the laser drill. The drill is fast becoming the solution to every problem the astronauts encounter.

Look Out For...
The police apes in their blue uniforms. Until now, the army have dealt with any wrongdoers.

Probably the largest moustache in cartoon history - absolutely unmissable on the chops of the museum curator.

The dedication in the front of Cornelius and Zira's stolen book. It's signed 'Uncle Hubert'.

Episode #13: Battle Of The Titans
Written by Bruce Shelly

Plot
Urko begins a three-month suspension from duty. Cornelius starts to worry what will happen to the humanoid when the general returns. Realising he has a clear shot at publicising his theory of ape/humanoid history, he asks the astronauts to help him retrieve the book from the mountain apes. Bill and Cornelius begin a perilous 600-mile flight in the old hot-air balloon. As they set off, they're attacked by the monster bird, but manage to escape using a patch of dark cloud as cover.

Urko, meanwhile, enlists the help of Colonel Rotok, and continues his persecution of the humanoids, launching an immediate attack on New Valley. Judy sets off to fetch the plane, the only real weapon that the humanoids have. She swoops down on the attacking apes and they start to scatter.

Bill and Cornelius reach the mountain apes' temple, and travel up the mountainside in a cable car to reach Kygoor, who's guarding the book. On their way back down, they're attacked by the monster bird, but Kygoor breaks free of his ice overcoat and fights back on their behalf, eventually scaring the creature off. Bill and Cornelius begin their journey home. Bill: "With that book, we can change the history of the planet." Cornelius: "Peacefully, I hope, peacefully..."

Quotes
Judy (mending the balloon): "This isn't a balloon, it's one big patch."

Colonel Rotok: "We must follow Urko's plan to the letter."

Good Bits
Zira: "Every time I think I married you for your beautiful eyes, you do something that reminds me I was really attracted to your exceptional brain."

Cornelius: "I could say the same about you, Zira."

Zira: "If you do, you'll hurt my feelings."

Kygoor swinging the monster bird around his head. Way to go, Mr K!

Not-So-Good Bit
The return of the monster bird. Earplugs at the ready, here we go again. Soreeear! Soreeear!

Look Out For...
Judy and Zira repairing the balloon. Sewing? In 1975, that was, naturally, a job for the ladies.

The uncovering of the book - its cover has changed since its first appearance in Terror On Ice Mountain (see pic, above). And neither Bill nor Cornelius notice.
GORILLA GRAMS

Whew! Issue 6 of Simian Scrolls produced a massive response and the largest number of letters of any issue yet. Space dictates that we can’t run all of the letters but the following are a sample. It is always wonderful to have feedback, whether critical or positive. Scrolls is by Apes fans for Apes fans and we want to hear from everybody.

Gerald Crotty wrote to say "another excellent issue. I really enjoyed Rob Kirby’s article on the comics, a brilliant piece of research, as was the history of the UK comic". Rich Cross, as ever, seems to have hit the right note for UK Apes fans (there is more from Rich starting on page 14 of this issue) and we were delighted to receive Rob Kirby’s follow up on both articles as follows:-

Finally worked my way through the latest Simian Scroll - loved the cover, and also very much enjoyed the latest article by Richard Cross. While he is right to be critical of POTA, it nevertheless did pave the way for Star Wars Weekly. There was definitely a "Sci-Fi comics don’t sell" ethos at work on both sides of the Atlantic prior to the success of the Star Wars movies. However, if I may, I’d like to expand upon one or two points in the interests of clarity.

I think I made an error in judgment when compiling the extract, by not including a small amount of material from the chapters dealing with the operation of Marvel in Britain. Basically, there really was no British Marvel until Dez Skinn took over in 1978. Perhaps I should have explained that from 1972, until the "Marvel Revolution", all the British weeklies were actually constructed in the States.

The Editor of the day, whether it be Tony Isabella, or letterly Larry Lieber, guided the selection of material and helped with the construction of schedules for several weeks’ worth of issues, to allow time for stats to be made from all the relevant art work pages. The issues were then assembled onto art boards, zip-a-toned, touched up, re-proofed for errors missed before their original US publications, and then mailed by courier to the UK.

All the London office then had to do was modify any spellings to UK parlance (“color” becoming “colour” and so forth), add any extra editorial pages, letters pages and advertisements, and arrange for the issues to go to print. When they weren’t doing that, they were all letters, competition entries and promotional events to deal with, such as Stan Lee’s Roundhouse shows and the ABC cinema events.

I’ve literally just come into contact, via another source, with someone who was actually with the London office almost throughout this entire period, so I’m hopeful of gaining a bucket load of additional insights to fill out this rather slim point in the history section. For the present, based on what I do know, I’d be surprised if the UK offices had much, if any, say on what strips were chosen for UK publication. I’m certain that Dez was just being a bit forgetful, because while Neil Tennant was certainly on staff during POTA’s day in the sun, how could have had little to do with the actual content bar helping with letter pages and so on.

As Richard said, the comic was certainly marred by bad planning from the start - hence the risible Ape slayer! Marvel US really should have known better than to launch the two transatlantic variations quite so close to each other. At least it showed them how to do Star Wars Weekly properly later on, so the venture wasn’t a loss by any means. Mind you, a certain UK artist, currently inking a long running strip for Marvel UK (I think that’s a good enough hint), gave me a verbal hand-slap for criticising Ape slayer. It seems he loved the idea, and even though he was aware it was actually retooled Killraven material, he was still waiting for it to connect together with the later P. Craig Russell Killraven’s he was currently buying in the full colour Marvel imports. Hmmm. Unless I’ve missed something, I think you’ll find the majority of the strips in the UK edition match the US one, albeit spread rather too thinly over too many issues. Bar a few chapters that shifted panels around to create page breaks, there were of course those weeklies that actually ran far more pages than the later US editions. If anything it was the American magazine that had the rigid format, because the UK weekly could quite easily vary the length of its instalments to accommodate the needs of both the lead strip and any back-up stories as necessary.

Again, Richard is oh so right when he says that Marvel wouldn’t countenance any additional expenditure on strip material purely for Britain. You have to remember that Captain Britain only came about, because the series was then going to be reconfigured as a US colour comic, which bar a few Marvel Tales cut-about back-up strips, sadly never happened. I’m sure he’s right that the demise of the TV series scotched the US magazine (although you do have to wonder if its appeal would have waned once they had passed the movie adaptations by more than a few months of Marvel’s own erratic material), and thereby signalled the end of the UK title once the material had dried up. In the end every Ape story surfaced in Britain at least once, along with several of the edited “Adventures” versions of the earlier movie adaptations in latter issues of the weekly too, and there weren’t many Marvel series you can say that of in Britain!

I can’t argue with Dez when he explained that because the American Editors didn’t really understand the UK marketplace, they often handicapped the longevity of their own comics unnecessarily. However, while Richard states is equally true, when he talks about the inevitable sales spiral following the burst of the first few issues, until a merger or relaunch temporarily raises the figures back up again. It would be lovely to discover the sales figures for all the weeklies, but I’m not holding my breath for anything other than the early Marvel Revolution figures that Dez gave me many years ago, wherein Star Wars Weekly was outselling even 2000AD, hence IPC’s interest in the title when Marvel UK almost closed and put their comics range up for sale! You’ll have to buy the book to get the lowdown on that shocker! I’m well chuffed that readers of Simian Scrolls are champing at the bit for the release of my Marvel UK book, - trouble is, so am I! Briefly, I was all but ready to go to the presses with a self-published edition when Dez Skinn stepped in and offered a stunning co-publication deal. Now with his industry contacts and all the promotion that this will bring it was wonderful news. However, the downside was that we would now have to transfer about 400 pages of material on to an electronic design platform, Pagemaker. The original version of the book, while partially computer typeset (with some earlier pre-computer material was done on a typesetting hotfoil typewriter - well it was back in the 1990s), was compiled in the time honoured tradition of paste-up on physical boards.
Anyway the upshot of all this is that I'm just clearing the decks of other commitments to begin seriously getting into this new program, so that Dez and I can then split the re-design between us, but that will take several months. With the full time job I have, there is sadly no way I could take a career break, which would be the ideal solution. So, unless I suddenly win the Lottery, I remain as frustrated as it sounds like your readers are. Rest assured, I will keep plodding on and it will get published. When exactly I just can't say yet. But worry not, I'll be sure and let John and you know when it's finally gone to print. You'll probably be able to hear the cheering wherever you live, just by stepping outside, and that'll just be the relief of my family that it's all been finally wrapped up! Thanks for all your support and interest.

ROB KIRBY

There will be a serialisation of Rob's history of UK Marvel in Comics International (see page 17 of this issue for ordering details for Comics International - an essential read for any comics fan). Jon Carpenter (Jon, not John! Carpenter) wrote in to thank us for the "great Apes comics coverage and an amazing cover" and also asks if there is any chance of more comics coverage in future issues to examine the 1990s Adventure Comics line. Jon, you must have read our minds. We are planning to have interviews with some of the creators of the Adventure Comics in a future issue and, with a few more Apes comic surprises in the pipeline, we are planning, next year, to have another comics themed issue. Anybody who wants to contribute can get their thinking caps on or their pencils in hand!

Susan Chandler wrote in to tell us that she very much liked the article about the Planet of the Apes Annuals - the feature on the UK Annuals brought back a lot of memories for a lot of UK Apes fans. Darren Stockford enjoyed the "great Ian Edginton Interview" (we are not sure whether or not that means Ian is great or the interview was great - probably both!) and suggested a cartoons special. Darren enjoyed the last fanzine so much, he decided to write substantial chunks of this one! Darren is a shining example of getting involved and hopefully will inspire other readers to participate in putting Scrolls together - Scrolls is for the fans and, as you can see, is created by the fans and everyone is welcome. Kind words have come in from around the globe (hello Dean Preston down in New Zealand - we all miss you up here!) and Scott Coles in Canada e-mailed us to say that he was "especially entertained by the Teen Book reviews by Urko Unsworth. Give him a pint of banana lager for me. Or a beating ... whichever would suit him best!" We'll compromise by giving Roy Mitchell a beating with a banana.

"Thief" by Dave Ballard was universally well received by readers and if there are any other readers out there itching to see their fiction in print, just contact us. Carl Critcho’s amazing cover for Scrolls 6 drew praise from all quarters (including SFX Magazine and Comics International) and Dave Ballard’s amazing cover mosaic on the back page was greeted with delight by all fans. The work and effort that went into the cover mosaic certainly paid dividends - taking the time to look at each individual cover is a very pleasant trip down memory lane (unless of course you are remembering the issues you used to own but now no longer have). As a result of the fantastic efforts of the contributors, SFX Magazine awarded Simian Scrolls 6 "Fanzine of the Month" again so congratulations everybody. SFX Magazine is the premier magazine for science fiction and if you aren’t already reading it, it comes highly recommended. Because issue 6 was a comics special, Scrolls was also reviewed in a comics context in Comics International and scored a none too shabby 8 out of 10. Even apart from its excellent taste in Fanzines, Comics International is a superb, must read publication for anybody with an interest in comics and ordering details are on page 17 - it's worth it for "Sez Dez" alone!

Special thanks this issue go to, firstly, Dave Ballard. Dave has contributed immeasurably more than the Editor to this issue, including the cover and also the layout and design of the back cover, in addition to the credited pages in the contents page. Without Dave, Simian Scrolls 7 would not have happened. Also, Alan Maxwell has helped massively with the layout of articles for this issue and, again, he deserves far more credit for this issue than its Editor. Many, many thanks to both guys, Simian stalwarts both. A big, big Simian thank you to all of our contributors to this issue - their talent and knowledge are there for all to see. The back cover art is by Dave West. When it was loosely suggested to Dave that, for the Fan Club, a "Kitchen type" image would be good, Dave came back with this work of genius which we like to refer to as "KitchenApe". Dave’s talents are also on display in the very highly recommended and well reviewed "More Than We Seem" which can be ordered at www.devacomics.com. Issue 8 of Scrolls is currently planned to be an Action Figure special, to be released in January, 2004. Contributions to issue 8 are welcome and do not necessarily have to be limited to action figure contributions. We always like to have a bit of variety!

These are exciting times for Apedom. Rittenhouse, the trading card Company, are planning to put out a new series of trading cards based, primarily, on the original POTA movie, with the possibility of more cards after (possibly based on the TV and animated series). As well as the imminent return of Ape Chronicles, the US Fanzine, there is talk of a special edition DVD of the original Apes movie and, whilst it has been delayed, it is hoped that the POTA TV series will be released in the UK later this year. The most exciting development for Apes fans, however, is the establishment of the Official International POTA Fan Club, details of which can be found on page 6. As a special treat for Simian Scrolls readers, we are delighted to have been given the distinction of running the first three pages of the Fan Club’s own comic strip, "Beware the Beast", penned by our very own Dave Ballard, pencilled by Neil Foster and edited by Michael Whitty. Look out for future instalments of Beware the Beast elsewhere - the Official International POTA Fan Club will point you in the right direction. APES ARE BACK.... AND THEY ARE HERE TO STAY! APES RULE!!!
PLANET EARTH - LATE 40TH CENTURY

NOT A GOOD TIME... TO BE HUMAN

BECAUSE HUMANS ARE VERMIN!

CHUU-GICK

INCAPABLE OF RATIONAL THOUGHT

THEY CARRY COMMUNICABLE DISEASES!

KER-BLAM!

AND THEY KNOW THE SOUND OF A RIFLE WHEN THEY HEAR ONE

THE OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL PLANET OF THE APES FAN CLUB PRESENTS...

BEWARE THE BEAST

INTRODUCING GIDEON...

ART: NEIL FOSTER
STORY: DAVE BALLARD
EDITOR: MICHAEL WHITTY
CURRENT EMPLOYER: APE CITY EXTERMINATION AUTHORITY...

AND HE LOVES HIS WORK

IT'S UP AND RUNNING IN A HEARTBEAT

NAKED ANIMAL INSTINCT... THAT'S ALL IT IS

QUICK! IT'S GETTING OUT OF RANGE!

KER-BLAM!

HOW DO THEY KNOW WHEN THEY'RE OUT OF REACH?

HOW DO THEY DO THAT?
YOU'D ALMOST THINK IT WAS MOCKING HIM
LIKE IT WAS DARING HIM TO GIVE CHASE

GRRRRR!

HE EXPECTS IT WILL TURN AND RUN

BUT IT DOESN'T GRUNCH!

WHAT THE...!!!

IT IS MOCKING HIM!

YOU WANT TO PLAY?

LET'S PLAY!

ALL RIGHT THEN

TO BE CONTINUED...
A home for ‘those who would wander with friends in Middle-earth’.

The Tolkien Society

“...a perfect house, whether you like food or sleep, or story telling, or just sitting and thinking best, or a pleasant mixture of them all...”

Founded in 1969 with the author’s approval, the society was formed to further interest in the life and works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

Registered as an educational charity in the UK, we have local groups or ‘smials’ around the world.

We bring together those with like minds, both formally and informally, with gatherings and events throughout the year locally or for the whole society.

Come along to Oxonmoot, our convention/party weekend; this year a four-day weekend to celebrate Tolkien’s life and works in the year he would have been Eleventy-one!

President in perpetuo J.R.R. Tolkien CBE

For more information or membership details www.tolkiensociety.org

or

The Secretary (Scrolls), Sally Kennett, 210 Prestbury Road, CHELTENHAM, GL52 3ER United Kingdom.

“The Ring Goes Ever On” 11-15th August 2005

2005 sees fifty years in print of The Lord of the Rings. In celebration of this, The Tolkien Society, is arranging a week-long conference at Aston University, in Birmingham, UK. Programme of Events to include: Lectures and Panels, Evening Entertainments, Dealers Room, Art Show & Auction, Quizzes, Video Stream, plus tours of Tolkien’s Birmingham.

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NO FEES!

NO FUSS!

THE OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL PLANET OF THE APES FAN CLUB WANTS YOU!

FULL DETAILS INSIDE!!!