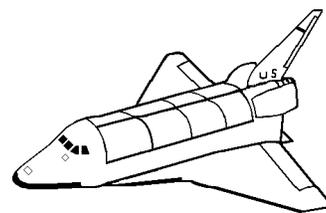


The



SHUTTLE
October 2004

*The Next NASFA Meeting will be 23 October
2004 at the Regular Time and Location*

*Con+Stellation XXIII 15–17 October 2004
Last ConCom Meeting 14 October at the Hotel*

🔔 Oyez, Oyez 🔔

The next **NASFA meeting** will be **23 October 2004**. Note that this is **one week later** than usual due to Con+Stellation, but otherwise is at **the regular time and location**.

The **October program** will be a post-mortem discussion of Con+Stellation XXIII. The **October after-the-meeting meeting** will be at Mike Cothran and Marie McCormack's house.

The final Con+Stellation XXIII: Delphinus **concom meeting** will be **14 October**, the Thursday before the start of the convention. Activities at the hotel will start with unloading the art show equipment as early in the afternoon as we can assemble a crew. There will also be a trip to pick up tables and other items stored at Mike Kennedy's house. After dinner, work will continue with more unloading plus setting up the art show and as much other equipment as we can.

Weber to Sign at BookMark

Popular sf author David Weber will be in Huntsville for a book signing at 3:00P Saturday 6 November. The location will be BookMark, 7500 South Memorial Parkway, Suite 133. For any last-minute details you can contact the store at 256-881-3910.

This appearance is part of a tour promoting Weber's latest Honor Harrington book, *The Shadow of Saganami*. The *Shuttle* has been given a pre-release copy, but unfortunately not quite in time to arrange a review for this issue. A review should appear in the November *Shuttle*.



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Deadline for the November 2004 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 5 November 2004.

Dragon*Con 2004

a Mini Convention Review
by David K. Robinson

I recently attended Dragon*Con 2004 <www.dragoncon.com> in Atlanta Georgia 3–6 September 2004. I stayed with Jack Lundy, a friend of mine. I thought that overall it was a good con! It was very well attended! It had several guests including Soupy Sales, Erin Gray, Garrett Wang from *Star Trek Voyager*, and Gil Gerard. I got Erin Gray's autograph for \$20. I attended a few room parties; they were really fun.

I thought that the programming was a bit lacking. I attended a few.

The hotel where we stayed was real hospitable. We stayed at a Travel Lodge because we didn't want to pay full price for the hotel.

The dealers room was well stocked. I bought a couple of games, a photo of Erin Gray, and some Star Trek and Dr. Who novels.

I also enjoyed mingling with the fellow fans. I met some nice people!

Well overall I thought it was a good con! I hope to go back next year! Grade B+

Skyyyy Pilot... I Mean Captain

a Movie Review
by Mike Kennedy

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow; PG; Starring Gwyneth Paltrow, Jude Law, Giovanni Ribisi, Michael Gambon, Ling Bai, Angelina Jolie, et al.; Written and Directed by Kerry Conran; Produced by Aurelio De Laurentiis, Raffaella De Laurentiis, Bill Haber, Jon Avnet, Sadie Frost, Jude Law, Marsha Oglesby, et al.; Distributed by Paramount Pictures; 107 minutes

Much of the pre-release buzz surrounding *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* had to do with the way the movie was made. In case you've been under a rock somewhere, *Sky Captain* is the first major movie to be shot completely in blue screen, meaning that all of the "sets" and "scenery" were added after the fact. Aside from costumes and some props, the actors had nothing but each other to react to or even look at during the entire principal photography. The obvious questions are "will the sets look 'real'?" and "will the actors do a good job despite the unusual process?" The answer to both questions is a definite — if not fully unqualified — yes.

Sky Captain is set 1939, but a distinctly alternate history — the first hint of which happens in the opening scene as the blimp *Hindenberg III* glides into view. This is a distinctly Art Deco past. The stylized architectural lines of that movement are in nearly every scene of the movie and lend themselves quite well to the special effects techniques used to create them. Examined in frame-by-frame detail, the backgrounds are not completely photorealistic. However, neither are they cartoons. While stylized, the backgrounds are well done and add to rather than distract from the mood the moviemakers apparently wanted to create.

Sky Captain's writer/director is a first time filmmaker. In fact, the movie is essentially an extension of work he started as a film student. To me, that makes it a bit surprising that he could attract both enough money (reportedly some \$70 million) to make such an ambitious first film and two fairly big name actors as the leads. Having experienced actors in the major roles was probably a saving grace. Either Law, Paltrow, or both are on screen for the large majority of the movie. If less experienced actors had been in those parts, it's entirely possible that they wouldn't have been able to cope with the process as well as did these two. Actually, all actors did a more than credible job in what must have been an odd situation. (The actor who must have had the least trouble was, well, dead. Sir Laurence Olivier — or his image at least — makes a cameo appearance using archive footage.)

Ah, I seem to hear some of our readers saying "but what about the story line?" In short, some of the world's great scientists are mysteriously disappearing and New York City is under attack by giant flying robots. Intrepid newspaper reporter Polly Perkins (Paltrow) and ace mercenary pilot Joe "Sky Captain" Sullivan (Law) team up to solve the mystery and save the world from wannabe evil overlord Dr. Totenkopf. As their quest takes them around the world, things are complicated by a troubled romantic history between Sullivan and Law... and don't get any simpler when Francesca "Franky" Cook (Angelina Jolie) (who has her own history with *Sky Captain*) gets stirred into the mix. (Jolie's appearance is advertised as a cameo and indeed she's not on the screen all *that* much of the movie. However, I'd class her role more as a secondary character than a mere cameo.) For the nerds in the audience, there's the brilliant Dex Dearborn (Giovanni Ribisi) whose technical prowess makes much of *Sky Captain's* heroics possible. For the fetishists in the audience, there's Dr. Totenkopf's head henchperson Mysterious Woman (Ling Bai).

For many critics *Sky Captain* is a love-it-or-hate-it movie. One review I read complained bitterly that the film blew the potential love story between the captain and Polly. Apparently that reviewer has never seen a Tracey/Hepburn movie. The relationship between Law and Paltrow's characters was, in my view, an obvious homage to romantic comedies of that stripe, where both the characters have a wit and are unafraid to use it. Whether *Sky Captain* succeeds in this is left up to the judgment of the viewer. Of course, *Sky Captain* is not a romantic comedy, it's an action-adventure tale (albeit one that does not play things straight or take itself all that seriously).

Much more could be said about *how* the movie was made. (The list of special effects companies and artists is longer than the entire credits of most movies and Macophiles like myself get to crow just a little about the key roles that Apple computers played in the pre-, during-, and post-production processes.) However, the proof of any pudding is in the eating. *Sky Captain* is more than worth going to see even if the gross (under \$32 million in the first three full weeks of domestic box office) doesn't show that opinion is all that widespread. With two or three wide releases each weekend, *Sky Captain* will get pushed out of your local multiplex before much more time elapses. I have a suspicion that the special effects will not hold up as well on the small screen as they do in theatrical release, so I'd advise you to trot on down and take it all in before it's no longer available.



No Need For Windows!

No Need for Doctor Drake (aka The Lizard of Oz) —
Prolog
by PieEyedDragon

Today was the day. That's what Mr. Diggs and the Professor had assured her; the same as they had already done eighty-eight times before.

The Princess was feeling desperation. This was a fairy land where people hardly ever died; yet her friend had been wasting away now for over a year. Neither her magic, nor charms and potions had any good effect. She had even tried using the Belt to make a wish, but that, too, had inexplicably failed. The belt stayed around the patient, now. It was probably the only thing keeping her alive.

The Princess recalls a time they had both been trapped in the underwater, domed island city of the Skeezers. Faced with the prospect of lying forever, alive, at the bottom of a lake; her friend had said: "No, I'd rather die quickly."

Preceded by waving antennae, the Professor sticks his angular head into the room and announces "We are ready, Your Majesty."

— O — O — O —

The councillors are quickly assembled as the Princess seats Herself before the Magic Mirror. It was showing random images, as usual; and her own, sad reflection. The palace, the City, the entire Land; was hoping that this would work.

Even the Councillors who *could* breathe, stopped; as the Princess tugged at the "Peri-Fear-All's" small leather boot-strap.

The new silver disk, with the engraved royal emblem, spun faster and faster. The images change, forming into words: "WELCOME TO WINDOZ-89. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU TODAY?"

Princess: Our good friend, the girl in the next room, is very ill. Find a person, item, or creature that can cure her.

Mr. Diggs crosses his fingers

SEARCHING THE LAND...(images flicker)...NO RESULTS.

*The Professor crosses *his* fingers*

SEARCHING NEIGHBORING LANDS...(images flicker)...NO RESULTS.

SHALL I CONTACT EXTERNAL SEARCH ENGINES? (Y/N)

Princess: Yes.

Everyone in the room crosses their fingers, if they have any

CALLING GOOGOL...SITE NOT AVAILABLE.

CALLING YOMAMA...SITE NOT AVAILABLE.

CALLING ZERO...CONNECTION REFUSED.

CALLING MEMORY ALPHA...SITE NOT AVAILABLE.

CALLING SUPREME...CONNECTION REFUSED.

CALLING SHIVA...CONNECTION REFUSED.

CALLING DEEP THOUGHT...CONNECTION REFUSED.

CALLING PANOPTICON...CONNECTION REFUSED; TIME LORDS ONLY.

CALLING COLOSSUS...SITE NOT AVAILABLE.

CALLING BRAINIAC...GUEST LOGON REJECTED.

CALLING QUESTWORLD...SITE NOT AVAILABLE.

CALLING JEEVES...CONTACT...

JEEVES: Sorry, I don't know the answer to that;

redirecting...

CALLING GHOSTWHEEL...CONTACT...PUBLIC INTERFACE guest LOGON ACCEPTED.

ENABLE COOKIES

The Wogglebug snatches-up the snack basket and places it beside the spinning disk. One cookie disappears, and another one with different icing patterns takes it's place.

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS ESTABLISHED WITH WINDOZ.

CONSTRUCTING SHADOW SELECTION MATRIX.

POSSIBILITIES EXAMINED...(6**6)**6.

RESOURCES MATCHING SEARCH CRITERIA...16.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE NOW...0.

CHECK FOR UPCOMING AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES? (Y/N)

Princess: Yes.

RESOURCE P.E.D. HAS...ONE...USER AHEAD OF YOU. P.E.D. WILL BECOME AVAILABLE IN...FIVE...MINUTES. REVIEW RESOURCE P.E.D.?(Y/N)

Princess: Yes.

Images appear: an egg, a baby dragon, an adult flaming dragon, a peaceful lakeside park. The image now changes to a square arena. The caption identifies the overly-muscled man as "Goku"; and the more monstrous humanoid as "Cell." Cell fires a beam of light at Goku. Goku, with great speed, flies upward without crossing the square boundaries of the arena. The beam turns and follows him.

High in space, Goku teleports himself back to the arena. The beam continues on...and on...and on. It now gradually starts to curve back upon it's path. The Earth has rotated the arena over the horizon; but the K-Wave can punch through the planet to strike it's designated target; destroying Earth in the process.

Now, a bright queenly woman is seen, looking upward. She unfolds a beautifully-decorated silk fan and waves it once, outward.

Now, the park is shown again. A small rocky shrine is suddenly wreathed in flames. An old man comes running. A spirit is seen within the flames as the dragon drops his invisibility. After a brief conference, the dragon flies up over the shrine. The flames transfer to him and propel him up and away at great speed.

Yosho: Will he return?

Spirit: No, or yes. The road ahead of him may lead to many places, for it is a real twister.

Yosho: Does he understand about "Divine Wind?"

Spirit: You were away, training too-young boys to be soldiers in the last defense. That battle did not take place. We saw the light from Hiroshima. We heard the thunderclap of doom.

Yes, he *does* understand about "Kami-Kazi."

— O — O — O —

Floating in space, the dragon calls-up more, and stronger, shielding spells: binding them to his magical wing-extensions. Waiting for the hammer-blow, he transmits the requisite message: "Gamera-B reporting Imminent destruction probably. No Gyaos activity. Directive 2. Goodbye, Mom."

The Kamehameha Wave strikes the Anvil of Okayama; enveloping, and burning inward through all shields.

— O — O — O —

GHOSTWHEEL: THE SPECIFIED RESOURCE, P.E.D., IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE NEXT FIFTEEN SECONDS. DO YOU REQUEST TRANSPORT OF

P.E.D.? (Y/N)

Princess: Yes.

GHOSTWHEEL: SPECIFY YOUR AUTHORITY TO IMPORT EXOTIC RESOURCE FROM ALTERNATE REALITY.

Princess: I Am Princess Ozma, the ruler of this land: Oz.

GHOSTWHEEL: TRANSPORT SUCCESSFUL. YOUR CONNECTION TIME HAS EXPIRED. HAVE A NICE DAY. GHOSTWHEEL IS DISCONNECTING.

— O — O — O —

Stormclouds kept the citizens of Butterfield, Kansas, from seeing the great flash, 300 miles overhead. The tracking devices of the Strategic Air Command registered the implosion of a meteorite. They could not measure the Z-shaped rip in space-time that quickly closed-up again.

— O — O — O —

The final message reaches its target somewhere in Greenland; under 200 meters of ice. The eyes twitch, as the Great Turtle begins the slow process of waking from her centuries-long sleep. The Gyaos must not be allowed to catch her, napping.

[Some of the above beings and situations have been suggested by the works of L. Frank Baum, Douglas Adams, Roger Zelazny, Gene Roddenberry, Lloyd Biggle, Robert Heinlein, and others.]

[The characters of the Tenchi series are property of Pioneer Entertainment.]

Letters of Comment

EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC-EMOC

Lloyd Penney
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Etobicoke ON
Canada M9C 2B2

21 September 2004

I have the September NASFA *Shuttle*, Vol. 24, No. 9, on the desktop, and I am finally ready to get a letter of comment to you... and on time, too! Don't get used to it...

Many thanks for getting the Aurora nominations in the newsletter. Whoever got it to you beat me to it. Lots of familiar names on it, and for me, it's the first time I haven't been on the ballot in about a decade. Looks like I'd better get busy doing something.

The local... yes, I did get the job at The Stronco Group. No, it didn't last. My boss called me in with 15 minutes to go on a Friday and announced that she felt me being in the job was not a perfect fit, so she let me go after only three weeks. So, the job hunt is on again, but I do have some interesting leads. My luck has to improve; it can't get much worse than this...

The next three Worldcons are in Scotland, Los Angeles, and Yokohama. I think it's great the world is truly participating in the Worldcon, but it also means that a large number of people won't be able to go until it returns to an affordable location. Chicago is bidding yet again, for 2008, as are Denver and a hoax bid for Geneva, Switzerland, and two cities bidding for 2009 are Kansas City and Montreal. I wish I could have gone to Noreascon 4, but no money means no travel. I was told by Hugo-winning fan editor Cheryl Morgan that I finished sixth in nominations for Best Fan Writer, so I am pleased with that.

We have decided to forgo any other conventions for the rest of the year, and we are hopeful that another new job will finally get back on track, and life can return to normal, whatever that might be. Take care, sorry for the short loc, and perhaps I can do better next time.

[Hey, not that it's your fault but a guy could get depressed reading about all your bad luck with jobs, Lloyd. I'm sure all our readers hope that this is the end of it and things go swimmingly from here on out. I got the Aurora noms for the last issue from the web, which is of course how I tracked down most of the Worldcon info published. People could do that sort of thing themselves, but I like to think that I add at least some value by sifting through multiple sources to select the most important facts and arranging them in an easy-to-read-and-understand manner. It's unlikely (though not quite impossible) that I'll be at any of the next three Worldcons either, though I plan on going to the NASFiC next year and likely in 2007 if there is one. Though I'll have to twist a couple of arms pretty hard, I have at least a lead on an on-the-spot reporter for Glasgow. I'll look for the same thing for Los Angeles and Yokohama as their times grow a bit closer. -ED]

LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC

Sheryl Birkhead
25509 Jonnie Court
Gaithersburg MD 20882

1 October 2004

Agh — I've been waiting for too long to respond to the *Shuttle* — I keep thinking I'll get to it... right now I'm not at home — so I need to wait until I get home and actually have the *Shuttle* in my hands — I'll be "right" back.

Ah, that's better. From what I've heard, Boston was a pretty good con — can't wait to see continuing (yes?no?) tales. I'd like someone to give a guesstimate on what it would cost (yeah, yeah — I know it would be in today's dollars) to go to the Japanese Worldcon — airfare, rooms, representative meals. Uh, not that I'll be going, but it's nice to entertain the thought. My brother (who travels to China *very* often) says, now, airfare is not bad at all — so...

The Boston N4 Hugo is a *ghood* looking award!

Congrats to Toni on her EGoH at the next NASFiC — won't be headed there *or* Glasgow it seems.

Well here is the bottom of the page — I had intended to type with the "new" script typer but...

[You may have run a little late, Sheryl, but your missive did arrive in time for the October *Shuttle*. This is a weird issue for me since I'm working on it less than a week before a con I'm chairing (Con†Stellation XXIII, of course) so my mind isn't fully on it. Well, that'd probably be the case this time of year anyway with college football (Roll Tide!) and the baseball playoffs (Go Braves!) in progress. The *Shuttle* won't have any more Worldcon coverage this issue but there's certainly a lot of it available elsewhere, both on the web and in print. Estimating airfare to Yokohama is somewhat problematic since it depends on whether you're starting in a gateway city or not. For instance, the current best round trip fare between Huntsville and Tokyo-Narita (the nearest airport) seems to be around \$773 plus various fees and taxes. Leaving from Atlanta cuts that about \$70 at present (but often makes more difference than that) whereas leaving from LAX saves another \$200. -ED]



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