

# The making of apollo 13



When making Apollo 13, Ron Howard's intention was to make his film as exciting as possible.

He wanted to make a chemistry on set that would show throughout the film.

Ron wanted Apollo 13 to be realistic, as well as exciting and enjoyable.

Within the characters, Ron wanted to capture their real personalities. This was done by the actors (Tom Hanks and Kathleen Quinlan) meeting the real-life Jim and Marilyn Lovell.

They each spent a day in their home to help capture the right characteristics and get a real idea how they felt. To make the film realistic and scientifically correct, actors and the film crew went to NASA in Florida and watched real Apollo 13 footage. Apollo 13 is faithful to the real life story. To make the film dramatic and realistic, Ron allowed real life events, phrases and outfits were copied.

Marilyn Lovell's ring did slip off in the shower and fall down the drain. Ron found this out when he met Marilyn and added it into his film to add realism. Gene Kranz wore a cream waistcoat whilst working at mission control. Ron saw this in the real footage, so in his film, Ed Harris (who plays Gene Kranz) also wears a cream waistcoat. Real footage was watched and used by the film directors to help when they filmed the lift off scenes.

This ensured Ron's scenes were realistic and looked accurate. The actors watched footage of the real conference to make sure they captured the crew's actions, feelings and emotions at that time. Whilst in the space ship trying to find out what went wrong with the oxygen tank, Jack checks with mission control if his mathematical workings are correct, the real Jack

Swigert did this when he was on the mission. Marilyn Lovell did only cry when she was all alone in her bedroom. She wouldn't let others see how she really felt; she wanted to be strong in front of her family.

Fred Haise did say the phrase 'sure was a good ship' when they landed in the Pacific Ocean, Ron used this to help portray Fred's feelings and character. The layout of mission control in the film is very similar to the real layout of mission control in Houston. Ron and the actors also met the real crew and used the astronaut's descriptions to help make the scenes more realistic. They spoke to the astronauts and spent time with them so they could learn, use and understand the terminology they had to use. Ron made the film accurate by researching facts, using real events and phrases, talking to NASA and astronauts.

'In addition to being an entertaining film, it will go into records as being a source of accurate data in the future' Dave Scott (astronaut). The whole film is not completely accurate. Ron wanted to make the film dramatic and enjoyable, so he created the relationship between Jack and Fred. In real life, Jack and Fred were good friends; they had no problems with each other. Ron created the tension between them to add some drama to the storyline.

We are also manipulated in the scene where Jim tells Ken that he won't be going on the mission and that he will be replaced by Jack. The cut of Ken's reaction of his bad news, to Jack's reaction of his good news makes it seem even worse for Ken and creates a bad image for Jack. In real life, they didn't find the news out directly after each other. Ron Howard used computer generated imagery in scenes of Apollo 13 to make the film visually exciting.

Most of the effects were when filming the lift-off. Ron had cameras on cranes swinging around to create a spacious feel, so you can see the huge scale. To create the thrust scene where once the rocket has launched, there is smoke sucked back in; they just filmed the lift-off and reversed the film. Shakes were added to cameras to make it more dramatic. Model spaceships, photographers and 3D computer effects were all used and then put together to create realism.

All the footage used in Apollo 13 was generated by the film crew themselves. Ron makes you believe his scenes are the real thing when you watch them. Although Ron's scenes are dramatic and look realistic, we as an audience are put in impossible positions. It is not possible to be that close to a spaceship at lift-off or when it is space.