

Getting Our Money Into Circulation

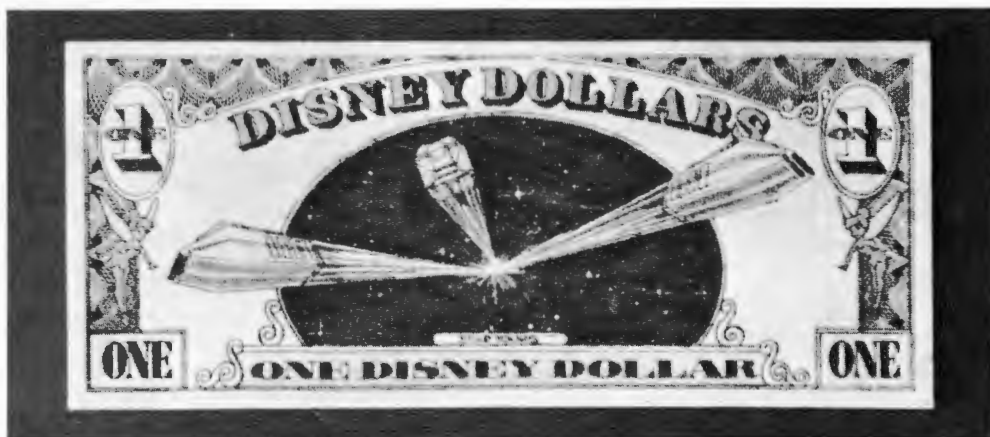
When Disney Dollars first appeared on the scene a month ago, they caused quite a stir and received a tremendous amount of press coverage. It wasn't a new idea — Walt Disney World had Mickey Money in the early 1970s and, although they didn't have the purchasing power our Disney Dollars now have, they were used for golf, water skiing and other recreational activities.

Other businesses have also had their own currency before. For years department stores have had gift certificates which were good for purchases. And casinos think nothing of their own version — namely chips — which are also used as money on an even exchange. But Disney Dollars added a slightly new twist, collectibility.

"It all began," recalls Disney Marketing Executive Vice President Jack Lindquist, "with a simple idea that mushroomed. One day, Harry Brice (a Silhouette Cutter on Main Street) had this idea and he went in to discuss it with Neal McClure, who has since retired but was then our Legal Counsel. Neal listened and thought it sounded pretty good. He thought he'd like to have me in on it and scheduled another meeting."

"My first idea about the entire thing," says Harry, "came about because last year I went to a few of these Disneyana shows. I couldn't believe what people were paying money for — anything with Disney on it. So I began to wonder, 'why couldn't Disney make something just for the collector?' So I came up with this idea to make a souvenir item, which would be sold in the Park, that looked like money."

"As we discussed Harry's idea," Jack says, "I said, 'Let's talk about real money.' We started thinking in terms of real money with buying power, not just play money. We called in Vice President of Finance Bob Risteen for his opinion



The first rendering of a Disney Dollar featured Star Tours on the back of the bill.

and any problems he foresaw. Ron Dominguez poked his head in and we bounced the idea off of him. And he thought it was a good idea. I got approvals from Michael Eisner, Frank Wells and Dick Nunis and we got a lot of cooperation from all areas."

"It turned into a real brainstorming session," Harry adds. "We had some pretty wild ideas — pie-in-the-sky stuff. How about if we made denominations other than the common U.S. currency? Maybe a three dollar bill with a picture of the Three Pigs or a seven dollar bill with the Dwarfs? Someone said it would be great if we could get a \$10,000 bill which could be sold through the Neiman-Marcus catalog. A lot of fun ideas."

Once the idea to make real money began to take on a serious tone, a committee was formed to bring Disney Dollars to fruition. Theme Park Operations Division General Manager Bob Gault chaired the group and sought out the Secret Service, the Treasury Department, and other government agencies regarding any problems they saw with the project.

"We found that there were surprisingly few legal aspects we needed to be aware of," Bob says. "The government was very supportive and helpful. They

were most helpful in suggesting safeguards against counterfeiting, stressing high quality in the printing, paper and design. Basically, the more intricate the design, the harder it would be to copy. They also suggested numbering the bills and even putting watermarks on the paper. As a result, there are quite a few safeguards in Disney Dollars."



Creative Services' Illustrator Matt Mew signs one of the proof sheets of Disney Dollars which are being sold in the Disneyana Shop on Main Street.

The actual design of Disney Dollars went to Creative Services and into the hands of Illustrator Matt Mew. "At the first meeting where I was involved," Matt remembers, "we discussed the concept. It was stressed from the very beginning that Disney Dollars would have to be of the highest quality — something you'd want to keep and collectors would really want. We wanted the feel and quality of real money, but it couldn't be too exact in appearance because that would cause too many problems.

"One of the original ideas out of that meeting was that we could also use it as an advertising vehicle, possibly incorporating Star Tours in the design. But by the next meeting, we felt we wanted something more traditional — something readily identifiable with the Park. What could be more Disney than Sleeping Beauty Castle? That went on the one dollar bill. The five dollar bill required more thought and I used the steamboat. Mickey and Goofy were fairly easy choices for the faces of the bills. There weren't many changes from the original designs I'd done and we hit upon something everybody agreed upon."

Once the design was completed, the job of printing fell to EPI of Battle Creek, Michigan. EPI is known for their high quality printing. And, just like they show in the movies, the plates are the key to the printing. They were made using an intricate process called intaglio steel engraving by U.S. Bank Note of Chicago. U.S. Bank Note, a firm specializing in high security, negotiable documents such as stocks, bonds, bank notes and certificates, had to make the plates to very specific and rigid requirements. Special paper, made from 100% cotton, gives the bills the look and texture of real money.



Silhouette Cutter Harry Brice, left, accepts a framed pair of Disney Dollars from Marketing Executive Vice President Jack Lindquist.

With printing and cutting completed, Disney Dollars appeared on May 5 — and instantly became a success.

The next printing of Disney Dollars will be a little different. The new bills will also state that they are redeemable not only at Disneyland, but Walt Disney World as well.

"The whole thing is," Jack says, "that this wouldn't have been possible without a lot of people, but especially Harry. If he hadn't gone to see Neal with an idea about something that looked like money without value to be sold as a collectible souvenir, Disney Dollars probably would not have happened. His idea sparked others. I seriously doubt that I'd ever sit around and think up Disney Dollars. But Harry's idea got us thinking and I just wanted to recognize him for that."



Engraving Disney Dollars is a delicate task. On May 5, Disney Dollars became available to the guests as legal tender and can be used for any merchandise, food or service in the Park.