

# So Long

It was never goodbye. It seems that whenever Dick Clark signed off for any of his broadcasts, it would be with his traditional salute and his familiar "This is Dick Clark... so long." Whether it be the myriad incarnations of the original Pyramid game show, "Bloopers and Practical Jokes" (along side another icon, Ed McMahon), his 30+ years of hosting his own Rockin' New Year's Eve show, the "oldest living teenager" seemed to have his hand in every aspect of every show he was associated with. I was not around to really enjoy the heyday of American Bandstand; however, popular music owes the show and the man most associated with it a huge debt. Bandstand not only brought rock'n'roll to teenage homes on Saturdays but also broke the color barrier by showcasing acts like Chubby Checker, Sam Cooke, the Supremes, Gladys Knight and the Pips, amongst others.

Today, Mr. Clark bid his final *adieu* after suffering a massive heart attack at the age of 82. I'm not sure which I remember him more from. Every New Years for as long as I can remember, the TV was tuned to ABC from 11:35PM onward to witness whatever elements were being thrown on Times Square to ring in the New Year. Until the last few years (after he suffered a stroke), Clark was in the thick of rain, snow, sleet, or 60°+ degree weather counting down the minutes until the ball would drop from atop Number One Times Square to ring out the old and bring in the new.

From time to time, I catch reruns of the many Pyramid shows on GSN. Others have attempted to recapture the success of the original but have failed for whatever reason.

While I was not alive in the 50 and 60s, I do remember seeing some of the hit artists of the 80s on Bandstand. From Michael to Janet to (I'm almost embarrassed to say) Prince, and Madonna AB was a staple after cartoons ended.

HOWEVER... I have been trying to recollect if Mr. Clark had one of those famous "poke their head out the window" cameos on Batman visitng Gotham City from his home Philadelphia way.  
SURE ENOUGH!

Rest in Peace, Mr. Clark. May you ring in the New Year for eternity.

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## Pure Campy Fun!

Back in the 1960's a TV sensation swept the country. With "POWS", "BAMs" and "SMASHES" Batman made it to television. Everything was bright, colorful and loud. In 1966 there was a spinoff from Batman called "The Green Hornet". Adapted from a 1930's radio program, this series (which lasted for 2 years) was a bit darker than Batman. The Hornet fought real crime, and of course Bruce Lee stole the show.

Now on to 2011, a new Green Hornet found his way to the big screen. This show is somewhere between the Campy fun of the 1960's Batman and the darker 1960's Green Hornet. Seth Rogen plays an inept jerk who wants to do good. He has one good idea and Kato (played by Jay Chou) is the master mechanic, martial arts expert with the knowledge to pull it off. The Vigilante, thought by all to be no better than the rest of the criminal underworld, Green Hornet is born.

If you go into this movie expecting it to be soul searching or a deep revelation into the mind of a vigilante hero, you are in the wrong show. There are some martial art fights, lots of things blowing up, a crime syndicate to wipe out, more things being shot at and blown up, some more fighting and more stuff blowing up. And there is comedy, yes there are things to laugh at in this film. 2 hours of mind numbing fun with lots of things being blown up and shot at.

I give it a must see again rating. I may even get the DVD when it hits the cheap shelves.

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# A Bus, A Bus, My Kingdom For A Bus

After our adventures on our own tour of Times Square, the time was near to get on the bus for our twilight tour. I had never gone on a guided tour of the area so I thought it would be kind of neat to sit back, ride around, and learn about the area. We got on top of the two-level bus in the back. There was a canopy that covered half of the bus that some of us had to be wary of or we could end up with a lump on the head. The vehicle took us from So-Ho to No-Ho (hehe), across the Brooklyn Bridge, to Greenwich Village, and pretty much all over. Some of the landmarks we were able to see included the Empire State Building, the Chrysler Building, the Washington Arch (which was constructed to commemorate the centennial of President Washington's inauguration). the Flatiron Building (which served as the facade for the Daily Bugle in the Spider-Man movies). The tour itself was awesome by starlight with the lights and atmosphere... even if it was below 40 degrees. I bundled up the little guy as best I could.

While the tour was enjoyable, the guide was not so enjoyable at times. Quite frequently, he would get carried away with his commentary and we would be at a new location when he was still lecturing about the previous one. He even quipped that the info would be beneficial if any of the passengers were ever going to be on Jeopardy!

Following the tour, we departed the bus. Then the real fun began! We had to find a Waterway bus to get us back to the Ferry to take us back across the Hudson to our Jersey hotel.

This turned into a comedy of errors. To quote Admiral Kirk, "We looked like a cadet review." Apparently, finding

one of the buses required a bit of timely luck. We first had to find a location where we thought one would eventually arrive. So we asked police officers, hotel personnel, and other people who looked like they would know. The most we got was some pointing and mumbling neither of which were extremely helpful. I thought about asking the Dark Knight himself who we saw earlier. Now if Spidey had been patrolling the area, I'm sure that he would have been more than happy to help us. He is from Queens after all.

We eventually got to the location for a bus arrival (I won't say that we were at one time a corner away from it). And we waited, and we waited, and we waited. Chris approached a horse-drawn carriage driver to see if he would take us to the pier (for not less than \$75). A taxi would have been just as bad. Finally, C decided that he would jump out in front of the first Waterway bus that came along. Finally, our hero came along. I think it was two hours after we began looking for one. So, another late night for all. Still no major meltdowns. I was really proud of the kids. However, this would not be the last encounter we would have with Waterway buses.

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## The View From Here

As I read in the newspaper today, I was shocked but not totally surprised that one of my childhood mainstays is being retired. The [View-Master](#) is a small plastic toy in which was place a white white wheel full of 3-d pictures. The wheels initially contained scenes of actual places (The Grand Canyon, Disney Parks, I had a set from Cedar Point that probably would be worth something if only I had been a child who thought about such things). There was a [camera](#) made during the 50s

with which you could create your own View-Master reels. Later, reels of movies, television shows, and other forms of popular culture were introduced. I had reels full of Mickey Mouse, Winnie the Pooh, superheroes (I had a series of Caped Crusader reels taken from the 60s television series featuring Catwoman), the Flintstones, and others.

In an effort to appeal to increasingly uninterested kids, new versions of the toy were introduced. I had the projector that enabled the images to be shown on a wall, or set up in a dark room on a "screen" consisting of a white sheet placed over a few boxes stacked on top of each other. Friends would come into my theatre and watch as the scenes unfolded to improvised narration. I believe there was a "talking" version as well.


Over the years, sales of the View-Master have decreased exponentially. The majority of children are much more interested in video games, DVDs and the like. But for at least one 8-10 year old growing up in the late 70s-early 80s, it provided hours of imagination and fun.

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## **Time In A Bottle, Time On My Hands, Time After Time**

This weekend was really weird. It started off Friday morning when I was asked to work on my day off (now I am working like 12 days in a row). Later, I went to the game night that I previously described (in my newly repaired automobile..l brake problems) where I learned that some friends were looking for a sitter for Saturday night. The next morning, I contacted them and said that I would be happy to watch the four kids. I get off at 4. The plan ALMOST worked out. Instead of a 12-4

shift, it was a 12-9 shift. I felt horrible. I immediately called and explained the situation. Hopefully, there will be other opportunities when I ACTUALLY know my schedule.

Today was a fun day. I only worked until 2 so another great friend and I went to see [Four Christmases](#) which was kind of cute. You can read taylhis' indepth [review](#). Some laughs, not the best movie ever made but it was worth seeing with a friend. We then went to Wal-Mart and spent an hour there wandering around. I ended up completing my [Batman](#) movie collection (yes, I even am the proud owner of the horrendous Batman and Robin travesty; however, I still lack the original big screen adventure from 1966). Along with my [The Dark Knight](#)  DVD is a reproduction of the original comics in which the Joker and Two-Face are introduced. One strange thing about the comic originally published in Detective Comics Issue number 66 (1942) the District Attorney who became the scarred supervillain was named Harvey KENT. I'm not sure how long it took to change the name to Harvey Dent but this took away any confusion that might have been caused with [Superman](#)'s alterego of Clark Kent. That would have made for an interesting story.

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## Vacation Diary – Chapter Four

Wednesday, October 22 – Breakfast at Golden Corral – best omlette I've had in a long time. Then it was off to the Magic Kingdom where our group got separated. It was ironic because they make an announcement on the monorail on the way over to the Magic Kingdom about picking a meeting place in case your party gets separated, and during that announcement, I had a feeling we should probably do that. We ended up finding everyone but not at the meeting place we had designated. The Monsters Inc. show is funny as always, and my husband was

chosen *again* to participate, this time playing "Sully". We skipped Space Mountain this time around because the line was long and by the time we remembered to get fast passes, we were ready to leave Tomorrowland. I also skipped one of my favorites, Peter Pan's Flight, but it was well worth it to get my husband a wheelchair so he could get off his extremely painful infected toe. Besides, the girls still got to ride it with our friend, Jamiahsh. Splash Mountain was fun, although the recent updates the ride incurred saw the song on it changed from the extremely catchy "Zippidy Doo-Dah" to something else I don't even remember. That's 0/2 for me liking the rides they've updated this trip, if you're keeping track.

And this is the second Florida trip where both my husband and I saw a strange and unidentified creature. We're not crazy, but both times we both saw the same things. This time, it was a black figure running across the road which was actually a bridge over another road. When it got to the edge of the bridge, the black shape just kept going – which means it was airborne. I didn't see it "running" really; to me it was a black oval traveling across the road – I couldn't make out any legs. My husband, who has better eyesight than I, saw something running and then flying. Either way, none of this describes any animal I'm familiar with, especially one who is native to the United States. And since I'm on the subject, I will describe our first unidentified creature encounter. It was a few years ago on our way down to Florida, somewhere in the wilderness of Georgia in the middle of the night. I saw something sitting by the side of the road, and then it opened and flapped a LARGE pair of wings and flew a short distance upwards onto a low branch in a tree. It's wingspan was huge – a diameter of a full grown man at least, 6 feet or more. This sighting was witnessed by my husband also, and we call it "Batman". I've looked up various birds and the largest I've found is a condor, but this creature seemed even larger and its body was bigger and shaped less like a bird's body.

Mysteries as yet unsolved...

Well, anyway, talking about the strange creature on Wednesday night disoriented us, and after we got out of Disney World's huge tangle of roads, we went to the Boston Lobster Feast where at least one kid stayed passed out. Because we had 3 of the 4 kids asleep by the time we got back to the condo, Chris and I decided to take our night out that had been scheduled (and cancelled due to kid neediness) for the previous two nights. We went over to the Fun Spot, a newer amusement park next to Old Town. We went on an extreme ride – check this out:



It actually was much more mild than it looks – and no, that's not us in the picture. The ride was kind of lame, really... Conversely, two of the 4 go-cart tracks at Fun Spot are wicked, simply put. And I'm not exaggerating when I say that someone might be killed on those tracks. Unfortunately, I had to witness a little girl speed out of control and hit the wall at a high rate of speed. I think she was alright; she was conscious at least, but she was very scared, and it was terrifying to witness. The one track starts by winding up a ramp, and then when you're at the top, the track drops off so suddenly that I'm sure a cart could get some air if one was on a suicide mission and wanted to try it. So your cart picks up speed down this steep hill, and before the track even levels out, there's a hairpin turn – looks like you're driving in a bowl – followed by another downward slope. I can't believe they let kids drive the course, and I shudder to think what careless, invincible (so they think) teenage boys would do with a go-cart on that track – especially a whole pack of them driving it together. But for us adults, it was lots of fun, although I prefer something much more mild in a go-cart – the things have no padding! Another course they had there was very small but it had a lot of sharp turns, and it reminded me

of a live version of Mario Kart – without the fake gift boxes and shell weapons, of course ☐

Here is a picture of crazy go-cart course – it doesn't even show the “32 degree banked bowl”, just the “shear drop”:



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## “You Are Now Approaching Walt Disney’s Carousel of Progress”

All good things must come to an end. Wednesday was my final full day in Orlando and it was just as fun as the first. As we prepared to make our way to the Magic Kingdom, Taylor and Sammie asked me to help gather more of our slimy, shell enclosed friends. However, I decided to stay inside and help with baby Christopher. While waiting, I happened upon the old 1960s Batman movie. Yes, between seasons of the camp television classic, Adam West and company made the transition to the big screen; complete with one of the most hilariously bad moments in all of cinema: the shark repellent bat spray. Ok... enough on the caped crusader and his cinematic adventures.

After visiting Tomorrowland (and the droning voice announcing our approach to [Mr. Disney’s vision](#) of the 21st century and its catch tune “There’s a Great. Big, Beautiful Tomorrow”), it was decided that Big Chris was not going to survive the rest of the day on his feet. So, while he and Lisa took the two youngest with them to get a wheelchair, Taylor, Sammie, and I went to Fantasyland to ride [Peter Pan’s Flight](#). This is a ride I actually remember from Disney Land which I visited when

I was 4 years-old. I don't think the ride stopped in California. However, once again I was right in the middle of a malfunction (not the wardrobe type, either).

Following the ride, I got behind the wheelchair and started pushing. Not a problem at all... not only did it keep Chris off that toe, it probably did me some good, too. It also aided in the lines at the rides. With the added bonus of baby swap for those attractions that did not allow lap holding, wheelchair access allowed us to move quicker to the ride. Not that I had wished for this to happen.

From there, we visited each and every attraction I make it a point to visit every time I visit the park. I LOVE [The Haunted Mansion](#) and its doom buggies in Liberty Square. Also never to be missed are [Splash Mountain](#) featuring the characters of Uncle Remus (I find it really strange that they have an attraction devoted to the stories but will never again release *Song of the South* on video) and [Big Thunder Mountain Railroad](#) both of which are in Frontierland. While riding BTMR, poor Sammie lost her bracelet and when we made a quick peek to see if it fell off in our car, it was nowhere to be seen.

One of my other favorites is in Adventureland (N0000, not Jungle Cruise). Pirates of the Caribbean has been updated since my last visit. It now features the voices and likenesses of Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow and Geoffrey Rush as Barbossa. We rode Pirates more than once and surprise, surprise... it happened again. Yo, ho; yo, ho/A Pirate's life for me

At the end of the day, I was rewarded for pushing the wheelchair (not that the reward was necessary) with an all-you-can-eat lobster buffet. Of course forgetting that Chris is allergic to shellfish. On the way back to our home, his voice was getting scratchy. After we got in and made arrangements for me to get to the airport by 7, C&L went out

for a few hours to get away by themselves. I was seriously going to make them if they had not. Taylor and I played some Uno since the other three were sound asleep. After Uno, T wrote out the lyrics to a song she learned with motions in music class. I always loved learning new little songs in music class. So, I will reproduce them as best I can:

### The Long-Legged Sailor

Have you ever, ever, ever in your long-legged life

Met a long-legged sailor with a long-legged wife?

No, I never, never, never in my long-legged life

Met a long-legged sailor with a long-legged wife.

For simplicity's sake I will supply the following: in each successive verse, you replace long-legged with short-legged, knock-kneed, bow-legged, and cross-legged, respectively. Did I remember all the verses, Dopey?

When C&L got back, the four of us played a final game of Uno then it was time to say goodbye to the last one's standing before going to bed.

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## Oh say it ain't so...

I just ran across this [article](#) and was stunned. Cher as Catwoman? Maybe a few, ok quite a few years ago, but now? With plastic surgery and all she doesn't look too bad for 62, but still, a 62 year old comic book villain/heroine? That would be quite a difference from most of the comic books stories I know about. Now if this were just an animated film, why not. I

think she would have a distinct and wonderful voice for Catwoman. Oh well I guess I shouldn't get too worked up.

But the same rumor mill has Johnny Depp as the Riddler. Now that may be an interesting casting decision.

We will see

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## Time and Numbers

Every so often I write something to try to get some of the lurkers, who read my blog, to stop and say hi. This is another of those posts.

I am a numbers person, so I am fascinated by the statistics that are generated for this blog. Some topics seem to bring more people. Books, Haunted houses, Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Moon Landings are all big draws. Big of course is a relative term. This blog has been averaging about 15 readers per day. My maximum in 1 day (that I know of) was just over 80. The average this week was around 25. I realize that some of the 'readers' I am seeing are just robots or data mining sites, but when they find something that, in the programming, is found interesting, they leave blog replies. Some of the people who come to read just won't do it.

I know a couple of the 'shy' people, and I don't really expect replies from them (they know who they are). There are others that I think would be very interesting to hear from.

Things I would like to know about you. How did you find this blog? What do you want to read here? What country/state are you from? Do you come back often? Am I boring you? Just pop in to say hello. Again, until you are 'vetted' (good political

term, no?) your replies will only be seen by me, or maybe the owner of the place, he once 'hacked' in for a April Fools joke... But he is a good friend of mine, almost like a long lost brother. So if you don't want them to be seen, let me know in the response, and I'll get rid of it. Me, I'm just curious...

Other things I want to know. Why is a site in Russia interested in my blogs on Superman Movies? Why isn't the same site interested in Batman? Just wondering..

This is just stuff I was thinking about this Saturday morning...

Loaded with tags, just for fun? Just having a bit of fun, that's what blogging is all about.

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## Breaking records...

The newest Batman movie

[The Dark Knight](#) has been breaking all kinds of earning records. The powers of the movie industry do not think that Batman will break the current \$ record held by *Titanic*, a movie I never saw by the way (the boat sinks), but it has a good chance of catching up to the Original *Star Wars* movie.

But I did some searching, and found out that adjusted for inflation, *The Dark Knight* is currently in 58th place. The #1 show is *Gone with the Wind*. #2 is *Star Wars*.

Just some cool things I found out at [Box Office Mojo](#). If your interested in box office takes at all, this is one very interesting site. They had breakdowns on the days of the week, time of the year and movie ratings. I may spend a little more time there looking for trivial information. (That may help in some games!!)