

PLANET OF THE APES

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

ALAN JOHN VIRDON, COLONEL



Born in January 12 1942 in Jackson County, Texas¹, where his parents owned a farm in which he grew up; Virdon in his youth learned about farming techniques from his father and how to ride horses. After finishing High School, Virdon enrolled at the University of Colorado in 1961 and Majored in Aeronautics Engineering B.S. and minored in Chemistry². After graduation Virdon entered the U.S. Air Force in 1964; two years later he met and married Sally Hayes³, in which they had a son, Chris born the following year, who while growing up on the family farm in Texas, is taught by Virdon all he knows about farming—particularly the importance of planting the best seeds to insure the health of next year's crop. On the farm, Virdon watches veterinarians work to get familiar with birthing and other techniques. As such, he learns how to help a cow in labour whose calf has turned around in the womb.

By 1974 Virdon now a Major was assigned to Edwards Air Force Base, and meets for the first time Lieutenants' Peter Burke and Stephen Jones and the three men quickly become good friends as astronauts-in-training for the NASA space program. Approximately two years later Virdon is promoted to Colonel, he along with Captains' Peter Burke and Stephen Jones enter the ANSA Interstellar Space Program at The Johnson Space Center. Thus as a training prerequisite, Virdon, Burke and Jones serve together on a mission to Titan to prepare them for Alpha Centauri.

It is now August 19, 1980 and the *Hyperion* is ready for launch to Alpha Centauri, Virdon is mission commander, and accompanying him are Majors' Peter Burke and Stephen Jones. Unknown to them due to political pressure is that their mission will be the last to launch from Cape Kennedy, for shortly after the Icarus Program is cancelled. As the *Hyperion* approaches Alpha Centauri, it travels through "radioactive turbulence" and goes out of control. Is this the famous Hasslein Curve? Virdon directs Jones to activate the automatic homing device before the three astronauts are knocked unconscious. The *Hyperion* crash-lands back to earth about 1100 years into the future, with Jones dead, Virdon and Burke with the help of a human named Farrow find out that the planet is now ruled by apes.

Viridon, the consummate family man, is driven by the need to find a way back home to his wife, Sally and son, Chris. With this in mind, Viridon salvaged a magnetic disk from the now wrecked *Hyperion*, which might just be the ticket home...if Viridon can find a computer to read it. His sense of responsibility extends to his second-in-command, Peter Burke, and their new-found simian friend, Galen, who helped Viridon and Burke escape from Urko, who is the Chief of Security and Zaius, who is the President of the High Council of Central City, as all three of them are now branded fugitives and must avoid capture while on the run. Viridon is also a compassionate man, a problem-solver, the voice of reason and his cool determination and ability to think on his feet make him the de facto leader of the trio.

Being a leader he tries very hard to hear all sides of the story, and occasionally has to pull rank to get things done to his way of thinking, even if it means risking his life. Viridon is very fond of Galen and tries to impart human wisdom whenever he can to help Galen understand humans and their ways.

1-Viridon's birthplace of Jackson County is stated in the episode "The Good Seeds", but of course which one? So I have chosen Jackson County Texas, as Chris his son was also born in Houston, Texas thus it seemed logical that Viridon was too.

2-From the Fan Fiction story "Land Before Time" by SSS 979.

3- Sally's surname is given by Carol Davis in her Fan Fiction story "Countdown".

PETER JAMES BURKE, MAJOR



Born in December 6 1951 to Tom¹ Burke, an ex-Korean veteran, who tries to encourage important lessons that he learned in the Korean War and about life to his son by asking such questions as, "Son, when the going gets tough, and the tough get going, what will you do?" and Mary Powell² a religious woman who read Biblical bedtime stories to Peter, like the Biblical story of Isaac and his twin sons, Jacob and Esau, hoping to implant in him the importance of avoiding deception. With the help of his parents' teachings it was hoped that Burke would grow up with a sense of balance in his life, knowing by feeling and instinct, right and wrong, truth and justice. Burke is one of three children, with two sisters. The family owned a dog named 'Skip'³ and Burke commented once "That he'd preferred to have two dogs and one sister instead". Burke spent his childhood years growing up in Jersey City, attending P.S.103 dreaming of one day becoming an astronaut.

Burke also has a cousin, Steve Burke⁴ who lives in Seacouver, Washington with his daughter Angie. In 1964 Burke began his High School years, and became excellent in athletics and sports, joining the baseball team as a pitcher. By 1970 Burke enrolled at Michigan State University and becomes a running back for the football team and takes R.O.T.C. (*Reserve Officers' Training Corps*) classes; Burke majored in Computer Science⁵ and later upon graduation attained a Bachelors' Degree in Astrophysics and a Masters' in Aeronautic Engineering⁶.

After graduating from Michigan State University, Burke briefly considered purchasing a bar in Jersey City, but decided not to pursue that career path as he felt his future lay in his dream of becoming an astronaut. So in 1973 he enters the US Air Force, During his military training, Burke hated the hours spent running on a treadmill, but his excellent athletic abilities do him good stead as he was able to endure it; As part of that training, Burke was also subjected to a mock interrogation to see how he held up, and did very well and resisted, by only providing only his name, rank and serial number. By 1974 Burke and his friend Stephen Jones who he met through training are both promoted to Lieutenants and assigned to Edwards Air Force Base, in which they meet Viridon to train as astronauts.

In 1976, Burke now a Captain enters the ANSA Interstellar Space Program with Viridon and Jones and begins training for the mission to Alpha Centauri at the Johnson Space Center. Burke progresses well in his studies and new found abilities and in 1978 Burke is promoted to Major, and along with Viridon and Jones serve together on a manned mission to Titan to prepare them for Alpha Centauri. During his time in training, Burke dates a woman named Susan, enjoying many picnics and romantic moments with her. Despite her attempts to get him to talk more about his past, he keeps his emotional distance from her, causing the relationship to end.

It is now 1980 and about two weeks before the 19th of August launch date, after a pre-flight indoctrination, Viridon and Burke enjoy a relaxing couple of days at Hanson Point, on the shore of California. Viridon's wife Sally is there, along with Burke's date, a redhead named Jan Adams. Smitten with her, Burke carves her initials in a cave on the beach. Though Burke is a self proclaimed "ladies' man", Jan is the only woman whose initials he ever carves anywhere.

Burke is gifted with a dry wit and a practical, frequently pessimistic nature; he is impulsive and sarcastic, yet courageous in the face of danger. Burke's hot-headed temperament frequently lands him into trouble but is balanced by a sense of humour which he uses against Galen so he can to liven things up a little, but his wisecracks and rash temper can rub the wrong way creating emotional tension and has an innate kindness buried beneath the bravado. Burke follows Viridon on his quest out of fierce loyalty but is cynical of his and Viridon's chances of ever getting back to their own time and, having no family there, is less motivated to expend energy towards that goal, preferring the 'When in Rome' attitude, nevertheless Burke has a strong sense of duty to Viridon more as a friend than as a fellow officer.

1-Tom, from the fan fiction story "Seven Truths" by Sandra McDonald, and it is also stated in the same story that Tom is an ex-Vietnam veteran, the Vietnam War was between 1959-1975, but the Korean War was between 1950-1953 and is possibly more likely.

2-Powell, from the fan fiction story "Elsewhere" by Carol Davis. Special Note: the first name of Kate was also given to Burke's mother in the story, but I chose Mary from the Fan Fiction story "Echoes of the Past" by Cassidy Rae, to strengthen her religious background.

3-Skip, added by the author.

4-Cousin information, from the fan fiction story "Time Matters" by Dawn Cunningham.

5-This information comes from the Fan Fiction story "Evol-Q-tion" by Dayton Ward.

6-This information comes from the Fan Fiction story "Land Before Time" by SSS979.

GALEN



Born in September 17 3061 to Yalu, who became a respected member on the High Council in 3085, and Ann; both parents currently live in Central City. Galen has a third cousin on his mother's side of the family named Augustus who was born in the same year as Galen, the two chimps grow up together and become close friends. Galen's childhood was like any other chimps, playing and getting into mischief, like hiding in a secret gully to play hooky from school, or like the time when he and Augustus were nine, stealing apples from a neighbour's tree. Galen also has another cousin from his father's side of the family by the name of Pergis¹, a young university student activist who tries to make public the truth and cover-up by Zaius and the High Council about the past and man's role in it from the books that Zaius keeps in his study with almost rebellious results. Galen can be too impulsive at times as well, and this occasionally got him into trouble; and there were other times when Galen went off exploring by himself, for he showed curiosity at a very young age, to this end Galen discovered a small brook near his home, and on days where he would like to be alone, Galen would lay by the stream and listen to the running water, and be comforted by its gentle sound.

During his-what might be termed-High School years, Galen met and fell in love with Kira, and they both became sweethearts, the relationship continued through to university where they continued their studies and by 3081 became engaged to be married, but for undisclosed reasons, they broke off their engagement and wedding plans. In 3085 Galen was going to become Councillor Zaius' Personal Assistant, but that was all about to change when news came of a mysterious ship crashing to earth near the village of Chalo, where Galen's second cousin, Veska was Prefect.

Thus Zaius sent Galen along with Urko to investigate, and as they approached this mysterious ship, Urko captures two humans—two astronauts—Viridon and Burke. On the way back to Central City Galen learns more about them, again his curiosity got the better of him and while going to visit the astronauts in jail outside Central City, prevented their murder being set up by Urko; but by doing so, was himself charged with murdering a gorilla by Urko, thus being jailed himself awaiting execution. But luckily, Viridon and Burke got Galen out, and all three of them became fugitives on the run.

Now an outlaw to his own kind, Galen roams the countryside with his human friends, aiding their quest to discover a way back home. Galen's flair for play-acting and numerous contacts in the ape world (*He seems to have friends and relatives just about everywhere*) help the trio to survive against all odds, while their adventures provide the chimpanzee's insatiable curiosity with an never-ending supply of new discoveries and experiences as well as searching for the truth about his planet's past knowing justice must prevail if there is to be a new sense of freedom for all—human and ape. Although Galen is frequently exasperated by Burke and Viridon's behaviour, the deep friendship shared by the three gives them hope that some day humans and apes may live together in peace. Galen looks up to Viridon as an authority figure while sharing a more brotherly relationship with Burke.

1- This information comes from the Fan Fiction story "No Price Too Great" by Kassidy Rae.

ZAIUS, COUNCILLOR, PRESIDENT OF THE HIGH COUNCIL



Born in March 8 3034, Zaius was elected President of the High Council in 3070, taking over from his mentor and friend Doswa who retired to pursue a quiet life in the country. In 3073 Zaius' first serious stint as President came about when the earth ship the *Pegasus* crash-landed with two surviving astronauts from the past, knowing about earth's precedent history Zaius wanted to question them, but Chief of Security Urko had them killed before he could interrogate them. It was another 12 years before another earth ship the *Hyperion* in 3085 did the same, but this time the surviving astronauts, Viridon and Burke escaped jail with the help of Galen, a chimpanzee that Zaius was considering to hire as his Personal Assistant. But this was never to be as Galen murdered a gorilla helping the astronauts escape, thus along with Viridon and Burke became fugitives on the run.

As the President presiding over the High Council, Zaius' powers extend throughout the known provinces on the western half of the United States. Zaius is a crafty and sometimes ruthless politician who insists on strict adherence to the letter of the law—his law. Zaius knows the truth about mankind's past superiority and is convinced Viridon and Burke represent an infection that will overthrow ape society, by inciting the other humans to rise up and rebel against their masters. *"They are a disease that must not spread; the infection they have is fatal"*. Zaius commented once, but his desire to study them before they are killed, puts him at odds with Urko. *"If we are to know their kind, to prevent their knowledge from increasing to the rest of our society, we must know their thoughts and their plans"*.

Although Zaius rules Central City with an iron fist—almost, he has to a certain degree neglected various teachings of the Lawgiver; this is especially true when he orders Galen's execution, Zaius feels the *"Ape Shall Never Kill Ape"* which was the Lawgiver's (Caesar's *actually*) first law, should not protect or apply to those who are guilty of murder—even if accidental, to prevent judgement. *"If we are to maintain law and order, we must be liberal in our thoughts, if we are to advance simian society"*. As Zaius once told Julian¹ the current Lawgiver, who is not too pleased with how Zaius handles his office, who replied, *"One cannot advance if one walks backwards behind the sun"*.

¹-Julian (The office of Lawgiver between 3047-3093) Geologic Table.

URKO, GENERAL, CHIEF OF SECURITY



Born in October 15 3035, Urko grew up believing that all humans are liars, and that their kind should be exterminated, but as Zaius remarked to him once, *"They have their uses, without them, who would tend the fields, build our dwellings?"* So begrudgingly Urko puts up with them. In 3061 Urko enrolls at the Central City Military Academy, where he befriends two fellow gorillas, Aboro and Bulta. By 3065 near the end of their training Urko, Aboro and Bulta show promise as leaders, but when Aboro is caught cheating in the final days of his senior year, his reputation is irreparably damaged, while Urko and Bulta graduate from the academy. It is during this time Urko meets Elta a daughter of a prominent council member and eventually they marry. Over the next two decades, Urko, Aboro and Bulta remain friends, with Aboro never rising higher than District Chief of the village of Hathor, as the blot on his record prevents his promotion. Aboro pretends to accept his fate but secretly covets Urko's success. For in 3070 Urko becomes a General, the Supreme Commander of the military and the Chief of Central City Security, with Bulta as his assistant.

Urko's true test at being Chief of Security came in 3073 when he captured two humans who claimed to be astronauts from earth's past. Knowing that they posed a danger to simian society, Urko had had them killed before Zaius had time to question them. He remarked later that, *"I was doing my duty as my office demanded"*. But secretly Urko felt that these astronauts would disrupt other humans to stimulate new ways of thinking that could undermine ape rule.

But Zaius was to have a second chance at finding out about earth's past to understand the human mind for in 3085 another earth ship crash-landed, this time Urko's plan to kill them failed. As Urko now had to deal not only with recapturing two astronauts but a chimpanzee as well by the name of Galen who helped them escape, who he now considers a traitor to his own kind. Although Zaius has ordered their recapture alive for interrogation, Urko thinks learning about the astronauts is a waste of time.

Urko secretly wants them dead and will go to any lengths possible to see this through, even if it means going against Zaius' orders. Urko being of the military mind is one tough gorilla, though he can be surprisingly reasonable at times as well as stubborn. Urko is an excellent leader when it comes to the gorilla mentality and is not to be reckoned with. If Zaius is the intelligence behind simian administration and authority, Urko has the strength and power to carry it out with force and with fear.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

1] WWW.POTATV.KASSIDYRAE.CO

2] WWW.HADLEYBURG.DEMON.CO.UK

3] WWW.NETCOMUK.CO.UK

4] 'THE HASSLEIN CURVE' A TIMELINE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES BY RICH HANDLEY.