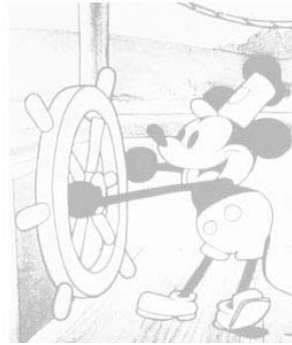




CLUB 71



EXPLORING THE WORLD OF DISNEY COLLECTIBLES

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2008

In the Beginning (Take 2)...

When I started this blog, one of my first posts was about the 1971 Walt Disney World license plates and how they basically started license plate production for Disney. I have also mentioned how they were among the first license plates that we purchased once we found that they were available on eBay. These, however, were not the first plates that I bought for my collection. In all truth, I was dragged into Disney license plate collecting kicking and screaming. My brother and father had been collecting them for years, replacing the coffee mug collection with license plates. At the time of my discharge from the U.S. Navy in 2001 I moved back home to be with my family. This was when I discovered just how fanatical dad and Shaun (my younger brother) were about these license plates. Honestly, I had no interest whatsoever in beginning a collection, I figured they had more than enough for all of us. What I did want, though, was a license plate to put on the front of my car. I had seen it in my brother's collection and thought it was really cool. He informed me that they were no longer available in the parks and that I would have to try to find one on eBay. I would like to tell you that it was some high dollar and really rare plate, but that's not the case. The license plate I wanted was this one:



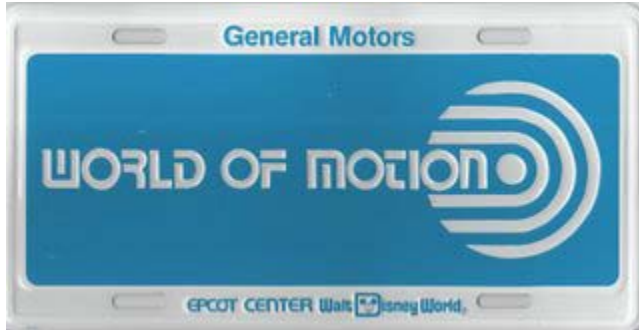
I loved the design of it, the color, the layout, and basically everything about it. It also incorporated two of my favorite things in all of WDW, the monorail and Epcot. It didn't take too much looking to locate one of these plates, and if my memory serves me correctly it didn't cost me much more than 8 or 10 dollars with shipping. For a very long time that was the only license plate I owned and I was quite happy that way. The following summer, though, we went back to WDW on a big family vacation. During our wanderings we kept coming across rack after rack of license plates (apparently this was a big time for production). Dad and Shaun would grab theirs and automatically they would turn to me and tell me that I needed to pick one up too. Before I knew what was going on I had reluctantly bought 7-10 new license plates. I think I came back from that trip with 12 license plates total. Once we were back home I realized that I had inadvertently laid the groundwork for a collection of my own, so I figured I would go ahead and start looking more seriously at the auctions and start doing some research. From that point on it almost became like a competition to see who could acquire the most license plates the fastest. I really got my dad mad at me when I beat him out for this little beauty:



What he didn't know, though, was that in the same auction I had been going after another plate as well:



My dad never did get the blue and white 1971 plate, but the person that was running the auction sent me three of the all blue misprints, which I gave a copy of to both dad and Shaun. Before I knew it I had amassed a collection of about 100-125 plates, many of them hard to find, such as this one:



Although it was almost like a competition between the three of us, Disney license plate collecting actually brought the three of us closer together. We would sort the collections, catalog them, try to find out what we were missing, and surf auctions together. I still have that beat up Epcot license plate (it spent 4 years on the front of my car), but I also bought another one to add to the collection. I can't imagine my life now without my collection, it's brought me so much joy and really gave me a great way to bond with my father and brother. For Disney it all started with a mouse, but for me it all started with a license plate.

POSTED BY RYAN CROCHET AT 12:06 PM 0 COMMENTS